

July 2023 Chairperson of the Board Letter

Dear Al-Anon and Alateen members,

The purpose of this Chairperson of the Board (COB) letter is to share with you some highlights from our Board of Trustees' Quarterly Meeting. You will also find updates from our Policy Chairperson, a Finance Update from our Treasurer, and an update from our Conference Leadership Team (CLT).

FINANCE UPDATE

Thank you to our members for your donations and purchases of our Conference Approved Literature (CAL). Your financial support helps the World Service Office (WSO) to be a self-supporting organization as stated in the Seventh Tradition. Your generosity allows WSO Staff to provide the many services that are listed on the back of the Quarterly Appeal Letter.

There is good news to share! Our June 2023 contributions exceeded our budgeted expectations by eight percent. Our literature sales were only one percent below our budget for the month. The literature sales did not include the 2023 International Convention sales. More detailed information will be provided by our Treasurer. (See the Finance Update attached to this letter for more financial information.)

The Board approved the 2023 Revised Budget as presented. We anticipate a net income of \$64,770 for 2023.

JULY BOARD MEETING

The Board had a full agenda that included generative discussions, training, and presentations.

The Road Trip! You and Your Board Connect Work Group has been working on the agenda and revising the interactive workshop. All Trustee, Executive, and Staff assignments have been finalized. This event is being hosted by California South (CA-S) on October 28, 2023. Registration will open in September. **Given the 2023 Al-Anon International Convention (IC2023) workload, the Board has agreed to postpone the trial of Road Trip! as a hybrid event scheduled for 2023 until next year.**

The Trustees were presented with the completed accomplishments from the 2023 WSO Projects Landscape, such as the International Convention, the financial audit, the Alateen recertification process, the publication of the new Public Outreach (PO) Toolkit initiated and undertaken by the PO Committee, the 2023 World Service Conference, updates to the Employee Manual, and more. The PO Toolkit was launched earlier this year, and the WSO Staff has already received 13 member submissions. In October, Staff will bring recommendations to the Board for projects and Strategic Plan strategies to undertake in 2024.

2023 International Convention Highlights:

Book sales at IC2023 were amazing. Members purchased 8,015 units of *A Little Time for Myself—A Collection of Al-Anon Personal Experiences* (B-34), our new daily reader, in English, 584 in Spanish, and 29 in French. The four-day sales figure was \$152,421.

The IC2023 member registration totals were: 3,387 Al-Anon, 42 Alateen, 293 A.A., and 54 guests (3,776 total in-person participants) plus 741 virtual registrants. A new record was set at 4,517 registrants! Seven professionals attended as well. Collaborating with international structures, the WSO was able to offer 127 Al-Anon members the opportunity to attend virtually at registration rates which were discounted to represent the equivalent rate in local currency. What an accomplishment!

Due to hotel problems as well as registrants' illnesses, WSO is providing a replay of IC2023 for our virtual participants as well as those who paid and cancelled because they were unable to attend.

Board Development:

The Board, Executive Committee, and the WSO Conference Staff participated in the Annual WSO Al-Anon Member Involved in Alateen Service Training conducted by Group Services.

The Envisioned Future Work Group brought to the Board a generative discussion about common "Team Norms" that could be developed. What are Team Norms? They are a bridge between principles and rules. They are centered around group thinking and behaviors. These "norms" are guidelines for the Board, yet they don't provide the "how" to do it. The Board discovered that it has "hidden norms" that could be documented to assist new Trustees joining the Board.

The Board continued a generative discussion on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) by reflecting on the Trustees' participation in the 21 Day Challenge, a program of various resources to gain insight into Trustees as individuals and our biases. The program focuses on the following actions: read, listen, watch, notice, connect, and engage. We are committed to continuing these conversations. We made several suggestions for next steps for our October Board Meeting.

Alateen Feasibility Update:

An update on the Alateen Feasibility Strategic Plan Strategy was presented. A motion passed to approve the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) identifying next steps for a project to create an Electronic Alateen Safety & Behavioral Requirement (EASBR) for Areas within the WSC Structure and an intentional EASBR for international structures.

Audit Committee:

A motion was passed to engage a different company for audit services for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2023, and the following four consecutive years, with retention review to be completed annually by the Audit Committee.

Plans for the 2025 WSC:

In 2023, World Service Conference (WSC) members began a conversation about the financial feasibility of holding the WSC in New York every third year, a tradition established to allow each panel to visit Stepping Stones. Since the WSC is “the effective group conscience of our society in world affairs,” members were asked to weigh concerns about the financial feasibility of our world services with the benefits of this link to Al-Anon history. Members shared many spiritual experiences and their hope that future Delegates would continue to enjoy the same opportunity. During the July Board meeting, Staff asked the Board to direct them as to where to contract for the 2025 WSC. Honoring their legal fiduciary responsibilities, Trustees offered many perspectives and explored a wide variety of options. They considered two topics also raised at the 2023 WSC: increasing Delegate involvement in the WSC agenda and the impact of the trial four-day Conference agenda. From the discussion, three themes emerged:

- Delegates want to be more involved in WSC and are talented at organizing.
- Costs of a New York WSC could be lowered substantially if travel time to Stepping Stones could be increased.
- Visiting Stepping Stones before or after WSC would afford longer travel times and increase time on the Conference agenda for discussions and connections.

With these themes in mind, the Board decided to host the 2025 WSC in New York or a surrounding area and, as a trial, invite Delegates who would be attending to form a Delegate team. This team's charge will be to organize, coordinate registration, and handle all logistics for one optional add-on visit to Stepping Stones, arranged to occur either immediately before or after WSC, for all interested Conference members. To support Delegate efforts, the Board committed the WSO to connecting the Delegate Team with Stepping Stones, transportation, and other logistics contacts; communicating optional visit costs to Areas along with the WSC Equalized Expense payment amount; and collecting payments by check from Areas to forward to the Delegate Team with an appropriate release of responsibility. Trustees are excited to see what Delegates will plan and will capture the experience to inform future Conference discussions on this topic. More details will be provided once the selection of a hotel has been finalized.

Literature Committee:

The *Just for Tonight* Alateen Bookmark (M-82) that was given conceptual approval by the 2021 Conference has completed the CAL process and should be available this fall in English, Spanish, and French.

Nominating Committee:

Because the current Executive Committee for Real Property Management (ECRPM) Chairperson was unable to finish the term, the Board approved two motions to appoint Sue C. to serve as Chairperson of the ECRPM and Liz D. to serve on the ECRPM through the end of the current term ending April 2024. Sue C. was an existing At-Large member of ECRPM and Liz D., who has previously served on ECRPM, was asked to fill the At-Large member vacancy.

Guest Speaker:

A guest speaker presented their Ph.D. dissertation topic, titled “Does It Work If You Work It? The Therapeutic Elements of Al-Anon Participation.” Their research relied upon

data from Al-Anon's 2018 Membership Survey. The speaker focused on what other professionals would need to know about Al-Anon Family Groups. They discussed in their research that longevity in Al-Anon was a key component of better mental health. The presentation ended with a Model of Effective Al-Anon Participation:

1. Attending Meetings
2. Spiritually Motivated
3. Working with a Sponsor
4. Engaging in Service
5. Serving as a Sponsor

This presentation was well-received by the Board. We hope to see them at the 2028 Al-Anon International Convention with A.A. participation as one of our professional speakers.

COB Letter Presentation:

The next COB Letter Presentation is scheduled for August 12, 2023. **The October COB Letter Presentation is scheduled for November 11, 2023.** All Trustees will attend the presentations, which are held virtually from 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm ET.

In conclusion, please accept my appreciation for all you do to support the Board of Trustees, the Executive Committee, and Staff. Your love of service work and the fellowship shines through in everything you do.

In gratitude,

Jeri W.
Chairperson, Board of Trustees
Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc