

LIFELINES

SEPTEMBER, 2018

RIAFG NEWSLETTER

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Editor's Corner

September 29th is the Al-Anon workshop at Butler Hospital. The theme this year is **sponsorship and service**, "giving back."

When I first came to Al-Anon I had nothing to give. I was broken, exhausted, confused and in crisis. My life and how I dealt with life starting looking too much like my parents'. When I was young, hiding in my room, listening to the arguments, complaints, or the terrible silences, I vowed I would never act that way. I would always remember my feelings of fear, loneliness, and that dreadful knot in my gut. I would never subject my children to that.

At my first meeting I felt relief. I had tagged along with my second husband to his AA meetings. I loved the Steps and Slogans and the sharings, but I didn't feel that I belonged there. My first Al-Anon meeting felt right. I had found where I belonged.

I was told to get a sponsor and get active. After a few months I got "volunteered" to make the coffee and provide the refreshments. I didn't have the courage to ask anyone to sponsor me, but I did do the service for my group. I had to arrive early which often meant I was also the greeter. I could say "Welcome," that was easy, but not much more than that. I realized that having this responsibility ensured that I showed up. People were depending on me. Eventually, I realized it was also to myself.

I was so grateful that the meeting would be there on Tuesday night. I could count on it. I could be silent and listen. I could share without interruption.

I mustered the courage and asked a close friend who was also in Al-Anon to be my sponsor. She tentatively said yes as long as this did not interfere with our friendship.

When I moved to Rhode Island, I asked someone whose sharings were so helpful to be my sponsor. I have gained so much insight thanks to this beautiful woman.

I was going to a lot of meetings at that time. Amazingly, a couple of people from my meetings called me. Maybe I did have something to offer. That simple act of being called by someone in program helped me realize that I could also make phone calls.

I have a serene life today thanks to Al-Anon. I eventually became willing to give back.

Don't miss out on a day of recovery on September 29th. Just participating on that day is a way of giving back.

A grateful member of Al-Anon,
Elaine H.
Lifelines Editor

Rhode Island Area
Al-Anon Family Groups



Hope & Help for Families
& Friends of Alcoholics

2018 Annual Workshop

Our Day will include speakers, meetings, raffles, food, fun, fellowship and Most of All- Recovery!



Sponsorship and Service

Volunteers requested! Check <http://riafg.org/> for updates and the workshop agenda.

**September 29th, 2018
9:00 am - 3:00 pm**

Suggested Donation \$10.00*
•
No charge for Alateen

Butler Hospital
Ray Conference Center
345 Blackstone Boulevard
Providence, RI 02905

*Do not let Financial Hardship prevent you from attending a day of recovery. To offer to volunteer in lieu of donating or make other arrangements, please contact the office.

Potluck Lunch
We ask each participant to bring a dish to share.

CAN YOU DO SERVICE?
Call out for Groups and members to volunteer for service on the day of the Workshop. To volunteer or ask any questions on opportunities, contact: 2018 Workshop Chair by email Workshop.riafg@gmail.com or contact the office at 401-781-0044

Donations Requested
Groups & Members- Please donate gift baskets and/or items for our raffles!

We welcome Love Gifts to share!

GROUPS!

ARE YOU A GOOD COOK? CONSIDER A POTLUCK DISH AS A GIFT OF YOUR SERVICE

DON'T FORGET TO MAKE A BASKET OF GOODIES FOR OUR RAFFLE! CHOOSE A THEME, OR JUST COMBINE LITTLE ITEMS.

RIAFG Fall Workshop

2018 Fall Workshop Breakout Session

Session 1 9:45-10:30

Al-Anon Room 1	GETTING THE GIFT OF PROGRAM Why we need a Sponsor
Al-Anon Room 2	SHARING THE GIFT WITH OTHERS Stepping up to be a Sponsor
Al-Anon Room 3	UNEXPECTED GIFTS Sponsorship Challenges & Benefits

Session 2 12:45-1:30

Al-Anon Room 1	EMPOWERING OURSELVES TO REACH THE NEWCOMER
Al-Anon Room 2	PROVIDING A GIFT TO THE NEXT GENERATION How can we support Alateen?
Al-Anon Room 3	CONCEPTS THREE & FOUR

Session 3 2:15-2:45

Al-Anon Room 1	SERVICE SPONSORSHIP Is it the missing piece in your group?
Al-Anon Room 2	GETTING THE GIFTS FROM SERVICE Progress Not Perfection
Al-Anon Room 3	IMPROVING ACCESS TO SPONSORS WITHIN OUR GROUPS

The Workshop Co-Chairs are looking for your service

- BREAKOUT SESSION LEADERS - Topics and times are available
- DECORATION TEAM - Prepare & Display Signage & Centerpieces
- RAFFLE TEAM - Receive, Display, & Coordinate Results Board
- LUNCHEON TEAM - Receive, Display, & Oversee Supplies
- REGISTRATION TEAM - Sign-in, Collect Donations, Provide Programs
- INFORMATION TEAM - Display and Oversee Literature Table

Forum Article:

Stepping out of my comfort zone and into service

The loudest of softest voice isn't right or wrong. It's a voice, a nudge, a push from a longtime member or Sponsor saying, "I think you could do that." Me? Before even saying, "I'll try," I go through the crisis of self-degradation or degrading the position. I have to justify my hesitation in some way! At home, my usual response to requests (Aw, gee, do I have to?) has given me the reputation of someone who resents leaving his comfort zone.

The very special love that I have for Al-Anon members and their love have given me the courage to step out of my comfort zone. Al-Anon Family Group members are thrilled I volunteer. This attitude has spread to my home life, too. I offer my services more often now, without expecting anything in return.

Courtesy, respect, and love go a long way. The rooms of Al-Anon have accepted me with open arms, and when I got busy, I got better. Now my goal is to grow in compassion and patience for those who don't hear the soft or loud voices of service.

May I have the voice of calm, reason, strength, and nurturing for my fellow members to ask for help? This is my meditative prayer.

By Bernie M., Florida

Reprinted from The Forum, copyright issue September 2015, Al-Anon Family Group Hdqtr., Inc., Virginia Beach, VA.)

Sponsorship - I stopped taking shortcuts

It was ten years before I got a real Sponsor. I started by sponsoring myself. While I managed to get through the Steps, I wouldn't recommend it. I missed so much true recovery that first time, but it got me started. Next, I asked a relative who was in another Twelve Step program to sponsor me. I did complete a fairly good Fourth and Fifth Steps.

I finally realized I needed to stop taking shortcuts. I found someone who always seemed to have something to say directly to me at meetings we both attended. I was a little surprised when he agreed to be my Sponsor. For the first time, I worked the Steps with someone who had worked them himself. My Sponsor was able to help and guide me through sharing his hope, strength, and recovery with me.

Today, I sponsor several men myself. Sponsoring others has really expanded my program by giving back through service to others. Sharing my experiences with men I sponsor allowed me to clarify my recovery thoughts when I had to put them into words. Sponsorship has been one of the greatest gifts of the program I have received.

By John I., Nebraska

Reprinted from The Forum, copyright issue April 2016, Al-Anon Family Group Hdqtr., Inc., Virginia Beach, VA.)**Editor's Note: Would you like your own subscription to the "Forum?" A subscription form is in the back of all issues. The cost is \$11.00 per year and there is also an online version available.

Did You Know?

You CAN 'Carry the Message' on Social Media while Protecting Your Anonymity. "Following" or "Liking" an Al-Anon WSO social media page does not constitute membership in the program. Social media pages are public to allow individuals and organizations to follow them and engage by liking and sharing content they value.

Carrying the message – It's easy to carry Al-Anon's message of hope on social media without violating anyone's anonymity. Here are a few tips:

- Write your comments in "third person", i.e. "I know a lot of people who were helped by going to Al-Anon meetings."
- Use hashtags to insert your shared message into the searches for those key terms., i.e. "#AlAnon provides support to anyone affected by the #FamilyDisease of #alcoholism."
- Feel free to create a social media alias but refrain from creating a name that includes Al-Anon or Alateen, i.e. Al-Anon Bob.
- Avoid referring to your direct experience in Al-Anon in "first person"

District 2 News:

District 2 will meet with all Group Reps and interested parties this Month on Sept 13 at the South County Step Meeting Location at 6:30 pm. The District 2 is looking for Groups to host a District meeting before the evening meetings. Thank you all for your service.

Charles, DR for District 2

Task Force News:

The spring assembly generated a request from the Group Representatives that a task force be created for further discussion on the service break out questions shown below. These questions affect our RI Al-anon groups. Whether you are a newcomer, old timer, or anywhere in between we invite you to join us for fellowship and input.

We are meeting **Sunday September 30 at 1:00 pm** at the Coffee Connection, 1744 Mineral Spring Ave, North Providence.” For more information email breakouttaskforce@gmail.com

RIAFG Spring Assembly SERVICE BREAKOUT SESSION QUESTIONS

- ❖ **What works?**
What works for you? In Al-Anon service or in your real-world life?
Sometimes our workplace trains us to step up using techniques or methods that are sound and effective, that are fruitful. Any suggestions?
- ❖ **What motivated you to step up to service?**
Could you suggest a way to attract members to service based on your service experience?
- ❖ **What doesn't work?**
What stands in your way? What gets in your way of committing to service?
- ❖ **Do we need to change the number of Area positions?**
- ❖ **Are there positions that can be combined or eliminated?**
i.e. Add the *Forum* to the Literature Coordinator’s responsibilities.
Eliminate the Email Coordinator position and have the Office Volunteers handle responses to the emails.
- ❖ **Can we make more of the Coordinator positions non-voting to attract members who can't commit to attending the AWSC meetings and/or attract dual members?**
- ❖ **Should we allow voting members to attend the AWSC meetings via technology, like Skype or FaceTime?**
Perhaps that would make it easier for someone who may have transportation or child care or whatever issues that make physical attendance at the AWSC meetings very difficult for them.
- ❖ **Are there other questions we need to ask?**

Members Share:**How it feels to sponsor someone**
(as related to me by my sponsor D.Y.)

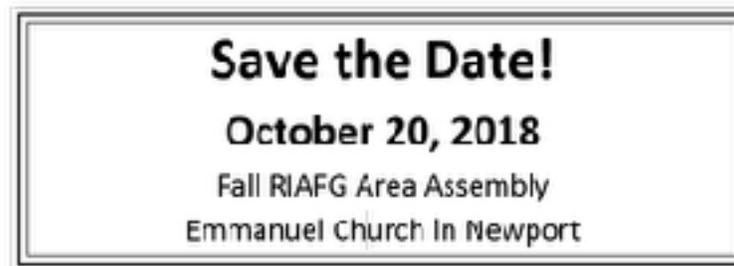
My sponsor has sponsored more than “someone.” It has been around twenty people in her ten years of service, people with whom over the years she has established very close friendships. She expressed her gratitude in being able to sponsor for she feels that not only she receives much in doing so, but that she learns and grows along with her sponsees.

Her life experiences have helped her accomplish successfully her role as a sponsor by instilling in her the knowledge that being a good listener is one of the most important qualities to have, along with allowing the sponsee to find the path herself/himself.

My sponsor tells me that a fundamental approach to help the sponsee succeed in her/his recovery is always answering within the context of the CAL, always incorporating the teachings of the Al anon program.

With great admiration for a person who has a generous soul, who is open minded, who knows how to respond appropriately to the needs of others, I send this small tribute.

In love and peace,
MC

**Area Office News:****Rhode Island Al-Anon Family Groups Annual Appeal**

Each year your Rhode Island Area Al-Anon Family Groups has an Annual Appeal to raise funds to help Rhode Island’s trusted servants and volunteers carry Al-Anon’s message of hope to Rhode Island families and friends who have been impacted by someone’s problem drinking.

In September, when the appeal letter is read in your groups, please help us – and thereby also express your own gratitude for what the program has done for you – by donating \$5, \$10, \$20 or whatever amount you can afford.

Yours in Fellowship and Service,
RIAFG Budget Committee

Service Opportunity: If you are an active member of Al-Anon who has benefited from this wonderful program, please **consider becoming an Office Volunteer or At-Home Volunteer** as part of your own recovery process. We need your help to help others. Please call the area office (401) 781-0044 – and leave your contact info in a message for Jane. We especially invite you to a Saturday morning/midday shift. Currently we are covered for the first Saturday of the month only. Thank you!

Jane A., RIAFG office coordinator

We currently have 4 Volunteers: Here is the schedule:

Sunday		
Monday	12:30-2:30 PM	Phyllis H.
Tuesday		
Wednesday	12:30-2:30 PM	Paul B.
Thursday	6:00 PM-7:30 PM	Jane A.
Friday		
Saturday		
**At-Home Volunteer	(Tuesdays)	Clara R.

Area Chair's Corner:

September is Recovery Month

During the month of September, addiction recovery is celebrated in the United States and presents an opportunity for Al-Anon and Alateen members to help raise awareness about family recovery available in Al-Anon. One in 4 Americans have been affected by someone else's alcoholism. A simple thing that Rhode Island Al-Anon members can do is to contact the TV and Radio stations in our Area and ask them to play Al-Anon PSAs.

The WSO has distributed a "hard copy" of the 2018 PSA Relaunch Campaign "Jack" and "Samantha" to the following Rhode Island TV and Radio stations. Please take a few minutes to give them a call or write a quick note encouraging them to air the Al-Anon PSAs to their audiences.

WJAR-TV	WNAC-TV	WPRI-TV	WLNE-TV
WLWC - TV	LIFE AND FAMILY MINISTRY		WCTKF
WHJJA	WCVYF	WADKA	WARVA
WNRIA			

Also, in 2017, Cat Country 98.1 WCTK-FM played the Al-Anon Public Service Announcement (PSA) 212 times. Please take a few minutes to send them a note of thanks:

Cat Country 98.1 WCTK-FM
75 Oxford Street, Suite 402
Providence, RI 02905

Phyllis H.
Area Chair

AA Liaison Report

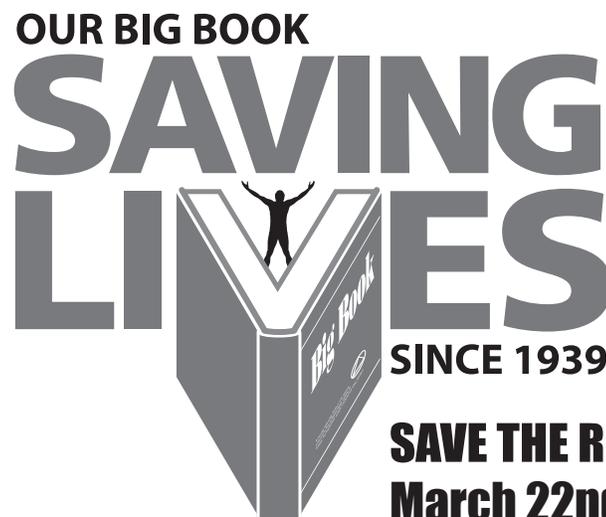
I attended the monthly AA Area 61 meetings in July and August. The theme for the 2019 AA Convention is "Our Big Book: Saving Lives Since 1939." The date of conference is Mar. 22 – 24, 2019 at the Gurney's Resort in Newport. Registration before March 8 cost is \$25.00. Register on or after March 9 and the cost is \$30.00. Registration can be done online (preferred) or download the printable registration form at www.aainir.com.

Eloy M. from Colorado, Panel 56 delegate will serve as our Al-Anon speaker at the March convention. His sharing is powerful! He spoke at the WSO Conference this spring. Eloy will speak on Saturday, March 23, most likely in the morning during the convention. I'm staying in touch with Eloy on a monthly basis.

The times for Al-Anon meetings for the weekend are not yet established, and the number of meetings may be reduced to five due to overlap with AA activities such as the meditation, play and/or spiritual walk.

I will be creating an Al-Anon flyer for convention weekend and begin to recruit Al-Anon meeting leaders.

Jackie G., AA Liaison for RIAFG



**SAVE THE RI CONVENTION DATE:
March 22nd - March 24th, 2019**

Register before March 8th. Cost: \$25

Register on or after March 9th. Cost: \$30

Register online (preferred) or download the printable registration form at www.aainri.com.

Registration forms will be available at Area 61 meeting places in September.

News from the WSO:

World Service Conference Summary

Last year when the WSO announced that it would no longer provide free copies of the World Service Conference Summary, it was decided that the Area would pay for complimentary copies for all Area officers/coordinators who wish to have a paper copy (the cost is \$5 each). It is now time to place our order for the 2018 WSO Conference Summary.

PLEASE EMAIL ME BY SEPTEMBER 1 IF YOU WOULD LIKE A COPY. I will place the order and distribute the copies once they are received.

If you don't want a paper copy, you can read the summary and/or download it on the WSO website <https://al-anon.org/for-members/world-service-conference-wsc/world-service-conference-summary/>.

Love in Service and Fellowship,

Phyllis H.
Area Chair
Rhode Island Al-Anon

Al-Anon's New Book on Intimacy is Here!

Trusted Servants, we need your help! We are looking for someone with five years continuous Al-Anon membership with webmaster expertise to fill our "Webmaster" position at the World Service Office in Virginia Beach. This position is part of the Digital Strategy Team and an integral part of our Public Outreach efforts. We strongly believe we will get the best candidates from the efforts of members like you who know a fellow member, if not yourself, who has the expertise for this position. Please get the word out!

Please use this link to see the job description al-anon.org/pdf/webmaster.pdf.

Thank you!
NATHALIE L.
Executive Administrative Coordinator

Help Make Al-Anon's Next Daily Reader Something Special

Al-Anon's three Legacies: the Steps, Traditions and Concepts of Service, are the foundation of our program. Please help the New Daily Reader, working title, be the first Al-Anon daily reader to include sharings on all 3 by submitting your thoughts on any of them.

Type al-anon.org/sharing in your browser to submit your sharings.

The WSO has mailed the **Annual Group Update Sheet** to the registered groups. Please make sure that the WSO has the current information for your group meeting.

Get the Latest News

From the 2018 World Service Conference

Al-Anon's largest representative group conscience, the World Service Conference, met in West Harrison, New York on April 16-20

The Conference Theme was
"Al-Anon —There is No Standing Still!"
For Highlights of the Conference, go to

al-anon.org/18WSCnews

Upcoming Events:

Sept 15, 2018	AWSC meeting, 10:00 AM to Noon, 106 Rolfe Square, Cranston. All re welcome.
Sept 29, 2018	RIAFG Fall Workshop with AA participation 9:30 AM to 3:00 PM at Butler Hospital, Ray Hall, 345 Blackstone Blvd., Providence
Oct 20, 2018	Fall Assembly at Emmanuel Episcopal Church in Newport More details to follow
Oct 26-38, 2018	New Hampshire Al-Anon/Alateen Convention: "Transformation through the 12 Steps." Margate Resort at Winnepesaukee, 76 Lake St., Laconia, New Hampshire
Nov 17, 2018	AWSC meeting, 10:00 AM to Noon, 106 Rolfe Square, Cranston. All are welcome.
Mar 22-24, 2019	Rhode Island AA Convention with Al-Anon participation

Al-Anon Meeting Updates:**NEEDS SUPPORT**

Cranston/Warwick Day Time Al-Anon, Tuesday at 10:00 AM at Edgewood Congregational Church
1788 Broad St., Cranston.

HOLIDAY CHANGE

The Al-Anon at Noon group in Westerly at Christ Episcopal Church will NOT meet on Labor Day.

Would you like to be on the distribution list for Lifelines? Send an email requesting this to lifelines.riafg@gmail.com. These are sent as "BCC's" so your anonymity is protected.

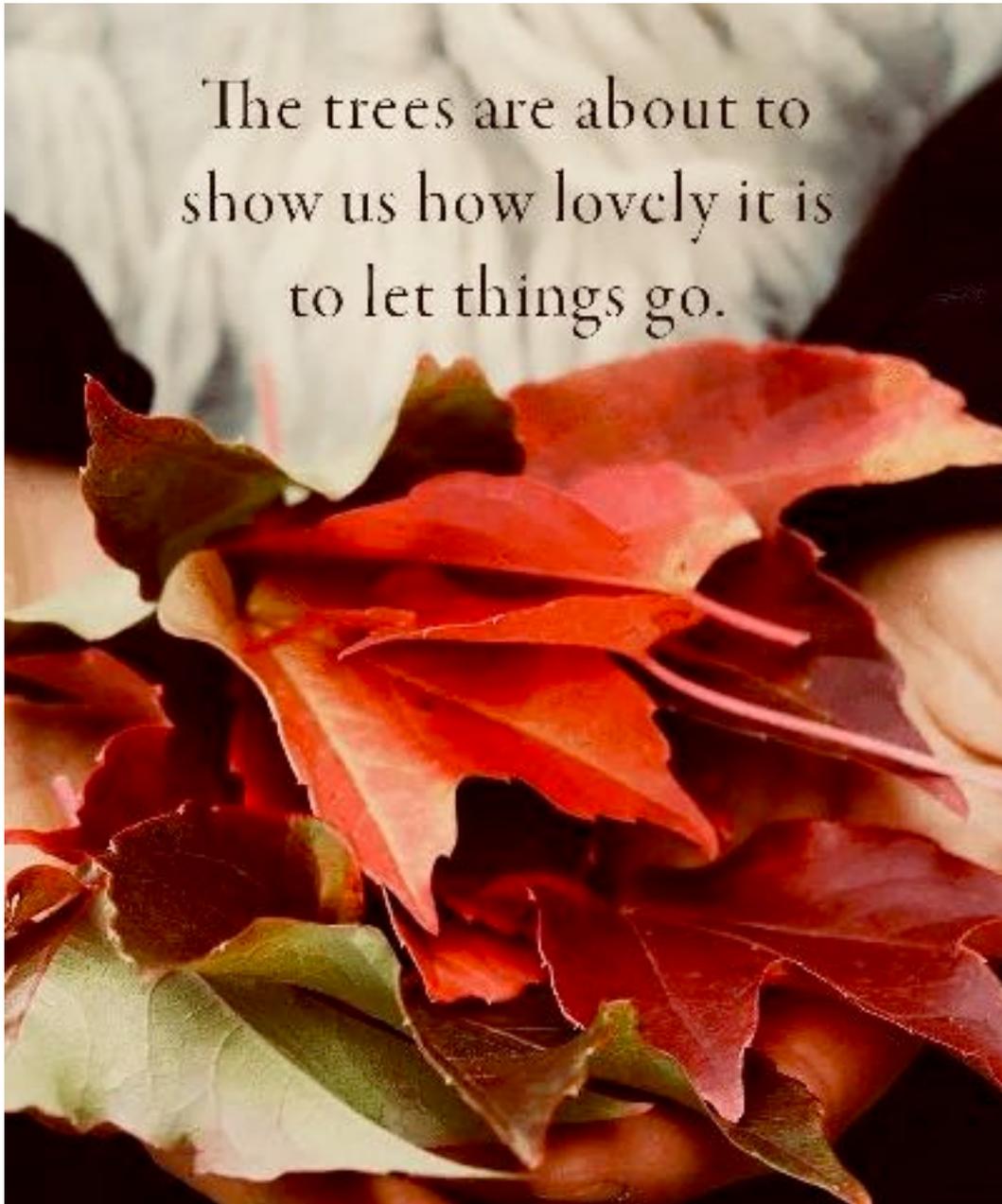
Do you have a story or an Al-Anon event to share? Would you like to share why your home group is so special to you? Would you like to share your insights? Do you have an inspirational photo? Please email these to lifelines.riafg@gmail.com.

WEB Sites, Addresses and phone numbers:

**RI AFG: www.riafg.org Office: 106 Rolfe St., Cranston, RI 02910
Telephone: 401-781-0044. Office hours available by calling this number.**

**WSO: al-anon.org. Office: 1600 Corporate Landing Parkway,
Virginia Beach, VA 23454. Telephone: 757-563-1600**

**God, grant me the serenity to accept the the things I cannot change,
courage to change the things I can and wisdom to know the difference.**



Submitted by MC