

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2023

WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE

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A 63-Year Conversation

The 2023 World Service Conference (WSC) was held in Virginia Beach, April 19-23, 2023. Let's review the highlights from the WSC, a 63-year conversation.

Transforming Electronic Groups

The 2021 WSC recognized electronic meetings as Al-Anon Family Groups. The 2022 WSC welcomed the Global Electronic Area (GEA) into its Structure. At the 2023 WSC, the Transforming Electronic Groups Project Team shared the year's accomplishments in supporting these groups.

In March 2023, the new Global Electronic Meeting Search supporting electronic groups seeking global participation was launched on **al-anon.org**. This Global Search displays meetings just beginning or about to start based on the user's browser time zone and language settings. This search includes groups meeting in 18 different languages.

The Project Team also reported on:

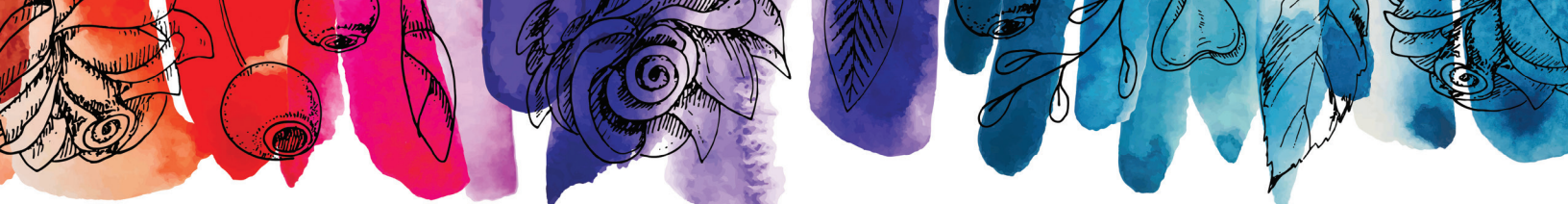
- Availability of online forms for groups wanting to transfer from the GEA to a geographical Area within the WSC Structure or vice versa
- Updates to registration and change forms allowing groups to register with either geographic or non-geographic Areas
- Discontinuation of PDF versions of these forms

Staff described the two efforts in progress as of April 2023. The first was the creation of an electronic groups listing which can be downloaded into spreadsheet format for easy management. Second was the development of a process to display electronic groups registered with geographical Areas on the map along with physical groups (Geographic Meeting Search).

The Project Team's future roadmap includes:

- The next-generation group records application for Area Group Records Coordinators
- Distinguishing hybrid meetings on the Geographic Meeting Search





Alateen Electronic Group Feasibility

The 2023 WSC was presented with an update to the presentation shared last year on the WSO's progress researching and recommending to the Board of Trustees a framework to create safe online meetings for Alateen. Conference members were provided with a framing document that included background information, the conceptual solution, and possible implementation approaches for supporting electronic Alateen groups. Conference members were reminded that no action is to be taken at this time, as the discussion is purely conceptual.

The proposed conceptual process included creating Global Electronic Alateen Safety and Behavioral Requirements, a new category of Al-Anon Members Involved in Alateen Service for Electronic Alateen Groups (AMIAS-E),

and minimum requirements for Alateens to participate in electronic Alateen groups. This same discussion took place with the international structures, as they are required to follow WSC policies.

Many similarities among international and WSC members were noted when members were given the prompt: "Describe in one word how you are feeling about the proposed conceptual process for electronic Alateen groups."

Conference members and international structures were polled and asked the same four questions about the process presented. The Project Team will compile the responses and present the findings to the Board of Trustees in July. At that time, the Board will decide on the next steps in the process to support electronic Alateen groups.

Copyright & Trademark

At the 2023 WSC, WSO Staff shared a new Copyright & Trademark Protection presentation created in response to the growing number of copyright and trademark violations—particularly on websites, social media platforms, and other digital media—being reported by members globally. Staff designed the presentation to support Conference members in sharing the important message about what constitutes copyright and trademark violations, so each Al-Anon member can inform their groups and events on how to avoid this unintentional harm to Al-Anon as a whole.

The presentation included insight into *what* defines copyright, *why* its protection is important, and *how* the WSO is striving to exercise due diligence to ensure Al-Anon's copyright preservation. The presentation

also explained Al-Anon trademarks, which include the Al-Anon and Alateen logos and names, who within the fellowship have permission to use them, and how and when they can be used.

Conference members were reminded that protection of Al-Anon trademark and copyright is essential to safeguarding our primary purpose: to help the friends and families of alcoholics. Without such protection, our Al-Anon message of hope could be harmed by those who might choose to use our trademark to represent outside interests.

Staff closed by encouraging everyone attending to share the presentation widely to help inform the fellowship and its trusted servants how they can help honor Warranty Four and ensure we don't unintentionally give away "the Al-Anon name itself."





Literature Discussion on Sponsorship/Service Sponsorship


Based on a recommendation from the Literature Committee, the 2023 World Service Conference held a discussion regarding development of a new piece of Conference Approved Literature (CAL) on sponsorship and service sponsorship.

The Literature Committee's discussion began almost two and a half years ago after having received several requests from the fellowship for more CAL about this topic. Some of these requests came from those who had participated in comprehensive Area sponsorship workshops that covered numerous aspects of the subject. After several lengthy discussions, the Committee agreed that it envisioned a booklet or small book primarily made of member sharings, similar in length and spirit to *When I Got Busy, I Got Better* (P-78) or *Intimacy in Alcoholic Relationships* (B-33). Although member sharings about sponsorship do exist throughout our literature, none of the three small pieces specifically focused on sponsorship or service sponsorship include personal stories. The Committee agreed that our CAL is most effective when it shares our experiences from a variety of viewpoints.

To ensure Conference members could make an informed decision regarding whether to provide conceptual approval, Staff prepared a memo describing the financial and resource impacts associated with developing such a piece. The information accompanied the Literature Committee recommendation memo.

During the Conference discussion, numerous Delegates shared their Areas' responses to this idea, most of which were very much in favor. Following discussion, the Conference agreed with the Committee's recommendation and gave conceptual approval for the

Literature Committee to collect sharings from the fellowship and develop a new piece on sponsorship and service sponsorship.



Announcing Events Policy Discussion

In October 2020, the Policy Committee clarified that the World Service Office only announces events that are supported by a service arm, whether the event is held face-to-face or electronically.

A Policy Task Force was created in 2021 to consider whether the "Announcing Events" and the "Workshops" portions of the Policy Digest reflect the intention to support groups announcing group events, such as group anniversaries, without providing an opportunity for outside entities, even those operated by AI-Anon members only, to use group sponsorship to allow their events to be announced at group meetings.

Following a discussion, the 2023 WSC approved wording that clarifies these two sections of the Policy Digest.




2023

International Convention Flag Ceremony Celebration

The Flag Ceremony that occurs during the opening of every International Al-Anon General Services Meeting (IAGSM), most recently held in London, was replicated during the WSC. Panel 61 delegates enthusiastically agreed to act as the International Delegates and carry a photo representing each structure as well as a flag that was placed on a special table. The international representative from Germany carried that structure's flag and read highlights that the German IAGSM Delegate had shared while in London.

Road Trip! You and Your Board Connect

Rev up your service journey! Meet the Board of Trustees and At-Large members of the Executive Committee in southern California for a day filled with fun, fellowship, and inspiration. Join local and visiting members on Saturday, October 28, 2023 in Los Angeles for a day you won't forget!



MORE INFORMATION INFORMATION INFORMATION

For a more detailed account of the 2023 World Service Conference, see the 2023 *World Service Conference Summary* (P-46). The electronic version will be available in July; print copies will be available for purchase in August.