

Area Outlook

News, Views, and Sharings From the Great State of Idaho

Idaho Area 13 Al-Anon / Alateen Newsletter

Volume 34, No. 3, Fall 2006



Sharing & Caring

Face To the World

Gently sliding towards the light a baby's
Born, face to the world

It's a girl the doctor says and slips
The mask upon its face

Mother rocks the little girl and spins
Another mask for her

It's a Christian says the priest as drip-
ping fingers
Move to cross another mask for her

Playground whispers sink in deep and
Add their searing branding words

Mask on mask are added on
As year on year she's given them

Masks so heavy
Hard to wear, hard to bear

Then one day a mask slips down
With trembling hands she grabs a hold

A pause, a chill, the question asked,
Is this me or am I another?

Some masks fall easy, some take flesh
As their clinging grasp is broken

A woman stands before a mirror
Gently sliding towards the light, face to
the world

"It's me" she says and smiles; "hello it's
Nice to finally meet you"

I Dance

Alone, I dance
I dance with arms held high on tips of
toes and
Laughter falling like silver coins as I
spin and twirl
and feel the joy of breathing and being
Alive in this glorious moment

Alone, I dance
I dance with the colors of the sunset,
My eyes drinking in the gold and purple
waves of light
That fill me up with joy and delight
Alive in this glorious moment

Alone, I dance
I dance with the leaves that flutter and
twist,
Yearning to launch from the branching
boughs
and I try to fly myself into the sky,
Alive in this glorious moment

Alone, I dance
Come dance with me and see the
rainbowed drops of dew,
And smell the heated summer blooms,
come feel the breeze
Slip past your skin and turn and find
your smile again.
Come play with me and dance and sing,
Alive in this glorious moment

Special thanks to Tamara
L. from Boise for
contributing her beautiful,
original poetry.



Sending love from the Area Committee!

According to our Service Manual, the “primary function of the Area World Service Committee is to plan for the general improvement of both the Assembly and the groups.” Everything we do at the AWSC meetings is done “with the purpose of informing and unifying the groups.” I serve on the Area Committee because I love the program and the way of life it has given me. As committee members, we are your trusted servants. We serve the Idaho Area out of gratitude.

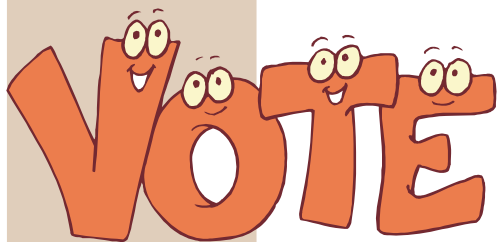
If you have ideas or suggestions to improve our groups or the Assembly, please tell one of us on the AWSC. We are here to listen & to do our best. I learn by example. The example our Area Committee hopes to demonstrate is its love of our Traditions & Concepts and the way they keep our area and districts healthy.

The August Area World Service Committee meeting had some great discussions. I’m listing the voting issues for Group Reps at the Fall Assembly on October 6-8, 2006 in Boise. There are several other issues on which we’re hoping to hear feedback, if time allows.

The Assembly morning session will include a presentation by our Regional Trustee, Judy D., from Wyoming. I encourage all Group Reps to attend...it will be very informative. Plus, Judy D. will tell her personal recovery story at the Al-Anon Luncheon. I’m very excited about her visit.

If you have any questions or suggestions, please email me at ruthineagle@qwest.net.

Love to all,
Ruth B., Idaho Area Chairperson



Voting Issues for Group Reps:

1. **Should we increase the Delegate’s Equalizer Expense to the World Service Conference from \$1612 to \$1698?** The total amount requested by the WSO as each areas portion of the WSC costs was \$1612 the last several years. Costs have increased and the current equalized expenses are \$1698 for each Delegate. These costs include travel, hotel, meals, incidental expenses, notebooks, printing and mailing of the Conference Summary to AWSC members of each area.

2. **Should we approve the “Alateen Guidelines To Attend An Idaho Assembly” as written by an Alateen Ad Hoc committee (with final revisions being done by Boise Alateen)?** District Reps will get a copy of this document via email when it’s completed.

3. **Recommendation: To consider whether to have Area or Groups support an Idaho Area Spanish Hotline.**

Our new Area Spanish Contact, Elsa M. from Nampa, is asking for a Spanish Hotline for our Area. The Spanish Ad Hoc Committee will present recommendations. (see the Special Report from the Task Force on pages 4 & 5.)

4. **Do we leave the Alateen Traditions as printed in the Service Manual?**

By an oversight of the World Service Conference many years ago, the Alateen

(continued on page 3)



AREA CHAIR REPORT

(continued from page 2)

Traditions were never formally voted on and approved. They reflected the thinking and hard work of Alateens at that period of time. Our Delegate would like Group Reps to give her feedback on this topic as it may be voted on at the next WSC in Virginia Beach. The option is to make small changes to the Alateen Traditions which reflect "word changes" not changes in content or meaning.

Discussion Issues for the Assembly Business meeting:

- 1. Adherence to the Traditions**—how do you pass on your enthusiasm for the Traditions...at the district level and group level?
- 2. Money for Outreach**—should we add money to our Public Outreach Coordinator budget for general outreach expenses for the Area, i.e., purchasing PSA's annually. ▲

District 5 just got done with their annual picnic. We chose to have it at Lava Hot Springs this year to try to centralize it so we could get some of the smaller communities involved. We had a good turn out and had a few AA's show up also. Had a lot of fun also floating down the river, games. Didn't get to the games, though, had too much fun floating the river. Learned a lot with moving the picnic (some do not like the change). Think it will be better next year. This was just a day together to laugh and enjoy with family and friends.

We have been working on our Annual Holiday festival, which is scheduled in November, as December gets too busy.

We are invited to do a Recovery Fest in the community. This is like a health fair.

Have had a few planning meetings for Spring Assembly, 2007, as District 5 is hosting the event.

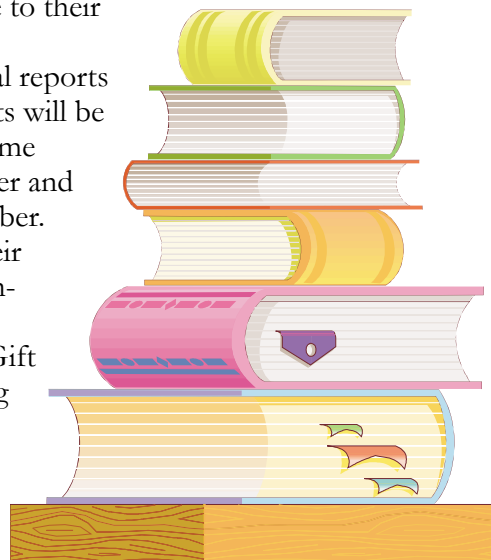
Love in service,

Wanda ▲

Balance of assets minus liabilities (including cash, bank account, inventory and accounts payable) has been \$8000 to \$10,000 for the past several months.

- Literature Center has changed Wednesday hours - 2pm to 6pm. Monday and Friday are still 10am to 2pm. This is being tried for July, August, and September. If the response is good, it will continue.
- District 3 requested that we not charge for schedules. The Board approved this.
- District 3 will be looking for two new Board members this winter. The current Chair (Renee) and the Area liaison (Will) are completing their terms in December.
- Non-Appeal letters were sent out in June, thanking groups for their continued support and informing them that no appeal was needed due to their generosity.
- District 3 asked that Literature Board present verbal reports in October, 2006 and January, 2007. Written reports will be presented to District monthly. This will provide some additional time at the District meetings in September and November. There is no District meeting in December.
- Cost of literature went up in June. WSO raised their prices and the Literature Center applied the same increases.
- District 3 asked if the Literature Center could do Gift Certificates. This is a very promising idea. Looking for Holiday or Birthday presents?

Submitted by John B for Will S
Literature Center Liaison ▲



DISTRICT 5 REPORT

LIT CENTER LIAISON REPORT

DISTRICT 1 REPORT

Our District had its first Public Outreach Literature Table in July at the Coldwater Creek Safety Fair. We had several volunteers including an Alateen help set up and give out information about Al-Anon in Northern Idaho. Our table was next to the AA table. We had great feedback from people and a lot of interest from young and older teens. We really felt it was a huge success and we look forward to doing this again in the future.

We had our first District Picnic on the shores of the Pend Oreille River near Sandpoint. It was a very low turnout but the few of us that did show had a pretty good time.

I traveled to all the meetings in the District to see how they were doing and to show my face. I answered many questions concerning the District, Area and WSO. Since I have no clue to what I am doing half the time, I did my best to answer them. Some questions came up to what my job was. Other questions were about the 7th tradition and what the money is used for at the District, Area, and WSO levels. I was impressed by the attendance of some of the meetings that are out a ways and in low populated areas of Northern Idaho.

We are getting ready for our Fall Speaker Meeting Fundraiser and Potluck. Now that we have an Alano Club in Coeur d'Alene, our Fundraisers are becoming more popular. We will be having a raffle with the help of all the meetings in our District.

We had one meeting disband and another meeting that had disbanded started up again in Post Falls. We are excited to have the Freedom Group back. This is the only meeting in the Post Falls area. Alateen is still going strong in Coeur d'Alene with about 5 to 7 regular members.

That is about it for now. Thanks so much for all your support.

Lori M.

District 1 Rep



DISTRICT 4 REPORT

Hello everyone! The annual "Women in Recovery Banquet" had women come in from Boise, Pocatello and Idaho Falls. Thank you so much for making this a great success! The dinner was delightful and Al-Anon was asked to join in the recovery "countdown."

The summer Al-Anon/Alateen picnic fundraiser was not as big as we had hoped but we managed to raise some very nice funds for Al-Ateen. We had invited the AA's and some did indeed attend. The lunch was excellent. A BIG thank you to Rod and Linda for the BBQ.

The Alateen meeting is up and running again on Wednesday nights at the Presbyterian Church in Twin Falls at 6 p.m. We would like to acknowledge Elsa for her work in outreach. She has done a wonderful job contacting the juvenile courts and the school counselors and the libraries. We will have a great Alateen meeting.

Monday nights in Kimberly are going well. This had been a combined meeting with Alateen just until we could get the Alateen meeting going in Twin Falls. Tuesday night in Filer is a good healthy group with an average of one to five newcomers a week. Wednesday night is struggling a little but with the help of our "old-timers" (I say that lovingly) it will be a good group in no time at all. Friday noon is a step meeting with very good attendance. This group works on the steps by the month and when there is a newcomer it always goes back to step one. Well Done! The Tuesday night group in Burley is small but Ann is very encouraged to help those who are in need. There are four available groups in the Hailey/Ketchum area: Monday 8:30 a.m. at The Sun Club; Tuesday 7 p.m. at the Hailey Sun Club South; Wednesday noon in Ketchum at the Sun Club; and Friday noon and the Hailey Sun Club South. The Wednesday noon in Ketchum is a big, healthy group. There is a discussion of an Al-Anon group opening up in Bellevue and in Jerome. Buhl's Friday evening Serenity Seekers have a good strong healthy group. Well done everyone! Participation is the Key to Harmony.

The 23rd annual "Women in Recovery Retreat" is coming up soon at Camp Perkins to be held on September 22, 23, and 24. AA started this Retreat over 20 years ago and they have invited Al-Anon from the very beginning. There are both AA and Al-Anon speakers. This is a great time to cooperate with Alcoholics Anonymous. This event draws people as far away as Utah and Wyoming. We all have a wonderful time.

Thank you all for your Support, Love in Service, District 4.



Hello from District 3! As always we have lots of things happening in and around Boise. Here's some of what we've been doing during the past few months:

GROUPS

- A new group just started August 11 in Boise. It meets from noon to 1:00 p.m. on Fridays at the Five Mile Church of the Nazarene, 2701 S. Five Mile Rd. Go into the main church entrance and walk through the sanctuary to the kitchen.
- Alateen meeting days and locations have changed in the past few months. We now have 3 Alateen meetings per week, two in Boise and one in Eagle. Each Alateen meeting has an Al-Anon meeting in the same location, same time.
- The Thursday meeting to support the Literature Center has changed from evening to a noon meeting, partly in response to a request from counselors who have offices in the same building as the Lit. Center.
- A new Spanish-speaking meeting just started at St. Mary's Church, W. State St. at 28th in Boise, Saturday mornings at 11:00a.m. We're looking for some Spanish-speaking members to support this meeting.

LITERATURE CENTER

If you haven't seen the new Literature Center, stop by and visit!! It is clean and bright and attractive with lots of literature for sale. **NEW HOURS:** Monday/Friday 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.; Wednesday 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. They're trying these new Wednesday hours for a few months, so if you're coming from out of town, call to make sure they're open: (208)344-1661.

The location is 1111 S. Orchard St., Room 172. Use building entrance 5 or 6. From I-84, take the Orchard Street exit (exit 52) and head north on Orchard. The Lit Center is just past Overland Road at the NW corner of Kootenai and Orchard Streets.

THANK YOU to the Board of Trustees of the Literature Center for literally snatching the Literature Center back from the abyss last year. They made some hard, practical business decisions and did an awesome job of involving the membership and transforming the Lit Center into a warm, inviting place with plenty of inventory available. It's on solid ground financially now and we in District 3 hope it will be here for years to come. Thank you to Renee, John, Vivian, Will and Connie!! Special thanks and appreciation goes to Beverly, the office manager! Welcome to Mike, the newest board member who recently joined to replace Connie.

ALATEEN

Phil, John, Karla and several others have been working hard to provide Alateen meetings that meet the needs of Boise area Alateens. They say there will be an Alateen program at the Fall Assembly. For information call Phil at (208) 322-8125.

OUTREACH

In July, August and September some members have been invited to participate in events for prisoners (who are about to be released) and their families at the prison south of Boise.

District 3 ordered several hundred copies of the special outreach magazine from WSO that we will distribute during September in celebration of Recovery month.

EVENTS

District 3 has been busy hosting some major events this year.

- Al-Anon Day June 10 was a wonderful day of fellowship and recovery for around 50 of us who attended. Thank you so much to Eilene and her committee for all their hard work. Thank you also to Myrna who told her story that weekend at the Fireside meeting in Boise. Most of the attendees at Al-Anon Day were from District 3. I wish you all could have been here to hear Myrna and to share the day with us!


(continued on page 6)

DISTRICT 3 REPORT (CON'T)

(Continued from page 5)


- The Gem State Roundup was August 11-13 in Boise. It was FUN! Many thanks to Tina and her committee of Al-Anon volunteers who made this event possible for us. Our Fri. night Al-Anon speaker was Phil and the luncheon speaker was Larcine from California – they were exceptional!! Now we're looking for an Al-Anon chair for the 2007 Gem State Roundup.
- **OCTOBER 6,7,8** – Fall Assembly at the Doubletree Riverside hotel in Boise. Michele W. (Area Secretary) is Al-Anon chair for the Assembly. September 1 is the early registration deadline. Flyers are available on the website, www.idahoarea18aa.org. Our Al-Anon luncheon speaker will be Judy D., Northwest Regional Trustee. We are hoping to have a workshop with Judy as well so this should be an awesome assembly!!
- **OCTOBER 28** – TENTATIVE date for a Chili Feed. We'll have flyers and more details available soon.
- **DECEMBER** – Annual Lasagna Dinner. Watch later in the fall for flyers and information about this event.

DISTRICT REP

I am learning more all the time about how to represent my district. I'd love to hear ideas from other District reps about how you conduct your district meetings and what kinds of things you focus on at the district level. Our district meetings are held the 3rd Thursday of each month from 6:00-7:30p.m. at the Literature Center in Boise. Anyone who wants to come is welcome to attend! Call me, Laura, at (208) 284-6992 or email me at Rebola@aol.com any time! 

DISTRICT 2 REPORT

Summer time has brought complacency in our service work. However, our meetings remain strong and well attended. Our district chose to divide our free literature between our meetings and allow the autonomy of the groups to decide where to use it in their area.

Three of our meetings have ordered the magazine for our September outreach projects. Our phone service costs continue to rise and we are searching for another provider. There will be a sponsorship workshop on Sept. 9 in Lewiston and our district is also planning a service manual workshop this fall. 

ALTERNATE DELEGATE REPORT

Summer is about to wind down. At last we got to attend a few recovery functions this year. Al-Anon Day was especially good as have not been able to go the last 2 years. What a great speaker and the people there radiated the room with love and sharing from the heart. We heard so many good things. Food was great, too. Since that trip to Boise, have cleaned a lot of wreckage from my head. Had no idea I had held onto so much of that garbage for a long time. Fear can trigger your mind into high gear. Made me dig in and work a few steps again.

Nice to see everyone who was at the area meeting. Enjoy hearing what other districts are doing and what the area is working on.

Looking forward to Fall Assembly and learning more how Al-Anon works. Looking forward to seeing everyone at the GR Orientation at Fall Assembly. Thanks to all the people in our lives who help us to live one day at a time as best we can. Thanks to everyone who works on a committee (for Al-Anon Day or the Assembly) for so freely giving your time to make these functions good for all of us to enjoy.
Myrna C.

*The Area Outlook is published quarterly by the AWSC Newsletter Editor for members of Al-Anon Family Groups and Alateen. Materials for publication consideration should be sent in the following formats: Word, WordPerfect, Text, or Works. Prepared flyers or inserts that do not require formatting and layout may be sent as a PDF file. Email submissions to newseditor@cablone.net. Be sure to include "AFG" in the Subject line to avoid the spam filters. For those with no internet access, hard copies may be mailed to:
New Editor
P.O. Box 1132
Meridian, ID 83680.
The Al-Anon traditions will be honored in our newsletter.*

Help Wanted

Area Public Outreach - Media Coordinator

- Encourages districts to get information directly to the public and to the media about Al-Anon/Alateen as a resource.
- Makes presentations or hold workshops at area assemblies, if asked.
- Distributes service projects and information from the WSO to Area assemblies, and districts.
- Requests reports of public outreach activities from the districts. Helps districts exchange information on public outreach successes/concerns.

Area Institutions Coordinator

- Works with the local districts to establish institution meetings and plan institution outreach projects.
- Makes presentations or holds workshops at area assemblies, if asked.
- Distributes service projects and information from the WSO to Area assemblies, and districts.
- Encourages Districts, AISs, and GRs to carry projects and information to the group
- Requests brief reports of institution activities from the districts.

Area Internet Coordinator

- Coordinates items for inclusion to the Idaho Area 13 website.
- Other related duties per policy manual.

For further information, contact Ruth B. ruthineagle@qwest.net

WSO and Database Comparison

I created a document for each district comparing what I had in my database against the July 31 printout from WSO. The WSO printout shows what World Service has in their database and provides when anyone asks about a meeting. The current mailing address on this printout is important because if mail is returned to WSO, the meeting is suspended for a year, then inactivated if no new mailing address is provided.

Thank you to those districts who returned my document with modifications. I updated both my database and WSO on-line with all changes provided.

I sent reports of the meetings by district to Danielle to update the Web site and to each of the DR's for their final verification.

Group Annual Update Form

Many groups complete the WSO annual update form to show any changes for their group. I received these from WSO the first of August and updated my database according to those forms. Please continue to complete these forms annually.

Reports for Assembly

I will create the list of GR's for the Fall Assembly based on the current information in my database. Please make any changes by September 29 so I have time to make corrections. This report is used by the Secretary at the Assembly for voting purposes.

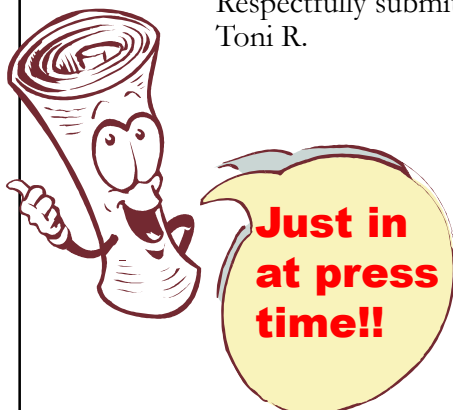
Web Updates

I email reports to Danielle each month to update the Web site. The reports are by town and by district.

Group Numbers

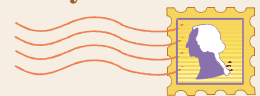
Please use your group number anytime you communicate to WSO, Danielle, or me. It is so much easier to find the correct group with this number. We have 130 meetings both active and inactive in this area and many times the meeting names are similar. You can find the group number on the Web site, on reports I provide, and forms you receive from WSO. Group numbers beginning with 999xxx have not been registered with WSO are have been temporarily assigned a number for my database. Once this group has registered, I change my database.

Respectfully submitted,
Toni R.



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Special Report: Spanish Task Force

Editor's Note: Last spring, the Area Committee voted to establish a Spanish Task Force to study the feasibility of providing a phone for our Spanish speaking contact person in Idaho. Their findings follow.

Our Task Force members are: Ruth B., Elsa M.; Kathy B; Loni T.; and Cecilia S. I've attached the principles and discussion that lead to our recommendations:

1. **Tradition 5, One Purpose: to help families of alcoholics.** We do this by...welcoming and giving comfort to families of alcoholics. The Paths to Recovery, pg. 176-7, says: "We can also help make welcoming information available about Al-Anon in the community. To do this, Al-Anon needs to be easily accessible whenever someone tries to find us." "As groups and individuals, we support these services with donations and volunteer hours to assure that someone is there to pick up the phone and direct the person to the nearest meeting."
 - a. There is an immediate need for a Spanish Al-Anon Hotline that can be answered by a real person in Spanish. This is not one group's responsibility. Providing easily accessible information to Spanish speaking family members is an area responsibility. It can be part of our Twelfth Step work at an individual, group, district, and area level.
 - b. Newcomers and professionals can talk to someone in Spanish who speaks their language & understands about alcoholism. Provides a way for Spanish speakers to get general information about Al-Anon and information about starting Al-Anon groups. Lets newcomers know they are not alone, there is help available.
 - c. It will give our Spanish Contact an outreach tool to help carry the message.
 - d. The Area effort involves getting the word out about the Spanish Hotline number, and as a start-up it could include getting Spanish Radio & TV spots (PSAs) aired in the Treasure Valley because we need to work to our strengths—this is where we have an active Spanish meeting to send newcomers.
 - e. The Local effort involves things like the Esperanza group getting flyers out to churches & professionals in Nampa—getting the word out locally to attract new members. Each District could be getting information about our Spanish Hotline Number to professionals, churches, anyone in the Hispanic community locally. Districts could also ask if Spanish speaking members would be willing to start new Spanish language meetings. Elsa would then be a resource for these new start-up meetings.
2. **Tradition 7, Self-Supporting.** From Al-Anon's Twelve Step & Twelve Traditions, pg. 115: "There are no dues or fees but, as part of a greater whole, each group takes responsibility for supporting local, national and worldwide Al-Anon services. Each group is free to decide how much it can afford to contribute to each of these activities." Ibid., pg. 116: "When individual members and individual groups understand that they are responsible for their own survival and progress, a great spiritual strength flows into each part as well as the whole." From Paths to Recovery, pg. 195: "Both local service arms and the WSO help spread the word of recovery in ever-expanding circles and are dependent on Al-Anon members for ideas, direction and resources."
 - a. This is an IDAHO Spanish Al-Anon Hotline we're trying to fund. Idaho as a whole is responsible to help with costs, and with volunteer efforts to get the word out. One person, like Elsa (who is doing an amazing job), cannot do it all statewide. And one group, like Esperanza, cannot fund the area's outreach work. Part of the Seventh Tradition is the spiritual connection I get by supporting a group or service activity. It's no longer "their service project," it's OUR project. I'm part of the effort when I support it with my time or money.

(see column 1 of page 9)

3. Our checking revealed that a pre-paid Wireless phone would meet our needs.
- a. It was suggested we buy a T-Mobile used phone for \$50 (new for \$100), Sym card and 120 start-up minutes good for 3 months is \$50. After the 3 months we buy a phone card: \$100 for 1000 minutes (good for a year). T-Mobile has no monthly fees. So for \$200 we can have 15 months of cell phone service. T-Mobile service would cover the whole state of Idaho if the user is in the Nampa/Boise area.
 - b. Committee members found some prepaid wireless phones—the idea is that the pre-paid plan helps you control cost. The lowest price TracFone is \$29.98, and the Air-time Card, good for 400 minutes, is \$129.42 (good for 365 days). The card costs less if it's good for only 60 days. Verizon offers a pre-paid phone too. Many others do too, I'm sure. The biggest benefit is no monthly fees, no contract to sign, only pay for minutes you use.

In summation:

1. The Task Force saw the need for Spanish Outreach in our Area as our Area responsibility.
2. One way to meet this responsibility was to purchase a wireless phone. The phone's purpose is to provide a contact to give general information about Al-Anon and information about starting Spanish speaking Al-Anon meetings Area wide.
3. An inexpensive way to begin is to buy a Pre-Paid phone for the next 15 months for an outlay of \$200 and monitor the usage for that time period.
4. We need to develop an Outreach campaign to “get the word out” both on an Area level and a local level.

Respectfully submitted
Kathy B., Task Force Chairman

Complimentary Group Subscription

Beginning with the May 2006 issue, all registered, English-speaking groups in the World Service Conference structure will receive a complimentary subscription to *The Forum*. The WSO will mail the subscription to the group's current mailing address (CMA). Please ask the members in your Area to ask to see their group's copy. If members of a group haven't seen their group copy, have the Group Representative call the World Service Office to verify that the CMA is current.

Now Included

News and information formerly appearing in *Inside Al-Anon Xtra* will appear each month in *The Forum*. Please encourage Group Representatives to give a two-minute report from *The Forum* at every meeting.

The Forum is now a primary communication tool between the World Service Office and the groups.

Have You Been to a Meeting Overseas?

We are looking for sharings from members who attended a meeting outside the World Service Office structure. Please submit your experience, strength, and hope to *The Forum*.

Readership Survey Results

- √ More than 800 readers responded to the Readership Survey.
- √ Look for results of the Readership Survey in upcoming issues of *The Forum*.

Did You Know?

Members can submit a Forum sharing on-line by visiting the Forum page on the Members' Web site, www.al-anon.org/members/

Calling All Al-Anon and Alateen Groups

Groups can contribute to *The Forum* by submitting “Round Table Topics” or “Alateen Meeting Topics.” Groups may submit a topic with five to ten questions on the Forum page of the Members' Web site—www.al-anon.org/members/—or via e-mail at wso@al-anon.org, fax to (757) 563-1655, or mail to 1600 Corporate Landing Parkway, Virginia Beach, VA 23454-5617.

In our last area newsletter, I shared about our next Northwest Regional Service Seminar (NWRSS) being held on September 14 – 16, 2007, and gave the history and an update on the NWRSS. There had only been one Area (state) left, in the northwest region, that had not hosted a NWRSS and that Area was North Dakota. At this year's WSC, seven out of the nine Areas turned in bids to host the NWRSS, and there were twelve hotels submitted. Our Idaho Area submitted two hotel bids, one for the Red Lion in Idaho Falls, and one for the Coeur d'Alene Resort. Since the hotel bids submitted were not only spread out through the northwest region, most of the hotels were not submitted for the same city. It was decided for the northwest regional delegates to vote for their top two cities, and then the World Service Office (WSO) will chose the location after a site visit of both hotels in June. After a series of closed ballot voting, the two hotels (cities) chosen were International Inn in Minot, North Dakota, and the Coeur d'Alene Resort in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. I was very excited about the possibility of Idaho hosting the next NWRSS and it would have been a wonderful Al-Anon event in northern Idaho.

In the first part of August, I was informed that the International Inn in Minot, North Dakota was selected for the 2007 NWRSS. I would be a liar to say I wasn't disappointed. I have all of the reasons, "in my head," why I felt it would have been so important for Northern Idaho to host this event at this time. Before Al-Anon, I use to think, if I wanted something more than "thought" I worked harder, and the other person then I should get it. But in Al-Anon I does not work in this way. There was something I need to learn in this process and trust that all is right in God's World.

Sometimes, I will hear from an Al-Anon member that they are not in Al-Anon service work because they are concentrating more on the steps and the spiri- tually part of their program, or they do not like discussing the service issues of the program. What I have learned is when I got involved in Al-Anon service work is when my program flourished in ways I could not have imagined, or practiced, if I was not involved in Al-Anon service work. And as I practiced these principles in Al-Anon service work, the lessons learned are soon applied to "my practiced principles" outside the program. In this case one of the first pieces of Al-Anon literature I thought of was "Alcoholism, the Family Disease." On page 20 and 21, there is "A Checklist for Evaluating Our Maturity." I made sure I read this list again, and especially working on number 7 "Is a good loser, accepting defeat and disappointment without complaint or ill temper," number 10 "Applauds others' achievements with sincere goodwill," number 11. "Rejoices in the good fortune and success of others having out-grown petty jealousy and envy," and number 12 "Listens courteously to the opinions of others-even when they hold opposing views; does not enter into hostile argument."

Thank you again for allowing me to practice these principles in all of my affairs.
Yours in love and service,
Cecilia S.

*"Thank you again
for allowing me to
practice these
principles in all of
my affairs."*

head," why I felt it would have Idaho to host this event at this in Al-Anon, I use to think, if I wanted something more than get it. But in Al-Anon I does not work in this way. learn in this process and trust

an Al-Anon member that they because they are concentrating tually part of their program, or

"Problems cannot be solved at the same level of thinking that created them in the first place."

- Albert Einstein

Easy Does It!

Al-Anon's Suggested Welcome explains that without the spiritual help of our program, many of us try to "force solutions." When our efforts to overcome another's alcoholism get us nowhere, we resolve to try even harder. When we are impatient for an answer and no answer comes to us, we take an action at random just to feel we are doing *something*. When the square peg fails to fit into the round hole, we refuse to give up and try to force it into place. As a result, our frustration mounts, our anxiety increases, we feel like failures, and we vow to try even harder. In short, our thinking becomes distorted. With the slogan, "Easy does it," Al-Anon suggests a simple alternative to this destructive and frustrating pattern. Sometimes even doing *nothing* can be far more productive!

We have tried doing things the hard way. This slogan reminds us that, while "hard" doesn't do it, "easy" often does. We may not have all the answers today. This is not a failure, only a reality. It is not always our job to solve every problem. Perhaps we are expecting too much of ourselves or others. In fact, we may know everything we need to know for this day. If and when the time is right, more will be revealed. "Easy does it" reminds us that a gentler approach might make a tough situation much more bearable.

Or maybe we are trying to take on something that is not our responsibility. Struggling harder will only make things more difficult. But if we adopt a kinder, more relaxed attitude, we may be able to see the situation more clearly and act more appropriately.

(Taken from How Al-Anon Works, page 68) ▲



Still in the works: "OUR RECOVERY IN RELATIONSHIPS"

Still needs members stories about intimacy, sexuality, and parent-child and grandparent-child relationships. Especially want the experience of men and Alateen members.

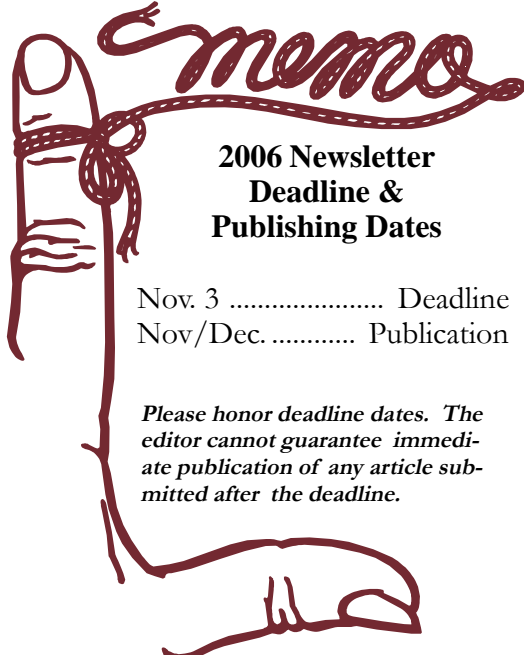
"FACING GRIEF & LOSS WITH AL-ANON"

Could still use more sharings from members who are men, young people, gays, lesbians, parents who have faced grief regarding their *non-alcoholic* adult children affected by alcoholism, and members who contemplated divorce but decided to remain in an alcoholic marriage.

Could also use more sharings on spiritual aspects of grieving.

SEND TO:

1. www.al-anon.alateen.org/members ("Publications" section) OR
2. Mail:
Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc.
1600 Corporate Landing Parkway
Virginia Beach VA 23454-5617
Attn: FACING GRIEF & LOSS
or
RECOVERY IN RELATIONSHIPS
or
3. Fax: 757-563-1655 ▲



**2006 Newsletter
Deadline &
Publishing Dates**

Nov. 3 Deadline
Nov/Dec. Publication

Please honor deadline dates. The editor cannot guarantee immediate publication of any article submitted after the deadline.

Take It Through The Steps

“Take it through the steps!” That was the response to almost any problem that we’d hear in our meetings whenever it came time for a certain veteran Al-Anon (and well-respected gentleman) to share. Eventually, his repetition became a slogan for me and mentally, I started taking some of my issues through the steps. It helped! I also heard how some people in the meeting would get together on a one-to-one basis and take their burdens through the steps. One person shared deeply from his heart how taking his divorce through the steps with his sponsor made a huge difference in his life.

EDITOR’S DESK

I was inspired and would continue to

take some of my concerns through the steps “mentally.”

“I was 'wrapped around the axle' about this for days”

However, it was when I was faced with the “death” of my laptop, that I was forced to take my reaction through the steps in a more tangible way. But let me digress for just a moment and discuss my relationship with my laptop. Pretty much wherever I go, my laptop goes. I use it for my business, my personal life, even my recreation. I took my laptop with me to Ireland where I accomplished an incredible amount of writing for a specific project on which I was working. When I wasn’t working, I wrote in my computer journal. When I wasn’t writing, I was playing computer

Pachisi to help pass the time on the long, trans-continental flight. I even take my laptop camping where I journal regularly. Have laptop, will travel, I always say.

I was quite dismayed when I needed to replace my laptop, as this major inconvenience occurred in my Higher Power’s time frame, not mine. I pay cash for these purchases or I don’t make them. It was at a time when my cash reserves were at an all-time low and my efforts to take my business to a new level were at an all-time high. Hence, I had to resurrect my credit card from its musty, well-hidden home in my document safe.

I was “wrapped around the axle” about this for days. I was sure the technician who looked at my laptop merely was trying to rip me off and I really didn’t need one a new one. I had nightmares about charging the purchase of a new laptop, agonized over how to pay it off when I had other responsibilities, and even considered not using a computer for my business, which would merely catapult me back into the 1970’s! (Something an internet-dependant business should *not* do!).

I finally decided one morning upon arising, that I would take my paper journal (as my now disabled current laptop was in technological ICU), and *take it through the steps*.

What a powerful practice! I discovered fears lurking behind obsessions, all-too-familiar character defects disguised by blame, and a dethroned Higher Power that was replaced by a computer! It was totally liberating.

“Good work,” my sponsor said after I shared the entire process. I am writing this article on my new laptop. I’ll be fine. My genuine Higher Power is in control of my finances. All I need to do is work hard at my business, suit up, show up and do what’s in front of me.

The very next meeting, someone presented a topic to the group that was burdening her. When it came time for our veteran to share, he gave his usual recommendation. “Take it through the steps.” I’m grateful he says it repeatedly. Eventually it sank in and did me a world of good.

