

CONNECTICUT AREA WORLD SERVICE COMMITTEE
MINUTES
December 1, 2023

Chairperson Lisa G. opened the meeting at 7:02 p.m. She welcomed everyone and followed by a moment of silence and the Serenity Prayer.

Roll call was taken by Karen V. **Absent were** Janet S. DR1, Jean B. ADR3, Jen B. DR4, Convention Co- Chair Kate A., Literature Tricia, Public Outreach Eric B., Webmaster Robert T., LDC Manager Lois, BOD Carol D.

Lisa asked the DR's that were stepping down if they could share their experience, strength, and hope with the area.

Secretary Report: Karen V. She asked members to make a motion to accept May 5, 2023 meeting minutes as presented. There were two changes on roll call and Motion was made to accept the minutes as amended by Ron S. (DR3); seconded by Janice R. () Motion carries unanimously.

Treasurer's Report: Presented by Stephanie S.

Bank Balance	\$35,511.46
Outstanding Items	(25.00)
	<u>1,102.58</u>
Checkbook balance	\$36,589.04

A motion to accept the treasurer report was made by Jackie B. (DR4) and seconded by Vicki R (ADR 4)

Delegate's Report: Elaine M.

Was happy to share her 1st year in office.

As a group there were face to face Assembly's and were able to extend a helping hand to the groups of District 10 to carry the AI-Anon message. The Area also solidified the process of Permanent Electronic Groups in Connecticut which is every evolving. The movers and shakers of today's program. She thanked everyone for all their support, which is invaluable to her. She thanked the District Representative's and Alternate District Representative of District 3, 8 and 11 who are ending their 3-year term but a reminder not to go away, think about other service opportunities of interest you might have to continue your AI-Anon/Alateen journey. News from WSO- On Saturday November 18, 2023, Elaine joined the Conference Leadership Team on a conference call. Here is a small snip of the Conference Call.

The Planning for the 2024 World Service Conference Summary (WSC) has begun and will be held on April 17th – 22nd , 2024.

All Delegates are invited to submit two Chosen Agenda items (CAI) which allow outgoing as well as incoming Delegates to submit topics of interest from their members which will be vetted and discussed at Conference in April.

The deadline for topic submission from all the Delegates is March 2024. Please discuss with your GR's what topics they would like me to represent to the CLT team from Connecticut. Please submit your topics by February 28, 2024, through the "links of service", your District Representative. This is your opportunity to use your voice. What would you like me to submit to WSO?

We received a tentative agenda for the Conference in Virginia Beach April 17- April 22, 2024. No, she does not get to go to the beach for the 4 days it is a working conference.

Financial Update-

Revenues consist of literature sales and contributions. The other sources of revenue generation are from magazine sales and investment gains and losses.

September Literature sales \$279,537

Contributions \$215,672

Biggest expenses consist of WSO staff salaries and benefits, technology support, Conference Costs (including interpretation), and postage.

Contributions, Literature Sales, and magazine sales continue to be above budget projections. Elaine received a message from WSO thanking the members for all the members continued support.

The Policy Committee continues to help clarify how a Tradition or Concept might apply to a new confusing situation that arises in Al-Anon or Alateen.

Choosing a Group Name- section of the "Digest of Al-Anon/Alateen Policies" 2022-2025 Service Manual (P24/27).

More will be revealed over the next few months regarding the CLT meeting.

It has been brought to Elaine's attention that there are still "rogue" meetings within our state who continue to meet without registering WSO but are calling themselves an Al-Anon meeting. Please keep in mind that in order to use the name of Al-Anon/Alateen the requirement is that groups are registered with WSO. She called to the members attention to Tradition Three, the relatives and friends of alcoholics, when gathered for mutual aid, may call themselves an Al-Anon Family Group, provided that, as a group, they have no other affiliation. The only requirement for membership is that there be a problem of alcoholism in a relative or friend. Tradition Four, each group should be autonomous, except in matters affecting another group and/or Al-Anon or AA. She thanked again to District's 3, 8 and 11 for your support over the past year and over the last three years. You are truly making history within your districts by being the guardians of the Al-Anon Traditions. Keep carrying the message. As you begin your elections in your district I would like to share with you an article that appeared in the World Service Office Area Highlights 2014 on Obedience to the Unenforceable which might help members who might be hesitant at stepping up for service.

Elaine included a revised map of the District Map of Connecticut outlining the Districts per the Assembly vote in June. Please note, this is the only map to be used.

Posted on ctalanon.org website.

Alternate Delegate – Katie D.

She hoped many of GR's were able to attend the Workshop at the Fall Assembly entitled "Supporting GRs: Strengthen Your Link of Service and Your Recovery," and found it valuable. The PDF of the Powerpoint and a Word version of the GR Binder suggested table of contents and group information handout are posted on the Website. If you have any questions, or suggestions for the next workshop, please let her know.

This next year, she would like to focus on attending your District meetings and would appreciate it if you would send her a note with your meeting time and location and she will reach out to schedule.

She thanked all the members for their service in support of our fellowship and for carrying the message. She wished everyone a wonderful holiday season

District 1 Report: Deborah C, ADR1

District 1 includes the towns of Plymouth, Bristol, Plainville, New Britain, Terryville, Wolcott, Southington, Berlin, Newington, Wethersfield, Rocky Hill and Cromwell. Total of 17 meetings the District.

· 12 meetings are In-Person· 3 meetings are Hybrid· 2 meetings are PEG

There are not any active Alateen groups in the District at this time. The Newington Thursday night has had no teens and is therefore closed temporarily. The New Britain High School meeting has not had approval to restart since closing for Covid.

There are 5 Amias and 3 Alateen Sponsors, when and if Alateen meetings start up again

The Alternate DR position was recently filled. We have a District Secretary and District Treasurer.

The District Public Outreach position is vacant so the Alternate DR is currently fulfilling that role.

Discussions are being held whether to use a District Alateen funds to hold a PO event for Professionals in an effort to raise awareness about Alateen

Discussions are also being held on how groups who are using the District Zoom account might pay for their own account or contribute to the cost of the District account going forward

District 2 Report: Carol D.

This District, which covers Cheshire, Durham, Meriden, Middletown, Wallingford and everything in between has 11 meetings. Two meetings are PEGs, all the rest meet in person. Two are Spanish speaking, but has not seen any member from those meetings in 2 years. There is now an Alternate District who she believes is also the PO Coordinator. All the other officers positions in the district are filled also, so that is great, and each group has a GR. There is now Alateen meetings, one in an institution (Solnet) so is not open to the public, but is doing well. The other one in Middletown needs support but the Sponsors are hanging in! (thanks Lisa and Tina) We have had a potluck District meeting and might be having a cookie swap at next week's meeting. With love in Service, Carol D PS As an aside, her homegroup is having an Anniversary on Dec. 13th in Cheshire, would love to see you all there!!

Concept 4 Marissa W. (DR6):

Concept 4: Participation is the key to harmony This concept reminds us that we are one of many and all voices and experiences matter. It also reminds us of the importance in sharing our voice and experience because we are only as good as the strength of our parts – Meaning no individual can sustain our program. For the program to continue and be sustainable, its members need to actively participate by taking on service roles and sharing experience. This can be in many forms - whether that be helping to set up meetings, chair meetings and share experiences on topics, guide others through the steps that were so freely given to us, taking on service structure positions such as GR, DR, Area Coordinators or Officers, etc. In every role/position we have members who are willing; willing to give of themselves for the sustainability of the program that has given to us. Making sure this program will be there for those who need it for many years to come. In her experience, she has gained so much by both actively listening and participating. She began with listening to others share in meetings, then sharing her own experience in meetings. She then moved to chairing meetings and eventually growing in group service positions to serve as a GR and now a DR. She knows she could not be successful in any of these opportunities without the participation of the fellow members. Much like her experience in business, we need to surround ourselves with the strength of others to enable success. This concept is another great reminder that she is NOT in control. She needs others - to help her to be better, help her see what she cannot see because their perspectives and experiences are different and together, we can see the greater picture and come up with more impactful solutions. She is grateful to be a participant in this program and for the participation of our members.

Old Business

District Map Elaine M.

Elaine had the new map colored professionally and was distributed to the members and this map will be on the web site.

2024 Convention Chair Janice R.

There have been three Convention Planning Committee meetings thus far. Our last one was held on the Zoom platform and our December meeting will also be held on Zoom. Committee members are working diligently with their Co-Chairs preparing for what she foresees upcoming a fabulous convention that will offer peace and serenity to our beautiful fellowship. Save the Date Flyers and the Serenity Breakfast Registration Flyer have been posted and responses are coming in. 95% of our committee positions are filled. The one vacancy is due to our Decorations Chair stepping down, and our Co-Chair stepping up to fill it. We now have a Decorations

Co-Chair vacancy. Another updated Volunteers Flyer will be posted shortly on our website and sent to our Area Secretary for distribution. Our Pre-Registration committee did a great job in gathering information for our banquet meals and we now have established three specific meals at one price.

They are excitedly making changes to the Program which will make it attractive, creative and a solid program of recovery for our fellowship. The Program Committee has selected the topics and are currently confirming speakers and moderators for these topics, The Keynote Speaker for Saturday night and a Spiritual Speaker for Sunday morning. We do not do anything alone in this program and Janice was happy to report she can ask for help with a clear conscience.

Flyers Chair will be working on the Registration Flyer this month and she will be seeking the code for the hotel rooms. The Registration Form will be completed shortly and posted on our website and distributed to our Area Secretary. Flyers Co-Chair is diligently working on the Public Outreach aspect of it.

She can't believe how fast the months are going by and we are getting closer and closer to both events, the Serenity Breakfast and our Convention.

She is thankful for Co-Chair, Kate, who is working very hard to assure us of a wonderful Serenity Breakfast.

2024 Convention Co-Chair/ Serenity Breakfast Kate A. (Was absent and was read by Janice R)

Convention Update

Last year at this time, our then Co-Chair, Janice R., gave a detailed report containing an analysis of cost, location, and ease of 4 hotels in CT. This year, I decided that I would do the same. Kate's thinking was that there had to be more than a handful of hotels to choose from and surely there might be a gem among them. Through my exploration, Kate found that in CT, there are very few hotels at this time that are able to accommodate a large group of 400 hundred individuals and offer several breakout rooms for workshops, along with a generous ballroom for our Keynote speaker events. Some hotels that may have been adequate have since shuttered their doors due to the pandemic as well. She found that those hotels that are adequate in size and accommodation are incredibly expensive and are targeting as their patrons, weddings, and extravagant banquets. Their Ballroom pricing alone is starting in the thousands. The hotels I checked out were in New Milford, Danbury, Southbury, with the hopes a less expensive venue would be available outside of the Hartford/New Haven area. Although they did offer a lower service charge, of 20% they could not accommodate our crowd size. Kate also came to realize how important it is, through speaking with these hotels, to have a central location in a more populated area. The hotels Janice researched were centrally located and Kate wanted to make sure that the numbers still held true. Kate spoke to each hotel only to find that the costs, if not the same, had increased. For instance, The Omni Hotel in New Haven now has a cost of \$65.00 per plate for the banquet. Last year it was \$48-\$56.00. This is before you factor in their 24% service fee and then add the \$7.35% CT tax- from which we are not exempt. The Sheraton Bradley service fee is now 23%. The Omni also, since last year, has outsourced their electronics and AV services to an outside vendor which has made those services also more expensive. Other costs have also increased. The Sheraton Bradley would discount their rooms, but only to \$149. The Sheraton Hartford Hotel South, our venue from last year, certainly has pluses and minuses. On the plus side, there is no fee for parking. Most other hotels are now charging for that necessity. The cost of food and beverages is lower than any other hotel that Kate contacted. Where most other hotels charge over \$150 per room, the Sheraton Hartford charges \$114. They were able to negotiate with the Sheraton Hartford to get prices down on almost all items, from AV to food cost to room costs. Even the Serenity Breakfast food itself was negotiable from \$24 to \$20. There are enough smaller rooms within the hotel to accommodate all our needs for AI-Anon including Spanish, AA, Alateen, Hospitality, and Activities, along with a Ballroom that was adequate for last year. They still maintain their own AV equipment. The cost of plated food from Sheraton Hartford South is \$45.00, again as opposed to higher pricing in other hotels. On the minus side of things, the corridors may be a bit smaller than we are used to for our crowds. It has a limited capacity of 400 at one time. However, at no time last year did we exceed that, and no one was turned away. As all hotels are doing now, there is a hefty service fee of 22% and then the added CT sales tax. However, it

remains on the lower side of service fees among hotels. After researching hotels and finding we are still meeting most of our needs as a group at the current venue, the best move this year is to go with the Sheraton Hartford South again for 2025. Compared with Janice's findings a year ago, not much has changed and the things that have are cost increases. I have asked the hotel to reserve March 22nd & 23rd for the year 2025. I would ask for a vote of confidence on my findings.

A motion was made to accept as presented by Janice a vote of confidence to proceed to reserve as requested by; Jannine G. DR11 the motion was seconded by Ron S. DR3 Motion carried unanimously
Serenity Breakfast Update

Currently, Kate and team are in good shape regarding the Serenity Breakfast. As of Tuesday November 27, 2023, there was a total of 28 registrations (6 through Eventbrite and 12 via check) for the Serenity Breakfast. We have a snow date for January 28, 2024. The capacity for the breakfast is 240 attendees. Last year we had a total of 179 attendees. The cost of the breakfast is \$33.00 if you pre-register by check, and \$37.05 if you register through Eventbrite given the Eventbrite fees. I sent the preregistration flyer to the AA liaison (Ray G) to post on the AA website, and Janice hand delivered our pre-registration flyer to our Spanish Liaison (Janine) during a meeting. Both English and Spanish will be posted on our website. There are wonderful speakers for the Serenity Breakfast. Our three speakers, AA, Al-Anon and Alateen are sure to inspire as they share their experience, strength, and hope. Several committees are participating in the Serenity Breakfast such as the Greeters, Treasurers, Electronics, Flyers, and the Raffle Committee. This year the Raffle Committee is raffling off 3 Registrations for the Convention and 2 Bundles of Literature. Raffle tickets will be sold at \$5 for 7 tickets and \$1 for 1 ticket. I did a little research and can tell you that this is a bargain, as these are the same prices for tickets, we had in 2012!!!

New Business

Purchase of Equipment Janice R.

Janice was requesting reimbursement from the Area Equipment Purchase/Repairs Line Item on the Area Budget. Both our Chair and Co-Chair of the Electronics Committee/Convention have indicated to Janice that some of the equipment needs to be replaced. The equipment that they purchase is for all Area events and not only for the Convention. It is very important that translation equipment works in a functioning capacity, that our microphones work so that our speakers at all events can be heard clearly, and that mixers can achieve the quality of clear sound at all events. Mic stands are necessary in order to protect the microphones and again achieve sound quality.

Enclosed is one list showing the equipment needed along with the invoices detailing the description, provider and cost. Online purchases present quite a savings and most online purchases require a credit card payment rather than a check. I have also enclosed his receipt for the purchases.

Janice found that this will serve the fellowship in the long run, as the equipment will last and be available for all events. It will remain housed at the LDC with a sign-out sheet. Our Electronic Chair will purchase the equipment and have it sent to his home. The LDC is open one day per week and we do not want the equipment sitting in the church office. In addition, Mark will test it out to make sure it is all in working.

Motion to accept the report and proceed with the reimbursement made by Justice K DR8 and seconded by Sami W. DR5

AWSC Meeting Dates Lisa G.

Dates were presented to members healthy discussion on meeting location. The members decided that October meeting will be cancelled for the Area. A new calendar will be distributed to the members with the changes discussed.

Refreshments at AWCC Meetings Lisa G.

A discussion was had to bring back refreshments at the area meetings. This was coordinated by 2 districts before covid. A group consensus was taken and it was decided that we would bring this back to the area.

AA Liaison Stephanie R

She begin her report by bringing up a serious concern regarding some of the non conference approved items used at Al-Anon's Public Outreach events.

In her first year as the AA Events Liaison for Al-Anon, She attended the 5 sanctioned AA event with Al-Anon participation. 3 events had a full PO displays consisting of most or all of the following materials: 5 or 6' trapped in a bottle cut out, literature racks of CAL, pens, stickers, wrist bands, fortune cookies, the wheel of slogans, and (at the last 2) tiny plastic bags with AlAnon logo candy hearts. At another event there was simply a small amount of literature, pens, stickers, wrist bands and fortune cookies.

Below are some of the concerning comments made by members visiting the PO table I observed:

- Fortune Cookies have been stale at the last 2 events.
- (Several people's comments after spinning the wheel) - "now what" and/or "what do we get" Could this be an association too close to gambling or carnivals?
- I watched many conversations at AA's outreach tables interrupted by the noise of the wheel spinning.
- An AA member asked "Why is Al-Anon selling 'dime bags' of candy?"

With the traditions noted below, these items don't seem to align with the principles of our program.

Tradition 4 - Individual interpretations seem to be affecting the image of AA and Al-Anon.

Tradition 5 and 6 - Al-Anon has but one purpose, to help families of alcoholics - these 'outside influenced' items can be seen as distracting and diverting from Al-Anon's primary purpose and our work in carrying the message.

Tradition 10: The Al-Anon Family Groups have no opinion on outside issues, hence our name out never be drawn into public controversy. The images below are examples of how the drug Fentanyl is manufactured to look like candy. Loose candies or self-packaged candies can create a vulnerability on behalf of Al-Anon and potentially harm innocent visitors to our table. It is my suggestion we change the things we can. These comments and criticisms are an important reflection of how we, as Al-Anon members, are carrying the message of recovery and represent the Al-Anon program. Stephanie spoke with Eric and discussed these concerns which was eye-opening so he'll bring these concerns to his next committee meeting. As trusted servants and guardians of the traditions Stephanie brings this information to this meeting for continued conversation and KBDM.

The positive feedback from AA members has been beyond anything I could have imagined. Several AA members voiced their appreciation for Al-Anon's presence and encourage more participation from Al-Anon and Alateen members. A couple members at CSCYPAA who saw Stephanie at their Area 11 Fall Assembly just a few weeks ago were [pleasantly] surprised to see her there and thanked her for supporting their program. We may even have a few new AA guests at our assembly and upcoming events!

CSCYPAA had 400 attendees of which 30 were Al-Anon members. We had PO and literature tables, 4 speakers, and 6 volunteers.

Lastly, Stephanie was very excited about the 2024 AA Events. She will be setting up a monthly meeting (probably Zoom) for anyone interested in doing service at an event and for AA Event Chairs to provide updates or needs. She invites all to join the meetings and explore another layer of recovery in service so keep your eye out of the meeting information!

She has learned in these rooms that she can't grow on yesterday's recovery, and she can't do this alone. She needs to continue to stay busy in service, be vulnerable, ask for help, and get better. Who wants to come have some fun!!

Ron S. DR3 moved that the meeting be adjourned 8:39PM; Second by Leslie. DR13
Meeting closed with the Al-Anon Declaration.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen V., AWSC Secretary