Voting members (GRs and Proxies):
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)
  o Make sure groups put name and number on donation checks when they send them to the Area office
  o 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

Asking 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.