

Area Assembly

Meeting Minutes
AFG Area 22_LA
Saturday, November 7, 2020

**** UNAPPROVED MINUTES ****

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Louisiana Area Assembly was held online using the video conference program Zoom, at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, November 7, 2020. Angela A., Chairperson, opened the meeting with a moment of silence followed by the Serenity Prayer. She welcomed all in attendance, and then read the Louisiana Area Assembly Mission Statement: The mission of the Louisiana AFG Area Assembly is to foster and support participation in service for Al-Anon and interest in the Steps, Traditions, and Concepts; to provide opportunities for groups to associate with other groups; to inform about the activities and service in our region; and to maintain representation to and from the World Service Conference (WSC).

Angela introduced the Louisiana Area Officers, who then read Al-Anon's Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts of Service, including the General Warranties. Angela then referred everyone to page 22 of the *2018-2021 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27) and reminded them about the "Three Obstacles to Success" in Al-Anon.

Angela announced the future tentative dates of the 2021 Area Assembly weekends:

March 27-28*, May 22-23*, August 21-22, and November 6-7

* *Not our usual "Assembly months"*

Angela reminded Assembly members that all the documents that are needed for today's meeting were on the Area website, www.la-al-anon.org (password: serenity). She then reminded everyone of the online conference procedures for participating in discussions, asking questions, dealing with technical problems, online meeting etiquette, etc.

Rachel B., Area Secretary, asked for any corrections to the unapproved minutes from Saturday, January 18, 2020 (approval had been deferred until now from the previous Assembly). Angela A. requested that "unfinished business" be referred to as "on-going business". A motion to accept the minutes as amended was made by Steve G., Group Representative (GR), and seconded by Steven S., GR. The minutes were approved as amended.

Rachel B. then asked for any corrections to the Assembly minutes from Saturday, August 15, 2020. Angela A. requested that "unfinished business" be changed to "on-going business"; it was incorrectly stated that Alyson M. chaired the new and on-going business part of the meeting, and this was corrected to read that it was chaired by Angela A. It was noted by Clara E. that the hyphens were missing in "Al-Anon" in the delegate's report in the .pdf version of the minutes, and Rachel stated that more care would be taken to assure that any future conversions reflected the spelling correctly. A motion to accept the minutes as amended was made by Lucy W., GR, and seconded by Danny C., GR. The minutes were approved as amended.

OFFICER REPORTS

Treasurer's report: Hope L., Treasurer

This report reflects the complete third quarter of 2020. I have included my balance from the information from the Area World Service Committee (AWSC) meeting of Sept 19, 2020. I am grateful for everyone who helped to finish the third quarter. The information for the Alateen fundraiser and our seed money for the South Central Regional Delegates Meeting (SCRDM) is the same as on last report.

Alternate Delegate's report: Eric N., Alternate Delegate

Thank you, Rebecca and Sarah, for this morning's workshop about District meetings and spiritual principles. Duke H. will be our speaker tonight at 7:30. I am looking for volunteers to present workshops and to speak at future Area Assemblies. Please see my article in the current newsletter for tips on planning a workshop.

Delegate's report: Tammy M., Delegate

Temporary Electronic Meetings and Conference Approved Literature (CAL):

- ◆ The Area already has permission to use the Al-Anon name if it wishes to display. You do not need permission to display the Opening, Steps, Traditions, Concepts or Closing as you can directly link to this information in the *2018-2021 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* on al-anon.org and share it on your screen.
- ◆ Protecting our Conference Approved Literature (CAL) copyright--offer members the opportunity to serve by reading CAL instead of sharing it online.
- ◆ Displaying the Meeting Opening, Suggested Closing, and Our Three Legacies during meetings only when they do not persist after the meeting closes.
- ◆ Receiving the Seventh Tradition--determine if it is possible to contribute to local and national services--which might have fixed expenses, such as rent and special workers--before face-to-face meetings resume. We are also asked to be "obedient to the unenforceable" and follow the group conscience of our fellowship as a whole. This group conscience is documented in the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual*, and is based on the decisions of the World Service Conference (WSC), our largest representative group conscience.
- ◆ On page 115 of the *2018-2021 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (version two), it states that the World Service Office (WSO) cannot grant permission for "substantial" reprints of CAL in the US and Canada. On pages 116-117, the *Manual* reiterates that the WSO does not give permission to reprint extensively within the US and Canada, but goes on to clarify that the WSO can approve "limited excerpts" from CAL, provided that the proper forms have been submitted. In this case, "limited" has generally been interpreted as being a paragraph or less in length, but also limited in the number of quotations reprinted in a given document. However, to provide some flexibility in the use of CAL at face-to-face meetings and workshops, members may copy CAL (and *The Forum*) without written permission provided that:
 - ♣ It is for one-time use (such as for a meeting topic)
 - ♣ The number of photocopies printed is limited to the number of members attending
 - ♣ The number is also limited to what can be reasonably discussed within one meeting
 - ♣ The photocopies are not for sale or being distributed beyond that meeting or workshop

- ♣ Photocopies are used, rather than retyping the material, to maintain accuracy, and the following credit line is included on all copies: "From ___, copyright 20___, by Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. One-time reprint permission granted by Al-Anon members read, provided that the passage is not posted on a website or otherwise visible beyond the length of that individual meeting. While displayed, the passage should include the credit line and copyright information, just as the face-to-face meeting does. Attendees are asked not to take screen captures of CAL and share with others.

Are you an effective communicator? Do you enjoy helping others? Do you have a passion for Al-Anon's legacies and its service structure? Do you want to make a difference by sharing your knowledge with other Al-Anon members? If so, you may be a fit for the attached position! The Group Services Specialist role requires five or more years of membership and service in Al-Anon. Please see the attached position description for a summary of the job duties and position requirements. Interested candidates can email their resume and cover letter to HumanRes@al-anon.org.

We wanted to let the fellowship know that we have begun development of improvements to the Mobile App, including an update to our registration process. We will work to complete the development, testing, and rollout of these changes as soon as we can. We'll keep you updated as we progress and can provide timelines. Thank you for your continued suggestions and feedback! We look forward to evolving our Mobile App together.

The Public Outreach Committee has recommended that the year be removed from the *Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism* (AFA) magazine cover and only be included as part of the copyright information on the inside cover. In December 2019, a consensus was reached by the Committee. WSO Staff raised a concern that the magazine without a date could be at risk for being thrown away prematurely.

- ◆ So, the PO Committee, which has several members who work in the professional field, continued the discussion at the September 2020 Committee meeting. The consensus was that the year on the cover is a greater detriment than a benefit
- ◆ Dates matter particularly when referring to research materials.
- ◆ Including the year dates our timeless content and makes it more likely to be thrown out the following year.
- ◆ Members are less likely to hand out what appears to be outdated materials, so more magazines end up being wasted across all service levels.

The PO Committee's recommendation has been presented to the Executive Committee, and no concerns were raised. The new issue of AFA, formally known as AFA 2021, will be the first issue printed without a year on the cover. This message will be posted to PO Coordinators and the AFG Announcements communities later this week.

We have received many requests for the PSA distribution and airplay lists. Historically, at the launch of a new PSA campaign, WSO provided the lists to members and asked for their help to deliver the Al-Anon message of hope to their local TV and radio stations. This year, we have held off in publishing these lists because of recent information from our new PSA.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many groups are not meeting in person. Therefore, it has become difficult for members to obtain literature through traditional methods. In an effort to enhance the affordability of literature for members, the flat rate shipping cost of \$10 has been reduced to \$5 for individual orders under \$50 in the US, Puerto Rico, and Bermuda. Shipping

costs for orders in Canada will be reduced to \$10 for individual orders under \$50. This special shipping rate will be available for a limited time.

Dates for Town Hall Meeting with WSO:

- ◆ Saturday, November 14th, 2020: Miriam B. (IN)
- ◆ Saturday, December 12th, 2020: Rosanna H. (CA[N])
- ◆ Saturday, January 9th, 2021: Cindy J. (FL[N])
- ◆ Saturday, February 6th, 2021: Susan R. (SD)

SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Newcomers to Area Assembly Meeting report: Sylvia G., Newcomers to Area Assembly Coordinator—absent; report given by Jay P., past Delegate

State Convention: Duke H., Convention Chair

Landmarks: “Dreaming Big with 20/20 Vision” was selected as the convention theme during the second meeting and it served the Committee well for the duration. It reminded us that dreams and reality are both essential. Initially, the greatest milestones by the Committee were being ready to host a convention by the time of the Assembly that was scheduled for March 28 and shaving \$3,500 in costs from the Convention. In time, adapting to rapidly changing conditions related to COVID-19 became the focus. Often, there were more questions than answers. To make clear what was known and unknown, we wrote three knowledge-based decision making (KBDM) documents. When the convention was suspended, the Committee found opportunities to be of service to other areas. When the suspension was lifted, the Committee hosted a convention nine weeks later on October 17, 2020.

Program:

7:00 AM Doors Open

7:30 AM AA & AFG Meetings

9:00 AM AFG Speaker, Lucy J., Shreveport LA

10:30 AM Breakout Sessions

- Both Sides of Sponsorship: Sponsor & Sponsee – 77 registrants.
- Communication, Compassion & Consideration – 87 registrants.
- Don’t Even Think About Changing Him (or Her) – 59 registrants.
- Opening Our Hearts, Transforming Our Losses – 90 registrants.
- Working with Newcomers During a Pandemic – 35 registrants.

11:30 AM Lunch Break

1:00 PM AA Speaker, Karl S., Baton Rouge LA

2:30 PM Breakout Sessions

- Forgiveness: Letting Go of Drama and Trauma – 125 registrants.
- Giving Up, Owning Up, Making Up, Keeping Up – 49 registrants.
- Having Had a Spiritual Awakening: Step Twelve – 54 registrants.
- Living in a 2-Story House: His Story & Her Story – 43 registrants.
- Thoughtful, Honest, Intelligent, Necessary, Kind – 86 registrants.

4:00 PM AFG Speaker, Tammy M., Lafayette LA

5:30 PM Dinner Break

7:00 PM AFG Speaker, Bear W., Ventura CA

Participation: 367 persons registered from 30 of the United States, 2 Canadian provinces, and the United Kingdom. Thirty-eight volunteers hosted the convention; these included speakers, meeting chairs and co-chairs, workshop moderators, and technical assistants, as well as Committee members.

Income:

\$2,403.89 Group donations (checks received prior to convention)

\$1,318.03 Individual donations (received through Eventbrite)

\$569.56 Less Expenses (\$300.00 for Quickbooks and \$269.56 for Zoom)

\$3,152.36 Net Income

In addition to the amounts above, individual donations received for AFG's WSO were \$576.15.

GR Meeting report: Carmen O., GR Meeting Coordinator

Part I--Welcome! Ice Breaker-Name, Group, Town

- ◆ November-Gratitude Month--each day of each week gratitude--solves self-pity, overcomes resentments, "can't be grateful when you are hateful"
- ◆ Sharing on gratitude for today---what are you grateful for? Program, learning how to be grateful, growth in service—personal as well as "pebble in the pond" rippling inventories

Part II--Tri-Legacies

- ◆ Tradition One-Angelique-UNITY-COMMON, Conflict Resolution Kit-
- ◆ Concept One-Clair: Discovering Choices-Character Defects-Control/Learning to delegate and sharing responsibility Balance. Paths to Discovery
- ◆ Volunteers-Tradition Two-Quentin
- ◆ Concept Two- Buddy H.

Part III--Guideline G11-Volunteer (2)

- ◆ You don't have to have all the answers...
- ◆ Tips on reporting rack to your group
- ◆ Importance of GR-weekly presence-Responsibilities

Part IV--The Service Manual! Page 54--When you don't have an answer, where do you go?

The SERVICE MANUAL

Part V--ESH-Experience, Strength, and Hope--Open Floor to Discussion, Topics-Alateen-

Steve G.; Unhealthy boundaries: -dilution of program with outside issues, affiliations

Attendees-27

DR Meeting report: Susan A., Alternate Chair

The District Representatives (DR) meeting went well. It was my first DR meeting to chair as your new Alternate Chair. We had two guest speakers – Steve G. discussing Alateen and Rachel B. using the Service Manual to help us better understand one of our duties as DR – the meeting updater. We filled our assignments for the next Assembly. We talked about ways to keep current in order to be a good link to our groups. We shared our experience, strength and hope with each other. We shared what was working in our districts, what was not working, looking for solutions through the Traditions.

Typed & submitted by: Rachel B., Area Secretary

gabeandrach@yahoo.com

Concerns about face to face meeting attendance were expressed, as well as the need to come together at district meetings. We closed with a few “back to basics” to keep in mind, particularly the need for a service sponsor. The meeting was attended by nine DRs; Rachel B., our Area Secretary; Tammy M., our Delegate; Eric N., our Alternate Delegate; Clara E., a past Delegate from Panel 45; and Steve G., our Alateen Coordinator. We appreciated having three officers and a past delegate to share their experience, strength and hope with our group. Thank you for our attendance! Keep coming back!

South Central Regional Delegates Meeting (SCRDM) report: Angela A., Chairperson
Nothing new to report.

ACTION COMMITTEE REPORTS

Group Services Committee: Group Records Coordinator position is vacant; report given by Rachel B., Area Secretary

Rachel is working on updating the .pdf on the meeting updater on the Area website. She asked the committee members, “Are there any concerns about the communication we have between groups, the Area, and WSO?” There was a concern that not all groups in the Area have DRs, nor are they served by an AIS/Intergroup, and not all groups provide phone contacts to get more information about groups. Also, there is no longer a list of active groups on our Area website, only a link to the WSO meeting search engine. Since we do not have a Group Records Coordinator, members have no one to directly contact to find out if a group is active or not.

Rebecca P., Archives Coordinator, stated that the goal is “data management”—to get together a team of volunteers to help organize and sift through the boxes in the Archives office in Baton Rouge.

Steve G., Alateen Coordinator, gave a brief update about available Alateen Zoom meetings in the Area.

Goals set: (We will have a Zoom meeting on Sunday, January 24, 2021, from 2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.)

- ◆ To strengthen the connection between the Assembly and existing groups by:
 - ♣ Encouraging groups to elect Alternate GRs to attend District meetings and Assembly if their GR cannot attend; remind groups that Alternate GRs need not make a three-year commitment, that it can be a one-time duty
 - ♣ To encourage the Assembly, when we start meeting in person again, to consider having hybrid meetings: a combination of Zoom/face-to-face Assemblies to accommodate GRs who cannot attend Assembly due to travel concerns
- ◆ To communicate effectively to GRs what their responsibilities are in attending Assembly, and attracting them to attend Assembly by:
 - ♣ Asking members in service to focus on sharing their experience, strength, and hope about how Assembly enhances their recoveries

- ♣ Challenging Group Services Action Committee members to share their service stories in La Treasure Chest (LATC) newsletter, focusing on the positive aspects of attending Assembly
- ♣ Possibly getting together with GR orientation coordinator, Carmen O., and Newcomers to Assembly Coordinator, Sylvia G., about holding a pre-Assembly Zoom meeting, inviting two or three speakers to share what Assembly has done for them, and providing a way for newcomers, current attendees, and anyone else who is interested to socialize and encourage members to attend Assembly

Fellowship Communications Committee: Danielle H., La Treasure Chest (LATC) Editor

Membership Outreach Committee: Sylvia G., Newcomers to Area Assembly Coordinator—absent; report given by Duke H., Convention Coordinator

Major goals reached unanimously:

- ◆ Encouraging Personal Outreach One-to-One (at the group level)
- ◆ Encouraging Intergroup Communication (among GRs and DRs)

Possibilities for reaching these goals:

- ◆ Hosting Technology Workshops
- ◆ Enhancing Online Communication
- ◆ Sharing Leadership Phone List
- ◆ Miniature Interim Conventions
- ◆ Remembering to Say I Love You

Public Outreach Committee: Gina R., Public Outreach Coordinator

Public Outreach Action Committee discussed and considered numerous projects and agreed on two projects:

- I. Area 22 Public Outreach Workshop: "Best Practices of Public Outreach" (link to training workbook below). Goal: To teach and guide Area 22 to plan and implement a statewide, comprehensive and unified Outreach strategy. Sat., Jan. 30, 2021 via Zoom (pending clearing date with any Area 22 conflicts)

All GRs, DRs, and every Al-Anon/Alateen member are encouraged to learn about Area, District, and Group Public Outreach opportunities and to create a working plan for 2021.

Action Committee and District Work Teams will follow-up the workshop, tentatively in mid-Feb. and mid-March, as needed to prepare Area 22 Public Outreach Plan for March 2021 Area Assembly. <https://al-anon.org/pdf/TheBestPublicOutreach.pdf>

- II. For the remainder of 2020

- ◆ *"IN THE LOOP" WSO challenge* AREA 22 Districts and each AFG encouraged to distribute 100 to 150 copies Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism (AFA- aka Help & Hope). ACTION COMMITTEE, on behalf of WSO, CHALLENGES each Al-Anon group in AREA 22 to distribute 100-150 copies of AFA to doctors' offices/professionals & institutions. Approx. \$50 (6 pkgs of 25 at \$8 each)
- ◆ District Reps asked to encourage GRs to have order placed together and sent to Area Information Service (AIS) to save funds on shipping and to be a central distribution

point, if possible. In Districts without DRs, neighboring districts are asked to partner with GRs to take action.

- ◆ In addition, a no-cost item, Public Outreach bookmark M-76, is suggested to be ordered in quantities of 100 for each Al-Anon and Alateen group's distribution. (More details in posted report)

Administrative Goal: Action Committee in 2021 - expand Public Outreach participation throughout Louisiana

- ◆ Hispanic Coordinator opening - Area 22 AFG members asked to encourage fellow Al-Anon members to consider this position. Coordinator serves on Action Committee.
- ◆ Encourage participation of GRs or any other Al-Anon members from Districts 1, 3, 17, and 18, and any other Al-Anon members who do not have an active assignment. At present, no representation from those districts which are assigned to Public Outreach Action Committee.
- ◆ Public Outreach tools are available as downloads on WSO website, (listed in the extended report that has been posted in AWSC for this Area Assembly).

Information from WSO to Al-Anon Family Groups:

- ◆ Policy: WSO announced new vendor disseminating Public Service Announcements (PSA) to the media. Tracking results is expected to be streamlined when a PSA is used on radio or television. At this point, Public Outreach Coordinators have been asked to alert our Area to restrain from personal contact regarding broadcasting PSAs.
- ◆ Policy: WSO allows reposting of PSAs directly from WSO, as long as it is to a service arm of Al-Anon. This includes social media platforms. As individuals, we are allowed to share from WSO website, not to download and repost.
- ◆ Policy: Many literature items are allowed to be posted for Public Outreach.
- ◆ WSO Conference Approved literature and outreach messages have already been crafted and tested for our use so we do not have to invent.
- ◆ WSO CONNECTS has provided Coordinator with commentaries of Public Outreach activities that U.S. Areas have used in past years.

Budget & Finance Committee: Lisa A., Budget & Finance Coordinator

ON-GOING BUSINESS: Angela A., Chairperson

- ◆ Fundraising calendar: still with the Area World Service Committee (AWSC)

NEW BUSINESS: Angela A., Chairperson

- ◆ Trial Schedule for Assembly Weekend: Susan A., Alternate Chair, stated that an updated KBDM document was on the website; trial schedule was adopted in April 2019 and used for three Assembly weekends, with the main change being that the AWSC meeting was held on Sunday and the Assembly was held on Saturday (previously they had been switched) in order to hold all GR-attended activities on one day. The trial was extended in January 2020 through

the end of the year. The Assembly can make one of three decisions: a) to adopt the new schedule as it is; b) to extend the current trial as it is; or c) to revert back to the previous schedule (with Assembly on Sunday and AWSC on Saturday). At the last meeting of the AWSC, the AWSC recommended that the Assembly adopt the new schedule.

During discussion, interest was expressed in having both Coordinator and Action Committee reports presented at the Assembly. Angela A. conducted a “straw poll” of Assembly members who experienced both schedules, just to get an idea of the percentage of members who preferred the new schedule.

Motion 2020-06:

Matter under consideration: Assembly weekend schedule

Wording of Motion: to extend the current trial schedule through the last Assembly weekend in 2021

Motion made by: Pebble B., GR; *seconded by:* Steven S., GR

31 voting GRs; yes: 20, no: 11; abstain: 0

Motion passed

- ◆ Angela A. informed the Assembly that the WSO reimbursed part of the Delegate expenses to the 2020 WSC; the total reimbursed was \$1,481.69.

Assembly was closed with the Serenity Prayer followed by the Al-Anon Declaration.