

Delegate's Report-Fall Assembly, 2010



Good morning! It is so good to be back with all of you again. Do you feel as glad as I do to be part of the worldwide fellowship of Al-Anon that includes Alateen? Isn't it hard to believe we're moving into our third year of Panel 49? In some ways, it feels like we've just begun!

Things are getting busy again as we move into year three. For several months, I've been part of a World Service Conference Task Force preparing a document we're hoping to be ready for the 2011 World Service Conference (WSC). I also chaired the Conference Committee on Trustees (CCT), and sat on a Regional Committee on Trustees, (RCT). Your Alternate Delegate (also known as Tall Terry) and I will be working on another potential Chosen Agenda Item for the 2011 World Service Conference to be completed and in to WSO no later than December 19th, 2010. I will also be attending the Southeast Regional Delegate's Get-Together February 3-5, 2011 in Raleigh, North Carolina. As this is a new location, we are excited and hope for a larger turnout by current and past Southeast Region Delegates.

Florida (S) Visit:

In October, our Area Chairman Shelley and I visited the Florida (S) Assembly. We were warmly received, and it was interesting to learn how their Area does business. A few highlights: 1.) Their Assembly meetings and AWSC meetings move each time to different venues and alternating coasts. 2.) They take a quorum after each break before they restart the meeting. As they do business on Sunday morning, if they don't have a quorum, they can't complete the business at that time. 3.) They do their break out sessions and Red Light Green Light topics on Friday evening and it can get very late. 4.) They pass the basket in lieu of doing a raffle. 5.) They have a Spanish Area Coordinator and translation equipment, reporting that their Spanish membership at the Area level has increased with these resources. 6.) They have their own ppt. projector. Both the projector and the translation equipment are kept by an Area Coordinator. 7.) They keep a complete list of all Alateen meetings by district that gets passed out at Area meetings. I have their agenda, and formatted Area Alateen meeting list if anyone would like to take a look. They are excited to be doing the TEAM event with WSO and us, and we were invited to sit in on their TEAM luncheon. The Florida (S) Delegate and Chairperson hope to visit us before the end of the panel.

2011 World Service Conference Details

The 2011 World Service Conference will be held April 11-15, 2011. It will again be held in Norfolk, Virginia at the Wyndham Hotel, where it's been the two previous years. As a Panel 49 Delegate, I will have the opportunity to visit Stepping Stones on Sunday the 10th in the morning, before traveling to the Conference site. Thought Forces, Task Forces, and Committees will meet on Monday to continue or finalize work before the Conference begins. The theme of the 2011 Conference is:

Expanding our community of hope by embracing:

- Yesterday's foundations
- Today's successes
- Tomorrow's possibilities

Ampliamos nuestra comunidad de esperanza al acoger:

- los cimientos del pasado
- los éxitos del presente
- las posibilidades del futuro

Élargir notre communauté d'espoir en intégrant:

- Les bases d'hier
- Les succès d'aujourd'hui
- Les possibilités de demain

This year, Al-Anon Family Groups celebrates its 60th Anniversary with a banquet dinner to be held on April 16th at the Virginia Convention Center. This event is being held on the day following the Conference. The details are as follows:

Open House

In celebration of 60 years of Al-Anon Family Groups and the beginnings of the Clearing House, the World Service Office (WSO) will host an Open House. There will be a special ceremony at 3 pm commemorating paying off the WSO's mortgage.

When?

Saturday, April 16, 2011, 1:00 – 4:00 pm

Where?

WSO, 1600 Corporate Landing Parkway, Virginia Beach, Virginia 23454

Banquet

Continuing the celebration, there will be a 60th Anniversary Banquet, which will be a ticketed event with limited seating. Tickets are (\$50 U.S.). You can find the ticket order form on the Members' website at www.Al-Anon.org/members.

When?

Saturday, April 16, 2011; Reception 6:00 – 6:45 pm; Banquet at 7:00 pm

Where?

Virginia Beach Convention Center, 1000 19th Street, Virginia Beach, VA 23451

Please note: The Open House is free of charge; the Banquet is a ticketed event and seating is limited.

CHAIRMAN OF BOARD LETTER

As you may remember, after each of the four Board of Trustees meetings, the Chairman of the Board puts out a letter summarizing details of the Board of Trustees meeting. I will read a little of the November letter:

"In these ever-changing times, attending Al-Anon Family Group meetings can help us find the strength, courage, and serenity to work through our difficulties. We came to Al-Anon to learn to cope

with someone else's drinking, and in time discovered that the principles of the Al-Anon program could be applied to all aspects of our lives, because Al-Anon is a way of life.

The Al-Anon program helped me to become willing to accept change. Do I always like change? No. Can I accept that change is inevitable? Yes. For example, in my early years of attending Al-Anon, the meetings were mainly composed of spouses of alcoholics; it was uncommon to see a man at meetings. There was little attention given to adult children or parents of alcoholics, and gays and lesbians were guarded when it came to discussing their relationships. Meetings had to be held in churches and lasted for one and one half hours. There was minimal flexibility.

Today's Al-Anon members are from various cultural backgrounds, and I use cultural in the broadest sense of the word. So let's ask ourselves: Are we always welcoming to prospective members, regardless of their cultural practices?

Are we tolerant of those seeking help because a family member has multiple addictions, combined with perhaps a mental diagnosis? Do we take time to explain the Al-Anon program and its focus, and offer them the opportunity to decide if Al-Anon is the right place to be?

Do we welcome teenagers to Al-Anon meetings where no Alateen meetings exist? Have we thought of holding meetings in venues other than churches? Have we considered that the duration of meetings might be shorter than one hour in order to be held during lunch breaks?

The above questions are just a portion of the ongoing discussions at Board meetings as we approach the question: "What external changes in the environment will affect Al-Anon in the future?"

With the future of Al-Anon Family Groups in mind, the Board of Trustees met with a consultant to evaluate its current work and to consider what it is doing correctly, what it is doing that it needs to do differently, and what it is not doing that it needs to be doing. The answers will evolve over time as we work to fulfill our primary purpose. As stated by the Sixth World Service Conference, "There is no standing still without retrogression."

Prior to the meeting, the Board took a self-evaluation, which indicated that the Board has a clear understanding of the present work and future direction. The consultant was very complimentary to the Board in its use of the Knowledge-Based Decision-Making (KBDM) process to discuss issues and its focus on Strategic Planning. We further discussed how to integrate the staff into the planning process.

As a follow-up to the August letter, in October, the International Coordination Committee (ICC) welcomed Delegates from the International Al-Anon General Services Meeting (IAGSM) to Virginia Beach. Delegates from the various countries participated in General Sessions and workshops. It was evident from the topics presented and ensuing discussions that Al-Anon members worldwide share the same insights and concerns. A summary of the event will be forthcoming.

The Associate Director of Communications—Professionals attended several national events hosted by organizations such as Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). The staff at the WSO recognizes the importance of being seen by national organizations as a credible Twelve Step recovery program for families. These strides have included having Al-Anon as a participant at some of these events, versus merely as an observer.

At the request of the Board and as part of its Strategic Planning, the Group Services Department is working on four podcasts to assist Group Representatives (GRs) in the understanding of their responsibilities and how to be effective in carrying them out.

So that all Al-Anon members will have an opportunity to review the 2011 issue of *Al-Anon Faces*

Alcoholism (AFA), a free copy will be sent to all groups in the United States and Canada. It is hoped that more groups will participate in this important Public Outreach project.”

A financial update was also given in the Chairman of the Board letter as well as a Policy update from the Policy Committee. “The purpose of the Policy Update sent each quarter with the Chairperson of the Board’s letter is to provide Delegates with information regarding:

- Current discussions by the Policy Committee in response to questions and concerns generated by the fellowship
- Pending motions to be presented to the next World Service Conference (WSC)
- In the case of the 2nd quarter letter, Policy motions passed by the WSC

Two Current Discussions:

- The Committee continued with the discussion of social networking sites on the World Wide Web and whether these sites could be used for public outreach in a way that conforms to our Traditions.
- Because of the increased importance of the Internet in Al-Anon’s communications within the fellowship and in public outreach, the Policy Committee recognized the position of Area Web Coordinator as a new position in Al-Anon’s service structure, and authorized the World Service Office to provide direct support to that position.”

The entire Chairman of the Board letter including updates, and past letters can be found on the members' website by clicking the Inside the WSO link.

What Else is on the WSO Members' site:

How many of you have visited the members' website? There are many resources if you've never visited or haven't visited in a while.

Besides the Chairman of the Board letter, all three Legacy Blogs are open for reading and comments. One of the G.R. Podcasts appears to be ready and is on the Home page. You can access current and past Conference Summaries through the Publications link. There's information and the order form available for Al-Anon's 60th Birthday celebration. There's a fact sheet for putting on a TEAM event, which we are! The new Service Manual is also on the site with both interactivity and no interactivity.

Also, under the Submit a Personal Sharing link, there are four opportunities to share on humor in *The Forum*, the new book titled Tracing Our Growth, other *Forum* sharings, and WSO is also looking for sharings for *Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism (AFA)*. I've attached a memo and sharing sheet regarding contributing to *Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism* (Attachment 1 and 2). The memo states that WSO has posted a PDF to Delegates regarding the *Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism* sharing sheet with the hope of encouraging members to submit their sharings and reach out to those who are still suffering. WSO would like as many sharing sheets as possible to be distributed among the fellowship. Members may also submit a sharing via the Members' Web site.

Literature:

On the same sharing theme, I have attached another flier regarding writing about Al-Anon outside the fellowship for any professional writers we may have, or aspiring writers. The flier helps with how to write and keep your anonymity. (Attachment 3)

There are two power points now available to Area Literature Coordinators you may get an opportunity to see at some point. If your interested, let our Coordinator know.

There will be a second printing of *Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism*. “**Carry the message...Al-Anon Faces**

Alcoholism 2011, our annual public outreach magazine, is Twelfth Step work that every Al-Anon member can do. It's simple: just leave at least one copy behind. Just one step at a time, one person at a time... and then let go. Deadline to order: February 9, 2011, 5 pm ET. For more information, contact your Area Public Outreach Coordinator. **Thank you for encouraging everyone in your Area to participate!"**

Recurring questions:

The WSO is asked many questions by the membership on various topics. In line with part of the Policy discussion in the Chairman's letter, I have attached a recurring question about delisting meetings (Attachment 4). I have also included a question regarding the history and intent of the Al-Anon Declaration (Attachment 5).

Property Ownership Discussion:

Lois said once, "There is no difference between good business practice and good spiritual practice". As you may remember, the 15-year trial of owning our World Service Office will end in 2011. At that time, the Conference having looked at all the information obtained during the trial will vote to end the trial and keep the property, end the trial and sell the property, or continue the trial for another period of time. If you have any lingering questions regarding this upcoming vote, please let me know. If I don't know the answer, I'll find out for you.

TEAM (Together Empowering Al-Anon Members):

I am excited to announce that several **TEAM** events have been scheduled to date, including ours with Florida(S)! And some have already been successfully held. You'll be hearing more from Cindy on ours regarding the details and how to participate. The response by Areas to this new event has been fairly positive, even with some bumps in the planning process. Communication is key!!!!

Diversity:

Listen carefully to the directions as they're a little backwards:

If you feel you **do not** fit into this category and you're able, please stand up-
56 year old white female....

What are all the ways we might be diverse in this room?

Have you taken the information regarding cultural diversity and diversity in general back to your districts? Since as we discovered at the spring Assembly, and observe again, many of us do not fit into the 56-year old Caucasian female category noted in the 2009 Membership Survey. Hopefully you are staying conscious of this fact in your "public outreach" and "outreach to professionals" projects. We may need to ask "Where do diverse cultures go for support and information?" And may need to look at diverse thinking regarding spirituality.

In the 2010 Conference Summary, on pgs. 42-43, is the presentation of Cultural Competence given at this year's World Service Conference. Pg. 43 highlights some other diverse groups. Perhaps you and your district members have identified others. In our meetings, these may include members of non-Christian faiths, or with no faith belief systems, other ethnicities, younger members, older members, etc. What do we do with the awareness that we gain in recognizing this diversity? How are you reaching out to these diverse people both in and out of our fellowship? Please let me know. If you haven't as yet sought to reach out, please let me know how you and your district plan to do so over the next few months. Send me an email and let me know how it's going, successes and barriers.

As you heard in the Chairman of the Board letter, Cultural Diversity is high on the list of topics to

again be discussed at the 2011 Conference. As we live in a diverse country, and as we are a worldwide fellowship, discussions of diversity and inclusion will continue.

Questions for Reflection:

Does the membership of our Al-Anon groups reflect the diversity of our communities?

Does my home group reflect the diversity of my community? How can my home group better reflect the diversity of my community?

Does my district reflect the diversity of my community? How can my district better reflect the diversity of my community?

Do the members of my Area reflect the diversity of my state or province? How can my Area better reflect the diversity of my community?

How am I affected by the diversity of other members in the program? Am I willing to be open minded and flexible?

I've attached the Diversity Workshop I included in my spring Assembly report with the above reflection questions listed on the last page (Attachment 6) . I know at least one district has used it . Please take it back to your districts and use the workshop to generate thoughtful discussion. "Let it begin with us"

As we move into our last year of Panel 49, we will continue to focus on leadership at all service levels, as well as using our Legacies at **all** levels of service. So.... can I have my 8 volunteers up front now?

CONCEPT SKIT

I attached the discussion questions for thought and discussion. They too, can be used at your district level. (Attachment 7)

I look forward to continuing to learn, laugh, and grow with you during the next year. If you have questions let me know. And remember you can invite me to visit you. Happy Holidays!

Love in service,
Terry F.
Delegate-Panel 49