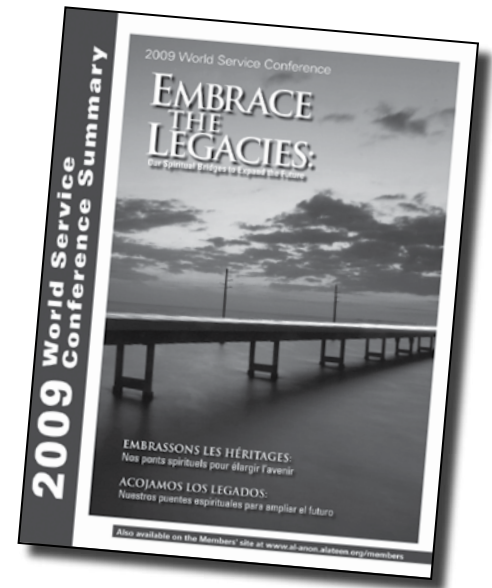


# “Embrace the Legacies: Our Spiritual Bridges to Expand the Future”

By Suzanne M., Associate Director — Conference



This year, the members of the World Service Conference focused on “Embracing the Legacies” during the annual week-long meeting of the widest group conscience of Al-Anon Family Groups.

Delegates and Board of Trustees and Executive Committee members—from the U.S., Canada, Bermuda, and Puerto Rico joined together with World Service Office Conference staff in Virginia Beach, Virginia, April 19-23, to constitute 94 voting members of the Conference. Non-voting participants included representatives from Germany, Italy, UK & Eire, and Mexico. This Conference theme was “Embrace the Legacies: Our Spiritual Bridges to Expand the Future.”

In her opening remarks, the Chairperson of the Conference said, “As trusted servants, we will work together to build bridges to expand the future of Al-Anon Family Groups. We will ensure that the Legacies our early pioneers gave us remain strong and will continue to be the foundation of our spiritual values. We will work hard to make sure that our message is heard everywhere by all of those whose lives have been affected by this disease of alcoholism.

“In many of her writings, Lois referred to the fact that the survival of our program depends on growth—growth in spirit more than in numbers. We all want the principles upon which Al-Anon is founded to remain fundamental for all time and all people. Our individual acceptance and application of these principles must continue to grow as well. We remember Lois’ caution, ‘stagnation is retrogression.’ I personally heard Lois say when I was a new Delegate ‘that the growth of the program depends on the dedication of each member.’ That is each of us!”

When the Chairperson of the Board welcomed the members of the Conference, she stated, “The Legacies are the very

foundation of our spiritual program and assure us that when entering the rooms of Al-Anon, we have an opportunity to share with a pure heart. Our feeling of spirituality gives real meaning to our lives, the way we think and feel, and becomes evident in our manner toward others and our approach to life situations.

“As a formula for recovery, unity, and service, the Legacies bring balance to our lives. As we heal and gain self-knowledge and confidence we put aside our personal agendas, opening our hearts and minds to the possibilities and opportunities presented us to carry the message. In growing and expanding the future of Al-Anon Family Groups, we in turn receive many personal benefits.

“To ensure the preservation of our beloved fellowship, we have the capacity to form spiritual bridges that will reach others, to expand our thinking and our horizons. There are many methods to deliver our message, some that we have yet to discover. Spiritual thinking brings vision and removes us from the status quo.”

Some of the highlights of the Conference included a discussion on the Conference theme; a presentation from the Preserving Our Alateen Traditions Task Force; discussion on the proposed Excess Bequests Procedure; and the “Big Question”: “Is the current World Service Conference model providing the spiritual bridge we need to expand into the future in order to meet the needs of the fellowship?”

For complete details of these topics and discussions on the motions, visit [www.al-anon.org/members](http://www.al-anon.org/members), or order a copy of the *2009 World Service Conference Summary* (P-46) for \$3.00 shipping/handling on the same site.

The WSO frequently hears of Alateen groups that are struggling. Attendance is down. Alateen Group Sponsors and Alateen members often ask, “Why aren’t Al-Anon members bringing their children to Alateen?” The following was written by a longtime Al-Anon member. Area and District Alateen Coordinators, as well as District and Group Representatives, may find it helpful to encourage Al-Anon members to bring their children. Feel free to reprint in local/Area newsletters!

**“Greetings! Alateen needs you!”**

By Sharon B., Alateen Process Person (AAPP), Georgia  
*Georgia on Track*, March 2009

The heading above is how I started a recent newsletter article and our fellowship has responded in a big way. We now have 79 certified Al-Anon Members Involved in Alateen Service (AMIAS). Many of these members sponsor or co-sponsor groups, but many don’t. Each district has been given a list of certified AMIAS to draw on. Districts interested in starting Alateen groups have a resource list to work with.

Sometimes existing groups need a last minute stand-in Alateen Group Sponsor, so Group Sponsors, call your District Representative when you have no certified AMIAS to cover your meeting. There may be someone available, and this is a great alternative to canceling the meeting.

### My child says, “I don’t want to go to Alateen.” What can I do?

Anonymous, via e-mail

I’ve heard this statement and question so many times. I feel sad when the parent continues, “I’ve done my best. There’s nothing else I can do.” I’ve learned to ask a few questions. “Is your child still in school?” When I hear, “Yes,” I ask, “Does your child occasionally say, ‘I don’t want to go to school today!’” I often hear, “Of course.” Then I ask, “Do you require him to go anyway?”

I knew from bringing up five children that my children were often rebellious, contrary, and even hostile as they reached their teen years. Their behavior did not relieve me of the obligation to educate them. My moral obligation to my children was to assure that they had sufficient knowledge to go off on their own when they grew up. I had heard that I needed to give them roots and wings. If I do, they will develop a solid base and be able to take over our planet when it’s their turn.

How does this relate to Alateen? I realize, as do many who are reading this, that [the subject of] alcoholism is not taught in most schools. If it is taught, it might likely be a police officer who talks about dire consequences from drinking. No one is taught how the disease permeates everything we do in life. As a parent, I have the obligation to provide for the education of my children, even about alcoholism.

This is where Alateen can help my family. Alateens are learning about how the disease operates in our families. They are there to provide their experience, strength, and hope to the newcomer. I can help my own teens by saying to them, “My obligation is to provide for your education. Since alcoholism



Photo by Jamie N., New Jersey

affects the whole family, and you are a lovely part of my family, here’s how I’m going to assure that you receive your family health education. I’m bringing you to Alateen even if you don’t want to go.”

Does it always work? Probably not! But it is my obligation to provide roots—and one of those roots is knowledge of the disease of alcoholism in the family. It is also my obligation to provide wings—allowing my children to decide after several meetings that it is their choice to take what is offered to them and use this life-saving program or not.

### Al-Anon is just a phone call (or a click) away!

By Sharon B., Group Services Assistant—Special Services

Al-Anon telephone meetings have been around for over five years and are growing in numbers. These “voice-to-voice” meetings are held via conference call and are registered with the WSO as “electronic meetings”—as are Internet meetings (via e-mail, chat, and bulletin board).

Electronic meetings can supplement the face-to-face group meetings and also accommodate the disabled, members without transportation, or those living in remote areas where there are no local meetings. There are 84 registered electronic meetings, including 52 Internet-based meetings—languages include: English, Spanish, French, German, Portuguese, Estonian, Italian, and Danish—and 32 telephone meetings in English and Spanish.

For the current list of registered electronic meetings, visit [www.al-anon.alateen.org](http://www.al-anon.alateen.org). Scroll to the bottom of the page, select the tab “How to locate a meeting,” and look for the highlighted text “Electronic meetings click here” to request the electronic meeting list.

The screenshot shows the Al-Anon/Alateen website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'Home' and 'Site Map'. Below that, there's a section titled 'How to find a meeting in the US/Canada/Puerto Rico' with instructions on how to use the site. There are dropdown menus for 'United States' and 'Canada' with 'Go' buttons. A callout box with an arrow points to the footer of the website, which contains the text: 'You can also call 1-888-4AL-ANON (1-888-425-2666) Monday thru Friday, 8 am - 6 pm ET for meeting information in Canada and the US. If no Al-Anon/Alateen groups exist in your area, or if you are homebound, the Lone Member Service can help you. For information on the Lone Member Service, click here. There are also Al-Anon meetings available electronically. To request a list of electronic meetings, click here.' The footer also includes navigation tabs: 'Alateen', 'Al-Anon Internationally', 'How to Locate a Meeting', and 'Contact'.

### Embrace the Legacies: Our Spiritual Bridges to Expand the Future

The 2009 World Service Conference Summary (P-46) will be available in hard copy and on the Members’ Web site in August. Order your copy today at [www.al-anon.org/members](http://www.al-anon.org/members).

### Listing meetings in local directories and Web sites

By Marie J., District Representative, District 9, Arizona  
*Message Carrier*, April-June 2009

At the Fall Assembly, it was reported that there is a meeting in our district that is using A.A. literature as their primary source of literature. WSO suggested\*, seeing as the meeting at this time has been registered, to take a group conscience of the district, Al-Anon Information Service, and Area to determine which groups they list on their meeting schedules and Web sites.

The district voted to remove this group from the district’s list of groups and brought it to the Group Representative meeting at the Al-Anon Information Service. At the January Group Representative meeting, it was voted to remove this group from the AIS schedule and Web site. It has been said that “Al-Anon does not or should not police our groups.” If we do not protect our program, who will? We need to be diligent in our efforts to preserve the Al-Anon Traditions. The use of materials other than Al-Anon Conference Approved Literature will not serve the Al-Anon program as a whole. Our *Service Manual* states this (see “Registration of Groups” on page 77 and “Outside Publications” on page 94 of *2006-2009 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27).

Some of you may think that this is not a big deal, but it is a *huge deal*. We must protect our program. Let’s not forget how the allowance of outside literature can and will confuse the newcomer. What you choose to read anywhere other than the Al-Anon meeting is your business and there are some great reads out there; just please keep them out of our Al-Anon meetings. The WSO pamphlet titled *Why Al-Anon Conference Approved Literature* (P-35) is free.

\* WSO suggests that service entities (District, AIS, or Area) determine what criteria needs to be met in order to be listed on their meeting directory (for example—being registered with WSO, using CAL, not having outside affiliation) and develop a process to notify groups when they do not meet the criteria for being listed. When a group refuses to abide by the criteria, the service entity involved could determine, through their process, if the group should be removed from their meeting directory while they work with the group to resolve the problem. Groups that have been removed from meeting directories would continue to have a representative attend and vote at the District Meeting, Area Assembly, and Al-Anon Information Service Meeting.

## Member Services—International

### Let it begin with me!

By Kay B., UK & Eire  
News & Views, September 2005

Tradition Nine has taken many years to sink into my subconscious—but at last I think I have it! We have a simple program of recovery here, for complicated people, or so I have been told. However, I have felt so stupid not to be able to make sense of it for myself.

To help my understanding I started by reading the pamphlet *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* (P-17). When I read the sharing for Tradition Nine, I identified with the feeling I had when I first heard this Tradition. I remember being quite shocked that no Al-Anon member is in a position to give another a directive or to enforce obedience. Having lived with raging arguments through my childhood and early married years, I now recognized I was in a place of safety. This immediately made me feel comfortable.

I stayed confused for years until I began to realize, through my service roles beyond the group (like Area Delegate and Regional Trustee), that we are trusted servants and just simple members of Al-Anon Family Groups. Therefore, these Service Boards and Committees are “directly responsible to those

they serve.” As a result, any decision that is made by a Selected Committee or the General Service Board which may affect our fellowship as a whole is taken to the Conference for discussion and voting—truly democratic—so no one is in authority over us. With the help of the ultimate authority—a Higher Power—we will survive and grow because we are no longer alone and have the guidance we need.

However, if we had no suggestions about how to organize our groups and no rotation of roles and no Conference Approved Literature, how in the world could we help ourselves or others who come into our welcoming rooms? Who would make executive decisions about the everyday running of our General Service Office—sending out the literature we request, managing the Web site, answering distress phone calls, identifying where the nearest meetings are to share with “anyone, anywhere, who reaches out for help,” and then how would we know when to say “Let It Begin with Me”?



## Archives

### The early days—before Al-Anon was Al-Anon

Sarah M., Area Archives Coordinator, Missouri  
*Missouri Round Robin*, July 2008

I want to share some excerpts from a letter written by a wonderful longtime member, Leona (Slim) W. to the World Service Office Archivist, Margaret O. in 1980:

“My name is Slim and I am a member of the Little Dixie Al-Anon Group that meets in Fayette, Missouri, and I am grateful to be a member. A.A. came into our lives before there was any Al-Anon (at least to my knowledge). This was in the year 1943 in St. Paul, Minnesota, where my husband found A.A. Since there was no Al-Anon, I became engrossed in A.A. and tagged along with my husband (at his insistence). I went to every meeting that I could. I thought, ‘This is wonderful for him,’ but it wasn’t very long before I realized that here was a philosophy of life that even I could use.

“With no Al-Anon in those days, we wives (husbands of alcoholics were scarce then) tried to help one another—we tried to give consolation, extend our faith, and tell the newcomer what to do and not to do. We gathered together to make the coffee and cake and decorated the meeting rooms for the A.A. members. At my husband’s request, I even went on calls with him in order to talk with the non-alcoholic and keep her away so he could talk to the alcoholic. And it seemed to help.

“Finally, Al-Anon came into existence. In 1955, I learned about Al-Anon during the International Convention in St. Louis, MO. The number of Al-Anon members present was small in comparison to what we see today, but I learned so much and immediately bought the first Al-Anon book, *The Al-Anon Family Groups* (B-5), published that year.

“I went back home and suggested to my friends they start a group by writing to AFG Headquarters. Regretfully I had to leave them because we moved to Fayette, Missouri that same year, where I was registered as a Lone Member for many years. Some time later, we did start the Little Dixie Group by first meeting in homes and then in the Christian Church of Fayette.”

## Public Outreach—Outreach to Professionals/Institutions

### 1,000 acts of Public Outreach—999 more to go!

By Michele D., Public Outreach Coordinator,  
Ontario South

*Open Lines Newsletter*, 2009

I have set a three year goal of achieving 1,000 “acts” of Public Outreach during my term of service. I have asked each member to perform ONE “act” of public outreach. It doesn’t have to be spectacular, complicated, or time consuming. Creativity is encouraged and fun is a given.

I asked members to e-mail me their “acts” so that I can share them with the Area. I have already received the first “act” from Peterborough. Members distributed books to the Crossroads YMCA shelter.



Photo by Lori S., Canada

### How to make outreach to professionals and institutions more effective

By Boothe D., District Representative,  
West Virginia  
*Area 60 Lifeline*, Issue 1, 2009

Our Committee has identified the need to have a list of talking points when speaking to professionals. Talking points are a way to quickly make clear important information about Al-Anon.

We also discussed the need for a speakers’ bureau with lists within each district, or even a state-wide list, of members willing and ready to talk to fraternal organizations, e.g. Rotary Club meetings, school counselors, social work classes, etc., about Al-Anon.

The Committee also recommended to members that, when leaving literature at an agency or office, it is important to speak to a professional who will be speaking with the patient or client. Of course, that is up to the comfort level of the member leaving the information. No one is being asked to break their anonymity unless they are willing to do so. When an Al-Anon member speaks directly to a service provider, it is more likely to make the contact more productive.

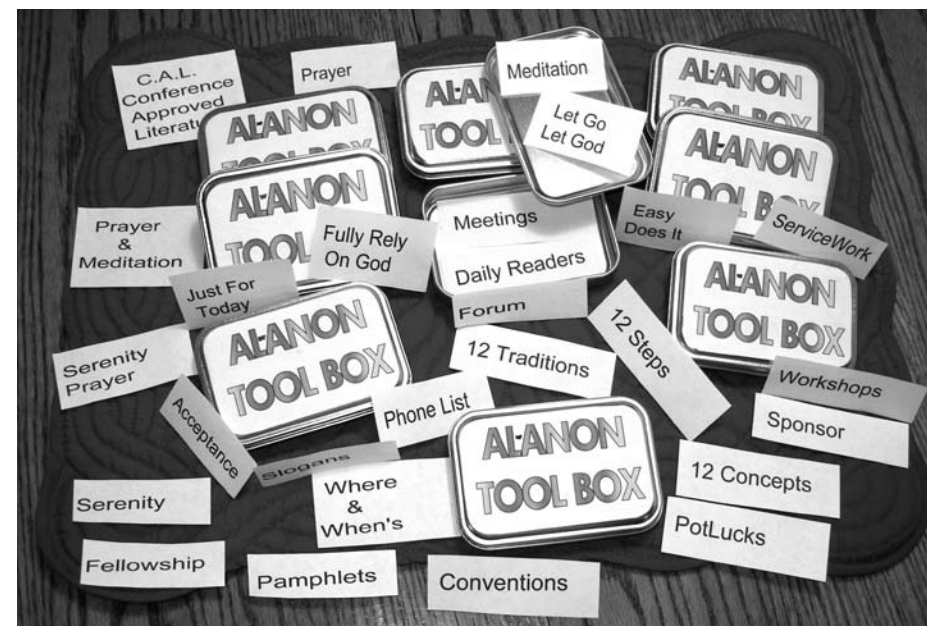


Photo by Nancy C., Missouri

### Outreach to correctional facilities garners enthusiastic response

By Louise M., Institutions Coordinator, California North  
*12 Stepper*, December 2008

I spoke at the State of California Correctional Facilities Twelve Step Advisory Board to a meeting of Community Partnership Managers (those who manage outside groups that go into prisons) to tell them about the Al-Anon program and why we share our program with inmates.

Many of the managers know about and have A.A. and other Twelve Step programs for drug abusers in their prisons already. Some of the managers did not know about Al-Anon, several ones approached me after I spoke to request literature.

Since this meeting, I have had a chance to deliver more literature to correctional facilities and several “Friends Outside” organizations which distribute literature to country, city, and state facilities. I was told that the inmates descended upon the literature and gobbled it up. You cannot imagine how hungry both the staff and inmates are for information about Al-Anon.

I want to thank the Northern California World Service Area for granting me money to buy literature for the various prisons.

## Public Outreach—Outreach to the Public/Media

In the following articles, Public Outreach Coordinators from four Areas are calling their members to action. Their commitment and enthusiasm can inspire us all.

### Tools for Public Outreach

By Valerie H., Public Outreach Coordinator

*Washington Wanderings*, March 2009

Your World Service Office has been busy developing tools for members to use during their outreach service journey. Our founding pioneers knew that serving this fellowship would build our spiritual resources and connect us with blessings and benefits that would bring us out of our isolation, anger, and fear. They even knew it would plant a desire in us to give away what we have gained.

Podcasts entitled “First Steps to Al-Anon Recovery” are recordings on the Internet that are available by free subscription. An automated e-mail will notify subscribers each time a new installment is posted. Check them out at [www.al-anon.alateen.org](http://www.al-anon.alateen.org).

I have distribution lists for you that show all of the radio stations in the Washington Area that already received the new public service announcements. You can order a CD from WSO and approach stations that are not on the list to see if they are willing to broadcast them. Ask if they are willing to copy your CD for their use, so you can approach other stations with the same CD. If you have any difficulty with this in the Washington Area, let me know.

### We are Public Outreach!

By Lois K., Public Outreach Coordinator, BC/Yukon

*The Bulletin*, March 2009

Does your district in the BC/Yukon Area have a Public Outreach Committee? Please take five minutes to e-mail me and let me know. If you have six minutes, tell me how often it meets, how many members serve on the committee, and a little about their recent activities. For those of you in the BC/Yukon Area who don't have a Public Outreach Committee, you may be wondering what it is and how much work it involves. At the district level, a PO Committee can just be a small group of members who are willing to plan and implement outreach activities. The Committee does not have to be too formal or undertake big projects. Sometimes the simplest things are the most effective.

### Public Outreach to the media

By Vicki L., Public Outreach Coordinator, West Virginia

*Area 60 Lifeline*, Issue 1, 2009

The West Virginia Public Outreach Committee discussed how to connect with the World Service Office, perhaps by linking our Web site to the WSO Website, which has podcasts. As a reminder, a PowerPoint presentation about Al-Anon is available in West Virginia and any member can use it. Contact Public Outreach District Coordinators for more information about the presentation, how to get it, and how to use it. The Committee also discussed the need to contact PO District Coordinators in West Virginia to reach the local level of service, as well as the need for long range focus to identify which individuals and organizations to target and how to develop an outreach campaign for our Area.

### New from the World Service Conference—understanding anonymity presentations

Looking for workshop ideas? Your Area Delegate returned home with a PowerPoint presentation and a skit about anonymity. Have fun and help members gain a better understanding of anonymity, particularly when involved in Public Outreach activities.

### New WSO Web-based service tools are available

The WSO's Public Outreach site has two new electronic service tools that can be utilized by members to inform professionals and their patients and clients who are the family members of alcoholics about Al-Anon:

- Graphic of “First Steps to Al-Anon Recovery” logo—Professionals can hear members share their stories and other professionals speak about the benefits of Al-Anon.
- Graphic of “e-News” logo—The WSO sends timely electronic updates to professionals. Each e-News message is focused on a single subject and is also posted in the “Professionals” section of the WSO Public Outreach Web site.

Visit [www.al-anon.alateen.org](http://www.al-anon.alateen.org) to see these new tools.

These services are available in English only at this time.



## Literature

### My experience working on Al-Anon's latest book

By Ellie L., Past Delegate, Connecticut

*Lifelines*, January 2009

The most gratifying experience for me as part of the worldwide fellowship of Al-Anon Family Groups was the opportunity to serve on the Literature Committee when it was reviewing draft after draft, scoring paragraph by paragraph, of OUR RECOVERY IN RELATIONSHIPS (working title). This manuscript went through many incarnations before it reached your hands as our newest piece of Conference Approved Literature, *Discovering Choices* (B-30). Living intimately for three years with the hundreds of submissions from members required much prayer and contemplation with my Higher Power.

It was a truly humbling experience to read the sharings from members and to decide which could contribute in the most inspiring, meaningful, and helpful way to a very diverse membership in every imaginable relationship.

When I felt inadequate to the task, a wise program friend said words that stayed with me: “God doesn't call the qualified; God qualifies the called.” I began by very tentatively voicing my opinion. I was surprised and encouraged that others shared my concerns. I found I could let go of some of my pet ideas that didn't seem to resonate with other Committee members, or for which there were very few member submissions. However, I am grateful that many of my suggestions were incorporated into the final version.

Serving on the Literature Committee helped me learn to live with the principles of anonymity, humility, substantial unanimity, letting go, and especially experiencing collegiality—recognizing that the final results are so much greater than each individual contribution.

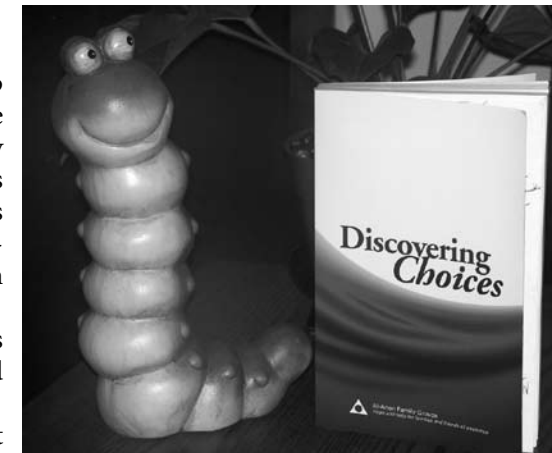


Photo by Roberta H., Indiana

### When a newcomer has questions

By John D., Area Literature Coordinator, Missouri

*Missouri Round Robin*, February 2009

*Al-Anon, You, and the Alcoholic* (P-2) is a perfect pamphlet for a newcomer. It contains 22 questions and answers that will be sure to help newcomers after they leave their first meeting. Some of the questions answered are: “Will Al-Anon help me convince someone that he or she is an alcoholic?”; “Why are Al-Anon members anonymous?”; and “Will Al-Anon help me understand why the alcoholic can't stop after one or two drinks?” I encourage you to make this pamphlet available at your meetings (it is not included in the Newcomer Packet) or even take a few minutes to read it yourself. You may be surprised by the answers!

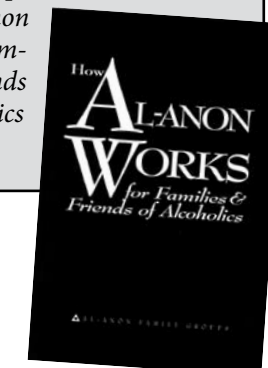
**Remember—when you buy from your local Literature Distribution Center, you support your local services.**



Photo by Richard B., Missouri

Need a meeting topic? Look in our literature!

Did you know you can find meeting discussion questions selected by members and groups posted on the Sample Chapter page of the Members' Web site, [www.al-anon.org/members](http://www.al-anon.org/members)? From October through December, find topics selected from *How Al-Anon Works for Families & Friends of Alcoholics* (B-22).



**Will *The Forum* grow—or fade away?**

*The following excerpts are from an article in the July issue of The Forum written by the WSO Director of Communications.*

I believe *The Forum* has an important role to play in Al-Anon. It is a cross section of the best that we have to share with each other. It is a focal point for Al-Anon unity. And it is the place where we see a broader, more diverse group of members apply the principles of the program to a range of current situations.

But despite what I think, *The Forum* will fade away unless we, as a fellowship, decide that it is worth our support.

Subscriptions to *The Forum* have dropped below 20,000 for the first time in about 35 years. There are fewer than 1.4 subscriptions per group. That means on average, every group has one subscriber, while every second or third group might also have a second subscriber. Probably 90 percent of our members never look at a copy of *The Forum*.

Ten years ago we had 30,000 subscribers. Five years ago, about 27,000. The downward trend couldn't be clearer.

The WSO sells *The Forum* at cost—the cost of printing and mailing. The subscription fee does not cover the staff time of editing and designing the publication. So if we consider total costs, *The Forum* is a net loss for the WSO.

It's fair to ask: How much longer should the WSO subsidize a magazine that engages only a tiny minority of members?

The vitality of *The Forum* is a two-way street: it needs both readers and writers. A receptive, interested readership would encourage more members to submit their sharings. And a more diverse selection of sharings on a wider range of topics would in turn attract more readers.

*The Forum* is affordable. At \$11 per year in the U.S. (less than \$1 per issue), I don't believe there is a single group that cannot buy one or two subscriptions per year, in addition to the free copy they already get. With at least three copies of *The Forum* per group, the magazine could once again become a focal point for Al-Anon unity and a meaningful bridge to the future.

I would suggest to you that the more vital we are as a program, the greater need we have to share with each other. When we seek to grow, we have a more urgent need to share news. When we're extending our reach, we have stronger interest in sharing new insights into recovery. *The Forum* could play that role for our fellowship—or it could fade away.

Tradition Seven reminds us to be self-supporting. But what we support remains our choice. Only time will tell whether *The Forum* will be a bridge that can take us to the future or whether it will be remembered as a part of Al-Anon's history.



**Lessons learned from Al-Anon's history**

Following a motion from the 2008 World Service Conference, the WSO is preparing a book about Al-Anon's history. Please share your recollections about the events you witnessed since you joined Al-Anon—and what you learned from the experience. Your sharing could include the founding of Alateen, the first Conference, the creation of Conference Approved Literature, the influx of adult children of alcoholics, the relocation of the WSO, the introduction of the Alateen safety requirements, or many other events and achievements.

How did the history you witnessed contribute to your own experience, strength, and hope? Send your sharings to the WSO by October 31, 2009, Attention: Al-Anon History Book. For more details, see the August issue of *The Forum*.

**Enhancing your recovery with Conference Approved Literature**

How has using CAL helped your recovery? The "CAL Corner" department of *The Forum* would like to know! Describe in 350 words or less how a particular piece of literature has helped you. Send your article by mail to AFG, Inc., 1600 Corporate Landing Parkway, Virginia Beach, VA 23454-5617; by fax to (757) 563-1655; or by e-mail to wso@al-anon.org, Attention "CAL Corner."

**Sharing Ourselves**

At this year's World Service Conference, Panel 47 Delegates gave three-minute talks based on the Conference theme, "Embrace the Legacies: Our Spiritual Bridges to Expand the Future." The following are excerpts from those talks.

To read the complete set of three-minute talks, see the 2009 Conference Summary on the Members' Web site, [www.al-anon.org/members](http://www.al-anon.org/members).

*"As I look at the theme for this year's Conference, 'Embrace the Legacies: Our Spiritual Bridges to Expand the Future,' I realize how much those Legacies have provided me with a spiritual bridge to my future. Recovery through the Steps provides me with the tools to look at myself and gain my understanding of God and not that of my father. Unity through the Traditions helps my group to prosper and continue to be around for those who suffer from the effects of alcoholism. Service through the Concepts has led me to a greater understanding of this fellowship and its service structure. Can you imagine how well businesses could do if they adopted even some of the Concepts?"*

—Rodney B., Alabama

*"Until I became a Delegate, I did not understand or appreciate the spiritual bridge-building relationship between Canada and the World Service Office that has existed since Al-Anon's beginnings. I took advantage of the invitation to sit in on the Open Annual Board Meeting that follows the Conference each year.*

*"I was unexpectedly overwhelmed with feelings of pride and gratitude as I thought of the Canadian Delegates and Trustees who had gone before me and had worked alongside so many other Delegates and Trustees from the U.S. to expand Al-Anon's future. I silently prayed that I, too, would be able to embrace Al-Anon's Legacies and use them as tools to strengthen and expand Al-Anon and Alateen for future generations of families and friends of alcoholics."*

—Judy C., Maritime Provinces

*"I see our Legacies of the Twelve Steps, Traditions, and Concepts as our inheritance from those who came before us. They come with the requirement that I safeguard them for those who come to Al-Anon in the future. I need to remember our primary purpose and focus on that in every effort to share my experience, strength, and hope. To be diverted from this primary purpose, even in well-intentioned efforts, is a disservice to Al-Anon as a whole."*

—Pat N., Massachusetts

*"Today I am either living in love or fear. If I am not acting from love, I'm afraid of something. Today when I ask God why something is happening, it's in looking back that I see the reason. I identify miracles in every moment and am amazed how my Higher Power works things out. My part is to apply these 36 simple principles in all my affairs to be a channel for God's love."*

—Mary M., Minnesota North

*"Through the grace of God and my Area's trust, I became the Alberta Northwest Territories Panel 47 Delegate. At the World Service Conference, I discovered that although I was a vital link between my Area and the World Service Office, my main responsibility was to be a voice for the worldwide fellowship of Al-Anon Family Groups. By presuming goodwill, sharing leadership, and encouraging Knowledge-Based Decision-Making, you have helped me build a culture of trust in my Area."*

—Rose Anna J., Alberta/ Northwest Territories

*“As I participated in various activities as a Delegate, it became clear to me that the legacies of this program were those people that came before us. Lois, Anne, and those other early pioneers that brought our Clearing House and World Service Office together are legacies. The early members of our program, unrecognized, yet just as important, that opened the meeting doors, made the coffee, gave the hugs in the early 1950s, are legacies.”*

—Roland C., Oregon

*“Each year the World Service Conference meets and builds on the experience of the past Conferences. As long as we continue to build bridges from the past to the future, our program will continue to expand. My term as Delegate has been an exciting journey and I will take its gifts with me into the future. The things I have learned and shared with my Area—big thinking, diversity, task/thought forces, conflict resolution, Alateen Traditions, bequests—give me the assurance that the program is sound, and that the Conference is keeping up with the changing times to leave a legacy for the future.”*

—Jacki S., Oklahoma

*“Although I faced the position of Delegate with some trepidation, I soon realized that my fears were groundless. Upon reflection, I saw that the spiritual nature of the program opened my life in ways I never thought possible. I no longer fear being in different groups, and I know that I can trust my fellow members anywhere in the world. Because of the three Legacies, we have a solid common ground so that we are able to reach out to each other, content in knowing that our Higher Power will work through us to create bridges to reach out to those family members who are still suffering all around the world.*

*“Each time a newcomer arrives at my home group, I feel honored to be able to reach out to them and aid them in their first steps, crossing the bridge to their spiritual future. As long as our base is solid, as embodied by the three Legacies, we can freely and enthusiastically cross our bridges to reach out to others and embrace the changes that will result in creating new bridges to the future.”*

—Renee H., Wisconsin

*“Let me offer an example or two of how the Traditions and Concepts have helped in my personal recovery. Control issues being among the top issues I have had to confront in my lifetime, the first three Steps were both crucial and difficult in my healing process. But when I learned that when Tradition Two says ‘For our group purpose there is but one authority—a loving God . . .’ it also says to me, ‘For our family purpose there is but one authority—a loving God . . .’ This Tradition helped me to apply what I was learning in the Steps to my other relationships, especially my family.*

*“Similarly when Concept Five told me I might hear a solution to my problems if I was open enough to listen to the voice of the minority, I scoffed! After all, I knew that I always had the right idea in every situation. But service was where I first took a chance and put this idea into practice. I listened and was amazed at how my thinking was invigorated. Today, ‘You could be right!’ is more than just a catchy phrase to dampen an argument—it’s a reminder to me that I’m not always right.”*

—Don F., Virginia

These shared experiences, sent from around the world, came to WSO through French and Spanish newsletters as well as correspondence. The WSO will continue to select service activities for this page, so Spanish and French members will have the opportunity to write and read about their service projects without translation. This additional page gives all members a consistent reminder that service in Al-Anon is taking place in many languages.

Estas experiencias, de los miembros de todas partes del mundo, las hemos recibido en la OSM en boletines y cartas, tanto en español como en francés. De ahora en adelante la OSM continuará publicando actividades de servicio; de esta forma los miembros hispano hablantes y los de habla francesa podrán escribir y leer sus experiencias auténticas de servicio. Esta página adicional nos recuerda a todos los miembros que el servicio en Al-Anon se lleva a cabo en muchos idiomas.

## EXPERIENCIA DE UNA EX-TESORERA

Boletín Serenidad N° 115

Oficina de Servicios Generales de los

Grupos de Familia Al-Anon/Alateen en España

Diciembre de 2007

Es curioso cuando pienso que este servicio fue el primero que realicé en el Comité de Área, a pesar del tiempo que ha pasado, todavía lo recuerdo...era el mes de octubre y había elecciones para renovar el Comité de Área. Yo no llevaba mucho tiempo en Al-Anon, era R.G. del grupo en el que empecé y escucho en la Asamblea: “¡se necesitan servidores!”, sin pensarlo dos veces levanto la mano y digo: “yo me presento”. A lo que me contestan: y “¿de qué te presentas?” Y añado: “de lo que sea, da igual, en donde haga falta”. A lo que me proponen: ¿Qué te parece de tesorera? ¡Vale! Esa fue la primera vez que me presenté a este servicio. Votaron por mí y me eligieron. Bien, mi antecesora “soltó las riendas” y en ese mismo momento me entregó todo cuanto tenía. Cuando le hice ver que hasta enero no tenía que desempeñar mi cargo, se negó. En ese momento, me quedé un poco desconcertada y ahora que lo pienso no se como no pensé” ¡Dios mío!, ¿Dónde me he metido? Nada más lejos, me encantó realizar este servicio no sólo tuvo su encanto sino que me permitió poder servir en un Comité de Área que poco más adelante sufriría una importante crisis.

De las tres Comunidades Autónomas que la forman, una de ellas intentó formar su propia Área, los grupos de la otra hacía tiempo que no aparecían por las Asambleas de Área. Por lo que quedábamos bajo mínimos, en el Comité solamente las servidora de Literatura y la Tesorera y un planteamiento en la última Asamblea: ¿Deberíamos disolver el Área?

Todos sabemos que la palabra crisis en chino se escribe con dos pinceladas, una significa peligro y la otra oportunidad. El Área, gracias a Dios, superó aquellos momentos, y yo tuve que renunciar a mi servicio de tesorera sin finalizarlo, para presentarme al de Delegada.

Os decía que fue el primer servicio que realicé en el Comité de Área y curiosamente, también es el último que he realizado dentro de dicho Comité. Sucedió después de mucho tiempo. Había hecho bastantes servicios en Al-Anon, era el momento de pasar el servicio a otro compañero, el servicio es así, lo haces con amor, con todo el amor que eres capaz y después tienes que dejar a otros compañeros que se benefician de él. Incluso me había tomado un tiempo sabático. Pero añoraba poder hacer algo por Al-Anon, le debía y le debo tanto, que me siento en deuda permanente con él, vaya que en mi argot profesional soy una auténtica “MOROSA”.

Empecé a acudir de nuevo a las Asambleas de Área de oyente y en una de éstas, la palabra mágica: “¡se necesitan servidores!” más concretamente tesorero de Área y todos me miran y me insisten. Yo: “¡que ya hice este servicio!” e insisten y ¡vaya! Que soy una chica fácil con Al-Anon, no sé decir que no. Me presento, me eligieron y ¡sorpresa!, no hay unanimidad, alguien vota NO. Y los comentarios: ¿así que eres contable y alguien ha votado NO? Pues sí, y en mi interior me siento bien, va bien una dosis de humildad de vez en cuando.

Esta vez completé los tres años de ser-

vicio y al final la satisfacción de que un compañero capacitado y responsable, se hizo cargo de este servicio. Ahora visto en la distancia, me doy cuenta de mi insistencia en ocasiones para incentivar las aportaciones. Posiblemente no haya sido del gusto de todos, en ocasiones escuchas decir: “se habla demasiado de dinero y nos olvidamos de la espiritualidad”. Pues no, no señor, yo he descubierto en Al-Anon mi espiritualidad, pero no por eso me olvidé de comer, vestir, y de todas las facetas de mi vida en las que necesito dinero, necesito alimentarme física y espiritualmente. Al-Anon no vive del aire, necesita de nuestras aportaciones. Qué rápidamente hemos olvidado como llegamos. Yo, en aquel momento hubiera dado cualquier cosa, sí, cualquier cosa; me hubiera endeudado por solucionar el problema que me había quitado las ganas de vivir. Ahora que disfruto de la vida, de mis seres queridos, de mis compañeros, de todas las pequeñas cosas que Dios ha puesto en mi vida, que he recuperado todo esto, que me he encontrado con Dios, no puedo olvidarme de que el día en que llegué había unas personas que me ayudaron y que...“cuando alguien pida ayuda...Yo soy responsable”; con mi presencia y mi aportación. No olvidemos que el destino final de ese dinero es: LLEVAR EL MENSAJE A LAS PERSONAS QUE TODAVÍA ESTÁN SUFRIENDO. (Objetivo de Al-Anon).  
Con amor  
Rosa

INVITAMOS a todos los miembros a que compartan con nosotros sus experiencias de servicio para publicarlas en esta sección. Igualmente deseamos recibir los boletines de Zona para publicar sus experiencias. ¡No pierdan esta oportunidad!

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Ces expériences partagées proviennent de bulletins et de lettres envoyées au BSM par des membres d'expression française et hispanique à travers le monde. Le BSM sélectionnera pour cette page des témoignages de membres sur leur travail de service, et leur permettra ainsi de partager leurs expériences dans le service directement sans traduction. Cette page supplémentaire rappelle à tous les membres que le service dans Al-Anon se fait dans toutes les langues.

## Prendre des fonctions éloigne nos peurs

Extrait du journal interne des Groupes Familiaux Al-Anon de la Circonscription du Québec-Ouest  
Yvonne G.

*Le Tournesol*, mars-avril 2009

Après plusieurs 24 heures d'Al-Anon, j'ai continué à accepter des fonctions dans le service et dans les groupes. Après avoir fini mes termes de trois ans, un après l'autre, les années ont passé et j'ai pris ma retraite de mon travail personnel, mon conjoint y était déjà.

Quelque temps après, j'ai cessé de faire du meeting régulier et cessé de prendre des fonctions, pensant que mon conjoint apprécierait mon dévouement, ma présence; cependant nous n'étions, presque toujours, pas d'accord sur tout. Comme de raison étant orgueilleuse, exigeante, contrôlante, dépendante, etc... vivant souvent d'illusions, j'ai continué comme ça un bon 5 ans.

Je pensais souvent à Al-Anon, mais comment y retourner sans drame?

Dieu a placé une personne dans le besoin d'Al-Anon, je l'ai accompagnée à une réunion et ensuite à plusieurs et j'y suis toujours depuis cinq ans.

On m'a demandé d'être Vice-présidente pour le Congrès de Joliette, j'ai accepté et ça m'a aidée à m'affirmer et ensuite Présidente pour le Congrès l'année suivante. Par la suite je me sentais tellement inutile, je me cherchais et j'ai demandé à Dieu de me donner un autre signe.

La RG de mon groupe m'a demandé d'accepter la fonction de RD et j'ai vu le signe de mon Dieu d'Amour. J'ai souri et accepté et ça va très bien.

Servir a été pour moi de mettre le mode de vie dans ma vie à moi et non dans l'autre ou les autres. Faire seulement ce que je dois faire sans me préoccuper de tout et mettre les Étapes et les Traditions dans ma vie.

## Mot de la secrétaire française adjointe

Extrait du journal interne des Groupes Familiaux Al-Anon de la Circonscription du Québec-Ouest

Jocelyne, secrétaire française adjointe

*Le Tournesol*, mars-avril 2009

J'essaie de vous servir, et ce, en toute humilité. Cela m'aide à progresser dans mon cheminement. J'ai beaucoup de gratitude pour tous ceux qui m'envoient leurs changements. Ce que j'apprécie encore plus est de les recevoir sur les formulaires à cet effet avec tous les renseignements nécessaires : numéro de district, numéro et nom du groupe, adresse postale, adresse du RG ou du RD selon le cas, etc.

Une membre disait: « Comment voulez-vous diriger les gens vers les réunions si le site n'est pas à date? » et moi je vous dirais comment tenir un fichier à date si le RG ou le RD ne font pas les changements. En l'absence de RG, une membre du groupe peut le faire, et sinon le RD se doit de le faire. Voir dans le *Manuel de Service* p. 144-145, cela fait partie de ses fonctions.

De plus, lors de la 38<sup>e</sup> journée Al-Anon il y aura des formulaires corrigés pour la circonscription et ceux du BSM seront aussi disponibles. J'attends vos changements, il me fera plaisir de les enregistrer dans le fichier. Ensemble nous pouvons y arriver.

Avec amour dans le service.

## Invitation à tous les membres

Faites-nous parvenir vos expériences dans le service pour nous permettre de les publier dans cette page. En nous envoyant les bulletins de nouvelles de votre circonscription, vous nous donnez aussi la possibilité d'y puiser des témoignages et de les partager avec tous les membres.

Veillez photocopier *Area Highlights* et le distribuer à d'autres membres