

## Sharing Area Highlights – WSC 2026

### Rhode Island; Barbara W., RIAWSC Delegate Panel 64

Rhode Island is tiny, 37 miles wide by 48 miles long, and as Area 49, we have 3 districts, 34 in-person/hybrid meetings including one Spanish-speaking meeting and one Alateen meeting, and 10 online meetings. There has been a healthy increase in interest in service at the AWSC level and spirits are high!

#### **Highlights**

- RIAWSC Area 49 held two in-person assemblies, one in the Spring hosted by District 3 and one in the Fall hosted by District 1. Five additional AWSC meetings were held via Zoom or in hybrid format.
- RI Area World Service Committee is rocking! All but three service positions have been filled.
- The Budget is out of the red and into the black, thanks to member responses to fundraising efforts.
- Workshop Coordinators planned and held the annual all-day Al-Anon Workshop in October featuring Al-Anon and AA speakers, breakout sessions, and AA participation.
- Alateen Coordinator and Alateen Process Person worked hard to get Alateen up and running again post-Covid. RI has one new Alateen in-person meeting started and one that is in process.
- New Tech Coordinator position was created and filled.
- The Area held a successful Writing Workshop on Zoom and at the Annual Workshop.
- A Task Force for office accessibility has been established.
- The Rhode Island AA Convention with Al-Anon participation was sold out, there was an Al-Anon speaker, several Al-Anon meetings held, and literature available.

#### **Challenges**

- We are still looking for an Alternate Delegate, a Public Outreach Coordinator and a Forum Coordinator.
- There was no elected Delegate for 2025 and thankfully our chairperson attended WSC, doing double duty.
- We are working to figure out how to best support our Spanish-speaking group at assemblies and workshops.

## **75 Years, One Purpose**

Tradition Five is my favorite tradition, it states that Al-Anon's one purpose is to help families of alcoholics and that I can be helped by working the 12 Steps, encouraging and understanding the alcoholic, and welcoming and giving comfort to other Al-Anon members.

By the time I walked into my first Al-Anon meeting in Chicago in 1992, I felt as though I had tried everything I could think of to get my alcoholic husband to act normally, to no avail. I was in deep despair, hopeless and in pain. I reached out for help by walking into that Al-Anon meeting, and it was such a relief to feel open to help for the first time in my life.

I had asked for help before but I never actually wanted feedback. I used my problems and extremely chaotic situations as topics of conversation to gain attention and shock and distance people. The "help" I received was never helpful so I nodded, smiled, and quickly and disdainfully discarded suggestions.

As I attended these early meetings, I realized I had found people who understood and whose sole purpose was to help me! I was gently helped indirectly by listening, sharing, working the 12 Steps, and reading literature. Al-Anon appeared set up to give me no reasons to criticize or reject what I was hearing, and no way to mess it up or fail at it.

Al-Anon was my lifeline. Everyone was kind and I began to feel heard, "a part of" despite sharing my great imperfections, and it was a fantastic and new feeling. After a meeting, I felt poured back into my body. I began to understand the disease of alcoholism and that there were reasons for my struggles, and it all made sense. I learned to have more compassion for myself, my family, alcoholics, and friends and families of alcoholics.

Before Al-Anon, helping others gave me a reason for existing. In Al-Anon, I have learned to offer help without strings or resentment. I benefit myself by giving only what I am able to give, which in turn, benefits others in a healthier way.

Aversion to help is a primary way that I've been affected by the disease of alcoholism. I volunteered as third-year delegate to continue to give service when I can, to develop my ability to accept help from a mentor, a service sponsor and members, to try new scary things and to accept my imperfect humanity. Attending the WSC is yet another opportunity for me to show gratitude for the gift of the Al-Anon program through service.

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