



Chairperson's Report

AWSC February 2017

Welcome to the beginning of a new year and the last year of Panel 55! We have come so far together, weaving our different approaches, perspectives and experiences into a common goal of service to the Al-Anon fellowship that has brought many of us the priceless gift of serenity. Thank you for all of your hard work, your attention to detail and your commitment to service.

“Participation is the key to harmony.” Concept 4 of our Legacies and one of the spiritual foundations of our program, this idea has served well as our motto for Panel 55. I believe we have embodied this concept with participation from every corner of our Area in Thought and Task Forces, Conventions, Alateen events, Workshops, Gratitude Dinners and Group and District meetings. By continuing to gather together we solve our common problem of learning how to recover from the effects of someone else’s drinking – and we realize we are not alone.

I deeply and truly appreciate your participation in service – it has made my job fulfilling and satisfying and you have shared the load so that I have not felt overwhelmed. Thank you.

I’d like to highlight a few topics, and hope it helps you prepare for the year ahead.

Election and Turnover. Throughout this last year of the panel we will be looking at ways to smooth the transition to Panel 58. We will be making time to finish our tasks while also creating meaningful recommendations for the next Panel. Tradition 12 reminds us to place principles above personalities and to me this means even if we do not accomplish everything we hoped to, but we can rest assured that we have played a crucial part in moving our Area forward. I would like us all to begin thinking of ways we can wrap up our service experience and share it with the next trusted servant. What can your Area Officers do to help with this?

TEAM Event. Most of us are familiar with Service Workshops and some of us are familiar with TEAM events that include WSO collaboration. This year we are doing something new by combining this event with our Spring Assembly. One event is not to replace another, but to truly embody the TEAM concept – Together Empowering Al-Anon Members. I encourage you to open your minds and hearts to seeing how these Area events can work together to strengthen the service structure in our Area. Throughout this Panel I have received many requests for help from individuals, Groups and Districts – asking for ideas on how to “get people in to service.” This cooperative venture with Assembly and TEAM is in response to that – let’s invite more people to come, experience the possibilities and the connection we get when we participate in Al-Anon service. I see this as a part of the purpose of Assembly.

Thought and Task Forces. We are finishing up the work that has brought so much transparency to our Area. This AWSC meeting we will be hearing from six Task Forces. This brings to an end our revision of the majority of our Area Guidelines. It is quite an accomplishment that couldn't have happened without the participation of so many Al-Anon members. This is not a process that has to happen every Panel, but it is part of our responsibility as an Area, to be mindful of changes and to work through the Knowledge Based Decision Making process to move forward. The results of the many Thought and Task Forces are located on the Area website, and with a little time any Al-Anon member can follow the process on a wide variety of topics. Again I believe this strengthens our fellowship and creates harmony as we work together in unity.

Unity and Clarity. With the help of new technology and the hard work of dozens, even hundreds, of Al-Anon members we have created a space on our website that provides both an archive of our work together, and an invitation to others to add their voices and their ideas. Continuing to take guidance from our Higher Power and the spiritual principles of the program, we can move forward with confidence that we have tried our best to bring the Al-Anon Declaration to life in our Area. I encourage you to take the time to familiarize yourself with the information on our Area website, and share that with others in your Groups. We are not alone. We do not have to shoulder the responsibilities alone. When anyone anywhere reaches out for help, the hand of Al-Anon and Alateen will be there. We have let it begin with us. Check it out at www.AFGArea9.org

Fully Self-Supporting. Oftentimes Tradition 7 can seem to be mainly about money. But for those of us in service we know it is a far deeper, richer and more expansive spiritual principle. During this panel we have had trusted servants who stepped down from their position, and it is important that we honor their willingness and ability to make that decision. It is not easy to step away, but in Al-Anon we know that we must take care of ourselves. We trust that a Higher Power will guide all of us, and so others stepped up to take part. In this process we see the spiritual principle of full self-support in action. I cannot begin to thank all of the individuals who have added responsibilities in order to get us through difficult times. I'm so grateful that we are a strong and vital Area. I hope you feel that strength too. And, if you, or your Group or District, feel some extra gratitude, it is perfectly okay to show that through an additional contribution to the Area! ☺ We have a well-established history of using our funds wisely and passing along extra money to the World Service Office. Participating in the financial and service aspects of the fellowship in many different ways is all part of the harmony of our recovery.

I look forward to seeing you in February and May. I hope that we can work together to finish our work, prepare for the next Panel and enjoy the beauty of Al-Anon fellowship in the process. Please let me know if there is anything I can do to assist as you plan ahead.

You may always reach me at chairperson@AFGArea9.org or by phone/text at 850-556-9858.

Yours in service,

Cindy J.
Chairperson, Panel 55