



Delegates Report

AWSC FEBURARY 4, 2017

AWSC | Florida North | February 4, 2017

Happy New Year!

I hope you all had a wonderful year end, 2017 is going to be an awesome year! I will be heading off to Conference from April 24-28 at the Wyndham Oceanfront in Virginia Beach. The Board enthusiastically approved the 2017 World Service Conference theme:

Our Members: Our Hope for the Future
Nuestros miembros: nuestra esperanza para el futuro
Nos membres: notre espoir pour l'avenir

Love Gifts can be sent starting April 14th to;

*****Packages will not be accepted by the Hotel before April 14, 2017*****

Wendy Roth (Hold for WSC April 24-28, 2017)
Wyndham Virginia Beach Oceanfront
5700 Atlantic Avenue
Virginia Beach, Virginia 23451

Please put my name and address in the return address section in the event mail delivery is delayed. This can be found on the CMA.

Open and Closed Al-Anon Meetings

Please share this with your District's and let me know the outcome

Frame

During the Open Policy Meeting at the 2016 World Service Conference, there was a discussion on "open" and "closed" Al-Anon meetings. The purpose of this conversation was to determine whether newcomers or potential newcomers might read a meeting schedule and not understand that they are welcome to attend closed meetings. In fact, newcomers and professionals frequently call the World Service Office seeking clarification. It would be easy to assume that a closed meeting does not welcome newcomers, is closed to anyone who doesn't have a personal invitation to attend, or that the meeting is "full" and cannot accept any more new members. Generally, a "closed" meeting does not sound welcoming. Newcomers may be misled or become discouraged, thus not receiving the help they need when trying to attend a meeting. This appears contrary to Step Twelve and Tradition Five which emphasize the importance of carrying the message and reaching out to friends and families of alcoholics who need help.

According to active, registered Al-Anon face-to-face meetings within the WSO structure, there are 8031 open groups and 8276 closed groups.

Background

The "closed" meeting was created in 1941, when A.A. members determined that they wanted some of their meetings to be for alcoholics only without the presence of family members. From the beginning, Al Anon followed the A.A. model and adapted A.A.'s terminology to designate a

classification of Al Anon meeting that was not open to visitors, e.g., public, professionals, or interested individuals.

Our Manual of Al-Anon Family Groups from 1960 until 1966 said this: “Many groups hold an open meeting once a month at which alcoholics and other guests are invited to attend so they may learn just what work is being done in Al-Anon.” However, in 1968 the World Service Conference (WSC) discussed and approved a Policy Committee statement defining “open” and “closed” meetings. The hope was to clarify the age-old question: Who is welcome to attend Al-Anon meetings?

Today, Area Web sites, local Al-Anon Information Services (AISs), Intergroups, and printed meeting schedules commonly designate Al Anon meetings as either “open” or “closed.” As Al Anon members, we generally understand that “closed” meetings are for “regular Al Anon members only, those whose personal lives are, or have been, deeply affected by close contact with a problem drinker.” The “open” meetings are “for anyone interested in alcoholism,” i.e., students, professionals, or other visitors who want to attend a meeting for educational purposes, but not to participate as members. However, these terms are often confusing to newcomers, potential newcomers, and even public agencies reaching out to Al-Anon.

Discussion

The Policy Committee is inviting all Conference members to share your experience and thoughts on the following questions:

1. How well do members in your Area understand the difference between an open and closed meeting? Do group members know if their meeting is listed as open vs. closed?
2. How do students and professionals find out about Al-Anon in your Area? Are the closed meetings in your Area providing a monthly open meeting?
3. Is the original purpose of open meetings obsolete? (See attached background information). Has the Internet, numerous self-help books, active public outreach, etc. eliminated the need to designate Al-Anon meetings as “open” or “closed”?
4. How often have you heard that a newcomer was reluctant to attend a closed meeting?
5. How frequently do students/professionals attend an Al-Anon Family Group meeting to satisfy coursework?

6. How do closed groups respond to the student, professional, or newcomer who may or may not know if they have been affected by a loved one's drinking problem?
7. In groups that are registered as closed, do members understand that if an observer shows up at a closed meeting, members can take a quick group conscience on whether to allow the individual to sit in? That visitors should be treated with courtesy and respect for showing an interest in our fellowship?"
8. Do members in a closed meeting believe their anonymity is more carefully guarded?
9. The Al-Anon Fellowship does not appear to be growing...are these terms contributing factors?

Update on Prayer for Today Editing

What Al-Anon refers to as the "Prayer for Today," is in the public domain. It is most generally known as the "Prayer of St. Francis," but is also known as the "Peace Prayer," "Make Me an Instrument of Your Peace," and to some A.A. members as the "Step Eleven Prayer."

The "Just for Today" wording is also in the public domain. While both these pieces were adopted by Al-Anon in its earliest days, they were not developed by Al-Anon members. Al-Anon has no exclusive rights to them. For this reason, the *Just for Today* Wallet Card (M-10) and Bookmark (M-12) do not have copyright dates or the CAL symbol.

During its discussions, the Literature Committee considered the idea of editing the prayer, but eventually decided to recommend removal of the prayer to the Conference. It is up to the Conference to determine whether to follow the Committee's recommendation or consider alternatives, which could include editing the prayer, using only a portion of it, or keeping it as it is.

Regarding the idea that "we 'cannot edit' the prayer," there are several versions and adaptations of the prayer in existence, including some that have adapted it as song lyrics. Some historical research indicates that it was not written by St. Francis of Assisi, but instead written in France in 1912.

At April's Conference, the Delegates agreed to continue the discussion next year, after they conduct informed, Traditions-based discussions within their Areas, with the intention that all aspects and points of view can be respectfully examined prior to reaching conclusions. In following this process, we trust that all group conscience decisions will be, as stated in Tradition Two, the expression of a loving God of our understanding.

WSO Open Positions

The WSO has posted job openings for the following positions:

- Research Analyst
- Communications Secretary (Bilingual Spanish)
- Webmaster

Job descriptions for these positions can be found under the “WSO” tab on our Members’ website, and here is a link:

www.al-anon.org/members/wso/inside-the-wso/item/...

Annual Trustee, Committee and Work Group Vacancies

From the Executive Director

As part of the twice-yearly solicitation for service volunteers at the WSO level, I am writing to remind you of the process for submitting candidates, and to give you any updates related to that process. The résumé for Trustees at Large and Regional Trustee candidates is available electronically to Conference members on AFG Connects/WSC Members/Forms. The résumé includes text boxes which limit the length of a nominee’s response. Nominees should print out and review their résumé before submitting it to make certain they haven’t modified the form or exceeded the amount of space provided. Please read the processes for each group of candidates carefully giving attention to the important information included there.

ANNUAL VACANCIES

The number of positions available annually is as follows:

- 3 at-Large Trustees
- 3 Regional Trustees (rotates depending on Region)
- 1 at-Large member, Executive Committee for Real Property Management
- 1 at-Large member, Alateen Work Group (trial)
- 5 at-Large members, Forum Editorial Advisory Committee
- 5 at-Large members, Literature Committee
- 5 at-Large members, Public Outreach Committee
- 2 at-Large member, Audit Committee

Process for Trustee At Large Candidates*: Potential candidates’ résumés must be postmarked, faxed, or e-mailed to the WSO on or before **August 15, 2017**. The Delegate from a TAL candidate’s Area is notified when we receive the résumé and can send in writing any concerns he/she might have about the candidate to the Nominating Committee prior to the October meeting. Up to six candidates are selected in October by the Nominating Committee, in consultation with the Conference Committee on Trustees (CCT). The Nominating Committee will forward the names of the selected candidates to the CCT Chairperson. The Chairperson will then send the names of the

selected candidates to the members of the CCT. Any member of the CCT may file an objection to any of the selected candidates by **December 15**. Then, up to three nominees are selected by the Board in January. The selected nominee's name will be presented to the World Service Conference (WSC) for traditional approval. Please note the requirement for length of continuous AI-Anon membership, as well as the requirement that Delegates must wait until two WSCs have passed after their terms end before they can be considered. Also, please keep in mind the requirements regarding stamina, the willingness to share a room, and the need to be available 28 – 60 days a year.

*In January 2011, the Board of Trustees voted to give all Trustee candidates an additional question to answer in writing. Candidates will receive the question after the August 15 deadline and have a short time frame to return the answer. The Nominating Committee and the Conference Committee on Trustees/Regional Committees on Trustees will evaluate the answers as part of the scoring and ranking process. The additional question provides valuable insight related to each candidate's ability to communicate clearly in writing, originate ideas, and meet a deadline.

Process for the Executive Committee for Real Property Management (ECRPM): The nominating process is the same as for Trustee at Large. Members serve one three-year term and may not be re-elected. Remember, **August 15** is the deadline. Please note the difference in length of continuous AI-Anon membership as well as the need to be willing to share a room.

After selection, all Trustees and ECRPM nominees, having received traditional approval by the Conference, are elected at the Annual Meeting of the Board of Trustees immediately following the World Service Conference.

Process for Committees: Since 2006, the Board of Trustees has been reviewing and revising Selected Committee structures to determine if each of the Committees is meeting the needs of the fellowship. Some Committees have been disbanded and others have had their membership or meeting times restructured to allow members to serve without spending time on airplanes or in cars to travel to the World Service Office. The trial Alateen Work Group is seeking one at-Large member. It will be appointing Thought/Task Forces made up of Alateen members, and AI-Anon Members Involved in Alateen Service (AMIAS) in those Areas selected by the Work Group. The Forum Editorial Advisory Committee, the Public Outreach Committee, and the Literature Committee have five at-Large members each. These members can come from anywhere in the World Service Conference structure. The Audit Committee is also seeking applicants in the fellowship who have auditing experience and/or education to oversee the interaction with the auditors of the World Service Office audit. The Work Group and other Selected Committees discussed above are one-year time commitments and run from May to April each year. Résumés are due by the time of the Conference; applicants are notified in May or June as the Committees are formed.

Process for Short-Term Opportunities

Thought Forces and Task Forces: Thought Forces and Task Forces develop on an as-needed basis. Members with specific skills related to the purpose of the Thought or Task Force will be recruited to accomplish the goal for which it was formed. Time commitments are generally short-term and will be spelled out. As Thought Forces and Task Forces can be formed at any time, notices for those groups will go to the Delegates, and résumé forms will also be made available on AFG Connects.

Road Trip! You and Your Board Connect!

We are pleased to announce that the 2017 Road Trip! You and Your Board Connect Event will be held in Aurora, Colorado on Saturday, October 21, 2017.

2018 International Convention- Baltimore!

In July, the Board announced the theme for the 2018 International Convention. Within a few days of posting the COB letter, we realized the “hashtag” used within the theme made our theme available at the public level and with that availability came the possibility of breaking members’ anonymity.

The July COB letter was taken down from the Web site the hashtag was removed, and the letter reposted. The WSO staff completed a KBDM, and thus a new theme for the 2018 International Convention was presented and approved by the Board.

The Board enthusiastically approved the new theme for the 2018 International Convention:
Celebrating One Day at a Time 2018 International Convention

The 2018 International theme has a multiple layered meaning: we are celebrating; we are celebrating one of our slogans, “One Day at a Time; and we are celebrating the 50th Anniversary of our daily reader “One Day at a Time in Al-Anon.”

Welcome WSO Director of Finance!

In 2014, The Board began discussions related to succession planning for the Director of Business Services. The position title was changed from Director of Business Services to Director of Finance, a timeline for recruitment was outlined, a Search Committee was formed whose responsibilities included reviewing resumes, interviewing, and presenting a recommendation for hire to the Board of Trustees.

Interviews were held in August and September, and the Board received the recommendations from the Search Committee during our October Board Meeting. It is with great excitement and confidence that the Board of Trustees, acting within our legal authority as outlined in the By-Laws, announces the appointment of Niketa B.(non-member) as the new Director of Finance for Al-Anon Family Groups, Inc.

Niketa holds a current CPA licensure, and a Master’s Degree in Accounting, with Business related coursework. She brings with her an excitement for our Mission and Vision statements, articulate and clear thinking, a demonstrated ability to grasp the understanding and principles of our Legacies, and a shared excitement to work within an organization that applies spiritual principles as a means for guidance and planning. Niketa begins her work with Al-Anon Family Groups, Inc. on November 14th.

Please join the Board in welcoming Niketa. In welcoming our new Director of Finance, we will be saying goodbye in January to David Z, Director of Business Services. David began working for the

WSO when our office moved to Virginia Beach. We will truly miss David's commitment to the fellowship, his insight, and his special sense of humor. David will continue his work at the WSO through January.

eBooks CAL Hyperlinks

Improving ways for members to order Al-Anon/Alateen Conference Approved Literature (CAL) eBooks and audiobooks is important in the technological world we live in today. More members want to read CAL on their mobile phones, tablets, ereaders, and personal computers in addition to their print publications. Digital CAL also is a service to members who do not have CAL print publications.

The Policy Committee approved adding the names of eBook and audiobook vendors to the "Electronic Literature" section of the World Service Office's (WSO's) online store. A statement upholding Al-Anon's Traditions followed the names of the electronic vendors for each digital CAL item:

"This announcement is informational only, and not an endorsement of any electronic media provider, reader, or other products sold by electronic media providers."

However, this change still required WSO online store visitors to log off the WSO online store to order digital CAL from a vendor.

Subsequently, the Executive Committee authorized the addition of hyperlinks to our online store that will take you directly to our digital literature page on the respective vendors' websites. An electronic version of *The Forum* is also available by those means. Two new icons now appear in the "Books" and "Electronic Literature" sections of the WSO's online store to identify and redirect members to our CAL eBooks and audiobook pages offered by Amazon, Barnes and Noble, iTunes, Kobo, and Audible.com:



We have made every effort to uphold the spirit of Al-Anon's Traditions and to adapt the WSO's online store to today's technological world. Announcements and articles about this addition will also be sent to trusted servants and the fellowship through *AFG Connects* communities, *Group e-News*, *AFG Announcements*, and *The Forum*.

With Joy & Gratitude in Service,

Wendy R.

P55 Delegate

