

New York North AFG Report

Committee Name:

Date of Report: 5/20/23

Report Prepared By: Kathi D.

Position: NYN Delegate

Report Prepared For: Spring Assembly

[Annual Report](#)

[Board of Trustees](#)

[World Service Office \(WSO\)](#)

[Financial Update](#)

[International Coordination Committee \(ICC\)](#)

[Literature Update](#)

[Copyright and Trademark](#)

[Transforming Electronic Groups](#)

[Alateen Electronic Group Feasibility](#)

[Practicing the Seventh Tradition](#)

[Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Workshop](#)

[WSO Visit and Personal Reflection](#)

[Area Highlights](#)

[Area Archives](#)

[Area 7th Tradition WSC Contribution Procedures](#)

[ASBR Guidelines and revitalization of Alateen](#)

[2023 World Service Conference \(WSC\) Motions](#)

Annual Report

The 2022 Annual Report will be published online by the end of June after translation is completed. There are now over 9000 electronic groups. For the first time ever there will be a Spanish Longtime Member panel at the 2023 AI-Anon International Convention, which will be streamed through the app during the Trailblazer's Breakfast. The word God was accidentally italicized in the 2022-2025 AI-Anon/Alateen Service Manual on page 13 in Step Three and Eleven. Upon notification, the error was corrected within 30 minutes in the online version.

Board of Trustees

Mission Statement: AI-Anon Family Groups Headquarters, Inc. is a spiritually based organization that helps the families and friends of alcoholics connect and support each other through barrier-free meetings, information, and shared experiences.

Vision Statement: Families and friends of alcoholics find hope and encouragement to live joyful, serene lives.

The Five Goal Statements:

1. Members: AFG, Inc. connects and supports the friends and families of alcoholics.
2. Recovery and Service Tools: AFG, Inc. develops and publishes materials to share the collective experience of the families and friends of alcoholics.
3. Awareness: AFG, Inc. builds public and professional awareness of the AI-Anon program.
4. Financial Sustainability: AFG, Inc. encourages membership and organizational self-support by aligning resource allocation with its core purpose and strategic priorities.
5. Global Engagement: AFG, Inc. invests in each new generation of trusted servants to preserve our legacy and improve our structure and operation to meet the needs of the global landscape.

Each Goal is supported by Strategic Objectives, or “the what”— what needs to be done to accomplish the Goals. Each Strategic Objective is supported by Strategies, or “the how”—how to accomplish the Strategic Objective.

The following projects support Goal 1- the 2023 AI-Anon International Convention, continue the work on Transforming Electronic Groups, develop an Alateen Electronic Group Feasibility plan, and perform annual updates to the AFG Records database and group processes. Goal 2 related projects are to refine the ebook strategy to reflect international needs, update the *AI-Anon Family Groups* mobile app, and collaborate to improve Conference Approved Literature (CAL) globally. Goal 3 related projects are developing the Community Relations team, updating the Public Outreach Toolkit, and the second year of the Longitudinal Study. Goal 4 projects are improvements to the online literature store and the yearly audit. Goal 5 related projects: planning for the 2024 World Service Conference (WSC), the 2024 IAGSM (International AI-Anon General Service Meeting), Zonal meetings, and the Road Trip!.

World Service Office (WSO)

Over the past year there have been many staff changes. Sadly, Chris Baker died earlier this year after a brief illness. He was an instrumental member of event planning. His absence was felt by all at the World Service Conference. Other staff members and volunteers jumped in to help fill the void left by his passing. As in any organization, some staff have left to pursue other endeavors. There were several departmental reorganizations to increase efficiency and with this a number of promotions and job reassignments to provide staff with growth opportunities.

Salaries are fully-supported through members' contributions and literature sales and are in alignment with other non-profit organizations of the same size. At this time, the office employs 46 staff with plans to fill the current three vacancies.

Notable Staff Changes:

- Retired: Joe T., WSO Archivist
- Hired: Tanya J., Associate Director - International
- Promotion: Jennifer U., new WSO Archivist
- Reorganization: Scot P., Director - Communications and Community Awareness Department

The **Finance & Operations** consists of Accounting, Human Resources, Customer Service, Shipping, Publications, Translation, and Building Operations. Niketa W. oversees the department. Some of their milestones for the past year are the new forewords for *The Dilemma of the Alcoholic Marriage* (B-4) and *One Day at a Time in Al-Anon* (B-6) were translated and published. The 2022 Strategic Plan was translated and posted on the website in Spanish and French. They are currently reviewing a new phone system that will allow for the office to remain open remotely during inclement weather. Are preparing for the 2023 International Convention and designing/printing the new bookplate that will accompany the new daily reader, *A Little Time for Myself* (B-34), when purchased at the Convention. All with all of the normal daily operational duties.

Sarah S. is the Director of **Programs**. This department is to envision, implement, evaluate, and, when needed, eliminate WSO programs to best serve the needs of the Al-Anon Family Groups fellowship and fulfill the Al-Anon Family Groups Headquarters, Inc. Strategic Plan. Additional responsibilities are to support members within the WSC Structure and trusted servants globally and to cultivate relationships with Alcoholics Anonymous.

The Director of **Communications & Community Awareness**, Scot P., manages the Digital Communications and Community Relations teams. The *Al-Anon Family Groups Mobile App* is undergoing a code refresh. This refresh will not add any new features or change the way it looks. The purpose is to improve the app's performance. Currently, there are over 145,000 registered members and 118 Al-Anon meetings. They are also working on increasing Al-Anon's online presence through both audio and video PSAs and static banners on various digital and streaming sites. Al-Anon.org had its millionth session on February 27, 2023, reaching this milestone eleven days earlier than in 2022 due to a very strong January, including a spike in traffic from a celebrity interview mentioning Al-Anon Family Groups.

Heather S., Associate Director of **Community Relations** reported the following that their main focus has been building public awareness of the Al-Anon program to both professionals and the community. 2023 International Convention (IC) offers the opportunity to expose our program to professionals. During the IC, a variety of educators, recovery industry specialists, and community service workers will be invited to participate in one-on-one camera interviews. These interviews will be published on the Al-Anon website and social media pages. Additionally, interviews will be conducted with members.

Group Services Associate Director is Sue P. Some of the tasks are the Inmate Correspondence Service, Alateen, including the recertification process, the Alateen Electronic Group Feasibility study, meetings with Alateen Coordinators, AAPPs, and AMIAS supporting Alateen meetings on the *Al-Anon Family Groups Mobile App*, support AIS/LDCs, Electronic Groups, review Alateen Safety and Behavioral Requirements, and support Spanish-speaking members. Two team highlights from the past year are the successful completion of the WSO Task Force to support the Global Electronic Area and working with the International Team to help with the structuring of meetings and service structures globally. Group Services goal is to treat every interaction, member or not, with the warmth and understanding that characterizes the Al-Anon program.

Suzanne M., Associate Director of **Conference** reported that during the past year they worked to plan and implement the World Service Conference and the 2023 International Convention, and the full cyclical update process of the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual (P-24/27)*. Tom C., Associate Director of **Literature** reported that his team has been working on the new daily reader, *A Little Time for Myself (B-34)*, which will debut in June at the International Convention in English, French, and Spanish. The text for the *Just for Tonight* Alateen bookmark was approved and is currently undergoing translation and design. Its planned release is later this year. The Literature Committee reviewed the first draft of a booklet of “gems” from *The Dilemma of the Alcoholic Marriage (B-4)*. This booklet was given conceptual approval by the 2021 Conference. The second draft is currently in development.

The newest WSO staff member is Tanya J., Associate Director of **International**. Tanya's first day was March 27th. To date, the team has met with trusted servants from 31 international structures - including Mongolia, Iran and Thailand for the first time. They are exploring creating a fourth Zonal Meeting for the Oceania region.

Financial Update

The 2022 Financial Audit was given a clean opinion, which is the highest opinion given. The review looked at accounting records, timecards, receipts, bank accounts, and tested internal controls. Revenue sources consist of literature sales (38%), contributions (58%). The remaining 4% comes from magazine sales, investment income, and premium subscriptions to the AI-Anon Mobile App. WSO again thanks members for their continued monetary support. Last year's contributions were the highest ever! Again, last year contributions were higher than budgeted. Literature sales for 2023 are expected to be much higher than last year's due to the new daily reader. WSO invests only in conservative, mature, and healthy equities and bonds. Although last year incurred significant losses, \$1,647,728, gains still outpace the losses.

Total revenue for 2022 was \$4,211,517. Contributions totaled \$3,337,918, which was significantly higher due to last year's special appeal. Literature Sales totaled \$2,099,846, which was 10% higher than for 2021. Expenses for 2022 totaled \$5,589,860 - \$3,333,424 Program Services, \$904,405 Literature distribution services, \$1,352,031 General administrative services. The net change in assets was a loss of \$1,378,343. It is important to understand that this is an accounting loss due to the decrease in the value of the Reserve Fund (investments).

Revenue	2022	2021	\$ Change	% Change
Gross profit from literature sales	\$ 2,099,846	\$ 1,906,751	193,095	10%
Contributions	3,337,918	2,623,242	714,676	27%
Magazine sales	247,368	238,040	9,328	4%
Subscription income	48,174	33,328	14,846	45%
Noncash contributions	125,939	136,555	(10,616)	-8%
Investment income	(1,647,728)	2,062,376	(3,710,104)	-180%
	<u>\$ 4,211,517</u>	<u>\$ 7,000,292</u>	<u>(2,788,775)</u>	<u>-40%</u>
Expenses				
Program Services	\$ 3,333,424	\$ 2,752,049	581,375	21%
Literature distribution services	904,405	922,257	(17,852)	-2%
General administrative services	1,352,031	1,540,509	(188,478)	-12%
	<u>\$ 5,589,860</u>	<u>\$ 5,214,815</u>	<u>375,045</u>	<u>7%</u>
Change in net assets	\$ (1,378,343)	\$ 1,785,477	407,134	23%

The complete 2022 Audit Report is available for your review.

The WSO preliminary operating budget estimates total revenue at \$5,860,480 and total expenses at \$5,860,480. Expenses breakdown as follows: total labor costs \$4,060,530 and operating expenses \$1,799,950. The budget is reviewed monthly at the Finance Committee meeting. WSO is using technology to reduce the cost of travel by holding some meetings virtually. Currently, there is an on-going discussion concerning the viability of holding the World Service Conference triennial in the NY/Connecticut area due to increased hotel and conference costs, additional travel cost for WSO staff, and the cost incurred to ship conference material to the hotel.

In 2022, 61% of groups contributed to the World Service Office with the average group contribution of \$208.33. Historically, this represents an increase due to the special appeal. Therefore it is expected that the number of group contributions will be lower in 2023. For the year 2022, 62% of groups within New York North contributed to WSO with an average total

group contribution of \$153.26. The cost per group in 2022 was \$283.33 and for 2023 it's \$321.25.

The full budget is listed below:

Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc.
2023 Operating Budget

	2023 Preliminary Budget	2022 Revised Budget	2022 Audited Actual
Revenue			
Literature Sales	3504970	2729380	2725035
Less cost of goods sold	(736040)	(573170)	(625189)
Contributions	2532900	2917980	3337919
Magazine Sales	235000	235000	247368
Subscription Income	48000	46000	48174
Investment Income	50000	40000	(89844)
Fund Transfers	225600	225600	-
Other - currency adjustment			(83899)
Total cash revenue	\$5,860,430	\$5,620,790	\$5,559,564

Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc.
2023 Operating Budget

	2023 Preliminary Budget	2022 Revised Budget	2022 Audited Actual
Operating Expenses			
Building Occupancy	285,690	260,030	258,624
Packing & Shipping (Net)	(45,000)	(5,000)	(57,680)
Postage	173,430	204,890	158,620
Telephone (Phone & Internet)	53,800	53,100	53,212
Stationery & Office Supplies	39,620	43,500	40,611
Technology	322,630	309,450	288,648
HR/Training/Consulting	53,060	60,310	48,859
Repairs & Maintenance	19,080	17,070	14,171
Travel & Meetings	168,900	189,310	155,993
Direct Conference Costs (Net)	128,630	112,850	113,002
Professional fees	93,000	86,250	85,387
Printing	132,420	135,260	124,003
Canadian Office	2,030	2,030	1,897
General services meeting	-	71,480	47,395
PSA Campaign	91,980	110,000	87,810
Bank and Credit Card fees	111,000	111,000	108,610
Miscellaneous	14,630	18,280	16,934
Post-retirement Health Benefits	65,000	58,000	19,427
Depreciation (Exc. Bldg.)	90,000	85,000	85,712
Total cash expenses	\$5,860,430	\$5,953,520	\$5,604,046

International Coordination Committee (ICC)

The ICC is an advisory committee to the Board of Trustees. It coordinates the Biennial IAGSM (International AI-Anon General Service Meeting). The IAGSM is not a decision making body. Its purpose is to provide Delegates with WSO presentations, workshops, and support. The 2022 IAGSM theme was "Connecting Hearts and Minds around the World". WSO staff who attended the IAGSM used this opportunity to visit several countries.

The GSO located in Oslo, Norway had disbanded after experiencing finance and service difficulties. During the visit WSO assisted with the process of forming an AI-Anon Information Service (AIS). The WSO team met in Riga, Latvia for a full day where English, Russian, and Latvian were spoken. Approximately thirty members attended where they learned the requirements needed to form an AIS and Alateen meetings. They also started the process to request permission to translate CAL to Latvian. While meeting with members in Vilnius, Lithuania, WSO encouraged them to form an AIS.

Next the team traveled to Amsterdam in The Netherlands, which has been experiencing challenges for several years. They met with thirteen members in-person and fourteen online during which they discussed Service and Sponsorship. The idea of Country Sponsorship was introduced - one country supporting another country. At the AIS in Ankara, Turkey the meeting focused on Tradition Six. At Sofia, Bulgaria's AIS they met with all of the country's group representatives. Alcoholics Anonymous and a local therapist were in attendance at the business meeting, which focused on using their website for communication and connection. There are currently 34 groups in Hungary. WSO met with many members in Budapest during which many reported that they found AI-Anon through a therapist or alcohol rehabilitation centers.

Switzerland has two fully-formed GSOs - German and French. The German GSO has the rights to translate CAL to German. Translation rights are limited to one language per country. WSO met with both GSO in Zurich. The GSO located in Vercie, France is run totally by volunteers. They have 132 groups including 5 English-speaking, 1 Polish-speaking, and 2 Spanish-speaking.

Literature Update

The conference voted to have the WSO create a new piece of Conference Approved Literature (CAL) on Sponsorship - both personal and service. This piece of literature will be more than a pamphlet. It will contain personal sharings from AI-Anon and Alateen members. It will take many years to complete this project. For reference the new daily reader, *A Little Time for Myself* (B-34), took ten years from conceptual approval to completion.

Copyright and Trademark

Several years ago, WSO created a part-time Legal Assistant position to handle the increasing number of copyright and trademark violations as well as members' requests for information. This presentation was created to help members better understand what does and doesn't violate AI-Anon's copyrights and trademarks.

Copyright is "the exclusive legal right, given to an originator or an assignee, to print, publish, perform, film, or record literary, artistic, or musical material, and to authorize others to do the

same.” This statement means that AI-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. is the only organization that has the legal right to print and publish Conference Approved Literature and to give permission to others to do the same. Having copyrighted literature is important as it is the only means of protecting the collective wisdom of our fellowship. The only entity that can legally permit others to reproduce AI-Anon Conference Approved Literature (CAL) is the WSO.

Trademarks are names, symbols, and logos that have been registered with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (and global equivalents). Trademark names are AI-Anon and Alateen and the blue triangle with an inner circle, red triangle with an inner circle, and the black triangle with the letters AFG in the inner circle. Using the AI-Anon or Alateen names and the AI-Anon symbols/logos without permission violates copyright law.

Now that we have the legalese stuff out of the way, why is this important to all AI-Anon members?

- If a trademarked AI-Anon name or logo is used by those associated with outside interests, such as events not linked to the service structure, this use can violate **Tradition Ten** by implying outside affiliation and, potentially, inadvertently drawing AI-Anon into public controversy.
- When members or groups create social media content that includes the AI-Anon name or symbols, they can give the appearance of acting on behalf of AI-Anon as a whole. This violates **Tradition Four**, affecting AI-Anon as a whole by connecting our program to an individual or organization and, in the case of social media, our principle of anonymity described in Tradition Twelve if an individual’s membership is revealed.
- Violations of copyright **costs AI-Anon resources**, both human and financial, as the WSO and other service structures around the world must work to protect our copyright. Whenever a violation of copyright comes to the attention of the Board of Trustees, it is the responsibility of the Board, through its duly appointed representative, to notify the violator. This is necessary in order to avoid invalidation of the copyright. This effort diverts the WSO Staff and trusted servants from our primary purpose.
- The consistency of the AI-Anon message and program can be harmed when AI-Anon’s copyrighted materials are reproduced incorrectly, which happens frequently, albeit unintentionally, if members copy and paste from or retype copyrighted CAL incorrectly.
- The consistency of the AI-Anon message and **program can be harmed** when AI-Anon’s copyrighted materials are reproduced incorrectly, which happens frequently, albeit unintentionally, if members copy and paste from or retype copyrighted CAL incorrectly.
- On a larger scale, AI-Anon can be **harmed financially by unauthorized third-party entities** reproducing and selling CAL without permission.

Common violation is the use of AI-Anon or Alateen logos or the AI-Anon or Alateen name on social media pages and websites when announcing a service or fellowship recovery event. Less frequent, but still relatively common, is the alteration or modification of the AI-Anon or Alateen logo in any way. Typically, we see this when conventions or other entities not linked to the service arm create their own version of the AI-Anon logo, often including a design or words in the logo to represent their unique event.

Registered AI-Anon groups, Districts, AI-Anon Information Services (AIS), Intergroups, and Areas have been given permission to use AI-Anon’s copyrighted materials and trademarks as follows:

- Use the AI-Anon or Alateen logo on event flyers.
- Use the AI-Anon or Alateen logo or the AI-Anon or Alateen name on social media pages, websites, and guidelines.
- Download, print, photocopy and publish AI-Anon Guidelines.

WSO also gives all registered Service Arms explicit permission to use trademarked and copyrighted materials in the following situations:

- To reprint and publish excerpts of Conference Approved Literature that have been marked as shareable - as long as the reprint statement is included.
- To reproduce CAL to be used during a meeting but it can not leave the meeting the space.

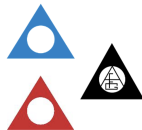
TRADEMARKS

- ▶ AI-Anon “marks” registered with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (and global equivalents)

- ▶ Names:

- ▶ AL-ANON
- ▶ ALATEEN

- ▶ Symbols and Logos



The following WSO resources provide guidance in determining what is a copyright or trademark violation:

- The 2022-2025 AI-Anon/Alateen Service Manual (P-24/27) v2 includes, as part of the “Digest of AI-Anon and Alateen Policies,” information on:
 - Copyrights (page 116)
 - Logos/Symbols (page 117)
 - Authorization to Publish and Reprint (page 117)
 - Social Media (pages 127-128)
- The pamphlet Why Conference Approved Literature? (P-35) includes a “Respecting Copyrights” section on page five.
- Page two of the AI-Anon Guideline AI-Anon Service Arm Websites (G-40) contains a list under the heading “Some content is not suitable for posting on service arm websites,” which outlines specific copyright violations.

What should you do if you come across a questionable use of AI-Anon property? The WSO has hired a paralegal to help track down violators. If you see something that you feel should be reported, I can give you contact information at the WSO so they can take a look at it. The biggest caveat, though, is to remind members NOT to purchase the eBook version of One Day at a Time. This is the book that has been pirated and made available for sale on a platform not related to AI-Anon.

Transforming Electronic Groups

The Global Electronic Area (GEA) has held two Assemblies, set up banking practices, and is fully self-supporting. To date, 31 Areas have voted to accept Electronic Groups within their service structure. Some have created an online overlay district while others assign the group's district based on the district of the person who originally started the group. Currently, there are over 9000 Electronic Groups registered in the GEA. The process and forms were created to allow Groups to transfer between the GEA and a geographic Area.

WSO is continuing the work needed to update the group records database to support both physical and electronic meetings. Future plans include adding electronic meetings in a geographic Area to the website meeting search function.

Alateen Electronic Group Feasibility

WSO continues to explore the feasibility of Alateen Electronic Groups. Currently, the only Alateen groups that are allowed to meet electronically have a registered physical location. The group can be either temporarily holding electronic meetings or conducting meetings using a hybrid-format.

There are several legal implications that need to be addressed. The United States (US) does not have a federal safety requirement for minors meeting in person. Requirements vary between states. The US minimum age limit for businesses engaging with minors through electronic media is currently 13. However, there is a push to increase the age to 16. Internationally, minor requirements are more stringent than the most stringent US state's requirements. Working within these constraints WSO has developed a conceptual process for Electronic Alateen groups.

Electronic Alateen groups must be attached to a geographic Area. This requires each Area to create Global Electronic Alateen Safety Behavioral Requirements (G-EASBR). The decision to allow Electronic Alateen groups is at the sole discretion of each Area. This means that Area groups have both voice and vote concerning this matter.

The G-EASBR process minimums certified AI-Anon Member Involved in Alateen Service - Electronic (AMIAS-E) must be mandated reporters. They must pass an extensive background check and have never been convicted of a felony or charged with child abuse or inappropriate sexual behavior. An AMIAS-E must first be a certified AMIAS. There must be a minimum of two AMIAS-E in attendance at each meeting.

Alateen participation minimum requirements are as follows: teen pre-interview conducted by at least one AMIAS-E, show proof of age, photo ID, have an email address, and provide emergency contact information. Cameras must be kept on during meetings and the Alateen must remain visible at all times.

Each Alateen group must have an email address. Meetings can be listed on Service Arms (Area, AIS, District) website but can not include the meeting's link. Information is limited to Group name, meeting day, time, and the group email address. A process needs to be developed to distribute the meeting's link to only certified Alateen participants. Areas must agree to update

requirements immediately when directed to do so by WSO. This is necessary as legislation changes. It is important to remember that Al-Anon and Alateen are not above the law.

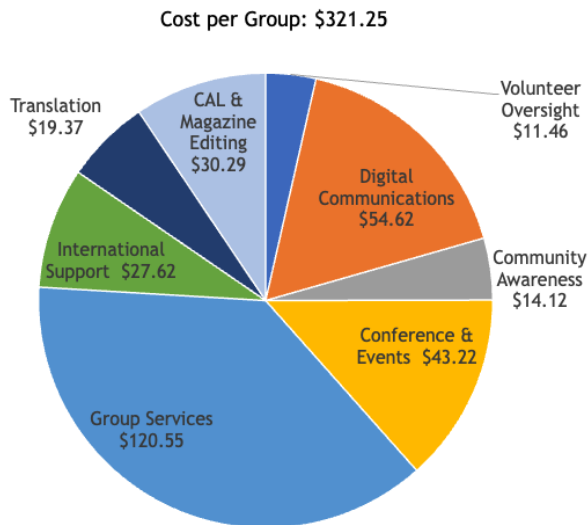
The conference gave consensus for WSO to continue with its work on creating the conceptual framework necessary to allow for Electronic Alateen groups. At this time Areas are not tasked with implementing the conceptual framework outlined above as it is still under development.

Practicing the Seventh Tradition

Cindy M, Treasurer, delivered a presentation on practicing the Seventh Tradition - Every group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions. Her presentation started with a quote from Lois, "It's all spiritual". "Let it begin with me" by making individual contributions. Contributions can be made directly through the Al-Anon.org website, by mail, or through automatic withdrawals.

She also addressed some myths concerning how groups should contribute. Give close to home the most. Use the formula that has been passed on from treasurer to treasurer. Send the most to the service arm that needs it the most. If a service arm has a deficit budget, send them the most. She suggested a better way is to distribute excess funds based on the cost/group of each service arm. This is done by dividing the current annual budget by the number of groups.

WSO calculated that it cost \$321.25 to support a group.



Service Arm	2023 Budget	Number of Active Groups	Cost per Group	
WSO			\$321	54%
NYN	\$20,000	236	\$ 85	14%
AIS	\$ 5,000	45	\$110	18%
District	\$ 500	6	\$ 84	14%
Total costs			\$600	100%

Next we need to figure the percentage to contribute to each service arm. The first step is adding up the cost per group for each service arm, which is \$600. To determine the percentage for each service arm, divide the individual cost/group by the total cost of \$600. When distributing excess funds the computed percentages should be used to determine the amount given.

To take this one step further, here is a sample budget for my home group.

Rent	\$200	
Literature	\$100	
GR- Fall Assembly	\$250	
Direct group expenses		\$550
WSO	\$321	
NYN	\$ 85	
AIS	\$110	
District	\$ 84	
Service arm expenses		\$600
Total annual expenses		\$1150

My Home group currently has 7 active members. Which means that to be a fully self-supporting member my annual contribution needs to be \$164 or \$3.15 per week.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Workshop

Last year I was a member of the WSO Diversity Thought Force. At the 2022 WSC, the thought force presented a skit. After the presentation, several Delegates directly asked the Board of Trustees and the WSO Executive Director, Vali F. what specific action was planned to address this topic. The answer was to continue talking about it. This reply was met with skepticism as this topic has been talked about for over a decade with little perceivable change.

At the July 2022 Board of Trustees (BOT) meeting, several members discussed reading a book by author and consultant Deborah Irving. At each BOT meeting the conversation around diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) continued. Eventually, the Board brought in Deborah Irving to deliver a DEI workshop. The Board then decided to deliver the same workshop during the 2023 WSC.

The workshop produced strong emotion in all attendees. After the workshop presentation, we were divided into small groups to discuss how we felt. The range of emotions and thoughts were diverse. A few members of color found the presentation offensive given that the presenter was a white, middle-aged woman. One senior white Delegate was offended as she felt that in AI-Anon we are all the same. Their feelings were acknowledged.

This is a sensitive topic for all. We live in a society where whiteness is normalized. Our history and what we are taught is a reflection of this. Therefore, it is understandable that Al-Anon, which was founded by mostly white women, is also a reflection of a society where whiteness is normalized. For those who are the members of the dominant culture it can be difficult to see our own biases and their effects on others. FYI: we don't have to be racist to hold a bias. Biases are part of human nature.

I will share with you a personal experience. Years ago, I was visiting a new city. I really needed an Al-Anon meeting so I chose the closest one. The meeting had a diverse membership - including more men than women. As I listened to the night's sharing, a sinking feeling came over me as it became evident that this was a LBGTQ meeting. I felt like an interloper. When it came my time to share, I openly admitted feeling like I didn't belong. The members didn't kick me out. Instead they continued to share as before. I learned several things that night. Of which the most important was that we share the same disease, however, we don't all share the same societal acceptance.

So, what can we do? First of all, talk about "It". Conversation is the way humans have always thought together. Seek multiple perspectives. Cultivate racial curiosity by learning about historical events from the non-dominant culture's point of view. Learning only happens outside of our comfort zone.

WSO Visit and Personal Reflection

When we arrived at the WSO office, all of the staff, along with the Trustees, were standing outside to greet us. It was an emotional experience and this person who hates to cry just may have shed a tear or two. We were greeted with warm words and hugs. We were divided up into groups and the building was divided into zones. As we walked through each zone we had the opportunity to talk with staff members. We all thanked them for all of the work they do for Al-Anon. We spent time in the climate control archives room, viewed the new media room where podcasts and videos are created, saw the literature distribution area where every piece of Al-Anon literature since June 1, 1996 has passed through, and even had a snack in the staff break room. Some of us, myself included, went outside to enjoy the landscaping and beautiful warm day.

Each Delegate is given the opportunity to deliver a 3-minute speech in their third year during the World Service Conference. After listening to the first few speeches I was overcome with a sense of inadequacy. I wrote my speech without reading previous delegates' speeches, which are printed in the conference summary. Oh how I wished I had read them! Changing my speech was not an option. We must read exactly what was previously submitted. I expressed my fear with a few trusted Al-Anon friends and was assured that there was nothing 'wrong' with my speech. I am happy to report that it did entice laughter, which is what I hoped. My speech is printed below:

Love, Laugh, and Grow Together...wow! There was very little love and nearly no laughter in my life before coming to Al-Anon.

The disease of alcoholism casts a long shadow. For me, this shadow spans across many generations. Memories of laughter during my childhood mostly occurred outside of my home. Inside the home, the memories of laughter are from early childhood - before the family disease of alcoholism was firmly rooted. In my late teens, I rediscovered love and laughter with a man, who I would eventually marry. The laughter was

short-lived but my desire to love him into the man I knew that he could be only grew. I'm pretty sure that this year's conference theme is not based on the type of love and growth I was undertaking.

I attended my first Al-Anon meeting two months shy of my thirtieth birthday. It took several more months before crawling back to another meeting - completely defeated. I didn't come to fix the alcoholic and didn't stay because of the love and laughter I felt in the room. I stayed to find out how to leave him.

Early in my recovery, I reconnected with a childhood acquaintance. Sherry was full of love and laughter. I wanted what she had so I took my first really big Al-Anon step by asking her to be my sponsor. She agreed and quickly introduced me to service work. She nudged me into accepting a GR position. I laughed more at my first Spring Assembly than I had in years. She encouraged me to be the Alateen co-chair for the Spring Assembly our District was co-hosting. When I balked she told me that a co-chair was like the first-runner up in a beauty pageant - you only have to do something if the winner is unable to fulfill their duties. Well, the chair reunited with her husband and the military transferred him to Hawaii and this first-runner up became the chair. This has been a recurring theme through-out my service journey!

I quickly learned that Al-Anon will never fire you from a service position. Instead, you will be surrounded with love, guidance and even laughter, giving you the courage needed to grow in your position. Today I have a much different idea of what it means to Love, Laugh, and Grow Together than I did all those years ago.

It is an honor and privilege to serve Al-Anon.

Area Highlights

This is a Delegate only session, which occurs prior to the official start of the Conference. Each Delegate provides a summary of their Area's successes and challenges over the past year. This year instead of each of us reading our submissions, the Delegates in charge of the session pulled common threads for us to discuss further in detail. The three topics we were able to cover focused on Area Archives, Area Seventh Tradition for WSO contributions, and Area Alateen Safety Behavioral Requirements (ASBR). Each topic contained several questions for us to discuss.

Area Archives

Question one was "If your Archives service position is filled, does it include an ongoing workforce or is it accomplished by a different person each panel?". One Area has an appointed archivist who is responsible for maintaining the Area's artifacts. The Area paid for the archivist to attend professional training. They also have an elected position, which works directly with the archivist, reports to the AWSC and Assembly, and creates an archive presentation for each Assembly. Another Area has created an ongoing workgroup to help maintain their archive and to assist with digitizing and storing. Most Areas reported that they were working on digitizing their archives.

The other question was "Does your area have a policy on how your archives are collected, stored, and cataloged?". Several Areas have their archives stored in a climate controlled storage unit at the Area's expense. One Area reported that they created a digital motion log to quickly find past Area decisions.

Area 7th Tradition WSC Contribution Procedures

The first question posed was "What policy or procedure does your Area have to address donations to the District/Area/ WSO?". The responses included creating a realistic budget, which included group contributions, determined what an ample reserve meant, then donated the excess funds to the WSO. Some Areas determined their ample reserve to be 67% of their annual budget. One Area created a special projects fund with a portion of the excess monies to be donated. They created a process for Area members to apply for funding. Fund applications can be submitted by Area Coordinators, Districts, or Groups.

The second question discussed was "How has your Area been successful in having funds to support the 7th Tradition?". Responses included sending out special appeal letters or campaigns and assisting all service levels with creating a cost per group pie chart.

ASBR Guidelines and revitalization of Alateen

Last year several Areas lost their ability to hold Alateen meetings due to not completing the annual Alateen verification process on time. This meant that they needed to start the process over again. Many were able to complete this process and receive WSO approval to again hold Alateen meetings.

The two questions presented were "While updating the ASBR Guidelines, what suggestions for success/lessons learned are there for Areas still in the process?" and "What has been most

instrumental in the success of building back Alateen meetings in your Area?”. Areas provided a lot of useful information concerning both questions. Lessons learned were to break the tasks down to bite-sized chunks, work with WSO to understand and resolve any issues, and to review guidelines annually to ensure they are up-to-date and make any necessary changes. As for rebuilding Alateen within the Area to hold monthly AMIAS (AI-Anon Member Involved in Alateen Service) and sponsor meetings. It was also suggested to hold ‘mock’ Alateen meetings with AMIAS’ to help those new to Alateen service.

2023 World Service Conference (WSC) Motions

- Motion 1: Seating of non-voting participants at the 2023 World Service Conference (motion carried)
 - This motion is needed at the start of each WSC to allow non-conference members to attend. The 2022-2025 AI-Anon/Alateen Service Manual, page 68, lists the composition of the Conference members.
 - **Seated this year with voice but no vote:** Niketa Williams, Director of Finance & Operations, Non-AI-Anon Member; Britt Marquardt, International Representative, Germany AI Anon Member.
 - **With voice limited to the Executive Committee for Real Property Management (ECRPM) business, but no vote:** Liz Dichiarà, Chairperson-ECRPM, AI-Anon Member.
 - **With voice limited to facilitating the DEI Workshop on Friday, April 21, 2023, but no vote:** Debby Irving, Conference Consultant, Non-AI-Anon Member.
 - **World Service Office Staff members be seated to observe at the 2023 World Service Conference as designated, with no voice and no vote:**
 - Friday, April 21, 2023- Camille Peters Associate Director, Customer Service & Shipping, Non-AI-Anon Member & Silvia Kaminski Programs Assistant, AI-Anon Member
 - Saturday, April 22, 2023- Rory Mulford, Senior Data Analyst, Non-AI-Anon member, Beth Rodriguez, Digital Communications Coordinator, Non-AI-Anon member, & Colette Norman, Translation Manager, Non-AI-Anon member
 - Sunday, April 23, 2023- Christa Abildgaard, Senior Groups Services Specialist, AI-Anon member, Tracey Smith, Group Services Specialist, AI-Anon member, Anne Peacock, International & Legal Specialist, AI-Anon member, Valérie Stump, AFG Records Manager, Non-AI-Anon member.
- Motion 2: To approve the 2022 Audited Financial Report. (motion carried)
- Motion 3: To approve the 2023 Finance Committee Report. (*motion carried*)
- Motion 4: To give conceptual approval to develop a comprehensive piece on sponsorship and service sponsorship using personal stories from AI-Anon members. (*motion carried*)
- Motion 5: To amend the text of the “Conventions and Other Events”; “Workshops” and “Conventions and Other Events”; “Announcing Events” portions of the “Policy Digest”. (*motion carried*)
- Motion 6: To approve the 2022 Annual Report (*motion carried*)