

2025

WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE SUMMARY

**Investing in Each Other to
Preserve Our Legacy**

**Invertir los unos en los otros
para preservar nuestro legado**

**S'investir mutuellement
pour préserver notre héritage**



65th Annual
World Service Conference 2025

AL-ANON FAMILY GROUPS 2025 WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE

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“Our World Service Conference (WSC) is the active voice and the effective group conscience of our society in world affairs.”
2022-2025 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual (P-24/27), page 184



VISION

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



MISSION

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



DOMAINS & GOAL STATEMENTS

Members: AFG, Inc. connects and supports the friends and families of alcoholics.

Recovery & Service Tools: AFG, Inc. develops and publishes materials to share the collective experience of the families and friends of alcoholics.

Awareness: AFG, Inc. builds public and professional awareness of the Al-Anon program.

Financial Sustainability: AFG, Inc. encourages membership and organizational self-support by aligning resource allocation with its core purpose and strategic priorities.

Global Engagement: AFG, Inc. invests in each new generation of trusted servants to preserve our legacy and improve our structure and operations to meet the needs of the global landscape.



Concept Two

The Al-Anon Family Groups have delegated complete administrative and operational authority to their Conference and its service arms.

The 2025 Conference Summary is available in color online at al-anon.org in the Members section. Remember, you can enlarge the text by using the zoom button.

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PRE-CONFERENCE

2025 ASSIGNMENTS FOR SELECTED COMMITTEES, THOUGHT FORCES, AND TASK FORCES

Delegates, Trustees, Executive Committee members, and World Service Conference Staff members comprise the Selected Committees, Thought Forces, Task Forces, and Work Groups. Below are the Delegate assignments for this year's Conference.

Assignment	Panel 63 (2023-2025)	Panel 64 (2024-2026)	Panel 65 (2025-2027)
Conference Committee on Trustees	Carol G., Chair, ME Carol W., IL(S) Pat G., NY(S)	Anna A., Chair Elect, TX(E) Gretchen S., FL(N) Kathy D., FL(S)	Burt P., GEA Claudette D., QC(E) Jennifer S., MS
Literature Committee	Barbara O'D., SC Dave B., UT Donna W., WY GW, LA	BJ M., TX(W) Rose R., OH	Dagny G., MP Laura L., VA Nancy M.C., BC/YK
Public Outreach Committee	Kate M., NH Mari J., AK Sue K., MO	Chris M., CA(N) Colleen C.D., MN(S) Irene F., TN Pauline W., KY	Cheryl W., WV Marcy F., MN(N)
Applying Step Four to Encourage Area Inventories Task Force	Lalit J., NE	Jason W., Chair, ON(S) Ralph H., PA	David C., MA Jill J., MT Lyria B., NC/BDA Melody G., AZ Peter M., NJ
World Service Conference Charter Presentation Task Force		Teresa F., Chair, CA(S) Carol C., NY(N) Liz P., IL(N)	Kimberly H., WA Stephen Y., OR TME, CO

SEATING MOTION

The first order of business for the 2025 Conference was approval of a motion brought by the Conference Leadership Team (CLT) to seat selected non-voting participants who could provide critical information to the Conference. The motion carried. (See WSC Motion #1, page 36.)

(See the Motion to Seat Future Non-Voting WSC Members on page 8 for additional information.)

SELECTION OF TRUSTEES

Conference Committee on Trustees Report

Carol G., Chairperson, Panel 63, Maine

In a virtual session prior to the 2025 World Service Conference, the Chair of the Conference Committee on Trustees (CCT) presented the work of that year's Committee.

Each year's CCT is composed of nine WSC Delegates from all three panels and elects its own Chairperson. CCT members are responsible for reviewing all applications submitted for Trustee at Large (TAL) and Executive Committee for Real Property Management (ECRPM). Applications are scored based on candidate skillsets, current needs of the Board of Trustees, and candidates' answers to the application questions. CCT members forward their comments and scoring sheets for each candidate to the CCT Chairperson, who compiles the material into an anonymous report for the WSO.

A potential slate of candidates is selected by the Nominating Committee using the information in the CCT report and their knowledge of current Board needs. After approval from the Board, the CCT may file objections to any candidate selected until December; the final list of nominees is decided during the January Board meeting. The Trustee at Large nominees are given traditional approval by the WSC, after which they and the ECRPM nominees may be elected by the Board of Trustees.

In 2024, the CCT reviewed ten applications for Trustee at Large and three for the ECRPM, keeping all information confidential and without discussing opinions or ideas with other Committee members.

The Chairperson concluded her report by announcing the 2025 CCT Chair, Anna A., Panel 64, Texas East.

Nominating Committee and Trustee Affirmations

Cindy M., Trustee, Nominating Committee Chairperson

The Chairperson of the Nominating Committee described the candidate selection process for Trustee at Large, Regional Trustee, and At-Large members of the Executive Committees.

All Trustee applications are first sent to the WSO. Regional Trustee applications are sent to the candidate's Area for vetting through that Area's process; the names of Trustee at Large candidates are reported to their respective Areas so that any potential objections to their application can be noted. The Trustee applications are then reviewed and scored by the appropriate Nominating Subcommittee: Trustee at Large applications by the Conference Committee on Trustees (CCT), and Regional Trustee applications by the members of the Regional Committee on Trustees (RCT) specific to that applicant's Region. Feedback from those Delegate Committees is brought to the Board for discussion by the Nominating Committee (NC), the members of which compile their own reviews of the candidates.

After the Board of Trustees selects candidates to interview for Trustee, the CCT and relevant RCT members are informed of the choices and given the opportunity to voice any potential objections. During the January Trustee interviews, candidates were given 15 minutes to share a personal or service story and show a PowerPoint presentation before answering questions from the Board.

Before listing the candidates for affirmation, the Chairperson discussed the important role of each trusted servant's Higher Power in the selection of Trustee candidates and asked each Conference member to invite their Higher Power into the process of affirmation. WSC members were also asked to share any possible objections to the Board's slate of candidates, and the Nominating Committee presented a brief skit illustrating the process of nomination from the point of view of an applicant for Trustee.

The following Trustees and Board Officers were affirmed by the 2025 WSC:

Trustees at Large:

Ann Marie Z., second three-year term
Jean H., first three-year term
M. Magdalena E., first three-year term

Board Officers:

Kathi M., Chairperson
Cindy M., Vice Chairperson
David B., Treasurer

The Nominating Committee Chairperson announced the Board's 2025-2026 Executive Committee appointments:

Executive Committee:

Jeff F., third one-year term, Chairperson
Angela A., second one-year term
Kari O., first one-year term
Sarah S., Director of Programs

Executive Committee for Real Property Management:

Mark B., three-year term
Lori H., Chairperson

THE BOARD'S GOALS FOR THE CONFERENCE

Prior to the start of Conference, the Board's Goals for the Conference were posted to AFG Connects, as follows:

The Conference, AI-Anon's largest group conscience, will act in the spirit of unity and goodwill to assure that AI-Anon's world services are continually available to the AI-Anon fellowship.

GOAL 1: The spiritual tone of the Conference will prevail by the demonstration of AI-Anon's core principles in action.

GOAL 2: The Conference will provide guidance to AI-Anon's Board of Trustees and the World Service Office (WSO) on services to the fellowship and guardianship of AI-Anon's Twelve Traditions.

GOAL 3: Conference members will understand the purpose of the Conference, relationships within the Structure, and be able to articulate Conference discussions and decisions.

Conference members were asked to select one Goal and share how they would strive to support the Goal they selected during the Conference week.

GOAL 1

Conference members discussed the spiritual principles they hoped to bring to the WSC, including acceptance, trust, mutual respect, presuming goodwill, participation, and keeping an open mind. They emphasized the presence of a Higher Power in the group conscience and its importance in reaching understanding and making the decisions necessary for the work of the Conference.

GOAL 2

This Goal was discussed in connection with the 2025 Conference theme and the importance of the Twelve Traditions. Responders reflected on their role as Conference members in the ongoing history of the worldwide fellowship and the various ways they prepare for Conference both materially and spiritually, reading and taking notes on all pre-Conference material and praying for guidance from their respective Higher Powers.

GOAL 3

Members described their use of service tools like the *Service Manual*, the pre-Conference materials, and the Steps, Traditions, and Concepts to prepare ahead of the WSC and carry the information discussed at Conference back to their Areas. The principles of understanding, listening, unity, and hearing the minority voice were noted, as well as the importance of communication and active participation for all Conference members.

SHARING AREA HIGHLIGHTS

Marti P., Panel 63, Arkansas

Cheryl S., Panel 63, Idaho

Carol W., Panel 63, Illinois South

Lalit J., Panel 63, Nebraska

Prior to the opening of the 2025 World Service Conference, Delegates held a session to share Area experiences, strengths, and challenges. All other Conference members—WSO Volunteers (Trustees and Executive Committee members) and WSO Staff—were invited to attend as guests with no voice.

To begin the session, Delegates were given a handout collecting their responses to a survey given online prior to Conference about their experiences, goals, and fears during each year of their Delegate term. Delegates then participated in an icebreaker game in which they were paired up by matching painted rocks with different Al-Anon slogans. Delegates interviewed their partners, then introduced them to the rest of the group with the information they had shared.

After selecting three Chairpersons to plan the 2026 Sharing Area Highlights session, the 2025 Chairs closed with the Serenity Prayer and Al-Anon Declaration.

OPENING LUNCHEON

Prior to the start of the 2025 World Service Conference, Conference members and support Staff attended an opening luncheon. The Conference Co-Chairperson welcomed Conference members by reading the Conference theme, “Investing in Each Other to Preserve Our Legacy,” in English, Spanish, and French and reciting the Serenity Prayer.

Al-Anon Declaration

Let It Begin with Me

When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help,
let the hand of Al-Anon and Alateen
always be there, and — *Let It Begin with Me.*



Al-Anon Family Groups®
hope for families & friends of alcoholics

Following lunch, the Conference Chairperson invited Conference Mentors to “pin” the new Panel 65 Delegates and any other first-time Conference members. Sue P., Associate Director—Group Services, was the opening speaker. Her talk can be found on page 29.

The Conference Co-Chairperson closed the luncheon with the Al-Anon Declaration.

GENERAL SESSIONS

CONFERENCE THEME AND OPENING REMARKS

Jayme C., Trustee, Conference Chairperson

“Serving as a Trustee has been the most spiritual journey of service for me, and I have had a spiritual transformation.”

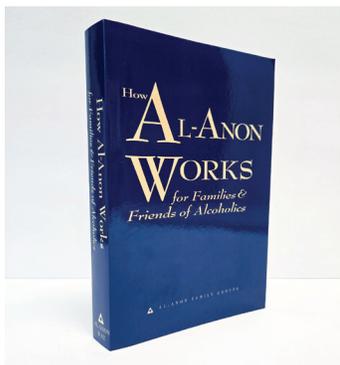
2025 World Service Conference Chairperson Jayme C. began her opening message with a moment of silence followed by the Serenity Prayer. She introduced the 2025 Conference theme, “Investing in Each Other to Preserve Our Legacy,” and invited Conference members to bring their Higher Power into the conversations and decisions of the next four days.

The Chairperson shared about her introduction to service in the Al-Anon program and its important role in her recovery, she recalled the lessons she learned from her experience of the World Service Conference (WSC) as a first-year Delegate in 2012 and encouraged Conference members, especially new Delegates, to embrace Concept Four, “Participation is the key to harmony,” by contributing their voice to the work of the 2025 WSC. To illustrate this point, she quoted the wording of a 1984 WSC motion described in *How Al-Anon Works* (B-32), page 107:

“Each member of the fellowship is a significant part of a great circle of hope. While respecting each other’s individuality, our common welfare must come first. Our recovery depends on our mutual need and an atmosphere of trust.”

She asked Delegates to invest in each other and preserve Al-Anon’s legacy by participating in the WSC and continuing the circle of hope and respect.

The Chairperson finished her message by tapping the gavel to open the 65th World Service Conference of Al-Anon Family Groups.



WELCOME FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Kathi M., Trustee, Chairperson of the Board

“As we reason things out, let’s remember why we are here and what we have learned through our Legacy of the Concepts of Service and our program. For me, that means asking for my Higher Power’s guidance in all I say and do at Conference.”

The Chairperson of the Board welcomed Conference members to the WSC on behalf of the Board of Trustees of Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. She shared about the many changes that have occurred since her first Conference in 1990, as well as the many similarities, particularly the consistent spiritual principles central to the work and mission of the WSC.

The Chairperson reflected on her experience as Conference Chair in 2024 and the many thoughtful conversations that occurred during that WSC and expressed her confidence that Conference members would continue to talk to each other, reason things out, and preserve Al-Anon’s legacy during this year’s sessions. She asked Conference members to use the lessons of the Concepts of Service and their personal Higher Powers as they continued the work of the Conference on behalf of the worldwide fellowship of Al-Anon.

CLEARING THE AIR

Kathi M., Trustee, Chairperson of the Board

Reflecting on concerns raised by groups and Areas since the last World Service Conference (WSC) and considering how similar concerns had been addressed historically, the Conference Leadership Team offered an opportunity at the beginning of the 2025 WSC for Delegates to share any concerns or questions they had about WSO activities or actions since the last Conference. The process highlighted several topics already scheduled for discussion on the agenda, including the "Choosing a Group’s Name" Policy, along with frustration regarding transparency. Although there was initial confusion about the process, Delegates expressed appreciation to the CLT and Board of Trustees for the "Clearing the Air" session which allowed them to feel heard.

ROLL CALL

Jayme C., Trustee, Conference Chairperson



After the welcome from the Conference Chairperson and Board of Trustees, a roll call was held, with the Conference Chairperson calling the names of each Conference member and the Conference Co-Chairperson presenting them with a keepsake medallion to commemorate their participation in the 65th World Service Conference.

CONCEPT SIX REVIEW

The Conference Leadership Team presented this session for all Conference members to review Concept Six: “The Conference acknowledges the primary administrative responsibility of the Trustees.” The World Service Conference is the traditional authority for Al-Anon Family Groups, Inc., and the Board of Trustees is the chief service arm of the Conference. In Concept Six, the Trustees are

made active guardians of the Twelve Traditions and are charged with upholding and applying these principles.

The Board of Trustees delegates responsibility for planning the World Service Conference to the Conference Leadership Team (CLT), made up of Trustees and select World Service Office (WSO) Staff members. The CLT evaluates which issues to include on the agenda during the limited days of Conference prior to submitting it for Board review and approval.

Conference is attended by Area Delegates, WSO Volunteers (members of the Board of Trustees and the Executive Committee), and voting WSO Staff. All Conference members are charged with listening to, participating in, and voting on matters related to Al-Anon as a whole. Conference members are expected to prepare and inform themselves on all issues in order to thoughtfully participate in the group conscience.

MOTION TO SEAT FUTURE NON-VOTING WSC MEMBERS

Each year, the World Service Conference has voted on a motion to seat selected non-voting participants. The people listed on the Seating Motion included Staff who are critical to our Conference agenda, for example, the Senior Director of Finance & Operations with voice; the Executive Committee for Real Property Management (ECRPM) Chairperson with voice limited to ECRPM business; International Representatives, i.e., a representative from a General Service Office with voice; and Staff members seated to observe a session, or a day of sessions, with no voice.

Because this formality includes many people's time before and during the Conference, the Conference Leadership Team presented a motion to seat all future non-voting WSC members, noting that approval of the motion would alleviate the need to approve an annual Seating Motion. The motion carried (see WSC Motion #4, page 36).

APPROVALS

2024 Auditor's Report

Niketa Williams, Senior Director of Finance & Operations (non-member)

Prior to Conference, a copy of the audit, including the opinion letter of the auditors, was posted on AFG Connects for Conference members to review. The presentation from the Senior Director of Finance & Operations gave an overview of the audit process and the 2024 results.

An audit is an investigation of an organization's finances conducted by an outside accounting firm. Auditors review accounting and financial records such as check stubs, invoices, timecards, receipts, and bank accounts; obtain written confirmation of accounts by banks; and test internal controls. The annual audit for 2024 was conducted January 13-17, 2025, by the Brown Edwards LLP audit firm, and reflected Al-Anon's financial records for 2024. The firm issued a clean opinion, which means all records were found to be in compliance with generally accepted accounting principles.

The audit report's four main sections—statement of financial position, statement of activities, statement of functional expenses, and statement of cashflows—reflect the organization's performance in 2024. Contributions made up the highest percentage of revenue in 2024, at 40 percent, followed closely by net literature sales at 39 percent. Expenses for 2024 were lower than budgeted, and contributions from members were higher than expected, leading to a net increase of \$461,644 in the General Fund. The Reserve Fund also experienced a gain in investment income due to a positive market

performance and a decrease in postretirement benefits liability.

As of December 31, 2023, the net value of the Reserve Fund continued to surpass one year's operating expenses. In 2024, the Board of Trustees approved the following projects on which to spend the Reserve Fund surplus: a replacement van for the World Service Office (WSO), furniture replacement for the WSO Board Room, a new automated letter opener to increase mailroom efficiency, and several new strategic projects that will require future funding. More information on these projects can be found under "Excess Reserve Funds" on page 17.

As of December 31, 2024, the net value of the Reserve Fund continued to surpass one year's operating expenses.

In 2024, AFG, Inc. also delivered on seven Strategic Plan Strategies, hosted the International Al-Anon General Services Meeting (IAGSM), completed the triennial Membership Survey, and launched the booklet *Healing within Our Alcoholic Relationships* (P-95). Consistent contributions and literature sales remain necessary to support the work of the organization.

A motion to approve the 2024 Audited Financial Report was made, seconded, and carried. See Motion #3 on page 36.

2025 Finance Committee Report

Ann Marie Z., Trustee, Treasurer of AFG, Inc.

Niketa Williams, Senior Director of Finance & Operations (non-member)

The Treasurer opened this report with a short explanation of the purpose and goals of the Finance Committee. The Committee is made up of the Treasurer, the Chairperson of the Board, the Chairperson of the Executive Committee, the Executive Director, a Volunteer member of the Board or Executive Committee (in 2024, the Chair of the Policy Committee), and the Senior Director of Finance & Operations, who is an ex-officio member, which means she attends with voice but no vote. Its purpose is to oversee the finances of the World Service Office (WSO), review budget proposals, set literature prices, develop plans to increase revenue, and ensure that the organization's money is used in alignment with Al-Anon's spiritual principles.

The budget is determined every year based on estimates submitted by each department at the WSO. Budget considerations for 2025 included being in Connecticut for the WSC; Zonal meetings for international structures; Road Trip! You and Your Board Connect, which will be held in Omaha, NE; an increase to the PSA campaign budget; and WSO Staff salaries. The preliminary 2025 budget was approved by the Board of Trustees at their January meeting.

The Senior Director of Finance & Operations then presented the 2025 budget to Conference members. A small surplus is expected in 2025 despite a slight predicted decrease in literature sales, since no new pieces of Conference Approved Literature (CAL) are being introduced in 2025; however, literature sales are still projected above pre-pandemic levels. With 88 percent of total revenue coming from literature sales and member contributions, consistent support from the fellowship is still needed for the organization to reach its budgeted goal.

The majority of expenses for 2025 are related to Strategic Plan projects such as the Core Systems Overhaul and eBooks Globally, as well as ongoing projects like the *2026-2029 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27) and the Excess Reserve Funds projects discussed on page 17. Expenses are projected to increase seven percent from 2024, including a two-to-three-percent increase in Staff salaries.

The 2025 Finance Committee Report continues on page 10.

AL-ANON FAMILY GROUP HEADQUARTERS, INC. 2025 BUDGET

	2025 Budget	2024 Actuals
Revenue		
Literature Sales	3,737,021	3,888,585
Less cost of goods sold	(934,255)	(959,173)
Contributions	2,900,000	3,022,844
Magazine Sales	265,000	261,867
Subscription Income	53,000	58,296
Investment Income	175,000	173,210
Fund Transfers	300,000	-
Other - currency adjustment		(92,504)
Total cash revenue	\$ 6,495,766	\$ 6,353,125
Noncash contributions		\$ 443,348
Total Revenue	\$ 6,495,766	\$ 6,796,473
Expenses		
Salaries	3,491,370	3,255,893
Benefits	509,850	497,267
Payroll Taxes	268,340	247,811
Occupancy	310,860	318,435
Packing & Shipping	(77,250)	(63,750)
Postage	181,600	176,957
Telephone	58,200	62,491
Stationary & Supplies	46,360	48,332
Technology	367,530	350,996
HR/Training/Consulting	65,950	47,702
Repairs	8,000	9,528
Travel & Meetings	222,520	199,255
Conference Costs	149,550	47,219
Professional fees	113,805	108,265
Printing	154,100	149,424
Canadian Office	2,270	2,257
General services meeting	-	28,363
PSA Campaign	146,390	72,210
Bank and Credit Card fees	136,500	136,310
Miscellaneous	15,550	12,894
Retiree Health benefits	67,500	63,585
Depreciation	120,800	120,037
Total cash expenses	\$ 6,359,795	\$ 5,891,481
Noncash expenses		\$ 443,348
Total Expenses	\$ 6,359,795	\$ 6,334,829
Revenue over Expenses	\$ 135,970	\$ 461,644

Conference members had the following questions about the Finance Committee Report:

How often have member contributions exceeded yearly literature sales?

The most recent year was 2020 because of declining literature sales due to the pandemic; sales have been increasing since that year.

Does “subscription income” under “other income” only refer to *Al-Anon Family Groups Mobile App* subscriptions? Is that income enough to cover the cost of hosting the app?

“Subscription income” refers to yearly subscriptions to the Daily Reflection on the app. The cost of the app is included in the yearly budget; the Mobile App Daily Reflection was never intended to completely cover its expenses.

Are contributions in the *Mobile App* recorded separately from other contribution sources?

Yes, we track the contribution income from the app as well as other contribution methods.



Does the WSO still keep its Staff under 49 employees?

Yes; currently, the WSO has three open positions, and the total number of Staff will remain under 49 even once those are filled.

Do the invested funds in the Reserve Fund still total one year's operating expense after recent market fluctuations?

The one year's operating expense calculation is performed annually.

Following the presentation, a motion to approve the 2025 Finance Committee Report including the 2024 Budget was made, seconded, and carried. See Motion #5 on page 36.

2024 Annual Report

After the 2024 Annual Report was posted to AFG Connects, Conference members were invited to submit any clarifying questions prior to Conference. All questions and answers were compiled and posted for Conference members to review. At the World Service Conference, the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees and WSO Staff members gave a series of updates on the work of the Board and WSO departments in the four months between the drafting of the Annual Report and the week of the WSC. Summaries of those updates can be found under each speaker heading below.

Chairperson of the Board of Trustees

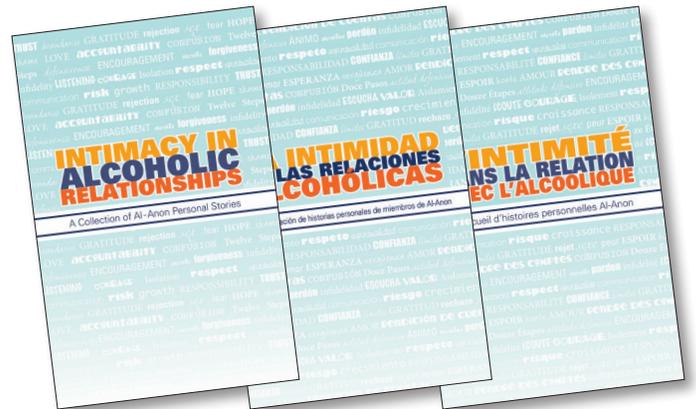
The Chairperson dedicated her update to addressing the questions posed by members about the Board's efforts to support underserved communities, reduce barriers created by cultural and linguistic obstacles, and reduce any biases that may be preventing effective

outreach. The Board and WSO have been making strides to address these issues over the past four years, including expanding outreach to international structures via Global Gatherings and Regular Structure Meetings, increasing access to Conference Approved Literature in translation, offering interpretation for Spanish- and French-speaking Delegates at the WSC, and holding workshops at both Board meetings and World Service Conferences focused on diversity and inclusion in relation to Al-Anon's spiritual principles.

The Public Outreach Committee of the Board has also increased efforts to reach a wider audience with its message of help and hope for families and friends of alcoholics. A new public outreach tool aimed at educating professionals working with young people about the value of Alateen was publicly launched in 2025 after its initial introduction by the Revitalizing Alateen Delegate Task Force at the 2024 WSC (see p. 21 in the 2024 World Service Conference Summary). The Public Outreach to Young People Strategy also includes a number of new public outreach strategies to reach underserved communities, including participation in multiple national conferences and a PSA campaign focused on podcasts.

Executive Director

The Executive Director described the work of the Legal team so far in 2025, including the handling of contracts for the 2028 Al-Anon International Convention in Minneapolis, MN and for independent reviewers of CAL translations in Bulgarian, Latvian, Romanian, and Farsi, as well as processing several trademark renewals in countries supported by international structures and beginning the trademark registration process in China.



The eBooks Globally Strategy has also made progress in 2025 with the selection of a consolidation ebook vendor that will allow Al-Anon to publish CAL in hundreds of ebook platforms used around the world. The WSO has also established criteria for international structures to receive net revenue from ebook sales within their countries in order to alleviate the potential impact of ebook sales on their sales of printed CAL and their countries ability to be self-supporting. The rollout of this Strategy will begin with a six-month pilot project to launch an ebook version of *Intimacy in Alcoholic Relationships* (B-33) in English, French, and Spanish.

Finally, the Board has approved a Risk Mitigation Strategy for the WSO to protect the organization, its finances, and its intellectual property from both cybersecurity and non-information technology threats.

Senior Director of Finance & Operations

Since December, the Finance & Operations Department launched a health and wellness initiative for Staff, led by the newly hired Human Resources Manager. Staff held a WSC Travel Training session for World Service Conference Delegates, which was recorded and will be available for future WSC members to reference when booking travel. The service tool *Remember Al-Anon in Your Will* (S-38) was updated and translated into Spanish and French; the updated version, available as a free download on al-anon.org, provides guidance to members on how to leave a bequest to Al-Anon that confirms their membership in the program, which is necessary for the organization to be able to accept these gifts in keeping with the Seventh Tradition. Delegates and trusted servants are also encouraged to keep their Areas informed about this service tool to ensure future bequests include membership confirmation.

Director of Communications & Community Awareness

The Communications & Community Awareness Department recently updated the Global Electronic Meeting Search to create a smoother user experience for visitors using languages other than English. A new option was added to the geographic meeting search to report problems with accessing hybrid meetings remotely, and a form for adding electronic groups connected to a geographic Area to the geographic search has been implemented. Online forms are now also available to support the Annual Group Update process, which have been used by many groups since the beginning of this year's mailing.

As of April 28, the WSO will not be posting on X (formerly Twitter) due to a change in the website's policy that allows any content posted by users to be used in training AI as well as ongoing technical issues with the Al-Anon X account. The WSO continues to maintain accounts on other social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and LinkedIn.

Director of Programs

The Director of Programs shared some updates on ways the Programs Department has been working to expand communication with the fellowship. The team is currently reviewing the quarterly Coordinator calls, which are an opportunity for trusted servants to collaborate and connect with the WSO and share updates and questions, and will be reaching out to Area Coordinators for feedback to improve the experience of these calls. Delegates were also encouraged to share the request that members not email multiple WSO Staff members or departments with the same question to avoid duplication and miscommunication; answering emails is a Programs Department priority, and all questions from members will be directed to the appropriate team and will receive a response.

WSO Staff continue to welcome invitations to visit Areas in the WSC Structure. The WSO Staff & Volunteer Invitation form is available on AFG Connects and should be submitted at least two months prior to the requested visit.

Associate Director–World Service Events & History

Work on the 2026-2029 *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27) is underway, and the updated *Manual* is scheduled for release in early 2026. The new version will include updates to the “Groups at Work” section to reflect recent policy changes.

The Archives team is currently reviewing the WSO's records and collection management procedures and is working on ensuring comprehensive guidelines are available for retiring Staff on retaining and discarding records.



75th Anniversary Announcement

After the Programs Department update, the Director of Programs and Associate Director—World Service Events & History took the stage together to announce the 75th anniversary celebration that will be held after the 2026 WSC, featuring a World Service Office open house and a banquet with Al-Anon speakers. The 2026 WSC will run from April 20-24, 2026, and the celebration will be held on April 25, both at the Newport News Marriott City Center in Newport News, Virginia. Banquet tickets will be available for members to purchase prior to the event.

Associate Director–Public Outreach

The Public Outreach Team has continued to share the Public Outreach to Professionals—Alateen toolkit with Area Public Outreach Coordinators, Alateen Coordinators, AAPPs, and AIS Coordinators, as well as at a Global Gathering for international structures. In 2025, Al-Anon will be attending a total of seven national conferences to spread awareness of Al-Anon and Alateen to professionals who work with young people, including the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Family Education and Care Navigation Meeting in February, which brought together professionals from family-focused organizations across the US. This effort is part of the Public Outreach Professionals - Young People Strategy funded by Excess Reserve Funds.

The public outreach magazine *Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism* will be receiving an update in 2026; the WSO will begin collecting member sharings and articles from professionals for the new edition in the near future.

Associate Director–Literature

The Writing Guideline for the FINANCES IN RECOVERY piece (working title) approved by the 2024 WSC has been posted on al-anon.org in English, French, and Spanish. The WSO is also collecting sharings for the PERSONAL AND SERVICE SPONSORSHIP piece (working title), and more submissions are still needed; no deadline for these pieces has been set, and members are still encouraged to submit sharings on both topics.



Healing within Our Alcoholic Relationships (P-95), released in September 2024, was the third-most-purchased English CAL book in 2024 and the most purchased for both Spanish and French.

Starting with the first issue of 2025, the page counts for the French magazine *Le lien* and the Spanish magazine *Al-Anon y Alateen en acción* have both been increased by four pages, allowing for more sharings and better design quality.

The WSO posted 20 quotations from CAL on AFG Connects in March that may be used without seeking permission in 2026 service arm fundraising calendars as well as any service arm newsletters that do not appear on public-facing websites.

Associate Director—Group Services

The Annual Area Alateen Recertification began earlier this year; as of the start of the WSC, six Areas had completed the recertification, 55 were still in the process of recertifying, and three had not yet begun recertification. The WSO asks Areas to consider completing their recertification by the end of May 2025 to aid in planning the English- and Spanish-speaking Alateen programs for the 2025 A.A. International Convention with Al-Anon participation. Group Services has also approved updated Alateen Service and Behavioral Requirements (ASBRs) from four Areas and encourages all Areas to consider whether their current ASBRs would benefit from updating or revisiting.

The Outreach to Professionals—Alateen toolkit was launched during a February meeting with Area Alateen Coordinators, Area Public Outreach Coordinators, and Al-Anon Information Services. The meeting recording is still available for trusted servants to view.

International Services Manager

The International Services Manager began by announcing the upcoming retirement of the International and Legal Specialist and asking WSC members to spread the word about the Member Services Specialist—International job opening posted in May. The WSO is seeking resumes from Al-Anon members passionate about international service who hope to spread the Al-Anon message to structures across the globe.



The International Coordination Committee (ICC) and International team hosted the first interim International Al-Anon General Services Meeting (IAGSM) in February 2025, continuing the “Big Question” discussion begun at the 2024 in-person IAGSM. Thirty members from international structures discussed the questions, “How can IAGSM Delegates contribute to the agenda-setting process?” and “How can feedback be gathered from all IAGSM Delegates (participating and non-participating structures) on relevant and beneficial agenda topics?” The meeting resulted in the formation of a task force dedicated to brainstorming ideas for how IAGSM Delegates could participate in the IAGSM agenda-setting process.

The newly launched Public Outreach to Professionals—Alateen toolkit was introduced to international structures during the March Global Gathering focused on Al-Anon Resources and Service Tools. Since January 2025, the International team has held nearly 30 Regular Structure Meetings to communicate and collaborate with international structures.



Conference members had the following questions about the Annual Report updates.

What will be the timeline for the eBooks Globally Strategy after the six-month pilot project?

The WSO plans to release ebooks monthly if the Intimacy in Alcoholic Relationships trial is successful.

Is the Member Services Specialist—International position located in Virginia Beach?

Yes, it's an in-person position at the WSO.

Are there translated versions of the Public Outreach to Professionals—Alateen toolkit available?

Not yet; international structures have been using the English version in their outreach.

Will the Service Manual be published as an ebook as part of the eBooks Globally project?

Since the Service Manual is available as a free download on al-anon.org, it will most likely not be rereleased as an ebook, which would require paying royalties to the ebook provider.

Will there be ebooks available in languages other than English, French, and Spanish?

The three languages are part of phase one of the eBooks Globally Strategy; once that phase is complete, the WSO will evaluate how to proceed with releases in languages other than English, French, and Spanish.

A motion to approve the 2024 Annual Report was made, seconded, and carried. See Motion #6 on, page 36. The complete report can be found on pages 37-98.

REPORTS

2024 MEMBERSHIP SURVEY RESULTS

Heather S., Associate Director—Public Outreach

Al-Anon's Membership Survey is conducted every three years to gather data on the experiences and demographics of the Al-Anon fellowship for use in public outreach. The statistics generated by the survey provide evidence-based insights about the effectiveness of the Al-Anon program and its positive impact on members' lives, which can be used in Al-Anon outreach to professionals such as mental health and addiction counselors.

The 2024 Membership Survey received responses from over 15,000 members in the World Service Conference Structure, which consists of the US (including Puerto Rico), Canada and Bermuda, and the Global Electronic Area. Despite representing only a portion of the Al-Anon fellowship and its demographics, the survey data still presents an illustration of the benefits of Al-Anon membership; 80 percent of respondents indicated an improvement in their mental health during their first year of participation in the program, and members who attended more than one meeting per week reported a 17 percent higher improvement in their mental health than those who attended once a week.

The Membership Survey data also shows the relationship of the Al-Anon program to professional counseling, therapy, or other treatment. Of the 11,469 members who reported receiving treatment prior to attending Al-Anon, 43 percent were referred to the program by a professional. Respondents who attended Al-Anon meetings in addition to professional counseling indicated a 25 percent greater improvement than those who did not receive treatment.

The Associate Director—Public Outreach encouraged members to use this tool in outreach in their Areas by sharing the data supporting the benefits of the Al-Anon program with mental health and addiction professionals in the position to recommend Al-Anon to their clients.

INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS

2028 Al-Anon International Convention Site Announcement

Vali F., Executive Director

Before announcing the site of the 2028 Al-Anon International Convention with A.A. Participation, the Executive Director thanked the 14 Delegates who submitted bids to hold the Convention in their Areas. Following our event management consultant's evaluation of all the bids received from the cities, a small team of WSO Volunteers and Staff created a short list of viable options. Two current Delegates were added to the Site Selection Task Force to assess the short-listed cities for travel accessibility, affordability, and walkability. The WSO Volunteers and Staff on the Task Force attended the in-person city presentations following the 2024 WSC and unanimously recommended one city to the Board of Trustees, which approved the selection.

The 2028 Al-Anon International Convention will be held July 20-23, 2028, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Attendees will be able to choose from two hotels attached to the convention center with overflow hotels within walking distance. The city is a four-hour flight from anywhere in the continental US and Canada. Holding the Convention on a date other than July 4th weekend will allow for more affordable travel and for Al-Anon to be the only event in town. The International Convention Committee and the Delegates from

Minnesota North and South look forward to welcoming Al-Anon members from all around the world.

2025 A.A. International Convention with Al-Anon Participation

Sarah S., Director of Programs

Suzanne M., Associate Director—World Service Events & History

The 2025 A.A. International Convention with Al-Anon Participation will be held July 3-6, 2025, in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. Al-Anon daytime sessions will be held on Friday and Saturday, including speaker meetings, panels, writing workshops, and service workshops; meetings in English, French, Spanish, and American Sign Language (ASL); and Alateen meetings in both English and Spanish. Al-Anon and Alateen members from the US, Cambodia, India, Mongolia, Singapore, Mexico, and more have already registered, and registration remains open. There will be many volunteer opportunities for attendees as well as for volunteer speakers and moderators.

INTERNATIONAL COORDINATION COMMITTEE (ICC)

Diane B., Trustee, Chairperson of the International Coordination Committee

Sarah S., Director of Programs

Tracey S., International Services Manager

"The effects of the family disease are the same whoever or wherever we may be, yet despite the real barriers that exist across the globe, there is still the same desire for the help and hope found in Al-Anon Family Groups."

The first session of the International Coordination Committee (ICC) presentation began with an overview of the work and history of the ICC. The ICC was formed in 1978 to support the growth of international structures and the unity of worldwide Al-Anon. The Committee is responsible for coordinating the International Al-Anon General Services Meeting (IAGSM), considering first-time translation and reprint requests for Conference Approved Literature, and ensuring the voice of international Al-Anon is heard at the WSC. The ICC supports a total of 135 international structures in all phases of growth, from individual groups to Al-Anon Information Services, evolving structures, and General Service Offices (GSOs).

In 2024 and 2025, the ICC has met with international structures via Regular Structure Meetings (RSMs), which allow WSO Staff to communicate directly with individual structures, and Global Gatherings, in which multiple international structures participate in virtual meetings centered around a specific topic. The ICC also hosted the 2024 IAGSM, which brought together 18 Delegates from 12 international structures to discuss topics such as "Envisioning the Future of Al-Anon," "Public Outreach: Engaging the Professional Community," and "Working with Boards within their Structure," as well as the first-ever IAGSM hybrid business meeting, which allowed 15 additional Delegates to participate in a productive conversation about the future of the IAGSM. (See the 2024 IAGSM Summary for more information.) Since the 2024 meeting, the WSO has held two interim meetings focused on improving accessibility for GSOs to participate in the IAGSM and Delegate input on the IAGSM agenda.

The second ICC session featured a presentation by the Director of Programs and the International Services Manager, on their 2024 trip to visit AI-Anon GSOs and evolving structures in Asia. The International team identified structures that could benefit from in-person connection with the WSO and selected South Korea, Mongolia, China, and India as their destinations.

The South Korea GSO has been established for over a decade, but had lost regular contact with the WSO in recent years. The intent of the visit from Staff members was to rebuild connection and establish a consistent relationship with the members in this country. The Director of Programs and International Services Manager met with the Korean GSO's Board of Trustees to share their experiences and answer questions, held workshops at a countrywide fellowship event attended by over 100 members, and toured Korean cultural sites with members of the GSO. Korean members shared that the WSO visit was particularly helpful in providing guidance for revitalizing Alateen in their GSO and motivated many members to participate more actively in service.

Next, the team visited Mongolia, a structure established only three years earlier by a member living in the US and 75 Mongolian members. The Mongolian AI-Anon Information Service (AIS) presented Staff with handmade deels, or traditional Mongolian garments, and held a formal opening ceremony with cultural music and dance performances. Over three days, the structure held a public outreach event with professionals in the community, a recovery meeting attended by over 200 members, and multiple workshops for Staff to share their knowledge and experience. Members of the Mongolian AIS shared they experienced the WSO's visit as a major step in the establishing of their structure and continue to have regular contact with Staff through weekly virtual meetings on the Concepts of Service.

The WSO's meeting with China was held virtually due to travel warnings, and the Structure and WSO Staff collaborated to hold an all-day electronic meeting with simultaneous translation attended by about 200 members. Workshop topics included the Twelve Traditions, sponsorship, and Alateen Safety and Behavioral Requirements. Since China has only recently been able to declare their intention to become a service structure due to outside issues, the attendees benefited greatly from the WSO's experience and information, including a session focused on how to build a service structure. The Chinese service committee continues to meet regularly and work toward forming an AIS and gaining permission to translate and reprint CAL.

After the meetings with China, the International Services Manager continued on to visit India, which has an established GSO that serves a large and populous country. India's Board of Trustees met with the International Services Manager in person and the Director of Programs remotely for an in-depth discussion about the service structure, electronic meetings, Twelfth-Step work, and how to provide CAL for members unable to read print. The GSO also held an AI-Anon meeting attended by members from across the country and workshops on conflict resolution and Alateen Safety and Behavioral Requirements. Members in India shared that the WSO visit provided hope and practical advice, including the gift of the *Conflict Resolution Kit* (K-70), and inspired members to hold similar workshops in their areas.

A highlight for Conference members from this second presentation was the heartfelt expressions of gratitude from members and trusted servants in each visited structure. These messages included great appreciation for the experience, strength, and hope shared with their members, who included both newcomers attending their first meeting and trusted servants invested in expanding the message of hope in their structures.

ROAD TRIP! YOU AND YOUR BOARD CONNECT

Jeri W., Trustee, Chairperson of the Road Trip! You and Your Board Connect Work Group



The members of the Road Trip! You and Your Board Connect Work Group presented a short skit representing the process behind the selection of Areas to host the annual Road Trip! event. Delegates can present the possibility of hosting a Road Trip! event to their Area World Service Committee as long as their Areas contain a city with a major airport and hotels with space for up to 200 people. If the Area Assembly votes to proceed with the application, the Area provides the name of the city and two hotels that fit these criteria and sends the application, signed by the Area Delegate and Chairperson, to the WSO by the deadline (September 19, 2025 for applications for the 2026 Road Trip!).

After receiving the applications, the Board of Trustees selects three potential Areas at random "from the hat" to host the next year's event at its October meeting. WSO Staff are then charged with negotiating contracts that will determine the final choice of city. The location and agenda for Road Trip! are approved by the Board of Trustees, and the work of preparing for that year's event is assigned to select members of the Road Trip! Work Group, Executive Committee, and WSO Staff. The Board looks forward to receiving Area applications for 2026 and engaging with the fellowship across the WSC Structure.

DISCUSSIONS, PRESENTATIONS, AND WORKSHOPS

CHOSEN AGENDA ITEMS

Prior to the World Service Conference, Conference members were invited to submit Chosen Agenda Item topics for WSC discussion. Conference members submitted 57 CAIs by the deadline. A Task Force composed of three Delegates and two Trustees reviewed the submissions, decided which CAIs they thought could be combined, and contacted the submitters for their approval to consolidate the suggested topics. Conference members voted, and the two items with the most votes were discussed in separate sessions at Conference.

Chosen Agenda Item I

Topics and Rationales have not been fact-checked.

CAI

Service Participation in the Electronic Hybrid Age

Rationale

What creative methods is your Area using to bring fellowship and service participation to the forefront of discussion in this current electronic/hybrid/face-to-face mix of AI-Anon development? How are opportunities being presented that we did not have before? What advantages can come of these new times which we would not have had if this opportunity/challenge had not presented itself? Are we attracting new members and how?

CAI

How to preserve fellowship on an Area level in the wake of Zoom and hybrid AWSC and Assembly meetings.

Rationale

Zoom is a great tool for those who physically can't attend AWSC/ Assembly in person, but while it allows completion of duty, it prevents interaction on a personal level, with no mingling, sharing personal updates, or chatting with old and new friends during breaks. Fellowship relies on those interactions. Some members have chosen to rely on Zoom for convenience, rather than necessity. This may cause a rift in Area-level fellowship.

CAI

Effects of the use of electronic platforms on building cohesiveness in Area/District business meetings

Rationale

Face-to-face meetings easily allow members to interact and casually share ideas/thoughts/opinions in informal settings (e.g. during breaks or meals). This would often foster a sense of unity that carried into business meetings. How is this unity being fostered as many Areas and Districts become more reliant on electronic meetings to conduct their business?

CAI

How do we encourage fellowship in AI-Anon/Alateen in 2025, for both in-person and electronic groups?

Rationale

Defining “fellowship” as acts that build interpersonal relationships between members, experienced members have shared the importance of fellowship outside of meetings in strengthening their recovery. This has included things like pre- or post-meeting coffee and carpooling, etc. How are we encouraging fellowship among both in-person and electronic members in our present time? What needs to change from fellowship methods of decades past? What works well and should continue?

CAI

How can we support electronic groups with a solid online meeting format using CAL to keep electronic groups healthy and using physical AI-Anon materials?

Rationale

A newcomer in a physical meeting room sees tables, tents, displays, literature, and resources. While attending online electronic meetings in Areas, tools are referenced, readings come from different books (some of which I doubt are CAL), pages are screenshared, and some members have never heard of service positions. Some Area GRs/DRs have never attended live meetings/Area events. How can they serve the Area? If they attend virtual Area events and have questions, how do they ask during breaks?

CAI

Why hybrid meetings and getting them started?

Rationale

Hybrid meetings as a norm allow for increased participation at all levels of service—i.e., group, District, and Area meetings as well as speaker and workshop meetings. Technology can be challenging, however, it is a way to attract and involve younger members (we can learn from them) as well as those who may not physically be able to attend but have valuable experience to share.

CAI

How do we protect anonymity while leveraging technology to reach more family members who need us?

Rationale

This continues to be an ongoing issue in my Area. I understand that it is impossible to always keep everyone safe, especially those who are unfamiliar or choose not to use technology. We use Zoom for all of our AWSC and Assemblies. We do our best to keep everyone's anonymity, but not everyone feels it is an appropriate way to conduct Area business.

CAI

Is electronic meeting dominance resulting in loss of fellowship and participation; is face-to-face meeting participation the only avenue for moving toward service commitment participation?

Rationale

While virtual meetings originally helped overcome obstacles for pandemic Al-Anon recovery, possible drawbacks emerged, such as a burgeoning breakdown in quality fellowship, retention of members, continued long-term recovery, mutual aid, and reduction in spontaneous interaction among members, which may ultimately lead to lessening service commitment participation. Is Zoom meeting incorporation helping or hurting quality fellowship, retention of members, continued long-term recovery, mutual aid, reduction in spontaneous interaction among members, and lessening service commitment participation?

Following the reading of the Chosen Agenda Item Topics and Rationales, Conference members had two minutes at the microphone to share their thoughts.

Since Conference members agreed that electronic meetings will continue to become more common as time goes on, discussion focused on strategies to amplify the benefits and alleviate the drawbacks of online fellowship. Members spoke about the way some online meetings have added creative opportunities for personal connection, such as icebreaker games, a fellowship meeting after the meeting, hosting special events and celebrations for online members, and adding optional in-person events to electronic meetings. The benefits of digital participation were discussed, especially in relation to increasing attractiveness for demographics like younger members, members with young children, and single parents, as well as the increased connection with international structures and the worldwide fellowship. Members shared about the importance of flexibility and keeping an open mind, overcoming fears of change, and the opportunity to find growth in areas of discomfort or unfamiliarity.

Chosen Agenda Item II

Topics and Rationales have not been fact-checked.

CAI

Attracting and retaining Al-Anon members in the 20- to 40-year-old range.

Rationale

The 2021 Membership Survey reported the average age of members to be 62.5 years old. On average, members attended their first meeting at 44.1 years old. How do we not only attract members in the 20- to 40-year-old range to meetings but also encourage them to keep coming back when the current members of the meeting are older?

CAI

Future of Al-Anon: If Al-Anon is to grow, how can we better raise awareness of our program and attract younger members to keep our legacy alive?

Rationale

The October 2024 COB letter reads, “As the Board discussed, it became clear that we are already doing many things to attract members and that it is not a competition. People who need help will participate in things they believe will help them.” Our Area is involved in a variety of public outreach efforts, and we continue to be surprised that Al-Anon isn’t more broadly known and/or valued with mental health/public health/clergy professionals.

CAI

How do we instill enthusiasm and positivity for leadership positions in our program?

Rationale

This is important to me because without leadership, Al-Anon will stand still. Who will be there to “carry the message”?

Following the reading of the Chosen Agenda Item Topics and Rationales, Conference members had two minutes at the microphone to share their thoughts.

Conference members spoke about strategies their Areas have used to attract newcomers and younger demographics, such as holding meetings in more varied timeslots and locations, offering childcare at meetings, adding a beginner’s meeting, and making use of social media for public outreach. Alateen was a frequent focus of discussion, with speakers sharing about their experiences as Alateens and Alateen Group Sponsors, easing the bridge between Alateen and Al-Anon, and creating opportunities such as Alateen participation on At-Large Committees and Area Assemblies. Members also shared about their experiences encouraging service participation and being mentored in service themselves, emphasizing the responsibility of service positions like Delegate to identify and foster members with leadership potential and the optimism around projects like Passing It On for future service development.

ELECTRONIC ALATEEN VALIDATION AND IMPLEMENTATION PLANNING

Sarah S., Director of Programs

The Director of Programs began her presentation by reviewing the work done to gain approval to support for electronic Alateen groups since 2020. That year, the Board of Trustees approved the Strategic Plan Strategy: Alateen Electronic Group Feasibility, which established a pilot project to migrate seven existing electronic Alateen chat groups to the *Al-Anon Family Groups Mobile App*. In 2022, the project team developed a potential conceptual solution to support electronic Alateen groups; a proposed course of action was approved by the Board of Trustees in 2023 and presented to that year’s WSC, whose feedback was incorporated into the new Electronic Alateen Validation and Implementation Planning Strategy. Members of the 2024 Conference were presented with a conceptual framework for supporting electronic Alateen groups, which they took back to their Areas for feedback. This framework included a proposed set of World Service Conference Structure Electronic Alateen Safety and Behavioral Requirements (WSC EASBR) and requirements for Al-Anon Members Involved in Alateen Service Serving Electronic Alateen Groups (AMIAS-E). (See the 2022, 2023, and 2024 *World Service Conference Summaries* [P-46] for a more comprehensive discussion of these presentations.)

Since the 2024 WSC, the proposed WSC EASBR has been reviewed by the Policy Committee, which concluded the requirements are consistent with the current Alateen Policy, and sent to general counsel for review to confirm its language meets current legal requirements within the WSC Structure. Staff have begun work on implementation planning for electronic Alateen groups, including research and discussions on technological processes, record-keeping, updating and creating training materials for AMIAS-E, and strategies for communicating the implementation process to WSC Structure Areas.

Based on the time required for Staff to complete these projects and for Delegates to discuss the possibility of registering electronic Alateen groups with their Areas, the project team proposed a July 2026 rollout of electronic Alateen groups implementation and asked for feedback from Conference members about this potential timeline.

Delegates discussed topics such as the role of Area autonomy in Alateen member interviews and legal validation, the status of Alateen groups temporarily meeting online, whether teens in the WSC Structure can attend Alateen meetings in geographic Areas other than their own, hybrid Alateen groups, communication with Areas and Alateen Coordinators, and increased service outreach to younger members.

Delegates were encouraged to discuss during Assemblies their Area's willingness to support electronic Alateen groups in accordance with the WSC EASBR if it is adopted in 2026. These discussions would prepare Conference members to vote on any motions brought forward to recognize electronic Alateen groups as Al-Anon Family Groups at the 2026 WSC.

Most Conference members were in agreement that the proposed timeline would provide enough time for the necessary discussions with their Areas, and many expressed that their Areas would be enthusiastic about registering electronic Alateen groups. The Director of Programs closed by encouraging all Delegates, even those from Areas that had not previously considered forming electronic Alateen groups, to bring the discussion back to the members they serve, similar to when Areas discussed accepting electronic Al-Anon groups and creating a process to connect them to the Area links of service.

EXCESS RESERVE FUNDS

Vali F., Executive Director

At the end of 2023, WSO Staff calculated a significant excess in the value of the Reserve Fund compared to the amount of the WSO's One Year's Operating Expenses. As part of its role of ensuring the Reserve Fund does not become excessive, in accordance with Warranty One of the General Warranties of the Conference, the Board gathered a variety of operational and strategic project ideas on which to use the excess funds from Conference members, WSO Volunteers, and Staff.

Several immediate purchases of necessary office equipment for the WSO were approved, including a new inventory scanner and a replacement van. (See Auditor's Report, p. 8.) The Board also approved the funding of three special Strategic Plan projects: WSO Core Systems Overhaul, Professional Outreach—Young People, and Passing It On.

The WSO Core Systems Overhaul is a multi-year effort expected to extend at least into 2027 and involves the replacement of the software used to run the current Online Group Records application, the al-anon.org online store, AFG Connects, and WSO accounting functions. The first phase of the overhaul project is to gather requirements and understand the needs of the Staff and users within the fellowship; these conversations began in 2024, when Staff met with Delegates to discuss Area group records procedures, and are now nearing completion. Immediately following the WSC, Staff will begin the second phase: selection of a vendor for the replacement software. The final two steps will be implementation/development and the software rollout, which will be executed in multiple phases to minimize disruption for all users.

The Professional Outreach—Young People project will develop multiple strategies to spread awareness of Al-Anon among young people ages 13-25 and professionals who work with these age groups. The project includes a new PSA campaign for podcasts with audiences of teens and young adults; outreach at conferences for professionals working with young people; trade advertisements aimed at social workers, school counselors, and family therapists; and a LinkedIn advertisement campaign to raise awareness of Al-Anon and Alateen among educators. (See Annual Report, New Alateen Public Outreach Service Tool, p. 68)

The final project, Passing It On, is designed to encourage communication within the links of service, identify and foster future leaders in the fellowship, document service resources and local and institutional knowledge, and encourage sponsorship and mentorship to invest in the next generation of trusted servants. (See Growing Future Volunteer Leaders below.)

GROWING FUTURE VOLUNTEER LEADERS

Sarah S., Director of Programs

"The future is not something we wait for, it's something we create!"

The Passing It On presentation began with a series of recorded skits made by the Growing Future Volunteer Leaders project team, illustrating common misunderstandings and information gaps that can occur in the process of Al-Anon service work. The team members shared that many trusted servants across the fellowship had noted the need for increased awareness of service knowledge and experience, processes among the links of service, and application of service tools and the Concepts of Service across groups, LDCs and AISs, Districts, and Areas. These conversations led to the choice of "Growing Future Volunteer Leaders" as the Board's 2025 WSC Strategic Topic and the conceptual development of the "Passing It On" project as part of the excess reserve funds allocation.

The goal of the Passing It On project is to create and develop content that would support Areas in identifying and passing on information from one generation of members and trusted servants to the next through the use of presentations, discussions, and workshops facilitated by past and current WSC members and WSO Staff and Volunteers. The preliminary timeline for the project would involve the development of a Passing It On study guide to distribute to Areas and of a plan for six teams to visit Area events over a period of three to four years. Following the 2025 WSC, a task force will be created with the charge of developing a rubric of proposed content and a framework of criteria for selecting future developers of that content. As part of this development, the project team asked WSC members for their input on what to keep and add on to the conceptual plan, how to accomplish the project, and any other ideas for growing future leaders.

Delegates shared their thoughts about confusion and lack of information about service roles among the membership, the need for documentation of institutional knowledge around service roles and responsibilities, and the importance of mentorship and service sponsorship. Some Delegates shared about their experience creating training materials and documentation for members in service and the benefits this had for their Areas in increasing service participation and efficiency. Some suggestions for the project included a particular focus on younger members and Alateens in service, establishing mentorship before beginning service roles, creating accessible and attractive service tools such as videos and online resources, and providing guidance for approaching newer members and potential

service leaders within the group and Area. Members shared their enthusiasm for the project and its potential for investing in the new generation of trusted servants.

POLICY DISCUSSION

CHOOSING A GROUP'S NAME POLICY—MEMBER APPEALS

Debbie P., Trustee, Policy Committee Chairperson

Prior to the 2025 World Service Conference, Delegates were provided with a timeline of the changes to the Choosing a Group's Name Policy in the "Digest of Al-Anon and Alateen Policies" section of the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27) to inform their discussion of the Policy and its implementation. Until 2010, the Al-Anon Registration/Group Records Change Form (GR-1) contained a "Group Focus" field to identify groups seeking to attract specific participant demographics, such as Al-Anon adult children of alcoholics, women, or people of color. In 2011, following a 2010 Policy Committee discussion of these focus groups, the World Service Office (WSO) removed the "Group Focus" section from GR-1 and advised groups seeking to focus on specific participant designations to add the label to their group's name. Based on feedback from groups who felt the "Group Focus" field was a necessary filter when searching for Al-Anon groups, as well as from Areas and Districts who maintained a "Group Focus" field on their local meeting searches, the WSO added a "Participants" filter to the al-anon.org meeting search when it launched in 2018.

With the dramatic increase in electronic group registrations following the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic, the WSO began receiving more proposed group names that seemed to be out of alignment with Al-Anon's primary purpose of welcoming anyone affected by another person's drinking. The WSO Staff who are delegated responsibility by the Policy Committee for reviewing these names brought the issue to the Policy Committee for guidance. The Committee discussed the topic at its Open Policy Committee Meeting during the 2022 WSC (see the *2022 World Service Conference Summary* [P-46]). A Thought Force followed and at its October 2022 meeting, the Committee took a consensus to form a task force charged with examining the "Choosing a Group's Name" text in the Policy Digest to ensure clarity and inclusion of the Traditions, Concepts, and Al-Anon's spiritual principles.

The "Choosing a Group's Name" Task Force presented text revisions for discussion at four meetings of the Policy Committee in 2023 and 2024. The Policy Committee sent a Policy Digest revision to the Board of Trustees in January 2024 with the recommendation that the proposed text be presented to the 2024 WSC; the text and framing document were sent to Conference members in February 2024 in preparation for the WSC discussion in April.

At the 2024 WSC, Conference members discussed the proposed edits to the Choosing a Group's Name Policy and were asked to consider and approve the changes. The proposed changes included language clarifying that the only requirement for membership in Al-Anon is that there be a problem of alcoholism in a relative or friend and that the names of Al-Anon groups should take care to be inviting, attractive, and avoid public controversy (*2024 WSC Summary*, p. 19). After discussion and a further opportunity to reflect, the Conference voted to approve the proposed text as written.

Between the 2024 and 2025 Conferences, the WSO received a number of appeals concerning the new policy and specifically the implementation approach approved by the Policy Committee in July 2024, by which Staff were directed to reject proposed names for new groups or name changes for existing groups that included

community identifiers and to instead guide these groups to use the "Participants" designation field on the Group Records Registration or Change Form. These appeals were discussed at two Policy Committee meetings before being brought to the 2025 World Service Conference as the body responsible for the original Policy decision. To ensure thoughtful consideration, multiple sessions were dedicated to discussion of the "Choosing a Group's Name" Policy and its implementation.

The Policy Committee Chairperson opened the first session by asking Conference members to consider the question, "Do you believe these appeals are concerned about the current policy or the implementation of the Policy?" During discussion, some Delegates expressed that groups in their Areas had misconceptions about the details of the Policy and its implementation, leading to fears that the WSO would begin applying the same approach to group names containing identifiers for existing groups not seeking name changes, and that clearer communication about the policy and its implementation was needed. Other concerns included the role of group autonomy in choosing names, interpretation of the Traditions regarding outside affiliation, and the desire for more input from groups in implementing policy changes. Via a show of hands, Delegates expressed after this first discussion that the member appeals were concerned with both the Policy itself and the implementation of the Policy, with a larger percentage indicating the latter.

The second session began with a clarification from the Policy Committee that the Committee's intention had never been to direct Staff to enforce the "Choosing a Group's Name" Policy implementation on existing groups. The Committee also clarified that the WSO was only reviewing group names for new groups and groups submitting name changes; existing groups submitting updates other than name changes did not have their names reviewed by the WSO. Given the outcome of the previous session vote, the Policy Committee Chairperson prioritized implementation concerns for the session discussion. During discussion, Conference members suggested approaches to group name appeals such as involving Area Group Records Coordinators in the appeal process and suggesting alternatives for rejected group names. WSO Staff also spoke about their experience with and process of implementing the Policy in regard to Tradition Three; Staff members shared that when considering group name registrations that contained participant identifiers, they contacted the groups to ask if their meetings would welcome anyone affected by another person's drinking, and multiple groups responded that only members who fell under the specified participant category would be welcome. Conference members agreed that more comprehensive communication to the fellowship about Al-Anon groups welcoming all friends and families of alcoholics was needed.

With the WSC nearing conclusion, a third and final session on the topic was held. The Policy Committee Chairperson began by summarizing the many agreements and understandings reached by Conference members throughout the extended discussion. Conversation then proceeded on the primary topic of contention: whether or not having identifiers in group names was consistent with the Choosing a Group's Name Policy. A consensus was taken indicating that WSC members were not in alignment on the central issue. Afterward, a motion was proposed to suspend Staff implementation of the "Choosing a Group's Name" Policy as relates to identifiers in group names until the 2026 WSC to allow for Area discussion about the Policy and its implementation. The motion passed (see WSC Motion #7, p. 36).

LOCAL SERVICES

Ann Marie Z., Trustee, Local Services Task Force Chairperson

The work of the Local Services Task Force began in 2018 and focused on reviewing and revising the Local Services section of the “Digest of Al-Anon and Alateen Policies” in the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27) to ensure the information was written as policy rather than procedures. The following recommendations for revision of the Local Services section were approved by the Board of Trustees and submitted to the 2024 World Service Conference (WSC) members in March to support their preparation for the Conference discussion:

- “Naming a Service” was rewritten as “Al-Anon Information Services (AISs) or Intergroups,” considering both WSC’s and international structures’ uses of the term.
- “Answering Services” and “Information Services (Intergroups)” were removed, as they were considered procedure rather than policy.
- “Employees in Al-Anon Services” became “Service Participation by Employees in Al-Anon Services” with minor edits.
- “Autonomy of Groups” became “Meeting List Publishing” with some text modified and new paragraphs added.

In April 2024, the Policy Committee discussed a minority opinion raised regarding the changes to the “Autonomy of Groups” section, and the Task Force presented revised text to the 2024 WSC for approval. This revision restored the “Autonomy of Groups” section and deleted draft “Meeting List Publishing” verbiage, with the understanding that a future Policy Task Force would review this section and determine next steps. The 2024 WSC approved the remaining changes to “Local Services.” (See the *2024 World Service Conference Summary* p. 19 for more information.)

In 2024, following the WSC, the Local Services Task Force reviewed the draft “Meeting List Publishing” revision and determined that the Policy needed to be expanded to address the needs of the Global Electronic Area and international structures and that a revised “Autonomy of Groups” section needed to be included to address the minority opinion. The Board approved a proposed revision in October 2024 to be presented to the 2025 World Service Conference.

The proposed revisions to the Policy Digest renamed the “Autonomy of Groups” section to “Who Can Disband a Group” and added a line clarifying that only members of a group have authority to disband that group. A “Meeting List Publishing” section was also added concerning Areas’ ability to request that the WSO not publish information about a meeting if the Area has an established a Meeting List Publishing Policy previously approved by the groups in that Area and that the WSO has agreed to support.

The Conference discussed the proposed changes, including clarifying the criteria for the WSO to support an Area Meeting List Publishing Policy, such as the policy being non-punitive and including a process for reinstatement of groups who have been removed from the Area meeting list. After discussion, the Conference agreed that it was ready to vote, and a motion to approve the proposed changes to “Local Services” was presented and approved (see Motion #2, p. 36).

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Before the opening of Conference, while Panel 65 members attended the Orientation for New WSC Members, Panels 63 and 64 were charged to create presentations on specific topics to deliver during Conference.

Panel 63

Panel 63 gave a presentation on focusing on worldwide Al-Anon while at the World Service Conference. The Delegates discussed the links of service and the distinct responsibilities of the group, District, and Area; the importance of keeping an open mind and listening and learning; following the Legacies, including Tradition One and Concept Twelve; and communicating the needs and experiences of the worldwide fellowship to their Areas.

Panel 64

Panel 64 presented on tips for keeping Alternate Delegates informed about Conference materials and activities. Their presentation consisted of skits illustrating the principles of engagement (regular and open conversations with Alternate Delegates about their information preferences), communication (ensuring appropriate levels of information are shared and confirmed), and confidentiality (following the Conference guidance on what documents are shareable and with whom).

TASK FORCE: DELEGATE PARTICIPATION ON CLT FOR AGENDA DEVELOPMENT

Sarah S., Director of Programs, Task Force Chairperson

The topic of Delegate participation on the Conference Leadership Team (CLT) was first discussed at the 2024 World Service Conference (WSC) after being submitted by a group of 2023 WSC Delegates. Through the Delegates’ Knowledge-Based Decision-Making process, they identified that their primary concern was the lack of Delegate participation setting the Conference agenda which is a responsibility delegated by the Board of Trustees to the CLT. After a thoughtful discussion, the 2024 WSC passed a motion to form a task force to investigate how to resolve these concerns. (See *2024 World Service Conference Summary* [P-46], p. 15.)

The Task Force, composed of three Delegates and the Staff and Volunteer members of the Conference Leadership Team, identified three workstreams that would most benefit from Delegate input: agenda development and refinement, which includes collecting WSC member topic ideas, considering and recommending the highest priority ideas to CLT, and providing feedback on the preliminary WSC agenda; Chosen Agenda Item (CAI) education, which includes educating Delegates on the criteria for topics appropriate for consideration by the World Service Conference; and CAI facilitation which includes gathering, clarifying, and consolidating Chosen Agenda Items (CAIs). The Task Force members then defined the roles and skills needed for three proposed Conference work groups to address these workstreams: the Agenda Collaboration Work Group, CAI Education Work Group, and CAI Facilitation Work Group.

The proposed WSC Agenda Collaboration Work Group would consist of five members, three Delegates, and two CLT members. Key skills would include a clear understanding of the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27) and the goals of the World Service Conference. The CAI Education Work Group would consist of four Delegates, with CLT members participating in support and continuity roles. Key skills would include strong facilitation and

presentation skills and the ability to encourage and empower others. Finally, the CAI Facilitation Work Group would consist of three Delegates and one consulting CLT member, and key skills would include attention to detail, a strong understanding of the *Service Manual*, and an understanding of the Chosen Agenda Items process.

Conference members had the following questions about the presentation:

What happens if there is disagreement between the CLT and a Delegate work group? Does CLT have the ultimate decision power?

The Task Force envisions the CLT and Delegate work groups as collaborating teams working toward an improved agenda, so the hope would be for members to reason things out and come to an agreement on any issues. The Board of Trustees is the body with ultimate authority over the final Conference agenda.

Will Delegates be CLT members?

No, the work groups will be collaborating with the CLT rather than being added to the CLT itself.

THOUGHT FORCE: OVERCOMING REGIONAL TRUSTEE APPLICATION BARRIERS

Jean L., Trustee, Thought Force Chairperson

The charge for the Thought Force on Overcoming Regional Trustee Application Barriers was to review resources and brainstorm strategies that could be implemented for overcoming member barriers to applying to serve as Regional Trustee.

The members first identified what barriers existed, which included lack of knowledge of the Regional Trustee position and its relationship to the Trustee at Large position; inconsistent or confusing Area processes for vetting Regional Trustee applicants, or lack of any process at the Area level; and timing of the Regional Trustee application. To combat these barriers, the Thought Force suggested strategies focused on increasing education among the groups and members about Area responsibility in approving applicants for Regional Trustee, including the timeframe and when applications can be submitted; thoroughly documenting Area Regional Trustee applicant approval processes where they exist, reviewing processes and simplifying them where possible, and developing processes in Areas that don't have one in place; and implementing anonymous applications where possible.

The Thought Force asked for feedback on the strategies and other possible solutions from Conference members. Many Delegates shared their experiences with Areas lacking a Regional Trustee applicant approval process or clear communication about the process, leading to confusion or reluctance of members to apply for the position. Some Areas had difficulty with the August deadline in relation to their Area Assemblies, and most agreed that simplifying the Regional Trustee application process and sharing the desired qualifications more widely would increase the number of applications among the fellowship.

TASK FORCE: STEPPING STONES

Ralph H., Panel 64, Pennsylvania, Task Force Chairperson

"It is not just a visit; it is a moment to reflect on our own journey, supporting each other while we stand on the shoulders of giants, carrying forward the legacy they handed to us with love."

The Stepping Stones Task Force was charged with handling all logistics relating to the 2025 Delegates' trip to Stepping Stones, the home of Lois and Bill W., which is considered the birthplace

of the clearinghouse for Al-Anon Family Groups. The Task Force was responsible for confirming Delegate and WSO Volunteer participants, organizing the visit with the Stepping Stones foundation, and arranging transportation and meals. The Task Force members shared their experiences facilitating logistics with the foundation and additional Delegate volunteers, navigating the requirements for transportation, and designing an effective registration process for Delegates to sign up for the visit, transportation, and hotel stays.

The Delegates closed with a reflection on the spirituality of the Stepping Stones visit, which allows members to experience the home where Lois and Bill's vision for healing first took shape and continues to the present day.

TASK FORCE: SINGLE TRUSTEE PROCESS

Kathi M., Chairperson of the Board, Task Force Chairperson

The charge of the Single Trustee Selection Process Task Force was to identify options for creating a single process for selection of Trustees, an alternative to the current system of two application streams for Trustees at Large and Regional Trustees, that would address concerns about ensuring diversity of geographic perspectives and ensure consideration of Area input in the selection process.

The presentation began with a brief overview of the current Trustee selection processes. Under the current system, applicants can stand for Trustee at Large by applying directly to the WSO, while those applying for Regional Trustee need to undergo an Area approval process before their applications can move forward. The presentation identified that responsibilities for Trustees once elected are identical. Although every Area within a Region can submit an applicant for Regional Trustee, the WSO typically receives only one application per Region, and often none are submitted. In contrast, for the last two years, the WSO has received many more applicants for Trustee at Large than vacancies are available to be filled. The Board does not fill vacant Regional Trustee positions with Trustee at Large applicants out of respect for traditional authority and responsibility. As a result of this discrepancy, Trustee positions are consistently left open, especially in recent years, with the Board operating at 72 percent capacity over the last five years.

The Task Force arrived at three proposed ideas for a single, unified process to elect Trustees that would hopefully serve to increase Trustee applications and Board capacity.

- Option One: This option would redefine the composition of the Conference Committee on Trustees (CCT) to include the geographic/regional voice across panels and expand its mandate to review all Trustee applications, eliminating the Area review in favor of an expanded CCT with a focus on regional representation.
- Option Two: This option would continue to have applications scored by both the Conference Committee on Trustees and Regional Committees on Trustees to ensure the Area voice is heard but eliminate the Area approval step.
- Option Three: This option would maintain the Conference Committee on Trustees as-is but expand its mandate to include reviewing all Trustee applications. Option Three would replace the Area approval step with a new process to obtain feedback from to ensure the Area voice is heard from all the Delegates in each applicant's Region.

Under all three options, the differentiation in titles for Regional Trustee and Trustee at Large would be eliminated, with all applicants standing only for Trustee. The processes would also eliminate the extended timeline for Regional Trustee applications and provide greater opportunity for filling all Board vacancies. Drawbacks common to all three options were the possibility for Regional imbalance on the Board with no standardized guidelines to ensure Regional representation, as well as the removal of the Area Assembly/AWSC opportunity to approve in favor of Delegate review and feedback only.

The Task Force asked Conference members for feedback on these options, which they felt might be the most effective, and any other suggestions for improvement or new ideas on simplifying the Trustee process. Most Conference members supported the idea of a single process, with option one (expanding the CCT to consider Regional representation) being the most commonly mentioned. Delegates confirmed that the extended timeline and complicated process was a deterrent to members considering applying for Regional Trustee and agreed that the common aspects of the three options would encourage greater participation. The discussion showed that Regional representation and Area autonomy were important issues for many in the fellowship, and ensuring as much geographic representation as possible be considered moving forward, as the Task Force identified.

Prior to the end of the session, the Task Force emphasized that this discussion was intended to increase understanding of options within the fellowship and Areas, and Delegates agreed to discuss the three options with their Areas, gather feedback, and bring that information to the 2026 WSC.

The Thought Force also reflected on the importance of history in preserving Al-Anon's legacy and how these resources may be used to create new areas of service participation and interest in the program among members and newcomers.

During discussion, Conference members shared their experiences with Area Archives being underserved and not well shared, as well as the meaningful impact of shared history when Archives were prioritized and given resources. Many felt that archives are more easily accessible and attractive when digitized and available online and discussed strategies for achieving that transition. One Delegate shared that their Area had rediscovered an unused but comprehensive archive of Area history and was beginning to share those materials with a "history capsule" column in the Area newsletter. Members also reflected on the meaning of Al-Anon history to their personal recovery and the preservation of the Al-Anon legacy.

THOUGHT FORCE: REVITALIZING ARCHIVES TO ENHANCE OUR RECOVERY

Becky V., Panel 63, Iowa, Thought Force Chairperson

The charge for the Revitalizing Archives Thought Force was to develop strategies for supporting Areas in connecting members to Al-Anon history. The Thought Force members surveyed different Areas on their experiences with Area Archives and preservation and strategies to expand interaction with Al-Anon history within the fellowship. Ideas included creating Archives Committees, inviting WSO Staff for Area visits centered on Archives, making use of new technology and encouraging members with related expertise into service, and adding flexibility into the Archive Coordinator position to increase attractiveness and participation. The Thought Force also suggested updating the WSO *Area Archives* Guideline (G-30) and the Longtime Member Questionnaire (AR-1), the latter of which is currently out of print, and creating new service materials geared toward Archives inventory and preservation.



SHARING OURSELVES

DELEGATES (PANEL 63)

Mari J., Alaska

In 2023, before the Assembly, I called my Service Sponsor, the current Chair and past Delegate, who expressed her fear that people would not step up for important positions in the coming Assembly. She said that she had heard the phrase “no one has broken Al-Anon yet,” but was still nervous and sad about it. A seed was planted as I considered my own investment in the program.

Three times, the request was called for someone to step up for Delegate. My future was uncertain—I had plans to move to Oregon in 2020, changed by the pandemic. I was not sure when I might leave the state. But I was intrigued by the opportunity, so I finally offered to stand for a year if someone would take my Coordinator position. I had invited another member to come to our Assembly who had never been—the virtual equivalent of “get in the car,” another type of investment. She offered to take the position for me so I could fulfill my duties as Delegate, and I was voted in.

In January, the firehose began. I began feeling the weight of representing my Area at the World Service Conference. It was overwhelming and yet tremendously exciting. I reached out to several past Delegates and my mentor to ask questions, and I felt encircled with the care and support invested in me. At Conference, I began to see how the WSO works to preserve our legacy nationally and internationally. Particularly moving was the trip to the WSO, walking up the line of people welcoming us “home.” It was powerful to be welcomed in that way by those whose day-to-day work was to preserve that legacy.

I was not sure how I could encapsulate all of the information and inspiration that I witnessed that year into a virtual report, but somehow I did, and it was received with joy and appreciation. I saw how I was investing in my Area to preserve the legacy of Al-Anon. In my last year, just as I was told I might, I feel like I am finally getting a handle on more of the ways I can effectively invest in our Area. I will continue that investment and hopefully inspire others to step in to service. I am honored and grateful to be a part of continuing our legacy to help families and friends of alcoholics.

Marti P., Arkansas

One of the first lessons I was introduced to in recovery was to look up the definitions of words, even if I think I knew what they meant. So, I looked up the definition of investing, and yeah, there is a financial definition, but there are additional meanings, one being able to endow with attributes. This meaning resonated with me. When I look around gatherings of recovery-minded folks, I am often amazed at how different we are and how similar at the same time. Through the process of recovery, one of the sayings I have heard often is, “you spot it, you got it.” This is often taken to have a negative meaning—recognizing undesirable character traits. However, I heard a new take on this saying a while back: “you spot it, you got it” also relates to positive traits. If I notice and desire to emulate a positive quality in someone, I must have a bit of that quality to be able to recognize it in others. My challenge is to become willing and taking the necessary steps to coax those qualities to the forefront.

My time as Delegate from Arkansas is coming to a close, but I will endeavor to incorporate the positive qualities I have encountered

at the World Service Conference and all the other opportunities to serve that have been opened up to me in this process. As this chapter comes to close, I look forward to what my Higher Power has in store...More will be revealed.

Elaine M., Connecticut

“Investing in Each Other to Preserve Our Legacy.” My first Al-Anon meeting was many 24 hours ago. I honestly don’t remember when I arrived on the doorsteps of Al-Anon. Like so many of us, I was at my wits’ end and asked Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.) for help. As I explained the situation in my home, the kind gentleman told me he would have someone from Al-Anon call me. My introduction came with a phone call from the phone service volunteer, who suggested I attend a meeting.

I walked into my first meeting, sat in the back of the room, and didn’t utter a word for fear they would think I was crazy. I gravitated toward people who smiled and laughed, and one of them became my first Sponsor, who walked me through my difficulties, guiding me through the Steps and Traditions. What she did for me was to invest her time and introduce me to service, even if I thought I wasn’t ready. She assured me that I could do it; all I needed was willingness, and my Higher Power would do the rest. I attended District meetings, even though I wasn’t a Group Representative, Area World Service Committee meetings, Assemblies, and other events both A.A. and Al-Anon. What I didn’t realize was that she, the other longtime members, and my Higher Power were preparing me for roles for which I never imagined that I could do the work, which was their investing in me.

Throughout the years, I slowly moved into roles with guidance and support from so many members who shared their experience, strength, and hope. My gratitude and willingness to give back to this program is shown through investing in others through sponsorship, meetings, and providing reports to the fellowship, always remembering to carry the message with grace, encouraging members and reassuring them that “yes, you can do it.” I feel honored that when I come back from Conference, people are eager to hear what I learned. When challenged, I utilize the Steps, Traditions, Concepts, and General Warranties of the Conference; reason it out with my Service Sponsor; and pray for guidance from my Higher Power. I am reminded of Lois, who shared, “We are brought together through a common problem and united by a common goal.” (*How Al-Anon Works* [B-32], p. 99) I look forward to seeing during our next election for Area Delegate who is willing to stand for the role of Connecticut Delegate.

Cheryl S., Idaho

In our recovery through Al-Anon, I have learned that our strength lies not only in individual resilience but also in the support we provide one another. The phrase “stick with the winners” reminds members to engage with those who embrace the entire program. Regular attendance at meetings, sharing, sponsoring, and working the Steps are not just recommended practices; they form the backbone of our thriving fellowship. It is within this shared commitment that we create our legacies. Perfection is not important. What matters is a willingness to grow and learn from one another.

The recovery and serenity we enjoy today are a direct result of the dedication of early members like Lois and Anne, who laid the groundwork for our program. This foundation and our involvement are crucial for the survival of Al-Anon. Whether leading a meeting or a role as Secretary or Treasurer, each act of service contributes to the whole. I want Al-Anon to remain available, not just for others, but for myself as well. Complacency can creep in when I am too comfortable at home, but through service, I challenge myself and embrace growth, which reaffirms my commitment to return each week. By investing in younger members, we ensure that their voices are heard and that Al-Anon's principles are passed down, preserving the legacy that has touched countless lives.

As a Delegate, I learned the invaluable lesson of collaboration. I didn't have to navigate the responsibilities alone; trusting others reinforced the idea that we are stronger together. Through my own service experiences, I discovered that engaging within Al-Anon through the links of service not only enhances my understanding of the program but also instills a sense of purpose. The three legacies of recovery, unity, and service capture what Al-Anon represents. When I embrace the program, I am not only improving my own life but also distracting my mind from the chaos surrounding alcoholism. My journey through Al-Anon has transformed my understanding of the disease and deepened my investment in the fellowship. Al-Anon taught me kindness and compassion and encouraged me to slow down and truly listen. I resonate with the sentiment in this statement: "Service is the gratitude I pay for the life that Al-Anon has given me." By spending more time focusing on solutions rather than problems, I recognize that investing in each other is what truly preserves our legacy. Together, we uphold a program that not only empowers members but enriches our shared humanity.

Carol W., Illinois South

Recently I heard at an Al-Anon meeting to breathe in God's will and breathe out my will. I practice this multiple times a day, to keep me in the moment and connected to my Higher Power. Taking what I like from other members and leaving the rest preserves our legacy.

I walked into my first Al-Anon meeting 13 years ago. A therapist told me and my husband that we were helping our daughter kill herself. She told my daughter to get to rehab and me and my husband to attend at least six Al-Anon meetings and, if we did not find relief, to come back. Very quickly, I found my home group. I remember how, that Sunday morning years ago, as I sat in my chair and listened to others, I realized we were not alone. I do not remember what was discussed at that meeting, but I heard, "Keep Coming Back," saw the smiles, and felt the warmth from others. I had promised that therapist I would attend six meetings, so I was determined that six meetings it would be. It did not take long before I realized that Al-Anon is a recovery program for me, not a "get my daughter sober" program.

It is so important that professionals are aware of the power of Al-Anon. My family was lucky; we chose an addiction therapist with knowledge about recovery programs. Not all professionals have this knowledge. I am just one example of how public outreach works and why it is so important. This is investing in each other to spread the Al-Anon message.

My service journey started within months of my first meeting. The first few years, I served at the District level; then, a wonderful member came to me, put her arm around me, and asked what I thought about serving at the Area level? Again, this is investing in each other to spread the Al-Anon message. The Steps, Traditions, and Concepts help us preserve our legacy. It is so important for our members with years of experience to welcome newcomers. This program is such a gift.

From *Hope for Today* (B-27), page 35: "Serenity isn't a matter of chance; it's a matter of choice." I go to meetings for relief and do service for recovery. Every day, I am grateful for the Al-Anon program and my experience as Delegate.

Becky V., Iowa

I am so happy for the members before me who found that investing in each other to preserve our legacy was important. Without the friends and family members who offered encouragement for me to "just try" this Al-Anon program, I would not be who I am today. This program is about attraction rather than promotion. There were never any promises made to me that this program would solve all my problems; rather, through others investing time to visit with me, sharing their Higher Power with me, and being just being a phone call away, I now know that investing in each other is something I want to pay forward. I've learned that the Steps were to protect me from myself. I could be my own worst enemy and continue to beat myself up for what I thought were mistakes. The accountability I learned because of sponsorship and being honest with myself is what kept me coming back and working the Steps even today. When I show someone else the kindness and patience that I received when I came into this program, I know I will be in a safe and happy place.

My Higher Power is different today than when I first came into the program, and that is okay. For me, the reading on February 4th in *Courage to Change* (B-16) is special. In part, it says, "...after I'm through those hard times, I never truly remember the pain. What I remember is the sunshine on the water, the peace of the moment, the love of my Higher Power wrapping around me as tangibly as the sunshine" (p. 35). While reading some material regarding Concept Three, I was reminded that it is about mutual trust. I need to have trust in others, and at the same time, the other person needs to be able to trust me. Only in this way can I continue to be me and detach from what is not mine yet care about others. Regardless of who or what brought me to this program, I want to be one of those people who is willing to invest in others to preserve our legacy. Today, this journey I am on is a fun time! If I "Let Go and Let God" and we continue to make decisions together, this life will continue to be good!

GW, Louisiana

I had already completed my three-minute share when I got an email from WSO stating: "The CLT invites outgoing Delegates to focus their talk on the 2025 Conference theme." Oops! On to plan B.

"Investing in Each Other to Preserve Our Legacy." When I hear the word investing, I cannot help but think of financial references (stock markets, crashes, rallies, etc.). So, as it is with financial investing, the graph for spiritual investment is not a simple elevating diagonal line.

Area Assembly was an acquired taste for me. Too business-y and too much conflict. But I kept coming back. My first regional service event as an Alternate Delegate did not go the way I planned. There was a period of adjustment there as well (are we sensing a pattern here?).

A funny thing happened on the way to my first World Service Conference. I had a conflict. So, in spiritual investments as well as financial ones, the graph is not a linear elevating line. The important thing is to keep your eye on the prize... a spiritual awakening.

"Our Legacy." Here's a legacy I perceive for Panel 63. Panel 63 completed three World Service Conferences in 12 days. How many panels can claim that? I believe protecting our legacy simply means protecting our Legacies, which is our stated purpose in the Conference Charter: "To be the guardian of both Al-Anon's world services and its Twelve Traditions."

I started creating personal themes in 2023. That year it was “joy.” In 2024, “joy” again, and in 2025, “free” (“Keep It Simple”). My favorite slogan is not indexed in any CAL. My goal in recovery is to become happy, joyous, and free.

For years, I thought that the goal in Al-Anon was to achieve serenity, but serenity, acceptance, courage, and wisdom are actually valuable spiritual tools that guide me to my goal of being happy, joyous, and free.

I have also had a theme song for each Conference: “I Gotta be Me” in 2023; “Bubbles Up” in 2024; and “Thankful” in 2025.

Bubbles up!

Carol G., Maine

“Investing in Each Other to Preserve Our Legacy.” When I was thinking about our Conference theme, I thought about the legacy I have found here—the people; experience, strength, and hope; Steps, Traditions, and Concepts; and the literature. I looked up the meaning of “legacy” to try to understand what I was investing in. I found the following definitions: One’s character, reputation, and life they lead; setting an example for others; one’s faith, ethics, and core values.

These are characteristics I found in the members I encountered at my early meetings and thought, “I want what they have,” but doubted I could ever achieve it. Through attending meetings and listening to the experience, strength, and hope those people so willingly shared, I learned how to work this wonderful program. They invested in me, and their guidance and inspiration impacted my life, faith, and home. I was steered into service, making me push my limits and improve my understanding of the program, my self-worth, and my confidence. With willingness to make changes in myself, I invested in myself, in a relationship with a Higher Power who has my back, leading me in a positive direction, and in a program that changes my life “One Day at a Time.” My investment is showing up, being the real me, practicing the principles in all my affairs, and hoping to be attractive enough that someone will want what I have found in the rooms of Al-Anon. This reminder from the ODAT encourages me to invest in others: “Let me never forget how much Al-Anon can do to make me a better person with a richer, fuller life. It gives me the means and the wisdom to serve others which I must have in order to fulfill myself” (*One Day at a Time in Al-Anon* [B-6], p. 26).

Al-Anon was the answer to a prayer for me. My first Al-Anon meeting was on the fourth Monday of April, 20 years ago, giving this opportunity to share a little more significance. I am grateful to the people who were there when I arrived, those who have crossed my recovery path along the way, and all of you here today. I am grateful to be able to do my part in “Investing in Each Other to Preserve Our Legacy.” Thank you for the opportunity to serve.

Lalit J., Nebraska

Growing up in the Southern Plains of Nepal, I never imagined—even in my wildest dreams—that I would stand before the “largest group conscience” of Al-Anon Family Groups, participating in a 65-year-long conversation dedicated to providing help and hope to the families and friends of alcoholics.

I found Al-Anon amid utter hopelessness and despair. Today, I stand here filled with gratitude for everything that led me to its doors. Before Al-Anon, much of my life revolved around avoiding my deepest fears—loneliness, rejection, and abandonment. I focused on everyone but myself. Thanks to the Al-Anon program, I am now embracing the journey of knowing myself, accepting myself, being myself, and giving of myself. This program has given me both hope and purpose.

Tying this to the 2025 WSC theme, “Investing in Each Other to Preserve Our Legacy,” I am fortunate to belong to a home group with a strong history of service. Over the years, this group has sent six Delegates to the World Service Conference. Past Delegates and longtime members have invested their time in guiding, encouraging, and mentoring me through various levels of service. As stated in *Many Voices, One Journey* (B-31): “Lois frequently said words to the effect that, ‘it takes only one person to start something, but many others to carry it out’” (p. 3). Having experienced a spiritual awakening through these Steps, we strive to carry this message to others and practice these principles. It has taken thousands of dedicated members over 65 years to grow our fellowship into what it is today.

It is vital that we do our part in preserving this legacy to ensure that Al-Anon remains available to families and friends of alcoholics—just as it was for me 23 years ago. Just like an anchor provides security to a boat during a severe storm, service work keeps me grounded in the Al-Anon program. Through it, I stay connected and hopeful and continue moving forward, no matter how rough the challenges may become.

Lisa S., Nevada

Without Al-Anon, my legacy would be much like that of my dear ancestors before me. They had been doing the best they could but were no match for alcoholism. For me, the legacy of the family disease of alcoholism resulted in broken relationships, unrealized gifts and talents, confusion about my purpose on this earth and what it means to be a human being, and a very possible early death by misadventure such as a single car accident, suicide, or a body prematurely aged by chronic anxiety.

I appreciate the reading from one of our daily readers that talks about how the family disease of alcoholism can destroy the common decencies of life. That was certainly true for me when I walked into my first Al-Anon meeting. The shame and denial of generations of alcoholism in my family had been passed down to me. I was angry, self-pitying, close-minded, and unaware that I was leaking my own suffering and hurting others who were already suffering. I had the distorted thinking of rationalization, minimalization, and denial. I thought I could stop other people’s drinking. The police had been coming to our house because of my behavior, not for the behavior of the drinker. Yet I would have insisted the drinker’s life was unmanageable, not mine.

That first meeting, Al-Anon members bestowed upon me their legacy of recovery and service by keeping the meeting going with a welcoming circle of chairs, offering Conference Approved Literature, acknowledging me when I walked in the room, and sharing how they found contentment, whether the alcoholic was drinking or not. They had found purpose within the apparent senselessness and shared it as experience, strength, and hope using Al-Anon tools. I hope my legacy of service will be attending meetings and welcoming people who discover Al-Anon. I feel so lucky to live in the age of the Twelve Steps. I can only imagine the world if all of us did not have our programs and we were running loose on the streets and the suffering that would be loose in the world then. I hope my legacy will be built on the achievements of members who have gone before me, letting people know who we are, where we are, and what we do, keeping my mind, heart, and ears open to the language of love in our legacies. I hope that we all “Keep Coming Back.”

Marilyn M., Newfoundland/Labrador

“Investing in Each Other to Preserve Our Legacy.” These words cause me to stop and remember to be grateful for those who have gone before me and invested in each other. By doing that, they preserved our legacy so that Al-Anon was there for me.

I will share how my experience of these preserved legacies helped me in my growth in Al-Anon. My personal growth increased as I worked the Steps with my Sponsor. I came to know that I had assets that I could offer my group, District, and Area. The Traditions gave me confidence, knowing that adherence to these Traditions would preserve these legacies. When it came to the Concepts, my eyes were opened as to how important these were, not only in the preservation of Al-Anon but also in my own personal life.

My mother was a longtime Al-Anon member who encouraged me to attend an Al-Anon meeting with her. After my first meeting, I was hooked! Immediately, it felt like I was home with like-minded people. As I continued to attend meetings and hear members share their stories, I also noticed how they read the Steps and Traditions at each meeting, and I observed how important it was to these people that we abide by the Traditions. It was stressed that we use only CAL and not talk about therapy or religion.

God love my mother! After one month of meetings, she told me to get a Sponsor and get involved with service as soon as I could! Being the obedient adult child at the time, I did as I was told, and for that I am grateful. Service has shown me the importance of investing in others; it's called carrying the message. Step Twelve says, “...to carry this message to others, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.” This is how we “Invest in Each Other to Preserve Our Legacy.”

Kate M., New Hampshire

I'm taking an old tried and true Al-Anon method of looking up word definitions in the dictionary when thinking about our Conference theme, “Investing in Each Other to Preserve Our Legacy.” First, “Invest: To make use of for future benefits or advantages. To involve or engage especially emotionally.” Now, “Preserve: To keep safe from injury, harm, or destruction. To maintain.” And finally, “Legacy: Something transmitted by or received from an ancestor or predecessor or from the past.”

I have to admit, when I first heard the theme, I thought, *boring*. But this theme is why I'm standing before you here as a Delegate today. When no one stood for this position in my Area, Higher Power tapped me on the shoulder and whispered the hopes and dreams of long-since-passed members who brought me through working this program when I was new. They spent time and energy growing me and growing our program. HP tapped to remind me that it's now my turn to invest my time and energy to make sure this program is here for the next newcomer.

I used to hide in service. It was an old survival tactic to be safely accepted by a group. They can't reject you if they need you. Lunchtime setup for the potluck at a District workshop was my very first service position. It was a safe job. I could be “a part of” while hiding from them in the kitchen. A longtime member recognized my tactic. While seeing me work while others were eating, she called me out. She told me to sit down and eat. “This is a fellowship, and you should be visiting with us.” It wasn't gentle, but it was effective.

I am grateful that member called me on my tactics, because that was the first time I recognized I had tactics. Today, I do service to maintain a growth mindset. I never want to settle into my old ways again. I've come too far to turn back. I offer service, now, as

a love letter to those who showed up and did the hard work of our fellowship with their own sense of gratitude. And they did it with joy—mostly. And I do it because I *want* to be a part of, and I want to continue meeting the amazing people I've found here—all of you. Your kindness and inclusiveness have once again shown me the true power of belonging in our fellowship. Thank you.

Rocio N., New Mexico/El Paso

When I was a teenager and my mom told the family she was going to Al-Anon and that we should attend Alateen, I never imagined I would be standing here today! My brothers and I attended two Alateen meetings and stopped going, because the Alateen Group Sponsors explained that alcoholism was a disease and that we should love our dad because he was sick. We didn't understand it and resented the comment and stopped going to Alateen. It took me eight more years to realize I needed help and to step in to Al-Anon.

I never thought that serving as the group's Treasurer within the first three months of coming to Al-Anon would have brought me here to be part of the largest group conscience in the world.

Growing up in an alcoholic home, I did not have self-esteem or self-love, and all I wanted to do was please others so they could love me. I didn't believe I was worth investing in or working on, so I did group-level and District-level service before I got a Sponsor and learned about Al-Anon's three legacies: recovery, unity, and service.

Before working the Steps, Traditions, and Concepts, I served and served, because I wanted to feel the love and recognition of other Al-Anon members. At the beginning, my Higher Power used my character defect of needing to be needed to my benefit so I could “Keep Coming Back.”

My Sponsor told me I needed to invest in my own recovery if I wanted to preserve what service was giving me: love. I was obedient, and I did follow my Sponsor's suggestion, and continue to do so. By working the Steps, I recovered the love for myself. By working the Traditions, the love of my family. And with the Concepts, I am able to serve my Al-Anon fellowship and my family with love, especially my aging parents.

Becoming Delegate has been a journey of growth spiritually, mentally, and emotionally for me. I started every service position with minimal understanding of the role, its purpose, and how to fully live into it. And with the help of my Sponsors (personal and service) and conscious contact with my Higher Power, I discovered new skills and courage.

My focus in recovery changed when I started to become involved in service. Now, it is about helping preserve our legacies.

Pat G., New York South

How to sum up three years in three minutes, 400 words? Quite a challenge. Here goes. I've gotten to meet the most wonderful people: all the Delegates in this room and all the Delegates in the previous two panels with whom I've served. I've gotten to meet many of our World Service Office Staff, our Trustees, and our Executive Committee members. I've gotten to meet and serve with people who not only speak the words of appreciation and love for Al-Anon, but who put those words into the work of service, our Third Legacy. I've experienced strong leadership in action and the patient answering of countless questions. I've both heard and been the minority voice. I've experienced firsthand our Al-Anon principles at work in the best way. I've been the recipient of loving, kind words and numerous hugs. I've been accepted, respected, cared for, humbled, and challenged. I've met new role models, and I've come away with a good friend. I've been tired beyond any capacity I thought I could endure. I've felt

the pain and joy of personal growth. I think that maybe I've made a difference, that I've contributed to the betterment of our fellowship, that maybe I made someone else feel welcomed. I certainly hope so.

Not bad for the poor kid from Brooklyn who never fit in, the high school girl who was never asked to go to a dance or asked to prom, the square peg trying to fit into the round hole. Al-Anon was the first place I truly felt I fit in. Walking into my first World Service Conference, those old feelings tugged at my mind and heart. The smiles, hugs, and words of acceptance melted away those old hurts that dog me at times. Visiting our World Service Office (WSO) was a highlight for me. Thank you, WSO, for that demonstrative, loving welcome. It touched me to my core. I am changed for the better because of that experience. Numerous times through these three years, I have felt the loving arms and strength of my Higher Power. I have been carried. The saying "God does not call the qualified, He qualifies the called" has been proven true. I am honored and so very grateful to have served as, New York South's Panel 63, Delegate.

Donna S., Ontario North

"Investing in Each Other to Preserve Our Legacy." I had no plans or interest in ever becoming a Delegate. I agreed to be the Alternate Delegate twice—honestly, because the Delegates at the time were younger than myself and healthy, so no worries. I was very content with my duties as District Representative. To my surprise, I received a phone call in 2024 from our Delegate, stating she had to step down due to personal reasons. After some encouragement and listening with an open mind (Tradition Two), I began preparing for the World Service Conference. I had five weeks.

I attended the Conference without trepidation, and my experience as a result of investing in one another and unconditional love and support from our members proved to be quite enjoyable. Concept Four, "Participation is the key to harmony." I have been Group Representative twice, was Alternate District Representative, and, after much encouragement, became District Representative. Investing in myself means using my resources to better myself and my quality of life. Investing in others means taking time with them and mentoring them.

I have two sponsees and have a very close relationship with both. With the help of my Higher Power, these relationships have reinforced for me that our survival as a fellowship depends upon unconditional love and the knowledge that we need one another. To preserve a legacy means to preserve something; for me it is Al-Anon and its Legacies. Our world is changing so fast that it is sometimes difficult to keep up, but we must continue investing in one another as to not lose a program that has changed and saved so many lives.

Tradition Ten: It is essential that Al-Anon remain politically, socially, and philosophically neutral. There is room in our fellowship for members with every point of view. However, we must keep our focus on our primary purpose (with our Legacies to guide us) and not allow ourselves to be distracted. Tradition Twelve: Placing "principles above personalities." Tradition One, "Our common welfare should come first; personal progress for the greatest number depends upon unity."

"When anyone, anywhere reaches out for help, let the hand of Al-Anon and Alateen always be there, and—Let It Begin with Me."

"Focusing on what I have in common with others helps me see each of us as equals, regardless of our differences" (*A Little Time for Myself* [B-34], p.191).

Lourdes C., Puerto Rico

I was born in the chaos of an alcoholic family, where common sense was absent. We developed by putting out fires and reacting to the crisis of the moment. There was no story; no one told it. The code of silence prevailed among all family members: "don't feel, don't talk, don't trust."

The World Service Conference gave me the platform to know the foundations of Al-Anon of love and growth in an environment where we can all honestly share, feeling part of this family that, although it is not perfect, is universal and maintains its literature and its program across borders, cultures, and ideologies.

In my second Conference I could see equity, inclusion, and diversity in action as part of our walk on the path of grace, unity, and understanding. When I heard my Panel 63 presenting themselves in Spanish in solidarity with me, I knew that I was home. There I understood what one of our Trustees shared: "a hug doesn't need translation." I am part of a fellowship where love and solidarity is the universal language.

Recovery, unity, and service, following the Steps, Traditions, and Concepts of this program, start with me and my availability to be honest with myself and accept that I am unable to make everything perfect. I can ask for help, and I have to do the part that corresponds to me, respecting the Traditions, which help me strengthen relationships in my day-to-day life.

Investing in service using the Concepts guarantees that everything I do, I do for the good of Al-Anon as a whole, in search of consensus and unanimity, preserving what has been maintained for so many years, according to the gift of those who preceded us on this path of grace. I belong to Al-Anon. My brothers and sisters are all over the world, wherever someone asks for help to face alcoholism with serenity, strength, and hope.

Thanks to Al-Anon for giving me the opportunity to know love and share the principle that I need to invest day by day. As Step Eleven says, I am trying to "improve [my] conscious contact with God...praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out."

Mary C., Saskatchewan

Before I entered the rooms of Al-Anon, I was sure that no one knew or understood what I was going through, living with an alcoholic. I worked very hard at denying it to myself and to others and at hiding the reality of my not-so-perfect home. I was consumed by another person's behaviour and how that negative behaviour might be taken as a reflection on me. I was near-perfect, you see, and I didn't want anything to tarnish that exterior.

When my husband did hit his bottom and admitted that he needed help, he was 2000 kilometres away from home, and I had nothing to do with his decision to finally quit drinking. Not knowing that I had been powerless all along from making this happen, you can imagine my surprise that he found sobriety without my help! My husband encouraged me to attend Al-Anon, and thus began my journey of recovery.

For the first few weeks, I purposely attended meetings where no one knew me. I was not ready to expose the true nature of my life to people I knew. I was also not ready to feel the unconditional love from these strangers as I did at my first meeting. Week after week, our legacies of hope, acceptance, and encouragement were shown to me until I was able to open up to friends and family.

I've heard it said that "recovery is a journey best traveled together." I grabbed onto all the wisdom and support I could get in those early years, making lasting friendships with others who had traveled similar roads. I was not consciously aware of investing in my fellow members, but by sharing honestly and listening respectfully, I was doing my part. Today, I am aware of my contribution to upholding our principles of hope, mutual support, and compassion to my fellow members, especially to the newcomer. As I listen and share, I think of my beginnings in the program and the love shown to me. What Lois began, let us continue. Thank you to all of you for traveling this journey with me.

Barbara O., South Carolina

On the 16th of April 2011, the 60th anniversary celebration of Al-Anon was held in Virginia Beach. A Virginia member of 60 years was recognized as the longest member in attendance, as was a four-month newcomer, temporarily living in Virginia, who was invited to join the celebration by her aunt, who later was the Delaware Delegate for Panel 52. A new book, *Many Voices, One Journey* (B-31), was given to the longtime member, who gave it to the newcomer! The newcomer was also given *How Al-Anon Works* (B-22). All toured the World Service Office and witnessed the burning of the mortgage. The newcomer saw two parts of Al-Anon: the fellowship and the organization.

The longtime member sent pamphlets, personal writings, and the *Beginners' Meeting* Guideline (G-2). The newcomer was taken under the wings of members in the District. Her longtime-member Sponsor was a Group Representative (GR) and invited her to District meetings, where the Alternate District Representative (DR) whom she met at the anniversary later became the Virginia Delegate. The newcomer's Sponsor told her to read Conference Approved Literature (CAL), write, call, and go to at least three meetings weekly, which included open A.A. meetings.

In open A.A. meetings, some Al-Anon members were also members of A.A., but they practiced anonymity. Once, when the newcomer asked a question not answered in the "group binder," the Sponsor gave her a little red booklet, "Groups at Work." The groups read Traditions, held business meetings, used the al-anon.org website, used something called an Literature Distribution Center (LDC), to buy Conference Approved Literature (CAL), and had GRs go to Assembly.

Over a year later, the newcomer went home. Attending a newcomers' meeting, the Chair later asked her to serve as Chair. The Virginia longtime member told her, "It's all in the literature; stick to it and allow time for sharing and questions." The newcomer stopped trying to "teach" and began following the guidelines. The not-so-newcomer became GR, talking over things with the Alternate GR and members in service and later getting a Service Sponsor. When the DR gave the Delegate's report about obsolete group binders, a discussion led to a vote by GRs to order "Groups at Work." The member served as DR and Area Literature Coordinator, elected by chance to Delegate Panel 63. Encouraged by newcomers and longtime members, the South Carolina Delegate is now a grateful member of the worldwide fellowship of Al-Anon and Alateen at the Conference, which is "Investing in Each Other to Preserve Our Legacy."

Rena B., South Dakota

I am an adult child of an alcoholic. My Al-Anon journey began in April of 2007. I was brought to my first meeting by a coworker. When I left that meeting, I knew that was where I needed to be. I started attending faithfully for the next four years. Then, from 2011 to 2014, I only attended meetings sporadically. I returned to Al-Anon in 2014 because I wanted to become involved in the Alateen group being started at my home group. I began attending Al-Anon regularly again. I became an Al-Anon Member Involved in Alateen Service (AMIAS) and one of the Alateen Group Sponsors at that newly started Alateen meeting. From there, I began to attend Area meetings. I fulfilled a partial term as Alateen Coordinator from 2015-2016. In 2015, I switched home groups. I became the Group Representative for my new group from 2016-2019. In 2019, I was elected as District 5's District Representative, and in that same year was elected as the Area Chair. I served in both positions from 2020-2022. Then, in the fall of 2022, I was elected Panel 63's Area Delegate.

In each of these service journeys, I grew more and more. I did not do it alone. In "Investing in Each Other to Preserve Our Legacy," I received much help from those who have gone before me. I have a Sponsor and a Service Sponsor who have both invested much of their time in helping me to succeed at every service level. I belong to an Al-Anon study group, which consists of two past Delegates and a past Trustee as well as my Sponsor. One of the books we have studied is the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27) cover to cover, including the Traditions and Concepts of Service. Every week we invest time in each other, helping to preserve our legacy. I am grateful for Al-Anon and Al-Anon service. Al-Anon taught me how to have healthy relationships. It has given me skills to navigate in this world with courage, strength, and hope. Al-Anon has healed much of my resentment and anger. It makes me happy to know that there is a program out there that helps people heal from the effects of alcoholism in their lives. I am excited about Al-Anon because "Investing in Each Other to Preserve our Legacy" gives people hope and a future. It gives Al-Anon hope and a future. And I will "Keep Coming Back."

Dave B., Utah

My time as Delegate has been significant and has taught me much about myself, my life, and my fellow Al-Anon members. Our Conference theme this year is "Investing in Each Other to Preserve Our Legacy." This theme is particularly appropriate in today's community and culture. We are a diverse group of people who are bonded together by our common bond in Al-Anon. We all equally have a voice with which to share our experience, strength, and hope, and this unites us and binds us as one.

As it says in *From Survival to Recovery* (B-21): "As we work the Steps, we move ever closer toward light, toward health, and toward the Higher Power of our understanding. As we watch others grow, we realize we are also changing" (p. 268). By remembering this in all phases of my life, I become conscious of making sure that I invest in the members of my group, District, Area, and WSC. I watch them and learn from them. I become a part of them and they a part of me. This brings me more joy than I can adequately express. My heart is full of love for all of you and for all of those I encounter in the program. I was accepted as I am with love and understanding many years ago, and it is this love that has carried me through my years of service. I am always willing to help and support where I can. I might not be the loudest voice in the room many times, but I know that my

presence and contribution is essential, no matter the time or place.

Again, in *From Survival to Recovery*, we are posed the following question: “Will we ever arrive? Will we feel joy all the time?... Probably not, but we can acquire growing acceptance of our human fallibility, as well as greater love and tolerance for each other. Self-pity, resentment, rage, and depression can fade into memory. A sense of community rather than loneliness defines our lives. We come to know that we belong, we are welcome, we have something to contribute, and that this is enough” (p. 268). I have come to know that I am part of an extraordinary community, that I have a contribution to make, and that this is enough.

Donna W., Wyoming

“Investing in Each Other to Preserve Our Legacy.” I got married when I was young, and I believed that it would be what I had always envisioned my marriage to be. Early in the marriage, I was living with active alcoholism. I had always been aware of the drinking but hadn’t really seen the extent of it, nor did I realize that it was going to become such a problem. I thought that it was just the social part of being young. I believed that once it was time to “grow up,” the increased drinking would stop. That is not what happened.

When I was first introduced to the Al-Anon program, I did not hear that this program would help me. What I heard was, “He has a problem, and you need to do something about it.” Surely that is not what was said, but that is what I heard. In my mind, I justified my behaviors because I was just trying to fix the problem. My impression was that if I went to Al-Anon, they would help me learn how to stop his drinking. I kept hearing that the program was for me. That was something I just could not comprehend. I thought doing something for myself was selfish. I had a tough time knowing what I needed to do to take care of myself. I had put myself last for so long that I really did not know who I was, let alone what my feelings were. I had taken the blame for everything that was happening. I thought if I could just be better, then things would be different.

Once I truly accepted that this program was for me and started to go to meetings for my own recovery, things started changing for me. Asking someone to sponsor me was hard for me, but it was the best thing I ever did for myself. My Sponsor was highly active in service. I learned the importance of service from her. Serving in many service positions over the years has been an important part of my recovery. I want to do my part in keeping Al-Anon alive for those in need of recovery, as it was when I needed it the most. I will always need this program in my life. For me, service is an important part of “Investing in Each Other to Preserve Our Legacy.”

OPENING SPEAKER

Sue P., Associate Director—Group Services

My name is Sue P., and I am an extremely grateful member of the worldwide fellowship of Al-Anon Family Groups. I also have the privilege of serving as your Associate Director of Group Services at the World Service Office, which is something I never expected to hear myself say.

So, here’s the story: I have heard many say that if you shake the family tree, at least one alcoholic will fall out. Many in my family have died from this disease, including my father. My family tree is infested with alcoholism, and it goes back generations.

My upbringing was filled with physical fighting and chaos along with another language spoken that I was not taught, which was Spanish. Thankfully, I learned Spanish in school and was able

to defend myself! I also learned at a young age to be an umpire, caretaker, and people-pleaser. My best teacher was my mom, may her memory be a blessing, as she instilled in me the skills of mothering, managing, manipulation, and martyrdom. I understand today that it was not her fault. She, too, was affected by alcoholism growing up. She was my fiercest critic and greatest cheerleader all at the same time. Despite that, I miss her dearly!

I just wanted to escape. I wanted what I saw on TV—*I Love Lucy*, *The Brady Bunch*. Every episode ended on a high note, and I wanted to live happy and happily ever after! My escape came when I was able to go away to college in Rochester and then Buffalo, New York. This was where I was introduced to Al-Anon, by way of an internship to complete my Occupational Therapy course of study.

The internship was a 28-day alcohol rehabilitation program. Once in that program, I started to understand the dynamics of the disease of alcoholism. It felt as if every group session was filmed from my home. I started to understand how, because of the family disease of alcoholism, I developed poor self-esteem, never felt good enough, and felt like an outsider all the time. During this time, I was required to attend open Al-Anon and A.A. meetings and create a report on the benefits of a Twelve Step recovery program as a post-discharge plan to maintain sobriety.

I went to those initial meetings and witnessed how A.A. offered help to the alcoholic. I loved hearing the “drunk-a-log.” At one point, I identified so much with the A.A.s that I thought I was an alcoholic... except I didn’t drink. Then, I went to the Al-Anon meetings and realized the difference. Honestly, I did not like hearing what I heard in Al-Anon. I didn’t like talking about my feelings, placing the focus on myself, and detaching with love. NOPE! Not for me! I’m good! But definitely, this was for Mom, and A.A. was for my father!

I had it all figured out. I was going to finish my schooling and fix my family in one fell swoop! I started to execute my plan with a phone call home on a Sunday afternoon in 1982. I emotionally shared with my mom that I don’t remember my father ever telling me he loved me without having been drinking. She proceeded to yell to my father to pick up the extension in the bedroom and to tell me he loved me. Before he was able to do that, Mom whispered to me, “He hasn’t started drinking yet.” Of course, my father obliged, because he did love me. My poor parents.

I desperately tried to convince them to go to meetings. My father wanted no part of it. My mom insisted that if my father’s family would stay away, he wouldn’t drink. Of course, that never happened. With every weekend call, I attempted to convince them of how sick they were. It all fell on deaf ears.

I was sure this internship would be my career path. What a great feeling to see people discharged home and flourishing, living a happily-ever-after life! I even saw some in the meetings I attended. In my last two weeks at that internship, I saw some of my initial clients return to the facility as they had relapsed. I was convinced it was my fault. There went my career path. I thought I was a failure.

Fortunately, I still needed to continue my studies for OT, which brought me to the Bronx, NY, for my next internship in a hospital setting. I was offered full-time employment and left behind what I learned in those Al-Anon and A.A. meetings. After all, I was okay. I had my degree. I had my *One Day at a Time* (B-6) book, which was gifted to me by the Al-Anon group, and I was not going back home to be affected by the craziness of my parents. I’m good!

And then I met *him*. The charming, charismatic alcoholic. I knew he had a problem with drinking on our first date. I convinced myself that I could save him and that once I did, he would be so grateful, and we would live happily ever after. What happened was a ten-year

rollercoaster of active alcoholism that led to him being removed from our home in handcuffs in front of our small children. On the outside, the nightmare was over: he's gone, a restraining order is in place, and I am free. On the inside, I was full of fear, anger, and doubt.

To cut to the quick, I was a mess, and it got worse with each passing day. While my husband and I reconciled, I continued to ignore and deny all my feelings. I now had two little kids in tow and needed to show up for them. Again, there was no idea entering my brain to go to Al-Anon or to even open the *ODAT* book that sat on my bookcase like a trophy. I just felt that this was my lot in life, and I had to get over it.

Miraculously, my husband was charged with a DUI in the winter of 1994. I remember him calling me from jail and thinking, "He hadn't even started drinking yet!" Sounds familiar to that Sunday morning phone call years earlier. That DUI created an avalanche of change, which included attendance at an outpatient alcoholism rehabilitation program where he was introduced to A.A. meetings.

He took to A.A. the same way he took to drinking: every day, all day. I thought my happy ending was coming, but it was just another nightmare beginning. All of my insecurities surfaced. I could not figure out how to act. I just wanted to be acknowledged but felt completely left out. Two years went by, and he came home with a flyer announcing an A.A. event with Al-Anon participation that he wanted to attend. He knew my saga of trying to Twelve-Step my parents all those years ago.

What I heard was that we were going to be spending the day together, just the two of us. When we got there, my sober alcoholic husband informed me that he was going to meet his Sponsor and A.A. buddies, the Al-Anon meetings were somewhere "down there," and he would see me later. He turned around and walked away. I was enraged! How could he leave me alone like that? If I had a gun, I would have surely shot him dead.

Of course, I said nothing. I felt embarrassed as I put on my name sticker and proceeded to dutifully walk down the hall to the Al-Anon meeting room. I now had a plan: I was going to go to these Al-Anon meetings, and I was going to find the courage to kick him to the curb and show him who he was dealing with! In truth, I was scared on the inside and filled with fear. I was convinced that he was going to leave me for one of those A.A. women, because surely they could give him what I couldn't. The plan was to beat him to the punch to save myself a world of hurt and that Al-Anon would help me.

Thank God for Al-Anon and the members who welcomed me that day. They continue to be a part of my life. They supported me, watched me through my growing pains, and loved me until I learned how to love myself. To say I am grateful today is an understatement.

Al-Anon taught me that his sobriety was not my responsibility. My focus became the children and preventing them from growing up to be alcoholics or drug addicts. Since I thought their behavior was skirting that line at the ripe ages of eight and ten, I was convinced they would end up in jail, or worse, dead. Thankfully, the fog slowly began to lift, and I learned about finding and using a Sponsor and a Higher Power, reading our CAL, and detaching with love. The slogans got me through each day.

I found it strange to hear members share how long they had been coming to Al-Anon. I thought, in my arrogance, "Are they stupid? Like, how hard can this be?" But then, I learned about service.

Almost from the beginning, I was involved in service in my beloved New York South Area. Service was my safe space. My challenge was bringing it home and practicing the principles in all my affairs. Luckily for me, service taught me to trust the Al-Anon principles. I found courage and a sense of self-esteem that I never had.

I served as the Area Alateen Coordinator. I absolutely loved it. This now became the opportunity to bribe my two boys to go to Alateen meetings. I was sure that if we all started talking the same language of recovery in our home, all would be well. I didn't want them to feel left out the way I had. The Alateen Group Sponsor never revealed to me what was shared in the Alateen meeting despite my best efforts. She lovingly told me to mind my business. I tried to get the kids to tell me what they talked about, and I was quickly informed that it was "anonymous," and they didn't have to tell me. Well, DANG!

I served on Area Al-Anon Convention Planning committees. Going to Area conventions for A.A. and Al-Anon became a staple for us. It was a quick vacation and welcome spiritual replenishment. It was at an A.A. convention where I initially heard an Al-Anon speaker share. I wanted what she had. After my service as Area Alateen Coordinator, I was able to serve as the Area Convention Coordinator. It was right on time, because my youngest son had enlisted in the United States Marines, and I thought I was going to lose my mind. As we were in the middle of a convention planning meeting, he called from bootcamp to wish me a happy birthday and tell me he just became a Marine, as he finished the Crucible, his last qualifying exercise. The entire committee was there to share that special moment.

That's how service has been all these years. Every time I was at some kind of breaking point or at my wit's end with the alcoholic or the kids and convinced everything was over, another service opportunity presented itself. All of the support I ever needed came as a result of participating in service.

In early 2016, I was at another crossroads, this time with work. The nursing home where I was working was in the process of being sold. Upon hearing that announcement, I started updating my resume. This had happened already in 2006, and I did not want the rug to be pulled out from under me again. I trusted my Higher Power knew what was best for me.

After serving in various positions at the Area level and now as Alternate Delegate, I felt prepared to stand for Delegate. Our Election Assembly would be that October. I shared this with some Al-Anon friends. One committed to stand for Alternate, and another said she would stand for Chair. We had it all figured out. That's when our Delegate came back from Conference to give an update to the Area World Service Committee on her experience. She told us about job opportunities at the WSO. During the break, she turned to me and suggested I apply for the position of Associate Director—Groups and Alateen. I told her, "No way!" But my thought was, "I wouldn't be good enough." She encouraged me to consider it, to look at the information on the website, and I did. I trusted God's plan.

What I saw was a job quite like what I was doing as a Director of Rehabilitation Services—an "information central" kind of position. I gathered the information requested and talked to my Sponsor, my Al-Anon friends, and my service network. When I was ready to hit "send," I realized there was one person I didn't talk to...my husband. He simply said, "Go for it. If it's meant to be, God will let us know." I hit that "send" button, and on November 7, 2016, I began a new chapter in my life—a chapter with a career change and a move I never expected!

As I was packing up our home in New York, I dropped a photo album from one of my bookcases. Out fell a picture that my husband took when we came to Virginia Beach in 2006, when the rug was pulled out from under me at a former job. Our eldest son was stationed there. I did not want to go anywhere; I just wanted to mope. I said that the only thing I wanted to do was to drive by the

WSO and take a picture. The picture he took of me standing at the corner property marker of the WSO was the picture that fell out. Yup, God's plan!

Al-Anon service prepared me for coming to the WSO and taught me how to live my life a different way, directly connected to applying the Traditions and Concepts. These are some of the highlights of God's work in my life:

I came into Al-Anon wanting to be out of the relationship I was in. God gave me the opportunity to live a life in recovery with a sober alcoholic. Simply precious.

I wanted to make sure my boys wouldn't grow up to be alcoholics and drug addicts. God allowed those two boys to listen in on many service and anniversary meetings and, "Just for Today," they do not exhibit signs of alcoholism. If anything, they have shared with many of their friends who have a problem or have family members with a problem that help is available in Al-Anon and A.A.

The scared, angry girl who started in Al-Anon with a superiority/inferiority complex now lives a life of gratitude, grace, and humility because of a Higher Power, called God, that I trust to lay out a path I do my best to follow. When I do, amazing things happen. Even when I don't, as I can still be willful and stubborn, God has a gentle way of reminding me, through messages from all of you, who is really in charge.

God and Al-Anon have given me an opportunity to live two lifetimes in one life. What an amazing gift. That initial convention speaker for Al-Anon said two amazing things that I carry with me today: "How grateful I am for the alcoholics in my life," and, "Thank you, Al-Anon, for God and thank you, God, for Al-Anon." At the time, I thought it was ridiculous, but no truer words have been spoken.

As we prepare to begin this 2025 World Service Conference, may we each feel the love and peace of our Higher Power and celebrate this amazing fellowship we serve. Thank you so much for being part of my journey and thanks for letting me share.

SPIRITUAL SPEAKERS

Sue K., Panel 63, Missouri

I read an essay before beginning to write this talk that said you should approach writing from your heart and then submit it to the critic in you. It said the critic must sit out the first round.

Not my usual approach. I've read past spiritual speakers in the *World Service Conference Summaries* (P-46) and am wondering how I'll live up to them. Follow me around for a week, and you'd see a lack of consistent spiritual practice like prayer and meditation. I'm thinking, "You've made a mistake." As you can tell, I haven't done a good job of keeping the critic at bay. But I'm willing, and God told me to say yes.

I know you are probably thinking, "If you don't have a consistent spiritual practice, how did God speak to you?" All I can tell you is I hear this voice all the time and know it's not mine.

My voice says: "You don't really think you have something to share?" "No one cares what you think." "You're such an imposter!"

But my Higher Power's voice says, "Tell your sponsee this; share that at a meeting." "Give the minority opinion." It says: "Your story will speak to someone if you're honest when you tell it." So here it goes.

When I got to Al-Anon, I had a lifetime of investing in big ol' whirlpools of need that sucked the life out of me. I was all about telling others what they should do and what they should believe. I

thought I was loving people, but I was manipulating, controlling, and directing them. I was losing myself to save others, and for what?

I didn't see a legacy for myself, but I sure did for everyone else. My daughter should become a pastor's wife, my son an engineer, and my husband should build his career. I really had no direction for my youngest son because I was just like him, and I had no end goal for me.

Then, alcoholism came into our home. It seemed like it came out of nowhere. Neither my husband nor I were alcoholics or raised in alcoholic homes. Sure, our families had their own brand of dysfunction, but I was well taken care of by two flawed individuals. They married young, and we all kind of grew up together, but there was never the uncertainty of alcoholism. After being in recovery, I did realize my great-grandfather drank and saw that my grandfather's behavior was just like that of the Al-Anon adult children I listened to in meetings. My mom, raised by a controlling adult child, in turn tried to control me. Generations later, alcoholism was still affecting the family, even without the drinking. Not the kind of legacy you want to grow up in.

I graduated high school, left home, and lived a pretty carefree life. I experimented with all the things associated with the cry of my youth: sex, drugs, and rock and roll.

I finally went to college and met and married my husband. Then I met my Higher Power, and life calmed down. Because I'm not an alcoholic, I outgrew the drinking and drugging. I disappeared into the identity of being a wife, a mother, and a good religious person. I did everything I considered right, and I expected my loved ones to do the same. Until one day they didn't, and all my dreams were washed away by the disease of alcoholism.

From there, you know the story: attempts to cure, to control, and not to cause the drinking ensued, resulting in further loss of myself and my well-being. I wondered why God didn't follow the detailed instructions I prayed, and then one day He led me to you.

One of my loved ones was in a treatment program where family members were required to attend a weekly meeting. Lucky for all of you, I got my obnoxious newcomer behavior out there.

Being judgmental: "What is wrong with these people still attending meetings?" Being self-centered: "Why won't they stop the meeting to answer my questions...I need answers, and I need them quick." Being self-righteous: "What's this new-agey thing, calling God 'Higher Power'?" I knew I believed the right way.

Meanwhile, my loved one was getting better as I got more resentful and angry for all "they" had caused in my family. I was getting crazier trying to control their sobriety. I started noticing that the people at the meeting who talked about going to Al-Anon were doing so much better than me. I walked into my first Al-Anon meeting in August 2006. I came for me and decided to invest in myself.

My first meeting, I learned I was going to have to ask for help. I got a newcomer packet with phone numbers to call. I was told about sponsorship and was invited to lunch after the meeting. Those early meetings and lunches were where Al-Anon first invested in me. The members patiently listened to my insane stories. I would cry, "If they relapse, I'll just die." In turn, I listened to their stories. They laughed, loved, and led me through those first months of recovery.

I chose a safe Sponsor whom I knew wouldn't push me too hard and who had a similar faith. She was what I needed, although, because of our similar faith, she let me skim through the first three Steps. But she got me through a lot. More family members succumbed to alcoholism, more of "those" phone calls happened. There were DUIs, hospital visits, and treatment facilities. And, yes, a relapse, and no return to sobriety to date. To my surprise, I didn't die. And I saw miracles happen!

People's attitudes, actions, and families were changing around me. I saw the reality of being in a room full of people of different faiths and different ways of conducting their lives; so many differences, and yet we were affected by a loved one's drinking. I came to understand the 3 Cs, because if we all approached alcoholism differently, how could we have caused it? We had all failed in our various attempts to help, so how could we control or cure it? We were all different, but we were in the same boat: we loved an alcoholic. It was one of many spiritual awakenings, all because my Sponsor and home group members invested in me.

In return, I started investing in my home group. I chaired, then spoke at meetings and served as Treasurer. Then, one day, our Group Representative pulled me aside and said, "I think you would make a good Group Representative." That was all the encouragement I needed.

As I entered service, I changed Sponsors—my Sponsor got divorced and wasn't attending meetings on a regular basis. We decided parting ways was a good idea, and she suggested I find a Sponsor in service. My next Sponsor was not just involved in service, she was a former Delegate. As I began investing my time and talent into our fellowship, my new Sponsor and Al-Anon friends in service invested in me.

A home group member announced there had been a caucus at Assembly and she was now District Representative. She invited me to join her in visiting meetings in our previously unrepresented District. Her enthusiasm sucked me in. One of the most exciting adventures in my service journey began. Visiting meetings, attending District meetings, planning workshops and potlucks, and going to my first Assembly launched me into service. It just takes investing a little time, a little love, and a little faith for things to happen in our fellowship and to see the miracles of lives, groups, and Districts change and grow.

I worked the Steps again and realized I was breaking free from behaviors and thought patterns I had struggled with my whole life. My God broke out of the box as I came to believe in a Power greater than myself. The power of our 36 Legacies ushered in a new faith, a new life, and a release from the ego-driven life I lived for others. I didn't change my Higher Power, but my Higher Power got so much bigger. Through service, I learned a new language of trust in God, in myself, and in this fellowship.

I started studying the Traditions and Concepts. A group of us met before my home group to study the Traditions using *Reaching for Personal Freedom* (P-92). The Traditions inspired me to continue in service. As I looked at the Traditions, I saw examples of healthy boundaries. Up to that point I really didn't have boundaries, nor did I respect others' boundaries. At my sister's wedding, I was asked to be in charge of wrangling the wedding party and make sure they walked down the aisle at the right time. But at the reception, I wasn't in charge anymore. That didn't stop me from deciding my new brother-in-law was not calling people to go to the buffet correctly. I escorted my parents to the buffet line, where he called me out, stating he had a system and didn't appreciate my help. God used a humiliating circumstance to show me a huge character defect, which led to the spiritual awakening that I needed to continue in Al-Anon service. The Traditions and Concepts were boundaries that taught me when to help, when to be in charge, and when to mind my own business.

I became DR, then was elected as Alternate Delegate. Then, the Area Chair stepped down. In Missouri, the Alternate Delegate serves as Area Chair until an election can be held, and I was thrust into double duty.

At the next Area World Service Committee (AWSC) meeting, I announced I was Interim Chair...and "they" all needed to start praying about standing for Area Chair. I went home from the meeting, and the next day I awoke thinking, "God, who will stand for Area Chair?" The voice I heard wasn't my own, and it said, "You will, of course."

Despite my lack of consistent spiritual practices, I try to live in my Higher Power's presence. I keep my eyes and ears open for those thoughts, circumstances, and even sometimes an inner voice, which never steers me wrong.

I was elected Area Chair and God used that position to invest in my spiritual growth. I became aware of that "one authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience." I looked into the face of God as I looked out at the Assembly and heard His voice in the group conscience. I learned how to be a trusted servant. As my fellow officers invested their time and wisdom serving alongside me, I learned what it meant to not govern.

In Panel 60, I served as Alternate Delegate with no idea what we would be facing. At the South Central Regional Delegates meeting, much to my chagrin, a topic was raised about an impending pandemic. In my ego-driven wisdom, I declared it an outside issue. The following week, the world shut down. I learned that although Al-Anon has no opinion on outside issues, that does not mean we aren't affected by them. But our Higher Power had a plan, as we all know.

Although the first AWSC was postponed, we held our first online business meeting in April 2020. Through the guidance of our Higher Power and taking the right of decision seriously, Missouri never missed a business meeting through Panel 60. We dove headlong into online, then hybrid business meetings. I learned a lot about double-headed management by engaging in it more often than I would like to admit. Steps Six and Seven were worked continuously during this time as my Higher Power taught me to stay in my own lane. If you truly want to trust God to remove all your shortcomings, get into service. Again, God as expressed in our collective group conscience had different plans than me. I once again served as Interim Area Chair when our Area Chair stepped down to accept a job at the WSO. Luckily, someone else stood for Chair, and I learned that year that I'm not always the answer and to ask for help.

Then I was elected as the Panel 63 Delegate. Why? Because I was the only one to stand. At the beginning of my Delegate reports, I say, "I am Sue K., the member you chose to serve as Delegate." This is to remind myself I am a member first and a trusted servant second. Investing in my recovery is my priority, but to be honest, my recovery is only possible because I invest in service. I've learned we don't just bring our recovery to service—we bring our disease. I have been humbled, I have been admired, I have been maligned, I have seen miracles and mistakes in service, but through it all, my Higher Power has been constant. My prayers changed from "God, here's what you should do" to "God, what would you have me do?" My Higher Power and my fellowship have never let me down.

As Panel 63 says goodbye to the World Service Conference, I think about how our panel has been like one of those movies that starts with the end. We began by visiting the WSO, which holds our today and our future, and we will end by visiting Stepping Stones, where the story started. We served on committees, had some very interesting conversations, and maybe got a little bit done. Through it all, my fellow Panel 63 Delegates, the WSO Staff and Volunteers, and the panels before us and after us have invested in each other. And the big question is, why?

These words from *When I Got Busy, I Got Better* (P-78) on page 34 express this best. A member is reflecting on a picture of Lois W., “My picture of Lois also reminds me of a simple truth that I often overlook: Our program exists only because of the thousands of members like Lois who have been willing to serve others. Al-Anon is literally comprised of service: Without it, there would be no fellowship.” Farther down the page, it reads, “Participating in service has clearly demonstrated to me some of the day-to-day reality of recovery in Al-Anon stretching back over the last half-century; it has given me a sense that there is lasting hope in the world and that I can make a difference in preserving and imparting a continuing sense of positive achievement.”

Our 36 Legacies came alive to me in service. My Higher Power expanded, and my trust in the spiritual power of this program grew. I am willing to invest all I can to ensure that power would be available for anyone, anywhere. I now know that being one of the many hands of Al-Anon and Alateen reaching out will be my legacy.

May the legacy of continued recovery, unity, and service be there for those who are still suffering and will someday find their way to our doors. Your investment in Al-Anon Family Groups preserves that legacy. Thank you for your service.

Kate M., Panel 63, New Hampshire

I have a big smile on my face right now, because I can't believe you all chose me to be a spiritual speaker at THE World Service Conference. If you knew what I know about who I was before I entered the Al-Anon rooms, you would be laughing too.

I was one of those people who changed the pronouns in the Steps to him/her/them if Steps Three or Seven landed on me at the start of a meeting. I was a skeptic and had to let everyone know I wasn't buying into it! I didn't know what “it” stood for, but I wasn't buying it. Eventually a lovely member took my hand after a meeting and explained to me that we don't change the Steps or the program; we let the Steps and program change us. And she suggested there was a certain arrogance involved in thinking that I had the right to change something that wasn't mine to accommodate my personal belief system. It took me a little while to digest that, but I got it.

Which leads me to our Conference theme, “Investing in Each Other to Preserve Our Legacy.” I have so much gratitude for the member who took the time to share their program wisdom with me. That moment she took allowed me to go deeper in this program. She planted the seeds for me to be here today, in service as a Delegate, speaking to all of you as a spiritual speaker. I just never know where Higher Power will take me.

In the book *As We Understood...* (B-11), there's a passage about the Eleventh Step on page 209 that I fell in love with: “In drawing, I have learned how a tree changes as I view it from different angles and distances, and how it changes as light moves through it, around it and to the other side. Funny how we can't see a shape when we look directly at it. We can't look directly at the sun, either, but to watch its light illuminate and define a tree is truly wonderful. Similarly, when I start to look at the space within which you live, at the light in your life, for the first time, I recognize your uniqueness and intricacy.”

I'm a visual person, so this passage always speaks to me when I'm envisioning God or a Higher Power. If I look directly at HP, I can't see it, but I can see the amazing impact HP has on all the people around me. Al-Anon allows me the gift of witnessing HP working in other people's lives as well. Some of my program experiences over the years represent a little of my spiritual journey in Al-Anon.

Right from the start, I treated the Al-Anon program like a science experiment. With one eyebrow raised, I would take one strategy I heard in a meeting, and when the opportunity presented itself, I'd test it for myself. I mean, were the people in my group really conducting the experiment to the best of their ability? Were they duped into believing that it worked because they wanted it to? I had to try it myself.

Someone shared at a meeting about physically sitting on their hands to refrain from interfering at an event. They said it helped them avoid drama. So, one of my first experiments was to attend a baby shower without helping—no arriving early, decorating, organizing, or parking cars—just being a good, supportive guest. It was a terribly difficult task for me. The committee in my head was doing cartwheels thinking about what a bad friend I was for not helping in some way, even though I was never asked. At one point, there was a long pause in festivities, my helper sensors were going off and I knew there was a problem in the house. I could help, but I was not asked to help. So, I did what my Al-Anon group told me to do. I sat on my hands. I made conversation with the person next to me. I did my best to enjoy myself while shooting glances to the house to see if anyone would call me over. The result of my experiment is that I had a pleasant afternoon with absolutely zero drama. I stepped on no in-laws' toes, and the next day I had no mental second guessing of my actions. My science experiment was a success. I would continue to implement pieces of shared wisdom from the group into my own life like this. That moment of courage to try a different path forward—in this case it was a quiet courage—sparked my awareness that maybe I didn't know everything. Maybe there was something to this program. Maybe the world wasn't so black and white.

My faith in the program grew stronger and stronger after each one of these little experiments. I came to Al-Anon not being able to trust people, including myself. I didn't fully understand how my lack of faith in others or myself impacted most of my decision making and the wider vision for my life.

Not long after working the Steps with my Sponsor, I had another opportunity to practice my faith in the program. Every Sunday morning before my home group meeting, I would call my dad. My dad is one of the alcoholics in my life. We had a special relationship that was based on arguing, usually about the current events of the day. This often ending in yelling and the phone being slammed down. This dynamic, since I was very young, was part of the reason I would show up to every fight I was invited to. However, after working the Steps and spending more time living our Al-Anon program, I wanted that dynamic to change. Fighting didn't give me the satisfaction that it once gave me. I wanted a relationship with a healthier connection.

Al-Anon has taught me that to have my needs met, the first thing I need to do is communicate them. In a moment of courage for me, I asked my father if we could change how we communicate. I asked if we could stop arguing and instead talk to each other about what's going on in our lives instead of world events. There was silence on the other end of the line. That committee in my head was happy to fill it by reminding me that I was weak for having needs, that I was expecting too much, that I was going to be disappointed.

Then my dad broke the phone silence with, “Well, you know, I just wanted you to be a strong woman who could defend herself. I watched my mom get beaten by men and the world, and I didn't want that for you.” I told him he went a little overboard in his efforts.

We started a new journey that day. We both had to learn a new way of communicating. Today, there are still some arguments, started by both of us, and there are still some slammed phones, but we always call back and we always say, “I love you.” The honesty and grace in

his response allowed me to learn how to love my dad for who he is instead of resenting him for who he isn't. This moment cemented my faith in this program. The rewards for having the courage to take that risk were beyond what I could have imagined.

During this period, I was also in Al-Anon service in my Area. I was a District Representative with a plan to get our Area practicing "principles above personalities." I was working on a task force creating Knowledge-Based Decision-Making (KBDM) guidelines to use in our Area. Our little task force learned about what principles should be working in our Area service, like equality, honesty, patience, understanding, trust, and acceptance. By the end of the panel, those guidelines were adopted.

I felt very certain that using these new guidelines would bring us back to placing "principles above personalities" and rebuild trust. More than six years prior, we discovered that we had accidentally incorporated our Assembly back in the '90s. The new Bylaws were made to correct that issue, but the mistrust and lack of faith prevented us from passing the Bylaws. After witnessing the discord as a GR and then DR, I stood for Chair thinking I would guide the Area through the KBDM process, rebuild trust, and get the new Bylaws implemented. I'm not going to describe myself as Saint Kate, but I had a plan. This was an incredibly challenging task given the state of cooperation in our Area, but the incoming panel of Coordinators, Officers, and DRs were truly committed to getting this work done. We followed our Area KBDM process for an informed group conscience and went through the documents line by line, giving everyone the opportunity to speak, ask questions, and understand the content, and we communicated our progress clearly to the Assembly. During year two, we realized we needed to hold additional review meetings to ensure the documents were ready for approval before the end of the panel. We scheduled two extra day-long sessions. As Chair, I felt I had the responsibility to lead by example and drive this effort. "Saint Kate."

When a good friend of mine decided to get married on one of those extra meeting days, I nearly skipped his wedding. Good Al-Anon friends of mine slapped me to my senses and told me showing up for my friend on their important day was more important than the Area Al-Anon Bylaws. They reminded me that HP had a greater plan. I didn't want to give up control of the document review process. I feared the group falling into personality conflicts again. I couldn't fathom them being able to make reasonable progress without me there. Boy, was I wrong.

The group did just fine and made great progress. They were just as committed as I was. They wanted me there, but they didn't *need* me. This was a new feeling. And this happened *again* at the next day long session that was planned. I had to work that weekend. I couldn't believe I couldn't be there again—I felt like such a hypocrite. The group stayed committed and made beautiful progress without me there.

This was truly a moment when my faith in the program also became my faith in a Higher Power. When those Bylaws were completed by the AWSC, they were presented to the Assembly with unanimity. When introduced at Assembly, there was no arguing, only discussion. When the Assembly voted to adopt them, it was unanimous. It was most definitely a spiritual experience. And it wasn't just mine. Nearly every AWSC member expressed the deep emotions that came from the experience we had together as a panel.

I firmly believe Higher Power made me miss those day-long meetings. It took an incredible amount of faith to not show up on those two days. I learned such a valuable leadership lesson: the group could do it on their own. I also needed to understand that the project belonged to the group, not to me. The group needed to know that they owned this project and that I trusted them with it. I never would've let go if Higher Power didn't step in to prevent me from being there. I have so much gratitude for what the drama and frustration of that time has given me today.

Each one of these snapshots of time in practicing my program required heaping amounts of courage in very different ways. Sitting on my hands was difficult and created a lot of internal drama for me. I call it a quiet courage because all I had to do was sit on my hands, but it was so hard in those early days. Expressing my needs to my dad was so personal, and risking that kind of rejection was a new kind of courage for me. And the courage it took to not show up allowed me to understand what it means to be a good leader and gave me a beautiful view of what Higher Power's support can look and feel like.

I used to cringe each time I would hear someone say, "the joy is in the journey." I was always so eager to just get to the destination so I could relax. I didn't understand how to enjoy the journey. As my faith has grown in this program, so has my understanding of that phrase. Today, I feel confident that Higher Power has my back, always. That confidence leaves me open to what Higher Power decides to bring to me today.

Higher Power has given me more professional challenges during this panel than ever before. Just before my first WSC, I found out I had the opportunity to buy the business I work for. After consulting long and hard with HP and some professionals, I turned that opportunity down because it wasn't right for me. It hurt. I thought I might be losing the opportunity of my lifetime, but my faith in HP has taught me that if it doesn't feel right, I need to let it go.

My second WSC, I came here as a new business owner with just 20 days of experience owning my business. I'm not entrepreneurial. I never thought I'd own a business, but here I am having this adventure in my late 40s. My service experience in Al-Anon has taught me to "Keep an Open Mind." When I keep myself in a growth mindset, I truly never know what HP will bring my way. Life has not been boring! I'm grateful for that. And I think I'm finally finding the joy in this journey. All these life surprises boost my hope bank.

I've intentionally used the word courage a lot in this share. It's because courage works hand in hand with my spirituality. Courage is my faith taking action.

I couldn't have built my faith without all of you in these rooms. When you show up for a meeting, your shared wisdom plants seeds of courage for the newcomer. When you show up for service, your participation is the gentle bumper that allows us to start practicing these principles in all our affairs. And when we keep showing up to meetings and we keep showing up for service, we ensure the program will always be here for the newcomer seeking the priceless gift of serenity—just like those who welcomed me and fostered my recovery.

I really appreciate you allowing me to share my gratitude and love for this program here. I do have to give a quick shout out to a Panel 36 Delegate. She invested in me when I was a new Al-Anon babe in the woods. I think she's gotten a good return on her investment.

IN CLOSING WE WOULD LIKE TO SAY...

CLOSING SESSION

Kathi M., Trustee, Chairperson of the Board

Jayne C., Trustee, Conference Chairperson

The Chairperson of the Board reflected on the work done by the 2025 Conference and the way its theme, “Investing in Each Other to Preserve Our Legacy,” was exemplified in the ability of Conference members to reason things out and remain open-minded even during difficult discussions. She shared her experience of spirituality in service and noted how the cooperation and respect demonstrated by Conference members showed the effectiveness of the Al-Anon program and its Legacies. Her message encouraged members to continue the work of Conference throughout the year with their Higher Power as their guide.

The Conference Chairperson also thanked Conference members for their dedication to the Legacies and demonstration of spiritual principles over the four days of the WSC. She quoted some of the memorable phrases and sentiments shared during the 2025 Conference, including, “Recovery is a journey best traveled together”; “The healing is in the hearing”; and “Al-Anon is self-correcting.” She asked Delegates to reaffirm their commitment to meaningful service and spreading the message of help and hope.

That evening, the Conference Chair began the closing dinner with a moment of silence followed by the Serenity Prayer. She presented certificates of appreciation to outgoing WSC Delegates, Trustees, Executive Committee members, and Staff. Kate M., Panel 63, New Hampshire, and Sue K., Panel 63, Missouri, shared their Al-Anon stories as Spiritual Speakers. (See pages 31-34) The evening closed as members and their guests formed a circle and recited the Al-Anon Declaration together.



Thank you

2025 WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE MOTIONS

MOTION #1 – (82 yes, 0 no, 0 abstentions, 3 void) - CARRIED

That the following persons be seated at the 2025 World Service Conference:

With voice, but no vote:

Niketa Williams

Senior Director of Finance & Operations
Non-Al-Anon Member

Tracey S.

International Services Manager
Al-Anon Member

With voice limited to Executive Committee for Real Property Management (ECRPM) business, but no vote:

Sue C.

Chairperson, ECRPM
Al-Anon Member

MOTION #2 – (88 yes, 2 no, 0 abstentions, 0 void) - CARRIED

To make the following changes to the “Local Services” section of the “Policy Digest” of the *2022-2025 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27) v4(a):

Move the updated “Autonomy of Groups” subsection to the “Membership and Group Meetings/Conventions” section and rename the subsection as “Who Can Disband a Group.”

Establish the “Meeting List Publishing” subsection in the “Membership and Group Meetings/Conventions” section.

In accordance with the changes recommended by the Policy Committee and adopted by the Board of Trustees.

MOTION #3 – (89 yes, 0 no, 1 abstentions, 0 void) - CARRIED

To approve the 2024 Audited Financial Report.

MOTION #4 – (88 yes, 2 no, 0 abstentions, 0 void) - CARRIED

That the following non-voting roles be seated at the World Service Conference:

- World Service Office (WSO) Staff who have voice and are critical to the Conference Agenda, for example, the Senior Director of Finance & Operations
- The Executive Committee for Real Property Management Chairperson with voice limited to ECRPM business
- International Representatives, i.e., a representative from a General Service Office with voice
- WSO Staff members seated to observe a session, or a day of sessions with no voice.

MOTION #5 – (89 yes, 1 no, 0 abstentions, 0 void) - CARRIED

To approve the 2025 Finance Committee Report.

MOTION #6 – (89 yes, 1 no, 0 abstentions, 0 void) - CARRIED

To approve the 2024 Annual Report.

MOTION #7 – (64 yes, 26 no, 0 abstentions, 0 void) - CARRIED

Allow group names to continue to include identifiers such as those currently listed on page 28 of the *2022-2025 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27) v4(a) including “men, women, parents, adult children, young adults, other gender identification/sexual orientation, etc. with the understanding that in keeping with Traditions Three and Five, the groups will welcome anyone affected by someone else’s drinking” until the 2026 World Service Conference to allow WSC Structure Areas to discuss the implementation of the 2024 WSC-approved “Choosing a Group’s Name” Policy.



2024
WORLD SERVICE OFFICE
ANNUAL REPORT



Al-Anon Family Groups
Help and hope for families and friends of alcoholics

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GREETINGS & THANKS

• • •

Kathi M., Chairperson of the Board of Trustees (Trustee)
Carol M., Chairperson of the Executive Committee (At-Large Member)
Vali F., Executive Director
.....

This year, through the combined efforts of the WSO Staff, the Board of Trustees, and the At-Large members of the Executive Committee—along with many other world service volunteers—we have continued our journey “One Day at a Time” toward accomplishing the Strategic Plan Goals, the legal and traditional responsibilities of Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. We are extremely grateful to have been a part of this combined effort and believe our Cofounders, Lois and Anne, would be proud.

This Annual Report seeks to inform the World Service Conference and our membership about the efforts, accomplishments, and challenges of the WSO Staff and Volunteers as we worked together in 2024 to achieve the AFG, Inc. Vision and Mission. Each accomplishment celebrated in this Annual Report is the direct result of our fellowship’s continued Seventh Tradition support of World Service Office (WSO) clearinghouse services and the willingness of Volunteers and Staff alike to serve at the world service level.

Reflecting on the year, here are just a few of the WSO’s less broadly recognized highlights and opportunities for growth in the context of the AFG, Inc. Strategic Plan Domains and Goals:

Members: By year end, despite limitations imposed by the current software system, the WSO had provided combined visibility to both electronic and physical groups for all World Service Conference (WSC) Structure Area Group Records Coordinators. This capability supports group members finding the support they need for their groups within the links of service.

Recovery & Service Tools: After thoughtful conversations with international structures, and considering the principle of self-support, the WSO adopted a methodology that will allow both broader publication of ebooks globally and distribution of net revenue to English-, Spanish-, and French-speaking General Service Offices that rely on the sale of literature to members within their geographic areas.

Awareness: Our Public Outreach Toolkit continued to expand this year through the efforts of the Delegate-led Revitalizing Alateen Task Force, which presented to the 2024 WSC a package to support our members’ outreach to professionals about Alateen, and the WSO Staff, who prepared it for publication and distribution.

Financial Sustainability: In 2024, the Board of Trustees found itself in the fortunate position of reflecting on the spiritual principle described in Warranty One, “that only sufficient operating funds, including an ample reserve, be its prudent financial principle.” For the first time in many years, the Reserve Fund balance exceeded the WSO’s one year’s operating expenses. Adhering to its guideline defining an “ample reserve,” the Board consulted widely to identify special projects through which it could align resource allocation with our core purpose. (See Manage Our Budget & Financials for more details.)

Global Engagement: Bill W. stated in his slightly modified essay “Leadership,” as described in Concept Nine, “No society can function well without able leadership at all levels, and we are no exception.” Consistent with this idea, the Global Engagement Goal statement declares that we “invest in each new generation of trusted servants to preserve our legacy.” This year, the Board of Trustees and the Nominating Committee took steps to improve the Trustee and At-Large Executive Committee member nominating processes so as to continue to attract strong leaders to these vital world service leadership roles.

In 2024, we also accomplished this goal by forming a Task Force of Delegates and Conference Leadership Team members to chart a potential course for infusing the WSC Agenda development process with Delegate input and by holding a historic hybrid business meeting with International Al-Anon General Services Meeting (IAGSM) Delegates globally to discuss the viability and value of this service event in the face of declining participation. Our thanks to all the members, groups, Districts, Areas, Al-Anon Information Services, and international structures who contributed their time and financial resources in 2024. You made it possible for the World Service Office to continue the work of our Mission and Al-Anon's primary purpose by following our Conference Theme, "Our Path toward Grace, Unity, and Understanding."

WHO WE ARE: VISION, MISSION, AND STRATEGIC PLAN

VISION

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



MISSION

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



DOMAINS & GOAL STATEMENTS

Members: AFG, Inc. connects and supports the friends and families of alcoholics.

Recovery & Service Tools: AFG, Inc. develops and publishes materials to share the collective experience of the families and friends of alcoholics.

Awareness: AFG, Inc. builds public and professional awareness of the Al-Anon program.

Financial Sustainability: AFG, Inc. encourages membership and organizational self-support by aligning resource allocation with its core purpose and strategic priorities.

Global Engagement: AFG, Inc. invests in each new generation of trusted servants to preserve our legacy and improve our structure and operations to meet the needs of the global landscape.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Members:

1. Provide access to the Al-Anon program for all
2. Advance support to underserved and diverse communities
3. Understand member and group needs

Recovery & Service Tools:

1. Create attractive, new content by gathering, processing, and disseminating pertinent information
2. Communicate the message of hope in a way that is current, appealing, and widely available
3. Reduce barriers to accessing information created by cultural and linguistic obstacles

Awareness:

1. Identify and reduce the effects of biases that may be preventing effective outreach
2. Validate the effectiveness of the Al-Anon Family Groups program in helping our members
3. Educate the public and professionals about who we are, what we do, and why
4. Build relationships with the media, governmental and non-governmental agencies, and professionals

Financial Sustainability:

1. Align resources to support the needs of the fellowship in accordance with Al-Anon's spiritual principles
2. Create opportunities for members to support AFG, Inc.
3. Improve transparency of the financial needs of AFG, Inc.
4. Manage risk to reputation, operations, and assets

Global Engagement:

1. Reinforce the process for passing experience on to incoming trusted servants using effective approaches for the new generation
2. Communicate leadership skills required for trusted servants and create development pathways
3. Collaborate globally to share knowledge and evolve our programs and communications

OUR INTENTIONS

• • •

Strategic Plan

Kathi M., Chairperson of the Board of Trustees (Trustee)
Carol M., Chairperson of the Executive Committee (At Large member)
Vali F., Executive Director
.....

In January 2024, the members of the Staff Strategic Leadership Team (SLT)¹, Board of Trustees, and Executive Committee gathered at the January Board meeting to agree on the prioritized projects and Strategic Plan Strategies toward which World Service Office (WSO) Staff and Volunteers would apply their efforts in 2024. The SLT shared that the annual WSO Projects Landscape contained nine projects and Strategic Plan Strategies, all of which were considered essential for Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. (AFG, Inc.) in 2024. These included ongoing projects discussed at the 2024 World Service Conference (WSC), such as the Next Generation AFG Records, eBooks Globally, and Electronic Alateen Validation & Implementation Planning.

During the year, the Board and Executive Committee identified and approved several new Strategies necessary to address timely matters such as preparing *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual (P-24/27)* updates and publishing an Alateen Public Outreach service tool originated by a WSC Delegate Task Force.

2024 Strategies Update

Staff Strategic Leadership Team
.....

In 2024, SLT consisted of the Executive Director, Director of Finance & Operations, Director of Programs, Director of Communications & Community Awareness, Associate Director–Public Outreach, and the Publications Manager.

SLT shared regular updates with the Executive Committee and Board of Trustees (WSO Volunteers) using the WSO work management software on each of the WSO Projects Landscape strategies. These updates inform the WSO Volunteers about progress against milestones as well as challenges that have arisen. The SLT meets monthly with the Executive Committee and quarterly with the Board to answer questions, gather feedback regarding the Strategies, and to discuss any projects that are off track and Staff plans to overcome delays. Although a common concern again in 2024 was WSO Staff capacity, three of the nine WSO Projects Landscape strategies were completed, many milestones were accomplished, and all but one remained on track at year end.

Several 2024 projects were known to be multi-year efforts that will carry over into 2025, including the Core Systems Overhaul, a project to upgrade the WSO association management, accounting, and related software systems; eBooks Globally; and Al-Anon's participation at the 2025 A.A. International Convention to be held in Vancouver, British Columbia, July 2025.

¹The Strategic Leadership Team consists of three Directors, one Associate Director, and a Manager. Its primary purpose is to deliver the strategic priorities of the organization as defined by the Domain Goal Statements and Strategic Objectives established by the Board of Trustees.

Domain: Members

AFG, Inc. connects and supports the friends and families of alcoholics.

- Next Generation AFG Records
- Electronic Alateen Validation & Implementation Planning
- 2025 A.A. International Convention with Al-Anon Participation (2025 A.A. IC)
- 2028 Al-Anon International Convention with A.A. Participation (2028 IC)

Domain: Recovery & Service Tools

AFG, Inc. develops and publishes materials to share the collective experience of the families and friends of alcoholics.

- eBooks Globally
- New Booklet: *Healing within Our Alcoholic Relationships* (P-95)
- CAL Globally in All Languages
- *2026-2029 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27)

Domain: Awareness

AFG, Inc. builds public and professional awareness of the Al-Anon program.

- Revitalizing Alateen Public Outreach Packet

Domain: Financial Sustainability

AFG, Inc. encourages membership and organizational self-support by aligning resource allocation with its core purpose and strategic priorities.

- WSO Core Systems Overhaul
- One Year's Operating Expense
- Online Store 2.0

Domain: Global Engagement

AFG, Inc. invests in each new generation of trusted servants to preserve our legacy and improve our structure and operations to meet the needs of the global landscape.

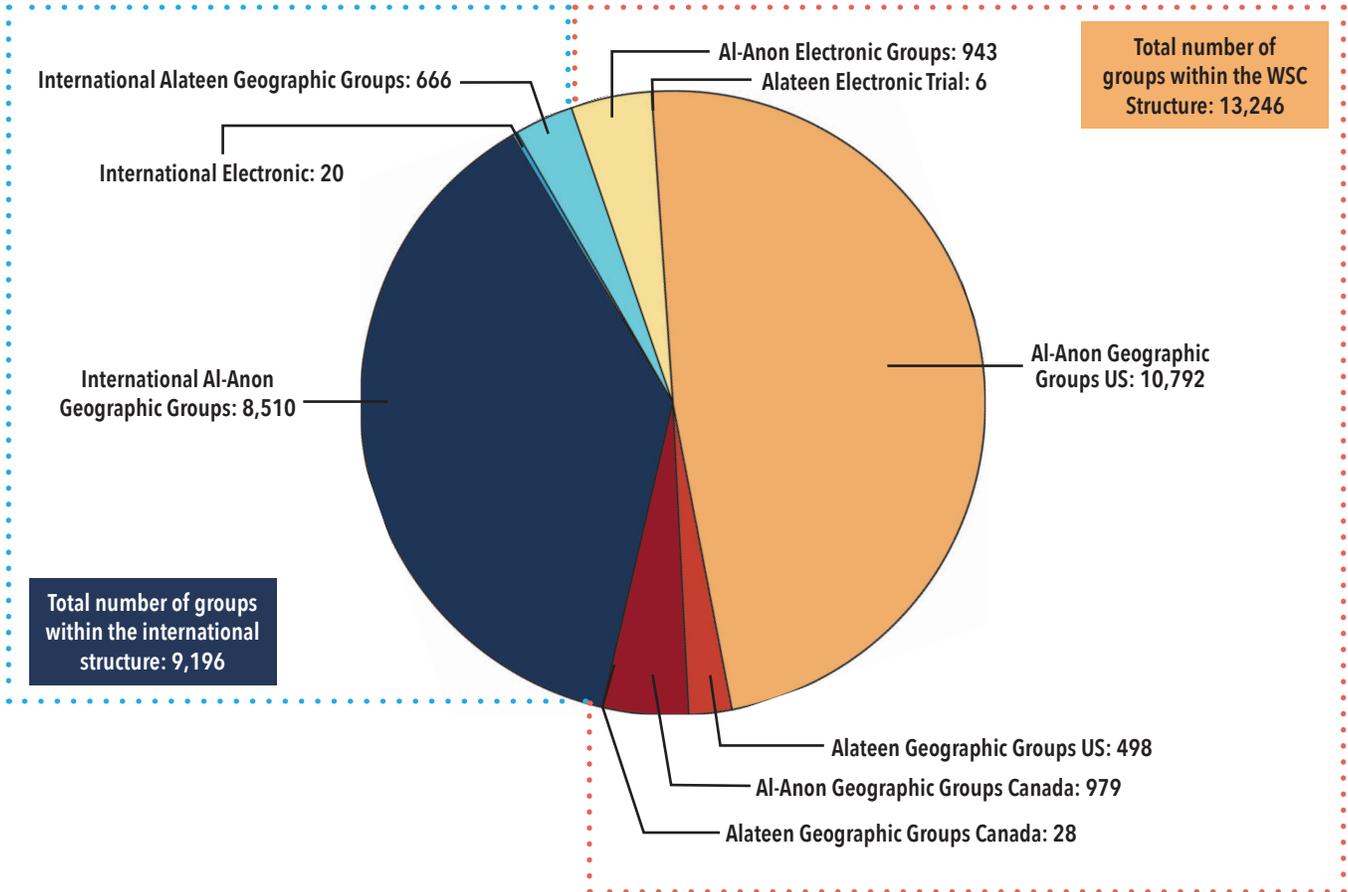
- Trustee Application Revamp

Details about each initiative are referenced in the upcoming Annual Report sections: Our Impact, Our Work, and Our Plans.

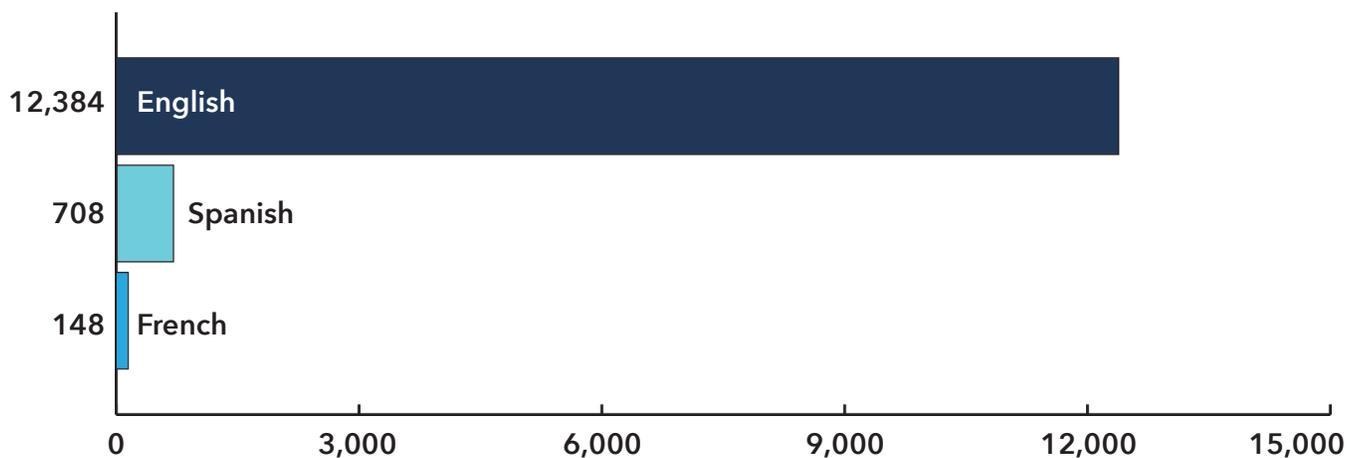
OUR IMPACT

2024 Worldwide Al-Anon Family Groups Counts

The counts represent the number of groups in each category. Groups counted in "Geographic" categories include groups meeting in-person and electronically.

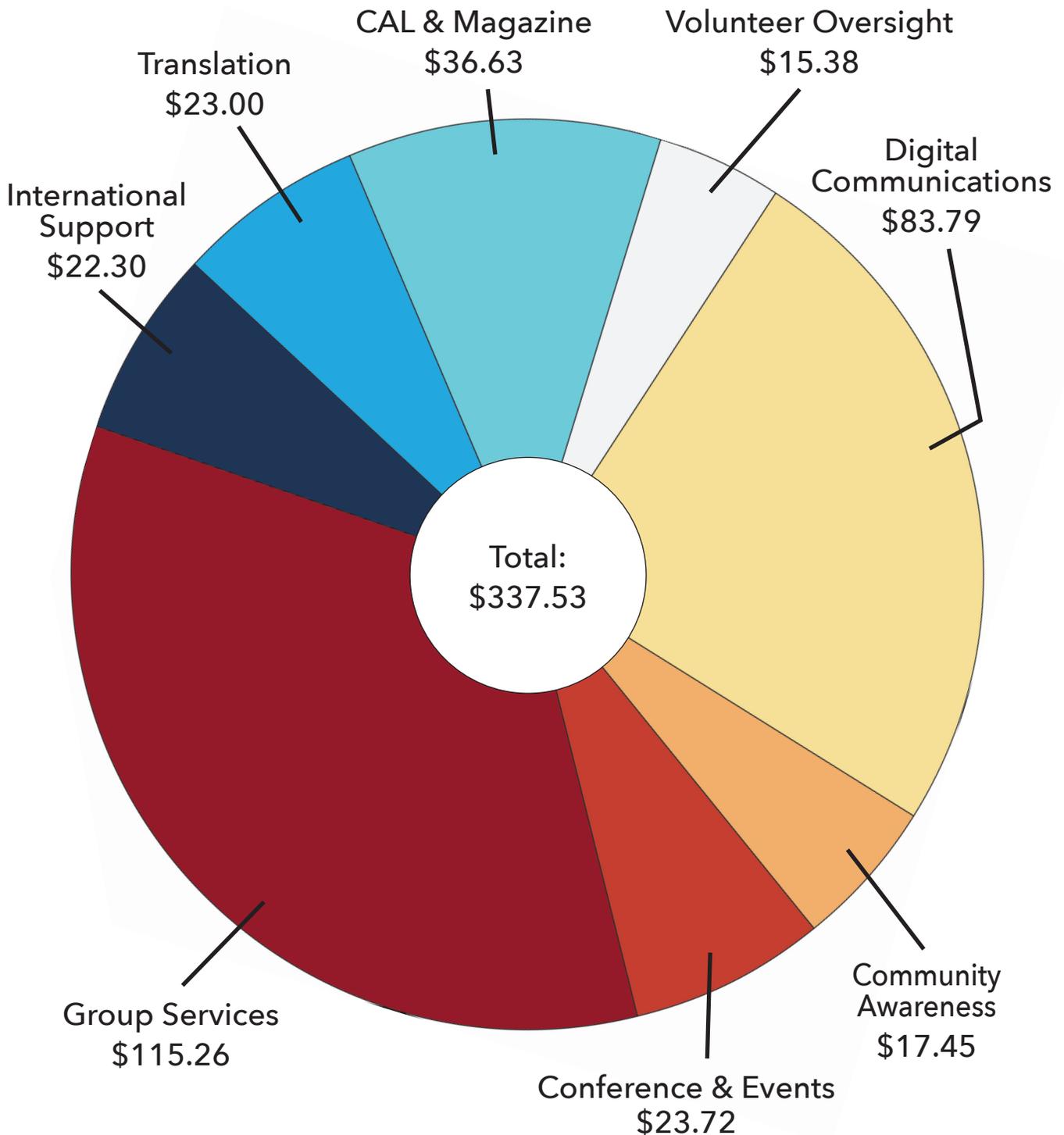


Allocation of English, Spanish & French Groups within the WSC Structure



Cost of WSO Services Allocated across WSC Structure Groups

The total contribution per WSC Structure group needed to fully fund the cost of all services the World Service Office provides.

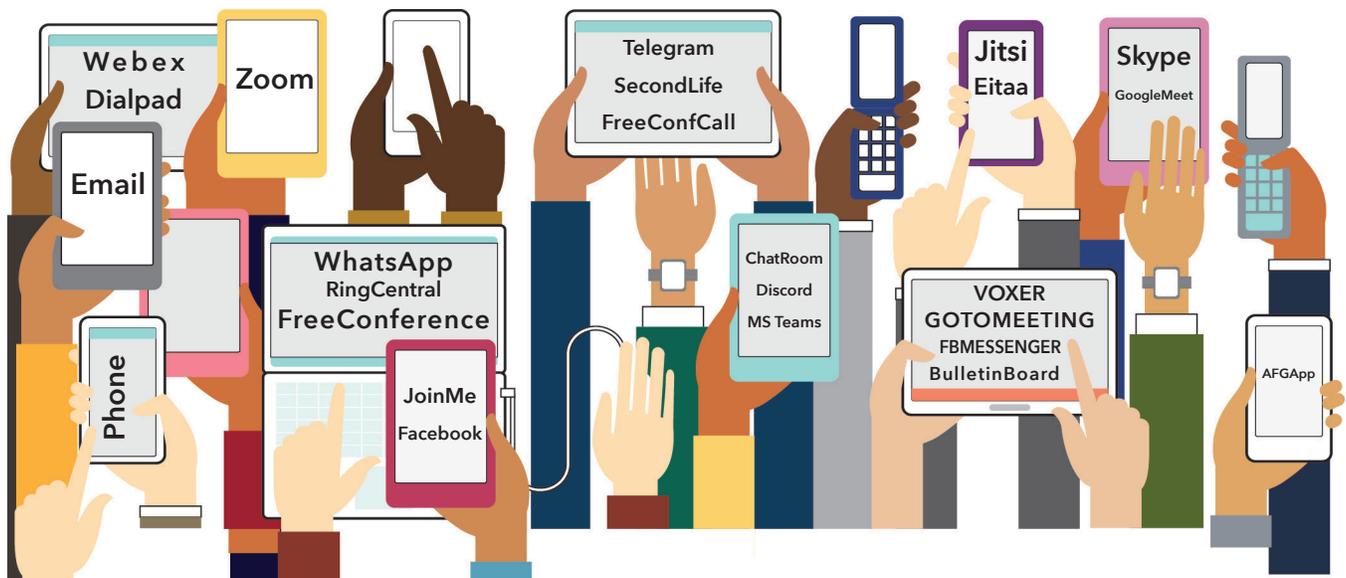


Al-Anon Spoken All over the World

Languages spoken by groups registered with the WSO.



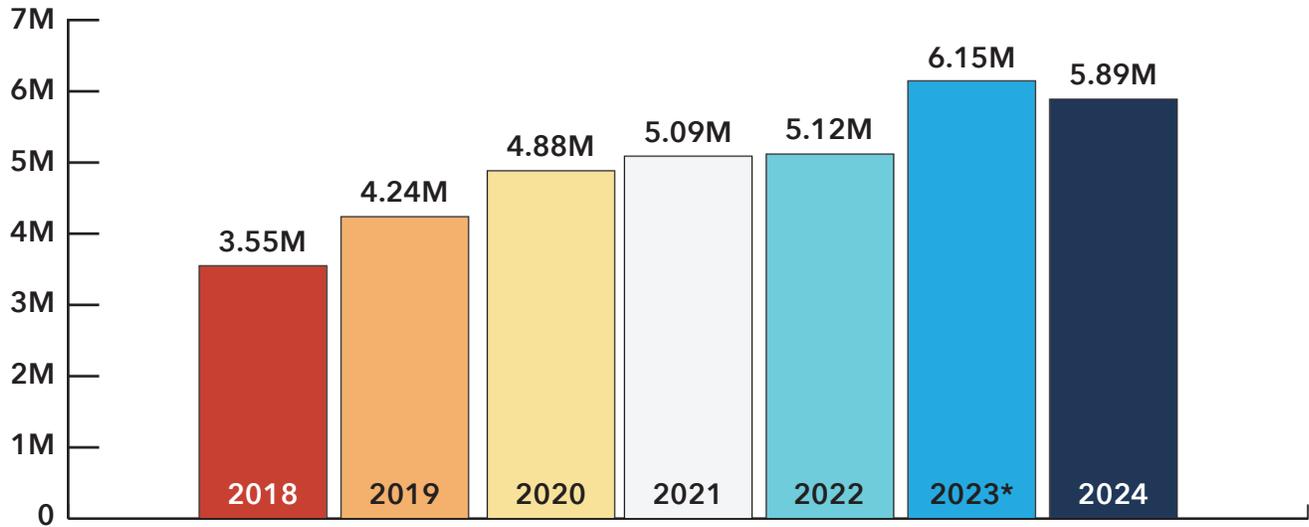
Al-Anon Meets on Many Platforms



Digital Communications Connections

Website Sessions

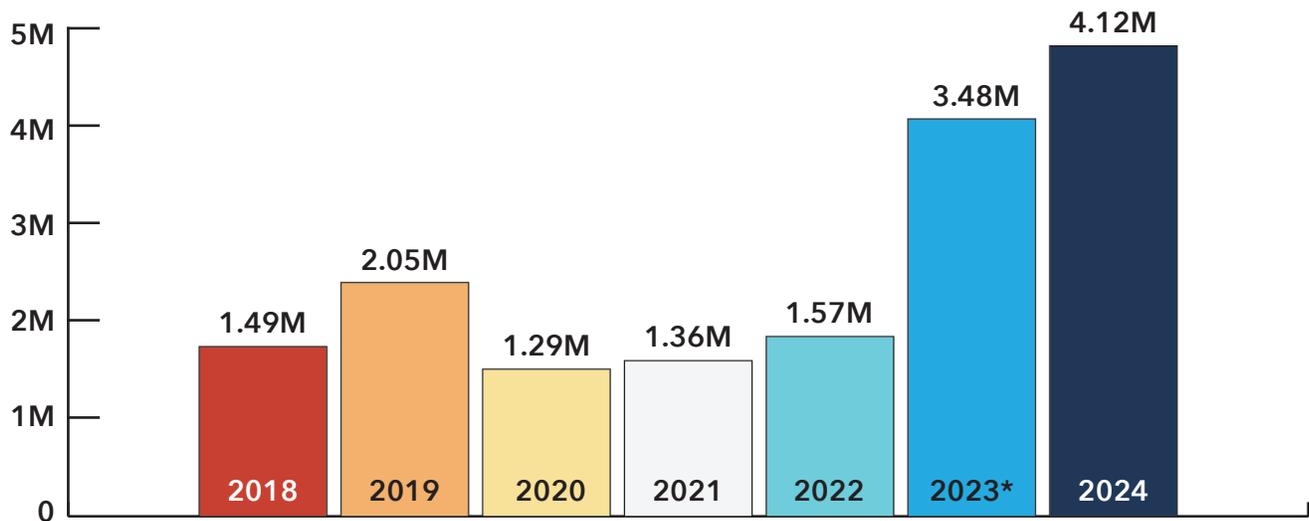
The number of times al-anon.org was visited during the year.



*In 2023, session tracking analytics changed from using cookies to using events.

Al-Anon Meeting Searches

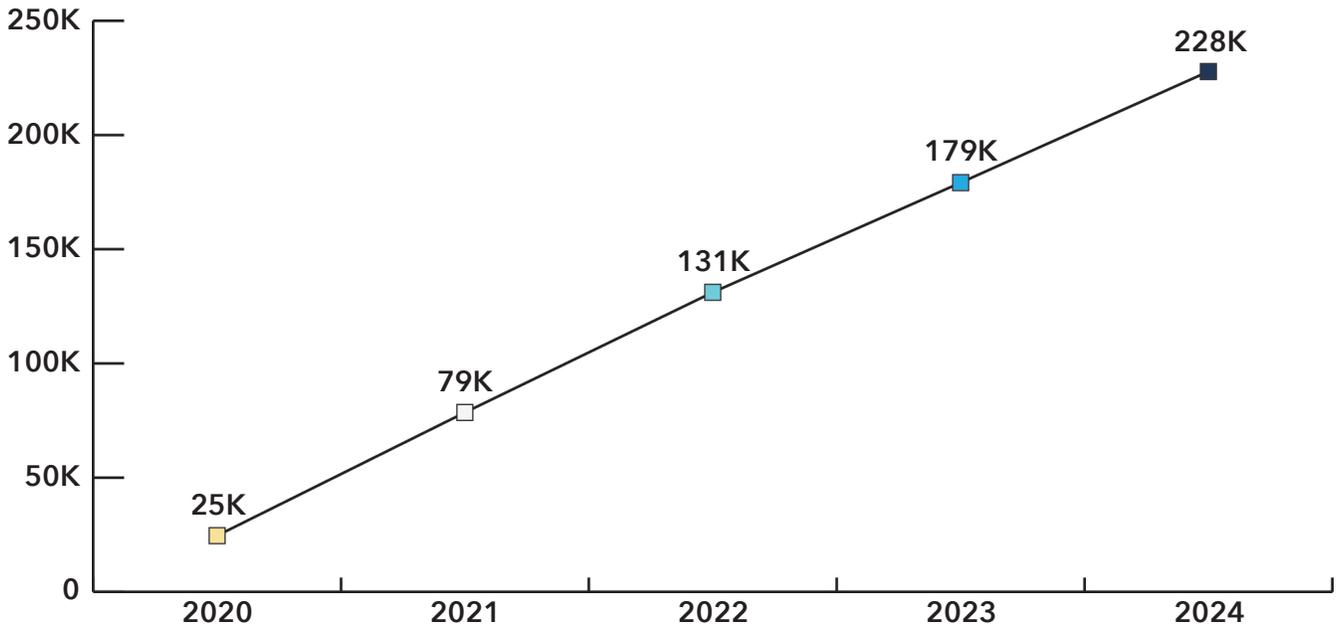
Total number of searches made for in-person and electronic meetings.



*In March 2023, the new Global Electronic search launched, providing greater search visibility.

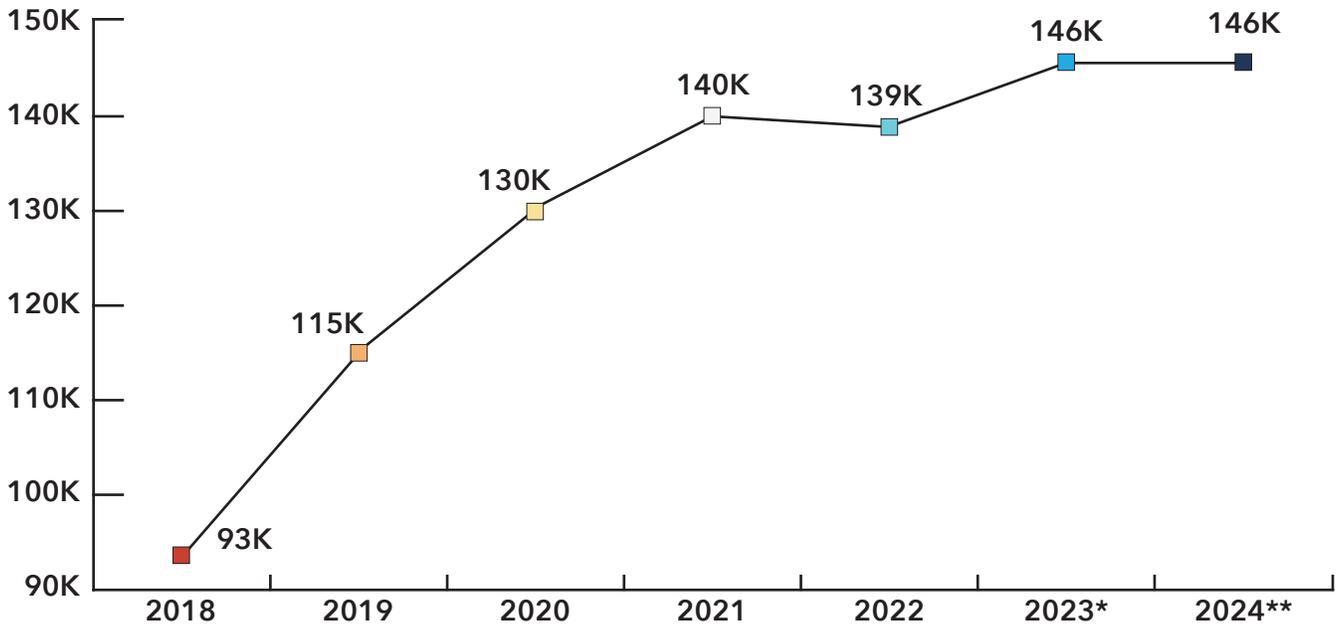
AFG Mobile App Registered Users

Total number of registered users for the Al-Anon Family Groups Mobile App



WSO Social Media Followers

Total number of followers on Facebook, Instagram, X, and LinkedIn

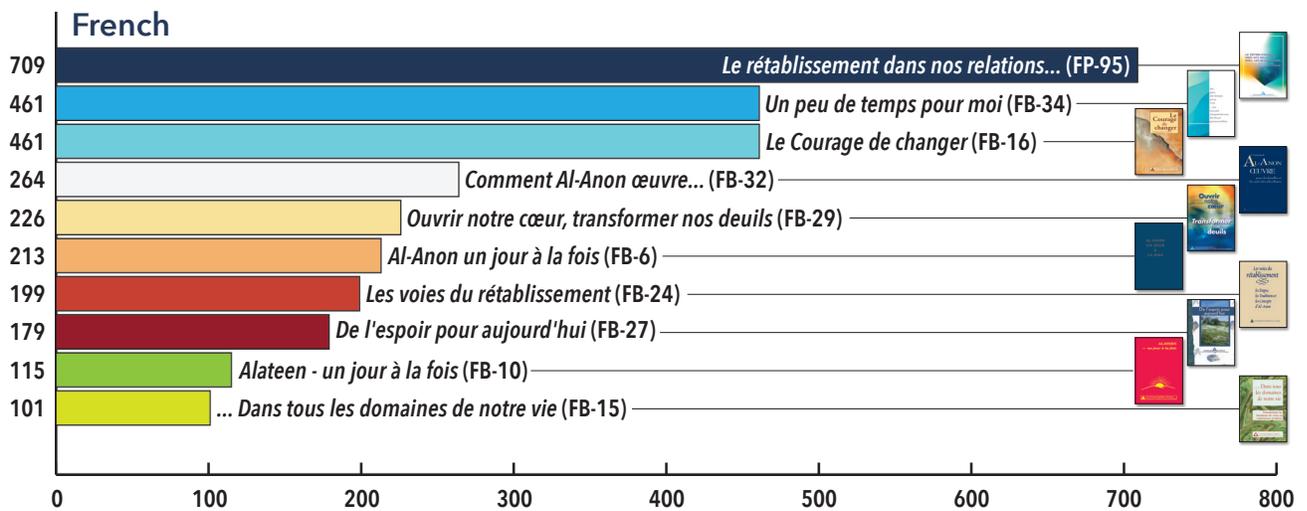
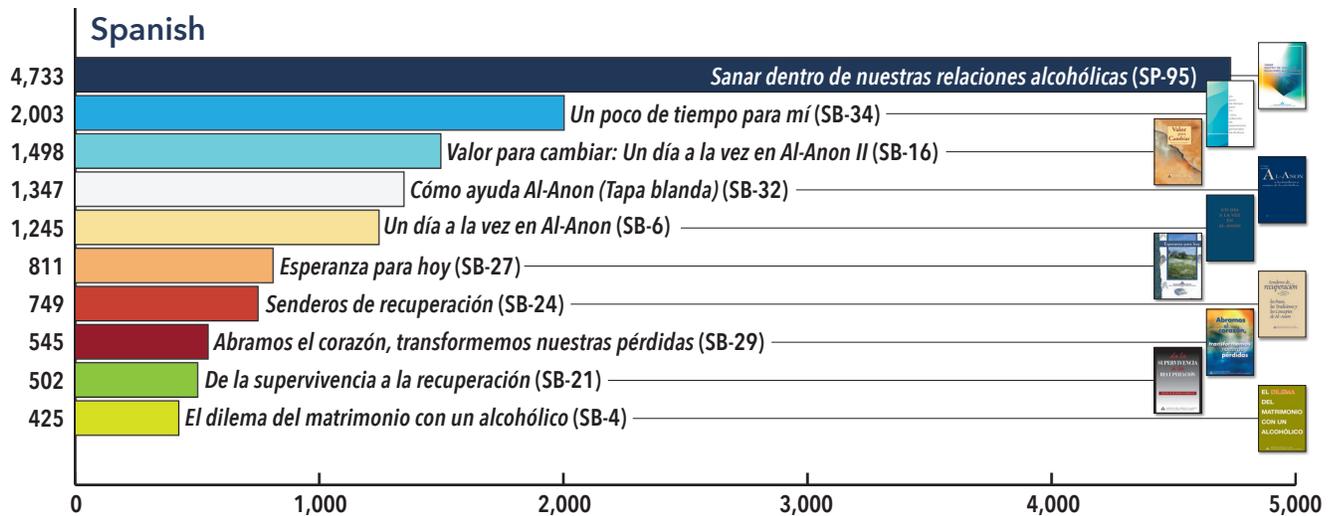
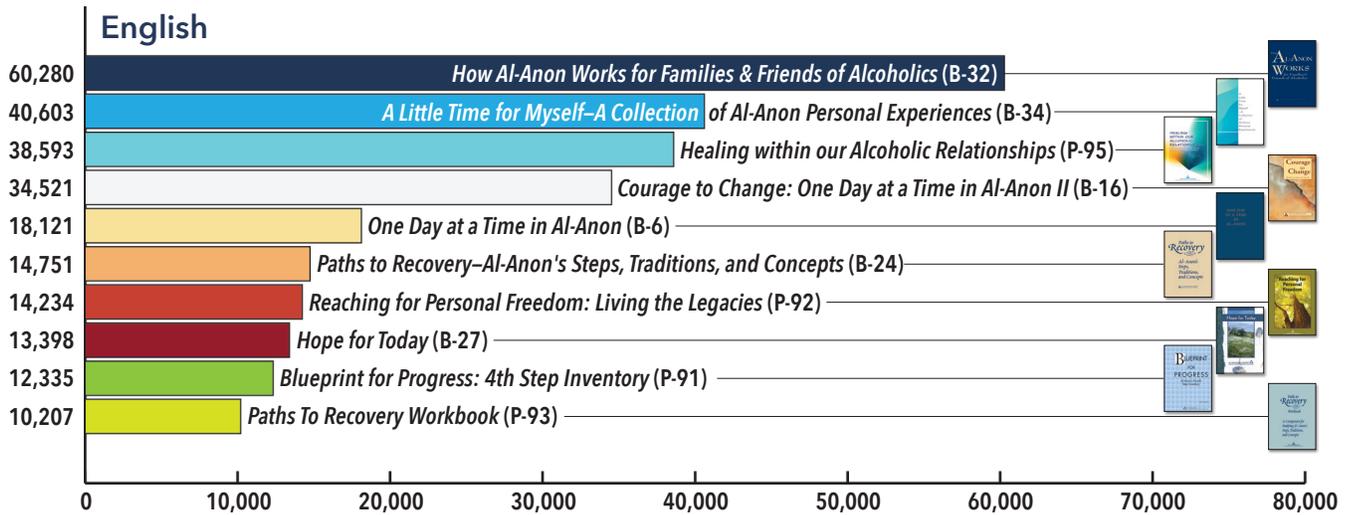


*No longer managing Alateen pages - removed 9,021 followers as a result

** No longer managing Spanish and French X (Twitter) pages - removed 2,129 followers as a result

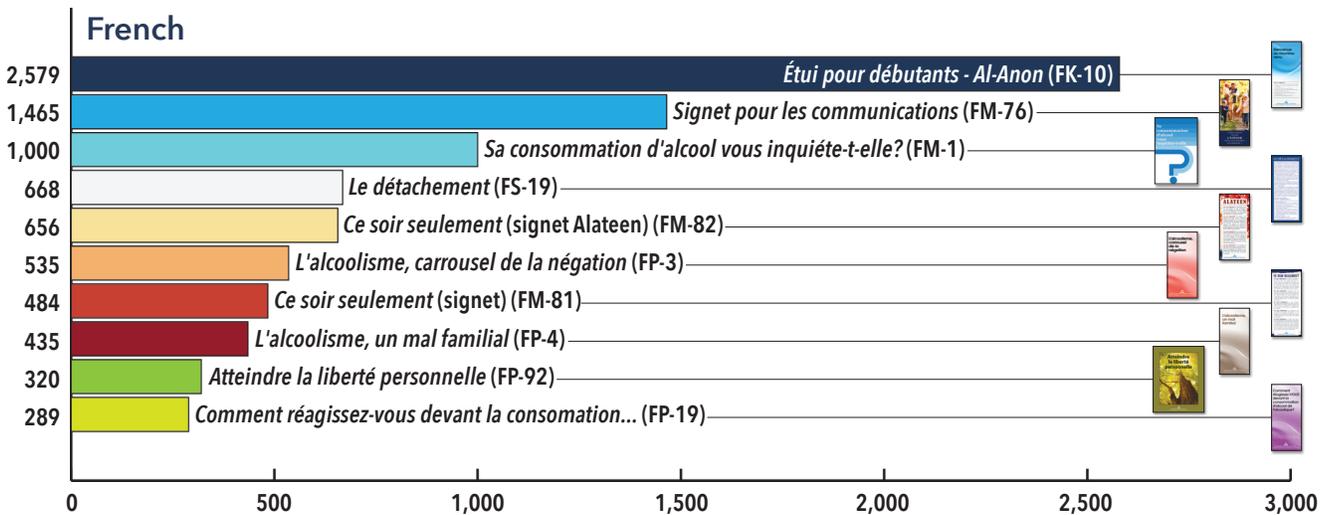
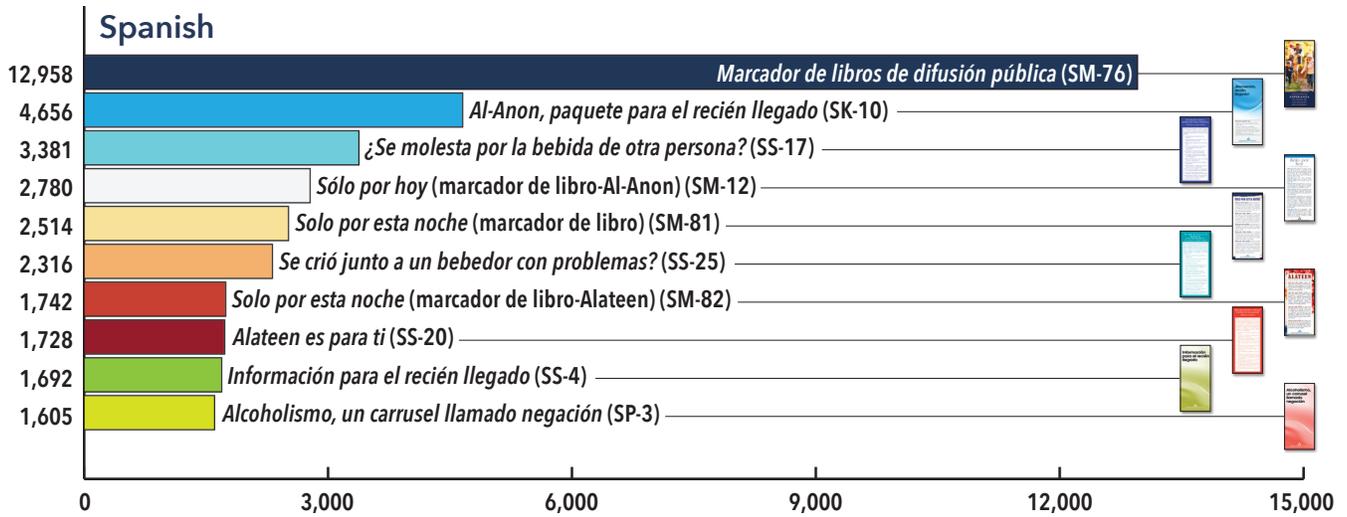
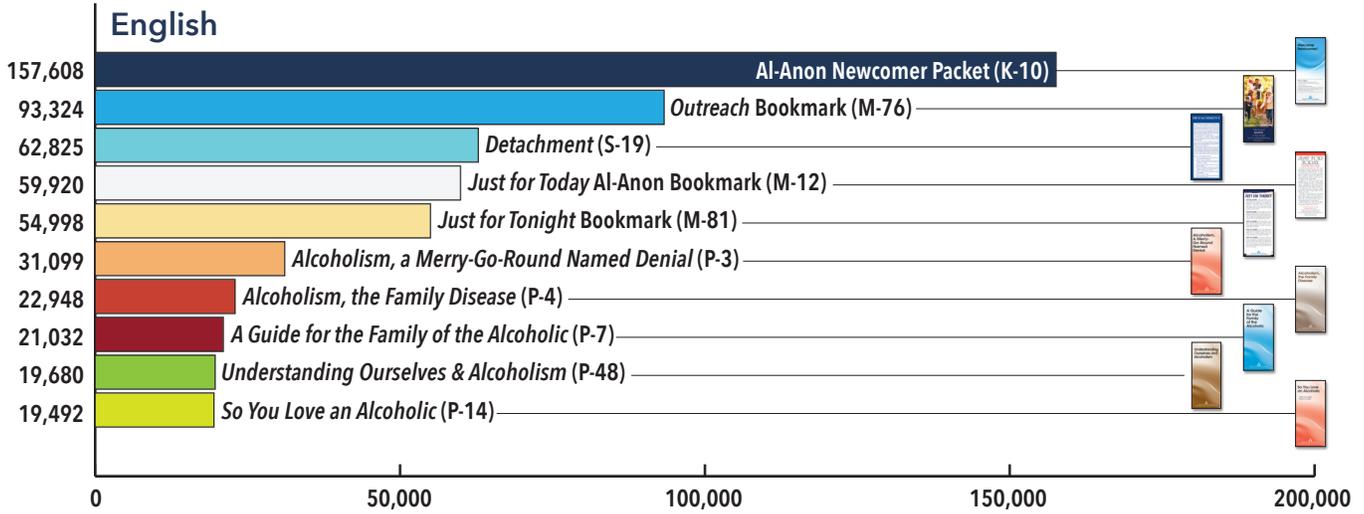
Top 10 Selling Books/Booklets of 2024

The top selling books and booklets listed by the number of books sold in each language



2024 Top Selling Non-books

The top selling non-books listed by the number of non-books sold in each language

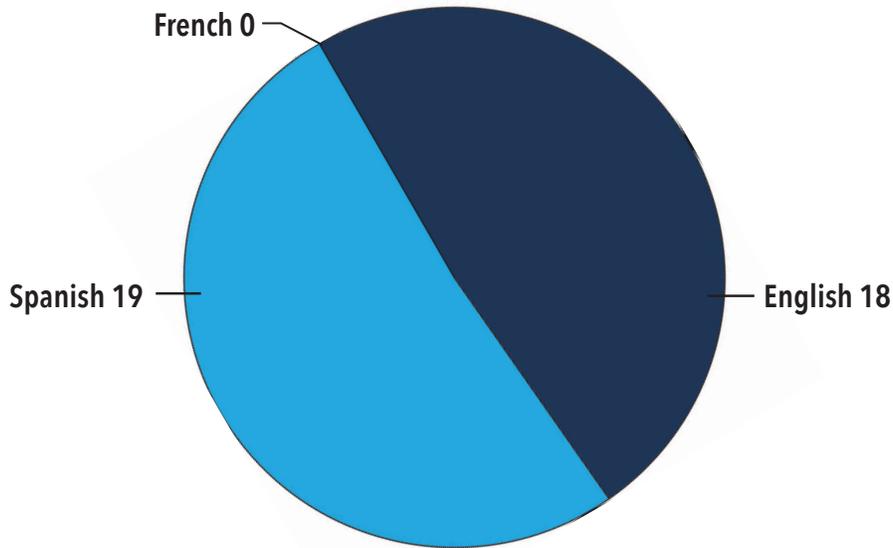


Conference Approved Literature Requests by International Structures

International Structures may request the right to reprint and sell English, Spanish, or French literature, whereas International Structures in countries speaking other languages may request the right to translate and print the literature into another language to serve the members in their geographic country.

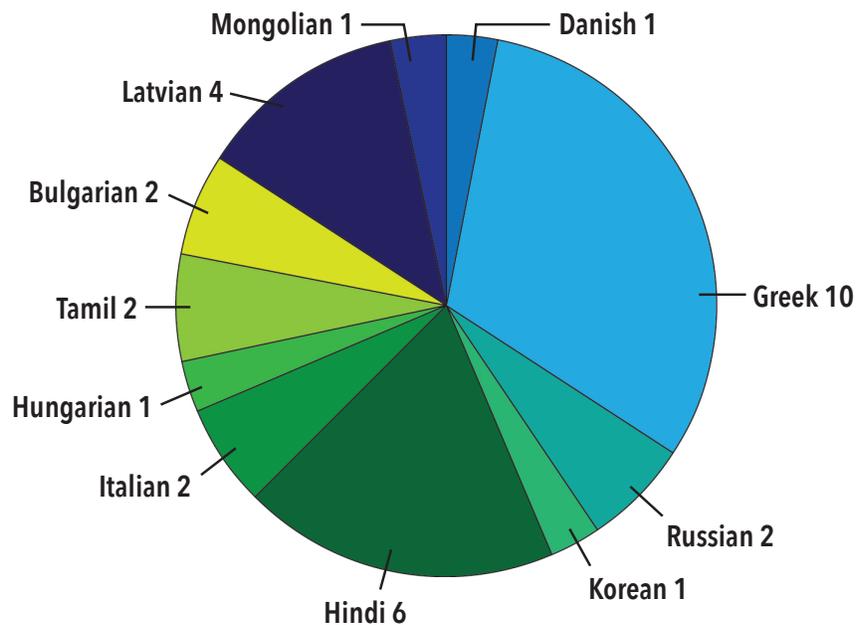
2024 Reprint Requests

The number of approved requests to reprint CAL.



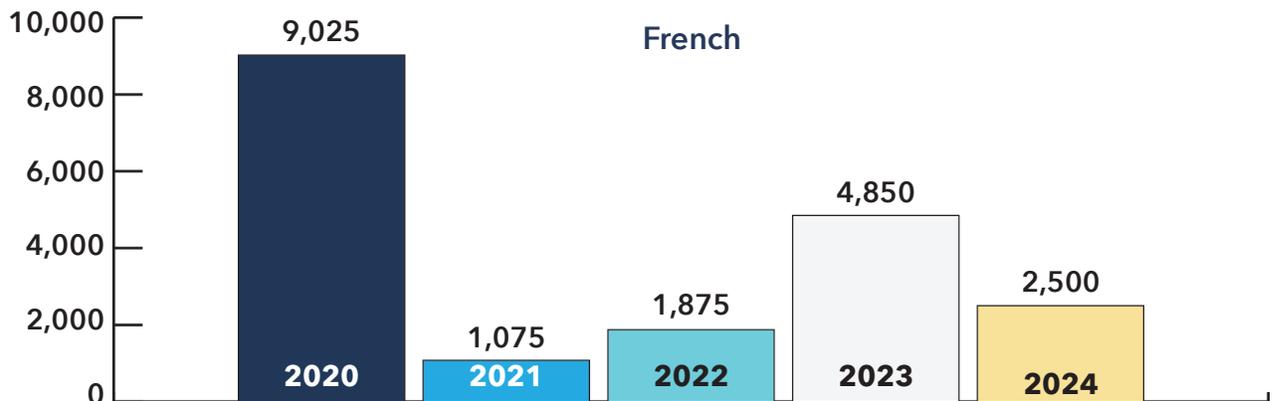
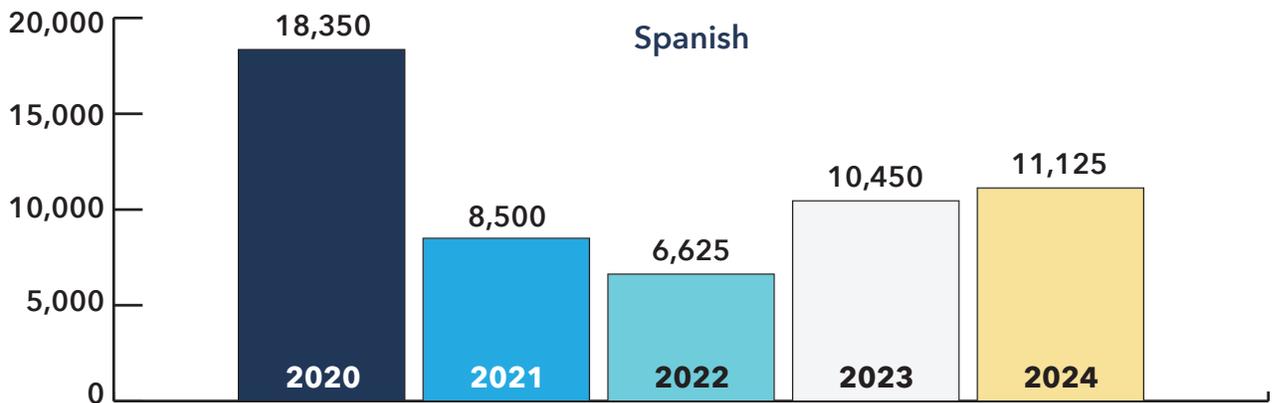
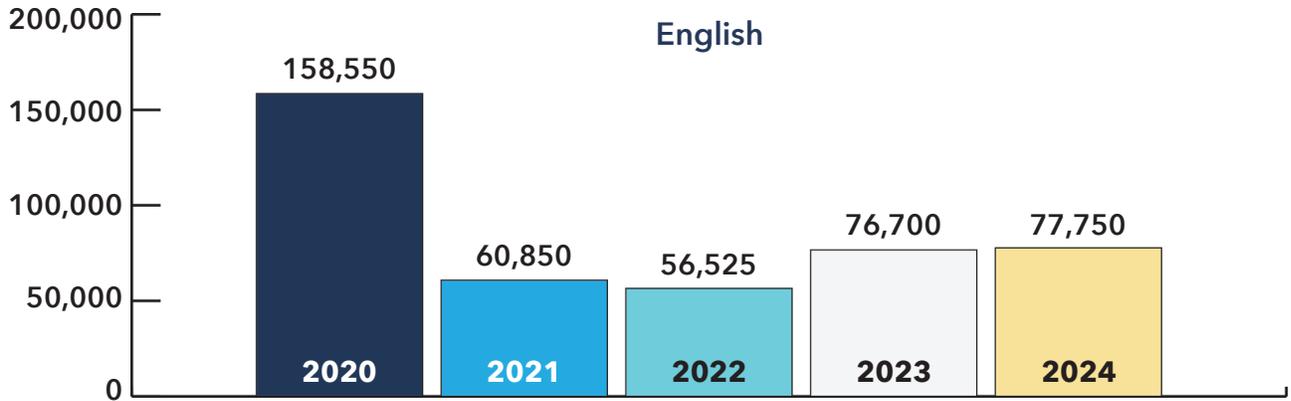
2024 Translation and Print Requests

The number of approved requests to translate and print CAL by language.

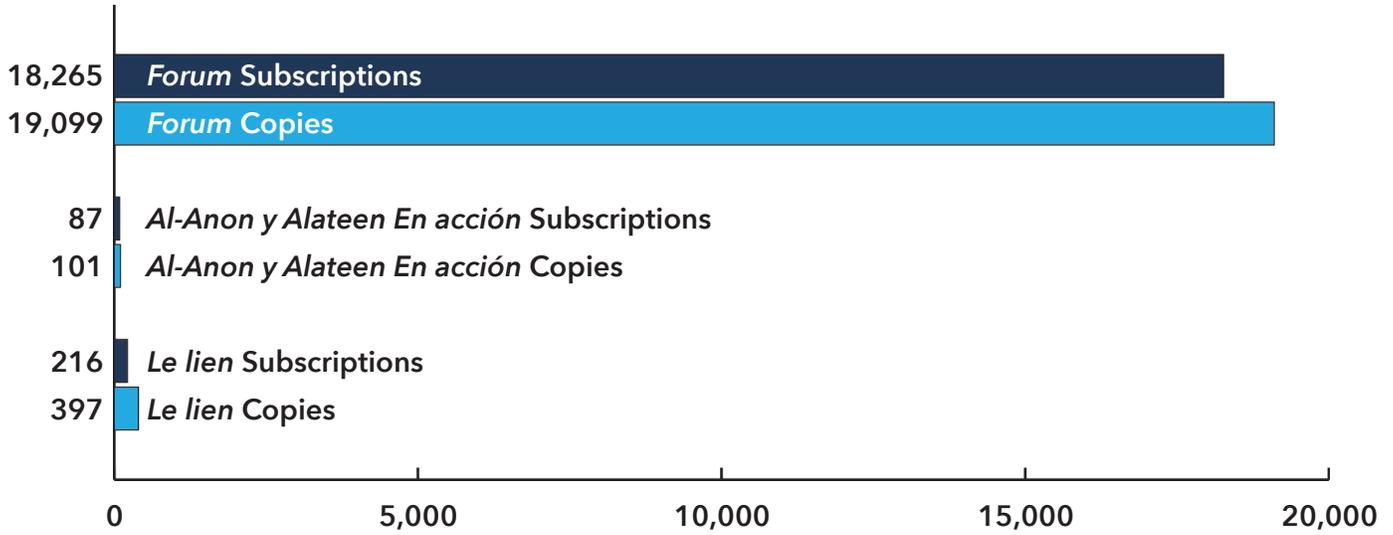


Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism

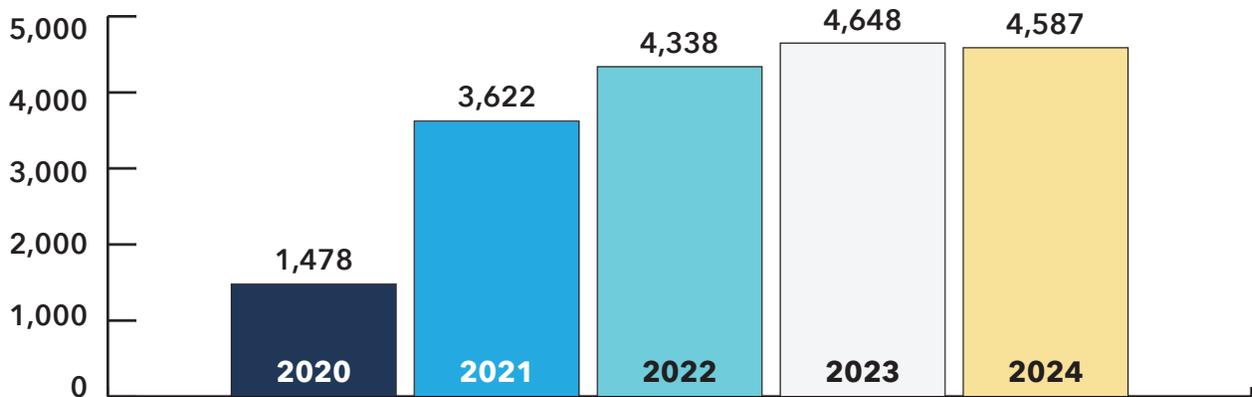
Number of magazines sold per year. 2019 was the last year with a yearly magazine with two printings. 2020 introduced the undated magazine.



The Forum, Al-Anon y Alateen En acción, and Le lien Subscriptions



AFG Mobile App Premium Access Subscriptions



OUR WORK

• • •

Domain: Members

AFG, Inc. connects and supports the friends and families of alcoholics.

Meeting the Needs of Our Groups and Our Members

Sarah S., Director of Programs

Sue P., Associate Director—Group Services

Valerie Stump, AFG Records Manager (Non-member)

.....

2024 proved to be another enlightening year for Group Services' work meeting the needs of our groups and members. The WSC Conference Theme, "Our Path toward Grace, Unity, and Understanding," guided the team in its efforts to serve when responding to emails and phone calls. It is the team's hope that its communications are filled with respect and that the guidance provided is conveyed with love and commitment to our primary spiritual aim of providing help and hope to anyone who is impacted by someone else's drinking.

Group Services supported the International Services team with presentations on Alateen, the World Service Conference, and how to apply the Twelve Steps to members in evolving and national service structures around the world via Global Gatherings. These virtual meetings were all well attended, with more than 30 countries represented. As the World Service Conference Structure is recognized as the senior structure in accordance with the Al-Anon World Service Conference Charter, the team seeks to share a consistent message surrounding policy and process to support international structures in effectively carrying the message of help and hope that Al-Anon offers.

The team was grateful for the opportunity to support the Director of Programs and the International Services Manager as they prepared for their travel to Asia. The team collaborated on four presentations: Welcoming Newcomers, Practicing the Traditions and Concepts of Service, Conflict Resolution, and Alateen. Several team members participated virtually to share the Twelve Steps with members in China. What a privilege and emotional experience to share with almost 200 members who enjoyed translation into Chinese! Never did the team members imagine that service participation and technology would be able to bridge these geographic gaps.

The Programs Department was excited to support the Global Electronic Districting Task Force (TF) by providing the details necessary to assign groups to Districts according to the districting methodology the TF developed and the Area approved. Group Services and AFG Records then together supported the Area Group Records Coordinator in efforts to assign groups to Districts. Of the 55 GEA Districts created, 29 had District Representatives by year end. That's 53 percent in less than one year!

Al-Anon Member and Group Communications

Each year, WSO Staff across all departments communicate with members in various ways, pursuing the Members Domain objective of providing access to the Al-Anon program for all. Conversations may occur as the result of members calling a specific team, such as Group Services or International; contacting the WSO via the wso@al-anon.org email; or calling the WSO Meeting Line and speaking with Staff who provide meeting information to newcomers and members. The types of questions, inquiries, and comments vary widely. The following are just a few examples to demonstrate the wide variety of topics members raise to WSO Staff.

- Many members this year shared concerns about safety in Al-Anon meetings, whether the meetings were in person or online. The team frequently referred members to the service tool *Let's Talk About Safety in Al-Anon Meetings!*, found on al-anon.org, as well as guidance on conducting business meetings and group conscience decisions in the *2022-2025 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual (P-24/27) v4*.
- An Al-Anon member living in New Jersey, who was moving to Tanzania as a missionary to operate a school, contacted Group Services. She wanted to start an Alateen meeting in the school and was looking for resources. Tanzania does not have a service structure but does have a registered English-speaking Al-Anon meeting in the town where the school is located. The member was not aware of the Al-Anon meeting and was very excited. Group Services shared Al-Anon policy relating to holding Alateen meetings, using the Alateen name, and the use of Alateen literature in group settings outside Al-Anon.

Since the member is bilingual in Swahili and English, many children faced with alcoholic family members could benefit from her reading the daily Alateen readers verbally translated into Swahili. The member was encouraged to consider connecting with Swahili-speaking Al-Anon members in Tanzania who could support a meeting taking place at the school. She stated her plans to purchase Alateen CAL from the local LDC in New Jersey to carry to Tanzania. WOW! These are the types of conversations at the clearinghouse that are most satisfying!

Al-Anon Information Services (AIS), Literature Distribution Centers (LDC), and combined AIS/LDC (Intergroup) Communications

The WSO continued to hold quarterly web conference calls in 2024 to support trusted servants for these service arms. Meetings were also supported by the collaborations with the Associate Director–Public Outreach, Associate Director–Literature, AFG Records Manager, and the introduction of the newest Group Services member, who will be supporting their service responsibilities. Many of the service arm members did not understand their connection to the Area and the importance of their attendance at Area World Service Committee (AWSC) meetings. Feedback from all meetings was generally positive and confirmed that the information the WSO provided was pertinent to the trusted servants' positions.

Listed below are the World Service Conference Structure statistics related to registered AISs, LDCs, and combined AIS/LDCs (Intergroups):

	English	Spanish	French
Al-Anon Information Service (AIS)	80	2	1
Literature Distribution Center (LDC)	107	1	4
AIS/LDC (Intergroup)	86	16	0

Electronic Alateen Validation & Implementation Planning

At the 2024 WSC, Staff presented and facilitated a discussion on potential Global Electronic Alateen Safety Minimums (Global EASM) and Electronic Alateen Safety and Behavioral Requirements that could be applied to Areas within the WSC Structure (WSC EASBR). Staff shared the process undertaken to engage trusted servants, both inside and beyond the WSC Structure, in their development. They confirmed for Delegates that, once an implementation plan is approved, implementing the WSC EASBR would be optional, and that certification would be available for those Areas already certified to use the Alateen name. At and following the WSC, Conference members asked clarifying questions, which Staff have researched. Answers to these questions are being reviewed and finalized.

Two additional steps are in progress to be completed before implementation can be approved. The final WSC EASBR requires review and approval by the legal counsel retained by AFG, Inc. In addition, an International Task Force needs to be formed to determine if the Global EASM language provides the flexibility necessary for international structures to meet both the AFG, Inc. and their local legislative requirements.

Inmate Correspondence Service

This program for the incarcerated population serves as a bridge to recovery from the effects of someone else's drinking. The WSO acts as a postman to preserve the anonymity of the Inmate Correspondence Service Contact (i.e., Al-Anon member).

Historically, there have always been many Al-Anon members willing to serve by volunteering to write letters in lieu of or serving as meetings, as many incarcerated populations must find their own path to the program. Regrettably, the majority of Al-Anon member volunteers are female while the majority of requests are received from male inmates, leaving the WSO unable to fulfill the need. In 2024, the Inmate Correspondence Service supported only one inmate.

Transforming Electronic Groups: Updating WSO Processes

Vali F., Executive Director

Valerie Stump, AFG Records Manager (Non-member)

Staff began 2024 work on the Transforming Electronic Groups (TEG) project with hope and excitement as the team's exploration of options to complete a straightforward upgrade of our current online group records and underlying association management (database) system (AMS) solution yielded encouraging results. Regrettably, by the time of the World Service Conference, these hopes had dimmed as the team discovered the upgrade option did not support the need for multilingual websites and workflows. As a result, Staff announced at the 2024 WSC that the WSO would need to undertake a replacement of the AMS system over a much longer duration.

While attention turned to this new effort, Staff committed to delivering one last feature as part of TEG. With 56 Areas accepting electronic groups by April, Area Group Records Coordinators were desperate for one application that allowed them to find and see electronic and physical group information. The team developed, tested, and implemented a workable solution to this challenge by year end, completing the TEG project.

In the meantime, geographic Areas continued preparing and reasoning things out as relates to accepting electronic groups. By year end, 64 out of the 67 geographic Areas had notified the WSO that their groups had approved, and they had the procedures in place to support, electronic Al-Anon Family Groups in their service structures.

Archives: Engaging with Our History

Heather S., Associate Director—Public Outreach

Suzanne M., Associate Director—World Service Events & History

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Archives Exhibits and Tours

The WSO Archives team enhanced the WSO visitor experience by creating a dedicated space for tour gifts, featuring copies of *Many Voices, One Journey* (B-31) in English, French, and Spanish, select historical pamphlets, and postcards as tokens of appreciation. The Archives team refreshed the WSO lobby exhibit cases to highlight Al-Anon's early history, Conference Approved Literature, Alateen, the World Service Conference (WSC), public outreach, and international structures. A special focus for the

Archives team this year was on providing the Literature team with historical content that was featured in the 70th anniversary of *The Forum* magazine.

The Archivist curated a special collection displaying the histories of the international service structures in attendance for the biennial International Al-Anon General Services Meeting (IAGSM) in Virginia Beach. The IAGSM opening was held during the WSO visit, which included a tour of the office and Archives, and visiting trusted servants were warmly welcomed.

Group and Structure Research

The WSO Archives had an incredibly active year supporting members worldwide, answering over 500 research requests! Using the Archives Research Request form (AR-9), available on al-anon.org, as well as inquiries from emails and other sources, the Archivist tackled everything from uncovering group registration dates to exploring the history of Al-Anon's Newcomers' Welcome.

Visit to A.A.'s GSO

The Archivist & Conference Specialist (Spanish) and the Associate Director–World Service Events & History met in November with their separate staff counterparts at the Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.) General Service Office (GSO) in New York City to share their knowledge and experience of their positions. The Archivist & Conference Specialist and her GSO counterpart discussed the purpose of their respective archives, collection policies, records management, and digitization of archives materials in addition to touring A.A.'s Archives. The Associate Director–World Service Events & History learned about A.A.'s conference inventory process, polling the conference between annual meetings, and meeting outside conference a few times a year for general sharing. The visit, which highlighted the value of collaboration, emphasized the benefit of the Archives and Conference Departments exchanging information and best practices between the two service offices.

International Conventions

Vali F., Executive Director

Sarah S., Director of Programs

Suzanne M., Associate Director–World Service Events & History

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2025 A.A. International Convention

A.A.'s 2025 International Convention with Al-Anon participation will take place July 3–6, 2025, in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. The Convention activities will include a Block Party on Thursday night at venues around the Convention Campus; Al-Anon, Alateen, and A.A. meetings on Friday and Saturday during the day; and Big Meetings on Friday and Saturday nights and Sunday morning. There will be an A.A. virtual program track for attendees who are unable to attend in person.

The WSO Co-Coordinator's attended a site visit in Vancouver, which included a tour of the Hyatt Regency Vancouver Hotel where Al-Anon will hold its daytime meetings on Friday and Saturday, as well as a tour of the Vancouver Convention Centre where, among other Convention activities, registration will take place. Al-Anon's Information Booth and Speaker/Moderator Sign-In Booth will be housed at the Convention Centre on Wednesday and Thursday before moving to the Hyatt Regency for Friday and Saturday.

After updating Al-Anon's Welcome Committee guidelines, the WSO Co-Coordinator's selected an Al-Anon Welcome Committee Chairperson. The Chair invited a Co-Chair to join him, as well as a Secretary/Treasurer. These three members comprise Al-Anon's Welcome Committee Core Team.

In November, A.A. held a Welcome Committee Dinner for both fellowships' Core Teams, as well as the A.A. Subcommittee Chairs and Co-Chairs, of which Al-Anon is one. A WSO Co-Coordinator attended the dinner with Al-Anon's Welcome Committee Chair and Co-Chair. The event included a review of all Subcommittees and a Q&A session to clarify roles and responsibilities.

Prior to the end of the year, the WSO Co-Coordinators met with Al-Anon's Welcome Committee Chair, Co-Chair, and Secretary/Treasurer in Vancouver to tour the Hyatt Regency Vancouver Hotel and discuss the Welcome Committee's next steps.

2028 Al-Anon International Convention

Eleven Delegates submitted bids to hold Al-Anon's 2028 International Convention with A.A. Participation in a city within their Area. Four of the Convention and Visitor Bureaus declined to move forward with the bid process for their respective cities, and one city withdrew due to an inability to present their bid on site in Virginia Beach the day after the Conference closed.

The Convention Site Committee, composed of two WSO Volunteers, five WSO Staff, two Delegates, and two members of an outside consulting firm, listened to six bids. Following the presentations, members of the Convention Site Committee discussed the merits of each city, including the pros and cons. There was a consensus to move forward with three of the six locations.

The two WSO Volunteers, five WSO Staff, and one member of the consulting firm visited the three cities to determine the best fit for hosting Al-Anon's 2028 International Convention for our membership. The Site Selection Committee agreed to recommend one of the cities to the Board of Trustees for approval. Following the Board's approval, three Staff members returned to the selected city to further refine Al-Anon's specifications prior to signing contracts.

The Board and Site Selection Committee members are excited about the location of Al-Anon's next International Convention in 2028, which will include reimaging the Alateen program, as well as feature a Room Block where all hotels are within walking distance! The location will be revealed at Al-Anon's 2025 World Service Conference.

Domain: Recovery & Service Tools

AFG, Inc. develops and publishes materials to share the collective experience of the families and friends of alcoholics.

Literature: Collecting, Editing, and Maintaining Our Member Sharings

Carol C., Associate Director–Literature

Tom C., Associate Director–Literature (Retired)

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Conference Approved Literature (CAL)

In 2024, the WSO said goodbye to our longtime Associate Director–Literature, who retired in February after 23 years of distinguished service. We are grateful for the many pieces of CAL that were developed during his tenure and the vast knowledge of Al-Anon's literature and its history that he so generously shared with our fellowship.

Throughout 2024, WSO Staff received 23 suggestions for new pieces of literature or revisions to existing pieces. These were shared with the 15 members of the Literature Committee as it discussed and conducted Committee work over the course of four quarterly meetings. Members also reviewed written assignments.

While the development of new material is important, so is bringing attention to existing literature. In addition to the monthly “CAL Corner” spotlight in *The Forum*, several “Inside Al-Anon” articles and “Notes from the WSO” pieces throughout the year focused on our literature, including the February article that explains how a structure-wide inventory led to important revisions to some of our CAL, the June article that highlights some of the great submissions for the Alateen *Just for Tonight* bookmark (M-82) that didn’t make it into the final version, the July article that identifies CAL as vital to our self-support, and the September article by a member of the Literature Committee that describes her service journey to At-Large Chairperson.

Insight: Literature Committee

Ana I., Chairperson of the Literature Committee (At-Large Member)
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As an At-Large member of the Literature Committee for the past four years, a most rewarding experience for me has been the enthusiastic welcome that Al-Anon’s membership continues to give our newest daily reader, *A Little Time for Myself—A Collection of Al-Anon Personal Experiences* (B-34). This book has sold out and been reprinted several times, generating vital revenue. More importantly, I see it being referred to and read from in meetings. Members like the typeface and font size and the amount of text on the pages. Moreover, the book was conceived to reflect our current and varied membership, and indeed it includes many different perspectives while adhering to the singleness of purpose outlined in our Fifth Tradition: to help families of alcoholics.

I pay special attention to the accolades for *A Little Time for Myself* because I was personally involved in the process, from ensuring the content reflects Al-Anon’s tone, spirit, and message, to reviewing the final version ahead of its much-anticipated launch. Reception of this book has exceeded expectations and succeeds in achieving AFG, Inc.’s objectives of creating attractive new content and communicating Al-Anon’s message of hope in a relevant and appealing way.

Another rewarding experience was the creation of *Healing within our Alcoholic Relationships—A Collection of Insights from Our Shared Journey* (P-95). For this booklet, the Literature Committee gathered and reviewed “gems” from *The Dilemma of the Alcoholic Marriage* (B-4) and other Conference Approved Literature on relationships. The compendium, published in three languages in September 2024, is a treasure trove of recovery.

We also discussed at length and ultimately recommended to the 2024 World Service Conference development of a new piece on finances—an important and often neglected topic in alcoholic families.

I am grateful for the opportunity to participate in AFG, Inc.’s goal of developing material that brings the collective experience of family members and friends of alcoholics to our fellowship!

For members’ convenience, the WSO once again provided 20 quotations in English, French, and Spanish for service arms to use in fundraising calendars without having to seek written permission. This service reduces work for trusted servants as well as WSO Staff.

FINANCES IN RECOVERY PIECE (working title)

Following more than a year of discussion and Knowledge-Based Decision-Making (KBDM), the Committee presented its recommendation for development of a piece about members’ relationships with finances in Al-Anon recovery to the 2024 World Service Conference, who provided conceptual approval for the piece. Work then began on brainstorming and drafting a writing guideline for the FINANCES IN RECOVERY PIECE (working title). The final translated and designed guideline is slated for publication in January 2025.

PERSONAL/SERVICE SPONSORSHIP PIECE (working title)

In January, the Literature Committee finalized a writing guideline for the PERSONAL/SERVICE SPONSORSHIP PIECE (working title) that was approved by the 2023 WSC. That document was translated, designed, posted on al-anon.org, and shared with Area Literature Coordinators. Submissions have been steadily coming in.

Recovery Magazines—*The Forum*, *Le lien*, *Al-Anon y Alateen En acción*

As the monthly magazine of Al-Anon Family Groups, *The Forum* continues to offer help and hope to the families and friends of alcoholics, as do our bimonthly Spanish and French magazines, *Al-Anon y Alateen En acción* and *Le lien*. Before 2023, content in the Spanish and French magazines had been made up only of translated excerpts from *The Forum*. However, we now receive and publish a significant number of submissions from Spanish- and French-speaking members. This milestone came as the result of a collaboration between the Digital Communications, Literature, and Translation teams to make our online submission processes more accessible to our Spanish- and French-speaking members. We continue to expand the vision and possibilities for our magazines with the hiring in August of a bilingual English and Spanish Magazine Editor.

All our magazines showcase the collective experience of Al-Anon members and are intended to support recovery between meetings and provide topics for meeting discussion. The Publications team designs the magazines from the manuscripts developed by the Magazine Editor, incorporating member-submitted photographs as well as stock photography. Member sharings are selected for publication based on recommendations from the *Forum* Editorial Advisory Committee (FEAC). An “Inside Al-Anon” article in the March issue outlines the *Forum* process.

The FEAC also played an important role in the commemoration of the 70th anniversary of *The Forum* in 2024. The WSO Archives and Publications teams were crucial in accessing historical materials and past issues and formatting them for publication. An article in the September issue reflects on *The Forum’s* 70-year history. Additionally, a beautiful commemorative poster was made available as a free download on al-anon.org.

Dozens of Area *Forum* Coordinators from throughout the US and Canada participated in web conference calls in 2024, sharing their service experience with one another. Many conducted writing workshops to encourage member submissions to *The Forum*, reflected in an uptick in sharings received at the WSO.

Insight: FEAC Chairperson

Meg U., Chairperson of the Forum Editorial Advisory Committee (At-Large Member)

In keeping with AFG, Inc.’s goal of developing and publishing materials that share the collective experience of families and friends of alcoholics, the five members of the At-Large Forum Editorial Advisory Committee (FEAC) read and evaluate 50 member submissions each month for possible publication in *The Forum* and meet quarterly to review the magazine.

The Forum is one tool AFG, Inc. uses to connect and support the families and friends of alcoholics through sharings from our members. As we review each sharing, we consider the writer’s perspective: does the sharing come from a spouse, adult child, parent, grandparent, Alateen member, international member, person of color, LGBTQIA+ member, newcomer, or longtime member? How does the member apply a Legacy, a slogan, or a recovery concept such as detachment? Is the sharing Al-Anon in content and feeling? We seek to recommend sharings for publication that reflect the diversity as well as the commonality of our experience and offer hope in contemporary and appealing language.

I have often been inspired by the wisdom of an Alateen member or the hope and possibility expressed by a newcomer. I have learned many unique and practical ways to apply the Legacies, tools, and principles of the program from people all around the world.

Serving on the FEAC has also deepened my awareness of the timelessness of the Al-Anon program, especially as *The Forum* commemorated its 70th anniversary throughout 2024 with reprints from past issues. Something that a member wrote years ago can impact a reader's recovery as much today as it did when it was written.

I love that we are all connected through *The Forum* and our literature. As I finish my service on the *Forum* Editorial Advisory Committee, I feel so grateful to have been able to serve in this role and so grateful for the Al-Anon program.

Publications: Publishing Recovery and Service Tools

Vali F., Executive Director

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

Suzanne M., Associate Director—World Service Events & History

Suzette McKinney, Publications Manager (Non-member)

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eBooks Globally

At the January 2024 meeting, the Staff Leadership Team (SLT) presented to the Board of Trustees their plan for exploring two options for moving forward with distribution of ebooks in a manner that would acknowledge the global impact of ebook sales and the reliance of Al-Anon international structures on literature sales to be fully self-supporting. SLT completed the research, presented its recommendation to the Board in July, and shared the idea with international structures at the International Al-Anon General Services Meeting (IAGSM) in September. The approved plan includes utilizing an ebook vendor to distribute to the many ebook platform providers, collaborating with English-, Spanish-, and French-speaking international structures to execute net revenue sharing agreements for sales in their geographic areas, and rolling out ebooks in 2025 and 2026.

2022-2025 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual (P-24/27)

Two updated versions of the *2022-2025 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual (P-24/27)* were posted to al-anon.org in English, French, and Spanish in 2024. In addition to the electronic copies, replacement pages for those members who have a printed copy of v2 were posted in all three languages to download, print, and trim to fit in the *Service Manual*.

- In February, v3 of the *Service Manual* and replacement pages were posted with the following changes: a housekeeping edit to the "Channel for Arriving at Policies" section to reflect the accurate composition of the Policy Committee; an update to the Announcing Events Policy text as approved by a 2023 Conference motion; a housekeeping change to "Electronic Communication Outside of Al-Anon" to replace "social networking sites" with "social media posts"; and a housekeeping edit to the Concept Eight descriptive text to reflect a 2021 Bylaws change.

In October, v4 of the *Service Manual* and replacement pages were posted with changes including the updated Choosing a Group's Name Policy text and the Local Services Policy text as approved by two 2024 Conference motions.

Insight: Local Services Policy Revision

Ann Marie Z., Chairperson of the "Local Services" Task Force (Trustee)

The Local Services Task Force has existed since November 2018. In 2017, the Policy Digest Review Thought Force suggested there were areas in the "Local Services" section of the "Policy Digest" (pp. 108-109) that needed review. The items under review in the Policy Digest were written as procedures, not Policy and needed to be reviewed to determine if they were Policy or procedures. I have participated in this Task Force since May 2022, advancing the work of the AFG, Inc. Strategic Plan Domain Goal of Recovery & Service Tools through its development of recommended changes to the "Digest of Al-Anon and Alateen Policies."

The final four portions of the "Local Services" section were approved by the Policy Committee to be presented to the 2024 World Service Conference (WSC). In February 2024, the proposed changes were sent to the Delegates for review, questions, and comments. A minority opinion regarding the "Meeting List Publishing" portion was raised. This was Concept Five in action.

The April Policy Committee meeting, which was held prior to WSC 2024, discussed the minority opinion. After thoughtful discussion, the Policy Committee agreed to delete the "Meeting List Publishing" verbiage from the text presented to the 2024 WSC, with the understanding that a future Policy Task Force would review.

I have had the opportunity this year to chair this Task Force and continue the discussion. After consideration, the Task Force brought further text revisions to the July 2024 Policy Committee meeting. The Policy Committee discussed the revisions and requested the Task Force do further work on the section. We met again in early August to discuss the conversation and revise wording. The October Policy Committee Meeting approved the revised "Meeting List Publishing" verbiage, which will be presented at the 2025 WSC for consideration. For me, the Policy Digest revision process is a true example of Concept Four, "Participation is the key to harmony," as we work to advance the Strategic Plan Goal of Recovery & Service Tools.

2026-2029 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual (P-24/27)

The next edition of the *Service Manual* is already in the works. Several work groups of WSO Staff have been reviewing the 2023 and 2024 World Service Conference approved policy updates that affected certain text in the "Al-Anon and Alateen Groups at Work" section of the *Service Manual*. A fourth work group is reviewing Groups at Work in general for any necessary corrections/updates. The *2026-2029 Service Manual* is on schedule for a print release in January 2026.

Warehouse: Distributing Literature & Al-Anon Tools

Niketa Williams, Director of Finance & Operations (Non-member)
Camille Peters, Associate Director–Warehouse & Customer Service (Non-member)
Suzette McKinney, Publications Manager (Non-member)

Late in 2024, Staff were challenged by a Canadian postal system strike. The WSO regularly sends multiple mailings along with individual member orders to our Canadian members. The process for sending mail to Canada involves multiple steps to move the materials through the United States to the Canadian border before the packages are turned over to Canada Post for delivery. Not knowing the duration of the strike, Staff decided to continue processing Canadian member orders and mailings, such as *The Forum* and *Le lien* subscriptions, to ensure all materials were positioned for quickest delivery once the strike ended. Nonetheless, we alerted Canadian *In The Loop* subscribers of the situation and the likelihood of delivery delays. Our mail provider gave us regular updates, and we were pleased to learn the strike ended before year end.

Healing within Our Alcoholic Relationships (P-95)

The 2021 WSC motion to develop a GEMS BOOKLET (working title) of favorite passages from *The Dilemma of the Alcoholic Marriage* (B-4) and other Al-Anon literature on relationships culminated in the September release of the 48-page booklet *Healing within Our Alcoholic Relationships—A Collection of Insights from Our Shared Journey* (P-95).

The new CAL booklet was launched at the end of September in all three languages. Literature Distribution Centers and General Service Offices internationally were able to preorder the booklet to ensure local availability at the book launch. The booklet seems to have been well received by the fellowship, with 25,555 copies sold in all three languages during the first month: 23,029 English, 2,255 Spanish, and 271 French.

Holiday Bundle: Al-Anon Family Groups Workbook Bundle with Free Shipping!

Each year, Staff has the opportunity to identify Al-Anon Recovery & Service Tools which might be helpful “to share the collective experience of the families and friends of alcoholics.” The identification process involves a collaboration between the Literature, Publications, Customer Service, and Accounting teams, who consider what may be helpful to membership, which books are available in all three languages supported by the WSO, and the feasibility of having enough inventory to support the bundle.

The 2024 Holiday Bundle was focused on supporting the work of recovery. So, to inspire members to dig deeper, we offered the three Al-Anon workbooks for \$25 including shipping. The Al-Anon Family Groups Workbook Bundle (K-74) included:

- *Blueprint for Progress: Al-Anon’s Fourth Step Inventory* (Revised) (P-91)
- *Reaching for Personal Freedom: Living the Legacies* (P-92)
- *Paths To Recovery Workbook: A Companion for Studying Al-Anon’s Steps, Traditions, and Concepts* (P-93)

The bundle was offered just in time for the holidays, November 1 through January 2, and was well received, having sold 1,971 in English, 211 in Spanish, and 37 in French.

Domain: Awareness

AFG, Inc. builds public and professional awareness of the Al-Anon program.

Digital Communications

Scot P., Director of Communications & Community Awareness
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Website Enhancements & Security

To help newcomers and members find information, resources, and meetings quickly, the team improved the search feature on al-anon.org by defining custom search results pages with relevant content based on website visitors’ keywords searches. As an example, when site visitors previously typed a zip code into the site search bar, the search would return web pages that included those numbers, resulting in a poor experience. Now, the site returns a search results page with information about meetings and links to the meeting search pages. This approach ensures more streamlined and relevant search results.

Most have experienced in one way or another the reality that using technology poses inevitable cybersecurity risks. The WSO is not exempt from these risks in its pursuit of the Awareness Domain Goal. During 2024, the WSO experienced security challenges. In response, the WSO substantially strengthened its website protection measures. Working with the security team from the WSO’s IT vendor, Staff

implemented enhanced measures including real-time malware scanning, improved website protection, and stricter access protocols. Additional protective layers now include enhanced firewall protection, a Content Delivery Network (which provides faster and more secure content delivery to our visitors worldwide), and daily backups. Staff also implemented a practice of completing hourly security checks.

Monitoring Online Mentions and Public Service Announcements on Radio, TV, and Online

The WSO was approved to invest in a new tool that provides greater visibility to mentions of Al-Anon and other keywords important to our Mission on TV, radio, online news sources, licensed print, podcasts, and social media platforms. Because of this new tracking tool, Staff discovered airings of our public service announcements (PSAs) in Canada, where we previously had no visibility due to limitations of our former provider in Canada.

This tool helps us identify opportunities for Al-Anon Family Groups as well as informing us of any items that could negatively impact Al-Anon as a whole. It also allows us to have a greater visibility of PSA plays by location and gives the WSO more opportunities to share earned media coverage of Al-Anon Family Groups with the fellowship.

Public Outreach

Scot P., Director of Communications & Community Awareness

Heather S., Associate Director–Public Outreach

Conferences - Building Awareness and Cooperating with Area Trusted Servants

Attending professional conferences and events is vital to the AFG, Inc. Awareness Goal of building public and professional awareness and fulfills Step Twelve by carrying the message through public outreach and service. Participation in significant gatherings in 2024, such as the National Collegiate Recovery Conference, Recovery Month events, a stop on the Mobilize Recovery Bus Tour, and the Association for Addiction Professionals (NAADAC) Annual Conference, advanced this commitment.

Al-Anon showcased its resources at the annual National Collegiate Recovery Conference, a collaboration between the Association of Recovery in Higher Education (ARHE), the Association of Recovery Schools (ARS), and the Association of Alternative Peer Groups (AAPG), in San Diego in June. The conference provided valuable networking opportunities, with nearly 50 professionals and students visiting the information table and eight participants attending the Al-Anon meeting, including two first-time attendees. The success of these efforts was enhanced by the cooperation between WSO Staff and the local Al-Anon Information Service (AIS), who coordinated nine volunteers to staff the table and provided literature. Follow-up communications were initiated with 30 professionals, including a request for an Al-Anon presentation for the Alcohol and Other Drug Assistance Program at a university in New Jersey and Spanish-language materials for Counseling & Psychological Services at a university in North Carolina.

WSO Staff also participated in Recovery Month events in Washington, DC, including a kickoff luncheon and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's Walk for Recovery in September. These events offered valuable opportunities to network with public officials and advocates from the recovery community. Following this, Al-Anon was invited to participate in other locally based events as part of Mobilize Recovery's national bus tour. In October, WSO Staff attended the Richmond, VA event, where they coordinated with local members to staff a table, fostering connections with local organizations, elected officials, and families from nearby treatment facilities.

WSO participated in the NAADAC Annual Conference in National Harbor, MD, using the opportunity to achieve extensive visibility. The WSO registration package included an exhibitor booth, a half-page color ad in the conference program, and an insert in the Attendee Folders, ensuring that all 1,200 addiction professionals received a copy of our *Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism* magazine. With the support of Area members, WSO Staff engaged with over 100 attendees, facilitating meaningful interactions and connections. As a result, follow-up communications were initiated with more than 40 professionals, leading to ongoing outreach and dialogue beyond the conference.

Membership Surveys

Triennial Membership Survey

Thank you to everyone who participated in the 2024 Al-Anon Family Groups Membership Survey. This triennial survey, conducted during the summer, gathered responses from 15,375 members, providing a snapshot of Al-Anon's fellowship at a specific point in time. For the first time, the WSO offered materials to General Service Offices (GSOs) to support participation. Four were able to become involved this survey, resulting in over 200 members in Australia, Austria, France, and Norway responding. The data gathered from these members will be shared directly with the structures and are not included in the World Service Conference (WSC) Structure results.

At year end, Staff had collaborated to compile the results and submitted them to the Executive Committee for consideration. The Executive Committee completes this review in accordance with the WSO Service Tools Policy in the "Conference Approved Literature and Service Tools/Materials" section of the "Digest of Al-Anon and Alateen Policies."

Once approved, survey results will be published on al-anon.org to offer data-driven insights for mental health, addiction, and medical professionals. Answers to the final question—"What would you share with a potential newcomer?"—will be compiled and reviewed by the Public Outreach Committee for potential social media posts.

Longitudinal Survey: Year Three

The Longitudinal Study is a five-year project involving members who opted in during the 2021 Membership Survey that commenced at the suggestion of professionals seeking to increase their colleagues' confidence in recommending Al-Anon to their members. The survey tracks the same participants over five years, asking ten questions from the survey to assess the long-term impact of Al-Anon participation.

Currently in year three, the study has an average yearly attrition rate of 48 percent, meaning fewer members complete the survey each year. This average is within the standard range of 30-70 percent for long-term studies. This study remains limited to those who initially opted in to preserve data integrity, which is vital to achieve the confidence originally intended.

New Alateen Public Outreach Service Tool

In 2023, the Board of Trustees developed a charge for a Delegate Task Force to encourage public outreach that would revitalize Alateen. The Revitalizing Alateen Task Force members went above and beyond, creating a resource packet to help members raise awareness about Alateen that was presented to the WSC in April 2024. The packet included guidance for outreach to professionals working with youth, along with a sample PowerPoint, script, introductory letter, flyer, and both printed and digital resources for professionals.

Given the quality of the result and its intended purpose of national public outreach, the packet came under the WSO's responsibility in accordance with the "National and International Public Outreach:

Roles and Responsibilities” section in the Policy Digest. The WSO review process ensured consistency with WSO branding and other Al-Anon service materials, enhancing the tool’s effectiveness for outreach. Once approved by the Executive Committee, the packet will be posted in the Public Outreach Toolkit section on al-anon.org and shared with trusted servants.

Insight: Public Outreach Committee

Beth K., Chairperson of the Public Outreach Committee
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As a four-term At-Large member of the Public Outreach Committee, I have witnessed firsthand the Committee’s growth and enthusiasm in helping families of alcoholics, particularly through the four Work Groups formed by the Committee to expand its capacity to complete its important work.

A key focus has been identifying and addressing biases that may hinder effective outreach. Through the Equitable and Unbiased Work Group of the Public Outreach Committee, we have made significant strides in this area. This experience has heightened my own awareness of how subtle biases can be and underscored the importance of fostering a more inclusive community.

The Open Letter Work Group has also been busy seeking to develop a new service tool: a comprehensive letter of introduction to empower members to engage with the public and professionals. The Committee approved their recommendation and forwarded it to the Executive Committee in December for consideration.

To improve accessibility, the Social Media Work Group actively reviews materials for posting, while the Public Outreach Toolkit Work Group is focused on enhancing the accessibility of outreach projects. They are working to streamline the Toolkit review process, ensuring timely access to effective outreach resources.

I am truly impressed by the remarkable strides the Public Outreach Committee has made this year. The Committee’s dedication to fulfilling AFG Inc.’s Awareness Goal is inspiring. The innovative strategies and tireless efforts have significantly enhanced Al-Anon Family Group’s public outreach initiatives.

Domain: Financial Sustainability

AFG, Inc. encourages membership and organizational self-support by aligning resource allocation with its core purpose and strategic priorities.

Human Resources: Recruiting, Growing, and Retaining Staff

Vali F., Executive Director

Niketa Williams, Director of Finance & Operations (Non-member)
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In 2024, WSO Staff turnover was 17.9 percent, which represents an increase over the prior year. The 2024 turnover reflects the retirement of a long-term Staff member, the Associate Director–Literature, who served the WSO for 23 years, as well as some career advancement opportunities for other long-term employees. The WSO encourages Staff to develop and grow and accept that change is inevitable. All were grateful when our Magazine Editor, who has served the fellowship well with her talents coordinating and editing *The Forum* these last several years, submitted her name and was promoted to Associate Director–Literature position. The Directors’ Team² takes the opportunity with each vacancy to review the existing position and evaluate whether evolution is required. The Magazine Editor was one such position, and as a result, we were very fortunate to have hired a bilingual Spanish and English Magazine Editor which creates the opportunity for creating a process for accepting and completing the member review of Spanish content for our *En acción* recovery magazine in the future.

²The Directors’ Team consists of the Executive Director, Director of Finance & Operations, Director of Programs, and Director of Communications & Community Awareness.

Several other critical roles were filled, including International Services Manager, Group Services Specialist, and Executive Assistant to the Executive Director and Board. Some of these were filled through promotion and others through outside hire. Al-Anon member roles, which currently represent slightly more than a third of our positions, can be particularly challenging to fill, as most require relocation to Virginia Beach based on previous experience. Accordingly, the International Specialist position, which was posted in the fall, remained unfilled at year end. Given Al-Anon service requirements, the process of filling these positions relies heavily on WSO members and other trusted servants sharing information with members in their Area whom they believe meet the requirements and might be interested in working at the WSO.

This year, the organization conducted an internal compensation study to assess and ensure that its compensation structure is both competitive and equitable with the broader nonprofit sector and in alignment with the organization's internal goals. The study reviewed job responsibilities and experience, comparing them with similar roles in the industry. Additionally, it considered the benefits provided to WSO Staff in evaluating market competitiveness. The findings will help ensure that the WSO remains capable of attracting and retaining quality talent in the labor market. As a result of the study, a few Staff members received pay adjustments to bring their compensation in line with market standards. Overall, the study confirmed that the organization's compensation is both competitive and fairly aligned with industry benchmarks.

Considering our program Legacies and that the first word of the first Step is "we," employee engagement at the WSO remained a priority. The Staff enjoyed a summer picnic, providing a chance to unwind and connect during a busy time of year, as well as a year-end holiday party to celebrate the season together with current and past WSO Staff. Other activities throughout the year included an onsite food truck at lunchtime and the Staff recognition process, aligned with the WSO Core and Aspirational Values.

WSO Volunteers: Improving Application and Nominating Processes

Vali F., Executive Director

Kathi M., Chairperson of the Board of Trustees (Trustee)

Cindy M., Chairperson of the Nominating Committee (Trustee)

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Evolution of the Application Process

The Nominating Committee efforts to improve transparency and usability of the Trustee and At-Large Executive Committee application process for members interested in serving at the worldwide level brought significant work for WSO Staff in 2024. Key activities included:

- Transforming the new Trustee application process approved by the Board of Trustees in January 2024 by replacing the existing resume process with an online application form.
- Updating the reference surveys so that Trustee candidates are responsible for gathering the skills-based reference themselves and the AFG-chosen reference process is streamlined.

The Human Resources Manager also supported the Nominating Committee in developing a new At-Large Executive Committee member Role Description, which the Board approved in October. Posting will occur once Staff have completed their analysis of the time study currently underway with the At-Large members, which is scheduled to conclude at the end of January. The goal of the Role Description and time study is to assist members interested in serving to better understand the needs and requirements of the role.

Insight: Informing Those Willing to Serve

Cindy M., Chairperson of the Nominating Committee (Trustee)
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This past year, I've had the honor and privilege to chair the Nominating Committee as we worked on creating a Role Description for the At-Large members of the Executive Committee. As stated in the descriptive text of Concept Eleven, the Nominating Committee, "aids the Trustees in discharging their prime obligation to see that all vacancies within the Board of Trustees or its Executive Committees are filled with those of the greatest possible competence, stability, and industry." The previous Nominating Committee worked on creating a Trustee Role Description and application to be more skills-based following a 2022 WSC discussion.

At the October 2024 Board meeting, a new Executive Committee At-Large Member Role Description was approved. It will be posted in the new year, after completion of a time survey by the existing Executive Committee At-Large members. Just as we have seen an increase in Trustee At Large (TAL) applications following the posting of the Trustee Role Description, we hope that the new Role Description for Executive Committee At-Large members will increase the applications to serve on the Executive Committee. In addition to describing the specific skills needed by the Executive Committee, the new Role Description also highlights that applicants do not need Delegate or Trustee experience to serve on the Executive Committee and that Past Delegates do not have to wait two years before applying, as they do to serve as Trustee.

What a tremendous gift to be part of this process! I feel as if I have done my part to help AFG, Inc. fill its open Volunteer positions with "those of the greatest possible competence, stability, and industry." I am grateful to have contributed to the AFG, Inc. Global Engagement Goal by "invest[ing] in each new generation of trusted servants to preserve our legacy." I look forward to continuing the process by updating the application for Executive Committee At-Large members in the coming year. There is always something to review and update as we move forward on "Our Path toward Grace, Unity, and Understanding"!

Evaluating the Regional Trustee Selection Process

Considering the work of the 2024 Delegate Task Force, in July the Board of Trustees decided to create both a thought force and task force to advance the discussion on the Regional Trustee selection process. These work teams consist of WSO Volunteers and Staff familiar with the nominating selection experience and process. Both were charged with bringing conversations to the 2025 WSC on the topic.

Insight: Filling Open WSO Volunteer Positions

Craig M., Member of the Single Process Trustee Selection Task Force (Trustee)
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Serving as a member of the Single Process Trustee Selection Task Force, which is charged with preparing to hold a discussion at the 2025 World Service Conference, my work directly contributed to the Strategic Plan Financial Sustainability Domain Goal by seeking to align volunteer resources to support the needs of the fellowship in accordance with Al-Anon's spiritual principles.

The current processes for selecting qualified applicants to serve as Regional Trustee and Trustee at Large being separate, even though both Trustee roles are the same, has resulted for the last several years in an understaffed Board of Trustees. Each year, the number of Regional Trustee position applicants is consistently fewer than the number of available positions, while the number of applicants for Trustee at Large exceeds the number of available positions. As the recent past Annual Reports confirm, the scope and Mission of Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. far exceeds the existing capacity of WSO Staff and Volunteers ideally needed "to connect and support the friends and families of alcoholics." Therefore, the Trustees have determined it is critical that AFG, Inc. do everything within its means to ensure that the Board is fully staffed and consistent with our World Service Conference Charter.

As with so much of my service work with Al-Anon, I am forever moved by how trusted servants come together, with the same love and passion for our fellowship as I, each inspired by our Higher Power to find the common good. It is humbling to witness the frequency with which we reach consensus, not contrived or forced, but the seemingly natural outcome of a process that depends on our applying the spiritual principles that are the foundation of the Al-Anon program.

Operations: Managing the Business

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

Michael Rodriguez, Building & Office Manager (Non-member)

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We continue to make operational improvements to build efficiencies and equip the WSO Staff with the tools necessary to help them perform their tasks more effectively. Some improvements, such as laptop and other equipment replacement, are completed on an annual and ongoing basis as part of the operating budget. However, this year, the Reserve Fund surplus afforded Staff the opportunity to make more substantial purchases.

One purchase the Board approved was a new envelope opener. This machine offers the latest technology in mail room equipment, which has allowed us to streamline incoming mail processing. In addition to programmable depth adjustments, the machine also simultaneously dates the individual mail pieces as they are being opened. While this purchase did not initially appear to represent much improvement, Staff has confirmed since its implementation significant time savings over the previous manual processes involved in opening every Appeal Letter contribution and timestamping every piece of mail for audit control purposes.

Additionally, Staff were authorized to replace the existing boardroom furniture with new boardroom tables equipped with electrical outlets on the tabletops. We have also retrofitted the boardroom with an isolated electrical breaker for supplying power to these tables. The new boardroom configuration, which places the length of the tables closer together than the previous tables, proved to support greater connection amongst trusted servants during the tables' first use at the December Executive Committee meeting.

Canadian Office

The WSC Structure consists of Areas within the United States (including Puerto Rico), Canada, and Bermuda, and as such, the WSO serving the Structure needs to exist in the eyes of the law in these countries. Currently, the WSO is registered in both the United States and Canada. Al-Anon Family Groups Headquarters (Canada), Inc. is a registered charity and, in accordance with Canadian law, is required to maintain a virtual office in Canada. This approach also allows our Canadian members to mail their Seventh Tradition contributions to the Canadian address without the need for international postage. The WSO's Canadian presence is maintained using a virtual office without Staff or physical Al-Anon presence.

In 2024, our virtual office provider informed us with minimal notice that they were closing, and Staff was required to pivot quickly to secure a new virtual office. As a result, the Canadian office address changed. Canadian Areas and members were notified as quickly as possible, and a postal forward was purchased so that member mail to the old address will be redirected to our new facility for one year.

Information Technology: Enhancing and Protecting Data and Systems

Vali F., Executive Director

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

Scot P., Director of Communications & Community Awareness

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In 2024, the WSO's Information Technology (IT) vendor shared through its monthly, weekly, and daily updates to the organization that risks related to cybersecurity were increasing exponentially. Considering this insight and security challenges experienced mid-year, the decision was made to engage a part-time, virtual Chief Information Security Officer (vCISO) to collaborate with key Staff Directors in identifying and mitigating potential security risks. The vCISO proved invaluable in guiding decisions as Staff resolved security vulnerabilities. The intense process of evaluation, impact quantification, and policy definition and implementation will continue into 2025.

Online Store 2.0

In early 2024, the team completed its work identifying features and functionality required to improve the WSO online store and user experience. Some features included the ability for the WSO to process additional forms of payment and to receive multiple contributions from a group in one day. This latter is necessary when members of electronic groups choose to submit their Seventh Tradition directly to the WSO. The Software Engineer determined which tasks could be completed internally and facilitated our current AMS software vendor providing a proposal to complete the remaining work. The resulting proposal identified the need for customization, which typically expands ongoing operational expenses for any software system.

Concurrent with these efforts, Staff working on the Transforming Electronic Groups project recognized the need to replace the AMS system that serves as the foundation for the WSO online store functionality. Once that decision was made, further efforts to upgrade the online store on current technology were suspended. The project was marked complete although the needs are being evaluated as part of the new Core Systems Overhaul Strategy.

WSO Core Systems Overhaul

The Executive Committee, through its delegated authority and responsibility for Strategies oversight, approved the new Core Systems Overhaul (CSO) Strategy at its May 2024 meeting. The CSO project replaced the Online Store 2.0 and all but one remaining activity identified under the Transforming Electronic Groups Strategy. Many factors led to the Staff recommendation to replace the existing Strategies with CSO. Beyond the factors identified under the Transforming Electronic Groups and Online Store 2.0 sections of this Annual Report, the final tipping point came when the WSO learned that the accounting software we use has reached end of life.

The CSO Strategy involves most WSO systems, including accounting, the online store, and our association management (database) system (AMS) and linked online group records application, and potentially could involve the current AFG Connects platform, meeting search functionality, and others. Given the scope, WSO Staff engaged a third party to facilitate the assessment of WSO and related current and future requirements for these systems. By year end, current requirements along with many future needs had been documented. The project will continue in 2025.

Legal: Protecting Al-Anon's Name

Vali F., Executive Director

Sarah S., Director of Programs

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Trademark and Copyright Protection

WSO work protecting Al-Anon's name, associated trademarks, and copyrighted materials is ongoing. As the reach and use of technology expands, the WSO continues to work with social media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, and Reddit groups and subgroups to remove content violating AFG, Inc.'s intellectual property rights. This process is often challenging, as group administrators are often difficult to notify and sometimes appear reluctant to respond. Typically, once administrators are contacted and the process of reasoning things out concludes, the violations are resolved, and groups continue in their efforts to support the families and friends of alcoholics in accordance with Al-Anon policy and the law.

Staff has received an increase in reports of sites unrelated to the Al-Anon service structure and without appropriate permissions offering users the opportunity to download copyrighted CAL for a fee. AFG, Inc. continues to observe our delegated responsibilities in accordance with Warranty Four to protect the Al-Anon name and AFG, Inc. intellectual property by putting these sites on notice when alerted to their activity. Where applicable, AFG, Inc. invokes the Digital Millennium Copyright Act, which protects copyrighted online content, with the guidance and assistance of outside counsel as may be necessary.

Generally, when investigating an alleged violation, WSO reaches out to the individual or organization responsible, reminds them of our Warranty Four responsibilities while explaining how AFG, Inc.'s intellectual property rights are being violated, and requests changes that will protect the Al-Anon name, logo, and copyrighted material.

The WSO continues to educate and inform members through the Al-Anon website, articles in *The Forum* and *In The Loop*, and by responding to individual questions about what constitutes a "limited excerpt" of CAL, how to appropriately post CAL in electronic meetings, and what Al-Anon's social media policy is.

Trademark Registration

In order to protect the Al-Anon name globally, the WSO is responsible for registering ownership of its protected trademarks, the Al-Anon and Alateen names and logos, in each country where Al-Anon is present. International trademark registrations can take months and even years to complete. This year, trademark registrations for:

- Mexico, South Africa, and Brazil were renewed for another ten years;
- Israel were initiated and finalized; and
- Bolivia and Bermuda began.

Each structure requires different documentation to validate ownership of the trademark. WSO Staff work with the WSO's trademark counsel, who coordinate with local counsel in the country of registration to understand and deliver the requirements.

CAL Globally

The Conference Approved Literature (CAL) Globally Strategy has been underway for several years. The project goal is to expand the availability of Conference Approved Literature across the globe by increasing the options available to structures already licensed to translate and reprint CAL to sell or share reprint rights with other structures unable to afford printing or restricted by current agreements

from reprinting themselves. The team is currently evaluating two scenarios through this Strategy. The team shared great excitement with two structures early in the year as the first CAL Globally agreement was executed. The agreement was drafted and executed as part of a one-year trial to ensure adequate time to evaluate whether the arrangement supported the structures and the goal and did not create unintended consequences in terms of protecting Al-Anon's name and copyright. More will be revealed in 2025 on the progress being made to increase CAL accessibility under this agreement.

By year end, discussions with international structures involved in the second scenario had met with WSO Staff and an agreement had been drafted for legal review to support this arrangement. The project will continue in 2025.

Domain: Global Engagement

AFG, Inc. invests in each new generation of trusted servants to preserve our legacy and improve our structure and operations to meet the needs of the global landscape.

Coordinating the World Service Conference

Suzanne M., Associate Director—World Service Events & History

Jayme C., Chairperson of the Conference Leadership Team—2024-25 (Trustee)

Kathi M., Chairperson of the Conference Leadership Team—2023-24 (Trustee)

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The World Service Conference (WSC), Al-Anon's annual business meeting, provides guidance to the WSO on service matters that are brought to its attention and is a prime example of the AFG, Inc. Global Engagement Goal Statement: "AFG, Inc. invests in each new generation of trusted servants to preserve our legacy and improve our structure and operations to meet the needs of the global landscape."

Planning for Al-Anon's 2024 WSC began shortly after the close of the 2023 WSC and continued into 2024. In April, Conference members gathered in Virginia Beach, Virginia for Al-Anon's 64th WSC. Ninety voting members and other attendees carried out Al-Anon's business.

In addition to discussing and voting on routine motions such as the Annual Report and the Finance Committee Report, the Conference passed a motion to form a task force of the Conference Leadership Team and a minimum of three Delegates, charged with proposing how Delegates could be selected and participate with CLT to contribute to WSC agenda development. This Task Force, which met several times from August through December, is on schedule to present its proposal to the 2025 WSC.

Insight: Moved by the Minority Voice

Jayme C., Chairperson of the Conference Leadership Team (Trustee)

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The Concept Eleven descriptive text in the *Service Manual* states that "the Conference Leadership Team (CLT) has the responsibility to prepare a World Service Conference agenda that facilitates the active voice and effective group conscience of our fellowship." This year, I have had the privilege and honor of serving as the Conference Chairperson. Per the Global Engagement Goal of the Strategic Plan, the CLT facilitates the WSC, which reinforces the process for passing experience on to trusted servants.

The Delegates, WSO Staff, and Volunteers who serve as Conference members each bring different knowledge and perspective regarding matters that affect Al-Anon as a whole, yet the Conference has the spiritual guidance founded in everyone's collective wisdom.

At the 2024 WSC, I observed as the Conference discussed the topic of Delegate participation on the CLT. I was moved by the courage the Delegates displayed in bringing forward this conversation and all Conference members demonstrated in reasoning things out. I now have an even deeper appreciation for the minority voice. After the discussion, the motion to form a task force was approved with substantial unanimity.

As a member of this Task Force, I have experienced many spiritual principles such as collaboration, respect, unity, trust, accountability, harmony, responsibility, and cooperation. Serving on this Task Force has been very impactful for me. Perhaps, eventually, it will be as impactful to the members of the WSC.

In 2012, I was a brand-new Delegate at the WSC. I was fearful of speaking and fearful of your criticism. Today I am serving as the Conference Chairperson. What a unique spiritual journey it has been—from fear to faith!

Insight: Gaining Insight Through Participation

Rachelle C., Co-Chairperson of the Conference Leadership Team (Trustee)
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I am a first-year Trustee. As with every other service position I have had the privilege to hold, once I became a Trustee, I began to absorb a new level of understanding of our Legacies and how I can best apply them in service, in recovery, and in my relationships.

My first assignment as Trustee was to serve as Co-Chairperson of the CLT. Participating in setting the agenda for the WSC has been an educational and spiritual journey for me. I was especially grateful to be a part of the Task Force on Delegate participation in setting the Conference agenda.

Working side by side with WSO Staff, Trustees, and Delegates, we were able to gain insight into various approaches to increase the involvement of Delegates and gain Delegate perspective on how to best structure the WSC agenda. Our goal was aligned: to ensure we could effectively deliver on the Conference’s purpose of being the largest group conscience discussion for Al-Anon Family Groups and the guardian of both the Al-Anon world services and the Twelve Traditions.

The work on setting the WSC agenda helped me to understand the global context of our WSC Structure and how each new generation of trusted servants—whether WSO Volunteers, Delegates, or WSO Conference Staff members—works together toward this common goal to preserve our Legacies and ensure we learn from the past as we build for the future.

2024 ANNUAL REPORT **Policy Committee**

Debbie P., Chairperson of the Policy Committee 2024-25 (Trustee)

Pennie K., Chairperson of the Policy Committee, 2023-24 (Trustee)
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As a member of the Policy Committee, I have come to appreciate and value the foundational significance of our policy statements and how important it is that they reflect the spiritual principles contained within our Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts. Being included in these reflective, honest, respectful, integrity-based, open-minded, and sometimes courageous conversations offers opportunities for patience and the presumption of goodwill.

In 2024, several thought and task force reports and facilitated conversations were put forward to the Policy Committee members for their consideration.

In January, the Registering Multiple Meetings Thought Force (Multiple Meetings ThF) brought a discussion to the Policy Committee about how our Legacies applied when considering how many meetings

one Al-Anon group might host. After a thoughtful, detailed review of the information gathered, the Policy Committee did not support having a numerical limit on the number of meetings a group may register. The Multiple Meetings ThF had also recommended that the “Registration of Groups” section of “Groups at Work” could benefit from additional information and guidance about registering a group. The Policy Committee will consider this recommendation in the future.

Also at the January meeting, a discussion was held about a concern that an Al-Anon member had previously brought forward regarding a former A.A. member who had served as Delegate. The Committee agreed a Thought Force was necessary to support further consideration. In October, following a review of the material presented by the Al-Anon Members Who Are Also Members of A.A. Thought Force, the Policy Committee began by confirming the current Policy. The Committee then addressed the question of the Policy’s application to past membership in A.A. Following the conversation, a recommendation was made by the Policy Committee that the Board of Trustees consider revising its criteria for WSO Volunteers and At-Large Executive Committee members as it relates to past A.A. membership.

At the 2024 WSC, all Conference members were able to observe an Open Policy Committee Meeting where the topic of discussion was “How might we, as individual members, keep the focus on maintaining the sense of unity and belonging that is the essence of the Al-Anon/Alateen program and help each other avoid becoming attached to external identities (e.g. gender, race, ethnicity, age, etc.)?” An Open Policy Committee meeting occurs every three years at the Conference to allow all Conference members to view the spiritually based, reflective process of Policy conversations.

In response to a District bringing forward the topic, the Policy Committee brought to the 2024 WSC, for discussion not decision, the question, “Is the gendered language in the Steps and Traditions in alignment with Al-Anon’s Legacies?” Further information about this discussion can be found in the *2024 WSC Summary* (P-46).

In 2024, the Choosing a Group’s Name Task Force (Group Name TF) continued its spiritually based conversations about the Choosing a Group’s Name Policy and how it interpreted the Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts. The Group Name TF and Policy Committee offered Conference members extensive background as an accompaniment to the proposed Policy Digest text changes. Thoughtful time and conversation were dedicated to the proposed Policy Digest changes and, prior to the recommendation moving forward to motion, Conference members were asked whether they were ready to vote. With that confirmation, the motion to accept the new Choosing a Group’s Name Policy was brought to the Conference, which approved the revision with substantial unanimity.

Insight: Strengthening Honor and Responsibility

Debbie P., Chairperson of the Policy Committee (Trustee)
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Since the beginning of my journey in Al-Anon recovery, once I eventually woke up enough to understand that I am not alone, my curiosity has fueled my desire to travel through the links of service. Each time I ventured out of my comfort zone to explore what was happening in my District, my Area, and eventually at the World Service Conference, I was profoundly affected by the magnitude of Al-Anon’s global reach. I am part of something far greater than myself.

In 2024 I have had the extraordinary opportunity, while serving on the Board of Trustees as a WSO Volunteer, to participate on two different Committees that with their combined involvement have given me what I consider a valuable, unique, and very expansive view of Al-Anon Family Groups globally. Being part of the International Coordination Committee (ICC) and attending the Al-Anon International General Services Meeting (IAGSM) as one of the US & Canada Delegates offered the opportunity to hear firsthand the voices of our global community. I believe I have come to understand that some of their greatest desires are to be included, recognized, and active participants in Al-Anon Family Groups’ unity—exactly what I wish for.

Having had this firsthand experience and bringing it to my participation as a member of the Policy Committee has strengthened my understanding of the honor and responsibility that the Committee members take on when we consider all current and potential AI-Anon members in our decision-making around AI-Anon policy statements. Bringing the spiritual principles contained within the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions into our policy conversations encourages me to remember that when we look at common welfare and the expression of a loving God through our group conscience, all voices need to be considered.

Supporting the WSC Structure and its Trusted Servants

Sarah S., Director of Programs

Scot P., Director of Communications & Community Awareness

Heather S., Associate Director–Public Outreach

Suzanne M., Associate Director–World Service Events & History

World Service Conference Delegates

One of the ways Staff and the Conference Leadership Team have continued supporting the Delegates is through AFG Connects, a communication platform where Delegates can “talk to each other [and] reason things out.” Delegates utilize this tool to share their experience, strength, and hope, and, in doing so, embrace AFG, Inc.’s Mission, “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 barrier free meetings, information and shared experiences.” Some of the chattier topics on the WSC Members community in 2024 included:

- Discussing whether Areas require their Delegate to be an AI-Anon Member Involved in Alateen Service (AMIAS)
- Having a process in place to ask an Officer or Coordinator to step down
- Including an ample reserve policy in Area procedures
- Determining how to accept electronic groups into geographic Areas

WSC Structure Areas

In 2024, Staff supported the 68 WSC Structure Areas by hosting Chairperson of the Board Letter virtual presentations following the January, July, and October Board Meetings. The presentations include updates from the AFG, Inc. Treasurer, the Policy Committee Chairperson, and the Conference Leadership Team Chairperson and offer an opportunity for Delegates to ask questions of their assigned Trustees.

Additionally, WSO Staff and Volunteers are often asked to provide support and guidance to specific Areas struggling with challenges and growth opportunities. This year, the WSO Staff and Volunteers collaborated to assist several Areas, including presenting a conflict resolution session to aid an Area in navigating a particularly difficult situation and meeting with the Area Board to clarify legal versus traditional responsibilities. Staff and Volunteers both appreciate the opportunity to offer their mutual experience, strength, and hope and have been heart-warmed by watching Higher Power in action as the trusted servants participate with humility to achieve a group conscience that serves their members and our primary purpose.

WSO Staff & Volunteer Visits to Areas

WSO Staff and Volunteers feel privileged to have the opportunity to participate either in person or remotely in Area Assemblies, Conventions, and other service and recovery events. Staff and Volunteers are often asked to share on their AI-Anon personal and service journeys and to conduct a workshop. This year, WSO Volunteers adopted the long-standing Staff practice of sending a mentor along when

new visitors participate on behalf of the WSO for the first time. Through collaborations, WSO visitors have shared a wide variety of topics including a technology workshop and a Traditions workshop.

This year Staff participated in 12 Area events, including a Spanish Overlay District anniversary, while WSO Volunteers visited 11 Areas. The ability to share our personal journey in recovery with members at the local level serves to bridge the gap between the clearinghouse and the fellowship. Staff and Volunteers welcome the opportunity to serve in this manner and provide any type of additional sessions for your events!

Insight: Opportunities to Encourage Future Leaders

Jean L., Chairperson of the Envisioned Future Work Group (Trustee)

As a Board member in my last year of service, I feel my greatest contribution to the Goals of the Strategic Plan is through investment in the new generation of trusted servants. I have gained a tremendous amount of knowledge in my time on the Board and now have the gift of sharing this with other members. My hope is to share this knowledge with new trusted servants to help them grow in confidence and in their abilities to serve our fellowship. It takes trusted servants to ensure the availability of this program. I have been given the opportunity this past year to attend an Area Assembly. During this visit, I was able to “demystify” the role of Trustee. I had a nice conversation with a new member who had no knowledge about any of this.

Encouraging and supporting our future leaders at all service levels is a gift I am excited to continue to share. My time on the Board has expanded my view of our fellowship and what is possible. As a Board member, I have contributed to a lot of different work during my time. I have learned about my strengths and weaknesses. I know how to work with others with different communication or work styles. I have learned how to lead and to share leadership. I have learned about dealing with frustrations with grace and dignity. All of these are skills that I have shared with newer Board members and hope to share with members of the fellowship when my time is done.

Area Coordinators

Across the WSC Structure, a vast number of trusted servants serve as Area Coordinators seeking to fulfill Al-Anon’s primary purpose. Over the last several years, WSO Staff have expanded their efforts to practice the Global Engagement Strategic Plan Goal Statement “invests in each new generation of trusted servants to preserve our legacy and improve our structure” by increasing the cadence of communication and training for these hardworking Coordinators. Coordinators are supported by various teams within the WSO who respond thoughtfully to the different needs of these roles.

Area Alateen Coordinators & Alateen Process Persons

Group Services reviewed and approved the revised Alateen Safety and Behavioral Requirements (ASBR) for six Areas in 2024: Utah, Michigan, Missouri, Delaware, Ohio, and North Carolina/Bermuda. At year end, the team was in the process of reviewing the ASBR for British Columbia/Yukon in preparation for the 2025 A.A. International Convention with Al-Anon Participation.

Each ASBR typically requires between three and five hours to review. Given the time intensity of ASBR reviews, in 2024 the Group Services team adopted a strategy of dedicating time each week to complete their reviews, which eliminated the backlog, barring two new submissions in 2024.

Currently, 64 of 68 Areas are certified to use the Alateen name:

- One Area that lost its certification in 2021 worked with Group Services in 2024 and is in the process of updating the Area ASBR to reflect changes in its state’s mandatory reporting laws.

- Two Areas have not applied to certify following their loss of certification in 2021.
- Given the Global Electronic Area consists of electronic groups only, the GEA cannot qualify for Alateen certification until the Electronic Alateen Validation & Implementation Planning project is complete, a WSC EASBR is approved, and the Area has implemented procedures to apply the WSC EASBR.

The 2024 Annual Area Alateen Recertification was completed by all certified Areas in the WSC Structure by the June 15 deadline. Group Services worked diligently with AFG Records to assist multiple Area trusted servants in carrying out the annual recertification process. Staff invite Area Alateen Coordinators and Area Alateen Process Persons (AAPPs) to several web conference calls per year to share experience, strength, and hope regarding rotation of service, training, and service roles and responsibilities.

As part of the 2024 Annual Alateen Recertification process, WSO Staff visited the Alateen groups taking place in the *Al-Anon Family Groups Mobile App* to verify that AMIAS were in attendance and that teens were attending meetings. This will be an ongoing practice, since WSO is responsible for administering the meetings and verifying the AMIAS serving them. All five meetings continue to meet weekly with regular attendance by teens.

In speaking with trusted servants and reviewing internal processes, Staff recognized that the online step to complete recertification of Alateen groups continued to be challenging for Area trusted servants. Addressing the concern, the Software Engineer and the AFG Records team, with input from Group Services, upgraded the WSO association management (database) system to simplify the Alateen group recertification process in the Online Group Records application. The upgrade will be introduced as part of the 2025 recertification period and incorporated into training sessions.

Area Archives Coordinators

In addition to holding quarterly meetings with the Archives Coordinators, the Archivist & Conference Specialist introduced a new WSO initiative, a monthly “Open Questions” post to the Archives Coordinators community on AFG Connects, and invited all Area Archives Coordinators to participate actively by sharing their valuable experience, strength, and hope. May’s questions about *The Forum* magazine generated the most responses.

Area Group Records Coordinators

Area Group Records Coordinators (AGRCs) actively engage in the Group Records Coordinator Community on AFG Connects. The WSO communication platform enables them to share best practices and ask questions. By fostering a sense of community, AFG Connects empowers AGRCs to share their Area experiences, strength, and hope and to stay informed. This resource is particularly valuable for new Area Group Records Coordinators, especially those who may not have a Service Sponsor.

Area Literature Coordinators

Area Literature Coordinators are essential in sharing news and information about literature with local members. Updates were posted and questions answered on the Literature Coordinator community of AFG Connects, where Coordinators also shared their ideas about writing workshops and other ways to encourage Area members to take an interest in CAL. Many Literature Coordinators have been leading writing workshops for the PERSONAL/SERVICE SPONSORSHIP PIECE (working title), and sharings have been arriving at the WSO. To help further communication among them, two Literature Coordinator conference calls took place—one in February and the other in December.

Area Public Outreach Coordinators

In addition to the two biannual meetings, four additional sessions were offered to support and empower Area Public Outreach Coordinators in their service efforts. One meeting focused on strategies for engaging underrepresented, underserved, and under-resourced communities, featuring guest speakers—including a past Trustee, a past Delegate, and a current Public Outreach Coordinator—who shared their experiences with outreach to diverse groups such as the Indian medical community, Native Americans, Spanish-speaking populations, and social service agencies. Another session provided a deep dive into the use of billboards, posters, flyers, and public service announcements (PSAs) as tools for public outreach.

To support the rotation of service, Coordinators were encouraged to bring members considering standing for this position to the meetings. Public Outreach Committee members were also invited to observe the meetings, which helped inform initiatives at the committee level. Overall, the meetings and discussions fostered a sense of unity and mutual support among members while stimulating innovative approaches to public outreach.

Area Technology Coordinators

To encourage the continued sharing of experience, strength, and hope, Staff has posted monthly discussion topics to the Technology Coordinators community of AFG Connects this year. Insightful feedback has been received on subjects such as what technology tools Areas are currently using, what other trusted servants they are working closely with, and how they are training their local members to feel more confident when using new technologies.

Area Web Coordinators

The Web Coordinator Community held a conference call to share WSO updates and website best practices and address Area website challenges, while initiating monthly discussion topics in AFG Connects to strengthen knowledge sharing on crucial subjects like website security, anonymity protection, and online meeting management.

Supporting WSO Volunteers

Vali F., Executive Director

Sarah S., Director of Programs

Heather S., Associate Director—Public Outreach

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WSO Volunteer Onboarding

Over the past two years, as the Trustees have identified and discussed behaviors that Trustees are expected to demonstrate but which have not always been documented (hidden norms), the need to update the WSO Volunteer Onboarding materials has become evident and important. This year, the Vice-Chairperson and the Leadership Team, which consists of the Chairperson of the Board, Chairperson of the Executive Committee, and Executive Director, reviewed all Trustee and Executive Committee onboarding materials for thoroughness and applicability. Materials were consolidated and updated leading to the creation of a WSO Volunteers Resource Guide being produced. The guide contains the WSO Volunteers Handbook, the Board Governance Handbook, and Bylaws for both corporations.

In addition to these updates, the decision was made to require all WSO Volunteers to attend the May and July orientations to ensure consistency of knowledge across the Board and its Executive Committee and to offer an opportunity for all to refresh their memory on WSO Volunteer practices. At-Large Executive Committee members were assigned a mentor for the first time and the decision

was made for WSO Volunteers attending their first Area visit to be supported and accompanied by an experienced WSO Volunteer.

As another part of the Hidden Norms Board initiative, the Chairperson of the Board invited all current and past Board of Trustee mentors to share tips they had heard and offered to their mentees. These tips are being incorporated into a WSO Volunteer Mentor Tip Sheet to be added to the WSO Volunteers Resource Guide in the future.

These practices all aim to ensure those Al-Anon members willing to serve the worldwide fellowship of Al-Anon Family Groups are well supported in keeping with the spiritual principles outlined in our Legacies.

Insight: Developing Effective Trusted Servants

Jeffrey F., At-Large Member of the Executive Committee
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As part of my duties this year on the Executive Committee (EC), I have been given the privilege of mentoring a new At-Large member of the EC. Our Strategic Plan Global Engagement Domain Goal states, "AFG, Inc. invests in each new generation of trusted servants to preserve our legacy and improve our structure and operations to meet the needs of the global landscape." I believe this is accomplished when trusted servants are given the information and tools to perform their duties effectively. It is important that we continue to impart our knowledge to others if we expect them to be successful in their positions.

The Executive Committee deals with a lot of time-sensitive information. To be effective, members of the EC must constantly remain informed. In my mentoring role, I make myself available as often as needed to answer questions and give guidance, while allowing the individual to use their own ability and judgement to make decisions. It is critical to remember that each of us must contribute our own thoughts and ideas. I also try to be encouraging, as I remember my first year on the Executive Committee could be a little overwhelming at times. I was appreciative of positive feedback. All of this helps trusted servants to have a positive experience in their service roles.

I continue to be available to others in the fellowship as well. Having served in various positions, I am always willing to listen to others and give feedback when requested. When considering my first service position, I was told we don't do service alone. I believe this to be as true today as it was then. This is how we develop effective trusted servants.

Work Plans and Guidelines

In 2016, the Board of Trustees began a process of documenting the flow of work and the responsibilities for Committee Chairpersons and Board Officers. The intention was to capture institutional knowledge in a centralized location to ensure future WSO Volunteers were as empowered as possible to be fully self-supporting in their roles in keeping with Tradition Seven. The original work plans were captured in Excel. With the implementation of a work management software system, the work plans have gradually been ported to that tool to provide for improved capture and guidance in terms of direction. This year, a plan was added to support the Finance Committee Chairperson. Plans are now available for the Chairperson of the Board (COB) along with Chairpersons of the Executive Committee, CLT, Finance, and ICC. Staff intends to add an additional work plan each year to support the efforts of our dedicated WSO Volunteers.

Insight: Invest, Preserve, and Improve Our Structure & Operations

Angela A., At-Large Member of the Executive Committee

Reflecting on how my contributions as a rookie Volunteer and At-Large Member of the Executive Committee have impacted the Domain of Global Engagement is an exciting assignment! Exactly how has my participation in fulfilling the Executive Committee's duties contributed to the ways in which AFG, Inc invests in each new generation of trusted servants to preserve our legacy and improve our structure and operations to meet the needs of the global landscape?

Interestingly, my Higher Power seems to have called upon my inherent strength of attention to detail as the Executive Committee (EC) set about the tedious task of editing the various Committee and Work Group Guidelines. As a trusted servant new to this role, I came in eager to learn as much as I could about the tasks I would be undertaking, so I read everything I could find about the EC's workings and responsibilities, including the Committee Guidelines. It was all overwhelming at first, but the Guidelines were a road map forward, and one I returned to frequently. So, I knew that in the year to come, both seasoned and new members of these various committees and work groups would also be seeking direction from the Guidelines we were editing.

During our EC meetings, we read through each line of each Guideline submitted, pausing to consider how both the original and revised texts defined the group's makeup, meeting cadence, and the members' and chairperson's responsibilities and duties. This required our patient persistence, accountability, mutual trust, and respect as we reasoned things out with much give and take. I was pleased to see how the fresh perspective of a "newbie" that I brought to the table was viewed as an asset and very much appreciated by my fellow EC members. Though I still have much to learn, I am grateful to have been a valued contributor.

Road Trip! You and Your Board Connect

The location of our ninth Road Trip! You and Your Board Connect was Columbia, South Carolina, and it was attended by 73 pre-registered participants as well as several walk-ins. As always, planning for the event began much earlier, with Staff finalizing hotel contracts in January, the Welcome Committee beginning their work in February, and WSO Volunteers preparing their personal shares and presentations starting in June. Several process changes were implemented this year as the result of Road Trip! becoming a permanent event.

- The Board approved a Staff recommendation to transfer the Chairperson's responsibility for the event back to a WSO Volunteer, given logistics have been solidified and less Staff knowledge is required to facilitate the event.
- Road Trip! assignments were made earlier in the year to allow for an informed discussion about the agenda at the July Board meeting, leading to less duplication of content and improved opportunities for interaction and conversation at the event.
- A Master of Ceremonies role was created and assigned to the Staff member who is appointed to the Executive Committee to ensure a smooth flow throughout the day.

The result of the changes appeared to be extremely positive for Staff, Volunteers, and participants alike. Volunteers in particular noted that the changes offered improved opportunities for fellowship and unity:

Insight: As with so many opportunities I have had within the fellowship, I find that I always receive a greater portion than I give, and once again this was evident through my participation in Road Trip! - Carol M., Chairperson of the Executive Committee (At-Large member)

Insight: Inspiring Connection through the Annual Road Trip! Event

Jeri W., Chairperson of the Road Trip! Work Group (Trustee)
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As Chairperson of the 2024 Road Trip! You and Your Board Connect, which was held in South Carolina, I found the undertaking most impactful. The goal for the WSO Volunteers and Staff was to engage our audience in interactive exercises, presentations, and personal shares. Each provided a framework as to the work done by various committees at the WSO level.

Road Trip! aims to advance two of Al-Anon’s Strategic Plan Domain Goal statements:

- Members: “AFG, Inc. connects and supports the friends and families of alcoholics.”
- Global Engagement: “AFG, Inc. invests in each new generation of trusted servants to preserve our legacy and improve our structure and operations to meet the needs of the global landscape.”

What I observed was the Al-Anon fellowship being eager to talk with one another, pay attention to new information, and meet with our Board of Trustees, Executive Committee members, and Staff. We were a group of equals sharing our experience, strength, and hope for Al-Anon and its future leaders. The positive energy was felt from the moment the Area Welcome Committee began welcoming each registrant as they arrived at the hotel. Everyone maintained their enthusiasm throughout the busy day.

Two participant survey results captured the experience well for me:

- “The Road Trip! inspired me. It gave me some fresh thinking and ideas. I felt a strong unity of purpose throughout the day. I think it was just what I needed to revitalize my program with the mix of information, personal sharing from Board and Executive Committee members, and our table group sharing.”
- “It was an enlightening experience, full of information, interactive discussions at our table, and heartfelt sharing from the presenters. I found this to be of great interest as I may decide to stand at some time in the future.”

International: Increasing Access to Al-Anon Globally

Sarah S., Director of Programs

Tanya J., Associate Director–International

Tracey S., International Services Manager

Diane B., Chairperson of the International Coordination Committee–2024-25 (Trustee)

Kathi M., Chairperson of the International Coordination Committee–2023-24 (Trustee)
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Supporting Structures Worldwide

How many times have you heard someone share that they are a member of the worldwide fellowship of Al-Anon and Alateen and wondered, “What does worldwide mean?” Well, the worldwide fellowship of Al-Anon and Alateen now offers meetings in over 135 countries! Currently, there are 40 countries with an established General Service Office (GSO), 16 countries with Al-Anon Information Service (AIS) offices, and 70 countries with a collection of groups who are working together to carry the message of hope to families and friends of alcoholics who have not yet found us.

Over the last few years, the International team has continued to grow and evolve so we can ensure that we are providing excellent service and support to all these structures outside the World Service Conference (WSC) Structure. The International team is composed of both Programs and Volunteer Governance Department Staff: the International Services Manager, International Specialist, part-time Paralegal, and the Executive Assistant to the ED and the Board. The team, together with the International Coordination Committee (ICC), provides support to all levels of international structures, whether they are one or two members, a handful of groups, AISs, evolving structures working to become GSOs, or self-supporting GSOs.

In 2024, we established many first-time contacts with members who wished to introduce Al-Anon meetings to their countries, including Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Cambodia, and Tanzania. The WSO also formally registered two International AIS offices in Cuba and Iran. The team is currently working with evolving structures who wish to become GSOs; however, there were no formal recommendations to the Board for approval in 2024.

Translation of Conference Approved Literature

To date, international structures have translated and printed Conference Approved Literature (CAL) into 39 unique languages. This year, the International team supported three countries as they prepared their requests to translate and print CAL. Requests are presented to the International Coordination Committee (ICC), which considers them for recommendation to the Board of Trustees. In 2024, the Board of Trustees approved Latvia and Mongolia to translate and print CAL in their native languages.

Regular Structure Meetings

The International team continues to hold Regular Structure Meetings (RSMs) with all international structures who wish to participate. The purpose of the meetings is to hold generative discussions, provide mutual support, and collaborate with each other to ensure structures have the resources they need to carry the message of hope. International structures often provide feedback about a variety of topics. This feedback is imperative, as it allows the WSO Staff to continually evaluate how we can most effectively serve the global community.

Regular Structure Meetings are one of the highlights for the International team as we witness and experience how impactful these conversations are and how rapidly structures grow because these Al-Anon members are willing to invest their time and share their experience, strength, and hope. The International team spends a significant amount of time preparing for the RSMs to make certain they are delivering the information needed and requested. While it is a huge investment of Staff time, the expansion and growth of structures who are carrying the message of hope are reaching thousands of members around the world.

Global Gatherings

Following the success of the Global Gatherings for international structure trusted servants launched in 2023, these sessions have continued throughout 2024. The goal was to hold Global Gatherings on a semimonthly basis, recognizing that some deferrals were necessary to accommodate international trips and other events. We completed four Global Gatherings in 2024 and addressed the following topics:

Alateen: An Overview and Alateen Safety & Behavioral Requirements - The Group Services Team facilitated a discussion about the Alateen Policy and Alateen Safety & Behavioral Requirements and shared suggestions on how to create and implement them in international structures.

2024 WSC Report: An Overview of the WSC - The Associate Director–World Service Events & History facilitated a presentation on WSC sessions practically relevant to international structures.

Twelve Steps: Sharings from WSO Staff and Volunteers - Twelve WSO Staff and Volunteers each shared their experience, strength, and hope about one of the Twelve Steps. This meeting had the highest number of attendees of the four Global Gatherings. Almost 200 members joined to listen to the personal stories. It was an incredible gathering of members from around the world, many of whom may never have heard members share their experience of working the Legacies.

Board Governance (Part Two): Board of Trustees Composition, Jurisdiction, Responsibilities - The Executive Director continued her presentation addressing questions left unanswered after the first Global Gathering on the topic in 2023.

Global Gatherings offered simultaneous interpretation, and the meeting was available through transcription through real time in over 28 different languages. The International team and guests were supported by the WSO Staff tech team, who facilitated the many components: presentations, chat conversations, translations, interactive polls, and international trusted servant questions and answers.

Insight: Supporting the Global “We” Through Global Gatherings

Cindy H., Member of the Board of Trustees

I believe that my first Board meeting was all about learning for me. I wasn’t really concentrating on the AFG, Inc. Strategic Plan. However, at my second Board meeting, this last October 2024, I became more aware of the Strategic Plan Domains and Goals. Reflecting on the Strategic Plan, the most impactful event to me has been attending the Global Gathering. Through these, I am developing an understanding of Al-Anon Family Groups worldwide and that my contributions as a Trustee affect a broader “we.”

I hear inquiries from people all over the world, and I imagine myself in their place. I am learning to listen, because I have no voice at that meeting, and to focus on empathy. Now, when I look at Al-Anon policy, I consider how it will impact everyone. When I look at some of the Board committees and task/thought forces, I am cognizant, now, of the greater “we.”

I hope that by being aware of the global “we,” my involvement in task and thought forces contributes to the greater goal. I notice that I am gaining understanding of what the questions and charges are, which is helpful for my contribution. I have gained perspective when considering questions for these committee conversations and am reframing those questions into more thoughtful contributions. When I start with a broader “we,” it takes me back to Step One and Tradition One and recognition that “personal progress for the greatest number depends upon unity,” which is consistently achieved through our Global Gatherings.

International Al-Anon General Services Meeting (IAGSM)

The 2024 IAGSM took place in Virginia Beach, Virginia, from September 25-28, 2024. Eleven different structures attended in person, represented by 18 Delegates, including the two from the US & Canada. This was a unique and historical IAGSM, as an additional 20 Delegates, representing nine additional structures or serving as the second Delegate from a structure already attending in person, attended the first hybrid business meeting. The IAGSM business meeting focused on the financial sustainability and value of the IAGSM, considering it faces many external challenges, including long-distance travel and related costs; an evolving landscape of technological advances; and for some members, governmental factors beyond Al-Anon control.

The business meeting discussion made it evident that all members present, whether in-person or virtually, loved and found value from attending the IAGSM. During the discussions, Delegates and ICC members spoke to the relevance and purpose of the meeting, which eventually led to a vote to create the IAGSM’s first Thought Force. The Thought Force was charged with discussing possible alternative funding options for Delegates to attend IAGSMs in the future. This Thought Force will report its findings at the 2026 IAGSM.

Due to the criticality of the topic, the IAGSM also voted to hold interim IAGSM meetings to continue the conversation about the relevance and purpose of the IAGSM. Over the next two years, the ICC will facilitate discussions with IAGSM Delegates via web conference.

Insight: Creating Unity Through Fellowship and Service

David B., Co-Chairperson of the International Coordination Committee (Trustee)

I serve as one of the five non-Delegate members of the ICC. As such, I was privileged to attend the biennial IAGSM held in Virginia Beach this past September. It was a rewarding and humbling experience to meet the Delegates from around the world. I listened as they shared their stories, ideas, and concerns and as we joined together to solve common issues before the IAGSM. While some knew each other from previous meetings, others were new to the group, and they were all new to me. While all spoke English, some were much more fluent than others, and everyone helped each other out so that all could understand.

It was exciting to watch the group come together from our opening on Wednesday through our final time together on Saturday night. We evolved from a group of Al-Anon trusted servants somewhat uncertain of each other to a much more cohesive team working together. This cohesion allowed the group to effectively add 20 more members to the discussion circle for the first-ever hybrid IAGSM business meeting. Those who joined virtually were not able to travel to Virginia Beach to meet in person, so their attendance at the business meeting, held over several hours on the last day of the meeting, allowed even more voices to be heard on the issues discussed within the IAGSM. I am blessed to have been a part of this demonstration of the Global Engagement Strategic Plan Goal in action.

International Visit to Asia

The 1984 WSC held a discussion that resulted in a unanimous decision to accept Al-Anon's Declaration of Unity. The statement, which first appeared in the 1980 International Convention Souvenir Booklet, is as relevant now as when it first appeared. It is action on a global scale. This Declaration of Unity embodies the WSO international visits to Asia in 2024:

"Each member of the fellowship is a significant part of a great circle of hope. While respecting each other's individuality, our common welfare must come first. Our recovery depends on our mutual need and an atmosphere of trust."

Given the nature of anticipated structure conversations when planning first began, it was decided that the Director of Programs and International Services Manager would undertake the four-country visit in November. As with all international trips, plans evolve as more is revealed. In this case, in-person visits were impacted by evolving State Department guidance, and the final itinerary consisted of South Korea, Mongolia, a historical virtual meeting with China, and India.

The visit to South Korea began with a meeting between the structure's full Board of Trustees and the WSO visitors. During the meeting, Staff answered questions and shared our personal stories. Two members from South Korea also shared their personal stories. The second day's agenda included a full day of workshops, with Staff presenting on Alateen, cooperating with Alcoholics Anonymous, the Twelve Steps, and sponsorship. Over 100 members traveled many miles to Seoul to attend the workshop. The joy and enthusiasm the members shared was infectious. Having the opportunity to spend time with trusted servants and members alike in South Korea provided further insight and understanding regarding the needs of structures in Asia.

The next stop on the visit was Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, which was scheduled to include four long days of meetings, presentations, and discussions. While Al-Anon in Mongolia has been established for 11 years, communication with the WSO began in late 2022.

The visit began with an Al-Anon meeting on the topic of "Love and Unity." Over 200 members were present for this meeting, many of whom, again, had traveled hundreds of miles to participate, and many of whom were attending their first Al-Anon meeting. The participation was a testament to Mongolia's public outreach efforts. From there, the four-day event commenced with an opening ceremony of local

artisans who gave performances of traditional cultural significance followed by a marathon of workshops. Workshops included the Traditions, attracting newcomers, cooperation with A.A., the Twelve Steps and sponsorship, and how to establish Alateen. Staff were privileged to meet pioneers of the Mongolian service structure. This visit was very emotional for many as members shared how they believed it validated their hard work over the years.

Due to travel restrictions, a physical visit to China was not possible. Seeking to leverage the opportunity to meet virtually in the same time zone, the WSO tech team collaborated with China's volunteers to overcome challenges for members accessing non-Chinese electronic platforms. The barriers were daunting, but, in the end, a historical web conference service event with simultaneous translation was held.

The two-day event included meetings with members in China who had established a service committee so that they could have the opportunity to learn from the WSO visitors about the process for forming a structure. One highlight of the virtual visit was a workshop during which WSO Staff and Volunteers shared their experience, strength, and hope on the Twelve Steps with more than 200 members from all over China. Emoticons and other electronic reactions demonstrated the depth of members' gratification during the sharings. Other workshop topics including the Twelve Traditions, Alateen, newcomers' meetings, and sponsorship filled a full day. With a strong connection and foundation, China has begun the process of being a formally recognized structure.

India was the last structure visited. India has an established GSO that translates service tools and CAL into 14 different languages. Members shared their vibrant culture and the Al-Anon warmth that WSO visitors experienced throughout the visit. Members again traveled long distances to participate in the service event, which included a meeting with the India Board of Trustees and International Delegates, an Al-Anon meeting, and two days of workshops. The workshop topics included conflict resolution using the Traditions, Alateen, understanding safety, and the 2003 Board of Trustees Motion. There was also an all-India online meeting attended by over 100 members, which afforded valuable space for all to ask questions related to Al-Anon. This meeting was particularly appreciated with appeals to repeat it on a regular basis.

The visit reinforced WSO understanding that international structures often have to overcome many obstacles that members and trusted servants do not face in the WSC Structure to carry the Al-Anon message of hope. Where our Structure has vast resources, the visit presented an opportunity to witness firsthand how structures carry the message with substantially fewer resources. While they may not have access to the same resources, their love, commitment, dedication, and understanding of the program is just as deep and strong. Words cannot describe the connection and unity Staff experienced. Even though we didn't speak the same language, throughout our visit all were united through our singleness of purpose: carrying the message of hope to families and friends of alcoholics.

Perspectives on the WSO Volunteer Service Journey

Insight: Finding Joy in Service

Pennie K., Member of the Board of Trustees

The Joy of Service (S-57): "Your fears will diminish, you will reap the benefits of giving to others, and you will learn that by placing our common welfare first, you will receive much more than you give."

For me, joy is very different from my other emotions. It represents achieving something I have long desired, with an outcome that exceeds my wildest dreams. I felt no joy when I attended my first Al-Anon meeting; I didn't even know what joy was. I was at the end of my rope and dying on the inside.

I kept returning to Al-Anon meetings, reading a Step or Tradition, and sometimes sharing when it was my turn. Initially, I was fearful when asked to lead the meeting, worried I might do it wrong. However, after I led that meeting, members praised my performance, and my desire to give back to Al-Anon grew. I experienced more joy and less fear.

Others said they wanted to give back to Al-Anon because it had given them a new life. I began to want to give back as well. This was when my journey of service began. I have held many positions at all levels. Today, I have reaped the benefits of giving to others. Once I got involved in service, I received outcomes that exceeded my wildest dreams, and I am grateful for every position I have held.

Today I know how joy brings satisfaction in my life. I have felt the awe and wonder of being of service as a Trustee. I see what service work does and how it keeps the Al-Anon program thriving today.

Insight: Applying Al-Anon’s Legacies to Ensure Continuance of our Program

Marco R., Member of the Board of Trustees
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I started my recovery in Spanish-speaking groups, and all my Al-Anon service has been in the Hispanic community. In preparing for Board week, I read all documents pertaining to my assignments, since I continue to learn the Al-Anon terminology in the English language. My main objective is to always be prepared for the different topics during Board week and for the different committees in which I’m involved.

As a new member of the Board of Trustees, I have been learning the different aspects and duties related to serving at this level. I had never served in an area officer position, e.g., Area Delegate, Treasurer, or Chairperson; therefore, the process of discussions and the assignments are new to me and bring excitement and joy as I apply the Al-Anon Legacies in decisions that ensure continuance of the program.

I participated in the Road Trip! Work Group as the Co-Chairperson. During planning, I saw the Fourth Concept in action from the beginning. The event’s success was due to the participation of everyone involved; “participation is the key to harmony.” During the Road Trip! event, the roundtable discussions with the Area members were very spiritual and full of wisdom, allowing all members to participate and to ask questions. It was very interesting to see that the event was imagined as a key to encouraging members into service.

The opportunity to serve at this level allows me to be in closer contact with other Areas’ members. My goal is to continue learning and preparing to better serve the Al-Anon community.

Insight: Participating in Al-Anon’s Global Landscape

Diane B., Chairperson of the International Coordination Committee (Trustee)
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The global landscape was not familiar to me when I became a WSO Volunteer. My experience could be summed up as: I’m a member of the worldwide fellowship of Al-Anon. I had no idea what that meant. To that point, my service was focused within my community and my Area, so I had a limited understanding of what the WSO did to support the global structures.

When I became a WSO Trustee, that changed. I was given the opportunity to serve on the International Coordination Committee (ICC). This was at the beginning of the global pandemic, and travel was brought to a standstill. We learned about Zoom and how to conduct meetings in real time with a variety of time zones, so my first experience attending the International Al-Anon General Services meeting (IAGSM) in 2020 was virtual. I have since attended both the 2022 and the 2024 IAGSMs.

Supporting the Strategic Plan Goal of Global Engagement, my contribution was through inexperience and lack of international knowledge. Nonetheless, I practiced being willing, open-minded, and teachable. My lack of experience was perhaps my biggest asset. I had no expectations and certainly no previous understanding of how the international community interacted with the WSO. I relied on the knowledge of other trusted servants and WSO Staff. I listened to the voices of the international community.

Tradition One states, “Our common welfare should come first.” I hope that my participation in the global landscape has promoted our common welfare and preserved our legacy.

OUR FINANCIALS

Manage Our Budget & Financials

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

Ann Marie Z., Treasurer of the Board of Trustees (Trustee)

Our Financials

In 2024, literature sales rebounded to pre-pandemic levels. The year also marked the release of a new booklet, *Healing Within Our Alcoholic Relationships* (P-95), which generated positive enthusiasm. By contrast, 2023 was a landmark year for literature with the debut of *A Little Time for Myself* (B-34). Despite these successes, a decline in literature sales was anticipated for 2024. Literature sales for 2024 were \$3,888,585, representing a 12 percent decrease from 2023, but an increase from 2019, before the pandemic.

As a result of continued support from our members, contributions totaled \$3,022,844, which accounted for 40 percent of revenue for 2024. Contributions increased by four percent in 2024 compared to 2023. Contributions from groups made up approximately 56 percent of all contributions received.

Positive market conditions increased our investments held in the Reserve Fund, allowing the WSO to build an ample reserve, which had decreased in previous years due to a tough market.

Thanks to ongoing member support and the growing success of literature sales, the WSO was able to provide essential services; host the 2024 IAGSM in Virginia Beach; release the new booklet *Healing within Our Alcoholic Relationships* (P-95); make new connections with members in Mongolia, India, China, and South Korea; enhance our website security; complete the 2024 membership survey; streamline operations in our mailroom; and select a new site for the 2028 International Convention.

Al-Anon's operating funds come from three main funding sources: revenue from literature sales, contributions, and other revenue. More than 69 percent of total expenses go directly toward achieving the Mission of Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. The supporting services included in general and administrative expenses provide customer service support and financial support to maintain operations.

Note: The complete audited financial statements of Al-Anon Family Groups Headquarters Inc. for fiscal year 2024 may be obtained online at al-anon.org.

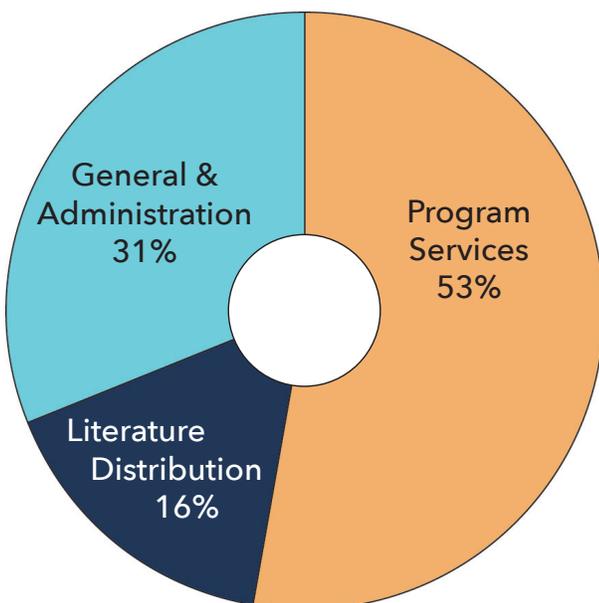
Five Year Revenue (in thousands)



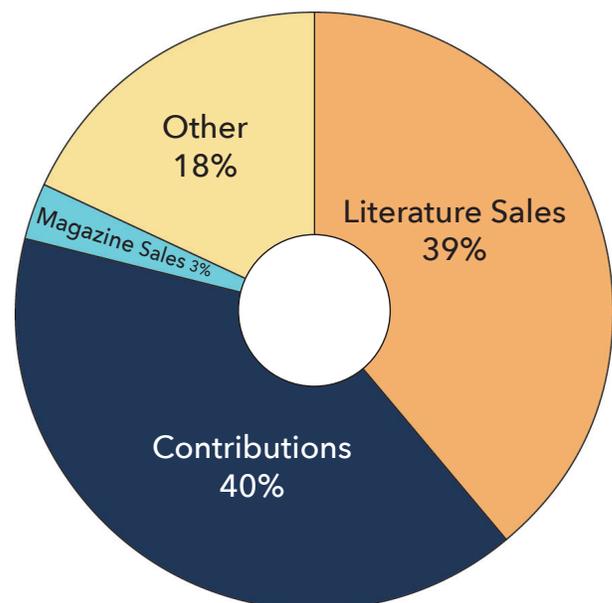
Financial Highlights

Statements of Financial Position	2024	2023	2022	2021	2021
Total Assets (in thousands)	\$15,776	\$14,575	\$12,757	\$13,783	\$11,833
Liabilities and Net Assets Total liabilities	\$1,354	\$1,466	\$1,850	\$1,497	\$1,333
Net Assets without donor restrictions	\$14,422	\$13,109	\$10,907	\$12,286	\$10,500
Total liabilities and net assets	\$15,776	\$14,575	\$12,757	\$13,783	\$11,833
Operating revenue (in thousands)	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Literature sales, net	\$2,929	\$3,218	\$2,100	\$1,906	\$1,847
Contributions	\$3,023	\$2,916	\$3,338	\$2,623	\$3,295
Magazine sales	\$261	\$262	\$247	\$238	\$292
Other income, net	\$1,337	\$1,596	(\$1,473)	\$2,233	\$458
Total operating revenue	\$7,550	\$7,992	\$4,212	\$7,000	\$5,892
Operating expenses (in thousands)	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Program services	\$3,290	\$3,184	\$3,333	\$2,752	\$2,484
Literature distribution	\$1,005	\$891	\$904	\$922	\$866
General & administrative	\$1,942	\$1,715	\$1,352	\$1,540	\$1,571
Total operating expenses	\$6,237	\$5,790	\$5,589	\$5,214	\$4,921

Functional Expenses



Operating Revenue



Treasurer's Finance Committee Update

Ann Marie Z., Treasurer of the Board of Trustees (Trustee)
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Contributions and literature sales are the WSO's main sources of revenue. The consistent and continued contributions, as well as the release of our new pamphlet *Healing Within our Alcoholic Relationships—A Collection of Insights from our Shared Journey* (P-95) in early October, have led to our total revenue being above budgeted expectations. The Finance Committee discussed the projected end-of-year surplus in October. We were able to recommend to the Board of Trustees, for the second year in a row, to return the four percent Board approved transfers for 2024 from the General Fund to the Reserve Fund. This transfer is usually needed to help cover WSO operating expenses.

As Treasurer of the Board of Trustees and Chairperson of the Finance Committee, I participate in the review of the monthly financial statements and help to develop the Quarterly Appeal Letter. The Quarterly Appeal is sent from the WSO to the Current Mailing Address (CMA) of Al-Anon groups. The AFG, Inc. Treasurer said at the 1970 World Service Conference, "The service that the Al-Anon fellowship gives to humanity world-wide is too important to be hampered in any way." So, I draft the Appeal quarterly with a personal invitation giving the individual member the opportunity to contribute in gratitude for what Al-Anon has given them so services remain available.

Page 17 of *Healing Within our Alcoholic Relationships* states, "I now have a goal I can see clearly and the program with which to work toward it. It is my guide to self-improvement, comfort, and a better way of life." My path toward this better way of life is interdependent with the paths of all whom I participate in meetings with and the fact that the WSO services are there for "anyone, anywhere."

Reserve Fund Surplus

As part of the annual year-end financial procedures, the Director of Finance & Operations calculates the value of the Reserve Fund along with the cost of one year's operating expenses for the WSO. The results are presented to the Finance Committee for review. For many years, this review has resulted in a recommendation to the Board of Trustees that no action be taken, because the Reserve Fund value has consistently been less than one year's WSO operating expenses.

At the end of 2023, due to an actualization of investment gains that occurred with the consolidation of investment brokers, the Reserve Fund value on December 31, 2023 exceeded the calculated value of one year's WSO operating expenses. Given the Board's commitment to limit the Reserve Fund to one year's expenses in keeping with Warranty One, the Board created a new 2024 Strategy in April to define how to utilize the surplus. To ensure an informed group conscience, the Board sought suggestions from all WSC members for "special projects" toward which the Board could apply the surplus.

The Board delegated to the SLT the identification of any Staff recommended projects; the evaluation of the WSC suggestions with particular emphasis on which projects received the greatest support from Conference members; and the creation of a recommendation to the Board of projects to pursue further. At its July 2024 Board meeting, the Board evaluated the resulting list of potential projects, which included the upgrade of WSO systems, public outreach projects, and many others. Since certain projects could be implemented quickly, the Board approved Staff moving forward with these immediately (see **Operations: Managing Operations** for more detail) and approved further evaluation of a smaller list.

At the October Board meeting, SLT presented further details, and the Board approved the use of the Reserve Fund monies for three special projects. Each of these projects represents varying degrees of additional work for WSO Volunteers and Staff, so their implementation is subject to evaluation as part of the annual Strategic Plan approval process at the January Board meeting. Further information will be shared once this process is completed. No funding will occur until the Board approves the projects.

OUR PLANS

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AFG, Inc. Envisioned Future

Kathi M., Chairperson of the Board of Trustees—2024-25 (Trustee)

Jeri W., Chairperson of the Board of Trustees—2023-24 (Trustee)

Jean L., Chairperson of the Envisioned Future Work Group—2024-25 (Trustee)

Debbie P., Chairperson of the Envisioned Future Work Group—2023-24 (Trustee)

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Being a member of the Board of Trustees requires the ability to think and plan for the future. Nowhere is this more evident than in the discussions conducted during the Envisioned Future Work Group sessions of the Board agenda. Every Board meeting allocates time for free-flowing, generative discussions about topics that affect the future of Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc., Al-Anon Family Groups, and the environment in which we operate.

This past year we have held discussions on several interesting topics. We discussed how Artificial Intelligence (AI) could affect the fellowship. What if Siri could suddenly reinforce the actions of sponsorship? Could we have AI Sponsors? What about the more immediate issues of AI notetaking? How could this affect anonymity? Could AI harm the fellowship by removing personal contact? How about exposing confidential information? The mere discussion helped us consider options for the future.

We also discussed the possibility of conducting exit interviews as Trustees complete their time on the Board to understand better how we could improve the experience and process, as well as the possibility of using these interviews to invite these Trustees to consider how they plan to continue their Al-Anon service after their Board work is completed. As Board members, we gain knowledge, understanding, and skills. As with many things in our program, if we want to keep it, we must give it away. We wondered whether past Trustees might serve as mentors to future leaders. What might that look like?

Another discussion continued to focus on the topic of how we grow future leaders. We all know members who seem to have natural leadership gifts. How can we encourage these gifts? Perhaps with training modules like we currently have with the Alateen training? What kind of training do our future leaders need? Ideas such as “train the trainer” and past Trustee mentors were also suggested as opportunities for encouraging future leaders. These ideas contributed to a potential strategy known as “Passing It On,” which the Board approved financing with the current Reserve Fund one year’s operating expense surplus. The 2025 WSC members will have the opportunity to discuss this project prior to its implementation.

We also had a discussion about other programs in the recovery space. What were they doing from which we could learn? This discussion led us to talk about how we are carrying the message. Are we encouraging fellowship before or after our group meetings? Are we sharing our stories with the public rather than only in meetings? Throughout the conversation, we reminded ourselves that ours is a program of attraction rather than promotion.

What does our future hold? We do not know, but the Board is committed to continuing to seek to expand our thoughts and consider what may be possible.

2025 Strategies

Vali F., Executive Director

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

Sarah S., Director of Programs

Scot P., Director of Communications & Community Awareness

Heather S., Associate Director–Public Outreach

Suzette McKinney, Publications Manager (Non-member)

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Planning for 2025 was informed by the One Year’s Operating Expense Strategy undertaken in 2024 to gather Conference member and Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) feedback on how the Board of Trustees might utilize the end-of-2023 Reserve Fund surplus over the WSO’s one year’s operating expenses. This Strategy and subsequent research resolved with the October 2024 Board of Trustees approval to utilize the surplus to complete three projects when resource capacity allows.

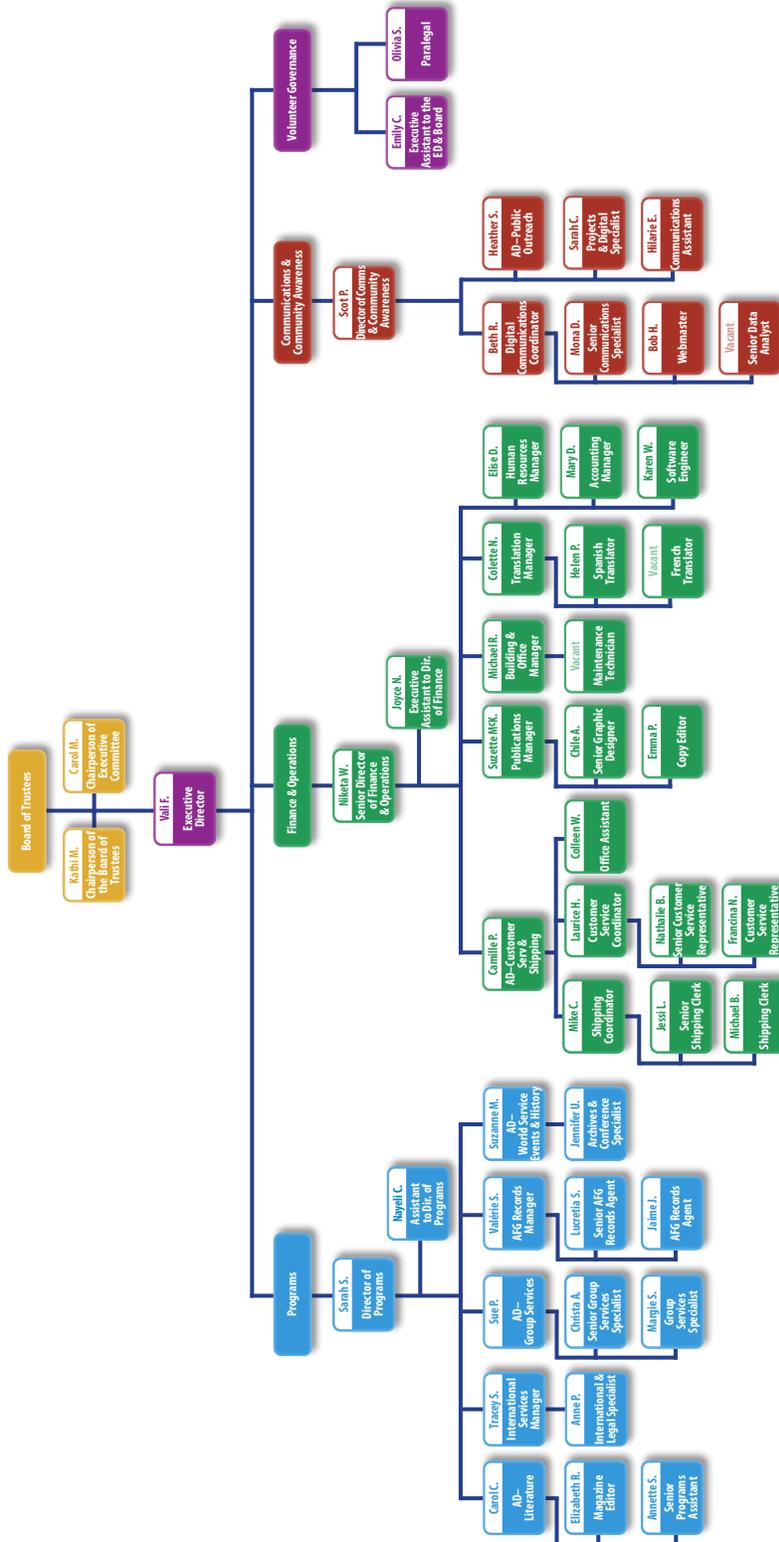
According to the annual Strategic Plan planning cycle, the SLT, whose members at year end are listed above, began 2025 Strategies planning in late 2024. As in 2023, SLT started by identifying projects to which the WSO was committed; for instance, hosting the Al-Anon program at the 2025 Alcoholics Anonymous International Convention and Electronic Alateen Validation & Implementation Planning. The team then undertook a quantitative process to evaluate the impact, opportunity, and time criticality of each committed and proposed project. The exercise confirmed existing commitments and helped the team refine its recommendations for the 2025 WSO Projects Landscape. The Landscape captures the approved projects for WSO Volunteers and Staff, serving as a guide for prioritizing throughout the year. The proposed 2025 WSO Projects Landscape will be presented to the Board of Trustees for consideration at its January 2025 meeting.

APPENDICES

Organization Chart



World Service Office Organization Chart - April, 2025



Confidential - Property of Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc.

Board of Trustees Motions and Decisions by Consensus³

Kathi M., Chairperson of the Board of Trustees—2024-25 (Trustee)

Jeri W., Chairperson of the Board of Trustees—2023-24 (Trustee)

The Board, in its legal, financial, or oversight capacities, acted to:

- Begin a three-year trial to offer interpretation at its Road Trip! event when interpretation is requested by the Area and supported by local Area interpreters using the criteria specified by the Board.
- Accept the 2023 WSO Annual Report to the WSC as presented.
- Eliminate the need to restrict applicants for balanced regional representation on the Literature, Forum Editorial Advisory (FEAC), and Public Outreach At-Large Committees during the selection of At-Large applicants.
- Accept the 2024 WSO Projects Landscape.
- Approve the 2024 Preliminary Budget as presented.
- Authorize funding from the Reserve Fund for a special project to complete registrations of the AI-Anon trademark in newly identified international structures not to exceed \$100,000.
- Include the costs related to Delegates' expenses to visit Stepping Stones following the WSC as part of the 2025 WSC Equalized Expense and Full Cost calculations.
- Revise and replace the current Trustee Roles Description to reflect the clearer delineation of responsibilities and qualifications effective immediately.
- Begin using the revised Trustee Application for the 2024 nominating process (to elect Trustees starting in 2026).
- Approve the Regional Committee on Trustees Chairperson and Alternate Chairperson elections to take place during the time frame of the World Service Conference at a time determined by the Conference Leadership Team (CLT).
- Grant Latvia permission for first-time translation and printing CAL into the Latvian language.
- Grant Mongolia permission for first-time translation and printing CAL into the Mongolian language.
- Present the "Choosing A Group's Name" Policy as revised to the World Service Conference for consideration.
- Approve IRS Form 990 as amended.
- Choose the Trustee(s) to serve as alternate members on the Nominating Committee during Board Officer discussions after the Board Officer resumes have been submitted and choose the Trustees by lot from those eligible to serve as alternates.
- End the trial and create a permanent practice of the Nominating Committee a) asking candidates who are not currently serving on the Board to continue to provide a confidential, skills-based (either work or AI-Anon service) reference who can share experience validating the candidate's skills and to ensure the reference is submitted; and b) having Staff collect an AI-Anon service based reference.
- Eliminate the process of scoring Board Officer candidates.
- Maintain the Reserve Fund as is until the July Board meeting while it explores a plan for addressing the funds in excess of the WSO's one year's operating expense.

³Following best-practice recommendations provided by the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) and confirmed by the AFG, Inc. attorneys, in 2022 the Board of Trustees, together with its Executive and other Committees, began using a consensus methodology for decisions except when matters, such as legal and other fiduciary responsibilities, required formal motions.

- Approve the proposed Road Trip! Work Group Guideline modifying the Work Group composition, assigning a Trustee as Chairperson, and adjusting Staff assignments on the Work Group effective immediately.
- Present the "Local Services" Policy as amended to the World Service Conference for consideration.
- Accept the Strategic Leadership Team proposal to pursue an ebook strategy which allows the WSO to publish all current Spanish, English, and French language Conference Approved Literature books in ebook format and international structures to receive net revenue for ebook sales occurring in their geography upon execution of mutually beneficial legal agreements.
- Approve the transfer of Reserve Funds to implement the following four projects recommended by the Strategic Leadership Team:
 - ◆ Option 3) Replace tables & inoperable chairs in the WSO conference rooms.
 - ◆ Option 6) Purchase a new van for the WSO.
 - ◆ Option 7) Purchase a new inventory bar coding system.
 - ◆ Option 8) Purchase a new mail scanning system.
- End the four-day World Service Conference (WSC) week trial and return to hosting the WSC across five days beginning with the 2026 WSC, while continuing to seek opportunities to hold appropriate sessions virtually so gaps are available for fellowship and breaks.
- End the trial of holding the WSC over a weekend and return to scheduling the Conference agenda to occur during the week starting with the 2026 WSC, with the flexibility to shift onto one weekend day if necessary to accommodate holidays, while ensuring the WSC occurs during the month of April.
- Approve the 2024 Revised Budget as presented.
- Set the Full Cost for a Delegate to attend the 2025 WSC at \$ 3,617.71 and the Equalized Expense cost at \$ 2,532.00 (70 percent of Full Cost).
- Hold the WSC in New York or the surrounding area for a six-year trial starting after 2025 to allow for the Conference members to attend Stepping Stones once in their panel.
- Extend for a second three-year period the trial to assign the Global Electronic Area (GEA) to the Region within the WSC Structure in which their current Delegate lives or, if the Delegate lives outside the WSC Structure, to a WSC Structure Region pulled from a hat—in the latter case, the Delegate would not be eligible to serve as a Regional Trustee per the AFG, Inc. Bylaws.
- Approve the At-Large Executive Committee Member Role Description as presented and implement it as soon as the results of the At-Large Executive Committee member time survey are analyzed and incorporated into the Role Description.
- Accept the Nominating Committee recommendation that Delegates not be required to wait two years after serving before being considered to serve as an At-Large member of the Executive Committee on a three-year trial basis.
- Suspend holding the Road Trip! event in 2028 due to AFG, Inc's responsibilities for hosting the 2028 International Convention.
- Extend the trial to hold the October Board of Trustees meeting in one and a half days for an additional year to further evaluate the results and impacts.
- Approve At-Large Executive Committee members and Staff Strategic Leadership Team members participating with voice but no vote during Envisioned Future Work Group discussions.

- Approve the following special projects to be funded by the Reserve Fund surplus, with transfers to occur after expenses are incurred, when appropriate for efficiency, and following review through the usual financial controls including Board approval for the amounts to be transferred:
 - ♦ Core Systems Overhaul
 - ♦ Passing It On
 - ♦ PO Campaign for the Professional – Young People, including travel expenses when identified.
- Update the last sentence of the Investment Philosophy contained in the Reserve Fund & Investment Philosophy to replace “alcohol-related” with “alcohol-producing” companies.
- Select Minneapolis, Minnesota as the location to hold the 2028 Al-Anon International Convention with A.A. participation and to invite Minnesota South and Minnesota North Areas to serve as the Welcome Committee for Convention.
- Approve that the amount of \$169,200, representing the year-to-date annual four percent transfer from the Reserve Fund, be returned to the Reserve Fund before the end of the year 2024, and that no further four percent transfers be made from the Reserve Fund to the General Fund during the fourth quarter of 2024.

Executive Committee Motions and Decisions by Consensus³

Carol M., Chairperson of the Executive Committee - 2024-25 (At-Large member)

David B., Chairperson of the Executive Committee - 2023-24 (At-Large member)

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

- Approve the monthly Finance Committee Report and financial statements.
- Bring forward the Literature Committee’s recommendation for a new piece of literature on Al-Anon members’ relationship with finances in Al-Anon recovery to be accompanied by a WSO operational and financial assessment.
- Approve the pricing for *Healing Within Our Alcoholic Relationships—A Collection of Insights from Our Shared Journey* (P-95) at \$4.00 in English, Spanish, and French.
- Accept the Revitalizing Alateen Task Force (TF) presentation and ask Staff to review and publish an Alateen public outreach resource using the TF - created materials.
- Accept the Staff recommendation to add, consolidate, and remove Strategies from the 2024 WSO Projects Landscape, thus modifying the Strategic Plan initiatives for the remainder of 2024.
- Accept the changes to the Bereavement section of the Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. (AFG, Inc.) Employee Manual.
- Accept the recommendation of the Directors Team to eliminate the written weekly Directors’ Reports in favor of monthly Directors reports on key milestones and dashboards as they evolve for a one-year trial.
- Approve the Revitalizing Alateen Packet service tool with amendments as suggested by the Executive Committee.
- Provide conceptual approval of the PO Committee – Professional Letter as presented.
- Approve implementation of the new application process for bookstores buying from the WSO.

2025 CONFERENCE ATTENDEES

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Trustees at Large

Ann Marie Z. Kathi M.
David B. Marco R.
Jayme C. Pennie K.
Jeri W. Rachelle C.

Regional Trustees

Cindy M., US Southwest Debbie P., Canada Central
Diane B., US South Central Jean L., US North Central
Cindy H., Canada West

Sustaining Member

Vali F., Executive Director

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Carol M., Chairperson
Vali F., Executive Director
Kathi M., Board Chairperson (Ex-officio)
Ann Marie Z., Treasurer
Debbie P., Policy Chairperson
Angela A., Member at Large
Jeff F., Member at Large
Sarah S., Staff member

NON-TRUSTEE COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON

Sue C., Executive Committee for Real Property Management
Chairperson**

WORLD SERVICE OFFICE STAFF

Vali F., Executive Director
Niketa Williams, Senior Director of Finance & Operations*
Sarah S., Director of Programs
Scot P., Director of Communications & Community Awareness
Emma Pacchiana, Copy Editor* (Summary Writer)
Heather S., Associate Director – Public Outreach
Sue P., Associate Director – Group Services
Suzanne M., Associate Director – World Service Events & History
Tracey S., International Services Manager*

AREA DELEGATES

Melanie R., Alabama/
Northwest Florida
Mari J., Alaska
Olive W., Alberta/
Northwest Territories
Melody G., Arizona
Marti P., Arkansas
Nancy M.C., British Columbia/
Yukon
Chris M., California North
Teresa F., California South
TME, Colorado
Elaine M., Connecticut
Phil D., Delaware
Gretchen S., Florida North
Kathy D., Florida South
Debi S., Georgia
Burt P., Global Electronic Area
Kauai P., Hawaii
Cheryl S., Idaho
Liz P., Illinois North
Carol W., Illinois South
Brenda K., Indiana
Becky V., Iowa
Joan K., Kansas
Pauline W., Kentucky
GW, Louisiana
Carol G., Maine
Brenda W., Manitoba/
Northwest Ontario
Dagny G., Maritime Provinces
Dolores McK., Maryland/
District of Columbia
David C., Massachusetts
Theresa S., Michigan
Marcy F., Minnesota North
Colleen C.D., Minnesota South
Jennifer S., Mississippi
Sue K., Missouri
Jill J., Montana
Lalit J., Nebraska
Lisa S., Nevada
Kate M., New Hampshire
Peter M., New Jersey
Rocio N., New Mexico/El Paso
Carol C., New York North
Pat G., New York South
Lyria B., North Carolina/
Bermuda
Brenda G., North Dakota
Rose R., Ohio
Allison T., Oklahoma
Donna S., Ontario North
Jason W., Ontario South
Stephen Y., Oregon
Ralph H., Pennsylvania
Lourdes C., Puerto Rico
Claudette D., Quebec East
Kathy H., Quebec West
Christine E., Rhode Island
Area Chairperson
Mary C., Saskatchewan
Barbara O'D., South Carolina
Rena B., South Dakota
Irene F., Tennessee
Anna A., Texas East
BJ M., Texas West
Dave B., Utah
Joanne V., Vermont
Laura L., Virginia
Kimberly H., Washington
Cheryl W., West Virginia
Iris R., Wisconsin and the
Upper Peninsula of Michigan
Donna W., Wyoming

*Non-member, non-voting

**Non-voting

