

# Lifelines – Rhode Island

Your Monthly Newsletter  
June 2012 Edition

## 52<sup>nd</sup> ANNUAL WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE

I had the honor of representing our area as delegate at the 52<sup>nd</sup> Al- Anon Annual World Service Conference, April 15-19, 2012 in Stamford CT. The Conference Theme was: **Our Spiritual Journey- we get as we give.**

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Each area in the United States and Canada has one delegate. Most of the WSO senior staff was present, as were all members of the Board of Trustees. There were a total of 97 voting delegates. My job as Rhode Island Delegate was two fold:

1. Represent our area. Be the voice of Rhode Island on any issues or discussion items that were presented at the conference;
2. Work for our area. Listen and identify material or ideas that may be of assistance in our own area in providing the services of the Al Anon fellowship.

A typical day began with breakfast at 7 and work sessions generally from 8am-8pm. There were few breaks. Substantial issues were presented; there was much discussion and sharing, and a lot of laughter and tears. The delegates and staff did not skip sessions. Everyone worked hard. We were able to take a short break for part of one day to visit, as a group, Stepping Stones, the home of Lois and Bill W. in Bedford Hills, New York.

My significant impressions were as follows:

- a. WSO, trustees, and delegates were all grateful for the Fellowship and working hard with respect for each other to further its goals. Although we came from different regions and backgrounds we were all human and connected to each other. Most of the WSO Staff and all the Trustees are and were Al Anon members before working at the WSO.
- b. An air of spirituality and goodwill permeated the entire conference. Personal attacks and negativity were not evident. The reminder of “Presume Goodwill” towards each other cushioned the discussions, votes, and even differences of opinion.

My overall feeling was gratitude for the overwhelming spiritual learning experience, and for the opportunity to be present with others and see and listen to how Al Anon had changed their lives, including the special growth that flowed from service work.

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*The next AWSC  
meeting will be May 19th  
10 AM - Assembly Prep  
at the Rolfe St Office  
from 10 AM – 12 Noon*

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### From Grief to Acceptance...

By Carol S.

Even though I had grown up in a family affected by alcoholism, I never believed a child of mine would have the disease. I certainly was smart enough and loving enough to give my family everything they needed to navigate life, unscathed by the disease.

But nothing would be further from the life I led. I married a man with the disease, which I did not recognize at the time, and we had two sons. My husband did get sober early on in the marriage so I was able to still cling to the notion of having that life free of alcoholism. Then my first son was born totally blind and autistic, In Al-Anon by now, I began to develop a faith in a higher power and a support system that worked. However when number two son was born, I still had expectations that he would be the golden child and he exhibited all the signs of being so right away. Bright and precocious, he did well until he became a teenager. Then all hell broke loose: truancy from school, drinking and smoking pot, and staying out all night. The progression of his disease was swift and powerful but nonetheless my husband and I jumped in and fought like warriors, doing all that was humanly possible to keep him from using but to no avail. When his disease progressed to include the use of drugs, he landed in jail. I had been in Al-Anon for quite a while by now but seeing him suffer when he got out of jail, and relapse, we both returned to our old behavior of search and rescue, doing all the things for him that was his responsibilities, and bringing the horse to water, you know the rest...

I brought him to meetings and even got him his first sponsor. Through god's grace, I know now, not our efforts, he stayed sober for 3 years and did fairly well, held a job and even took some classes.

On a vacation with friends to Hawaii, he began to dabble in beer and marijuana and before he knew it, he was on the merry go round again. He came home and we let him live with us...

I cried for an entire year. The sense of loss was unbelievable. What I felt only happened to failures had happened to us. But I kept going to meetings. I found it hard to hear let go and let god. After all, in my mind, WE had licked it once; we had to keep "helping."

In spite of being well acquainted with the program, I fell into denial and didn't want to hear the words enabling and let go, at all. As my husband and I grew sicker and sicker and more fearful, we did more and more enabling. We did things that we normally would never do, and crossed lines that made us uncomfortable with our own behavior. Our son's disease reached an all-time low and we knew something had to give soon.

Then someone suggested we go for professional help and we were ready to hear it. Within weeks, we changed our behavior and set some boundaries, which was among the most difficult things each of us had ever done, our son was in rehab, something we never thought could happen again.

He hasn't spoken to us since he left rehab and extended care prematurely, both of which have been hard to accept. In working with my sponsor, I have come to believe that God has done for us what we could not do for ourselves: Let go and let God.

When our son left rehab, he moved two thousand miles away. I must admit this has helped in our letting go. Today, I view this as an opportunity for us and him to heal.

My prayer is that my son will find sobriety if he hasn't already, but the miracle is that we know we are powerless over that and we are finding serenity and even some happiness in accepting what is.

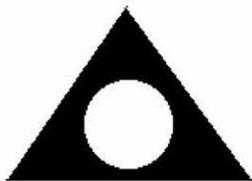
*Al-Anon's newest Timely Reprint, Parents of Alcoholics (R-18), is now available. It features selections from stories, recently published in The Forum, that share the experience, strength, and hope of parents whose children have a drinking problem. This 12-page pamphlet is available for \$1.00 at the Area Office.*



The office hours vary depending on volunteer hours. The phone message is changed every Sunday to reflect the availability. Please call before going to the office (401-781-0044).

We are always in need of more volunteers to keep the doors of the office opened.

Looking for volunteers for the Policy Committee, the Workshop Committee and the Assembly Guidelines Committee - Interested? Call the office!



*Please Note: The RI Area office is only used for Al-Anon Family groups in accordance with Tradition 3 and Tradition 6.*

## Al-Anon Web Sites

- ▲ Your local, Area 49 web site  
<http://www.riafg.org>
- ▲ The Al-Anon Members' Web site  
<http://www.al-anon.alateen.org/members>
- ▲ Podcasts <http://al-anonfamilygroups.org/Podcasts/FirstSteps/>
- ▲ Online meetings and outreach  
<http://www.ola-is.org>
- ▲ Public Al-Anon/Alateen site  
<http://www.al-anon.alateen.org>

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The complete conference summary will soon be posted on the WSO members' website. As delegate, I also will present my formal oral and written report to the area at the June 9th Rhode Island assembly. At the assembly, I will speak of the issues addressed at the conference, decisions that were made, and the overall information presented for all the topics addressed. I hope many of you reading this can attend that assembly and ask me questions you or your group may have.

Any members that might want specific information, or would like me to come to their group and discuss the conference, please contact me by email or phone message to the state office.

David G.

*3 am  
A boy wakes up,  
3 am.  
Fights, screams, alcohol!*

*There is a letter,  
JUST ONE LETTER,  
A letter which describes her FATE!*

*Sisters crying, Brother Tearing,  
But...  
Boy at 16 is scared,  
All he hears is the cries of ambulances!*

*It is now 3:30 am  
The letter to termination has FAILED!  
She is alive,  
but dying inside.*

*The boys says,  
Mom, I LOVE YOU.  
She says son, Alcohol has gotten the best of  
me.*

*He is home  
4 am  
He takes the bottle like an axmen cut wood....  
And strikes  
BOTTLE TERMINATED!*

Dan K - Alateen

**CURRENT OPEN POSITIONS:**

*Alateen Process Person* - The Area Alateen Process Person (AAPP) serves as the Area's designated Alateen contact with the WSO Group Records Department regarding Alateen forms. Since 2004, every Area has Alateen requirements and has a process to certify Al-Anon Members Involved in Alateen Service (AMIAS), register Alateen groups, and implement the Alateen Behavioral and Safety Requirements at all events in the Area that have Alateen participation. The Alateen Process Person works closely with the Alateen Coordinator; for example, the Alateen Coordinator may be responsible for the training and certification of AMIAS, and the AAPP for submitting Alateen forms, recertifying AMIAS, or verifying certification of members serving Alateen for Al-Anon conventions and other events with Alateen participation.

*Archives Coordinator* - Enjoy scrap booking? The Archives Coordinator preserves the experience, history, and memorabilia of the RIAFG. The Coordinator may head up an Archives Committee, which would be responsible for researching the history of Al-Anon in RI. Our archive materials are currently at the Area office. They need to be organized, dated, catalogued, and preserved using archival methods (e.g., acid free paper, boxes).

*Area Delegate* - The Delegate attends the annual Al-Anon/Alateen World Service Conference (our world-wide group conscience) and brings to the Conference our Area's viewpoint on matters affecting the entire fellowship. The Delegate then returns to the Area with a broader perspective of Al-Anon worldwide. He/she is the bridge of understanding that links the groups in the Area with world Al-Anon/Alateen to help us continue to function in unity. The Delegate is the servant of Al-Anon as a whole.

*Area Secretary* - The Secretary takes the minutes of all Area meetings and Assemblies. These minutes should be sent to the Area World Service Committee members soon after the meeting and be recorded in a permanent minutes book to be passed along to a successor. Minutes are also kept in a log at the Area office.

*District Representatives for District 2, 3, 5* - The DR is usually any incoming, outgoing, or active past Group Representative who is willing to represent the district at Area World Service Committee meetings and Area Assembly. The DR conveys information to the GRs from the Area World Service Committee, listens to group concerns, and takes any questions or concerns to the Area World Service Committee meetings.

*Group Representatives* - Many groups in Rhode Island currently do not have GRs. The GR receives information from their District Representative to share with their individual groups and attends the RIAFG Assembly meetings to vote on area issues. The GRs are the voice of RI Al-Anon.

*Workshop Committee Chair* - Chairs the committee that plans our annual Fall Workshop. The purpose of the workshop is to allow members to participate in giving back to the program (Participation Is the Key to Harmony) while enjoying a day of recovery. All proceeds help the Area as a whole, which allows us to be self-supporting. The chairperson holds periodic committee meetings and secures volunteers who take on responsibilities for registration, decorating, hospitality, master of ceremonies, speakers, treasury, meetings, food, craft table, Alateen participation, AA participation, Literature table, and Public Outreach table. This person also troubleshoots and supports these tasks as necessary.

*Office Coordinator* - Delegates office duties to the office volunteers dealing with the mail, phone calls and UPS deliveries.

The only way the meetings stay alive is by service, we do this by chairing meetings, taking group positions, and taking area positions. The only way to keep what we have is to give it back.

## RI Al-Anon/Alateen Events

May 22<sup>nd</sup>, New Beginnings Anniversary Meeting; 7:30-9:00 pm; St. Luke's Church, Pierce St East. Greenwich.

June 9<sup>th</sup>, RIAFG Area Assembly, 9:00 - 3:30 -- \$5.00 Bring Your Lunch. Anchor Recovery Community Center, 249 Main Street, Pawtucket, RI 02860. For Directions, go to: <http://www.anchorrecovery.org/>.

June 22<sup>nd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup>, 36<sup>th</sup> Ocean State Young People's Conference; contact Nancy F 401-575-0734 or check the webpage <http://www.rhodeisland-aa.org/a61/osypc/home> for more information. Registration form: [http://www.rhodeisland-aa.org/sites/default/files/OSYPC\\_2012\\_Registration.pdf](http://www.rhodeisland-aa.org/sites/default/files/OSYPC_2012_Registration.pdf)

June 23<sup>rd</sup>, TEAM Program - Carrying the Message  
Southern New Hampshire University, Hooksett, NH  
Email Pat with questions at [team@nhal-anon.org](mailto:team@nhal-anon.org) or visit the NH Al-Anon webpage <http://www.nhal-anon.org/>.

July 20<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup>, VT Al-Anon Convention, Sheraton Convention Center, Burlington, VT  
For more information check out <http://www.starwoodneeting.com/Book/Alanon2012>.

July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2012 AA Bilingual Sharing Day "United With One Purpose"; Masonic Temple, 112 East Main St., Meriden, CT 9:00 am to 3:00 pm; for more info email [rompiendofronteras@ct-aa.org](mailto:rompiendofronteras@ct-aa.org).

August 17<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Maine Al-Anon/Alateen Convention with AA Participation  
Visit [www.maineafg.org](http://www.maineafg.org) to download registration form.

September 21-23, 2012 Ridin' into Recovery; 29<sup>th</sup> New Hampshire Al-Anon and Alateen Convention with AA Participation - updates to follow.

2013 Al-Anon International Convention, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. JULY 5-7, 2013.  
A flyer with details is found on the members' web site.

THE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ONLY HAPPENS EVERY FOUR YEARS. Vancouver is beautiful. WSO will provide registration information to the state and also on its web site by the fall 2012. WSO has set aside blocks of hotel rooms, so the conference and hotel registration can both be easily completed at the same time through the WSO.

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*Lifelines* e-subscription: Email to: [RI\\_Al-Anon@hotmail.com](mailto:RI_Al-Anon@hotmail.com) (type "Mailing List" in the subject line) 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.

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