

Delegate's Report Fall Assembly 9-25-10.

I would like to welcome all our new GRs and DRs to this assembly. I would like to begin by reading a sharing from "As We Understood" pg.26.

As some of you know, the job of the delegate is to bring the happenings of the World Service Conference to the Group Representatives who in turn will share this information with the members of their groups. The initial report is given at the Spring Assembly but it is not possible for all of the material to be covered in just this one meeting so today I hope to be able to bring you more on the topics covered at the 2010 WSC. This year's theme was "Celebrate! Embrace the group conscience to expand our circle of hope."

Today I would like to begin with the Board of Trustees Big Question: What was happening 50 years ago? What spiritual growth can the fellowship celebrate as a result of 50 years of its informed group conscience as expressed through the WSC? How has this expanded our circle of hope? I am part of a conversation that has been going on for these many years. There is HOPE for the people everywhere. We are a work in progress. I would suggest that you read pages 27-28 of the service manual as you ponder this question.

We spent a considerable amount of time this year on policy. In the spring I covered the many changes regarding Alateen and the fact that there will be a section where all the Alateen policies will be in the new manual due out late October-early November. Today I will try to highlight the three other areas of policy which we covered Financial Matters, Use of Materials at Al-Anon Meetings, Membership and Groups

Under financial matters: All income from contributions and literature sales is allocated to the General Fund. Contributions to the WSO cannot be earmarked for special purposes unless recommended by the World Service Conference. Other matters covered under this heading included the amount a member may give, Combined Giving Campaigns, wording of the Quarterly Appeal section, By Groups and other Service Entities, Discount Services and Fund Raising; Raffle/Lottery tickets were all addressed.

Under Use of Materials at Al-Anon Meetings: To keep Al-Anon's message in focus and encourage unity only Al-Anon/Alateen Conference Approved Literature (CAL) and Al-Anon/Alateen service tools are displayed, distributed, and used at meetings, including meetings at conferences, and conventions. These items reflect the informed group conscience of the Al-Anon Family Groups as expressed by its World Service Conference since 1961. When sharing at meetings, members limit any mention of outside material to a brief reference. Suggestions of pieces of literature are given when addressing these questions. Authorization to Publish and Reprint are all addressed.

Under Membership and groups, Choosing a Group's Name was addressed; Having an appropriate group name is very important because it is included in local and on-line meeting directories and may be a potential member's first impression of Al-Anon. The

group's name should be inviting to all and reflect Al-Anon principles. The letters AFG for Al-Anon Family Group is suggested to help avoid confusion with other entities. The WSO will review proposed group names for adherence to Al-Anon principles.

For the complete changes which will appear in the Service Manual, you can review them now in the Conference Summary, Motions 5,7,8, & 10 found on pages 83 – 91. The complete summary is available for viewing on the WSO member website under Publications.

Another of the Thought Forces giving a presentation at this year's Conference was the one on Current Conference Structure. Let me begin with a brief review of the make-up of the current Conference structure. One-third of the Conference consists of Trustees-both Regional & at-large, Executive Committee, and World Service Staff members; the other two-thirds are the delegates who represent the groups in their respective Areas from the United States and Canada. Areas pretty much currently follow geographic boundaries with some areas such as New York being divided into two areas. Other Areas that are divided include California, Florida, Illinois, Minnesota, Texas, Ontario & Quebec; and then there are some such as Alberta/Northwest Territories, British Columbia/Yukon, Maryland/ D.C., Newfoundland/Labrador, and North Carolina/Bermuda. In 2008 the WSC was petitioned by California South to allow the two areas of California to divide into three Areas.

A state, province, or territory more than 400 groups may petition the Conference to divide and send an additional Delegate to the Conference. A state, province, or territory may divide only once, as reaffirmed at the 1982 WSC. (See pg 128 of the current Service Manual). Rather to try to resolve one Area's request or perceived need, it was thought that looking at the issue in a larger context was necessary. What would work best for the entire WSC? The charge for this Thought Force was to: Brainstorm ways to identify the diverse needs of our fellowship; using the KBDM process the Thought Force concluded the three key issues pertaining to the Conference structure at both the WSC and Area level: Communication, Participation, and Representation. Based on the results six strategies for changing the Conference were presented along with the pros and cons of each strategies. Here are the six strategies in bullet format; more details on this can be read in the Conference Summary pgs. 58-59.

- Plotting all the groups on a large map & using the patterns that emerge as a basis for creating new Areas.
- Allowing Areas with more than 400 groups to split.
- Allow smaller Areas to combine.
- Using technology to create a virtual Area for remote groups.
- Consider the creation of a virtual Area for electronic meetings.
- Leave the Conference as it is.

As you can well imagine this presentation sparked some interesting discussion. Following the discussion we were asked to prioritize the Strategies for additional consideration. Before voting a seventh option of "Other" was added. Conference members could vote for two. Results: 1. Plotting all groups in our service structure, 2.

Allowing Areas with more than 400 groups to split, 3. Allowing smaller Areas to combine tied with “Other”. Where are we with this now? A second Thought Force is right now being formed to: Identify ways within the Area service structure that would allow Areas with 400 or more groups to divide and smaller Areas to combine. Using the KBDM process they will gather information and develop strategies along with the pros and cons of each of the strategies which they develop. The first strategy from the 2010 report will be done by the WSO staff – this was the plotting of all groups on a map. As you can see this is an ongoing process and the answer will come following much work and discussion. This will be an ongoing discussion at Conference until a workable plan can be developed in which we can adequately meet the needs of the fellowship.

This leads me into my next topic the KBDM process – the Knowledge Based Decision Making process to reach an informed group conscience. I feel that it is important that we go back over the essentials of this process to keep ourselves focused and to bring along the new members of the assembly who may not yet be familiar with the process. We have been using this process for several years now at Conference and two years ago we began to use it here at the Area.

Knowledge-based decision-making has four essential elements based on a philosophy of: open communication between leadership and membership; dialogue before deliberation; all decision makers having common access to full information; and it exist in a culture of trust. Using this process we ask a series of five questions: 1. What do we know about our membership’s needs, wants and preferences? 2. What do we know about our resources and strategic position? 3. What do we know about the realities and evolving dynamics? 4. What are the ethical implications? 5. What do we wish we knew, but don’t? and what are the pros and cons in each of these questions?

The benefits of the process are great:

- Group members are more likely to support the decision made.
- Group effort is more likely to yield better results.
- Participants become part of the process, more voices are heard, more solutions generated.
- Recognition that responsibility for action rests on everyone
- Actions tend to lean toward the greater good for the organization
- Negativity is diffused.

The KBDM process is not used for all our Conference work but it is used in our Thought and Task Forces and other Committee work. The explanation of the Knowledge Based Decision Making process has been expanded to include ‘to reach an informed group conscience’ so as not to lead members to the idea that we were abandoning the group conscience principle. Along with this I would like to remind you that when we decide something by group conscience we are most importantly making a decision to support the decision whether or not we agree with it or not.

Chosen Agenda Item #2: these are the topics submitted, chosen and developed by the delegates. Title of this topic was: How can we get “new people” (defined as current and longtime AI-Anon members, as well as newcomers) interested in service and to become willing to commit to service positions at the group, district, and Area levels? This is a topic which many Areas struggle with. The two questions that we focused on were: what do you do when members holding an office are not doing their job? and secondly, how do we get people willing to do service positions? It was suggested that we begin by looking at the barriers to service: lack of confidence, skills or time; fear of making a commitment; lack of understanding about the duties of a position. Some of the things we can do to help overcome the problems is to have guidelines that spell out the skills needed, the time commitment necessary, and the skills to do the job. An orientation session for new officers, coordinators, Grs and DRs is helpful. Having technical experts available help as needed. Active districts spread enthusiasm; visiting committees to spread enthusiasm. Doing a service inventory and doing a skill survey are some of the things that can be done to help. Later today, several of the officers and coordinators will be sharing their Hats on for Service – a way in which we hope we can spark your interest in a service position for our next election. I think our theme this weekend:” Humor in service” is appropriate because we do have fun along the way. The other thing that we are hearing that is helpful is: “We want you to succeed” and I think we need to begin to use this in our Area, district and group meetings.

The Task Force on Technology made a presentation which illustrated some of the challenges members face in service. A skit, “ We Want You to Succeed,” gave an overview of how to create a PowerPoint presentation, how to hold a meeting via conference call and how to create a database for Area Group Records. They also developed a number of ideas and grouped them according to the following categories: Data storage, E-mail, Presentations-delivery options, e-communities, Excel, Word, Conference calls, and Skype. These materials I have made copies of and have assembled into a notebook that is available for you to look at. It includes the PowerPoint skit on “We Want You to Succeed.” Included in the materials are tips for various forms of technology, as well as challenges we may encounter and possible solutions. Please take some time to look at these materials and share your thoughts about them with me.

We know that at the 2011 World Service Conference we will address the question of Property Ownership. At our 2009 Fall Assembly we spent some time reviewing this question and hopefully all Areas will come to Conference prepared to answer the question: What will we do-

End the trial and keep the building

End the trial and sell the building

Extend the trial for another period of years?

I have not talked much about TEAM EVENTS, so today I would like to spend a little time talking about what they are and asking you to give them some thought as to whether this is something we want to investigate further. TEAM stands for Together Empowering AI-anon, Members. A TEAM EVENT is a partnership between one or more Areas and the World Service Office with the aim of providing an opportunity for AI-Anon and

Alateen members to learn more about service and the Al-Anon program. The Area(s) and WSO work together to plan an agenda of workshops and presentations that address the Area's specific needs and expand members' understanding of our worldwide fellowship. They are jointly sponsored by the Area(s) and WSO. They have replaced RSSs: Regional Service Seminars which were held every three years in an Area within a specific region.

This summer we saw and heard about the first TEAM EVENTS. One is planned for the Connecticut Area the first weekend in October, I have placed the information about this event in our Area newsletter. Do we have anyone going? TEAM EVENTS give us more flexibility and options both in size and topics and what I have heard so far has been positive. I have provided all officers, coordinators and DRs with a printout to help begin a discussion to answer the many questions you may have regarding these EVENTS. I have also brought a display of EVENTS that have already occurred or will be occurring in the months ahead. Please have some conversation at your district meetings and in the spring we can continue this conversation at the spring AWSC meeting. These EVENTS can be a single day or a weekend; they can stand alone or be held alongside another event such as a convention or assembly. The WSO agenda topics include: "Giving – Our Spiritual Link to Gratitude – Al-Anon world service in action" and "Trustee Search" plus a 15 minute personal sharing of each of the WSO presenters, in addition to topics which the Area helps select, depending on the size of the EVENT. We have a list of some twenty four suggestions. In the handout there are some sample EVENTS of varying lengths. So come to the Spring AWSC meeting prepared to have a conversation about TEAM EVENTS.

The Thought Force which I am currently working on Including Dual Members in Service, while maintaining policy has completed the first phase of our assignment. We submitted to the Board of Trustees a preliminary proposal of strategies and were notified back of what they liked and have now completed a proposal including four strategies with the pros and cons of each. This has been accomplished thru our meeting just prior to the start of Conference, e-mail communication and a conference call. We are now in a waiting mode for further reaction from the Board of Trustees and Executive Committee to see what our next step will be. We are hopeful that a presentation will be given at next year's Conference so as to move this matter forward.

On Wednesday evening of this week members of our Area attended the Rochester Area National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence event to mark September as Recovery Month. Jean W. our Literature Coordinator, & Gina C. alternate delegate shared Al-Anon materials with professionals in the field of recovery and others. We had 200 copies of Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism 2011 and a number of other public outreach pieces available. All materials were marked with our New York North name and web address. We also had meeting lists from the Rochester area available. The program included a showing of "When Love Is Not Enough" the Lois Wilson story, a keynote address from Robert Lindsey, President of NCADD, Inc. and declarations from both the County Executive's office and the Mayor's office. We are hopeful that this will help

boost the interest of professionals in recovery to send family members to the rooms of Al-Anon. On Wednesday morning the Rochester area newspaper had an article on the front page of the Living section about the event and Al-Anon was suggested as a source were provided.

I have a number of “Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism” left from the other night; I would like all here to take a copy and read it, share it with your group and then give it to a professional, doctor, or clergy. There are also some of the bookmarks please take these and leave them in Laundromat, waiting room or similar place and then consider as a group, district or AIS to order these materials to reach out to the public. The bookmarks are free and can be ordered from WSO. The AFA will be offered for sale in lots of 25 or more later this year for delivery in the spring.

I would like to wrap this report up by having a conversation with you about some of the things I’ve already shared with you.

First, I need your help with coming up with a Chosen Agenda Item for the 2011 WSC. A Chosen Agenda Item needs to be a topic of benefit to Al-Anon as a whole. We need to avoid topics that are currently in Thought or Task Force consideration: Dual members, How service contributes to growth and is an integral part of recovery, Conference structure, How to support Areas dealing with groups who do not consider Al-Anon or Alateen as a whole.

Have any groups or Districts used the Skit on Tradition Two – Group Conscience?

Have any districts used the Conflict Resolution Workshop using Path to Recovery?

Have any districts looked at reaching out to minorities in their district? If so, what have you done?

There are still some 2010 Conference Summaries for Coordinators and DRs, please take them with you and share them with your Group Representatives. There are order forms available and they can also be viewed on line on the members site of the WSO.

Next year’s WSC is planned for April 11 – 15 in Virginia Beach; on Saturday, April 16 there will be an Open House at the WSO and a 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday Party for Al-Anon, more information will be coming. The theme for the 2011 WSC will be: “Expanding our community of hope by embracing: Yesterday’s foundations  
Today’s successes  
Tomorrow’s possibilities”