

There are some things to tell you about. Some items are from the 2011 World Service Conference other items are information for you to take back to your group and include in your report over the next few weeks.

A report was given about the IAGSM. This was the 15<sup>th</sup> Bi-Annual International Al-Anon General Service Meeting where 34 members were present representing 14 service structures from around the world. The theme was "Many Structures, Many Voices, One Purpose." The meeting itself is very similar to our World Service Conference. Every fourth year this meeting is in the US. The meeting will be in South Africa in 2012. The Chairman of the Board of Trustees represents our conference structure, the US and Canada, at the IAGSM.

International guests, Rosa A, from New Zealand, and Maria Evangeline, from Mexico, shared a bit about themselves and their service structure. How amazing it was to get to know them better and see first hand how Al-Anon Family Groups is connected around the world.

A report was given about the trip to Northern Europe and contact made with service structures in that region of the world. A trustee and the Associate Director of Member Services – International shared their photographs and stories about these service structures. Once again I felt connected to Al-Anon Family Groups around the world.

During the week, skills workshops were held. Delegates were able to participate in two of the three sessions offered. I chose to attend Communication—Active Listening and Communication—Presentation and Reporting Skills. These workshops were designed to help Delegates with giving reports and listening to member's concerns in their own Areas.

Two topics discussed were chosen by the Delegates. The first of these topics was about technology. After the topic was introduced, there was a lot of discussion. A question I heard which could extend the conversation on technology was: keeping our principles in mind how can Al-Anon make the best use of technology while maintaining all of meaningful aspects which made Al-Anon effective? I heard it said technology is a way to keep in contact with remote groups. I also heard, "It would be nice to develop an APP to assist in finding meetings". One other thing I heard about technology is many members do not even know one thing about technology and are a little afraid to use technology. Not knowing how to use technology is one thing, but having the willingness to learn how to use technology is also important. Willingness!!! Where have I heard that before? During this discussion it was strongly suggested that all members in service have e-mail accessibility. If they do not have a personal account, having a reliable, e-mail buddy is highly, even strongly recommended because more and more information is being sent electronically and not through the USPS now.

The second topic had to do with diversity, addressing diverse populations, and undocumented immigrants. Diversity has been discussed during a few past World Service Conferences. However, undocumented immigrants were added to the discussion. One point I remember from the discussion is: Areas need to develop and implement a plan for their location in regards to reaching out to minority populations.

We had a speaker come from outside the fellowship and give a presentation. The topic was "*Cultural and Linguistic Competence*" *A Strategy Towards Diversity and Inclusion*" Through the exercises done during the talk I have a greater understanding of cultural factor that influence diversity. I refer you to page 32-33 of the 2011 Conference summary for more information about this topic.

The Annual Report and the Audit Report were received and approved. The Budget was presented. A discussion about the budget was held. Approval was given to the annual budget. During the week, the ways our contributions are used were presented in the form of short skits called Vignettes. It was mentioned that each group needs to continue sending contributions to WSO so services to groups can continue. Groups receive services whether they send contributions or not. Plea letter contributions go to public outreach and not to operations.

Members have asked what the difference between AFG and AFG, Inc. is. Let's see if I can explain it through my understanding. AFG, Inc is Al-Anon Family Groups Headquarters, Inc and is the organization. The Board of Trustees is legally responsible for AFG, Inc, and exists in the eyes of the law. It has tax exempt status. It is the legal arm and protects our logo, copyrights, and trademarks. It conducts the business of Al-Anon. It has the By-laws of the corporation, which can be amended by the Trustees and it has a governance document. It recognizes the World Service Conference as the ultimate traditional authority. --- Al-Anon Family Groups, the fellowship, does not exist in the eyes of the law nor does it have

tax exempt status. It is the traditional arm providing meetings and a service structure. It provides support for individual members. It has a governance document, the World Service Conference Charter, which can be amended by the World Service Conference. It recognizes the Board of Trustees as the chief service arm of the Conference.

During the week we attended the open Policy Meeting. The discussion was about dual members and how they can be in service. This discussion cannot be found in the Conference Summary as Policy Meetings are not a part of the Conference but Conference members are invited to attend the open meeting. Questions were asked and answered in the Knowledge Based Decision Making format. While information was shared more questions came up. More discussion will be held on the topic of dual members and service. I encourage all of you to look at the Policy Up-Date posted quarterly on the members' website. [www.al-anon.org/members](http://www.al-anon.org/members)

TEAM events have begun. TEAM is Together Empowering Al-Anon Members. Areas reported about how their TEAM event had more interaction between attendees, how the event linked their service work and recovery, and the events leadership was shared between WSO staff /volunteers and the host committee. The reports told how members attending the event felt more connected to the presenters. TEAM events can be part of another event or can be a stand alone event. The topics for the workshops, talks, etc are geared to what the host committee would like but would include three sessions which have been determined ahead time which are presented at each TEAM event. A question I have for AFG of Ohio, when would be a good time for us to have a TEAM event?

Let's look for a moment at the Concepts of Service. They are on page 19 in your Service Manual and in a section explaining the Concepts of Service which begins on page 171. In Concept six, seven, and eight the Board of Trustees is mentioned. As stated on page 63, The Board of Trustees is the legal entity responsible for administration of Al-Anon funds and services. Explanation of what the Board of Trustees does begin on page 129. Ohio is in the North Central Region of the United States and will be electing a Regional Trustee in 2012. The process for electing Regional Trustees was adopted in 2010 and is described in the 2010 World Service Conference Summary (p. 26-28). Persons interested in becoming a Trustee may obtain resume forms from the Area Delegate. A candidate's resume must be presented to the Area for approval before the August 15<sup>th</sup> filing deadline in the year in which they are applying.

Thought and Task Forces gave presentations during the week. The Thought and Task Force presentations are included in this year's conference summary. (Pages 42 -60) The topics covered by these groups may continue in future discussions. The Thought Force I will mention was titled "Thought Force to Support Areas in Dealing with Groups Whose Activities Fail to Consider Al-Anon or Alateen as a Whole". For example, groups who are not registered, high pressure groups, groups who talk about the book called Alcoholics Anonymous (AA "Big book"), outside literature groups, etc. Six strategies for dealing with such groups were given. Members were asked to which strategy they liked, disliked, and were there additional strategies. Personally I found the discussion to be interesting. You can find the complete discussion on pages 53-3 in the 2011 Conference Summary. I suspect the discussion will continue in the future.

At this year's Spring Assembly I talked about the "Do Not Refer" discussion which was held at the World Service Conference. I will not go into further detail about that discussions but I do want to refer all of you to this year World Service Conference Summary which includes the discussion from the floor. This discussion begins on page 35. This is the beginning of a conversation. Any up-dates can be found on the members' website ([www.al-anon.org/members](http://www.al-anon.org/members)), click on inside WSO, then go to Board of Trustees and select Policy Up-Date. As I mentioned in the spring, Districts and Al-Anon Information Service Council locations are encouraged to develop a policy for their location in regards to not referring members to certain meetings. An Area policy is needed also.

My conference assignment for 2011 is being a member of the Literature Committee. The motion and discussion about the new piece of literature being developed can be found on page 78 of this year's Conference Summary. Our Literature Coordinator, Ginny will have more information about the new piece of literature.

Things you all can download from the member's website include *Group Inventory –Use of Conference Approved Literature (CAL) – (S-62)*, *Joy of Service (S-57)*, and *Links of Service S-28*. I encourage you to download a copy of these service pamphlets and take them to your home group for discussion. To find them go to the members' website, click on Publications and go to "other items to download". Guidelines can also be found on the members' website also and can be found under Group Services.

Podcasts are available on the members' website. When on the home page, click on "for Members and Groups". Topics include

- How the group functions as a community
- Structure of the AI-Anon/Alateen fellowship
- The need for GR's and the GR duties
- How do I become a GR

A publication called *Area Highlights* can also be found on the members' website, click on Publications. A list of items available will pop up, click on *Area Highlights*. No Longer will groups have to wait for the District Representative to send them a copy. *Area Highlights* is compiled at our World Service Office and consists of articles and ideas on a variety of topics from around the US and Canada.

Taking a Group Inventory Guideline G- 8 has been revised and expanded into two parts, G-8a and G-8b. The Guideline G-8a was expanded to include additional question for all AI-Anon and Alateen groups as well as a special section for Alateen and Alateen Sponsors. Guideline G8b includes methods for taking an inventory and a section for reflections as well as a list of additional resources for groups. This Guideline is now posted on the members' website under Group Services.

This is a note I received from WSO. "In the spring of this year, some AI-Anon groups were invited to share a message with their members presenting them with an opportunity to participate in a scientific research project that would study aspects of family recovery from the effects of alcoholism. Following the invitation, some members had questions about AI-Anon's policy of cooperating with – but not affiliating with—researchers."

AI-Anon has cooperated with professionals for over 60 years now. As stated in Tradition 11 our basic public relations policy has always been based on the distinction between attraction and promotion. A further explanation can be found in the *2010-2013 AI-Anon Alateen Service Manual* on Page 107.

Have you checked out the members' website recently? There are active blogs with pod-casts added each month to the Traditions blog. Other blogs are "For Member's and Groups", "Thinking Abundantly in", and the Concepts.

Speaking of the Members' website, everyone can find letters from the Chairman of the Board of Trustees along with Policy Up-dates and financial information by clicking on Inside the World Service Office (WSO) then going to Board of Trustees. I encourage all of you to read these letters.

Some of you have received an e-mail from WSO with a newsletter to groups. District Representatives and a few others in the Area also received this note for their information. Notes from time to time will be sent to groups via e-mail. These notes will also be sent to DR's for their information. Plea letters will continue to be sent via USPS and will not be sent via e-mail, but notices about plea letters will be sent to DR's on e-communities.

My report this time has referred numerous times to the members' website and e-mail. I highly, strongly, seriously recommend each of you have an e-mail account or a very reliable e-mail buddy. The address needs to have your anonymity protected. Like [sallysue@onedayatime.com](mailto:sallysue@onedayatime.com) last names omitted but last initial is okay. More and more information is now being sent electronically and no longer through the USPS.

Can you picture yourself in Vancouver? Mark your calendar for July 5-7, 2013. A day of service is being planned for July 4<sup>th</sup>. Registration and housing will be sent to groups in the fall of 2012.

I have one more question for everyone. What skills building topics would you like to see us cover next year? Ideas and suggestions can be given to me this weekend or e-mail to me and I will pass the information onto our next Area Chairman.

Next year the World Service conference will be held in Stanford Conn. The theme will be, "Our Spiritual Journey – we get as we give." I send best wishes to all of you as you continue your spiritual journey.

I'd like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to service as your Delegate on Panel 49. I am truly grateful for the all the encouragement, help, and enthusiasm given to me by each of you. I am honored to have served as your Delegate.

Friday of the 2011 World Service Conference was an emotional day. That evening, my Panel presented our skit. Our skit included things that had been accomplished during our three conferences as well as poking fun at ourselves. We ended the skit with a song. (Sing it here.)

Thank you for letting me share.

As always, One Day At A Time Yours in service, Sandra F