

Virginia Area Al-Anon
 2021 Spring Assembly (via WebEx)
 May 15-16, 2021

Delegate's Report

On the 61st Annual World Service Conference

“Moving Forward with Unity, Courage, and Perseverance”
“Avancemos con unidad, valor y perseverancia”

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Virginia Area Website:
www.vaalanon.org

WSO website:
www.al-anon.org

1. What does a Delegate do?

- The World Service Delegate is an Al-Anon member elected at an Area Assembly.
- Represents all the Virginia Area groups at the annual World Service Conference (WSC).
- The Delegate is the primary communication link between the groups and the WSC.
- Shares the Virginia Area experience at 3 annual Conferences.
- Brings the views and the spirit of world-wide Al-Anon back to the Virginia Area.
- See the World Service Conference Chart on page 171 of the *2018-2021, Al-Anon Service Manual*, version 2, to understand more about how our organization is structured.

2. What is the World Service Conference (WSC)?

- It's the largest **Informed Group Conscience of Al-Anon/Alateen** world - wide.
- It's an annual business meeting attended by 67 Area Delegates from all over the United States, Puerto Rico, Bermuda, and Canada, along with the Trustees at Large, the Regional Trustees, the WSO Executive Committee and the WSO Administrative Staff voting members.
- This year it had 91 voting members, plus additional attendees with voice, but no vote.
- On Al-Anon's overall policy matters, the World Service Conference makes the final decisions.
- The Conference can direct committees to further study or to refuse to act in a given situation.
- The Conference cannot mandate or govern the Al-Anon fellowship, which it serves.
- As part of their duties, Delegates are invited to serve on either a:
 - Thought Force
 - Task Force
- This year I will be serving on the Thought Force: Diversity Today.

- That Committee's charge is to: Conduct a Knowledge-Based-Decision-Making (KBDM) process to determine what is currently known about this topic and what remains unknown.
- This committee will be meeting virtually throughout the summer and submit a report to the Chair of the Executive Committee by Sept. 1, 2021.
- After the 2022 WSC, the report will be available for use by the Areas, Districts, and Groups.
- I also will serve on the U.S. Southeast Regional Committee on Trustees. That committee is responsible for reviewing nominees' application for the Southeast Region Trustees.

3. The 2021 World Service Conference (WSC) – the first full virtual WSC

- I am a Delegate of Panel 59, meaning that I, and the other Panel 59 Delegates, attended our 3rd and last of 3 Conferences this April. Next year the VA Area will send a new Delegate to represent us.
- The 2020 WSC met virtually last year, but because of the short time between the shut-down caused by the Covid-19 virus and the scheduled Conference, an abbreviated WSC was held. We met via WebEx for only about 8 hours over 2 days. Most discussions were held on AFG Connects for WSC members.
- This year we had ample time for planning and a full Conference was conducted virtually. That means we met Monday, April 12, through Friday, April 16 via WebEx from 1:00 pm till 9:00 pm EST.
- WSC passed 15 motions. Several were routine votes, such as the Seating Motion (to allow non-voting members, with voice, but no vote to join the Conference); approval of the Annual Report; the 2020 Audit Report; the 2021 Budget and Financial Report. Some motions were Conference specific, which will be explained as my report continues.
- There were 91 voting members, consisting of the 67 Delegates, the Board of Trustees, the Executive Committee, and voting members of the WSO Staff.
- The remainder of the attendees included non-voting members of the WSO Staff, the Interpreters (this year French-speaking only; Spanish-speaking Interpreters were not requested); the Recorders; and the International Delegates from various General Service Offices (GSO). These attendees were voice only, non-voting attendees.
- There were more International Delegates than ever before, because of the virtual format. They included Delegates from:
 - Argentina Germany Portugal
 - Australia Italy South Africa
 - Ecuador Paraguay Spain
 - France Peru UK & Eire
- No Stepping Stones visit this year because of Covid-19. However, WSC members did get to see a virtual presentation from the Staff at Stepping Stones.
- The 2022 WSC will meet in New York and next year's WSC members will get to go to Stepping Stones in person.

4. The Policy Committee Motions presented to the 2021 WSC:

- **This year's Conference passed 2 transformative and historical motions.**
 - There are currently **449 permanent electronic groups, with 700 meetings**, - phone, virtual, and Alateen Chat meetings. These groups have only a CMA, no GR, and no representation at a District or an Area. They have no Delegate representation at WSC.
 - The **first of the 2 transformative Motions passed** changes the status of these **permanent electronic groups** to Al-Anon Family Groups. This means these groups may now elect a GR and will have representation.
 - This status change was achieved administratively by amending the Service Manual to eliminate any reference to defining an Area in geographic terms. So, now a new Area is not limited to a specific geographic area.
 - The **second Motion passed** allows for all **permanent electronic groups** to form a **new Electronic Area**. All **permanent electronic groups** that are now new AFGs automatically become members of the new Electronic Area, which has not yet formed.
 - Once the new Electronic Area is formed, and has petitioned to join the WSC, each new AFG may decide, based on their Group Conscience, whether they want to belong to the new Electronic Area, or if they would rather join a geographic Area of their choice. An AFG may only belong to one Area.
 - The new Electronic Area is considered as contiguous to any geographic Area.
 - At this point in the process, we will follow the guidelines in the *2018-2021 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual, version 2*, (pages 157-158; and pages 165-166)) for changing a group to a new Area.
 - **The immediate impact on the Virginia Area** is for us to create a policy regarding this process. The Area Officers will discuss this at our June 5 Officers' Meeting, and begin to think through how we will proceed. We will keep the membership informed as this process unfolds. Right now there are many unanswered questions.
 - **Please note: no changes to any Virginia Area group are required right now. There is no time pressure for anything to change.**
 - If you belong to a regularly face-to-face meeting that is meeting virtually, you need do nothing now.
 - However, this new motion allows for the possibility that a face-to-face meeting temporarily virtual that wants to remain virtual, to decide to do so and still maintain its affiliation with its District and the VA Area. Or it could decide to join the new Electronic Area.
- **Other Policy Committee Motions presented at 2021 WSC:**
 - **Suggested Alateen Preamble to the Twelve Steps revision:**
 - After some members' requests for changes to the Alateen Preamble, dating back to 2017, and after several discussions among the Literature Committee members, the Literature Committee recommended to the Policy Committee that the Alateen Preamble wording be changed to be more welcoming to potential Alateen newcomers.
 - The new Alateen Preamble motion passed at WSC.
 - The new Alateen Preamble became effective at the close of the 2021 WSC, but will not appear in print until the new edition of the 2022-2025 Service Manual is released. If members wish to use it now, they may. See the new wording in **Attachment A**.

- **Bequests Portion of the Policy Digest Section of the 2018-2021 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual, version 2:**
 - See pages 103 – 105 of the Service Manual, the first paragraph of the “Bequests” portion at the top of p. 105.
 - That passage appears to form part of the “Bequests” portion text. However, the content was intended to apply to the “Contributions to WSO” portion of the Policy Digest overall.
 - The motion that was passed moves that passage on page 105 to page 103, just under “Contributions to WSO.”
- **Interim Housekeeping Changes Motion:**
 - This Motion grants WSO Staff members who regularly review the Policy Digest for “housekeeping changes” permission to correct typos, grammatical errors, and adding words accidentally omitted, remove obsolete terms and pieces of CAL which are no longer in print.
 - Those housekeeping changes no longer need to wait to go before WSC for approval.
- **“Announcing Events” text changes Motion:**
 - See the Service Manual, pages 91-92. There has been confusion among Al-Anon members as to which events were appropriate to announce at their meetings, District and Area calendars.
 - The intent of the Motion was remove words such as ‘generally’ and ‘whenever possible’ which lent to differing interpretations of this portion of the Service Manual.
 - The proposed text revisions, while removing confusion relating to what was appropriate to announce, introduced new confusions about what to post on calendars and what constituted a ‘Service Arm.’
 - **This motion did not pass.** It was sent back to the Policy Committee for further revision.

5. Motions presented by the Literature Committee:

- **Alateen “Just for Tonight” bookmark:**
 - This was originally planned to be presented at the 2020 WSC, but was delayed because of the abbreviated Conference.
 - WSO received requests from 2 Alateen groups in the same Area to develop an Alateen version of the Al-Anon *Just for Tonight (M-81)* bookmark.
 - The teens were invited to provide input and submit writings for consideration, which they did.
 - The teens’ sharings not used in the new proposed bookmark, could provide additional material for *Alateen Talk* and the “Alateen” department of *The Forum*.
 - WSO has not produced a new piece of CAL specifically for Alateens for 20 years!
 - The motion passed overwhelmingly at WSC.
 - No proposed release date as of yet, but it should not take long to produce and can be expected shortly.
- **The Dilemma of the Alcoholic Marriage (B-4)**
 - Requests from members for a revision to this book date back to 2018 and discussions have been ongoing at the Literature Committee for a long time.
 - Objections to this book mentioned that it included examples of cross-talk, advice-giving, and members using ‘we’ statements, as if speaking for the fellowship as a whole. It also

refers to the husband as ‘the head of the household,’ and it consistently assumes that the Al-Anon member is a woman and that the alcoholic is a man.

- In 2001 the Literature Committee proposed that rather than replacing the book, that a new book about alcoholic relationships be published. That book was released in 2008 as *Discovering Choices – Recovering in Relationships* (B-30).
- Yet *The Dilemma of the Alcoholic Marriage* (B-4), one of the oldest CAL still in print, continues to have strong sales.
- The Literature Committee, after much discussion, proposed to the 2021 WSC, 2 things:
 - Create a new Preface to *The Dilemma of the Alcoholic Marriage* in recognition of the many members who have benefitted from this book and the fact that it is part of Al-Anon’s history.
 - And create a booklet made up of the ‘gems’ from this book, plus some new material.
- This motion passed.
- **Adding a new Preface to *One Day at a Time* (ODAT)**
 - In April 1966, the 6th WSC unanimously approved the development of a book of daily readings, modeled after a daily reader for recovering alcoholics.
 - ODAT was released in September 1968.
 - In 1978 the WSC passed a motion that no change could be made to ODAT without “majority approval of the full Conference in session.”
 - Since then only housekeeping changes have been made.
 - 52 years later, it is one of the most popular books.
 - In recent years there have been an increasing number of concerns about specific readings, or what some consider dated or non-inclusive language, should indicate it is time for a revision of the book.
 - The Literature Committee proposed to the 2021 WSC that, rather than revising the book, a new Preface be written to help members see the book in its historical perspective.
 - The new Preface could also emphasize the timeless nature of Al-Anon’s spiritual principles that the book exemplifies.

6. 2021 Al-Anon Membership Survey and the new Longitudinal Study:

The 2021 Al-Anon Membership Survey is:

- Conducted every 3 years, since 1985.
- Open from June 16, 2021 to July 27, 2021.
- Open to all Al-Anon members, age 18 and up, regardless of time in the program.
- Available in English, Spanish, and French.
- Takes only about 15 minutes.
- Mobile friendly.

The Survey is not:

- Collecting personal information.
- Breaking your anonymity.

Starting on **June 16th**, members will be able to visit al-anon.org/membersurvey to participate!

For the Spanish survey visit al-anon.org/encuestamiembros

For the French survey visit al-anon.org/sondagemembres

AI-Anon Longitudinal Study

- In 2020 the WSO Staff contacted research professionals in the field of alcoholism/addiction as they began preparing for the 2021 Membership Survey.
- The goal was to get a professional opinion on our Survey process regarding validity and legitimacy.
- Responses from the professionals were positive; the WSO process was deemed good and the results valid.
- However, the professionals noted that there was a lack of a control group and that the likelihood of assembling such a group would be very low.
- The professionals suggested that instead of a control group, an alternative would be to conduct a longitudinal study. That consists of asking the same group of members the exact same questions over a period of five to ten years. This allows for the WSO to track an AI-Anon member cohort to understand the impact of consistent AI-Anon membership on mental health.
- These recommendations from the professionals were forwarded to the Board of Trustees for further discussion.
- The WSC, after discussion and subsequent vote, passed the motion to proceed with a Longitudinal Study.
 - **Longitudinal Study participants** are to be selected from members who opt-in when completing the **2021 Membership Survey**.
 - These participant members will be contacted via email and asked a set of ten questions – the questions will not change from year-to-year – each year for a period of five years, beginning in 2022 through 2026.

Please be sure to participate in the 2021 AI-Anon Membership Survey described above. Take this information back to your groups and encourage their participation as well. These two studies provide valuable information to our organization that is used to help plan services. And now adding a long-term study as well, we will be able to better anticipate and prepare for our future needs.

7. Interpretation Services at WSC

- WSC is a tri-lingual organization; we have members who speak English, Spanish, and French.
- The 2019 WSC was the beginning of a three-year trial, offering professional interpretation to members at Conference. This service was only for aural interpretation only, when requested by WSC Delegates. Interpretation is provided in Spanish and French.
- Written translation of documents is handled by WSO Staff, in advance of Conference.
- This 2021 Conference was the last of the three-year trial period.
- The costs of the interpretation services for the past three years came from the WSO Operating Budget.
- The Board of Trustees informs us that the WSO Operating Budget cannot absorb the cost of interpretation services going forward without additional cost cutting.
- The motion presented to the 2021 WSC was to:
 - Continue providing Interpretation Services after the end of the trial period.
 - And for the Areas to absorb the costs of these services in the Delegates' Equalized Expense.

- This means that the 67 Areas in the WSC will see their Delegates' fees for attending WSC will go up. The cost could be as much as \$500 per Delegate. That is the approximate cost for Interpretation services at this Conference for Spanish and French. (Spanish interpretation was not requested this year, only French). The actual amount will be determined as plans for 2022 WSC, being held in New York, are finalized. WSO Staff is determined to negotiate the best price possible.
- This motion passed, with 85 yes, 2 no, 2 abstain, and 1 void.
- The Virginia Area will need to adjust our 2022 budget accordingly.

8. Trustee nominations

- In 2022 three Trustee at Large and three Regional Trustee positions become available.
- Qualifications for Trustee at Large and Regional Trustee are the same.
- Resumes for either Trustee position will be due by August 15, 2021. Service would begin in April 2022.
- The Virginia Area belongs to the Southeast Region and our Regional Trustee position will be open.
- The Southeast Regional Trustee application must first go through our Area's approval process. Your Delegate, yours truly, then submits the application to the Board of Trustees. The Trustee at Large applies directly to the Board of Trustees.
- Applications and more information about these positions are available at the WSO website address (see page 1 of this report). Or contact me, your Delegate (also on page 1 of this report).
- Delegate service is not a prerequisite for holding a Trustee position.

9. Finances at the WSO

Highlights of the 2021 Budget

- WSO is still operating with a **deficit budget**, due to decrease in CAL sales stemming from the Covid-19 shutdown and decrease in CAL sales.
- 2021 Budget shows the expected expenses to be \$73,780 more than revenue for the year.
- Estimated expenses: \$5,465,290. Estimated revenue: \$5,391,510.
- Since 2008, up to 4% of the fair value of the Reserve Fund may be transferred to the General Fund.
- A 4% transfer is budgeted again for 2021.

WSO Costs and Contributions per Group (Al-Anon and Alateen)

Estimated cost of services provided	\$3,697,704
Average cost of services per group	\$ 263.33

	Total Groups	Total groups contributing	% of groups contributing	Average for Groups contributing
2020 USA/Canada Summary	14,042	8,245	58.72%	\$175.04
2019 USA/Canada Summary	14,429	9,311	64.53%	\$152.61

Area 057	% of Groups Contributing	Average for Group	2020 VA Total Contributions	2019 VA Total Contributions
Virginia	65.0%	\$157.20	\$31,440	\$25,112

- The good news is that contributions for 2020 exceeded literature sales for the first time since 1954.
- However, “We will continue to be dependent on contributions to meet revenue forecasts until literature sales return to normal,” Cindy M., Trustee, Treasurer.
- Please take this information back to your groups as you consider your group’s contributions to the WSO and your group’s response to the Quarterly Appeal Letter, each Feb., May, August, and November.
- The May 2021 Quarterly Appeal Letter is posted on the WSO website now. It is also sent to each group’s CMA quarterly.
- For more information on the 2021 WSO budget and for the 2020 Audit Report, contact me at my email address, listed above.

10. Upcoming Events

- **70th Al-Anon Anniversary**
 - July 10, 2021
 - Free, live online celebration with several videos and live Al-Anon speakers
 - Spacing was limited to 500 and registration was scheduled to be open until May 31
 - Registration reached the maximum by the time Conference closed
 - Audio recordings of the Al-Anon speakers will be played periodically in meetings inside the free Al-Anon Family Groups app for the remainder of 2021.
 - Watch for more information in *The Forum* and *In the Loop*.
- **Stepping Stones**, www.steppingstones.org
 - The home of Bill and Lois Wilson, in Katonah, New York.

- Tours area paused through June 7, 2021.
- The Annual Picnic, June 5, 2021, is virtual this year.
- Sign up at the website for updates on upcoming events, recordings, and more.
- **2023 Al-Anon International Convention, Albuquerque, New Mexico**
 - June 29 – July 2, 2023
 - Watch for more information in *The Forum* and *In the Loop*.

11. Upcoming Elections

- Panel 59 elections are coming up this October.
- **Challenge: Bring the topic of Service back to your home groups. Talk about how your experiences in service have helped you to grow in your recovery.**
- Look at CAL for lots of readings on the value of service.
- Consider prayerfully what your next service position will be.
- “We contribute in gratitude for what we have received from Al-Anon,” (Service Manual, p. 19, ‘Passing the basket’).

12. Envisioning the future

- The 2021 WSC will be regarded as historic and transformative.
- What else lies ahead?
- Look for the growth of the International GSOs and their desire to join WSC.
- How will we meet the challenges of our organization moving more and more into the digital world?
 - What opportunities may open up?
 - What barriers can we foresee?

13. Thank you

- Thank you for all the cards and texts of support. They were much appreciated.
- Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your Delegate to the WSC.

14. I am available to attend your District meetings to talk about any of these topics, or anything else on your members’ minds.

If your members have questions or are curious about how our organization works, I will be happy to discuss them with you.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Woodside, Virginia Area Delegate to the World Service Conference, Panel 59.

Attachment A.

New Suggested Alateen Preamble to the Twelve Steps Effective April 15, 2021

Alateen, part of Al-Anon Family Groups, is for young people who have been affected by alcoholism in a family member or friend. We help each other by sharing our experience, strength, and hope.

We believe alcoholism is a family disease affecting everyone emotionally and sometimes physically. Although we cannot change or control the alcoholics in our lives, we can detach from their problems while continuing to love them.

In Alateen we focus on our own program rather than outside issues such as religion, politics, social media, or other Twelve Step programs. There are no dues or fees for membership. Alateen is self-supporting through its own voluntary contributions. Alateen has one purpose: to help young people affected by someone else's drinking. We are careful to protect each other's anonymity as well as that of all Al-Anon and A. A. members.

By applying the Twelve Steps to ourselves, we begin to recover from the effects of the family disease of alcoholism mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. This allows us to encourage our alcoholic relatives and friends, and to give hope to other teens.