



Al-Anon Family Groups
Strength and hope for friends and families of problem drinkers

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BOARD VISION STATEMENT

All people affected by someone else's drinking will find help and recovery in every community.

BOARD MISSION STATEMENT

Anticipate the future and Al-Anon's place in it and ensure that the necessary resources are available.

STRATEGIC PLAN PRIORITIES

Al-Anon's spiritual principles permeate our policies and practices; we apply emerging technology and communication options:

- To increase the visibility of Al-Anon so that it is recognized as the number one resource throughout the world for helping friends and families of problem drinkers.
- To empower the Al-Anon fellowship to be vibrant, inclusive, and flexible.
- To achieve a viable future for Al-Anon Family Groups, the Board will be adaptive and strategic in its use of talents, skills, and abilities.

April 28, 2016

Dear Al-Anon and Alateen members:

The purpose of this Chairperson of the Board letter is to share highlights from our 2016 World Service Conference, along with an update from the April Special Meeting of the Board of Trustees, the Open Meeting of the Board of Trustees, and the Annual Meeting of the Board. You will also find updates from our Policy Chair and Co-Chair, our Treasurer, and the Conference Leadership Team (CLT).

The theme for the 2016 World Service Conference was "Realizing our Spiritual Potential." Throughout the week we were given the privilege of listening and participating through the personal sharings of our outgoing Delegates, our opening and closing dinner speakers, Conference floor discussions, breakout sessions, Committee and Thought and Task Force groups, as well as sharing during mealtimes. The experience of being of service to our worldwide fellowship allows us to be uplifted and inspired. We realize that we are not alone. We accept the ability of receiving the gift of imagination in place of limitations. It is only through the actions of service to others that I've come to a realization of "our" spiritual potential.

The following are highlights from the 2016 World Service Conference:

Conference members approved amendments to the descriptive text of Concept Eleven on pages 207-214 in the *2014-2017 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual (P-24/27)*. Amending the text allows for updates reflecting various structure changes of Standing Committees, as well as the addition of Thought and Task Forces and Work Groups, while keeping in mind that Al-Anon is a worldwide fellowship and that not all International structures have made the same changes.

The “Meet the Board” event was presented with the announcement that the three-year trial has been extended through 2019. The 2016 event is being hosted by Arkansas on October 22nd in Fayetteville. The 2017 invitation was shared, along with new hotel planning forms that should allow for clearer communication for Areas interested in submitting to host for 2017. Conference members were asked to participate in a “Meet the Board” “re-naming” activity. Over seventy-five responses were received and a new name for the event may be announced as early as the July Board meeting. Submission deadline to host in 2017 is September 15th, 2016.

During the Conference, there were continued conversations related to the current model of Alateen, and results of the recent Alateen survey were shared. The focus continues on securing ways to encourage participation of teens. One interesting result of the Alateen survey centered on the use of technology. The Alateen members participating in the survey overwhelmingly shared that technology is of no interest. Use of Facebook, on-line meetings, chat rooms, and phone apps were all shared as a non-interest. The shared preference was face-to-face meetings.

Four Task Forces were presented: *Anonymity and Technology; Communication and Strengthening our Links of Service; Meeting Types; and Acceptance of Communities, Cultures, and Beliefs.* While each topic appeared on the surface to be separate, through presentations of each Task Force and subsequent discussion, possible links to each were revealed. The overriding theme was the subtle implication of bias: How without knowing and to varying degrees, prior experiences can permeate our thoughts, actions, and reactions. One member shared how she realized she had limited herself in reaching her own spiritual potential through the presence of preconceived ideas. All four presentations were powerful and worthy of use in our Areas.

2018 Al-Anon International Convention presentation: The question was asked “*Where will you be in two years, two months, and ??? days?*” We hope you will be joining us at the 6th Al-Anon International Convention, July 6-8, 2018 in Baltimore, Maryland. Additional information can be found on the Member’s Web site.

Along with the 2018 International Convention, the announcement to begin planning for the 2023 International Convention was made. Detailed information outlining the bid process, meeting and hotel room requirements, and all the information needed for presenting a bid were handed out to each Conference member. Please keep in mind that the responsibility for the preparation and presentation of the bid rests with the WSC Delegate of the Area or Province. You are strongly encouraged to involve the local Convention and Visitors Bureau to assist you in bid preparation and presentation. The completed World Service Office Bid Questionnaire, with any supporting material, must be submitted to the WSO by the Area Delegate and postmarked no later than December 1, 2016.

Each year, the Finance Committee gives a presentation to the entire Conference. This year the focus was understanding our financial reports. The breakout sessions focused on “how to share” the information within our Areas, and how to use the financial reports

as resources in educating our membership. One member's take away was "healthy relationships discuss finances." Contributions received at the Conference from individual Conference members and Areas totaled \$11,098.73, an increase of 27% from the 2015 WSC contributions. One Area shared that in place of sending love gifts as a thank you their Area made "dream jars," with each group within the Area contributing loose change.

The Open Board meeting topic centered on Delegate-Trustee Calls. Since the late 1990's, Trustees have been making calls to Delegates to provide the opportunity to discuss questions concerning the quarterly Chairperson of the Board letter, Policy and Finance Updates, and to establish more communication between Trustees and Delegates, recently, an Update from the Conference Leadership Team has also been included. The Board discussed the following: *What role does the Delegate Call have in fulfilling the Board's efforts to be collaborative, informative, and supportive?* The consensus of the Board was that the Delegate calls fulfil the Boards efforts through providing an opportunity for transparency, open communication, and sharing of ideas.

Three Regions—US South Central, US Southwest and US Northwest—began the process of nominating Regional Trustees by the forming of their respective Regional Committees on Trustees (RCT). While the process for nominating a Regional Trustee and Trustee at Large is different, the deadline for resumes to be submitted to the WSO is August 15th.

Change is a part of any organization. The Board is excited to share that our WSO is moving forward into a new chapter.

During the April Special Meeting of the Board, and within the powers and duties of the Trustees, Mary Gregory was appointed as our new Executive Director. Mary will serve as the Interim Executive Director for a period of time to ensure the new office structure is functioning well. The Board will post the Executive Director position description and qualifications to all members in the fellowship when appropriate.

The second change was the Board's acceptance of the Director of Business Services letter of retirement. David Zach has served our fellowship with great loyalty, expertise, and a special sense of humor since 2000, and will be greatly missed. David will remain on staff until the completion of the 2016 audit, sometime late January or February. As shared previously, the Board has a succession plan in place. The initial steps in the search process have begun. When appropriate, the opening announcement and job description will be placed on AFG Connects. Please keep in mind that this is a non-member position.

An additional change is the development of the Director of Programs position. The Director of Programs will be responsible for participating in the development, implementation, and evaluation of all World Service Office activities that serve members, and those activities that seek to attract new members who can benefit from affiliation with AI-Anon. Along with education and supervisory experience requirements,

applicants are required to have a minimum of ten years active Al-Anon membership and Al-Anon Area leadership experience is required. The complete job description has been posted on AFG Connects under Announcements – WSO Structure.

The Conference gave traditional approval, and during the Annual Meeting the Board of Trustees elected the following trusted servants:

Regional Trustees:

Joan Sullivan, US Northeast	Second three-year term
Bruce Fetter, US Southeast	First three-year term
Debbie Grace, US North Central	Second three-year term

Trustees at Large:

Elizabeth (Jennie) McCann	Second three-year term
Judy Kirby	Second three-year term
Rosie Morin	First three-year term

Board Officers:

Debbie Grace	Chairperson of the Board
Joan Sullivan	Vice-Chairperson of the Board
Elizabeth (Jennie) McCann	Treasurer

The Board, in its legal capacity, elected the following:

Executive Committee Members:

Beverly Anderson	Third one-year term
Connie Hurst	First one-year term
Paula Burleson	First one-year term

Executive Committee Chairperson:

Beverly Anderson	One-year term
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Executive Committee for Real Property Management:

Thomas Blake	Three-year term
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Executive Committee for Real Property Management Chairperson:

Jeffrey Keeny	One-year term
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To aid the Board in further planning and discussion, we are asking current Delegates to please share your response to the following questions when your Trustee contacts you:

What was the most significant topic discussed during WSC that you will bring back to your Area?

The Trustee assigned to the Delegate is a resource for clarification or questions from this letter, and feedback regarding Area issues, if desired. If you prefer not to have the Trustee phone you, please let him/her know when the initial contact is made.

I would be remiss if I did not mention the wonderful 65th Anniversary Celebration held on Saturday evening following the Conference. Three hundred and fifty members and friends of our fellowship gathered to celebrate our beginnings and our future. Our two speakers had a combined total of over 105 years in the fellowship. Their personal sharings were gifts of unconditional love, tolerance, and absolute devotion to carrying our message of hope.

Throughout the years, our fellowship has experienced challenges and conflict. Through the continued practice and commitment to our Legacies, and through the keeping of our primary spiritual aim, we have grown and learned from each other. As we begin this new chapter of our fellowship, may we continue to realize our spiritual potential that extends without limit into the future.

In gratitude,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Debbie R. Grace". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the "In gratitude," text.

Debbie Grace
Chairperson of the Board of Trustees

Policy Committee Update

Judy Kirby, Chair

John McLoughlin, Co-Chair

April 2016

The purpose of the update sent each quarter by the Chairman of the Policy Committee is to provide information and to report progress on the following:

- Topics discussed by the Policy Committee that are generated by the fellowship and need clarification or interpretation in light of the Tradition and Concepts
- Policy motions presented to the World Service Conference (WSC)
- Policy motions passed by the WSC

The Policy Committee presented to the 2016 World Service Conference (WSC) proposed language regarding a limited, one-time memorial contribution in memory of deceased Al-Anon members, by family members who are not Al-Anon members. This language was requested by the 2015 WSC. The Conference discussed the language as proposed and then passed the motion (84 Yes, 5 No, 1 Abstention, and 1 Void) to amend the text on page 95 of the “Financial Matters” section, “Memorial Contributions,” in the “Digest of Al-Anon and Alateen Policies” section of the *2014 – 2017 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/P27) as follows:

Memorial Contributions. Any Al-Anon or Alateen member may make contributions to the WSO in memory of anyone who is deceased. (Contact the WSO for details).

The World Service Office accepts contributions in memory of deceased Al-Anon members from “family” who are not Al-Anon members. The fellowship recognizes that accepting such contributions can give comfort to families of alcoholics as described in Tradition Five.

The World Service Conference defines family as anyone who has a close relationship of loving care and concern for another. The individual donor defines his or her relationship to the deceased Al-Anon member.

This one-time gift of gratitude is limited to an amount no greater than \$500. Memorial contributions by non-members are not solicited.

This motion reflects the spiritual principles of Tradition Five and reinstates a similar policy that had been in place from Al-Anon’s early days until 1986. The amended text will be updated in the electronic version of the *Service Manual* located on the Members’ Web site. Members can download that text and insert it into their current *Service Manual*.

The Policy Committee recommended revised text regarding “Convention and Other Events,” formerly title “Conventions,” pages 85 and 86, of the *2014 -2017 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27). The proposed text included spiritual principles and criteria regarding conventions and other events. It was presented in a motion to the 2016 World Service Conference (WSC) as an effort to help prevent Al-Anon’s name from being linked

to outside enterprises, clarifying Tradition Six. Minimal feedback about the proposed text was received from Conference members prior to the WSC. However, numerous helpful suggestions were offered during the Conference discussion. A consensus affirmed that the language under consideration be revised and brought back to the 2017 WSC. A Policy Task Force comprised of Policy Committee members will review the proposed text and other ideas resulting from the discussion at the 2016 WSC.

At the Open Policy Meeting, the Policy Committee discussed the terms “open and closed meetings” with the purpose of exploring to what degree these designations complicate public outreach efforts and cause confusion for potential and current members. The discussion about “open” and “closed” meetings focused primarily on Tradition Five, the principle of being welcoming, and Tradition Twelve, maintaining anonymity of members. The Policy Chairman appointed a Thought Force to explore this topic further.

In addition to ideas from World Service Conference members, the WSO Policy Committee welcomes the reflections and suggestions from all AI-Anon and Alateen members regarding the announcement of events within our fellowship. This is also true for any other topics of policy needing clarification or interpretation.

FINANCE UPDATE

Jennie M., Treasurer

April 2016

The following update is based on the unaudited financial statements for the period ended March 31, 2016. The General Fund recorded a loss of \$104,839 for this quarter, compared to a gain of \$38,865 this quarter last year in large part to a continued decline in literature sales. Revenue from literature sales was below 2015 revenue from sales by \$97,368. In an effort to balance the budget, the investment income and transfer from the Reserve Fund totaled \$33,571 compared to \$22,360 in 2015. While 2016 Contributions exceeded 2015 Contributions by \$4,794, they are not meeting budget projections. Total income fell below budgeted income by about 1% while total expenses were just slightly above budget.

Income:

Literature sales were \$874,756 this quarter, compared to \$947,192 this quarter last year, a decrease of 7.65%. Gross profit on literature sales was \$706,913 (80% of sales), compared to \$804,281 at March 31, 2015. Contributions were \$367,371 this quarter, compared to \$362,577 this quarter last year—an increase of 1.32%, *Forum* subscription income was \$57,193 this quarter, compared to \$65,525 last year—a decrease of 12.72%. This reflects activity before the suspension of the complimentary copy of the *Forum* took effect.

Expenses:

Operating expenses were \$1,269,887 this quarter, compared to \$1,215,878 this quarter last year-- an increase of 4.44% which was very close to the budget. There were no significant changes in expenses from one year to the next. As part of our duty to keep a watchful eye on expenditures, the Finance Committee must find places to cut expenditures while not affecting core services to the members. The suspension of the complimentary copy of the *Forum* to the groups is one such action we have taken in 2016. If revenues do not increase significantly, the Finance Committee will be looking for additional ways to cut expenses, which may affect services.

Reserve Fund:

The fair value of investments in the Reserve Fund totaled \$4,818,093 at March 31, 2016. This amount includes an unrealized gain of \$523,379. In compliance with a Board of Trustees' motion, 4% of the average balance of the Reserve Fund over the prior 36 months could be transferred to the General Fund, if needed. The 2016 budget includes such a transfer.

Conference Leadership Team

Tina Barna, Chair

April 2016

The purpose of the Conference Leadership Team (CLT) update is to communicate the agenda planning activities for the World Service Conference. Planning begins at the close of the prior Conference with review of the evaluations and insights offered by WSC members at the conclusion. The agenda topics are determined by the World Service Conference's request for more information, for Thought Forces and Task Forces, and direction to the Committees.

Thank you to all Delegates, Trustees, Executive Committee members, and WSO staff who contributed greatly to making the 2016 WSC a success. The evaluations are being tallied and all of the comments and suggestions will be used to plan the next Conference. It is exciting to report that we received 66 "stickie note" ideas for the 2017 Conference Theme.

Along with the existing Thought and Task Forces, there will be an additional Thought Force. At the 2016 WSC, a request was made to the Conference Chairperson for a group to discuss ways in which Delegates can fully participate in the WSC. The request was honored by discussion on the Conference floor and by the formation of a Thought Force to bring back information to the 2017 WSC. **What specific feedback would you like to offer the Thought Force working on this?** Comments and ideas shared during the Trustee/Delegate calls will be collected and given to the Thought Force members.

All 2016 WSC presentations and reports have been uploaded to the AFG Connects Web site and are available for use in Delegate reports back in their Areas.