

December Anniversary Meetings

- **Waterbury Sunday Night**

Sunday, December 6, 2015

(Snow date December 13)

5:30 p.m. Potluck; 6:30 p.m. Speakers and Raffle

44th Anniversary Meeting

Christ Episcopal Church

2030 East Main Street, Waterbury

- **Monday Night Alateen**

Monday, December 7, 2015

7:00 p.m. Potluck; 7:30 p.m. Speakers

Journey of Recovery Anniversary Meeting

Gaylord Hospital, Chauncey Conference Room

Gaylord Farms Road, Wallingford

- **Stratford Monday Night Holiday Party**

Monday, December 14, 2015

7:00 p.m. Potluck; 8:00 p.m. Speakers

Christ Episcopal Church

2000 Main Street, Stratford

Convention

- **CT AFG Convention "Miracles in Motion"**

April 1-3, 2016 (Friday-Sunday)

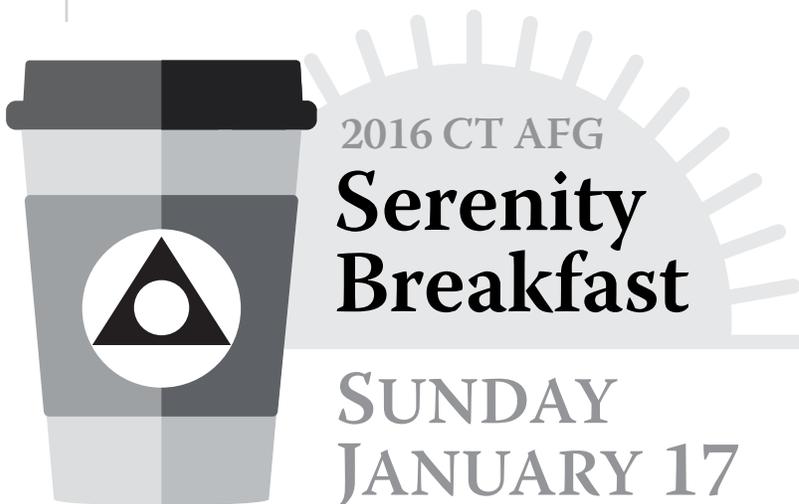
Crowne Plaza Hotel, 100 Berlin Road, Cromwell

With Al-Anon, Alateen and AA participation.

For more information and registration forms go to www.ctalanon.org or email Convention2016@ctalanon.org.

Reserve rooms at the Crowne Plaza Hotel by calling the Leah Richards, Convention Service Manager, at 1-860-807-2451 or the hotel direct at 1-860-635-2000. Be sure to mention the Al-Anon Convention for a special rate when you make your reservation.

★ See page 3 for more about the 2016 CT AFG Convention >>



Registration: 9:00 a.m. Breakfast: 9:30 a.m.

Al-Anon, Alateen & AA Speakers:

10:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m. (Snow date January 24)

Crowne Plaza Hotel: 100 Berlin Road, Cromwell, 860-635-2000
\$22 per person

Menu options are "Country Scrambled Eggs" served with applewood smoked bacon and home fries with sautéed onions and peppers or the vegetarian "Cinnamon French Toast" served with warm apple compote. Both options include a cup of fresh fruit, orange juice, muffins, scones, coffee, decaf coffee or tea. There will be a raffle including Convention Registrations.

Information: www.ctalanon.org

To register by **MAIL** fill out the registration form below and return it with your **non-refundable** check and breakfast choice to:

CT AFG Convention, P.O. Box 2122, Branford, CT 06405

Space is limited to the first 150 pre-registered people.

Registration deadline is January 12. **SORRY NO WALK-INS.**

PRINT CLEARLY - ONE FORM PER PERSON

First and Last Name

Name and City for Name Tag

10 digit Phone number

Email Address for confirmation

If no email, postal address

Check one: Al-Anon AA Guest Alateen

Special need: Spanish Interpretation ASL Interpretation

Hard of Hearing headset Other: _____

Please check one:

Both breakfasts served with a cup of fresh fruit, orange juice, basket of warm muffins and scones, coffee, decaffeinated coffee, tea

COUNTRY SCRAMBLED EGG: \$22

Served with applewood smoked bacon and home fries with sautéed onions and peppers

CINNAMON FRENCH TOAST (VEGETARIAN): \$22

Served with warm apple compote

Special needs (meal) _____

Check # _____ Total Enclosed \$ _____

Non-refundable checks payable to:

CT AFG Convention

Received by January 12, 2016.

No Walk-ins.

A Breakfast registration makes a great raffle prize or gift for a sponsor, sponsee or AFG friend!

Fall Assembly

The CT AFG Fall Assembly was held on Saturday, November 7, 2015 at the South Congregational Church in Hartford. There were morning workshops followed by the group assembly in the afternoon.

A Message from our Delegate

When the Area Officers and myself got together with Districts 1 and 13 to plan the Fall Assembly all we could say is — there is so much to cover in such a short time how will we fit it all in?

The morning of the event I walked through the Assembly hall and I prayed “Guide us through this day” to my Higher Power. Next I made the rounds and visited the LDC, chatted with past delegates, and talked with my service sponsor. I resolved to surrender my expectations and asked my Higher Power to take over. As always, He did just that. It was a great Assembly and efficiently run. Thank you to all of the CT AFG fellowship who attended. You made it a truly wonderful day where everything was accomplished with excellence.

— *Love and Peace, Ann B.*

The following is a sampling of emails amongst CT AFG members posted the Monday after the Assembly.

Dear AWSC Members-
Thanks to all of you and the GRs and Alt. GRs from your districts for participating in the morning workshop Saturday. Thanks for your thoughtful comments and questions throughout the budget process leading to the budget vote at the Fall Assembly. Your Board of Directors are beginning the process of changing the management at the LDC/ Office/Storage facility to a paid Manager and Assistant Manager assisted by volunteers effective July 1, 2016. We are happy to receive questions and comments at bod@ctalanon.org.
*Love in Service, Pat S., Chairperson
Board of Directors, CT AFG*

Good Morning District 4!
What a great turn out we had at the Fall Assembly — we had 15 folks representing District 4. I think we were the second largest group so pat yourselves on the back! The big news of the day is the LDC will continue on with employees! That is great news. I want to thank Jackie B. for keeping us well informed and to all of you GR’s who shared the information with your groups! I had visions of being there until 5 p.m. and was thrilled that we were out by 3:45 p.m., amazing! ...
— *Kim G., DR, District 4*

SUBJECT: THANK YOU ALL

Thank you all for making today another pleasant and productive assembly. For me it was yet another proof that service is fun. It’s a privilege to work with you.
*Yours in service,
Sue G., CT Area Chair*

Thank you Sue and the Officers for keeping the Assembly in order. I also thought it was an excellent Assembly.

— *Gail L., Convention Chairman 2016*

It is a hard group to chorale but you did it Sue. The morning BOD session helped tremendously to sort things out before the vote. Well done.

— *Ann T-V.*

You did a great job Sue!

Thanks — Mary Ann R.

It really helped that our District 9 had a Trustee and the Delegate at our District meeting to explain the upcoming voting items on the agenda before the Assembly. The assembly went well. Thank you all for service. My recovery depends on it.

LIS, peace — Janet W., Alt. DR and soon to be DR for District 9

Hello! I have been attending Assemblies for about 30 years ... and this was one of the best I have experienced!!! Thanks to all ... especially Sue “G-1” for keeping a close eye on the time...

LIS — Terry C.

A big thank you to Sue G. and the other Area Officers! It was a very smooth day. A great first Assembly for my new GR’s.

LIS — Amy A.

My gift to me is serenity

Serving others and caring for my loved ones is key to having a fulfilled life. But consistently putting myself last can be a form of self abuse. Toss in a family member with a drinking problem and my life is out of balance. Why am I so quick to jump for everybody else's needs? Is it because my life is so tangled up I feel better focusing on other people's problems than honestly facing my own? This holiday season let's gift ourselves serenity. Here are a few self-love tips I'm trying to follow on my path to recovery:

Make me time – I try to take at least 15 minutes to do something totally self indulgent—turning the cell phone to mute (OMG!)—I'll sneak out for fresh air and a walk after lunch; read something just for fun; or play with the dog.

Ten minute goals – I find myself procrastinating because things feel too overwhelming to tackle. My desk is a big mess or there are dishes in the sink, but just the thought of it is exhausting. I look at the clock and decide I will do whatever I can accomplish in ten minutes. Little by little it all gets done.

Reach out and touch someone – Dig out the Al-Anon phone list and give someone a call and ask how they are doing. One of the best ways to make friends is by being a friend.

Learn to Let Go – I cling to things (and certain people) for wrong reasons. Get rid of something you don't use any more — throw it in the trash or if it is reusable donate it or sell it online. The act of physically letting go of material things is freeing and gets me into a rhythm of letting go the more significant things that I need to release — like worrying about my qualifier.

Meditate, pray and accept – When I read and meditate on Al-Anon literature I get my daily dose of experience, strength and hope. I take my cares to my Higher Power and watch and listen for a response. All my prayers are answered just not always in my timing or in the way I told God to do things. (Why won't God obey me?) I've learned to trust His plan is better than mine.

Squeeze, lift and smile – Squeeze in my abs, lift up my chest, pick up my chin and smile. Hey I instantly look like I lost weight!

Look forward to happy times ahead – I must not forget to work on my Gratitude List. Especially when I'm feeling low, I jot down one or more positive things that happened today or something positive that I am looking forward to. It helps to go back in my journal and see how far I've come.

It is never too late to be happy, no matter what you are going through.

— Margaret G., District 4, Lifeline Coordinator

What is the Convention?

The CT AFG Convention "Miracles in Motion" is a three-day event held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, 100 Berlin Rd., Cromwell, CT where one can soak up a lot of Al-Anon love, experience, strength, hope and wisdom from Friday afternoon thru Sunday morning. One can: hear many great speakers; go to the dance; attend meetings; stay over and swim in the pool; visit with friends old and new; enjoy an optional banquet meal Saturday night; see the fun Al-Anon related entertainment skit Friday night; hear a spiritual speaker Sunday morning; enjoy the hospitality room snacks; enjoy activities such as yoga; purchase Al-Anon literature; buy tickets for the raffle; purchase Al-Anon CDs; get souvenirs; make friends; visit the labyrinth for some quiet meditation; sleep, talk or listen. Or not! It is a weekend getaway with as much or as little as one wants to put into it.



One registration fee (\$25 Adults, \$5 Teens, food is extra) covers one, two or all three days. Some people get hotel rooms and stay overnight. Others opt to commute daily or only attend one day.

All the Friday night, Saturday night and Sunday morning keynote speakers will have Spanish and ASL (American Sign Language) interpretation and Hard of Hearing Headsets available.

I can not describe how energized and loved I feel after being with Al-Anon members for the weekend! The only way to really understand what a Convention is about is to attend one. Invite your friends! It's a great way to introduce someone to Al-Anon.

The online link is NOT AVAILABLE at this time. For further information our Pre-registrations forms including Spanish forms are on our Al-Anon/Alateen website www.ctalanon.org. For more information email Convention2016@ctalanon.org.

Mom

— By Sandy S.

I wish our whole relationship was different.

I wish you had the ability to be a mom.

I wish things were different in the end.

I wish you didn't leave your house a mess.

I wish you left a will so I didn't have to go through this.

I wish we had a better relationship. It was better than where we were.

I wish I knew then what I know now.

I wish I could have told you what I was feeling.

I wish you weren't sick.

I wish you could have been the mom that I needed.

I wish that you didn't hurt me.

I wish I knew how you really felt about me.

I wish I knew if you really loved me.

I wish you had gotten sober.

I wish you didn't die of cancer.

I wish that we had more time to try and make everything better.

I wish I didn't have expectations.

I wish I could have loved you without all the hurt.

I wish you loved and cared for me.

I wish I didn't have to take care of you when I was a kid.

I wish the last time I saw you, you could have returned my feelings.

I wish the last time that I saw you, that you could have told me why you were crying the night before.

I wish you could have told me what you were feeling.

I wish I knew if you were scared.

I wish I knew what you wanted me to do to help you.

I wish I could have helped you.

I wish that you hugged me back.

Buggin' out before Al-Anon

I am so grateful that I found this program. I had totally lost myself.

When I first came in I attended the newcomers meetings. After a while, I found that I was changing — I was getting myself back.

I was learning that the feelings I was experiencing weren't normal. Instead of anger I had rage. I felt as if I could rip someone or something apart. I did exactly that to the alcoholic in my life and to myself.

While I was sitting in a meeting a light went on in my head. I realized I wasn't feeling so much rage anymore. The fears that I was battling were easing too.

Before Al-Anon if I was outside weeding my flowers and a bee came buzzing around me I would freak out and run back into the house. I would not be able to go back out because the fear was so intense.

After going to Al-Anon for a while I noticed that I could tolerate the bees better.

I had an overwhelming fear of spiders. Don't get me wrong — I am still not great with them — but I have come a long way.

If I saw a spider I would have to get someone to kill it for me before I could go back into that room.

One night after being in Program for probably six months to a year, I got up to go

to the bathroom. I turned on the light and lo and behold there was a spider on the floor!

Instead of screaming for someone to kill it, I set the garbage can over it and said, "If you are still alive in the morning I will leave you alone — as long as you disappear."

When I returned the next day I lifted off the garbage can and there it was — stretching, waking up. If I didn't dislike him so much it would have been cute. I walked away after proclaiming that as long as he was gone afterward, I would leave him alone.

I have learned a lot in this Program. Try at least six meetings and keep coming!

— *Love in the program, Lori S.*

Al-Anon is the place to be

I'd like to offer some insight here to newer members about what we do in Al-Anon.

First, we do not give advice! Second, we do not tell others what to do. Third, we do not advocate for anyone but ourselves. And we do this by sharing our experience, strength, and hope.

If your life has been affected by someone else's situation with alcohol, THIS IS THE PLACE to be. It doesn't matter if that person is alive or dead, male or female, old or young, son, daughter, uncle, cousin, parent, child, niece, or nephew. The connection doesn't even have to be by blood — it can be through friendship, relationships, marriage, or any other manner.

Try six meetings, if you don't feel that you

have gained some insight, try six more.

Face-to-face meetings help tremendously to shake me out of the isolation that comes/ came with the disease. Here I find like-minded people who share the same feelings I have. Although our stories and circumstances can be different, the effects of the disease are the same.

It took me 10 years after a divorce to an alcoholic to begin to see my role in the situation. I learned why I was still making the same old wrong choices for myself. I was exhausted from trying to control everything around me so I could feel OK. (It didn't work!)

I started to show up at a few meetings here and there. I don't know why, but even without talking in those early days, just being at a

meeting made me feel better. I always heard something new — a word, a phrase, a slogan, a step, or a person sharing their story. I never left a meeting feeling worse than when I came. Most often I felt much better. I kept coming back because of this.

Now 15 years later, I am in the best place ever. Although I have no active individuals in my life I still continue to go to meetings, do service, and talk to my sponsor. I keep coming back because I don't want to go back.

Give it a try (and six more)!

— *Bruce G., DR, District 6*

As part of their opening format, some meetings read the following statement on cross talk.

No Cross Talk Please!

Cross Talk is: talking out of turn; advice giving; questioning the person who is sharing; holding private conversations; having an individual comment on everyone's sharing; and being discourteous and intimidating. If you want to speak on what you hear, speak of your own recovery only, addressing a topic with "I" instead of "You."

All Al-Anon discussions should be constructive, helpful, loving, and understanding. In striving towards these ideals, we avoid topics that can lead to dissension and distract us from our goals, including discussions of religion, other philosophies, programs, non-conference approved literature, therapies, or gossip.

Please remember that we have no cross talk in our meeting, which means we do not interrupt, criticize, or give advice, nor do we comment directly on another member's share, ever keeping the focus on ourselves.

Lifeline needs Al-Anon and Alateen submissions!

(Under 800 words please)

Let us know how the Al-Anon program works for you • Send a story that would attract members into service • What's new with your group? Please submit Anniversary Meeting notices two months in advance.

Email lifeline@ctalanon.org.

WANTED: Your heart-felt sharing on Step 1 for the January issue.

Thanks to everyone who has sent in Alateen sharings. They will be published in our special upcoming Alateen double issue. We are half way to filling eight pages. Please Alateens and Sponsors send in your sharings even if they are very brief!

Don't forget to have your event publicized on the website!

Email webmaster@ctalanon.org.