



# Lifelines

The Newsletter of the RI AFG, August 2007

## September is National Recovery Month

by Steve C, Public Outreach Coordinator

September is National Recovery Month, during which Al-Anon groups and individual members traditionally do some bit of Twelfth-step work. Public Outreach (PO) is very important to me for a couple of reasons. The first is rather selfish: I want this program that has given me so much to endure. I want to be able to continue to come to meetings and have this wonderful program available to me. The second reason is a little more magnanimous: I want the program available to those who have yet to arrive, those that have not found their way into the halls. I know what it is like to live in the disease without a program and wouldn't wish it on anyone. The more I give away what I have, the more I keep.

My public outreach work is pretty subtle, I think. I don't have any major campaigns or advertising going, no big projects. I try to attract others by living the program. I try to be an example of how wonderful life can be despite the hardships, difficulties, tragedies, and heartaches that life presents.

This past spring I enlisted help from Lynn D to design and print a beautiful, colorful, three-sided display describing what Al-Anon is all about. The display made its debut at the AA Convention in Newport and received great reviews. Gerry L has also been very willing and helpful in manning "public outreach opportunities" to hand out literature, answer questions, and keep us front and center. I was asked by the Paths to Recovery Group (Tuesday night, Middletown) to speak to their group about Public Outreach earlier this year. Their attendance was down and they were looking for ideas on how to get the word out and beef up their meeting. I am grateful to all for the opportunities and for their help.

### *Ideas for Public Outreach*

There is a book called *The Best of Public Outreach* (P-90), a "how-to workbook" for Public Outreach activities. It is a great reference and guide for anyone who is interested in this line of service and is available from the Area office. There is a wealth of information and ideas in this booklet for PO at the Group, District, or Area level, or even on an individual basis.

The media is a huge resource that is largely untapped. I have done little in this Area except to post information in my local newspaper regarding meeting times and the Area phone number. There are public service announcements available for TV and radio from WSO.

I would like to see the "Have you been Affected by Someone Else's Drinking?" poster posted in libraries, hospitals, doctor's offices, counseling offices, shelters, churches, etc., along with literature and/or meeting lists and

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*The more I give away  
what I have, the more I keep.*

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## Little-known Literature

### *Part 2 of a Monthly Series on the June 2007 Assembly*

*by Leah D, Literature Coordinator*

#### ***The Next Area Assembly Is November 17th***

What issues is your group/district facing? What would you like to hear more about/discuss at the next assembly? Tell your GR or DR, or contact the office and let us know. Your discussion topic may make it on the agenda!

#### ***Giving Back***

We have the funds, the meeting places, interested schools, and kids looking for meetings. All we're missing are **Alateen Sponsors!** Attend the next Informational Sponsors Meeting to learn more (see last page for details). You must have at least 2 years in the program and have a Sponsor to be an Alateen Sponsor. Dual members are also eligible.

One of the benefits of attending Assembly is that Group Representatives (GRs) and other attendees can peruse the Literature Table. As the Area's Literature Coordinator, part of my duties includes promoting the use of Conference Approved Literature (CAL)—and one of the ways to do this is by setting up a Literature Table at Assembly. I was also given a few minutes during the Assembly to talk about CAL.

At this Assembly, the Literature Table included all the available Al-Anon books (both the familiar and new) as well as a pamphlet rack. The rack was filled with a selection of service-related and little-known pamphlets. GRs could browse through the books and could take a copy of each of the pamphlets for free.

For me, one of the coolest aspects of being the Area Literature Coordinator has been getting to spend time at the Al-Anon Office, where we keep copies of all the available literature, including lots of pamphlets I had never seen at my meetings. Getting to speak at the Assembly gave me the opportunity to share some of those pamphlets with the GRs and other Area trusted servants:

#### ***Al-Anon Spoken Here (P-53)***

This pamphlet discusses why and how we keep the focus on ourselves and the Al-Anon program during Al-Anon meetings. It discusses how we keep the focus on Al-Anon by discussing Al-Anon related topics, such as the Steps, Traditions, slogans, the Serenity Prayer, anonymity, and sponsorship. It also explains why we try to keep the focus on our own recovery (and not the alcoholic) and why we don't discuss outside issues—like therapy and professional terminology—and outside literature. Additionally, the pamphlet explains why dual members are often asked not to openly reveal that they are members of other 12-step programs during Al-Anon meetings. Finally, the pamphlet suggests steps members can take in their own groups if they feel their meeting is being diluted by outside issues. This pamphlet is \$0.35 each.

#### ***Sponsorship, What It's All About (P-31)***

This pamphlet has a question and answer format. It describes what sponsorship is ("a mutual and confidential sharing between two Al-Anon or Alateen members"). It discusses frequently asked questions about sponsorship from two perspectives. There is a section for members (newcomers or long-timers) who are looking for a Sponsor or want to know more about how a Sponsor could help them. There is also a section for members who have questions about becoming a Sponsor. This pamphlet is \$0.35 each.

#### ***The Al-Anon Focus (P-45)***

The Al-Anon Focus pamphlet is for Al-Anon and Alateen members who are also recovering alcoholics. An increasing number of AA members are turning to Al-Anon for help with problem drinkers in their life. This pamphlet discusses how the Al-Anon focus is different from the AA focus and how working both Programs can be of help to members of AA. This pamphlet is \$0.25 each.

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## Alateen Spoken Here

### Choices

Kimberly

Wisconsin

Who I am and what I become are determined by my decisions. There are a variety of choices available—good, bad, right, wrong; each choice has a consequence. I am 15 and have discovered that my choices forever change my life and the lives of those I care about.

Two years ago my life spiraled out of control and became unmanageable. My health deteriorated to the point that I couldn't control my thoughts or even my bodily functions. During this time, the alcoholism in my family rapidly progressed and my life crashed and burned. I was scared and made a decision that changed my life forever—I chose to cut myself as a way of coping. Bad decision! I felt I had entered a black hole from which I couldn't escape. I discovered I had much in common with the alcoholics in my family.

My Alateen family helped me realize that I couldn't control the alcoholic. I didn't cause it; they made the choice to start drinking, just as I chose to cut myself. As some alcoholics do, I reached out for help. Good decision! I dealt with issues I didn't realize I had and learned healthy ways to deal with stress.

Thanks to a simple decision to get help by regularly attending meetings, I am now living a healthy and happy life.

Joe

Minnesota

I once thought my life wasn't worth living. I couldn't let go of my obsession with my Dad's drinking. If I hadn't gotten help I probably would have become very much like him.

My Dad has a disease—he can't change that fact and no matter what I do, neither can I; so I made the choice to forgive him. I am thankful for Alateen; it has made such a difference in my life!

Wanda

Missouri

Before Alateen, I felt my life was messed up; why not mess it up even more? I made poor choices to try to escape the effects of living with alcoholism. I even tried to commit suicide.

The program helps me make better choices, especially concerning my attitude. Through Alateen, I have discovered who I am and how to make good choices.

### *Alateen Turns 50 This Year!*

Are you an Alateen, former Alateen, or Alateen sponsor? We would love to hear your reflections as Alateen turns 50. What has this program meant to you?

Please e-mail your submissions to Deb E. at [destre99@yahoo.com](mailto:destre99@yahoo.com), or drop off or mail them to the Al-Anon office (see last page).

Please provide your first name and/or the town or group to which you belong, unless you wish to remain anonymous.

### *Service Has Taught Me...*

I am humbled daily by things that I am learning about myself and how lucky I am to have found this program. My life is so different today, and how grateful I am to serve and grow in this capacity. I have learned more about empathy towards others, that not everyone works their program the same, and that we are all in different places in our recovery and to lead in that capacity has been the biggest challenge to me. My HP put me in these service roles for a reason. Today I am learning to balance my role with my defects of character and my experience, strength, and hope.

I was told when I started this service journey that I should hang on and enjoy the ride. Well, I feel I have been given a new chapter in my recovery. I am using service tools, meetings, Area meetings, Committee meetings, and studying our *Service Manual* as a whole new extension of my recovery—Tools that were always there, but I didn't know how to use. Today my awareness is there and I am using them in my life daily.

I encourage anyone with a strong interest in studying more about how this program works to get into service in some capacity. There is so much we can do, both alone and together, to keep our program alive! Service is just another expression of love for this program!

~ Barbara M

### *What Has Service Taught You?*

Please e-mail your sharing to Deb E. at [destre99@yahoo.com](mailto:destre99@yahoo.com), or drop off or mail them to the Area office (see last page).

Please provide your first name and/or the town or group to which you belong, unless you wish to remain anonymous.

## Public Outreach

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the Area phone number.

AI-Anon "business cards" are another great way to get the word out, perhaps with a slogan and the Area phone number on it. I know PO coordinators in another state who give these cards to their local police departments to hand out when answering domestic violence calls. It has been a huge success. I would like to see the business card idea get up and running. Anyone with graphic design abilities that could put this together would be welcomed. The PO budget can handle the printing.

Alateen literature can be left in high schools with guidance counselors or in student lounges. The list goes on and on and is limited only by one's imagination.

I think it is worth mentioning that my position is Public Outreach COORDINATOR. COORDINATOR being the key word. I COORDINATE PO efforts, I don't do them all by myself. What I have learned, or am learning, is how to ask for help. If I don't want to do this by myself, I have to ask. There is far too much for one person and if I just ask, I will get help.

## Literature

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### *Service-related Pamphlets*

I also shared several service-related pamphlets with the group. Joy of Service (S-57) is a free pamphlet that discusses what members give and receive when they serve as GRs and District Representatives (DRs). Service Sponsorship (P-88) discusses what service sponsorship is, how to get (or become) a service sponsor, and the benefits of service sponsorship. This pamphlet is \$0.30 each.

Links of Service (S-28) is also free. It describes the links between AI-Anon members and AI-Anon World Service. These links include: doing service at the local level, becoming a GR, attending the Area Assembly, and bringing the news back to our groups. At the Assembly, a Delegate is elected (every 3 years), and he or she travels to the World Service Conference. Then the Delegate brings information back to the Area Assembly—and the GRs bring that information back to the groups!

All the pamphlets above are available at the RI AI-Anon Office.

## Treasury Report

The following is a listing of the donations to the Area Office for July.

When sending donations, please include full name and full group #, which can be located on any meeting list.

To speed check processing, you may mail checks directly to me at:

Valerie Bacon  
68 Elmgrove Avenue  
Smithfield, RI 02917

Peace in the Program,  
*Valerie, Area Treasurer*

Group #	Group	Area	Alateen
2-00628515	HUGS	\$25.00	
2-502037	Serenity on the Hill	\$20.00	
2-503064	Step Up to Serenity	\$10.00	
3-012435	Tues. Night Bristol	\$30.00	
4-025797	New Beginning	\$40.00	\$40.00
3-0026686	Sat. Night Live	\$100.00	
3-0507902	???Not on the List???	\$25.00	
1-012463	Fri. Night Serenity	\$50.00	
4-036734	Living Recovery	\$30.00	\$25.00
2-040889	Let Go & Let God	\$29.00	
54469	How It Works (closed)	\$78.25	
2-037296	Change What You Can	\$25.00	\$25.00
3-050750	There Is Hope	\$75.00	
5-012437	Charlestown New Life	\$40.00	\$40.00
	<b>July Totals</b>	<b>\$577.25</b>	<b>\$130.00</b>

### Meetings Have Moved

- ▲ Living Recovery in Coventry still meets every Monday at 10:00 AM at St. John & Paul Church on Main Street, but has moved to the rectory conference room. This group does not meet on Monday holidays.
- ▲ The Wednesday night Let Go and Let God Al-Anon *and* Alateen meetings in Lincoln now meet at Christ Church, 1643 Lonsdale Ave. in Lincoln. We can use all the support we can get! Moving is difficult!

### Meeting Needs Support

- ▲ The Thursday morning Step up to Serenity AFG at St. Paul Ev. Lutheran Church in Warwick is struggling and could use support. Please consider attending an extra meeting or two as a form of service.
- ▲ Tuesday night Detachment with Love, which meets at Roger Williams, needs support.

### Meeting Has Closed

*The Bristol Friday Night Columban Fathers Al-Anon Meeting has officially closed.*

## Upcoming Events

### August

#### RI Al-Anon Fall Workshop Committee Meeting

*Wed, August 29, 6:30 PM*

*Area Office, 106 Rolfe Street, Cranston*

Save the date! Our workshop will be held on Saturday, November 3<sup>rd</sup> on Butler Campus in Providence. If you would like to help out, please attend the committee meeting or call the office and leave a message for Marie G. or Jenny N.

### September

#### Alateen Informational Sponsors Meeting

*Sat., Sept. 8, 1:00 PM*

*Area Office, 106 Rolfe Street, Cranston*

This is the third in a series of quarterly informational sponsors meetings. A speaker will walk us through the mandatory reporting process. All Al-Anon members who are currently involved with Alateen are strongly encouraged to attend, and anyone interested in volunteering is welcome!

#### Area Meeting

*Tues, Sept. 18, 7:00 PM*

*Area Office, 106 Rolfe Street, Cranston*

If you are interested in participating in service, please attend!

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#### RI Al-Anon Family Groups Area Office/Literature Distribution Center (LDC)

106 Rolfe Street, Cranston, RI 02910

*Hours:* Please call the office

*Phone/Fax:* 401-781-0044

*E-mail:* RI\_Al-Anon@hotmail.com

*Web:* www.RIAFG.org

An area newsletter is a vital link in keeping groups and members informed. The purposes of *Lifelines* are to: encourage attendance at service events; communicate local, area, and Al-Anon Information Service news; and attract Al-Anon members into service.

*Lifelines* submissions may be sent to [destre99@yahoo.com](mailto:destre99@yahoo.com) or mailed to the office at the address above.

The deadline for the next issue is **September 13**. If you wish to receive *Lifelines* and other Area news via e-mail, please e-mail [destre99@yahoo.com](mailto:destre99@yahoo.com) and type "Mailing List" in the Subject line.