

2019 World Service Conference

“Action Is Attraction – There Is No Growth in the Comfort Zone” [02.2019 WSC Poster]

What is WSC?

“The World Service Conference is the annual business meeting of Al-Anon Family Groups. The Conference provides guidance to the World Service Office in service matters brought to its attention. Some delegates referred to it as “a 59 year conversaiton.”

Who Attends Conference?

- Delegates—with voice and vote
- Board of Trustees—with voice and vote
- Executive Committee—with voice and vote
- World Service Conference WSO staff—with voice and vote
- Other attendees—voice and vote vary with each participant’s role

Why does the Conference meet? The World Service Conference makes the group conscience available and effective for all Al-Anon. It is the practical means by which the group conscience can speak; it is the voice of world Al-Anon and the guarantee that our world services shall continue to carry on under all conditions.

“The Conference protects Al-Anon and Alateen against a service breakdown; it makes for unity and enables our fellowship to act as a whole upon important matters. This makes it the principal guarantor of Al-Anon and Alateen’s harmony and survival.” --2018/2021 *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*, “World Service Handbook” section pages 160 and 161

The Conference Members are the Voice of Al-Anon Family Groups and as such have knowledge and experience gained from the Area they represent.

It is the responsibility of each Conference Member to provide understanding, direction and guidance as it relates to Unity and Spiritual Guidance in our common purpose at the World Service Conference.

The Conference Members working together at WSC are putting the Steps, Traditions and Concepts into action.

The Conference agenda, Chosen Agenda Items, Thought Forces, and other Conference discussions are conducted and appropriate actions taken utilizing our Legacies’ core principles of Unity, Autonomy, Primary Spiritual Aim, and Principles above Personalities.

The 59th World Service Conference was held at the Sheraton Hotel in Virginia Beach, Virginia, April 13–17, 2019. All 67 Delegates were present. In addition, the voting members of Conference included 17 Trustees, 3 At-Large members of the Executive Committee, and 7 WSO Staff members. Our Director of Finance and Operations and Associate Director--Digital Strategy attended with voice and no vote. The Executive Committee for Real Property

Management (ECRPM) Chairperson attended with voice only as it relates to ECRPM business and no vote. Maria S from Mexico had voice and no vote.

The WSC certainly lived up to its theme: “Action Is Attraction – There Is No Growth in the Comfort Zone.” For the first time ever, this Conference was a truly trilingual Conference, with French and Spanish interpretation being provided, allowing non-English-speaking Delegates to attend and thus honoring our spiritual principles of inclusivity and participation. This is the first year of a three-year trial that was approved by the Board of Trustees in July 2018. Following in this line, we were provided with a presentation of the two new PSAs by Scott P., Associate Director—Digital Strategy, World Service Office (WSO). Each PSA was shown in English, French, and Spanish.

This year at the WSC, we also experimented with a new method of voting that uses browser-based software on our electronic devices (phones, tablets and computers).. After several attempts and with the technical aide of Staff members, we became quite efficient at it (sort of). Or, at least we learned we would need to arrange for better internet connectivity next year.

Saturday’s Agenda schedule included New Member Orientation (Panel 59 Delegates), a meeting of the current Delegates to share Area Highlights, and meetings of the current Committees, Thought Forces and Task Forces. (See pages 70-72 of the 2018-2021 *AI-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*). The 12 hour day ended with the opening dinner.

The Current WSO groups are:

- Conference Committee on Trustees (CCT)/Nominating Committee
- Public Outreach Committee
- Literature Committee
- New Thought Force: Fear of Change
- New Thought Force: Identify Ways to Look at Service in Relation to Roles, Terms, ad Possible Roadblocks
- Task Force: Conference Purpose, Makeup & Roles
- Task Force: Reaching and Unifying Rural and Large Geographic Populations

Sunday was the official opening of the 2019 World Service Conference. Roll was taken and review done of conference etiquette, conference theme and goals, voting procedures and announcements,

The first item after roll call was **MOTION #1 – (94 YES, 0 no, 0 abstentions, 0 void) – CARRIED** That the following persons be seated at the 2019 World Service Conference.

Financial Report [03.see page 2 of May19-Appeal copy.pdf]

The purpose of WSO is to support and facilitate AI-Anon outreach to families of alcoholics everywhere within the standards of best practices. Their programming includes an array of services and generally runs through a five and a half million dollar budget, annually. This is a phenomenal undertaking that underpins the service network that reached us with hope and healing.

WSO services the Al-Anon Groups in the US, Canada, Bermuda , and Worldwide through programs, administrative services, digital strategies, finance and customer services and operation

I have copies of the 2018 Audit report and the 2019 Budget if anyone wants to review them. Generally the highlights are as follows.

2018 Audit

Finances

The unaudited Financial statement showed an operating surplus of \$140,003, which was considered due to strong literature sales, reduced expenses, and Convention income. Also \$323,836 was transferred from the General Fund to the Reserve Fund for the year. WSO had total assets of \$9,833,940 and liabilities of \$1,387,695. In 2018, income from operations totaled \$5,556,987 in the General Fund, and expenses of \$5,416,985.

Income

The income came in at \$3,975,492, largely due to literature sales, particularly the new publication of *Intimacy in Alcoholic Relationships* (B-33) which has continued to perform well in sales.

Contributions of \$1,953,458 were lower than budget by \$46,542 (2.3%), almost \$20,000 lower than 2017 results.

Forum subscriptions were lower than budgeted, as well, at \$257,685.

Expenses

Expenses came in at \$5,416,983, a decrease due to decrease in salaries, office expenses, supplies, and miscellaneous expenses. Accounts trending above budget were travel and meetings, the general services meeting, credit card fees, and repairs.

Contributions [\[04.2018 Contributions.Expenses per Group pg 1\]](#)

Out of the total number of 14,551 groups in North America, there were 9,328 Al-Anon groups that made contributions to WSO in 2018.

Donations totaled \$1,953,460 USD and of those \$155,068 CAN were Canadians' contributions, which amounted to 1/14 of the total contributions.

Our Responsibility [\[04.2018 Contributions.Expenses per Group pg 2\]](#)

So how has Area 39 contributed to WSO?

Our Area 39 NY North contributed \$18,096 in 2018 to WSO compared to \$18,922 in 2017. Of all registered groups in NY North, 64.7% contributed an average of \$103.94 - almost \$5.00 less than last year [\$108.75]. This is lower than the \$292.00 WSO expenses per Al-Anon/Alateen Groups for 2018.

Reserve Fund

A decline in earnings provided an investment loss of \$453,436 for the year, as the investment being sensitive to market conditions. Our investment continues to reflect AFG, Inc's Investment Philosophy of growth and income with a moderate risk tolerance. Per the Financial Director this decline has already recovered in the first quarter of 2019.

2019 Budget

For 2019, WSO is projecting a Deficit Budget, as expenses are expected to exceed revenues. The preliminary budget is at \$5,387,600, with projected expenses at \$5,511,969. This is planned so that the spending of accumulated reserves will benefit the organization and its members in subsequent years. So please encourage your groups to send a few extra dollars to help WSO as they face this challenge.

Overall expenses have been budgeted to increase because of interpretation services at the WSC, strategic plan initiatives including creation of a mobile app, advanced meeting search, improving the translation backlog, increased travel and meetings.

If every group that contributed in 2018 would increase their donation by \$8, we would replenish the \$200K transfer from the Reserve Fund. Let's discuss this in our Group Business Meetings, making use of a previous WSC handout – "Spirituality in Group Finances" as well as the pages on Group Finances/Budget (pp55-56) in P-24/27.

[02.2019 WSC Poster]

2018 Thought Force: Welcoming Potential Members

Background: During the 2017 WSC one of the Chosen Agenda Item breakout sessions was titled "*Welcoming potential members dealing with Drug addiction in family member or friend – while keeping true to our primary purpose*". The report back indicated a clear consensus that there would be value in continuing the discussion in the form of a Thought Force.

Thought Force Charge: Conduct a KBDM that includes considering how we welcome members in our meetings, education of our groups, public outreach messaging and language in our service tools and AI-Anon Handbook (Groups at Work) that may be supporting or preventing these potential members from finding hope and help in AI-Anon. Generate ideas to "welcome, support and offer hope" to potential members with a family member or friend dealing with substance abuse, while maintaining our primary purpose and not diluting or altering the AI-Anon program.

A skit was presented and a Questions & Answer and Strategies handout with CAL – Conference Approved Literature references. E copy is available.

The 2018 World Service Office Annual Report

The Annual Report was sent out in January and WSC members were asked to submit any comments or questions prior to conference. The questions with responses and comment were then sent back to the WSC members. There was discussion at conference followed by

MOTION #2 – (93 YES, 0 no, 1 abstention, 0 void) – CARRIED To approve the 2018 Annual Report. Copies of this report can be found on the WSO web site.

The following actions were approved by the Executive Committee and presented to the Board of Trustees:

- To approve the change of deadline for At-Large Committee résumés to January 1 from August 15th to facilitate the process.
- To approve the translation of the Lois W. Memorial Issue of *The Forum* into Spanish and to post the issue in French, Spanish, and English in 2019
- To formally inactivate the Lone Member Correspondence Service and remove references in Conference Approved Literature as editions are updated, except as historical notations
- To formally discontinue the quarterly Area Highlights publication for the WSC Structure . All the discussions happening on AFG Connects gives a lot of information that way, plus provides a way to engage in discussions about particular problems or successes.
- To approve that the quotation on page 223 of *One Day at a Time in Al-Anon* (B-6, B-14) be corrected to replace the word “truth” with “wrath”
- To accept replacement of the nomenclature of “Do Not Refer” and “Re-Refer” policies with either “Meeting List Publication” or “Publishing” policies. The final wording to be determined after the current nomenclature is reviewed by WSO Translation and Style & Proofing Staff. In September, WSO posted material designed to support Areas in establishing fair and balanced "Do Not Refer" and "Re-Refer" policies founded on the spiritual principles contained in Al-Anon's three Legacies, as described by the 2012 Policy Committee Thought Force. Recently, WSO Staff reviewed the policy materials submitted by three Areas. As Staff reflected on the principles of what is fair and balanced, we realized the language "Do Not Refer" discouraged a holistic, spiritual approach to finding solutions to challenges with groups. Staff recommended to the Executive Committee replacement of the nomenclature of "Do Not Refer" and "Re-Refer" policies with "Meeting List Publishing" policy and the recommendation was approved. Given the Executive Committee's motion, Staff has renamed the support material: "Area Meeting List Publishing Policy Development Resources." As noted in September, Areas are not required to create a Meeting List Publishing policy. However, Areas that have developed a policy may submit it through their Delegate to the Executive Director, who will coordinate the review. Meeting List Publishing policies must clarify both how Areas will work with groups prior to removing them from meeting lists and throughout the process as they support them to be re-published.
- To approve the use of the wording “Families and Friends Only” and “Families, Friends, and Observers Welcome” to replace “Closed” and “Open” in identification of meeting attendees on the AFG Electronic Meeting Registration/Update Form. Newcomers and non-members inquiring about meetings frequently do not understand our internal “open” and “closed” meeting designations. Following several discussions, the Policy Committee suggested that new terms would be helpful to clarify the intent behind these

designations. The statement “Families and Friends Only” helps newcomers understand they will be attending a meeting with others who are also struggling with the challenges of living with the disease of alcoholism. “Families, Friends, and Observers Welcome” clarifies for newcomers or anyone interested in learning more about our program that the meeting welcomes them. The word “Observers” is designed to include professionals, students, the public, and anyone interested in learning about AI-Anon. Students are often required to attend; some must observe an AI-Anon meeting as a requirement for a course. Professionals like to observe AI-Anon meetings to learn how they are conducted. Sometimes they observe because it fulfills a requirement; they may need to do so to earn Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for recertification of their licenses in a state or province. This new wording will be used for a trial period of six months prior to making a recommendation to the Board regarding the implementation of this change on the AI-Anon Registration/ Group Records Change Form (GR-1).

- To approve the transfer of surplus 2018 operating budget funds, less \$2,000, to the Reserve Fund prior to the close of the audit year.

Policy Committee Task Force – Alateen Discussion:

During 2018, the Policy Committee completed its review of the “Alateen” portion of the Policy Digest. The Policy Committee recommended revisions of this section to the Board of Trustees. The proposed changes provide more clarity and reflect the spiritual principles members apply when they adhere to the 2003 Alateen Motion from the Board of Trustees. The Board accepted the changes and recommended they be presented for consideration by the 2019 WSC in April. **MOTION #3 – (91 YES, 3 no, 0 abstentions, 0 void) – CARRIED** To amend the text on pages 93-97 in the “Alateen” section in the “Digest of AI-Anon and Alateen Policies” section of the *2018-2021 AI-Anon/Alateen Service Manual (P-24/27)*

During the discussion before vote I made note on a question from the floor. Are the Alateen guidelines to be followed for teens at an AA Convention? Response from Sue P. was the guidelines are needed when the Alateen name is used for event or meetings. Teens that attend regular AI-Anon meetings are not considered Alateens unless then attend Alateen meetings or events. It is suggested that Areas plan for minors or teens attending an AI-Anon event.

Concept Five Task Force

WSO sent out documents of the revised text for Concept Five earlier this year done by the Policy Committee asking for feedback is it clear and accurate, consistent with AI-Anon spiritual values and if we can live with it. The revised text will be reviewed by Style and Proofing prior to being finalized. This text is the result of work by the Board of Trustees. The purpose of the revised language is to improve the clarity of the appeal process currently outlined within the

text of Concept Five. After discussion motion was made to accept the changes. **MOTION #6 – (91 YES, 3 no, 0 abstentions, 0 void) – CARRIED** To amend the Concept Five descriptive text on page 186-187 in “Al-Anon’s Twelve Concepts of Service” section of the 2018-2021 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual (P-24/27)

World Service Handbook Task Force

The Policy Committee also worked on revision of the World Service Handbook and presented proposed changes to the WSC. **MOTION #7 – (91 YES, 1 no, 1 abstentions, 0 void) – CARRIED** To amend the text on pages 139, 140, 168, and 171 in the "World Service Handbook" section of the *2018-2021 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27)

Road Trip! 2019—You and Your Board Connect! [05.Road Trip1.ppt]

Road Trip! Is an interactive day with presentations, personal sharings, round table discussions, and most importantly—fellowship. The Board provides the program; you provide the location. This year’s Road Trip! event will be held in Seattle, Washington on October 19 following Board week. Registration will open in May and will be posted on AFG Connects and *In the Loop*. All Delegates at Conference were provided with an information sheet, a new template for a Request for Meeting Proposal, and an invitation to complete if Areas are interested in hosting this event in 2020. Road Trip! You and Your Board Connect 2020 will be held October 31, with the site to be determined. The deadline to submit a bid to host will be September 30, 2019.

[1] [SEP] Do not let this opportunity pass you by! If you were not chosen last time and meet all the requirements, why not try again?

[02.2019 WSC Poster]

Policy Committee Work Group: Electronic Meetings

The Policy Committee formed the Electronic Meetings Work Group (EMWG). The Work Group was charged with exploring ways to reach out to electronic meetings and finding ways to allow them to fully participate in the fellowship. At the 2018 WSC, the EMWG gave a presentation on electronic meetings. The EMWG is to review existing archival material about this topic so that it can determine how to improve the WSO’s understanding of electronic meetings’ needs and wants, and how the WSO can help the members in these meetings achieve Al-Anon’s primary purpose.

The Electronic Meeting Work Group put forth a presentation outlining the tasks that they had completed. These included hosting a conference call with Current Mailing Addresses of registered electronic groups, updating the Electronic Meeting Registration Form and accompanying instructions to allow electronic meetings to choose from multiple platforms, circulating a survey of electronic meeting members regarding a name for the meetings, and creating an AFG Connects Electronic Meetings Community. Other topics included anonymity in electronic meetings, different types of Facebook groups, Facebook instant messaging, and social media platforms other than Facebook.

Following discussions during the April Policy Committee meeting, the Policy Committee made a unanimous recommendation to the Board of Trustees to direct the WSO to pursue all appropriate remedies to protect the Al-Anon name, pursuant to the electronic meeting policy in the “Digest of Al-Anon and Alateen Policies” section of the *2018-2021 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27). The Board of Trustees, in their legal authority, unanimously approved the recommendation. The Board then informed the WSC members that approval was given to draft a letter that would be sent to Facebook/social media groups that are hosting Al-Anon meetings. The letter (with review by lawyers) would invite these groups to register their meetings with the World Service Office so they could continue using the Al-Anon name or logo. Our Policy Digest suggests that the WSO is the public outreach vehicle for Al-Anon Family Groups; we do not support other entities creating public outreach social media spaces because that is the role of the WSC Structure or GSO Structures’ links of service, thus excluding groups and individual members.

Given the enormity and breadth of this subject, the EMWG will continue to focus on gathering additional information about electronic meetings.

Group Services

The “Let’s Talk about Safety in Al-Anon Meetings!” service tool has been extremely well received. Group Services responded to numerous emails and phone calls requesting additional copies and thanking the WSO for providing the information. As a result of that request, the service tool is now posted in English, Spanish, and French on the al-anon.org website. It can be found on the Group Resources home page.

A new community on AFG Connects was launched in the end of January for electronic meetings. The Current Mailing Address (CMA) for each meeting has log-on access to the community. The decision to create this online platform was made after the successful conference call that was held with the electronic meeting CMAs and members of the Electronic Meeting Work Group in November. Their discussion threads have included comments regarding service in meetings, displaying of meeting formats, dominance in meetings, and meeting autonomy. [L] [SEP]

The number of electronic meeting registrations continues to grow. As of March 31, 2019, we have a total of 214 meetings, with the following breakdown:

131 phone meetings and 83 online meetings in the following languages: [L] [SEP]

152	English [L] [SEP]	1	Estonian [L] [SEP]
39	Spanish [L] [SEP]	1	Farsi [L] [SEP]
3	German	1	Italian
1	Icelandic	1	Polish [L] [SEP]
3	French [L] [SEP]	1	Portuguese
2	Danish [L] [SEP]	9	Russian

The online platforms that are currently in use are:

- **Bulletin Board** – 6 meetings in English, Russian, Italian, and Danish
- **Chat** – 12 meetings in English, Spanish, Farsi, and Polish
- **Email** – 27 meetings in English, Spanish, French, Estonian, German, Portuguese, and Russian
- **Facebook Messenger** – 3 meetings in English
- **Free Conference Call App** – An online platform: Members can call in or use the app to participate in meetings; 6 meetings in English have registered since January 1, 2019.
- **Skype** – 27 meetings in English, Spanish, Icelandic and Russian (Of these 27 meetings, 18 are in Spanish!)
- **Zoom** – 2 meetings; 1 is bilingual Spanish/English and one is Danish

Since January 1st, **19** new electronic meetings have registered. This is the most ever experienced.

The total number of Al-Anon & Alateen groups worldwide in 2018 is 24,498: [page 15 of the Annual Report.:

- US/PR/BDA Al-Anon: 12,503
- US/PR/BDA Alateen: 845
- Canada Al-Anon: 1,159
- Canada Alateen: 44
- International Al-Anon: 9,028
- International Alateen: 919 (426 in Mexico)

The number of Alateen groups grew significantly from 2017 due primarily to an increase in meetings in one structure. This structure accounted for 87% of the total increase. Discounting the effect of that one country, however, the growth from 2017 to 2018 was still a robust 20%.

The total number of electronic (social media, digital, and phone) meetings increased a net eight percent in 2018 to 213:

- • Social media (includes instant messaging and apps): **33**
- • Digital (includes email, chat, and bulletin boards): **53**
- • Phone: **127**

International Conventions

The **2020 Alcoholics Anonymous International Convention** with Al-Anon participation will be held in Detroit, Michigan on the weekend of July 4 at Ford Field Stadium. The theme for this convention, which will be celebrating A.A.’s 85th anniversary, is **“Love and Tolerance is our Code.”** Registration opens September 9, 2019 at \$115.00 US and after April 2020 at \$140.00 US. The Al-Anon meetings will be held in the Marriott Hotel and the Al-Anon program will be similar to Al-Anon’s International Conventions, which are held separately.

2023 will see our **Seventh Al-Anon International Convention** being hosted in Albuquerque, New Mexico, June 29– July 1, at the Albuquerque Convention Center. More information will become available as this international celebration of Al-Anon recovery draws nearer.

TEAM Events

Since this January, six Areas' requests to host Together Empowering Al-Anon Members (TEAM) events have been accepted. The Areas hosting are Nevada, held in February; the Maritime Provinces; Quebec East; New York; Pennsylvania; and South Carolina. We feel confident that these events will be successful and beneficial to all involved. However, after much discussion with Staff and Trustees and on the recommendation of the task force charged with reviewing TEAM, and keeping in mind the best use of our resources to carry out our Strategic Plan, it was decided that after the end of 2019, TEAM will no longer be available. The Board of Trustees will be announcing at next year's Conference what a new format for connecting with our members may be. Please stay tuned!

Digital Strategy

Digital Strategy at the World Service Office (WSO) oversees Al-Anon's message online—on our website, social media pages, and email—and its public outreach at the national level, which includes PSAs, search engines, and online billboard ads.

Staff is conducting web conferencing interviews with Al-Anon-friendly professionals to help carry the message using video.

The Digital Strategy Team is working hard to find new ways of communicating and to improve upon existing methods of communication so that our message can reach every person, from the young to the young-at-heart. We continue to share Al-Anon's message of help and hope through social media and have been testing paid ads—the equivalent of online billboards—to raise awareness. When we carry out testing, Facebook is useful because it allows us to select our audience. For a recent study, we have selected anyone in the US and Canada who does not currently "like" our Facebook page. In the first 90 days, we've generated over 150,000 impressions. In brand awareness terms, this means that roughly 6,000 people would be able to remember seeing our message if asked about it two days later. At this rate, at the end of this one-year trial, we will have about 600,000 impressions and 24,000 new people who will be able to recall our message, providing the opportunity for Al-Anon to become a vital resource for more families and friends of alcoholics who reach out in a moment of desperation.

Last year was a record-breaking year for the Al-Anon website, with **over 3.5 million visits to al-anon.org** and over **1.4 million people finding meetings using our online meeting search**. For the last two years, we have achieved our one millionth visit at the end of April, but this year we hit 1 million visits a full month earlier, with over **60% of the visits coming from first-time visitors** to al-anon.org. These visits have led to over **540,000 meeting searches**. At this pace, we can expect to have over four million visits and two million meeting searches in 2019. We are excited about this visibility, as it gives us the opportunity to increase newcomer attendance at meetings and to offer help and hope to more families and friends of alcoholics.

One way we have worked to improve existing methods of public outreach is through better measurement. It's nearly impossible to know if you're going in the right direction without having some data to show you the way. In digital methods it's relatively easy with opens and clicks and pageviews, oh my!

But in broadcast it's a bit more difficult, which is why this year we are introducing two new toll-free numbers and special web addresses to help us determine how effective our PSAs are at generating calls to our meeting line and visits to our website. This method of measurement does not give us any of the personal information of our visitors; it only shows us how many people are visiting our website because they saw one of our PSAs. This will give us more insight into the effectiveness of our PSA program than we have ever had before and will empower us to make better creative decisions for years to come.

How do we get the PSAs aired? (A possible Public Outreach project for your district.) This is the grass-roots effort that we need from our Members doing Public Outreach. A plan of action may look something like this:

1. Search on the internet for a list of radio and TV stations in your immediate area (this could be done at the district level).
2. Determine who is going to contact each of those stations.
3. Start with calling the station to identify the employee responsible for choosing which PSAs to play
4. Visit the station and ask to speak with the person identified as responsible for PSAs
5. Take a device where you can play the PSAs for them, share with them our mission, and ask them to play our PSAs
6. If they agree, find out which email address we should send the broadcast quality versions
7. Visit the PSA page on al-anon.org and complete the PSA request form: Station Name, Contact name, Radio or TV, Language, Email Address along with the Member's contact info.
8. The WSO will send an email to the station with the link to download the broadcast quality version.

One of our Member Goal Strategies is to help members and newcomers find meetings worldwide. To advance this Strategy, we are reviewing approximately 2,000 meetings that take place outside the WSC Structure but that are registered with the WSO for any number of reasons. Most of these are in countries that have evolving structures or that lack any structure at all. Once these meeting addresses are verified and their latitude/longitude is determined, we will be adding them to our online meeting search.

The Digital Strategy Team is responsible for public outreach and communications with the media. *Face the Truth* is a relatively new show on CBS, created by the producers of *The Doctors*. The shows' producers have requested (and WSO Staff have permitted them) to display the Al-Anon logo during four episodes so far, including most recently for a taping in February. The show starts with an intervention in which family members and friends encourage the alcoholic to "face the truth." Afterward, the co-host recommends that the family members attend Al-Anon and Alateen.

And finally, the Team has committed to several new Strategic Plan Initiatives, including collaboration on the office-wide adoption of Asana for project management. The Strategic Plan Strategies charge us with keeping our website looking fresh and inviting, by posting current and relevant content and by growing our *In the Loop* subscriber list. Anyone who is interested in receiving this email newsletter in English, Spanish, or French can easily sign up by visiting al-anon.org/emailme. Last but not least, we have kicked off a project to develop an official AI-Anon mobile app, which we plan to make available later this year.

AI-Anon International

The Associate Director—International is responsible for answering correspondence with members and structures outside of the WSC Structure. The position is the primary point of contact for news and information coming in from international structures and is the channel for information that follows from the WSO to support the structures. Specific areas of support include literature (over- seeing the process of translation and reprint) and policy (providing guidance and materials). More general topics include logos, contributions, literature, group problems, technical questions about web- sites, and other subjects.

Contacts this year includes Africa (South Africa), Europe (Greece, Iceland, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Norway, Estonia, Sweden, Portugal, Russia, UK, Eire (Ireland)), Asia (India, Isreal, South Korea, Turkey). Austrailia, New Zealand, The Americas (Brazil, Cayman Islands, Columbia, and Mexico).

International Coordination Committee

The primary accomplishment of the International Coordination Committee (ICC) in 2018 was the planning and hosting of the 19th International AI-Anon General Services Meeting, October 3–6, 2018, in Virginia Beach, Virginia. As the host Structure, the ICC was responsible for planning the agenda, chairing the meeting, communicating with all attendees, arranging finances, coordinating with the facility, and preparing a written summary.

Twenty-three Delegates from 16 GSOs attended the meeting. The agenda included eight general session presentations, four work- shops, a Big Question discussion, a keynote speaker, a spiritual speaker, and a business meeting.

Ongoing activities of the ICC include:

- A Task Force that is charged with clarifying the roles of Trustees and Staff on international trips and developing tools to facilitate tracking goals and outcomes for trips
- Research into the history of translation and sales of literature across national borders
- Follow-up on outstanding items from the IAGSM Business Meeting and planning for the 2020 meeting

Visits were made to Greece, Norway , Finland and Estonia by members of the International Committee.

In November, GSOs were informed of the availability of professional French and Spanish interpreters at the 2019 WSC. This service is only provided when interpretation is required by a Delegate member of the WSC; however, for 2019, it has been determined that there will be a need for both French and Spanish professional interpretation for at least one WSC Delegate. Because of this, the French and Spanish interpretation service was extended to other Structures who may need this language support. [L
SEP]

Trustees

Throughout the WSC there were presentations done by various trustees on **Being a Trustee** to shed light on what the service position entails. They were titled:

- Mentors and Roommates
- Trustee Travel
- What are the “Costs” of Being A Trustee (Emotional, Physical, Financial, Spiritual)
- All members of the Board of Trustees are members of the Policy Committee
- Serving as Chairman of the Board

Hybrid Conference Mega Issue The Board of Trustees felt an idea-generating discussion about a Hybrid Conference would be both beneficial and insightful to all. This year’s Mega Issue aligns with Al-Anon’s Strategic Plan to explore delivering barrier-free access to information for members. One aspect of the Board’s envisioned future for Al-Anon is to increase access to knowledge, resources, and the program. This Mega Issue idea-generating conversation focused on exploring an opportunity. Discussion regarding a Hybrid Conference (which is defined as a “live” in-person event at a physical location with a “virtual” online component) was held within three, one-hour sessions. Members were reminded to keep in mind Al-Anon’s spiritual principles as expressed in Al-Anon’s three Legacies and to be assured that no decisions regarding holding a Hybrid Conference would be made based solely on the Mega Issue discussions.

The format for the first session began with seeking additional insights from Conference members in response to the Knowledge-Based Decision-Making (KBDM) questions in an initial brainstorming session. From these insights, the task force refined and revealed several key components related to a Hybrid Conference.

The second session included prioritization of potential solutions. Using an abundance of creative minds, we expanded our vision; we came up with ideas of how a Hybrid Conference might look and how barriers could be overcome for existing members who struggle with overwhelming time commitments and the next generation of members, some of whom are working and may have less available vacation time to commit to attend Conference.

The final session focused on identification of the benefits and potential risks of the solutions. We evaluated the ideas that were generated. It is now up to the Board to determine which next steps—if any—will be taken. The task force and the entire Board appreciated the enthusiastic participation by so many in this Mega Issue discussion of a Hybrid Conference.

Bylaws Revisions Revisions to the wording of the US Bylaws and the Canadian By-Laws were presented. The revisions represent 17 months of work and five reviews with the Board.

These included many conversations that will undoubtedly be revisited again in the future, as they have been in the past, by the Board of Trustees in their legal role.

The majority of the changes to the Bylaws fell into four categories:

- **Updates to reflect current standards and laws.** After the Board completed their review in October, our attorney was asked to evaluate the Bylaws to ensure they met current standards and adhered to laws governing AFG, Inc., and to review the Board’s proposed changes to ensure they aligned with current laws. Many of the tracked changes you see in your document reflect the renaming of the Bylaws from a hyphenated By-Law to the current unhyphenated standard. Canadian standards still require use of the hyphenated spelling of “By-Laws.”
- **Updates to simplify language.** Perhaps unexpectedly, the attorney proposed several simplifications. The first example occurs under Article 1 – Names, where several sentences were eliminated.
- **Clarification of language.** The task force sought to remove language that might be confusing when considered in the context of our Legacies. The first example occurs in Article 1 – Names, paragraph 1, where the word “organized” was replaced with “formed.”
- **Clarification of practice.** The task force sought to clarify descriptions to reflect current practices. An example of this clarification occurs in the definition of “ex-officio” under Article VII – Duties of Officers.

In addition to these changes, there are a few that are wholly new. We also discovered through research that a few were updates to previous practices. A copy of the full revisions will be posted in our *2019 World Service Conference Summary*.

WSO Volunteers Traditional Approval

Five Regions began the process of nominating Regional Trustees. The Conference gave traditional approval for and in its legal capacity elected, during the Annual Meeting of the Board of Trustees, the following trusted servants: Regional Trustees (Our regional delegate - Marianne B – US North East, Jean L US North Central), Trustees at Large (Lynette K, Rosie M), the Executive Committee (Debbie G, Joan S and Karen WP, Chair – Debbie G), the Executive Committee for Real Property Management (Katherine R, Dennis G, Chair – Sue C) the Board Officers 2019-2020 (Gail G -Chairperson, Rosie M – Vice Chairperson, Cindy K – Treasurer)

WSC Summary For a detailed report of the 2019 World Service Conference, please look for the free online *Conference Summary*, which is scheduled for posting July 15. A printed version will be made available for purchase in mid-August.

The complete major revisions to the "Handbook" section of the *Service Manual*, starting with the 2017 WSC approved "Handbook" changes, and to incorporate the changes approved by the 2019 World Service Conference within the "Concepts," "Handbook," and "Policy Digest" sections, the **trilingual Version Two (2) Service Manual online will be delivered on November 25th**. The timeline reflects the efforts of Staff to evolve our processes to support

delivery of all three languages simultaneously in the future. We will follow-up with you regarding the date of the trilingual printed versions in June.

World Service Conference Site Announcement (2020)

The dates selected for the 2020 World Service Conference are Monday, April 20 through Friday, April 24, 2020. Delegates are scheduled to arrive on Sunday, April 19 and depart on Saturday, April 25. The Conference will be held at the Sheraton Virginia Beach Oceanfront Hotel, 3501 Atlantic Ave., Virginia Beach, VA 23451.

Thoughts

I know this report is long and very wordy. I want you to have all the information I could gather about what's going on in AI-Anon today. Most of the information contained is on the WSO web site and available to members world wide.

The atmosphere at the World Service Conference is amazing. Every item on the agenda is approached with the spiritual principals of the program found in our Legacies in the forefront. The principles of Unity, Respect, Honesty, Participation, Good Will, Harmony, Mutual Trust,, Service, Responsibility, Transparency, Self Supporting, Tolerance, Universality and Equality to name some.

As in my home group, I found that many voices shed enlightenment.

It seems everyone is worried about the Dim and Dark districts and groups. One delegate, Cindy FL North reminded us that a 33% Hitting average gets you into the Hall of Fame in Baseball Why do we focus on the numbers less than 100% of non participating groups/districts and instead find joy in the percentage that participates?

Truly, **“Action Is Attraction – There Is No Growth in the Comfort Zone.**

Thank you for letting me serve NY North.
Peace, Molly C.