

# Public Outreach Coordinator Report

## Freddie S

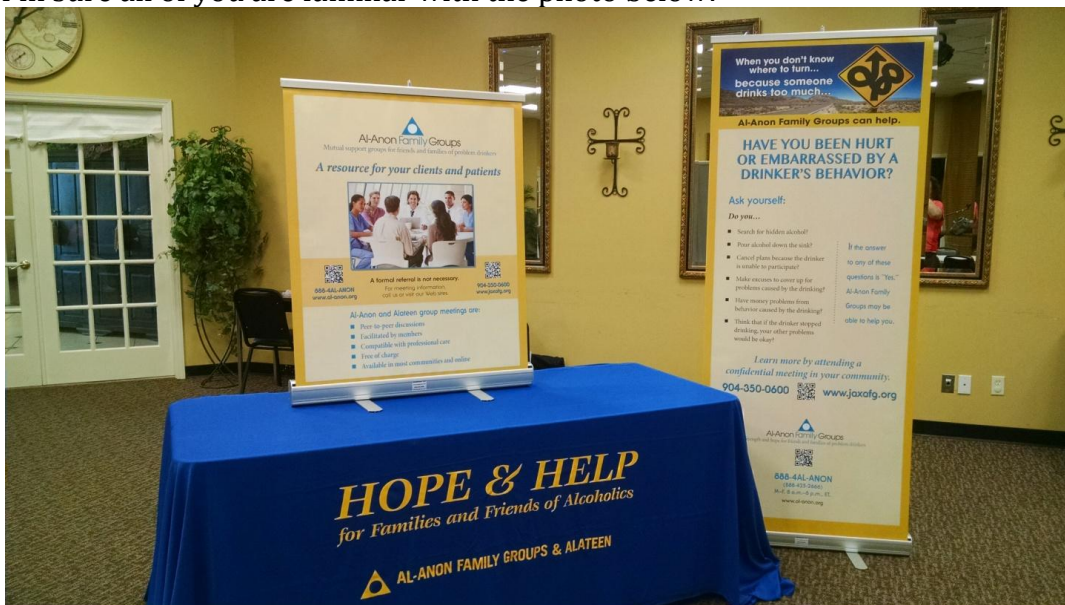
### Assembly - May 20-22, 2016

#### Hello Panel 55

I want to congratulate all of you on the many outreach projects your Districts have initiated. I feel as though WSO really knows who North Florida is. They are receiving many requests from our Districts for approval of projects involving more than just listing our meetings. And our Districts are receiving approval for their projects — maybe not on the first attempt, but you have persisted and accomplished your goal. No project deserves less recognition than any other. We never know which avenue will be the one that reaches the individual most in need of our program. Whether you have gotten approval for an ad in a local magazine or a backlit poster at the airport or a flyer at a school or a movie theatre commercial or a billboard or a Facebook ad or inclusion in an on-line calendar — YOU have reached out and it has begun with you. Keep up the good work, North Florida.

The Public Outreach Work Group has been hard at work since our Fall Assembly. The result is a proposal for the 2016 Area Public Outreach Project and an idea for the 2017 Area Public Outreach Project.

I'm sure all of you are familiar with the photo below:



Each N FL District now has its own table cover like the one shown above and a tabletop banner like the one shown on the table in the photo.

One of the concerns brought up during the discussion of the 2015 PO Project was that we were only reaching out to professionals with this banner. For 2016, we would like to address that concern. We are proposing that we "Continue to Cover North Florida in Al-Anon." We propose to do this by ordering two additional banners for each district —



one tabletop banner directed at teens and one stand-alone tall banner directed at adults. WSO has approved both banners.

We are also proposing that one set of 3 banners and a table cover be purchased in Spanish and given to our Spanish Liaison for the use of our Spanish members.

We feel that these three banners will allow our districts to present an appealing display in any venue. We believe this will continue to encourage more volunteers who can proudly man a booth or table that looks just as good as any other participant's at a health fair or conference.

Please see the attached proposal for the 2016 Area Public Outreach Project.

As for 2017, we would like to "Reach Out to Everyone". This project is in the development stage and we hope to meet with all your AISLs and anyone else from your districts who would like to participate at the Fall AWSC.

This project was conceptualized from a suggestion from one our districts and involves lots of pens and Alateen's 65<sup>th</sup> Birthday. We are talking about click pens or banner pens and how to distribute them. We are also suggesting Birthday Presents be given to school counselors. We need suggestions as to what to put on the pens and where to put them. We also need suggestions as to what to include in the Birthday Presents and what schools to give them to. So here's the idea:

First we want to purchase a large quantity of pens with our AFG information on them. Then we plan to distribute them:

- some to each district to have available to hand out at health fairs, etc...
- some mailed with a letter and AFA's to professionals, institutions, etc... (We need help adding to this list of places we can send them and deciding what to send.)
- some mailed to school counselors inside a wrapped present with a letter honoring 60 years of Alateen and a subscription to Alateen Talks (What else should we include in the present and what schools should we send the presents to - 5 per district?)

We are projecting this project will cost about \$4,000.00. We plan to ask the budget committee to increase our budget for 2017.

We want to have this proposal ready to present next Spring and hope to have it as a recommendation for the 2017 Spring Assembly.

I hope you all met the February 3<sup>rd</sup> deadline and have all ordered more AFA's (*Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism 2016*). In your day-to-day life, there are opportunities to share the hope that Al-Anon offers to those who are hurting but don't know where to turn. Whether you are visiting your doctor's office, the library, or waiting for your car to be serviced, there is an opportunity to ask if you can leave behind a few copies of *Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism 2016*.

I was asked to inquire about the possibility of leaving the date off the front of the AFA's since the message inside is timeless. WSO replied that they believe leaving the date and making sure our outreach efforts are using the most current version ensures we present a more appealing face for Al-Anon.

I have participated in two PO Conference calls with WSO to date. The last one focused on how to get volunteers during the holidays. I was pleased to share information about our PO projects, which I feel encourage participation year round. I love attending these and hearing the sharings from all over the country. WOW!

Public Outreach graphics in a variety of sizes and resolutions are now available on the Members' Web site at <http://al-anon.org/members/public-outreach/some-helpful-public-outreach-tools/item/526-road-sign-design-for-local-adaptation>. Please include national as well as local contact information in the "Avant Garde" typeface, and submit your design to the WSO Public Outreach Department for review prior to production.

A couple of Districts have found free advertising available to Non-Profit Groups recently. Remember that our Area is registered as a Non-Profit Group. Although our Districts do not hold that designation, our Districts can submit a request for the Area to take on the project in order to qualify for the free advertising. You will find the directions for SPOP on our Area website, AFGArea9.org. Click on Members, then click Documents and Resources. Special Public Outreach Project will be one of the options. If you need any help, just let me know.

SPOP is available anytime a District may need the Area to do a project for any reason. The project must be funded by the District and the District will be responsible for all the "leg work", but it will be an Area Project and contracts etc.... will be signed by an area officer if the project is approved as a SPOP. These project will not incur sales tax as funds will be donated to the Area and the Area will pay all the bills.

Sadly, we are not always able to do all the things we'd like to for a number of reasons. I found the wording from WSO regarding one such incident comforting.

*"Ultimately, if more than one local member or service arm is not willing to commit to having a meeting, it is pointless for one member to start it because he or she would be unsupported.*

*Since this is a local request, it is appropriate and appreciated if a local member would ... make contact and let know Information. From my perspective and when other local service arms have been in this position, all that needs to be explained is that Al-Anon members, who are volunteers, are unavailable to consistently sponsor a group at this time.*

*Does this preclude the possibility of offering literature, Al-Anon introductory materials, or local meeting schedules? These items could be offered as an interim measure for the inmates to provide to their families. The literature could be mailed if members are unavailable to deliver it personally.*

*Please don't feel badly. Your district is not the first to find itself in this position. It is better to be forthright and honest upfront about the district's capacity to provide this service among yourselves as well as the professional who requested the meeting. In addition, outreach to correctional facilities is a unique service*

*that many members readily do not volunteer to participate in because of security clearance process and being with inmates at a meeting.*

*Thanks for carrying the message. Step Twelve says, “..we **tried** to carry this message to others...” and that is what you did by exploring the feasibility of it.”*

Please don't let the fact that your news is not the best possible outcome keep you from contacting the person who has reached out to us. If we keep the lines of communication open, we may be able to meet their needs or requests at a future time.

And note Step Twelve says **tried** to carry, not carried. Wow - that sure makes things easier.

Thanks again for everything each of you does to keep Public Outreach alive in North Florida.

**Let's make this a GREAT DAY!**

**Yours In Service, Freddie**

**[publicoutreach@afgarea9.org](mailto:publicoutreach@afgarea9.org)**

**"Participation is the Key to Harmony"**

## **News Release from WSO**

### **Al-Anon Helps When a Loved One Loses the Battle with Alcoholism**

*According to the most recent CDC data, 30,000 Americans lose their lives a year due to alcohol-induced causes. During January National Drug and Alcohol Facts Week, family and friends who are dealing with the loss of a loved one to the disease of alcoholism can find support and help from Al-Anon Family Groups.*

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports 30,000 Americans lost their lives in 2014, due to alcohol-induced causes. "During National Drug and Alcohol Facts Week, from January 25-31, 2016, these statistics shed light on the realities faced, not just by the drinker, but by their friends and families," said Pamela Walters, Information Analyst at the Al-Anon World Service Office. "In the grips of dealing with a loved one's death due to alcoholism, the friends and family members are left to pick up the pieces of their own lives after what can be a heartbreaking struggle with the disease," said Walters.

"My alcoholic husband of 28 years never found sobriety and died in 2014 as a direct result of the effects of the disease," said an anonymous Al-Anon member in a recent Al-Anon Membership survey. "He developed alcoholic dementia, as well as other chronic health problems, and could not take care of himself. My Al-Anon 'family' has walked with me through hell, holding my hand, showing me that I could thrive in recovery despite the circumstances in my home."

Another member of Al-Anon said, "Unfortunately, several months after joining Al-Anon, our daughter died unexpectedly at the age of 28 of alcoholic hepatitis. I've had a very difficult time dealing with this loss. Our young daughter's alcoholism was the reason I began attending Al-Anon initially. In those rooms, I found a source of comfort, strength, and support that I desperately needed. Our situation at home (she lived with us) seemed a bit less stressful due to the understanding of her disease that I discovered in Al-Anon."

"The first benefit I recall is knowing that I wasn't crazy," said another Al-Anon member. "My husband kept telling me he didn't have a problem with drinking (he eventually died from drinking). Also being able to talk about it in a safe environment and not being told I was wrong for the way I felt. Also, the friendships I have gained are priceless!"

Al-Anon Family Groups are for families and friends who have been affected by a loved one's drinking. Nearly 16,000 local groups meet throughout the U.S., Canada, Bermuda, and Puerto Rico every week. Al-Anon Family Groups meet in more than 130 countries, and Al-Anon literature is available in more than 40 languages. Al-Anon Family Groups have been offering strength and support to families and friends of problem drinkers since 1951. Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. acts as the clearinghouse worldwide for inquiries from those who need help or want information about Al-Anon Family Groups and Alateen, its program for teenage members.

For more information about Al-Anon Family Groups, visit [al-anon.org](http://al-anon.org) and read a copy of Al-Anon's annual public outreach magazine "Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism 2016." Find a local meeting by calling toll-free: 1-888-4AL-ANON.

**PROPOSED  
NORTH FLORIDA AREA 9  
PUBLIC OUTREACH PROJECT FOR 2016**

**CONTINUING TO COVER NORTH FLORIDA IN AL-ANON**

The Public Outreach Work Group proposes the following:

That the North Florida Area purchase twenty-six retractable banners. Thirteen banners will have an outreach message directed at adults (these will stand alone) and thirteen banners will have an outreach message directed at teens (these will be tabletop). One of each banner will be distributed to each of the thirteen districts in Area 9. We further propose to purchase one of each adult, teen, and professional banner, plus a table cover, in Spanish for the use of the Area Spanish Liaison.

The total cost will be approximately \$3,502.90.


**Findings/Reasoning/Goal:**

- We aim to establish a consistent look for Al-Anon in North Florida in order to promote recognition and advance our Al-Anon identity.
- We will look more professional in a professional setting.
- Each District will have the appropriate banner for any venue they may choose to participate in.
- We aim to encourage pride, willingness, and enthusiasm in our volunteer pool. The more volunteers who are willing to participate, the more opportunities our Districts can take advantage of.
- Although WSO's most recent survey shows that the majority of newcomers are referred by professionals, we want to be able to reach out to everyone, everywhere. Therefore, it is prudent and a sound investment to make our outreach tools more attractive.
- Assigning these expenses to the Area allows the majority of districts to have more funds available for additional Public Outreach Projects.
- We get a price break when ordering the banners in bulk as we only have to pay one processing fee. Still, each retractable banner can be customized for each district's contact information.
- A couple of districts already have table covers and/or banners, which can be used as back-ups or spares.



## Adult Focus Public Outreach Banner

**When you don't know  
where to turn...  
because someone  
drinks too much...**



**Al-Anon Family Groups can help.**

**HAVE YOU BEEN HURT  
OR EMBARRASSED  
BY A DRINKER'S BEHAVIOR?**

**Ask yourself:**


*Do you...*

- Search for hidden alcohol?
- Pour alcohol down the sink?
- Cancel plans because the drinker is unable to participate?
- Make excuses to cover up for problems caused by the drinking?
- Have money problems from behavior caused by the drinking?
- Think that if the drinker stopped drinking, your other problems would be okay?


*If the answer to any of these questions is "Yes," Al-Anon Family Groups may be able to help you.*

*Learn more by attending a confidential meeting in your community.*

**904-350-0600 - [www.jaxafg.org](http://www.jaxafg.org)**

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

**888-4AL-ANON**  
(888-425-2666)  
M-F, 8 a.m.-6 p.m., ET.



[www.al-anon.org](http://www.al-anon.org)

Note that this banner is in a draft stage while submitted for your consideration. WSO has approved this as shown.

**DRAFT**



## **ALCOHOLICS AREN'T THE ONLY ONES TRAPPED BY ALCOHOL**

**Teens, has your life been affected  
by someone else's drinking?**

**Ask yourself:**

- Do you tell lies to cover up for someone else's drinking or what's happening in your home?
- Do you stay out of the house as much as possible because you hate it there?
- Are you afraid or embarrassed to bring your friends home?
- Do you think the drinker's behavior is caused by you?
- Do you feel that if the drinker loved you, he or she would stop drinking?

**If the answer to any of these questions is "Yes," Alateen may be able to help you.**

**Learn about Alateen by calling or visiting our Web site.**

**888-4AL-ANON**  
[www.al-anon.org](http://www.al-anon.org)

**904-350-0600**  
[www.jaxofg.org](http://www.jaxofg.org)

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

*(Image above shows watermark and DRAFT notation, both of which will be removed before final production.)*