



Lifelines

The Newsletter of the RI AFG, September 2008

June Assembly Follow-up

During the June Assembly, members attended a workshop that discussed the links of service and ways of sharing information from the Assembly with the groups. Members were encouraged to ask questions and some of those questions, due to time constraints or a lack of information at hand, could not be answered on that day. As promised, we provide those questions, and their answers, for you here in this article.

The next Area Assembly will be November 15th at St. Joseph's Hospital in Providence at 9:00 AM. Every group needs to be represented at this Assembly; it will be an Election Assembly and GRs will vote for all Area service positions. We are happy to have a World Service Trustee attend for the first time in our Area. All members are invited to come hear her speak.

I heard we're not supposed to use the chant at the end of our meetings anymore. Is that true?

Some groups finish the meeting with a closing prayer and then a "chant" ("Keep coming back. It works if you work it..."). We heard at the November 2007 Assembly that the World Service Conference asks that we refrain from using the chant. Some members wanted clarification, so we went to the source. The following is a letter from Ric B., Al-Anon's executive director:

Concern over the length of meeting closings because of the additions of chants was a discussion topic at the 2001 World Service Conference. The Conference members concluded that it is not appropriate for the WSO or the Conference to make a policy or issue a statement regarding the use of chants in the closing of a meeting. Conference members were in agreement that it is within group autonomy to determine the use of chants and/or prayers at the end of a meeting by making a group conscience decision that abides by the Traditions. The group conscience decision could then be stated at the end of the meeting. Conference members were reminded that our cofounder, Lois W., said, "It doesn't matter what [prayer] we close with, but we close with a spiritual moment." Details of this discussion can be found in the 2001 World Conference Summary, page 21.

So there is no official policy regarding chants; how groups close their meetings is the decision of an informed group conscience. The only reference to the closing at the end of a meeting in the Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual is the Suggested Al-Anon/Alateen Closing on page 24 (2006-2009 edition). It states at the end of the Suggested Closing: "It is suggested that groups close in a manner that is agreeable to the group conscience." (The Service Manual can be found on the Al-Anon/Alateen Members' Web site: www.al-anon.alateen.org/members under the "Group Services" tab. The password to enter the Members' site is your group name followed by AFG, e.g. Easy Does It AFG.)

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Some additional things to think about regarding "chants":

- ▲ *Chants are not part of Al-Anon and came into the program from treatment centers and other 12 Step programs.*
- ▲ *When looking at the faces of newcomers when members are chanting and pumping their arms, they are clearly left out of the process.*

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Alateens: How do YOU carry the message?

Please consider submitting a sharing on this topic for the next issue, either on your own or as a group. Please e-mail your submissions to Deb E. at destre99@yahoo.com, or drop off or mail them to the Al-Anon office (see page 5).

Please provide your first name and/or the town or group to which you belong, unless you wish to remain anonymous.

Al-Anon Members Needed for Alateen Service

Alateen needs Al-Anon members to become certified and volunteer to support existing groups as alternates to help fill in at meetings.

Alateen Spoken Here

Carrying the Message

Russell, CT

I feel that I carry the message pretty well within my group. If a newcomer asked me about something, I would be able to tell them. I also carry the message outside of my group. I got one of my friends, whose Dad is in A. A. to come to the meeting. He loves the program now. Not only have I told people about the program, I've showed them how well it works. I do this by being calm, cool, and collected instead of getting ready to fight. That was me before Alateen.

Carly, NJ

I believe that carrying the message in both my group and outside my group is very important. I carry the message in my group by sharing any feelings, good or bad, with my fellow members. They recommend tools for me to use if I'm depressed or just upset.

Sharing outside the group is something I try to focus on and help with. So far, I spoke at several different meetings, I spoke at an Area Al-Anon/Alateen Convention, and I explained to my friends what Alateen is and how it helps.

My actions have changed over the five years I've been coming to Alateen. I've noticed that I'm a little more social and less isolated from my family and friends. I explain to my friends why Alateen is the way it is and answer their questions. I am proud of myself for encouraging them to attend Alateen and get the help they need.

Used with permission from Alateen Talk, Volume 46, Number 1.

Keep Coming

On July 8, 2008, the Tuesday noon "Together We Can Make It" Al-Anon Family Group celebrated its 5th year anniversary. At times during these years, only 2 of us were present, but today we have about a dozen grateful regular members at every meeting.

- Carol W

Assembly Follow-up

continued from page 1

- ▲ *Such chants and behaviors may reinforce the idea that Al-Anon is a cult when we know that it isn't nor do we want it to be perceived to be.*
- ▲ *The experience of some groups has been that adding the Al-Anon Declaration at the end of their chosen closing prayer seems to replace the chants. In 2006, every group was sent a table card to display the Declaration, and it is printed in the "Groups at Work" section of the Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual (page 24 in the 2006-2009 edition).*

How can I get a copy of the 2008 World Service Conference Summary?

The *World Service Conference Summary* (P-46) is *FREE* and covers all of the issues discussed at this year's World Service Conference, such as: How can we apply our Tradition of anonymity on the Internet and in electric media? Can members bequeath any amount of money to the WSO? What did Conference members have to say during the Alateen Traditions discussion?

The Summary is available on the Al-Anon/Alateen Members' Web site. Just log on to: www.al-anon.alateen.org/members. The password is the name of your group plus the letters "afg". Click the dark green button on the right of the screen to access the *2008 World Service Conference Summary*.

Or, you may also order a hard copy directly from the WSO, but you will have to pay \$3.00 in shipping and handling. Order forms are available at the Area Office and in most issues of *The Forum*.



Attraction vs advertising—
they want what we live!

*Photograph submitted
by Linda F.*

Treasury Report

The following is a listing of the donations to the Area Office for July and August.

Please remember to put the group name and *entire* group number on all checks when sending in donations. Your group number is provided 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 | Public Outreach |
|------------|------------------------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------|
| 3-050750 | There Is Hope | 25.00 | | |
| 502037 | Serenity on the Hill | 40.00 | | |
| 3-00501427 | Joy Beckons | 45.00 | | |
| 5-503443 | Essential Steps & Traditions | 25.00 | 15.00 | |
| 4-064957 | Freedom Group | 20.00 | | |
| 5-012437 | Charlestown New Life | 50.00 | 50.00 | |
| 3-012435 | Our Daily Bread | 50.00 | | |
| 1-0026403 | Sunday Night Al-anon | 20.00 | | |
| 2-0062815 | H.U.G.S. | 25.00 | | |
| | July Totals | 300.00 | 65.00 | |
| 3-030119 | Monday Morning Al-Anon | 25.00 | | |
| 4-064957 | Freedom Group | 20.00 | | |
| 2-0040461 | Keep It Simple | 25.00 | | |
| 4-036734 | Living Recovery | 30.00 | | |
| 4-012443 | E.G. Friday Night | | | 8.00 |
| 2-037296 | Change What you Can | 25.00 | 25.00 | |
| 4-012475 | Cranston/Warwick Day | 19.00 | | |
| 4-052531 | Step Up to Serenity | 20.00 | | |
| 2-502037 | Serenity on the Hill | 30.00 | | |
| 4-0039006 | Forever Hope | 150.00 | 75.00 | |
| 2-0062815 | H.U.G.S. | 25.00 | | |
| 2-040889 | Let Go & Let God | 22.00 | | |
| ??? | ????? (Check #3078) | 20.00 | | |
| | August Totals | 411.00 | 100.00 | 8.00 |

What Gifts Have You Received Serving as a Group Representative?

Serving as group rep has helped me understand the links of service and Al-Anon as a worldwide fellowship. It was an important position to fill for the health of our group and to have the support and guidance of the district and area. For me, I take care of my gift of recovery by giving it away and doing service. Participation is the key to harmony.

- Anonymous

It's almost time to rotate service positions!

Are you interested in representing your home group? Ask your GR for more information about this important and recovery-strengthening service position, and consider stepping up to service in November.

Al-Anon's New Book on Relationships Is Here!

Al-Anon's latest book, *Discovering Choices*, explores the many facets of our recovery in relationships. Drawing on the experience, strength, and hope of hundreds of members, it sheds light on how alcoholism has affected many different types of relationships in many different ways. It also shares why various Al-Anon tools have been helpful in improving our relationships or our attitudes about them.

Copies of the book will be available at the Area Office/LDC (see page 5) for \$15.00. When you purchase your literature at RI's Area Office/LDC, you save on shipping and the proceeds support RI Al-Anon services.

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

Lifelines e-subscription: destre99@yahoo.com (type "Mailing List" in the subject line)

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 Al-Anon Information Service news; and attract Al-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 **October 15**.

If you wish to receive *Lifelines* and other Area news via e-mail, please e-mail destre99@yahoo.com and type "Mailing List" in the Subject line.

Upcoming Events

September

Saturday Nite Live Anniversary

Sat., Sept. 27, 2008

Calvary Methodist Church, 200 Turner Road, Middletown

Please join us for speakers, food, and fellowship!

October

RI AFG 2008 Workshop with AA Participation: Discovering Choices

Sat. Oct. 4, 2008, 8:30 AM-4:00 PM

Ray Conference Center, Butler Hospital, 345 Blackstone Blvd, Providence

We will have AA, Al-Anon, and Alateen speakers, workshops, food, raffles, literature, crafts, and more! Donations by groups or members of gift baskets for the raffle, crafts or love gifts, and/or items for the white elephant table will be most appreciated. We ask that each participant please bring a dish to share. Registration cost \$10.00; Alateens pay \$2.00 or volunteer time.

Higher Powered Lunch Bunch 18th Anniversary

Tues., Oct. 21, 2008, 12:00-1:00 PM

St. Stephen's Church, 2nd Floor, 114 George Street, Providence

Please join us for food, fellowship, and a special Al-Anon speaker!

Area Meeting

Tues., Oct. 21, 7:00 PM

Area Office, 106 Rolfe Street, Cranston

We will be planning the next voting assembly. If you are interested in participating in service, please attend!

Tuesday Night How U Get Serenity (HUGS) Anniversary

Tues., Oct. 21, 7:30 PM

Park Place Congregational Church (Upstairs), 71 Park Place, Pawtucket

There will be speakers and refreshments. Come celebrate with us!

Tides of Change; Waves of Healing: 25th Annual New Hampshire Convention with AA Participation

Fri., Oct. 31-Sun., Nov. 2, 2008

Ashworth-by-the-Sea, Hampton Beach, NH

This is a yearly, 3-day convention devoted to fellowship, sharing, and personal growth sponsored by the NH Area Assembly. For a registration form, visit <http://www.nhal-anon.org/Convention.html>. The registration is deadline is September 22, 2008.

November

Tiverton 'There Is Hope' Al-Anon 17th Anniversary

Mon., Nov. 10, 7:00-9:00 PM

Amicable Congregational Church, 3736 Main Rd., Tiverton

Join us for our "Attitude of Gratitude" Dinner of Thanks. Come join us as we begin the Holiday season by giving thanks for the blessings of recovery through the 12 Steps. We'll have speakers, food, fellowship, and literature.

Area Assembly

Sat, Nov. 15th, 9:00 AM-3:00 PM

St. Joseph's Hospital, 21 Peace Street, Providence

Are you ready to take your program to the next level? All current and upcoming GRs and Area Coordinators and Officers are expected to attend. We will discuss issues that affect the health of our groups and vote in the next group of Area service members. Your voice is important. **Make sure your group is represented!**

SEPTEMBER 2008

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NOVEMBER 2008

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