

2018 World Service Office Annual Report

ADMINISTRATION

WORLD SERVICE OFFICE OVERVIEW

In the field of world service, the **Board of Trustees** assumes primary leadership. The Board of Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. (AFG, Inc.) meets quarterly and is responsible for carrying out the mandates of the World Service Conference (WSC), establishing business policies of the World Service Office (WSO), estimating revenue, administering services to the membership, publishing and distributing Conference Approved Literature (CAL), and approving the Annual Reports submitted by the Executive Director and WSO Conference Staff.

The Executive Committee meets monthly and is empowered to act on behalf of the Trustees between Board meetings. The Executive Committee has been given legal authority by the Board of Trustees to oversee the day-to-day affairs of the WSO, and it receives weekly service updates from the Office's Directors, Associate Directors, and Executive Director.

AFG, Inc. is a not-for-profit organization, listed under Section 501(c)(3) of the United States (US) Internal Revenue Code, and has been incorporated in New York State since 1954. Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters (Canada) Inc. was incorporated in February 1999 under the Canadian Corporations Act and has since continued under the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act. It is a registered charity under paragraph 194(1) of the Income Tax Act of Canada.

The Executive Director is responsible for overall supervision of the WSO Staff (which currently consists of 49 full-time employees and one temporary employee) and for administration of the organization's policies. The Directors, Associate Directors, and Managers who make up the Staff Leadership Team (SLT) collaborate on office-wide projects, provide direct input on budgeting for the departments, and serve as a resource for each other and the Executive Director.

AFG, Inc. is committed to equal employment opportunity and is in compliance with applicable federal, state, and local fair employment laws and guidelines. AFG, Inc. does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex (including pregnancy), age, disability, religion, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, genetic information, status as a veteran, or any other characteristic to the extent to which it is protected by applicable federal, state, or local law. Every effort is made to maintain a work atmosphere that is free of harassment.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Debbie G., Chairperson

The Trustees, along with members of the Executive Committee, direct the business operations of the WSO in accordance with the Bylaws of Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. The Board acts as the chief service arm of the WSC, as it guards the legal rights of the Al-Anon fellowship and controls the organization's finances. The Board serves as the guardian of Al-Anon's Twelve Traditions, its Twelve Concepts of Service, and the "Al-Anon World Service Conference Charter."

To aid members in better understanding the actions and duties of the Board of Trustees, it is important to make clear that Trustees, Executive Committee members, and employed Staff have a fiduciary duty to the organization of AFG, Inc., and that this duty includes principles of Care, Loyalty, Obedience, and Foresight. In short, this means they are required to act reasonably, prudently, and in the best interests of the organization to avoid negligence and fraud, to prevent conflicts of interest, and to look continuously toward the future.

Duty of Care

- Exercise ordinary and reasonable care in performance of duties
- Exhibit honesty and good faith
- Make decisions based on information, not opinion
- Act in the best interest of the fellowship
- Listen to experts when necessary
- Be knowledgeable about the fellowship
- Show up and ask questions

Duty of Loyalty

- Offer undivided commitment to the fellowship
- Express faithfulness
- Be accountable
- Look after the interests of AFG, Inc. as a whole, rather than a single Region's or group's
- Support any group conscience decision, despite personal opinions

Duty of Obedience

- Adhere to laws and regulations
- Comply with financial responsibilities
- Tend to legal issues
- Adhere to the Articles of Incorporation
- Obey Al-Anon's Bylaws

Duty of Foresight

- Make plans that have Strategic legitimacy
- Exercise Board stewardship
- Display a readiness to learn

The Board approved Interim Actions of the Executive Committee:

- To approve At-Large members for the Literature Committee, Audit Committee, Public Outreach Committee, and *Forum* Editorial Advisory Committee
- To approve the change of deadline for At-Large Committee résumés to January 1
- To accept revised guidelines for the Finance Committee, Policy Committee, Strategic Plan Oversight Work Group, Audit Committee, International Coordination Committee, Literature Committee, *Forum* Editorial Advisory Committee, Nominating Committee, Conference Committee on Trustees, Conference Leadership Team, Executive Committee, Public Outreach Committee, and Compensation Committee
- To accept updates and revisions to the WSO Employee Manual
- To approve the translation of the Lois W. Memorial Issue of *The Forum* into Spanish and to post it in all three languages in 2019
- To formally inactivate the Lone Member Correspondence Service and remove references in CAL as editions are updated, except as historical notations
- To formally discontinue *Area Highlights* for the WSC Structure

The Board, in its legal and financial capacity, took action:

- To approve the 2017 Annual Report
- To approve the 2017 Auditor's Report
- To comply with the Audit Committee's recommendations to accept the Dixon Hughes Goodman audit firm and letter of engagement for audit services for the financial year ending December 31, 2018
- To approve the 2018 WSC motions
- To approve the banking resolution for AFG, Inc.
- To elect three Trustee at Large nominees, five Regional Trustee nominees, the At-Large member of the Executive Committee for Real Property Management (ECRPM), as well as Board Officers, Executive Committee At-Large members, and the Chairpersons of the Executive Committee and ECRPM
- To approve the Committee Chairperson appointments for 2018-2019
- To accept the resignation of the US Southeast Regional Trustee
- To approve the revised 2018 Budget
- To approve the 2018 Budget Report descriptive text as presented (as a handout to the 2018 WSC)
- To approve that the Equalized Expense amount for the 2019 WSC be \$1,308.00 US. The full cost for a Delegate to attend the 2019 WSC is \$1,982.00 US.
- To accept the Investment Philosophy as presented
- To retain the firm of Dixon, Hughes & Goodman LLP for audit services for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2018

- To approve a special project to provide professional interpretation, when required, to support Spanish- and French-speaking Delegates who attend the WSC. The project will start in 2019 as a three-year trial, with the annual net Conference cost of over \$100,000 to be transferred from the Reserve Fund.
- To direct the WSO to send a statement informing all registered groups of the importance of discussing and creating safety guidelines
- To direct WSO Staff to utilize the Policy Committee criteria presented at the 2012 WSC to ensure that an Area has established a fair and balanced "Do Not Refer" and "Re-Refer" policy. These criteria allow the WSO to support Area "Do Not Refer" group conscience decisions by removing group meetings from the WSO meeting list. Groups not being referred by the WSO remain active and registered.
- To accept the *Forum* Editorial Advisory Committee's recommendation to replace *The Forum* Statement of Purpose with the wording from the Suggested Al-Anon Preamble to the Twelve Steps that says: "a fellowship of relatives and friends of alcoholics who share their experience, strength, and hope in order to solve their common problems."
- To approve and accept the new Conflict of Interest Policy and the Conflict of Interest Statements
- To approve the annual meeting with Dixon Hughes Goodman LLP on February 24, 2018, held virtually via web conferencing and with video technology, as a one-year trial. An assessment by the Audit Committee, Director of Finance, and Dixon Hughes Goodman LLP was completed in September 2018. The Audit Committee report to the Board in October 2018 included a recommendation concerning the meeting format for 2019.
- To approve the Strategic Plan dated October 17, 2018, with Objective 2 under the Goal for Members being resubmitted in January 2019.
- To approve revisions to the Bylaws of Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc.

The Board, in its oversight capacity, took action:

- To approve the following as the 2019 WSC theme:

Action is Attraction – There is No Growth in the Comfort Zone
La acción es atracción – No hay crecimiento en la zona de comodidad
L'action, c'est l'attrait – Il n'y a pas de croissance dans la zone de confort

- To approve the Conference Leadership Team's recommendation to offer professional interpretation, beginning at the 2019 WSC. This interpretation will be provided for a three-year trial period, and it will be aural interpretation, not written translation of documents or presentations.

Strategic Planning, Board of Trustees

Terry F./Judy K., Chairpersons, Strategic Plan Oversight Work Group

As the descriptive text of Concept Nine states, “We often must try to think months and years ahead.” This is the ongoing work of Strategic Planning, an essential role of the Board of Trustees.

In order to accomplish one of the Board’s 2018 goals of personally connecting with Areas, one of the Trustees attended AI-Anon service events (such as Assemblies) in six Areas: New York South, North Dakota, South Dakota, Quebec East, Delaware, and Puerto Rico. These Areas were identified as locations that had no WSO Staff or Board of Trustee contact in the last five years. The goal behind the Board’s Strategy was to reconnect with these Areas in an effort to strengthen the Service Structure. As Concept Nine suggests, “If an idea seems good, we try it experimentally.” Feedback on these visits will be evaluated by the Board to determine whether or not the outreach resulted in measurable, positive outcomes for the Areas and for AI-Anon as a whole.

Because the Board determined that working with a professional would provide guidance and further direction to the Strategic Planning process, the Board of Trustees, At-Large members of the Executive Committee and WSO Conference Staff members attended a collaborative session with a Strategic Planning consultant. The goal of this session was to exercise foresight in thinking about AI-Anon’s service needs and estimating the future—an essential activity at the World Service level, as described in Concept Nine.

Prior to the Strategic session, the Board, Executive Committee, and Staff members completed an extensive environmental scan in order to share perspectives and opinions on world events and how those changes might affect AI-Anon Family Groups. The survey addressed demographics, the economic climate, legislation and regulations, technology and science, and politics and social values. For each of the five arenas of change, individuals were asked to reflect on current conditions, trends, and assumptions about the future. These arenas were important to consider because Strategies for the future will be based on how the WSO chooses to respond to a changing environment.

The survey responses provided the stimulus for the consultant-guided discussion. Together, Board, Executive Committee, and Staff members reviewed the wording of the current Mission and Vision Statements and formulated new forward-thinking Goals and Objectives. Subsequently, the Staff formulated specific Strategies to meet the Goals and Objectives. These Strategies are closely linked to the prudent allocation of AI-Anon’s resources and have been deemed feasible and appropriate, based on the WSO’s capacity and the annual budget.

As a result of the Strategic Planning session, AFG, Inc.’s Mission and Vision were modified to more clearly state who AFG, Inc. is and what our organization does, even though AI-Anon’s primary purpose remains unchanged. A common theme in the planning process was the word universal: “universal access to tools for recovery” and “AI-Anon as the universally available resource.” The Goals and Objectives address aspects of a rapidly evolving technological environment and the diverse needs of current and potential AI-Anon members.

AI-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc.’s Updated Strategic Plan:



CORE PURPOSE

Helping families and friends of alcoholics find hope and encouragement to live joyful, serene lives.

MISSION STATEMENT

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



CORE VALUES

- **Spiritually based:** adhering to our Legacies
- **Honest:** treating all equally, with integrity and respect
- **Transparent:** sharing process, content, and information
- **Self-supporting:** refusing outside funding



ENVISIONED FUTURE (2024-2029)

- AFG, Inc. is a global organization with technology-based operations that support the delivery of on-demand, barrier-free access to the program, information, meetings, and Sponsors.
- The research-validated effectiveness of the AI-Anon/Alateen program in addressing the family disease of alcoholism is recognized by professionals, schools, and religious leaders. Their recommendations to this program increase membership and expand its outreach.
- Society as a whole benefits from reduced health care costs, lower levels of incarceration, and increased graduation rates.
- Families and friends of alcoholics benefit from greater connectedness to support, no matter their location or language.

GOALS (2022-2024)

- **Goal: Members**
AFG, Inc. provides universal access to tools for recovery from the family disease of alcoholism.
- **Goal: Public**
Both the public and professionals recognize alcoholism as a family disease, and AI-Anon as the universally available, effective, and sustainable resource for those affected.
- **Goal: Organization**
AFG, Inc. has one global structure, increasing access to knowledge, resources, and the program.



The Strategic Planning process used by the Board, Executive Committee, and Staff now provides a systematic procedure for future planning—one that focuses on impact and opportunity. This step-by-step guidance in addressing AI-Anon’s future revitalized the work of the Board, Executive Committee, and Staff in envisioning a future that ensures AI-Anon’s continued relevance and increased viability in a complex environment.

Together Empowering AI-Anon Members (TEAM)

Due to the 2018 AI-Anon International Convention, TEAM Events were not held in 2018. The following Areas will hold TEAM Events in 2019: Nevada (February 2), Quebec East (May 25), New York South (June 2), Maritime Provinces (May 30), South Carolina (June 7), and Pennsylvania (September 28).

Road Trip! You and Your Board Connect

The 2018 Road Trip! You and Your Board Connect event was held in Houston, Texas on Saturday, October 20, 2018. This was a successful event, bringing in 55 registrants. The event received very positive feedback from the evaluation forms, the Area Delegate, and the Board and Executive Committee members in attendance.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Paula B., Chairperson

The Executive Committee, which meets monthly, is the administrator of the WSO; it has legal and financial authority to act on behalf of the Board of Trustees between quarterly meetings. This Committee reports all actions to the full Board for final approval no later than the next meeting of the Board of Trustees.

The seven members of the Executive Committee include: the Executive Director, a member of Senior WSO Staff (currently the Director of Programs), the Chairpersons of the Policy and Finance Committees, and three At-Large AI-Anon members who are elected by the Board of Trustees. The Chairperson of the Board participates in the meeting with voice to communicate the perspective of the Board, but does not vote. The Chairperson of the Executive Committee is elected by the Board from among the three At-Large members.

In accordance with Concept Eight, the Board of Trustees has assigned these responsibilities to the Executive Committee:

- To approve the minutes and actions of the Finance Committee (including the monthly, unaudited Financial Statement)
- To approve special projects for the Board and Staff that involve day-to-day operations
- To receive weekly updates on departmental activities from the Executive Director, Director of Finance & Operations, and the Director of Programs. These updates contain progress of Project Approvals and Proposals to Study (submitted by the Staff), and insights into how the activities are related to the Strategic Plan.
- To review additions, updates, and corrections to policies and procedures for the Employee Policies and Procedures Manual of AFG, Inc.
- To approve Committee Guidelines
- To approve résumés for At-Large Committee (*Forum* Editorial Advisory Committee, Public Outreach, Literature, and Audit) members and certain thought and task force members
- To review presentations and handouts for the World Service Conference
- To review the annual letter from the WSO's copyright lawyer regarding current trends in copyright laws and the internet to ensure that AI-Anon's copyright and trademarks are vigorously protected

- To approve discontinuance of a pamphlet based on recommendations from the Literature Committee
- To review the progress of the Staff Strategic Plan implementation efforts each quarter and report major changes to the Board
- To perform other duties assigned by the Board

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

- To approve the change of deadline for At-Large Committee résumés to January 1
- To approve the translation of the Lois W. Memorial Issue of *The Forum* into Spanish and to post the issue in French, Spanish, and English in 2019
- To formally inactivate the Lone Member Correspondence Service and remove references in Conference Approved Literature as editions are updated, except as historical notations
- To formally discontinue *Area Highlights* for the WSC Structure
- To approve that the quotation on page 223 of *One Day at a Time in AI-Anon* (B-6, B-14) be corrected to replace the word "truth" with "wrath"
- To accept replacement of the nomenclature of "Do Not Refer" and "Re-Refer" policies with either "Meeting List Publication" or "Publishing" policies. The final wording to be determined after the current nomenclature is reviewed by WSO Translation and Style & Proofing Staff.
- To approve the use of the wording "Families and Friends Only" and "Families, Friends, and Observers Welcome" to replace "Closed" and "Open" in identification of meeting attendees on the AFG Electronic Meeting Registration/Update Form. This new wording will be used for a trial period of six months prior to making a recommendation to the Board regarding the implementation of this change on the AI-Anon Registration/Group Records Change Form (GR-1).
- To approve the transfer of surplus 2018 operating budget funds, less \$2,000, to the Reserve Fund prior to the close of the audit year.

POLICY COMMITTEE

John McL./Norm W., Chairpersons
Bruce F./Joan S./Gail G., Co-Chairpersons
Kerri K./Sue P., Secretary Designees

The Policy Committee is the second-largest group conscience representing AI-Anon as a whole, after the World Service Conference. The Committee is comprised of members of the Board of Trustees, WSO Staff who are WSC members, and At Large members of the Executive Committee. The Policy Committee ensures that the "Digest of AI-Anon and Alateen Policies" (Policy Digest) contains clear and concise policies that are based on AI-Anon's Traditions and spiritual principles. If the Policy Committee determines that more clarity on a topic is necessary, the Committee then makes a recommendation to the Board of Trustees. If the Board approves any recommended change to the Policy Digest, that change requires approval by no less than a two-thirds vote at the WSC.

Topics at the quarterly Policy Committee meetings are generated by members of the fellowship, Delegates, and members of the Committee. The Policy Committee can exercise authority over issues or projects that involve Al-Anon policy, public relations, the Traditions, or the Concepts of Service, as these may arise in other WSO committees. It is empowered to consider any issues or projects submitted by an Al-Anon member or to reconsider a decision that has already been made, if any part of the fellowship dissents. The Policy Committee makes recommendations and reports minority views to the Board of Trustees.

During 2018, the Policy Committee completed its review of the “Alateen” portion of the Policy Digest. The Policy Committee recommended revisions of this section to the Board of Trustees. The proposed changes provide more clarity and reflect the spiritual principles members apply when they adhere to the 2003 Alateen Motion from the Board of Trustees. The Board accepted the changes and recommended they be presented for consideration by the 2019 WSC in April.

The Policy Committee continued its discussions regarding electronic meetings; these conversations began at the 2017 WSC Open Policy Meeting and led to the formation of the Electronic Meetings Work Group (EMWG). The Work Group was charged with exploring ways to reach out to electronic meetings and finding ways to allow them to fully participate in the fellowship. At the 2018 WSC, the EMWG gave a presentation on electronic meetings. The EMWG is to review existing archival material about this topic so that it can determine how to improve the WSO’s understanding of electronic meetings’ needs and wants, and how the WSO can help the members in these meetings achieve Al-Anon’s primary purpose. Given the enormity and breadth of this subject, the EMWG will continue to focus on gathering additional information about electronic meetings.

At the Open Policy Meeting during the WSC, the Policy Committee discussed the topic “Meditation as Part of a Group Meeting.” Discussion focused on how to balance a group’s autonomy to set its own format with its responsibility to uphold Al-Anon’s spiritual principles, along with how to avoid affiliation and create a welcoming environment for friends and families of alcoholics, as set forth in the Traditions. This discussion led to the formation of a thought force charged with conducting a knowledge-based discussion at the October 2018 Policy meeting. Due to the great variation in the forms of meditation or “quiet time” practiced at meetings, no resolutions were reached at that time.

The Policy Committee created a thought force to assist it in its consideration of whether a procedure is needed to present Policy Committee motions to the WSC between annual meetings (aka Interim Conference Actions). The Policy Committee used the Knowledge-Based Decision-Making (KBDM) questions in reviewing the issue. The Committee will continue its work on this question.

At the July Policy Meeting, the Policy Committee approved the Executive Director’s request to invite the Associate Director—Digital Strategy to attend the Policy Committee meetings as a resource for a trial period of one year, beginning July 2018.

Throughout 2018, the Policy Committee continued its review of the “Membership and Groups” portion of the Policy Digest, with the goal of describing the spiritual principles upon which the provisions are based, in addition to making any appropriate updates. Since the October Board meeting, two task forces have been created to begin reviewing and updating two other sections within the Policy Digest. The first is working on the “Local Services” section. The second is working on the section titled “Conference Approved Literature and Service Tools/Materials.”

Strategic Planning

A key Staff responsibility during the second half of 2018 was converting the AFG, Inc. Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives that were approved by the Board into short-term Strategies and action plans. While the Objectives outline direction for the organization in the next three to five years, Strategies represent the one- to two-year implementation plan supporting those Goals and Objectives. After participating in the Strategic Planning session, Staff created task forces with WSO Volunteers to define the Strategies necessary to achieve significant progress toward the Goals and Objectives. The Staff Leadership Team then prioritized the Strategies and built action plans for those that were labeled “critical” (needing to be accomplished within 2019) or “high” (needing to start in 2019). The SLT also calculated the budget and capacity requirements necessary to complete each Strategy. Since capacity is limited, Staff also identified current activities that could be automated or optimized through process improvement to reduce workload. The results of these efforts were presented at the Executive Committee meeting in November. The Executive Committee was asked to confirm whether the completion of these actions would bring about substantial progress toward the Goals; the Committee provided confirmation.

Based on this guidance, Staff incorporated costs for accomplishing the Strategies into the 2019 preliminary budget proposal, which was presented at the December 2018 Finance Committee meeting. The SLT then finished the year by developing the detailed tasks necessary to meet each Strategic milestone, starting with those being delivered before the 2019 Conference.

Staff was successful at implementing a critical priority Strategy before the end of the year; this Strategy consisted of streamlining the current semiannual process for creating and distributing *Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism (AFA)*. Staff considered frequent requests from professionals and links of service to replenish *AFA* inventory late in the year, the impact of twice-a-year order deadlines and deliveries on Customer Service and Warehouse Staff, and cost impacts of placing smaller orders and maintaining inventory. Staff then decided to shift *AFA* from a semiannual ordering and shipment process to an annual inventory system. Each new *AFA* will become available for order in December of the year prior and will be available for order through November of that year.

Staff Leadership Team

Throughout the year, and particularly in anticipation of added Strategic Plan responsibilities, the SLT sought to reduce the number of steps involved in completing routine and special projects. The goal of these changes was to give the WSO more time to answer member questions; to focus on public outreach efforts across social media, traditional Public Service Announcement (PSA) tools, and the professional community; to support WSC Delegates at Conference and International Al-Anon General Services Meeting (IAGSM) Delegates at their biennial meeting; and to produce the exciting Sixth International Al-Anon Convention in Baltimore. The SLT accomplished these changes by applying the principles of the Al-Anon program found in Al-Anon’s Legacies; its members sought unity in their decisions by talking to each other and reasoning things out, so that they could uncover the group conscience in their biweekly meetings.

The Project Calendar was implemented early in the year, to improve both efficiency and communication across departments. It visually demonstrates potential bottlenecks in the processing of ongoing and one-time projects, such as *The Forum* magazine production and the International Convention. As the year progressed, it became apparent this calendar was insufficient to support the number of projects being simultaneously executed by WSO Staff across departments. A Staff task force evaluated and presented a recommendation for a next-generation project management tool to the SLT, which approved the recommendation. Implementation began in December; pilot projects will include action plans for the Strategic Plan Strategies.

Service Manual

When Staff discovered errors in the first version of the *2018-2021 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27), they carried out a thorough evaluation of their processes for revision, editing, and translation. As a result, new technology was implemented to give Staff adequate control over additions and revisions to the file. Access to the document was limited and a tight protocol was applied to ensure the final design version matched the master document. Responsibility for future *Service Manual* editions was transferred to the Events & Special Projects Team, which is skilled at coordinating multiple projects. Their expertise will facilitate the difficult process of updating all four sections of the *Manual* simultaneously.

Additionally, Staff created a process for generating and identifying versions of the *Service Manual*, given it is now possible to publish interim electronic and printed copies between formal edition changes. Staff have implemented all these changes and controls in their development of version two (2) of the *Service Manual*. The first section that they revised in version two (2) was “Groups at Work”; edits to this section were completed in December.

Given the issues discovered, the changes that needed to be implemented, and the WSO’s desire to ensure the same *Manual* material is available in all languages, the decision was made to delay publication of the Spanish and French *Service Manuals* until version two (2) is available, starting with publication of *Groups at Work* (P-24).

Executive Director Updates

Mid-year, Staff detected a potential security concern at the WSO. Actions were taken to ensure the safety of the Staff and, fortunately, investigation into the situation confirmed the perceived threat was, in fact, harmless. Nonetheless, the Executive Director and Executive Committee agreed that an operational security audit and risk assessment would be appropriate to identify any potential concerns for Staff safety and to obtain suggestions on best practices. The audit was performed in December. Staff will review the report and implement appropriate changes in 2019.

At the direction of the Board of Trustees, Staff undertook the process of creating a safety document that would encourage groups to talk about safety in Al-Anon meetings and develop plans for addressing any issues that might arise. Building on the example of other fellowships, Staff drafted the document, the Executive Committee reviewed the content, and General Counsel validated the language to ensure it protected Al-Anon as a whole. This document was published to the WSC Members community on AFG Connects at the end of the year.

Staff and the Structural Transition of the World Service Office

The WSO’s organizational structure continued to evolve in 2018 with the distribution of teams across three departments: Administration & Digital Strategy, Finance & Operations, and Programs. Given their scope, the Digital Strategy and Events & Special Projects Teams began reporting directly to the Executive Director, while the Translation Team became part of the Finance & Operations Department.

Accompanying this change, the retirement of the Associate Director—Public Outreach Media in June provided the WSO the opportunity to transfer responsibility for public outreach media and communications to Digital Strategy. This change ensures a consistent message of help and hope for families and friends of alcoholics is delivered across both traditional public outreach tools, such as PSAs, and digital tools, such as social media. Given the added responsibility, the Digital Strategy Manager position was redefined as Associate Director—Digital Strategy.

The SLT Task Force continued its work of evaluating all administrative positions. Staff titles were reviewed and updated to increase WSO attractiveness in the job market: administrative clerk positions were eliminated in favor of generalist positions, and clerks, representatives, and secretaries became assistants. When resignations occurred, job descriptions were revised and skills updated, often reflecting increased use of technology to improve efficiency. Staff names and streamlined titles were posted at desks to improve new employee orientation and to help WSO Volunteers and visitors get to know the Staff.

Another outcome from the Task Force discussion was the development of an “administration as a service” concept across the departments. Administrative assistants are assigned to managers who may only direct a portion of their daily workload: for example, the Executive Assistant (Spanish) reports to the Director of Programs, but spends more than 50 percent of her time working for Administration and Finance & Operations. When this approach is used, administrative capacity is shared and employees enjoy the variety that comes with working across departments. Staff leaders tap into capacity by bringing unusual or peak-time administrative needs to the SLT meeting for resolution. So far, several urgent requirements have been addressed, making Strategic use of WSO talents and resources.

The WSO improved the Staff performance review process this year, implementing a talent calibration process to create fair and equitable ratings across departments. Salary increases were then linked directly to ratings, imbedding the spiritual principles of accountability and responsibility in the Staff evaluation model. Recognizing the benefits of fitness to employee morale and organizational health, the WSO introduced a stipend to offset costs for Staff who demonstrate consistent participation in a gym, yoga or other organized program. Additionally, Staff were offered reasonably priced training opportunities, such as local leadership workshops, to support their growth and contribution to the organization.

Human Resources

Bill Piersol, Human Resources Manager (Non-member)

2018 Staff turnover rate was 20 percent, which is consistent with a 19 percent average recently reported for businesses¹ and non-profits.² Ten new Staff members joined, including the Accounting Manager, two Shipping Clerks, Group Records Agent, Spanish Translator, Administrative Assistant (Spanish), Programs Generalist, Webmaster, and Receptionist. Additionally, the SLT recognized the need for a specialist who could refine public and fellowship communications and created the Editorial Quality Specialist position, which was filled early in the year. In anticipation of the retirement of our longtime Senior Group Services Specialist, a selection was made from six applicants to fill the revised Group Services Specialist—Meetings member position.

In an effort to ensure the WSO could hire and retain the most qualified Staff, options were extended for flexible working hours (when those options aligned with the WSO employee policies contained in the AFG, Inc. Employee Policies and Procedures Manual). Additionally, the Translation Team was expanded to formally include French- and Spanish-speaking contractors working across the globe.

Evolution of the structure led to opportunities to promote talented staff, several of whom have considerable longevity at the WSO. In Finance & Operations, the Customer Service Manager, who has spent over 28 years working for the WSO, was promoted to the new Associate Director—Customer Service and Shipping position, created to streamline processes across customer service and the warehouse. This change produced the opportunity to promote the Customer Service Assistant Manager to Customer Service Coordinator. As well, the Translator—French was promoted to the newly created Translation Project Coordinator position, responsible for overseeing all WSO translations and completing French translations. Meanwhile in the Programs Department, a relative newcomer to Staff with only two years in the Office, the Programs Generalist, was promoted to Senior Group Records Agent.

General Counsel

The WSO continued its practice of keeping a local General Counsel on retainer so that it could address the operational topics and issues that inevitably arise in the usual course of business (such as human resources concerns and copyright violations).

In 2018, Al-Anon's General Counsel reviewed two key items for the Board: revisions to the Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. Bylaws as approved by the Board; and the Conflict of Interest statement, which was only signed by WSO Volunteers prior to 2018 but, starting in 2018, was also signed by Senior Staff.

Trademarks & Copyrights

Re-registration of the three Al-Anon trademarks (Al-Anon, Alateen, and the Al-Anon [triangle] logo) continued in 2018 for countries where Al-Anon literature is translated and reprinted. The following registrations were completed and received:

- Costa Rica, El Salvador, Russia, South Korea, Ecuador, Norway, Peru, the UK, and Guatemala.

Travel & Administration

The Executive Director joined a Trustee and the Director of Programs for a visit to three countries: Norway, Finland, and Estonia. Norway experienced a significant change in the makeup of its Board of Trustees and was seeking experience, strength, and hope for starting again. In anticipation of the WSO visit, Norway arranged the first Nordic convention to be held in its country: members from Sweden, Norway, and Finland attended the event and WSO Staff had the opportunity to meet with all attendees to discuss the challenges facing their Structures. A similar conversation occurred in Finland, a long-established Structure, where the WSO met with members of the Finland Board and staff to discuss topics such as social media. The WSO also visited Estonia, which has two groups—one that has been meeting for 20 years and another that was established in January 2018. Members of these groups spoke with the WSO visitors about websites, translations, and attracting new members. The visit offered the Executive Director a wonderful opportunity to personally empathize with how similar the issues faced by established structures are to those faced by the WSC Structure, as well as how difficult the challenges faced by evolving structures that do not yet have a single translated book can be.

The Executive Director was also invited to attend several events within the WSC Structure: a convention in South Carolina; an Assembly in Northern Illinois; an Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.) Convention with Al-Anon participation in Orange County, Southern California; and the Pennsylvania Assembly. At each of these events, the Executive Director shared her personal story and led a workshop or gave a presentation about the work and evolution of the WSO. Those in attendance expressed appreciation for the WSO Staff's efforts to expand the message of help and hope to the family and friends of alcoholics, particularly their attempts to reach the next generation of those who are suffering.

Working with the Areas

Staff completed the process of reviewing three Area Meeting List Publishing Policies. Areas had created these policies to address the challenge of working with groups that do not adhere to Al-Anon principles in their meetings. Staff utilized the principles outlined in the materials that the Policy Committee Thought Force on "Do Not Refer" presented to the 2012 WSC in their review. Conversation is ongoing with the three Areas that have submitted policies.

Events & Special Projects

Jacqueline Gursky, Events & Special Projects Manager (Non-member)

This year the Events & Special Projects Team expanded their role in support of conventions and conferences to allow the Programs Department and Digital Strategy Teams to focus on content and public outreach efforts. This Team, composed of professionals trained in event planning as well as project management, has been assigned overall project coordination and event logistics responsibility for International Conventions and International Al-Anon General Services Meetings, in addition to their current responsibility for WSC logistics planning. As part of Conference this year, this Team supported the Associate Director—Literature and the Associate Directors—Public Outreach and Digital Strategy in utilizing web conferencing to include At-Large Public Outreach Committee and Literature Committee members in their Committee meetings held at Conference. Web conferencing enabled the At-Large Chairs of

¹ Society of Human Resources Management, 2016 [Human Capital Benchmarking Report](#).

² Nonprofit HR, 2016 [Nonprofit Employment Practices Survey](#).

these Committees to facilitate the meetings and all At-Large members to fully participate, where in past years they had not been able to contribute.

Part of the role of the Events & Special Projects Team is to look ahead. By the end of the year, the Team had secured the contract for the 2020 International Al-Anon General Services Meeting in London, brought the 2023 International Convention contract to its final stage, and begun planning for the Anniversary Dinner in 2021.

DIGITAL STRATEGY

Scot P., Associate Director—Digital Strategy

The Digital Strategy Team worked with a digital agency to resolve ongoing server error issues that were causing a poor user experience. The effects of these issues were temporary and the visits to the WSO website continue to grow each month.

Conference members tested a social stream feature in the mobile app to determine its viability for use in the International Convention app. They reported that they enjoyed being able to interact with each other using the Conference mobile app. Conference members seemed particularly appreciative of the opportunity to share pictures in a manner that protects anonymity. Staff were able to run a test during Conference of the polling feature of the app, as a means of determining its viability as a replacement for current electronic voting tools.

The Digital Strategy Team developed a mobile app for the International Convention; the app contained a scheduling tool that allowed members to create personalized schedules of sessions they wanted to attend. It was downloaded over 2,000 times. Members in the Convention mobile app had over 48,000 interactions, which included sharing over 2,060 photos with fellow Convention participants.

The Team conducted several one-on-one video interviews with members at the Convention, making sure to protect members' anonymity. Editing of these videos is underway. These videos will be published on the website as part of public outreach to professionals and potential members.

Many members stopped by the new Digital Lounge at the International Convention to ask questions and get assistance with the mobile app.

With the retirement of the Associate Director—Public Outreach Media, the Senior Communications Specialist—Media was given responsibility for communications with Al-Anon's PSA vendor. She worked with the vendor to relaunch two popular radio and TV PSAs. The Senior Communications Specialist—Media and the Associate Director—Digital Strategy met in person with the CEO of TV Access, the PSA vendor, to discuss impact and best practices for PSAs. His experience suggests the Al-Anon PSA message no longer resonates well, so he provided ideas that were shared with and considered by the Public Outreach Committee. Because of that feedback, two PSAs are now in development; they will be distributed in 2019. One uses the traditional Al-Anon PSA format, while the other builds on the 20 Al-Anon Questions. The Digital Strategy Team also automated the PSA request process, allowing members to send PSAs directly to their station contact when requested.

The Associate Director—Digital Strategy and the Publications Manager attended the Digital Book World conference. At the event, industry leaders spoke about audiobooks, digital books, and e-books, and about using voice assistants such as Alexa, Siri,

and Google Assistant to enhance the reading experience. Staff learned that while sales from top e-book publishers seem to have plateaued, independent e-book publishers are continuing to expand. By offering guidance on how to navigate the quickly changing publishing environment, the conference helped Staff become better prepared to serve Al-Anon members across many different publishing platforms.

Al-Anon has been approved for a free nonprofit subscription to a website optimization software platform that will help Staff understand how the WSO website is being used, so that they can improve user experience.

Data Analysis

The Data Analyst worked with the Associate Director—Public Outreach Professionals to launch the 2018 Membership Survey and ensure that all responses would be collected for future analysis and reporting. The Data Analyst finalized the presentation of the Membership Survey results and these have been published via AFG Connects to the Conference and International General Service Offices (GSOs). The key focus has been data visualization—essentially, turning numbers into pictures so that results are easier to understand.

Website Conversion

The Digital Strategy Team, along with the Senior Communication Specialist—Media completed the transfer of the content from the "old" Members website to the newly designed Al-Anon website.

Digital Strategy also developed a new Al-Anon Slogans page that lists all 16 Slogans and shows snippets of CAL literature supporting each. The page is available in all three languages: <https://al-anon.org/for-members/members-resources/literature/al-anon-slogans/>

In the Loop

In the Loop celebrated its first full year in circulation. During 2018, Staff updated the style of *In the Loop* articles to make them more appealing to time-pressed members, condensing the writing to deliver news and ideas in brief snippets. Additionally, Staff expanded the focus to include not only "news from the WSO" but also helpful ideas for groups, such as the Newcomer Preparedness Checklist. A survey was conducted to understand how members felt about the publication and 64 percent rated it "very good" or "excellent." The most-enjoyed content has been literature and WSO-specific information. It was also found that 68 percent were aware that any member can subscribe to *In the Loop*, and 84 percent indicated they were likely or highly likely to recommend that their group and other Al-Anon members subscribe.

Meeting Search 2.0

The Associate Director—Digital Strategy worked with the WSO Group Records Coordinator and the Software Engineer to develop a new meeting search, which was launched on January 11, 2018. The search features a map view and the ability to search by radius, and it includes results regardless of city or zip code. It also includes filters to allow searches for Al-Anon meetings and Alateen meetings on the same page. Bilingual members no longer need to switch pages to switch languages. The new search includes several advanced filters, such as handicap accessible and other descriptors

like men’s meeting, to help people find the right meeting for them. The tool also allows people to easily report problems with finding a meeting, for instance, when there is no meeting at the location. This feature automatically sends a notice to Group Records for follow-up.

Members were taking advantage of the online meeting search’s “Report a Problem” feature to update their meeting information. However, it is suggested that members submit a Group Change Request form to their Area’s Group Records Coordinator to address meeting changes. To encourage members to submit changes rather than report a problem, an option for “Outdated/Incorrect Information” was added to the Report a Problem Form. Members trying to correct the old information are now directed to complete a Group Update Form.

The Associate Director—Digital Strategy received a call from the Web Coordinator from Alberta, who stated the Area previously had a robust meeting search that looked a lot like the new WSO Meeting Search. The Area had decided that, going forward, it would be better to link directly to the WSO Meeting Search rather than maintain a separate meeting database. Similarly, the Web Coordinator from Texas West stated the new Meeting Search was better than anything they would be able to create and that Texas had decided to link to the WSO Meeting Search instead of the AI-Anon Information Services (AIS) meeting listings. These shifts represent an important opportunity to improve overall meeting list accuracy for newcomers and members searching for meetings across the Structure.

2018 Stats

- Website Visits – 3,550,883 (21% higher than 2017)
- Online Meeting Searches – 1,486,396 (122% higher than 2017)
- Social Followers – 93,135 (25% higher than 2017)
- Toll-Free Calls – 16,481 (39% lower than 2017)

Public Outreach & Communications

With the organizational realignment that followed the retirement of the Associate Director—Public Outreach Media & Group Records, public outreach responsibilities (excluding public outreach to professionals) were transferred to the Digital Strategy Team. The scope of responsibility was also expanded to include not only outreach but also inbound public communications (for example, support for member comments on social media and the website). The Associate Director—Digital Strategy and Associate Director—Public Outreach Professionals collaborated closely as responsibilities were transitioned. Details of the Public Outreach & Communications efforts are described under Programs, Public Outreach & Communications later in this report.

PROGRAMS

Marsha W., Director of Programs

INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS

2018 International Convention

Baltimore, Maryland, July 6–8, 2018

Vali F., Chairperson | Marsha W., Coordinator
Suzanne M., Co-Coordinator

Day of Connecting

Prior to the start of the Convention, the Board of Trustees hosted 21 workshops, presentations, leadership talks, and roundtables on a variety of service-related topics. More than 1,200 people registered for the event. Participants expressed very positive responses to this Day of Connecting and gratitude for the WSO Volunteers' efforts.

Attendance

There were 4,029 registrees for the Convention; 49 were Alateens and 271 were Alcoholics Anonymous members. Also included in this total were 122 members who identified as Spanish-speaking and 37 who were French-speaking. Represented countries outside the continental US, Canada, Puerto Rico, and Bermuda were: Australia, Austria, Belgium, the Cayman Islands, Colombia, Costa Rica, Denmark, Ecuador, El Salvador, England, France, Germany, India, Ireland, Lithuania, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Panama, Qatar, Scotland, Singapore, South Africa, South Korea, Sweden, Switzerland, and Uruguay.

Program

Over 330 members volunteered to participate in the program, which was held in English, Spanish, and French. Approximately 120 Spanish-speaking members participated in AI-Anon meetings at the 2018 International Convention in Baltimore, and the French-speaking members participated in their eight-session program. Each meeting had a speaker and a moderator. Feedback was positive regarding meeting topics.

The Big Meetings offered Sign Language, Spanish, and French interpretation. The social stream from the attendee-only Convention app displayed throughout the hall as members found their seats and waited for the Big Meetings to begin. Members responded to this new means of sharing their experience by snapping pictures and posting snippets for their fellow Convention attendees to enjoy on the big screens. At the first Big Meeting, the Board of Trustees presented a Resolution of Gratitude and *One Day at a Time in AI-Anon 50th Anniversary* (B6-50) to the General Manager and Chairperson of the Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Members showed great enthusiasm for representing their Areas and countries in the Language of Love Parade. The 500 parade participants carried signs indicating the languages they speak, and the countries, states, and provinces they call home.

A.A. Meetings

A.A. held all their daytime meetings in the Sheraton Inner Harbor Hotel. A.A.'s Convention Coordinators reported positive results from their chosen speakers and leaders.

Alateen Meetings

Alateen held all their daytime meetings in the Baltimore Convention Center. Over 35 Alateens were registered. Between 25 and 35 young people attended each of the six Alateen workshops, and the open meetings that were held filled the room to capacity. A total of 39 Alateens pre-registered. Four additional Alateens who were younger than 13 participated. Each Alateen was presented with a love gift to tie onto their identification tag. Certified AI-Anon Members Involved in Alateen Service (AMIAS) were also able to take a love gift to identify themselves as an AMIAS and express their love for Alateen. The meeting room was decorated with love gifts sent to the WSO from Alateen conferences and recent and past WSCs, previous issues of *Alateen Talk*, and sharing sheets for anyone who wanted to put their ideas on paper.

Host Committee

Close to 400 people volunteered. Members stood on street corners to give directions and were available at several transportation venues and throughout the Convention Center to welcome travelers. The local members were delighted with the participation and believe that holding the International Convention in their city helped strengthen and bring together all the local groups.

World Service Office Staff and Volunteers

After the WSO pre-Conference dinner meeting on Wednesday night, the more than 40 WSO Staff members and Volunteers worked at a variety of locations conducting workshops, coordinating sessions, directing members, supporting session moderators, and personally greeting each attendee at registration. Their hard work and enthusiasm, along with that of Host Committee members, was much appreciated.

World Service Conference Homecoming

Past and current WSC members met onboard Baltimore's Inner Harbor Spirit Cruise Ship to reconnect during the WSC Homecoming. Past Delegates and the current Maryland/DC Delegate were invited to participate in the event program. The venue was the perfect location for attendees to connect with one another while sightseeing, playing a game of foosball, or dining.

Pioneer Luncheon

Prior to entering the Baltimore Convention Center Ballroom, Pioneer Luncheon attendees enjoyed a visual timeline of AI-Anon Family Groups, which featured nine large posters. During the luncheon, guests heard two longtime members share their experience, strength, and hope. Several other longtime members also shared what AI-Anon was like when they first started attending meetings. All guests received a complimentary copy of *Many Voices, One Journey* in English (B-31), French (FB-31), or Spanish (SB-31).

Evaluations

An electronic survey was sent to English-, French-, and Spanish-speaking Convention attendees. Preliminary responses indicate that the Convention was an overall success and that many are planning to attend AI-Anon's Seventh International Convention in Albuquerque, New Mexico in July 2023.

2020 A.A. INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION WITH AL-ANON PARTICIPATION

Detroit, Michigan, July 2–5, 2020

Vali F., Al-Anon Convention Chairperson
Suzanne M., Program & Speaker Coordinator
Kerri K., Welcome Committee & Staff/WSO Volunteer Coordinator
Jacqueline Gursky, Convention Manager (Non-member)

Staff enjoyed the opportunity to both continue and improve their cooperation with A.A. through their collaboration with the A.A. planning team for the 2020 A.A. International Convention (2020 IC) in Detroit. The Al-Anon Convention Chairperson and the Program & Speaker Coordinator joined A.A. on its kickoff site visit to view and select Al-Anon's meeting space and meet with the 2020 IC liaisons to Al-Anon. Staff were excited to learn that A.A. opening festivity plans include an event in the Al-Anon meeting location. The opening plans also include events in other locations across the International Convention "campus." Safety concerns at such a large gathering—the 2020 IC is expected to attract between 50,000 and 60,000 attendees—in today's environment will result in some changes in process, such as adherence to the stadium "clear bag" rules for Big Meetings.

After receiving input from the WSO Volunteers, the A.A. planning team selected Al-Anon session titles. Sessions will include a variety of formats—book study, next pick, speaker, panel, and workshop—as they did in Baltimore at Al-Anon's 2018 International Convention. Typically, approximately the same number of Al-Anon members attend Al-Anon's sessions at the A.A. International as the Al-Anon International Convention, so the planning effort is quite similar.

2023 INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

Albuquerque, New Mexico, June 29–July 2, 2023

Vali F., Convention Chairperson
Suzanne M., Program & Welcome Committee Coordinator
Kerri K., Speaker & Staff/Volunteer Coordinator
Jacqueline Gursky, Convention Manager (Non-member)

Although 2023 seems a long way out, Staff began planning in November with an initial meeting to discuss roles of the International Convention Planning Committee. The Events & Special Projects Manager was named the Convention Manager and was assigned responsibility for planning coordination. At the kickoff, Staff were encouraged to review the retrospective ideas gathered from participants, Staff, WSO Volunteers, and the Host Committee shortly after the 2018 International concluded.

CONFERENCE

Suzanne M., Associate Director—Conference

AFG Connects

The Associate Director—Conference, with the help of the Programs Assistant and the Administrative Assistant, facilitated the AFG Connects communities for Area Chairs, District Representatives, and past and current WSC members. AFG Connects is the online system the WSO uses to communicate with trusted servants. In addition, trusted servants initiate discussions with each other in their various communities.

The **Area Chairs** have been discussing: Area/Convention liability insurance; districting and redistricting Areas; guidelines for trusted servants who are not fulfilling responsibilities; whether Area Alateen Process Persons (AAPPs) are Coordinator or Officer positions and whether AAPPs are elected or appointed; and the "age-out" date of Alateens in the Areas.

The **District Representatives** (DRs) have been discussing: birthdays and raffle tickets; DR requirements; timing of District meetings; rent vs. donation; spending money on District outreach; as well as who votes at District meetings.

The **Past and Current WSC Members** have been discussing: the cost of the Area Assembly; special-project funding; financial reimbursement for past Area Delegates to attend Regional Delegate meetings, Area World Service Committee (AWSC) meetings, or Assemblies; past Delegate involvement in the Area; and how Assemblies are organized.

The **WSC Members** have been discussing: liability insurance coverage for the Area; requirements for Officer and Coordinator positions; Area insurance for groups; the role of the Alternate Delegate; whether or not an Area's Delegate is required to be an Al-Anon Member Involved in Alateen Service; as well as computers for AWSC members.



Conference Logo

Staff created a logo for the World Service Conference, and it was a hit! The logo was used in the Conference app, packet, poster, and *Summary*.

2018 Conference

Ninety-two voting members attended the 58th WSC in West Harrison, New York, April 16–20, 2018. Alternate Delegates represented the Alabama/Northwest Florida and Montana Areas; the Area Chair represented Quebec West; shortly before the Conference convened, the WSO learned that the West Virginia Area would not be represented. Mexico and Denmark sent a General Service Office Representative to attend Conference; the GSO in Mexico also sent a translator to assist its Representative.

The Conference was held near Stepping Stones in Katonah, New York. During Conference, all members visited Stepping Stones, which was the personal home of Lois and Bill W. (the Cofounders of Al-Anon and A.A., respectively); Stepping Stones also served as the initial location of the Clearing House. Prior to the visit, Conference members heard a bit of the history of the home, answered some trivia questions, and shared their expectations with each other. Following the visit, Conference members were invited to share their thoughts about the experience.

Members utilized a Conference app for the second time. The 2018 app included the Conference schedule, hotel map, seating chart, bus assignments, and the *Service Manual*. There was an interactive tool on the app that allowed Conference members to post messages and pictures to a social stream. There was an overwhelming response to this year's app as Conference members favored it over last year's. Conference evaluations indicated that the Conference was very successful. In reflections shared during Conference, two members commented:

“Thank you for listening to the Delegates, involving us, and increasing our participation and input.”

“I had many people tell me how amazing Stepping Stones would be. I heard wonderful things and wondered if I would be disappointed. But in the end, I found myself in the house of someone who was very special to me. At the top of the stairs it hit me; I was home.”

2019 Conference

The Conference comes back to Virginia Beach, Virginia in 2019. Conference will be held in a new hotel between April 13 and 17. The Events & Special Projects Team implemented logistics changes to facilitate Delegate travel planning, providing them access to 24/7 travel interruption support.

In response to the Board’s July 2018 motion to approve a special project to provide professional interpretation, when required, to support Spanish- and French-speaking Delegates who attend the WSC, Quebec East elected a non-bilingual, French-speaking Delegate who will require the assistance of interpretation. The bilingual Spanish-speaking Delegate from Puerto Rico also requested the assistance of Spanish interpretation at the 2019 WSC.

CONFERENCE LEADERSHIP TEAM

Judy K./Jennie McC., Chairpersons | Teri M./Cheré F., Co-Chairpersons
Suzanne M., Associate Director—Conference

The Conference Leadership Team (CLT) has the responsibility to prepare a WSC Agenda that facilitates the active voice and effective group conscience of Al-Anon’s fellowship. The CLT is comprised of a Volunteer Chairperson and Co-Chairperson who are members of the Board of Trustees, the Chairperson of the Board, the Executive Director, the Director of Programs, and the Associate Director—Conference. The Events & Special Projects Manager attends meetings by virtue of her role, as it relates to planning the logistics of the Conference.

In the initial planning meetings for the 2019 WSC, the CLT unanimously agreed on (and the Board approved) the 2019 Conference theme, “Action is Attraction – There is No Growth in the Comfort Zone.” To ensure the essence of the theme is translatable into French and Spanish, the Translation Project Coordinator attended that portion of the meeting.

The CLT created five task forces of Delegates to increase Delegate participation in the WSC Agenda. The Delegates were charged with creating presentations and presenting the Board’s Goals for the Conference, the Conference Voting Procedures, the Conference Theme, Conference Etiquette, and the Conference Purpose, Makeup, and Roles.

At the 2018 WSC, five Trustees were invited to give three-minute talks on the following topics:

- travel;
- roommates/Mentors;
- time management/filing;
- the résumé/interview process; and
- the experience of holding different roles.

Because these talks were beneficial, the CLT agreed to continue offering this valuable resource at the 2019 Conference; it has invited six Trustees to give three-minute talks on the following questions:

- How do you end up where you end up?
- What does it cost to be a Trustee? (emotional, physical, financial, and spiritual labor)
- How do you get to be the Chairperson of the Board, and what it’s like?

In addition to the above questions, the Trustees will address the topics below:

- Board members as members of the Policy Committee
- Trustee Travel—within and outside the WSC Structure
- Mentors/Roommates

GROUP SERVICES

Sue P., Associate Director—Group Services

The primary responsibility of the Group Services Team is to connect with and share experience, strength, and hope with Al-Anon and Alateen trusted servants and members within the WSC Structure. Through daily calls and correspondence, Staff supported members as they discussed solutions to the following common concerns:

- Crosstalk
- Group insurance
- Group bank accounts
- Resolving group concerns
- Use of the Alateen name in events that are not connected to an Area
- Concerns with family members who have problems other than alcohol
- Use of literature that is not CAL in Al-Anon meetings
- Service participation by Al-Anon members who are also members of A.A.
- Use of Conference Approved Literature that is no longer in print
- Use of gender-neutral language in CAL
- Use of donations to groups from non Al-Anon members
- Safety in Al-Anon meetings (with topics including sexual harassment, stalking, and openly carrying firearms)

WSO Staff encourage members to utilize service tools in addition to the *Service Manual* so that they can discuss matters in a principled-based manner. Group Services also provides articles to *The Forum* and *In the Loop* that offer “how to” suggestions for addressing these topics.

In response to this last topic, Staff share that some groups have created a “Behavior Contract,” which they read as part of their meeting opening; it is similar to what Alateen groups use in their meetings. Staff also remind callers that “Al-Anon and Alateen meetings are not above the law.” (*Service Manual*, page 41)

Alateen

Staff held a new Alateen Coordinator conference call in February to help incoming Panel 58 Coordinators transition into their roles: ten participants attended (which represented an 81-percent participation rate). During a call, it was noted that two Area Alateen

Coordinators were not certified Al-Anon Members Involved in Alateen Service (AMIAS), even though it was required by both Areas' Safety and Behavioral Requirements. The Associate Director—Conference and the AFG Records Coordinator responded by collaborating to update the AWSC Form for Area positions with this requirement.

The WSO has received ten Area Alateen Safety and Behavioral Requirements for review.

The six Alateen Chat meetings continue to be regularly attended. WSO Alateen social media posts share links to the Alateen Chat registration page and the "Find an Alateen meeting" page to encourage participation. Staff verified that Chat Room Alateen Group Sponsors were AMIAS once the Annual Area Recertification was completed.

Alateen Talk was redesigned with a new masthead, full color, and a new tagline that reads: "The quarterly publication from Al-Anon Family Groups' teen and younger members worldwide" to improve attraction. Additionally, its subscription form was added to the online store and posting of *Alateen Talk* on the website was increased from two to four times a year.

Several members and non-members have asked that discontinued Alateen literature be considered for recirculation. The first item of interest is the discontinued book *What's Drunk, Mama?* (P-44), which the Alateen Work Group (now disbanded) had previously considered updating. WSO Staff inform members that the Literature Committee decided not to update this book because Al-Anon literature is intended to be written by and for members. *What's "Drunk," Mama?* (P-44) was written to be read to a younger child, and the scenarios are not reflective of present-day family dynamics of mother, father, and children. Staff guide members to *Alateen Talk* as well as the Teen Corner of al-anon.org for materials for younger members. The second piece of literature requested is *A Guide to Alateen Sponsorship: An Unforgettable Adventure* (P-86), which was discontinued because it does not meet the parameters set forth in the 2003 Alateen Motion from the Board of Trustees. Members are encouraged to use service tools (such as Alateen Training Modules, the Alateen Service e-Manual, and the various guidelines that relate to Alateen meetings and service) that replace the information found in P-86.

The **Area Alateen Coordinators and AAPPs** have been discussing Al-Anon group liability for an Alateen group meeting at the same time, responding to medical emergencies, how to create a list of important community resources for Alateens, when to use permission forms for Alateen meetings, mandatory child abuse reporting laws, and the challenge of transgender youth participation in Alateen conferences and at Al-Anon/A.A. events with Alateen participation.

Staff were excited to learn that Alateen members in Alaska participated remotely with Alateens in attendance at the Northern Mid-Atlantic Alateen Assembly and Conference (NOMAAC) and the Eastern Seaboard Alateen Conference (ESAC) by using a web conferencing system. Area Alateen Coordinators came up with the idea when they met at the 2018 International Convention in Baltimore. Alaska uses this technology in three Alateen meetings to extend meeting participation to teens across its vast Area. Group Services Staff participated in a meeting to understand the process: The conference is initiated from the physical Alateen meeting with the Alateen Group Sponsor in attendance. Teens then call into the meeting and participate in discussion.

Spanish-Speaking Members

Six new phone meetings—one bilingual Spanish meeting on web conferencing (Zoom) and three instant messaging (Skype) meetings—have registered and posted on the al-anon.org website.

A Spanish-speaking member informed the WSO of an issue with the 2018 Membership Survey in Spanish. Group Services Staff collaborated with Public Outreach and Digital Strategy to resolve the problem and then contacted each Spanish-Speaking AIS listed on "Worldwide Al-Anon Contacts" by phone or by email to encourage the members to participate in the survey.

Al-Anon Information Services

The Group Records Team mailed the AIS and AIS/LDC Annual Update to 193 entities in August. In total, 103 responses were received (53 percent):

- 90 AISs and AIS/LDCs did not respond (47 percent)
- 2 Updates were returned as undeliverable (1 percent)
- 63 of the respondents are AIS/LDCs (67 percent)
- 72 of the respondents publish a local meeting list (78 percent)
- 67 of the respondents publish an online meeting directory (71 percent)
- 63 of the respondents maintain a website separate from the Area (67 percent)
- 44 of the respondents publish a newsletter (47 percent)
- 69 of the respondents collaborate with the Area Group Records Coordinator to maintain up-to-date meeting information (73 percent)
- 68 of the respondents hold periodic meetings with Information Services Representatives (72 percent)
- 56 of the respondents have an office (60 percent)
- 33 of the respondents have paid staff (35 percent)
- 49 of the respondents have volunteer support only (52 percent)
- 62 of the respondents provide a Liaison to the Area Assembly (66 percent)
- 75 of the respondents respond to Twelfth-Step phone calls (80 percent); this is a major concern as this is a requirement for registration as an AIS according to the Policy Digest.

Staff have discovered many AISs that are actually Districts, and are slowly differentiating and properly updating these on the "Worldwide Al-Anon Contacts" page, found on al-anon.org.

AFG Connects

Less than half of the AISs and AIS/LDCs log into AFG Connects as a resource. The Team is investigating how to encourage participation.

Electronic Meetings

At the end of the year, the WSO listed 213 registered electronic meetings, on phone, email, chat, blog, bulletin board, instant messaging, and web conferencing platforms. Following discussions with the Policy Committee Electronic Meeting Work Group (EMWG) and database changes, Staff became ready to register meetings

occurring on apps and social media platforms. A total of 111 phone meetings occur in English and Spanish. Online meetings in Italian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian (six new meetings this year!), Danish, Estonian, Farsi (new this year), French, German, and Spanish are currently available.

The Phone Meeting Annual Update was mailed to 104 English-speaking and nine Spanish-speaking phone meetings in February, along with the invitation to participate in the Annual Phone Meeting Conference Call in March. Because of the geographic breadth of electronic meeting participation, these meetings do not have Group Representatives (GRs); WSO Staff represent their voice at the WSC.

Staff held the Annual Phone Meeting Conference Call to gather information on phone meeting needs so they could present these needs to Conference, and to share information on the EMWG and new WSO registration procedures. Participants shared that for many of them, phone and online meetings have evolved; they used to be supplemental, but are fast becoming members' primary meetings. Subsequently, members of the EMWG, including Staff, held their first-ever conference call with the Current Mailing Addresses (CMAs) from each registered electronic meeting in the WSC Structure. The call was attended by 30+ members who represented various electronic meeting platforms. Participants were excited about the idea of participating in regularly scheduled business meetings with WSO Staff. Staff plan to schedule separate conference calls for phone and online meetings to collaborate on how to keep meetings healthy, inviting, and vibrant.

Miscellaneous

Staff recommended to the Executive Committee that the Lone Member Correspondence Service (LMCS) be disbanded for the WSC Structure. The service began in 1959 and initially connected Al-Anon members throughout the world via mailed letters. With the introduction of the internet, Al-Anon members began conducting meetings online and interest in the LMCS waned. Staff had received no new requests for this service in over ten years. Al-Anon international structures, where internet access is less reliable, continue to utilize the LMCS. Members who contact the WSO seeking to give service through a letter-writing campaign are invited to participate in the Inmate Correspondence Service; there continues to be a need for Al-Anon member contacts who can perform Twelfth-Step work with incarcerated members.

Staff updated and posted the guideline *Starting an Al-Anon Group* (G-12) online and submitted the revisions to the Translation Team.

AFG RECORDS (FORMERLY GROUP RECORDS)

Pat Q., Associate Director—Public Outreach Media & Group Records
Kerri K., Associate Director—International

The Group Records Team was renamed AFG Records, to more accurately reflect the scope of the Team's work (as responsibilities go beyond just groups). The Department's responsibilities include registering and updating global groups and electronic meetings; maintaining Al-Anon Information Services (AIS), Literature Distribution Center (LDC), and AIS/LDC data; and updating Al-Anon Involved in Alateen Service (AMIAS) and WSC Structure trusted servant listings. This name change was also extended to the Team members and the Team's email address, AFGRecords@al-anon.org.

Group Records Conference Calls and Training Sessions

The new Area Group Records Coordinator and Area Alateen Process person web conference calls, which included PowerPoint presentations, were held on January 27. Eighty-seven percent of the Area Group Records Coordinators (20 Areas) and 48 percent of the AAPPs (11 Areas) participated. All participants successfully accessed the web conferencing platform to view the presentations and asked questions using the chat feature. A self-assessment survey was sent to establish a baseline so that training and resources could be tailored to the audience.

Two WSO Online Group Records web conference training sessions for incoming Area Group Records Coordinators and AAPPs occurred in February. An average of ten Area Group Records Coordinators and five AAPPs attended each training session. All the sessions were recorded and posted on AFG Connects.

The Alateen Annual Recertification web conference call took place on March 17, 2018. The goal of the discussion was to review the recertification process for Online AMIAS Recertification in 2018. Nineteen Areas participated in the call. Several participants couldn't access the web session because of space availability restrictions. Staff apologized for the inconvenience and posted a recording of the session on AFG Connects right away. The matter was resolved for future calls.

Nineteen AAPPs attended the Online AMIAS Recertification web conference training session held in March. The training sessions provided a platform for the AAPPs to ask specific questions and address their concerns about the Area 2018 Online AMIAS Recertification. The recordings of the sessions were posted on AFG Connects so that they could be viewed on demand.

Group Records Updates

Professional inquiries about starting Al-Anon meetings stayed steady, ranging from two to three monthly. An increase in the number of inquiries by university counselors who wanted to start young-adult meetings was noted in the fall. Inquiries originated from the Universities of Maryland, Arizona, and New Mexico.

An estimated 200 groups' complimentary *Al-Anon and Alateen Groups at Work* (P-24) were returned to the WSO. A significant number of the groups that reported not receiving the new edition had experienced a change in the CMA after the mail had gone out. In accordance with current procedures, the affected groups were asked to retrieve the new *Groups at Work* from the previous CMA.

World Service Office Online Group Records Application

In response to Online Group Records users' requests, links to the Online Group Records application and al-anon.org were added to the District Representative Community in AFG Connects. This change makes it more convenient for users to locate these resources.

A new tool was developed to improve the transparency in the changes the WSO makes, and to improve timeliness in delivering this information because of the limitations of the Change Log Report. Staff opted for an email notification, as Area Group Record Coordinators (AGRCs) requested a similar format. The email serves as an alert, letting AGRCs know of the most recent change and prompting them to check the affected group records. The response was very positive; the modifications were seen as substantial improvements.

Online Group Records Forms

On AFG Connects, AGRCs shared concerns about the newly released online Group Records Change Form, which replaced the AI-Anon Registration/Group Records Change Form (GR-1), and possible duplication of effort between the Areas using the module and the WSO. The Associate Director—International reassured the AGRCs that the WSO heard their concerns and that any issues would be addressed.

Staff posted frequently asked questions about the Group Records online forms on the Area Group Records Coordinator community to clarify the new process. The WSO asks the Area Group Records Coordinators to update the group information since the group changes are redirected to them to support their Area process. WSO Staff processes the submitted new AI-Anon group registrations since they are accessible for review on the WSO Online Group Records application.

The total number of AI-Anon & Alateen groups worldwide in 2018 is 24,498:

- US/PR/BDA AI-Anon: **12,503**
- US/PR/BDA Alateen: **845**
- Canada AI-Anon: **1,159**
- Canada Alateen: **44**
- International AI-Anon: **9,028**
- International Alateen: **919**

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

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

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

Alateen Annual Recertification for AI-Anon Members Involved in Alateen Service (AMIAS)

The deadline was extended to July 13 due to lack of availability of the Online AMIAS Recertification page starting June 30. A significant number of Areas were still working on their Online 2018 Alateen Recertification after June 30. The AFG Records Team sent reminders and contacted AAPPs personally, to offer further assistance to Areas that had not yet started their online recertification. Staff reevaluated the current process to identify possible enhancements to the existing procedure.

The Newfoundland/Labrador Area notified the WSO that their remaining Alateen groups disbanded due to lack of participation. To date, three Areas—Newfoundland, North Dakota, and Ontario North—no longer have Alateen meetings but have certified AMIAS available.

- 4,358 AMIAS were certified in 2018.**

WSO Online Meeting Search

The Team's efforts to encourage Areas to use the WSO Meeting Search on their website gained momentum this year. Eight Area Group Records Coordinators shared positive comments on AFG Connects about the WSO Meeting Search on AFG Connects. Some Coordinators pointed out the benefits of listing uniform meeting information on all AI-Anon websites and the reduction of the Area Group Record Coordinator's workload. Discussions about using the WSO Meeting Search are taking place with the Web Coordinators and Technology Committees.

AFG Records processed an average of 130 "Report an Issue" submissions monthly from the feature on the ai-anon.org Meeting Search tool. A significant number of reports was about disbanded groups that had stopped meeting many years ago. Other common issues were missing location instructions (which made it difficult for newcomers to locate the meeting room) and no one being present at the meeting location. Staff is continuing its effort to educate the fellowship on this important issue, asking members to "think like a newcomer" when they update their meeting information.

Area World Service Committee Members Roster

The format of the AWSC Members Excel List, sent to the Area Delegates biannually, was revamped. The document is now a PDF roster, and it has been renamed "AWSC Members Roster." The new format is more aesthetically pleasing and legible. The Area Delegates' feedback was positive.

INTERNATIONAL

Kerri K., Associate Director—International

AI-Anon/Alateen Internationally

The Associate Director—International is responsible for answering correspondence with members and structures outside of the WSC Structure. The position is the primary point of contact for news and information coming in from international structures and is the channel for information that flows from the WSO to support the structures. Specific areas of support include literature (overseeing the process of translation and reprint) and policy (providing guidance and materials). More general topics include logos, contributions, literature, group problems, technical questions about websites, and other subjects. Where appropriate, these categories are used to help classify the information presented below.

Africa

South Africa

In correspondence throughout the year, the Associate Director—International and the General Secretary of the South Africa GSO discussed procedures for listing Alateen information on websites, the WSO's procedures for maintaining anonymity on its completely public-facing website, and the use of video conferencing for business meetings. The General Service Conference in South Africa meets face-to-face every other year. In the intervening years, the Delegates gather together in one location and the Service Board meets at the office. The Conference is conducted using web conferencing technology.

The GSO invested in a website re-design in 2018 and is preparing to reprint *Paths to Recovery* (B-24) and *Intimacy in Alcoholic Relationships* (B-33). These are the first books to be reprinted within the Structure in many years. Doing so will make them more affordable for members. The GSO requested and was provided with a PDF of *Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism 2019* for local printing and distribution.

Europe

Greece

The Associate Director—International Services and Chairperson of the Board coordinated a visit to this Structure last May. They attended an Al-Anon convention May 11–13 in Porto Heli. Members from the UK & Eire, Spain, Belgium, Italy, and the US (not including the WSO) were present. The WSO Representatives met informally with several members from the Athens and Thessaloniki groups in May to discuss solutions to common problems.

After the close of the convention, the WSO Representatives spent time in Athens and attended three Al-Anon meetings at three different locations. The WSO team answered 21 questions (provided in advance) during a two-hour working session that was held on Wednesday, May 16. The meeting was skillfully facilitated to keep on track while allowing sufficient time for thorough answers and follow-up questions. Questions had been submitted by groups, members, and committees and included the following topics: translation/publications, Public Outreach, Alateen/AMIAS, finances, committee selection and participation, participation in the European Zonal Meeting and WSC, group conscience, rotation of service and other common group problems.

More than 20 people attended the Wednesday meeting, representing Athens and groups from the surrounding Areas. There were an additional ten or more members who attended via web conferencing; they represented the groups from the northern cities of Katerini, Larissa, and Thessaloniki. There was one Lone Member who participated.

Iceland

Iceland was close to completing a translation of *Paths to Recovery* (B-24) when it discovered what appeared to be discrepancies in the Traditions and Concepts. Research assistance from the WSO helped determine that the Traditions and Concepts of Service translations were never updated to reflect the corrected wording of the English versions, which had been modified in 2003. Research was also carried out by the WSO to determine the gender of the original author of the sharings that were submitted for the book. Although CAL represents all genders and sometimes avoids the use of gender-specific references, this can be difficult to avoid in certain languages where noun and verb endings are gender specific. In these cases, the WSO will help resolve the ambiguities so that the translation can be grammatically correct. These issues were all resolved, and work proceeded on the translation.

Kazakhstan

A member of a group in Kazakhstan has sent in questions about how to obtain reprint permission in their country.

Latvia

A member in Latvia has written to the WSO to request permission for their group to be recognized as an Al-Anon community, or what would be considered an evolving Structure.

Lithuania

A member of a group in Lithuania has sent in questions about how to obtain reprint permission in their country.

Malta

Malta is beginning a translation of *How Al-Anon Works* (B-32). This will be the first piece of CAL translated into Maltese since 1998.

Norway, Estonia, Finland, and Sweden

The GSO in Norway experienced significant turnover in staff and volunteer leadership in 2018. In its role as the senior worldwide Structure, the WSO shared experience and suggestions for how to resolve some of the conflicts that arose during this time of change. As part of this guidance, the WSO Executive Director, the WSO Director of Programs, and a member of the Board of Trustees visited the GSO in August. This was a tremendous opportunity to connect with several stable and long-standing Structures, such as Norway, Finland, and Sweden, as well as some evolving ones, such as Estonia.

While in Norway, the WSO Representatives attended a service meeting and met with members of Norway's Board of Trustees, members of Sweden's Board of Trustees, and International Delegates from Finland. The Representatives also spent a day meeting with active members in Estonia. Discussion topics at these meetings included translation, service roles, and the worldwide nature of Al-Anon's fellowship. The WSO Representatives encouraged all the Structures to continue to stay connected and, if possible, to participate in available international service meetings such as the European Zonal Meeting and the International Al-Anon General Services Meeting.

Portugal

The GSO completed the second edition of their *National Service Manual* and presented it to their Conference in April. In their *Conference Summary*, they noted that with this "very useful tool" they will be able to "share responsibility and fulfill their great purpose."

The GSO had to discontinue the operation of their website for a period of time because they lacked sufficient funds to update it, but it is once again operational.

In response to questions from the GSO, the WSO provided clarification of the terms "open" and "closed" with respect to recovery/sharing meetings and public outreach meetings. Staff also offered guidance on how to hold open recovery meetings.

Russia

The Russian Service Board hosted a 30th anniversary celebration in November. More than 200 people attended each day of the two-day event. Members traveled to St. Petersburg from many different locations in Russia, Belarus, Latvia, and the Ukraine. The first day of the event focused on questions and presentations on service. The second day was a celebration of recovery. For this event, the Service Board requested and received permission from the WSO to print the 50th anniversary edition of *One Day at a Time* in Russian.

UK & Eire

The WSO has communicated frequently with this Structure throughout the year. The upcoming departure of the UK from the European Union (Brexit) will have an impact on business operations since Eire, which is part of the Structure, will remain in the EU. The Executive Director is following up with the General Secretary on this issue and the Associate Director—International Services is providing support as needed.

International Reprint & Translation Requests

The WSO received requests in 2018 to translate or reprint the following pieces of CAL. Please note, publication of the translated work does not always occur in the same year that the request was

made; therefore, this is not a list of completed works, but rather works in progress.

2018 Translation and Reprint Permissions		
English CAL	Catalog No.	Structure
<i>Paths to Recovery</i>	B-24	Russia
<i>Hope for Today</i>	B-27	Finland
<i>One Day at a Time in Al-Anon 50th Anniversary</i>	B6-50	Russia
<i>Welcome Newcomer!</i>	K-10	UK & Eire
<i>Just for Today</i> Bookmark	M-12	Italy
<i>So You Love an Alcoholic?</i>	P-14	Finland
<i>Three Views of Al-Anon</i>	P-15	Italy & Russia
<i>To Parents of Alcoholics</i>	P-16	Russia
<i>The Twelve Steps and Traditions</i>	P-17	Italy
<i>Youth and the Alcoholic Parent</i>	P-21	Russia
<i>Alcoholism, a Merry-Go-Round Named Denial</i>	P-3	Italy
<i>Why Anonymity in Al-Anon?</i>	P-33	Russia
<i>Facts about Alateen</i>	P-41	Russia
<i>Understanding Ourselves and Alcoholism</i>	P-48	Italy
<i>The Concepts—Al-Anon's Best-Kept Secret?</i>	P-57	Russia
<i>Alateens Share with Adults in Their Lives</i>	P-67	Russia
<i>Service Sponsorship: Working Smarter, Not Harder</i>	P-88	Russia
<i>How Can I Help My Children?</i>	P-9	Russia
<i>Al-Anon Focus/Declaration Table Card</i>	S-24	Finland
<i>Information for the Newcomer</i>	S-4	Italy
<i>Al-Anon Family Groups Welcome Adult Children of Alcoholics</i>	S-69	UK & Eire
<i>Loving Interchange to Resolve Conflict</i> Wallet Card	S-71	Finland
<i>Conflict Resolution Using Our Twelve Traditions</i>	S-72	Finland
Spanish CAL	Catalog No.	Structure
<i>Un día a la vez en Al-Anon</i> <i>One Day at a Time in Al-Anon</i>	SB-6	Perú
<i>Alcoholismo, contagio familiar</i> <i>Alcoholism, the Family Disease</i>	SP-4	Perú
<i>Una guía para la familia del alcohólico</i> <i>A Guide for the Family of the Alcoholic</i>	SP-7	Perú
<i>¿Cómo puedo ayudar a mis hijos?</i> <i>How Can I Help My Children?</i>	SP-9	Colombia
<i>Si tus padres beben demasiado</i> <i>If Your Parents Drink Too Much...</i>	SP-22	México
<i>¿Qué es Al-Anon?</i> <i>This Is Al-Anon</i>	SP-32	Colombia Perú
<i>Cuaderno de ejercicios, Senderos de recuperación</i> <i>Paths to Recovery Workbook</i>	SP-93	Colombia Perú
<i>Esperanza y comprensión para los padres y los abuelos</i> <i>Hope & Understanding for Parents & Grandparents</i>	SP-94	México Perú
<i>Declaración de Al-Anon</i> <i>Al-Anon Focus/Declaration Table Card</i>	SS-24	Perú

UK & Eire (continued from page 100)

This Structure was successful in their bid to host the 2020 International AI-Anon General Services Meeting. The WSO is looking forward to working with the planning committee starting in 2019. (The IAGSM is held every other year; every other meeting, when feasible, it is hosted by a GSO.)

The GSO recently updated their public-facing website. This vibrant new site includes landing pages for members and professionals, meeting directories, and an online store (for the purchase of CAL). The Members page does not require an additional password.

Asia

India

In April, the Public Information & Website Committee of India participated in its first-ever national public outreach campaign. From April 4 to 11, volunteers met with and distributed service tools and literature to representatives of government, public health, education, and law enforcement agencies; recovery professionals; local business owners; and the general public. Members of the Committee spoke six languages. (India has 11 official languages.)

The WSO provided policy guidance to the GSO regarding local financing of printed literature.

Israel

Contact information for Israel was added to the Worldwide AI-Anon Contacts page of the WSO's website. Israel is a small, evolving Structure and this is the first time its contacts have been published online.

South Korea

South Korea completed a translation of *Hope for Today* (B-27). This is only the third book to be translated into Korean. It is also the only book to be translated into the language since 2004.

Turkey

For the first time in many years the WSO has been in communication with members participating in an Intergroup in Turkey. This Intergroup is interested in updating its meeting registrations, providing contact information for the Worldwide AI-Anon Contacts web page, and renewing its translation activity.

Australia/New Zealand

Australia

Correspondence with the GSO in Australia this year covered a variety of topics, including safety policies and safety in meetings, meeting publication policies, conflict resolution service tools, and Equalized Expense calculations for AFG's respective Service Conferences.

New Zealand

The previous General Secretary informed the WSO that he would complete his term in June. New Zealand is nearing the end of a six-year trial wherein their Structure has had a part-time paid office manager and an elected General Secretary volunteer. The General Secretary can serve a maximum of two, three-year terms. Staff spoke with the outgoing General Secretary in May and greeted the incoming Secretary in June.

The General Secretary and Board Chair of New Zealand invited the Associate Director—International and Executive Director to make opening remarks via web conferencing at their General Service Conference on June 8. While the time allotted was brief, the planning was a secret and there was a great cheer of excitement

and surprise when it was announced to the room that representatives from the WSO would briefly join the Conference. It was a moving experience for the WSO Staff who participated.

The Americas

Brazil

Early in May, a fire in a nearby building resulted in irreparable damage to the GSO in Brazil. Although much of the inventory of literature was able to be recovered, most of the office equipment and supplies could not be saved and the building itself was closed by civil authorities. The GSO has been renting office space and continuing to provide services to the best of their ability. Their membership and leadership have rallied together to support the office through this difficult time. Due to these unforeseen circumstances, Brazil was not able to attend the International AI-Anon General Services Meeting this year.

Cayman Islands

Members in the Cayman Islands are continuing to develop their Structure with assistance from WSO Staff. This year, they focused on opportunities for public outreach in the public transportation market by placing local AI-Anon information on taxis and at bus shelters.

Zonal Meetings

A Zonal Meeting is an informational meeting held every two years for countries with GSOs or evolving service structures. No Zonal Meetings were held in 2018.

Central American Zonal Meeting

In 2019, the GSO in El Salvador will host the Central American Zonal Meeting, which is usually held in October or November.

European Zonal Meeting

The evolving Structure in Slovenia will host the European Zonal Meeting. It will be held September 20–22, 2019 at the Slovenian Red Cross Youth and Health Resort Debeli rtič.

Ibero-American Zonal Meeting

The GSO in Mexico City, Mexico will host the Ibero-American Zonal Meeting October 26–27, 2019.

INTERNATIONAL COORDINATION COMMITTEE

Karen W.-P./Rosie M., Chairpersons

Rosie M./John McL., Co-Chairpersons

Kerri K., Associate Director—International

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

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

Ongoing activities of the ICC include:

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

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

LITERATURE SERVICES

Tom C., Associate Director—Literature

Literature

[Hope & Understanding for Parents & Grandparents \(P-94\)](#)

This new 24-page pamphlet was introduced at the 2018 WSC in English, French, and Spanish. Order forms were included as inserts in *The Forum* as well as in all literature orders.

[Intimacy in Alcoholic Relationships—A Collection of Personal AI-Anon Stories \(B-33\)](#)

Titling, indexing, design, and printing of AI-Anon's latest book took place prior to its introduction at the AI-Anon International Convention in July 2018. Order forms, notices, and articles about the book were distributed in *The Forum* and *In the Loop*. French and Spanish translations are scheduled for completion in early 2019. Staff provided the WSO Archives with all the original sharings and any other important information from the development of this book.

[One Day at a Time in AI-Anon 50th Anniversary \(B6-50\)](#)

Designs were reviewed and approved for the cover of this classic book, as was the wording for the commemorative bookplate, which was given out with the book at the International Convention in July. This printing was available in English, French, and Spanish. The text of the book remains as it has since shortly after it was first printed.

[Just for Tonight Bookmark \(M-81\)](#)

After the Literature Committee approved it and members of the Policy Committee reviewed it for adherence to AI-Anon policies and Traditions, this bookmark was designed and translated into French and Spanish. WSO Staff plan to introduce it to the fellowship in early 2019.

[NEW DAILY READER \(working title\)](#)

Requests for sharings were sent to Literature Coordinators and featured in WSO publications throughout the year. This work in progress includes sharings on each of the Steps, Traditions, and Concepts of Service. The WSO is currently in the process of finding an AI-Anon member—a freelance writer/editor—who can begin compiling this book from the more than 1,400 sharings that were submitted.

[THE FORUM BOOK \(working title\)](#)

Members have submitted over 800 titles and publication dates of *Forum* articles that they consider the best of the last ten years. Because most suggestions were received prior to 2017, there were very few recent articles. Therefore, two workshops were held at the AI-Anon International Convention in July, bringing in over 100 more articles from the last two years.

[Literature Coordinators](#)

Regular literature updates were posted throughout the year on the Literature Coordinator community of AFG Connects. In October, two hour-long conference calls were held with Area Literature Coordinators to continue enhancing communication and cooperation regarding their role.

Magazines

[The Forum—Now in Full Color](#)

Throughout its 64-year history, *The Forum* has continued to grow and change. In January, the magazine began production in full color. Comments from the fellowship have been very positive.

[“Talk to Each Other”](#)

This department of *The Forum* made a comeback in the August issue, in which a member sought input on what other members considered to be “principles of the program.” Readers were encouraged to send in responses, several of which were included in the December issue. The author of the question received all responses.

[“Inside AI-Anon Family Groups”](#)

The June issue of *The Forum* included an “Inside AI-Anon Family Groups” article by the Magazine Editor. The article described the process, people, and timetable involved in developing *The Forum* each month. Because the article was also posted in the Member Resource section of the website and linked from *In the Loop*, it received several comments, all of them very positive. One commenter wrote, “I have wanted to submit writings but hesitated because I did not understand the process...I will write now that I feel I can ‘Let Go and Let God’ after reading this submission.”

[Forum Coordinators](#)

Regular updates were posted throughout the year on the *Forum* Coordinator community of AFG Connects. A revamped *Forum* Sales Report was posted to the community at the beginning of every month starting in January.

[AI-Anon Faces Alcoholism](#)

Content curation for member sharings and editorial responsibilities have shifted to the Magazine Editor, who will be collaborating with the Associate Director—Public Outreach Professionals.

Service Materials and Reports

[Conference Approved Literature Quotations](#)

Once again, 20 quotations from a variety of CAL appeared in the Announcements community of AFG Connects. Areas and other service arms could use these in their 2019 fundraising calendars without having to obtain written permission.

World Service Conference Report

Through the combined efforts of the entire office, the *News from the 2018 World Service Conference* bulletin, which detailed highlights from the Conference, was posted in English, French, and Spanish on the website. A link to the article was also included in the June and July issues of *In the Loop*, *Le Messenger*, and *En Contacto*. An ad for the article appeared in the July and August issues of *The Forum*. In the years preceding 2016, this annual overview of the WSC was included in the July and August issues of *The Forum*. Prior to 2006 it also appeared in the special Conference edition of *Inside Al-Anon Xtra*.

2019 CAL Catalog

Because no new material would be introduced until the summer, there was no 2018 edition of the CAL Catalog. Instead, the 2019 Catalog was designed and printed in time for it to be included as an insert in the August issue of *The Forum*. Staff was excited to present this streamlined, full-color edition to the fellowship.

Revised Information and Tips for GRs as Forum Coordinators (F-2)

Staff updated the document with current information on ways that GRs can encourage their group members to subscribe to *The Forum*. Once designed, the guideline was posted to *Forum* Coordinators on AFG Connects as well as on the Al-Anon Online Store.

Revised Area Forum Coordinators Guideline (G-32)

Staff created an updated version that reflects current practices and offers additional suggestions on how Coordinators can encourage Area members to read *The Forum*. This update has been submitted for approval.

The Forum PowerPoint

Upon the request of several *Forum* Coordinators, Staff completed a new PowerPoint presentation highlighting the benefits of subscribing to *The Forum* magazine. It has been posted on the *Forum* Coordinator community of AFG Connects.

LITERATURE COMMITTEE

Stuart H., Chairperson

Tom C., Staff Liaison, Associate Director—Literature

Bruce F./Gail G., Trustee Liaisons

The Committee currently consists of eight Delegate members, three At-Large members (including the Chairperson), the WSO Staff Liaison, and the WSO Trustee Liaison. It continues to meet quarterly by conference call, with intermediate correspondence occurring via email and via AFG Connects discussion boards.

After the 2018 Conference gave conceptual approval for a “Just for Tonight” bookmark, inspired by an article in the August 2016 issue of *The Forum*, the Committee began fine-tuning the piece and unanimously approved a final draft. Staff worked quickly to progress this final draft through the approval process and send the CAL piece to the vendor within the year.

The Committee continued last year’s discussion of a suggestion for a piece on Al-Anon’s spiritual principles. After completing the KBDM questions on the topic, the Committee agreed to recommend the development of a blog or electronic discussion board, so that members of the fellowship could share input on the topic.

The Committee received 16 suggestions for new literature or revisions to existing literature from the fellowship. Although it held

discussions on several of these ideas, it did not decide to make any recommendations to the 2019 Conference.

The Committee also continued to discuss the development of the NEW DAILY READER (working title). Additionally, it addressed ideas for structure-wide or Area-wide literature projects (for Literature Coordinators and others) that would increase awareness of the wide variety of available CAL.

The five candidates for the two open At-Large positions on the Literature Committee participated in web conferencing meetings with voice but no vote. It was hoped that, through this experience, they would gain a better sense of the Committee’s responsibilities, and, at the same time, the Committee would get to know them better. Résumés for two of the candidates will be presented for approval by the Executive Committee so they can begin serving in the spring of 2019.

FORUM EDITORIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Brian R., Chairperson

Mark S., Staff Liaison, Magazine Coordinator

Joyce B./Lynette K., Trustee Liaisons

The *Forum* Editorial Advisory Committee (FEAC) currently consists of five At-Large members (including the Chairperson), the Magazine Coordinator (who serves as the Staff Liaison), and the Trustee Liaison. This year, two Associate Directors also served as Interim Staff Liaisons until the Magazine Coordinator position was filled. The FEAC continues to meet quarterly by conference call, with intermediate correspondence shared via email and via AFG Connects discussion boards.

The Committee welcomed a new FEAC Trustee Liaison, Lynette K. She replaces outgoing Liaison, Joyce B. The Liaison serves as a link between the Committee and the Board of Trustees, with voice but no vote.

Each FEAC member receives 50 unedited sharings to review and score every month. The Editor uses those scores, along with the accompanying notes, to determine which are suitable for publication in *The Forum*. To ensure that every possible sharing can be used, even sharings given too low a grade to be published in their entirety are examined for any small nugget of wisdom, especially for the “One ‘Quote’ at a Time” section of the magazine.

Near the end of 2017, the Magazine Editor and the Design Department began making stylistic changes to *The Forum* by adding more graphics and color. At the beginning of the new year, the magazine went to full color. Both the Committee members and readers overwhelmingly approved of the change.

The Committee also discussed how best to proceed with THE *FORUM* BOOK (working title), approved by the 2015 WSC. Because over 800 articles from past issues have been collected so far, the Committee recommended that Staff seek an Al-Anon member who is also a professional freelance editor. The editor will be responsible for reviewing and categorizing the sharings, along with choosing an organizational structure for the work as a whole.

The Committee members also made a recommendation to update the tagline from the older “strength and hope for the friends and families of problem drinkers” (in the “Statement of Purpose” at the beginning of every issue of *The Forum*) to the current “help and hope for the families and friends of alcoholics.” The entire Committee agreed that the second option sounds more inviting and positive.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

Professionals

Claire R., Associate Director Public Outreach—Professionals

Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism

The *AFA* magazine continues to be the largest public outreach project with fellowship participation in the WSO's Service Structure. Members ordered 208,050 copies of the *AFA 2018* second-printing magazine. A total of 219,025 copies of the *AFA 2019* magazine were ordered for the first printing. This was 1,000 copies less than the *AFA 2016* first printing, which was the largest to date for the 12 issues of the magazine produced.

Staff encouraged participation in the project by creating *AFA* articles, ads, order forms; tear-off tab flyers; print and electronic publications in English, French, and Spanish; and AFG Connects community postings. Members were invited to submit stories for the publication via print and electronic means, including the easy-to-remember link al-anon.org/sharing.

As with the 2018 issue, the *AFA 2019* cover design emphasizes the purpose of the Al-Anon program rather than the year of its publication. The *AFA 2019* magazine includes a member's story from the Czech Republic, which was submitted to the WSO via Facebook Messenger. This is the first time a sharing has been received from a member who is only able to attend Al-Anon because of social media.

Members' stories and four professional articles have been selected for the *AFA 2020* magazine issue. Professional articles were written by a psychiatrist, a psychologist, and a pediatrician. For the first time, a parole officer has submitted an article; it could pair well with the sharing from an incarcerated Al-Anon member.

Al-Anon Membership Survey

Members were invited to participate in the WSO's 12th Conference-approved survey from January 10 to February 27, 2018. The survey questionnaires were available online in English, Spanish, and French. For the first time, members had the option of using mobile telephones or tablets in addition to personal or laptop computers to complete the survey.

A record-breaking 13,395 members completed the survey (in comparison to 8,517 members in the 2015 study). Members in the continental US and Canada comprised 88.7 and 11.2 percent of the survey participants, respectively. One tenth of a percent of the respondents were from Bermuda or Puerto Rico.

Spanish- and French-speaking member participation increased significantly from:

- 36 Spanish-speaking members in 2009 to 139 Spanish-speaking members in 2018
- 71 French-speaking members in 2009 to 275 French-speaking members in 2018

While the numbers may appear small, they represent an almost 400 percent increase in participation. Staff are examining options for increasing participation in 2021.

The WSO began distributing articles, announcements, and information about the 2018 Membership Survey in October 2017 and continued through March 2018, when members were thanked for their participation in the study. The fellowship was also notified when the report was posted on the WSO website on August 1, 2018.

Members also had the option to share how Al-Anon has benefited their lives. More than 8,000 members responded. Although most

comments came from English-speaking members, 209 responses were received from French-speaking members, and 100 were received from members who are Spanish speakers.

Since the US and Canadian members' results were statistically comparable, new and notable findings included:

- Fifty-six percent of the survey participants were between the ages of 25 and 48 when they first attended Al-Anon.
- Seven in ten members have been affected by alcoholism that spans two or more generations.
- Al-Anon members who are adult children of alcoholics are 68 percent more likely to be diagnosed with a mental health disorder than a spouse of an alcoholic.
- The average member reported an 88 percent improvement in his or her mental health within two to three years of continuous membership in Al-Anon.

Al-Anon's survey is a snapshot (an environmental scan) of its fellowship for a specific and limited period of time. The substantial number of survey participants increases the credibility of the findings and reflects the fellowship's willingness to be of service to Al-Anon.

Communication and Cooperation with Professionals/ Professional Inquiries

Most professionals call or send email messages to the WSO to request literature and *AFA* magazines. An electronic form for professionals is available on the updated WSO website. It provides a welcoming newsletter with essential information about Al-Anon. However, Staff noted that the form was underutilized; only 214 inquiries had been submitted during the year.

Requests for new Al-Anon or Alateen groups in a specific community and for ongoing supplies of literature are referred to Area Public Outreach Coordinators for local follow-up. The WSO supports Area and local service arms by providing an introductory supply of literature until local members can respond to the requests.

Outreach to Professionals—Let's Be Friendly with Our Professional Friends Workshop, 2018 Al-Anon International Convention

A series of 12 questions related to the effects of alcoholism on the family, family treatment/counseling, and ongoing recovery were posed to a panel composed of one Canadian professional and three US professionals practicing in the fields of psychology and psychiatry. One of the professionals supervises psychological services for a county school system and offered insight into the recovery of children and teens. This workshop was incorporated to expand public outreach during the International Convention. Due to the success of the workshop, the format and questions were provided to Area Public Outreach Coordinators and District Representatives so that they could replicate the workshop with a panel of professionals from their communities.

Student Requests for Interviews

Junior and senior high school and college students contacted the WSO to interview Staff for their class projects. They were asked to submit their questions in advance so that research could be done if necessary. In addition to questions about the effects of alcoholism on children and families, they asked about Al-Anon as an organization, e.g., the number of employees, the year in which it was founded, its organizational structure, the number of Al-Anon groups or members (estimates are provided from average number

of members per group data, which can be found in the annual updates provided by groups). Some students shared that they chose the subject of Al-Anon because they were or are affected by a parent's drinking. Others contacted Al-Anon because their class assignment is related to alcoholism or addiction in general.

Staff Travel

The Association for Addiction Professionals (NAADAC), Houston, TX

The Associate Directors—Professionals and Digital Strategy attended the conference. The program consisted of sessions focused on addiction and treatment and recovery for family members. Staff networked with exhibitors from treatment facilities and presenters as well as attendees. Topics included cultural and linguistic competence, treatment of the family unit, helping families manage daily stressors, the therapeutic process of forgiveness, the brain science of addiction, elderly addiction and its effects on caregivers, telehealth for rural and frontier communities, recovery peer support services, ethics, and social media. Al-Anon received recognition from presenters in family-focused workshops, which helped Staff converse with both attendees and presenters.

Mental Health for All Conference, Montreal, QC

The Associate Director—Public Outreach Professionals attended the third annual conference hosted by the Canadian Mental Health Association (with additional sponsorship provided by the Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction) for the third consecutive year. This event gives Staff the opportunity to communicate with Canadian professionals and attend workshops, which are also known as “best practices,” in the fields of mental health and addiction from across Canada. A similar change of terminology is occurring among Canadian professionals and government agencies, and in the US. This conference provided Staff with updated statistics and research reports from the mental health and addiction fields in Canada.

Cooperation with US Government Agencies/Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT), National Recovery Month Planning Meetings

Staff continued to represent families of alcoholics and Al-Anon Family Groups at National Recovery Month planning meetings. The January and September face-to-face meetings afford the WSO the opportunity to share information with the Executive Directors of Nar-Anon and the National Association of Children of Addiction (NACoA). In addition to Al-Anon, these two organizations are the primary advocates for families and children affected by alcoholism or drug addiction. Attending meetings and learning about the activities of other nonprofit organizations in the addiction and mental health fields gave Staff the opportunity to maintain open lines of communication with these organizations. Requests for *AFA* magazine and Al-Anon information tables at local or state Recovery Month events are forwarded to Area Public Outreach Coordinators.

National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) Liaison Council Meetings, Rockville, MD

Staff observed scientific presentations three times per year at the NIAAA Council meetings. The Liaison session for public and nonprofit organizations provides an opportunity for Staff to give updates about Al-Anon activities, such as the Membership Survey, and to interact with other nonprofit organizations. A.A. GSO's Cooperating with the Professional Community Coordinator also attends these meetings, which means that A.A. and Al-Anon Staff

have time to interact, ask one another questions, and update each other on current activities.

One of the sessions featured a joint council meeting of NIAAA/NIDA (National Institute on Drug Abuse)/CRAN (Collaborative Research on Addiction) for the first time. The highlight was an opportunity to hear the Surgeon General of the United States discuss the Report on Addiction.

PUBLIC OUTREACH & COMMUNICATIONS

Pat Q., Associate Director—Public Outreach Media & Group Records

Claire R., Associate Director—Public Outreach Professionals

Scot P., Associate Director—Digital Strategy

Public Communications

In April, the Senior Communications Specialist—Media began directly reporting to the Associate Director—Digital Strategy. Prior to this, the position reported to the Associate Director—Public Outreach Media & Group Records, although approximately 50 percent of her workload was supporting Digital Strategy efforts.

The Senior Communications Specialist (non-member) was interviewed this past October by a reporter for *The Review*, the independent student newspaper at the University of Delaware, for information about Al-Anon.

Staff provided background information on the Al-Anon program, including data from the 2018 Membership Survey and other topics such as Al-Anon's purpose, the nonprofessional nature of the program (which explains why members do not give advice), and anonymity.

The article, “Hope and healing: Al-Anon supports those impacted by alcoholism,” was published online and can be accessed via internet search. The article includes several quotes from a Staff member; she was able to provide her surname and title because she is a non-member. This detail encourages the media to cite the article.

Al-Anon has been referenced in the media in 2018. TV shows *Mom* and *Face the Truth* and the advice column *Dear Abby* all mentioned Al-Anon in the past year. The Al-Anon name was also cited in *The Kominsky Method*, a series that is currently available on Netflix.

Writing Guide for Incarcerated Al-Anon Members

Fifteen sharings were submitted by Al-Anon members attending groups in correctional facilities. The WSO now has 38 stories from inmates as a result of the creation and distribution of the Writing Guide for Incarcerated Al-Anon Members. One of the six stories reviewed by the *Forum* Editorial Advisory Committee was selected for the January 2019 issue of *The Forum*. Because many families of alcoholics are concerned about a relative facing a sentence or a loved one who is currently incarcerated, the Magazine Editor is evaluating a sharing from an Al-Anon member in prison for the *AFA 2020* magazine issue.

Native American Fellowship of the Spirit Conference, Bloomington, MN

The WSO arranged with the Minnesota South Area to staff an Al-Anon information table at the conference hosted by White Bison, Inc. Staff expressed appreciation for the Area's prompt response to the request. The WSO provided *Al-Anon's Path to Recovery* (S-67) pamphlets for the event. As a result of participation in this event, White Bison, Inc. invited Al-Anon to set up an information table at a training workshop that will take place in Portland, Oregon in 2019.

Social Media

The Social Media Specialist has coordinated several web conferencing interviews with professionals. There is a lot of enthusiasm; Sis Wenger, President/CEO of the National Association for Children of Addiction (NACoA) has agreed to be interviewed and has stated she will talk to other professionals, including Jerry Moe, about participating as well.

Following a social media discussion at the April Policy Committee meeting, the Digital Strategy Team began “unhiding” comments posted on Facebook that Staff determined to be appropriate and consistent with AI-Anon’s message of offering hope and help to the families and friends of alcoholics. All comments are blocked initially; however, comments that adhere to AI-Anon principles, including anonymity, are unhidden so other website visitors can see what has been shared. Sharing comments increases search engine confidence in the helpfulness of the AI-Anon message, improves the visibility of AI-Anon pages, and expands the WSO’s ability to reach those still suffering from the family disease of alcoholism.

Staff Travel

Facing Addiction with the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (NCADD), Alexandria, VA

Staff attended workshops and shared *AFA* magazines at an AI-Anon information table between workshop sessions. AI-Anon’s display table offered Staff an opportunity to network with 60 NCADD affiliates in communities across the US. The theme of the event, “Having Our Voices Heard: Raising an Effective Voice in a Changing and Challenging World,” was educational and timely for Staff because of its emphasis on effective use of social media.

PUBLIC OUTREACH COMMITTEE

Maria N., Chairperson

Pat Q., Staff Liaison, Associate Director Public Outreach—Media & Group Records

Claire R., Staff Liaison, Associate Director—Public Outreach Professionals

Scot P., Associate Director—Digital Strategy

Norm W./Arlene M., Trustee Liaisons

The Committee includes Delegates from Panels 56, 57, and 58; an At-Large Chairperson; and one At-Large member from Saskatchewan. Although the Canadian At-Large member opted not to continue serving on the Committee for the service year of June 2018 to June 2019, three additional At-Large members from the US volunteered to serve on the Committee. A fifth At-Large member, preferably from Canada, is being sought.

The Committee met three times in 2018 instead of four. Staff experienced a period of adjustment during the transition of media-related assignments to the Associate Director—Digital Strategy in June. In addition, two hurricane warnings prevented rescheduling of the Committee meeting in September and October.

The Committee’s thought force charged with developing culturally sensitive public outreach materials completed its KBDM process. The thought force made two recommendations to the Public Outreach Committee:

- Develop a strategy for informing AI-Anon members about culturally specific public outreach materials that are already in existence. It was noted that the American Community Surveys, which update the US Census, show that the Hispanic/Latino population is the fastest growing in the country.
- Survey Spanish-speaking AI-Anon groups, asking them how they attract and retain newcomers.

Subsequently, the Committee agreed to form a task force that would survey the ten Areas in the WSC Structure with the largest number of Spanish-speaking AI-Anon groups.

The Committee also proposed creating a task force that would be charged with selecting quotes for WSO social media posts from CAL recovery books and pamphlets. Staff evaluated the recommendation and concluded this activity was adequately managed by Staff, proposing instead a discovery process that would offer the Public Outreach Committee greater opportunity for evaluation and decision-making. The Committee was invited to review members’ responses to the optional question on the 2018 Membership Survey, about how AI-Anon has benefited their lives. WSO Conference Staff confirmed that members’ identities are safeguarded because those who participated in the survey did so anonymously. In addition, the introduction of the survey questionnaire informed members that survey findings would be used to enhance and increase the WSO’s communication with the public and professionals.

The Task Force for Development of a Public Outreach Tool for Incarcerated AI-Anon Members and Families of Alcoholics Being Paroled or Discharged from Correctional Facilities developed several options after responding to the KBDM questions: Members could distribute *AFA* magazines for parole and pre-release programs at facilities and recovery sharings from incarcerated AI-Anon members collected by the WSO could be published in *AFA* or *The Forum*. Subsequently, sharings were selected to be forwarded to FEAC and sent to be considered for inclusion in the *AFA 2020* magazine issue. The Task Force also discussed the idea of an online business card template with WSO contact information so that incarcerated individuals can use the WSO’s online meeting locator or toll-free number for meeting information when they are released. This Task Force will continue to meet to complete its charge.

ARCHIVES

Joe T., Archivist

Digitization of Archives Collection

The Archives continued to preserve materials in a digital format. This is essential because the WSO Archives have limited physical space for paper documents and “other than paper printed” holdings are now routinely produced. For example, annual snapshots of the WSO social media memes; quotations posted on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter; and the content of the website are captured and preserved for Staff reference and historical perspective. The outcome is that digital transfers are increased and transfer of paper documents, with the exception of original sharings from members for books and pamphlets, are reduced. A secure cloud platform is under review.

The WSO Mail/Copy Clerk continued to assist the Archivist with specialized scans of materials, which increased the number of digitized images in the collection. The remainder of *Forum* magazines not digitized last year were scanned. This helped the Archivist and Mail/Copy Clerk create a list of missing issues for the first time. The *Inside AI-Anon* and *Inside AI-Anon Xtra* newsletters in English, Spanish, and French; half of the World Directories and WSO leases; and all of the photos were imaged. The WSO Archivist contacted the US Government’s National Archives as a resource; they aided him in finding ways to correctly identify tiny paper photos that were incorrectly labeled as paper negatives.

An easy-to-complete Request for Research (AR-9) form was posted on the WSO website. As the year progressed, the number of inquiries increased because of the form's availability. The electronic form has helped Staff better serve the fellowship by forwarding group or member concerns to Group Services for responses that reflect current policies and experiences rather than dated historical perspectives.

A GSO requested sharing details so it could identify the gender of a member whose sharing appears in *Paths to Recovery* (B-24). In many languages, an author's gender influences how his or her work should be translated. As a result, the WSO Archives modified their policy for retaining original member sharings from ten years to permanently. Staff implemented the new procedure first with the storing and digitization of the member sharings for the *Intimacy in Alcoholic Relationships* (B-33) book and *Hope & Understanding for Parents & Grandparents* (P-94) pamphlet.

Permission to research the early Family Groups, children, and adult children of alcoholics in Al-Anon's formative decade (the 1950s) was granted to a college university professor who has a Guggenheim fellowship and is hoping to write a book on these subjects.

Several inquiries from members challenged the current Conference-approved motions appearing in the Policy Digest section of the *Service Manual* regarding the exclusive use of CAL at Al-Anon meetings. The Archivist and Associate Director—Public Outreach Professionals began graphically compiling discussions and motions from *Conference Summaries* and the text that was subsequently added to the Policy Digest section of the *Service Manual*. This format shows the progression of WSC discussions and motions regarding the use of A.A. and other outside literature at meetings. Experience has shown that clarity and a historical perspective are best provided when research and WSO responses include references to the *Conference Summaries* (which are posted on the WSO website) and the Policy Digest section of the *Service Manual*.

A former Staff member volunteered to sort several cartons of materials, which were donated by the family of a deceased past Trustee and former Delegate, for the WSO Archives collection. The year-month-day [YY-MM-DD] format continued to unite the collection so that digital and paper content over multiple decades were not replicated in the donated materials and missing items could be electronically accessioned to the collection.

Over the years, Archives has moved many announcements into the holdings by using the document and publications codes that are assigned by Publications. The code-to-carton storage technique served the Archives well, but the retrieval of the content became cumbersome. A decision to populate all announcements by year began in the fourth quarter. The process includes digital and paper units. It saves Staff time when they need to retrieve information and improves the Archivist's speed of research.

AFG Connects

The **Area Archives Coordinator** community continues to serve as a clearinghouse and resource for Area Archive Coordinators to share their ideas about scanners, computers, cloud storage, etc. Area Archives Coordinators whose collections are stored as documents exchanged information with each other about archival storage folders, scrap books, etc. Some Area Archives Coordinators have converted and stored their collections in digital formats. The Coordinators using digital technology discovered a one-size-fits-all guideline would be too general to be useful, due to the wide variety of electronic equipment used by Archivists. So, the idea of creating a technology guide was abandoned.

Al-Anon Then and Now (AR-2)

Translations into Spanish and French were completed. This pamphlet can be used as a handout to introduce and summarize Al-Anon's history or can be distributed to the fellowship during viewings of *Lois's Story* (AV-1, SAV-1, or FRAV-1) or *Lois W. and the Pioneers* (AV-24, SAV-24, or FRAV-24) DVD film rentals. The pamphlet is available as a free download in English, Spanish, and French on the WSO website, and on the WSO's online store. Special website addresses can be used to easily access and download the pamphlets: al-anon.org/18thenandnow (English); al-anon.org/18brevehistoria (Spanish); and al-anon.org/18brefhistorique (French).

Al-Anon's Cofounders (P-87)

Translations into Spanish and French were completed. The fellowship will be able to access the pamphlet via free electronic download in all three languages beginning in 2019.

FINANCE AND OPERATIONS

Niketa Bailey, Director of Finance & Operations (Non-member)

In 2018, the Finance & Operations Departments worked on various projects during the year to help streamline operations and increase efficiency throughout the organization. Together, their Teams:

- added a Canadian PayPal option on the website to allow members to make contributions in Canadian currency;
- designed the cover of *One Day at a Time in Al-Anon 50th Anniversary* and the 2018 International Convention bookplate;
- implemented electronic card readers to accept credit cards at the 2018 International Convention;
- updated the newsletters *Le lien* and *en acción*, to be offered in full color;
- implemented PayPal as an additional payment option for literature purchases on the website;
- redesigned and streamlined the Conference Approved Literature catalog; and
- designed the cover of *Intimacy in Alcoholic Relationships—A Collection of Al-Anon Personal Stories* (B-33).

TRANSLATION

Colette Norman, Translation Project Coordinator (Non-member)

The following items were translated into French and Spanish in 2018:

Book

- *Intimacy in Alcoholic Relationships* (B-33)

Magazines

- *Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism 2019* magazine, order forms, and marketing tools
- *Le lien*, a French-language publication compiled from *Forum* articles (six issues)
- *Al-Anon y Alateen en acción*, a Spanish-language publication compiled from *Forum* articles (six issues)

Pamphlets/Service Tools

- *Hope & Understanding for Parents & Grandparents* (P-94)
- *Fact Sheet for Professionals* (S-37EF; S-37ES)
- *2018-2021 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*
 - ◆ *Al-Anon and Alateen Groups at Work* (P-24)
 - ◆ *Digest of Al-Anon and Alateen Policies* (P-25)
 - ◆ *World Service Handbook* (P-26)
 - ◆ *Al-Anon's Twelve Concepts of Service* (P-27)
- *Does She Drink Too Much?* (P-62) [French only]

Web-Based or Digital Media

- 2018 Al-Anon International Convention: theme, program, website registration information, housing information, audio podcast release, audio release agreement for participants, special event registration information, and surveys
- *Le Messenger* and *En Contacto*—French and Spanish electronic newsletters published monthly
- *Alateen Talk* excerpts published online
- Vanity URLs for website pages
- CMA letter for electronic meetings
- Website content updates

Other Items

- Appeal Letter to members (quarterly)
- Appeal Letter to members (update of information on the back of the letter)
- Chairperson of the Board letter (quarterly)
- *News from the 2018 World Service Conference* bulletin
- 2019 World Service Conference theme for use on posters, letterhead and other materials
- *One Day at a Time in Al-Anon 50th Anniversary Book Plate*
- 2019 CAL Catalog
- *Resolution of Gratitude to Alcoholics Anonymous*
- *Just for Tonight* (FM-81) [Bookmark]

CUSTOMER SERVICE AND SHIPPING

Camille Peters, Associate Director—Customer Service & Shipping
(Non-member)

The Customer Service & Shipping Department accomplished the following items in 2018:

- Redesigned the warehouse to streamline operations and increase efficiencies
- Renegotiated new shipping rates with UPS
- Labels for *Le lien* and *en acción* are processed in Customer Service
- Processed and shipped 422,000 copies of the *Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism* magazine

2018 Stats

- Total literature orders placed: 17,451
- Total contributions entered: \$1,953,460
- Total *Forum* subscriptions ordered: 18,220
- Canadian orders placed: 630
- Overseas orders placed: 112

Finance Committee

Jennie McC./Joyce B./Joan S., Chairpersons
Niketa Bailey, Director of Finance & Operations (Non-member)

The Finance Committee meets monthly and reports to the Executive Committee immediately following the Finance meeting. During the Conference, the Finance Committee reports directly to the Board.

Responsibilities of the Finance Committee include monitoring expenses and cash flow, aligning the budget of estimated income and expenses, and recommending that the Board of Trustees set aside funds in reserve when appropriate. The Committee's oversight ensures that AFG, Inc. remains solvent.

The Committee reviews the financial feasibility of proposed projects that are not currently included in the budget, taking into consideration the goals and desired outcomes, cost-effectiveness, timing, and the project's relationship to the Strategic Plan. Additionally, it sets prices for new or existing literature. The Finance Committee reports its actions and recommendations to the Executive Committee.

Other routine functions include:

- Approving the letters for the quarterly appeal to members
- Reviewing handouts on the previous year's contributions (received from the US and Canada) that will be distributed at the WSC
- Recommending to the Board of Trustees the Equalized Expense amount for the WSC (the amount the Board requires each Area to send as their contribution toward the expenses of their Delegate)
- Reviewing, revising (when appropriate), and submitting recommendations for the Investment Strategy Goals to the Board of Trustees for approval
- Reviewing each department's budget with the Director of that service when preparing the Preliminary 2018 Budget for presentation to the Board of Trustees in January
- Reviewing the Audit Report and Management Letter
- Reviewing Investment Philosophy
- Reviewing the 990
- Reviewing Finance Committee Goals and Objectives
- Reviewing the Investments in the Reserve Fund
- Reviewing packing and shipping charges to ensure fairness and validity
- Meeting with the investment managers twice a year

Non-routine actions included:

- Working on the Finance Committee presentations for the 2018 and 2019 WSCs and discussing various ways to make it more meaningful and helpful to Conference members
- Recommending that the Board of Trustees print *Intimacy in Alcoholic Relationships—A Collection of Al-Anon Personal Stories* (B-33) in softcover format and setting the price at \$11
- Recommending that the Board of Trustees offer *Courage to Change: One Day at a Time in Al-Anon II* (eB-16), *How Al-Anon Works for Families & Friends of Alcoholics* (eB-22), *Alateen—Hope for Children of Alcoholics* (eB-3) and *Having Had a Spiritual Awakening* (eB-25) eBooks in English and in Spanish and French where available, and to offer the electronic version of *The Forum* through the Google Play Store at a selling price that is equivalent to its selling price on other platforms
- Establishing a task force on Area reserve funds to help Delegates at the 2018 WSC understand the purpose of their Area's reserve fund and how decisions are made
- Reviewing the draft of the Eighth ECRPM Triennial Report prior to presentation at the 2018 WSC
- Recommending that the Board of Trustees print the *Just for Tonight* Bookmark (M-81) at an initial quantity of 50,000 and set the price at \$0.10 per piece
- Approving pricing of *AFA 2020*