

Lifeline

September
2016

CONNECTICUT AREA 7 NEWSLETTER FOR AL-ANON & ALATEEN

SEPTEMBER

- **Wednesday Torrington AFG**
4th Anniversary meeting
Wednesday, September 7, 2016
2:30 pm Food and Fellowship
3 pm Speakers
Sullivan Senior Center, Crafts Room
88 E. Alberts St., Torrington
- **Wednesday Parents Southington**
3rd Anniversary meeting
Wednesday, September 14, 2016
6:30 pm Food and Fellowship
7:30 pm Speakers & Raffle
Hospital of Central CT, Bradley campus
1st floor, Conference Room A
81 Meriden Ave., Southington
- **Thursday AM Wallingford**
27th Anniversary meeting
Thursday, September 15, 2016
10 am Meeting
Noon Potluck lunch
First Baptist Church
148 Church St., Wallingford
- **North Madison Saturday Morning AFG**
Anniversary meeting
Saturday, September 17, 2016
8 am Speakers, Food and Fellowship
North Madison Congregational Church
1271 Durham Rd. (Rte. 79), North Madison
- **Barely Awake AFG**
25th Anniversary meeting
Saturday, September 24, 2016
9 am Potluck Breakfast and Fellowship
9:30 am Speakers
Federated Church of Colchester
60 Main St., Colchester
- **Wolcott's Saturday Morning**
Anniversary meeting
Saturday, September 24, 2016
9 am Coffee and...
9:30 am Speakers, raffle, refreshments
All Saints Episcopal Church
282 Bound Line Rd., Wolcott
- **Monday Night Collinsville AFG**
31st Anniversary meeting
Monday, September 26, 2016
6:30 pm Potluck Dinner and Fellowship
7:30 pm Speakers
Collinsville Congregational Church
7 South St., Collinsville

- **Alateen Hole in the Wall**
Anniversary meeting
Monday, September 26, 2016
6 pm Potluck Dinner and Fellowship
6:30 pm Speakers
Backus Hospital, Main Lobby Conf. Rm.
326 Washington St., Norwich
- **Alateen Bristol Tuesday PM**
2nd Anniversary meeting
Tuesday, September 27, 2016
7 pm Potluck and Fellowship
(Peanut-free zone please)
7:30 pm Speakers & Raffle
Bristol Baptist Church
43 School St., Bristol
- **New Britain Wednesday PM**
33rd Anniversary meeting
Wednesday, September 28, 2016
6 pm Potluck and Fellowship
7 pm Speakers & Raffle
St. Mark's Church
147 West Main St., New Britain

- **Newington Tuesday PM Step**
31st Anniversary meeting
Tuesday, October 25, 2016
7 pm Potluck Dinner and Fellowship
7:30 pm Speakers
United Methodist Church
401 New Britain Ave., Newington

NEW AFG MEETINGS

- **Step Meeting Friday Morning Bethlehem**
Fridays mornings at 10:30 am
Church of the Nativity
48 East St., Bethlehem
- **Paths to Recovery for Women**
Fridays mornings at 8:15 am
First Congregational Church of Madison
26 Meeting House Lane, Madison

SPECIAL EVENTS

- **LDC OPEN HOUSE**
Thursday, September 15, 2016
1-3 pm. Refreshments. See the new offices and meet Veronica G., the new Literature Distribution Center Asst. Manager.
South Church, 277 Main St., Hartford
- **CT AFG Area Meeting**
Friday, October 7, 2016
7:30 pm Unitarian Universalist Church,
328 Paddock Ave., Meriden
- **Al-Anon/Alateen SPONSORSHIP SEMINAR**
Why Sponsorship?
Saturday, October 15, 2016
9 am to 2 pm
South Church (LDC)
277 Main St., Hartford
Preregister: \$8; Walk In: \$10; Alateen: \$5
Please take the Anonymous Sponsorship Survey to provide valuable information:
<http://goo.gl/forms/8iyZMpqiUCF1CGe22>
- **CT AFG Fall Assembly**
Saturday, November 5, 2016
South Church, 277 Main St., Hartford
- **58th Annual Area 11 AA Convention**
The Journey Starts Here
September 9-11, 2016
Four Points Sheraton
275 Research Parkway, Meriden
A weekend of sober fun with AFG and Alateen participation. Meetings, dance, workshops, yoga and more.

OCTOBER

- **Monday Morning Serenity**
40th Anniversary meeting
Monday, October 10, 2016
9 am Potluck Breakfast and Fellowship
10 am Speakers & Raffle
Trinity Episcopal Church
300 Main St., Wethersfield
- **Wednesday Centerbrook Step Meeting**
5th Anniversary meeting
Wednesday, October 12, 2016
6:30 pm Food and Fellowship
7 pm Speakers & Raffle
Trinity Lutheran Church
109 Main St., Centerbrook
- **Newington Thursday Night Men's Meeting**
Anniversary meeting
Thursday, October 13, 2016
6:30 pm Food, Fellowship, Speakers
Grace Episcopal Church
124 Maple Hill Ave., Newington
- **The Loving Hugging Friends of Al-Anon**
38th Anniversary meeting
Wednesday, October 19, 2016
6 pm Potluck Dinner and Fellowship
7 pm Speakers, Raffle
Westchester Congregational Church
95 Cemetery Rd. Colchester

CT Al-Anon needs YOU!

Multiple AFG positions need to be filled by January 2017

The 2014-2016 term for CT Area World Service Committee Panel 10 is coming to a close this December. The following Coordinator positions will need to be filled: Al-Anon/AA Liaison; Alateen; AAPP; Answering Service; Archives; Group Records; Lifeline Editor; Literature; Schedules; and Webmaster. The Districts and Groups electing new representatives are 4, 5, 6, 12 and 13.

Is your rotation coming to a close? Submit a reflection on your service position and what it meant to your recovery to *Lifeline* by emailing lifeline@ctalanon.org. Below is a spotlight on the Area Literature/Forum Coordinator's position which needs to be filled.

Area service showed Coordinator how to walk through fear

My three-year term as Area Literature/Forum Coordinator is coming to an end in December of 2016. I wanted to share my reflections on how I got here and what it has meant for my recovery.

I had been volunteering at the LDC (Literature Distribution Center) in Hartford. I took to heart the book *When I got Busy, I Got Better*. I was trying to stay busy within the Al-Anon fellowship during a time of chaos in my home life. I loved sorting, packing and shipping the orders. Our literature has always been a source of knowledge, strength, and peace for me. I was pleased with the knowledge that our literature is so close by, stored in a location right here in Connecticut that all Al-Anon members have access to.

In 2014, as a self described "newcomer," I was aware that the Literature/Forum Coordinator position needed to be filled, yet my self critic was whispering in my ear, "You haven't been in the program long enough. You don't know enough. You are NOT Enough."

Fortunately I had been attending meetings long enough to learn that I was not alone in having these feelings. I was reminded that feelings aren't facts. One of the greatest gifts Al-Anon continues to give me is the experience of feeling fear and walking through the fear and doing it anyway. Through this action, I grow.

We are told that our Higher Power often works through others. One day while volunteering at the LDC, the assistant manager "tapped me" and encouraged me to consider the position. She believed that I would be good at it. I smiled to myself and my HP, as I hadn't shared with anyone that I was even considering it!

A necessary step in recovery is a spirit of willingness. I am so grateful I found the courage to attend my first Area meeting and present my service resume. The support of my Higher Power, my sponsor, and other Al-Anon members all combined to form a new courage in me. You all believed in me more than I believed in myself. Your faith in me led me to say "Yes" to a higher level of service. The Coordinator position has helped me with issues of isolation, fear, trust, faith, and letting go of perfectionism.

I have attended multiple Al-Anon and AA events, and have

interacted with hundreds of people in recovery. Providing literature to friends and families of Alcoholics has been a rewarding and humbling experience.

Rotation of service is very important. A wise member in recovery once shared that if I don't give others the opportunity to help/serve, then I was denying them the opportunity to grow. The time is approaching to pass the baton of this amazing opportunity for growth on to another Al-Anon member. Someone believed in me. Now I believe in you!

— Aimee L., Area Literature/Forum Coordinator, 2014-2016

P.S. I'd love to tell you more about this service commitment. Please follow your links of service because (just for today) my coordinator email link is not working! A description of the Guidelines for The Literature/Forum Coordinator position is on page 17 in "Gratitude in Working Clothes" which can be found on the members' website.

Commit to your recovery and step up to a District meeting

My growth in Al-Anon started with a simple question, "We don't have a GR, would you be willing to go to a District meeting and see what it is all about?" I said, "Yes." That single word has made a difference in my recovery.

Through service, one of the things that is shared is information. Information is relevant to forming new ideas, having opportunities for new experiences and witnessing others deal with Alcoholism with strength and dignity.

Service provides a unique opportunity to watch, listen and learn. It is the good fortune to see other people in recovery. It is a place to listen to ideas that are not yours and to learn about this fellowship called Al-Anon.

Later I graduated into the role of District Representative. As DR I was the conduit for the flow of information into and out of my District. I was completely out of my comfort zone. I was around large groups and expected to communicate effectively with people from diverse backgrounds. The commitment allowed me to grow in confidence and to learn from others as they shared information and experiences from their Districts.

From my years in service my voice has grown as well as my ears. I am not as quick to speak, having learned how to listen. I am also not as complacent to allow others to make decisions without voicing my concerns where warranted. Had I not stepped up I would have a very different perspective on what it takes to keep Al-Anon alive. Alive — not just in my heart — but in my home group, my district and my state.

Service is not just a commitment of time to your Group/State/Fellowship. It is a commitment to your recovery. Jump in, the water is fine!

— Anonymous, CT.

Minding my own business

I recently learned a powerful lesson about the beauty of minding my own business at work. It brought about remarkably better results from my coworkers and was no doubt orchestrated by my Higher Power.

I had a “rescue others” impulse at work for a very long time. This year I decided to detach instead of rushing in. I stopped treating others like victims who needed saving. I let them take care of their matters on their own. Only when specifically asked for my opinion did I confidentially offer it.

I must confess to a few weeks of discomfort. Not speaking up and holding my views to myself was hard. Breaking the old habit of diving in to rescue others and transforming into the new me who focused on myself was challenging. It brought a new awareness to me. If I LET OTHERS DO THEIR JOB, they will eventually do it, their way, in their time. My job is to focus on myself and my recovery.

Nothing like trying a new behavior (in this case, refraining from intervening) to gain a surprisingly new and healthy perspective on life! I love AI Anon!

— June C., Connecticut AFG

PUBLIC OUTREACH (PO) HAPPENINGS

★ **Area Public Outreach Meeting:** Thursday, September 8, 2016, at 7 pm, at the Best Western Hotel, Berlin Turnpike, Berlin. All District PO Coordinators meet here to share on the PO activities in their districts. Meetings are open to all AI-Anon members interested in service work in Public Outreach.

★ **CT WOMEN’S EXPO:** Saturday 9/10 & Sunday 9/11, 2016, 10 am-5 pm both days, Connecticut Convention Center, Hartford. Please support your PO committee by volunteering. We have members signed up for this event, but there is always room for help.

★ **TOTAL LIFE EXPO:** Saturday, September 17, 2016, 10 am-3 pm, Mohegan Sun Convention Center, 1 Mohegan Sun Blvd, Montville. Members from District 11 will be participating.

The Southern CT Women’s Expo scheduled for September in Bridgeport was canceled. AFG money has been refunded and reallocated to purchase seven street posters that will appear on US1 and other CT routes. Please let our PO Coordinator Mary Ann T. know if you see one.

To sign up contact your District’s Public Outreach Coordinator or **Mary Ann T., CT Area Public Outreach Coordinator** at ctpublicoutreach@ctalanon.org

Reports from our leaders

From the **CT AFG Delegate**

Hi all! I hope everyone has been able to keep cool this summer. I just wanted to give some updates as to what is happening at WSO and CT since the Assembly. I want you to be an informed Area.

WSO NEWS

Marsha W. has been appointed as the new Director of Programs overseeing all the Associate Directors. Kerri K. has been appointed to replace Marsha as Associate Director Member Services-International and groups. There are still other job openings at WSO and they can be accessed at **AI-Anon.org**. They include Associate Director Member Services-Alateen and Digital Strategy Manager.

I tried to keep the budget information for WSO simple but there are still questions and rumors out there about the monies of WSO. The Conference Summary is now online also, so please, if you need detailed information, go to the website and you can read all of the incidentals especially the Audit report. All of numbers are on the Finance page. The site is an invaluable tool for anyone who wants information so please use it.

The Board of Trustees at WSO met in July. The Chairperson of the Board report can be accessed through the WSO website.

AREA NEWS

The Assembly voted in June for a “Meet The Board” event for 10/21/2017. No one has come forward to take on the task to find

a venue for this event. Please pray on this. Just think — if we are chosen you can ask all those questions of the Board that you have wanted to ask! There is a “Meet the Board” event 10/22/2016 in Fayetteville, Arkansas. If no one takes on the task by 8/26/2016 I will have to cancel our involvement.

The LDC has moved from one end of the building to the other end. The office is still at 277 Main St. Hartford but it has its own entrance at 1 Buckingham St. around the corner. Visit the new office at the Open House on Thursday, September 15, from 1-3pm.

— Love and Peace, Ann B, Panel 54, Connecticut

From the **Chairperson, CT AFG BOD**

I am writing to thank everyone who helped in our packing and moving of the LDC office. We are settled in and the phones are working. We have our own entrance now at 1 Buckingham Street. As you face the church from the parking lot, go to the sidewalk on the left side of the building and follow it to our new entrance. I am pleased to announce that we have a new Asst. LDC Office Manager, Veronica G., who began working on July 12. Stop in and say hello to Marie, LDC Office Manager, and Veronica and see our new office. We are still looking for someone to fill the volunteer 3-year service position of LDC Treasurer. Be sure to mention this to anyone who might be interested in this valuable service position.

— LIS, Pat S., Chairperson, CT AFG BOD (Board of Directors)

TRADITION 6: Our Family Groups ought never endorse, finance or lend our name to any outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary spiritual aim. Although a separate entity, we should always co-operate with Alcoholics Anonymous.

A COOPERATIVE JOURNEY

Editor's Note: Craig W., AA Delegate, spoke to the CT AFG Spring Assembly on June 11, 2016. With permission from the author his powerful speech is reprinted here.

Dear CT AFG Area Committee (Area 7),

For a long time in my journey in AA service, I have had the opportunity to cooperate with Al-Anon. I am quite familiar with Al-Anon's Tradition 6 and its guidance to cooperate with AA. Many service positions and committees later, here I am as Area 11 AA Delegate. I am extremely grateful for the members of AA that I serve and at the same time I would be short changing my experience if I did not take a few minutes to communicate my appreciation for Al-Anon's involvement in my personal journey and our Area's cooperative journey.

I had the privilege to sit on a panel at the 2016 CT AFG Convention called "Healing Relationships" with my mother who is a member of Al-Anon. That was one of the greatest things I have ever done in cooperation with Al-Anon and have ever done period.

Alcoholism is such a cunning, baffling and powerful illness that affects all involved. The denial is so thick, the truth so elusive, the pain unbearable. AA and Al-Anon and its cooperation together allow for us folks to have a life where serenity is possible. It allows relief from the obsession to drink, or the obsession to fix the drinker. My gratitude for these programs in my family is massive. I do not need to explain to you how important it is to be able to have an honest life with honest conversations and to be free from delusion and managing this horrific illness.

This is why I want to reinforce our continued relationship. Together, without affiliation, we heal the suffering, we bring hope to the hopeless, we bring reasonable happiness to the wounded and we are useful where we were unable to be useful before.

A big shout out to your Alateens who are remarkable speakers. The maturity, commitment and perseverance are profound. It parallels my experience in AA, coming in young and also as a child surrounded by a family plagued with alcoholism. I sit here in this emotional state thinking about: how we as Areas cooperate; how many passionate and helpful people both of our fellowships produce; the joy of serving the fellowship; and the opportunity to be on a panel with my mother — all thanks to these programs.

And still Alcoholism and all of its ramifications runs rabid right outside our doors. We stay open for the member who may not get some of these gifts as their family will never heal but they themselves may. We stay connected and helpful to each other so that we can always provide hope to all those who suffer.

Despite all the wonderful work AA and Al-Anon have done there is still more to do. My stepsons (whose biological father drinks too much) think it is normal to see the things they see, hear the things they hear, feel the things they feel and most important to NOT TALK about any of it. At 7 and 11 years old they think it's better to fix the one who drinks too much, to pretend everything is OK, to make up stories about how good a time they had even though they were victims of another degrading day.

We cooperate at home and we cooperate in our Area service structures. We live these programs so that many we have not met yet will have the opportunity we have.

Area 7, thank you for your service. Thank you for your participation and cooperating with us here in Area 11. Thank you for helping save my family's life as well as keeping the doors open for my family who may want help. I will, and I believe Area 11 will, always do what we can to help keep our cooperation alive and well.

— *In Love and Service, Craig W., AA Area 11 Panel 65 Delegate*

TRADITION 7: Every group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

I must be self-supporting

Tradition 7 says that I need to be fully self-supporting in all areas of my life. This means that I need to take care of my own well-being and not rely on others. This also means that I need to allow the people in my life to take care of their well being and to not rely on me.

When I first came to Al-Anon I was looking to others for my emotional well being. I thought my family and friends would make me happy instead of looking to myself for that happiness. I also did not believe that my loved ones were capable of taking care of themselves. I was not self-supporting.

In Al-Anon I have learned that I do not need the approval of others for my happiness and that I must allow others the dignity to make their own way in life. This is not always easy but with the tools of **Trust, Detachment, and Letting Go and Letting God** my loved ones and I can be self-supporting.

— *Janet P., District 11*

Lifeline publication deadlines for 2016

Lifeline is printed in time for distribution at the Area meetings. Let us know how the Al-Anon program works for you! Send a story that would attract members into service. Please submit Anniversary Meeting notices far in advance. Email lifeline@ctalanon.org.

October issue Sept. 26
November issue Oct. 24
December issue Nov. 18
Don't forget to have your event publicized on the website!

Email: webmaster@ctalanon.org