



Virginia Al-A-News

A newsletter written by and for Al-Anons and Alateens in Virginia

Spring 2009

Step Up Your Program and Step Up to Service

Are you looking to “step up” your program? Service is a great way to enhance your recovery and give something back at the same time. And the timing couldn’t be better: it’s time to elect a new panel of service members to our Area World Service Committee (AWSC). December 2009 marks the end of the 3-year term for all Area Officers and Group Representatives (GRs), leaving all Area positions open.

These positions are vital to keeping Al-Anon running.

New members will be elected at the next Area Assembly (Fall). All GRs and outgoing Area service members must attend, and anyone interested in stepping up to service is encouraged to attend and familiarize themselves with the Assembly procedures described in the *Service Manual*, pages 136–139.

The following are brief descriptions of each service position. We encourage you to read them and think about which service activities interest you, or whether you know someone who may be a good candidate for election to an office.

The current position holders are available to answer your questions and support you, both now and once you take on a service role...

You are never alone!

You can always ask for help and/or form a committee of members to help carry out the tasks of your office. There are also opportunities to serve as alternates to any of these positions or to serve on committees led by these positions.

Area Chair

The Chairman facilitates all Assemblies and Area World Service Committee meetings during the 3-year term of office. The Area Chair should have leadership and organizational ability; it is essential to be able to plan an agenda and conduct meetings in an orderly manner. Communication and cooperation with others are key elements of good chairmanship.

continued on page 3

Inside This Issue

Dear Serene

Calendar of Events

Wanted: GRs



Dear Serene;

I belong to a nice, little Al-Anon meeting. And that just about sums it up.

It seems that we are supposed to have business meetings. We don't. We don't seem very organized. The Group Representative is very new and there are no others that are taking on other jobs for our group. I just volunteered to be the secretary. We don't have a treasurer, yet.

Few people want to volunteer to do any service work, even simple tasks, such as welcoming newcomers at the door or making coffee. My sponsor tells me that if I don't give back to the program, it's hard to keep it.

How can I help my group get stronger and grow with such apathy?

Lonely and Afraid

Dear Lonely;

Congratulations on your new service job! It sounds like you are on your way! Our program is based on attraction rather than promotion. No one should be talked into a service job, or rather, sold on it. Yet, it is how we survive, by all helping out doing our part. Your group will grow. Be patient! Try having a meeting with service as the topic. Don't give up!

Your sponsor speaks the truth. It is a much stronger program when you give it away. It comes back to you many, many times over. That isn't the reason to do service. There is real personal growth when we do service work. We grow out of our previous selves and into new selves. We usually have fun, meet new people, and enjoy working our program while we help Al-Anon become stronger. The attraction part is often contagious, watching someone else in a service position and the changes they experience.

Ask for those interested in this meeting becoming their home group to stay after the meeting for a few minutes. Talk about having a business meeting before or after the meeting. Encourage your members to attend the business meetings. Have someone chair the meeting. Ask for volunteers, with a smile! Your group will grow as your members grow.

In Service- Serene



Step Up

Continued from the front page

Area Delegate

The Delegate is a channel through which information flows. The conscience of Al-Anon can work effectively only if it is informed. Much depends on the Delegate being thoroughly familiar with the *Service Manual* throughout his or her term of service. The Delegate attends the annual Al-Anon/Alateen World Service Conference (our world-wide group conscience) and brings to the Conference our Area's viewpoint on matters affecting the entire fellowship. The Delegate then returns to the Area with a broader perspective of Al-Anon worldwide. He/she is the bridge of understanding that links the groups in the Area with world Al-Anon/Alateen to help us continue to function in unity. The Delegate is the servant of Al-Anon as a whole.

Treasurer

The Treasurer maintains the Area bank account and pays all bills for expenditures approved by the Area World Service Committee. We have a checking account with Sovereign Bank with a debit card so the Treasurer can make deposits at his or her leisure. To date this checking account holds all funds for Al-Anon, which includes Alateen and Public Outreach. The Treasurer maintains the Area Budget (currently on an Excel Spreadsheet) and also maintains a record of donations sent by groups (recording the group name, group number, and check number). The records are kept on a thumb drive, which can pass along to the next Area Treasurer. Donations are sent to the Area office, or, if you are comfortable releasing your full name and address, you can request that they be mailed to your home. The Treasurer makes periodic financial reports to the Area and Assembly. This position only requires a minimum of your time and the current Treasurer will be available to answer questions and help the next Treasurer.

Secretary

The Secretary attends to all regular secretarial work and takes minutes of all Area meetings and Assemblies. These minutes should be sent to the Area World Service Committee members soon after the meeting and be recorded in a permanent minutes book to be passed along to a successor. Minutes are also kept in a log at the Area office.



District Representatives

The District Representative is usually any incoming, outgoing, or active past Group Representative who is willing to represent the district at Area World Service Committee meetings and Area Assembly. They should have (or will certainly gain) knowledge of Al-Anon traditions and concepts as well as how they work. The District Representative meets with Group Representatives in their district to provide the GRs with information from the Area World Service Committee, listen to group concerns, and take any questions or concerns to the Area World Service Committee meetings.

Public Outreach

Public Outreach informs the general public through the media, professionals, facilities, and organizations about whom we are, what we do, and how to get in touch with us. Our goal is to attract to our program those whose lives are or have been affected by someone else's drinking, so that those who need our program can find the help and hope we offer. We also strive for name recognition and credibility as a community resource. The Public Outreach Coordinator serves as a communication link to events in the Area and the general community; distributing service projects and information from the WSO to Area Assemblies, Districts, and Groups; encouraging the Area, Districts, and GRs to carry project ideas and information to the groups; and continually educating the fellowship about the need to attract those who are still suffering to our program.

Literature Coordinator

The Area Literature Coordinator carries the message of recovery and unity through Al-Anon Conference Approved Literature (CAL) to the Districts, Groups, and members in the Area. This person manages the Literature Distribution Center at the Area Office, maintaining inventory, updating the order sheet, ordering new literature, and making donations from the proceeds to the Area treasury. This coordinator reads and becomes familiar with each piece of Al-Anon literature, encourages its use in meetings and program events, works with volunteers to display CAL at workshops, develops literature donation projects, and encourages members to write sharings for ongoing and new CAL projects.



Forum Coordinator

The *Forum* Coordinator encourages groups and members to submit sharings to the *Forum* magazine and to subscribe (it's currently \$11.00 per year). The Coordinator carries Al-Anon's message of recovery as it is printed in the *Forum* to the GRs, who are the *Forum* Representatives at the group level. This coordinator's duties include, but are not limited to, being available to GRs and DRs for assistance in conducting workshops or outreach activities. Coordinators can ask Area World Service Committee members to assist by subscribing to and sharing the value of the *Forum* as they conduct their service activities. Coordinators can keep records of their efforts to pass on to the next coordinator. They may also bring sharing sheets, blank order forms, and copies of the *Forum* to workshops, assemblies, etc. Display boards may also be made to use at these events.

Newsletter Coordinator

The purpose of an Area newsletter is to provide a vital link among individual members, groups, and the Area; encourage attendance at service events; communicate local, area, and Al-Anon Information Service news; and attract Al-Anon members into service. The Newsletter Coordinator determines the type of submissions that will be accepted and establishes a due date for submissions; copy edit submissions for spelling, grammar, and punctuation and make sure we use consistent terminology; encourage members to make it *their* newsletter by submitting information, reports, and service sharings. The NL Coordinator (along with the E-mail Coordinator, described below) also helps maintain a list of e-mail addresses, adding and updating members' e-mail addresses. Members' anonymity is protected at all times. All of this can take anywhere from 4 to 8 hours a month, if the coordinator works alone. It may be helpful to form a committee, or find a group of volunteers who are willing to donate a half-hour or hour of their time to do certain tasks each month.

Webmaster

The Webmaster keeps the VA AFG Web site updated by uploading the newsletter and revised meeting schedules, and adding Area news, service opportunities, and events from the area. Responsibilities also include renewing the Web site each year and getting reimbursed by the Area Treasurer. Software like Dreamweaver is recommended to update and upload materials.



Alateen Coordinator

The Area Alateen Coordinator is the vital link of communication between the WSO and the Area on matters relating to Alateen. This coordinator is a resource for Alateen at all levels of service. The Alateen Coordinator is encouraged to work closely with the Area Alateen Process Person (AAPP) (described below), the Area's designated contact with the WSO regarding Alateen forms. Some Areas designate additional responsibilities to the AAPP. For example, the Alateen Coordinator may be responsible for the training and certification of Al-Anon Members involved in Alateen Service and the AAPP for submitting Alateen forms, recertification of Anon Members Involved in Alateen Service (AMIAS), or verifying certification of members serving Alateen for Al-Anon conventions and other events with Alateen participation.

Co Chairperson /Alateen Processing

The Area Alateen Process Person (AAPP) serves as the Area's designated Alateen contact with the WSO Group Records Department regarding Alateen forms. Since 2004, every Area has Alateen requirements and has a process to certify Al-Anon Members Involved in Alateen Service (AMIAS), register Alateen groups, and implement the Alateen Behavioral and Safety Requirements at all events in the Area that have Alateen participation. The Alateen Process Person works closely with the Alateen Coordinator; for example, the Alateen Coordinator may be responsible for the training and certification of AMIAS, and the AAPP for submitting Alateen forms, recertifying AMIAS, or verifying certification of members serving Alateen for Al-Anon conventions and other events with Alateen participation.

Group Records

The Group Records Coordinator is the link between the Area and the WSO. They must have computer and Internet availability and be familiar with Microsoft Office Programs, such as Access, Word, and Excel. This person compiles and maintains a complete list of all GRs, DRs, Area Officers, and Area Coordinators. (Personal information is considered confidential and treated as such.) He or she updates the list of all RI meetings and their respective GRs and contact persons, and they keep the WSO updated.

Area Archives

Enjoy scrap booking? We need an Area Archives Coordinator to preserve the experience, history, and memorabilia of the VA AFG. The Coordinator may head up an Archives Committee, which would be responsible for researching the history of Al-Anon in RI. Our archive materials are currently at the Area office. They need to be organized, dated, catalogued, and preserved using archival methods (eg, acid free paper, boxes). Anonymity is stressed when displaying photographs that might identify individual members. The materials collected can be displayed at workshops, assemblies, group anniversaries, or public information displays. *Reprinted from Lifelines.*



Calendar of Events

June 19-21	State Convention
July 17-19	MEAC
Nov 13-14	Fall Assembly

To submit an article, please send via email to:

nettles1@hotmail.com

Please put "newsletter" in the response box

To send via snail mail:

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Group Representatives Wanted!



Tremendous Growth Opportunity

**Two- all expenses paid
trips out of town each year**

Three Year Commitment

See your current Group Representative!

