



## *Election Time!*

The Fall Assembly at Blackstone  
is the election assembly this year.  
Time to get a new GR for your group!

New officers will be elected at the area level.  
Outgoing GR's are asked to attend to vote for new officers.

**BUY ONE....GET ONE FREE!**  
The outgoing GR and NEW GR Offer

Buy one group representative's way,  
and get the new GR's free!  
The registration forms must be returned  
together to receive this great offer.  
Bring your new GR to the assembly to see how it works!

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## Detaching with Love.....

Hello,

I am not sure of the format for this. This is my first contribution. But here goes:

I tried “detaching” in many ways when I first came to Al-Anon. I tried wrapping my loved one in a warm blanket and giving them to my Higher Power. The “God-Box” sounded like a great idea, but it didn’t seem to do it for me, either.

Then, my sponsor kept talking about dignity and pain. My sponsor said that when I would step in and “help” that person with their “problem”, I am taking away his dignity. I really didn’t get this at first. When my loved one was asking, (pleading) for money to pay a bill, it didn’t seem that not giving it to him would make him feel very dignified. Then, when I applied this suggestion, my loved one was very proud to have solved the situation for himself. I could see that by allowing him to be an adult by not treating him like a child was, indeed, restoring some of his lost dignity.

My sponsor also said that when I would step in and “save the day”, I was delaying the process of letting my loved one hit “bottom”. So, now, when I see him in a “difficult situation”, whatever form it takes, I try to remember the “Serenity Prayer” and accept the things I cannot change, change the things I can, and WISDOM to know the difference.

I don’t always do the right thing when confronted with “enabling or detaching” but I’m growing and learning everyday. It’s not always easy, (usually it’s not), but I know detachment is a way of giving positive help to my loved one, and it’s also a way of taking care of myself.

Thank you for allowing me to express my feelings on this subject.

Debbie J

*“If I can’t detach with love,  
I can learn to detach with consideration...”*



## Calendar of Upcoming Events

### **E.S.A.C./Alateen Conference**

September 22-24, 2006  
Makemie Woods Camp  
Lanexa, Virginia

### **Northern Virginia Gratitude Breakfast**

November 4, 2006  
Knights of Columbus  
Arlington, Virginia

### **Fall Virginia Assembly**

October 14-15, 2006  
Blackstone, Virginia

### **ASC Tidewater Gratitude Breakfast**

November 12, 2006  
Greenbrier Holiday Inn  
Chesapeake, Virginia

## *Poetry Corner*

### *Making Decisions*

*It's not easy to make a decision  
When you think you alone must decide.  
But if you have faith in your Higher Power,  
you know He'll be there as your guide*

*No man (or woman) is an island, they say,  
there are good people all around who  
are ready and willing to assist you.  
That may be where God's help is found.  
There are other places, too, where guidance is given.  
Have you listened at meetings of late?  
Do you use the books and pamphlets and slogans?  
They all help you make plans that are great.  
Take advantage of all these reliable sources  
when you're trying to decide what to do.  
God has helped others through difficult times,  
and he's sure, when asked, to help you...*



# Dear Serene

Dear Serene,

What can I do? We had some people in training for a caring profession who wanted to sit in on an Al-Anon meeting to see what it was all about. They came to our meeting and one of the long time members announced that it was a closed meeting and they would have to leave. I felt really terrible for those people who came to find out about Al-Anon. I didn't know what to do. Please help.

What to do?

Dear What,

Grab yourself a cup of coffee and hang on, because you've hit this serene heart with some heavy stuff. I just love you for caring about this. What you can do immediately is ask for a group conscience if someone says it's a closed meeting and visitors must leave. If the group conscience still wants to exclude the visitors, then go outside the meeting room with the visitors and talk with them about Al-Anon. Talk with them about how Al-Anon works and how working our steps, using our slogans, reading conference approved literature, and attending meetings help us little by little, one day at a time to become serene. Give them a meeting list and note any meetings that are not closed. Get their names and how to contact them.

For the love of ODAT, we want people to feel welcome in Al-Anon! What courage it takes for a newcomer, a professional, a concerned human being to walk into the rooms.

I've seen groups so obsessed with the idea of anonymity, that they hold themselves CLOSED. Then I've heard some of those same groups complain because their attendance is low and there aren't any new people coming in. Well, what is wrong with that picture, darlin'? We're an anonymous fellowship, not an exclusive club. Our purpose is to help friends and families whose lives have been affected by someone's drinking. Well, suppose that help comes through our sharing the program with care professionals, who, in turn refer friends and families of alcoholics to Al-Anon for help. That becomes public outreach. Suppose a friend of a friend wants to know about Al-Anon so they may suggest it to a friend whom they know to be in need of help. Maybe they want to feel comfortable enough to come with them to their first meeting. That's called public outreach.

Wake up and smell the biscuits! Talk about what anonymity means. "Whom you see here, what you hear here, let it stay here."

You can suggest that your group do another group conscience and agree to have an open meeting for the first thirty minutes, then ask the visitors to leave for a closed portion of the meeting so that members who are in great pain or who are uncomfortable sharing with non-members present may have the opportunity to do so.

That THINK slogan fits right in here, doesn't it, dear?

Serene



Looking for a fun service job?



STOP!

Try on a Group Representative position!

The Perks....

Two, all expenses paid weekends  
away from your family,  
surrounded by loving, service oriented,  
strong program people from all walks of life.

A Tremendous Growth Opportunity  
Serious Inquiries Only!

See your group for more details...



**THE AL-ANON SERVICE  
CENTER OF  
NORTHERN VIRGINIA**

*presents the*

**33<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL AL-ANON  
Gratitude Breakfast**

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2006**

**9:00 AM**

**PHYLLIS D. ~ BELTSVILLE, MD**  
**AL-ANON**

**ALATEEN (TBA)**

**PAUL A. ~ CHELTENHAM, MD**  
**AA**

**DONATION \$15.00**

**KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS**  
**5115 LITTLE FALLS ROAD ~**  
**ARLINGTON, VA**

**FOR TICKET INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT YOUR GROUP REP. OR**  
**AL-ANON SERVICE CENTER**  
**(703) 764-0476**

**TICKET DEADLINE ~ OCTOBER 10, 2006 NO TICKETS SOLD AT DOOR**

**~ DIRECTIONS ~**

**FROM POINTS WEST:** I-66 east towards Washington, D.C. EXIT 1-66 at Lee Highway/Washington Blvd. LEFT on Lee Highway. LEFT on Harrison St. RIGHT on Little Falls Rd. to 5115 on left.

**FROM POINTS EAST:** I-66 west away from Washington, D.C. EXIT 1-66 at Glebe Rd. RIGHT on Glebe Rd. LEFT on Rock Spring Rd. LEFT on Little Falls Rd. to 5115 on right.

**FROM POINTS NORTH** From intersection of Old Dominion Rd. and Chain Bridge Rd. Old Dominion Rd. toward Arlington. RIGHT on Little Falls Rd. to 5115 on right.

**FROM I-395:** EXIT 1-395 at King St. toward Falls Church/Bailey's Crossroads RIGHT on George Mason Dr. LEFT on Yorktown. . RIGHT on Little Falls Rd. to 5115 on left.

**Columbus Club phone number: (703) 536-9656**