



# AL-ANON FAMILY GROUPS FLORIDA SOUTH AREA 10, INC.

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*Panel 52*

*2012-2014*

## **DELEGATE'S REPORT TO THE AWSC February 11-12, 2012 Bonita Springs, Florida**

Greetings Florida South!!!

Wow - when I was told I was "*in for the ride of my life!*" I had no idea!! Panel 52 is off and running at full speed ahead!!

First, let me thank everyone for their trust and most of all patience as I start out on a job I am just learning!! I am receiving information from the World Service Office (WSO) at lightening speed and trying to assimilate it all so that I can pass on the information to our groups. Here is some of the information that I have obtained relative to the Florida South Area:

### **PANEL NEWS**

**E-Communities:** are currently available for most Coordinators (Alateen, Archives, Literature, Group Records, Public Outreach, Web, and Forum); AAPP; Area Chairs; District Representatives; and, past and present WSC members. You need to be invited to access these communities, so if you haven't received an e-mail, there is probably something wrong with your e-mail address.

Literature Distribution Centers and Al-Anon Information Services also have access to e-communities. However, they must obtain the login and password from their immediate outgoing counterparts. Please encourage them to give the login and password information to the incoming contacts.

**Conference Calls:** there were conference calls in January, 2012 for Literature, Group Records and Alateen Coordinators, and there will be one on Saturday, February 11, 2012 for the AAPP & Alateen Coordinator. There will be a second call for Literature on Friday, March 2, 2012.

**2018 International Convention Bid Presentation:** I have received word from Ric Buchanan, our Executive Director, that the Convention Site Committee and the Board of Trustees are considering 12 bids for the 2018 AFG International Convention, and our bid is among the 12 being considered. The bid presentation will take place on Friday, April 20th at 4:30 in Stamford, Connecticut.

### SERDGT

As many of you know, I recently attended the Southeast Regional Delegates Get Together (SERDGT) in Raleigh, North Carolina, February 3-5, 2012. This is an informal gathering to help prepare new Delegates to attend the WS Conference and to discuss concerns relative to our region and to encourage past Delegates to stay involved. By consensus, it was decided to raise the registration fee from \$20.00 to \$25.00 for the weekend and to change the dates from the first weekend in February, to the third weekend in March on a trial basis for the 2013, 2014 and 2015 SERDGT. In addition, 2013 will be the last year that North Carolina will be serving as the host committee, and bids are being accepted from the other areas in the region willing to host the SERDGT.

The 2012 timely topics discussed during the weekend were:

- How has your Area handled topics requested being placed on the agenda for discussion that were not really subjects relevant to that level of service;
- What can be done to make the Home Group concept more widespread?
- What works for groups to ensure that meetings are prepared in advance for every meeting?
- Linguistic Districts - whether some areas have them, are talking about this issue, how can we be more proactive in bringing these groups into the service structure?
- Whether any Areas have addressed whether or not to say the Lord's Prayer to open or close the Assembly, how was it handled?
- How can I add enthusiasm and fun into Area business meetings?
- What ways do Areas use electronic communication to educate, communicate and facilitate the message of Al-Anon service, i.e., training?
- How does your Area preserve the history of discussions that have previously taken place and ensure that it gets passed from Panel to Panel?
- Has anyone used a Yahoo site similar to DOLs at the Area level for communication?
- Are any Areas having trouble with texting during the meetings and how are you handling this?
- Service opportunities - how are we encouraging full participation?

I had an opportunity to not only meet past, current and new delegates from the Southeast Region, but also Paula B., our Southeast Regional Trustee and hear her report. Some of the items reported on are:

**Board of Trustees:** There is a new Trustee form. Potential candidates must submit their resumes by August 15th. Trustee at Large is a 1 year appointment (must have a minimum 10 years Al-Anon membership), Executive Committee for Real Property Management (ECRPM) serves for 3 years (must have 7 years continuous Al-Anon membership).

**Finance:** The General Fund recorded income as of September 30, 2011 of \$207,700 for the period, compared to \$59,000 for the same period last year. Literature Sales were \$3,364,800, up 13.3% from the preceding year. Gross profits on Literature Sales were \$2,682,100 (79.7% of sales), up 1.4% from the preceding year. Contributions were \$905,600 this year compared to \$883,100 last year– an increase of 2.5%. Forum subscriptions income was \$205,500 this year, compared to \$209,300 last year – a decrease of 1.8%. Operating expenses were \$3,641,000 which represented an increase due to printing the Spanish and French Service Manuals, travel to TEAM events and repairs to the HVAC system. The fair value of investments in the Reserve Fund totaled \$4,448,000 at September 30, 2011. Per the Board of Trustee’s motion, 4% of the average balance of the R.F. over the prior 36 months will be transferred to the General Fund.

**Policy Committee:** The Policy Committee is -

- continuing to review the *Public Relations* section of the *Digest of Al-Anon and Alateen Policies* section of the manual in light of new technologies;
- exploring the possibility of family member memorial contributions in light of the legacies;
- working on further clarifying the *Dual Membership in Al-Anon/Alateen and A.A.* policy contained on pgs. 78-79 of the *Digest* in light of the spiritual principles outlined by an earlier Thought Force;
- discussed principles the Areas may consider when addressing groups that do not adhere to the Twelve Traditions when referring members to these groups. (Do Not Refer).
- by consensus, the Policy Committee has agreed to make available to members, a document *Procedure Regarding Collaboration with Outside Researchers* to explain the internal policy when collaborating with outside researchers who are examining the family recovery from the effects of alcoholism;
- gave approval to the Literature Committee to change the name of the pamphlet *To the Mother and Father of an Alcoholic* (P-16) to *To the Parents of Alcoholics* because it could be interpreted as non-inclusive and limited only to members whose families

- consist of a mother and father;
- discussed the safety of baby-sitting services at meetings and determined that it is more *Groups at Work* so it was referred to Group Services.

**Public Outreach:** The PSA *Sketches IV* generated nearly 90,000 air plays on television last year, a 54% increase over *Sketches III*. Al-Anon's English PSAs in the US ranked in the top 4% and the Spanish PSA ranked in the top 11%. In Canada, they were in the top 1% taking up nearly 97% of the time taken by PSAs.

The *First Steps to Recovery* podcasts airing on the Outreach Website - more than 20,000 podcasts were played each quarter and more than 2,000 listeners went directly to the find a meeting page after listening.

**Twitter:** The Twitter account "AlAnon\_WSO" doesn't accommodate the hyphen in Al-Anon. WSO sends outbound messages to the public, professionals, members & potential members - it does not permit followers to 'tweet' back. The short tweets point Twitter followers to a web page, podcast or another resource that can give them a deeper look at the information highlighted in the tweet.

**Facebook:** The Al-Anon WSO page is a source of information about Al-Anon and not a place for members to share with each other, which would violate our Tradition of anonymity. WSO does not accept 'friends' on facebook.

**Electronic Newsletters/Notifications:** The WSO would like to remind everyone to read page 89 of the Service Manual which states "Members' business e-mail addresses should not be used for Al-Anon/Alateen outreach, as they could imply affiliation, and may not be confidential to the member.

**Literature:** The soft cover of *How Al-Anon Works for Families & Friends of Alcoholics* (B-32) has been a big success. It has affected the sales of the hard cover version. Also, there is a new *Taking A Group Inventory* Guideline (G-8a and G8b) - it has been expanded into two parts.

*Forum* subscriptions continue to decline. A complementary copy of *Al-Anon/Alateen Groups at Work 2010-2013* (P-24) was sent to all individual subscribers to the *Forum*.

The WSO is continuing to look at the issues surrounding electronic literature. One of the major concerns is the impact on the LDCs and on WSO, and impact on outside structures since literature sales is the primary source of donations.

**Group Records:** The “Group Focus” option has been removed from both the on-line web application and the Group Registration/Change Form (GR-1). The existing groups currently listing a group focus have been sent a letter asking them to include that information in their group name.

**TEAM:** Upcoming events are:

March 10, 2012 – “Recovery on My Mind” at the Vineville United Methodist Church, Macon, Georgia.

June 9-10, 2012 - “TEAM Recovery Through Service” at the Lido Beach Resorts, Sarasota, Florida.

**International Structures:** The 2012 International Al-Anon General Service Meeting (IAGSM) will be held in Cape Town, South Africa 10/3-6, 2012. The theme is *No Structure is Ever Alone*.

The Canadian office has gone virtual. They have a new address which provides virtual access. All telephone calls and e-mails are now going directly to the WSO.

In August, 2011, staff and 3 volunteers visited Iceland, England, Turkey, Slovenia, Hungary, Poland, Austria and Italy to meet with Board Members from those countries that have General Service Offices & AIS, as well as attend the European Zonal Meeting and attend Italy’s 35th Anniversary celebration at their national convention. The Executive Director has been invited to attend Colombia, South America’s national conference in October, 13-14, 2012 at their expense.

The Board of Trustees has approved 3 pamphlets in Serbian, has given permission to translate and print Al-Anon/Alateen CAL in Hungarian. The Ukraine has started their 1st Intergroup, the Finland GSO has moved due to financial reasons; the Peru GSO has a new website as does New Zealand GSO. Argentina will have a celebration of 45 years in August, 2012.

**2013 Al-Anon International Convention:** The 2013 Al-Anon International Convention will be held in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada July 5-7, 2013. The theme is “Celebrating Worldwide Unity–Al-Anon Family Groups.”

**Trustee Visits:** If we are interested in having a Trustee visit, we need to give WSO at least 6 months notice. They want to come and visit, but need to be invited.

## **2012 WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE**

As you know, I will soon be attending Al-Anon's largest group conscious, April 15-19, 2012 at the Stamford Marriott Hotel and Spa, 243 Tresser Boulevard, Stamford, Connecticut 06901. The theme of Al-Anon's 2012 World Service Conference (WSC) is:

**Our Spiritual Journey—we get as we give  
Nuestro viaje espiritual—es al dar que recibimos  
Notre cheminement spirituel—c'est en donnant que nous recevons**

The WSC goals are:

- Conference members will understand the purpose of the Conference, relationships within the structure, and be able to articulate Conference decisions.
- The spiritual tone of the World Service Conference will prevail by the demonstration of mutual respect and acceptable conduct by its members.
- Knowing that our Higher Power is present in the expression of our group conscience, Conference Members will presume goodwill.

I have been assigned to a Conference Mentor, who is Bette R. from Milwaukee, Oregon and we have made arrangements to meet before the Conference begins. I have also selected the skill building workshops that I would like to participate in, as well as selecting the committee, task or thought force I would like to be assigned.

I have been asked to prepare a Sharing Area Highlights (SAH) which is to consist of 1 success and 1 concern or challenge that our Area has faced since the last WS Conference that is 300 words in length. I will then prepare a 1 minute written summary and have an opportunity to present this highlight at the mic. They expect participation from all 67 delegates.

**Chosen Agenda Items:** The 2011 WS Conference members voted to cede the 2 hours originally planned for floor discussion of the chosen agenda items to accommodate the Board's Big Question, which will now have 3 hours instead of the 1 originally allotted. The Board's Big Question being:

What will be the impact of electronic literature on AIS/LDCs; the World Service Office; and the English, French, and Spanish structures outside of the WSC structure.

Should time permit, the 2 chosen agenda items will be added back into the agenda for

discussion:

- How does WSO see social networks, such as Facebook and YouTube, as a way to attract and retain new members to our fellowship?
- How do we empower the average Al-Anon member to speak up at meetings when someone else's sharing is not Al-Anon?

I have a phone conference scheduled for Saturday, February 25, 2012, where I hope to learn a little bit more about travel, and what to expect when I arrive at Conference. I will have an opportunity to visit Stepping Stones while at Conference!

One thing I do know, I will be taking the thought of your love and support as I start out on this new service journey! And yes! - I am looking forward to receiving all of those Love Gifts that represent our Area and distribute them to the 67 Delegates there.

I'm looking forward to an exciting year and attending as many events as possible. If I can be of assistance please call or e-mail me, I am here as your Trusted Servant.

Two final thoughts: let's see how we can apply the conference theme -- *Our Spiritual Journey--we get as we give* in our Area this year, and don't forget that Lois' Birthday is March 4th!

Love and Al-Anon Hugs,

Jennifer D.,

Florida South Delegate, Panel 52

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