



Lifelines

The Newsletter of the RI AFG, May 2007

WSC 2007 Was Awesome!

Hi Everyone,

Of course I have tons of things to say to each and every one of you, but the most important thing is to say thank you to you all for all of your good wishes and support. This year I really got to enjoy conference and understand the role we all play in helping families of alcoholics. How cool it has been to be chosen to work on the Literature Committee, too, and be part of writing our newest book: *Opening our Hearts, Transforming our Losses*. I would have never imagined that I could be part of such a monumental effort that will help so many.

It's been an honor to serve with you all. We have made such strides in RI and, believe me, the Trustees and WSO executive staff weren't shy in telling me that. How proud I was this year to be there for you all. This experience has strengthened my own personal program beyond words. Really, for once I am without a word for the blessing I feel I have received.

Good wishes to everyone for the outpouring of cards and love gifts RI groups sent. Other delegates were very impressed that little RI had a place twice the size of last year's table in the hospitality room (see next page). This is where delegates put out love gifts received from their area to share with you all. I had so much to carry back I got nervous when my luggage exceeded the 50-lb limit! But, HP was with me and the bag handler let it go, this time! My gratitude to all who sent me cards too! I was so glad to get that mail! When you're at conference, it is so inspiring to receive those letters of encouragement from your area. It helped me remember that we in RI practice Shared Leadership and that, although, I was physically there alone, you were all there in my thoughts, prayers, and actions. I am proud to be your trusted servant today—certainly different from my first conference. I was nervous and afraid of the unknown. I was fortunate to have my service sponsor at conference with me. She has led me through some interesting stuff, but really, the cards and positive feedback I received from you all was the energy I needed to experience and understand our role at conference. Can't wait to tell you everything at the next Area Assembly!

See you all soon, LIS,

Barbara M.

PS...I learned a new way of communicating Service Work, some delegates referred to service as Service Love!

*How proud I was this year
to be there for you all.
This experience has
strengthened my own personal
program beyond words.*

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2007 RI Area Assembly

Curious about what was discussed at this year's World Service Conference, or about what's happening in Al-Anon at the Area Level? Please attend our second annual Area Assembly, June 16th (see last page for details).

e-CAL

The WSO is launching a 3-year trial of e-CAL, an electronic form of Conference Approved Literature. Sharings can take on any form—music, poetry, graphics, etc.

See what members are sharing, or submit a sharing yourself. Log on to: 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 Faces Alcoholism 2008

More hope from members' recovery stories.

More information for professionals and potential newcomers about the benefits of Al-Anon and Alateen.

The deadline for ordering is 5:00 PM ET, Monday, July 16th. An on-line order form is available at www.al-anon.alateen.org/members (your password is your home group's name plus "afg") and ask your GR for more details.

Every year, we assemble as an Area (as suggested by our *Service Manual*) to discuss and vote on what we are doing at the Area level, to inform our GRs of Area and WSO happenings, and to discuss our plans or needs. Area World Service Committee (AWSC) members, Group Representatives (GRs), and interested members of our RI Al-Anon Family Groups (that's you!) are encouraged to attend.

This year, we will talk about:

- ▲ Links of service (service roles)
- ▲ Summary of 2007 World Service Conference
- ▲ How do we create a future that's more responsive to the diverse needs of Al-Anon Family Groups?
- ▲ What could be adding to the dilution of Al-Anon?

We will wrap up the assembly with food and fellowship.

Groups are encouraged to support their GRs at the Assembly (ie, by reimbursing any expenses, by ensuring they have *Service Manuals*—these can be downloaded from the WSO Web site for free or purchased at the Area Office). When anyone, anywhere reaches out for help, let the hand of Al-Anon and Alateen always be there for them, and let it begin with us!



Table at the WSC where Barbara displayed the love gifts received from our Area.

Letter to the Editor

I don't understand why you printed what you did about crosstalking in the most recent newsletter. The WSO has no official policy on crosstalking.

Please refer to the November 2004–February 2005 edition of the RI Lifelines, page 3, where there are direct quotes regarding crosstalking from the WSO's 2004 *Dynamic Groups Today—Building Blocks for Tomorrow* (P-46). I quote:

How do we define "crosstalk?" How can we deal with "crosstalk" without becoming rigid or controlling? Does the WSO have an official stand on crosstalk?

It is within the autonomy of the group to define crosstalk. The World Service Office has no official stand on this practice. Reviewing the group's definition during the group's periodic inventory will help the group members maintain flexibility.

What is the difference between a loving exchange and crosstalk?

A group, at its business or inventory meeting, could determine its own group conscience as to the amount of interchange appropriate for the meeting. The size of the group, the length of the meeting, and the group's desire to hear from everyone in attendance are all factors for the group to consider. Reading and study of "The Obstacles to Success in Al-Anon" in *Alcoholism, the Family Disease* (P-4) and *The Twelve Steps and Traditions* (P-17) may help.

Used with permission from the *2004 World Service Conference Summary* (P-46)

Marcia W.

Dear Readers,

The content for the Gentle Reminder on Crosstalk came from a response from the WSO to a question from our delegate. The definition quoted does, in fact, come from the 1991 World Service Conference and is echoed in the June 1995 issue of the Forum.

It was not my intention to suggest that there was a clear guideline/policy on Crosstalk—there is not—which is why I included the statement: "There is some conflict between what some members call crosstalk and others call 'loving interchange' as mentioned in the Suggested Welcome...In the end, the definition is left up to group autonomy, keeping the Traditions in mind."

I included the Gentle Reminder in response to readers' requests for an article on the topic. My intent was to present what information there is in order to raise awareness around the issue and, perhaps, inspire groups to discuss it and form their own group consciences on the matter.

Our delegate tells me that terms that do not appear in the *Service Manual*, such as crosstalk were discussed at this year's conference as well, with new developments you'll hear about at our Area Assembly in June and through your DRs and GRs in the coming months. So, the conversation continues!

I'd hoped the article would get members talking about crosstalk and, from your letter, it seems to be working! Thank you for being a part of that discussion!

Peace in the Program,
Deb E.

Meeting Needs Support

The Saturday night Hope Step Al-Anon group at Hope Congregational Church in East Providence is struggling and could use support. Please consider attending an extra meeting or two as a form of service.

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 from June through August, until school starts up again.

What Has Service Taught You?

Please e-mail your sharing to Deb E. at 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.

Service Opportunities

- ▲ Enjoy scrap booking? We need an **Area Archivist** to preserve the experience, history, and memorabilia of the RI AFG.
- ▲ An **Area Forum Coordinator** is needed to encourage groups and members to submit sharings to *The Forum* and to subscribe.
- ▲ **District representatives (DRs)** are needed for **Districts 3 and 5**. The DR is an important link between the groups and the Area Assembly.
- ▲ We have the funds, the meeting places, interested schools, and kids looking for meetings. All we're missing are **Alateen Sponsors!** You must have at least 2 years in the program (dual members included). Attend the next Informational Sponsors Meeting to learn more (see last page for details).
- ▲ Become a member of the **2007 Workshop Committee**; plans for this year's event are already underway.

If you are interested in any of the above positions, please come to the next Area Meeting or call the office (see last page).

- ▲ **Traveling overseas?** Consider attending a meeting, bringing CAL with you, etc. Send WSO a note about where you've been and how you brought public outreach with you.
- ▲ Does your group receive copies of *Lifelines*? Consider **making copies** for your fellow members.
- ▲ We would like to put an Al-Anon book in every library! If your group would like to help, please **donate a book to your local library** (eg, *How Al-Anon Works* is a suggestion) and e-mail lightdance1@aol.com with the book's title and the library's name for our records.
- ▲ Public Outreach is raising money by **selling refillable pens** with RI AFG contact information and the slogan "One Day at a Time." They are dark blue with gold writing and are on sale for \$2.00. We also have **coffee mugs** that are white with blue lettering on sale for \$4.00 each. These items make great gifts for meeting and member anniversaries! You can purchase them at the office.

Alateen Spoken Here

Anonymous

When I admit I am powerless over alcohol, I realize that I don't have the power to change the alcoholic in my life. I also realize that I can't change anything about alcoholism.

My Dad's drinking causes me to feel powerless because I cannot change it. My life is unmanageable when my Father drinks.

It is important for me to admit that my life is unmanageable because I cannot change someone else's life; I can only change myself. Thanks to Alateen, I am my own best cheerleader.

Brandy South Carolina

I still have problems with detachment. I want to fix everyone's problems except my own and that causes problems for me. I am still trying to fix other people, mostly my family.

When I try to fix everyone else's problems, I get really angry. It doesn't work and makes everything worse for me and my family. I once thought it meant detaching only from my Mom and Dad's diseases, but it is from so much more. I have a lot more to learn about detachment and Alateen helps me.

Used with permission from Alateen Talk, Vol. 44, No. 2.

Opening Our Hearts, Transforming Our Losses

A new piece of Conference Approved Literature (CAL) has just been released called *Opening Our Hearts, Transforming Our Losses*. This book includes sharings from hundreds of Al-Anon members on how they have used the tools of the Al-Anon program to heal from the losses they experienced as the result of a loved one's alcoholism.

The book covers a wide range of topics—since there are many types of losses that result from, or are associated with, alcoholism. Topics include:

- ▲ Coping with the death of a loved one (including the alcoholic or a sponsor)
- ▲ Grieving for our childhood (including dealing with past abuse)
- ▲ Loss in relationships (including separation, divorce, and relationships with adult children)
- ▲ Facing financial ruin
- ▲ Loss of the dream (including mourning what was lost or what we never had)

We've already sold out of the first order and will have more copies available soon at the RI Literature Distribution Center (aka the RI Al-Anon office). Copies are \$14 each.

Love in Service, Leah D.

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, 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.

Treasury Report

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

Please remember to put the group name and *entire* group number on all checks when sending in donations. Group numbers are listed 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		State	Alateen	Public Outreach
3-0026686	Sat Nite Live	\$50.00		
3-012435	Our Daily Bread	\$100.00		
2-0040689	????????	\$122.38		
2-012455	Courage to Change	\$24.50		
3-002668	Hope for Today	\$95.00		
4-0012475	Cran/War Daytime	\$110.00		
1-024249	Hope Step	\$25.00		
3-050750	There Is Hope	\$50.00		
2-0062815	HUGS	\$25.00		
4-0039006	There Is Hope	\$140.00	70.00	
1-504019	????????	\$20.00		
2-0040461	Keep It Simple	\$20.00		
2-503064	Step Up to Serenity	\$10.00		
4-036737	Living Recovery	\$25.00		
April Totals		\$767.38	70.00	

Upcoming Events

June

Alateen Informational Sponsors Meeting

Sat, June 9th, 1:00 PM

Area Office, 106 Rolfe Street, Cranston

This is the second in a series of quarterly informational meetings. All AI-Anon members who are currently involved with Alateen or who are interested in volunteering are welcome!

Area Assembly

Sat, June 16, 9:00 AM-1:00 PM

St. Joseph's Hospital

21 Peace Street, Providence

Area World Service Committee (AWSC) members, Group Representatives (GRs), and interested members of our RI AI-Anon Family Groups (that's you!) are encouraged to attend.

Area Meeting

TBD at Area Assembly

Area Office, 106 Rolfe Street, Cranston

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

RI AI-Anon Fall Workshop Committee Meeting

Wed, June 27, 6:30 PM

Area Office, 106 Rolfe Street, Cranston

Save the date! Our workshop will be held on Saturday, November 3rd 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.

JUNE 2007						
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10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

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 AIS news; and attract AI-Anon members into service.

Lifelines submissions may be sent to destre99@yahoo.com or mailed to the office at the address above.

The deadline for the next issue is **June 16**. If you wish to receive *Lifelines* via e-mail, please e-mail destre99@yahoo.com and type "Mailing List" in the Subject line.