

# LIFELINES FEBRUARY 2019

## RIAFG NEWLETTER



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### Editor's Corner

Step 2, "Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity." I often forget that I have a Higher Power who is always available and who always meets me where I am, not where I think I should be.

I wish I could say that this was only sometimes, having been around program for a long while. But Al-Anon is not a goal. It is a program that outlines a process with tools I can use as I navigate life.

I will never arrive someday at Al-Anon "nirvana" where all is clear, where I am completely serene and fulfilled. That isn't Al-Anon for me, or how my life seems to work. I used to think that this was not only possible, but also my responsibility. A "strong" person could achieve this goal. All I had to do was figure out how to do it.

"Came to" is an awakening to a state of awareness. It is a gradual, bumpy process. It has its high points and its low points. In other words, for me, it is reality.

Al-Anon provides me a means to develop, to become more myself and more at peace with who I am and where I am in my life. I need to remember this because I find it all too easy to become discouraged. I can go to that "head" place of "Here I am again dealing with the same old issues. Will I ever get this right? Will I ever figure out the why's of the self-defeating behavior that I keep tripping all over?"

I have learned in Al-Anon that I can stop a behavior, and I can start a new behavior. I don't need to know why. I just need to do it.

And, most importantly, I do not need to do this alone. I have a Higher Power. I have people who are on similar journeys. I have program tools. I can only move forward when I accept who and where I am. I can only move forward from my where I am.

I need to be aware of my present circumstances and accept them. However, I need to be careful that my acceptance doesn't slip into avoidance. I am not in reality when I am avoiding the very reality that I am trying to accept.

Sometimes this is a tough program. Meeting life on life's terms is not a walk in the park. But it is certainly better than living in denial and a fantasy world. Just for today I have a program that guides me.

A grateful member of Al-Anon,  
Elaine H., Lifelines Editor

**Would you like to be on the distribution list for Lifelines? Send an email requesting this to [lifelines.riafg@gmail.com](mailto:lifelines.riafg@gmail.com). These are sent as "BCC's" so your anonymity is protected.**

**Do you have a story or an Al-Anon event to share? Would you like to share why your home group is so special to you? Would you like to share yo? Please email these to [lifelines.riafg@gmail.com](mailto:lifelines.riafg@gmail.com)**

# FOREVER HOPE

## Al-Anon Family Group

Invites You to Join Us As We Celebrate Our

**31<sup>st</sup> Anniversary**

and

**Lois W.'s Birthday**

**Sunday, March 3, 2019**

**10:00 a.m.**

West Greenwich Town Hall  
280 Victory Highway, Route 102, West Greenwich, RI

Speakers • Finger Foods • Hot & Cold Beverages • Fellowship • Spirituality

***Come Share the Joys of Recovery with Us***

Park in the large lot to the south (right) of the Town Hall. Entry is at the back via the wheelchair ramp.

OUR BIG BOOK **SAVING LIVES**  
 SINCE 1939  
 43rd Rhode Island Convention March 22-24, 2019

+



**AA CONVENTION WITH AL-ANON PARTICIPATION**

Five Al-Anon meetings will be available. Please consider leading one – a great way to serve! Meeting leaders are responsible for the \$25.00 registration fee. Registration: <https://ainri.com/convention/>

**SPECIAL NOTE: ELOY M., our AL-ANON guest speaker will give his talk on Sat., Mar. 23 at 10:15 am.**

**Al-Anon Meetings**      CAL = Al-Anon/Alateen Conference Approved Literature

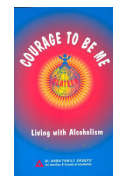
Sat., Mar. 23 at 9:00 am: **Understanding Ourselves and Alcoholism - Nel P.**  
 Suggested CAL - Understanding Ourselves and Alcoholism pamphlet

Sat., Mar. 23 at 11:30 am: **How Al-Anon helped save my life? - Barbara H.**  
 Suggested CAL - You pick and share your personal story.

Sat., Mar. 23 at 2:30 pm: **Al-Anon Slogans - How they help us.**  
 Suggested CAL - Any daily reader, How Al-Anon Works pgs. 65 -75

Sat., Mar. 23 at 5:00 pm: **Al-Anon Fellowship -Breaking Our Isolation - Heather M.**  
 Suggested CAL - From Survival to Recovery pgs. 13, 18, 23, etc. or Concept Four

Sun., Mar. 24 at 8:30 am: **How I practice the Al-Anon Twelve Steps in My Daily Life.**  
 Suggested CAL - Paths to Recovery, Daily Readers or How Al-Anon Works



**If you would like to lead a meeting, please contact Jackie G. by email: [aa.riafg@gmail.com](mailto:aa.riafg@gmail.com) or leave a message at our Area Office phone number, (401) 781-0044.**

Parking is FREE and available at the hotel, though it's limited. The hotel offers valet parking @ \$20.00 per night. We have a FREE trolley that runs from the Newport Visitors Center parking lot (there will be a sign) 23 Americas Cup Ave from, Friday, March 22, 6-8:00 pm, 9:30-midnight & Saturday, March 23, 8am-8pm, 9:30-midnight: <https://www.discovernewport.org/about-newport/visitor-center/>



*REGISTRATION FORM*  
 Al-Anon Family Groups presents the  
**42nd Annual CT AFG Convention**  
**“From Survival to Serenity”**  
**March 29-31, 2019**

Red Lion Inn, 100 Berlin Rd, Cromwell, CT 06416

*Print Clearly - one Form per person*

\_\_\_\_\_  
 First and Last Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
 City and state

\_\_\_\_\_  
 10 digit Phone Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Email Address for Confirmation  
 If no email, postal address.

Circle one:    Al-Anon    AA    Guest    Alateen\*\*

**Adult \$25 / Teen \$5** \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
**PRE-REG DUE BY March 8<sup>th</sup>!**

***Saturday Night Italian Banquet***

***Buffet \$40.00*** (Optional) \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Salad, Entrées, Starch, Vegetable, Dessert, Tax & Gratuity.

***Vegan Meal \$40.00*** (Optional) \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 (plated meal plus vegan options on buffet included)

The price of Banquet ticket includes priority seating for  
 Key note speakers

Check # \_\_\_\_\_ Total Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Register on line at**


<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/42nd-ct-afg-convention-from-survival-to-serenity-tickets-51635622537>

***Pre-register to be entered in a drawing for free  
 2020 Convention Registration***

**Non-Refundable** Checks Payable to:

CT AFG Convention  
 P.O. Box 1226  
 Waterbury, CT 06721

**Postmark after March 8<sup>th</sup> 2019, and Walk-ins  
 Adult \$30 / Teen \$5**

With Al-Anon, Alateen and AA Participation  
 Spanish and ASL Interpretation and   
 Hard of Hearing headsets available.

**Registration opens 3:00 pm Friday,  
 8:30 am Saturday and Sunday.**

**Information and Online Registration:**  
[www.ctalanon.org](http://www.ctalanon.org)

**Questions / Volunteer Interest:**  
[convention2019@ctalanon.org](mailto:convention2019@ctalanon.org)

**\*\*ALATEEN:** Per CT Safety and Behavioral Requirements  
**ALL TEENAGERS MUST** complete appropriate Permission  
 Slips and **notarized** Medical Authorization form, including  
 out of state guests. Do NOT mail any Alateen forms with  
 the registration. Forms MUST be presented upon arrival  
 to the Alateen sign-in table at the convention.  
 Download forms at [www.ctalanon.org](http://www.ctalanon.org).

**ALATEEN:** Name of Accompanying Adult or Teen  
 \_\_\_\_\_

***Hotel Reservations***

Please call the hotel direct at 860-288-4985 to make  
 your hotel reservation or online  
[www.redlion.com/cromwell](http://www.redlion.com/cromwell)  
 by February 26.

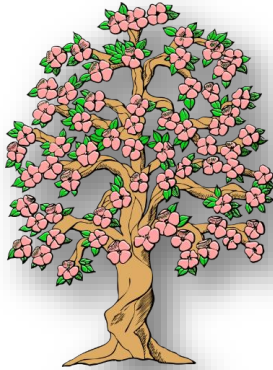
Use Hotel Code “42NDO329” to get the discounted rate

Pre-register for Convention and Hotel room by February 26,  
 2019 AND pay for two hotel nights using our Hotel Code to be  
 entered in a drawing for reimbursement of one room night.

**If staying at hotel,** name on hotel reservation:  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Special need:** Spanish Interpretation, ASL Interpretation,  
 Hard of Hearing headset, other: \_\_\_\_\_





# AL-ANON FAMILY GROUPS SPRING ASSEMBLY

May 18<sup>th</sup>, 9:30 am – 3:30 pm (Registration at 9:00)

Registration fee \$5.00 per group

St. Luke's Episcopal Church

99 Pierce Street, East Greenwich

(Basement hall, enter through double doors without awning)

Ample parking in lot



Coffee and Beverages Provided / Pot Luck / Bring Your Own



Lunch

Everyone is welcome, but only GR's (or appointed proxy) may vote. If your group does not have a GR, or your GR can not attend, the group can designate another group member, who is not a member of AA, to fulfill the role as proxy for the day. Please make every effort to attend so your group's voice/vote can be heard.

*Agenda includes:*

Delegate's World Service Report

Task Force Reports and filling Area Vacancies

## BOSTON 61st ICYPAA 8/22/19-8/25/19

ICYPAA = International Conference of Young People in Alcoholics Anonymous.

When: 8/22/19-8/25/19

Where: Boston Marriott Copley Place,  
110 Huntington Ave, Boston, MA 02116, USA

**All Al-Anon/Alateen members are welcome to attend.**

\$30 PRE-REG NOW AT [ICYPAA.ORG](http://ICYPAA.ORG)!

FOR ANY QUESTIONS EMAIL [REGISTRATION@ICYHOST.ORG](mailto:REGISTRATION@ICYHOST.ORG)

**BOOK YOUR ROOM!** at <https://book.passkey.com/go/icypaa2019>

Questions: email [facilities@icyhost.org](mailto:facilities@icyhost.org)

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

Hello Editor! CONGRATULATIONS ON A YEAR of monthly 2018 LIFELINES!!!!

The December LIFELINES was wonderful. I feel such a sense of continuity when I read it.

Defining continuity as it relates to LIFELINES:

- 1) for me today it is help-with-recall
- 2) for me it is reassurance that we are a body that takes healthy action and reflection
- 3) for me it is a centering newsletter that compiles what we are focusing on
- 4) Better than minutes, LIFELINES opens an invitation to express, to take part in service on the level you can, to ask for assistance, to practice principles.  
\*\*\*When I feel the stress and distraction of the age (not only MY AGE but our computer/social media/ phone/cyber generation AGE) I have a tendency to go-it-alone, and Al-Anon support gives me my sanity. Again LIFELINES OFFERS centering for me.
- 5) It's centering for my home group. At our quarterly business meeting and as the GR I draft an agenda and deliver LIFELINES hot off the presses!
- 6) Last, for your edification (and in support of your excellent service, here are a few of my own notes from District 2's meeting, held at the office 11/29/18.) A positive discussion of "How do you present, and incorporate LIFELINES at your meetings?":  
bring hard copies  
refer members to the sign-up system for personal email delivery  
read an excerpt! (I used to attend a MA meeting where the newsletter was read, in part, by a member. It was built into the opening. Very heartwarming to have this sort of continuity.  
suggest to your group: if this'reader' role might become a service position---a member volunteers to read at "Announcements" at each meeting.

A Grateful Member of Al-Anon

\*\*\*This is a new column for the newsletter. Please send your comments, suggestions, questions, etc. to [lifelines.riafg@gmail.com](mailto:lifelines.riafg@gmail.com).

**AA LIAISON:****AA Convention with Al-Anon participation**

**Seeking Al-Anon members who are attending the conference to volunteer to read the preamble, the Al-Anon anonymity statement, and the Al-Anon Declaration at the podium before our Al-Anon speaker, Eloy M. gives his talk. Please email me at: [aa.riafg@gmail.com](mailto:aa.riafg@gmail.com). Thank you in advance for your service!**

“Our Big Book: Saving Lives Since 1939,” Rhode Island AA convention with Al-Anon participation is fast approaching. The dates are Mar. 22-24, 2019 at the Gurney’s Resort in Newport. Register before March 8 cost is \$25.00. Register on or after March 9 is \$30.00. Registration online is preferred, but you can download the printable registration form at [www.aainir.com](http://www.aainir.com).

Al-Anon schedule for the speaker is Saturday at 10:15 am. Eloy M. from Colorado, Panel 56 delegate will serve as our Al-Anon speaker at the convention. His sharing is powerful! He spoke at the WSO Conference last spring. \*\*\*I still need a few volunteers for the bullet items highlighted in yellow below. Please consider this service opportunity and or share with your groups and encourage others to serve.

**Facilities - Bonnie**

Chair –**Jackie G.**

Al Anon Preamble – **TBD VOLUNTEER NEEDED**

Resolution of Gratitude to Al-Anon – **Mary K.**

Al Anon Anonymity Statement – **TBD VOLUNTEER NEEDED**

Speaker – **Eloy M. from Fort Collins, CO**

Closing and Prayer (Al Anon Declaration?) – **TBD VOLUNTEER NEEDED**

**I am looking for volunteers for anyone who would like to lead the remaining three meetings. See the flyer for details.**

Jackie G., AA Liaison

**UPCOMING EVENTS:**

- Feb 7, 2019 District II meeting, 6:30 PM at North Kingstown Public Library
- Feb 14, 2019 District III meeting at the Portsmouth Library from 6 to 7 PM
- Feb 20, 2019 AWSC on Wednesday evening from 7 PM to 9 PM at the Cranston AFG office
- Mar 3, 2019 Anniversary Meeting, Forever Hope Al-Anon Family Group, 31st Anniversary and Lois W.'s Birthday. West Greenwich Town Hall 280 Victory Highway, see flyer for details.
- Mar 22-24, 2019 Rhode Island AA Convention with Al-Anon participation. See flyer & AA Liaison report. **NEED VOLUNTEERS!**
- Mar 29-31 2019 42nd Annual CT AFG Convention. See flyer for details.
- Apr 6, 2019 AWSC meeting at Cranston office from 10:00 AM to Noon. **ALL ARE WELCOME!**
- May 18, 2019 RIAFG Spring Assembly, 9:00AM to 3:30PM at St. Luke Episcopal Church, 99 Pierce St., E. Greenwich. See flyer
- May 29, 2019 AWSC meeting at Cranston office from 7 PM to 9 PM. **ALL ARE WELCOME!**
- Aug 22-25, 2019 Boston ICYPAA Convention. See above for details.
- Sep 7, 2019 AWSC meeting at the Cranston office from 10 AM to Noon. **ALL ARE WELCOME!**
- Nov 6, 2019 AWSC meeting at the Cranston office from 7 to 9 PM. **ALL ARE WELCOME!**

**MEETING NOTICES:****NEEDS SUPPORT:**

Cranston/Warwick Day Time Al-Anon, Tuesday at 10:00 AM at Edgewood Congregational Church  
1788 Broad St., Cranston.  
South County Step meeting, Thursday from 7:30 PM to 8:30 PM needs your support.  
Let It All Go AFG, Tuesday 7:30 PM, North Kingstown Methodist Church, 450 Boston Neck Rd.,  
North Kingstown  
Keep It Simple Saturday K.I.S.S. on Saturdays at 1200 PM, Ray Hall, 2nd floor, Room 4, Butler  
Hospital, 345 Blackstone Blvd, Providence  
Higher Powered Lunch Bunch on Tuesdays at 12:10 PM at St. Stephen's Church, 114 George St.,  
2nd floor, Providence.  
Saturday Night Live Al-Anon Group, Saturday, 5:00 PM, Calvary United Methodist Church, 200 Turner  
Rd., Middletown

**LOCATION CHANGE:**

Westerly Friday Night AFG is now meeting at Grace United Methodist Church,  
10 Park Ave., Westerly.

**TEMPORARY CHANGES:**

The Kingstown Congregational Church, where the Wednesday Butterflies Are Free and Friday Essential Steps and Traditions are held, is undergoing renovations from January 12th through March 12th. During this time these meetings will be held at the usual time -NOON- in rooms on the west side of the building. The entrance to the Church may vary depending upon where the work crew is operating on that day.

**MEETING CLOSURE:**

A New Beginning, Thursdays at 7:00 PM at St. Paul's in Portsmouth has closed.

**AWSC NEWS:****2018 Rhode Island Al-Anon Family Groups Financial Report**

Our total Income for the year was \$10,368 and our total Expenses were \$10,539. Even though our 2018 Expenses exceeded our Income by \$171, our bank account balance as of 12/31/18 was \$5,975.

Our income was comprised of the following primary sources: Group Donations \$7,594; Annual Appeal \$750; Fall Workshop \$986; Literature Sales \$500; Other \$538.

Thanks to the generosity of our membership, the Group Donations for 2018 reached an all-time high exceeding the previous year's donations by \$801; and our 2018 Appeal Donations exceeded the previous year by \$196. This wonderful support of our commitment to helping families and friends of alcoholics is greatly appreciated.

Phyllis H.  
Area Chair

**Group Donation Receipts**

The Budget Committee and the Office Volunteers are happy to share with you that beginning in January 2019 we will be sending receipts for all donations that are received by the Area. Donation receipts will be mailed to the address on the check or the return address on the envelope. If a group prefers to have the receipt mailed to someone else, please include that information with the check.

Phyllis H.  
Area Chair



## DISTRICT II NEWS:

### What's NEWS in District II – November 2018 & January 2019

Once a month, District II meets for about an hour at a named location to unite the individual groups within the district. Topics range from informing groups of Area or World Service news to planning program-related events. District meetings also coordinate service and public outreach projects and as such are a great way to see the program in action and get involved in service. Last year, District II not only decided to bring its news to you but also to rotate its meeting location in an effort to encourage participation and service.

The **November 2018 meeting** was held at RI Area office in Cranston before the Serenity on the Square AFG meeting. Old business addressed the Spring Assembly, which District II will be hosting at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in East Greenwich on Saturday May 18, 2019. The Area submitted a \$100 deposit to St. Luke's to secure the date and will be sending out an Assembly checklist and planning the meeting agenda. The agenda is informed by input from the District, which forwards actions/questions from their respective Group Reps (GRs). In addition, one Group Rep (GR) volunteered to create a flyer.

Other old business revisited this question: How do groups use Lifelines? Some GRs print copies for their group to share or members to take with them. Other GRs sign people up with their email addresses. One GR shares it with a class of clinicians who requested it after receiving a copy. A suggestion was made for groups to ask a member to pick something out from lifelines to read at business meetings or during the announcements.

**New business** focused on setting dates for future District meetings. The GRs voted to skip the month of December and to tentatively schedule the next meeting for Tuesday Jan 15, 2019 at 6:30pm BEFORE the New Beginning AI-Anon meeting at St. Luke's. Because the District needed to wait to get approval from that group's GR, the backup plan was to meet at the North Kingstown Free Public Library in the downstairs Conference Room on Thursday Jan 17, 2019.

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The **January 2019 meeting** was held at the North Kingstown Library. Old business included two main topics of discussion: (1) reviewing the Assembly checklist and (2) reviewing the Area Budget. For the Assembly, it was noted that volunteers are needed to (1) make food; (2) set up; (3) break down; (4) transport materials from the office AND back to the office after the meeting; and (5) ask the office for an inventory of these items. Forever Hope AFG volunteered to run the registration table. After reviewing the Area Budget with the Group Reps (GR), the District submitted 3 direct questions for the next Area Meeting, which will be held on Saturday February 20<sup>th</sup> at the Area Office (106 Rolfe Street). These questions were: (1) What is the function of and rule for the prudent reserve?; (2) How do the pre-approved budget amounts get changed?; and (3) What were the numbers for Literature?

In new business, the Task Force meetings, policies generated by them, and their relationship to the Groups as a WHOLE and questions in concern included: (1) Are the meetings conveniently scheduled?; (2) Are inputs asked for in writing for those who desire to participate?; and (3) Will reports of the Task Forces be available prior to the assembly?

Also in new business, it was decided that if a group wishes to host a future District II Meeting, the Group Rep (GR) of that group must invite the meeting in and have permission from the group PRIOR to the District attempting to go. In addition, that group's GR must attend the meeting in order for the District Rep (DR) to approve. Finally, it was agreed to have a meeting agenda assembled PRIOR to the February meeting. The purpose of this is two-fold: (1) To give the DR the ability to move topics along within the one-hour time frame and be cognizant of additional pending topics and (2) To allow ALL voices to be heard and not run over time.

The **next District II Meeting will be held Thursday February 7<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm** at the North Kingstown Free Public Library in the downstairs conference room. All are welcome to attend. If you are in District II and would like to host a future District Meeting, please contact your District Rep. We look forward to continuing to serve you and AI-Anon as a whole!

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## Links of Service

Member + Member = **Group**

**Group** + **Group** = **District**

**District** + **District** = **Assembly**

**Assembly** + **Assembly** = **Conference**

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## DISTRICT III NEWS:

District III News:

District III meets the second Thursday of every month at the Portsmouth Library from 6 to 7 PM. We had a very productive and exciting meeting in January! Our first topic was the concern that not all active meetings have a Group Rep which is a wonderful opportunity to do service and is required in the WSO Service Manual. Basically, the rep acts as a liaison between the group and the District (map of District 3 included). Our goal is to increase the health of all active meetings by having this important position filled. Also, an accurate CMA for each meeting is extremely important and we plan on reviewing that list to make sure all information gets channeled to all the meetings.

A second topic which was unanimously decided is to have a monthly column in Lifelines to increase our communication to all Alanon members.

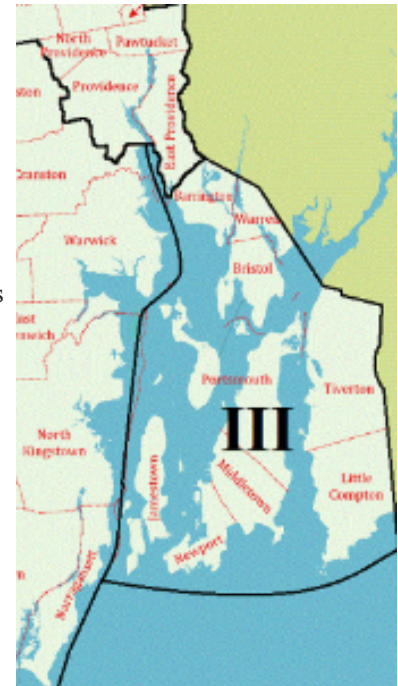
Another topic in the works is establishing officers within the District III group which will facilitate a healthier, more efficient, and effective group.

The idea of producing an Alanon Flyer for members to post was discussed and is being researched. Lastly, we are looking into starting a NEW meeting in Newport which at present has no Alanon Meeting.

We had a fun and productive meeting! Our next meeting is Feb 14th, Valentine's Day. How wonderful is that to do service and participate in our future plans for District 3? We hope to see you there!

Gratefully in Service,

District III



## FORUM ARTICLE:

### Learning to Care for Myself

Even though my mind understood that I should not be doing for others what they could and should do for themselves, my heart could not tolerate the pain of watching them suffer. On a regular basis my heart kept saying, *maybe just this one more time and then he'll stop this self-destruction.*

Finally, a friend said again, "If you keep softening the bottom, he'll keep digging." Those time I was finally able to hear the message. By not allowing him to suffer the consequences of his decisions, I was depriving the alcoholic of an opportunity to grow and change. I finally learned that the magic word "no" is a complete sentence. The consequences were grim and potentially fatal, but he finally quit digging. He is not in recovery yet, but he is employed and doing well. He no longer only calls when he needs something.

I am busy living my life now and carrying the message of caring for myself. I am the only one I can change. I have learned to listen with compassion without feeling the need to fix him or others. I only offer suggestions when someone asks for them and let go of the expectation that they will follow them. I am now free to be me and so is he.

by Charlotte L., Georgia

Reprinted from The Forum, issue February, 2018, Al-Anon Family Group Hdqtr., Inc., Virginia Beach, VA.)\*\*Editor's Note: Would you like your own subscription to the "Forum?" A subscription form is in the back of all issues. The cost is \$11.00 per year and there is also an online version available.

**MEMBERS SHARE:****My Valentine**

I love my qualifier. We have been married 52 years. It has been a wild ride for sure. I knew very little about drinking and nothing about alcoholism when I married the man of my dreams. I did know that his parents drank too much and he vowed he would never be like them. Thus started my lifelong relationship with alcohol and drugs. As a young wife I "tried" Al-Anon, but for whatever reasons, I heard members complaining and belittling their qualifiers, so I chose not to be part of a group like that. It took me years to find my way back. When I did, I heard words of love and encouragement. By this time I had a family full of alcoholics/addicts, this is a family disease, and I was trying to control them all. Through the 12 steps and 12 traditions, the support of my home group, and the literature I am learning to love the people in my life, as is, one day at a time. It's not easy, but boy is it rewarding. I am so grateful to Al-Anon. This February I am celebrating Valentine's Day with a heart full of love and acceptance. I have given the control to my Higher Power. Wishing you a heart full of love, too.

Happy Valentines,  
Linda

**MEMBERS SHARE:**

I have been in the program for just about four years. I did not understand fully what codependent meant but over the holiday season I had an experience which explained it to me. I don't consider myself codependent because I work and have a lot of independent interests, but it turns out that's not exactly the point.

I went to a local lights display which happens to be on the grounds of a Catholic Church. Though not Catholic, I was intrigued by a hill they had with steps leading up to a statue. It has religious significance which is not relevant here. What was relevant is that I decided to do the kneeling prayer for each of the 20+ steps leading up to the statue. There were many people on their knees doing the same thing. I wanted to have a spiritual moment in which I could connect to a Higher Power.

My partner was next to me also on his knees. It was a beautiful somewhat warmer than usual night. The first few steps were fine but then my mind shifted into a state of low level panic. How was my partner feeling? Was he alright? We had to get through 20 more steps and knowing he was not from a religious background I started wondering if he would have enough prayers or ideas to get through the steps.

Let's pause here for a minute to think about this. I was completely "out of my own experience." I was focused on his experience and trying to imagine or predict what was going on in his head. I could not focus on my own prayer or my own needs or my own experience.

But not just that, my "living through another person" went beyond that. I was aware of not wanting to move ahead on the prayer steps and so I timed my prayers to coincidentally "end" just when my partner's prayers ended so that we moved up the stairs at exactly the same pace. As we got closer to the top of the stairs I became more and more aware of how distracted I was and how immersed I was in "managing" the experience for another, just with my thoughts and a bit with my actions. I was concerned about the other person's knees and the pace of the kneeling up the stairs, I wondered if the other person judged the devout people above and below us.

It struck me then as rather sad that I could not focus back on my own path. I wished I could have gone down and started over.

I was so focused on everything the other person was doing and thinking that I didn't really "feel" my own experience.

When I first shared this at a meeting, I actually started to cry after sharing because it struck me as so sad that someone would be so lost in another's experience.

I am now not viewing the experience as tragic or sad, but as a moment when I really understood more fully what codependence is by slowly walking on my knees THROUGH it. Understanding what is going on is a first step to healing.

M.E.

**AREA OFFICE NEWS:****Volunteers Needed**

**Step 12: “Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to others and to practice these principles in all our affairs.”** Service is one of the ways that we work this step. Please consider volunteering at the State Office in Cranston. You can do this at the office or you can do this in the comfort of your own home. “Let it begin with me. When anyone anywhere reaches out for help, let the hand of Al-Anon and Alateen always be there, and let it begin with me.”

The Area Office still needs volunteers! Please consider giving back by volunteering for hours in the office or as a volunteer from your home. Both positions have training.

## Office volunteers responsibilities:

- Greet anyone who calls the office
- Greet visitors to the office. They are usually coming for literature.
- Retrieve recorded messages, return calls and record them in our log.
- Open and distribute the mail
- Fill literature orders for in-person purchasers.

## At home volunteers responsibilities:

- Access the Al-Anon voicemail account from their home phone, retrieving messages
- When the caller leaves a message and a number, the at home volunteer calls them back
- Mailing a meeting list or referring the caller to [riafg.org](http://riafg.org)
- Keep a brief written log of calls returned and communicate with the Office Coordinator

Please call the office for more information and/or to volunteer!

Jane A. RIAFG office coordinator

**We currently have 4 Volunteers: Here is the schedule:**

Monday:	12:30 to 2:30 PM	Phyllis H.
Wednesday:	12:30 to 2:30 PM	Paul B.
Thursday:	6:00 to 7:30 PM	Jane A.
At-Home Volunteer:	Tuesday	Clara R.

**JOB OPPORTUNITIES:****\*\*\*\*OUR STATE AWSC NEEDS YOU\*\*\*\***

The following positions are open and the AWSC needs you to step up to service:

<b>2019 Workshop Coordinator</b>	Term is for 2019 (Non voting position)
<b>Area Secretary</b>	Term is for 3 years to December 2021
<b>Area Alternate Delegate</b>	Term ends on December 2019
<b>Forum Coordinator</b>	Term ends on December 2019
<b>Public Outreach Coordinator</b>	Term ends on December 2019

**Everyone** is invited to attend the AWSC meetings. So come on down to Cranston and see how this works. Four of the above positions expire the end of this year. What a perfect way to get some experience at the State level!

Worried about doing this alone? You are not alone. We all work together. Also, you can pair up with a friend in Al-Anon to co-perform the job duties. The only requirements are you are a member of Al-Anon and not a member of AA for the voting positions. The Workshop Coordinator can be a member of both programs.

The next meeting is Wednesday, February 20th from 7 to 9 PM at the state office in Cranston. We are alternating our meetings between Saturdays and Wednesdays.

## RIAFG Safe Meetings Procedure

In Al-Anon we are blessed to have meeting spaces where we can “place principals before personalities” and attend and share safely. Unfortunately, there are rare instances in which meetings are confronted with threatening or unstable behavior that disrupts members’ safety. At the Fall Area Assembly, Group Representatives voted to create a committee charged with drafting a statewide safety procedure to support meetings faced with such situations. While we are fortunate to have some models of other states’ procedures, we want to ensure our procedures meet Rhode Island members’ needs.

If you have a suggestion or comment on this matter, please email the committee at [riafg.safemeetings@gmail.com](mailto:riafg.safemeetings@gmail.com) so that we can include your experience, strength, and hope in our efforts.

\*\*\*\*\*Any Al-Anon member can send feedback, join, or request clarification from any of the task forces that are currently addressing the Spring Assembly service breakout findings, group safety issues, and the Do not refer/refer policy creation. Above are the emails for two of the committees. For now any questions, concerns for the Do not refer/refer policy can be sent to [lifelines.riafg@gmail.com](mailto:lifelines.riafg@gmail.com) and I will forward them.

## NEWS FROM THE WSO:

### Let’s Talk Safety

Safety is an important issue within Al-Anon—one that all can address. Open discussion on the topic can aid groups in developing workable solutions to safety issues—solutions that are based on the fundamental principles of our fellowship and that will help keep our meetings safe. [This document applies only to Al-Anon meetings, groups and members: For Alateen safety, please refer to your Area Alateen Safety and Behavioral Requirements.] When members feel safe and are safe at meetings, the unity of our groups (Tradition One) is maintained. Al-Anon groups are spiritual entities; they are made up of families and friends of alcoholics who gather and share their experience, strength and hope to solve their common problems. Yet, we are not immune to the difficulties that affect the rest of humanity.

For more information, check the WSO website at [al-anon.org](http://al-anon.org).holism 2019 (AFA)

### Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism

The WSO is now accepting orders for *AFA 2019* second printing magazines. You can get yours by:

Placing orders on line from the WSO store at [al-anon.org/afa2019](http://al-anon.org/afa2019)

Downloading an order form at [al-anon.org/afaform](http://al-anon.org/afaform)

Faxing the WSO at 757-563-1656 or

Mailing to 1600 Corporate Landing Parkway, Virginia Beach, VA 23454-5617

Stretch your gratitude for Al-Anon into the new year by using *Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism (AFA) 2019* magazines to carry our message to families and friends of alcoholics who receive services from professionals. Locations accessible to the public, such as libraries, also welcome *AFA* magazines to inform the public about the effects of alcoholism on the family. This is your opportunity to carry and share the message of hope with families and friends of alcoholics.

**The deadline to order *AFA 2019* magazines is February 11, 2019, 5 PM ET.**

### Request for Sharings for Newcomers

Please consider writing an article for people who are considering attending their first meeting, but uncertain as to whether they qualify for membership in Al-Anon. In 300 words or less, please share what it was like for you as a newcomer. You may wish to focus on: What it was like before Al-Anon and what led you to your first meeting; The first slogan or program idea that had particular significance for you; What kept you coming back after your first meeting.

Whatever brought you to Al-Anon, let your story benefit someone else who has yet to experience the gifts of hope and peace that Al-Anon offers

Please submit your sharings to *The Forum*, 1600 Corporate Landing Parkway, Virginia Beach, VA 23454-5617; or to [wso@al-anon.org](mailto:wso@al-anon.org), or to [al-anon.org/18forumshare](http://al-anon.org/18forumshare).

## Alateen Talk

Have you seen it? *Alateen* Talk has a bright and new design. *Alateen* Talk is a quarterly publication where Alateen members share their experience, strength and hope. Their sharings relate to their personal lives and how Alateen helps them. *Alateen* Talk is a great tool for carrying the Alateen message to young people who are suffering from someone else's drinking. You can subscribe to *Alateen* Talk by filling out the form at [al-anon.org/alateentalkform](http://al-anon.org/alateentalkform).

### How Has Conference Approved Literature Helped You?

In what ways have *Opening Our Hearts*, *Transforming Our Losses*, *Intimacy in Alcoholic Relationships*, *Alcoholism, a Merry-Go-Round Named Denial*, or *Hope & Understanding for Parents & Grandparents* helped you? For possible publication in future issues, send your sharings by February 15 to *The Forum*, 1600 Corporate Landing Parkway, Virginia Beach, VA 23454-5617, Attention: "CAL Corner"; at [wso@al-anon.org](mailto:wso@al-anon.org) with "CAL Corner" in the subject line; or at [al-anon.org/forumshare](http://al-anon.org/forumshare).

### 2018 Membership Survey Results

The 2018 Membership Survey Results are now posted on the WSO website at [al-anon.org/surveyresults](http://al-anon.org/surveyresults). Below is a list of several facts that the Survey revealed about our members who responded:

7 in 10 members have been affected by alcoholism that spans two or more generations.

44% of the members with zero to one year of continuous attendance in Al-Anon meetings reported a significant improvement to their mental health.

28% of members said that a professional had recommended Al-Anon to them, and 84% of those referred began attending meetings because of that referral.

78% of members have sought professional treatment, counseling, or therapy, and 69% started or continued to utilize these services after joining Al-Anon.

99% of members attend one or more face-to-face meetings per week. Although Al-Anon also offers telephone and online meetings, only 9% of members attend phone meetings and only 7% attend online meetings on a weekly basis.

#### WEB Sites, Addresses and phone numbers:

**RI AFG: [www.riafg.org](http://www.riafg.org) Office: 106 Rolfe St., Cranston, RI 02910**

**Telephone: 401-781-0044. Office hours available by calling this number.**

**WSO: [al-anon.org](http://al-anon.org). Office: 1600 Corporate Landing Parkway, Virginia Beach, VA 23454.**

**Telephone: 757-563-1600**

**God, grant me the serenity to accept the the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can and wisdom to know the difference.**

photo by TH

