

2005 Conference Summary

Al-Anon Family Groups 2005 World Service Conference

April 16–20, 2005

Energize Al-Anon— Expand, Explore, Experience!

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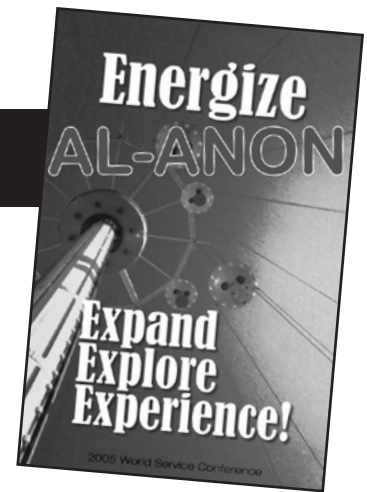
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Concept Two

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."

2002-2004 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual (P-24/27), page 157

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CONFERENCE THEME AND OPENING REMARKS

Gen B.,
Conference Chairperson, Trustee

“Energize Al-Anon—Expand, Explore, Experience” created a lot of enthusiasm at the 45th World Service Conference, held at the Stamford Marriott Hotel, Stamford, Connecticut, April 16-20, 2005. Everyone examined these words during the week and their efforts proved to be “energizing.”

After breakfast on Saturday morning, the Conference Chairperson welcomed everyone and made formal introductions of the Trustees, Executive Committee, World Service Office (WSO) staff, Delegates, and Delegate committees. The Conference officially began with the Serenity Prayer.

At every Conference, the first order of business is approval of a motion presented by the Admissions/Handbook Committee to seat certain persons who can provide critical information to the Conference, some with a voice but no vote and some with no voice or vote. The following persons were seated:

- David Zach, Director of Business Services (non-Al-Anon Member)
- Colleen G., Chairperson, Executive Committee for Real Property Management (Al-Anon member)
- Maria del Carmen R., International Representative from Mexico (Al-Anon member)
- Nancy Cole, Consultant to the Board of Trustees (non-Al-Anon member)

The motion carried. (See WSC Motion #1, page 59.)

Following the motion, the Chairperson called roll, which she jokingly referred as the “starting lineup,” and made announcements regarding policies and procedures of the Conference. The taking of still photographs was approved by a show of hands. Videotaping was not permitted at any time. The procedure for creating and submitting a motion was reviewed and members were reminded of the two-minute limit, one-time at the microphone. It was approved by a show of hands that all subsequent voting would be done by closed ballot, with “substantial unanimity” defined as two-thirds of the votes cast. An Ask-It-Basket and Seventh Tradition basket were placed on the dais for those who wished to contribute.

The Chairperson noted that there was an error in the step-by-step Conference Voting Procedure document regarding the votes necessary for reconsideration of a motion. Conference members were asked to change the wording from “simple majority” to “two-thirds majority.” One Delegate said her area used the “51 percent rule” and found it worked for them. A WSO staff member responded that research had not provided a foundation for an earlier change in Conference procedures from two-thirds to a simple majority, and that the process was being restored to its original form. Areas were reminded, however, that they have autonomy to adopt whatever procedures meet their needs.



Location of the 2005 World Service Conference

GREETINGS FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Judy P.,
Chairperson, Board of Trustees

“You are here for the 45th Anniversary of the World Service Conference to continue the ongoing conversation for Al-Anon Family Groups. As Conference members, you are the carriers of the energy that Lois and our pioneers entrusted to those chosen to serve.

“We are all here for a purpose. While each of our responsibilities may be different, we are all here to serve and preserve Al-Anon. We are here to ensure that Al-Anon is here for those who come after us. We do not assume these responsibilities lightly.

“The world is a different place than it was when Lois and her friends gathered with the wives of the early day AA delegates to

discuss Al-Anon and its future. They had no idea Al-Anon would one day be in 115 countries around the world. Imagine what Lois would say if she were standing on Times Square, seeing our “Reality” public service announcement on the Astrovision Board.

“I think if Lois were here today, she would be sitting in the front as she did so often at many Conferences, smiling and taking it all in. I believe Lois was a woman ahead of her time. She would have been excited to be here with us this week, hearing our discussions about the ‘World Service Handbook’—the little booklet she first wrote to help new areas get organized and elect their Delegate.

I think she would have been energized with Al-Anon today as the Conference works on the Concept Eleven text, as it discusses the Alateen safety requirements, and even as the Committee reports are presented.

“Lois and our pioneers knew there would be a need for changes to happen for our survival. I’d like to read a quote from her book, *Lois Remembers*, from page 195:

But the survival of our ‘A’s’ [Al-Anon, Alateen, and AA] depends upon growth—growth in spirit more than in numbers. We believe the principles upon which AA and Al-Anon are founded are fundamental for all time and all people. And yet our individual acceptance and application of these principles must continue to grow or we as societies will perish. For stagnation is retrogression. There is no standing still.

“Mark Twain once said, ‘I’m all for progress; it’s change I have trouble with.’ With this in mind, I would like to share with you that the Board has made progress—not change! It is called ‘knowledge-based decision-making.’ You will see it modeled in our Open Policy meeting and in the way several items will be presented on the Conference agenda. We are very excited about this new procedure and we hope it will give you the opportunity to explore new horizons, experience a new way to do Al-Anon business—here and in your assemblies, and expand your knowledge. We think you will be energized!

“Here is how it works. Items that come to the Conference from the Board or a Committee will be introduced to you by cover letter. The facts and background and any other available information will be provided to you. When the item is brought to the floor, you will have had an opportunity to review all of the information, prepare questions, and even formulate information to share. The Board has found that by using this process, we are better prepared, can have better and more informed discussions, and thus make better decisions. This format takes more time, but for important decisions time is not a significant factor. To clear time on the Board’s agenda for this new format, we had to let go of some things we were doing and turn them over to our wonderful and very capable World Service Office (WSO) staff and volunteers—things such as editing commas, words, upper-case versus lower-case, etc. We have even given up micromanag-

ing the WSO and its procedures. We let the Executive Director do his job. This is just a sample of our progress, and it has made a huge difference in the way the Board spends its time. The Board would like to suggest that perhaps the Conference could let go of some of this too—turn it over to the pros. You have much more important things to do with your time.

“You have received many brown envelopes with information to prepare you for this Conference. Some of you have complained, ‘too much reading,’ while others have said, ‘I need more.’ Much of this information is the beginning of the knowledge-based decision-making process. Much of the preparation for this Conference has been underway for a year, some of it over several years, and some has spanned over what seems like a lifetime. Some of the items we will be discussing were discussed last year and perhaps the year before. Some items we discuss will continue to be discussed next year and perhaps the year after that.

“Years ago, I was at a meeting where a longtime member brought one of the very early issues of *The Forum* to introduce a topic. It was about the writer’s favorite slogan, ‘TTT’ meaning, ‘Things Take Time.’ That has been an important lesson for me to learn and apply to my service.

“There is one more thing I want to talk to you about. The Board and the WSO want you to be successful as a leader—as a Delegate here at the Conference and in your area. All of us are willing to do whatever we can to help you do your job. Following every Board meeting, I prepare a letter. In that letter, I make every attempt to give you the latest information you will need to pass on to your area. This is sent electronically and by hard copy. After the Conference, my quarterly letters will be posted on our Members’ Web site, www.al-anon.alateen.org/members, after you receive them. A member of the Board will call you within a month after you receive my letter. Please make every attempt to make a connection with this Trustee. He or she will answer any questions you have about what the Board is doing. The Trustee is also willing to listen and, if you need more information, will help you find the answers.

“Last but not least, there will be a lot of important information for you to go over in the next few days here at the Conference.



The 2005 World Service Conference Begins!

If you don't understand something or you need more information, please approach your Delegate Sponsor or a WSO staff member or volunteer and ask for what you need. As Al-Anon members, the Board wants the best

for Al-Anon too. We want you all to be successful Delegates. We are your partners in service."

Following her greeting, the Chairperson of the Board read the Twelve Traditions.

SHARING AREA HIGHLIGHTS

Each year, Delegates gather on the evening before the official opening of the Conference to share. This meeting is open to all Conference members. The Moderator divided attendees into six

groups, and they addressed their areas' successes, new ideas/projects, concerns, and lessons learned. The following is a summary of those comments:

Successes

- Completed an area inventory
- Did a public outreach project to the judiciary and had some judges request ongoing contact and renewal of their supply of schedules and literature
- Had a social gathering prior to assemblies which provided a great opportunity for fellowship and shared recovery
- Had two uninvolved groups become active after receiving letters
- Provided placemats to a local fast food chain and have been getting referrals
- Started a voice mail system for the local Al-Anon information service. Districts take turns monitoring it on a monthly basis
- Created a message board on the area's Web site
- Had a change of attitude from "we have never done it that way before" to "how can we better serve all of the groups in our area?"
- Started roving workshops
- Created an area policy manual and kept it updated
- Held a luncheon workshop for professionals and, of the 50 invited, 38 attended; did a follow-up in two to three months
- Provided additional literature to county law enforcement as a result of a public outreach project
- Had a *Forum* road show, featuring writing workshops to help members acquire writing experience
- Did an interview with a community reporter and the article (which included the 24-hour hot-line phone number) was published in four community newspapers
- Was invited to participate in a college conference regarding underage drinking and, as a result, a treatment center has requested meeting lists and speakers
- Had a Spanish-speaking group celebrate its 10th anniversary with a candlelight meeting and honored a longtime member who has been instrumental in developing Spanish-speaking groups in the area
- Had 100 percent of districts with District Representatives

New Ideas/Projects

- Put posters on transit buses
- Discussed a pamphlet at district meeting; sent it and minutes to all groups
- Put out a calendar listing upcoming area events
- Had a two-day conference to transition from one panel to next
- Cooperated with AA in doing workshops
- Had a field trip to local Al-Anon information service/literature distribution center to raise awareness
- Asked for volunteers to contact nonparticipating groups
- Asked groups to take pictures of their meeting places, indoor and exterior, for archives album
- Had a "service day" for the Delegate to give a reportback, incorporating fun, food, and fellowship
- Did Group Representative orientations in six breakout sessions with officers and Coordinators rotating from group to group to share office responsibilities; provided a notebook of information
- Contacted churches three weeks prior to Christmas and asked them to put Al-Anon's contact information in their bulletin
- Received immediate responses from school principals and counselors after delivering information packets to them
- Paired new Group Representatives with experienced members to help them through the business part of assemblies
- Gave back issues of *The Forum* to halfway houses, parole officers, and mental health offices
- Held a POW (Public Outreach Workshop); some attended sessions with speakers and lunch; some stuffed "make and take" envelopes for professionals; some brainstormed for ideas
- Included a page for WSO news and an events calendar in area newsletter
- Had an inactive district agree to host an assembly
- Created an Al-Anon/Alateen awareness program aimed at pre-graduation students in higher education
- Worked with the Webmaster to develop tools to promote the area's Web site to professionals

- Asked districts and groups what they needed and had workshops based on that
- Took time at area meetings for members to share and learn more about each other
- Used the Web site as the single place for group record changes, so that the answering service, meeting schedules, and the WSO data base are synchronized
- Held area meetings in different locations and had area officers and Coordinators share about their position
- Kept in contact with distant and remote districts and meetings through conference calling

- Set up an AI-Anon hotline using a cell phone
- Had the Area Archives Coordinator cross-reference all assembly motions for greater ease of locating information
- Realized the need for long-term planning
- Suggested having workshops on Concept Nine to improve leadership
- Had the entire area work on one project
- Delegate received meeting minutes from districts to keep better informed about area happenings
- Three minutes, one time at the microphone, helped move the meetings along and allowed shy personalities to speak up

Concerns

- Transitioning to a new panel
- Lack of communication; breaks in the links of service; unfilled service positions
- Finances
- Dual members serving in positions that could lead to a position on the area world service committee
- Lack of participation; lack of commitment by volunteers
- Discerning what information should be shared at the assembly and what just needs to be reported in the newsletter
- How to get younger members involved in service
- Dominant members not willing to let go of old ideas
- Volunteers starting projects and not completing them
- Members not well informed about Tradition Seven
- Whether the area should incorporate
- Educating members about anonymity when listing local events in newspapers, on radio and TV, or in church bulletins
- Decrease in membership and closing of meetings causing newcomers to travel long distances for meetings
- Alateen Sponsors who have failed to comply with the Board's requirements
- Increased cost to attend district meetings by outlying districts
- Newcomers feeling intimidated rather than encouraged
- Gossip during election assemblies
- Dilution of the AI-Anon program
- Lack of participation from Past Delegates and other levels of service
- Expansion of Big Book meetings and multilevel sponsorship arrangements
- Use of the Lord's Prayer at meetings

Important Lessons Learned

- Use the Steps, Traditions, and Concepts of Service when addressing crucial issues
- Need to do more education about the minority appeal process and listen to minority opinions
- Communication is extremely important; listen to newcomers; don't be afraid to ask questions
- Past Delegates offer valuable experience for future activities
- Most benefit is gained when there is a plan and efforts are unified
- Be sure to check with your bank about how they handle mailing information
- Small things, such as certificates of service, are an important part of encouraging members to keep coming back
- Keep the focus on what I can do and not worry about what others are not doing; be a good example; be energetic and enthusiastic; we can't be all things to all people
- Structured and organized assemblies are critical
- The more information available prior to assembly, the more comfortable members are at making decisions
- More enthusiasm and interest was shown at assemblies with WSO participation
- "We are the messengers and our attitude in how we present the message can help build a wall of resistance to change or help break it down."
- Remain obedient to the enforceable and unenforceable
- Stay focused on the objective
- When nominating new Coordinators, ask directly if they are a member of AA; to some, "primary program" is not clear
- Having a warm body in a position is sometimes worse than no one at all
- Breaking information into "bite-sized pieces" can make the information easier to digest
- Look into everything connected with a chosen action
- A Sponsor who is fully grounded in AI-Anon principles is critical
- Projects always take more time than we want

Alateen

- Registered all active groups under the new requirements
- Alateen speakers went to schools
- Alateen Sponsors must attend two workshops per year; increased area budget for workshops, but not for personal expenses incurred by attendees
- Created a Coordinator-level Alateen Process Person/Alateen Safety Coordinator
- “We seem to have more people now interested in becoming Sponsors.”
- Held three-day workshop for Alateen Sponsor training
- Increased Spanish-speaking Alateen groups
- Held Alateen Sponsor workshops at every assembly
- Alateen Coordinator did Sponsor training workshop
- Requirements have not caused loss of Alateen groups or Alateen Sponsors
- Organizers of AA conferences with Al-Anon and Alateen participation have been very supportive of requirements
- Being without an Alateen Coordinator gave insight into what it would be like without Alateen
- Alateen requirements sparked interest, concern, and enthusiasm in some “not so active” members
- Alateen conference theme, “Today is Not Tomorrow”
- Creating a manual to help define Alateen sponsorship
- Created an invitation-only e-mail site for Alateen Sponsors
- When multi-area Alateen conferences meet, which guidelines apply?
- In lieu of background checks, a disclosure form was used, asking direct questions
- Inability to provide Alateen Sponsors for the numerous requests being made by middle and high school meetings; Alateens unable to find a meeting when referred by a professional

Action Committees

- Projects kept members involved
- Encouraged Past Delegates, area officers, or Coordinators to chair action committees for continuity
- Created reportback sheets and print them in newsletter
- Added a fundraising subcommittee
- Restructured our committees, reduced them from four to three and call them “teams” instead of committees
- Developed a mission statement for each committee
- Set up an e-mail server site to keep all action committee members connected
- Helped Group Representatives feel more connected to area service work and gave tangible ideas and projects to take back to their groups

Some Questions for an Area Inventory

- Do you feel your input or ideas are taken into consideration at the area level?
- Have your Group Representatives shared with the District Representatives why they do not attend assemblies?
- What do you think would improve Group Representative attendance?
- Have you explained the purpose of holding assemblies?
- Do the members of your district think assemblies are boring?
- Do you feel the Traditions are being followed at assemblies?
- Do members in your districts feel certain members dominate the assembly?
- Do we follow up on outreach projects?
- How do we support our Al-Anon information service/literature distribution centers?
- How do we break the buck barrier?

Suggestions included:

- Use two methods: anonymous (hand in at end of assembly) and open discussion
- Discuss the inventory; listen to and address concerns
- Evaluations and inventories are important and help us all to be better Al-Anon members, groups, districts, and areas

CLEARING THE AIR

Bidge B.,
Trustee

Time is set aside each year shortly after the opening announcements to allow members to voice their comments or concerns about anything that might have happened at last year's Conference. Any matter that would otherwise impede their ability to give their full attention to the business of the Conference was allowed. When the floor

was opened, the following comments and concerns were expressed:

- That the Conference members honor the traditional two-minute, one-time limit at the microphone on each issue
- That an area be allowed some time on this year's agenda to present its minority report regarding the Alateen requirements

- That an explanation be made as to how the Alateen requirements affect personal recovery
- That the Alateen requirements disregard Tradition Two
- That this session, as well as all other sessions, be taken seriously
- That floor motions be given sufficient time to be heard, discussed, and voted on and that it not be on the last day, when everyone is tired and wants to

go home

- That the changes being considered to Concept Eleven take the spirituality out of our business side and that we need to balance business with spirituality

When there was time on the agenda, the Conference Chairperson allowed the presentation of a minority report from the Vermont Area Ad Hoc Alateen Committee regarding the Alateen requirements. No action was taken by the Conference.

APPROVALS

2004 Annual Report

Each year, every Conference member receives a copy of the prior year's Annual Report prepared by the World Service Office (WSO). It summarizes the goals set and activities undertaken by its departments from January 1 through December 31. In his opening remarks at this year's Conference, the Executive Director gave a brief history of the current format of the Report.

Among the changes the Board made last year was the acknowledgment of its duty to be visionary, not a manager. Its challenge is to think of big ideas and then ask the WSO staff to accept those they feel they can achieve and write objectives for themselves. The Board is also writing goals for itself. He said, "In next year's Annual Report, you will also see what the Board has achieved regarding its goals."

When the floor was opened for discussion, there was praise for the readability of the report and its focus on a knowledge-based process. There was appreciation expressed for the time and effort that was put into preparing it. One Conference member asked

why the names of "nationally-recognized entities" were not printed in the report and was told that printing names in the report could imply endorsement, which is a violation of our Traditions. There were several questions regarding Alateen and the minority appeals that were filed. Members were referred to the *2004 Conference Summary* for answers. The Board does consider each comment received. It was further explained that the rights of appeal and petition under Concept Five include the right to be heard but not necessarily the right to stop the process or reverse an action previously taken. Another member asked, "How will we know when the minority opinion becomes the majority?" The response was that while it's impossible to give a specific answer, we believe group conscience is guided by a Higher Power and that if that happens, the group would become aware.

A motion to approve the 2004 WSO Annual Report was carried. (See WSC Motion #2, page 59. The complete report can be found on pages 75-83.)

Ric B.,
Executive Director

2004 Auditor's Report

On January 31, 2005, the opinion letter of the independent auditors was signed and a copy of their letter and report was immediately forwarded to all Conference members for their consideration. At the Conference, the Director of Business Services gave an overview of each paragraph of the letter and reviewed the various statements and accompanying notes of the financial status of Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. Again this year, the corporation received an

"unqualified" opinion, which means the auditors found that, in all material respects, the financial statements were prepared in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

As of December 31, 2004, Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. had total assets of \$11,209,347 and total liabilities of \$3,255,836, leaving unrestricted net assets of \$7,953,511, which were distributed among three funds: General, Reserve, and Building.

Zelda R.,
Treasurer, Trustee
David Zach,
Director of Business Services
(Nonmember)

General Fund revenue totaled \$4,147,706 and expenses were \$4,307,375. As a result, the General Fund net assets were reduced by \$159,669. Investment income in the General Fund for 2004 was \$110,107.

The Reserve Fund had a balance of \$4,444,545 at year-end after recording investments at market value and estimating the cost of post-retirement health benefits. Net income of \$218,549 was recorded in the Reserve Fund. The estimated future cost of post-retirement health benefits was \$678,950.

The Building Fund, established in 1995 to record the purchase of the World Service Office (WSO), shows the cost of land, building, and building improvements after depreciation at \$2,372,072. There is \$80,906 of contractual reserve for the retirement of bonds and \$1,184,865 of Board-designated reserve for bond retirement above the contractual amount.

The gross profit realized from literature sales was \$2,784,710 and subscription income from *The Forum* totaled \$254,732.

When the floor was opened for discussion, one member asked for clarification on allocation of occupancy costs. She was told that occupancy costs are allocated to each department on the amount of square feet occupied. Another member asked what constituted accounts payable and was told that those amounts represented goods or services received from vendors but not yet paid. Another question was asked about the Financial Statement Presentations in the Notes section of the report, which states that AI-Anon “does not solicit pledges.” It was explained that pledges are promises to make contributions or donations and AI-Anon does not accept pledges.

A motion was made to approve the report. It carried unanimously. (See WSC Motion #3, page 59.)

2005 Budget Report

Zelda R.,
Treasurer, Trustee

David Zach,
Director of Business Services
(Nonmember)

The Board of Trustees Treasurer presented the 2005 budget for AI-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc., which shows that expenses are expected to exceed revenue by approximately \$66,000.

Conservative estimates indicate that income from literature sales and *Forum* subscriptions will be slightly less than 2004. Contributions have been budgeted at \$1,408,000, a substantial increase from 2004, due to a large bequest received this year. Investment income should be less than last year because on April 1, 2005, funds that had been invested were used to prepay some of the outstanding bonds originally secured to purchase the World Service Office property and building.

Overall expenses are budgeted to increase by \$243,000. Payroll costs are expected to increase by \$162,000, due to cost-of-living and merit increases. Outreach activities now include Public Outreach Exhibits. We have included funds to be available for projects that may be identified during the year. Canadian Public Outreach expenses are higher due to a public outreach project to Canadian health care facilities.

An open discussion period followed the presentation. One member asked about the heavy dependency on literature sales for revenue, and whether that dependency might cause problems in the future. She was

informed that there have been only one or two years since 1951 that revenue from contributions has exceeded revenue from sale of literature. Literature sales have always been a major source of support for the fellowship. It is one way that the fellowship can support the World Service Office (WSO). However, literature is created for recovery, not to balance the budget. It was asked whether Regional Trustees were required to share a room. The Board of Trustees reviews expenses for Trustees and if it is appropriate (for example, for medical conditions), sharing a room is not required. Most of the time, Trustees share accommodations. One of the Delegates asked about the large increase in Public Outreach. The Director of Business Services explained that in the past the Public Outreach Department presented projects for the next year. However, when new opportunities arose, they needed approval. About three years ago, it was decided to allocate an amount for Public Outreach for those opportunities. To date, no money has been spent for those projects, but it is available for Public Outreach if approved by the Executive Committee.

Another question arose regarding international travel by the WSO staff and whether there could be a more cost-efficient way to spread AI-Anon’s message worldwide, such as the “To Russia with Love” project. It was

AL-ANON FAMILY GROUP HEADQUARTERS, INC.

	<u>2005 Budget</u>	<u>Preliminary 2005 Budget</u>	<u>2004 Actual</u>
<u>Operating Expenses</u>			
Salaries (includes Temp Help)	2,051,000	2,077,000	1,945,545
Payroll Taxes	162,000	164,000	154,286
Employee Benefits	<u>562,000</u>	<u>559,000</u>	<u>512,977</u>
Total Labor Costs	2,775,000	2,800,000	2,612,808
Building Occupancy	278,000	293,000	273,680
Packing & Shipping (Net)	(6,000)	(1,000)	(5,764)
Postage	258,000	258,000	232,002
Telephone	60,000	70,000	64,888
Stationery & Office Supplies	110,000	110,000	112,579
Outreach Activities	93,000	93,000	15,854
Public Information Exhibits	0	0	16,329
Office Services & Expenses	165,000	165,000	168,772
Repairs & Maintenance	10,000	10,000	18,022
Travel & Meetings	217,000	217,000	218,914
Direct Conference Costs (Net) Schedule 2	70,000	70,000	62,015
Regional Service Seminars	18,000	18,000	21,737
Legal & Audit	30,000	30,000	68,549
Printing	132,000	132,000	130,730
Canadian Public Information Schedule 3	48,000	42,000	18,849
In-Office Volunteers	6,000	6,000	2,265
PSA Campaign	94,000	94,000	91,271
Miscellaneous	<u>22,000</u>	<u>22,000</u>	<u>40,377</u>
Total Operating Expense	\$4,380,000	\$4,429,000	\$4,163,877
International Al-Anon Gen'l Service Mtg.	0	0	21,498
Membership Survey	0	0	0
Depreciation & Amortization (Exc. Bldg.)	<u>170,000</u>	<u>170,000</u>	<u>122,000</u>
Total Expense	\$4,550,000	\$4,599,000	\$4,307,375
<u>Estimated Revenue</u>			
Literature Sales less cost of printing	2,741,000	2,611,000	2,748,710
Contributions	1,408,000	1,400,000	1,034,157
Forum Subscriptions	250,000	250,000	254,732
Interest	85,000	100,000	110,107
Funds from General Fund *	<u>66,000</u>	<u>238,000</u>	<u>159,669</u>
Total Estimated Revenue	\$4,550,000	\$4,599,000	\$4,307,375

* To be used only if necessary revenue is not received

explained that a WSO staff member made two trips to Russia before that project was put in place. Travel and meeting face-to-face with members of countries that do not have a general service office (GSO) is necessary to lay the groundwork for the program. It was explained that accommodations in most countries, such as Greece and Turkey, were by no means luxurious. Many times, Al-Anon traveled at the invitation of Alcoholics Anonymous, who usually is invited to countries long before Al-Anon. Traveling with Alcoholics Anonymous helps keep the cost of travel down. Last year's budget was larger than usual because the International Al-Anon General Services Meeting (IAGSM) was held in Brazil. The GSOs attending that meeting contribute financially to the WSO because the WSO supports them. Some countries, such as Cuba, are unable to send a representative to the United

States, so we need to travel to them. As a result of a recent visit to Cuba, the WSO now has contact with them once a month and is keeping the dialogue open as their structure continues to evolve.

An explanation of the Building Reserve Fund was requested. It is a separate account. However, in the audit it is included with the General Fund cash. It was created to insure that funds would be available for maintenance and repairs to the Headquarters' building if and when needed. The Executive Committee for Real Property Management (ECRPM) looks at that amount regularly and increased the amount two years ago.

Concerning the new software for the member database, workflow analysis is currently being done with the goal of keeping customization of the new system to a minimum.

A motion was made to approve the report. It carried. (See WSC Motion #4, page 59.)

VISIT TO STEPPING STONES

This year, the World Service Conference returned to its roots in the New York City vicinity. This gave members of the 45th World Service Conference the opportunity to visit Stepping Stones, Al-Anon's first "Clearing House" and the home of Lois and Bill W. (cofounders of Al-Anon and AA, respectively).

The new Executive Director of the Stepping



Stepping Stones—Al-Anon's First "Clearing House"

Stones Foundation welcomed Conference members and their guests. She introduced the outgoing Executive Director of the Foundation, who gave a history of Lois and Bill's life together. She told how they acquired Stepping Stones in 1941, after having been homeless for two years, with 52 moves during that time. As members strolled through the gardens and walked through the rooms, there was a distinct sense of Lois's presence. Before Lois could afford fabric, she painted "curtains" on the walls around the windows. Mementos and pictures of the history Lois recounted in the book *Lois Remembers* (B-7) are everywhere. Upstairs, Delegates stopped to gaze at the desk that was Al-Anon's first World Service Office. Some walked up the hill to "Wit's End," Bill's retreat and writing place. Many others took pictures to help preserve this event. One comment overheard on the trip back was, "It was very spiritual to finally see and be at Stepping Stones; to connect and be a part of our history."

SELECTED COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Delegates from each panel, Trustees, and staff members comprise the selected 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 a committee, the committee requested by the incoming Delegate, and the timeliness of the request. Below are the Delegate committee assignments for this year's Conference:

Gen B.,
Conference Chairperson, Trustee
Cynthia H.,
Associate Director of Membership
Outreach—Conference

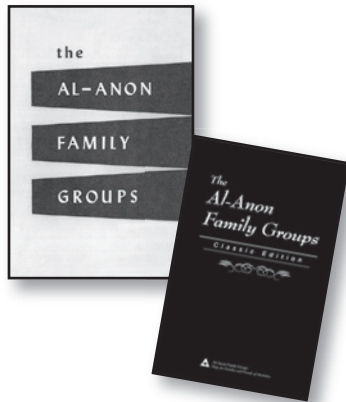
Committee	Panel 43 (2003-2005)	Panel 44 (2004-2006)	Panel 45 (2005-2007)
Admissions/ Handbook	Carolyn L., KY Jan H., TX (E) Fran K., IL (N) Gail C., ON (S)	Mickie Z., MP Ruth H., WA John McL., VT Carol C., CO	Connie H., IA Joyce B., UT Susan R., AR
Conference Committee on Trustees	Miriam McK., CA (S) Mari Lee W., IN Julie M., MD/DC Ruth H., MB Denise R., RI	Ann F-S., MA JoAnne H., MN (N) Janie J., AL	Gayle McN., NM Sheila K., NL Sharon C., ON (N)
Group Services	Lucy R., FL (N) Vicki H., CA (N) Carol F., MN (S) Connie D., NY (N)	Elaine L., QC (E) Debbie P., OK Nancy C., WV Paula B., NC/Bermuda	Marlene R., AK Tricia B., WY Susan L., SC Reen R., ME
Literature I	Sue B., MI Denise M., DE Margie R., TX (W) Jane L., TN	Debbie F., GA Kal T., BC/YT Marilyn M., AB/NT	Ellie L., CT Carmin T-M., PR Dorothy B., NE Cecilia S., ID
Literature II	Stuart M., FL (S) Pierrette G., QC (W) Ethel B., HI	Cindy M., AZ Susan G., OR Jim S., WI Kathy B., NJ	Tina B., NV Cherri N., SD Donna E-H., MO Lois K., SK
Public Outreach	Geri H., OH Jeanine S., PA Mary K., KS	Fran A., MS Jeanne H., MT Shirley J., ND Phyliss S-T., VA	Betsy C., IL (S) Lida K., NH Joan L., NY (S) Clara E., LA

FELLOWSHIP COMMUNICATION

Archives Advisory Committee

Liz W.,
Chairperson, Trustee

Joe T.,
WSO Archives Coordinator



Fifty Years of Al-Anon's First Book

The primary purpose of the World Service Office (WSO) Archives is to preserve records through systematic record retention, to provide research services, and to display pertinent items reflecting Al-Anon's history.

In 2003, the Board of Trustees approved a three-year trial suspension of this Committee. Since that date, the staff has updated the Chairperson and the Executive Committee regarding the work carried out in the Archives. Staff continues to preserve minutes and other historical records on the Laser-Fiche imaging system, improving the ability to search files electronically. Cataloging continues, and a series of spreadsheets were added to help with ongoing inventories. The restoration of the original logo is complete and several photos of Al-Anon's pioneer years were added to the archives display. Sizeable donations to the collection included a set of photos from the early International

Al-Anon General Services Meetings as well as early documentation of the electronic meetings and WSO Web site designs.

The WSO Archives record management and retrieval capabilities improved with the addition of an entire set of Advisory Board Minutes from 1951-1964. Requests for missing documents continue to be printed in Coordinator mailings, *Inside Al-Anon Xtra*, and *Area Highlights*. The collection is improving due to the response to these pleas.

Staff continues to follow the direction established at past Advisory Committee meetings, the Executive Committee, and the Board of Trustees. There remains much accessioning work to be done, and at this time it appears the suspension of the Committee is appropriate, as no new issues have arisen that need the expertise of an Advisory Committee. The Executive Committee is still available to provide volunteer oversight when necessary.

Forum Editorial Advisory Committee

Julie F.,
Chairperson, Trustee

Patrick Q.,
Associate Director of Fellowship Communication—Literature I/Forum

Suzanne M.,
Fellowship Communication Coordinator



At each of its quarterly meetings, the Committee reviewed and graded 250 manuscripts and critiqued the previous three issues of the magazine to assure that the quality of the magazine and the editorial policy is consistent with Al-Anon philosophy.

The January *Forum* included *Inside Al-Anon Xtra*, which the World Service Office mailed to the current mailing address (CMA) of all English-speaking groups that receive the newsletter. That mailing included a sharing sheet requesting members to share with potential newcomers what they found helpful when they attended their first Al-Anon meeting. Committee members have begun reviewing and grading these manuscripts for possible inclusion in the September *Forum*, which will contain several personal stories of members whose experience included a professional referring

them to Al-Anon.

The Committee finalized the 2005 Readership Survey for *The Forum*. The May *Forum* will include the survey, which readers may also request via e-mail. The Committee continued discussing ways to update *The Forum's* Statement of Purpose in order to prepare a recommendation to the Executive Committee. *The Forum* continues to post three articles each month on the Public Outreach and Members' Web sites, www.al-anon.alateen.org and www.al-anon.alateen.org/members, respectively.

An incentive was developed for Al-Anon members who are willing to tell funny stories about themselves. *The Forum* continued publishing Legacy sharings on individual Steps, Traditions, and Concepts of Service, as well as presenting members' sharings asking for feedback in the "Talk to Each Other" department.

Literature Committee I

Bidge B.,
Chairperson, Trustee

Patrick Q.,
Associate Director of Fellowship Communication—Literature I/Forum

During the combined meeting of Delegate and at-Large members, Literature Committee I paid special attention to the Board's Vision and Mission Statements. The Committee also reviewed the process for developing Conference Approved Literature. Members discussed Committee roles and responsibilities,

and literature review procedures.

The main focus for Literature Committee I this year has been the continuing development of a new piece of literature, based on a motion from the 2002 World Service Conference. The working title is OUR RECOVERY IN RELATIONSHIPS. To date, the Commit-

tee has reviewed the writer/editor's proposed outline and 133 pages of the first draft of the manuscript. The draft contains selections from over 900 personal sharings from the fellowship, in addition to narrative text created by the professional writer/editor who is also an Al-Anon member.

Based on Committee reviews and requests from the writer/editor, the fellowship is invited to submit additional sharings for OUR RECOVERY IN RELATIONSHIPS. The project needs personal sharings that refer to selfishness, self-caring, intimacy, and sexuality. Additional sharings are needed about parent-child and grandparent-child relationships, plus more sharings in general from Al-Anon men.

The Committee has approved revisions for *Alateen's 4th Step Inventory* (P-64). The revision calls for a new design for this pub-

lication prior to the next printing. Illustrators with experience designing graphics for young people are welcome to submit résumés to the WSO.

The Committee is discussing possible recommendations for the electronic creation and distribution of new Conference Approved Literature, which the members are referring to as "e-CAL." The Committee is also discussing revising presentations for current CAL pamphlets. Such revisions would aim to attract readers more quickly, engage readers through interactive elements, and make information easier for readers to retain.

The Committee considered several requests this year from Al-Anon members who asked for the development of new pieces of literature. The Committee declined to recommend any motions for new literature at this time.



Exploring Electronic Literature

Literature Committee II

This year the Committee completed the major revision of the book *Al-Anon's Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions* (B-8), approved by the 2003 World Service Conference. These changes will be included in the next printing, which is expected to take place this summer. The Committee also completed minor revisions of the pamphlet *Alcoholism, the Family Disease* (P-4), which are included in the latest printing, and made recommendations for minor revisions of the book . . . *In All Our Affairs* (B-15).

At its meeting of Delegate and at-Large members, the Committee concentrated on their roles and responsibilities by reviewing the process for developing Conference Approved Literature. The Committee talked about Al-Anon pamphlets and the Conference Approved Literature criteria that they be understandable by a broad-based reading audience. It discussed the need to capture the attention of the reader in a short amount of time.

Next they studied options regarding the pamphlet *The Twelve Steps and Traditions* (P-17) and decided to recommend only minor changes. At last year's Conference, the Committee decided to recommend discontinuance of *What's "Drunk," Mama?* (P-44) to the Executive Committee and to examine other options for fulfilling the needs met by this booklet. During the past year the Committee examined alternatives, including

a member's suggestion for a new piece of literature for young people that would explain why their parents attend Al-Anon. After thorough discussion, the Committee decided not to present a motion to the Conference at this time.

The World Service Office has received over 400 sharings from the fellowship for FACING GRIEF & LOSS WITH AL-ANON (working title), which is being developed based on a motion from the 2003 World Service Conference. An Al-Anon member who is a freelance writer/editor has been hired to develop a manuscript based on the sharings. In reviewing the writer/editor's preliminary outline and report on the sharings received, the Committee was pleased with the direction it was taking and suggested several minor changes. The Committee agreed to solicit more stories from members who have faced other losses due to alcoholism besides death.

The Committee also discussed development of literature designed specifically for electronic publication, which they are referring to as "e-CAL." While this idea is only in early discussion stages, the Committee expressed excitement regarding the possibilities.

At the second Committee meeting, Delegate members reviewed comments from the entire Committee on the minor revision of *From Survival to Recovery* (B-21). The manuscript is now ready for final review.

Doreen D.,
Chairperson, Trustee
Tom C.,

Associate Director of Fellowship
Communication—Literature II/
Newsletters



Revised Al-Anon's Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions Book

GROUP SERVICES

Group Services Committee

Lynda E.,

Chairperson, Trustee

Frank R.,

Co-Chairperson, Trustee

Dolores T.,

Associate Director of Group Services

Judy D.,

Alateen Advisory Committee Chairperson, Trustee

Barbara O.,

Associate Director of Member Services/Alateen

The Group Services Committee had two conference calls to discuss strategies to remove the resistance to group registration, to increase a feeling of connectedness to the group, and to stress the importance of the current mailing address (CMA). They concluded that areas need to be encouraged to have a focused plan for registration that allows all the members to be aware of the process and benefits of registration. The Committee also concluded that welcoming newcomers and using the principles of rotation, while engendering fun in service activities, increases connectedness to the group. Discussions regarding the CMA need to be ongoing at area assembly orientations for Group and District Representatives.

meetings, including e-mail addresses on phone lists, and discussing Step One. Inviting members from the group to share their personal story for a speaker meeting and sharing that Twelfth Step work includes calls between meetings were also included.

The Committee discussed “cult-like” groups and sponsorship. Committee members shared their experience with these groups, where Sponsors decide for others what meetings to attend and how to dress and behave. This type of direction is based on “lineage” of sponsorship. Members in these groups are afraid to speak up, leave the group, or question the way the group is being “run.” Delegates suggested that longtime Al-Anon members visit these groups and share a different view of sponsorship. Experience was shared that focusing energy on the negatives of these groups often gave them more power. The Committee recommended that the World Service Office (WSO) create a bookmark on what sponsorship is and is not.



During the Conference meeting, the Committee reviewed charts of the worldwide Al-Anon and Alateen group count.

	US	Canada	Outside WSC structure	Total
Al-Anon	12,592	921	8,708	22,221
Alateen	1,009	82	815	1,906
Combined	13,601	1,003	9,523	24,127

2004 Group Count

The support for Alateen has been positive, as 2,405 Al-Anon members were certified by the areas in the US and Canada as “Al-Anon Members Involved in Alateen Service.”

The Associate Director Member Services/Alateen provided background information for an Alateen on-line bulletin board meeting. Ideas were discussed for on-line meeting safety and behavioral requirements for Alateens and the Al-Anon Members Involved in Alateen Service that would be sponsoring the meeting. Members discussed various safety measures with emphasis on making sure that all Alateen identifying information remains confidential. They also discussed the role of Sponsors. Committee members were encouraged to provide additional written feedback after they return to their areas and to recommend two Alateens and one Sponsor for a trial Alateen “bulletin board-type” meeting.

The Committee discussed vibrant and dynamic groups in regards to Twelfth Step work. The focus was on newcomers and encouraged the use of greeters and newcomer

Al-Anon Registration/Group Records Change Form



In discussing ways to promote regional service seminars at the group level, the Committee suggested encouraging members to get in the car and bring a friend in order to interact with other members, WSO staff, and Trustees. Areas, districts, and groups sometimes pay a portion of members' expenses to attend. When they return, they are asked to share their experiences at various service activities.

The Associate Director Member Services/Alateen asked for experiences and ideas



regarding implementation of the area requirements at Alateen conferences, especially the multi-area conferences. All areas involved in one multi-area Alateen conference had similar area requirements. Cooperation and accountability with the hosting area is essential. A member suggested that the hosting area's Delegate be invited to the conference. Members also identified other Alateen con-

ference issues that their areas were addressing, such as Alateens and Sponsors from outside the area attending the area's Alateen conference.

The Committee shared personal experiences with on-line meetings and reviewed a draft of the on-line meeting guideline. They were asked to submit suggestions in writing.

MEMBERSHIP OUTREACH

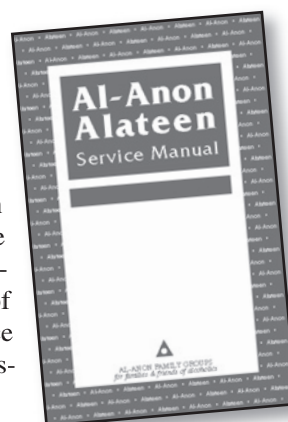
Admissions/Handbook Committee

The Admissions/Handbook Committee, with Trustee and Delegate members, is a subcommittee of the Conference Committee. It has two specific responsibilities relating to the World Service Conference (WSC). As the Admissions Committee, it reviews and makes decisions on all requests for seating non-voting participants at the Conference (see "Opening Remarks," page 2), and makes decisions on all requests to seat populous areas that want to divide. The Committee received a question this year related to a further division of an area that had already divided once. The question came to the Admissions/Handbook Committee because that is where the discussion starts to change or amend the policy, as stated on pages 118-119 of the "World Service Handbook" section of the *2002-2004 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27). The Committee has begun a discussion based on the following questions: What designates a need for an area to divide? How big do we want the World Service Conference to be? What are the alternatives? What do we know at this

time? What do we need to know? What do we wish we knew? This will be an ongoing discussion with the wide cross-section of the Conference represented on the Committee.

The Committee was also assigned the responsibility by the Board of Trustees to review the World Service Conference Charter. A housekeeping change to correct the date of the last amendment in 1996 will be made in the next printing.

As the Handbook Committee, its responsibility is to make recommendations for changes to the "World Service Handbook" section of the *Service Manual* to accurately reflect the links of service and make the text consistent with the new structure. The Chairperson thanked the Conference members for their participation in the revisions of the text. (See World Service Handbook Revisions Discussion, page 29.)



Liz W.,
Chairperson, Trustee
Cynthia H.,
Associate Director of Membership
Outreach—Conference

Our "World Service
Handbook" is in the
Al-Anon/Alateen
Service Manual

International Coordination Committee

During the last Conference, the Delegate from Puerto Rico raised a question from her area concerning the Spanish translation of the Seventh Tradition. In addition, the World Service Office (WSO) received correspondence from a member in Puerto Rico questioning the translation. This translation has been used for over thirty years.

These questions raised a broader question about the translation of the Steps and Traditions. AA holds the copyright on the Twelve Steps and the Twelve Traditions. The English version of the Al-Anon Twelve Steps follows the AA version word for word

except for one word in Step Twelve. In English, the Al-Anon Twelve Traditions do differ slightly from the AA version; however, the Seventh Tradition is exactly the same.

In order to assist the WSO Board of Trustees in a decision concerning this matter, the Spanish-speaking Al-Anon General Service Offices (GSOs) were polled regarding their preference of two options: to update the Spanish Traditions and Steps using the AA version as the basis, or to leave the Al-Anon translations as they are currently.

Of the thirteen Spanish-speaking GSOs that responded, eleven wanted the transla-

Mary G.,
Chairperson, Trustee
Marsha W.,
Associate Director of Membership
Outreach—International

tions left as they are. The Board decided to follow the group conscience of the GSOs, as they represent the vast majority of Spanish-speaking groups.

Service members in El Salvador reported to the WSO that they can no longer function as a GSO because of internal problems within their country.

The 2004 International Al-Anon



*Reaching
throughout
the World*

General Services Meeting (IAGSM) took place in Sao Paulo, Brazil, in October. The Associate Director of Membership Outreach—International showed a slide presentation of the meeting and the Chairperson, Mary G., gave an overview of activities that took place during the three day event. Three members of the International Coordination Committee (ICC) shared key ideas from some of the presentations.

Update on Upcoming International Conventions

Ric B.,

Chairperson

Marsha W.,

Convention Coordinator

Dolores T.,

Convention Co-Coordinator

AA and Al-Anon members from around the world will celebrate from June 30th to July 3rd, 2005 at the 2005 AA International Convention in Toronto, Ontario. The Al-Anon theme is "Let It Begin with Us!" Conference members watched a colorful and welcoming PowerPoint presentation created by a member of the Al-Anon Host Committee.

Conference members were also informed that all contracts for the major hotels have been signed for the 2008 Al-Anon International Convention with AA participation in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, which will be

held July 4th through 6th. The excitement is building!



*Al-Anon's Participation at the
2005 AA International Convention*



The 2008 Al-Anon International Convention Is Coming to Pittsburgh!

Regional Service Seminars

Carolyn W.,

Chairperson, Trustee

Mary Ann K.,

Director of Member Services

The voting members of the Regional Service Seminar (RSS) Committee are all the Regional Trustees and the Director of Member Services. The Chairperson of the Board and the Executive Director are ex officio members who attend with voice but no vote, as do the staff members who coordinate the RSSs.

Because this is a Board Committee whose members are mostly Board members, there is a natural transparency in its relationship with the Board. As a result, discussions of the Board may serve as direction for the Committee. The conclusion that the RSS

Committee is primarily a resource for staff and an opportunity for the Regional Trustees to share clarifies the Committee's role.

In 2003, the Board approved a revision of the RSS Committee's meeting schedule, on a trial basis, to eliminate the April meeting at Conference. Because one of the responsibilities of the RSS Committee is to plan the agenda for the RSS breakout meetings at Conference, elimination of that particular meeting resulted in confusion and difficulty in the conduct of the breakout meetings with the Delegates. The Committee continued to experiment with its meeting schedule to find

a balance between unnecessary meetings and the effective use of the Committee.

In July of 2004, the Committee met to review the status of RSSs, the results of RSS breakout meetings at the 2004 WSC, and to assist in the orientation of newly elected Regional Trustees to the RSS process. The Committee eliminated its October meeting completely. In January, only those Regional Trustees chairing 2005 RSSs met with their staff coordinators. Prior to this 2005 Conference, the RSS Committee met to review material to be distributed at the RSS breakouts and to prepare for those sessions with the Delegates.

Some highlights about the RSSs in 2004 include:

Attendance at Canada Central Regional Service Seminar was small but this gave more members an opportunity to share their experiences.

The US Northwest RSS was held in Alaska for the first time. The unique agenda scheduled all events in the general session room. Those who attended reported that this gave a feeling of unity and closeness.

The US Southeast RSS held in Raleigh, North Carolina, had the largest attendance of the three events with 338 members attending. Half of those in attendance took the time to fill out the evaluations.

Upcoming 2005 RSSs will be held in Saint John, New Brunswick; Cleveland, Ohio; and Honolulu, Hawaii. Regions hosting RSSs in 2006 are US Northeast, US South Central, and Canada West.



Saint John,
New Brunswick



Cleveland, Ohio



Honolulu, Hawaii

Site for the 2006 World Service Conference/55th Al-Anon Anniversary Celebration

The search for a site to hold the 2006 World Service Conference (WSC) began immediately following last year's WSC. There were several factors involved in making the decision, including availability of meeting space, cost, service, food and the need for time to prepare financial reports.

Based on those factors, the 2006 World Service Conference will convene at the Ramada Plaza Resort Hotel, in Virginia Beach, Virginia, from Monday, April 24, through Friday, April 28, 2006. Conference members will have an opportunity to visit the World Service Office during this annual meeting.

Conference members were also reminded that 2006 will mark the 55th Anniversary of Al-Anon! There will be a celebration in Vir-

ginia Beach with members from throughout the World Service Conference structure on Saturday, April 29, 2006 (the day after the official close of next year's Conference). The World Service Office (WSO) will host

Cynthia H.,
Associate Director of Membership
Outreach—Conference



Location of the 2006 World Service Conference



Join us in Virginia
Beach in 2006!

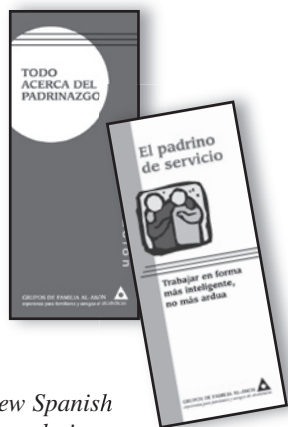
an Open House from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. That evening a reception and anniversary banquet will be held at the new Virginia Beach Convention Center. Further details will be announced throughout the year in various WSO publications.

Spanish Luncheon

Dolores T.,
Associate Director of Group
Services, Moderator



Four Hundred-Seventy-One
Spanish-Speaking Groups!



New Spanish
Translations
Available

Participating Delegates received individualized folders with information about their area Spanish-speaking Al-Anon and Alateen groups. As of February 1, 2005 there are 471 Spanish-speaking groups in the World Service Conference structure, which is an increase of eight percent.

The Associate Director of Group Services traveled to the Hispanic Al-Anon Adult Children Convention to continue outreach to Spanish-speaking members and groups. Spanish Al-Anon Registration/Group Records change forms were handed out with a request that members help groups register and to report changes to the World Service Office (WSO). The Translation Services Manager and the Associate Director of Group Services attended the Mexican General Services Conference at the invitation and expense of the Mexican General Service Office. The theme was “The Year of the Five Warranties.” This year two pamphlets, *Sponsorship, What It’s All About* (SP-31) and *Service Sponsorship: Working Smarter, Not Harder* (SP-88) were translated. Translation of *Hope for Today* (SB-27) is progressing.

The Associate Director of Membership Outreach—International reported that the WSO has established connections with Cuba and that monthly calls are made to continue the working relationship. The Executive Director and the Translation Services Manager traveled to Cuba in November. The WSO is exploring partnering with Spanish-speaking General Service Offices to get copies of the *Service Manual* and other literature delivered to Cuba.

Delegates shared their area experience in cooperating with local Spanish-language intergroup offices. Some areas have a Spanish-language intergroup and a Spanish-language district for all the Spanish-speaking groups. An English-speaking district held a fundraiser, and with donations from an English-

Spanish-Speaking Intergroups



language intergroup, translation equipment was purchased. One intergroup celebrating 23 years has had a paid worker for six years. Their literature sales have increased and their bi-monthly newsletter includes reports from Spanish-speaking Coordinators. Other areas reported that the Spanish-speaking intergroup is represented on the area world service committee and on action committees. Delegates reported ongoing problems in getting Spanish-speaking groups registered, as well as the need to continue education on the importance of having a current mailing address (CMA). The Spanish Liaisons have told area world service committees that Spanish-speaking members feel supported.

Ideas for establishing intergroups or Spanish-speaking districts included: establishing a Spanish-language intergroup as a subdivision of an English-language intergroup, asking the Spanish contact to help write letters and flyers in Spanish, attending Spanish-speaking functions and meetings, inviting Spanish-speaking groups to the assembly, and bringing a Spanish Al-Anon Registration/Group Records Change Form when visiting a group and helping them complete it. Everyone was reminded that Spanish-speaking Alcoholics Anonymous groups can be a resource. The luncheon ended with the recitation of the Al-Anon Declaration in Spanish.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Long-Range Study Panel

Jack S.,
Chairperson, Trustee

In his update to the Conference, the Chairperson gave a brief history of the Long-Range Study Panel. It started as a temporary committee set up in the early 1980s with

some goals, but little follow-up from year to year. In 1990 at the Board’s request, the Panel developed a Five-Year Plan designed to span from 1995 to 2000, with 11 goals

and many objectives for each goal. It was expected that another Five-Year Plan would be developed in 2000, but that did not occur. Instead, the Annual Planning Day began during the July 2001 Board week to set one-year goals and objectives for the World Service Office staff.

In July 2002, the Panel began a one-year trial period of being incorporated into a two-hour session during each Board meeting. This change allowed all Board members an opportunity to participate in long-range discussions.

In February 2004, the Board developed a Strategic Plan with goals and objectives. One goal was for the Board to spend 80 percent of its meeting time in forward-thinking strategic work and 20 percent in evaluation and oversight. The Board has made much progress towards that goal.

This January, the Board decided that an annual plan with goals and objectives is still needed, as it is a tracking device to see where we are and what has been accomplished so far that year. The quarterly reports to the Board and the Annual Report to the Conference and the fellowship provide tools to

evaluate the progress and success in reaching the plan's goals.

Since the trial period for including the Long-Range Study Panel sessions in Board meetings has expired, the Board discussed whether there is a need to return to having a separate panel, or to continue to integrate strategic planning into its meetings. By consensus, the Board agreed to end the trial period and dissolve the Panel. Strategic planning will be a permanent part of the Board agenda.

The Chairperson closed with the following quote by Bill W., found on page 175 of the *2002-2004 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*:

“... We have found we must use these principles to estimate constantly, especially at world service levels, where stakes are high. We must think about our service needs as they relate to general economic conditions, group capability, and willingness to contribute. We must often try to think months and years ahead.

Such is the process of estimating the future. Responsible world leadership must be proficient in this vital activity. It is an essential ability, especially in our trustees. . . .”



Looking at Future Goals

Policy Committee

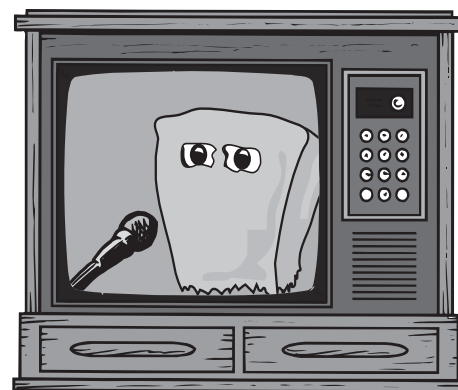
During this last year, the Policy Committee discussed on-line meetings and the possibility of putting information about them in the “Digest of Al-Anon and Alateen Policies” section of the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27). That discussion is still taking place. This year, most of the Committee's discussions considered whether the “Digest of Al-Anon and Alateen Policies” should be reformatted in order to be more user-friendly. Because the Committee wanted the input of the Delegates regarding this topic, it was brought to the Conference floor for discussion. (See “Policy Digest Discussion” on pages 30-31.)

An Open Policy Committee meeting was held during the Conference so Delegate members could observe the Committee in action. The topic for discussion was whether to reconsider the World Service Office policy of staff not appearing full face, with full name and organizational title in the media. A packet of background information from prior discussions was provided to everyone. The current administrative policy dates back to the 1983 World

Service Conference discussion.

Research by the WSO staff included discussions with staff at the General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous regarding their policies and procedures and examples were given of missed opportunities to explain what Al-Anon is and is not. During the discussion Committee members expressed concern that this policy might have an adverse affect on the newcomer and cause confusion regarding anonymity. “We have to be true to our values. Anonymity is important.” Another member said, “If we're speaking to an afternoon talk show audience, we need personal stories. If we are talking to professionals, we need to have professionals talking about us.”

Discussion also included the need to find other ways to dissolve Al-Anon's invisibility without jeopardizing the anonymity of its members. No consensus was reached at this meeting and the topic will continue to be discussed.



Anonymity, Not Invisibility

Colleen R.,
Chairperson, Trustee
Mary Ann K.,
Secretary, Director of Member
Services

PUBLIC OUTREACH

Public Outreach Committee

Cecelia L.,

Chairperson, Executive Committee Member

Mary Lou M.,

Associate Director of Public Outreach—Media

Jo-Anne L.,

Chairperson, Canadian Public Outreach Subcommittee, Trustee

Howdy R.,

Chairperson, Outreach to Professionals Advisory Committee, Executive Committee Member

Claire R.,

Associate Director of Public Outreach—Professionals

Staff updates included the news that 56 areas now have area Web sites, and about 90 percent of the US and Canada has meeting information available on-line. The World Service Office (WSO) Public Outreach Web site's French and Spanish sections are now live. The WSO sponsored the closing lunch and an Al-Anon presentation at the National Child Welfare League of America Conference in Washington, DC in March. Attendance totaled 499, the largest professional event ever hosted by the WSO. Two nationally known professionals participated in a family related Recovery Month web cast, to be posted in the September Recovery Month Web site in August. Public Outreach has launched a two-year "Prescription Al-Anon" project, inviting areas to submit projects reaching out to the medical community.

Al-Anon will be participating with the PBS "Frontline" program *Country Boys*, airing in January. The six-hour documentary follows the lives of two teenage boys in rural Kentucky, both of whom were affected by alcoholism. Al-Anon and Alateen information will be included as a resource in the community information and study guides produced for the program. Local members may have the opportunity to partner with their local PBS stations.

The Canadian Public Outreach Subcommittee provides input to the Public Outreach Committee on Canadian outreach activities and ensures that Canadian interests are addressed.

The Outreach to Professionals Advisory Committee reviewed existing service materials targeting professionals, including the 2003 Al-Anon/Alateen Membership Survey, the *Fact Sheet for Professionals*, and the open letter series. The Advisory Committee asked the Public Outreach Committee to consider how the open letters are used, and whether a single "sample" letter would be a better option. The Public Outreach Committee felt that the existing letters are being used by the fellowship. They are posted on the WSO Members' Web site, www.al-anon.alateen.org/members. The Committee recommended adding "how to" information.

Based on input from the Advisory Committee, discussion was held on the need for

more open meetings. In many communities there are no open meetings. A member shared that one Al-Anon information service makes a schedule of groups in the area that rotate one week a month to be open. This way there is at least one open meeting each week that a student or professional can attend.

The Committee previewed the 2005-2006 public service announcement (PSA), titled "Feelings," which was later shown to the full Conference. Airplay reports for the current PSA, "Reality," indicate that it has been well received by TV stations, and that many stations are continuing to pick up Al-Anon PSAs each year. The past four PSAs were reviewed, and the Committee brainstormed PSA ideas for the coming three years. We want the PSAs to continue to provide identification to the friends and family members who have not yet found Al-Anon, and to be more informative about what Al-Anon/Alateen is.

Several service tools are under review. A member brought forth the following dictionary definitions: "service" means a helpful activity; "tool" means an implement used to accomplish certain ends. The Committee agreed that these were helpful definitions, which amplify the text in our *Service Manual*.

Three ad hoc committees were formed to create service tools for men, gays and lesbians, and dual members. The Committee anticipates completion of these outreach tools this summer. It also discussed the need for an outreach tool for parents of alcoholics. This tool could be inclusive of grandparents,



*Open Letters:
How Are They Used?*



*"I'm a recovering family member
of an alcoholic."*

foster parents, or anyone who is in a “parenting” role. Necessary permission to proceed will be sought.

The Committee is also reviewing the *Anonymity* (P-65) leaflet, the 6-1/2 minute Al-Anon video, and *The Best of Public Outreach* (P-90). Discussion will focus on the current use, whether these tools are still meeting a need, and how the material might be better disseminated.

The Committee was asked to consider alternative means of sharing in public, without violating anonymity. Many professional Web sites now want to feature recovery stories with pictures. It is possible for members who are willing to do so to appear full face

in the media (TV, print, or Internet), and talk about “being in recovery” without revealing their membership in Al-Anon. (See page 89 of the *2002-2004 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*, “Anonymity,” paragraph three.)

Last year, the Executive Director brought back an outreach bookmark from South Africa that had been used there for outreach in libraries. The Committee loved the idea and adapted it for this structure. Copies and order forms for the bookmark (M-76) were distributed to Conference members. The Committee came up with a long list of possible places to take them, but the really important thing is that they don’t stay in the meeting room.



New Outreach Bookmark (M-76)!

SELECTION OF TRUSTEES

Conference Committee on Trustees (CTT)

In 1984, a Conference Committee on Trustees (CCT) was formed on a trial basis to weigh various aspects of Trustee selection. In 1990 the World Service Conference (WSC) affirmed the CCT as a permanent subcommittee of the Board of Trustee’s Nominating Committee.

- From the *1984 Conference Summary*, regarding the CCT, “. . . It is an attempt by the Board to involve WSC Delegates more deeply in the process of selecting the Board and in determining its optimal composition and duration of service.”
- The CCT update from the *1990 Conference Summary* included the following, “. . . The CCT has worked closely with the Nominating Committee developing a cooperative relationship that serves all our interests.”

The eleven Delegates who are assigned to this Committee are the only voting members of the CCT. These Delegates, on a pre-established timetable, are mailed copies of résumés that have been submitted for Trustee at Large and for the Executive Committee on Real Property Management (ECRPM). The résumés are reviewed by the individual CCT members and are ranked based on candidates’ responses to each of the résumé sections. Each CCT member’s ranking is sent to the Delegate who has been elected Chairperson of the CCT, who then forwards the rankings anonymously to the WSO and to the Chairperson of the Board of Trustee’s Nominating Committee

(CCT is a subcommittee of the Nominating Committee). The Nominating Committee then considers the CCT rankings when making their decision on which Trustee candidates the Board will interview (usually six candidates for the three open positions each year).

As our fellowship continues to evolve, previous Conferences have made revisions to our Board. We currently have nine Trustees at Large and nine Regional Trustees who are affirmed during the Conference. The CCT is involved only with the Trustees at Large nominations. Current policy states that, “The Nominating Committee, after having consulted with the CCT, will make recommendations . . .” Some members of the CCT expressed concerns that the value placed on the input from the CCT is not clearly defined. The Committee discussed possible enhancements that could be made in bringing the Delegates’ voice to the Trustee at Large selection process.

Over the past year, the CCT suggested revisions to the Committee’s guideline and provided input to the Nominating Committee regarding revisions to the résumé forms. The Committee discussed ways to increase the bond between the Delegates and the Trustees in the Trustee selection process.

The CCT reminded all Conference members to encourage eligible members to submit résumés for Trustee at Large and for the Executive Committee on Real Property Management (ECRPM).

Miriam McK.,
California South, Panel 43,
Chairperson
Ric B.,
Secretary, Executive Director

Nominating Committee

Winnie S.,
Chairperson, Trustee
Ric B.,
Secretary, Executive Director

The Nominating Committee met with the Conference Committee on Trustees (CCT) during the World Service Conference (WSC). The Chairperson explained the purpose and functions of the two Committees. The orientation for the new members of the CCT includes the ranking process of candidates for Trustee at Large and the Executive Committee for Real Property Management (ECRPM) and a PowerPoint presentation on selection of Trustee and ECRPM candidates.

A decision was made to do a major revision of all résumé forms. This revision includes rewording and rearranging of the questions on the front of the form and giving more comprehensive information about the positions on the reverse side.

At the combined meeting of the Nominating/CCT Committees, a conversation was started regarding the possibility of creating a series of leadership development tools or workshops.

In 1995, the World Service Conference approved a trial by-law change to create the Executive Committee for Real Property Management (ECRPM). Candidates wishing to be considered for election to a three-year term must submit their résumés by August 15th of

each year. No résumés were received by the deadline this year.

At its January 2005 meeting, options to fill the potential vacancy were discussed. The Committee recommended that the request for résumés be reopened for a possible appointment and that the résumés be submitted by March 31, 2005. Résumés received were sent to the Nominating Committee and the CCT for review and scoring. After reviewing the input from both Committees, the Nominating Committee made a recommendation to the Board of Trustees that a candidate be appointed until the following Conference. Conference members were advised that candidates wishing to be considered for nomination for the balance of this three-year term need to submit a résumé by the August 15, 2005 deadline. A second candidate will be selected for a full three-year term. The appointment will take place at the Board's Annual Meeting following this year's Conference.

At its January meeting, the Committee presented the Board of Trustees with its nominations for Board officers, together with at-Large members, the staff member, and the Chairperson of the Executive Committee.

The following Trustees and Officers were affirmed by the 2005 WSC:

Trustee at Large:

Judy P., 2nd three-year term
Mary Ann R., 1st three-year term
Zelda R., 2nd three-year term

Regional Trustees:

Judy D., US Northwest, 2nd three-year term
Doris W., US South Central, 1st three-year term
Claudette D., Canada East, 3rd year of 1st three-year term

Officers of the Board:

Judy P., Chairperson
Julie F., Vice-Chairperson
Zelda R., Treasurer

The Board announced Executive Committee appointments for 2004-2005:

Catherine J., 3rd one-year term, Chairperson
Cecelia L., 2nd one-year term
Marjorie S., 1st one-year term

The Board announced the following Executive Committee for Real Property Management appointments:

Nancy F., appointment until the next Conference
Beth K., Chairperson

Regional Trustee (RT) Nominating Process 2005

The process of selecting the Regional Trustee (RT) candidates for nomination at this World Service Conference (WSC) actually began a year ago.

Candidates from the areas in the US Northwest, US Southwest, and US South Central Regions were selected at their area election assemblies. Delegates then forwarded their names to the World Service Office (WSO) prior to January 1, 2005. A Delegate from the Canada East Region also forwarded the name of a candidate to fill the third year of a three-year term as Canada East Regional Trustee. Once all résumés were received, they were mailed to Conference members for review prior to the World Service Conference (WSC). Then, at the designated time during the WSC, one nominee from each region was selected.

The Nominating Committees for each US region selecting an RT nominee are comprised of the following members:

- Delegates from each of the areas within their region
- Three Delegates and two Alternates from outside the region chosen by lot

from among the first- and second-year Delegates at the 2004 WSC

- Three Trustees and one Alternate, also chosen by lot at the January 2005 Board meeting

The Nominating Committee for the Canada East Region was comprised of Delegates from each of the areas in the region, one Delegate and one Alternate from outside the region from among the first- and second-year Delegates, and one Trustee and one Alternate from outside the region. The out-of-region Delegate, Trustee, and Alternates were chosen by lot at the January 2005 Board meeting.

The Chairperson of the Board serves as Chairperson of the RT Nominating Committee and conducts the voting procedure, assisted by a member from each of the Regional Nominating Committees.

Roll call was taken for each of the four regions nominating RTs at the 2005 WSC and the nominating process proceeded. The nominee for the Southwest Region did not receive traditional approval and the Board of Trustees voted to keep the seat vacant until the 2006 Annual Meeting.

Judy P.,
Chairperson, Board of Trustees

Regional Trustee (RT) Candidate Selection Process 2006

“At the World Service Conference (WSC), three Regional Trustees are nominated by the WSC Nominating Committee, composed of the Delegates from the respective regions, Delegates chosen by lot from outside the regions, and Board members chosen by lot.” (2002-2004 *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*, page 116). This process assures that the Board is geographically diverse.

At the 2006 WSC, Regional Trustee (RT) nominees will be selected from the Canada East, Canada Central, and Canada West Regions. This process began at the 2005 WSC when nominating packets were distributed to the Delegates from these regions. As there was a vacancy in the Southwest Region, Delegates from that region were mailed nominating packets after the Conference.

RTs act as liaisons to the World Service Office (WSO) in three ways:

- They keep the WSO informed of the dates of election assemblies for each area in their region.
- They follow up with the Delegates in those areas.

- They encourage Delegates in their regions to nominate qualified candidates from their areas.

Immediately following the selection of a candidate by the area, the Delegate is asked to send the completed résumé forms (or notification that there is no candidate) to the WSO, no later than January 1, 2006. Failure to meet this deadline constitutes forfeiture.

In June, following the 2005 WSC, each Area Chairperson in the nominating regions will receive a packet identical to the one distributed to the Delegates. This is to alert them to the procedure for selecting a Regional Trustee candidate by the area and to request that they pass the information on to the Group Representatives in their assemblies. All areas in the nominating regions are encouraged to submit the name of a candidate for RT and, whenever possible, an Alternate.

After January 2006, when all résumés have been received, they will be mailed to WSC members for examination prior to the 2006 WSC.

The following first- and second-year Del-

Cynthia H.,
*Associate Director of Membership
Outreach—Conference*

legates were selected by lot from outside the regions to participate in the RT elections for the Canada East, Canada Central, and Canada West Regions. Out-of-region Dele-

gates participating in the Southwest Regional Nominating Committee will be drawn by lot at the January 2006 Board meeting.

<i>REGION</i>	<i>VOTING</i>	<i>ALTERNATE</i>
Canada East	Ann F-S., Panel 44, MA	Jim S., Panel 44, WI
Canada Central	Dorothy B., Panel 45, NE	Tina B., Panel 45, NV
Canada West	Phyliss S-T., Panel 44, VA	Susan L., Panel 45, SC

At the January 2006 meeting of the Board of Trustees, one member of the Board and an Alternate will be drawn by lot to vote in each Canadian Regional Nominating Committee. Three members of the Board and an Alternate will be drawn by lot to vote in the Southwest Regional Nominating Committee.

ALATEEN DISCUSSION: LESSONS LEARNED

Judy P.,
Chairperson, Board of Trustees

It has been a very busy and sometimes turbulent year for the Delegates, their areas, and the World Service Office (WSO) since the decisions of the Board regarding Alateen were discussed at last year's Conference. The Board felt that it was time to look back, reflect, and learn from what has transpired, and then look ahead to the future. The Chairperson of the Board introduced this discussion with the following words:

"During the past four years, the Board of Trustees heard what you were saying during the 'Talking with the Delegates' sessions. We said we were listening. At the 2003 Conference session on 'Talking with the Delegates,' we listened again. We heard you loud and clear. You wanted something to keep our Alateen meetings alive and safe for our children.

"At the July 2003 Board meeting, we went through all of the charts from the 'Talking with the Delegates' sessions again and saw words and phrases like 'rules,' 'requirements,' 'need WSO backing,' 'Alateen was fading away.' We talked and talked and talked some more.

"At the October 2003 Board meeting, after more discussion, something was different. It was as if we all knew what we had to do. We knew it was a difficult choice, but we prayed, we remembered Bill's essay in Concept Nine, and we prayed some more. We reminded ourselves that good leaders never pass the buck, good leaders originate plans and policies, and good leaders sometimes have to face heavy and sometimes long-continued criticism—an acid test. We had our

answer. We were responsible; we needed to take the necessary action to protect our children and our name.

"The Board worked tirelessly to put together the foundation for what eventually came to be known as the Alateen Minimum Safety and Behavior Requirements. The year that followed was not easy for the WSO staff, the Trustees, and certainly not for you. This was an unprecedented action that needed to be carried out by the leadership of our organization.

"Hindsight is 20/20 and often our best teacher. So, at our January 2005 Board meeting, we discussed the lessons learned from implementation. We know many of our members have not been kind or willing to talk to each other and reason things out. We know many of you have had to withstand that criticism—that acid test. And further, we know that we, the Board, failed to see that we needed to be standing there with you when you took this information to your area. The most significant lesson we learned was that during the years we were discussing Alateen with the Delegates we now know we failed to clearly articulate to you, and to some who preceded you, that we intended to take some action. Additionally, we failed to give you all of the information you needed to prepare you for your job, and for this, the entire Board makes direct amends to you—the Conference members.

"We know the Delegates, the World Service Office staff, and volunteers are a team. We cannot work alone. We are all working for the good of Al-Anon and Alateen. We

are all working to serve and preserve the organization. We are all needed here, we all have a role, and we are all ready and willing to serve.

“Not too long ago, I had an Al-Anon member tell me to please carry a message to the Board. She said, ‘Maybe no more of our children will be hurt in Alateen.’ She wanted me to thank the Board for her—for being willing to do this for our children. Then she told me that an Alateen Sponsor had molested her daughter and that, hopefully, no other child or family would have to go through what they had just been through. We need to protect our children and our name—they are the most valuable assets we have.

“And now, we want to hear from you. What else does your area need from us for Alateen? What lessons did you and/or your area learn from this experience? As partners, where do we go from here?”

To answer the first question, one member said that her area’s process person felt that more training was needed. In response to what lessons were learned, several shared their experiences:

- We learned we have to communicate with our area and make an extraordinary effort to let them know how important certain issues are.
- We have to have strong leaders who can help get the information out and educate the assembly so that their decisions are based on information and not emotion.
- We became stronger leaders as a result of having to stand for principles above personalities and it was hard.
- We learned to communicate, talk things over, and reason things out.
- We learned not to react and to listen.
- We learned we do not have to respond. When something is unclear, ask questions. That helped. We reached out for help.
- The biggest lesson learned was to be available for questions and be ready with the answers.
- A small minority who were against the requirements tyrannized the majority. Now members are even signing up to be “Al-Anon Members Involved in Alateen Service,” in case they are needed to replace Sponsors.

Regarding where, as partners, we go from here, one answer was, “When we are not

quite sure what we need or we have a doubt, however small, we need to find an answer, one way or another, so there isn’t a mad scramble.”

In addition to answering the questions posed, many shared their successes:

- We saw growth in our area. We saw the process work. The minority stated its opinion and the process worked. We were able to come to a group conscience. They are not happy about it, but they have accepted it. The World Service Office has been very helpful and we thank them for that.
- Our Past Delegate was enthusiastic and it trickled down. We included Alateens in our discussions and they had input on what they wanted in Sponsors. We had to get a process for Alateens visiting from outside the area and transitioning Alateens. Now, when we have a non-compliant Alateen group, we have solutions. It’s not a reflection on any one person. It just means that the meeting has not met all of the requirements.
- The “us” (the areas) and “them” (the WSO) are now becoming “we.”
- We now have all the forms on our Web site so applicants can have them filled out when they come to assembly. We have a Coordinator who also has the forms and is enthusiastic about Alateen.
- It was ugly for a while. A few members wrote the WSO requesting the resignation of our Alateen Coordinator and myself. We now have three Alateen meetings. We hope more members will come forward and have background checks. No one in our area wanted to deal with storage of the private information, so we turned it over to an outside agency.
- It has created some positive things. Our members are now reading the *Service Manual*.
- The process has gotten our Past Delegates active in service.
- It increased enthusiasm in our groups.
- We cleaned up our group records.
- The Alateens invited me to their conference, so now I’m going through a background check for them.
- Most dissension came from those who were not Sponsors and not involved in Alateen. We passed the minimum

requirements and added background checks. On the first certificate, we do fingerprint checks. An attorney helped us. He reviewed what we had and researched all state laws. That cleared up things for a lot of people. If you have everything in place that you possibly can, it is called due diligence and that's the best you can do.

- We added a minimum age of 25 to the requirements. That recommendation came from past Alateen Sponsors. We also added that new Sponsors must participate in an Alateen workshop before they can participate in service.

They also had concerns:

- We had a few Sponsors resign.
- I would like to hear about insurance issues.
- I don't think there will be more Sponsors because of the requirements.
- Our links of service broke down.
- Our requirements were passed, but will be in force for only one year.
- It is a confusing process. We were so concentrated on getting guidelines that we forgot to get our process in place.

Most Delegates were prepared to share the experiences they had in their area, not only regarding the Board's decision about Alateen, but also with the process they went through to meet the deadline set by the Board. In one area, a Delegate made copies of everything she had received from the World Service Conference and formed a committee to create requirements and answer questions, but the process proposed was turned down. Several Alateens and Sponsors spoke against the requirements, suggesting that it was taking something away from them. Emotion took over their assembly. Two weeks after their assembly, the World Service Office called and asked what support they could provide. The committee is going back to the assembly to seek approval.

Several Delegates said that their areas were more upset with "how" the Board implemented the process than with "what" was proposed. One Delegate explained that in her area anything that directly affects the area is brought first to the area world service committee meeting. If it's approved there, then it is recommended to the Assembly. If the Board had done a similar process, it

would have been better. Many expressed that the shortness of time to create and implement the requirements caused a lot of problems. One year was not enough time to do everything that needed to be done. In response, members were informed that the Board's legal counsel had insisted that the requirements be implemented in three months, but the Board said they would be unable to do that.

One Delegate shared that her area broke the process down into small parts and that it helped. Her area found out how important Alateen was to them, focused on it, and were willing to do what was necessary to keep it.

At the close of the discussion, the Chairperson of the Board commented: "I was impressed with all who called and asked for what you needed and stood up to the test. As of last week, we had 2,400 people registered for Alateen service, and they are still coming in. I think we have revived a sleeping giant. You have done a great job."

Later in the week, the Chairperson of the Board updated the Conference regarding the status of Alateen groups not yet registered with the WSO. The deadline for registering Alateen groups was December 31, 2004. In late March, the WSO sent a letter to the Area Coordinators asking for their assistance in identifying groups that were no longer in existence. The WSO then deleted those groups from the database. The remaining groups that were not in the process of re-registering received a letter from the WSO. This letter encouraged them to re-register with the WSO through their area Alateen process or to cease using the Alateen name. They were not told they couldn't meet, only that they can't use the Alateen name.

Conference members were also told that in May and June, all registered Al-Anon groups in the vicinity of unregistered Alateen groups, as well as all facilities where these groups met, will be notified that the unregistered Alateen groups do not comply with their area's Alateen safety and behavioral requirements, are not associated with Al-Anon Family Groups, and are not permitted to use the Alateen name. The Al-Anon groups near unregistered Alateen groups are also asked to encourage re-registration or to invite the Alateen members to their Al-Anon Group until a group can be registered.

DIRECTORS' PRESENTATION: CREATING A CULTURE OF TRUST

Each year the Directors select an issue or topic that their day-to-day activities working with the fellowship led them to believe was important enough to warrant the focus of the entire Conference. This year, the Directors chose to highlight how, as Conference members, we can create a climate of trust throughout the fellowship.

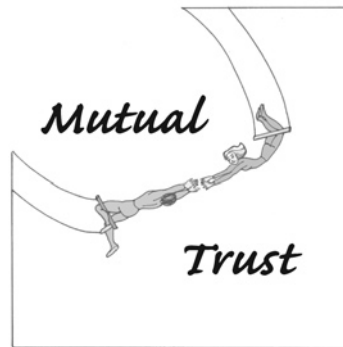
A review of readings in our literature on trust revealed that more has been written recently about trust than in the early days of the program. This increased focus on trust is found throughout our literature, as is the idea that trust in ourselves is connected to trust in others. Our hesitation to trust seems to be related to decisions of the group's trusted servants. Doubt about their decisions can surface quickly when we weren't part of the discussion. It takes time in service to understand the interplay of the delegated and ultimate authority in decision-making. Being involved in service helps us to understand the meaning of group conscience. How can we value the group conscience made by entities such as the district, assembly, Board of Trustees, Executive Committee, the World Service Conference, or International meetings? How do we pass on the understanding that these groups of members are also guided by a loving God as expressed in that group conscience?

Three prerequisites for trusting others were introduced and Conference members shared their experiences on each topic.

How do we, in Al-Anon, get clarity and consensus on what will constitute success?

Participation in the group conscience is a spiritual concept in Al-Anon. Members share as equals. They offer their ideas on a topic and surrender the idea to the group believing that the result of the discussion will determine the best outcome. We trust in this because of Tradition Two: "For our group purpose there is one authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience." We honor the group conscience by being deliberate, not casual; by being certain the group is informed; and by taking the time to hear from all who want to participate.

Does everyone have to agree with the group conscience? What things would have



to happen as a result of our decision? How long will we consider it?

Members shared:

"We had a discussion, took a group conscience, and I lost. For that group, at that time, that was their choice. I respect that group conscience today, even if I don't agree with it."

"For years we had always ended our meeting with the Lord's Prayer and I thought I would never be able to agree to change, but the night of the group conscience we had some new people of non-Christian faiths attend. By the end of the discussion, I was ready to agree to end the meeting another way. We now end with the Serenity Prayer followed by the Al-Anon Declaration. Those new people never came back, but I am happy with how we end our meeting."

"Last year when we had the discussions regarding the Alateen requirements, I shared my feelings. When it came to a vote, we stopped two times to say the Serenity Prayer. Even though I did not agree with the requirements my area came up with, I know today that the group conscience was right for my area."

"I don't know if the group conscience vote deepened my trust, but it deepened my recovery."

How do we build confidence in the competence of our trusted servants/leaders?

Having lived with the effects of alcoholism, many of us lost the ability to trust anyone. Attending Al-Anon did not necessarily mean our ability to trust was instantly restored. Certainly trust needs to be earned, but does that mean we assume that everyone else is incompetent until proven otherwise? The term "trusted servants" referred to in

Ric B.,
Executive Director
David Zach,
Director of Business Services,
(Nonmember)
Mary Ann K.,
Director of Member Services
Tom C.,
Associate Director of Fellowship
Communication—Literature II/
Newsletters

Tradition Two infers that we already trust them to perform the duties of their assigned position. In focusing on ourselves, we take steps to trust our trusted servants. We examine our own ability (or lack of it) to trust others and be trustworthy, rather than focus on what others should do so that we can trust them.

Do you have confidence in your Group Representative, District Representative, Delegate, Trustee, or staff members at all levels of service? Do you see their competence as something that you can rely on, knowing that they will use that competence to make informed decisions?

Members shared:

“The best way to make someone trustworthy is to trust him or her. Trust is interesting at the area level. My first thought is, I don’t know that trusted servant. Hopefully those who voted for that member know and trust him or her. Can I trust these people? Then I remind myself that people just like me elected them. The people chosen may not be ready, but I trust that God will make them ready.”

“I need to ask myself, in an election, if I am voting for the most qualified person or the one I like best.”

“Being a Service Sponsor helps build confidence for service. If someone complains about how something is being done, help him or her learn how to do it.”

“Many of us trusted our alcoholic relatives and now it is difficult to trust those who say they are trying to help us in the program. I also respect the group conscience today even if I don’t agree with it.”



“Giving Access”

How are we giving access to common information?

The *Conference Summary*, the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*, newsletters, and meetings have been our traditional ways of sharing common information. Recently, the World Service Office (WSO) has enhanced communication by using an “e-buddy” system to get information to recipients in a more timely manner. We are developing an information exchange system for the various service links where the WSO will post items on a protected Web site that will require a password. The system will be tested first by sending information to the Board of Trustees and Executive Committee. In a few months the system will be expanded to include Delegates, Coordinators, and WSO committees. The Members’ Web site has been updated to include the appeal letters, the 2004 audit, the 2005 budget, and the 2002-2004 *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*, which is now also available in French and Spanish. It is hoped that as the WSO makes more information available and easier to access on the Internet, members will respond with increased trust. Information is needed to make informed decisions.

Members shared that in addition to sending information through the mail, areas are using Web sites to post as much information as they can, including area newsletters and calendars. The anonymity of trusted servants is protected as members do with other media forms. Several members expressed gratitude for the speed and ease with which they can communicate over the Internet. Area Web sites have linked to each other when appropriate and the “e-buddy” system is working

CONCEPT ELEVEN REVISIONS DISCUSSION

Judy P.,
Chairperson, Board of Trustees

This session focused on proposed revisions to the descriptive text of Concept Eleven found in the “Al-Anon’s Twelve Concepts of Service” section of the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*. The Chairperson of the Board began the session explaining that it was a continuation of the discussion started at the 2003 World Service Conference. The Concept itself cannot be changed without written consent of three-fourths of all Al-Anon/Alateen groups worldwide. In 2002, the Conference affirmed the Board’s implementation of the revised WSO committee structure. Revisions

to the descriptive text reflect those changes.

During discussion, one member expressed her appreciation that the Board had proposed gender-neutral text. Others were concerned that the spirituality of the Concepts was compromised by the changes. There were concerns regarding word positioning and grammar, but members were assured that there would be several people looking at this document again, including a copy editor, to make the necessary grammatical corrections. A member asked why the text describing the Executive Committee was removed. It was

explained that the description of the Executive Committee belongs in Concept Eight.

This discussion continued over several days, at which point a motion was presented to accept the entire revision as amended. The motion carried. The Chairperson expressed her deep appreciation to all the members

of the Conference for their hard work. (See WSC Motion #10, page 59. For revised wording of the Concept Eleven descriptive text, see Appendix I, pages 84-93. The revision will also appear in the *2004-2006 Service Manual*, scheduled to be available in the fall of 2005.)

WORLD SERVICE HANDBOOK REVISIONS DISCUSSION

The Chairperson provided an historical overview of the “Handbook,” which began as the “Conference Manual” when a Conference Plan was talked about at the AA International Convention in Long Beach in 1960. The purpose of the “Conference Manual” was to suggest to states and provinces a way to form an assembly and elect a Delegate to the newly formed World Service Conference. The early Conferences talked about how they used the “Manual” to elect Group Representatives, organize districts, form an assembly, elect a Delegate, and conduct world service business. Prior to 1974, the World Service Office (WSO) did all revisions to the “Handbook”. At the 1974 WSC, Delegates were appointed to be part of the Committee. The 1975 WSC hammered out the details, made revisions, and discovered that “unity is not sameness, it is similarity.” The current revisions began in 2002 when the Conference voted to affirm the Board’s implementation of the revised WSO committee structure.

There has been discussion regarding the removal of the “no rules” sentence. In early editions of the “Handbook,” it did not appear. No one has been able to find when and why it was added, but it is believed to have been about the time of the 1975 printing. A question about this sentence was submitted as a Chosen Agenda Item at the 2002 Conference. The Committee also looked at this question in July 2002, and the at-Large members of the Committee voted to remove the sentence from the “Handbook,” as it was often used out of context. The entire Committee affirmed that decision. The procedures outlined in the “World Service Handbook” are only suggestions.

Many Conference members have been involved in revision of the “World Service Handbook”:

- Twenty-five Delegates from Panels 39-45, spanning four years

- Sixteen Trustee members of the Admissions/Handbook Committee (15 of whom are Past Delegates)
- Two Associate Directors of Membership Outreach—Conference
- The Director of Member Services

Prior to the 2005 World Service Conference, the revised “World Service Handbook” was also submitted to the Conference Committee, the Board of Trustees, and all 2005 Conference members for review and comment.

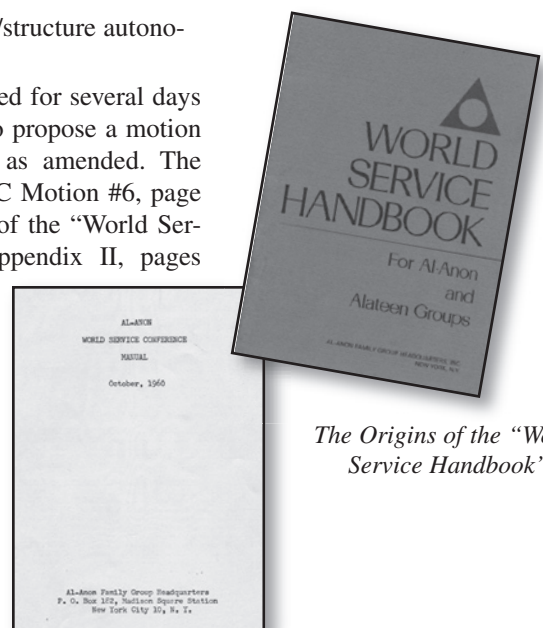
It was Lois’ vision that the “Handbook” be general enough for every area, as well as a “Manual” that may be used by structures in other countries. The Admissions/Handbook Committee remained true to that vision in their work.

Conference members were asked to use the same criteria as the Admissions/Handbook Committee did in their review of the text:

- Is it accurate?
- Is it general enough for worldwide use?
- Does it allow for area/structure autonomy?

The discussion continued for several days before they were ready to propose a motion to approve the revision as amended. The motion carried. (See WSC Motion #6, page 59. For revised wording of the “World Service Handbook,” see Appendix II, pages 95-114. The revision will also appear in the *2004-2006 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*, scheduled to be available in the fall of 2005.)

Liz W.,
Chairperson, Trustee



The Origins of the “World Service Handbook”

BY-LAWS REVISIONS DISCUSSION

Judy P.,
Chairperson, Board of Trustees

The Chairperson began this section by reiterating the relationship between the Board of Trustees of Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc., Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters (Canada), Inc., and the Conference. She provided the members with the following brief timeline of significant events. In 1954, the first Board of Trustees was set in place and in 1961 the first World Service Conference was held. It took another six years to adopt the Charter, and it wasn't until 1970 that the Concepts of Service were approved.

At last year's Conference, the Chairperson of the Board presented members with amendments being made to both the US and Canadian By-Laws by the Board of Trustees to reflect updates to the Board's procedures since relocation. In accordance with the Conference Charter, the Conference does not vote on the By-Laws, but can recall any amendment if not satisfied with it. Most of those changes were accepted by the 2004 Conference. However, the proposed changes suggested to Article IV – Trustees, paragraph 4, were removed last year so that the paragraph remained unchanged pending further review

by the Board. The Board was also asked to consider correcting some gender-specific language in Article VII – Duties of Officer, paragraph 4, "The Secretary."

During the last year, the Board discussed these two items and, after careful consideration, presented its suggested changes to this year's Conference. In the floor discussion, it was pointed out that the Canadian By-Laws are slightly different, in that they do not contain a reference to Lois W. and Anne B.

Conference members were reminded that the By-Laws are a legal document and that most corporations do not have a conference that approves changes. However, Al-Anon seeks to be democratic in its procedures and, whenever possible, involves the Conference. The ad hoc committee reviewing these changes discussed them at length to be sure the language accurately and appropriately described the procedure before submitting its recommendation to the Board. The Conference discussed these changes thoroughly, and did not recall them. (For revised wording of the By-Laws, see Appendix III and IV, pages 115-127.)

REGIONAL TRUSTEE PLAN REVISIONS DISCUSSION

Judy P.,
Chairperson, Board of Trustees

In a brief statement to the Conference, the Chairperson of the Board explained that during the last year, the Board of Trustees had appointed an ad hoc committee to review the Regional Trustee (RT) Plan, which had not been done in several years, to make recommendations to the Board. The committee held several lengthy discussions regarding the Plan and made wording recommendations to clarify some of the Plan's text. It was noted that, in some places, the text of the

Plan was not clear and that some of the procedures were no longer practiced. They also recommended more precise language to better reflect the intent of the corporation's By-Laws. The document was then mailed to all Conference members for review prior to the Conference. The revised Plan was presented to the Conference and withdrawn after brief discussion. Amendments or revisions will be discussed at a future Conference after review by the Board of Trustees.

POLICY DIGEST DISCUSSION

Colleen R.,
Chairperson, Trustee

As mentioned in the Policy Committee report, the Committee spent much time over the past year discussing the "Digest of Al-Anon and Alateen Policies" section of the *Service Manual*. However, it was decided that, before moving any further in the discus-

sions, the subject needed to be brought to the Conference members for discussion.

Conference members received a reproduction of the first "Policy Digest," which was published 30 years ago. Then, an archived tape of a conversation that took place at the

1975 World Service Conference was played. The exact words of this conversation can be found in the 1975 *Conference Summary*.

On the 30th Anniversary of this publication, the Committee felt it was appropriate to reflect on its original purpose and to begin a conversation about its current value, use, and the possibility of modifying its structure and format. An ad hoc committee has been looking at the structure and content of the “Digest” to determine what may be legal and/or suggestive in nature. This committee has reviewed several sections that might be considered interpretations of the Traditions and Concepts of Service. They also reviewed segments that constituted a World Service Office procedure or requirement.

The Policy Committee has only had preliminary discussions regarding the possible reformatting of the “Digest” and no recommendations or decisions have been made. They will start to review it again after this year’s Conference. Two questions were posed to Conference members. The first was, “What do you think is the purpose of the ‘Policy Digest’ and how is it used in your area?”

The general response from members was that the purpose of the “Digest” is to provide answers to questions that come up in meetings and to be a reference guide for topics such as anonymity, service, dual members, and outside publications, and to provide it all in one place.

It is used in many different ways. “When I was in service, whenever a question came up, I used it; when I gave my answer, I had this book to refer to,” one Conference member

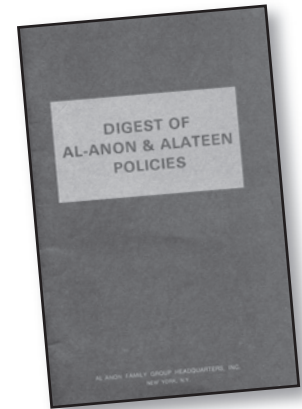
said. It can be used at assemblies, in *Service Manual* studies, for Group Representative orientation, as a gift to new sponsees, and to answer ask-it-basket questions. “We use it in meetings to see who can find the answer the fastest,” one member shared. When conflict arises, it serves to deflect a lot of arguments when you can say, “Al-Anon suggests” or, “It says in here . . .” Getting answers from the “Digest” means it doesn’t come from us personally. A copy can be given to new Group Representatives with a personal note that says, “This is what you will be carrying around for the next few years.”

The second question posed was, “What do you think would make the ‘Policy Digest’ more effective for your area?”

It was suggested that it be made available in electronic format and that the language be brought current to reflect our new Alateen requirements. Using color-coding or a different type of tab would be helpful and would help members locate the desired information. Having it spiral bound would make it easier to use. A further suggestion was to create an index for each booklet, with a main index at the back.

One member said, “The ‘Policy Digest’ remains one of our best kept secrets. It’s a very important part of the *Service Manual*.”

Conference members were informed that the *Service Manual* would soon be posted on the Members’ Web site, www.al-anon.alateen.org/members. Changes made at each Conference will be available on the electronic version by the following September, rather than waiting for the next printing.



30 Years of the “Policy Digest”

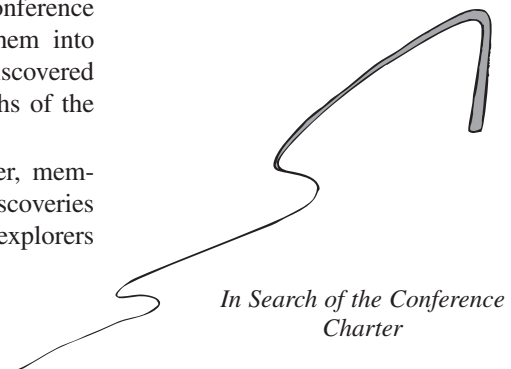
CONFERENCE COMMITTEE WORKSHOP:

Energize Al-Anon—Expand, Explore, Experience!

This year’s workshop began with a short skit, “Raiders of the Lost Charter,” which set the tone for action and adventure. It featured famous explorer/action hero W.S.O. (“Wizzo”) Jones and his companions as they battled the evil Professor Apathy and her henchperson in search of the Conference Charter. After piecing together clues that led them to the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27), they sought the help of Wizzo’s cousins, six Delegate member “Joneses” dressed for an archeological dig. These Delegates

threw out ropes for the rest of the Conference members to hold onto, and led them into six breakout “caves,” where they discovered the Conference Charter in the depths of the *Manual*.

After reading through the Charter, members discussed five questions. Discoveries made by the intrepid explorers included:



How does our Charter help us reach anyone anywhere who needs Al-Anon wherever they may be?

- Gives us a road map on “how to”
- Describes how an area can organize
- Shows how we share the Conference structure

How can understanding our Charter help assemblies, districts, and groups to energize their service work?

- Reminds us there are others doing this from all over—miles apart
- Talk about the Charter—from the groups to assembly members
- Use the Charter as an introduction to the Warranties

How can study of the Charter expand my assembly’s, district’s, or group’s understanding of our primary purpose?

- It would help to understand the body of principles in relationships—connection, not rules
- Like the Steps, the more we study, the more we live them, the more we understand
- Use questions about the Charter at workshops, in newsletters, groups, and skits

What experiences have we had in our assembly, district, or group which we can build on to explore new avenues for service?

- Action committees have energized our areas—new leadership and reporting in new ways
- Alateen requirements created interest—people looked at the Charter to see about responsibilities

- Action committees work when the Group Representatives are involved

Does energizing Al-Anon include giving up some old ideas, practices, or processes in order to adopt new invigorating ones?

- Yes, sometimes we are stuck – this can be very difficult; change is hard
- The Charter allows the Delegate to understand and serve Al-Anon as a whole—not just the area
- The key to giving up the same old ways is to show that change is not about giving up the principles, but finding new ways, ideas, practices, and processes to apply them
- We need more conversation before motions are made
- Introduction to the Concepts of Service is helpful in beginning change
- What are we willing to give up? Such as, “What is our idea of attraction rather than promotion?” Becoming visible is needed to attract; a person cannot be attracted if Al-Anon is not seen.
- Our areas are paying to send Delegates to the Conference and Delegates need to bring back accurate information and be given the opportunity to present the message
- Give the members a chance to be involved and not just talked to
- Sharing service responsibilities expands involvement and lessens pressure

All Conference members received copies of the workshop script and other materials to share with their areas so that other Al-Anon explorers can experience the adventure of the Conference Charter.

TALKING WITH THE DELEGATES

Judy P.,
Chairperson, Board of Trustees

This brainstorming session was first held at the 2002 World Service Conference (WSC) and has become one of the favorites on the Conference agenda. In her opening statements, the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees said that the Board meets quarterly and spends much of its time in forward-thinking. She explained, “Some discussions take one hour, some several hours, and some seem to go on and on.” This session is

an opportunity for the Delegates to provide suggestions for future Board discussions.

The Delegates met in breakout sessions moderated by a Trustee, in which they answered the question, “What do you think is important for the Board of Trustees to consider for future discussions?” All responses were recorded for consideration by the Board in future discussions.

The following are some of the matters the

Delegates think are important for the Board to consider:

- Membership needs—literacy-, hearing-, and visually-impaired
- Work on Regional Trustee Plan
- Role of Regional Trustee vs. Trustee at Large
- Having a similar voting procedure for Regional Trustee and Trustee at Large
- How big do we want the World Service Conference to be? How many areas?
- Internal Ambassador Program—World Service Office staff and Board of Trustees visiting the fellowship
- How the Board communicates information to the fellowship when it makes a legal decision so the fellowship does not feel it is being dictated to, e.g. Alateen
- Visibility in the media
- Links of service—expanding to more than Delegate communication
- Use of electronic media
- Ways to educate the fellowship/leadership regarding benefits/needs for incorporation at the area level
- Ensuring that adequate support is in place for the expansion of Al-Anon



The Delegates Talk and the Trustees Listen

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT PRESENTATION

The 2005-2006 public service announcement (PSA), “Feelings,” was screened for the Conference. Each year, the Public Outreach Committee spends time brainstorming how we can best reach out to the potential newcomer in a very short time. The Committee’s concepts are passed along to our PSA production company, who finds the words and pictures to make these ideas come alive. For 2005, the Committee really wanted to focus on the emotions that potential newcomers may be feeling, such as anger, fear, and feeling sorry for themselves. The result is appropriately titled, “Feelings.”

In early June, the 60, 30, 20, 15, and 10 second English-language versions will be sent to 928 TV and 2,370 radio stations in the US and Canada. For the 100 Spanish- and 42 French-language TV stations, and 300 Spanish- and 100 French-language radio stations,

we have created nearly identical spots.

Delegates were given VHS tapes including all three language versions to take back to their Area Public Outreach/Information Coordinator, along with a distribution timetable. The distribution lists will be mailed to the Area Coordinators, with copies to the Delegates.



“Feelings”

Mary Lou M.,
Associate Director of Public
Outreach—Media

2005 WORLDWIDE TRAVEL PRESENTATION

The World Service Office (WSO) visited nine countries during the last year. Each one required different assistance because they were in varying stages of development. The Executive Director reported, “Our work involves

sharing information with these countries about the worldwide group conscience of Al-Anon, connecting one member with another, and explaining how others around the world have strengthened their groups and structures.”



Connecting Members throughout the World

Singapore

In Singapore, 400 professionals gathered from throughout Southeast Asia for an international conference of addiction professionals. This trip gave the Executive Director and

a member of Al-Anon, who is a treatment professional, the opportunity to talk about the effects of alcoholism on the family. Al-Anon Conference Approved Literature in

Ric B.,
Executive Director

Tamil, Malay, simplified Chinese, French, and English was supplied by the WSO. Japan's General Service Office (GSO) sent literature in Japanese. After some initial encouragement by the Executive Director, members of a local Al-Anon group joined

him for a "meeting on wheels" demonstration for the professionals. Since that visit, the Singapore Web site has been included in the "Al-Anon Internationally" section of the WSO Public Outreach Web site, www.al-anon.alateen.org.

Greece and Turkey

Judy P.,
Chairperson, Board of Trustees
Marsha W.,
Associate Director of Membership Outreach—International

Al-Anon members have been meeting in Greece since 1972, but there has never been a strong connection or an exchange of information between groups. During this visit to Greece, there was discussion about starting an Al-Anon information service that would be supported by all six current groups. Members were encouraged to get involved in the translation process and to use the reprint permission they received years ago in order to have more Conference Approved Literature available in Greek.

A side trip to neighboring Turkey gave the Chairperson of the Board and the Associate Director of Membership Outreach—International an opportunity to meet with service members and share ideas about their structure's meetings. The Turkish members do not have reprint permission yet, but they agreed to set up a committee for translation. They expressed gratitude to AA, but after this meeting understood more clearly that Al-Anon is separate from AA, and they can do public outreach for Al-Anon without including AA in their plans.

India

Ric B.,
Executive Director

Like Greece, India has had meetings for over 40 years but neither country has a national structure. This country, with over a billion people, has great distances between its big cities where most of the Al-Anon groups are located. Members interested in service are beginning to understand the ben-

efits of having a service structure with Group Representatives (GRs), District Representatives (DRs), and area world service committees. The Executive Director emphasized that groups that choose not to have a GR choose not to have a voice in making decisions that impact Al-Anon.

South Africa

Ric B.,
Executive Director

The Concepts of Service and their relationship to the General Service Conference were the main focus of the informal discussions in South Africa. Since South Africans were not able to attend the International General Services Meeting in 2004, they were interested in improving com-

munication within their national structure. The Executive Director's sharing on the Concepts of Service gave them a principled framework. He was invited to present a workshop on using the Concepts of Service in our personal lives to their 2005 Conference.

Cuba

Ric B.,
Executive Director
Raquel K.,
Translation Services Manager

With the help of members in California South, the WSO contacted Cuban service members by phone in May. The WSO discovered that 37 groups were meeting and struggling to determine how to set up a national structure. Since American citizens cannot routinely travel to Cuba, the WSO's first request for a license to travel there was turned down. On appeal, the Executive Director and the Translation Services Manager, who served as the translator, were given licenses. They were able to attend ser-

vice meetings as well as the annual Cuban Al-Anon convention. The WSO is working with Spanish-language GSOs to get literature into the country until Cuba can apply for and receive reprint permission. The Executive Director said, "We were able to lay foundations for a new general service office in Cuba." The Cuban members sent their gratitude for the support of the WSO and for the literature that will remain when members can't stay.

Ghana, Togo, and Cameroon

At the invitation of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), the Chairperson of the International Coordination Committee and the Associate Director of Membership Outreach—International joined AA staff and volunteers in the first of the three countries on this trip. Several professionals from Ghana had visited the AA General Service Office in New York and were eager to get the program started in their country. AA staff included Al-Anon in all their activities. As a result, Al-Anon met with 70 professionals and explained the benefits of the Al-Anon program for the family.

Togo, a French-speaking country, required an Al-Anon translator for the service meeting. The current Chairperson of the Board of Trustees from France's Al-Anon General Service Office joined the WSO staff member and Trustee to help in that role. The Chairperson of the International Coordination Committee was able to tell her personal story in

French, since so many of those who came to AA meetings were family members. AA has found that in the initial development of AA overseas, family members come to AA meetings because they don't see the programs of AA and Al-Anon as separate. The AA members expressed their gratitude that Al-Anon was there to help these family members. Contacts were made and literature was distributed to help start Al-Anon groups.

In Cameroon, AA members set up meetings and family members attended. This was Al-Anon's opportunity to carry the message once again in French. Since the visit, they have reported that at least 34 Al-Anon meetings have begun. The Associate Director of Membership Outreach—International said, "While these contacts are with grassroots Al-Anon, we will continue to do what our pioneers did—carry the message."

Mary G.,
*Chairperson, International
Coordination Committee*

Marsha W.,
*Associate Director of Membership
Outreach—International*

In Conclusion

The Executive Director completed the presentation by saying, "What we have seen recently at the World Service Office is that if you name an idea—if you put it out there—it begins to germinate, and the possibilities in

the universe are wider than any of us can imagine. On all of these trips, we knew a Higher Power was there because opportunities just happened, and they were not anything that any of us alone could have imagined."

"LEAVE HOPE" PRESENTATION

The most abundant resource that Al-Anon has is our members. A team at the World Service Office (WSO) began brainstorming ideas for a project in which every member worldwide—newcomer and longtime member, young and old, lone member and on-line meeting member—could participate. It needed to be at little or no cost and take members less than five minutes to do.

To introduce this project, the presenters each had an elaborate blue ribbon tied around one finger as a reminder that they were "forgetting things all the time before Al-Anon." Then they asked for all of the members in the areas to "forget a piece of literature" on purpose in a public place—to forget the pain and "Leave Hope" on Lois's birthday, March 4, 2006. Prior to the presentation, a piece of free literature in French, Spanish, or English was "forgotten" at each Conference member's seat. An invitation to

create a local "Leave Hope" campaign was tied to it with blue ribbon. The WSO is also requesting that those who create a campaign or participate in it inform the WSO of what they are planning.

Cynthia H.,
Associate Director—Conference
Marsha W.,
Associate Director—International



*Remember to Forget on March 4,
2006!*

CHOSEN AGENDA ITEMS

Chosen Agenda Items Process

Cynthia H.,
Associate Director—Conference

Every year, Conference members are invited to submit questions on topics of interest to be considered for Chosen Agenda Items discussions and workshops at the upcoming Conference. The purpose of these sessions is to provide Conference members with time to discuss four topics that are general in nature and pertain to Al-Anon worldwide.

This year the Conference Committee wanted to give Conference members an opportunity for two of the questions to be one-hour, in-depth, open discussions. Conference members selected two topics for this longer discussion. A Delegate member intro-

duced each topic with a short presentation followed by fifty minutes of open discussion moderated by the Conference Chairperson.

On the first day of the Conference, members had the opportunity to vote for two additional topics to be discussed at two half-hour open discussion sessions. Someone other than the person who submitted the topic was chosen to moderate the discussion.

The remaining topics receiving at least five votes were discussed in workshops. Those items receiving fewer than five votes are answered in the “Ask-It-Basket” section on pages 60-74 of this *Conference Summary*.

Chosen Agenda Items—Open Discussions

Chosen Agenda Item No. 1

How do we use the principles of the three Legacies to resolve disagreement regarding decisions when it seems the Concepts of Service themselves are in conflict with one another, i.e. legal rights versus traditional rights and, especially, who has final authority (veto power) [pages 165 & 168 of the 2002/2004 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual]?

How can Al-Anon keep its persona as a spiritual fellowship guided by the groups and a Higher Power in the face of certain legal mandates from its corporate Board of Trustees?

Will we remain a spiritual program if the Board does all the guidance and the World Service Conference is only a means to get the Board decisions out to the fellowship?

Marilyn M., the Panel 44 Delegate from Alberta/Northwest Territories, was asked to introduce this topic with a short presentation. Her comments are as follows:

“I need to address the idea that the Concepts could possibly be in conflict with one another, in the veto power of the Board versus the ultimate authority of the groups. In writing the Concepts, Bill W. addressed the inherent difficulties the members might have had in trusting others to do their jobs while working at the Conference level. I see fear and the lack of trust as possible reasons for conflict, not any sort of conflict in the wisely written Concepts.

“Pages 165 and 168 of the Service Manual describe not a conflict, but a way to balance power. Concept Five clearly states several ways in which the rights of appeal and petition protect minorities, but it also protects Al-Anon from being subjected to the tyranny of either the majority or the minority. Page 165 explains that no Conference vote can be considered binding on the Board unless it equals two-thirds of a Conference quorum. Up to this point of two-thirds majority, the Trustees have a power of veto. This veto could be used if our trusted Board wanted to be sure that the majority is not acting in haste or emotion. In this case, it is the Trustees’ own minority opinion that is being petitioned – they are asking for their right to be

heard and the issue to be reconsidered because there may not be substantial unanimity to guide them.

“On page 168, we deal with the idea that, although the Board is not likely to contest the clear and sustained will of the Conference, Concept Seven says that in certain corporate business areas the Trustees do have legal authority and responsibility to do so. They may accept, even seek, advice and recommended direction from qualified sources. I believe that in using the principles in Concept Nine we have elected uncommonly wise, visionary, responsible, and spiritual leaders. It is their responsibility to “take a stand against the storm,” even if the minority voices its concern.

“In many places throughout the Concepts of Service, the Board is given the responsibility and authority to do what is right for Al-Anon. The Trustees are given, for example: their right of decision in Concept Three, primary administrative responsibility in Concept Six, the legal rights in Concept Seven, and primary leadership in Concept Nine.

“How does this guarantee to the groups that they have the ultimate authority? Is this where the perceived conflict exists?

“The power given to the Board is balanced through the power given to the groups in the Concepts: The ultimate responsibility and authority in Concept One, participa-

tion rights in Concept Four, rights of the minority in Concept Five, traditional rights in Concept Seven, and the responsibility to select good leaders in Concept Nine. In the unlikely event that the Board did not act on the Conference will or if any service arm in Al-Anon began to consistently govern without consulting the groups, the groups would have the option to elect better representatives or even withhold funds.

“Both the Board and the Conference have their rights, and we trust each other not to over-exercise our power of veto, or our final ultimate authority, lest the very future of Al-Anon is destroyed. All these rights and responsibilities are very powerful tools. These tools are not meant as ‘power’ tools but as ‘balance’ tools. Will we trust each other to use them as such?”

“The very idea that each of us, as members of Al-Anon, is devoting much of our life to the process of upholding the principles of the three Legacies is proof to me that we are doing our best to act out of love for Al-Anon. I believe in the spirit of democracy. With our Higher Power held utmost in our consciousness, we will always see our way through any difficulty or disagreement.”

“I must get personal with respect to my responsibility to this amazing spiritual program. When I disagree with someone, I have to be very honest about my motives. If I am fearful, for any reason, my attitude will reflect that. I will lose my trust of others. I will think that I know better than the group conscience. If my anger is starting to rise, it is a sign that I may be desperate to impose my will. When I don’t get my way, I can get confused, despairing, and depressed and, in all this, fear is at the root of my problem. I know that is not being spiritual. When I can’t accept the group conscience, I must discuss these feelings with a trusted member and get to the exact nature of why I am feeling this way. Do I feel there is an important principle that is being ignored or am I being fearful due to some past hurts? I must always be vigilant about my own spiritual fitness or my efforts to be of service here at the Conference, in my group, or in my personal relationships will be hampered.”

“Now, how do I use the principles of the three Legacies to stay spiritual in the face of a disagreement? How do I use my ultimate responsibility and authority? Principles of responsibility, humility, love, honesty, trust, acceptance, and sacrifice are my tools. If I feel something is going wrong, have I checked that my motives are right? Do I have rational reasons, or am I reacting out of fear?”

“As a leader and a trusted servant, I need to ask myself if I am being divisive in my actions. If not, I can feel free to express myself. The necessity and permission to express my concerns are confirmed in Tradition One—unity; Concept Four—participation; and Concept Five—the rights of minorities. All of a sudden I no longer feel fearful, because Al-Anon, my lifesaver, is being protected through a balance of power in the wisely written Concepts of Service. It is also very important that I can

trust my Higher Power, as expressed through our group conscience.”

“What would happen if I were continuously to hold on to my idea as correct and right above the substantial majority? How long and how often I restate my opinion is up to me, but I know that Al-Anon will survive as a spiritual program if we aim to live by the principles threaded throughout the three Legacies and we always use our Higher Power as our guide.”

“The lesson I learned in my newcomer days sums it up for me. The sentry for our protection against any service arm becoming a government is still found in Tradition Two: ‘For our group purpose there is but one authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants—they do not govern.’ If I am to remain a useful member of our Al-Anon/Alateen program, I will always ‘Let It Begin with Me.’”

An open discussion followed, moderated by the Conference Chairperson. The discussion had two common threads: communication and spirituality.

“Even groups that don’t like business had something to say,” one Delegate said of her area. They appreciated knowing that someone was willing to “step up and uphold Traditions.” Her area did not feel the Concepts of Service were statements but rather guidelines and she was pleased that some members of her assembly who usually don’t share came to the microphone and spoke.

Many agreed that information flows both ways, not only to the Conference, but also from the Conference. Last year was the first Conference for some and they were not prepared for the discussions that took place. “I came so uninformed. My fears came into play. I think lack of communication is the problem. When we don’t hear the information, we think, ‘What are they doing up there now?’” Many mentioned that they needed to use caution in how they communicated the issues discussed at Conference. They made sure the message members received was passed on in simple, down-to-earth words and not in an authoritative way, and to stick to principles without offering an opinion. Some expressed gratitude for the *Conference Summary* because they didn’t have a full picture of the Conference until they read it. Communication means we need to “talk things over and reason things out. I say, ‘Communication is the key to participation.’” Some were more afraid of the tyranny of the minority than being dictated to by the Board.

Spirituality was another thread in the conversations. Some felt it was being lost as a result of the changes being made to the Concepts of Service. Others said they felt spirituality happened as they came together here, as members of the Conference did, around the Concept Eleven discussions. “Spirituality in Al-Anon was not available to me until I learned about group conscience. Not everyone enjoys conflict. The Board takes extraordinary care to reach decisions. Separating spirituality from business doesn’t make sense to me. I had to learn the discipline of the process before I had that available to me.” One member shared, “I have come to enjoy the conversations because I was told that God goes to the assembly and God goes to the Conference. My God is bigger than the Board, the Conference, or any mistake we can make.”

Chosen Agenda Item No. 2

Twenty-first Century communication is direct and timely. Is the World Service Office's (WSO's) system of relying on Delegates and Area Coordinators obsolete in terms of reaching districts and groups in an expedient manner? Is relying on one person to carry important messages to an entire state or province still feasible in a world of now and immediate communication?

Paula B., the Panel 44 Delegate from North Carolina/Bermuda, was asked to introduce this hour-long discussion with a short presentation. Her comments are as follows:

"Modes of communication in the 21st Century are accomplished through a variety of means—verbal, written, e-mail, Internet, voice mail, instant and text messaging, pagers, and cell phones. The list goes on. Successful communication requires both a message and a timely understanding of the message.

"A major factor influencing successful communication is the choice of words. When a human delivers the message, however, other factors influence the message, including the speaker's personal delivery style, communication skills, inflection, and personal perspective. Understanding the message requires active listening skills and comprehension of the words.

"Today we are being asked to look at the ways we, as one of our area's links of service, are carrying the message to the fellowship. Are we getting the message out in a timely fashion? Are our areas, through the Area Coordinators, District Representatives, and Group Representatives, getting the message out in a timely way to the members? Most importantly, is the message communicated accurately and effectively, or are there occasions for personal bias?

"At the end of 2003, important information came from the Board of Trustees to all members of Al-Anon and Alateen. Many of us have heard the stories and complaints from members that, for several months following the initial release of this information from the Board, they were still unaware of the information or of how it would impact the fellowship. Delegates gained better insight and understanding about the processes and legalities that led to the Board's requirements at the World Service Conference in April of 2004. However, as Delegates, if there was no area assembly or world service committee meeting soon after the Conference, we were delayed in communicating the information to our fellowship. Therefore, many members had to rely on each other's understanding and, in some cases, rumor. In some areas, this negatively impacted the fellowship and the message of love and concern for Alateen.

"We need to examine whether some information can and should come directly from the WSO to the fellowship, not requiring initial communication through the Delegate or Area Coordinators. Examples would include new Public Service Announcements, new Conference Approved Literature, and new service pamphlets. These facts can readily be communicated through written and electronic means. The Webmaster could develop a link through the WSO Members' Web site that contained postings of such

announcements, service or job opportunities, and literature that is under development. Members could 'subscribe' on the Web site to an electronic newsletter, sent via e-mail weekly or monthly, that contains these same announcements. Anonymity could be maintained by using 'undisclosed recipient' in the 'to' field. The 'from' field could be simply 'WSO.' Ideally, the newsletters would contain an 'unsubscribe' link. This could be a timely form of communication replacing the need for members to surf the Web site, wait for mailings, district meetings, or area assemblies. In this way, information would be available to all members and not just those attending the business meetings and those in service positions.

"The current Al-Anon and Alateen Registration Group Records Change Form collects e-mail addresses along with the current mailing address. There could be a box to check to indicate that one wants to automatically receive such an electronic newsletter.

"We should also review other types of information and messages, however, and consider what role, if any, the Delegates should have with regard to electronic communications. Examples of such information may include Public Outreach initiatives or guideline and policy changes that have been approved as described in Concept Seven. The WSO takes time to carefully compose these messages and announcements to the Delegates and then we are charged with delivering the message as we understood it. The salient facts can be communicated directly to the fellowship by posting these on the Web site or via the electronic newsletter. The Delegate's responsibility might be to facilitate discussion or clarify the information. We need to discuss how well our areas would respond to this style of communication. We know our areas best and how important the 'personal touch' of the Delegate or Area Coordinators is to the success of the message being received and interpreted.

"As Delegates, we must put our personal preferences aside and look to Tradition One to assure unity in communication in our areas. If timeliness of communication means that some information comes directly from the WSO to the fellowship, we need to fully consider this option.

"To further the discussion on this topic, please share how your area does or does not successfully communicate in a timely way to all members. Is the message always delivered without the speaker's bias or perspective? How successful are the Group Representatives in carrying this message to the members of their group? If group members have questions, do they go to a knowledgeable source? Would the electronic delivery of the message to all members in the fellowship enhance the

uniformity and accuracy of the message and thus improve understanding?”

In the open discussion that followed, Delegates and other Conference members responded very positively with their experiences and also asked additional questions.

Most Conference members agreed that information from the World Service Office is important, but the Delegate needs to discern what is for the Delegate only and what needs to be passed on and to whom. This way, e-mail information overload of our trusted servants is avoided.

One Delegate shared that, “Effective communication means that I have a responsibility to receive the message and deliver it in a timely manner without giving an opinion, so that the fellowship knows there are no secrets. If I am upset about something, I have to be careful not to pass that bias on when reporting the information.” Having access to back up materials would help keep accurate information flowing. With or without a computer and e-mail, editorialized information skews what is passed on. Even face-to-face information can be skewed. Rumors start and with the best of intentions we can pass on inaccurate information.

A member said, “If providing information electronically would help the District Representatives bring important messages to their districts, this could bring a level of energy that would really be tremendous. Another member said that Delegates often have limited time at the assembly to relay all the information from the Conference. “Members also want the personal experiences of the Delegates and the processes they go through. More direct communication through e-mail could free the Delegates’ time to talk about process and inspiration.

Chosen Agenda Item No. 3

How can we communicate effectively and become more informed, get groups more involved, and increase the voice of the groups that are not currently represented? How do we get new people into service and keep them in service?

Communicating more effectively starts with being in contact. The suggestions made focused mostly on what the Delegate could do in response to these questions, but there were good ideas that could be useful to anyone. Some things to consider:

- Be willing to travel to the groups and share information so they do not feel they are in this all alone
- Be a Service Sponsor and suggest, “Get into the car; we’re going to do this”
- Send letters, e-mails, and post cards to current and past-term members, saying “hope to see you at assembly”
- Write thank-you notes
- Be careful how you speak, saying “I’m going to do, or what I’m doing,” not “I have to do,” and don’t call it “service,” call it a “get-together”
- Suggest an “adopt-a-group” program and have a thriving group adopt a smaller, struggling group and share information
- After an event, contact the committee and ask for feedback on how it went. Send out surveys asking, how can we improve? Then listen to what they have to say and, if possible, adjust to their needs
- Be inviting, enthusiastic, offer training, and be all-inclusive
- Send out a newsletter and be sure the information it contains is accurate and detailed
- Have a “Service Day” or “A Day in Al-Anon” for the Delegate’s report and include skits, workshops, and other fun activities
- Create traveling workshops
- One member said she was going to give her “report” a different name
- Subscribe to and maintain a toll-free telephone number
- Create and maintain a Web site (updated regularly) with recovery and district meeting information
- Have a roving district meeting
- Establish an e-buddy messaging system for those who do not have access to a computer
- Send out updated information monthly
- Do a workshop on how to make service more interesting
- Be an “ambassador of good will” and participate in area events

Communication by e-mail has been very helpful in getting the message to the members of assemblies and world service committees. Members who do not have an e-mail address are encouraged to partner with an “e-buddy,” someone who could receive the information for them and pass it on. This is being used increasingly in the areas with positive results. It may be hard, but change is inevitable and as another member stated, “Part of my recovery is that I adjust to the world as it is, not that the world should adjust to me.”

Using e-mail is not the only means of communication. Personal contact is sometimes necessary, especially when there is not enough background information or what is presented may raise a lot of questions. Any form of communication needs follow-up, so it was suggested that a telephone call might help to be sure the information arrived. One member said, “It doesn’t matter what we use if the group doesn’t have a Group Representative or current mailing address, because they won’t get the information.” We need to let everyone know they have a responsibility to pass on information. “I am learning to use the Internet, but nothing could replace what I learned at breakfast this morning, eye to eye.”

“We need to talk about whether the current channel by which we pass out information is adequate and meeting the needs of the fellowship,” shared another member. “Most Delegates have full-time jobs and other responsibilities, yet are still expected to pass on all the information and be certain it is correct and without bias. The Delegates must not be left out of the chain of communication, but does the Delegate have to be the only chain of communication, or can we find other ways to assure open access to information?”

Chosen Agenda Item No. 4

What are the impacts, both positive and negative, of technology, including the Internet, on our fellowship and how can we use technology to best serve our fellowship?

The discussion was started with a Delegate sharing a story about a visitor from out-of-state who was in crisis and wanted to attend a meeting. She was able to find one on the area's Web site. "She [the visitor] would not have found us [Al-Anon] on a 3x5 card." Another Delegate shared that all meetings in her area are listed on their Web site. "A meeting had changed its location. It went through the process and the next week a new couple showed up. They saw it on the Internet."

Those were two of the positive stories shared during this discussion. Another member shared, "A new member said she now knows she needs Al-Anon because of reading the sharings from *The Forum* on our Web site."

Technology has had a substantial impact on the volume of information that is communicated to and from various segments of the Al-Anon structure. E-mail in particular has played a big part. "With e-mail, it is possible to think about what is being written before it is sent, which can eliminate inconsistencies and anything that is unclear." With the time limitations set on the Alateen issues, the present technology made it possible to communicate with Alateens and Alateen Sponsors and to distribute the information rapidly. One area had the "minimum requirements passed before Conference last year. The details were worked out later. Now we can get the information out today instead of after the event."

The biggest benefit is the possibility and hope of having "24/7" Al-Anon, anywhere, anytime, anyplace. The current technology gives everyone a chance to meet people from all over the world or next door. It is especially helpful in areas with very limited or virtually nonexistent access. In some places, distance to meetings

can be a problem, so on-line meetings fill that void, not only for recovery, but also for district, area, and World Service Office (WSO) information.

A concern was expressed that inaccurate information can be sent from an outside source, but it is possible to correct that immediately with current technology. Another was that members, longtime or new, would isolate, not attend face-to-face meetings. It was suggested that face-to-face meetings be encouraged. One Delegate shared that she had received some information via e-mail and when she got the hard copy of the information by U.S. mail, it was different; it had been updated.

A question arose regarding the posting of photographs taken while visiting Stepping Stones this year. Members were advised that pictures could be posted, as long as they protected anonymity and didn't show faces. It was suggested that some text be provided with the photos putting the event in context, to be sure that there was no hint of endorsement by or affiliation with Al-Anon, such as explaining the photos being displayed and why they are important.

Another question was posed about the possibility of an information communication Web site linked to the WSO. The concept is being considered by the WSO, but it is still in the planning stages.

In a survey sent to Al-Anon members, 94 percent of those who responded said they owned or had access to a computer. A majority of Al-Anon members use them daily. "The Internet is very timely. I remember when mailings to Saskatchewan took three weeks. They don't have to do that anymore."

One member shared, "Be careful what you send out. You could mess up someone's day."

Chosen Agenda Items—Workshop Highlights

The following are those topics that were discussed in workshops, along with a summary of member comments.

Why are so much of Al-Anon/Alateen's financial resources dedicated to the World Service Conference? Are we self-serving and forgetting our purpose of reaching families and friends of alcoholics who are not yet in the program?

The voice of the groups is heard at the Conference. The purpose of the Conference is stated in the descriptive text for Concept One in the "Al-Anon's Twelve Concepts of Service" section of the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*. It states, "As Al-Anon entered its second decade, polling groups on important issues became impractical . . . There were also constant questions of policy that could not be settled by a poll and on which wrong decisions might lead to ultimate disaster. The group conscience had to point a way on these matters. It was in order to meet this need that the Al-Anon groups in 1960 voted for the formation of the Al-Anon World Service Conference." Other comments were:

- This is a good question to get us to look at our own administrative expenses versus outreach at the area level
- Perhaps there is a misunderstanding of the purpose for being

at the Conference. We must do a better job of educating members in our areas

- There is a lack of trust by some members who are upset with the program's direction. Communication to the members about the purpose of the Conference and what goes on may help
- Alateen, for good or bad, woke up the fellowship and is making us ask questions about resources and seek answers
- Emphasize the importance of the World Service Office travel to other countries (by request) and the connection of this travel to outreach and bringing the Al-Anon message of help and hope. These visits are making the connection for Al-Anon's growth in those countries

How can we convince and communicate to members that service is part of recovery and not separate from it?

The Al-Anon program is one of attraction. We can talk about our own recovery through service and invite new members to go with us to service functions. We can help the newcomer gain trust by offering to help and support their efforts. Other suggestions were:

- Be a good example—A WINNER
- Show enthusiasm in your attitude and let them know that service is a gift to your own recovery
- Ask them personally to help with a specific job—tell them

we need and want them

- Appoint “assistants” so newcomers can have a job
- Bring a newcomer to coffee while talking about service
- Always take time to answer questions from newcomers
- Read and share the booklet, *When I Got Busy, I Got Better* (P-78).
- Our actions (and sense of responsibility) will be the example

How do we apply anonymity and keep our teens safe if people are unwilling or unable to speak out because of anonymity and how do we apply “obedience to the unenforceable” in conjunction with Alateen minimum requirements?

In order to apply the principle of anonymity, it must be understood. Study of the pamphlet, *Why Anonymity in Al-Anon?* (P-33) and references to anonymity in the *Service Manual* and other Conference Approved Literature is helpful.

Before considering Alateen sponsorship, a thorough and complete understanding of the area’s safety and behavioral requirements is necessary. Those requirements provide a good foundation on how to keep Alateens safe. Anyone who is unwilling or unable to comply with those requirements need not disclose their rea-

sons. They could consider making themselves available for one of the many other service positions not involving Alateens. Local laws need to be observed in any case, whether it’s in an Alateen meeting or any place where children might meet.

The minimum requirements provide that certain criteria must be met before a group can use the Alateen name. “Obedience to the unenforceable” means that members are willing to uphold and abide by the criteria without the necessity of intervention from an outside source.

What does an area do with a group that is not in compliance with Al-Anon but calls itself Al-Anon?

One suggestion was to review and discuss Tradition Two, Tradition Twelve, and Warranty Four before asking for a group conscience vote. Asking for area members’ suggestions for the District Representative and/or Group Representative to help resolve the problem, inviting an area officer or Coordinator to visit the meeting and share about Tradition Four, and having workshops on how the Traditions unite us in a worldwide fellowship were also suggested. Other suggestions included:

- Attraction works best—sharing our recovery and inviting group

members to district meetings, assembly, and workshop days

- Submit an ask-it-basket question at assembly dealing with the problems that occur when the Traditions are not followed
- Have a group conscience on whether to list such meetings on Web sites and meeting lists
- Visit the group to share information without overwhelming the group with other members or too much information
- It takes patience, love, and care, but let the group know that the district and area are there to support them

In what ways can we support and/or protect those members affected by the increasing number of high-pressure groups (dictatorship rather than sponsorship)?

Carrying the Al-Anon message to these groups rather than avoiding them sets a good example and is a means of sharing the Al-Anon principles. Maintaining a loving attitude, sharing with newcomers, and encouraging attendance at more and different meetings can give perspective. Other suggestions were:

- Invite members to attend assembly
- Offer rides to another meeting

- Have workshops on sponsorship and applying the Traditions and Concepts of Service
- Make phone calls to keep in contact
- Put out a bookmark on what sponsorship is about
- Ask the District Representative to visit the group and give input

Are areas experiencing any problems with functioning of action committees, with follow-through on projects? Are there any committees which are not functioning as well as others and why? What are strengths and weaknesses of action committees?

While there are some areas that do not have action committees, those that do function in different ways. Most areas assign committees by districts at the beginning of the assembly for a three-year term to give time to complete projects. Other ideas included:

- “Service teams” that work with Coordinators to help with projects
- Districts and the Group Representatives assigned to Coordinators at the assembly each decide what project they will work on and report back to the assembly on how the

project is going

- Have action committee meetings at area world service committee meetings rather than assemblies
- Committees function better when District Representatives make being at the meeting fun so people want to be there and get things done

A strength of having action committees for some areas is that the committees seem to be bringing more people to the assembly. A problem in one area was getting groups to attend assemblies.

DELEGATES (PANEL 43)

MIRIAM MCK., CALIFORNIA SOUTH

Al-Anon and Alateen have energized and expanded my life in ways I never imagined. I went back to college and traveled so many places I had to have more pages sewn into my passport. I've made wonderful friends. I'm grateful for the experience of serving our fellowship as Delegate. Being active in service lets me practice my program, and I've still got a lot more practicing to do.

Through service I get to explore and experience ways to return some of what has been given to me. Our loving fellowship has given me back my enthusiasm, which I lost after more than a decade of loving and living with someone who drank a lot. Twenty years into Al-Anon, I am enjoying life. Instead of worrying, I can spend my energy exploring ways to re-energize Al-Anon and Alateen.

This year I turned 50. I'm taking time to inventory where I am in my life and what I'm doing. I think the Board of Trustees, by approving our Conference theme, may be encouraging all of us to explore where Al-Anon/Alateen is now and how we can expand our program. There are still so many families and friends of alcoholics who don't know about Al-Anon or Alateen.

I have fun when I practice in service and try to fill the shoes of our Al-Anon pioneers. Like them, I find personal recovery through the Twelve Steps. Step Twelve encourages me to share what I've found and to help expand this fellowship. The Traditions help us explore the best ways to work together as a group. Tradition Twelve energizes each of us with the principle of anonymity. We're equals. As Delegate, I get to explore putting principles above personalities in my home group, in my area of Southern California, and here at the Conference. The Concepts guide us all as we practice the Al-Anon/Alateen principles in our world service affairs. The Warranties help us preserve and pass on our program worldwide, and into the future.

I'm incredibly grateful for the gift of expanding and exploring my personal program by taking a turn as Delegate. In the *Service Manual* history section on our Concepts, it beautifully explains how our Steps, Traditions, and Concepts lead us as we pass on to others what we've been lovingly given. I've hit a few rough spots during my times here at Conference. I've shed tears, spoken up, and tried to do it in a loving way. I've made apologies and amends for some of the times when I've been at fault. I love Al-Anon, Alateen, you, and I love myself. I'm so very grateful for this experience. I'm also glad it is time for rotation. I trust that God will lead me to new experiences to explore myself and ways to expand and energize Al-Anon/Alateen. I trust that God will do the same for you, too.

DENISE M., DELAWARE

I must admit that when I received the theme for this talk, I didn't feel very energized. I had just lost my mother suddenly and most of my emotional and mental energy was tied to my grieving. I just couldn't seem to get it together. Most of the time

I'm somewhat alert and energized, but the past few months have been extremely difficult for me. Although the support I received from family and friends was encouraging and motivating, some of you may have experienced the effects of my procrastination.

I needed to do something, so I took a look back. I recalled the million-dollar question asked by my doctor, "How are things at home?" I answered "Fine." As I heard the word "fine" come out of my mouth, I realized I was not "fine." I believe this was a turning point in my life, because I remember this conversation so vividly.

When I look back today, everything seemed to have happened so fast—from those frustrating days and nights of living with active alcoholism when a call from a rehabilitation clinic challenged me to explore the possibility that Al-Anon could help me, to being a Panel 43 Delegate. Did I think I would stick around? After attending my first meeting, I knew I would. I wanted what you had. I felt energized at that first glimmer of hope, and I was told that service was the way.

I jumped into that group and was, as they say, gently pushed into service. Following other members, I kept an open mind by listening and learning. I explored the literature, shared with others, and participated in group commitments. As I grew, I expanded my level of service to the group, district, and area level. This always kept me energized.

When the service position of Delegate became available, I was willing but secretly hoping someone else would step up. I just wasn't ready for the unknown and I hadn't read all the pages of the *Service Manual* yet. Again, I was faced with the challenge of exploring something new—but the encouragement came then just as it had many times before, and I said, "Yes." I became a NERD, a North East Regional Delegate!

The first year at Conference was somewhat overwhelming. I just wanted to blend in, which seemed to be another challenge. I attempted to make this event even more overwhelming by trying to hear every word while taking notes, which was impossible. In my second year, I had a surge of enthusiasm and I felt that I really could energize Al-Anon in my area. I couldn't wait to take back a skit, a PSA, a new piece of literature, or a book. With each experience I felt exhilarated with thoughts of, "Wow! I was part of that."

As I come to the end of my term I realize that I have been energized, and I've had a great time traveling this path with those around me. What an experience I've had. Thank you all for this opportunity to serve.

LUCY R., FLORIDA NORTH

When I was told to focus my talk on the theme of this Conference, I thought the theme was too hard and other Conference themes had been easier—anything to keep my mind closed. I realized that resistance and negativity are always my first thoughts when something new comes into my life, even after all these many 24 hours in Al-Anon. I am eternally grateful to this program and my Higher Power that these thoughts are much

more fleeting than before I entered the rooms of Al-Anon. I knew to go to my Higher Power and ask for guidance to find the words I needed to say.

When I entered Al-Anon, my heart had become so hardened and frozen that it took a long time for the love and acceptance in the rooms to soften and thaw me. Although I did not know it then, walking into my first meeting began my journey of exploring my world and myself. I had woven myself into a cocoon and knew only one way to look at things, my distorted way. I went to between four and six different meetings a week. My thinking began to expand as I learned all the meetings had the same basic structure but each group did things differently, and all of them functioned well.

When I got a Sponsor, I began to believe her when she said I could do things in Al-Anon service. In my isolation, I had not participated in anything for years. I participated in skits with my home group and for the first time in years I experienced the feeling of having a good time. When I was told to get in the car, I went to area world service committee meetings and assemblies. I experienced the energy of trusted servants and became aware of how much bigger Al-Anon was and how important it was to keep the information flowing. I became so energized that I decided I could go further. After getting a taste of service, I was hooked.

In my service journey, I have come face to face with my defects. Some of it has been painful, but I have also found assets along the way. As I found the courage to explore the defects, my life has expanded beyond all expectations. I hope as I share my experiences I will touch someone's heart the way someone touched mine.

When my term as Delegate comes to an end, my love and sense of responsibility for spreading the message will not end. As an Al-Anon member blessed with the benefits of this program, I feel energized. I want to continue channeling that energy through Al-Anon to spread our message of hope to all people who have been affected by someone's drinking.

STU M., FLORIDA SOUTH

When I first received the theme for this year's Conference, I thought to myself, "And who was drinking what when they came up with this idea?" I pictured Al-Anon members all over the world carrying gunnysacks over their shoulders filled with daily readers, roaming the countryside handing out Conference Approved Literature to save the hordes of hopeless souls who have not found the one true way of life. It brought me back to debates over attraction versus promotion in my early days of Al-Anon.

Once I cleared my mind of that picture, I thought about the first part—Expand. If Al-Anon is to survive and thrive, we must expand—at the group, district, area, and throughout the world. As I learned in my Twelfth Step, if I don't carry the message to another who is still suffering, I am not working my program to its full potential. I am selfishly guarding something that was so freely given to me.

Expanding doesn't just mean increasing the physical numbers of Al-Anon. It also means I could expand my options. I could

just sit in a meeting for an hour a week, or I could get involved. At first, I didn't know much about service or the structure of Al-Anon. One night after the meeting, it was announced that they were having the monthly business meeting. Being naturally curious, I stayed. What kind of a business meeting could they be having? One item on the agenda was having a greeter for the group. When they asked for volunteers, like good Al-Anons, nobody stood. Then someone turned to me and asked me if I would like to do it. They told me all I had to do was show up a few minutes early and welcome people to the meeting with a hug or a handshake. I figured I could do that, so I agreed. It was a great feeling that night, being asked to participate. A few months later, our Group Representative announced that she had to resign and asked for someone to finish her term. As with the greeter, nobody volunteered. She turned to me and asked me if I would like the job. I wasn't sure I could do it, but she assured me I could. I said I would think about it and let the group know the next week. The next evening I went to another meeting and the topic was the rewards of service. Coincidence? I don't think so.

From greeter to Delegate. Who would have ever thought it? Certainly not me. I never wanted to come to Al-Anon in the first place. But as I became more involved in service, I began to explore district meetings and experience ideas from other groups. I explored area assemblies and experienced other people's thoughts and ideas. I explored the Conference and experienced the most wonderful feeling of fellowship and camaraderie that this program has to offer. I explored the Traditions and Concepts of Service and experienced a new and even more powerful spiritual awakening at each level, which tended to energize me more.

Today I remain active in my home group. I talk to newcomers to make them feel welcome. When I see them, it reminds me of that first business meeting and how I was energized into expanding, experiencing, and exploring Al-Anon. If I can pass that on to another, I will feel that I am doing my small part.

ETHEL B., HAWAII

My body was in Hawaii, but my mind focused on what was happening 3,000 miles away at my sister's house in Michigan. I was exploring all the ways I could help my sister's husband stop drinking. Like the newcomer, it was difficult for me to understand how one family member's desire to drink caused the problems my sister's family was experiencing. My mind enjoyed the challenge, but the daily anxiety and distress was affecting my health. I was diagnosed with a stress-related muscular problem and I needed to find help.

Searching for a solution, I remember reading a sentence in my brother-in-law's AA book. It suggested Al-Anon for the families of alcoholics. Could I solve my sister's problems and reduce my own stress if Al-Anon was available on Maui? I checked the phone book and found Al-Anon's number under "Alcohol Abuse and Addiction Information and Treatment." I hesitated. Days turned into weeks. Finally I built up the courage to dial Al-Anon's number. A lady answered. She was welcoming, gave directions to her meeting, and said she would meet me there. Each week she was there to listen, share, and encourage mem-

bers to come back! Seeing her always made me feel better, even though I still focused on my sister's problem. The woman's example motivated me to volunteer any way I could to help the group.

As the Delegate representing my area at Conference, I have discovered how important each group member is to Al-Anon's continued worldwide expansion. Most service positions end, but service work performed as a group member can go on forever. As a member, I can be there each week to welcome the newcomers we have worked so hard to attract. I can be that familiar face who willingly shares experience, strength, and hope—even if I think everyone has heard it before. I can offer hugs and encouragement. A newcomer may hear a message at today's meeting that will energize her to keep coming back. Eventually the newcomer may become a longtime member who is willing to expand the program by experiencing Al-Anon service.

As a newcomer, my reason for finding Al-Anon was to help someone else. The person I have helped the most is me! By exploring my character defects and experiencing new ways of reacting to someone else's problems, I have been able to improve my own health. Carrying the message to others each week not only helps to expand the Al-Anon program, but it also reminds me that I *can* help others the right way—the Al-Anon way!

FRAN K., ILLINOIS NORTH

Oh, my! All those "E"s in our theme remind me of those very big, triple E shoes and I know immediately I can't fill those! And then the thought comes to me, *I don't have to!* At my very first meeting I was told that I don't ever have to be alone again, unless I want to be. Now that makes it easier.

In order to give my energy to Al-Anon, I must first acquire it for myself. I have done that by attending healthy meetings, by reaching out to newcomers, and by being willing to give back to the fellowship.

When I first came to Al-Anon meetings, I had reached the depths of my own despair. My world ended at about a three-mile radius from my home. I was afraid to go beyond that limit. Encouraged by those I met in the fellowship, I have been able to expand my horizons. I'm way past the three-mile limit today! I have explored new ways of looking at problems and trying new solutions. I have experienced a recovery beyond my wildest dreams.

Reaching out to my home group was a cinch. There was so much to do to keep it alive and well on a weekly basis and I became comfortable with being a "part of" rather than "apart from." But going to the district and then to the area levels was much more difficult! My first experience as Group Representative wasn't so bad. I teamed up with someone I sponsored who was willing to drive to the district and assembly meetings. District Representative was a little more daunting because I had to drive 50 miles to the area world service committee meeting, alone. It wasn't a really happy experience. Some of those people brought personalities along with them and some of the discussions became a little heated. It was pretty scary. I went to my Service Sponsor and told her this was certainly not what

I wanted to be doing with my time. She told me I couldn't quit until the term was up!

When I made the leap to service at the area level, my world really began to change. I could see that my opinions counted and that my experience, strength, and hope could be of value to more than just those few who managed to make it to my home group every week. I had a place where I could give back my recovery to a greater number so that others, like me, could find help.

Today I'm truly grateful to be a part of an organization that has given me and many others an opportunity to live, laugh, and love again. Today I know that together we can make ourselves and, yes, the world better just because we are here. Every day we are passing on what we have acquired by daring to get out of our shells and expand our world, explore our pasts, and experience life on life's terms. Today I have energy to share.

MARI LEE W., INDIANA

My life on October 7th, 1989, had narrowed to the point that it was virtually two people wide and two people deep: my husband, myself, and our respective children. He and I had separated a month earlier. In one week, I discovered that marijuana when washed looks remarkably like seaweed, admitted a child to juvenile treatment, allowed my husband to come home because I didn't have a clue how to tell him not to, and went to my first AA and Al-Anon meetings.

I walked into my first Al-Anon meeting angry with God and feeling like my life was careening out of control. Sort of like being on the beer wagon, being pulled by four tons of stampeding horseflesh and no reins to stop them. I had no idea that my horizons were about to expand beyond my wildest dreams. My experiences were about to change from sorrow and pain to joy and laughter. I was embarking on a journey of self-exploration.

The weekend before my first Al-Anon meeting I heard a recovering alcoholic's story. The program he described sounded workable and the first ray of hope opened a slim crack in my world. At the Al-Anon meeting I heard the Steps read for the first time and knew in my heart that there was a way out—the crack widened. I opened my world a little further and asked someone to sponsor me. The crack expanded to a wide opening that light and laughter poured through.

With the Fourth Step I experienced a freedom I had never known before. I exposed dark secrets to the light, and explored feelings buried because of alcoholism in my childhood home. My way of handling angry feelings was to vanish. When I angered a member in my home group, instead of vanishing, I applied principles above personalities and continued to attend. Nearly a year later we resolved the misunderstanding and became close friends. Because of this positive experience, I was able to expand my beliefs to include the possibility that perhaps there was a God who cared.

While serving as Chairperson of the state convention, I presented a pet project to the area assembly. During the discussion one person stood at the microphone with an impassioned plea against my project. In that moment I knew two things. I knew I was going to lose the vote and I knew I was experiencing

unconditional love for another person. My recovery expanded as I laughed and let go of my need to have my way. I explored practicing a new attitude of victory in defeat. I had presented an idea, risking failure. I had listened to another person's perception of the situation and was willing to abide by the group conscience. Most importantly, I came away feeling that neither my idea nor I were worthless.

April 18th in *Courage to Change* was a turning point. For the first time, I actually read and comprehended the idea that I and no one else must become what I want to attract, and give what I want to receive. I stopped exploring ways to make him or them change and turned instead to exploring, experiencing, and expanding myself. Peace and serenity were finally mine.

Today the most valuable lessons I've learned in Al-Anon are to have an open mind and a willing heart, and that true victory lies in complete surrender to my Higher Power.

MARY K., KANSAS

First, I had to expand my thinking and grow through the Steps before I could begin to energize Al-Anon. I came to this fellowship with a closed mind, believing that I had no problems except my husband's drinking. If I could get him to slow down, then our marriage would be good.

I didn't like the Traditions so I would skip the reading of them, and also the meetings on the Traditions. But my Higher Power had a different plan in mind for me. I was asked to do workshops on the Traditions. The first one was at an AA conference, "How to Apply the Traditions to Our Families." I dug in and started to study and found a lot of good recovery in applying the Traditions, not only to my family, but also to myself and my group. The more I study, the more I value not only the Traditions but also the Concepts of Service. I am exploring all the tools of recovery.

Since coming to Al-Anon I have been able to experience all of my feelings, along with good and bad times in my personal life. I have been given so much by the program and by keeping the focus on myself. The program has given me back my enthusiasm for life, my sense of humor, and the ability to understand that the alcoholics in my life were not doing something to me but were just practicing their disease. I have had the privilege of being sponsored and of sponsoring. Most of the people I have sponsored have given me so much more than I could ever give them.

My husband passed away in 1993 and in 1994 I retired and relocated in Lawrence, Kansas. Each change brings a chance for growth. The meetings were good but a little different from what I was used to. Because of that, I now have a more open mind and know that there are more ways than one to find recovery. By just being a little bit willing and trusting in my Higher Power, I have been able to explore different service positions and to experience the path of recovery that the pioneers so long ago laid out for each of us with the Steps, Traditions, and Concepts of Service. When we are willing to expand, explore, and experience, we are given the ability to energize the Al-Anon program for our present and future members.

CAROLYN L., KENTUCKY

The energizing factor for me has been the spiritual awakening that has come as a result of working the Twelve Steps of Al-Anon in my life and being able to share this program of recovery with others. The last chapter of *Lois Remembers* is titled, "A Regenerating Force." In this chapter Lois states that the survival of Al-Anon, Alateen, and AA depends on growth in spirit more than in numbers. "... Stagnation is retrogression. There is no standing still." This has been my personal experience—with me there is no standing still!

When I joined Al-Anon, I got a Sponsor and immediately became active in service work. I became Group Representative, chaired meetings, and attended area assemblies. I was excited and wanted to share our way of life with everyone.

My life changed after about 20 years in Al-Anon, and I became involved in other interests. I began to move away from the center of Al-Anon activity and kept myself along the periphery of the program. At the same time I began to struggle with the question of my participation in Al-Anon recovery.

I kept going to meetings and praying, and then my answer finally came one night when I went to my home group. I knew a lady who at one time had been actively attending meetings and then quit. She walked into the meeting room in tears and shared how the disease of alcoholism was once again active in her home. She had left home a few days before and in desperation she searched for the Al-Anon group that she last attended—only to find that the meeting was no longer there.

The lady's story touched me deeply, especially the thought of someone desperately looking for an Al-Anon group and not being able to find it. Without a shadow of a doubt, I knew that night where my place was. I knew I must come in from the periphery of Al-Anon. I must return to the center of Al-Anon, where the God of my understanding had led me. This was His will for my life—to be an active member of Al-Anon and not a bystander. I experienced a renewal of my Al-Anon recovery that night and it continues today. I felt energized! I resolved to myself that when anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of Al-Anon and Alateen always to be there, and I want to let it begin with me.

RUTH H., MANITOBA

The Conference theme for this year is: "Energize Al-Anon—Expand, Explore, Experience!"

Last year my area hosted a regional service seminar. It was a wonderful way to expand and explore the program at its best. There was a wealth of experience and it gave us another leap toward becoming aware of the vastness of our program. We realized that there are people all over the world who need us and that we are making great advances toward becoming known in many more countries.

My area also held a "Luncheon for Professionals," which was our special project. It was a resounding success in reaching out to school counselors, police, lawyers, ministers, doctors, nurses, social workers, and addictions workers. We had many questions from the professionals and we gave out literature packets with

our group names, addresses, and literature price lists. We have requested that Group Representatives ask newcomers how they heard about Al-Anon and to report back to the assembly so we will have some idea if what we have done is getting the message out to more people. I sent thank-you cards to everyone who attended and included a business card with our distribution center address and phone number, letting them know how they can order more literature when needed.

In November, Al-Anon was invited to attend an international Aboriginal conference in Winnipeg for health care workers of Aboriginals across Canada. We had a booth that was well attended at the conference. It was another step in expanding and showing how our experience can be of help to others.

I mentioned at last year's Conference that my younger son had contracted a very rare type of terminal cancer. He suffered a great deal during the last several months of his life and was only kept out of pain with morphine and other painkillers. He and his wife lived two hours away from the city. About a week before his passing he told me he was scared and asked if I would come to spend some time with him. Thank God for my Al-Anon program because without it I don't know how I would have been able to watch what was happening to him.

I thank God every day for the strength that the Al-Anon program has given me. No one will ever replace this generous and loving man, but today my memories are full and life goes on. Today I know that no matter what happens, nothing in this world is as strong, powerful, and all encompassing as the love and friendship that I receive from my Al-Anon family.

JULIE M., MARYLAND/DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

I came to Al-Anon feeling broken, irreparably flawed, and terribly afraid. My world was slowly shrinking. The more my world shrank, the less I knew who I was, what I stood for, and what I wanted. I allowed people and situations to determine my life and I accepted the unacceptable. If I didn't allow others to do what they wanted, I just knew I would be completely abandoned.

When I finally hit bottom and crawled into Al-Anon, I was desperate for a sense of connection. I never felt connected to anything before and scarcely anyone. I was certain no one wanted to be my friend. I would never be successful at any job. I would never be loved. From the moment I walked in the doors, there was never any question that I wanted to belong in Al-Anon.

After three months in the program, a group I attended was looking for a Group Representative. I expected the job to be snatched up right away. I desperately wanted to serve, but was certain that no one would want me. I was too new and I didn't know anything. Yet, after several minutes when no one volunteered, I timidly spoke up, "Well, I'll do it if no one else..." I couldn't even finish the sentence before people were clapping! Whatever the true reasons for the applause, it felt awfully good to be appreciated.

From Group Representative I quickly became District Repre-

sentative, Area Chairperson, and Delegate. I have never thought I was the best person for the job, but since I was the only person, I know my Higher Power had a plan for me. For some reason the Steps seemed very scary—I guess because I felt so bad about myself. The thought of examining myself and my behavior felt like it would destroy whatever sense of self I had. The Traditions and the Concepts of Service I could use and understand. Perhaps because I wanted so desperately to belong, I needed those Traditions and Concepts so I could be with other people.

For many years in Al-Anon my program was expanding, but my life outside Al-Anon continued to shrink. I was self-employed and worked from home. I stopped dating. My friends became almost exclusively Al-Anon members—but I think I was learning how to be good to myself during this time, how to have healthy boundaries. As a direct result of my service, my life outside of Al-Anon started to expand. While I still don't date, I have started graduate school and I am going to my first concert in 14 years. In the fall I plan to give up 10 years of self-employment to look for a job outside of my little apartment.

I am not without fear or self-doubt. The thought of experiencing life is very scary to me. Yet, I push ahead. This week I am missing a graduate school class to attend the World Service Conference. My father is very frail and approaching the end of his life. As a result, my family is in chaos. Yet, short of my father's dying, it is not an option for me not to come to Conference. Service is the bedrock of my recovery. I need to be here.

SUE B., MICHIGAN

Energize! What a powerful word! Before recovery and Al-Anon, life drained me of energy. I dealt with depression and didn't see where I had any control. Ironically, my life was extremely busy at the time. I had four teenage boys and the youngest was into drugs and alcohol. I worked full-time and pretty much ran our house without any help. As I look back, I was very active but not very energetic.

I came to Al-Anon in my late 30s, having learned about recovery through my son's rehabilitation center. The professionals kept saying go to Al-Anon, but I was resistant since I already had a support group. Besides, I would have to make time to get to meetings—but I did start to go sporadically, and I bought a *One Day at a Time in Al-Anon* book.

I finally started going to Al-Anon meetings regularly when we moved. The meetings in this smaller city were what I would call energized. People talked before the meeting and even laughed. They always treated newcomers tenderly—as special, important new additions to the group. I felt comfortable there. I was able to become energized myself and feel that *my* life was important. I took the focus off everyone else and started truly enjoying life.

My home group was service oriented. They read the Traditions, talked about events in the area, and passed on information from the World Service Office. I stepped forward to become group Treasurer when no one else said yes, not having a clue I would be led to service at the district and area levels. The energy at those levels was not always what I would call positive, yet there were learning experiences with positive outcomes. It was

a place to expand myself, explore new thinking, and absorb the experience of longtime members.

It was a difficult decision I made to stand for Delegate, since my nature is to stay out of tense situations. God pushed me and, as with the group Treasurer position, no one else stepped forward. I came to my first Conference feeling unworthy. I walked the beach several mornings during my stay. Walking has always helped me release pent up anxiety. One morning I was watching waves splash against the shore and I began to cry. There was such power and rhythm as they crashed into the sand. I felt enlightened by the scene as I saw each wave join with the others to create power and unity. I could see the same phenomena happening at the Conference, as each individual joined with others for a greater purpose. As I continue to energize myself by expanding my program, exploring new ideas, and sharing my experience, I can help to energize Al-Anon.

CAROL F., MINNESOTA SOUTH

When I first came to Al-Anon, I had no energy for myself. All of my energy went to the alcoholic and my kids. Just like so many others, I tried to figure out ways to get the alcoholic to stop drinking. What I have learned in Al-Anon is how to make the most of my energy without wasting it on things I can't control. To be honest, there are times when I still fall back into that old way of thinking. The difference is now I realize when I am trying to control everything and I work the program so I can put the focus back on me. When I am low on energy, I try to take care of myself until I get my energy back. What a concept!

Al-Anon has taught me to expand my thoughts and ideas. I try to look at things differently, to listen, keep an open mind, and remember that I don't always have the answer. I have learned I am not alone and that I need to ask God for guidance. I have learned there are always choices. When I first came to Al-Anon, I was so closed-minded. I couldn't see that I had any choices. Now the choices available to me are amazing. Choosing to do service is one of those choices I am so grateful I made.

Al-Anon has not only expanded my thoughts and ideas, it has also expanded my family and friends. You see, my home group is my new family. I can share more with them than I can with relatives. The people I have met by being in service and the friendships I have made are immeasurable.

Al-Anon has helped me explore new ways of doing things and it has expanded my horizons. I have gone places and done things I never dreamt I would do. I have attended regional service seminars, the International Convention in Salt Lake City, regional Delegate meetings, three World Service Conferences, and now I have visited Stepping Stones where Bill and Lois lived. Traveling with Al-Anon friends has been remarkable. I have learned so many things about myself by hopping in the car and going to service functions. One of the many gifts I have received is that I feel so energized when I return home.

I don't know why God has blessed me in so many ways. Maybe it is because I am willing to try different ways and willing to explore. Some of my experiences have been difficult, fearful, and humbling, but many have also been wonderful!

To energize Al-Anon, we need to continue to do service work, attend meetings, and share our experience, strength, and hope from the heart. We need to listen to others and encourage them in their journey. We need to let others know that they are not alone and that we understand. By participating in Al-Anon, we can't help but get new energy, expand our thoughts and choices, explore new ways of doing things, and experience life!

I want to thank everyone in Al-Anon, especially the people in my home group and area, for all the love and support I have received. This experience as Delegate has been wonderful! I will never forget it and I will always cherish it.

CONNIE D., NEW YORK NORTH

When I read the theme, "Energize Al-Anon—Expand, Explore, Experience!" my first image was of Cal and that "energetic bunny" carrying the message of recovery. It reminded me that we never have to do anything alone. My first Al-Anon meeting was a spiritual awakening for me. The energy I felt through smiles, hugs, and understanding nods convinced me to return.

My first opportunity to *expand* came in the form of encouragement from my Sponsor to stand for a service position. Every level of service has given me chances to *explore* the program and myself. I have gained a strong faith in the God of my understanding. After many plans of mine fell by the wayside, I realized who was in charge. I only needed to be willing, to do my best, and my Higher Power unfolded my future day by day.

The thought of serving my area as Delegate never entered my mind. My *experience* as an Area Alateen Coordinator provided me with opportunities to learn about healthy confrontations and how to put principles above personalities. It always seems that the most painful situations are the ones where I grow the most. Always there has been love and support from Sponsors and other members.

Shortly after my first Conference a crisis in my family became full blown. Both of my children struggled with their marriages. Watching the effects of the disease on my grandchildren was difficult. Next, my husband chose to leave after 38 years together. I struggled with powerlessness after working hard to stop enabling so I could allow others to be responsible for their behavior. The most important people in my life were in pain and I couldn't do anything to stop it. I questioned if I was doing the right thing. It certainly wasn't turning out the way I had prayed—as in, "Higher Power, here's MY plan . . ." My Al-Anon family stood by lovingly and gave no advice. I was doing all the things I had watched others go through. *Experience* is a great teacher, as is the pain. I forgot to focus on the things I could change.

When we discussed Alateen issues at Conference last year, it brought back memories of how spiritual this program is. My first area assembly as a Group Representative included a serious discussion about Alateen. It felt overwhelming to me, but we came to a decision that was best for all and we grew tremendously. Whether for a group, district, area, or World Service Conference, we come from all walks of life to discuss what is best for Al-Anon and Alateen and to carry the message to those still in need.

I am truly learning to live with myself, maybe for the first time ever. Al-Anon *energized* me when I felt hopeless. It helped me *explore* and find a place and a voice in my community. Let me always be ready to share, not just the information we gather at Conference, but to encourage others to *Expand, Explore, and Experience* this amazing journey called life. I don't know what my Higher Power has in store for me when I complete this term, but I bet it will include some energizing events! Service heals, and along with the work comes fun and beautiful friendships. Together, we can make it!

GERI H., OHIO

When I walked into the rooms of Al-Anon in February of 1978, the only energy and experience I had to offer was that of a very bitter, confused, angry, and fearful individual. I didn't come into this program to get my spouse sober because he had already been in recovery in the program of Alcoholics Anonymous for six years. Al-Anon was not discussed as openly then as it is today, so I really had not heard much about it. I just knew that I did not like who I had become—because of *him*—and I needed to get *him* to work his program harder so that I might become a calmer, more serene person. I walked through the doors of Al-Anon very resentfully.

Fortunately, the first group I joined was a healthy one, quite knowledgeable in the basic principles of the Al-Anon program. The members were especially eager to expand on this knowledge by passing it on to the newcomers. I chose a Sponsor who was active in service, loving, and willing to share her experience, strength, and hope with me. She had a tremendous amount of patience. She guided me into the Steps of the program and then nudged me—sometimes not so gently—into group service.

Very slowly I began to change. I could see myself making healthy decisions. My attitude toward the alcoholic became more compassionate and I acquired a loving relationship with a Higher Power that I had never experienced before. I became enthusiastic about serving in Al-Anon and excited to explore all the avenues of service.

After many years of service at the group, district, and area levels, I had the privilege of being elected Delegate. During my term as Delegate, I've had many opportunities to explore the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* for insight into those things affecting my area.

This past year, I have been faced with many challenges and decisions, both in service and personally. Being given this wonderful opportunity to serve as a part of the World Service Conference has shown me a deeper insight into respecting the differences and opinions of others. I have learned to put into practice the term “respond instead of react,” and this has enabled me to have peace and serenity during times of chaos. I've also benefited from the experience and energy of those in service before me, and am willing to share with those following me any experience that I can offer.

My hope is to see all of our groups grow together and support one another in times of agreement and in times of dissension. We need to continue to energize Al-Anon, expand on our basics, and

learn from the experience of others. There is no better way for us to start than to “Let It Begin with Me.”

GAIL C., ONTARIO SOUTH

In April 1983, my husband went to AA. At that time, we were separated after 23 years of marriage. He asked if I would attend a few meetings with him. It was there that I learned about Al-Anon. I started attending Al-Anon in June 1983 for the sole purpose of learning one more way to keep my husband sober.

What a revelation this program was for me! It was a place where I felt comfortable sharing what was happening in my life and was told that, if I kept coming back, I would gain some sanity. I guess that was when I began to learn about change and creating new possibilities. It was not an easy road over the first few years, but we decided to stay married and work on our relationship.

One of our main problems was communication. This can still get in the way today, if I choose to let it—the key word being “choose.” I latched onto this program right from the start. Within four months, I had a Sponsor. She was just the person I needed to help bring my self-esteem back. Since she was in service, it was natural that I would be guided in that direction. From my first year, I have never looked back. When there was something to do, it was suggested I try it.

In 1993, I suffered from a deep depression. Al-Anon saved my life. My doctor encouraged me to keep going to meetings, and you people helped me find my way back to sanity. Again, my Sponsor talked me into becoming the Group Representative. That ultimately led me here today.

I have changed many things in my life since I started in service and it has created a lot of new possibilities. From a very early age, I could never express how I felt. I could never give my opinion in an appropriate manner, because I was very shy and withdrawn. Today, I can stand in front of you, knowing that I have an opinion and that my voice does count. The world does not center on me, but includes me along with very loving and kind people. I am able to fit into a crowd and not be afraid of making a mistake or having someone not like me. I can say hello, smile, and welcome the newcomers.

I have become part of a dynamic group and district. I am trying to do what I can to keep my area dynamic, as my predecessors have done. I will continue to share my experience and the knowledge I have gained in service. Exploring and meeting the challenges of being a Delegate, and expanding on the wisdom I have gained through this exploration, have given me lots of energy and a passion that I wish to convey to every member I meet along my journey.

I will miss seeing every one of you face-to-face, but we all have a piece of our hearts linked together forever. I do not know where my Higher Power is leading me, but I have enjoyed my time as Delegate and hope to continue in service.

JEANINE S., PENNSYLVANIA

“Energize Al-Anon” is easy for me, because going to meetings, seeing *The Forum* arrive in the mail, and the announcement of a new meeting in our district excites me. I have found a life again through this program. A co-worker shared with me that she is going back to Al-Anon after years of being away. I ran over and hugged her and said, “Welcome back.” That, to me, is energizing. I told her that she could find a meeting on-line while on her lunch break. She liked that. Listening to recovery in a meeting energizes me, too. Watching a newcomer evolve from a crying, hysterical wreck to a confident, serene individual is energizing.

I started to expand my recovery when I heard someone mention that they went to more than one meeting a week. I got a meeting list and started going to other meetings in my neighborhood. Cautiously, I started to talk to people after the meeting instead of scurrying out the door. Each meeting was a little different, with different people attending. I was expanding my walls of trust and acceptance. When I became a Group Representative, I really started expanding my recovery. Attending my first assembly, I was surprised to see so many warm and friendly people. That experience helped me expand my view and scope of the program. I became an Alateen Sponsor right after that assembly and expanded my adventure on the road to recovery even more.

Service work helped me to explore parts of myself that I had neglected and ignored. You can’t sit in an Alateen meeting for long and not feel those same feelings that the kids shared. I explored those feelings that I had, too, growing up with a dad whose drinking bothered me. The program has allowed me to explore many of my fears and feelings in a safe and supportive place.

My life experiences are enriched when I do service work. I’ve always heard that you only have to be willing. My willingness was nurtured when others would share about the fun they had at a workshop or convention or even at Intergroup meetings. My concern for the continuation of outreach to members was a catalyst in my doing more service beyond the group level. I heard that meetings were scheduled for the women’s prison in Philadelphia, but unless they had chair people, they couldn’t meet. I volunteered to chair two September meetings. Since I heard that we never have to do anything alone in Al-Anon, I rounded up program friends to go to the meetings with me and be speakers. Those were incredible meetings for me. I think I got more out of them than the inmates. I had to overcome my fear of going into the prison and I strengthened my relationship with other members by sharing that experience and hearing their stories.

My time as a Delegate has helped me expand my view of the fellowship, explore new places, and experience the love of my Higher Power. I have had many opportunities for learning and leaning. I learned that I could stand up in front of 300 people, give a report, and live with criticism. You taught me that it’s principles above personalities. I’ve had to lean on my Higher Power on many occasions during this term. My vision of Al-Anon has expanded to include the worldwide fellowship and worldwide outreach to those still suffering.

PIERRETTE G., QUÉBEC WEST

This year’s theme fits me well. I was born into a family of twelve—where alcohol was present as well as verbal abuse and, at times, physical abuse. Being one of the youngest, I thought I was adopted. There were too many of us. I felt lost, unloved, and unrecognized for what I did, so I always sought love and approval. I left home promising myself I would never get into a relationship, but my Higher Power had other plans for me.

Alcohol was present in all of my relationships. I discovered Al-Anon through the alcoholism treatment center my boyfriend attended. When I tried my first Al-Anon meeting, I did not believe this program could help me. I attended because I was feeling bored at home while my boyfriend attended two or three meetings a day. I returned to the meeting because I still felt lonely and bored. I did not realize my family history had such an impact on my life, why problem drinkers attracted me so much, and why my life was in constant turmoil. Still, I must thank my Higher Power for the alcoholics in my life.

Expansion to me means understanding myself. Through the Steps, I took a good look at myself and started understanding the impact my alcoholic family had on me. I have made friends and become a new person. Although it took a while, I am no longer lonely and bored.

Exploration is service. I was so shy that I spent the first year in Al-Anon without saying much. One day I volunteered to be Alternate Group Representative. Being a “back bencher” was fine with me, but when the Group Representative left our group, I dared to put my name down for the job! Week after week, I read the *Service Manual* while hiding my face. Because I was curious and still am, I kept reading and exploring new things. Perseverance is a real gift from Al-Anon.

Experimentation has come to mean daring to take risks. When my boyfriend left, I was hurting so deeply that the Al-Anon program finally got through to me. I read everything over again and found new meanings. I dared to experiment with new functions and new ways of doing things. I grew out of my shyness and stood up for myself on many occasions.

Last year was difficult when I lost my job after 14 years. I became sick emotionally, spiritually, and physically. A few months ago, my twin brother was diagnosed with lung cancer. Being assigned to Literature Committee II saved my sanity and kept me focused on the Al-Anon program, even though I did not always meet the deadlines or complete the work. My Higher Power is working for me, and my Al-Anon friends are by my side at all times.

Service has given me new opportunities to experiment and explore and new knowledge to learn. Now I am heading for a new career in the legal field. I will be forever grateful to Al-Anon, the members, and to my Higher Power for all the gifts I have received over the years.

DENISE R., RHODE ISLAND

As I thought about this year’s Conference theme, I was brought back to my beginnings in the program, almost 13 years ago. I was tired of life at age 24. My life was not working and I

did not know why. My energy and spirit had been depleted from years of chasing the material things I thought would make me okay. If only I had the right car, job, education, boyfriend, etc., I would have the life that I wanted and not feel as if there was something wrong with me.

I found the program of Al-Anon for the first time when I was 18, but did not stay. I was the youngest person at the meeting and, although I could relate to all the feelings, I was not ready to deal with mine. I still had enough energy to do it my way. It was a blessing that I knew where you were because, when I had no energy or answers left, I knew where to find you.

In Al-Anon I learned that my beaten spirit and wounded soul could be mended with the unconditional love of those people who understood and had lived with the disease of alcoholism. The fear of living that had kept me at a distance from others diminished and was replaced with new opportunities to expand, experience, and explore the world around me—and what a great trip it has been.

When I was a child, my family didn't go many places. After being in the program for a year, I took my first plane ride, went camping, took a trip to the French Riviera, and, most recently, took a trip to Costa Rica. As I continued to have new and exciting experiences, I also had times of great difficulty and sadness. I learned that experiencing life meant I had to deal with all of it—not just the parts that I liked. I can see, today, that those difficult experiences were really stepping stones for me to become the person my Higher Power meant for me to be. When my thinking was limited to basic survival, my Higher Power saw a lively person with lots of interests, love, and laughter to share. Today I possess the energy and faith to go wherever my Higher Power takes me—which is what got me to the World Service level.

This time next year my Higher Power will grant me another experience to explore—I will be married. I know, today, that this program has helped me expand my world, explore my possibilities, and have experiences that were beyond my wildest dreams. It was my dream to marry someone I love and have a family. I did not think I would ever do that, in part because the disease of alcoholism had distorted my perception of who I was and what I had to offer. It made me feel inadequate as a daughter, a friend, and as a future wife. Al-Anon energized me to be the kind of person I would want to have around and a person who knows how to take love and give it in return. I look forward to all the experiences marriage will bring. Because of this program the world is at our feet to expand, explore, and experience.

JANE L., TENNESSEE

When I heard, “Energize Al-Anon,” my first thought was the little “energetic” bunny that keeps going and going—to give Al-Anon a boost. My next thought was, “Energize me!” I get energized being with energetic people who share ideas and projects that have worked for them—such as doing service work, attending conventions and regional service seminars. I'm ready to roll up my sleeves and get on with the footwork.

“Expand” means to reach out, make larger, grow. When I blow

up a balloon, it stretches. I reach out for support, encouragement, energy, experience, courage, new opportunities, new ideas, anything that can help expand my program and my recovery. The world is changing every day. Al-Anon needs to change. I need to change. I need to get out of the box and grow.

“Explore” means look for, dig, brainstorm. Look for the courage and strength to carry out some of those new ideas. I need to inventory my recovery to see if I am honestly living my program. Being a Delegate, a communication link, I've learned the importance of communication—truly listening, searching the *Service Manual*, using Conference Approved Literature, and placing principles above personalities.

“Experience” is sharing with others what I've learned. It's a “we” program and I can ask for help. I receive guidance, courage, and strength from Sponsors and longtime members. One of the first things I heard was, “Attitudes are contagious. Are mine worth catching?” Today I hope it's obvious that mine have changed.

I've found when my bucket runs dry, I need a “boost”—to get out and find a meeting or to talk with someone in recovery. I need to truly listen and learn. Today I'm willing, committed, and responsible. When I volunteer to do something, I try to carry it out the best I can.

Service work is important to me and to the fellowship. I'm giving back at the same time I'm expanding and exploring my program. Longtime members encouraged me. Sometimes it felt like a nudge or a push, but that is what I needed and still need sometimes today. I've been accused of nudging and pushing people I sponsor. It's important to do the necessary footwork and then “Let Go and Let God” work out the results—“One Day at a Time.”

When my energy is low or I'm feeling down and out, I know it's time for an energy boost. Maybe the Alateen issue caused an Al-Anon boost. I know it caused me to look at myself and my part. I get interested and excited about doing public outreach, having a workshop or Al-Anon Day, anything that causes me to do a little extra. My Higher Power nudged me to attend a workshop after I had been out of service for a while. I didn't realize how badly my recovery was suffering, until I saw and shared with my active friends in the fellowship that I had not seen in a while. I've been actively involved ever since.

I used to think the World Service Office took care of Al-Anon, but now I realize they get ideas and suggestions from us, the members. We are responsible for Al-Anon/Alateen. Let it begin with me!

JAN H., TEXAS (E)

When I reflect on this year's Conference theme, I think back to how I would have connected the words energy, expand, explore, and experience to my life before Al-Anon. Fifteen years ago I expended a great deal of energy in trying to make everyone around me happy, including myself. My explorations in people-pleasing only brought on endless feelings of frustration and pain. I grew up with many family members who abused alcohol and of course, I married an alcoholic. After many years of trying

everything possible to make our home a happy place, I was at my wit's end and I just wanted to say "Beam me up! My exploration is over, my energy is spent. I give up!" Thank goodness my husband reached his bottom, went to AA, and six months later I went to my first Al-Anon meeting.

Valentine's Day 1990 was a day I shall never forget. It was at my first meeting that I received hope from what ailed me—me. It was not about how I could change anyone else but how I could improve my life by applying the Al-Anon principles and working a few simple Steps. Simple, yeah right! My life unfolded in ways that leave me without sufficient words to describe the miraculous transformation that took place. I started going to as many meetings as I could, soaking up all that I heard. I was experiencing new ideas and ways to let go and let God. I was finally freed from that illusion of control. I was expanding in ways that I had never dared I could, exploring whatever the program could give me, and experiencing trust, love, and purpose as I never had before! My attitude changed from one of doom and negativity to one of hope and joy. I was becoming healthier and understanding my part in the whole picture of life. I had a new home that had endless resources to offer. Al-Anon is a channel, attached to infinite resources. The more we draw upon those resources the more we have and the more we can share with others.

One resource that I grabbed on to was a wonderful Sponsor who taught me that in order to keep the program you must give back. This is where my recovery took off and I learned many lessons of life in an environment that had some structure but at the same time allowed for flexibility and growth. I could make mistakes but I was not a mistake. I learned that I did not have to be perfect but that I was excellent in my own way.

My experience the last six years in Al-Anon as Area Chairperson, then as Delegate, has been frustrating and wonderful at the same time. Frustrating as I have had to really work on my character defects, and wonderful in that nowhere else could I have been more loved and supported.

I will remember my term as Delegate and how worldwide Al-Anon embraced change and expanded into new ways of protecting our future by taking care of its children. As we all expand and explore this new change for Alateen, all our experiences will be shared, and once again as in the past, we shall continue to learn and experience new ways to apply the principles of the program. Our fellowship will continue to expand, as there is no danger of exhausting the resources of Al-Anon.

MARGIE R., TEXAS WEST

Doctor Jonas Salk once said, "The reward for work well done is the opportunity to do more."

In July of 2004, I celebrated 25 years in Al-Anon but it took a long time before I had anything to give back. I was like a huge vacuum sucking up everything and giving back very little.

When I was elected Delegate and began studying the Traditions and Concepts in addition to the Steps, recovery started to happen for me. I began to *expand* and participate more fully in my own life, family, community, and in service to the fellowship of Al-Anon and Alateen.

When I was a new Group Representative, I heard something regarding the Traditions that I had never heard before. I doubted its authenticity because I had not studied the Traditions enough to know whether what was said was valid. My searching and fearless *exploration* of Al-Anon Conference Approved Literature became an attempt to find something that would prove or disprove what I heard.

Until that time, I had only perused the Concepts of Service. I was totally surprised to find the Concepts of Service every bit as enlightening as the Steps and Traditions. I discovered that they coincided with the principles of the other two Legacies and could even be useful in my personal recovery! What began as a need to satisfy my character defect of having to be *right* turned out to be a journey that has *energized* my personal recovery and given me the enthusiasm and the tools to carry a much healthier message.

Did I prove the member wrong and myself right? How important is it? Abraham Lincoln understood the importance of doing the right or unexpected thing when he said, "Do I not conquer my enemy by making him my friend?" I have been blessed with a great opportunity of service. I feel a direct responsibility to pump energy back by being willing, by making myself available, and by going out of my way to expand, explore, and energize!

I can't give away what I don't have, and I can't energize Al-Anon until I feel energized myself. When we come together to make the world a little better than we found it, isn't that what this program is all about?

The privilege of service has given me a way to give back—to continue to expand, explore, and experience what it is like to carry out our primary purpose.

INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATIVE

MA CARMEN R., INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATIVE—MEXICO

“ . . . That no Conference member shall be placed in unqualified authority over other members . . . ”

When I first listened to this second Warranty of the Twelfth Concept, I realized that I was in the right place. Authoritative action was the kind of behavior that I ran away from in my personal life. In my childhood I had received authoritarian and abusive orders from all adults living around me.

Later in my married life, when I was 20 years old, I found myself with the huge responsibility of four children and a husband suffering from alcoholism. My husband believed he had unlimited authority over us. It was hard for me to face this behavior and it was one of the many reasons I had to look for help.

After I arrived at an Al-Anon Family Group in Guadalajara City, I realized, without fear of being wrong, that I was in the right place. However, I could not understand this Warranty, since I could see that other more learned members, with a longer time in the group, exercised authoritarian behavior over other members.

One day I realized that every principle we have in this program was meant specifically for me. I had to make them come alive and practice them in all my life actions.

When I am giving of myself in service at the national level, I

have the responsibility to be brave and to defend these principles that express a deep and loving respect for the spiritual freedoms of our members. Facing my fears in front of any absolute authority, through service, has given me the confidence to adopt a firm position against the unlimited authoritarianism created in my country's service structure.

I deeply thank God for letting me live this experience, because I never thought that I could have the privilege of living it, not even a single day, and the privilege to visit Lois's home.

I have had the privilege of representing my country in two International Al-Anon General Services Meetings, and to attend three World Service Conferences. God had this beautiful surprise reserved for me. I commit myself every day to be a faithful servant and to give back in service the privileges that I have the opportunity to enjoy. I want to transmit these privileges in the best way possible to all the people around me.

Who can remember that girl who arrived at this group a long time ago, covered with a sea of tears and full of fears, who was not capable of making even a small choice in her personal life? Today I pray to God to let me know when I am wrong and to give me the will to change. When I am right, let me live easy with the entire world.

SPIRITUAL SPEAKERS

MIRIAM MCK., CALIFORNIA SOUTH

Each of us here at the World Service Conference, and every member of Al-Anon and Alateen, has a story to share. Our principles remind me that we're all equals and I'm humbled that my area has given me this opportunity to grow by serving as Delegate. Service gives me extra opportunities to “practice these principles in all my affairs.”

I spent the first 30 years of my life in Illinois. I am an old-fashioned dairy farmer's daughter. It's hard work, and I loved it—most of the time. There were just 38 students in my graduating class so I may not be the typical Californian that you imagined. In fact, my parents told me someday there'd be an earthquake and California would fall into the ocean and those sinners would get what they deserved. So how did this farm girl end up in San Diego, California, in Al-Anon?

My family was overly religious. There was no drinking in our home. My father told us that if a tavern were the only place left on earth that he could get a glass of water, he'd let all six of us children die of thirst rather than enter a bar. On the busy farm, at age five, I was put in charge and took on the role of “good little mom.” A caretaker-in-training and a bit extreme? Thank God that Al-Anon is helping me learn to find some middle ground. I believe that anything carried to an extreme becomes a defect. Even my love of Al-Anon/Alateen has gotten me in trouble when I've been too determined about it.

So, how did I get here? I fell in love with a guy whose garage walls were lined with beer cans. I don't know why I became obsessed with a guy so different from me. At the time I was 18 and had dropped out of my first year of college. The drugs and sex I saw there were not what I wanted. My husband was 18, too, but I thought we were both so grown up. His alcoholic father had committed suicide and I thought if someone just loved this guy, he'd be okay. He needed me, and I was so attracted to him.

Leaving the church after our wedding my husband told me we would never have children because he knew his anger was strong enough that he could kill a baby, but that I was an adult and I could run. This was a shock, but I was sure I could change his mind. After all, I'd grown up with the role of being the oldest of the family and wanted nothing more in life than to be a mom. I'd get out of bed, get on my knees, and pray to God to save this sinner. But he didn't, so it became my job. One year into our marriage, I had to agree that our home was not a place for a child. I couldn't get this guy sober. For more than a decade, I lived with and loved someone who I believed could kill me. A little extreme?

There came a day when I left with just the clothes on my back because when I left he changed the locks. Others suggested that if I'd locked myself out, wouldn't I break a window to get in? Oh, but I couldn't do that to him. Then he'd have to go to the hardware store and buy stuff and fix it and . . . So I used my last paycheck

to pay the mortgage, borrowed \$600 from the bank, and drove to California. The company I worked for had a location there too, although the job was 100% commission. There were times that I was scared and thought about going back. But I knew I'd change my mind again in the three days it would take me to get there, so I might as well stick it out in California. The job I'd had didn't work out. I pictured myself homeless or living at the YWCA. But a wonderful woman said I could come and live on her boat if I had a job by the end of the week. In three days, I had a job at a fast-food restaurant. The experience taught me I'd never have to be a bag lady. I can work. Even if it's not something I want to do for a lifetime, I can do it just for today.

That same friend introduced me to Al-Anon. I got to know my way around the big city of San Diego by going to meetings. I also made friends as I went to lots of meetings. Because I felt God let me down before, I didn't want to hear any of that God stuff, but you assured me I could take what I liked and leave the rest. There were many other tools that helped me tremendously. Working Step Four helped me realize things about me that needed to change. I got scared and thought a lifetime was not long enough to fix them all, so I quit going to meetings. But within a month, I decided that a little progress was better than none at all and so I returned, more committed to working on myself. I read our literature every day, wrote gratitude lists, journaled, and still do. I used the phone and finally became humble enough to get a Sponsor when it was time to work Step Five. I served the groups in many ways and substituted in Alateen.

Before Al-Anon, I was sure I'd never have another vacation again as long as I lived because I'd grown up poor and my husband and I were poor. God has wonderful ways of proving me wrong. My friend Judy encouraged me to travel. Living on a boat, I had nearly no possessions. I was between jobs and she said it was an awesome opportunity to go and travel the world. The books said I could do Europe on five dollars a day and that was cheaper than staying in California. So I got a passport and off I went. I was scared, but the experience taught me I could do more than I ever imagined. I also got to learn what Miriam liked. Before, I liked whatever you liked. By being alone, I had to find out what I liked.

When I returned, I was able to get another job and save money again. I put my first earned dollar into my scrapbook as a start to another trip. I learned from my parents how to live on very little, so saving money is easy for me. In fact, spending money is difficult for me. But somehow travel seems educational so I can justify it. My new job was inland and I was in an apartment with only a used mattress, folding table, and plastic four-dollar chair—not even a phone. I had uniforms for work and didn't have other clothes. My Al-Anon friends only saw my gray pants and pale blue work shirt. A little extreme? But there are two sides to everything. In over a year I had enough money saved and decided to head out on a trip again, this time for Asia. One of the awesome things I learned from this trip was the difference between religion and spirituality. In a temple, they were smashing bananas on the floor. We were told this was so the woman would have a healthy pregnancy. How weird, I thought. But then it came to me that if they came to our churches, they'd also think

our rituals are weird. For me religion is how we practice our beliefs; spirituality is what we think and feel. Through your sharings, I'm learning to accept a loving God of my understanding.

When I got back, I found another job. This job was near the coast and I got to be a boat-sitter again. What a change for a farmer's daughter. It was scary getting down to my last few dollars again, but it worked out. The first day on my way to a new job, my car engine blew up, just one month after making the last monthly payment. The boat I was moving to wasn't ready and I had to stay with friends. I told myself I'd really messed up my life. Here I was in my mid-thirties and I had no money and no keys on my key ring. I was told the choice was mine—faith or fear. Things always work out, not according to my wishes, but they work out. God has an imagination far beyond mine. If I had written my own script, I never would have even dreamt of the wonderful things that have happened to me.

Someone in Al-Anon told me I'd like Costa Rica, so I looked up where it was and decided to go. My friend who'd introduced me to Al-Anon worked for the airlines. She told me about over-bookings. She said that when they ask for volunteers to stay behind, I should be willing to "let go" of my ticket. After I'd let go of my ticket, I had second thoughts. They pointed out that besides being sent on my trip the next day, I'd be given a voucher for future travel, good for anywhere they flew. Okay, I agreed!

In Costa Rica, I visited the Al-Anon General Service Office. I realized we have so much that I take for granted. In their office, they had one desk, one chair, a phone, and their literature. My Spanish is limited, but at the meeting I attended, I could make out the slogans on the wall and feel the pain and the hope as members shared, laughed, and cried. Attending meetings while traveling helps me see the similarities in our meetings, rather than the differences. We can do things a hundred different ways and it's still okay because we share our principles and Traditions. I truly believe there is no one right way and I love our fellowship's practice of obedience to the unenforceable. Ours is a program of progress not perfection. For me, the spiritual basis of working together without rules is a practice of faith, trust, and respect.

This time I returned to the same job and excitedly told my boss about my free ticket. He said, "Go for it," not realizing I really would. While I looked through the airline's travel schedule, I saw that they flew to Africa. I never would have imagined going there. I never would have even thought to treat myself this well. But if God is paying for the airfare (that's how I see my free tickets) I could kick in the land cost. In the next months, I made plans to head for Africa. Before going, I practiced being in the moment. Future events may or may not come true. There are precious moments in the now that I would miss if I were only focused on something in the future. I also tested some of my old beliefs. In my head I could hear my father say, "You'll break both legs for having that much fun." We were taught that life was for work and suffering, not for fun. Checking out that old assumption, I asked my siblings and none of them knew anyone who'd broken both legs—so I worked at playing that old tape less and less.

Africa was an incredible journey and an opportunity to question even more of my old beliefs. As a farmer's daughter, when

I was in the Kalahari Desert I wondered why they didn't irrigate and grow vegetables. I was told that it was their spiritual belief not to alter nature. Maybe they're right. On this trip I was in a tent alone at night. All the scary fears I imagined never came true. This was also another lesson in faith, not fear, and another spiritual awakening.

I returned to the same job but my boss was not at all happy. In fact, he told me that I could not have another vacation again for a long time. I didn't ask how long a "long time" was. Through Al-Anon and Alateen, I learned to let go more and more. A few months later, I was called into my boss's office and told I'd won a national award. The prize was a luxury cruise. So not only did my boss have to let me take another vacation, his company even paid for it. This was within a year of me crying because I had no keys on my key ring. God writes incredible scripts. God even gave me another free trip when I let go of my return ticket coming home from that cruise. But prior to finding out I'd won the award, I got to practice the program. I worked next to someone who lied. I hated this man. Mild little me, I wanted to ram my pencil up his nose. But I heard in meetings that I was to pray for those I resented. I had to wish for them everything I'd wish for me. It wasn't easy, but I prayed for months that he could have what I would like – including that national award. I also wrote a lot of gratitude lists to read during the times when I hated my job. Our tools are so powerful and gratitude is a wonderful attitude for me. As a poor farmer's daughter, I thought that love was pity—but you have shown me a whole new way of life. Thank you!

Within months after the cruise, I got fired. I went straight to my regular Step study meeting. When the basket came around, I had my last paycheck in my purse. I could choose faith or fear. I made a conscious choice to double my regular contribution – another spiritual awakening. During this time I was sponsoring an Alateen meeting and an Alateen who was transitioning to Al-Anon. Through her sharings about college, I decided to attend our community college. God helped my money stretch farther than I ever imagined. I ended up getting a full scholar-

ship to an exclusive four-year school, earned a degree and a new career. God works miracles when I let go and when I'm willing to do my footwork. Life isn't always easy. My brother committed suicide and my father died in my arms. Because of your sharings in Al-Anon, I learned to be intimate. I worked the Steps, made amends, and could let go of my brother and father with love and grief.

God continues to smile on me with free tickets when I let go. On another free ticket I went to Turkey, Russia, and Paris. I met a lone member in Turkey and we remain friends today. I attended meetings in Russia and then got to host Russians in my home when the AA International came to San Diego.

After college, I married a man who is not an alcoholic. He and I took a bus trip that included Russia. Because he's not in program, I hadn't made plans to attend a meeting during this trip. Unbeknownst to me, AA was celebrating their 10th Anniversary in Russia and it just happened to be the day our tour stopped in Moscow. Through God's miracles and previous friends I'd made in Russia, an Al-Anon woman who spoke no English came to my hotel and took me to the convention. Another member whispered translation in my ear and they invited me back to attend a service meeting the following morning. There they talked about forming their Al-Anon national structure. One wanted rules, another wanted to "Let Go and Let God." They monopolized the whole meeting, but when it was over, they danced and sang together. Yes, Al-Anon works. And Alateen, too, as I can still picture the 14-year old boy who was beaming ear-to-ear throughout the weekend. If you haven't yet tried Alateen sponsorship, I can share my experience that it continues to be an awesome service for me.

I've many other worldwide Al-Anon/Alateen stories to share and hope we will see each other at a meeting some day. Because it's hearing your *experience*, strength, and hope that helps me *expand* my possibilities. Through service experiences, I increase opportunities to *explore* my defects and assets, and to grow more. And it is in coming together, with God's love, that our worldwide love *energizes* Al-Anon and Alateen.

VICKI H., CALIFORNIA NORTH

I stand here tonight blessed by a huge God—the God who led me to you in a script that I could never have written, the God who has shown Himself to me through you and countless others.

My father passed away on March 10th of this year. He would have celebrated 29 years of sobriety on March 12th. Six of his children were present at his bedside. This is significant because of the devastation that alcoholism caused in our family. The family disease wreaked havoc in our home. Children fled as soon as they were able. My mother was known as the Rock of Gibraltar for her ability emotionally to "check out" of any situation. With eight children, many years of active adolescence, and a periodic drinker as a husband, her ability to be present was nil.

My childhood was crazy at best. Since my father was a periodic drinker, we never knew if this was a drunken day or a sober day.

I learned that having friends was good, but bringing them home was not. I learned I could go to school and to my friends' houses for a respite from the insanity of my home. I learned if you were sleeping, people would leave you alone. I learned that fantasy took me places where I loved to be. I learned to use these tools as a child and continued to use them when I became an adult.

At the "all knowing" age of 16, I left home in California and moved to my oldest sister's house in Nebraska, where I spent my senior year at Murdock High. I went from a graduating class of 500 plus in California to a class of 18. Culture shock would be an understatement. In the second month of my senior year I saw a boy, painted a target on his chest, and vowed that I would have him. I knew where he went, what he ate, and what position he played on the football team. I joined the pep club and took

long walks that just happened to go past his farm house. When he finally asked me out, I was in heaven. He was the star of the town, and now by association so was I.

There wasn't much to do in such a small town, but what there was I did. I graduated with honors and five months pregnant. I knew I would be thrown out of town for having soiled their star, and that my sister would be very disappointed in me. I knew I would be all alone, but this boy and I decided to get married. We married the day after graduation. Instead of being railroaded out of town, all the little old ladies threw me a shower in the basement of the church. That was my first example of unconditional love. I was loved and no one threw me away.

We had a beautiful baby boy, but shortly after the wedding ceremony I found myself married to an abusive man. I would not have told you that then. My mother's first husband had been a physically abusive psychotic. When I left home, I knew there was one thing I would never be and that was my mother. Yet, here I was living her life. After two years, I decided to leave him and I told everyone that I just didn't love him. We had nothing in common.

I took a job at the local electronics company and found a sitter for my son. Within a short period of time, I noticed a group of people who went to have fun every night. I wanted some fun and I wanted to belong, so I started going to the bar with them after work. I could see they had fun because they drank—so I drank with them, but I wasn't very good at it. I figured out if I quickly drank the first drink like they did and then ordered a second drink, they would think I drank just like they did. I didn't even have to finish the second one. Their attention span wasn't very long, and I knew I had to fit in or I would be all alone.

Being alone became my biggest fear. I would hang out with these people for as long as I could, and I would make sure that I went home with someone. I didn't care who it was—someone's husband, brother, father, anyone. I left my son at sitters for days at a time. I would do anything to avoid being left alone.

This pattern continued for a couple of years until I could no longer live with myself. I plotted my suicide, making sure my bills were paid and that my son would be okay. When I realized what I was doing, it scared me. I had received a letter from my sister some time before this, letting me know that my father had gotten sober and I should come home. It was an absurd thought, but I was feeling desperate.

When I left Nebraska and went back home, it was very odd being in their new home. The people who lived there looked just like my parents, but aliens had obviously taken over their bodies. They used words like God and said prayers all the time. They were on the phone with other people constantly. I hated the parents who raised me, but at least I knew who they were. These people were just weird.

I got a job at another electronics company and it didn't take long to hook up with the people who were having fun. I went right back to my old routine. I met a man in a bar one night who asked me to marry him. I said "no," but it was only a month later when I moved into his house with my son. Things were wonderful for a while. You might think having met him in a bar would have given me a clue. After all, my parents had just spent

a couple of months living their recovery from alcoholism right in front of my face. Clues were not what I picked up. Instead, when things began to get really bad, I decided marriage would be the answer.

When we married, the drinking became worse. My husband had two children from a previous marriage and I had my son. Our lives revolved around drinking and partying. My husband discovered cocaine, which allowed him to drink more, and there was nothing more important to him than drinking. Parties started on Friday night and ended on Thursday. The only way for our children to be part of our lives was to be part of our partying. All three could roll a joint by the time they were ten and could run a triple beam scale like nobody's business.

When I told my husband that I couldn't live like this anymore, he said, "You had nothing when you got here, and you'll have nothing when you leave." I'd be alone, but I would do anything except that. I stayed, but I whined about it to my mother. Many times she asked me if I wanted to go to an Al-Anon meeting, and one day I said "yes."

I went to my first meeting and found immediate relief. The Twelve Steps were hanging on the wall. The First Step put it so plainly. I thought it read, "He is powerless over alcohol and his life has become unmanageable." I was ecstatic! There was the answer, so I ran home and told him the news—and he was not impressed. But it was enough ammunition to keep me going for about six months. Then my resolve wore thin and I would ask my mother to take me to another meeting. That pattern went on for six years. I went to a meeting every six months and read the First Step as it applied to him.

We were together for over nine years. The disease started out badly and it only got worse. The insanity in my home ran rampant. I remember sitting on the couch, seeing that I had turned into my mother—which was the one place I knew I would never go. And yet, there I was.

I began to spend most of my days crying. The children tried to comfort me, but there was no way they could. I found myself lying on the bedroom floor crying for hours. Then one day I knew the insanity had to end. I knew if anyone could get into my head at that moment, they would lock me up because I was stark raving mad. It no longer mattered how we got there. It just had to end, so I got up from the floor and went over to the closet where I pulled down a gun. As I was heading to the other closet to load the gun it occurred to me—should I shoot him or me? So I called my mother.

I didn't ask Mom about the shooting because I was afraid of what her answer would be, but I did ask what meetings she attended. After she told me, I said, "Good. I'm going to go to different ones." In that moment I knew if I went to meetings with her I would do what I thought she wanted me to do, and that was no longer an option. I had been to enough meetings to hear, "Half measures availed us nothing." So I attended my very first meeting where Step One applied to me. It was May 10, 1988, and I went to the newcomers' meeting. I have no idea what anyone said. I just know that for the first time in my life I was where I belonged. I felt the love that said, "We don't care where you have been, for we have been there, too."

I have been an active member of this program ever since. I got a Sponsor and started working the Steps. My worst fears came true in my first few months of recovery when my husband left me for another woman. I knew I would die, but you carried me through it. You introduced me to a God that was bigger than anything that might happen in my life. God was bigger than any mistake I could ever make. I fell in love with you and with the God you gave me. I realized if I had to be my mother in the illness, why not be just like her in her recovery?

I began to attend Al-Anon meetings with my mother. We found ourselves relating to each other as members in this incredible program, more often than we did as mother and daughter. We shared things with each other that a mother and daughter would never think of sharing. I attended my first assembly while Mother was Area Chairperson. I remember being in awe of how lovingly she listened to the minority opinion and even solicited it. I watched as she wisely guided the assembly from one issue to the next, allowing for smiles, tears, laughter, and anger—all at the same time.

I served as Group Representative and learned the most important of all lessons: “When you stand on the firing line of life, somebody will shoot at you.” I had to inform an adult child focused meeting that they were not following the Traditions. It wasn’t pretty, but we walked through our fears and came out on the other side.

At my third assembly, I decided I wanted to stay in area service and stood for Alternate Convention Coordinator. I was given the position and within three months the Coordinator stepped down and I became Convention Coordinator. I felt qualified for Alternate—but actual Coordinator? Here I learned, “God does not call the qualified. He qualifies the called.”

Next, I ran for District Representative, where I learned the principle of the group conscience. I learned that I am only a messenger or a facilitator. Any agenda I may have comes from the members. I learned how to listen to difficult discussions and that there is a spiritual solution that will work for everyone if we are just patient enough to look for it. I learned to ask questions and to listen to the answers in order to help find that solution. I watched our area panel struggle with personalities and I came to understand the importance of “principles before personalities.”

When I ran for Area Chairperson, I intended to bring back to the area everything I had witnessed in my mother. I wanted to bring the love back into the business. She and I attended all of the area world service committee meetings when she was Chair-

person, prior to her election as Delegate. She died in August of 2000, and my first assembly as Chairperson was in September. As I stood in front of the assembly, I knew God was present and I could not make any mistake bigger than He. As long as I was the best Vicki I could be, God would take care of the rest. As a result, I participated in a loving assembly where everyone was heard. We found spiritual solutions to business problems. Yes, this set of spiritual principles applies to all of my affairs.

When I stood for Delegate and the members elected me, again I felt unqualified. My first World Service Conference was just as intimidating as my first assembly had been. I knew everyone else in the room was much more qualified than I was. I vowed to keep my mouth shut and to let those that know, do. I kept my word for perhaps two hours and then I found myself being Vicki. I started bringing my area’s experience to the Conference, along with my ability to hear and understand the minority opinion. I began participating in the life that God had brought to me.

My experience as Delegate has given me the greatest gift of all—a family history. Growing up, we never discussed the history of our family. Our scars and stories were not ones to share with children, so we never discussed them. We knew my dad’s first wife had committed suicide. We knew Mom’s first husband was a physically abusive psychotic—but that was it. When I attended my first regional Delegates meeting, I heard my family history. I met the men and women who had walked this path before I did. They told stories of the old days and our beginnings. This was where I belonged. My parents had led me here through their living example and their quiet invitations to a life they discovered through the Twelve Steps of recovery.

I feel blessed to participate in healing a family that was devastated by the disease of alcoholism. I am blessed to help continue a program that offers that same healing to all families affected by this disease. I thank the members who have come before me, the members I have had the privilege to serve with, and the members who will follow.

Our Conference theme this year is: “Energize Al-Anon—Expand, Explore, Experience!” My parents’ recovery expanded my options. My willingness to work the Steps has allowed me to explore myself and my God. My service work gives me a safe avenue for experiencing a spiritual way of life—one that I learn in these rooms and practice everywhere else. Thank you for allowing me to share this walk, and for keeping the path open to those who will come in search of what we have found, long after we are gone.

CLOSING SESSION

After five days of participating in workshops and discussions, and voting on matters affecting the Al-Anon fellowship as a whole, the outgoing Delegates, Board members, and Executive Committee members were invited to share before leaving their last Conference. The following are excerpts from their sharings:

“There are less than 24 hours to go. I’ve seen a lot of miracles this week. I saw this body come together. I saw healing. I felt the “us” and “them” go away. I thank all of you for your support and love. We have started something here that we have all prayed for and that is for the good of Al-Anon worldwide.”

“Being on a Literature Committee, I’ve learned that I can read and not fall asleep.”

“My Sponsor said I would learn so much. This program has put a smile on my face and in my heart. I’ve made lifelong friends here.”

“My gratitude is for the experiences I’ve had. There are no enemies in this room or in this program. We all work for the Al-Anon program.”

“It was a microphone that drew me into service. Today I don’t need one. I came because I thought I could be a voice for those who could not be here. I will miss all of you.”

“Service is the only experience that I know that can make three years seem like 30 seconds and 30 years, all at the same time. We do this ‘boot camp bonding’ here.”

“I have come to realize your love for this fellowship and that you have its best interest at heart. I know the World Service Office has the fellowship in its heart. I hope I can help my area understand that.”

“A very sincere thank you for giving me access to this most formidable program. I now feel that I am a certifiable beginner.”

“I have always thought there was spirituality here. We’re always going to be Past Delegates and we’re going to get the *Conference Summary*.”

The Chairperson for the Closing Session thanked the attendees for making themselves available in service.

The last order of business was to hand out the scrolls. Although no one graduates from Al-Anon, the Executive Director and Conference Chairperson do present each of the outgoing Delegates with a certificate of appreciation for their contribution to the Conference and service to Al-Anon. After the scrolls had been handed out, the Chairperson officially closed the Conference.

After a brief pause, music from the 1960s was heard, as the Panel 43 Delegates danced into the general session room. “And the beat goes on...Free to be me...Panel 43 is moving on...” could be heard as they paraded to the front of the room, dressed as “flower children” and carrying signs. They twirled around, symbolizing that they were “rotating” out of their roles as Delegates. Then everyone formed a circle around the room and said the Al-Anon Declaration.

Liz W.,
Trustee
Gen B.,
Conference Chairperson, Trustee
Ric B.,
Executive Director



2005 WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE MOTIONS

Floor Discussions

World Service Conference motions presented from the floor that were not the part of a committee reportback are discussed here:

Discussion of Motion # 5

To be able to amend the 1993 Conference motion regarding the use of gender specific language in the “Handbook” section of the *Service Manual*, two motions would need to be passed by the Conference. Because of the importance of previously carried motions, a motion requesting that the Conference reconsider the 1993 motion would have to pass before a motion to amend the 1993 motion could be considered. The originator of the motion presented reasons why the motion should be reconsidered, including that many members find the current language sexist and non-inclusive, and that the purpose of communication is to convey accurate information. Because it is a reconsideration of a former Conference motion, there can be no discussion. The motion did not carry.

Discussion of Motion # 7

This motion was brought from the floor of the Conference because of concerns that the current Spanish translation of Tradition Seven refers to financial self-sufficiency, leaving out the service part of the Tradition. This had been discussed at the Conference before, but the originator of the motion felt it had not been properly addressed, and that the Spanish translation does not follow the intent of the Legacies.

As reported by the International Coordination Committee (see pages 15-16), the Board decided to follow the group conscience of the Spanish-language general service offices (GSOs), which represent over 5,000 groups worldwide. “Those GSOs worked this issue through their process, just as this Conference is working it through its process,” one Trustee said. A member asked how the revision of the service tool pamphlet, *The Seventh Tradition* (S-21) would be affected by this translation and whether it is going to be translated into Spanish. The response was that the pamphlet will be translated into Spanish and French, but it won’t affect the translation of the Tradition itself. It will contain information about all forms of self-support, including financial. The motion did not carry.

Discussion of Motion # 8

This motion, with the same wording as Motion #5, was brought to the floor later in the week, because of concerns that there was not adequate time to consider the motion the first time. Because it is a reconsideration of a former motion, there can be no discussion. The motion did not carry.

Discussion of Motion # 9

Over the past few years, the World Service Office has contracted with a communication consultant who has observed and given advice regarding its interactions. That consultant was asked to attend this year’s Conference and was seated with no voice or vote. During the Conference, some of the members felt her presence was helpful with some of the communication issues that arose. As a result, it was suggested that she be allowed to attend next year’s Conference with no voice or vote. Prior to voting on this motion, the members were asked to consider allowing her to return with a voice but no vote, giving the Conference the option of having her facilitate a workshop. One Delegate felt it was not appropriate for this Conference to make a decision—that the decision should be left to the next Conference. Because the proper procedure is to bring this matter through the Admissions/ Handbook Committee, by unanimous consensus the motion was referred to it.

MOTION #1

(96 yes, 1 no, 0 abstentions, 0 void) CARRIED

That the following persons be seated at the 2005 WSC with voice, but no vote:

David Zach	Director of Business Services Non-Al-Anon member
Colleen G.	Chairperson, Executive Committee for Real Property Management Al-Anon member
Maria del Carmen R.	International Representative, Mexico Al-Anon member

That the following person be seated with no voice and no vote:

Nancy Cole	Consultant to the Board of Trustees Non-Al-Anon member
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(See discussion on page 2.)

MOTION #2

(90 yes, 7 no, 1 abstention, 0 void) – CARRIED

To approve the 2004 Annual Report.

(See discussion on page 7.)

MOTION #3

(98 yes, 0 no, 0 abstentions, 0 void) – CARRIED

To approve the 2004 Audited Financial Report.

(See discussion on page 8.)

MOTION #4

(95 yes, 1 no, 0 abstentions, 0 void) – CARRIED

To approve the 2005 Finance Committee report.

(See discussion on page 10.)

MOTION #5

(56 yes, 41 no, 1 abstentions, 0 void) – NOT CARRIED

To reconsider the 1993 WSC motion re: gender-specific language in the Handbook section of the *2002-2004 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*.

(See discussion on page 58.)

MOTION #6

(89 yes, 7 no, 0 abstentions, 1 void) – CARRIED

To approve the text of the World Service Handbook section of the *2002-2004 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* as amended, which includes the amendments from the floor through page 17, the ad hoc report regarding committee names, and that all references to Public Information, Cooperating with the Professional Community, and Institutions be written as Public Outreach (Public Information, Cooperating with the Professional Community, and Institutions) as follows:

(See Appendix II on pages 95-114 for text as approved. See discussion on page 29.)

MOTION #7

(17 yes, 77 no, 3 abstentions, 0 void) – NOT CARRIED

To request that the WSO Board of Trustees revise the Spanish translation of Tradition Seven to match the current AA Spanish translation of Tradition Seven.

(See discussion on page 58.)

MOTION #8

(32 yes, 63 no, 2 abstentions, 0 void) – NOT CARRIED

To reconsider the 1993 WSC motion re gender specific language in the Handbook section of the *2002-2004 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*.

(See discussion on page 58.)

MOTION #9

(Referred to Admissions/Handbook Committee by Consensus)

To include Nancy Cole at the 2006 World Service Conference as consultant with no voice and no vote.

(See discussion on page 58.)

MOTION #10

(95 yes, 2 no, 0 abstentions, 0 void) – CARRIED

To amend the descriptive text of Concept Eleven on pages 180-193 in the *2002-2004 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*, Al-Anon's Twelve Concepts of Service section as follows:

(See Appendix I on pages 84-93 for text as approved. See discussion on page 28-29.)

THE ASK-IT-BASKET

Administration

1. What are the pros and cons for areas to incorporate?

See the 2002-2004 *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*, pages 92-93. The WSO can also provide the names of areas that have incorporated.

2. When a minority appeal is submitted, is the Conference always informed of it? Does the Board have the prerogative to deny it without consulting the Conference?

Concept Five gives the Board the right of decision if the appeal is made to a decision made by that body. If an appeal was about a motion of the Conference, the appeal would be made to it and Board members would participate the same as other Conference members.

3. Why doesn't the WSC have a group inventory instead of a consultant?

The Conference periodically does take an inventory. Outside participants have been a part of the Conference since its inception. The consultant was for the Board of Trustees to assist them in their communication.

4. How much does the WSO pay for a consultant?

It depends on the work being performed and the results desired. Consultants are used for a variety of reasons, e.g. technology, surveys, communication, personnel, and team-building.

5. Can WSO consider reissuing vinyl banners for easier storage and greater visibility at meetings?

The Legacies Banners are not working. Will they ever be redone in the larger print previously used?

Could we brainstorm about having three Legacy Posters that would fill requirements like: 1) Are they "user friendly?" 2) Do they display easily? 3) Do they transport easily? 4) Can home groups store them in a cupboard that they keep their CAL in? 5) When the Legacies are received when new, are they convenient to use immediately?

We will continue to study the issue. Based upon sales to the membership, the vinyl banners were not working. Nor were they easy to store. The Legacy Posters were designed for groups and small gatherings. Permission to create banners for large gatherings can be obtained from the World Service Office. We will never please everyone, as different people want to meet their needs differently.

6. What kind of training would a Delegate need to do their job better?

The Nominating Committee and Conference Committee on Trustees are exploring that idea, as well as skills for leaders at all service levels. Perhaps computer skills, ability to deal with conflict, dealing with difficult people/situations, and explaining the budget are possible skills to help all Delegates.

7. What insurance options are available to provide legal costs for members who provide service to the areas, intergroups and districts and who might be named in suits brought against the service entity for failure to sufficiently protect children and/or adults in Al-Anon/Alateen (can the WSO's insurance help provide defense for its members at the local levels too)?

Insurance is a common way to provide protections from legal action, especially at the Al-Anon information service and area levels. The WSO and some other service arms have officers and directors liability insurance which protects individual Board members in the event they are sued for actions performed in their specific capacity. Currently, it does not appear that the WSO can provide insurance to protect groups and service members as we do not have oversight or control sufficient to provide an insurable interest.

Any organization or member can be sued. Groups are harder to sue since they have little or no structure but individual members of the group may be sued as a result of specific conduct which could give rise to legal actions. The question is whether a suit would be successful. Trusted servants can protect themselves by adhering to area guidelines and requirements. (See 2004 *Conference Summary*, "Ask-It-Basket," question #7, page 59.)

8. Can we as the WSC discuss property ownership impacts now, since we are mid-way in our 15 year trial period? (The Trustees made a triennial report in 2003, but the topic wasn't opened up for WSC discussion.)

Yes, whenever the Conference chooses to discuss it, it can. (Please see Motion 12 of the 1994 *Conference Summary*.)

9. How does Al-Anon justify buying headquarters when it states "lest money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary goal," and yet it is proving too, by Al-Anon focusing for the last five years on legal protections, insurances, lawsuits, and finances rather than helping others? AA doesn't own property and is thriving. Are we depending on man rather than a power greater than we are?

No, the World Service Office is not focusing on legal protections, insurance, lawsuits, or finances. Financial support has always been an issue for Al-Anon. Some members don't see the need to carry the message as AA does. The World Service Conference voted to try to own property in 1994. Please reread all of Tradition Six, including the beginning: "Our Family Groups ought never endorse, finance, or lend our name to any outside enterprise, lest . . ." When we were leasing, we were supporting an outside entity; we no longer are.

10. Why does headquarters spend time and money on traveling? Isn't that what the groups are for?

Descriptive text of Concept One states that the Clearing House (the WSO) should do for groups what the groups can't do for

themselves. The staff and volunteer visits to other countries help strengthen existing Al-Anon structures. The goal in visiting some places is to share information on how to begin a structure. Individual groups would not have access to the background nor could they do the work involved. (See the "2005 International Travel Presentation" on pages 33-35 of this *Summary*.)

11. There is no readily accessible link from the "main" Web site to the events listing or other features within the new "Members'" area. If a person is not computer savvy in that case the lack of any apparent direct link to the "Members'" site from the "main/outside" site is likely to present a real challenge. The events listing is buried within the Members' section. Why is this so difficult? Are there instructions/directions somewhere to making access to Al-Anon Internet easier?

Yes, it has been printed in *The Forum* and is available from the Group Services Department. The Public Outreach site is for newcomers and professionals. There is intentionally no link to the Members' site. The Members' site address is listed on all literature geared toward recovery.

12. Can we begin discussion regarding realignment of the regions to more fully include participation of the many voices of the membership in Canada and US on the Board of Trustees?

Yes, any item can be discussed if sufficient numbers of Conference members vote for it. Revisions to the Regional Trustee Plan, including realignment of areas, can be submitted to the Board of Trustees for consideration or to the Conference by motion.

13. Could AFG, Inc. consider self-insurance with groups, districts, and areas contributing for a bond that would cover claims against any group, event, etc. using the Al-Anon/Alateen name?

No. Unlike other organizations, we exercise no control over individual areas. Therefore, we cannot acquire blanket insurance. This must be accomplished on an area level if desired. (Also see question #7.)

14. Many Alateen Sponsors believe that background checks go against our Traditions because it sets Alateen Sponsors apart from the rest of our trusted servants and sets a dangerous precedent of moving away from being forever nonprofessional. They believe that too much is lost from our program to justify the legal protection of Al-Anon's property. They also believe that owning property goes against the Traditions, too. They ask the WSO to divest of its property and, therefore protect us from lawsuits. Will these clearances protect Al-Anon's property? Will these clearances protect a child? Does anyone have faith that the Higher Power will protect us?

This really isn't a question but a position that the Conference discussed last year and did not agree with. Sponsors are different than regular members. They have access to our children, our most important asset. The property was never an issue for the

Board. This is a diversion to make the point of a few who refuse to accept the group conscience of the fellowship. (See the *2004 Conference Summary*.)

15. How can the membership get a better dialogue with the Trustees to ensure bottom up communication and bottom up information to their deliberations?

The Conference is the bottom up voice of the groups. Delegates need adequate time on the assembly agenda and to be invited to district meetings to communicate the issues discussed at the Conference. Electing Group Representatives and inviting members to attend district and assembly meetings gives all members an opportunity to dialogue through the links of service. Read Concept Two in conjunction with Concept One. It isn't an "either/or" situation. (See *2004 Conference Summary*, "Chosen Agenda Item #4," page 35.)

16. I believe that the Service Manual should contain explicit guidelines on how to conduct our relations and, in particular, our legal relations with the external society. (Interpretations of Traditions and Concepts governing Al-Anon's relationship with the external society with the application of the laws of the land.)

Please submit any specific ideas that you have to accomplish this and it will be referred to the appropriate committee/body for consideration.

17. Can our area and LDC find out the dollar value of literature being sold to customers/members in our area? (Our area is served by only one LDC.)

If this information is necessary to reach out to families and friends of alcoholics, it could be provided. The proper method to obtain this information is to make a written request to the World Service Office stating the reasons why having this information will improve service to members, professionals, and newcomers you serve.

18. Who should pay for the cost of all the e-mail info we will be printing, as you are encouraging this e-mail use?

This is a discussion for the areas. For most people, the cost is minimal as they already have e-mail and computers.

19. Will there be other "Special Projects" from the WSO in the future, and will those areas that participated in the last Special Project be excluded in any future ones?

There may be, but none are planned at this time. The "Prescription Al-Anon" project does take into consideration those areas that were not chosen for the "Special Project" by offering them larger amounts of literature initially.

20. Is there a timetable for how much longer the WSO will be mailing hard copies to Delegates and area service members?

No, there is no timetable nor has there been such a discussion at this time.

21. Was the change in the anonymity statement related to the Alateen minimum requirements?

No. The changes were made for consistency in wording with Tradition Twelve. See Motion 9, *2002 Conference Summary*.

Group Services

23. Does it violate any of our principles or Traditions to take personal notes in a meeting? Should you have to ask permission from the group?

Some members take notes during meetings to remind them about a principle or sharing. Professionals or students attending an open Al-Anon meeting may take notes. If the meeting is not open, the group may want to take a group conscience to allow the professional or student to attend.

24. How can we help people in country areas not feel that they will be looked down on if they attend Al-Anon?

"A warm and friendly welcome before, during, and after the meeting will make the newcomers feel part of the group and will encourage them to continue to seek help through Al-Anon." (From page 34, *2002-2004 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*.) Groups may want to establish greeters as service positions to welcome the newcomers.

25. Is it possible to hold a 5-10 minute meditation at a meeting using meditation music?

Each group is autonomous in how they conduct their meetings. This would be up to the conscience of the group. It is important that certain activities not create the impression of religious practice.

26. If a very small Al-Anon group does not have funds to pay the GR's expenses to assembly, are we breaking Tradition Seven if the district helps to pay the expenses?

Groups and districts may have fundraising events to help with Group Representative expenses to the assembly. Some districts and areas budget funds to help with these expenses. (See pages 75-77 of the "Digest of Al-Anon and Alateen Policies" section of the *2002-2004 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* regarding fundraising activities.)

27. Can WSO consider reissuing the "leaving 'hats' outside the meeting" table cards (and door hanger)? It seems to have a clearer message than current table card.

This request will be forwarded to the Group Services Department.

28. How can we help GRs to talk about finances to the groups and their district?

A workshop/topic on the Seventh Tradition at the assembly or the area world service committee is a good place to start the conversation. Conference Approved books and pamphlets have many sharings to assist the discussion. The *Seventh Tradition* pamphlet (S-21), is available on the Members' Web site at www.al-anon.alateen.org/members. (Look for a revised S-21 in the future.)

22. Where are we with the 1997 WSC bell curve?

Hopefully starting a new curve. This is a discussion which each area could have.

29. Are there guidelines for what can be posted to on-line meetings?

Guidance for on-line meetings can be found in the publication, *Fact Sheet for On-Line Meetings* (S-60), currently being revised. Registered on-line meetings can apply for license, renewed annually, to quote brief passages (no more than one paragraph) from Conference Approved Literature. For more information contact the Group Services Department at the World Service Office.

30. Our area is having trouble filling the Coordinator positions. How are other areas handling this problem?

Finding willing service workers is a periodic problem in many areas. Some have found that forming an area service or action committee can be inviting to members who may be willing to help, and can give them a little more experience and confidence to be willing to take on an area service position. Asking with enthusiasm and assuring members that we need never be alone in Al-Anon can make service positions less daunting.

31. How can we deal with decreasing membership?

Strong links of service and service sponsorship are the key to the growth of our fellowship. When more groups and members accept the message in Step Twelve, . . . "we tried to carry this message to others," more public outreach can be done. This question could be discussed at a group, and the results of the discussion brought to the district and then to the area assembly.

We also need to welcome newcomers when they do attend and be sure to keep in contact with them so that they know they are welcome. (See also *2004 Conference Summary*, "Chosen Agenda Item #1" floor discussion, page 33.)

Participation in Service

Questions pertaining to attracting and keeping members involved in service work are asked every year and the many ideas suggested are reported in each year's *Conference Summary*. The following are questions from the 2005 Conference. References to the full discussions from previous Conferences are noted:

32. How do we encourage members to expand their service work? How does participation create enthusiasm? What are some ideas to generate interest to serve Al-Anon above the group level (i.e.: district, area, world service levels)?

Enthusiasm and seeing and hearing about projects where members take action is catching. Action committees that are taking action create enthusiasm and can encourage members to participate. We all want to be part of exciting things. (See also the "Assembly Attendance" discussion on page 35 and the "Al-Anon at 53" discussion on page 38 of the *2004 Conference Summary*.)

33. How can we get and keep more members in service? How can we better educate our members to the importance of Al-Anon service? What can we do to raise the commitment level of members of Al-Anon/Alateen to service work? How do we take the fear out of participation in service? How can we deal with lack of commitment (members are in the mode of to each its own)?

Our own leadership example can be a powerful incentive for members to think about making a commitment to service. Chair meetings using *When I Got Busy, I Got Better* (P-78) (there are chapters about fear and commitment), Concept One, and the materials given to every Group Representative with the WSO special project presentations. Chair a meeting on *Service Sponsorship: Working Smarter, Not Harder* (P-88), encourage attendance at regional service seminars, and speak positively about your own service. For ideas, see the *2003 Conference Summary*, question #1 under "Participation in Service" on page 37 and the *2004 Conference Summary*, "Attracting Newcomers to Service" on page 36.

34. How can we make district and area meetings more enjoyable so newcomers will want to return? Service sponsorship is a vital aspect of our program. How can we get and keep more members in service? Can we provide some assistance for Al-Anon members regarding sponsoring dual members?

This topic was a "Chosen Agenda Items Workshop" discussion at the 2004 Conference. Personal recovery and service go hand-in-hand. Sharing our own experiences in meetings, chairing meetings on ways to increase our personal recovery, inviting newcomers to go with us to district and area functions, offering to be a Service Sponsor—all of the ideas begin with us. (For further ideas, see the "Chosen Agenda Items Workshop" discussion, *2004 Conference Summary*, page 34.) We sponsor dual members as we would any Al-Anon member in personal sponsorship. Service sponsoring a dual member is the same as any other Al-Anon member, encouraging them to participate on committees and wherever district and area autonomy allows.

35. What are some ways we can re-energize service drop-outs? How do we motivate long-term members who used to be involved in service to come back into service?

This could be an interesting workshop topic at the area assembly. A personal invitation to members with past experience to attend an assembly or to participate on action committees might energize them. For ideas, see the *2003 Conference Summary*, question #2, "Participation in Service" on page 37.

36. "Group conscience" is an expression/term that is a common expression/activity in Al-Anon/Alateen. Is "group conscience" defined/explained in any piece of literature? If not, shouldn't it be? (Members/groups go to the Manual/literature for definition/guidance regarding "group conscience.")

Group conscience is discussed in sharings about Tradition

Two in Al-Anon Conference Approved Literature. The Group Binder (M-59) is being updated and a new page regarding group conscience decisions is being added. To obtain a copy, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to the Group Services Department.

37. How do I, as a member of Al-Anon, address the issue when another member reading Tradition Eleven out loud at an Al-Anon meeting adds "radio, TV, film, and Internet"?

This is an opportunity to chair a meeting on Tradition Eleven and to help educate the group. The Conference Charter (page 144 of the *2002-2004 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*) explains, "...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." We ask all members to honor the Legacies as written as they reflect the group conscience of Al-Anon around the world. (Also see question #95.)

38. Isn't the Al-Anon message diluted when a member mentions another fellowship in their sharing? How do we minimize the distortion and dilution of the program at meetings? How should we deal with Al-Anon being watered down? How can we welcome dual members to our groups, yet keep the focus Al-Anon in our meetings?

The group conscience may decide how it chooses to approach this topic. Consider leading a meeting on *The Al-Anon Focus* (P-45) or *Al-Anon Spoken Here* (P-53). Mentioning another fellowship can divert us from our primary purpose so we ask members not to do so.

39. How does a district handle a double winner who goes from group to group, listens to others' sharings, and uses their names as people she has helped in her profession in order to get government grants?

The group may choose to use the Al-Anon guideline, *Taking a Group Inventory* (G-8) as a first step. Additionally, discussion of the "Three Obstacles to Success" found in *Alcoholism, the Family Disease* (P-4) may encourage the group to talk to each other and reason things out. Talking to the offending member after the meeting may also help resolve the issue.

40. Wouldn't it be advisable to change page 67 of the Service Manual to include Narcotics Anonymous as well as AA under "Dual membership"? What about an Al-Anon member who is also EA or OA or NA etc. serving as a trusted servant? Could that be a problem of main focus?

Except for AA members, members of other Twelve Step programs may serve above the group level. If an Al-Anon member is an AA member and also belongs to another fellowship, the person would be ineligible to serve by virtue of membership in AA. Our close relationship is with AA, as shown in our Traditions. We do not have a similar relationship with the other Twelve Step programs. (See *2003 Conference Summary*, "Ask-It-Basket," question #43 on pages 64-65.)

41. Is it a sacred duty and obligation for all Al-Anon members especially its trusted servants to maintain, protect the safety of the newcomer in the meeting room?

Study and knowledge of the Traditions within the group brings safety to every member in the group thus the newcomer will be safe as well. All group members should be aware of inappropriate behavior and confront it as soon as practical.

42. Is sale of items other than those available from WSO with Al-Anon logo [logo displayed] by a distribution center a violation of Traditions?

The WSO does not sell trinkets. It is up to the autonomy of the local literature distribution center whether to sell particular fundraising items. (See “Avoiding Commercialism” on page 75 of the *2002-2004 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*.)

43. If a group has “sharing off the topic” for 10 minutes at the start or end of meeting, is this Al-Anon?

It is up to the autonomy of the group conscience, provided the group adheres to the primary purpose of the program. A periodic group inventory of the practice may be helpful.

44. How do we find and keep people to take over and continue the service?

Encourage service through sponsorship; share experience, strength, and hope. Bring the enthusiasm of district, area, and Conference through reports.

45. Isn't it imperative to know what our primary goal is, name it, adhere to it then set other goals beyond this? Could we have the primary goal printed out and visible at every meeting?

The primary purpose (goal) of Al-Anon is to help the families and friends of alcoholics, which is stated in the Al-Anon Preamble found in all Conference Approved Literature, and may be read at the beginning of the meeting.

46. What can Al-Anon (WSO, area, districts) do to stop or slow down the decline of Al-Anon groups in rural locales?

Groups may sponsor or adopt a group—get in the car and travel to rural locations. Members can consider putting Step Twelve into action by doing public outreach in gathering places—such as placing posters at Laundromats, food stores, and churches.

47. How can we address the lack of sponsorship/service work by members in groups that is contributing greatly to the decline of Al-Anon groups?

Have a meeting on the benefits of sponsorship using the pamphlets *Sponsorship, What It's All About* (P-31) and *Service Sponsorship: Working Smarter, Not Harder* (P-88). “Let It Begin with Me” and carry the message.

48. Is the use of the Lord's Prayer at any Al-Anon function affiliating Al-Anon with a sect, denomination, or organization (Christianity)?

No. Because of the close and historical relationships that

Al-Anon has to AA, it was natural and expedient for our members to adopt the practice based upon their familiarity with open AA meetings. Any prayer or spiritual moment used to close the meeting is chosen by the group conscience of that group.

49. Would a policy (or suggestion) to use the “Al-Anon Declaration” as a closing rather than a prayer, help Al-Anon membership by appearing more “inclusive” to newcomers?

The closing prayer or spiritual moment is up to the autonomy of each group conscience. (See page 46 in the “Al-Anon and Alateen Groups at Work” section of the *2002-2004 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*.)

50. Would it be beneficial to have new groups register through their area first? What would be the benefits? What would be the drawbacks?

This is up to area autonomy. There are some areas that register groups through the area first. If you are interested in more information, contact the WSO. The pros and cons must be identified and discussed at the area level as it makes its decisions.

51. Each group is supposed to be represented by one GR at an assembly and gets one vote for her group. In some areas, where funds are limited, two groups put their funds together and send one GR who brings the information back. Shouldn't the GR have two votes, one for her group and one for the group that gave her travel funds, so each group is represented by a vote at the assembly?

No. See page 67 in the “Digest of Al-Anon and Alateen Policies” section of the *2002-2004 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*: “No member may, however, be Group Representative (GR) of more than one group at the same time.”

52. Why do we not use the AA format suggested for doing Step Four? It is so simple.

See pages 81-84 in the “Digest of Al-Anon and Alateen Policies” section of the *2002-2004 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*: “AA literature is written for and from the viewpoint of alcoholics and is not Al-Anon/Alateen Conference Approved Literature.”

53. Why do we not address the diverse needs of minority groups in our Service Manual?

The responsibility to do outreach belongs to the groups, districts, and areas as stated in the Fifth Tradition “...one purpose: to help families of alcoholics...” What specifically would you suggest?

54. Why do we print a whole new Service Manual rather than just making adjustments available to add to the Manual?

Past experience has shown that issuing single sheet changes was not successful. Cost savings are minimal and the cost of distribution and spoilage are great. The World Service Office changed to the current system in 1995.

55. It is not uncommon for Al-Anon speakers selected for Al-Anon or AA conferences and conventions to be an

advocate of the AA “Big Book” and its benefits to their personal recovery. How can the WSO and the Delegates work together to provide information to Conference Coordinators and the committees that select speakers that Al-Anon speakers need to reflect the Al-Anon program?

This discussion should happen at the planning committee before speakers are chosen. The Al-Anon guideline, *Members Interested in Speaking* (G-1) is available on the Members’ Web site, www.al-anon.alateen.org/members. Other resources include pages 80-84 in the “Digest of Al-Anon/Alateen Policies” section of the *2002-2004 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27), *Al-Anon Spoken Here* (P-53), and *Why Conference Approved Literature?* (P-35).

56. What can we do to keep newcomers coming back?

See the “Chosen Agenda Item #4: Attracting Newcomers” discussion in the *2003 Conference Summary*, pages 34-35.

57. Traditions and Concepts are rarely talked about at meetings. How can we introduce a better attitude toward them?

Consider chairing meetings on the Traditions and Concepts of Service using *Paths to Recovery* (B-24). Each chapter includes key words that can be used as topics such as responsibility, participation, leadership, authority, etc.

58. How do we promote the use of Sponsors?

Consider holding a meeting on sponsorship using *Sponsorship, What It’s All About* (P-31) and *Service Sponsorship: Working Smarter, Not Harder* (P-88). (See question #47, as well as *2004 Conference Summary*, “Ask-It-Basket” question #37 on pages 62-63.)

59. How can we make communication between the Board of Trustees/WSO and the groups more consistent and timely? Examples: Concept Eleven text for the *Service Manual*, group records receiving updated information on registered groups.

We are using the e-buddy system to get messages to all Delegates in a timely manner. The Concept Eleven text was distributed in 2003 and 2004 as well as 2005. Outgoing Delegates need to pass the information to incoming Delegates. Group Records Coordinators can send information electronically or by mail, fax, or e-mail. A monthly mailing from the WSO to the Group Records Coordinators includes the following types of changes processed: inactive groups, new group registrations, group name changes, reactivated groups, annual updates, current mailing address (CMA) changes, and new group questionnaires.

60. How does a meeting find balance between welcoming newcomers and continued growth for longer time members? This refers to meeting content and environment.

Consider having a group conscience meeting on how the group will hold its meetings and how it will welcome newcomers. This is a group autonomy decision. Some groups split off into a beginners’ meeting. Others take the newcomer aside so that he/she can get the necessary attention.

61. Would changing the term for most three-year service positions, such as GRs, DRs, Delegates, etc., to shorter two-year terms cause an increase of members to volunteer for these positions and thus get more members involved in service?

Al-Anon history regarding three-year terms is documented in Article 8 of the Conference Charter on page 145 of the “World Service Handbook” section of the *2002-2004 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*: “...this method was adopted because some AA’s found that their two-year plan resulted in too fast a turnover and the valuable experience of two-year delegates was lost to the Conference.”

62. When is an individual member stopped for talking too long and monopolizing an Al-Anon meeting? How can this be done tactfully?

Each member has a responsibility to assist the Chairperson to keep members adhering to the group conscience. If this is a continual problem, the member should be approached after the meeting. If it still persists, then a group conscience is necessary.

63. How do we terminate a meeting that is not following Traditions and detrimental to Al-Anon as a whole?

It is the District Representative’s duty to visit groups “to help the groups understand and apply the Traditions, which guide us in our fellowship activities” (page 135, “World Service Handbook” section of *2002-2004 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*). Also, page 79 of the “Digest of Al-Anon and Alateen Policies” section of the *Manual*, under “Autonomy of Groups,” states, “In keeping with the Traditions and Warranty Five of Concept Twelve (see page 205), local, area, or WSO service entities have no authority to close a group or engage in other punitive actions against a group because they disapprove of the manner in which a group practices the Al-Anon program.” As always, talk to each other and reason things out. If the group refuses to abide by the Traditions, you can ask whether they would like to call themselves something other than Al-Anon or Alateen.

64. When a GR’s term is over, what does the group do when all its members are double winners? This is a problem in several groups in our district.

A group inventory may be necessary to determine why the group is not attracting new members. Dual members may not serve as Group Representatives. (See “Digest of Al-Anon and Alateen Policies” section of the *2002-2004 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*, page 67.)

65. Can we use CDs of Al-Anon speakers in our meetings? At speaker meetings?

This is a group conscience decision. For meeting ideas, see the “Groups at Work” section of the *2002-2004 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*, pages 36-37.

66. What can we do when someone who used to be in AA says he/she is no longer an alcoholic and wants to be a

Group Representative?

Members need to have a discussion at the group level. Whether an AA member can serve beyond the group is not within the group's autonomy, since the group conscience of

Al-Anon, through the Conference, has set that policy. In exercising its autonomy, a group comes to a decision on whether that person should serve, not whether or not that person is a member of AA.

Fellowship Communication

67. How can our CAL become more available in more formats i.e., CAL books on tape and CD for ALL members use: those who have vision problems, hearing problems, reading/comprehension problems, time issues - for all members? Would it be possible for the area to have literature available on audio?

We are currently studying options for publishing electronic literature. As we do, we are also looking into the feasibility of audio formats. It is our charge to study the options carefully. As with any changes that occur in Al-Anon, we must rely upon the group conscience process before new procedures or materials can be made available to the fellowship. Our first electronic version of a piece of Conference Approved Literature will be *Courage to Change*. It will soon be available in a CD-ROM format that you can read by inserting the disc in your PC. If you have a sound chip on your PC you can also listen to the daily readings. You won't be able to make copies or download it. We will notify the membership with announcements in our WSO publications and on the Web sites when this and other new items are available. Prior audio offerings did not sell and so were discontinued. Districts wishing to create tapes for sight-impaired members can contact the World Service Office.

68. Are there any plans to put Al-Anon literature on tapes (i.e., books on tape)? If not, why not? If so, how does a member get such material? What needs to be done to set Al-Anon literature on tape?

See question #67. As stated, previous attempts were unsuccessful. Few members bought them, and some of those who did copied them for other members, making them cost-prohibitive for the WSO to produce. A set of daily reader tapes could cost between \$30-\$60 dollars each to have a professional voice.

The areas were polled through their Delegates several years ago. The results did not indicate enough demand for these items to warrant producing them at that time. As stated in question #67, if it becomes financially feasible, the situation would change. To find Al-Anon/Alateen materials available in large print, Braille, and on audiotape, see the Al-Anon/Alateen Directory for Members with Special Needs (S-14), available on the Members' Web site, www.al-anon.alateen.org/members. These materials are primarily available through agencies serving the visually or hearing impaired in the US and Canada.

69. Has WSO gotten a better book publisher? Past copies of *Courage to Change* have had bindings that don't last and pages that fall out.

When *Courage to Change* (B-16) was first published in 1992, there were separation problems that occurred as a result of the binding process, so corrections were made. Separation problems can normally occur after five or six years of heavy use. For

unusual problems with material or workmanship, please note the title and printing date of the item and inform the WSO's Customer Service Department. We are no longer offering adjustments on the earlier printings of *Courage to Change*.

70. Regarding *Alcoholism, the Family Disease* (P-4), I would like to suggest that this pamphlet be reviewed because of some of the language used in it. I believe the pamphlet, while reflecting where Al-Anon stood in 1972 (the year it was published) may have examples which do not reflect today's view of Al-Anon. For example, page 29, Step Ten, last paragraph where it states, "Since our concern is with the alcoholic...." I think we emphasize that our first concern is with our own recovery.

Based on results of the area literature inventory, the Literature Committees recommended minor revisions to this pamphlet, which are included in the 2005 printing. Please send any suggestions to the Literature Committees.

71. This question concerns the publication and distribution of pamphlets which do not carry the CAL designation. Page 81 of our *Service Manual* does describe that service tools are developed and that also, such publications as *The Forum*, *Inside Al-Anon Xtra*, guidelines, etc. do not go through the CAL process.

Please refer to *Why Conference Approved Literature* (P-35) under the question, "What about *The Forum* and other WSO publications?"

72. I would like to have the reference where and when the decision was made to develop and publish service tools which, while being subjected to a rigorous approval process, are not Conference Approved. Is there a motion or record of the decision when this process was started?

Service tools have been in existence since the early days of the program. (See the 2002 *World Service Conference Summary*, Motion # 12, page 61.)

73. Will there be a reader or pamphlet addressing sex or intimacy? Is it going to be a chapter of the new *Recovery in Relationships*?

There are no Conference motions authorizing development of a new pamphlet or daily reader addressing sex or intimacy. These topics currently appear in *Living with Sobriety* (P-49), *Dilemma of the Alcoholic Marriage* (B-4), and . . . *In All Our Affairs* (B-15). OUR RECOVERY IN RELATIONSHIPS (working title) needs more sharings on these subjects.

74. Pages 83-84 in the *Service Manual* says brief excerpts

from outside material may be part of personal sharing but only CAL should be used and displayed so isn't this contradictory? How can we share from other than CAL and not display it? Could this wording be changed so it is more concise?

Mentioning outside material as part of one's sharing at a meeting is not considered "use or display" of outside material by a group. The Policy Committee discussed this sentence during the year and decided no change was needed.

75. When did the entire *Service Manual* become Conference Approved Literature (CAL seal is on page 2)?

The individual sections of the *Service Manual*, the "Digest of Al-Anon and Alateen Policies," the "World Service Handbook," and the "Al-Anon's Twelve Concepts of Service" are approved by the Conference.

76. Has using gender neutral language ever been considered for Al-Anon literature as well as for the Steps and Traditions?

Someone would like to see the male pronoun used in referring to a Higher Power changed to more inclusive language. Why does the God of my understanding have to be male?

Since women make up the majority of our membership in Al-Anon, why do we continue to use the masculine pronouns of "he/him" in our literature when the pronouns "us/they/them": would include all people?

To change the language in the Steps, Traditions, or Concepts of Service would require a vote of the Conference and then written consent of three-quarters of all of the Al-Anon/Alateen groups in the world. (See Conference Charter, 3d.) This is an outside issue and one on which Al-Anon has no opinion. Our literature reflects the views and experiences of individual members and not Al-Anon's position.

77. There have been incidents of removing religious material from public places, such as the Ten Commandments, etc. What would happen to our program if we had to take God or Higher Power out of our literature?

This is an interesting question for an area or district workshop. The wording for our Legacies can be changed, but only if three quarters of all Al-Anon groups worldwide approve each change.

78. Can we copy stuff from our literature (that doesn't specifically give copy permission) for handouts at our Al-Anon/Alateen group meetings? How about for handouts at open speaker meetings?

Material from Al-Anon literature may be copied for use in Al-Anon/Alateen meetings without written permission from the WSO. Other uses do require permission, so when in doubt, it's best to ask the WSO. See "Reprint Authorization" on page 86 of the "Digest of Al-Anon Policies" section of the *2002-2004 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*. Also see the copyright/reprint section under the "Publications" department of the Members' Web site, www.al-anon.alateen.org/members.

79. If double winners is not an Al-Anon word, should we take it out of *How Al-Anon Works*?

The term "double winners" is used in some parts of the fellowship as an affectionate reference to people who are dual members of both Al-Anon and Alcoholics Anonymous. Its use in *How Al-Anon Works* is in the title of a personal story. See the pamphlet, *Al-Anon Spoken Here* (P-53), and the index to the *2002-2004 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27) under "Dual membership" for explanations about use.

80. Promises in the *Pathways to Discovery* (sic): Are they our official Al-Anon promises?

You are probably referring to the book, *Paths to Recovery* (B-24). The Policy Committee, upon reviewing a request to consider an excerpt from the book, *From Survival to Recovery*, as Al-Anon's promises, determined by substantial unanimity that Al-Anon has no "promises." It was the Committee's further consensus that the passage not be promoted or reproduced as "promises" or "gifts." In Al-Anon we offer newcomers our experience, strength, and hope. We don't make promises because each individual's needs and situations are different.

81. Would it be possible for WSO to create a book of memorable quotes heard at meetings, i.e.: HUGS "How You Get Serenity?" Would it be helpful to WSO to have volunteers to record some of our literature?

When the Literature Committees considered this question recently, the members concluded that this is something that *The Forum* already does. (See "Stoppers" in *The Forum*.) Members are welcome to submit their ideas. If the question about volunteers recording some of our literature refers to making audio tapes, please see the response to question #67.

82. Why is the "Prayer of St. Francis" used on the *Just For Today* bookmark? Why does some of our literature portray our Higher Power as a male figure or in the image of a Judeo-Christian God? Shouldn't we suggest groups not use prayers (i.e.: The Lord's Prayer and Our Father) specific to any religious affiliation in their meetings?

The prayer by St. Francis is in the public domain. Early in our fellowship it was felt that this prayer exemplified the Al-Anon philosophy. By following the spirit of our Third Tradition, however, which suggests that we have no other affiliation, credit for the prayer has not appeared on the bookmark since at least 1976.

83. Can the WSO develop literature that addresses the specific problems of mental illness, chronic illnesses and homelessness, as they relate to the family disease of alcoholism?

Members can share on how they applied the principles of Al-Anon to these types of problems, and send them to *The Forum* or other literature in development. The book . . . *In All Our Affairs* may also be helpful.

Public Outreach

84. How can we keep our Coordinators and their committees working on their projects until completed without having to police each step?

While a project is in the developmental stage, it would be a good idea to ask the Coordinator or another designated member to create a timetable for the project that includes periodic updates. Please refer to the workbook, *The Best of Public Outreach* (P-90). It gives suggestions for forming a committee, developing, and implementing a project, celebrating its completion, and is adaptable to any type of committee.

85. What methods can be used to help get more professionals aware of what Al-Anon can do for their clients?

The methods are as limitless as the imagination and may depend upon the type of profession. There are, however, key elements. Before starting a project, it is important to set reasonable expectations and to plan to re-contact professionals at periodic intervals throughout the year. It usually takes more than one mailing, one phone call, or one appointment to be effective. The idea is to build a rapport that is ongoing rather than a one-time contact.

Offering current meeting schedules and letting professionals know how to reach Al-Anon locally is vital. Professionals are busy, so it is important to keep a personal visit or phone call brief. Provide only a small amount of literature that is short, easy to read, and to the point. You can also give the professional the option of receiving additional information as well as meeting schedules. Refer also to the Al-Anon guideline *Outreach to Professionals* (G-29). Another idea is to call several members or invite them to an Al-Anon workshop to identify how they (as professionals) like to receive information and what makes them respond to an inquiry.

86. Is it time for Al-Anon to expand their thinking to include more...to help those suffering from all drugs, not just alcohol? Are we not affected the same whether our loved one is suffering from alcoholism or a different drug addiction?

Although it would be more convenient to only attend one support group, using Al-Anon as a “one size fits all” program is a misrepresentation of Al-Anon’s purpose. Al-Anon’s meetings, literature, materials, and shared experiences of members are about the impact of a relative or friend’s alcoholism upon our lives. While we know that other Twelve Step family support programs are not as plentiful as Al-Anon groups, Al-Anon cannot alter its purpose to accommodate everyone. It is important that all who attend Al-Anon feel welcome and be allowed to decide for themselves if they feel their lives are affected by alcoholism. Having more open meetings for anyone interested in learning about Al-Anon would help newcomers know what Al-Anon is before they start attending closed Al-Anon meetings.

87. What actions can be taken to reach and retain more family and friends who are affected by another person’s

alcoholism into our Al-Anon/Alateen fellowship? What actions can be taken to reverse the trend of the world-wide decrease of Al-Anon/Alateen membership? How can we increase the numbers of Al-Anon/Alateen groups and members?

Public Outreach projects provide information to the general public and the professionals who help families and friends of alcoholics. *The Best of Public Outreach* (P-90) workbook has more than 100 ideas for activities. Our Membership Survey shows that 38 percent of the members reported that they came to Al-Anon and then left for an average of three years before coming back. Members can take the initiative to contact a newcomer or a member who has stopped coming to Al-Anon. It is a way of saying “we care.”

Concept One places the responsibility for Al-Anon world services upon the Al-Anon Family Groups. This means that members locally must take the initiative to start and support a group. It takes time, patience, and faith to establish a group. So, it is important not to give up too soon or if there are only a few people at the meeting.

88. How can Al-Anon better reach our local churches and clergy?

Are we lacking communication with clergy? What types of outreach projects have been done with/for the clergy? How do we get across to the clergy that Al-Anon is also for them?

Members can make direct and multiple contacts with the clergy, seminaries, religious facilities (churches, synagogues, mosques, etc.), and congregations. Ask clergy who are specifically familiar with Al-Anon for the best way to communicate with other spiritual leaders. Clarify that Al-Anon is spiritually based rather than religious. Also refer spiritual leaders to the Al-Anon/Alateen Membership Survey results. A World Service Office staff member recently attended a religious leaders’ summit of clergy from all major denominations to explain how Al-Anon can be a reliable community resource.

89. We are making or have published free outreach pamphlets for adult children, men, gays and lesbians, dual members, etc. Why can’t we produce a free outreach pamphlet with the same sort of information inside entitled “Al-Anon is for anyone bothered by someone else’s drinking” so it can be used for anyone who might not fit into any of the above categories?

Outreach service tools are designed to attract the people who are not yet coming to Al-Anon. Not everyone identifies the same way. People need to have a sense of identification that even though they think they are “different” from others, they are welcome to come to Al-Anon.

Once people come to Al-Anon and start to work the program, they see that spiritually, we are all the families and friends of alcoholics even though our circumstances, stories, and backgrounds are different.

There has been much discussion on the best way to reach out

to specific groups of people who could benefit from Al-Anon. We have had generic outreach materials for many years, and we need to give our targeted materials a try. Your idea will be forwarded to the Public Outreach Committee for consideration.

90. How can the WSO better succeed at taking advantage of cutting-edge technologies in order to achieve a 24/7 access and availability of information about Al-Anon/Alateen?

Members' individual contributions and the purchase of literature helps to financially support the WSO so that it can upgrade and expand our technological services to the fellowship, professionals, and the public.

Many ideas are under consideration for improving access to information by members, professionals, the media, and potential newcomers. To be effective, there have to be a variety of ways to communicate with people. Besides having a Technical Services and a Web site Coordinator, the WSO also utilizes a Computer Consultant to provide expertise and to assist with uses of technology.

91. How can Al-Anon service arms (the WSO, areas, districts, and Al-Anon information services) leverage the Internet and cutting-edge technologies effectively to empower the groups' public outreach efforts and responsibilities?

This is a great question for discussion at every level of service. Currently 58 out of 67 areas (86.6 percent) have Web sites linked from the WSO site; 55 of these sites include area-wide meeting information. Today, about 90 percent of the geographic area of the US and Canada has meeting information posted on-line.

Not all technology is "Al-Anon friendly" or suitable for use by Al-Anon. A portion of the fellowship fears the Internet or does not have access to it. Most of all, members need to provide their area and local service arms with the financial support and encouragement to utilize the Internet to expand the availability of Al-Anon information. Members who have the necessary technological skills need to volunteer their services.

92. How can the WSO, areas, districts, and Al-Anon information services better utilize and organize their respective resources (for example, volunteers, time, and money) to communicate with the general public, professionals, and potential newcomers? If each service arm had unlimited and abundant resources, what could they do that they are not doing now? How can groups, districts, areas, and the WSO work together as partners?

All levels of service could benefit from discussing this question. Groups can be sure they are linked to their district and area by having and supporting a Group Representative. Districts can encourage their groups to participate in local and area activities, and send a District Representative to assemblies and area world service committee meetings. Area trusted servants can be sure to keep information flowing between their area and the WSO. The WSO is a clearinghouse for all levels of service, provides tools for all areas of service, and implements outreach efforts on the

national level. If all the links of service stay connected, and if project ideas and activities are communicated in all directions in Al-Anon's service structure, partnership among our service arms would seem to be a natural occurrence and outcome. The WSO welcomes suggestions to improve our connectedness.

93. Attracting people with many types of ethnicity and backgrounds was a goal agreed upon by consensus at the World Service Conference. How can the areas, Al-Anon information services, districts, and groups partner/cooperate with the WSO's efforts and share the responsibility?

Local members can have Al-Anon's service tools for diverse populations available at meetings and distribute them outside of the meeting rooms. These service tools are designed to help people in these populations identify and to attend a meeting. When they come to the meeting, treating them with the same dignity and respect given to other members will communicate the message of welcome and acceptance.

94. How can Al-Anon as a fellowship embrace potential newcomers and members' differences without requiring that we all think alike, speak alike, and be alike?

The goal of our outreach service tools is to attract individuals from all types of backgrounds to our meetings. As a fellowship, we can celebrate our individuality and practice our principles of unity and singleness of purpose. By avoiding the "Three Obstacles to Success," we can avoid controversy and dissension so that people from a variety of backgrounds will feel welcome. (See *Alcoholism, the Family Disease* [P-4].)

95. Since the Internet is considered a publication, do you for see that someday the word "Internet" will need to be added to Tradition Eleven (press, radio, TV, film and Internet)?

No, a change to the Traditions would require a vote of the World Service Conference to poll all of the Al-Anon/Alateen groups in the world and a favorable written vote by three-fourths of all the groups to make a change. (See Conference Charter, 3d., 2002-2004 *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*, page 144). The WSO interprets the Tradition as "at the media level." (Also see question #37.)

96. How do we overcome cultural barriers to carry the message to non-English speaking people?

Alcoholism does not impact non-English-speaking members differently than English-speaking members. Alcoholism and its effects on the family transcend cultural differences. An explanation of the principles regarding anonymity, gossip, dominance, and religion will help to break down barriers.

97. Is Al-Anon a "closed" society? There are so few open meetings for the public, professionals, or anyone thinking there may be a problem of alcoholism in the family. How can we attract newcomers without being more "open?"

This is an excellent topic for a workshop at any level of service.

Alateen

98. What is the definition of inappropriate sexual behavior in the new Alateen requirements?

Overt (in the open) or covert (hidden) sexual interaction is inappropriate sexual behavior. It includes unwanted verbal statements, touching, rubbing, or other contact which can be perceived to be sexual and makes either party or audience uncomfortable.

99. How can we all continue to ensure the long term viability of Alateen?

The Alateen Safety and Behavioral Requirements set the foundation for Alateen long-term viability. We can continue the effort by encouraging qualified members to become “Al-Anon Members Involved in Alateen Service” using the area’s process. All members who are providing service to Alateen need our support. Creative ideas of members and suggestions to the areas are needed so that service to Alateen easier and more attainable for them.

100. How can we increase the participation of Al-Anon members in Alateen (i.e.: adults in support and service positions and more Al-Anons bringing their children to Alateen)?

See response to #99. Areas can also encourage each Al-Anon group to help identify additional members to apply as an Al-Anon Member Involved in Alateen Service.

Perhaps the area would also want to ask the Group Representatives to take this question back to the Al-Anon groups regarding why Al-Anon members are not bringing their own children and what could be done to encourage them.

101. Alateen serves a wide range of age groups. Does the current literature meet the needs of all age groups in Alateen? Also, is the focus of the literature too limited, concentrating mainly on parental drinking, instead of a variety of sharings addressing other family members and friends?

All Al-Anon/Alateen literature is based on the shared experiences of our members, so Alateen literature reflects the Alateen membership. Alateen literature is written by Alateen members and addresses the issues of Alateens. The WSO receives very few sharings from Alateens below the age of thirteen or addressing relationships with alcoholics other than parents. Younger member sharings are published on the “Younger Member” page of *Alateen Talk*. Each registered Alateen group receives this publication quarterly.

102. Why is it so hard to find Alateen Sponsors within Al-Anon? There seems to be more people outside the fellowship interested than within.

Alateen’s history shows that this problem has been in existence since the beginning of Alateen. See #100 for increasing Al-Anon support of Alateen.

103. How can we best coordinate the Alateens and

Sponsors so we have both at the same time?

Plan the Alateen meeting so that it is at the same time and place as an Al-Anon meeting, enlist the support of the Al-Anon meeting, let surrounding AA and Al-Anon meetings know of the group. Another option would be to take the meeting to where the children are—such as having Alateen meetings at a school.

104. Will the WSO cover legal expenses if an Area Al-Anon Member Involved in Alateen Service is sued?

No, the area person is not certifying or guaranteeing that the Al-Anon Member Involved in Alateen Service will not harm a child. The area person is only certifying that the person meets the criteria required under the area process.

105. Has WSO been completely honest and upfront with the fellowship for the reason behind the Alateen motion?

Yes. See pages 24-26 for 2005 discussion.

106. How can we heal the divide many feel over the Alateen motion?

This can happen by accepting the Alateen motion and the affirmation of the Minimum Requirements by the 2004 WSC and moving on. Focusing on Alateen growth, encouraging members to follow the area process in order to be of service to Alateen, and sharing the positive things that are taking place in areas since the Alateen motion can also help. Our program teaches us to support what is and let go of what is not.

107. Prior to the Board motion of 12/03, was consideration given to having a discussion with all Al-Anon Family Groups regarding the continuation of Alateen? For what reasons did such a discussion not take place? What other alternatives were explored before deciding on the Alateen Requirements enacted by the Board? Has consideration been given to the concept of keeping Alateen requirements simple by only registering an Alateen group that meets at the same time and location as an Al-Anon meeting?

The Board discussed Alateen with the Delegates in 2003 at the “Talking with the Delegates” session, at Group Services Committee meetings, and at numerous “Chosen Agenda Item Workshops” over the years.

The Board kept the Alateen minimum requirements as simple as possible by taking existing guidelines that had been approved at prior World Service Conferences over the years and making them requirements. Adding additional criteria such as the one described above was considered but deemed unworkable at this time.

108. In light of the concept that our fellowship is not punitive, why are areas that have not passed Alateen requirements threatened with punishment (October Board letter)?

The consequence for areas that have not passed Alateen requirements is that they are not able to use the Alateen name

or hold Alateen meetings. They have not met the criteria to use the name or have Alateen meetings. Having criteria is not punitive. All areas that took the same action would receive the same result. Areas were given a year to form requirements and implement them. The one area that has not yet passed requirements is considering implementing requirements.

109. How have mandated reporting requirements affected need to attract Alateen Sponsors? What has been most helpful in attracting Sponsors?

Areas that have passed the Alateen Behavioral and Safety Requirements are reporting that more members are interested in being of service to Alateen. The discussion about Alateen safety has created more interest and support among members.

110. With the passage of the Alateen motion, what happens to the Warranties as in number five, “it shall never perform any act of government?”

The Conference did not perform an act of government. The Alateen motion set minimum requirements for Al-Anon members to participate and interact with Alateen members. We have several requirements in Al-Anon, e.g. a member of the Board of Trustees must be an active Al-Anon member for at least five years.

111. How do you handle an Alateen group not in compliance with state requirements?

The area can notify the WSO if an Alateen group, conference, convention, or event is not in compliance with the area requirements and request that the group, etc., comply. The WSO notifies the entity that in order to use the Alateen name, it needs to be in compliance with the area’s requirements.

112. How can we keep Al-Anon and Alateen “safe?”

In addition to the area Alateen requirements: Awareness and adherence to the Traditions, annual inventories at all levels of service, and education, education, education.

113. How are other areas dealing with Alateen groups and their Sponsors who do not comply with their area’s requirements for a group to be an Alateen group and their Sponsors who they require to be certified?

Areas, after encouraging the Alateen group and Sponsor to comply, are notifying the WSO. (See question #111.)

114. Can a Sponsor for Alateen ask a child who is disruptive to leave an established ongoing meeting? Which Tradition would support this decision?

For the common welfare of the group (Tradition One), a Sponsor can ask an Alateen to leave the meeting. It is a good idea to have an Al-Anon meeting at the same time and location so the Alateen can go there until their ride home is available. Sponsors need to have a process and plan for such occurrences keeping in mind the Alateen member’s safety as well as the welfare of the group.

115. We need a video, not another PSA, for Alateen

Public Outreach work, particularly in schools that can be used with our literature. Most Al-Anon members work full time and this can be loaned to the schools.

Thank you. This will be considered. Areas can also discuss ways to reach out to schools during Alateen Sponsor and public outreach workshops.

116. How do we clear up the different sponsorship roles—personal, service, Alateen?

The following pamphlets are available regarding sponsorship:

Personal Sponsors: *Sponsorship, What It’s All About* (P -31)

Service Sponsors: *Service Sponsorship: Working Smarter, Not Harder* (P-88)

Alateen Sponsors: *A Guide for Sponsors of Alateen Groups* (P-29)

117. What is acceptable to the WSO in terms of procedure when multiple areas sponsor an Alateen conference and Sponsors are approved by their area but do not meet the requirements of the area where the conference is being held?

Al-Anon Members Involved in Alateen Service need to meet the criteria of the area where they are serving. If a Sponsor from one area is taking an Alateen to an event in another area, the Sponsor may need to meet the criteria of both areas.

Areas involved in multiple area Alateen Conferences are working out the details on how this can be accomplished and will notify the WSO.

118. How should areas handle Alateen Sponsors who have met their area requirements and thus received a WSO number but are attending another area’s event with Alateens and the other area requirements are more stringent? Ex: not all areas require background checks.

A member can be certified to be of service to Alateen in more than one area. If a member is serving in two areas, they would need to meet the requirements of both areas and submit the “Al-Anon Member Involved in Alateen Service” form through both areas. (Also see response to question #117.)

119. Has WSO received that Alateen board game created by a member?

Al-Anon does not publish games as Conference Approved Literature. The WSO has suggested that segments of the game could be used in *Alateen Talk*.

120. Some groups in our area do not allow Alateens to attend the Al-Anon meetings. How can we handle a situation when no “Al-Anon Member Involved in Alateen Service” is present to go in with the Alateens?

Educate, educate, educate. Al-Anon meetings have no age limit to participate. Some Al-Anon groups are not aware that Tradition Five states Al-Anon’s purpose as helping the families of alcoholics and that is done by welcoming and giving comfort to the families of alcoholics. When there is no Alateen meeting

available, Alateens are encouraged to attend regular Al-Anon meetings. (See page 65, “Digest of Al-Anon and Alateen Policies” section, *2002-2004 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*.) Perhaps the district or area could encourage these groups to use the Al-Anon guideline, *Taking a Group Inventory* (G-8) as a meeting topic.

121. What are the ramifications of an Alateen group not complying with the Minimum Behavioral and Safety Requirements? What are the consequences locally and on the WSO level?

Each Alateen group was to re-register at the WSO with Sponsors who had completed the area certification process for

Al-Anon Members Involved in Alateen Service. All Alateen groups that had not re-registered by December 31, 2004 were removed from “active” status in the WSO group records and placed in the “disbanded” status. At the end of March 2005, Alateen groups that had still not re-registered and remained in the “disbanded” status were sent a letter notifying them that they were not eligible to use the Alateen name until they re-registered.

When an Alateen group is registered, they are a part of Al-Anon and able to use the Alateen name. They are represented through the links of service (district, area, and WSO) and information about that group is given out in local directories as well as the toll-free meeting line.

Membership Outreach

122. How do individuals who do not attend meetings (prospective newcomers) learn about this type of program contact, or that they need to register at WSO? Who sends CAL to the Lone Member? How does the general membership learn about Lone Membership?

The Lone Member Service is mentioned on our Public Outreach Web site in the section where meeting information is located. Anyone who calls or e-mails the WSO for Lone Member information is sent the registration criteria. The service is intended for homebound members and those who are geographically isolated from meeting locations. Lone Members receive the *Lone Member Letterbox* newsletter and purchase their own Conference Approved Literature just like any other member. When Lone Member Contacts—those members who write to Lone Members—are needed, the WSO makes requests through *The Forum* magazine or other newsletters.

123. Doesn’t a full assembly include Coordinators (2002-2004 Service Manual, #4, on page 131)?

This is a decision for the areas. “Assemblies convene at least every three years and as often in between as is deemed necessary for the purpose of electing district representatives (if not elected in their own districts), assembly officers, a delegate to the WSC, and an alternate.” (See Conference Charter, 5a. “State and Provincial Assemblies: Purpose of,” page 144). Coordinators of special services are usually voting members of the area world service committee and attend area assemblies. Whether they have voice or vote is up to area autonomy.

124. Why is the Conference theme decided by WSO instead of the Delegates?

The Conference theme is approved by the Board of Trustees upon recommendation of the Conference Committee, which is charged with planning the Conference agenda and creating a theme.

125. How are areas gathering information for publications in their area newsletters?

Each area is autonomous in these matters. This might be a question for your Delegate to ask at the Delegate’s “Sharing

Area Highlights” session held the evening before the Conference begins where Delegates “talk to each other.”

126. How are areas addressing the use of a Web site for communication of area business (meeting minutes and announcements) versus surface mail?

See question #91. Each area has its own process. Also see question #125.

127. Please explain how a “round robin” works. It is mentioned in the Service Manual – “World Service Handbook” – District Level – Finances, page 125. Several people in my area have asked and we really do not know what this is or how it works.

A “round robin” is another term for a group exchange.

128. When electing a Regional Trustee, I was told my first vote (as a courtesy) should be for a person from my area if there was one. Is that a recommended procedure? What if a Delegate thinks another person would be better for the Region and for Al-Anon as a whole? Wouldn’t that be leaving God out of the process?

While it may have once been a practice, it is not documented. In accordance with Concept Three, the decision is given to the individual once all of the information has been shared.

129. Is there a better way to present candidates for RT? Should only those voting discuss, in caucus, the shortcomings of candidates?

The Board of Trustees began a discussion at the Open Board meeting and will continue to look at it.

130. Why can’t everyone purchase the name badges that we are given to wear at Conference?

The Conference Committee voted on a trial basis to use lanyards for World Service Conference name badges. Offering them for sale would make them a trinket. (See pages 75-76, “Digest of Al-Anon and Alateen Policies” section, “Avoiding Commercialism,” in the *2002-2004 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*.)

131. Please provide information when the Lord's Prayer was no longer used at the WSC. Why was it discontinued?

As the fellowship became more aware of its diversity, the Conference Committee made the decision to reflect the diversity of the Conference members. It was not discontinued.

132. How can we, as Delegates to the WSC, increase the spiritual focus and minimize the business focus for WSO—to bring the corporation and the fellowship into balance by bringing the spiritual focus as our priority?

See "Chosen Agenda Item #1" floor discussion on pages 36-37 of this *Summary*, and the "Chosen Agenda Items Workshop" discussion, "Recovery Through Service," on page 38 of the *2003 Conference Summary*.

133. If the Delegate or Assembly Chairperson appoints an Area Coordinator, doesn't that go against what Al-Anon represents based on Tradition Two and Concept One (2002-2004 Service Manual, page 105)?

Each area is autonomous in how it fills area positions. See also Concept Three which talks about the right of decision. The "World Service Handbook" gives the recommended process based on years of shared experience.

134. Could the Service Manual encapsulate the entire election process in one section so it is easier to follow the procedure, making it more "user friendly?"

We do not know the specific section of the *Service Manual* the question refers to. The election procedure is in the "World Service Handbook" section of the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*.

135. How can Al-Anon service arms work together to overcome members' resistance to change in order to maximize the benefits that technology has to offer?

Please refer to "Chosen Agenda Item #2," pages 38-39 of this *Conference Summary*.

136. Re: Canadian NPIC office – Since this office has not been staffed for over a year, and services have been handled from WSO, is this redundant and will it be closed permanently?

All services for Canadian groups are maintained through the WSO except for the clerical support provided at Al-Anon's Canadian address. There are no plans to close it. Having a local address adds credibility to our Canadian outreach to professionals, national organizations, and the media.

137. What is common information?

Common information would be similar information provided to all persons making the decision.

Access to common information is one prerequisite for creating a climate of trust and making the best decisions. See the Director's presentation pages 27-28 for more information. The WSO has updated the Members' Web site with additional infor-

mation to give more members access to common information.

138. Would WSO consider researching options for foreign language translation equipment and sharing the information with the membership at-large, so that interested areas can avoid duplicating efforts?

Descriptive text to Concept One on page 154 of the *2002-2004 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* states, "This Clearing House [the WSO] was designed to inaugurate and maintain those special services for Al-Anon as a whole that could not well be performed by single groups or areas . . ." Each area has its own translating needs. Research necessary for purchase of equipment to help facilitate communication should be done by the members in the area. In this way the best decision can be made for that area.

139. Could the name of AFG World Service Conference be changed to "AFG US & Canada Service Conference" or AFG Senior Service Conference? Wouldn't that sound more real?

Historically the WSC served Al-Anon worldwide until other structures formed. Even today many scattered groups around the world without a structure receive service through the WSC. The WSC makes decisions that affect these groups and other structures as well. The World Service Conference name, taken by our pioneers, continues to reflect this reality.

140. Why doesn't the WSC have a meeting on the Twelve Steps of recovery?

Business and personal recovery go hand in hand. The Twelve Steps are evident at the Conference in many ways: the Twelve Traditions and Concepts of Service are applied in every discussion, a "Clearing the Air" session as the Conference begins, the three-minute personal sharings of outgoing Delegates. There are Al-Anon meetings every morning and a two-hour evening meeting available for all Conference members. (See also "Chosen Agenda Items Workshop: Recovery Through Service," page 38 in the *2003 Conference Summary*).

141. In place of submitting telephone long distance charges, stationery, and postal charges, our area has been submitting one month's Internet service charges as an annual expense for area officers. It has met with some resistance. Is this solely under area autonomy? Opinions and practices please.

Yes. Other areas could discuss their practices at "Sharing Area Highlights."

142. Is the WSO the service arm to contact when a paid worker of an AIS is seeking guidance on a policy?

No, the paid workers of an Al-Anon information service should discuss the issues with the elected volunteer leadership. After discussion, further clarification of wider experience could be sought from the WSO.

International

143. Can you tell us the budget for the ICC? Where can we find the information as well as the expense for the ICC?

The budget for the International Coordination Committee (ICC) is included in the WSO's budget under the "Travel and Meetings" category. A small portion of the budgeted amount covers travel expenses of the current at-Large member to attend the ICC meetings three times a year. The International Al-Anon General Services Meeting costs are also listed in the budget.

144. How many times is Spanish literature reviewed before it is printed in Spanish? Often the translation does not mean the same.

All literature is reviewed a number of times before it is printed. One goal is to insure that the Spanish translation, although not translated word for word from the English, reflects the philosophy and spirit of the program.

Spanish Conference Approved Literature goes through an extensive review process with input from members in six Span-

ish General Service Offices around the world with the final review done at the WSO. Questions about specific passages can be sent to the WSO.

145. Spanish-language literature is much less expensive in Mexico. What is the possibility that the WSO could utilize printers in Mexico and pass the savings to the Spanish-speaking Al-Anon/Alateen community (versus our US members purchasing literature through Mexico to receive the lower price)?

It has always been the WSO policy to maintain an equitable pricing structure for English, Spanish, and French material published at the WSO. French and Spanish are always sold at the same price as English even though printing costs are higher. Members need to understand that literature not purchased in the US and/or Canada does not support our structure or the services necessary to support and expand Spanish outreach in our structure.

Executive Director's Report

ADMINISTRATION

Ric B., Executive Director

INTRODUCTION

This report of the World Service Office's (WSO) activities is provided annually to the World Service Conference (WSC). This report is printed in the Conference Summary that is available to the entire membership. An abridged version of the Summary is sent to all registered English-speaking groups in *Inside Al-Anon Xtra* and is translated into French and Spanish.

OVERALL ADMINISTRATION

The Board of Trustees of Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. (AFG, Inc.) meets quarterly and is responsible for carrying out the mandates of the WSC, establishing business policies of the WSO, estimating revenue, administering service to the membership, publishing and distributing Conference Approved Literature (CAL), and 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.

AFG, Inc. is a not-for-profit organization, listed under Section 501 (c) (3) of the United States (US) Internal Revenue Code, and has been incorporated in New York State since 1954. Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters (Canada) Inc. has been incorporated since February 1999 as a registered charity under paragraph 149 (1) of the Income Tax Act of Canada.

The Executive Director is responsible for overall supervision of the WSO staff (currently 54 full-time employees) 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.

AFG, Inc. is committed to equal employment opportunity and is in compliance with applicable federal, state, and local fair employment laws and guidelines. AFG, Inc. does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, age, religion, national origin, or disability status. Every effort is made to maintain a work atmosphere that is free from harassment.

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEES

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Cecelia L./Judy P., Chairpersons

The Board approved the following interim actions of the Executive Committee:

- To discontinue *What's "Drunk," Mama?* (P-44) and *A Guide to Alateen Sponsorship – An Unforgettable Adventure* (P-86).
- To discontinue carrying Forum binders (M-57).
- Contracting airplay of Al-Anon's 60 second PSA and placement of two Al-Anon pamphlets for "direct to consumer" racks with the Professional Health Service Network (PHSN).
- The translation of *Hope for Today* (B-27) into French and Spanish.
- Printing the revised *Blueprint for Progress Fourth Step Inventory* (P-91), *From Survival to Recovery* (SB-21-Spanish) in soft cover, and the amended *Al-Anon Is for Adult Children of Alcoholics* (S-69) as a service tool.
- Introducing and expanding the Al-Anon presence with visits by staff members and WSO volunteers to Greece, Turkey, Cuba, South Africa, and India. In addition to a WSO staff member and volunteer, the Chairman of the Board of the GSO in France accompanied them on the visit to Ghana, Togo, and Cameroon to help with translation services and continued support for Al-Anon growth in those countries.
- Printing *Purpose and Suggestions* (P-13), *This is Al-Anon* (P-32), and *A Guide for the Family of the Alcoholic* (P-7) in Malaysian and Tamil for the First Asian Pacific Institute on Addiction.
- Posting sample chapters of Al-Anon Conference Approved Literature (CAL), excluding the daily readers, on both the WSO Public Outreach and Member Web sites in 90-day intervals for one year after the shopping cart is live.
- Placing *Al-Anon Speaks Out Canadian Bulletin* on the Public Outreach Web site.
- Staff travel to the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) Conference in Washington, DC, the National Conference on Juvenile Justice in Las Vegas, NV, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Consumer Direction Summit in Washington, DC, the Media Relations Seminar in Washington, DC, the American Society of Addiction Medicine Conference (ASAM) in Washington, DC, and the Research Society on Alcoholism Conference, Vancouver, BC. Many of these visits included presentations and/or displays.
- Participation by the Executive Director and a volunteer at the Asian Pacific Institute on Addiction (APIA) in

Singapore, and providing a display table consisting of a sampling of literature in languages spoken in that area.

- Participation by the Executive Director and Chairperson of the Board at the 2004 September Recovery Month Kick-off Day in Washington, DC.
- The AFG, Inc., *Employee Policies and Procedures Manual*.
- Purchase of a national media directory for the US and Canada.
- To approve the Al-Anon Member Involved in Alateen Service Registration Form.
- Offer a special price for multiple subscriptions of *The Forum* to one address.
- Offer Baker's Dozen promotion of *The Forum*.
- Distribution of the Benefits of Registration with the WSO group registration forms.
- Update the Professional Kits (K-30 and K-30c).
- A two-year Public Outreach project beginning January 1, 2005 for all areas in reaching out to healthcare providers.
- Adaptation of the "Reality" PSA for airing on the Times Square Panasonic Astrovision board.
- Update and Implementation of the following Literature pricing:
 - Eliminate the 50-cent discount on five books or more.
 - Eliminate bulk prices and offering a free copy of the guidelines.
 - Eliminate the discount on pamphlets.
 - Eliminate the minimum order discount requirement of \$375 for LDCs.
 - Eliminate the 25% discount on orders of 25 or more books of one title.
 - Price books in case lots which will reflect a 25% discount.
 - Increase the current 15% LDC discount to 17%.
- Distribution of a WSO press release through a nationally respected newswire service with electronic tracking report.

The Board continued work on the revisions to the descriptive text of the Twelve Concepts of Service. The Concept Eleven descriptive text and the By-Laws of AFG, Inc. and AFG (Canada) Inc. have been approved for presentation to the Conference.

To change the name of the Budget Committee to the Finance Committee.

The Board approved the Finance Committee motion to have the equalized expense for the 2005 WSC be \$1,100.00 (US). The projected cost for a Delegate to attend the 2005 WSC is \$1,818.00. The theme, **"Energize Al-Anon—Expand, Explore, Experience"** was approved for the 2005 WSC.

To invite AA to participate in Al-Anon's International Convention in Pittsburgh, PA in 2008.

To not print the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* in 2004.

Approved all committee guidelines as presented by the Executive Committee.

The Board of Trustees approved the Alateen Minimum Safety and Behavioral Requirements. The Board has heard and continues to hear all minority appeals regarding the Alateen Safety Requirements. All minority appeals regarding the Alateen decision have been denied. Alateen continues to be discussed, and the following plan was distributed in the event that an area did not comply with the Board Minimum Requirements by December 31, 2004:

Areas not in compliance were notified that, as a first step, the following actions would be taken:

1. All Alateen groups in the area will be removed from the WSO database. Callers on the toll-free meeting line will not be directed to any of these meetings.
2. The Alateen name cannot be used in the area in any way.
3. No Alateen announcements are permitted to be made in any Al-Anon meetings.
4. There will be no communication between the WSO and the Alateen Coordinator.
5. All Al-Anon groups in the area will be notified of these actions, that parents cannot be assured that their children are safe, and adults who are driving and supervising them are doing so at their own risk.
6. Notification of these actions will be sent to the Area Delegate, Area Chairperson, Area Alateen Coordinator, and all Alateen and Al-Anon groups in the area.

The Board agreed to be available to assist, help, and/or visit any area that requests assistance.

The motions of the 2004 WSC were given Board Approval.

The Board agreed to relinquish control of the pamphlet *Fact Sheet for Al-Anon On-Line Meetings* (S-60) and suggested that it be treated as any other service tool.

All nominees for Trustee at Large (TAL) as well as Board officers, Executive Committee at-large members, at-large members of the Executive Committee for Real Property Management (ECRPM), and the respective Chairpersons of the two Executive Committees were elected, having been given traditional approval by the Conference where required. The Chairperson of the Board announced her selection for committee chairs, which the Board approved.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Catherine J., Chairperson

These actions were approved and will be considered by the Board at its January, 2005 meeting:

- To discontinue the *Service Plan* as a service tool and also to discontinue *Homeward Bound* (P-8)
- To allow staff to attend the National Leadership Forum – Anti-Drug Coalition Conference
- To have staff make presentations at the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, the International Conference on Addiction, and the Hispanic Al-Anon Adult Children Convention in San Diego, California
- To extend the Public Health Service Network (Canada) 2004 contract for one month
- To publish 2,500 copies of *Courage to Change* (B-16) in a compact disc (CD) format, readable only, copyright protected, for use in a personal computer, to be sold to the fellowship for \$15.00 (US) each.
- To invite speakers from Washington, DC to attend a meeting of the Bi-National Advisory Committee to help the WSO gain new ideas on how to best reach out to professionals in alcoholism fields
- To allow the WSO to cooperate with Independent Television Service (ITVS) and their partners around a PBS Frontline series called “Country Boys”.

A document titled “The Process for Developing Conference Approved Literature” was approved. Its purpose is to clarify the process that the WSO now follows. This document replaces the former “Conference Approval Process.”

The Board delegated to the Executive Committee the review of résumés and approval of at-large and advisory committee members. Approved were:

Alateen Advisory Committee

Franziska B.	Alateen	second one-year term
Hilary N.	Alateen	second one-year term
Rachelle M.	Alateen	second one-year term
Sarah P.	Transitioning Al-Anon	first one-year term
Barbara S.	Sponsor	second one-year term
Ellen D.	Al-Anon (Professional)	first one-year term

Forum Editorial Advisory Committee

Blondel R.	first one-year term
Mae W.	second one-year term
Mary Jo P.	third one-year term
Loretta J.	fourth one-year term
Jenny G.	sixth one-year term

International Coordination Committee

Mirta S.	first one-year term
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Literature I

Walter H.	fifth one-year term
Brenda Sue D.	third one-year term
Elizabeth H.	third one-year term
Marlene O'D.	third one-year term
Sandra M.	second one-year term

Literature II

Jay DeV.	third one-year term
Dorena P.	third one-year term
William H.	third one-year term
Virginia L.	third one-year term
Patty T.	second one-year term

Outreach to Professionals Advisory Committee

Lyn D.	fourth one-year term
David B.	second one-year term
Mary R.	second one-year term
Jeffrey R.	second one-year term
Mark H.	first one-year term

Public Outreach Committee

Fran G.	sixth one-year term
Kay T.	third one-year term
Audrey S.	third one-year term
Beverly H.	second one-year term

DEPARTMENTAL GOALS

Caryn J. and Mary Ann K., Directors

Goal One: Determine what makes a vibrant group.

Ask Al-Anon members to send us one reason why their group is the “best” using all World Service Office (WSO) newsletters, one Regional Service Seminar (RSS), and the World Service Conference (WSC). We will submit to the Board a consolidated report on the reasons.

First Quarter: The three Directors concurred that the statement “I think my group is the best, because...” will be asked of all Conference members at the WSC. A form created specifically for this statement will be handed out at registration and gathered during the Conference. Additional ideas will be gleaned from the Delegates’ three-minute talks.

Second Quarter: At the 2004 World Service Conference, all voting members were asked to complete the survey. We received 16 responses. Plans are in place to pose this question at the upcoming Canada Central Regional Service Seminar and in a WSO newsletter.

Third Quarter: See Second Quarter. In July, the Board rescinded Goal One for the staff. The Group Services Committee agreed to explore this idea further.

Goal Two: Improve channels of communication.

a. Send at least 50 percent of Coordinator mailings in an electronic format via e-mail to Area Coordinators and Conference members using the E-buddy system.

First Quarter: Public Outreach and Alateen Coordinators have been contacted directly and through their Delegates to sign up for e-mails or to acquire e-buddies. There are several that have not responded or expressed unwillingness. A second request was sent explaining that we need 100 percent participation to implement the electronic program. Portions of some of the Coordinator mailings from February and March were sent electronically to the Delegates. Delegates are encouraged to forward these to appropriate members in their area.

Second Quarter: Public Outreach tried three different written communications plus a plea with Delegates at the World

Service Conference for PO Coordinators to sign and return the E-buddy forms. To date we have contacted 107 Coordinators. Sixty-three have agreed to participate, 20 additional PO Coordinators have e-mail addresses but have not sent in the form, and three have indicated they do not want to participate. Letters have been sent to all explaining that we need 100 percent participation. With the next PO Coordinator mailing, it will be sent to the Delegates with a request to forward the information within their area. Sixty-three of the 67 Alateen Coordinators have responded to the request for an e-mail address or an E-buddy. The four remaining Coordinators are being encouraged to participate.

Third Quarter: All 67 Alateen Coordinators have e-mail addresses. One Coordinator is using the Delegate as his E-buddy. The follow-up to the Alateen Coordinator Conference call will be sent by E-buddy. Follow-up requests for Public Outreach Coordinators resulted in 84 e-mail addresses from a total of 112, but three have refused to participate. Thirty-four of 67 Literature Coordinators and 21 of 67 Forum Coordinators have sent e-mail addresses. Literature Distribution Center (LDC) and Group Records Coordinators have also been sent the E-buddy information and asked to sign up.

Fourth Quarter: Conference members continue to receive most documents by e-mail, and subsequently, a hard copy is mailed. Occasionally, printed newsletters and flyers are not available in an e-mail format. Only hard copies of these items were sent. Group Records Coordinators are 50 percent signed up for inclusion in the E-buddy system. Public Outreach now has 91 confirmed e-mail addresses out of 105 Coordinators. Two Public Outreach Coordinators still decline to participate. We have e-mail addresses for 58 out of 67 Literature Coordinators and 58 out of 67 Forum Coordinators.

Annual: All 2004 Conference members and Alateen Coordinators have signed onto the E-buddy system and have been receiving WSO e-mail communications. Collecting e-mail addresses for other Coordinators was not successful. One solution for electronic communication with Coordinators may be to post Coordinator mailings on the WSO Member Web site. This would allow Coordinators to copy and forward pertinent information and/or send links to districts and AISs. Implementing the “Let’s Talk” feature for our areas of service could also improve communication.

b. Encourage all area Public Outreach and Literature Coordinators to contact area Web masters and area newsletter editors and ask them to post/publish one or two e-mailed items from each Coordinator mailing quarterly. Our goal is that 25 percent of the area Web sites known to the WSO and area newsletters received at the WSO will contain one or more items of information.

First Quarter: Both the Literature and Public Outreach Coordinator mailings included suggestions for the Coordinators to inform information service offices of pertinent information.

Second Quarter: There is no progress to report on this portion of the goal, as we have discovered some problems in tracking results. The Directors will re-think this objective and report to the Board in July.

Third Quarter: Further tracking of this objective has stopped and will be removed from the Annual Report.

Goal Three: Create strategies to increase feelings of connectedness to the group.

In the January 2004 issue of *The Forum*, ask members what makes them feel connected to their home groups. The information reported will help in the development of strategies which will then be measurable.

First Quarter: The request for sharings in the January issue of *The Forum* has resulted in 21 submissions from the fellowship to date. The sharings received are weak and offer us little to develop measurable strategies. The Directors request further input from the Board of Trustees on how best to continue with this goal.

Second Quarter: No activity this quarter, as we wait for further guidance from the Board.

Third Quarter: See Second Quarter. In July, the Board rescinded Goal Three for the staff. The Group Services Committee agreed to explore this idea further.

Goal Four: Identify and address two new needs of current groups.

Develop a series of questions, randomly select groups from Members Only, poll them by phone, and prepare a report to the Board. Needs would be addressed once identified.

First Quarter: A vendor experienced in polling will be contracted to perform this study. A Request for Proposal (RFP) is under development.

Second Quarter: The RFP for the vendor to survey groups has been finalized and mailed.

Third Quarter: The vendor has been selected for this study. The contract has been signed, and a conference call has been scheduled.

Fourth Quarter: The plan to survey groups included a pre-letter to a random sampling of groups with an individual password, instruction on how to use the Web or telephone as the way to respond, and the request to discuss certain topics included in the survey with the group prior to responding. A second letter was sent to encourage additional responses and stated January 10, 2005 as the deadline.

Annual: To include all responses made before the deadline, Anderson, Niebuhr, and Associates will provide their analysis of the data to the Board of Trustees early in 2005.

Goal Five: Develop strategies to remove the resistance to group registration.

a. To develop and distribute a "group registration benefits" statement in English, Spanish, and French with a goal of 50 groups registering as the result of this distribution.

First Quarter: All sections worked to develop a list of the benefits of registration at the WSO. The Production Department is to design a single sheet with the benefits listed on one side and the new AI-Anon Registration and Change Form on the back. Translations are in process.

Second Quarter: The benefit sheet is in production and will be included in individual orders.

Third Quarter: See Second Quarter. In July, the Board rescinded Goal Five for the staff. The Group Services Committee agreed to explore this idea further.

b. Poll all Spanish group contacts as to why they believe Spanish-speaking groups do not register with the WSO, with our goal to hear from 50 percent of the contacts.

First Quarter: The Associate Director of Group Services reached two Spanish contacts (California South and Kansas) for specific ideas as to why the Spanish-speaking groups do not register.

Second Quarter: No activity this quarter.

Third Quarter: See Second Quarter. In July, the Board rescinded Goal Five for the staff. The Group Services Committee agreed to explore this idea further.

Goal Six: Enhance/increase public understanding of the fellowship.

First Quarter: An RFP was developed by the Directors, approved by the Executive Director, and mailed to 19 potential vendors in February. To date, three vendors have contacted the WSO for additional information. Bids are due at the WSO on or before April 2nd.

Second Quarter: The selected vendor met with WSO staff in May. The tentative schedule for the Focus Groups is in place and the moderator's questionnaire is nearing final review.

Third Quarter: The Directors observed one of the vendor's Focus Group presentations in Raleigh, North Carolina. A draft report of all eight Focus Groups throughout the US and Canada will arrive in October. We have already received the first draft of the vendor's telephone survey.

Fourth Quarter: The Directors reviewed the draft report regarding Focus Groups with the vendor in a conference call. Project goals were clarified to ensure the data in the final report will comply with the intent of the Board. Telephone surveys were completed and a draft report was sent to the WSO in late December. Revision of this report and review of a marketing plan proposal will be completed in mid-January 2005.

Annual: The final report will be reviewed at the April 2005 meeting of the Board of Trustees during a meeting with the vendor.

BUSINESS SERVICES

David Zach, Director of Business Services

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Jack S./Zelda R., Chairpersons

David Zach, Director of Business Services (Nonmember)

All projects involving financial changes to the annual budget originate in the Finance Committee. These actions are detailed in the Board and Executive portions of this report. Minutes of the Finance Committee meetings are reported to the Executive Committee. The finance report then becomes part of the Executive Committee minutes, and thus, the Board of Trustees is kept advised. All Finance Committee motions are reviewed by the Executive Committee and are either approved or denied. For matters that do not deal with day-to-day operations of the World Service Office, the Finance Committee makes recommendations to the Board of Trustees for consideration at its next quarterly meeting.

The Finance Committee presented the 2004 Preliminary Budget to the Board of Trustees. With Board input and consideration, the proposed 2004 budget was adopted. At a special meeting of the Board of Trustees, prior to the 2004 WSC, the Board revised the proposed budget for presentation to the Conference. In July, the Committee revised the 2004 budget based on the first six months' revenue and expense figures.

There were monthly and quarterly reviews of the financial statements. Quarterly appeal letters were reviewed. Letters from members, directed to the Finance Committee, were reviewed and answered. The Committee recommended \$1,100 US equalized expense for the 2005 WSC. Finance Committee guidelines were reviewed. The Literature Distribution Center guidelines were reviewed and updated. Methods to increase or stimulate income were discussed. The Committee discussed the current pricing policy for books, pamphlets, and other items sold by the WSO. Effective January 1, 2005, a new pricing policy will take effect for books, booklets, and pamphlets which will be more advantageous in programming the shopping cart and ease for the membership filling out the order forms.

The Committee spent part of a day in November and in December developing the 2005 Preliminary Budget. As needed, Directors and/or Associate Directors of each service met with the Finance Committee to discuss various aspects of the departmental budget requests. The 2005 Preliminary Budget was readied for presentation to the Board of Trustees.

AL-ANON/ALATEEN INTERNATIONALLY

Beyond the borders of the US/Canada, many service workers are active in carrying the Al-Anon message. The following is this year's summary of their activities and interaction with the WSO. Many of the countries listed below have Web sites which can be accessed through www.al-anon.org and follow the meeting information to worldwide listings. References made to the International General Services Meeting (IAGSM) in the items below refer to a biennial service-sharing meeting that took place in São Paulo, Brazil, in 2004.

AFRICA

South Africa: The Executive Director of the World Service Office (WSO) spoke at an open meeting in Capetown and participated in their Executive Committee meeting at the invitation of the General Service Office (GSO). During that meeting, time was allowed for a workshop on the Concepts of Service. Plans for a Sub-Sahara meeting of Al-Anon groups/members in 2005 were also discussed.

Ghana: The Associate Director of Membership Outreach—International and the Chairperson of the International Coordination Committee (ICC) accompanied AA GSO representatives to Accra and, as a part of this visit, did a formal presentation about the benefits of Al-Anon and Alateen, with over 80 professionals and representatives from the media present.

Togo: At the invitation of Alcoholics Anonymous, AA representatives, the Associate Director of Membership Outreach—International, the Chairperson of the ICC and the 2004 IAGSM Delegate from France participated in planned programs attended by French-speaking professionals and the media in Lomé.

Cameroon: AA representatives, the Associate Director – International, the Chairperson of the ICC, and the 2004 IAGSM Delegate from France shared about the benefits of Al-Anon at various planned events in Yaoundé.

EUROPE

Belgium (Flemish-speaking): The GSO reported that they are now using a screening form for Alateen Sponsors.

Belgium (French-speaking): The GSO moved to a new location. They have five districts, 62 Al-Anon and two Alateen groups.

Commonwealth of Independent States (formally the Soviet Union): The Moscow Intergroup set up a trial Al-Anon local information Web site.



Denmark: The GSO advised that their National Service Conference began work on guidelines for Alateen Sponsors.

Finland: The GSO translated the WSO guidelines “Starting an Al-Anon Group” and “Group Representative.” In the future, these will be sent to districts and new groups.

France: The GSO hosted the 26th Conference. The theme was “Keep It Simple.”

Germany: The GSO completed the translation and published *Hope for Today* (B-27).

Iceland: The GSO reported that, as a result of a motion passed at the 2003 General Service Conference and to simplify their structure, they did away with areas, and on a trial basis divided the combined areas into three districts.

Greece: The Associate Director of Membership Outreach—International and the Chairperson of the Board visited with members in Athens to share the worldwide Al-Anon experience in face-to-face meetings.

Italy: The GSO now has two paid staff members, one supervising operations at the GSO and one clerical position.

Netherlands: The GSO has begun meeting every year with the Belgium GSO (Flemish-speaking) to insure that they have common literature and up-to-date price lists for each structure. The GSO has a new office in Bodegraven.

Norway: The Literature Committee has started the translation of *Hope for Today* (B-27) and completed the translation of *From Survival to Recovery: Growing Up in an Alcoholic Home* (B-21).

Poland: In September members celebrated the 25th Anniversary for Al-Anon in Poland.

Portugal: The GSO reported that there are currently 29 Al-Anon groups supporting that structure.

Spain: The GSO advised that a Web site was created for Spanish-speaking members in that country.

Sweden: The GSO reported that they completed the translation and published the translation of the book *From Survival to Recovery: Growing Up in an Alcoholic Home* (B-21).

Switzerland (French-speaking): The GSO advised that their Fourteenth Al-Anon Conference took place September 24-26.

Switzerland (German-speaking): The GSO advised there are 41 Al-Anon and two Alateen groups. This reflects a slight growth from 2003.

Turkey: The Associate Director – International and the Chairperson of the Board met with members in Izmir who have started the process of translating Al-Anon literature in Turkish.

UK & Eire: The GSO held an “Open Day” at their office which was Saturday September 4th.

ASIA

China: A member from Shanghai contacted the World Service Office and requested guidelines and registration materials be sent to start a new meeting.

India: During an organized meeting in Kolkata in June, the Executive Director from the World Service Office met with members interested in the growth of the service structure. A trial national committee was formed to further discuss creating a structure in India. A workshop on the Traditions led by the Executive Director had over 80 participants.

Japan: The GSO has begun translating *Hope for Today* (B-27). As part of a public outreach effort, the office sent literature to the First



Asian Pacific Institute on Addiction in Singapore.

Korea: The GSO reported that *One Day at a Time in Al-Anon* (B-6) is its fourth printing.

Singapore: The Executive Director participated in the Asian Pacific Institute on Addictions held May 30- June 3. Literature in Tamil, Malay, Chinese, French, Japanese, and English was available at an exhibit table.

AUSTRALIA/NEW ZEALAND

Australia: The GSO moved to a new location in July.

New Zealand: The GSO and groups celebrated the 50th Anniversary of Al-Anon in New Zealand.

NORTH AND CENTRAL AMERICA

Costa Rica: The GSO held a meeting in March similar to a Regional Service Seminar (RSS) in six different regions on the same date to give more members an opportunity to participate.

Guatemala: A representative from the GSO wrote about their cooperative activity in service work with other Al-Anon structures in Central America.

Mexico: The GSO reported that the Fifth National Convention took place July 30-31 in León, Guanajuato.

SOUTH AMERICA

Argentina: The GSO sent two Delegates to the 2004 IAGSM.

Brazil: The GSO hosted the 2004 IAGSM in São Paulo. This was the first time the IAGSM was held in South America.

Colombia: The GSO reprinted *Paths to Recovery—Al-Anon's Steps, Traditions, and Concepts* (SB-24). The GSO is assisting new GSOs and evolving structures by offering literature at the cost of printing in compliance with the joint printing and shared printing agreements.

El Salvador: Members wrote they are unable to sustain a GSO at this time because of internal problems within the country.

Peru: In 2003 the WSO approved this structure as a GSO on a trial basis. The structure sent a Delegate to the 2004 IAGSM.

Uruguay: The GSO sent two Delegates to the 2004 IAGSM for the first time.

Venezuela: The GSO indicated that their annual Conference in November was successful.



DESCRIPTIVE TEXT OF CONCEPT ELEVEN APPROVED BY 2005 WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE

(Bold and underline is new text; strikethrough is deleted.)

Concept Eleven

The World Service Office is composed of standing selected committees, executives, and staff members.

While the Trustees hold final responsibility for Al-Anon's world service administration, they should always have the assistance of the best possible standing committees, executives, staff, and consultants. This means careful consideration of these committees, the personal qualifications of their members, the manner of their induction into service, the way in which they relate to each other, **and** the special rights and duties of our executives, staff, and consultants, ~~together with a proper basis for the financial compensation of our special workers.~~

The long-range success of our World Service Office (**WSO**) will rest not only on the capabilities of the Trustees but also upon the competent leadership and harmonious association of those non-Trustee committee members, service directors, executives, and staff members who actively carry on Al-Anon's world services. Their quality and dedication, or their lack of these characteristics, will make or break our structure of service. Our dependence on them will always be great. ~~—Far more than most of the trustees, these servants~~ **Staff members** are in direct contact with Al-Anon worldwide through correspondence and/or travel. Their performance is constantly on view by visitors to the WSO. They perform most of the routine tasks and carry on most of our services. They often initiate **develop and implement** new plans and policies. Because this group is the visible image of world service, most Al-Anons evaluate our service by what they see and feel in them. These servants not only *support* the world leadership of the Trustees, they *share* world leadership with them.

*With the approval of the Board of Trustees, its Chairperson annually appoints committee Chairpersons. **The committee Chairpersons, in consultation with staff liaisons, select the at-large or advisory members who are then approved by the Board.*** ~~and is himself, along with **The Chairperson of the Board and** the Executive Director, **are** ex officio members of each committee.~~ The committee chairpersons recruit their members, who are then approved by the Board. Staff members are represented on each committee. Conference Delegates also serve on a number of these committees.

*The standing committees of the World Service Office include: * (1) Policy, (2) Alateen (3) Budget, (4) Conference, (5) Institutions, (6) Literature, (7) Nominating, (8) Public Information, (9) Archives, (10) International Coordination, (11) Cooperating with the Professional Community, and (12) Regional Service Seminars.[20]*

Selected Committees:

- **Admissions/Handbook**
- Alateen **Advisory**
- Archives **Advisory**
- **Canadian Public Outreach**
- Conference
- **Conference Committee on Trustees**
- ~~Budget~~ **Finance***
- **Forum Editorial Advisory**
- **Group Services**
- ~~Institutions~~
- International Coordination
- Literature
- ~~Cooperating with the Professional Community~~
- Nominating *
- **Outreach to Professionals Advisory**
- Policy *
- ~~Public Information~~ **Outreach**
- Regional Service Seminars

None of these service committees are executive in

character. They do not manage or conduct the active affairs of the service departments. They may, however, make any recommendations they wish to the services themselves, to the Executive Committee or to the trustees.

—Let us look at each of these in turn.

The Admissions/Handbook, Canadian Public Outreach, and Conference Committee on Trustees are subcommittees of the Conference, Public Outreach, and Nominating Committees, respectively. Advisory committees and subcommittees make recommendations to their parent committees. Other committees make recommendations to the Executive Committee or to the Board of Trustees. From time to time, ad hoc committees and/or task forces may be established to fulfill a specific, limited purpose. Ad hoc committees and task forces report to the entity which appointed them.

** Committees having permanent status, often referred to as standing committees.*

1. The Policy Committee: This is perhaps the most important of all the World Service Office (WSO) committees. It can take exercise authority jurisdiction over practically all problems issues or projects that involve AI-Anon policy, public relations, or the Traditions, as these may arise in other WSO committees. It is empowered to consider any problems issues or projects submitted by an AI-Anon member, or to reconsider a decision already made if any part of the fellowship dissents.

The Policy Committee makes recommendations to the Board of Trustees and also reports minority views. In an emergency, when immediate action is necessary, its decision is binding so far as that particular incident is concerned. But this decision does not necessarily become part of the overall policy, unless approved by the Board of Trustees and the World Service Conference. [See Appendix for AA's General Policy Committee.]

The Policy Committee is composed of a Chairperson, all members of the Board of Trustees, at-large members of the Executive Committee, the Chairpersons of all WSO committees*, and the Conference members of the WSO administrative staff; and. It meets quarterly in advance of the Trustees' meeting.

** The Chairperson of the CCT is not a member of the Policy Committee.*

3. Budget Finance Committee: The main responsibility of this body is to see that we remain solvent without making a god of money. Here money and spirituality *do* have to mix, and in just the right proportion. Here we need hardheaded members with financial experience. All should be realists, and a pessimist or two can be useful. The whole temper of today's world is to spend more than it has or may ever have. When a new and promising AI-Anon service project moves into sight, we may cry, "Never mind the money, let's go at it." This is when our budgeteers are expected to say, "Stop, look, and listen." This is the exact point where the "savers" come into a constructive and healthy collision with the "spenders." The primary function of this committee, therefore, is to see that our WSO operation is always solvent and that it stays that way, in good times and bad. The primary function of this Committee, therefore, is to see that our World Service Office (WSO) operation is always solvent remains financially sound, always aligning the use of our money with the spiritual principles of our program. and that it stays that way, in good times and bad.

This Committee conservatively estimates each year's income. It develops plans for increasing our revenues; and keeps a watchful eye on expenditures; and avoids waste and duplication. It closely scrutinizes the yearly annual budgets of estimated income and expense submitted by the World Service Office WSO, and including *The Forum*. It suggests amendments of the estimates when necessary. At mid-year it asks for makes budget revisions if earlier estimates have been inaccurate when necessary. It considers every new expenditure in the light of "Is this necessary or desirable now? Can we afford it?"

This Committee may be compelled to risk temporary deficits. However, uncontrolled spending could result in the collapse of vital services. On the other hand, fearful hoarding could result in the severe curtailment of such services. Both should be guarded against with great care.

When appropriate, the Budget Finance Committee recommends that the Board of Trustees set aside sums in our Reserve Fund (Warranty One) with the assurance of the immediate availability of those funds. This should enable us to

APPENDIX I

meet hard times or even a calamity.

~~This is not to say that our Budget Committee should be negative and fearfully hoard our money at the expense of office services and needed help to cope with our phenomenal growth. Penny-pinching could affect our services and deprive us of the confidence of our groups. Such false and unimaginative economy could prove very costly in spirit, in service, and in money.~~

~~Real prudence is neither hoarding nor recklessness. We may occasionally be compelled to risk temporary deficits, but uncontrolled spending could result in the severe curtailment or collapse of our vital services, and should be guarded against with great care.~~

This Committee is composed of a Chairperson (Treasurer of the Board of Trustees), the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees, the Chairperson of the Executive Committee, the Executive Director, and a volunteer member of either the Board of Trustees or the Executive Committee. This volunteer member is appointed by the Chairperson of the Board and approved by the Trustees each year at the Annual Meeting. The Director of Business Services is an ex officio member of the Committee.

7- Nominating Committee: At first, Al-Anon's Nominating Committee was a temporary one, operating only sufficiently ahead of the annual meeting of the Board of Trustees to present a slate of officers. This was primarily because the choice of members available for the Board was limited. Later, when there were more members, the value of a permanent committee was recognized and one was formed.

This Committee aids the Trustees in discharging their prime obligation to see that all vacancies whether within **the Board of Trustees** their own ranks or **its executive committees** among key service executives and chairpersons are properly filled with those of the greatest possible competence, stability, and industry.

~~The Nominating Committee, after having consulted with the Conference Committee on Trustees, will~~ **This Committee** makes recommendations that will determine, to a large extent, the continuous success of our services. ~~Its members will have the primary voice in choosing our future trustees-at-large and at-large members of the Executive Committee. Careful deliberation, painstaking investigation, refusal to accept casual recommendations, advance preparation of lists of suitable candidates — these need to be the principal attitudes and activities of this committee.~~

In making its recommendations for Trustee at Large, it evaluates and reviews the written input of each member of the Conference Committee on Trustees as part of its careful deliberation.

The Nominating Committee refuses to accept casual recommendations in its selection of candidates for Trustee at Large and at-large members of the executive committees.

Conference Committee on Trustees: In 1984, the Conference Committee on Trustees (CCT) was formed. The CCT, a subcommittee of the Board's Nominating Committee, is composed of World Service Conference Delegates and elects its own Chairperson annually.

The members of the CCT independently review and evaluate resumes submitted for Trustee at Large openings. A compilation of their reviews is provided to the Nominating Committee to assist it in the selection of candidates to be presented to the Board.

10: International Coordination Committee: In a world besieged with rapid change, the International Coordination Committee strives to perpetuate worldwide unity.

The Committee coordinates the activities of the WSO with those of individuals, groups and service arms outside the U.S. and Canada. It also considers requests for permission to reprint GAL worldwide and its translation into all languages.

When Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters was established, there were only a few wives of AA members overseas. As Al-Anon grew in other lands, groups and local service centers were formed. Ultimately, with the guidance and encouragement of the WSO, national service offices evolved.

In 1978, the International Coordination Committee (ICC) was formed as an avenue of communication to support the international growth of Al-Anon and Alateen.

The ICC, an advisory committee to the Board of Trustees, works to perpetuate worldwide unity. The Committee coordinates the International Al-Anon General Services Meeting (IAGSM) and reviews the activities of the World Service Office (WSO) as they relate to those individuals, groups, and service arms outside the areas served by the World Service Conference (WSC) structure. It also considers first-time requests for permission to reprint Conference Approved Literature (CAL) outside the WSC structure.

The ICC provides guidance to groups worldwide as they endeavor to form General Service Office structures within their own countries.

—With the growth of Al-Anon and Alateen in over 70 countries by 1978, carrying a unified message became increasingly complex. The International Coordination Committee was then formed.

—Plans for a meeting with delegate representation from every country began with the inception of the International Coordination Committee.

Such a meeting was envisioned as the most effective means to foster the sensitive communication needed to provide a uniform service message amid language and cultural differences. In 1984, after three trial biennial sessions, the International Al-Anon General Services Meeting became a permanent part of our structure.

4. The Conference Committee: Although the Conference is in session for less than a week in April, the multitudinous details of making arrangements for it beforehand and of reporting it afterward is an all-year-round undertaking. As soon as possible after the close of the Conference, the delegates and the groups receive an extensive Summary of the Conference sessions, including the reports of all committees:

Since the Conference is the most effective means of communication between the WSO and the North American groups, this committee has the responsibility of preparing a program that will be as informative as possible—giving the delegates an opportunity to present the needs of the groups to the WSO and a chance to reveal the extent and breadth of the work of the world headquarters to the groups through their delegates.

The Conference Committee has the responsibility to prepare a World Service Conference agenda that facilitates the active voice and effective group conscience of our fellowship.

To foster communication regarding the work of the Conference, Conference members and groups receive a summary of the Conference sessions.

Admissions/Handbook Committee: The Admissions/Handbook Committee is a subcommittee of the Conference Committee. The Committee reviews and recommends requests for seating non-voting participants at the World Service Conference (WSC). It determines if an Area meets the criteria for seating at the WSC and reviews requests for an Area name change. It makes recommendations for changes in the World Service Handbook section of the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*.

5. Institutions Committee: This committee develops and communicates methods members can use to bring the Al-Anon and Alateen presence to the families and friends of alcoholics who are in hospitals, treatment centers, correctional and other residential facilities. It also seeks to help members differentiate between the Al-Anon philosophy of recovery and that of the treatment center approach. Such clarification helps to uphold our Traditions, thus avoiding dilution of the Al-Anon program:

Soon after Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters was formed, AA encouraged Al-Anon to contact the families of patients, inmates and residents requesting help. This resulted in a beneficial correspondence with many of these AA families carried on by one of our early volunteers. Later, the work lagged for several years for lack of an available interested volunteer chairperson, until 1967, when an Institutions Committee formed with a permanent staff administrator.

Although we took our early lead in developing service work within institutions from AA, it later became apparent that a different approach was needed, since there are more alcoholics confined to institutions, whereas the families are usually

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the visitors.

Great care is taken to preserve anonymity while aiding the family or friends to contact an Al-Anon or Alateen home-group. As this AA member bears the stigma of being an alcoholic and an inmate or resident, the family may be relieved to find that alcoholism is a disease and the effects of alcoholism are often a contributory cause of the relative or friend being confined to a hospital, treatment center, correctional or other residential facility.

9: Archives Advisory Committee: This Committee is concerned with preserving and organizing historical Al-Anon/Alateen material, past and current. It recommends to the Executive Committee current preservation and archival record management techniques to further the ongoing maintenance of those materials. It also acts in an advisory capacity to the World Service Office (WSO) in making the archives available to the staff, volunteers, membership, and researchers.

It acts in an advisory capacity to the archivist, in budgetary matters and in making the archives available to the membership and researchers.

The Al-Anon World Service Office archives is a reservoir of material for Al-Anon and Alateen members, informing them of the heritage of their founders and giving them a sense of their past.

The Archives Committee is concerned with gathering, organizing, protecting and preserving the factual, documented history, past and present, of the

Al-Anon Family Group fellowship, maintaining the ongoing history of the World Service Office in accordance with the goals of the original Clearing House. It will strive to do everything necessary to

inspire a love for and create interest in all things pertaining to

Al-Anon/Alateen.

Its aim is to make information available and to assist and inform the serious researcher, within the framework of our Traditions, for the good of Al-Anon as a whole.

The Forum

For many years the editor of *The Forum*, appointed by the trustees, picked up letters accumulated periodically in her file at the WSO, wrote the article, and did the layout for an ensuing month's edition. Before publication, this was checked by the *Executive Director* and the chairperson of the Policy Committee.

Then an Editorial Committee was formed that names its own successors, subject to the approval of the corporate Board. *In 1991, the World Service Conference approved the motion to have a volunteer trustee appointed as chairperson of the Forum Editorial Committee and a staff administrator to compile the magazine.* The Editorial Committee assists the staff administrator and staff in determining the editorial policy and content of the magazine. *This committee makes recommendations respecting the Forum promotional material going to the groups.* Our Editorial Committee, therefore, is the chief guarantor of the magazine's quality and editorial continuity.

In 1982, the Forum Business Operations Committee was formed to oversee the business and promotional aspects of The Forum. To date the office has handled all subscription data.

Forum Editorial Advisory Committee: This Committee selects sharings suitable for publication, and through a process of review and assessment, recommends to the editorial staff articles for inclusion in various sections of the magazine. The Committee critiques previous issues. In reporting to the Executive Committee, it suggests reader surveys, reviews proposed survey text, and considers the results.

Group Services Committee: In 1996, this Committee was created to respond to the needs expressed by our fellowship as a whole. The Delegate Committee members bring the shared experience of their Areas so that the Committee can offer recommendations to the World Service Office (WSO) on how to best serve the membership.

2: Alateen Advisory Committee: This committee correlates the activities of Alateens on a national level. It was

formed in 1959, when the teenage sons and daughters of alcoholics indicated the need by asking the World Service Office if they could have their own Steps and Traditions. Up to this time a junior fellowship within Al-Anon had not been envisioned. With help from the WSO, the teenagers themselves adopted the Al-Anon Steps and adapted the Traditions to their own use.

The Alateen fellowship has unique problems, which need thoughtful consideration from many angles. Finding sponsors is one of the more difficult problems. Many Al-Anon members who have the time and capability are not interested in sponsoring an Alateen group. AAs are far more willing to do so; but one of Al-Anon's provisions for Alateen is that an Alateen group should have an Al-Anon sponsor whether or not *he or she is assisted by an AA*. A valuable source of Alateen sponsorship should be

Al-Anon members who were formerly Alateens.

Another of the unique problems is that, in the nature of things, Alateen membership is exceptionally fluid. There are no longtime members with a backlog of experience to give stability to the groups or to plan for Alateen's future. Youngsters grow up, go to college, get married, move away, join Al-Anon. They are teenagers, at most, for seven years. Therefore, since Alateen is part of Al-Anon, Al-Anon must make those provisions that Alateen cannot make for itself.

The Alateen Committee was restructured as an advisory committee to the Group Services Committee. This Committee identifies and articulates the needs of teenage members of the fellowship to assure that Alateen interests are considered in Group Services Committee decisions and activities. This Committee is composed of members of both Al-Anon and Alateen.

6. The Literature Committees: This body is **These Committees are responsible for all Conference Approved Literature (CAL). They create** material to meet new needs or changing conditions. **They are also** charged with the revision of existing books and pamphlets, and with the creation of fresh. Broadly speaking, its their mission is to see that *every aspect of the Al-Anon program of recovery is presented in adequate and comprehensive written material for our members, friends, and the world at large*. Our literature is a principal means by which for facilitating Al-Anon growth, unity, and service are facilitated. The influence of the many thousand books and pamphlets shipped each year is incalculable. To keep our literature fully abreast of our progress is therefore urgent and vital.

The Literature Committee often has to solve new problems of design, format, and content. Here, Our policy is to aim at only the best; we firmly believe that Cheap-looking, cheap-selling, and poorly conceived literature is not in Al-Anon's best interest.

Like other WSO committees, this one must be expert in the work to be done. *The initial form and draft and the final development of new undertakings is the responsibility of this committee, whose members exercise their role as constructive critics of evolving recovery material.* Here, too, the committee includes persons of wide Al-Anon experience. It is absolutely vital to get the "Al-Anon feel" into all our writings. What we say so well by word-of-mouth we must also communicate in print.

The Literature Committee carefully tests each new production by asking for the reactions and suggestions of a number of other members who are sensitive to the Al-Anon idea and feeling. *Originally, this committee was responsible for all Conference Approved Literature (CAL). As Al-Anon grew so did the scope and expertise of its service area and consequently the variety and amount of all CAL. In order to maintain the high quality of Al-Anon literature, the World Service Conference (WSC) in 1985 voted to assign responsibility for service literature to the appropriate service committees. All Al-Anon material, whether recovery or service oriented, must follow the Conference approval process.*

8. The Public Information Committee: This committee is important because it is the liaison with the public. Although most of its members should be *experienced in the field of public relations, commercial expertise is not enough*. Al-Anon's conservatism, as reflected in the Tradition "Attraction rather than promotion," requires the professional members of the committee to adapt their business experience to Al-Anon's needs. The techniques used to sell a TV personality or a new cosmetic would not be for Al-Anon. The committee should always include some members

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who, because of long experience, have “Al-Anon sense,” that is, a thorough grasp of our total picture and our relation to the public.

Nevertheless, we need high professional skill to deal with the huge complex of public communications as it exists today. This is not a job for amateurs alone. It takes technical experience, diplomacy, a sense of what is hazardous and what is not, the courage to take calculated risks, and a readiness to make wise compromises that abide by our Traditions. This is the combination of talents we shall always need.

We are trying, both directly and indirectly, to reach more of the families of those 25 million alcoholics who today inhabit the world. In order to accomplish this, it will be necessary to provide knowledge and to generate public good-will toward Al-Anon everywhere. We need the increasing goodwill of editors, writers, television and radio. These publicity outlets—local, national and international—should be opened wider and wider, but never by means of high-pressure tactics. It is to, and through, all these resources that we must try to carry Al-Anon’s message to those who suffer the consequences of alcoholism.

The work of our *Public Information Committee* is a critical assignment; a single large public blunder could cost many lives and cause much suffering by turning new prospects away. Conversely, every real *public information* success attracts the families of alcoholics to Al-Anon.

Public Outreach Committee: This Committee is the umbrella under which we try to reach families and friends of alcoholics and professionals who work with them, through the media and a variety of communication vehicles.

The Committee assists in the development of educational tools for our members to use with a variety of outside audiences to inform them of what Al-Anon/Alateen is and how it can be an effective resource for families and friends of alcoholics, and attract new members to our fellowship without compromising our Traditions.

Canadian Public Outreach Subcommittee: In 1979, the World Service Conference (WSC) established an ad hoc committee under the Board of Trustees to provide a channel through which federal and national Canadian bodies could be reached. It became known as National Public Information Canada (NPIC). In 2002, NPIC became a subcommittee of the Public Outreach Committee, and later its name was changed to Canadian Public Outreach Subcommittee to better reflect its objectives. Its purpose is to assure that Canadian interests are considered in all Public Outreach Committee decisions and activities.

11. Cooperating with the Professional Community had been one of the activities of Public Information until it became apparent that this service required and deserved more intensive attention. A separate committee, Cooperating with the Professional Community, was formulated on a trial basis in 1981 and became permanent in 1983.

The basic responsibility of the CPC Committee is to generate goodwill and facilitate the exchange of information between the World Service Office, the Al-Anon/Alateen groups, and among professional organizations, government agencies, and others with whom we must have contact to carry the Al-Anon message of hope.

The broad objective of the committee is to make Al-Anon better known to professionals nationally and internationally as a resource for families and friends of alcoholics. It is often the professional who is the first to be consulted or to recognize the pain of the relative or friend of the alcoholic. The professional, familiar with Al-Anon, is in a position to guide a troubled person to our program at a time when he may be most receptive. The committee encourages the membership to make contact with professionals at the area and local level.

Using recommendations from the fellowship, guidelines are formulated and material is developed for working with professionals.

Outreach to Professionals Advisory Committee: The Cooperating with the Professional Community (CPC) Committee was restructured as an advisory committee to the Public Outreach Committee. The work of outreach to facilities and institutions was also delegated to this Committee.

In establishing a CPC **This** Committee, we follow Bill W.’s suggestion of being friendly with our friends, the professionals. We need to develop and improve communication with professionals in medicine, religion, law, and education, and with employers, governments, courts, prisons, mental hospitals, and other enterprises in the field of alcohol-

ism: The broad objective of the Committee is to make Al-Anon/Alateen's purpose better known to professionals at a national level.

The Committee works Our hope is to improve cooperation between Al-Anon and the professional community, **institutions, and organizations at a national level** by providing information about who we are, what we are, and where we are, what we cannot do and what we can do. **and how we can cooperate with them.**

Regional Service Seminars Committee: encourage direct communication between World Service Office staff, members of the Board of Trustees and service-minded

Al-Anon/Alateen members from the region.

Since 1961, contact between the areas and the WSO has been available mainly through delegates to the World Service Conference. In 1979, striving to stimulate service by increasing communication at the grassroots level, the World Service Conference approved holding service seminars in the six regions of the United States and Canada on an experimental basis. They proved effective, and the 1983 WSC voted to have this method of communication, so vital in building a strong fellowship and in ensuring its future, become a part of our structure.

This committee reviews bids from the host region, coordinates the event, selects personnel to attend, and formulates the agenda based on requests from within the region.

The committee depends on delegates who act as their link to the groups to suggest topics for seminar workshops and presentations. Thus, each member has an opportunity to share joy and concerns surrounding service to the fellowship.

This Committee shares ideas from region to region and recommends ways to make the Regional Service Seminars more effective.

(Moved to Concept Eight)

~~The Executive Committee~~

The Executive Committee is not considered one of the standing committees since it is the administrator of the WSO, with legal authority bestowed by the Board of Trustees to conduct its day-to-day affairs. Its membership of seven includes the Executive Director, ~~a member from the administrative staff of the World Service Office~~, the chairperson of both the Policy and Budget Committees, and three responsible Al-Anon members. The chairperson and the three members are elected by the trustees.

All new projects considered by any of the standing committees should first be submitted to the Executive Committee for its approval and to the Budget Committee if greater expenditure of money than authorized by the budget is contemplated. However, any project that entails a change in policy should be first brought to the Policy Committee for consideration.

~~Principles That Operate in WSO~~

~~Qualities Needed for a Good Al-Anon Executives~~

No **Any** active service, can **to** function well, unless it is **must be** managed by a competent executive. It must always be directed by *one person*, supported by such assistants **staff** as are needed, ~~, not by a board or a committee that cannot effectively manage on a day-to-day basis.~~ This function must be delegated to an individual with ample freedom and authority to do his **the** job without interference, so long as the work is done well.

Real executive ability is rare and hard to come by. A special combination of qualities is required. The executive must inspire by energy and example, thereby securing willing cooperation. **Good executives possess a special combination of abilities, one of which is the ability to lead by example, thus securing willing cooperation.** If that cooperation is lacking, he must know when real firmness is in order. **action must be readily taken** He must act without favor or partiality. He must comprehend and execute large affairs, while not neglecting the smaller. He often must take the initiative in planning.

Executives with natural drive and energy may sometimes fail to distinguish between routine execution of established

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plans and policies and the *making* of new ones. In this area they may tend to make new plans and put them into operation without sufficiently consulting those whose work is to be affected or those whose experience and wisdom is actually or officially needed. **An executive is often the one who takes the initiative in planning. When making new plans and putting them into operation, consultation must be held with those whose experience and wisdom are actually or officially required.**

A good executive is, necessarily, a good salesman. He would not be satisfied with a fast sell and quick results on those occasions where patient consultation with many people is in order. Nor would he timidly delay or constantly request direction. The executive who overdrives can be reasonably restrained by the structural situation and guidelines within which he has to work. But a weak and wobbly executive is of little use at any time.

It is the duty of the **A** good executive therefore, to know **s** when to ask for specific definitions and directions and when to make his own decisions. This choice is structurally guaranteed by the **Concept Three (Right of Decision)**. If his **there is an error in** judgment is wrong, it can always be brought to his attention: **or if authority is exceeded, the decision can be reviewed.**

Certain key people at the World Service Office must be Al-Anon members. The clerical staff may or may not be. This could pose a problem, literally one of possible discrimination. As in the management of any business, the prime consideration is getting the job done well. It is important that the executive personnel make no distinction between Al-Anon and non-Al-Anon workers. While a reasonable amount of direction and discipline is necessary, it should be applied with fairness and equality. (See Appendix for AA's Rotation System.)

Paid Workers, How Compensated

The World Service Office is constantly hampered by lack of sufficient money to hire full-time top executives. But when we can afford it, each paid executive, staff members, and worker should be compensated in relation to similar services and abilities in the commercial world.

This policy is often misunderstood. Many Al-Anons regard world services as a sort of necessary charity to which they must contribute. It is forgotten that our particular charity benefits not only the newcomer, but is designed for the general welfare and protection of us all. We are not like rich benefactors who aid the sick and the poor. In helping others we help ourselves.

Another mistaken idea is that our paid workers, especially Al-Anon members, should labor cheaply. This would mark our service workers for unusual financial sacrifices, sacrifices that we would ask no other Al-Anons to make. Besides, inexpensive help is apt to feel insecure and be inefficient and is costly in the long run. This is neither good spiritual practice nor good business.

The difference between fair and poor pay at world headquarters is a matter of only a few cents a year to each member. Al-Anon's world service overhead is very small per capita for such a large society. Assuming that service money is available, we should compensate our workers well.

Staff Members

Certain key people at the World Service Office (**WSO**) must be Al-Anon members. The clerical staff may or may not be. **Some of these** key paid personnel **have a vote** on our committees and corporate boards. **It is not a requirement that clerical staff be Al-Anon members. It is important that all be treated fairly.** This could pose a problem, literally one of possible discrimination. As in the management of any business, the prime consideration is getting the job done well. It is important that the executive personnel make no distinction between Al-Anon and non-Al-Anon workers. While a reasonable amount of direction and discipline is necessary, it should be applied with fairness and equality. (See Appendix for AA's Rotation System.)

The Importance of Full Participation of Paid Workers

We have already discussed the importance of giving key paid personnel a voting representation on our committees and corporate boards.

In human affairs, authority and money are closely linked. Control of money can spell control of people. Unwisely used, as it often is, this control can result in an unhappy situation.

In our Al-Anon structure of service we, therefore, must do more than give our paid workers a place at the council-table. We ought to treat them our paid workers in all respects as we do our volunteers. The fact that they are dependent upon the money they our employees receive a salary from the WSO should never, consciously or unconsciously, be used as a lever against them. To do so would be neither good spiritual practice nor good business. They must be made to feel that they are on the team. But ~~W~~when we can afford it, each paid executive, staff members, and worker every employee should be compensated in relation to those offering similar services and abilities in the commercial world in comparable not-for-profit organizations.

They Our employees are must be made to feel that they are on part of the team. No organizational structure can fully guarantee our the WSO against the possible damage done by clashing personalities. If, however, they cannot or will not do their jobs, that is something else. ~~W~~we can and should let them go. Another mistaken idea is that our paid workers, especially Al-Anon members, should labor cheaply. This would mark our service workers for unusual financial sacrifices, sacrifices that we would ask no other Al-Anons to make. Besides, inexpensive help is apt to feel insecure and be inefficient and is costly in the long run. This is neither good spiritual practice nor good business. The World Service Office is constantly hampered by lack of sufficient money to hire full-time top executives. -

Only By our sustained willingness to practice spiritual principles in all our affairs can we can realize accomplish this these ideals.

WORLD SERVICE HANDBOOK

Revised 2005 World Service Conference

(Bold and underline is new text; strikethrough is deleted)

This is your “World Service Handbook.” It is for every member of our fellowship who has found the personal benefits and satisfactions that come from taking an active part in Al-Anon’s growth.

The opportunities to serve described here can take us far beyond the boundaries of the group and our personal problems. While our Ninth Tradition provides that Al-Anon, as such, shall remain unorganized, it does suggest that an orderly structure and logical procedures will make it possible for Al-Anon to carry its message with maximum effectiveness.

This “World Service Handbook” explains how Al-Anon is held together worldwide, how it is structured, how each member who is elected or appointed to a particular responsibility can best function in it.

It is not a book of rules; there are no rules in Al-Anon. Since our growth, ~~however,~~ depends on how well we serve the fellowship, this book can be helpful as a guide. It gives the methods that have long been standard practice in ~~world service work in the North American states, provinces, and territories, as well as overseas~~ **worldwide**. All these procedures have been drawn from long trial-and-error experience and should be changed only when an Area Assembly is fully agreed that such changes will better adapt these guidelines to their needs.*

The suggestions offered here differ in some details from those in earlier versions of the “World Service Handbook.” This came about because of the more comprehensive experience with the procedures that many groups shared with the committee entrusted with this revision.

**If and when the Area Assembly is agreed on alterations in the procedures recommended, it is vital that all groups in the Area be informed of the changes and why they were necessary.*

Terms Used in Al-Anon

The term “Al-Anon” is always understood to include Alateen. To keep it simple, the pronoun “he” is used throughout. The chart on page 104 and the terms listed below will be revised to reflect the current trial structure pending Conference approval:

Area Coordinator An Al-Anon/Alateen member, not necessarily a Group Representative (GR), who is appointed by the World Service Delegate or Assembly Chairman, or is elected **or appointed** ~~by the area world service committee (AWSC);~~ **according to Area autonomy,** ~~to edit the area newsletter or to unify one of the Al-Anon special services for an area (such as Alateen, Archives, Cooperating with the Professional Community, The Forum, Institutions, Literature, Public Information);~~ The Coordinator usually serves for a three-year term: **and** He votes at the Area World Service Committee meetings, but not at the Assembly unless he is a GR. **An Area Coordinator unifies one of the Al-Anon special services for an Area (such as Alateen, Archives, Cooperating with the Professional Community, The Forum, Group Records, Newsletter Editor, Institutions, Literature, Public Outreach [Public Information, Cooperating with the Professional Community, and Institutions]).**

Area World Service Committee (AWSC) This Committee consists of the officers of the Assembly, District Representatives, Coordinators, and liaison members, who meet between Assemblies to discuss Area and district matters, plan the agenda for the Assembly, initiate projects, and make recommendations to the Assembly. All Committee members may vote at the meetings of the Area World Service Committee.

Assembly A meeting of the Group Representatives (GRs) for the purpose of electing a Delegate to the annual World Service Conference, an Alternate Delegate, and Assembly officers. The Assembly also meets between elections to receive and distribute reports on Area and world service affairs. It reviews and approves interim reports of the Area World Service Committee. If a District Representative has not been previously elected by the GRs of a district, his election may take place at the Assembly. (See Caucus.)

Assembly Area A state, province, or territory represented at our World Service Conference by a Delegate. Some states **and** or provinces that are ~~large or~~ populous have been divided into two Areas, each with its own Delegate. (**See Conference Structure section.**)

Assembly Center The city where the Assembly meets.

Caucus A meeting at the Assembly of GRs from a given district, convened for the purpose of electing a District

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Representative if none has been elected in his home district prior to the Assembly.

Controller/ Director of Business Manager Services An individual responsible for all financial aspects of the **World Service Office (WSO)** and with has direct oversight of the Business Services.

Deputy Executive Director/ Service Manager Acts in the absence of the Executive Director and supervises staff administrators.

Districts Convenient segments into which an Area is divided by the Area World Service Committee, with the approval of the Assembly.

District Meeting A meeting of GRs held as necessary in a central location within a district to elect a District Representative, to hear his reports, and to discuss district matters.

District Representative (DR) An incoming, outgoing, or active past GR who is elected by the other GRs in his district either in his home district or at an Assembly. He assists the Delegate in passing on information about World Service Office activities and Conference decisions to the GRs in his district. He is a member of the Area World Service Committee.

Evolving National Structures A network of Al-Anon groups (outside the U.S. and Canada) in process of developing a service structure.

Executive Director Chief Executive Officer of Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc., who has oversight responsibility for all functions of the World Service Office.

French Services (PFA) ~~Publicatins Françaises, PFA, Inc., is a service arm of the WSO that translates and publishes GAL, The Forum, and other WSO material. PFA also maintains records and provides services for French-speaking groups in Canada and the U.S.~~

General Service Office (GSO) Board of Trustees A service structure of one or more nations outside the U.S. and Canada with a Board of Trustees and other elected Al-Anon members responsible for Al-Anon service related activities in their respective structure.

Group Representative (GR) A member, preferably with a basic understanding of the Al-Anon program, who is elected, subject to the dual member policy, for a three-year term by his group (Al-Anon or Alateen). He attends Assembly and district meetings and acts as contact between the group and the DR, and between the group and the Area World Service Committee.

Liaison Member A member appointed or elected by the local Al-Anon Information Service (Intergroup), which serves one or more districts. He provides a link between this service and the Area World Service Committee and encourages the exchange of information between the two. He usually serves for three years. He votes at the Area World Service Committee meetings, but not at the Assembly unless he is a GR.

Panel A panel consists of one-third of the Delegates attending the World Service Conference. A panel is elected every year for a three-year term. The elections of the three panels are staggered so that a Conference always includes one panel of Delegates with two years' experience. A non-panel area is one that has not yet joined the Conference.

Staff Administrators

Volunteer Standing Selected Committees Al-Anon/Alateen members with a broad understanding of our program who concentrate on one of the elements of our fellowship, such as Alateen or ~~Institutions~~ literature. (See pp. 114, 181 "World Service Office, How It Is Structured" section and Concept Eleven).

World Services Services rendered to groups all over the world by our World Service Office (WSO), also known as Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc., and by General Service Offices (GSOs) outside the United States and Canada. They are channeled through the Area World Service Committees and the General Service Committees in other countries. To keep communication open between the WSO and GSOs, an International Al-Anon General Services Meeting (IAGSM) has become part of our structure.

World Service Office Administrative Staff **Paid employees of the World Service Office who coordinate activities and projects for the service functions of the department to which they are assigned.** The Executive Director, the Deputy Executive Directors (with the exception of the Director of Business Services), and staff administrators. **Associate Directors** All are must be Al-Anon members: and are voting members of the World Service Conference.

World Service Conference (WSC) Al-Anon's annual week-long meeting attended by all World Service Delegates from all of the United States, Canada, and their territorial areas; representatives from overseas countries; members of the Board of Trustees and Executive Committee; Chairpersons men of standing selected committees; and the WSO administrative staff and other office personnel. The Conference provides guidance to the WSO in service matters brought to its attention.

World Service Delegate A District Representative who has been elected World Service Delegate for a three-year term

by the GRs at an Assembly. The World Service Delegate shares Area experience at three annual Conferences, which serve Al-Anon worldwide. He brings the views and the spirit of worldwide Al-Anon back to his Area.

World Service Delegate's Alternate A DR elected to work closely with the World Service Delegate, to participate in Area world service activities, and to replace the Delegate if the latter cannot fulfill his three-year term.

World Service Office

Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc., better known to most members as the World Service Office or WSO, is the headquarters of the entire fellowship.

What It Does

The World Service Office:

- acts as the clearinghouse worldwide for inquiries from those who need help or want information about Al-Anon and Alateen
- registers Lone Members, new groups, Information Services, and Literature Distribution Centers; and provides them with literature, information, and help
- advises the Delegates of the formation or disbanding of groups in their Areas
- maintains data of worldwide Al-Anon/Alateen groups and Lone Members
- guides Al-Anon's public information **outreach** efforts worldwide
- generates cooperation between Al-Anon and the professional community
- prepares and distributes Conference Approved Literature
- publishes and distributes Al-Anon periodicals **materials** to individuals and groups throughout the world
- plans and coordinates the World Service Conference
- gives an annual report of its activities and those of the World Service Conference in a *Conference Summary*
- carries the Al-Anon message to institutions and encourages the formation of Institutions groups to help those affected by someone else's alcoholism
- strives to stimulate interest in service through Regional Service Seminars
- cooperates with AA's General Service Office, located in New York City, in all matters affecting both fellowships
- guides countries outside the United States and Canada in developing their structures and establishing General Service Offices
- is responsible for services to Al-Anon Family Groups all over the world, directly or through the Al-Anon General Service Office of each country
- maintains translation review of Al-Anon/Alateen literature into foreign languages and supervises the legal aspects of its distribution
- plans, coordinates, and participates in the biennial International Al-Anon General Services Meeting (IAGSM)
- reports its activities quarterly to the Board of Trustees and annually to the World Service Conference
- organizes and preserves historical Al-Anon/Alateen material worldwide, past and present
- maintains the WSO Public Outreach and Members' Web sites

How It Is Structured

The World Service Office is headed by an Executive Director with assistance provided by a ~~deputy and~~ staff of workers **paid employees**, the volunteer Chairpersons ~~men~~ of standing **selected** committees, and other volunteers.

The Executive Director and the staff ~~administrators~~ handle correspondence with all parts of the fellowship to make sure that current information is disseminated to those concerned. Bilingual secretaries and translators are employed to help with foreign language correspondence.

~~Among t~~The standing **Delegate member** committees that take care of the various elements of our program are Alateen, Archives, Cooperating with the Professional Community (GPC), The Forum, Institutions, Literature, **Admissions/Handbook, Conference Committee on Trustees, Group Services**, and Public Information **Outreach**. Each committee has a volunteer chairperson, a WSO staff administrator to handle the day-to-day work, and several Al-Anon/Alateen members who live within commuting distance of the World Service Office to attend regularly scheduled committee meetings. Each also has delegate members, drawn from three panels, who work closely with the in-town committee by means of correspondence and meet with them annually at the Conference.

One example of how the committee works is the procedure followed by the Literature Committee:

When production of a new piece of recovery literature has been approved, the Literature

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Administrator submits copy to the chairperson of the Literature Committee, to key members of the administrative staff and the members of the Literature Committee. It is then sent to the delegate members who suggest changes or speaks for the Conference as a whole. The final step is a review by the chairperson and four members of the Policy Committee. On this basis, a piece of literature is considered to be Conference Approved Literature (CAL).

Other Committees in alphabetical order are: Alateen Advisory, Archives Advisory, Canadian Public Outreach, Conference, Executive, Finance, Forum Editorial Advisory, International Coordination, Nominating, Policy, Outreach to Professionals Advisory, and Regional Service Seminar (RSS). Guidelines for most committees, which list committee composition and responsibilities, are available from the WSO. The chairperson of the Budget Committee is the treasurer of the corporation and is assisted by the Executive Director, the chairperson of the Executive Committee, the Business Manager, and other designated volunteer members. The chairperson of the Nominating Committee is assisted by the Conference Committee on Trustees (CCT) and all trustees in searching for candidates to fill vacancies. The International Coordination Committee is composed of a chairperson, staff administrator, WSO members (staff and trustees), and in-town members familiar with Al-Anon worldwide. The Conference Committee consists of a volunteer chairperson, the Admissions/Handbook Chairperson along with the Conference Administrator, other administrative staff members, and volunteers. A subcommittee that functions under the Conference Committee is Admissions/Handbook, which has delegate members. Their attendance is required only at meetings at the Conference, and they may be consulted throughout the year by the WSO Conference Committee on any related matter. They may also submit suggestions throughout the year. The Regional Service Seminar Committee is composed of a volunteer chairperson, the Executive Director, rotating regional trustees, and the staff administrator involved in the planning of current seminars.

Ad hoc committees have been **may be** established temporarily for specific purposes **when the need arises**. Examples: the Relocation Committee (to find new quarters for the World Service Office), the Bylaws Review Committee, and a committee considering the expansion of our monthly publication. Additional ad hoc committees may be formed when the need arises to handle specific situations.

The WSO Policy Committee is composed of **a Chairman, all members of** the Board of Trustees, at-large members of the Executive Committee, the Chairpersons **men** of **all** standing **WSO selected** committees (**except the Conference Committee on Trustees**), and **the Conference** members of the **WSO** administrative staff. It meets quarterly in advance of the meeting of the Board of Trustees.

Its function is to consider problems or projects brought to its attention by any Al-Anon or Alateen member. Its statements of policy, based on our Traditions, are subject to the approval of the Board of Trustees and the World Service Conference. In particularly sensitive or debatable questions, the decision may be deferred until the Conference convenes.

The Executive Committee, which meets each month, is the administrator of the World Service Office, with legal authority granted by the Board of Trustees to conduct its daily affairs. Its seven members, one of whom serves as Chairperson **man**, are appointed by the Trustees. They include the Executive Director, one member of the administrative staff, the Chairpersons **men** of the Policy and Budget **Finance** Committees, and three **Al-Anon** members at-large **elected by the Board of Trustees** who contribute professional experience in specific fields and situations.

The Board of Trustees is composed of seven to 21 **volunteer** members: one sustaining member (the Executive Director), Trustees at Large, and Regional Trustees. Our cofounders Lois W. and Anne B., now deceased, were honorary lifetime members. The term of office for both Trustees at Large and Regional Trustees is three years; they may serve two terms, which may be consecutive. **Trustee at Large candidates submit qualifying resumes to the WSO. Nominees are interviewed and selected by the full Board of Trustees.** Each year, in January, the Board nominates three Trustees at Large.

Regional Trustee candidates submit qualifying resumes to, and are nominated by, their respective Areas. At the World Service Conference, three regional trustees are nominated **the nominee is selected** by **members of** the WSO **Regional** Nominating Committee composed of the Delegates from the respective regions, Delegates chosen by lot from outside the regions, and Board members chosen by lot.

The names of all nominees, both the trustees-at-large as well as Regional Trustees and Trustees at Large **nominees** are presented to the Conference for an expression of traditional approval. All the nominees are then elected by the Board of Trustees at its annual meeting.

The Trustees, along with the members of the Executive Committee, direct the business operations of the World Service

Office, observing the By-Laws of Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc., under which we operate in New York State. They are concerned with guarding the legal rights of the Al-Anon fellowship against those who may try to profit from our ever-growing public acceptance, with protecting our principles from distortion and dilution, and in general, with acting as the chief service arm of the World Service Conference. The Board serves as guardian of our Twelve Traditions, our Twelve Concepts of Service, and the Conference Charter.

The purposes for which the corporation was formed, as set forth in its Certificate of Incorporation, are “to encourage, assist and serve the families and friends of alcoholics in dealing with the problems concerning and attendant on alcoholism; to reinforce their efforts to understand the alcoholic and to foster his or her restoration to normal life; to disseminate information in relation thereto and to conduct and participate in any other classes of service to assist families and friends of alcoholics in dealing with their problems.” To serve these purposes, it is the responsibility of the Trustees to review all operations of the World Service Office.

In managing the affairs of the corporation, the Board is authorized to:

- establish and maintain the policies of the World Service Office
- control its property and finances
- make long-range plans
- authorize expenditures
- appoint the Executive Committee and other committees
- appoint an Executive Director, ~~Deputy Executive Director~~, and **Director of Business Manager Services** for the World Service Office; ~~and other staff~~
- take whatever measures are prudent and effective in carrying out the purpose of our fellowship
- approve the final agenda for the World Service Conference

Any Trustee who has a substantial financial interest in any contract or transaction requiring authorization by the Board may not vote on the matter.

Three-fourths of all authorized participants registered at the Conference may bring about a reorganization of the World Service Office if or when it is deemed essential. They may request the resignation of the entire Board of Trustees and nominate a new slate of Trustees. Prior to resignation, it is the responsibility of the outgoing Trustees to vote on the successor slate presented by the Conference. ~~For this purpose only (that is, for the purpose of bringing about a reorganization of the World Service Office),~~ the number of World Service Office participants voting shall be limited to one-fourth of the total Conference vote.

In this instance, the final decision-making body is the World Service Conference. (Further details of the Board’s composition, jurisdiction, and responsibilities will be found in Article 10 of the Conference Charter.)

World Service Conference

Purposes

Al-Anon’s Tradition Two states: “For our group purpose there is but one authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants;—they do not govern.”

The World Service Conference makes the group conscience available and effective for all Al-Anon. It is the practical means by which the group conscience can speak; it is the voice of world Al-Anon and the guarantee that our world services shall continue to carry on under all conditions.

The Conference protects Al-Anon and Alateen against a service breakdown; it makes for unity and enables our fellowship to act as *a whole* upon important matters. This makes it the principal guarantor of Al-Anon and Alateen’s harmony and survival.

Historical Background

From 1951, when Al-Anon began, until 1961, when the Conference was born, the world services for Al-Anon were conducted from the Clearing House office in New York. All the work was done by a group of volunteers and a few paid workers, all of them living in the New York area. In 1954, our services were incorporated as Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc., solely for business purposes. There was a Board of Directors that took care of the business and policy matters with the help of an Advisory Board.

When our fellowship was still small, this service arrangement worked well and did much to unify Al-Anon and spread its message around the world.

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This meant, however, that Al-Anon services were not linked to our growing groups. There was no way for the services to share with and account to those they served. It was only by means of mail polls and correspondence that the World Service Office was able to receive the guidance and direction of the whole Al-Anon membership.

This degree of isolation from the fellowship as a whole could have proved hazardous for our future. If an unauthorized decision proved to be a serious error, confidence in the World Service Office could be weakened; this would affect the whole vital service effort. Without direct linkage with the widespread Al-Anon groups, it might not have been possible to repair such a condition.

Al-Anon has followed AA's path from the beginning, using its principles and adapting its service structure to our own needs. AA had found that the group conscience of its fellowship as a whole could best be heard through the establishment of a conference of delegates representing all sections of the continent and meeting yearly with the Board of Trustees and the General Service staff. AA's first conference met in the spring of 1951.

From 1955 until 1962, Bill W. spent much time developing suitable principles and philosophies for the guidance of all AA's services. These, he felt, should agree with the principles and philosophies expressed or implied in the Steps and Traditions and with AA's experience. The resulting document is divided into two parts: "the A.A. Service Manual" and "Twelve Concepts for World Service."

By 1961, Al-Anon had agreed that its group conscience should have the same means of being guided in the performance of its services worldwide. A simple, inexpensive plan worked out by Bill and Lois W. was put into effect on a three-year trial basis.

When the Conference was first initiated, in order to obtain equal representation from all sections of the United States and Canada, the continent was divided into four quadrants by lines drawn through its approximate center from east to west and north to south, coinciding with state and provincial boundaries. Three Delegates were chosen in the first year from each of the four quadrants. These came from the states and provinces with the greatest number of Al-Anon groups. In each of the second and third years, twelve more Delegates were chosen from those states and provinces with the next greatest number of Al-Anon groups. Following this formula, all states and provinces have had the opportunity to join the Conference.

By 1963, the experiment had proved this linkage between the groups and headquarters so effective that the members of the trial Conference voted unanimously to make it permanent. With AA's Service Manual as a guide, our World Service Handbook was developed for Al-Anon by a Handbook Committee, chaired by Lois W.

The Conference Charter (see index), long in the process of development, was unanimously adopted by the 1967 Conference. This is a traditional, not a legal, framework within which the Conference functions.

In the meantime, in 1965, the name "Board of Directors" ~~had been~~ was changed to Board of Trustees, and since the Conference itself now serves as an advisory board, the latter previous advisory board was dropped. An Executive Committee was established to aid the Board of Trustees in the conduct of administrative affairs.

The Al-Anon—Alateen Relationship

Alateen is an integral part of our fellowship. Area World Service Committees are urged to encourage Alateen participation at district and Assembly levels.

An Alateen GR has both voice and vote in the district and Assembly area and may hold office (if elected by Al-Anon and Alateen GRs) at all world service levels: District Representative, Assembly officer, and Delegate.

Conference Structure

The Al-Anon fellowship is represented annually at a World Service Conference (WSC). It is attended by one elected Delegate from each Assembly area, the Board of Trustees of the World Service Board, the Executive Committee, volunteer Chairpersonsmen, and the voting staff members of the World Service Office administrative staff. Representatives from non-panel areas (those not yet electing a Delegate) and countries other than the United States and Canada may attend with voice but no vote.

The Group Representative is the first link in the chain that leads to the World Service Conference. Each GR is chosen by members of the group and may serve as GR in no more than one group at a time.

The District Representative is the next link. The Area is divided into districts, each with one DR, who is chosen by the GRs in his district to serve on the Area World Service Committee.

If a GR becomes a DR, he fulfills both functions unless the Area Assembly chooses to have its groups elect new GRs to replace those who have taken on the duties of DR.

If the District Representative does not continue to be his group's representative, he relinquishes his vote at the Assembly to his GR replacement. This follows the long-standing principle of one vote per group, which was reaffirmed by the 1975 World Service Conference and applies as well to officers of the Area World Service Committee. They retain their vote at the Assembly only if they have been re-elected GR.

The Delegate and new Assembly officers are elected by the GRs at an election Assembly, held prior to December 31 at a convenient location in the Area every three years. The Assembly is attended by all GRs in addition to members of the Area World Service Committee. Al-Anon members are encouraged to attend their Area Assemblies.

In Areas where terms of office begin on January 1, only the outgoing GRs vote for an incoming Delegate and officers—from among the outgoing DRs only. Under this procedure, the new GRs do not vote for the Delegate and officers ~~with whom~~ they will be working **with** for the next three years.

However, an Assembly may prefer to have the incoming GRs elect the Delegate and officers. Under this method both the incoming and outgoing DRs are eligible to stand for office, provided they have previously served at the Area level.

Before the important decision is made as to whether the incoming or outgoing GR has the vote, all the elements of its particular situation should be carefully weighed by the Assembly.

Once the Delegate has been elected, he is no longer either a DR or a GR, so his group would elect a new GR, and his district should elect a new DR. The Delegate votes at Area World Service Committee meetings but not at the Assembly.

Composition of the Conference

The World Service Conference (WSC) is composed of ~~state, provincial, and territorial delegates from the U.S. and Canada~~ one **elect** Delegate from each Assembly area, the ~~members of the~~ Board of Trustees, the Executive Committee, ~~standing committee~~ volunteer Chairpersons ~~men~~, and the ~~Al-Anon WSO administrative~~ **voting members of the World Service Office administrative** staff. At the 1985 WSC it was voted to make the Conference member ratio two-thirds elected Delegates to one-third staff and volunteers.

~~A~~ **S**states, provinces, and ~~or~~ territories **y** having more than 400 groups may petition the Conference to divide and send an additional Delegate to the Conference (see p. 145, Article 6. b. **of the Conference Charter**). Therefore, a **A** state, or province, **or territory** may divide only once, as reaffirmed at the 1982 World Service Conference.

A non-panel area may ask the Conference for permission to send a representative to the Conference. Such representation is limited to two years, under the following stipulations:

- The representative's expenses are to be paid by the Area
- The WSO is to be notified of his attendance no later than February 1
- The representative is to have voice but no vote at the Conference

These conditions also apply to other countries, except that they may continue to send representatives indefinitely.

Unlike elected government officials, our Delegates do not represent local interests. They may reflect Area opinion and contribute Area ideas, but they are not bound by directives from their groups. The Delegates as well as all other Conference members are the trusted servants of worldwide Al-Anon.

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 the 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

A majority vote of the Conference constitutes only a suggestion to the Board of Trustees and our WSO; a two-thirds vote is binding upon them, subject to the provisions of Concept Seven ("The Trustees have legal rights while the rights of the Conference are traditional").

On overall policy matters the Conference makes final decisions. The Board of Trustees and the World Service Office are service arms of the Conference, a part of the whole fellowship.

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The Conference is empowered to pass resolutions, make recommendations to the WSO, direct committees to further study, or refuse to act at all in a given situation. It cannot, however, mandate or govern the AI-Anon fellowship, which it serves. The Conference represents the AI-Anon membership but does not rule it.

Prior to their first Conference, all newly elected Delegates are assigned to one of the WSO standing selected committees ~~or to a Conference Subcommittee~~.

Upon arrival at the Conference, newly elected Delegates become acquainted with second- and third-year Delegates, as well as with members of the Board and staff. They are invited to visit their World Service Office.

The following are ~~T~~typical Conference activities ~~are~~:

- The Conference members are greeted by the Conference Chairperson~~man~~ or Assistant Chairperson~~man~~, who introduces the Chairperson~~man~~ of the Board of Trustees;
- The Executive Director gives a summary of the year's work.
- The staff members and volunteer Chairpersons~~men~~ of committees report on activities of the year.
- The Treasurer gives a detailed financial accounting, prepared by a certified public accountant, and presents a clear picture of our situation.
- The Conference discusses these reports and may name committees for further study if necessary.
- If such committees are appointed, they make recommendations and appropriate action is taken.
- Delegates report on Area matters.
- Other items on the agenda are taken up.

Conference Agenda

The agenda is developed over the previous months by the Conference Committee. ~~The delegate members of the Admissions/Handbook Committee, a subcommittee of the Conference Committee meet with a representative of the WSO Conference Committee annually at Conference time. They are consulted throughout the year and kept informed of progress. Their s~~Suggestions; and those of all other Conference members and the membership-at-large; are carefully considered.

A ~~T~~typical items ~~an~~ agenda might include ~~are~~:

- any action proposed by the Trustees affecting AI-Anon as a whole, to be presented for Conference debate and approval
- deviations from AI-Anon Traditions affecting AI-Anon as a whole
- proposed amendments to the descriptive text of the Twelve Concepts of Service
- consideration of proposed new literature
- questions and decisions in the field of overall public information outreach
- state of voluntary contributions—how noncontributing groups can be better informed
- consideration of local problems, provided they do or may affect AI-Anon as a whole
- special requests for guidance from Trustees or members of our WSO
- workshops and town-hall type meetings on service functions; how returning Delegates can best serve their Areas
- matters concerning Conference procedure, structure, and function

How the Conference Is Financed

General Conference Expenses. The cost of the Conference, as well as that of other worldwide AI Anon services, is covered by the WSO General Fund. It is the responsibility of the WSO to ask all members to respond generously to the four appeals sent annually (in February, May, August, and November) for support of these services. All members reap the benefits of the Conference.

The general Conference expenses include the salary of a staff administrator and his assistants; to handle the daily affairs of the Conference while in session; ~~preparation of the Conference Notebook, the Handbook, correspondence, and reports to the delegates and groups;~~ the cost of holding the Conference sessions; the cost of WSO members' (volunteers and paid staff) attendance at the Conference; and the expenses involved in producing and distributing writing and editing the *Conference Summary*.

Delegates' Equalized Expenses. Because costs of travel to the World Service Conference (WSC) are different for each Delegate, a formula was developed to provide a fair equalization of expenses.

The Delegate's equalized cost is calculated by dividing ~~T~~the total estimated travel, hotel, meal, and incidental

expenses for the Delegates, including their portion of the costs of the Conference Notebook, and printing and mailing of the Conference Summary to Area World Service Committee members, is divided by the number of Delegates, results in the equalized cost. **This cost is reported to the Board of Trustees.** A substantial portion of this cost, as determined by the Board of Trustees, **is the equalized expense** and is paid by the Areas. The Conference Committee informs each Area that this amount is to be sent to the WSO by the Area Treasurer before January 1. The Delegates' expenses are then defrayed by these funds, regardless of traveling distance.

Any Area may choose to contribute additional funds, up to and including the entire cost of sending a Delegate to the WSC.

Conference Procedures

Area Procedures for Joining the Conference

The Area must first submit a request for admission to the World Service Conference. The Admissions/**Handbook** Committee will review the request and will make a decision based on policies previously accepted by the Conference. If permission is granted, they may proceed as follows:

Our WSO suggests, as an Assembly center, the city with the largest number of groups. The most active registered group in this Assembly center is then invited to elect a temporary Chairman. (See **"Duties of Assembly Members, Temporary Chairman" section p. 135 for duties.**) The temporary Chairman notifies our WSO of his election.

The WSO sends each registered group in the Area the name and address of the temporary Chairman and a copy of this Handbook for the GRs to study prior to the election Assembly.

Well in advance of the Assembly, the temporary Chairman calls a planning meeting of all groups in the Assembly center to:

- select a date and meeting place for the Area election Assembly (if this designated Assembly center is not convenient, another site may be chosen for the election Assembly)
- notify all groups in the Area of the time and place of the Assembly where the election will be held to elect a DR from each district, Assembly officers, a Delegate to the annual World Service Conference, and an Alternate Delegate

At the Group Level

Election of a Group Representative (GR) and an Alternate. The GR is elected by his group for a three-year term by any election procedure it chooses. An AI-Anon/Alateen member who is also a member of AA is not eligible to serve as GR. Since the newly elected GR may be attending the election Assembly, the group's elections should precede the date of the Assembly. To emphasize the need for selecting informed GRs, a special election meeting may be called by the group, with time devoted to the role of the GR in our service structure and his work in the district and Area. A group may re-elect its GR for another term.

Since a GR may be unable to attend all district and Area meetings, ~~he needs an Alternate~~, **GR is needed and is** elected at the same time. The Alternate may be runner-up in the elections. The Alternate GR's duties may include serving as the group's public information **outreach** contact, newsletter reporter, and official greeter of newcomers and visitors.

If the GR resigns or proves to be inactive, the Alternate completes the term and may then be elected for a three-year term of his own. Another Alternate may then be elected. No one who is also an AA member may serve as Alternate GR.

In a city where there is an AI-Anon Information Service (Intergroup), the Alternate GR may serve as the Information Service Representative (ISR). The GR generally serves as the Alternate Information Service Representative (AISR).

When the GR Has Been Elected. He immediately sends his name and address to the Area Secretary **or Group Records Coordinator**, so he can be informed of the time and place of the next Assembly. In a new Area the GR informs the temporary Chairman.

The GR attends the Assembly, bringing this Handbook.

He makes himself thoroughly familiar with his duties. (See p. 132-134 **"Duties of Assembly Members" section.**)

Finances. The Assemblies ~~appeals~~ to each group in the Area for contributions to be sent to the Area Treasurer, ~~who, in turn,~~ **The Treasurer** sends the equalized expenses **amount** to the WSO and reimburses the Delegate and Area committee for expenses in the Area and for all Assembly overhead.

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Each group supplies **provides** its GR with sufficient money **funds** for fare and incidental expenses **to fulfill the GR duties including participation in the Assembly. Expenses may include meals, transportation, accommodations, and registration fees.**

The expenses of the assembly to the individual group will be less if all groups contribute. If every group makes an effort to accumulate funds throughout the year, the expense burden will be fairly shared by all groups in the area. The fare of the GR to the assembly is estimated and paid by the group according to the distance and transportation to the assembly center and back. A group's share of the ~~o~~Overhead expenses of the Assembly and the cost of sending the Delegate to the World Service Conference is suggested **are paid** by the Assembly **with contributions from the groups within the Assembly area.**

Each group supports the district in the purchase of Public Information, Cooperating with the Professional Community, and Institutions **public outreach** materials and activities (e.g., literature displays, mailings of special announcements, rent for district meetings).

At the District Level

Election of a District Representative (DR) and Alternate. The election of the DR and Alternate DR from among the incoming, outgoing, or active past GRs (see next paragraph), none of whom are members of AA, takes place in the fall of the year after the election of GRs and before election of Area officers. This is often done at a district meeting, unless geographical distances make this impractical. In the latter case, the DR is elected by a caucus of GRs at the Assembly. This term of office is three years, coinciding with those of Area officers and Delegate. Each district may choose its own method of electing.

The DR who is completing his term calls the district election meeting and notifies each group of the meeting, inviting the incoming, outgoing, and active past GRs and others who wish to attend.

If the DR resigns, proves to be inactive in his district, or for any reason is unable to serve, the Alternate DR completes the term. If the GRs of a district are not aware of the DR's failure to attend Area World Service Committee meetings, the **Area** World Service Committee may request a replacement.

In a city where there is an AI-Anon Information Service (Intergroup), the Alternate DR may be a member of its service board. The DR generally serves as the Alternate Information Service board member.

Other duties of the Alternate DR may include serving as Treasurer or Secretary of the district, as PI **public outreach** contact from the district to the Area, or as chairman of ~~periodic~~ meetings on the service structure, Traditions, and Concepts.

When the DR Has Been Elected. He notifies the Area Secretary **or Group Records Coordinator** of his election and that of his Alternate.

He acquaints himself thoroughly with the duties of a DR. (See pp. 134-135 "**Duties of Assembly Members**" section.)

Finances. The DR's expenses to attend Assemblies and Area World Service Committee meetings are shared by the groups within the district. When the DR is also a GR, the Assembly expenses are normally paid by the group he represents. Money for this purpose may also be raised by special events such as round-robins, district workshops, potlucks, suppers, rummage sales, and other cooperative ventures. The DR's expenses may be paid directly from such funds, or ~~a portion of them may be contributed to~~ **reimbursed by** the Assembly Treasurer ~~for the DR's expenses to be reimbursed. The Coordinators' expense may also be covered f~~From a portion of any surplus funds accumulated by the district and sent to the Area Treasurer.

At the Assembly Level

The Election Assembly. This is held once every three years before the end of December. The Area World Service Committee may also schedule interim Assemblies, which are called by the Chairman at such other times as it is deemed necessary. (~~see p. 136~~). One such Assembly could be held to hear the Delegate's post-Conference report. Some Delegates prefer to give their reports at combined district meetings arranged by two or more DRs.

Preparing for Election Assemblies. Before the Assembly is to convene, the Chairman (or temporary Chairman) prepares for the meeting by making sure that:

- AI-Anon/Alateen members who are not GRs are invited to attend the Assembly to serve as tellers
- a book is provided in which each GR is to register, giving his name, address, and group name
- a map of the Area, with district boundaries indicated, is hung in the Assembly room

- a chalkboard is at hand
- pencils and slips of paper are available for the voting
- all GRs have this Handbook

Election Assembly Procedure

If and when the Area Assembly is agreed on alterations in the procedures recommended, it is vital that all groups in the Area be informed of the changes and why they were necessary.

At the Assembly: Preparation

The Chairman (see ~~p. 136 for~~ **Duties of Assembly Members section**):

1. calls the meeting to order. (If this is the Area's first Assembly, the temporary Chairman conducts the meeting, but only until a three-year Chairman is elected.)
2. asks for a moment of silence followed by the Serenity Prayer.
3. reviews the procedure in this Handbook or any other preferred method for the election of the District Representative, the Delegate and an Alternate. It is important that everyone also understands the method agreed upon for the election of Area officers.
4. asks for a vote of acceptance of the proposed method of election. Years of experience have shown the method described in this Handbook to be fair and trouble-free. If another method is considered, it should be clearly understood and agreed upon by a two-thirds vote of the Assembly. In keeping with the principle of one vote per group, the Chairman has a vote only if he is still a GR.

Elections

Election of District Representative

~~See pp. 134-135 for duties:~~

In many Areas, it is practical to elect DRs in their home districts prior to the election Assembly. Where this is not possible, the election takes place at the Assembly.

The Chairman

1. points out on the Area map the division of the Area into districts. If questions arise about the division or number of districts, the Chairman asks for discussion and a vote on changes of district boundaries. An advantage of dividing into smaller districts is that they can be covered more conveniently by the DRs.
2. asks the GRs from each district that has not yet elected a DR to gather in groups to caucus. If the caucus is small, only informal discussion and agreement may be needed. Otherwise, written ballots should be cast and the same procedure followed as for electing Area officers. A DR may repeat his term, provided that the GRs in his district re-elect him.

Election of World Service Delegate**

~~See pp. 137-139 for duties~~

The Chairman asks the GRs who have the right to vote to elect a Delegate who is not a member of AA.** A Delegate may not succeed himself, but may be re-elected after an interim three-year term provided he has remained active in service at the Area level. Each group has but one vote.

1. The Chairman asks each DR and others eligible, if any (~~see p. 132 items 12, 13~~), whether he is prepared to serve as Delegate for three years. If so, he becomes a candidate.
2. Names of all candidates for the post of Delegate are listed on the chalkboard by the Secretary.
3. The Secretary calls the roll of voting members.
4. Paper and pencils are distributed for written ballots.
5. Non-voting members are selected to serve as tellers, collectors of ballots, and to record and tally votes on the chalkboard.
6. Written ballots are cast, collected, and given to the tellers to count.
7. Votes will be written on the chalkboard alongside the names of the candidates.
8. The first candidate to receive a two-thirds vote is elected.
9. If no one has the required two-thirds vote after several ballots have been taken and if two candidates each have 40 percent or more of the total vote, the Chairman may suggest that the two candidates stay and the others withdraw.
10. Whether or not any names are withdrawn, another ballot is taken.
11. If still no election occurs, the Chairman asks for a motion to close the balloting and that the choice be made by

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lot between the two high candidates. The first one drawn becomes the Delegate. Instead of this, many assemblies prefer to have a final ballot taken. Then the candidate with the most votes becomes the Delegate.

~~*See pages 117-122 and 131-132~~

~~**At the 1977 World Service Conference, it was voted that our policy is clearly defined, that Al-Anon/Alateens holding dual membership are not eligible for the office of Group Representative; therefore, the Admissions/**Handbook** Committee of the Conference would refuse admission of a Delegate who holds dual membership in Al-Anon/Alateen and AA.~~

Election of Alternate Delegate

~~See p. 139 for duties.~~

The Chairman then calls for the election of a World Service Delegate's Alternate who is not also a member of AA, following the same procedure as for Delegate.

In case the Delegate cannot complete his three-year term, the Alternate automatically becomes the Delegate for the balance of the Delegate's term. Another Alternate should be elected as soon as possible from among the DRs and officers. Since a Delegate should never be long without the assistance of an Alternate, the Delegate who has taken over may ask the Chairperson ~~man~~ to appoint an interim Alternate until a special meeting of the Assembly can be called. When a DR becomes Delegate, he is no longer a DR and his district elects a new DR. He has a vote at the **Area** World Service Committee but not at the Assembly, as this would mean more than one vote per group.

Election of Officers

The Chairman then calls for the elections of Assembly officers, usually the Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer, from among DRs. Each officer serves for a three-year term. He asks tellers to pass ballots to all GRs and to place all DRs' names on the chalkboard.

1. GRs vote for a Chairman by written ballot. In addition to the DRs, the outgoing Delegate may be included on the slate for this office. If the Delegate is elected Chairman, he has no vote at the Assembly.
2. Tellers count ballots and check the names on the board.
3. Balloting continues until one name receives a majority of the votes. This elects the new Chairman (~~See pp. 135-136 for duties~~).
4. A Secretary and a Treasurer are elected from among the DRs by the same method (~~See pp. 136-137 for duties~~).
5. Assembly officers, including the Alternate Delegate, may continue to serve as DRs.
6. If a vacancy occurs among the Assembly officers between meetings or an officer is unable to attend meetings, another DR may be appointed by the Chairman to replace the officer until another can be elected. The Assembly area should never be long without a full quota of officers.

Post-Election Activities

The Chairman directs the Secretary to send a report of the election Assembly to the **Associate Director—**Conference Administrator at **the** WSO with a duplicate to the newly elected Secretary, giving names and addresses of the Delegate, the Alternate, officers, DRs, and Area Coordinators.

Finances

The Chairman then introduces the matter of financing. He explains that Delegates' expenses to and from the World Service Conference are equalized so that each Area pays the same amount. ~~The Conference Administrator at the WSO finds out the cost of transportation from each area to the WSC and back. Allowance for plane travel is based on air-coach fares. Dividing the sum of these fares by the number of delegates and adding the cost of the delegates' stay at the Conference, the administrator arrives at the average amount needed to cover a delegate's trip to and from the Conference (See pp.121-122).~~ A **The** proportion of the **Delegates'** expenses **not covered by the equalized expense contributions** is paid by the WSO.

Delegates' interim expenses include telephone, postage, and the cost of visiting the groups in the Area. These will be met from the Area treasury. Finally, there will be the overhead expenses of the Assembly, rent, newsletter, incidental expenses, and others incurred by the Area World Service Committee.

The Chairman then presents a budget developed by the Area World Service Committee for the approval of the Assembly. The anticipated expense will be shared by each group in the Area. The GRs attending the Assembly should

come prepared to discuss, approve, and act upon methods of raising funds.

The Chairman directs the Assembly Treasurer to collect these funds and to issue receipts to the GRs so the GRs can account for the outlay to their respective group Treasurers. The Assembly Treasurer disburses the collected funds to the appropriate people.

Absent GRs should be asked to have their groups' share of costs remitted to the Assembly Treasurer.

If GRs are not prepared for the full outlay, the Chairman asks that group donations for the Delegate's expenses be sent to the Treasurer by December 1.

A check to cover equalized expenses for the Delegate is sent by the Assembly Treasurer to the **Associate Director—Conference Administrator** at the WSO before January 1.

By March 1, the **Associate Director—Conference Administrator** at the WSO sends each Delegate a check for **transportation and incidental expenses**, the fare to the conference and back and for his stay at the conference; **This amount may be** whether this is more or less than the equalized amount sent in by the Assembly Treasurer.

If there is no other business, the Assembly is then adjourned.

General Information for Assemblies

1. Upon receiving the results of an election, our World Service Office sends a letter of welcome to each new Delegate, with the date of the next Conference.
2. The Delegate, not the Alternate, receives all communications from our WSO, even if the Delegate was not able to attend the Conference.
3. The Chairman, elected for a three-year term, calls and conducts all subsequent Assemblies and Area committee meetings.
4. A full Assembly is comprised of the Delegate, officers, DRs, and GRs.
5. Assemblies are usually held at regularly scheduled intervals. The Area AI-Anon and Alateen groups are notified of each Assembly by the Chairman through the Secretary, the Area newsletter, or by any other effective method.
6. If the Alternate Delegate resigns, a new Alternate should be elected as soon as possible. If lack of time before the date of the Conference makes this impossible, and the Delegate has also resigned, the Chairman may attend the Conference in the Delegate's place. If the Chairman is unable to attend, next in line would be a past Delegate, beginning with the most recent one.
7. If an officer resigns or for any reason is unable to serve, a DR may be appointed by the Chairman to replace the officer until another can be elected to complete the term. He may then be elected for a three-year term of his own. In case the Delegate resigns, the Alternate finishes the Delegate's term and then may be elected for a three-year term as Delegate.
8. After the Delegate's third Conference, an Assembly is called to elect a Delegate and officers whose terms begin the following January 1.
9. Some areas may elect the retiring **outgoing** Delegate as Chairman of the Assembly. Where this occurs, he does not vote. Other Areas use the Delegate's Conference experience by electing or appointing him an Area Coordinator of a special service (e.g., Alateen, Archives, GPG, *The Forum*, Institutions; Literature, **Public Outreach [PI, CPC, and Institutions]**).
10. The Area World Service Committee meets whenever need arises to develop the Assembly agenda and to discuss Area affairs (See pp. 139-140.).
11. In Areas that have not as yet formed districts, the Delegate and officers are elected from among the GRs.
12. A DR who has resigned to take a current Assembly assignment (e.g., Newsletter Editor, Assembly officer, or Coordinator of a special service) may stand for the office of Delegate.
13. In order to draw on experience gained in service, an Area may choose to permit anyone who has served a three-year term as DR, has remained active at their Area level (as Newsletter Editor, Coordinator, etc.), and regularly attends AI-Anon meetings to stand for the office of Delegate.
14. One may hold an Assembly office in only one **Assembly** area at a time.

Duties of Assembly Members

Group Representatives (GR)

A GR is a vital link in the continuing function, growth, and unity of world AI-Anon. He is a member elected by his group for a three-year term. He attends Assemblies, maintains contact between the group and the district and between

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the group and the Area World Service Committee. He should also make himself thoroughly familiar with the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* ("**World Service Handbook**," "Al-Anon and Alateen Groups at Work," "Al-Anon's Twelve Concepts of Service," and the "Digest of Al-Anon and Alateen Policies").

GRs should be members with experience, stability, and an understanding of the Traditions and how they work, as applied in the "Digest of Al-Anon and Alateen Policies." It can be a challenging job. Ample time is also needed for GRs to perform their many duties. ~~the GR should have the potential to serve as DR, assembly officer, and eventually even as delegate.~~

If a group ~~can~~ also ~~have~~s an Alternate GR, the following duties may be shared:

- The GR and World Service

Through the contacts he makes with other GRs and the Area World Service Committee, the GR can gain knowledge of Al-Anon world service and the purpose and the work of the Conference. This will enable him to explain these to the group. The GR should be allowed regular time at group meetings to convey information concerning Al-Anon world service affairs.

- The GR and District Meetings

The GR attends all meetings of his district.

- The GR and the Area Assembly

In addition to attending the election Assembly, the GR is expected to attend all scheduled Assemblies (and any interim Assembly the Chairman or Delegate considers necessary) and to report back to the group. The GR or the Alternate GR, in the GR's absence, votes at the Assembly. Each group has *one* vote.

- Mailing Address at the WSO

The GR has the responsibility of seeing that the mail from the World Service Office is reaching his group. If the mail is not being brought to meetings by the person who is listed as the current mailing address (**CMA**), the GR consults first with the current mailing address and, if a change is warranted, contacts the District Representative and the WSO to provide an up-to-date current mailing address (possibly his own), a telephone listing, and other pertinent group information. If the group has a P.O. box, or if for any other reason the GR is not the group's mailing address, all mail should be referred to him. Although he does not replace the group Secretary, he can explain communications in the light of his understanding of the world Al-Anon picture.

- *The GR and The Forum*

The GR is also *The Forum* representative. He encourages the group to subscribe for at least one copy, acquaints members with its value, and urges them to subscribe. He also suggests that stories of interest be sent in to The Forum Administrator at the WSO.

- The GR as Pipeline

Communicating at district meetings, the GR can bring his group's viewpoint on any situation or problem concerning Al-Anon to the attention of the DRs. In turn, he informs his group of the outcome of the meetings.

- The World Service Delegate's Report

If the DR or the Delegate cannot personally give the Conference report to the group, the GR may do so and explain the functions and purpose of the Area Assembly and the Conference.

- ***Public Outreach (Public Information, Cooperating with the Professional Community, and Institutions)***

Local Public Information, CPC, and Institutions **public outreach** activities in the immediate community may be spearheaded by the GR, who may recommend forming a committee within the district, using material available from our WSO. If there is an Information Service, **public information outreach** and any institutions work affecting all the groups within its area of activity may be its responsibility. Liaison and cooperation should be maintained between the Information Service, the districts, and the Area **Public Outreach (PI, CPC, and Institutions) Coordinators**.*.

- Finances

The GR should be mindful of Al-Anon and Alateen's traditional insistence on being self-supporting. He makes sure the

appeals for support of our ~~the~~ WSO, ~~sent~~ four times a year (February, May, August, and November), are read to the group. He may personally present to his group the appeals sent by the Area Treasurer for support of the Assembly and give the group Treasurer the name and address of the Area Treasurer.

- *Conference Approved Literature (CAL)*

The GR, realizing **recognizing** the importance of CAL, makes sure that the leaflet **pamphlet** *Why Conference Approved Literature?* (P-35) is always on hand **available at the meeting**. He calls the attention of new members and longtime ones to this valuable tool **encourages use of a variety of CAL for meeting topics**.

*** When the World Service Office structure changed in 2002, some Areas chose a combination of these Coordinators and named them Public Outreach.**

District Representative (DR)

The DR is elected from among the incoming, outgoing, or active past GRs in his home district prior to the Assembly or by caucus at the Assembly (see p. 124-125). Each DR represents one district **within** the Area, ~~He helping~~ the groups **in his district** to understand **their relationship and responsibility to the worldwide** Al-Anon, fellowship.- making the members feel they are a part of a great whole in they have with, and even a responsibility toward, groups in other places and other lands.

The duties of the DR are:

- to call and chair district meetings; ~~preferably~~ at regular intervals
- to help the Delegate in every way possible in disseminating Conference information and reports
- to keep in touch with the GRs of his district to learn the views of the groups and their problems, which in turn, he may report to the Area World Service Committee or the Delegate
- to visit all the groups in his district, particularly new groups, to make sure they are getting necessary information and help
- to help the groups understand and apply the Traditions, which guide us in our fellowship activities
- to prepare **and update** a mailing list of the GRs in his district for the ~~secretary of the~~ Area World Service Committee ~~and to keep it up-to-date~~
- to urge every group to complete and promptly return the group data sheets sent out annually by the World Service Office
- to check the group's *current mailing address* (**CMA**) with each GR in the district to determine if it is correct
- to make sure that mail from the WSO is reaching the groups and being shared with the members
- to attend Area World Service Committee meetings and report to the Area World Service Committee on activities within his district
- to notify the Area World Service Committee and WSO of groups that have disbanded

Temporary Chairman

This office is necessary only in an Area preparing for its first Assembly (see pp. 122-123). The temporary Chairperson~~man~~ immediately notifies the WSO of his election. He sees that the time and place for a pre-Assembly meeting are chosen and that all groups in the Assembly center are invited to help with the planning. He chairs this meeting, where all preparations for the election Assembly are made, including notifying all groups in the Area. He serves as Chairperson~~man~~ of the Assembly until a full-term Chairperson~~man~~ is elected; the latter then takes over the balance of the meeting.

Chairman

A Chairman should have leadership and organizational ability, serving rather than dictating. It is essential to be able to plan an agenda and conduct meetings in an orderly manner. Communication and cooperation with others are key elements of good chairmanship.

- The Chairman conducts all Assemblies and Area World Service Committee meetings during his three-year term of office.
- He asks the Secretary to send out notices of all meetings to the Delegate, the Alternate, Area officers, and all voting members.
- If any officer other than the Delegate resigns before the end of his term, the Chairman appoints another DR to fill the office temporarily. As soon as convenient, an Assembly should be called to elect a successor for the un-expired

APPENDIX II

term. If the Chairman resigns, the Area World Service Committee names a Chairperson man pro tem or the Delegate may serve as Chairman until an election can be held.

- The Chairperson man, after consulting with the Delegate, calls an Assembly soon after the Delegate's return from the Conference to hear the report of WSC proceedings and decisions. He may also call an Assembly at other times deemed necessary by the Delegate or the Area World Service Committee.
- He calls meetings of the Area World Service Committee, preferably at regular intervals, to discuss Area matters.
- Before the end of the Delegate's three-year term of office and allowing ample time for a new Delegate to take office by the first of January, the Chairman calls the Assembly for the election of a Delegate and other officers.

Secretary

- The Secretary or **Group Records Coordinator** compiles a complete mailing list of all GRs, DRs, officers, and Coordinators and keeps it up-to-date.
- He sends out all notices of Assembly and Area World Service Committee meetings. He attends to all regular secretarial work and takes minutes of all meetings. These should be sent to the Area **World Service** Committee members soon after the meeting and be recorded in a permanent minutes book to be passed along to his successor.
- At election Assemblies, he calls the roll of all voting members and lists on the chalkboard candidates for office.
- He sends to the **Associate Director—Conference Administrator** at WSO the names and addresses of the Area World Service Committee members.

Treasurer

- The Treasurer handles all Assembly collections and funds.
- At least once a year he prepares a special appeal letter to be sent to all groups asking them to contribute to the Area treasury to cover Assembly expenses, including the contributions to the Delegates' equalized expense fund.
- He forwards to the WSO, before January 1, the equalized sum for the Delegates' fund equalized expense amount.
- He issues receipts to GRs for any contributions they make on behalf of their groups for the Assembly. ~~They can be reimbursed by their respective group treasurers.~~
- He pays all bills for expenditures approved by the Area World Service Committee. It is a sound business practice to have four members authorized to sign checks; of these, two signatures should be required on every check.
- He makes quarterly written financial reports to the Area World Service Committee and periodic reports to the Assembly.

World Service Delegate

The Delegate is a channel through which information flows. The conscience of Al-Anon can work effectively only if it is informed. Much depends on the Delegate being thoroughly familiar with the *Service Manual* ~~before he ever attends a~~ Conference throughout his term of service.

- He brings to the Conference the viewpoint of his Area on matters affecting the entire fellowship and returns to his Area with a broader perspective of Al-Anon worldwide.
- He is the bridge of understanding which links the groups in his Area with world Al-Anon/Alateen to help them continue to function in unity.
- He is the servant of Al-Anon as a whole.

At the Conference

- The Delegate attends all sessions of the Conference so that he may consider carefully the issues brought up, vote intelligently on them, and thus help to guide the Trustees in making their decisions.
- He tries to get a clear and comprehensive picture of our world fellowship to bring back to his home groups.
- He learns facts and figures; even more important, he gains a vision of a great movement in action.
- He learns what our World Service Office has meant to Al-Anon/Alateen in the past and what it, with the guidance of the Conference, will mean to the future welfare of the fellowship.
- In order to broaden the scope of certain standing selected committees at the WSO, Delegates are appointed to them as members-in-the-field. They are kept informed of interim committee meetings at the WSO. They can only attend special meetings of these committees at the Conference. They may later be consulted, by correspondence, on any related matter.
- He brings issues of concern to him to the attention of the Conference either through the Conference Committee or

directly from the floor in open Conference session.

In His Area

- The Delegate gives his Conference report to the Area World Service Committee and GRs to carry back to their groups. As often as possible, he makes his report in person at group or district meetings; nothing is more impressive than an eyewitness account.
- He meets with the Area's World Service Committee often to learn and evaluate the groups' reaction to his report and to hear their ideas on other pertinent matters. He can thus be better prepared to present his Area's views at the next Conference.
- If between Conferences the WSO needs overall group opinion on some urgent matter, the Delegate can get a cross-section of his groups' ideas through his DRs and GRs and report his findings. Thus, through the guidance of the Delegates, it becomes possible for the WSO to take any necessary action during the year.
- He may serve as a contact for public inquiries within his Area if the Coordinator is unavailable.
- ~~Before December 1,~~ The Delegate sends to the **Associate Director—Conference Administrator** items to be considered for the Conference agenda, ~~as suggested by his groups.~~
- The Delegate submits to the WSO, no later than January 1 of the regional election year, either the Regional Trustee (RT) resume or notification that the Area does not have a candidate.

World Service Delegate's Alternate

The Alternate Delegate works along with the Delegate as much as possible in communicating with the groups. He acquaints himself with all the Delegate's duties, so that if the Delegate is unable to finish his three-year term, the Alternate can step in to complete it.

If the Alternate must complete the term, a temporary Alternate is at once appointed by the Chairman from among the DRs to act until a special Assembly can be called to elect a new Alternate.

~~The alternate may serve as the editor of the area's newsletter or as a reporter. He may assume responsibility for briefing the assembly on Al-Anon structure; this has been found especially helpful for the new GRs.~~

~~In m~~**Many** Areas it is impossible for the delegate to visit all the groups in his area to report on the Conference. Such areas may be served more adequately by having the delegate and the alternate cover predetermined sections of the area: **have assigned or appointed the Alternate Delegate to serve as one or more of the following:**

- Area Newsletter Editor
- Forum Coordinator
- Group Records Coordinator
- Chairman of Area convention planning committee
- Chairperson**man** of Area Budget Committee
- Alternate Area Chairman

The Alternate Delegate could **can** also provide valuable service ~~as chairman of the area convention planning committee (to work with the local host committee) or as chairperson of the Budget Committee (to work with the area treasurer):~~ **to the Area by**

- visiting Area groups and districts
- assisting Area committees

~~Some areas have the alternate delegate appointed alternate chairperson. It has been found in some areas that an alternate delegate could be assigned to work on~~

- developing Alateen groups, encouraging Al-Anon members to sponsor them, and setting up Alateen workshops
- **other responsibilities as assigned by the Area**

Area World Service Committee

The primary function of the Area World Service Committee ~~should be~~ **is** to plan for the general improvement of both the Assembly and the groups. Voting members of this committee are usually the officers of the Assembly, the DRs, and Coordinators of services (such as Alateen, Archives, **Public Outreach** [PI, CPC, **and** Institutions], Literature, **Group Records, Forum** or Newsletter), and liaison members from any Information Services (Intergroups). The Chairman of Al-Anon/Alateen activities at an AA area convention or Chairman of **Area** Al-Anon and Alateen conventions should also

APPENDIX II

participate in Area World Service Committee meetings.

These meetings, called and chaired by the Area Chairman, may be held at stated intervals to hear and discuss the Delegate's report, to consider Area matters, to suggest items of interest for the Area newsletter, all with the purpose of informing and unifying the groups in the Area. To equalize travel expenses, successive meetings may be held in various localities within the Area.

Throughout the year, the **Area** World Service Committee is responsible for submitting questions that cannot be resolved at the district or Assembly level to the ~~WSC Admissions/Handbook Committee at our WSO~~. It also plans the Assembly agendas, prepares the Area budget, and studies the need for alternatives to these Handbook suggestions and presents its findings to the Area Assembly.

When advisable, the Area World Service Committee suggests ~~subdivisions~~ **revisions of boundaries** of existing districts to be approved at the Area Assembly.

When Al-Anon and Alateen groups are to participate in an AA or Al-Anon convention, a separate convention planning committee may be formed, using the talents of the membership as a whole. To assure liaison with the convention planning committee, a convention Chairman may be appointed or elected by the Area World Service Committee. He is responsible to the ~~committee~~ Area and **submits reports to** the Area Chairman.

All Al-Anon/Alateen members, except those who are also members of AA, are eligible to serve as an Area Coordinator. Guidelines for Area Coordinators of ~~special services, such as Alateen, Archives, Cooperating the Professional Community, Forum, Institutions, Literature and Public Information~~ are available from the WSO **or on the WSO Members' Web site**. ~~They are not detailed here because they are constantly updated to include new experience and development.~~

Interim Assemblies

The purpose of the interim Assembly is to assure adequate interchange of information and ideas about service activities, not only in the immediate Area, but where worldwide Al-Anon is concerned. (A typical election Assembly was previously outlined in this Handbook.)

Topics the agenda might include are:

- approval of Assembly minutes
- Chairman's report on Area World Service Committee since previous Assembly
- Delegate's report on Conference and/or recent communications from WSO
- Secretary's report
- Treasurer's report
- district reports from DRs on progress and problems
- GR time for ideas, opinions, and questions
- application of the Twelve Traditions of Al-Anon
- interpretation of the Twelve Concepts of Service
- workshops—intensive discussion in small groups
- town-hall meeting led by panel with all GRs participating
- films and videos: *Lois' Story*, *Al-Anon Speaks for Itself*, and *Lois W. and the Pioneers* **(for a list of current available films contact the WSO)**
- report on Area newsletter
- reports from Coordinators of special services: Alateen, Archives, **Public Outreach** (Public Information, Cooperating with the Professional Community, **and** Institutions) **The Forum**, Literature, **Group Records**
- reports from any other committees, such as Al-Anon Information Service (Intergroup), convention
- brief information session on WSO service—conducted by the Delegate

District Meetings

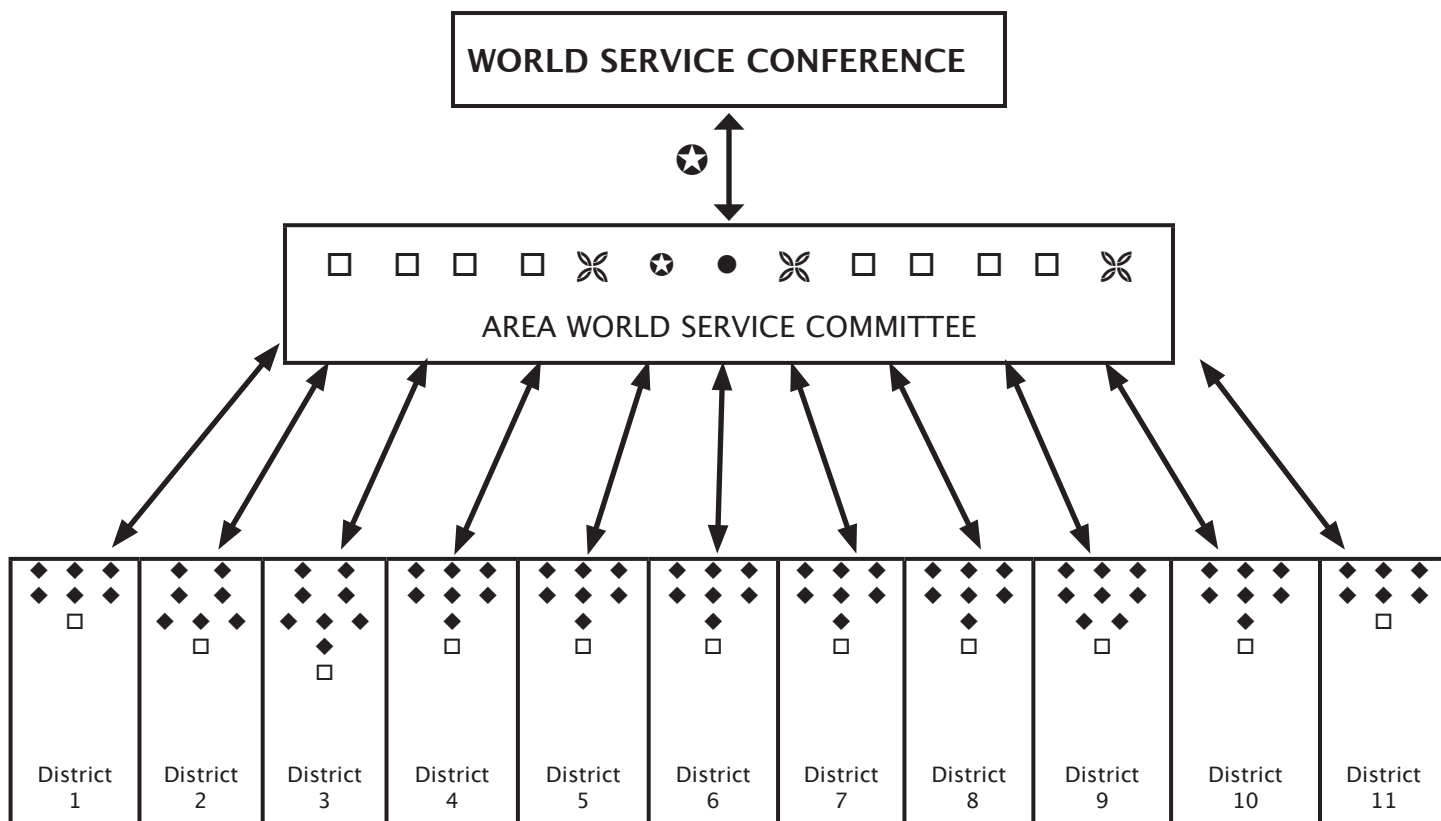
Various types of meetings may be held within a district to unite and inform local groups: meetings to hear progress reports of the Area World Service Committee, sharing sessions for discussion of district matters, round-robins, or

social evenings. At ~~stated~~ **regular** intervals, meetings scheduled and chaired by the DR are held to talk over such matters as:

- the need for local service committees such as ~~PI, CPC,~~ Alateen, **Public Outreach (PI, CPC and** Institutions), a telephone answering service, or an Information Service (attention should be called to the respective guidelines available from WSO)
- ways to familiarize groups, Information Services, and local service committees in the vicinity with Conference Approved Literature (CAL), with emphasis on specialized items available for teenagers, parents, men, ~~PI, CPC,~~ and **public outreach** Institutions
- sharing with the fellowship worldwide by submitting to *The Forum* articles or items of general interest
- encouraging members to subscribe to *The Forum*, either singly or through bulk group orders (when a group pays for multiple subscriptions, a small profit is realized on the sale of single copies at meetings)
- the value of *Inside Al-Anon Xtra* as a sharing vehicle from the WSO to the groups
- raising money to support a telephone answering service or expand an existing one
- means of stimulating contributions from the groups in the district to Al-Anon's World Service Office (our WSO informs the Delegate of all contributions from the groups in his Area; this information can be relayed by each DR so that GRs will know whether their groups have contributed)
- problems that arise when Al-Anon Traditions are disregarded or other concerns that groups and committees have presented for consideration
- workshops on Alateen, **Public Outreach (PI, CPC, and** Institutions), Literature, or any other Al-Anon service

Collections at district meetings are a practical way to raise money.

WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE (AREA COMMITTEE STRUCTURE)



- ◆ Group Representative
- District Representative
- ✧ Assembly Officer
- Chairman
- ☆ Delegate

The Area World Service Committee may also include Coordinators of special services such as Alateen, Archives, **Public Outreach** (PI, CPC, **and** Institutions), Newsletter Editors, The Forum, etc., and liaison members (from local Information Service centers or Intergroups)

Each district allocates funds to send its DR to the meetings of the Area World Service Committee. (Groups allocate funds for DRs to attend meetings of the Area Assembly as GRs.)

BY-LAWS OF AL-ANON FAMILY GROUP HEADQUARTERS, INC.

Effective April 30, 1988

ARTICLE I ~ NAMES

The name of this Corporation, as set forth in its Certificate of Incorporation, is Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. In these BY-LAWS, the Corporation is sometimes referred to as the Corporation or as the World Service Office. For the purpose of these BY-LAWS, the term Corporation and the name World Service Office shall be deemed synonymous and interchangeable with each other and with the name Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc.

1. As used in these BY-LAWS:

- a) Al-Anon group means a group of relatives and friends of alcoholics organized and functioning in keeping with the principles and Traditions of the Al-Anon fellowship.
- b) Alateen group means a group of teenage relatives and friends of alcoholics organized and functioning in keeping with the principles and Traditions of the Al-Anon fellowship.
- c) World Service Conference means the organization described in Article XI of these BY-LAWS.
- d) Trustee means a person who is or becomes a Trustee pursuant to these BY-LAWS.

ARTICLE II ~ PURPOSES

- 1. The purposes for which the Corporation was formed, as set forth in its Certificate of Incorporation, are: "To encourage, assist and serve the families and friends of alcoholics in dealing with the problems concerning and attendant on alcoholism; to reinforce their efforts to understand the alcoholic and to foster his or her restoration to normal life; to disseminate information in relation thereto and to conduct, and participate in, any other classes of service to assist families and friends of alcoholics in dealing with their problems."
- 2. In furtherance of the purposes set forth in the Certificate of Incorporation, the World Service Office will:
 - a) Coordinate policy among the Al-Anon and Alateen groups throughout the world;
 - b) Assist Al-Anon and Alateen groups in the conduct of their activities;
 - c) Provide relatives and friends of alcoholics with information about the principles and Traditions of Al-Anon and locations of Al-Anon and Alateen groups;
 - d) Assist in the formation of new Al-Anon and Alateen groups;
 - e) Publish literature of interest to Al-Anon and Alateen groups;
 - f) Bring Al-Anon or Alateen groups to the attention of the concerned public;
 - g) Provide information and other assistance to persons for whom regular attendance at meetings of Al-Anon or Alateen groups is difficult or impractical;
 - h) Establish and maintain national and international public relations; and
 - i) Establish and maintain policies for the work of the World Service Office.

ARTICLE III ~ MEMBERS

1. The members of the Corporation shall be the persons who are the Trustees of the Corporation. Each Trustee shall become a member upon becoming a Trustee and shall cease to be a member upon ceasing to be a Trustee.
2. Members shall not be required to pay dues or any other compensation to the Corporation, or to any one else, as a condition of membership.

ARTICLE IV ~ TRUSTEES

1. The Directors of the Corporation shall be the persons who are the Trustees of the Corporation. Each Trustee shall become a Director upon becoming a Trustee and shall cease to be a Director upon ceasing to be a Trustee. For the purpose of these BY-LAWS, the term Director and Trustee shall be deemed synonymous and interchangeable so far as necessary to conform to the Certificate of Incorporation of the Corporation which contemplates, and refers to, Directors.
2. The Board of Trustees shall consist of not less than seven nor more than twenty-one persons of the following classifications: Trustees at Large, Regional Trustees, Lifetime Trustees, and a Sustaining Trustee, as those terms are described in these BY-LAWS. The actual number of Trustees and the composition of the Board as among the classifications referred to shall be as established by the Board from time to time and in this regard the Board will generally be guided by the directions of the World Service Conference.
3. Trustees at Large are Trustees whose nomination originates with, or with the consent of, the Board of Trustees. The total number of such Trustees shall be set by the Board of Trustees from time to time and shall always be a number evenly divisible by three. One-third of the number of Trustees at Large shall be elected each year at the annual meeting of the Board of Trustees, and shall take office on the day following such meeting.
4. The Nominating Committee, prior to the next annual meeting of the Board, is charged to submit nominations for Trustee at Large positions to replace those whose term will expire. In the event a nominee for Trustee at Large is not elected by the Board of Trustees, the nominee shall be withdrawn and the position declared vacant. The position may be filled in accordance with Article IV, paragraph 9.
5. Regional Trustees are Trustees who live in geographic areas of the United States and Canada designated as official regions by the World Service Conference. Nominees for Regional Trustee shall be designated annually by the World Service Conference in accordance with such procedures as that body may establish. The total number of Regional Trustees shall be a number evenly divisible by three and one-third of the number shall be elected each year at the annual meeting of the Board of Trustees to take office on the day following such meeting. In the event that a World Service Conference's nominee is not elected by the Board of Trustees, the nominee shall be withdrawn, and the position declared vacant. The position may be filled in accordance with Article IV, paragraph 9.
6. The Sustaining Trustee is the person employed by the World Service Office established by Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. to hold the office of Executive Director of the World Service Office. The term of office of the Sustaining Trustee shall be for the same period as the person is employed by the World Service Office as Executive Director.
7. Lois W. and Anne B., the co-founders of Al-Anon, were Lifetime Trustees who served as Trustee as long as each lived.
8. Any Trustee may resign by sending written notice to the Secretary of the Corporation.
9. Any vacancy in the office of a Trustee at Large or Regional Trustee which occurs in any year between the annual meeting and the next World Service Conference may be filled by the Board of Trustees until the next annual meeting.
10. The length of time any Trustee at Large and Regional Trustee may serve on the Board is two three-year terms which may be consecutive.
11. Any Trustee may be removed from office for cause by affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Trustees.
12. Trustees shall serve without remuneration but they shall be entitled to payment of reasonable expenses.

ARTICLE V ~ POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE TRUSTEES

1. The Board of Trustees shall control and manage the affairs of the Corporation.
2. Without limiting the generality of the preceding paragraph, the Board of Trustees shall have the following powers:
 - a) To establish and maintain the policies of the World Service Office;
 - b) To control the property and finances of the World Service Office;
 - c) To establish plans and conduct the operations of the World Service Office;
 - d) To authorize expenditures;
 - e) To elect the officers of the Corporation;
 - f) To elect the at-large members of the Executive Committee and appoint members of other committees in accordance with these BY-LAWS;
 - g) To appoint an Executive Director and a Director of Business Services for the World Service Office; and
 - h) To take such measures as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of the World Service Office.
3. Any Trustee having a substantial financial interest in any contract or transaction requiring authorization by the Board of Trustees shall not vote on the matter.

ARTICLE VI ~ OFFICERS

1. The Officers of the Corporation shall consist of a President, a Vice President, a Treasurer and a Secretary, and such other officers as may be deemed necessary from time to time by the Board. The Executive Director serves as the Secretary of the Corporation.
2. The President, the Vice President, and the Treasurer shall be elected at the annual meeting of Trustees from among the Trustees for a term of one year each.
3. The President shall also be known as the Chairperson (and is sometimes herein referred to as the Chairperson), and the Vice President shall also be known as the Vice Chairperson (and is sometimes herein referred to as the Vice Chairperson).
4. Any vacancy may be filled for the unexpired term by a majority vote of the Trustees.
5. Any Officer may be removed from office by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Trustees.

ARTICLE VII ~ DUTIES OF OFFICERS

1. **THE PRESIDENT.** The President shall preside at all meetings of the Board of Trustees, and shall perform all the necessary duties, and exercise all the customary powers incident to the office of President, including appointment of committee Chairpersons, with the exception of the Chairperson of the Executive Committee. The President shall have general supervision of all of the affairs of the World Service Office, and shall be an ex officio member of all committees.
2. **THE VICE PRESIDENT.** The Vice President shall be an aide to the President and shall perform the duties of the President in the absence or disability of the President. The Board of Trustees shall in its sole discretion determine the matter of the President's disability. In the event the Board determines that disability has occurred, the office shall be deemed vacant. The Board of Trustees may elect a successor to serve until the next annual meeting of the Board of Trustees.
3. **THE TREASURER.** The Treasurer shall be the financial officer of the Corporation and shall provide advice to the

Corporation with respect to general financial policy and ancillary matters such as the collection, custody, and control of funds of the World Service Office and maintenance of books of accounts and financial records subject to such directions as may be given by the Board of Trustees. The Treasurer is responsible for having the books of account of the Corporation audited by a Certified Public Accountant at regular intervals as directed by the Board of Trustees. He may be an authorized signatory for disposition of funds of the Corporation on deposit in banks and other holding accounts. The Treasurer shall not be individually responsible for accounting procedures, security of funds, books of accounts or financial records, but does have general oversight authority respecting these matters.

4. THE SECRETARY. The Secretary shall record the minutes of all meetings of the Corporation, shall be the custodian of books and records of the Corporation and shall perform such other duties as may be delegated. The Secretary shall be an ex officio member of all committees.
5. The Officers of the Corporation shall each perform such other duties as may be delegated to them by the Board of Trustees as well as such other duties as shall pertain to their respective offices.

ARTICLE VIII ~ FINANCES

1. The fiscal year of the World Service Office shall begin on the first day of January in each year and end on the 31st day of December thereof.
2. Checks shall be made in the name of the Corporation and shall be signed by two officers or employees as may from time to time be designated by the Board of Trustees.

ARTICLE IX ~ MEETINGS

1. The annual meeting of the Board of Trustees shall be held on the day following the World Service Conference in April of each year at such place as is designated by the Board of Trustees, except when special circumstances warrant a change of date of the Conference.
2. Regular meetings of the Board of Trustees shall be held three times a year in January, July and October at a time and place designated by the Chairperson. In addition, there will be a regular meeting in April of each year on a date to be determined by the Board of Trustees.

If all the Trustees consent thereto generally or in respect of a particular meeting, a Trustee may participate in a meeting of the Board or of a committee of the Board by means of such conference telephone or other communications facilities as permit all persons participating in the meeting to hear each other, and a Trustee participating in such a meeting by such means is deemed to be present at the meeting.

3. Special meetings of the Board of Trustees may be called by the Chairperson at any time. The Chairperson shall call a special meeting upon the written application of three Trustees or upon the written application of the Chairperson of the Executive Committee for the transaction of such business as may be described in such application.
4. At least fourteen days' notice of each meeting shall be given to the Trustees by mail. Forty-eight hours written notice of any meeting may be sent by electronic means. Trustees may waive notice of meetings by executing appropriate waivers.
5. A majority of members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business in any meeting. Each member shall have one vote. The vote of the majority of the Trustees present at the time of the vote, if a quorum is then present, shall be the act of the Board of Trustees, except as otherwise provided by law. In the absence of a quorum, a majority of the Trustees present may adjourn the meeting from time to time until a quorum is obtained.
6. Any member unable to attend any meeting of the Board shall give advance notice of the absence to the Chairperson or Secretary of the Board and indicate the reason for the absence. Any member who fails to attend two meetings per year for reasons deemed inadequate by the Board shall be subject to dismissal by the Board for such cause. For the purposes of this paragraph, the Board of Trustees meetings during the World Service Conference shall be deemed to be one meeting.
7. Unless otherwise determined by the Chairperson, the order of business at all meetings shall be as follows:

- a) Calling of roll;
- b) Approval of minutes;
- c) Report of Treasurer;
- d) Committee reports and communications;
- e) Elections (if such action is scheduled for such meetings);
- f) New Business.

ARTICLE X ~ INDEMNIFICATION

1. Each individual serving or having served as Trustee or Officer, or both, of the Corporation shall be indemnified in the circumstances and to the full extent permitted by law, against any and all costs, expenses and financial consequences of whatever nature, including legal fees actually incurred in connection with any action, suit or legal proceeding of any kind in which such an individual is a defendant by reason of serving or having served as an Officer or Trustee, or both, of the corporation. This indemnification shall also extend to any individual made party defendant to any actions, suits or legal proceedings referenced in the preceding sentence by reason of the fact that his testator or intestate served as Trustee or Officer of the Corporation.
2. The foregoing indemnification shall apply also to each individual serving or having served (in his individual capacity, and not as a Trustee or officer) as a member of the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees or of any special committee as may be authorized from time to time by the Board of Trustees.

ARTICLE XI ~ WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE

1. The World Service Conference consists of the following persons:
 - a) Al-Anon Delegates from the United States and Canada;
 - b) Trustees of the Corporation;
 - c) Al-Anon members who serve as Directors and Associate Directors of the World Service Office;
 - d) The Chairpersons of committees established by the Board of Trustees;
 - e) The persons comprising the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees; and
 - f) Such other persons as deemed necessary for Conference business and representatives from countries not served by the World Service Conference Structure may be admitted by Conference vote. These persons may participate but not vote.
2. The World Service Conference shall be the permanent body empowered to express the conscience of the Al-Anon fellowship.
3. The Board of Trustees shall consult with the World Service Conference and, when required, accept its decision. However, the Board of Trustees shall continue to be vested with the full legal powers and responsibilities for the World Service Office.
4. Three-fourths of all authorized participants registered at the Conference may bring about a reorganization of the World Service Office as or when it is deemed essential. They may request the resignation of the entire Board of Trustees and nominate a new slate of Trustees. In this regard the annual election of Trustees shall be conditional upon the understanding of each, that his resignation is required on call for the same by the Conference, subject to the further understanding that prior to any such resignation becoming effective each Trustee shall be deemed to vote for the successor slate of Trustees presented by the Conference. For the purpose of bringing

about a reorganization of the World Service Office, the number of World Service Office participants voting shall be limited to one-fourth of the total Conference vote.

ARTICLE XII ~ COMMITTEES

1. **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.** The Board of Trustees shall elect at each annual meeting an Executive Committee consisting of seven persons. The Executive Committee shall include the Executive Director of the World Service Office, the Chairperson of the Finance Committee, the Chairperson of the Policy Committee, an AI-Anon member from the administrative staff of the World Service Office, and three AI-Anon members, preferably not Trustees. The Executive Committee shall meet at such times as the Board of Trustees may direct and shall have the power to act on behalf of the Board of Trustees in the intervals between meetings of the Board of Trustees.

The Committee shall report all such action to the full Board no later than the next meeting of the Board. The Board of Trustees shall elect one volunteer member of the Executive Committee as the Chairperson. The Executive Director is the Secretary.

The President, an ex officio member, shall perform the duties of the Chairperson of the Executive Committee in that person's absence.

2. **FINANCE COMMITTEE.** The Board of Trustees shall appoint a Finance Committee consisting of the following members: the Treasurer of the Corporation, the President, the Chairperson of the Executive Committee, one other Trustee designated by the President, and the Executive Director. The Treasurer shall be the Chairperson of the Finance Committee. The Executive Director is the Secretary. The Finance Committee shall plan the yearly budget of the World Service Office and shall render such other services as may be requested by the Board of Trustees.

The President shall perform the duties of the Chairperson of the Finance Committee in the absence of the Treasurer.

3. **POLICY COMMITTEE.** The Board of Trustees shall appoint a Policy Committee consisting of the following members: Trustees, Executive Committee members, the Chairpersons of all committees of the World Service Office, and the Conference members of the WSO administrative staff. The Chairperson of the Policy Committee shall be appointed by the President of the Board of Trustees. The Policy Committee shall consider AI-Anon policies particularly in relation to AI-Anon's Traditions, make recommendations to the Board of Trustees, and render such other services as the Board of Trustees may request.

The President shall perform the duties of the Chairperson of the Policy Committee in that person's absence.

4. **NOMINATING COMMITTEE.** At each annual meeting of the Board of Trustees, the Chairperson of the Board appoints the Chairperson of the Nominating Committee, with Board approval. After the annual meeting, the Chairperson of the Nominating Committee, in consultation with the Chairperson of the Board, appoints the members of the Nominating Committee.
5. The Board of Trustees may appoint such other committees as they may from time to time determine appropriate.
6. Committee members shall hold office for a term of one (1) year.
7. Committee members shall serve without remuneration but shall be entitled to payment of reasonable expenses.
8. Any Committee member may be removed from office for cause by affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Trustees.

ARTICLE XIII ~ AMENDMENTS

The Board of Trustees shall have the power to amend or alter these BY-LAWS in whole or in part by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Trustees at a meeting called for the purpose of amending the BY-LAWS.

Amended: July 27, 2004
Reviewed by the April 2005 WSC

BY-LAW NO. 1 OF AL-ANON FAMILY GROUP HEADQUARTERS (CANADA) INC.

Effective March 9, 1999

ARTICLE I NAMES

1. (a) The name of this Corporation, as set forth in its Letters Patent of Incorporation, is Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters (Canada) Inc. In these BY-LAWS, the Corporation is sometimes referred to as the Corporation or as Canada Service Office. For the purpose of these BY-LAWS, the term Corporation and the name Canada Service Office shall be deemed synonymous and interchangeable with each other and with the name Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters (Canada) Inc.
- (b) The Corporation is associated with Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. of Virginia Beach, Virginia, USA and it has been incorporated to carry on, in Canada, the work of the United States corporation.
2. As used in these BY-LAWS:
 - (a) Al-Anon group means a group of relatives and friends of alcoholics organized and functioning in keeping with the principles and Traditions of the Al-Anon fellowship.
 - (b) Alateen group means a group of teenage relatives and friends of alcoholics organized and functioning in keeping with the principles and Traditions of the Al-Anon fellowship.
 - (c) World Service Conference means the organization described in Article XI of these BY-LAWS.
 - (d) Trustee means a person who is or becomes a Trustee pursuant to these BY-LAWS.

ARTICLE II PURPOSES

1. The purposes for which the Corporation was formed, as set forth in its Letters Patent of Incorporation, are: "To encourage, assist and serve the families and friends of alcoholics in dealing with the problems concerning and attendant on alcoholism; to reinforce their efforts to understand the alcoholic and to foster his or her restoration to normal life; to disseminate information in relation thereto and to conduct, and participate in, any other classes of service to assist families and friends of alcoholics in dealing with their problems."
2. In furtherance of the purposes set forth in the Letters Patent of Incorporation, the Canada Service Office assisted by Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. will:
 - (a) Coordinate policy among the Al-Anon and Alateen groups;
 - (b) Assist Al-Anon and Alateen groups in the conduct of their activities;
 - (c) Provide relatives and friends of alcoholics with information about the principles and Traditions of Al-Anon and locations of Al-Anon and Alateen groups;
 - (d) Assist in the formation of new Al-Anon and Alateen groups;
 - (e) Publish literature of interest to Al-Anon and Alateen groups;

- (f) Bring Al-Anon or Alateen groups to the attention of the concerned public;
- (g) Provide information and other assistance to persons for whom regular attendance at meetings of Al-Anon or Alateen groups is difficult or impractical;
- (h) Establish and maintain national public relations; and
- (i) Establish and maintain policies for the work of the Canada Service Office.

ARTICLE III MEMBERS

1. The members of the Corporation shall be the persons who are the Trustees of the Corporation. Each Trustee shall become a member upon becoming a Trustee and shall cease to be a member upon ceasing to be a Trustee.
2. Members shall not be required to pay dues or any other compensation to the Corporation, or to anyone else, as a condition of membership.

ARTICLE IV TRUSTEES

1. The Directors of the Corporation shall be the persons who are the Trustees of the Corporation. Each Trustee shall become a Director upon becoming a Trustee and shall cease to be a Director upon ceasing to be a Trustee. For the purpose of these BY-LAWS, the term Director and Trustee shall be deemed synonymous and interchangeable so far as necessary to conform to the Letters Patent of Incorporation of the Corporation which contemplates, and refers to, Directors.
2. The Board of Trustees shall consist of not less than seven nor more than twenty-one persons of the following classifications: Trustees at Large, Regional Trustees, and a Sustaining Trustees as those terms are described in these BY-LAWS. The actual number of Trustees and the composition of the Board as among the classifications referred to shall be as established by the Board from time to time and in this regard the Board will generally be guided by the directions of the World Service Conference.
3. Trustees at Large are Trustees whose nomination originates with, or with the consent of, the Board of Trustees. The total number of such Trustees shall be set by the Board of Trustees from time to time and shall always be a number evenly divisible by three. One-third of the number of Trustees at Large shall be elected each year at the annual meeting of the Board of Trustees, and shall take office on the day following such meeting.
4. The Nominating Committee, prior to the next annual meeting of the Board, is charged to submit nominations for Trustee at Large positions to replace those whose term will expire. In the event a nominee for Trustee at Large is not elected by the Board of Trustees, the nominee shall be withdrawn and the position declared vacant. The position may be filled in accordance with Article IV, paragraph 8.
5. Regional Trustees are Trustees who live in geographic areas of the United States and Canada designated as official regions by the World Service Conference. Nominees for Regional Trustee shall be designated annually by the World Service Conference in accordance with such procedures as that body may establish. The total number of Regional Trustees shall be a number evenly divisible by three, and one-third of the number shall be elected each year at the annual meeting of the Board of Trustees to take office on the day following such meeting. In the event that a World Service Conference's nominee is not elected by the Board of Trustees, the nominee shall be withdrawn, and the position declared vacant. The position may be filled in accordance with Article IV, paragraph 8.
6. The Sustaining Trustee is the person employed by the World Service Office established by Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. to hold the office of Executive Director of the World Service Office. The term of office of the Sustaining Trustee shall be for the same period as the person is employed by the World Service Office as Executive Director.
7. Any Trustee may resign by sending written notice to the Secretary of the Corporation.

8. Any vacancy in the office of a Trustee at Large or Regional Trustee which occurs in any year between the annual meeting and the next World Service Conference may be filled by the Board of Trustees until the next annual meeting.
9. The length of time any Trustee at Large and Regional Trustee may serve on the Board is two three-year terms which may be consecutive.
10. Any Trustee may be removed from office for cause by affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Trustees.
11. Trustees shall serve without remuneration but they shall be entitled to payment of reasonable expenses.

ARTICLE V

POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE TRUSTEES

1. The Board of Trustees shall control and manage the affairs of the Corporation.
2. Without limiting the generality of the preceding paragraph, the Board of Trustees shall have the following powers:
 - (a) To adopt and maintain the policies of the World Service Office;
 - (b) To control the property and finances of the Corporation;
 - (c) To establish plans and conduct the operations of the Corporation;
 - (d) To authorize expenditures;
 - (e) To elect the officers of the Corporation;
 - (f) To elect the at-large members of the Executive Committee and appoint members of other committees in accordance with these BY-LAWS;
 - (g) To take such measures as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of the World Service Office.
3. Any Trustee having a substantial financial interest in any contract or transaction requiring authorization by the Board of Trustees shall not vote on the matter.

ARTICLE VI

OFFICERS

1. The Officers of the Corporation shall consist of a President, a Vice President, a Treasurer and a Secretary, and such other officers as may be deemed necessary from time to time by the Board. The Executive Director serves as the Secretary of the Corporation.
2. The President, the Vice President, and the Treasurer shall be elected at the annual meeting of Trustees from among the Trustees for a term of one year each.
3. The President shall also be known as the Chairperson (and is sometimes herein referred to as the Chairperson), and the Vice President shall also be known as the Vice Chairperson (and is sometimes herein referred to as the Vice Chairperson).
4. Any vacancy may be filled for the unexpired term by a majority vote of the Trustees.
5. Any Officer may be removed from office by affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Trustees.

ARTICLE VII DUTIES OF OFFICERS

1. THE PRESIDENT. The President shall preside at all meetings of the Board of Trustees, and shall perform all the necessary duties, and exercise all the customary powers incident to the office of President, including appointment of committee Chairpersons, with the exception of the Chairperson of the Executive Committee. The President shall have general supervision of all of the affairs of the Canada Service Office, and shall be an ex officio member of all committees.
2. THE VICE PRESIDENT. The Vice President shall be an aide to the President and shall perform the duties of the President in the absence or disability of the President. The Board of Trustees shall in its sole discretion determine the matter of the President's disability. In the event the Board determines that disability has occurred, the office shall be deemed vacant. The Board of Trustees may elect a successor to serve until the next annual meeting of the Board of Trustees.
3. THE TREASURER. The Treasurer shall be the financial officer of the Corporation and shall provide advice to the Corporation with respect to general financial policy and ancillary matters such as the collection, custody, and control of funds and maintenance of books of accounts and financial records subject to such directions as may be given by the Board of Trustees. The Treasurer is responsible for having the books of account of the Corporation audited by a Chartered Accountant at regular intervals as directed by the Board of Trustees. He may be an authorized signatory for disposition of funds of the Corporation on deposit in banks and other holding accounts. The Treasurer shall not be individually responsible for accounting procedures, security of funds, books of accounts or financial records, but does have general oversight authority respecting these matters.
4. THE SECRETARY. The Secretary shall record the minutes of all meetings of the Corporation, shall be the custodian of books and records of the Corporation, shall have custody of the corporate seal and shall perform such other duties as may be delegated. The Secretary shall be an ex officio member of all committees.
5. The Officers of the Corporation shall each perform such other duties as may be delegated to them by the Board of Trustees as well as such other duties as shall pertain to their respective offices.

ARTICLE VIII FINANCES

1. The fiscal year of the Canada Service Office shall begin on the first day of January in each year and end on the 31st day of December thereof.
2. Cheques shall be made in the name of the Corporation and shall be signed by two officers or employees as may from time to time be designated by the Board of Trustees.
3. The Board of Trustees shall at each annual meeting appoint an auditor to audit the accounts of the Corporation for report to the Trustees at the next annual meeting. The auditor shall hold office until the next annual meeting provided that the Trustees may fill any casual vacancy in the office of auditor. The remuneration of the auditor shall be fixed by the Board of Trustees.

ARTICLE IX MEETINGS

1. The annual meeting of the Board of Trustees shall be held on the day following the World Service Conference in April of each year at such place as is designated by the Board of Trustees, except when special circumstances warrant a change of date of the Conference. Annual meetings may be held in the United States of America if approved by resolution of the Board of Trustees.
2. If all the Trustees consent thereto generally or in respect of a particular meeting, a Trustee may participate in a meeting of the Board or of a committee of the Board by means of such conference telephone or other communica-

- tions facilities as permit all persons participating in the meeting to hear each other, and a Trustee participating in such a meeting by such means is deemed to be present at the meeting.
3. Special meetings of the Board of Trustees may be called by the Chairperson at any time. The Chairperson shall call a special meeting upon the written application of three Trustees or upon the written application of the Chairperson of the Executive Committee for the transaction of such business as may be described in such application.
 4. At least fourteen days' notice of each meeting shall be given to the Trustees by mail. Forty-eight hours written notice of any meeting may be sent by electronic means. Trustees may waive notice of meetings by executing appropriate waivers.
 5. A majority of members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business in any meeting. Each member shall have one vote. The vote of the majority of the Trustees present at the time of the vote, if a quorum is then present, shall be the act of the Board of Trustees, except as otherwise provided by law. In the absence of a quorum, a majority of the Trustees present may adjourn the meeting from time to time until a quorum is obtained.
 6. Any member unable to attend any meeting of the Board shall give advance notice of the absence to the Chairperson or Secretary of the Board and indicate the reason for the absence. Any member who fails to attend two meetings per year for reasons deemed inadequate by the Board, shall be subject to dismissal by the Board for such cause. For the purposes of this paragraph, the Board of Trustees meetings during the World Service Conference shall be deemed to be one meeting.
 7. Unless otherwise determined by the Chairperson, the order of business at all meetings shall be as follows:
 - (a) Calling of roll;
 - (b) Approval of minutes;
 - (c) Report of Treasurer;
 - (d) Committee reports and communications;
 - (e) Elections (if such action is scheduled for such meetings);
 - (f) New Business.

ARTICLE X INDEMNIFICATION

1. Each individual serving or having served as Trustee or Officer, or both, of the Corporation shall be indemnified in the circumstances and to the full extent permitted by law, against any and all costs, expenses and financial consequences of whatever nature, including legal fees actually incurred in connection with any action, suit, or legal proceeding of any kind in which such an individual is a defendant by reason of serving or having served as an Officer or Trustee, or both, of the Corporation. This indemnification shall also extend to any individual made party defendant to any action, suit, or legal proceeding referenced in the preceding sentence by reason of the fact that his testator or intestate served as Trustee or Officer of the Corporation.
2. The foregoing indemnification shall apply also to each individual serving or having served (in his individual capacity, and not as a Trustee or Officer) as a member of the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees or of any special committee as may be authorized from time to time by the Board of Trustees.

ARTICLE XI WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE

1. The World Service Conference consists of the following persons:
 - (a) Al-Anon Delegates from Canada and the United States;
 - (b) Trustees of the Corporation;
 - (c) Al-Anon members who serve as Directors and Associate Directors of the World Service Office;

APPENDIX IV

- (d) The Chairpersons of committees established by the Board of Trustees;
 - (e) The persons comprising the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees; and
 - (f) Such other persons as deemed necessary for Conference business and representatives from countries not served by the World Service Conference Structure may be admitted by Conference vote. These persons may participate but not vote.
- 2. The World Service Conference shall be the permanent body empowered to express the conscience of the AI-Anon fellowship.
 - 3. The Board of Trustees of the Corporation shall consult with the World Service Conference and, when required, accept its decision. However, the Board of Trustees shall continue to be vested with the full legal powers and responsibilities for the Canada Service Office.
 - 4. Three-fourths of all authorized participants registered at the Conference may bring about a reorganization of the Canada Service Office as or when it is deemed essential. They may request the resignation of the entire Board of Trustees and nominate a new slate of Trustees. In this regard the annual election of Trustees shall be conditional upon the understanding of each, that his resignation is required on call for the same by the Conference, subject to the further understanding that prior to any such resignation becoming effective each Trustee shall be deemed to vote for the successor slate of Trustees presented by the Conference. For the purpose of bringing about a reorganization of the Canada Service Office, the number of World Service Office participants voting shall be limited to one-fourth of the total Conference vote.

ARTICLE XII COMMITTEES

- 1. **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.** The Board of Trustees shall elect at each annual meeting an Executive Committee consisting of seven persons. The Executive Committee shall include the Executive Director of the World Service Office, the Chairperson of the Finance Committee, the Chairperson of the Policy Committee, an AI-Anon member from the administrative staff of the World Service Office, and three AI-Anon members, preferably not Trustees. The Executive Committee shall meet at such times as the Board of Trustees may direct and shall have the power to act on behalf of the Board of Trustees in the intervals between meetings of the Board of Trustees.

The Committee shall report all such action to the full Board no later than the next meeting of the Board. The Board of Trustees shall elect one volunteer member of the Executive Committee as the Chairperson. The Executive Director is the Secretary.

The President, an ex officio member, shall perform the duties of the Chairperson of the Executive Committee in that person's absence.

- 2. **FINANCE COMMITTEE.** The Board of Trustees shall appoint a Finance Committee consisting of the following members: the Treasurer of the Corporation, the President, the Chairperson of the Executive Committee, one other Trustee designated by the President, and the Executive Director. The Treasurer shall be the Chairperson of the Finance Committee. The Executive Director is the Secretary. The Finance Committee shall plan the yearly budget of the World Service Office, including the activities of the Canada Service Office, and shall render such other services as may be requested by the Board of Trustees.

The President shall perform the duties of the Chairperson of the Finance Committee in the absence of the Treasurer.

- 3. **NOMINATING COMMITTEE.** At each annual meeting of the Board of Trustees, the Chairperson of the Board appoints the Chairperson of the Nominating Committee, with Board approval. After the annual meeting, the Chairperson of the Nominating Committee, in consultation with the Chairperson of the Board, appoints the members of the Nominating Committee.
- 4. The Board of Trustees may appoint such other committees as they may from time to time determine appropriate.
- 5. Committee members shall hold office for a term of one (1) year.
- 6. Committee members shall serve without remuneration but shall be entitled to payment of reasonable expenses.

7. Any Committee member may be removed from office for cause by affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Trustees.

ARTICLE XIII

EXECUTION OF DOCUMENTS

1. Contracts, documents or any instruments in writing requiring the signature of the Corporation, shall be signed by any two officers and all contracts, documents and instruments in writing so signed shall be binding upon the Corporation without any further authorization or formality. The Trustees shall have power from time to time by resolution to appoint an officer or officers on behalf of the Corporation to sign specific contracts, documents and instruments in writing. The Trustees may give the Corporation's power of attorney to any registered dealer in securities for the purposes of the transferring of and dealing with any stocks, bonds, and other securities of the Corporation. The seal of the Corporation when required may be affixed to contracts, documents and instruments in writing signed as aforesaid or by any officer or officers appointed by resolution of the Board of Trustees.

ARTICLE XIV

CORPORATE SEAL

1. The seal, an impression whereof is stamped in the margin hereof, shall be the seal of the Corporation.

ARTICLE XV

HEAD OFFICE

1. The Head Office of the Corporation shall be in the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton, Province of Ontario.

ARTICLE XVI

AMENDMENTS

1. The Board of Trustees shall have the power to amend or repeal these BY-LAWS in whole or in part by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Trustees at a meeting called for the purpose of amending the BY-LAWS, provided that the repeal or amendment of such BY-LAWS shall not be enforced or acted upon until the approval of the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs has been obtained.

ENACTED AND CONFIRMED on the 9th day of March, 1999.

Helen R., President

Richard B., Secretary

Amended: July 27, 2004
Reviewed by the April 2005 WSC

– BOARD OF TRUSTEES –

Trustees at Large

Judy P.
Jack S.
Mary G.
Liz W.
Doreen D.
Genevieve B.
Zelda R.
Lynda E.
Bidge B.

Regional Trustees

Juanita P., US Southeast
Frank R., US Northeast
Colleen R., US North Central
Carolyn W., US South Central
Winnie S., US Southwest
Judy D., US Northwest
Julie F., Canada West
Jo-Anne L., Canada Central
Claudette D., Canada East

**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

Catherine J., Chairperson
Ric B., Executive Director
Judy P., Board Chairperson
(ex officio)
Zelda R., Treasurer
Colleen R., Policy Chairperson
Howdy R., Member at Large
Cecelia L., Member at Large

**NON-TRUSTEE
COMMITTEE
CHAIRPERSON**

Colleen G., ECRPM
Chairperson**

- WORLD SERVICE OFFICE CONFERENCE STAFF MEMBERS -

Ric B., Executive Director
Mary Ann K., Director of Member Services
David Zach, Director of Business Services*
Tom C., Associate Director of Fellowship Communication—
Literature II/Newsletters
Cynthia H., Associate Director of Membership Outreach—Conference
Mary Lou M., Associate Director of Public Outreach—Media

Barbara O., Associate Director of Member Services/Alateen
Pat Q., Associate Director of Fellowship Communication—
Literature I/Forum
Claire R., Associate Director of Public Outreach—Professionals
Dolores T., Associate Director of Group Services
Marsha W., Associate Director of Membership Outreach—International

- AREA DELEGATES -

Janie J., Alabama
Marlene R., Alaska
Marilyn M., Alberta/Northwest
Territories
Cindy M., Arizona
Susan R., Arkansas
Kal T., British Columbia/Yukon
Vicki H., California North
Miriam McK., California South
Carol C., Colorado
Ellie L., Connecticut
Denise M., Delaware
Lucy R., Florida North
Stuart M., Florida South
Debbie F., Georgia
Ethel B., Hawaii
Cecilia S., Idaho
Fran K., Illinois North

Betsy C., Illinois South
Mari Lee W., Indiana
Connie H., Iowa
Mary K., Kansas
Carolyn L., Kentucky
Clara E., Louisiana
Maureen R., Maine
Ruth H., Manitoba
Mickie Z., Maritime Provinces
Julie M., Maryland/District of
Columbia
Ann F-S., Massachusetts
Sue B., Michigan
JoAnne H., Minnesota North
Carol F., Minnesota South
Fran A., Mississippi
Donna E-H., Missouri
Jeanne H., Montana

Dorothy B., Nebraska
Tina B., Nevada
Sheila K., Newfoundland/
Labrador
Lida K., New Hampshire
Kathy B., New Jersey
Gayle McN., New Mexico
Connie D., New York North
Joan L., New York South
Paula B., North Carolina/
Bermuda
Shirley J., North Dakota
Geri H., Ohio
Debbie P., Oklahoma
Sharon C., Ontario North
Gail C., Ontario South
Susan G., Oregon
Jeanine S., Pennsylvania

Carmin T-M., Puerto Rico
Elaine L., Quebec East
Pierrette G., Quebec West
Denise R., Rhode Island
Lois K., Saskatchewan
Susan L., South Carolina
Cherri N., South Dakota
Jane L., Tennessee
Jan H., Texas East
Margie R., Texas West
Joyce B., Utah
John McL., Vermont
Phylliss S-T., Virginia
Ruth H., Washington
Nancy C., West Virginia
Jim S., Wisconsin
Tricia B., Wyoming

- INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATIVE -

Maria del Carmen R., Mexico**

- COMMUNICATION CONSULTANT TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES -

Nancy Ackerman Cole *

*Nonmember, non-voting

**Non-voting