

## **2017 Spring Assembly Delegates report**

Good Morning” I’m Diane C., New York North, and Panel 55. Every time I went to the mic as delegate, to give a report or ask the question, I had to give this information. The Recorder uses this to know whom the information and to record it in the conference summary. So whomever will be standing for this position, you might want to start practicing now, your name, your Area, and your panel number.

Thank you for the opportunity to represent New York North as your representative. This was a very Spiritual experience that I will always be able to look at with wonderment and delight. Each day I thought of you and your group members and know you were there supporting me with your prayers. Thank you so much. I would also like to thank you for all the candy, Love Gifts, Flowers and cards you sent to me over the week. They made me feel appreciated and loved.

### **First I would like to take a consensus as to what kind of report you would like to hear today!**

1. Who would like to hear a daily moment by moment report of my activities for the whole week?
2. Who would like to hear a synopsis of priority items that I feel would be most beneficial for you today and that I will report some of this additional information in the Northern Highlights and that you can read in the Conference Summary when it comes out?.

I think number 2 won so you can all receive a sigh of relief and not to worry about whether you will fall asleep before Lunch!

## **Financial report**

### **Audit**

We voted on and approved the Financial Audit, for 2016, for Al-Anon Family Groups, Inc. The Audit was done by firm Dixon Hughes Goodman. Their opinion was that we are in compliance with all that was necessary and that we received the Highest Rating that was available for a Non-Profit.

I have a copy of the Report and a list of questions delegates asked regarding the report. I can share it with you if you would like to read it.

## **2017 Budget-**

Many of you know last year's projected deficit Budget was \$144,000 approximately. Throughout the year we made up some of this I asking people and groups to continue to donate personally. By the beginning of the fourth quarter we were still lacking funds and the World Service Office reached out to share this with us and to ask us to **"Think Abundantly"**.

I am happy to say that New York North groups increased their donations by over \$6000 over our contributions from 2015. Please give yourself a round of applause<sup>!</sup>.

However only 58.8% of our groups are contributing on a regular basis as compared to 64.7% with groups from USA and Canada. The average group contributions in NYN for 2016 are \$118.98. The average cost of services per group is \$261.10. Is your group doing it part? I will posting this information in a future Northern Highlight article along with the breakdown as to how WSO arrives at that number.

## **WSO Income**

Estimated income comes from Literature sales, Forum subscriptions, Contributions and if needed up to 4% from our Reserve Fund. Last year we had to borrow money from the reserve fund and because groups donated so generously by the end of 2016 they were able to return money that they borrowed to the reserve fund. Thank you so much. Please share this information with your members and encourage them to Give Abundantly, Purchase Literature and to not only purchase a Group Subscription of the Forum but to purchase their own Personal copy for themselves.

## **Expenses**

Some cost saving measures being taken are:

- Using technology to its best advantage to reduce costs and offer better services
- Providing electronic documents where appropriate to save on printing costs
- Streamlining processes in the Office, with the help of the staff
- The net reduction in Salaries and Employee Benefits was \$5.6k. Employee benefits are made up of health benefits, vacation, sick time, and dental and retirement programs. The 2017 budget is showing an increase of these combined expenses of \$362k.
- The budgeted salary increase is because WSO is now fully staffed, allows for annual cost of living increases and earned performance based increases.
- We now have a Digital Strategy Manager, Webmaster, and Social Media Specialist The new personnel are to implement the new strategic focus of bringing new technology to AI-Anon, the redesign of the website, and efforts to increase AI-Anon's presence on social media.
- Printing and Postage were both down in 2016. Printing is expected to increase by \$5k over 2016 but postage is expected to decrease by \$17k. The decrease in postage

reflects the decision aligns with the new strategic focus towards technology and the suspension of the complimentary Forum.

- Occupancy costs were down \$14.8k in 2016. These consist of depreciation on the building, utilities, maintenance, insurance and other costs such as security. Occupancy costs for 2017 are expected to remain approximately equal to 2016.
- Office Services and Expenses were down \$70.9k in 2016. These expenses are expected to remain approximately the same in 2017. This includes reoccurring charges for things like the copies leases, computer support, payroll processing and monthly costs for the phone system that delivers group meeting information. These are all fixed costs that do not fluctuate.
- Travel and Meetings increased. The 2017 budget is than 2016 actuals because every other year a staff member and a Board member are sent to the “Zonal Meetings” to participate in their discussions and help them understand how Al-Anon works in their countries. In 2017 WSO hopes to travel to the zonal meetings in Europe, Central America and South America. In addition, the increase includes nine TEAM events that will take place in 2017.
- Public Service Announcements increased slightly in 2016. There are two PSAs budgeted for 2017. These two PSA’s will run throughout the year to allow the message to be more widely heard. In addition, the campaigns can be distributed to radio stations via electronic link instead of mailing CD’s or other media to the stations. This also helped to reduce the costs in this area. Those additional savings are redistributed back into other programs, public outreach, and website redesign.
- Postretirement Health Benefits are for retired employees after age 60 with 20+ years of service. Benefits are provided before age 65 through the Organization’s normal employee health plan, and then through Medicare supplemental health insurance policies. The Organization bears the entire cost of the premiums. . The 2017 preliminary budget shows the actual benefits at \$58k. In addition to salary average employee can expect to receive benefits; voluntary and mandatory voluntary benefits provided are approximately 13% of salary caused and include health dental life insurance pension long and short term disability we provide mandatory benefits such as Social Security unemployment insurance Workmen’s Compensation which had about seven print sent to our labor costs there are a total of 49 employees at the world service office. The WSO salary ranges as approved by the Board of Trustees are comparable ranges for similar positions in the state of Virginia arranges an actual pay level at the world service office attempts to address that part in Concept 11 which is establishes the need to can compensate employees quote in relation to similar services and abilities and comparable not for profit organizations.

For those who would like to see any of this financial information I have brought one copy with h me today or you can go to the World Service Office Members Website and click on WSO “with

the drop-down menu” financial information there you will find all of the information that I have included in this report, a copy of the quarterly appeal letter a chart showing how your \$15 contribution is spent the annual budget form 990 US tax returns containing Canadian tax returns. You can also make contributions now online through the WSO website and find pamphlets and forms under the drop-down menu on how to make a contribution. Some of the pamphlets and forms can be downloaded and printed for your use. You can also set up an account authorization agreement for preauthorized contribution USA a form to fill out and send to WSO

**Well that took up approximately one full day of my journey but it was not all that so I would like to share with you some other things.**

#### **CHOSEN AGENDA ITEMS:**

**How do we attract younger members and continue to keep them coming back.**

This was presented to us by a task force made up of two delegates and the conference chairperson. When younger members share their stories about how the steps work for them and how their Higher Power helps them we need to honor those words and not look at them as they are so young they don't understand. We need to continue to treat them with kindness and respect as they are all members were never too old to learn. Ask them to participate in group events and in group service. Offer to be there sponsors. Ask them to help you learn a new skill such as setting up the website being on the task force or inviting them for coffee afterwards. Take them to District Meetings or AIS Meetings to show them how Al-Anon service works can enhance their recovery also. If they have Children, maybe set aside a play area for the children to play and color. Consider having an earlier meeting time! Use your imagination and include the younger members in the discussions. Working together we can be there for Families and Friends of the Alcoholic.

If you have some ideas on this please consider sending me an email so that I can share it with other delegates and all of New York North. This is a subject is dear to my heart and is conveyed in our **Conference Theme: “Our Members: Our Hope for the Future.**

**How can we more effectively cooperate with AA? Enhancing a relationship with those members and their family and friends who are already aware of the positive impact of twelve-step recovery?**

Let it Begin with Me. Go to open a meeting. Meet and greet family members at Fellowship meetings such as AA Anniversary meetings , Days of Sharing, AA Conventions or other events you meet family members, Invite them to participate in Al-Anon Fellowship , share your stories when invited to AA anniversary meetings or other events. Reach out to their Area Delegate.

Give them the address of your Area or District website. Talk to them about Alateen. Remember our steps come from AA. Invite them to be speakers at our events. Go to their conventions participate when invited to the convention. Welcome AA members who come to Al-Anon Meetings as dual members reminding them to keep the focus of an Al-Anon program.

**Welcome supporting newcomers to Al-Anon dealing with drug addiction while staying true to our steps, traditions and concepts of service.**

**We have a program that works so let's share our program with them. Do not change our primary purposes to help families and friends a problem drinkers. Have a welcoming attitude, check our language so as not to exclude anyone, educate your group members about the possibility that Families of Drug Addicted people might have been sent to us by Family court, Doctors or Councilors. They are not always coming because they feel the need to be there but it might be a requirement to see their Loved One. Be welcoming and Kind. Remember these people have feelings similar to ours and are looking for a solutions also. .**

**Let people decide for themselves whether they belong, it's not our decision. When sharing keep the focus on ourselves not the alcoholic or drug addicted person. When possible after the meeting share information and the availability of resources in your community such as Nar-Anon or Drug Addiction Councilors. Look at the similarities not the differences we all have our own stories to share.**

***VOTING Items:***

- 1. Voted to Approve the 2016 Annual Report*
- 2. Voted to approve the 2016 audited financial report*
- 3. Approved the 2017 finance committee report*
- 4. To amend the text on pages 131 through 165 the (handbook section) 2014 - 2017.*

*Al-Anon- Alateen Service Manual-*

- 5. To amend the text on pages 95 - 99(Regarding Financial matters) in the Policy Section of I014 - 2017 Al-Anon and Alateen Service Manual .It suggested that we look to our Spiritual Principal as it relates to receiving and distributing funds from AA Events with Al-Anon Participation such as Conventions, Reunions, and Anniversary. It also related to make announcements of the in Al-Anon Meetings. It also relates to fundraising, raffles, selling of Al-Anon trinket at meetings and Use of Group Funds. We also talked about Cooperating with AA as it relates to Participation in these events with Al-Anon Participation.*

*These pages will be updated in the Web addition of the service manual by September and can be copy and pasted into your current service. Manual)*

### ***Other topics of discussions***

#### ***2018 -2020 Service Manual***

***Groups will NOT BE RECEIVING FREE COPIES OF THE NEW SERVICE MANUAL (this was thought about and discussed by the board and after careful consideration this decision was made.) New Groups will be given a copy three months after they register though. The Manual will be published and be available for sale at Literature Distribution Centers and through the WSO Website for \$5.00 or can be looked at and downloaded from the Website.***

***2017- Conference Summary. WSO will NOT be providing Areas free copies for District Representatives. However it will be published and can be view online or purchased WSO Website. It you want a paper copy it will cost you \$5.00 and I can order some to be available at the Fall Assembly if I know you are will to purchase them from me. (Please contact me afterwards about this.***

### ***OPEN & Closed MEETINGS***

*During the fall of 2016 The Policy Committee asked us to query our membership asking if they understand the difference between the two terminologies when they see it on meeting schedules. Do they think it is welcoming to newcomers? Do Professionals and Students understand the terminology before sending people to our meetings?*

*Only Al-Anon members in service are clear about the designated term open and closed meetings, the policy committee at the conference was asked to consider the history of the terms open and closed.*

*60% of the delegates responded to this query on AFG connect. Responses were similar and repetitive. Confusion abounds around the term. The purpose of open meetings is not obsolete however with the advent of the Internet and more knowledge about the family disease of alcoholism it is rare that a professional ever attends an open meeting. Open meetings are not held in most areas with any frequency, although some are always open, occasionally groups declare a meeting open for a special event such as an anniversary. Potential professionals our students were assigned to attend an open meeting most group understand about holding a group conscience if the meeting is close; students are never turned away. Although labeling a meeting closed may not be the wet best way to stress confidentiality& anonymity members Gil are concerned that their anonymity is preserved.*

*We were asked to consider the following options;*

- 1, Do nothing, leave it up to areas to deal with the terminology on their meeting list.*
- 2, Let WSO address the confusion and defined the terms more fully updating this section groups that work ,*
- 3, Ask the policy committee to consider the terminology and consider alternative wording appropriate to modern times with the caveat that preserving anonymity confidentiality and safety is important to all member.*

*This was only a topic of discussion no further action was taken.*

### **Prayer for today**

*We were asked how this was presented to our groups in our areas,*

*Most delegates presented it at their AWSC meeting, surveys to groups, at their area assemblies, email and personal phone calls*

***Reaction to this question was divided as to whether people would want to keep it or deleted from the Bookmark and Just for Today Pamphlet. If we keep it should it be given out to newcomers in the Newcomers Packets not put it in the newcomer package. Some people wanted there Board of Trustees & the Literature committee to make this decision because there was so much controversy related to this topic.***

***Because there was no consensus as to what to do it was decided to discontinue this discussion and to not take any action at this time.***

### **TASK FORCES:**

#### **Using Spiritual Principals in Group Money Discussions**

This Task Force presented a skit and had discussion using Al-Anon Literature to talk about such “Fears and financial Insecurities”, “Living by spiritual Principal’s”,” Using Tradition seven for Money discussions and “Abundance and Gratitude” We were also a handout that was titles” An Instant Meeting titled” Making Meetings about Money Easier”. It focused on suggested readings that talked about here of financial insecurity and presented for questions related to this topic. It also focused on living spiritual principals and gave suggested readings with the questions for discussion. This handout could be used in a workshop, in a Business Meeting, or broken up into several meetings. It could also be used in working with our Sponsors when we are working the Steps and Traditions Personally.

I have made copies for you that you might like to use in your groups.

### **Task force on Spirituality and District Money Discussion**

This Task Force provided two workshops that could be used together or separately. This was the task force that I was involved in. The first workshop focused on identifying our fears and our barriers we have in our District that prevent us from talking about Money and District Finances. It gave us space to write down these Fears and Barriers, to pick the largest one and to discuss which principle can be used to address the situation and to come up with solutions.

The second workshop focused on our Dreams, Our Hopes, and Our Trust.

A Facilitators guide was given to us along with participant's worksheets

I have provided copies of these for each District Representative who would like to use in their District.

**Task Force Talking about Spirituality and Area Finances** presented a guide to help you understand Area Finances and the Spiritual Principles behind them.

Step 12 suggests we practice these principles in all our affairs but do we do that with finances? Are we not asked to apply spiritual principles to our finances?

A handout identified where areas do use these principles already and then asked us a series of questions that we can initiate to continue this discussion. Additionally it identifies where our Area Abundance comes from such as Donations and Fundraisers. How does your area "carry the message" using their finances.

For those who would like a copy of this I have a few with me.

I will try to connect with our web master to see if there's a way these could be put on the New York North website and will let you know in the future what that URL would be.

### **International Al-Anon convention in Baltimore Maryland July 6-8, 2018**

**The Theme:**

**Celebrating One Day at a Time.**

**Early registration will be \$130 before December 30, 2017.**

**The convention features will be "big meetings" with speakers**

**Al-Anon workshops' with simultaneous Alateen workshops**

**AA participation Workshops (day time meeting).**



Dances.

Opening night will feature the” Language of Love Parade. Participants from each state, territory or country may dress in a costume that identifies their area.

On a personal note I have attended the Salt Lake City, the Pittsburgh Pennsylvania, and the Vic Vancouver international and this part of the convention is one of my highlights memories.

Beginning in September 2017, the 2018 international convention will have its own website,

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

You must register through this site. After Registering Hotel information will be provided for you.

There’s ONE YEAR, ONE MONTH AND 15 DAYS until we celebrate with other members of the worldwide fellowship of AI-ANON.

Let’s have a great contingency from New York North as we celebrate one day at a time!

Finally.

I would like to share with you what an awesome spiritual experience it was to listen to all Panel 55 outgoing delegates share their personal stories including their experiences with the theme Our Members our Hope future.

As I shared my story I was reminded of why I came to Al-Anon, how the membership has helped me both personally and in service, and I continue to have Hope that Al-Anon will continue to be there because of Members like us who continue Share our Experience, Strength and Hope. Let It Begin with Me!

**And Now I will have some photographs I would like to share with you showing events at the 2017 World Service Conference.**

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