

DELEGATE's REPORT

FALL ASSEMBLY 2008

Syracuse, New York

As summer is in the process of winding down I hope you all have enjoyed it and are excitingly looking forward to our upcoming Fall Election Assembly September 19th-21st in Syracuse. It is time, once again, to point out the fact that these business meetings are an intricate part of the success of Al-Anon Family Groups and without them our wonderful fellowship would be nowhere near as effective as it is. I'm very much aware of how much our membership enjoys the convention format that includes a number of workshops, panel presentations, Al-Anon meetings, speaker meetings, and other programmatic presentations and other experiences that we all enjoy very much. At the business meetings there are little of the aforementioned programmatic activities and going about the core business and policy making side of our fellowship is not always as much fun or interesting for some but please believe me when I tell you that our links of service from the World Service Office to the Area's to the Districts to the Groups and finally to the individual members are very much dependent on these business meetings and it is important that we all keep that in mind when participating in them. An organization as large as our worldwide fellowship needs to be a very detailed, intricate, and well planned operation if it is going to be truly successful. With that in mind let us prepare our self's for a very successful Election Assembly in September and those of you that are considering a service position in New York North should investigate the duties of these positions, what type of skills or background are necessary to carrying them out successfully, and ask yourself whether you have the time and the commitment to take on the challenge of the position. On the other hand please ask your Higher Power to provide you guidance in making your decision and don't be afraid. You can do it and you don't have to do it just like others have done it. You'll add your own touches and there are plenty of people to help you out. All you have to do is ask. With that said, let me provide you with my current Delegate's Report that will bring you up to date with the happenings from the World Service Office since my last World Service Conference Report last Spring.

- The Al-Anon Family Groups International Convention was held in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania over the Fourth of July weekend. It was a well planned and well executed event that was just a fabulous experience for anyone who was fortunate enough to attend it. To experience the fellowship, love and good will provided by over 4,000 Al-Anon members and friends and love ones was just an experience I will never forget. The workshops, speaker meetings, panels, Al-Anon and AA meetings, social events, etc. were filled with a wonderful spirit of recovery and the sharing of individual's experience, strength, and hope was something to behold!! Pittsburgh is a beautiful city with lots to do and see and the host Al-Anon Committee did a wonderful job of making all of us feel welcome and well cared for. There is a place on the member home page where one can go and read the comments and thoughts of members who attended (2008 International Convention blog):

<http://al-anon.org/members/2008InternationalConventionBlog>.

For those of you who could not make it for one reason or another I would highly recommend that you start planning and saving now for the next International Al-Anon Family Groups

Convention in Vancouver, British Columbia, July 5-7, 2013. I promise you that you won't be sorry!!

- On July 3rd, before the Convention officially convened, the World Service Office sponsored and administered an event called "Connecting with Our WSO" in which they offered a day long (9:00 AM – 3:30 PM) series of workshops on a variety of Al-Anon related topics. They were set up in a way that those in attendance could actually attend three different workshops on that day. A small fee (\$10.00) was charged and there was a reception included at the end of the day. It was very well done.
- We Delegates received a letter very soon after this year's World Service Conference from our newly elected Chairperson of the Board of Trustees, Mary Ann Reid. In this letter she conveyed her thoughts and reactions to this year's Conference and informed us which of the "Hot Topics" the Board of Trustees thought we should highlight in our Delegate reports. I did that in my report along with including a few other topics I thought our New York North members would have an interest in. I always present those topics in great detail while providing information regarding less important topics in a bulleted fashion.
- The Chairperson also provided us with the following observation: "Throughout the week we were reminded of our Conference theme, "Build Bridges-Energizing Our Spiritual Quest," and how building bridges could make a difference. We asked ourselves: How can we as WSC members expand, renew, and strengthen our connections with the fellowship? In response to this question we discussed ways to improve communication between the Areas, Districts, and groups by reaching out to newcomers, by asking AWSC members to visit groups, encouraging the use of CAL at meetings, utilizing past Delegates in service work, and requesting WSO Trustees to visit our Areas. We took some time to reflect upon and identify the natural talents and personal skills we discovered through participation in Al-Anon service work, along with those skills we would like to develop as we continue to grow spiritually."
- I told you in my World Service Conference Delegate's Report last spring how excited I was about this year's Conference giving conceptual approval for the Literature Committee to develop a piece of literature on Al-Anon's first 60 years targeted for completion in 2011 but I thought it was worth reminding you again in this report.
- Also I'd like to remind you about our fellowship's latest publication that was first made available at the International Convention this past July in Pittsburgh. Its title is "Discovering Choices," (B-30) and it explores the many facets of our recovery in relationships. It draws on the experience, strength, and hope of hundreds of members and sheds light on how alcoholism has affected many different types of relationships in many different ways. A copy was mailed to all Conference members on June 27th.
- There was a Forum Coordinator Conference Call on June 14th which was a first with these Coordinators. Forty participants were involved and the World Service Office was very pleased with the ideas brought up and the number of participants according to Bob Schneider, Director of Communications and Julie Miller, Communications Manager.

- The 2008 Alateen Advisory Committee Meetings brought about bids from seven Areas for the three meetings. The Areas selected for 2008 are as follows: Canada West: Alberta/NWT – U.S. Southwest: California North- U.S. Northeast: New Jersey. There will be Al-Anon Advisory Committee meetings in each of these Areas this fall, on the same weekend as their Assembly, with members from the Area. This is part of a three year trial period. Areas in the following regions will be invited to bid for the 2009 Alateen Advisory Committee meetings: U.S. Southeast – U.S. North Central – Canada Central
- The Al-Anon Registration/Group Records Change Form (GR-1) has been reviewed and updated to match the fields of the new WSO database. The updated PDF version of the GR-1 form and instructions are now posted on the Members Web site. As a result to changes to the Policy Digest, including the placement of the limited access and introductory meetings, the Production Department will or is in the process of creating an interactive GR-1 form in PDF format, so the asterisk feature on the form will be linked directly to the latest version of the on-line Service Manual. The new address is:
<http://al-anon.org/GroupRecords/GroupRecordsCoordinatorOnlineGR-1Form.htm>
- The Finance Committee and Board of Trustees reviewed the projected costs of the 2009 World Service Conference (WSC). After careful consideration, the equalized expense amount for the 2009 WSC is \$1,250.00 (U.S.). The entire cost to send a Delegate to the WSC is \$1,890.00 (U.S.). A copy of the letter sent to the Delegates will be or has been sent to Area Treasurers with a request to forward payment to the WSO as soon as possible, but no later than December 31, 2008.
- In a letter to Area Delegates dated July 21, 2008 from Tom Coffey, Associate Director of Communications-Literature it was stated that The WSO Executive Committee approved a request for a trial structure for the Literature Committee. Instead of five at-large members who needed to live within 300 miles of Virginia Beach, the trial structure will include five members who reside throughout the U.S. and Canada, but not in Areas where there are already Delegates on the Committee. The intent of the trial structure is to draw input from a wider cross section of the fellowship. At large members will no longer need to travel to Virginia Beach for quarterly meetings. By conducting Committee business via conference calls, e-mail, and the Internet, more people will have an opportunity to participate.
- A revised Area Alateen Coordinators guide (G-24) is available on the Members Web site. Revisions were made with input of Alateen Coordinators in 2007.
- The World Service Office has developed a number of modules in Power Point format that are designed to help the Alateen Coordinators to “train the trainers”. The modules can be customized to your Area, and then distributed to DRs or other trusted servants in our Areas to conduct informational Alateen workshops. Two of the modules were previewed at the “Connecting with our WSO” day on July 3 in Pittsburgh prior to the International Convention. Those of you that are not familiar with Power Point are encouraged to enlist the help of another trusted servant, friend, or family member to assist with the customization. The modules that were previewed in Pittsburgh were: Module I: Overview of Alateen Service and Module III: Alateen Events.

- A Sample Chapter Project handout, which uses Paths to Recovery (B-24) for meeting topics, was posted in July for Area Literature Coordinators. It was suggested to Coordinators that they distribute the handout in their Area. It will be due October 15, 2008. Selected topics will be posted from January through March, 2009. There were 30 submissions for the Sample Chapter Project using The Dilemma of the Alcoholic Marriage (B-4). Selected topics will be posted from October through December. There was another Literature Coordinator conference call held on September 6th.
- I have been requested in a letter received from Susan Martin, Associate Director – Conference, WSO to send information to her regarding the results of our Election assembly including information regarding our newly elected Delegate and the other newly elected Officers and Coordinators using the Area World Service Committee Update Form which they provided for me to use. This should be sent as soon after the election as possible.
- As of the end of July approximately 22,000 visitors have listened to our new podcasts. 60% of the listeners found the feed through Apple's iTunes store according to Chairperson Mary Ann Reid. There has been more podcasts posted during the month of August and they seem to be extremely popular.
- The Chairperson also indicated that a Regional Service Seminar (RSS) Task Force formed in July met to develop some of the ideas generated from last year's RSS Thought Force. A plan is in the development stage to provide an innovative RSS that could be presented at the 2009 WSC.
- The Chairperson also indicates that if we wish to have a Trustee visit an Area service event like an Assembly, the request process found on the File Exchange under Conference Mailing, subheading "Reoccurring Questions."
- After reviewing the materials provided by the Finance Committee on the merits of forming an Audit and Compensation Committee, the Board voted to create separate Audit and Compensation Committees, charging the Finance Committee with the task of developing an implementation plan for each.
- I have been asked to discuss the Process for Managing Excess Bequest Funds with our Area and return my findings to WSO before December 15th, 2008. I hope to discuss this today as part of this report.
- The Theme for the 2009 World Service Conference has been decided and reads as follows: **Embrace the Legacies: Our Spiritual Bridges to Expand the Future.**
- Five new Trustees were recently welcomed to their first official Board week: Beverly Anderson, Vicki Hoppin, Laurie Kleen, Penny Ridderbusch, and Karen Rimmell.
- The World Service Conference Summary is available and I will distribute copies for our trusted servants during this weekend. They are also available for members at a cost of \$3.00

for shipping and handling. This is the most comprehensive record of the happenings of the World Service Conference and a very interesting and informative summary in great detail. The on-line version of the Summary is now available on the Members' Web site. Go to the home page of the Members/ Web site and hold your cursor over "Publications," click on "World Service Conference Summary." Then click on 2008 Summary. There is a link to the Summary on the home page.

- Your Al-Anon World Service Office is preparing to respond once again to readers of the "Dear Abby" syndicated newspaper column. In a memo sent to Area Delegates and Public Outreach Coordinators from Pat Quiggle, Associate Director of Public Outreach – Media it was indicated that "We have submitted an item inviting readers to request a free copy of Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism 2009 or to view the annual Public Outreach publication in English, Spanish, or French on the Al-Anon Public Outreach Web site at www.Al-AnonFamilyGroups.net. Staff at "Dear Abby" informed the WSO that there is a very good chance the item will appear in an upcoming column. We will receive a two week notice when they determine the exact date it will appear in local newspapers.
- There was a Public Outreach Coordinator's Conference Call held on Saturday, September 6, 2008 at 3:15 P.M. The use of Al-Anon videos was a primary topic of discussion.
- A Guideline for Workshops on Alcoholism and Relationships using "Discovering Choices" (B-30) is now available. The format can be adapted to accommodate any given timeframe, audience of Al-Anon members, or number of attendees. It includes a generalized format for opening and closing, with seven topics to choose from for the specific focus of the workshop. All seven topics are based on chapters from "Discovering Choices" (B- 30).
- Vicki Leach has resigned as Trustee and e-Cal Chairperson for personal reasons. Margot Matthews has been asked to chair the e-Cal pending approval at the October Board meeting.
- The e-CAL Contest Winners page has been completed and you can view the results by clicking on the following hyperlink: www.al-anon.org/members/eCAL/results.html. The categories were: Best Audio, Best Video, Best Use of Images (two submissions tied), Best Multimedia, Best Public Outreach Message, and Best Overall. The Executive Committee reviewed 26 submissions and chose the winning presentations by using a point system.
- I used my Northern Highlights Column last month to provide you with a question and answer regarding the Al-Anon Declaration and A.A. Responsibility Statement. This is one of the questions and answers that the WSO sends the Delegates periodically in response to being asked at the 2006 WSC to send a copy of questions it receives from Conference members and our response to all Conference members so that they can share leadership by responding to recurring question in their Area. These are provided in an area of the File Exchange that Delegates use as an information gathering tool. The category is "Frequently Asked Questions."
- My October column was written about the topic of the Member's Web site. I attempted to encourage member's to use this wonderful informational tool and I provided them with a

description of the general site categories and subcategories as well as what specifically was on the front page of the site currently. The site has a vast amount of information that you can review at your own pace any time it is convenient for you and I guarantee that you that you'll learn a great deal about our wonderful fellowship.

- I was recently asked by Claire Ricewasser, Associate Director Public Service if I would consider applying for a position of A&E Recovery Rally Delegate who will participate in the Recover Rally in New York City on Saturday, September 27th. They are searching for people in recovery from all 50 states and Washington D.C. The Rally is a national celebration that will bring together thousands of people in recovery and recovery supporters from across the country to form a human chain—a living symbol of recovery-across the Brooklyn Bridge. This is sponsored by The A&E Network and the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependency, Inc. It is suggested by Claire that the Al-Anon applicants for these Rally Delegate positions may wish to review the Policy Digest section of the 2006-2009 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual regarding anonymity (pages 86-88, and 99). Members submitting an application would need to avoid disclosing their Al-Anon membership for media related portions of the project. You can, however, refer to Al-Anon as a mutual support program for families of alcoholics.
- The “Policy Digest” section of the *2006-2009 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* has been updated in all three languages to include the Motions passed at 2008 WSC. The updates, located on the Members’ Web site, are formatted so that the pages with changes can be downloaded, printed, and inserted on the appropriate page in the *Service Manual*.
- All of the bulk orders of the *Conference Summary* have been shipped. The *Summary* is also available on the Members’ Web site. I will pass them out today.
- The Alateen Coordinators were asked to indicate what topics they’d like to see included in the two remaining “Training the Trainer” PowerPoint modules by September 15th. The “Alateen Meeting” module will include all topics relevant to starting and working with an Alateen group. The “Alateen Challenges” module will include all Alateen concerns not included in the other modules. Thank you for your attention.

Respectfully Submitted by:
Robert M. Conway Jr.