

# *Celebrating One Day at a Time*

AI-Anon's International Convention 2018

## **BOARD VISION STATEMENT**

**All people affected by someone else's drinking will find help and recovery in every community.**

## **BOARD MISSION STATEMENT**

**Anticipate the future and AI-Anon's place in it and ensure that the necessary resources are available.**

## **STRATEGIC PLAN PRIORITIES**

**AI-Anon's spiritual principles permeate our policies and practices; we apply emerging technology and communication options:**

- **To increase the visibility of AI-Anon so that it is recognized as the number one resource throughout the world for helping friends and families of alcoholics.**
- **To empower the AI-Anon fellowship to be vibrant, inclusive and flexible.**
- **To achieve a viable future for AI-Anon Family Groups, the Board will be adaptive and strategic in its use of talents, skills, and abilities.**

**April 2018**

Dear fellow AI-Anon members,

The purpose of this Chairperson of the Board letter is to share highlights from our 2018 World Service Conference (WSC) along with updates from the April Special Meeting of the Board of Trustees and the Annual Meeting of the Board. This letter also includes updates from our outgoing and incoming Policy Chairpersons and a Finance update from our incoming and outgoing Treasurer, in addition to outgoing and incoming Conference Leadership Team (CLT) updates.

At the start of the 2017 WSC, the Board of Trustees announced with great enthusiasm and hope for the future that we were ready to begin the search for our new Executive



Director. During the start of this year's Conference, the Board was given the opportunity to formally introduce Vali F. as the new Executive Director of Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. Vali shared with the full Conference her professional and Al-Anon service experiences, along with her vision for the future of the World Service Office and our fellowship as a whole. A full summary of our Executive Director's opening remarks will be available within the *2018 World Conference Summary*.

The 2018 World Service Conference was held in West Harrison, New York and marked eight years since the full Conference has returned to Stepping Stones. While Stepping Stones was the personal home of Bill and Lois W., it also served as the initial location of the Clearing House. It was from Stepping Stones in May of 1951 that 49 family groups moved forward in selecting the name of Al-Anon Family Groups. Lois and Ann compiled Al-Anon's first pieces of literature, pamphlets called *Purposes and Suggestions* and *One Wife's Story*, and within eight months Ann and Lois moved The Clearing House to the Old 24<sup>th</sup> Street Clubhouse in New York City. With the help of volunteers, they registered 200 groups. All of this was accomplished without computers or smart phones. Upon returning from our visit to Stepping Stones, Conference members were given the opportunity to share personal reflections. The comments expressed were filled with the overwhelming evidence that Lois and Anne B. were envisioned thinkers, committed to reaching the families and friends of alcoholics. Personal reflections included the gratitude for opportunity to visit, expressed hope that the Conference as a whole will continue the practice of returning, gratitude for the work of our founders, as well as the overwhelming feeling that our Higher Power was and remains at work within the grounds of Stepping Stones.

The spirit of Lois's message to the 1973 Conference—*"Don't let the seriousness of your task stand in the way of your enjoying each other's companionship and the fun of working and planning together"*—was infused into the 2018 WSC Conference with the introduction of the newly revised Conference app. This year's Conference app included a new social media platform that gave Conference members the opportunity to interact with each other as they would on other social media platforms, while protecting anonymity by ensuring comments and photos remained in the app itself. Excitement and use of the app increased once users discovered the "gaming" feature, which assigned points based on postings, shares, likes and photos. The app was a daily reminder of this year's Conference theme,

**Al-Anon—There is no standing still!**  
**Al-Anon – Il n'y a pas de place pour l'immobilisme!**  
**Al-Anon – ¡No hay razón para detenerse!**

In an effort to honor the Board's commitment to consider ways to increase Delegate participation during Conference, the Conference Leadership Team formed a Task Force of ten Delegates: These members developed presentations on Conference Etiquette,



Conference Goals, Conference Voting Procedures and the Conference theme. The presentations gave all Conference members a visual overview of the spiritual principles applied in the overall functioning of our World Service Conference.

For many years, the WSC has been using a spiritually based approach to discuss topics and to more effectively communicate information to the membership. At the 2016 World Service Conference, there was a presentation from the Task Force: Acceptance of Communities, Cultures, and Beliefs. As a result, Conference members requested additional ways of identifying the spiritual principles that could be applied when looking at how our own biases limit our ability to welcome all potential and current members. During the 2018 WSC the Task Force: Celebrating Our Differences and Our Common Purpose presented a skit and workshop handout to assist members in identifying our own biases (known and unknown). The Task Force also helped Conference members brainstorm ways to apply the spiritual principles of our program to move beyond biases.

The Eighth Triennial Report on Real Property Ownership was given to the full Conference by the current ECRPM Chairperson, Jeffery K. In 1994, the World Service Conference passed Motion #12, which empowered the Board of Trustees to purchase property for Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. This purchase of real property was for a trial period of 15 years and contingent on several conditions.

In 2011 the World Service Conference passed Motion #6, which ended the 15-year trial period and empowered the Board of Trustees to continue to own the current or subsequent property in the name of Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. The ownership of property is contingent upon the conditions enumerated in Motion #6.

One condition set forth in the 1994 Motion #12 and the 2011 Motion #6 was that the Board of Trustees “establish a separate Executive Committee for Real Property Management in order to ensure that the management of the real property be done in a prudent manner and not interfere with the day-to-day operations of the spiritual parts of the program, i.e., service to the groups, individuals, or Al-Anon as a whole.”

To fulfill that condition, a motion to create the Executive Committee for Real Property Management (ECRPM) was approved by the WSC in 1995. The By-Laws were amended in January 2012 to include the Executive Committee for Real Property Management, and the Amendment was presented to the 2012 Conference. The ECRPM was established to oversee the management of real property in order to separate property maintenance and management from the day-to-day operation of the Al-Anon fellowship. The Committee consists of three At-Large Al-Anon members, the Chairperson of the Finance Committee, and the Director of Finance and Operations. The Committee first met June 15, 1996 and has met twice a year since then.



Another condition contained in the motions to purchase real property was that the Board of Trustees would “report triennially as to the financial feasibility of the ownership of real property, the compliance with the spirit and letter of this resolution, and the negative impact, if any, that the purchase of property has had on the fellowship as a whole.” Highlights from the Eighth Triennial Report included the reflected savings to the fellowship of approximately \$446,000, which were realized in 2017 by owning property vs. leasing in Virginia. Now that the mortgage is paid in full, the gap between ownership and leasing continues to widen as costs of ownership decrease and costs of leasing increase. A full report will be placed within the *2018 WSC Summary*.

Prior to Conference, members were given the opportunity to review a proposal from the Literature Committee regarding development of a new bookmark titled, “Just for Tonight,” which would be based on an August 2016 article in *The Forum*. Following floor discussion, a motion was approved by Conference: That the 2018 World Service Conference give conceptual approval to develop a bookmark based on an August 2016 *Forum* article titled “Just for Tonight” using inclusive language. It is important to note that conceptual approval of the new bookmark does not mean that the “Just for Today” bookmark, which is currently in use, will be removed or replaced.

For a detailed report-back of the 2018 WSC, please look for the free online *Conference Summary* posting. A printed version of the *Conference Summary* will be made available for purchase in mid-August.

Have you registered yet for the Sixth Al-Anon International Convention, **Celebrating One Day at a Time - 2018 International Convention**, July 6-8 of 2018 in Baltimore, Maryland? As of this writing, 3,432 members have registered for our International Convention. Please keep in mind the following registration deadlines and the registration costs associated with these deadlines:

Before May 31, 2018:	\$165.00
After May 31, 2018:	\$195.00

You can stay connected to “breaking news” related to the 2018 International on the International Convention website: <https://al-anon.org/al-anon-international-conventions/>. We look forward to meeting you in Baltimore.

Plans for the 2018 Day of Connecting have been finalized. The Board and World Service Office (WSO) Staff look forward to your participation on July 5<sup>th</sup>. The Day of Connecting is a special one-day, service-oriented event that will be held prior to the official start of the 2018 International Convention. If you are coming to the International Convention, why not come early and spend July 5, the day before the Convention, learning, sharing and deepening your understanding and commitment to our third legacy: Service? Workshops, panels and roundtable discussions on a variety of service



topics will be hosted by the Board of Trustees and members of the WSO Staff. The day promises to be a stimulating and exciting boost to your program and a fantastic way to kick off your weekend in Baltimore. There is a participation limit; registration is required. Registration and further information can be located on the International Convention website.

Registration for the 2018 WSC Homecoming, formerly the Conference Reunion Luncheon, is now open. Current and former Conference members and their guests may attend by registering at: [al-anon.org/wsc-homecoming/](http://al-anon.org/wsc-homecoming/). We will be taking a “two-hour tour” of the inner harbor, enjoying lunch and the opportunity to experience new activities together. Please don’t miss this chance to join us aboard the Inner Harbor and to be a part of something new and exciting.

The “Language of Love Parade” is a celebration of the 40 languages in which the message of Al-Anon and Alateen is available throughout the world! Members attending the 2018 International Convention are invited to wear a costume that represents their country, community, or culture, and participate in the “Language of Love Parade” on Friday, July 6, 2018. Participation is limited to 500 members.

In order to participate, go to the International Convention website Language of Love Parade link [al-anon.org/blog/language-love-parade/](http://al-anon.org/blog/language-love-parade/) to register. Members must complete the survey by June 22, 2018 in order to participate.

Road Trip! You and Your Board Connect 2018 is an opportunity for local Al-Anon members to meet and interact with the Board of Trustees and Executive Committee members, to discuss items of importance to the fellowship and to the organization of Al-Anon Family Groups. The 2018 Road Trip! will be held in Houston, Texas on Saturday, October 20<sup>th</sup> at the Houston Marriott South at Hobby Airport. An enthusiastic overview of the 2017 Road Trip! was presented during Conference with members who attended in 2017 sharing what they received through their participation. The opportunity to host this exciting event in 2019 awaits another Area. The deadline to submit requests to host is September 14, 2018. A digital copy of the request to host and all related documents can be downloaded by current Conference members by visiting AFG Connects, WSC Members, 2018 Conference Presentations.

The Board of Trustees is pleased to announce the following Areas have accepted the Board’s invitation for a Trustee visit in either 2018 or 2019: Alaska, Delaware, New York South, North Dakota, Ontario North, Puerto Rico, Quebec East, South Dakota and Virginia and Wyoming.

Four Regions—Canada Central, US North Central, US Northeast and US Southeast—began the process of nominating Regional Trustees by forming their respective Regional Committees on Trustees (RCT). While the process for nominating a Regional



Trustee and Trustee at Large is different, the deadline for résumés to be submitted to the WSO is August 15<sup>th</sup>.

The Conference gave traditional approval and during the Annual Meeting the Board of Trustees, in their legal capacity, elected the following trusted servants:

Regional Trustee:

Gail G., Canada West	First three-year term
Thérèse S., Canada East	Second three-year term
Cindy K., US South Central	Remaining two years of a first three-year term
Chéré F., US Northwest	Remaining two years of a first three-year term

Trustee at Large:

Cathy T.	First three-year term
Norm W.	Second three-year term

Board Officers 2018-2019

Debbie G.	Chairperson of the Board
Joan S.	Vice Chairperson of the Board
Joyce B.	Treasurer

The Board of Trustees, in its legal capacity, made the following one-year appointments:

Lynette K., Trustee at Large  
Arlene M., Canada Central Regional Trustee

The Board of Trustees, in its legal capacity, elected the following:

Executive Committee

Paula B.	Third one-year term
Connie H.	Third one-year term
Julius (JP) M.	Third one-year term

Chairperson of the Executive Committee:

Paula B.

Executive Committee for Real Property Management Chairperson

Tom B. – One-year term

The Board of Trustees, in its legal capacity, made the following one-year appointment to ECRPM:

Kay R. – One-year term



Two weeks following the posting of this letter, the Trustees will begin making contact with their assigned Delegates. The purpose of this contact is to serve as a resource for clarification of or questions about this letter, if desired. If you prefer not to have the Trustee phone you, please let him/her know when the initial contact is made.

To aid the Board in further planning and discussion, we are asking current Delegates to share their responses to the following questions when their Trustees contact them:

**What is your Area's current process for bringing forth Regional Trustee nominees?**

**What can the Board of Trustees do to further clarify the current Regional Trustee process?**

Throughout the 2018 WSC, all Conference members were given the opportunity to openly discuss the challenges and possibilities for tomorrow along with being part of a solution. We openly discussed our challenges and found new ways to identify the roadblocks that were keeping us from moving forward and ensuring all members see themselves and are viewed by our fellowship as equal members of our worldwide fellowship. We visited our initial home and viewed firsthand the groundwork Lois and Ann laid for our fellowship along with the vision of both Lois and Bill for our future. Conference was an opportunity to apply our spiritual principles as a format for change rather than stagnation. We did not stand still.

Life is all about change. It is about our willingness to be open to this change—to use these opportunities for growth and to fall back on the Steps, Traditions and Concepts of Service to keep the program in check.

*Many Voices, One Journey (B-31), page 385*

On behalf of the Board, our WSO Staff and our Executive Committee, I wish you, our Delegates, great success in the coming months as you enthusiastically share the message from this year's Conference. We look forward to reading your posting on AFG Connects. We look forward to greeting the members of our worldwide fellowship in Baltimore!

In gratitude,



Debbie L. G.

Chairperson

Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. Board of Trustees



## Finance Update

April 2018

Jennie M., *Outgoing Treasurer*  
Joyce B., *Incoming Treasurer*

The following update is based on the unaudited financial statements for the period that ended March 31, 2018:

The General Fund recorded a loss of \$42,800 for this period, compared to a gain of \$8,395 this period last year. That represents a net negative of \$51,195 over this period last year. Net revenue from literature sales was \$91,616 less than that of 2017, and below budgeted expectations by \$106,000.

### Income:

Literature sales were \$837,185 for 2018, compared to \$971,995 at this time last year, Gross profit on literature sales was \$672,327 (80% of sales), compared to \$763,943 for 2017. Contributions are at \$504,042 for 2018, compared to \$546,703 last year—a decrease of 7.8%. *Forum* subscriptions are \$64,646 compared with last year's subscriptions of \$68,902, a decrease of 6.18%.

### Expenses:

Actual operating expenses have decreased by \$123,000, down 8% from last year. The decrease in expenses is related to the timing of invoices. Conference expenses are lower than last year because fewer expenses have been incurred thus far. Those expenses will be realized in April and May. No specific expense line item is concerning at this point.

### Reserve Fund:

Investment income includes a monthly transfer of \$17,300 from the Reserve Fund. The fair value of investments in the Reserve Fund totaled \$5,647,228 at March 31, 2018. This represents an increase in value of almost \$305,000 for this year, reflecting the overall increased value found in the equities market.

### Outlook:

Contributions are \$53,000 above budgeted projections. The expectation is to have a strong year for literature sales with new literature being introduced in April and July. *Forum* subscriptions are being monitored to determine the effects of publishing in full color, which began in January of this year. We trust that members understand the need and will continue to support the efforts of the World Service Office.



## Policy Committee Update

April 2018

*John M., Outgoing Chairperson*

*Norm W., Incoming Chairperson*

The purpose of the update sent each quarter by the Chairperson of the Policy Committee is to report progress and provide information on the following:

- Topics that are generated by the fellowship and discussed by the Policy Committee, e.g., issues or concerns that need clarification or interpretation in light of the Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts of Service
- Policy motions to be presented to the WSC
- Policy motions passed by the WSC

During the April 2018 Policy Committee meeting, members continued to discuss revisions to the “Digest of Al-Anon and Alateen Policies” (Digest). Two Task Forces, focusing on the Alateen, Membership and Groups sections of the Digest, provided updates of their interim progress, which included proposed text changes. Progress was made but no final changes were agreed to, so the work of both Task Forces will continue.

The Electronic/Virtual Meeting (EVM) Work Group reviewed the presentation that was going to be shown at the WSC. They are working on a survey to get feedback from electronic/virtual meetings. The survey will ask what support the meetings would like from the WSO and will gather information that may be helpful in determining ways to include these meetings in the WSC Structure.

The Executive Director reported on a new procedure for and led a discussion about commenting on and reposting messages on social media. Since launching social media pages in 2012, follower comments have been reviewed by Staff, but have not been made visible to the public. Starting in 2018, comments will be reviewed by Staff and, if it is determined that they are in keeping with Al-Anon’s spiritual principles and Legacies, will be made visible in a post’s comment thread. This change will positively impact the WSO’s online presence and potentially attract more newcomers to WSO social media sites. The Executive Director also reminded everyone that WSO social media posts can be reposted and that this can be done in a way that ensures members’ anonymity.

At the Open Policy meeting, meditation meetings were discussed. As a result, a Policy Committee Thought Force will be formed to look into the matter for further discussion by the Policy Committee. Discussion will center around whether having a period of meditation as part of the meeting format is consistent with Al-Anon’s spiritual principles and Legacies.



Policy statements are interpretations of our basic guides, the Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts. They help clarify how a Tradition or Concept might apply to a new or confusing situation that arises in Al-Anon or Alateen. Changes and additions to the Policy Digest are made only as circumstances and our growth requires, since anticipating and including every specific situation would be impossible. As always, the Policy Committee welcomes all questions and suggestions from any Al-Anon and Alateen member, group, or Area regarding issues that might need further clarification or interpretation in light of Al-Anon's Legacies.



## Conference Leadership Team (CLT) Update

*Judy K., Outgoing Chairperson*

*Jennie M., Incoming Chairperson*

April 2018

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The 2018 World Service Conference (WSC) was held at the Renaissance Westchester Hotel in West Harrison, New York. Our 2018 Conference theme stated above is an excerpt from a statement made by our Cofounder, Lois W., and reflects the fast-paced agenda of the Conference. Registration opened on Sunday, April 15<sup>th</sup> and was followed by Area Highlights, committee meetings and an introductory talk by our Executive Director on Monday. Conference officially opened Monday evening and ended Friday, April 20<sup>th</sup>, with a closing dinner to acknowledge outgoing Conference members’ service and their dedication to Al-Anon Family Groups.

Conference members came to Al-Anon’s annual business meeting informed and prepared, thanks to the work of our Associate Director—Conference, who posted all documents on AFG Connects. Also, our wonderful World Service Office Digital Strategy Team provided a new and improved Conference app. This helpful organizational tool gave Conference members access to the WSC agenda and hotel information, along with a “social stream” for attendees to connect with each other. The majority of Conference members used the app throughout the week. A similar app will be available for Al-Anon’s International Convention in Baltimore, July 6-8, 2018.

The New Delegate Orientation for Panel 58 focused on Al-Anon’s Twelve Concepts of Service and how they define our world service Structure and members’ participation at the Conference. A Task Force of ten Delegates gave dynamic presentations on Conference Etiquette, Conference Goals, Conference Voting Procedures, and the Conference Theme. WSC members appreciated the increased Delegate participation. The full WSC agenda covered financial information, topics critical to Al-Anon’s future, news of our international outreach, and four chosen agenda items (CAIs), which were voted on by Conference members. The WSO Staff also provided updates about their current work at the WSO.

A highlight of the week was a visit to Stepping Stones, the home of our Cofounder, Lois W. The special event included time to tour the house and grounds. Despite the chilly morning everyone enjoyed learning more about Al-Anon’s past and came away with a better understanding of Lois, a humble visionary, who worked to unify the early Al-Anon groups. The visit was both educational and inspirational.



Planning is already underway for the 2019 World Service Conference. It will be held at the Sheraton Virginia Beach Oceanfront Hotel, 3501 Atlantic Ave., Virginia Beach, VA 23451. Delegates are scheduled to arrive on Friday, April 12, 2019, and depart on Thursday, April 18, 2019.

The Conference Leadership Team is now reviewing the 2018 Conference evaluations in order to provide a 2019 World Service Conference agenda that continues to facilitate the active voice and effective group conscience of our fellowship. This is our primary purpose. We are not standing still!

Thank you to the Conference members who provided meaningful input for this year's WSC agenda and numerous discussions. The week was characterized by the joy of service and the application of spiritual principles. Also, we extend a special thank you to all Area members, who sent an abundance of cards and love gifts. Your support was amazing and appreciated!

The six members who serve on your Conference Leadership Team include the Associate Director—Conference; the Chair and Co-Chair of Conference, both Trustees; the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees; the WSO Executive Director; and the Director of Programs.

