

Lifeline

CONNECTICUT AREA 7 NEWSLETTER FOR AL-ANON & ALATEEN

June
2016

Public Outreach

JUNE ANNIVERSARIES

- **Clinton Friday Morning Al-Anon**
22nd Anniversary meeting
Friday, June 17, 2016
9:30 am Fellowship and Breakfast
10 am Speakers, raffle.
The First Church of Christ
55 Church Rd., Clinton
- **Serenity at Sunset**
4th Anniversary meeting
Thursday, June 30, 2016
6:30 pm Food and Fellowship
7 pm Speakers
Lourdes of Litchfield
83 Montfort Rd., Litchfield

SPECIAL EVENTS

- **Area 11 Rompiendo Fronteras** (Breaking Frontiers)
AA Bilingual Sharing Day
Sunday, July 24, 2016
9 am to 3 pm. Workshops, translators, lunch included, AFG and Alateen participation
AOH Club, 71 Melville Ave., South Meriden
- **58th Annual Area 11 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.
- **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

CT AREA WORLD SERVICE COMMITTEE

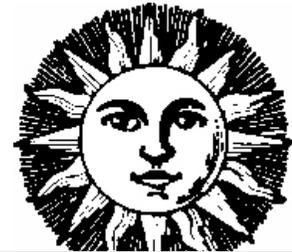
- **CT AFG Budget Meeting**
Friday, August 5, 2016
7:30 pm, Unitarian Universalist Church,
328 Paddock Ave., Meriden.
Area Officers, Area Coordinators and the Board of Directors Chair are required to attend. All Al-Anon members are welcome and encouraged to come. Everyone in attendance has a voice and a vote at the Budget Meeting.
- **CT AFG Area Meeting**
Friday, August 26, 2016
7:30 pm, Unitarian Universalist Church,
328 Paddock Ave., Meriden.

CLOSED

- **Thursday Noon AFG Downtown Hartford**
CLOSED : (
With great sadness the Thursday 12:15 pm meeting at Center Church in the parlor had their last meeting on May 5, 2016. A decline in attendance rendered it unable to fulfill the Tradition 7 obligation.

SOS! PLEASE COME & SUPPORT THESE MEETINGS...

- **Bakerville AFG**
Fridays, 10 am to 11:30 am
St. John's Episcopal Church
42 Church St., New Hartford
- **AFG Early Morning Step Meeting**
Thursdays, 7:30 am
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
661 Old Post Rd., Fairfield
Guest speaker every third Thursday of the month.
- **Stratford Monday Night AFG Meeting**
Mondays, 8 pm to 9:30 pm
Christ Episcopal Church
2000 Main St., Stratford
This 50+ year old meeting is the only group in District 4 that has a Newcomer's Meeting at the same time. Please consider helping.



PUBLIC OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES

The Al-Anon Public Outreach table needs volunteers on the following dates for these AA events with AFG participation.

Sunday, July 24, 2016

Rompiendo Fronteras
AOH Club, South Meriden

Saturday, Sept. 10, 2016

58th Annual Area 11 AA Convention
Four Points Sheraton, Meriden

Saturday, Nov. 26, 2016

CSCYPAA
Radisson Hotel, Cromwell

Volunteers are needed to staff the Al-Anon table at the upcoming Women's Health Expos for 3-hour time slots (11 am to 2 pm or 2 pm to 5 pm).

Saturday & Sunday, Sept. 10-11, 2016

CT Women's Health Expo, Hartford
CT Convention Center, Hartford

Saturday & Sunday, Sept. 24-25, 2016

CT Women's Health Expo, Bridgeport
Webster Bank Arena, Bridgeport

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

Editor's Note: I asked for an avalanche of submissions for June and my prayers were answered! Thanks everybody! If your submission was not included here I'll do my best to get it into the Sept. edition. Send your sharings to lifeline@ctalanon.org by August 8. — LIS, Margaret G., Lifeline Coordinator

Focus on **Public Outreach**

Members reach out to CT

Greetings Trusted Servants!

Public Outreach is alive and well in CT! 10 out of 13 districts now have very active Public Outreach Coordinators. They are currently working on projects that include: donating Al-Anon books to public libraries; donating Alateen books to high school libraries; displaying literature in libraries, food banks, shelters, rehabs and family life centers. They are reaching out to high schools, health teachers and social workers, and speaking to students during health classes and assemblies. They are participating in Health Fairs and cooperating with agencies such as Community Mental Health Affiliates, Substance Abuse Action Council, and the CT Mental Health Center.

On the Area level we participated in a Health Fair in Stamford in April. Three more Health Fairs are coming in September — CT Women's Expos in Hartford and Bridgeport and the Total Life Expo at Mohegan Sun.

Our billboard project is fully underway. The first sighting was in Waterbury near the mixmaster on I-84 West. That's down now. We are waiting to see where the next one will pop up. Drive safely, but keep your eyes open!

Our Area Business Card project is ongoing. Currently police departments in all cities and towns are being targeted and we are getting great feedback from the police officers.

A surprisingly large percentage of the public and of health professionals do not know what Al-Anon is. We need to reach out and share our message of hope. As Lois W. said, "If... Al-Anon groups do not let the public know of our presence, perhaps announcing the time and place of meetings in local newspapers or by some other means, we block ourselves off from those in need."*

Let's all do our part, and "Let it begin with me!"

— *Public Outreach Coordinator's Report, given by Mary Ann T. at the CT AFG Spring Assembly, June 11, 2016*

* From page 114 of *Lois Remembers*. Reprinted by permission of Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc.

★ PUBLIC OUTREACH AND THE 12TH STEP

What does Public Outreach and the 12th Step have in common? They both carry hope to those who suffer from the effects of alcoholism. Any willing member can do Public Outreach. Many projects can be done in your own town. For example you can distribute literature to your local library or senior citizens center. Some service can be even be accomplished without leaving your house — like compiling your town's school addresses and contact names.

Get together with your Al-Anon friends and work on a Public Outreach project together. Remember in Al-Anon we never do anything alone. I have hosted many potluck Public Outreach meetings in my home. It's a great way to spend an evening with Al-Anon

friends. We visit, eat and have our meeting. Before you know it, the time has passed and our task is completed.

I was introduced to Al-Anon many years ago by a member who was working the 12th Step. I will be forever grateful to that person who shared the Al-Anon message with me. Now it's time for me to carry the message to others.

District 3 has an active Public Outreach committee. We keep our meetings fun and interesting. Won't you come and find out what Public Outreach is all about? There is always room for you to join us!

— *Marie R., Monday morning meeting, Holy Infant Church, Orange*

★ "THE BEST OF PUBLIC OUTREACH"

Al-Anon has a hidden gem and great service tool for members doing Public Outreach service called *The Best Of Public Outreach*. It is a how-to manual with everything you wanted to know about Public Outreach. Go to the Al-Anon website at www.al-anon.org. Click on the Member's site, then on Public Outreach. A password is required. Enter your home groups' name (ie. Monday morning serenity group) followed by "afg." Click on "*The Best Of Public Outreach*." The book is about 80 pages long and can be printed or downloaded to a PC or tablet.

— *LIS, Mary Ann T.*

★ ENDLESS WAYS TO SPREAD THE MESSAGE

The love, support and sharings of those in the Al-Anon program have shown me how to create the life I enjoy today. I have healed considerably since those early days and I could not have done it alone. I want to make sure that the program will continue. Others need to know that they too can attain a peaceful and fulfilling life regardless if the alcoholic is still drinking or not. By participating in Public Outreach I have found endless ways to help spread the Al-Anon message in front of the community and behind the scenes. Public Outreach needs your support, ideas and participation. Together we are making a difference. I hope to meet you at the PO workshop on June 11th at the Spring Assembly.

— *LIS, Kathe L.B., District 3*

★ IT'S HIGHER POWERED!

My life's passion is to help people. When someone new enters the room I look forward to seeing them grow using the Al-Anon tools.

When a beginner says "My therapist told me I should try Al-Anon," or "I know someone and they said Al-Anon helped them," — that is what I call helping. A therapist once suggested that I should try Al-Anon. I did and it saved my life!

Without Public Outreach the word cannot reach the ears of the individuals that need help. When I reach out to someone and they get help through Al-Anon it makes my soul sing. That's Higher Powered! With Public Outreach you do what you can when you can. There is no limit and every little bit helps. *Let it begin with me!*

— *Cindy A., Public Outreach Coordinator, District 11*

“Carrying the message is essential to attracting new members. ... There is no replacement for individual Al-Anon members carrying the spiritual message of recovery within their communities in ways the media cannot.”

From page 110 of the 2014-2017 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual, copyright 1992, revised 2013, by Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. Reprinted by permission of Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc.

★ I RAISED MY HAND AND OFFERED TO HELP

I lost my husband to the disease of alcoholism in 2014, at the young age of 45. Prior to losing him I never went to a meeting.

In May 2015 I was chatting about movies with my friend Fred and the actor Nicholas Cage came up. I told him that my husband was just like the lead character Nicolas Cage played in *Leaving Las Vegas*. For those of you not familiar with the movie, he goes to Las Vegas for his last binge and dies from alcoholism in his hotel room.

I told Fred that I blamed myself for everything. I could not understand why my husband would not stop drinking even though he was told time and time again by his doctors that he was killing himself. I was struggling with carrying on with my life and was cutting myself off from all the people that cared about me.

Fred asked me to do him a personal favor — attend an Al-Anon meeting. Fred was in recovery and said if I went to just one meeting it would help him continue his personal recovery and making amends.

I went to my first meeting on June 6. I was astounded by the warmth and love I felt immediately upon entering the room. I kept going and within a month I programmed my first meeting.

The daily readers and slogans became a part of me. I found myself applying the principles of Al-Anon to everything in my life. Soon my friends and family were telling me how much happier I looked and sounded. I told them it was because of the program. I was caught off guard when a few asked me, “What is Al-Anon?” I explained it to them and they confessed they knew a lot of people that could benefit from it.

My GR and DR were discussing the need for a volunteer for the District Public Outreach position. I really began to ponder the position. The program had changed my entire outlook on life. I began “living happy, joyous and free.”

A couple of weeks later the topic came up again. I raised my hand and offered to help. The next week I met with the prior PO Coordinator, who is now the Area PO and my service sponsor.

I am passionate about service and inspired by everyone who has supported me.

— *Melissa C.*

★ LITERATURE IN THE DOCTOR’S OFFICE GOES FAST

For the past few years, I have been supplying my gynecologist with *Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism*, the 20 questions pamphlets and schedules. She places these in her restrooms and says they go fast. This is a quiet easy way for women to access information on our program. At the beginning of my recent appointment with her she asked, “Did you bring me something?” In between visits, I mail her literature.

— *Joany V.*

★ SHARING THE MESSAGE AT A HIGH SCHOOL

I recently spoke at a local high school on behalf of the Al-Anon Public Outreach program. This was my first time speaking to high school students and I was not sure how it would go. There were four classes of fifteen to twenty students rotating into the room.

I introduced myself and shared with them my family’s drinking problem and the impact it had on my life. I also shared my background. I came to America when I was fifteen with a fifth-grade education. My vocabulary was very limited. Education was not encouraged in my family but we were still expected to do well.

When I arrived in America there were two very important addresses I needed to discover — the location of the Catholic Church and the local Irish Club. I only owned a gray pin-striped suit and a green plaid dress. Before coming to the States we didn’t have indoor plumbing. I had never seen a phone or used anything electric before.

My extreme lack of basic necessities and amenities got the students attention. They became quiet and attentive. Two students in particular were on the edge of their seats — “YOU-SAY-WHAT?” They had never met anyone with my background before.

I explained that no matter what part of the world you are from, if someone you care about has a drinking problem it effects your life too. That person who is the life of the party — if he or she continues drinking eventually they will have trouble holding a job, maintaining relationships and sustaining a marriage.

I shared why I was speaking to them. I am the mother of two boys and two girls. I separated from their father when my youngest was a baby and it was very challenging. Thank heavens the Al-Anon members were so helpful, supportive and encouraging. I was able to manage well on a daily basis, until my second oldest child — a beautiful girl — started smoking pot and drinking.

By this time I had become a nurse and was working at a local hospital. I was truly beside myself as to what to do with an out of control twelve year old. Again the Al-Anon members encouraged me through this difficult time.

I told the youth about Alateen and how the program gives teens a safe place to speak in confidence about their home life and struggles with their qualifier. After the talk I answered questions and left information for them in the Health Classroom.

I thank God for all the wonderful people I have met in Al-Anon. I intend to keep coming, to stay involved and to continue to share the Al-Anon program for many years to come. It saved my life.

— *Patricia Mc, Tuesday morning meeting, North Haven*

★ IT’S A GREAT TIME TO GET INVOLVED!

If you are a member interested in volunteering for Public Outreach activities please give your contact information to your District PO Coordinator. (Your GR can connect you with him or her.) They will provide you with access to resources that will make your project easy and successful. No one needs to perform Public Outreach activities alone. We can learn from each other and spend our time and energy reaching more families and friends of alcoholics. A variety of projects provide healthy ways for individuals and groups to develop and grow in recovery. All volunteers involved with Public Outreach service are vital to Al-Anon’s growth. You can email the CT Area PO Coordinator, Mary Ann T., at: ctpublicoutreach@ctalanon.org

Down to Business

Strategies to Close the Deficit

Below is a communication sent to World Service Conference members about the budget deficit from the Treasurer.

What a great Conference! It is a privilege for me to work with you all. We are all concerned about the projected budget deficit for 2016. I would like to offer some strategies that could help to close the deficit and even have us end the year with a surplus.

LITERATURE SALES

What if every member bought an 'extra' book this year? What if one member at half of the meetings bought a hardcover book and "paid it forward" by giving it away to a newcomer, friend or library? That would increase literature sales by \$90,000. What if three people in each meeting bought a book?

APPEAL TO MEMBERS

What if each member placed \$15 in the Appeal envelope this year? Are you able to make that kind of contribution? What opportunities that would present! Is it possible that other members with encouragement and an understanding of the purpose would do the same? What if many members contributed even more?

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

What if every member clicked on the 'Contribute Now' button and made a contribution? What if they gave \$1, \$5, \$15 or even more? The potential is almost incredible. \$200,000? — that might be only \$1-\$2 per member. \$1,000,000? — that might be \$5-\$10 per member. \$3,000,000? — that might represent \$15-\$20 per member. Imagine the possibilities!

GROUPS

What if 25% of the groups gave an extra \$20 this year? We would realize \$76,000. What if they were able to give more? What if all groups were able to give a little more this year than last?

DISTRICTS

What if even half our districts contribute to WSO? Any amount would be an expression of gratitude, abundance and responsibility.

We are blessed with many grateful members. If each of us does a little, we can accomplish a lot. While it is wonderful to receive contributions of many thousands of dollars from Districts, Areas and members, we cannot depend on those generous service arms and individuals alone. We each have multiple opportunities to express our gratitude for what Al-Anon has given us.

Please don't be discouraged. If we relay the message that we each can and do make a difference we can not only close the deficit but fund the Reserve and exciting new initiatives at the World Service Office to further support our members and ensure Al-Anon's presence far into the future.

— Jennie M., WSO Treasurer

Report from the CT AFG President/ Chairperson Board of Directors

The Board of Directors (BOD) of the Connecticut Al-Anon Family Groups Services, Inc., the corporate legal entity of Connecticut Al-Anon, is pleased to announce that we have hired the first paid Office Manager for the CT Literature Distribution Center (LDC). Marie B., current LDC Office Manager who has served as an unpaid volunteer for the past three years, will continue as a paid employee effective June 28, 2016. The LDC Office Manager's responsibilities include managing and overseeing the operation of our corporate office and the storage facility for the area, managing and overseeing literature orders and inventory for the LDC office.

The BOD is actively seeking to hire the first paid Assistant Office Manager for the LDC to begin on June 28, 2016. The Assistant Office Manager will report to the LDC Office Manager, manage/participate in the day-to-day operations and perform other duties assigned by the LDC Office Manager. Hours are 9:30 am to 3:30 pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays, as well as the Spring and Fall Assembly dates. Prior Al-Anon/Alateen service experience, bookkeeping and computer skills are needed. Send resume to bod@ctalanon.org.

The BOD is actively seeking an Al-Anon member with Al-Anon/Alateen service experience, knowledge of accounting principles and computer skills to prepare and present financial reports and projections and to maintain the checking account for the LDC effective on July 1, 2016. This volunteer service position of LDC Treasurer also serves as the Chairperson of the LDC Finance Committee. Send resume to bod@ctalanon.org.

— Love in Service, Pat S., BOD Chair

Report from the CT AFG Delegate

The WSC (World Service Conference) is over. Thanks for the love gifts and well wishes while I was at the conference.

WSO NEWS

Rick B., executive director, is no longer affiliated with the World Service Office. There is an interim executive director, Mary G., overseeing the restructuring of the office along with the Board of Trustees. Posted on the Al-Anon website (www.al-anon.org) under "New Positions" is the job description for Director of Programs.

The budget for WSO was passed with a \$184,000 deficit. More discussion can ensue at the Spring Assembly. To see the budget go to the Al-Anon website under "Finances."

AREA NEWS

I am truly excited that our Connecticut Alateens were on the front cover of *Alateen Talks*. Download it from the Al-Anon website.

Special thanks to the "Miracles in Motion" convention committee members for an outstanding job.

— Ann B., Delegate