

**Delegate's Report on the 55<sup>th</sup> Annual World Service Conference:  
Living our Spiritual Principles; Expanding our Vision**

**Initial Motions (All Passed):**

Seating Motion  
Still Pictures Motion  
2/3 Majority for Substantial Unanimity Motion  
Use of Electronic Voting Motion.  
To Approve the 2014 Audited Financial Report  
To Approve the 2014 Annual Report

**Additional Motions (All Passed):**

I.) **To Request the Conference give permission for the conversion of *Lois' Story (AV-1)* and *Lois and the Pioneers (AV-24)* to DVD, copyright protected.** This motion was brought forward because the current format is on tape, which almost no one can play any more. Since they are copyright protected, WSO couldn't make the decision on its own to change the format to DVD. The process was approved with this motion and subsequent vote. We will be notified when the DVDs are available.

II.) **That the 2015 WSC give conceptual approval to develop a piece of CAL based on member sharings published in past issues of *The Forum* (See FEAC)**

In July 2013, the ***Forum* Editorial Advisory Committee (FEAC)** began to discuss the possibility of developing a book based on sharings published in past issues of *The Forum*.

After much discussion and careful consideration of the pros and cons, FEAC agreed to bring this proposal forward for Conference approval for two reasons:

A.) FEAC believes that *The Forum* regularly publishes important and thoughtful sharings that represent the diversity of the fellowship today. These sharings have insight into Al-Anon recovery that is not currently available elsewhere in Al-Anon's literature. The best of these sharings deserve to be read for years to come, but they are likely to be lost and forgotten in the continuous flow of new *Forum* stories published every month, unless they become Conference Approved Literature (CAL).

B.) FEAC also believes that this book may help a wider cross-section of the fellowship to become aware of the value of the magazine. *The Forum* plays a vital role in communicating the benefits of participating in Al-Anon service and promoting Al-Anon unity, but is read by only a relatively small proportion of the fellowship.

FEAC has followed protocol and prepared the five KDBM questions to present to the Executive Committee and, if approved, present to the World Service Conference for consideration.

This process follows the precedent set by four previously published volumes of *Forum*

*Favorites*, according to which FEAC would ask the Conference for conceptual approval to develop a book based on previously published *Forum* sharings. Also following previous precedent, FEAC proposes to develop the book and then submit it to the CAL process: namely, review by the Literature Committee, a Policy Review, and approval by the Executive Director.

**Background:**

*Forum Favorites* is now out of print. The third and fourth volumes in this series were approved by the Executive Committee and the World Service Conference in 1989. Volume 3 was printed in 1991. Volume 4 was introduced in 1993. The World Service Conference rejected a proposal for a fifth volume in 1994 because Volume 4 had been produced so recently.

**Criteria for inclusion:**

FEAC has agreed that the purpose of this book is to provide relevant, meaningful support to current members of Al-Anon who are actively working their programs. FEAC has determined that this book is not intended as an historical overview of what has been published in *The Forum* over the past two decades, neither is it intended to be a 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary retrospective of the magazine's best work. While stories included might be selected from any past issue of *The Forum*, each sharing must be deemed to have value to contemporary Al-Anon members—that is, members who are working their programs today. To that end, sharings will be excluded when they employ archaic language or are out of touch with the needs and diversity of the fellowship as it exists today.

FEAC's regular and designated responsibility is to determine whether a particular sharing is relevant and meaningful to Al-Anon members, namely that the sharing addresses topics of concern and that are of interest to the members of the fellowship today. FEAC members and *The Forum's* editorial staff exercise this editorial judgment in compiling every monthly issue of the magazine. These decisions are reached by consensus within FEAC. In most cases, three FEAC members and one staff member agree about the value and ranking of each story. In many cases, the reviewers independently agree in their assessment of a story. In some cases, consensus is reached after group discussion. The process of determining the content of the book would be more highly selective than that for the magazine, but it would be a similar process.

Selection for inclusion in the book would be guided by the same CAL criteria that are applied in the development of all Al-Anon books. These CAL criteria are also used on a regular basis by FEAC members and *Forum* editors in the development of each monthly issue of *The*

*Forum*. **These CAL criteria are:**

**Is it Al-Anon in content and feel?**

Is it responsive to identified needs within the fellowship?

Is it factually accurate?

Is it timely?

Is it understandable by a broad-based audience?

**“Al-Anon in content and feel” is key:**

Is it obvious that the writer has benefited in some way from the Al-Anon/

Alateen program?

Is it gentle and from the heart?

**A sharing is deemed *not* to be “Al-Anon in content and feel” when:**

It is directive.

It is teaching or preaching.

The focus is mainly on the alcoholic, instead of the hope of recovery.

When it focuses on any outside issue, including drugs or other addictions.

**In addition to CAL criteria, FEAC members and *Forum* editors also consider several other factors:**

- Geographic diversity—Are Canadian members represented? Is there some representation of members from other countries around the world?
- Gender diversity—Are there sharings from men as well as women?
- Diversity of recovery—From newcomers to long-timers, Al-Anon members have different levels of recovery. As in the monthly magazine, the book must include a range of recovery stories so that all members, regardless of the level of their personal recovery, will find something that is relevant to their personal program.
- Diversity of alcoholic relationships—Some members have an alcoholic spouse, some have alcoholic children, and some have alcoholic parents. As in the monthly magazine, the book must include a range of alcoholic relationships so that all members, regardless of their personal situation or recovery, will find something that is relevant to their personal program.
- Alateen must always be included.
- Members write or call the office to comment on stories published in the magazine.
- Stories that have received strongly positive feedback from members will be included in the book.

To be included in the book, sharings should be compelling, unique, and honest. They must create an emotional connection between the reader and the writer, and reflect the needs of a diverse Al-Anon fellowship as it exists today.

**Interesting notes concerning *The Forum* shared in the FEAC proposal:**

- The WSO occasionally receives requests for copies of previously published *Forum* sharings.
- While subscriptions have declined, the number of sharings received has not. The WSO and FEAC process approximately 1,000 to 1,200 sharings per year.
- Eighty percent of members do not read *The Forum* and may not be familiar with its contents.
- Newer members seem to have less interest in the magazine than longtime members.
- Members may not be interested in a historical perspective of *The Forum* but they may be interested in a collection of contemporary sharings that are reflective of our diverse fellowship.
- Members could have a greater opportunity to read/study/identify with selected sharings that are under-represented in current CAL.
- Subscriptions are declining – this could imply there is no interest in *Forum* articles and, therefore, no interest in reprints.
- Subscriptions are declining – this could reflect a problem with print media and not a lack

of interest in the subject matter.

Packaging previously published material in a new way exposes more members to basic principles of our fellowship.

**III.) AFG Connects Logo - JPEG**

**The World Service Conference requests that the WSO send out the AFG Connects announcements, as soon as technically possible, to any Al-Anon member who subscribes.** A new system of communications between members and WSO coming soon.

**IV.) Understanding Universal Recovery -**

The following Understanding Universal Recovery definition was affirmed by the Conference: *Family recovery is a process of healing and growth for family members affected by someone's drinking. This process helps these individuals make healthier life choices and develop relationships that are more positive and supportive.*

*(Karen's note: As has been previously discussed, this statement was developed so that professionals will understand exactly what AFG means when we speak of recovery. We are aware that there are people other than family members whose drinking has affected our lives, but this definition focuses on family recovery. Input for the statement came from Al-Anon members, board members, staff, etc., as well as from physicians and other professionals who participated in several surveys.)*

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**Additional Agenda Items:**

**V.) Amending the descriptive text on pages 196-198 in the 2014-2017**

**Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual, Al-Anon's Twelve Concepts of Service, Concepts 8 and 11:** At the January 2015 Board of Trustees meeting, the Board approved the clarifications to the descriptive text on **Concepts Eight and Eleven** in "Al-Anon's Twelve Concepts of Service." The text was updated to reflect the current World Service Office structure while preserving information that is helpful to Areas and international structures that continue to use the former structure. The proposed text was presented to Delegates for consideration and Delegates were asked to discuss the motion text in their Areas and send any questions or comments to the Board of Trustees by March 27, 2015. The Conference did approve the new text for Concept 8, but did not have time to complete Concept 11. Since the modifications will not be printed until the 2018 Service Manual, it was decided to table Concept 11 and continue at next year's Conference.

**VI.) Task Force - Create Ways to Raise Awareness of the Tools Available for**

**Alateen.** 5 Delegates, 1 Trustee, and 1 Staff member. Great skit based on TV's "Tool Time", using members as Tim, Al, from "Tool Time" and Bob from "This Old Spouse" with a couple of PowerPoint presentations thrown in. A second skit included two "Teens" checking out the chat room. Will be available on e-Communities soon.

**VII.) AFA Presentation - PowerPoint**

Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism, Al-Anon's annual public outreach magazine

What is AFA about? Hope - Understanding - Compassion  
History of AFA - in 2001 members distributed 13,000 copies  
In 2014 - guess how many copies? 347,000!

Thank you to everyone who has helped carry our message of hope to those who are still suffering!

What more can we do?

Encourage members to carry our message

Challenge each group to distribute at least a box of 25 copies

It's easy and fun! AFA can be placed anywhere that is accessible to the public

Please remember to go back and replenish your stock throughout the year

Why do we want to do more?

"...when I see a chair that stays empty throughout the entire meeting, I say a prayer for the person who needs but hasn't yet found Al-Anon." Jessica, MA

#### VIII.) **The *Area Highlights* Newsletter** - Power Point - Through the years

The 1960s - First Issue September 1965

The 1970s - A means for Delegates to communicate with each other; Spreading the Message [Please photocopy *Area Highlights* and share it with other members]

The 1990s - Added Spanish and French

The 2000s - *Area Highlights* newsletter posted on the Al-Anon website and there were 2,710 copies mailed

2011 - *Area Highlights* goes completely electronic

2014-2015 - Where do we go from here?

##### **Questions from WSO concerning *Area Highlights*:**

- How interested is my Area in using the *Area Highlights* newsletter for sharing its service experience, strength, and hope with other Areas?
- What would make the *Area Highlights* newsletter more useful to the members in my Area?
- What changes can my Area make to contribute to the *Area Highlights* newsletter more consistently?
- What is the will of the WSC regarding the *Area Highlights* newsletter?

#### IX.) **The Big Question: How do we envision responsible service leadership in Al-Anon, a vision that inspires today's members to be tomorrow's leaders who are motivated by spiritual principles?**

Background: The 2014 World Service Conference members discussed a Big Question related to the theme of the Conference. This "big thinking" approach is continuing at the 2015 WSC, building on last year's idea of looking at Al-Anon's place in the future.

The 2014 Big Question was, "How can we, as service leaders, anticipate the future and Al-Anon's place in it, ensuring that the necessary resources are available with our spiritual principles as our guide?" During discussions, members tried to anticipate Al-Anon's place in the world 15 to 25 years from now. Contemplating the year 2051, Al-Anon's one-hundredth anniversary, was challenging. Among the topics discussed were societal changes affecting members and groups; technology influencing communication among members and groups;

meeting formats; links within the service structure; self-support; and the role of our clearinghouse—the World Service Office (WSO).

This year's Big Question focused on our vision of service leadership in the next three to five years, a time span that perhaps we all can better "see." Concept Nine reminds us a "good idea can come from anywhere," and "anywhere" is well represented at the 2015 World Service Conference with attendees from Bermuda, Canada, Puerto Rico, the United States, Germany, Mexico, and the UK & Eire. We Conference members represent the largest group conscience for Al-Anon and are a valuable resource for Al-Anon Family Groups. As today's leaders, we have the opportunity to share our vision of Al-Anon's future service leadership.

Relevance: Concept Nine states that good personal leadership at all service levels is a necessity. Leaders, in order to be effective, must possess specific personal qualities, among them the all-important attribute of vision, "the ability to make good estimates, both for the immediate and for the more distant future" ("Concept Nine," Service Manual, p. 202). Living "One Day at a Time" refers only to our mental and emotional lives and not to considering our future.

As human beings and leaders in service, we have the capacity for foresight, or vision. As leaders, we can think not only about tomorrow, but months and years ahead. In fact, "Responsible world leadership must be proficient in this vital activity" (p. 202). If we as leaders of a fellowship do not look to the future, we 'shall surely suffer.' Even miscalculating the future is better than to refuse to think about it at all."

We also have the capability to examine past and present experience and evaluate what we think it means. We have the capability to think about our service needs as they relate to general economic conditions, group capability, and willingness of members to contribute. Concept Nine emphasizes that as leaders we must estimate constantly, especially at World Service levels, where stakes are high. An operating structure can be no better than the personal performance of those who serve and make it work.

Therefore, the future of Al-Anon Family Groups depends upon our dedication and vision. New ideas will help carry us into the future, reaffirming the guarantee that world services will not only continue under all conditions, but thrive.

X.) **Meet the Board** - Power Point - I have the packet available in case anyone wants to pursue this for our area. Could we possibly team up with a neighboring Area?

XI.) **Important Announcement:** We have a new Public Service Announcement. Please note that this is not broadcast quality. *Do not* pass it along to TV stations. Broadcast quality DVDs will be sent out soon. I'm giving this one to Fay W., our P. O. Coordinator. Perhaps a lending library can be set up for those who may want to show it to their districts. Another Delegate shared that their PO Coordinator follows up the PSA distribution by WSO with a letter to TV stations that begins, "You recently received...." I hope to have that letter soon to pass along to Fay in case she'd like to use it.

## **XII.) Member Services - Welcoming and Retaining Newcomers**

Some of the most frequently asked questions at our WSC have been the Board's Strategic Plan Priority which includes "To empower the Al-Anon fellowship to be vibrant, inclusive, and flexible", "How can we help our groups to grow?" and "How can we keep new members coming back?"

### **How can we keep new members coming back?"**

Offer a Newcomer Packet (K-10) with a meeting list and/or other Conference Approved Literature: soft-cover copy of *How Al-Anon Works* (B-32); and a copy of the group phone list, if available..

Spend time during the meeting acknowledging and welcoming the new member.

Initiate one-on-one contact before or after the meeting.

### **How do thriving groups in their district welcome new members?**

In my district, all groups follow the same procedure for newcomer meetings.

Our district has two meetings specifically to welcome newcomers.

We have a very strong and active district.

### **Do you think such a discussion, about how to retain newcomers, might be helpful to your groups?**

By bringing the idea to the table, we get an opportunity to examine what we do to see if it is working.

It might give some GRs options to try when they hear what other GRs/groups are doing to meet the need of the newcomer.

On-going information may help groups struggling with keeping members to do more.

This presentation is a resource to have the conversation at a deeper level - in our groups - and to share those conversations with each other at district meetings. (*Karen's Note: ...and at groups, AWSC and Assemblies, too!*)

**XIII). Regional Trustee Selection Process Presentation** - See Addendum **Trustee Resume`**, pages #6-1 through #6-3, attached, in case you're interested in standing for a position. The timeline for South Central Regional Trustee Process: **August 15, 2016** is the deadline for the Board to receive candidate resumes from the South Central Region. In **October 2016** up to two suitable candidates from each region will be presented to the Nominating Committee. In **January 2017**, the Board will select one candidate from each region. At WSC in **April of 2017**, the Conference will be presented to with the candidate for Traditional Approval.

### **(XIII continued) The following nominees were affirmed by the 2015 Board of Trustees:**

Trustee at Large - Sandra Cox, John McLoughlin, Tina Barna, and Karen Ward-Parente

Regional Trustee - Therese Samson, Leona Williams, Marilyn Massey

Board Officers - Paula Bursleson, Joan Sullivan, and Elizabeth (Jennie) McCann

Executive Committee for Real Property Management - Jeffry Keeny

Executive Committee - Bev Anderson, Roger Cowles, and J.P. Martinek

XIV.) **TEAM Event Task Force** - Information is available, but had ours in 2014, so....

XV.) **Task Force - Practices that Demonstrate a Healthy, Thriving Group:**

Define a healthy, thriving group and gather and present the material, in a format for groups to use, on the practices that those groups may use to be healthy and thriving. “Thriving” as defined by merriam-webster.com: Characterized by success or prosperity <a *thriving business*>. Synonyms are: flourishing, going, prosperous, triumphant.

Members join local groups, which have a welcoming atmosphere, where the Al-Anon/Alateen program is shared and where members participate in group service. Al-Anon and Alateen members usually consider one group as their “home group.” By regular attendance, friendships are established, and growth is acknowledged. In a home group, members and newcomers find a place where they feel accepted, no matter what. There may be time before the meeting where all members and newcomers are greeted as the room is being set up; refreshments and beverages may be available; and time after the meeting for more conversation and one-to-one sharing. Tradition Five ensures the group will be safe, friendly, welcoming, and non-judgmental. And always, our Higher Power is present in all meetings.

**Characteristics of members:**

- Show up early and/or stays late.
- Commit to weekly attendance.
- Encourage all members, including newcomers and long-timers, to return.
- Encourage the use of Sponsors.
- Are willing to be available to newcomers.
- Avoid outside issues.

**Meeting Protocol or Practices:**

- Has a structured weekly group format.
- Use the Preamble, Opening, and Closing from the “Al-Anon Alateen Groups at Work” (P24).
- Remember that “Al-Anon is spoken here” – members of other Twelve Step programs leave those programs at the door.
- Maintain the anonymity of group members at all times.
- Enthusiastically encourage service work and is self-supporting through members’ voluntary contributions in order to cover rent, purchase of literature, support of trusted servants and Al-Anon’s service arms, and rotates the service positions on a regular basis.
- Has regular business meetings at times chosen by the group.
- Practice Tradition Four; “Each group should be autonomous, except in matters affecting another group or Al-Anon or AA as a whole”.
- Has literature available for a variety of group members.
- Is mindful of the use of acronyms, especially when talking with newcomers or members who are fairly new. (Ex. *One Day at a Time*, instead of ODAT.)
- Use the wealth of CAL and service materials available.

**Member Participation:**

- Share their experience, strength, and hope about recovering from the effects of loving and living with alcoholics.

Keep their sharings focused on their recovery in the meeting, and may share details with their Sponsors or others on a one-on-one basis.

Support Alateen members transitioning into Al-Anon groups.

Actively and attentively listen during member sharings without other distractions.

**Group Problem-solving:**

Use the group conscience process to make group decisions.

Conduct group inventories at regular intervals.

Use available Conference Approved Literature, i.e. (K-70)

Review the "Three Obstacles to Success in Al-Anon".

Practice principles above personalities.

What do you see in your Areas that demonstrate Thriving Groups? Is there information you would like to see added?

XVI.) **Thought Force - Abundance and Spirituality** - Power Point - Unfortunately, I have no text to go with the PowerPoint at this time. Perhaps I'll be able to share more at ASWC in August and at our November Assembly. *(Karen's Note: One idea I came away with was to do a personal financial inventory. While I was thinking about this presentation, I realized that I went to six meetings a week when I started Al-Anon; my son went to seven AA meetings a week; my daughter went to two Alateen meetings each week. Of course, I gave each of the kids their dollar for the basket; a total of \$15.00 a week. Today I regularly attend only two meetings a week and I'm not subsidizing the kids anymore. And I put \$2.00 in the basket at each meeting. Even though my income is now limited, I know I can do better than that. The gifts of the program have made it possible for me to come as far as I have; I need to pay it forward and back.)*

XVII.) **Thought Force - To Create Strategies to Help the Membership Welcome New Practices into the Fellowship.** Identify the difficulties that keep the membership from considering, and perhaps embracing, new ideas within the fellowship and create strategies that could help the membership welcome new practices into the fellowship that are consistent with our spiritual principles.

XVIII.) **Thought Force - Spiritual principles/core values of being a registered group**

In many Areas, there are groups that do not feel there is a benefit to being registered with the WSO; other groups have multiple meetings but only elect one set of officers; and some even feel that if they were to register, it somehow implies control by the WSO. Just as many of us before and even early in program remain convinced we can manage on our own - potentially hesitating before reaching out to an experienced member to be our Sponsor - some groups are unaware of how the spiritual connections of the program are strengthened and enhanced by being registered to the worldwide Al-Anon fellowship and structure. Those who have had the opportunity to be part of a strong, registered home group understand the value of being connected to the whole. Perhaps they learned of opportunities to attend conflict-resolution workshops which help individuals and groups grow in unity, or to understand how groups internationally blossomed despite having only one book available in their language because they took accountability together for their Area or country connection. For those who have

never experienced such a group, fear of the unknown and the ever-present draw of isolation can be strong motivators to remaining unregistered.

The Thought Force began by identifying a list of the spiritual principles or core values they felt were enhanced by being a registered group:

Unity	Accountability
Participation	Responsibility

They included this list in all their notes as reminders of their goal: to create strategies that demonstrate these spiritual connections. They hope you will be able to identify the principles underlying each.

The Thought Force considered what might be appropriate to reach different categories of groups:

- Groups that don't know about being registered
- Groups that don't want to be registered
- Groups that don't understand the benefit of being registered

*(Karen's Note: There were three more pages of notes from the Thought Force which I, unfortunately, didn't have time to type [no download available to copy and paste]. So let's just look at the PowerPoint presentation.)*

**XIX.) Chosen Agenda Items (CAI): The next two items were the top two Agenda Items chosen by the Delegates prior to the Conference:**

***(CAI #5 ) Is the current model of Alateen the best model for the future of both Al-Anon and Alateen?***

**#5-A** Explain the importance of this CAI and how it could shape Al-Anon as a whole: In Bill's "Essay on Leadership," he speaks of revisiting past decisions to see how they're working out. Much has changed in Society since the advent of Alateen safety and behavioral Requirements. Cellphones and texting are now the norm for teen communication; background checks (and the administrative costs associated with them) are common; and schools, once welcoming, are now reluctant to deal with us for fear of litigation over the inclusion of the three legacies. In short, is Al-Anon wasting resources maintaining the current model of Alateen? If so what changes should be made?

**#5-B** The importance of Alateen to our Al-Anon programs. Explain the importance of this CAI and how it could shape Al-Anon as a whole. I would like to see work done for Alateen to:

Get Al-Anon members interested in being Sponsors, Coordinators, and AAPP.

Get teens interested in Alateen and Service they can do.

**#5-C** In some Areas, what is stopping our kids from coming to Alateen? Explain the importance of this CAI and how it could shape Al-Anon as a whole:

The Alateen Groups are up and running and we are not getting the teens to some of the groups.

What could be stopping the kids from coming to Alateen?

*(Karen's Note: Teens - please talk to me! We can't help make a better Alateen program without your input. My contact information is in the Round Robin. I don't text, so please call or e-mail me with your suggestions and ideas.)*

**( CAI #3 ) How can we clarify our primary purpose while welcoming members who need our program who may have a drug addicted friend or family member?**

**#3-A** Explain the importance of this CAI and how it could shape Al-Anon as a whole: Many people are coming into Al-Anon affected by others having problems with both alcohol and other substances, or sometimes only other substances. Our primary purpose is to help families of alcoholics and our only requirement for membership is a problem with alcoholism in a relative or friend.

Some groups respond by stating Al-Anon is for families of alcoholics and addicts, although that is inconsistent with Tradition Five. If groups do not have strategies to welcome newcomers in a manner that protects Al-Anon's focus while encouraging them to determine for themselves if they belong, we risk Al-Anon's ability to offer recovery.

**#3-B** Is Al-Anon becoming friends and families of addicts? Is the focus more on addiction than alcoholism? Are we diverted from Tradition Three and Tradition Five? How can we support groups and maintain Al-Anon's primary aim? Is the Al-Anon program being diluted?

**#3-C** Explain the importance of this CAI and how it could shape Al-Anon as a whole: I continue to hear more talk of addiction instead of alcoholism at all service levels and within the groups that I attend. Our responsibility is to ensure Al-Anon's survival as a resource for families and friends of alcoholics. How do we ensure Al-Anon's survival as a fellowship for families and friends of alcoholics? There are many different types of addiction and we risk our program being diluted more and more as different types of addiction are entering our meetings.

## **XX.) Memorial Contributions:**

At the 2013 World Service Conference (WSC), a Policy conversation began on accepting memorial contributions from a non-member on behalf of his or her deceased family member who belonged to Al-Anon. This conversation came at the request of the 2011 WSC in response to a discussion on identifying information for a guideline on memorial contributions.

The Policy Committee began the discussion in July 2011 in light of Tradition Five and "giving comfort to families of alcoholics." Once this Tradition was fully explored, the Policy discussion expanded to include a review of all Legacies and extensive archival research.

At the 2013 World Service Conference (WSC), members shared their opinions on the Memorial Contributions presentation, which included the archival timeline Delegates were provided on e-Communities in preparation for this discussion. During the discussion, members requested clarification on the definition of "family," "member," and whether there

would be a limit on the memorial contribution. WSC members also requested safeguards to ensure no undue influence or “ear-marking” and questioned whether a change to Al-Anon’s policy would affect AA as a whole. At the end of the 2013 discussion, the Conference members requested the conversation continue.

At the 2014 World Service Conference, in response to the work of the Thought Force, Conference members discussed the definition of “family” and “member”. Due to time restrictions, the discussion was unable to reach conclusion. Conference members requested to continue the discussion at the 2015 World Service Conference.

*( Karen’s Note: Consensus at the end of this discussion was that each Delegate should take the issue back to his/her Area and ask for input prior to the 2016 Conference. It was suggested each GR complete a simple ballot [perhaps at our November Assembly] indicating:*

1. *Definition of family; i.e., blood relative; spouse; significant other, Sponsor or Sponsee, etc.*
2. *What, if any, limits should be put on the contribution; i.e., one time only; a percentage of the WSC Annual Budget; would it be cumulative (one from entire family only or may husband make a contribution and also child?) etc.*
3. *Do we have concerns that these contributions may change AFG’s principles of being self-supporting and autonomous?)*

*(Another Note from Karen: I did bring back a few envelopes for your convenience.)*

## **XXI.) Area Dreams**

Each year, the Finance Committee provides a presentation at the World Service Conference based on the conference theme. This year’s theme of “Living our Spiritual Principles: Expanding our Vision” encourages us to look at our dreams for the future. The August 2014 Chairperson of the Board letter requested Delegate feedback on the question, “What dream would you like to accomplish in your Area?” The following dreams have been grouped according to general topic:

### **1. To hold an Area event**

- Host a convention
- Hold a Meet the Board event

### **2. To increase participation at Assembly**

- Use technology to reach variety of cultures and rural areas. e.g. translation equipment, video-conferencing, etc.
- Increase more presumption of goodwill and better communication in the Area
- Energize Assemblies with skits and other tools
- Encourage a better understanding of Area and its purpose to all members
- Have every group visited by an AWSC member each year
- Have a District Representative for every district
- Have multiple members standing for service so that we have a hard time choosing the best candidate

### **3. To increase the visibility of Al-Anon Family Groups**

- Let all professionals know about the benefits of Al-Anon

Place billboards in all districts

**4. To ensure financial support of Al-Anon Family Groups**

Increase understanding in Areas/districts of the proper size/use of a Reserve Fund

Break the buck

Increase donations to WSO

Have 100% participation in WSO donations and be #1 in group donations

**5. To strengthen Alateen groups**

Create a more diversified Alateen daily reader

**6. To strengthen Al-Anon Family Groups**

Encourage spiritual awakening for all members

Post newsletter on web page

Use the *Service Manual* more at groups and districts

Create a pamphlet on humor

Increase the use of KBDM

*(Karen's Note: My personal dream was to make sure every group has, understands the purpose of, and uses the Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual and Groups at Work. My group chose to aim a little higher: to make AFG more widely known than AA. This was a fun and frustrating exercise. The fun part was actually dreaming of how to do it: have an ad on the Super Bowl, somehow tying it to the Budweiser commercials; "Please drink responsibly. If someone else's drinking has affected your life, call 1-888-4AL-ANON." We talked about logistics like needing new staff members, graphics specialists, etc. After almost an hour, we decided that the first thing we would do was hire a project manager.)*

And a handout from the **Finance Committee** reads as follows:

*The Finance Committee would like to know what one idea, thought, or group of words, you believe would be successful to invite you as a member to increase your contributions. We would like to use these ideas in future appeal letters and publications. Thank you for your wisdom.*

**XXII.) Seventh Triennial Report on Real Property Ownership:** In 1994, the World Service Conference passed Motion #12, which empowered the Board of Trustees to purchase property for Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. This purchase of real property was for a trial period of 15 years and contingent on several conditions.

In 2011, the World Service Conference passed Motion #6, which ended the 15-year trial period and empowered the Board of Trustees to continue to own the current or subsequent property in the name of Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. The ownership of property is contingent on conditions enumerated in Motion #6.

One condition set forth in the 1994 Motion #12 and the 2011 Motion #6 was that the Board of Trustees "establish a separate Executive Committee for Real Property Management in order to ensure that the management of the real property be done in a prudent manner and not interfere with the day-to-day operations of the spiritual parts of the program, i.e., service to the groups, individuals, or Al-Anon as a whole."

To fulfill that condition, a motion to create the Executive Committee for Real Property

Management (ECRPM) was approved by the WSC in 1995. The By-laws were amended in January 2012 to include the Executive Committee for Real Property Management and the Amendment was presented to the 2012 Conference. The separate Executive Committee was preferred for its simplicity and the fact that it would cut down on additional forms needed to be filed annually with the Internal Revenue Service. This Committee was established to oversee the management of real property in order to separate property maintenance and management from the day-to-day operation of the Al-Anon fellowship. The Committee consists of three at-large Al-Anon members, the Chairperson of the Finance Committee, and the Director of Business Services. The Committee first met June 15, 1996 and has met twice a year since then.

Another condition contained in the motions to purchase real property was that the Board of Trustees would “report triennially as to the financial feasibility of the ownership of real property, the compliance with the spirit and letter of this resolution, and the negative impact, if any, that the purchase of property has had on the fellowship as a whole.”

The Board of Trustees reports the following:

1. **Has ownership of property been financially feasible?** The Board of Trustees reports that ownership of property has been a very good step financially. Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. received tax-exempt financing and thus a lower rate of interest due to non-profit status. A savings of at approximately \$673,000 this year has been realized by owning property vs. leasing it in Virginia. \*Now that the mortgage is paid in full, the gap between ownership and leasing continues to widen as costs of ownership decrease and costs of leasing increase.
2. **Are we complying with the spirit and letter of the resolution?** The Board of Trustees concerns itself with ownership of real property to the extent that it insures that the ownership of real property is financially feasible and that the spirit and intent of the Steps, Traditions, and Concepts are maintained. The Board reports that with the management of the property being the business of the Executive Committee for Real Property Management, the property management is kept separate from the primary spiritual aim of Al-Anon Family Groups. The Executive Director is able to focus entirely on assisting the groups in the primary spiritual aim of Al-Anon—helping families and friends of alcoholics. The need for staff to be concerned with the frequent search for office space and to deal with the day-in and day-out maintenance of commercial property has been eliminated.
3. **Has there been any negative impact on the fellowship as a whole?** After reviewing the last 18 years of real property ownership, the Board of Trustees has no negative impact to report. A small minority of groups attempted to tie the Alateen requirements established by the Board of Trustees to the ownership of property in 2004. The Board of Trustees clarified that the only assets it was protecting were our name and our children. The ECRPM is a Committee separate from all other committees. It operates separately from the work and business of the World Service Office, allowing the WSO to focus on the primary spiritual aim of the fellowship. This real separation is what allows ownership of property to function as well as it does.

XXIII.) In January I was asked to chair a new Task Force on the Acceptance of

Communities, Cultures, and Beliefs for the 2016 Conference. Our charge is *to develop a workshop for a district/Area that includes ways and ideas for group members in welcoming and giving comfort to newcomers from all communities, cultures, and beliefs while keeping the focus on Al-Anon's primary purpose of helping friends and families of alcoholics.* As other members of the Task Force contribute their thoughts, ideas, and input, I will be asking that all of you share with me, too. My first deadline is September 4, 2015, so get those juices flowing, please.

**XXIV.) In addition to sharings from outgoing Panel 53 Delegates, we had three special guest speakers during the Conference** - Lourdes C. from Mexico; Silke S. from Germany; and Nuala C. from England/Erie

**XXV.) Next year: 65 years of Al-Anon Family Groups** and 20 years that Ric B., our Executive Director, has been at AFG. There has to be some sort of party in the plans!

**XXVI.) Trip to Stepping Stones** - How to describe seeing where Lois and Bill lived? It was truly an honor, a spiritual experience. I really hadn't planned to go up to the second floor (since it's up a steep, narrow, winding staircase) but another Delegate said, "Oh, yes! You have to go, Karen. I'll even hold onto your bags so you don't have to drag them with you." And that's just what she did while I explored the second floor with its row upon row of wonderful love gifts and memorabilia. I understand why Lois kept all of the love gifts, souvenirs, and mementos she and Bill received, and it's truly a blessing that she did, but it also made me realize that I need to do a real thorough clean-up this fall, so no one will have to clean out my "stuff"!

A special note to anyone who has the privilege of going to Stepping Stones: If you go at this time of year, consider having heavier than anticipated clothes, some light gloves, and maybe even a hat or earmuffs. It got pretty chilly up there!

**XXVII.) And, of course, I can't close** without a huge thank you to all the groups, Districts and individuals who sent all the wonderful love gifts. Missouri was a big hit with copies of the Round Robin and our Convention flyer; Alateen magnets and special cards they sent to me personally, Cardinals' pins, puzzle piece pins, several styles of pens, key chains with tiny flashlights and Higher Power affirmations, bubbles, crocheted butterfly magnets, bookmarks, spectacular tote bags (that were all gone before noon the first day!), slogan notepads, and a special homemade butterfly throw, just for me! I was able to send "thank you" messages to everyone with my regular notes, except for two: I didn't have a list of DRs with me, so I couldn't say thanks to Melanie E, and her folks from District 4, and I still don't know who Linda M. is (if I remember correctly, her area code was 816 - KC area). But, anyway, thanks to those folks, too. And, if I've missed anyone, please accept my apologies. , Finally, of course, the most important gifts are those I carry with me every day, your prayers and support, which continue to carry me through this wonderful journey.

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**Other than conference:**

As previously reported, I attended the South Central Regional delegates' Meeting (SCRDM)

in Dallas, TX in early March. I learned a lot, especially that our next SCRDM will be in Oklahoma City, OK next year. It was my pleasure to attend two SCRDMs when they were held previously in St. Louis. That was also a real learning experience, too, showing me ahead of time what happens at these large business meetings (oh, we had fun, too!) and preparing me for how to best serve Missouri AFG as Delegate. I encourage you, too, to consider this opportunity to see what happens (just in case.....).

I visited two new groups in April: "Letting Go AFG" is in O'Fallon. This group is being started by two "newbies" who had actually considered closing the meeting since they couldn't find any "sponsors". I put them in touch with Betsy M., Round Robin editor, and with the St. Louis AIS. I believe both are following up with articles about this new meeting; asking for longtime members to consider helping them out. "Healing Steps" is in Kirkwood and meets on alternate weeks with an AA group.

I was also part of a group who shared about Al-Anon at Ft. Leonard Wood for their ASAP - Army Substance Abuse Program - which was introducing personnel and their families to different views of the problems substance abuse can cause and also the programs available for recovery. As I said in my Round Robin article, the turn out was disappointing, but we're all hoping that we at least got a foot in the door and that we'll be invited back in the future to continue spreading the word.

Respectfully submitted,  
With love in service,  
Karen Lund  
Missouri Panel 54 Delegate