



Lifeline

December
2016

Coordinator Reports

CONNECTICUT AREA 7 NEWSLETTER FOR AL-ANON & ALATEEN



DECEMBER

- **Mon. Night New Haven**
61st Anniversary meeting
Monday, December 5, 2016
6:30 pm Food & Fellowship
7:30 pm Speakers
East Shore Senior Center
411 Townsend Ave., New Haven

- **Mon. Night Stratford AFG**
Holiday party. All are welcome
Monday, December 12, 2016
6:30 pm Food & Cheer
8 pm Speakers
Christ Episcopal Church
2000 Main St., Stratford
- **Wed. Night Devon AFG**
Holiday party. All are welcome
Wednesday, December 14, 2016
7 pm Food & Cheer
8 pm Speakers
Devon United Church of Christ
30 Ormond St., Milford

▲ 40th Annual CT AFG Convention 2017 ▲



SAVE THE DATE CT AFG Convention Healing Our Hearts

March 31-April 2, 2017
Radisson Hotel, 100 Berlin Rd., Cromwell



2017 CT AFG Serenity Breakfast

SUNDAY JANUARY 22

Registration: 9:00 a.m. Breakfast: 9:30 a.m.

Al-Anon, Alateen & AA Speakers:

10:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m. (Snow date January 29)

Radisson Hotel: 100 Berlin Road, Cromwell, 860-635-2000

\$22 per person

Menu options are "Country Scrambled Eggs" served with applewood smoked bacon and home fries with sautéed onions and peppers or the vegetarian "Cinnamon French Toast" served with warm apple compote. Both options include a cup of fresh fruit, orange juice, muffins, scones, coffee, decaf coffee or tea. There will be a raffle including Convention Registrations.

Information and Online registration: www.ctalanon.org

To register by **MAIL** fill out the registration form below and return it with your **non-refundable** check and breakfast choice to:

CT AFG Convention, P.O. Box 262, Naugatuck, CT 06770

Space is limited to the first 150 pre-registered people.

Registration deadline is January 13. **SORRY NO WALK-INS.**

PRINT CLEARLY - ONE FORM PER PERSON

First and Last Name

Name and City for Name Tag

10 digit Phone number

Email Address for confirmation

If no email, postal address

Check one: Al-Anon AA Guest Alateen

Special need: Spanish Interpretation ASL Interpretation

Hard of Hearing headset Other: _____

Please check one:

Both breakfasts served with a cup of fresh fruit, orange juice, basket of warm muffins and scones, coffee, decaffeinated coffee, tea

COUNTRY SCRAMBLED EGG: \$22

Served with applewood smoked bacon and home fries with sautéed onions and peppers

SPICY SOUTHWESTERN BREAKFAST WRAP: \$22

Served with home fries

Special needs (meal) _____

Check # _____ Total Enclosed \$ _____

Non-refundable checks payable to: **CT AFG Convention**

Received by January 13, 2017.

Questions / Volunteer interest: convention2017@ctalanon.org

A Breakfast registration makes a great raffle prize or gift for a sponsor, sponsee or AFG friend!

CT AFG Fall Assembly 2016

The Fall Assembly "Gratitude in Action" was held on Saturday, November 5 at the South Congregational Church (site of the LDC) in Hartford. The event was hosted by Districts 4 and 5 who did an awesome job.

There were workshops for current and incoming GRs, DRs and their Alternates, an Alateen Bake Sale, sales at the LDC, Coordinator's reports, AFG business and voting. It's not easy to speak to an auditorium full of people. To all who got before the mic kudos and thanks for stepping up!

Did you miss anything?

Find the approved budget, new Officers, Coordinator's Reports, the WSC PowerPoint and much more posted at www.ctalanon.org. Sign in as a member using the user name "higher" and password "power" all in lower case. On the Members page select "Area and Assembly Business" then click on "Info from 2016 Fall Assembly." Thanks to Sue G., Webmaster, for posting all the Assembly information.

CT AFG Area Officers Announced

The 2017-2019 CT AFG Area Officers were elected at the Fall Assembly. Congratulations and welcome to the following...

Delegate: Gail L.
Alt. Delegate: Sue G.
Chairperson: Stacie V.
Secretary: Helen B.
Treasurer: Marcia M.

A big hug to our outgoing leaders

The CT Al-Anon Family Group extends its deepest gratitude to the outgoing Panel 10 Coordinators and DRs for your outstanding service. Special thanks to the Officers: Delegate, Ann B.; Alt. Delegate, Stacie V.; Chairperson, Sue G.; Secretary, Donna C.; and Treasurer: Carol D.

CT AFG Fall Assembly Reports

The following are just a sampling of the reports that are available on the website at www.ctalanon.org under the Members page.

Alateen Coordinator

The Task Force has been very active in revising the Sponsors Handbook and you will be voting later today on revisions to Page 3 of those guidelines. It has been an amazing Committee that has worked very hard to insure the safety of our children.

Thirteen years ago, I was approached after my Monday night meeting by a woman who asked me to consider becoming an Alateen sponsor. I was at a point in my recovery where I was not saying "NO" to service. I had no idea what a profound impact it would make on my life and my recovery. I am blessed to have seen hundreds of teens over the past 12 years who have given me far more than I have given them. I have learned more from them about acceptance, compassion and unconditional love than in all my Al-Anon meetings combined.

Three years ago, my goal was to open up five more Alateen meetings over my term as Coordinator. That goal is not going to be met because Connecticut Al-Anon members are not stepping up to be group sponsors. I've tried to convey how unbelievably rewarding this service is, but I have failed. WSO says one in four children in the U.S. lives with alcoholism in their home. We can only reach a small handful of them. It's sad.

Thank you for giving me this wonderful opportunity to be your Alateen Coordinator, and to serve with a wonderful group of fellow sponsors/AMIAS. I've done a lot of service over the years. These men and women are more dedicated than any other group I have ever served with.

Yours in grateful, loving service,
— Dave T., Alateen Coordinator

Alateen Area Process Person

I am a grateful member of Al-Anon and very privileged to be an Al-Anon Member Involved in Alateen Service or AMIAS. As an AMIAS I serve as an Alateen Group Sponsor and as your Area Alateen Processing Person AAPP or affectionately referred to as A2P2.

I am pleased to report that the Connecticut Alateen program meets or exceeds all World Service Guidelines and is in full compliance with all documentation and reporting requirements.

We currently have 19 meetings throughout the state. Unfortunately, Districts 8, 9, 10 and 13 currently do not have the benefit of any Alateen meetings. We need more AMIASs.

We have several meetings pending within the school systems. This is a challenge given the current availability of certified AMIASs. Several of our Alateen Group Sponsors sponsor more than one meeting in order to get new meetings started or to sustain existing ones.

We have lots of reasons to be proud of our Connecticut Alateen program. However, we cannot continue to carry this message and grow our Alateen program without more Al-Anon Members Involved in Alateen Service.

Rotation of service is an important part of our program. My three-year AAPP service commitment and six-year Alateen Group Sponsor commitment ends in eight weeks. Many of my colleagues have served significantly longer terms because they will not abandon their Alateen Groups for a lack of new Group Sponsors.

The future health and wellbeing of the Connecticut Alateen program hinges on the sustained commitment of Al-Anon Members to get involved in Alateen Service. I would once again like to extend an invitation to each and every one of you to consider Alateen service.

I thank you all for allowing me to serve the Connecticut Alateen program. It has been the most powerful service I have ever engaged in. Please, seriously consider how you can best support CT Alateen and advance your own personal recovery through Alateen Service.

Yours in grateful service,
— Steven I., CT Area 7, Area Alateen Processing Person (AAPP)

Website Coordinator

I have been managing the CT AFG website www.ctalanon.org since Ruth S. needed to step down in May of 2016.

I have tried to keep the Events page and Meetings pages up-to-date as well as document and update other pages. In order for the website to stay current your help is needed. Email me your meeting information and should you notice any errors or omissions please let me know at webmaster@ctalanon.org.

Check out the website, especially the Members section. The user name is higher and the password is power (lower case).

- There is a page on the Convention.
- There is information including order forms for the LDC (Literature Distribution Center).
- On the Members Service Opportunities page there is a "Gratitude in Working Clothes" document which describes all the coordinator positions, most of which need filling at the end of the year.
- Under Area and Assembly Business there is information such as the district map, panelling information, flyer distribution information and delegates' reports.
- Our bylaws are under Board Of Directors Business.
- There is a printable copy of the Area Schedule booklet under Group Information.
- There are Alateen Guidelines and forms.
- There are *Lifelines* to read. And more.

Thank you for your continued support of our website.

— Sue G2, CT AFG Webmaster

Public Outreach Coordinator

It is with great pleasure that I report to you on CT AFG Public Outreach activities for 2016. We currently have 10 out of 13 districts with Public Outreach Coordinators. That number will change January 1st, as several coordinators will have completed their 3-year term. Public Outreach is vital to Al-Anon's growth. We must continue to reach out to the general public to let them know there is help and hope. We need District PO Coordinators to help achieve this goal. It is vitally important for all districts to help fill those available positions. I can't do this alone — but together we all can do it!

In 2016 we participated in six Health Fairs and Expos in Hartford, Stamford, New Haven and in Uncasville. Several districts participated in health fairs at hospitals, mental health facilities and at rehabs. We also participated in one corporate health fair this fall.

Our banner has appeared on one highway billboard and two street posters. Please keep a watchful eye out for these, as they may appear anytime, anywhere, and without notice. It'll be a surprise for all of us.

Our CT AFG business card continues to be a vital Public Outreach tool. We gave out approximately 2,000 AFA's ("Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism" magazine). The "Girl in the Bottle" bookmark has been a favorite. These are small, easy tools we can all use to get our message out to those who need Al-Anon's help.

Our District PO Coordinators have been busy contacting radio and TV stations statewide asking them to play our PSA – and thanking them when they have. I am happy to report that at least two

radio stations have played our PSA.

Many districts have been focusing on reaching out to the high schools and middle schools in their districts. They have participated in school health fairs and have spoken at assemblies and in health classes. They have had Alateen book drives and have donated books to libraries, social workers and guidance counselors.

The purpose of Public Outreach is Step 12 is *to carry our message to others*. Al-Anon has a wonderful message of recovery. Let us all continue to work Step 12 and *Let it begin with me!*

Respectfully Submitted,

— Mary Ann T., CT AFG Area PO Coordinator

Schedules Coordinator

The 2017 CT Al-Anon/Alateen Meeting Schedule is available for purchase from the LDC for \$1. Support our CT AFG LDC and purchase the 2017 Schedules as needed throughout the coming year.

Changing how we manage updating, printing and distributing our Area Schedules began with a Board task force report dated May 6, 2015 — recommending the hiring of paid workers and suggesting the Area committee consider transferring three functions to the LDC including schedules. A thought force, initiated by our Area Delegate in January 8, 2016, resulted in a report containing detailed research, findings, and nine recommendations, which was presented to the Area Committee on May 6. The May report went to the Districts to be shared with District Groups, to be discussed, with questions and feedback to come back to the Area. On August 26, the Area voted to accept the recommendations for implementation and, in addition, recommended that the Delegate charge a task force to implement the recommendations. In accordance with the approved plan, my last updating and printing of Schedules produced an annual Schedule booklet to be sold by the LDC and to serve as a transitional asset to establish self-funding of future Schedule booklet updates.

District-generated Schedules continue to be effective communication tools for up-to-date and accurate meeting information. I assisted two Districts this year in formatting District Schedule templates at their request. This brings to 11 the number of Districts that have District Schedules at their disposal. In addition, a free downloadable version of the Schedule booklet can be had in the Members' section at www.ctalanon.org.

As Area Al-Anon Schedules Coordinator, I have learned in multiple opportunities to work my program. Most of all, I am learning to stay in the solution and let go of outcomes. These lessons have been the spiritual gifts of Al-Anon Area service that I have humbly received these past three years. And for this abundance, I am grateful. I highly recommend Area service to each of you. *"If you want to grow, don't say no!"*

It has been an honor to serve on the Area World Service Committee. I never expected to be the last Area Schedules Coordinator. My tasks are now reassigned to the LDC Manger and the Area Group Records Coordinator for 2017.

Respectfully submitted with Gratitude in Service,

— Ron S., Area Schedules Coordinator

Lifeline Coordinator

I am on the outgoing Panel 10 so the December 2016 issue is my last as *Lifeline* Coordinator. I am very proud of what I have published during my time. But I am going to be frank with you. As I explained at the Spring Assembly, as much as *Lifeline* is a cherished old friend, my belief is the newsletter is an outmoded, expensive, work-intensive, excess and in truth not up to today's digital-age standard of getting the message out. I have concluded that Al-Anon will do just fine without *Lifeline*. Please consider this...

1. *Lifeline* is expensive. We would save of \$835 a year in printing.
2. The *Lifeline* post robs Area of a member that could be active in an essential service position.
3. *Lifeline* is not our lifeline — email is. How do we get the word out? We send an email blast. We need to be on our DR's email list. GRs please start your home group's email list and keep the Al-Anon river of information flowing. And everyone please stay clear of the "Reply All" button.
4. *Lifeline* is redundant. Most of the info is already on the website or already went out in an email.
5. *Lifeline* is slow. From the moment *Lifeline* arrives for distribution at the Area meeting, ALL the information is already one week old. How much older is it by the time it travels from: the Area meeting to the District meeting; from the GR's hands to the group meeting; to finally being read by a member? The website content will ALWAYS be the latest on ALL topics. www.ctalanon.org should be prominently displayed at meetings along side the slogans and the Serenity Prayer.
6. *Lifeline* is losing submissions to WSO competition. Tell your story nationally in *The Forum*, and *The New Daily Reader*, just to name a few. WSO is begging for your shares. Chat away online with a global audience with *AFG Connects* or *AFG Announcements*.
7. *Lifeline* is buried under an avalanche of CAL literature. There is so much Al-Anon info in print and online now that you could never read it all.

In closing, please do not get the wrong impression. I loved my experience as *Lifeline* Coordinator. I enjoyed creating each issue. It was an honor being a part of the CT Al-Anon World Service Committee. If someone wants to step up I will gladly be their Service Sponsor. But considering my points above, if no one wants to take over, my recommendation is we say to our dear friend *Lifeline*, "Thank you for your service."

Reaction to the Lifeline report

The email responses regarding my report were all supportive of my position with the exception of the one below which eloquently states another side of the story ...

I hear your *Lifeline* concerns. One piece to keep in mind is that about 10% of our members do not have computers, or are not savvy enough to be able to get onto the website. And there are many members, even those who are somewhat younger, who like to hold something in their hands rather than read online. There are also those with vision impairments who can not easily read the screen, but can read printed text, sometimes with a magnifying glass.

I know your term is ending and many thanks for your efforts and for openly and honestly sharing your concerns.

LIS,

— *Ellie L., Panel 45 CT*

Signing off...

My time as *Lifeline* Coordinator was a great experience, especially my introduction to the Area Committee. I learned a ton about the business side of how Al-Anon works. I was wowed by the Program wisdom of longtime members whose resumés of service extends across decades. I met remarkable do-gooders who are 100% dedicated to spreading the message of Al-Anon. I hope some of their goodness rubbed off on me. I had a blast carpooling with District 4 to Meriden for the Area meetings. We had some fantastic Al-Anon meetings on wheels. I never would have met any of them had I not stepped up for Area service. This position forced me to negotiate prices with printers, and to learn Excel – at least enough to fill out reimbursement forms. I also was mandated to stand in front of groups to give 3-minute reports. Somehow I did that and more. My term also showed me that I like to write. I thank my service sponsor for her invaluable advice on all things Al-Anon. I look forward to my next service position whatever that may be. I hope my efforts on *Lifeline* did the Program some good, both in my publishing it and criticizing it. Best wishes to you all. — *Margaret G., Lifeline Coordinator*

12 things I have learned from service in Al-Anon

1. I am not the boss, but only a trusted servant.
2. I don't have to do everything, but I can do something.
3. I don't have to do it perfectly; I can just do it.
4. When I start thinking, "Someone should do something about that," maybe that someone should be me.
5. It's okay to make mistakes; that's how I learn.
6. I don't have to be the best at something in order to get it done.
7. There is great satisfaction in facing my fears and doing something outside of my comfort zone.
8. I am not alone. I can ask other people to help me.
9. There is nothing wrong with asking for help. That's how service works.
10. Service pulls me out of myself when I'm feeling down.
11. Carrying the message of Al-Anon is one of the most rewarding endeavors of my life.
12. I might never have met some of my best friends in Al-Anon if I hadn't stepped out of my little circle into service.

— *By Cheryl K., Colorado, July 2014*

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