

Rhode Island Al-Anon Family Groups (RIAFG)
Spring Assembly – June 9, 2018
Four Corners Community Chapel, Cumberland, RI
Hosted by District 1

Voting members (GRs and Proxies):

District 1: Lorie G., Denise D., Kathi B., Lorraine R. L., Nel P., Susan H., David G., Esme H., Kat M., Linda M.

District 2: Martha R., Rebecca S., Cindy B., Sally K., Elaine H., Lisa, Jackie G., Edward F.

District 3: Toby F., Sheila B., Terry L., Barbara M., Ann-Marie C.

Area Officer/Coordinator Attendees:

Barbara H., Delegate; Phyllis H., Area Chair; Tami K., Treasurer; Shawn J., DR1; Joel B., Alternate DR2; Terry L., DR3; Jackie G., AA Liaison ; Ashley B., Alateen Co-Coordinator ; Dennis S., Email Coordinator; Elaine H., Lifelines Editor; Ann-Marie C., Literature Coordinator

Opening/Welcome

Moment of silence followed by the Serenity Prayer; reading of the Steps, Traditions, Concepts, and Warranties; roll call/introductions. “What is an Assembly?”, housekeeping/facilities information.

Delegate report: World Service Conference (please see attached)

Barbara H. shared the story of her journey getting to conference; gratitude for love, faith, and support; impressions of Stepping Stones; and opportunities for growth.

Barbara H. described business at the conference (please see attachment), including:

- WSO website changes (no longer requires password)
- Social media protocol discussion (currently troubleshooting issues of anonymity in Facebook groups)
- 6 Alateen chat meetings
- Changes to WSO email news protocol (“In the Loop”)
- Area approval via Group Records Coordinator required to make changes to individual group status, etc., via website (registering new group, changing existing group, etc.)
- Challenges for rural groups
- AA members wanting to be involved in service: looked at structure as it stands (pgs. 86-89 in service manual, voting positions cannot be held by dual members), and will be discussing further next year
- Group autonomy vs. Al-Anon or AA as a whole (toxic group): WSO cannot remove a group from listing, but Areas can decide to remove groups from list and then ask WSO to remove
- Addressing issue of members involved in service, membership aging and younger members not wanting to serve, etc.
- Task forces: Facing our Biases inventory (attached); parents and grandparents brochure now available; new intimacy book will be available in February
- Literature committee developing “Just for Tonight” bookmark using more inclusive language
- Area contributions to WSO (see attached)
- Top selling books (see attached)

- WSO budget (see attached)
- “Road Trip” (see attached); CT would like to partner with RI to submit a bid for 2019 somewhere where members from both Areas could attend-e.g. Mystic, CT
- WSO updates: improved investment performance, WSO fully staffed, etc.
- See attachments for other useful resources from WSO

Area Business

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the November 4, 2017 minutes were passed.

Fall Assembly update: District 3 will host on October 20th at Emmanuel Church, 42 Dearborn St. in Newport.

Area Treasurer gave her report (see attached)

- Make sure groups put name and number on donation checks when they send them to the Area office
- RI Area will be doing our appeal in September

District Reports:

- District 2: going steady, having regular meetings with participation
- District 3: main work has been to secure Assembly location; some decline in participation
- District 1: good participation, meeting regularly; have been planning and carrying out fellowship events open to all Al-Anon members in the state; have been discussing sponsorship at recent meetings and when they have ideas they do/will pitch them to the Area for assemblies, workshops, etc.

Literature Update:

Ann-Marie announced that she brought copies of the 2018-2021 Service Manuals and the Al-Anon/Alateen Groups At Work for people to purchase. The parents and grandparents pamphlet is currently on back-order, but should be available in next few weeks.

Service Shares and Open Service Positions:

- Heather shared her experience, strength, and hope as past Public Outreach Coordinator
- Deb shared her experience, strength, and hope as past Secretary, Literature Coordinator, and Lifelines Editor
- Other member in attendance shared their service experiences

Breakout Session – Attracting Members to Service

Groups broke out to discuss a series of questions inviting thoughts and suggestions regarding attracting members to service.

Some ideas generated by groups:

- Fellowship events combined with service education – e.g. fellowship event with specific topics, traditions, to discuss; dinner party where current and former Area members talk about service; table at Workshop where current and former Area members are available to talk about their experience/answer questions
- Group inventory at the area level

- Service sponsorship/mentorship; sponsors encouraging sponsees to take on service positions and/or modeling behavior
- Using service as a weekly meeting topic and sharing experience, strength, and hope /program growth as a result of service
- Asking people personally to consider service, letting them know they'd be good at it AND that they would be well-supported/others will help/what resources are available to them
- Having small service positions at the group level so members get a taste of service and the “leap” isn't so great to the area level
- Ensuring that there is no appearance of cliquishness among Area-e.g. only friends asking friends to get involved in service
- Ensuring communication between Area and groups so all members know what Area service is/entails
- More specific job descriptions, so members understand both that they can make a position their own but also a general sense of time commitment and responsibilities (people can't make a commitment if they don't know what the commitment is)
- Asking ourselves what groups don't know/making sure we explain things at the group level-e.g. the vernacular language, abbreviations, acronyms, etc.
- Potential of combining positions but dividing tasks
- Not combining positions to ensure more people involved in service and/or each role is manageable
- Having fewer voting roles means more power to fewer people (but also true if positions aren't filled)
- Technology might make meeting “attendance possible” and/or more desirable
- “Interning” open positions or positions turning over sometime in the near future
- Potential stigma on empty roles; consider “marketing”/“sales pitch”
- Having Area officers/coordinators come out to groups to talk about service, answer questions, etc.
- “Planting a seed” about service positions in advance rather than putting someone on the spot, so they have some time to think about it

A motion was duly made, seconded, and passed: To create a task force that will use ideas brainstormed today in re: the attached questions and bring back an action plan for vote at the next assembly.

GRs volunteering to serve on task force: Kat M., Shawn J., Nel P., Susan H., Cindy B., (Ann-Marie will be a liaison to see if Toby F. would be willing/interested).

Assembly Action Items: voting on open positions and affirmation of interim officers

- Alternate Delegate was not filled
- Kat M. was voted in as Secretary
- Archives Coordinator was not filled
- Forum Coordinator was not filled
- Public Outreach Coordinator was not filled
- Website Coordinator was not filled
- Ashley B. and Joe G. were affirmed as Alateen Co-Coordinators
- Chris L. was affirmed as Group Records Coordinator

Asked a couple questions from the “Ask It Basket”

- WSO's stance on chanting at the end of meetings. They encourage us to use the Al-Anon declaration, no specific policy

- Newcomers mentioned in opening (does WSO discourage singling them out/asking if there are any). Delegate will check, but doesn't think WSO has any policy

Played “Do You Know?” (Al-Anon trivia)

Barbara H. asked questions about things she learned at the World Service Conference.

Closing

Motion was made to adjourn at 3:30 p.m., so carried.

The meeting closed with the Serenity Prayer and the Al-Anon Declaration.

Much thanks to District 1 for planning a great Spring Assembly.

Respectfully submitted,

Ashley B.