



# Lifelines

The Newsletter of the RI AFG, January 2008

## How Al-Anon Works: The Links of Service

By Missy B.

The links of service are a vital part of how Al-Anon Family Groups function as a whole. The groups help and serve members; members, in turn, help and serve the group. They do this by being as informed as possible and by using the *Service Manual* (sent to every registered group with a current mailing address).

Each link of service reports to the next, starting with the groups and ending with the Area World Service Committee, where decisions are made for Rhode Island Al-Anon Family Groups as a whole. Links help the Area to be aware of everything that's happening, because for individuals to try to undertake that would be almost impossible; with each link working, information can flow smoothly up and down the chain.

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To learn more about the links of service, check out the pamphlet *Links of Service* (S-28, FREE!) and your group's Service Manual.

All of this literature is available at the Area Office (see last page).

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### Inside This Issue

- 1 How Al-Anon Works: Links of Service
- 2 Assembly Reports
- 3 Alateen Spoken Here
- 5 Treasury Report
- 6 Upcoming Events

### What are the Links of Service?

Each group elects a Group Representative (GR) and an Alternate Group Representative (see the *Service Manual* for a description of each job and its duties). That Group Representative attends District meetings to gather information from a District Representative (DR). (Rhode Island is broken up into 5 Districts.) Group Representatives then bring the information back to their group.

*continued on page 4*

## Assembly Reports

### *Part 1 of a Monthly Series on the November 2007 Assembly*

#### ***The Next Area Assembly Is June 14th***

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 voice is important! Make sure your group is represented!

#### ***International Convention***

The 2008 Al-Anon International Convention, called "Connecting People—Around the World—Al-Anon Family Groups," will be held July 4–6, 2008 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

All are welcome to attend the July 3<sup>rd</sup> service workshops. Each Area and country is represented in a parade of countries! Let's stand together and show the world who we are and spread our love for this fellowship to the world.

Be sure to register early! Hotel and camping accommodations are available. Registration material is available through your GR and online at: <http://www.al-anon.alateen.org/members/2008int.php>.

#### **Assembly Summary**

An Assembly is our opportunity to discuss and vote on issues that are important to the groups, hear what's going on at the Area (state) and World Service Office (WSO) levels, and to discuss our plans or needs.

The last Area Assembly was held on Saturday, November 17 at St. Joseph's Hospital. Area World Service Committee (AWSC) members, Group Representatives (GRs), and interested members of our RI Al-Anon Family Groups (that's you!) attended.

Agenda topics included:

- ▲ Breakout session on shortcomings and strengths of our meetings (see below)
- ▲ Area officer reports (will be published in future issues of *Lifelines*)
- ▲ Delegate's report on sponsorship, the newcomer's welcome, the new guidelines for cooperation with AA, a WSC Question Brainstorm session (articles on these topics will be published in future issues of *Lifelines*), and the 2008 International Conference (see sidebar)
- ▲ Closing session on key take-aways

#### **Group Representative Breakout Session**

During the first morning session, Group Representatives broke into groups to discuss the shortcomings and strengths of our meetings. We talked about what is going on in our meetings, where we are strong, and where we need each other:

Group Strengths:

- ▲ Use of service manual
- ▲ Rotate service positions
- ▲ Education of guidelines, traditions, concepts
- ▲ Use of links of service
- ▲ Using group conscience to resolve problems
- ▲ Temporary sponsors
- ▲ Have people volunteer for newcomers meeting will improve the chance of people coming back

Shortcomings:

- ▲ Lack of attendance
- ▲ Use of AA literature
- ▲ Dominance by "old-timers"
- ▲ Not feeling heard (having a voice)
- ▲ Not aware of "tools" of the program
- ▲ Lack of sponsorship
- ▲ Old timers are leaving the program

## Alateen Spoken Here

### *Sharings on the Serenity Prayer*

**Lindsay, CO**

Accepting alcoholism as a family disease can be a difficult task. Finding peace of mind after I accept the disease can also be hard. The Serenity Prayer can make those things much easier.

"God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change..." I know I can't change the alcoholics' disease and that I need to accept the fact that they are suffering from alcoholism.

"...courage to change the things I can..." I know I can change my attitude and the way I handle situations in my life.

"...and wisdom to know the difference." I know that I have choices that I have to make. A choice that changed my life was coming to Alateen. When someone's attitude or their actions frustrate me, I sit back, breathe, and say the Serenity Prayer. This allows me to react to this situation in a more peaceful, healthy way.

The things I can change are my attitudes and my choices. When I think about my week or certain problems I've had, I don't think in such a negative way anymore.

Thank God for the Serenity Prayer!

**Nick, CO**

The Serenity Prayer tells me that my parents' drinking isn't my fault and that I can't control it. I can change the way I'm thinking about the alcoholic. I will have to look at the situation in a different way. I think about how uncomfortable it is, and try to find out what the best thing about it is.

### *Younger Members*

**Rolf, age 12, Oregon**

The Serenity Prayer can help me realize that I need to move on when it says: "accept the things I cannot change." It means I just can't stay in that spot, I need to move on, change or help what I can, and stop dwelling on the past. Where it says: "courage to change the things I can" means to me that I need to go and do something good for myself or others.

### *Please Read at All Alateen Meetings*

Attention Alateens: This page is for you! Alateen is a vital part of RI Al-Anon Family Groups and, as such, should be represented in its newsletter.

If you are an Alateen who likes to write or express yourself artistically, please consider submitting something for the next issue, either on your own or as a group. Here are just a few ideas, but feel free to come up with your own creative contribution:

- ▲ Write a couple of paragraphs on an Alateen topic or on your experience in the program in general
- ▲ Create a piece of artwork (program-related, of course)
- ▲ Create a word search using words that relate to a particular topic

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.

### *Meeting Needs Support*

Do you know how the Eleventh Concept applies to our everyday lives? Do you know what an LDC is? Do you know how to place principles above personalities?

Neither do we.

Come learn with us at the Friday night "When I Got Busy, I Got Better" Concept and Service study meeting. We meet Friday nights at 7:30 PM at Bradley Hospital.

## Links of Service

*continued from page 1*

The District Representative is a link to the Area World Service Committee (AWSC). He or she attends Area (state-level) meetings to gather information to bring back to the District.

The Area World Service Committee receives information by electing and sending a Delegate or an Alternate Delegate to the World Service Conference (WSC), which happens once a year, usually in April.

The Delegate is the Area's link to the World Service Office (WSO) and the World Service Committee. He or she receives lots of information about Al-Anon Family Groups to be passed on at the Area Meetings and at the Area Assemblies, where Area World Service Committee, District, and Group Representatives meet to exchange information with each other. The Delegate is also responsible for carrying the voice and ideas of our Area back to the World Service Committee.

### *Using the Links of Service*

These links can be used in many ways. For instance, when a District undertakes a Public Outreach project, it contacts the Area Public Outreach Coordinator, to inform them of what the District will be doing, so that double-headed management is avoided.

Links are also used when cooperating with Alcoholics Anonymous (AA). Letters are written to AA asking for their participation in Al-Anon Family Group events, usually by the Area AA Liaison or the Public Outreach Coordinator. AA contacts Al-Anon Family Groups to invite their participation in events as well. Information would be sent to the AA Liaison, who then reports to the Area, which in turn can pass that information on to the District Representatives, Group Representatives, and groups. Areas need to be informed and the best way to do that is by using all links accessible to them.

Groups that have questions or encounter problems can use the links by using their Group Representatives to help them use the *Service Manual*, Traditions, and Concepts. A group can ask a District Representative to attend their meeting, if necessary, or ask their Area for help, and finally, if all else fails, the World Service Office.

The links of service mean many things to me: a sense of accountability to one another, while allowing each individual to do their job; responsibility to each other, our groups, and the program as a whole; to know that we don't have to "do it alone" anymore; we are able to use the links by contacting and working with others who have come before us in our service positions. The links have helped me see just how Al-Anon functions as a whole, from the WSO to my home group in Rhode Island. The depth of the links unravels a little more for me every time I use them and I seem to find more and more links available, just waiting to be used as I continue on my journey through recovery.

## Treasury Report

Group #	Group	Area	Alateen
2-012435	Courage to Change	\$50.00	
4-064957	Freedom Group	\$20.00	
2-502037	Step up to Serenity	\$10.00	
1-504019	Bradley Hosp	\$25.00	
3-002668	Hope for Today	\$40.00	
5-012431	Ashaway Al-Anon	\$20.00	
3-0026686	Fri Night Live	\$40.00	\$40.00
3-0502202	Free to Be Me	\$35.00	
2-040889	Let Go & Let God	\$35.30	
5-503443	Essential Steps & Trad.	\$25.00	\$25.00
4-0012475	Cran/War Daytime	\$25.00	
1-024249	Hope Step	\$25.00	
3-012434	Bristol Sunday Night	\$40.00	
3-0501146	A New Beginning	\$50.00	
5-064936	Westerly Christ Church	\$25.00	
05-012437	Charlestown New Life	\$50.00	\$50.00
2-0062815	HUGS	\$25.00	
3-012435	Tue Nite Bristol	\$50.00	
2-012435	Courage to change	\$25.00	\$25.00
3-030119	Mon. Morn. Al-anon	\$50.00	
2-503064	Step up to Serenity	\$20.00	
1-012463	Fri Night Serenity	\$25.00	
<b>October Totals</b>		<b>\$710.30</b>	<b>\$ 140.00</b>
2-502037	Serenity On the Hill	\$10.00	
4-035711	Self Discovery Mon W. W	\$25.00	
1-045173	Higher Powered Lunch	\$50.00	\$50.00
4-012443	Fri. Night E.G.	\$50.00	\$25.00
2-502037	Serenity On the Hill	\$30.00	
1-0026403	Sun Evening al-anon	\$125.00	
<b>November Totals</b>		<b>\$290.00</b>	<b>\$75.00</b>
5-053697	Open Doors	\$25.00	
3-050750	There Is Hope	\$50.00	
5-012437	Charlestown New Life	\$50.00	\$50.00
5-063170	Butterflies are Free	\$35.00	\$35.00
3-012435	Courage to change	\$50.00	
3-065654	Paths to Recovery	\$100.00	
3-501401		\$10.00	
2-012455	Courage to change	\$25.00	
2-0040461	Keep it Simple	\$25.00	
<b>December Totals</b>		<b>\$370.00</b>	<b>\$85.00</b>

This is a listing of the donations to the Area Office for October, November, and December. Total donations for the year were \$6,106.

Please remember to put the group name and entire group number on all checks when sending in donations. Your group number is listed on the meeting list.

Peace in the Program,  
Valerie, Area Treasurer

## Upcoming Events

### January

#### Friday Night East Greenwich AFG

*Fri., January 25, 8:00 PM*

*St. Luke's Episcopal Church, 2nd Floor Auditorium*

*99 Pierce Street, East Greenwich*

Join us in celebrating our 25th Anniversary. It'll be an evening in recovery with speakers, fellowship, and food.

#### Tuesday Morning Cranston/Warwick Day 24<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

*Tues., January 29, 10:00 AM*

*Edgewood Congregational Church (basement), 1788 Broad Street, Cranston*

Please join us for speakers, raffles, food, and fellowship as our group celebrates 24 years of recovery!

### February

#### Wednesday Night Gift of Hope Anniversary

*Thurs. (not Wed.), February 7, 7:00–8:30 PM*

*Rochambeau Library, 708 Hope St., Providence*

AA and AI-Anon Speakers, Raffle, Fellowship, Refreshments.

Potluck—Bring food or soft drinks if you wish!

#### Sponsorship Workshop

##### Hosted by Paths to Recovery

*Tues., February 19, 6:30–9:00 PM*

*St. Columba's Parish Hall, 55 Vaucluse Ave., Middletown*

Our Delegate, Barbara M, will report on the concerns, visions for, and ideas about sponsorship brought to the World Service Conference. All attendees will receive the new bookmark on sponsorship. Bring your sponsor, sponsee, service sponsor along! There will be refreshments and literature available for purchase. *(This is in place of our regular meeting format.)*

#### Area Meeting

*Tues, February 26, 7:00 PM*

*Area Office, 106 Rolfe Street, Cranston*

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

#### Friday Night Serenity AFG 27<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

*Fri., February 29, 7:30–9:00 PM*

*Ray Hall, Butler Hospital, 2nd floor, 345 Blackstone Blvd, Providence*

Refreshments, speakers, raffle, and literature. Potluck—Bring your favorite dish!

JANUARY 2008						
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24	25	26	27	28	29	

### RI AI-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\_AI-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 AI-Anon Information Service news; and attract AI-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 **February 21**.