



# Lifelines

The Newsletter of the RI AFG, July 2007

## How Many Members Does It Take to Create CAL?

*by Barbara M, RI (Area 4) Delegate and Member of the WSO Literature II Committee*

### *The World Service Conference Literature Committee*

All Delegates, when elected, are asked to serve on one of the many Committees the World Service Organization (WSO) needs to run Al-Anon Family Groups. I was asked to serve on the Literature II Committee, which recently released the pilot of e-CAL and addressed members' interest in a publication on loss and grieving with the publication of *Opening Our Hearts, Transforming Our Losses*.

The members of the Committee contribute to the writing, editing, reviewing, voting, and approving of submissions; ensuring that our literature is current; that member suggestions are heard; that motions to conference in April were made when appropriate; and ensuring our Traditions are met with each piece of literature we are working on...And these assignments come monthly! I joke with some Delegates because their assignments aren't as demanding; but, in perspective, when I think about how important this Committee's responsibilities are, it's amazing! Imagine being asked to serve in this capacity and think about what is good for Al-Anon as a whole—not just RI, or my home group. It's about the big picture and they are asking my opinion! It is something I take seriously, and it has caused me to study my *Service Manual*, use my service and conference sponsors more, and incorporate our Concepts into my life in a really different way.

### *Creating Opening Our Hearts, Transforming Our Losses*

There are a lot of steps, people, and moving parts involved in creating a publication like *Opening Our Hearts*. For example, a member submits a request for new literature about a particular topic. The Communications, Literature, Department reviews the topic to determine if it has ever been discussed at past World Service Conferences (WSCs) and provides Delegates with history from the archives maintained as WSO. The Committee reviews the request, along with the historical background or reference material, and decides whether the request requires making a minor change, creating a new piece of Conference Approved Literature (CAL), or moving the discussion to a more appropriate committee. Delegates from throughout the US and Canada make these decisions! Each Delegate is responsible for ensuring that our Steps, Traditions, Concepts, and Conference procedures and policies are adhered to in this process. We discuss at length electronically, via conference calls, and in person when Conference is in session.

*continued on page 4*

---

*I hear my voice in those books, along with people I have met along my 17-year recovery path. I have been influenced by so many people who came before my beginnings in this program, and today I am still learning from the newcomers, people starting off in service, and my old-timer friends. I feel blessed to be given this gift.*

---

### Inside This Issue

- 1 How Many Members Does It Take to Create CAL?
- 2 Staying Focused and Making Good Decisions
- 3 Alateen Spoken Here
- 5 Treasury Report
- 6 Upcoming Events

### *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*

RI AFG needs a new Webmaster. The Webmaster keeps the RI AFG Web site updated by uploading the monthly *Lifelines* newsletter and revised meeting schedules, and adding area news, service opportunities, and events from *Lifelines*. It's not very time-consuming—only takes about 1–2 hours/month at most. Responsibilities also include renewing the Web site each year and getting reimbursed by the Area Treasurer. Software like Dream weaver is recommended to update and upload. The previous Webmaster is available as a mentor.

### *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.

## Staying Focused and Making Good Decisions

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

*by Liz P, Area Chair*

I have been asked to write up my thoughts about the Area Assembly held last month on June 16th. It's never easy for me to write my thoughts about anything, since my mind moves so fast that, by the time I write this sentence, I've already raced ahead three more thoughts.

...Which leads me to my first thought: focus. I feel it is my purpose as Area Chair to help the Area members focus on the topic of the moment. I know how easy it is for me to get side tracked, going from one idea to the next, only to lose sight of the reality that's right in front of me. Knowing myself helps me to recognize when others are doing the same and gives me several opportunities for recovery. I connect with these people, recognize us all as human, see the situation with love and compassion, then gently remind us all of the original matter at hand. It feels good to be in the moment, interacting with like-minded people who are all trying to take their recovery to the next level through service.

Our Area Delegate, Barbara M, had suggested breakout sessions for the Assembly, where we were grouped together by different service aspects to discuss our roles. This is a regular practice at the World Service Conference, where a great deal of information is exchanged, so we decided to try it. During the morning session, we broke out to discuss our service roles and responsibilities. The three groups were Group Representatives, Area Coordinators (Literature, Public Outreach, etc.), and Area Officers, which was my group. It was, in this little breakout session, where I realized my "focus" role. In that moment, all I needed to focus on was what I contribute by my position—not anyone else's. When we returned to the main room as an Area, all I needed to do was listen to the realizations of others. And what an experience that was! I heard ideas I could not possibly have thought of while indulging in my own racing thoughts.

I'm really enjoying the Area Chair position. Not only does this position keep me "in the moment," but I've learned so much about working together to make good decisions. Wise decisions are not made by reacting to a dilemma in a hurry. The AI-Anon approach of "don't just do something—sit there!" could also be called Knowledge Based Decision Making (KBDM). With KBDM, we gather as much information as we can about a topic before we begin our discussions. Then, we practice listening to the diverse perspectives and opinions of our members. The process sometimes takes a while, but only then can we make a motion and ultimately make an informed decision that we can all be comfortable with, thus uniting our fellowship even further.

My only hope for the next Assembly is that more members will see the benefit of attending this important gathering. Out of our Area's 58 groups, only 10 Group Representatives were present. It is my hope that our members realize that Service is not an obligation, but an opportunity.

## Alateen Spoken Here

### *If It's Broke Don't Fix It Workshop*

Hope

After many years of attempting to fix my family, I had to surrender. I could not fix them; the job was too big. I started to realize that the job was never intended to be mine. The best I could do to help those I so dearly loved was to open my heart to God and my eyes to the world around me. It was from doing this that I learned and grew. I have been able to love them and let them go.

Casey

If it's broke, don't fix it,  
 It's up to the alcoholic to decide  
 Whether they want to float away  
 Or whether they want to glide.  
 The choice is theirs, don't take it away.  
 If it's broke, don't fix it,  
 Let them do their job,  
 For they're the ones with the problem,  
 Let go and Let God!  
 It's theirs to fix, not yours or mine  
 One step at a time.

*Used with permission from Alateen Talk, Vol. 41, No. 4.*

### *Calling All Alateens*

This space is for you! 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.

### *Alateen Summer Session*

Alateen meetings in the schools will be closing soon for the summer. In the meantime, Alateens can find an extra meeting on Tuesday nights at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in East Greenwich, from 7:30–9:00 PM. This group will meet through August, until school starts up again

## Literature

*continued from page 1*

We received over 400 submissions for *Opening Our Hearts!* The WSO Literature department passed on those sharings that met the Committee's criteria (400 words or less, has an Al-Anon message, etc.). We all worked together. This book took 2 years to finish, and I understand that is fast for us. It was a lot of work, with demanding review cycles!

### Service Love

Serving at the World Service level on one of our Committees, in my opinion, is an honor. I did not choose this Committee—it sort of chose me. The e-CAL motion, proposal, and work were very interesting to me, since my private career is in information technology and large computer systems engineering. That was fun; and meeting and serving with members from around the country is fascinating.

I have done things I never thought I was capable of—for example, helping design the e-CAL system and leaving my words in our CAL. I hear my voice in those books, along with people I have met along my 17-year recovery path. I have been influenced by so many people who came before my beginnings in this program, and today I am still learning from the newcomers, people starting off in service, and my old-timer friends. I feel blessed to be given this gift.

I am humbled daily by things that I am learning and seeing about myself and how lucky I have been to found this program. My life is so different today, and I am grateful to serve and grow in this capacity. This is a journey that has allowed me to show my love for this program and return a smidgen of what I have received. I will pray to continue on in service in some capacity, to do my part to ensure that when anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, the hand of Al-Anon and Alateen will always be there, and let it begin with me!

With humbling gratitude for serving our Area,  
Barbara M, Panel 46

---

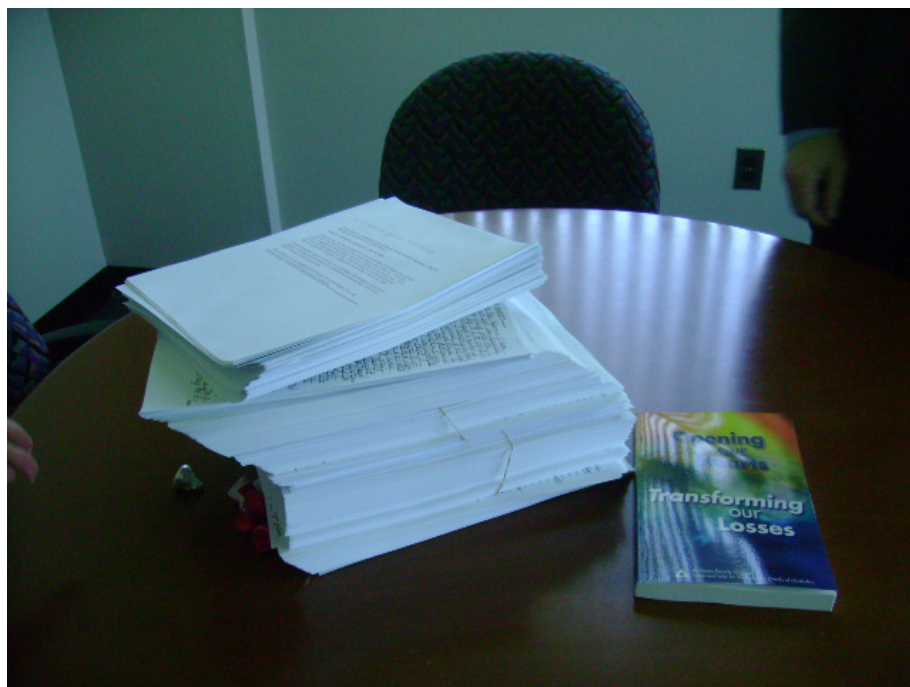
*For more information*

*about e-CAL, visit:*

*[www.al-anon.alateen.org/](http://www.al-anon.alateen.org/)*

*members. This site is password protected. The password is the name of your home group plus the letters "afg".*

---



*Al-Anon member submissions for  
Opening Our Hearts Transforming  
Our Losses.*

## Treasury Report

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

Please remember to put the group name and *entire* group number on all checks when sending in donations. Group numbers appear on the 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
4-0036734	Living Recovery	\$25.00	
2-012435	Courage to Change	\$25.00	25.00
1-012469	Detachment w/ Love	\$27.00	
4-064597	Freedom Group	\$10.00	
2-503064	Step Up to Serenity	\$10.00	
2-502037	Serenity On the Hill	\$20.00	
2-0062815	HUGS	\$25.00	
3-030119	Mon. Morn. Al-Anon	\$75.00	40.00
2-040889	Let Go & Let God	\$50.00	
2-037296	Change What You Can	\$25.00	25.00
4-012443	Fri Night E.G.	\$75.00	25.00
	<b>June Totals</b>	<b>\$367.00</b>	<b>115.00</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 will meet, starting August 1<sup>st</sup>, 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.*

### Meeting Has Closed

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

## Upcoming Events

### August

#### Sunday Morning Change What You Can AFG Anniversary

Sun, August 5<sup>th</sup>, 10:00–11:30 AM

Memorial Hospital of RI, 111 Brewster St. (Sayles Conf. Rm. 1, Downstairs)

Please join us for speakers, raffles, food, and fellowship!

#### Area Meeting

Tues, August 21, 7:00 PM

Area Office, 106 Rolfe Street, Cranston

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

#### 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.

#### Camp AFG (Maine's Annual Al-Anon Convention with AA Participation)

August 24–26

Camp Mechwana, Winthrop, ME

For more information, please visit [www.campafg.com](http://www.campafg.com).

### September

#### Alateen Informational Sponsors Meeting

Sat., September 8, 1:00 PM

Area Office, 106 Rolfe Street, Cranston

This is the third in a series of quarterly informational sponsors meetings.

All Al-Anon members who are currently involved with Alateen or who are interested in volunteering are welcome!

AUGUST 2007						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

SEPTEMBER 2007						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

#### 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](mailto:RI_Al-Anon@hotmail.com)

Web: [www.RIAFG.org](http://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 **August 16**. 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.