

2019 MAY DELEGATE REPORT:

This spring Assembly I am going to do things differently. So that we can have more of a dialogue, I will be asking members to engage in some discussions during the course of my report – which probably means I will not be able to do the entire report with the power point portion. The entire report will be on the website.

IMPRESSIONS OF THE 2019 WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE (WSC)

I will start with several quotes that I have taken from the 2018 International Al-Anon General Service Meeting (IAGSM) Summary which I encourage all to read on www.al-anon.org

Rosie M., Trustee-at-Large (TAL) and Chairperson of the International Coordination Committee said in her opening remarks, “Our common bond, described in our Third Tradition, reflects that we are affected by someone else’s drinking. Al-Anon is a unique fellowship that unites members of different backgrounds, races, and walks of life in an inspiring endeavor. We may speak different languages, but we are united by that common bond, and, therefore, we are connected from the heart.”

She ended with a quote from page 167 of *Lois Remembers* (B-7): “We get something at these huge, unique gatherings that cannot be gained in any other way. The combined emotional impact of so many people believing and striving for the same ideals is felt by everyone and brings a rich kind of joy.”

This years’ experience brought me that “rich kind of joy” and was filled with demonstrations of our spiritual principles of **unity, respect, participation and harmony, mutual trust, service, and responsibility.**

As the result of decisions made from additional discussion and information gathered at the 68th World Service Conference (WSC), our 69th greatest group conscience and business meeting became our first ever **Trilingual World Service Conference.** The professional French and Spanish translators performed an excellent and much needed service to several of our Delegates and our International Al-Anon General Service Meeting (IAGSM) representative from Mexico. While it took a little while to get use to the background murmur of the simultaneous interpretation that was occurring, it ended up helping many of us feel more spiritually connected to the principles of **participation, unity, respect and dignity.**

I don’t know what WSC was like in the past, but in my two years, we have been invited to listen in on Board Meetings. This year we were invited to listen to two open Board of Trustees (BOT) meetings (including the annual meeting at the end of conference) and one Open Policy Board Meeting. We were invited to participate in the discussions of the Electronic Meeting Working Group (EMWG), Policy and Handbook Changes as well as the Board’s Mega Issue. We also participated in two Chosen Agenda Item (CAI) breakout groups and one full World Service Conference (WSC) Chosen Agenda Item.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

I want to do a very quick summary of what I took from the financial reports. For those of you who wish more detail, I can email complete printouts of the 2018 Audit and printouts of the Audit and Budget Presentations that we received at the World Service Conference (WSC) from our Director of Finance and Operations (Niketa). Financial details of WSO can be read in each of the WSC summaries as well as the full Audit Reports and Tax information on al-anon.org under the Members>WSO >Financial Information <https://al-anon.org/for-members/wso/financial-information/>

To summarize all that was accomplished last year:

- Strong year for literature sales
- Contributions consistent with prior years.
- Successful International Al-Anon Convention
- New literature introduced during the year
- Resources allocated to technology and innovation
- Hosted the International Al-Anon General Service Meeting (IAGSM)

Of note: The independent auditor issued an “unmodified” opinion for our 2018 financials which is the highest opinion possible.

4 times a year your Group’s Current Mailing Address (CMA) receives a **Quarterly Appeal Letter** which lists all that your abundant giving has provided to keep our fellowship moving forward. Shown on the second page of the letter is how WSO serves each of us and our groups in many ways: This cost to the WSO in 2018 was \$292.39 per group.

2018 Contributions to WSO: Total service structure and individual giving was slightly less than the \$2,000,000 that was budgeted for in 2018, though it was still one of our best years. In Ohio, 57.9% of the groups donated with an average donation of \$ 101.89. (This includes the appeal letter donations). This amount was less than last year, but because of an increase in individual and structure contributions, Ohio did contribute a total of

\$ 6106 more than last year.

The **Finance Committee** (P-24/27, World Service Manual pp205-206) is charged with “seeing that our World Service Organization (WSO) operation remains financially sound, always aligning the use of our money with the spiritual principles of our program” The budget communicates in financial terms our spiritual principles, priorities and dreams for the next year and into the future in accordance with the Board’s Strategic Plan.

Our Director of Finance and Operations (Niketa) reports to the Finance Committee and At-Large Members of the Executive Committee each month. She reports directly to the full Board at each of the quarterly Board Meetings.

- The reserve account (and relevant market conditions) are included in each report
- Our market portfolio is one of moderate risk with respect to growth and income and contains nothing related to the alcohol industry.

WSO’S 2019 Deficit Budget.

It is termed a deficit budget because projected expenses are more than projected revenue in spite of the authorized 4% transfer from the **Reserve Fund**.

Income:

Our largest sources of revenue are literature sales and contributions. Literatures sales are projected to be smaller than last year when we introduced our newest book. *If every group would increase their donation by \$8, we would reach our budgeted 2019 contributions of \$2,050,000.* Let’s think about our spiritual principles such as **responsibility, trust, abundance, and unity**. Let’s discuss this in our Group Business Meetings, making use of a previous WSC handout – “Spirituality in Group Finances” as well as the pages on Group Finances/Budget (pp55-56) in P-24/27.

Other income is from the sale of the Forum and transfers from our investments and as needed from our Reserve Fund. As a reminder, we keep an ample reserve to cover up to one year of operating expenses should we fall on hard times and any special projects approved by the Board of Trustees. *Warranty One in P24/27*

Expenses:

Expenses are all those related to carrying out our message of help and hope to those affected by someone’s alcoholism (that is, those items that enhance our programs and goals, and address strategic plan initiatives), and include all the operating costs of having the clearing house World Service Office (WSO): salaries/benefits; printing and postage, occupancy, office services/expense; travel and meetings, Public Service Announcements (PSAs).

Overall expenses have been budgeted to increase because of interpretation services at the WSC, strategic plan initiatives including creation of a mobile app, advanced meeting search, improving the translation backlog, increased travel and meetings.

Quick Finance Update: While literature sales remain higher than expected during this first quarter of the year, contributions are down. Please remember that it is our members giving in gratitude and abundance that provides for the functioning of the WSO.

WELCOMING POTENTIAL NEWCOMERS SKIT

This was presented by a task force at World Service Conference (WSC). I found it to be a good portrayal of how we need to be aware of a newcomer’s autonomy and dignity when they come to a meeting. I have found that in my Southwest corner of Ohio that some members on the answering service are telling potential newcomers that they may not attend a closed meeting because of their loved one’s heroin addiction. It is up to the individual to decide whether they want what AI-Anon has to offer. We explain that we focus on the solution and not the problem at meetings. I would like this to start a discussion on how your meetings and local answering services respond to such suffering people.

Of note - In the Policy Committee update in the April COB letter:

There was a follow-up to a policy discussion in January 2018 finding that the terminology “Open/Closed” was not consistent with our spiritual principles of confidentiality and anonymity, nor welcoming to newcomers. The Executive Committee approved a motion to use the wording “Families and Friends only” and “Families, Friends, and Observers welcome” to replace “Closed” and “Open,” respectively, to identify meeting attendees on the AFG Electronic Meeting Registration/Update Form. The change in wording was to be used on a trial basis for six months prior to making a recommendation to the Board regarding implementation of this change on the Group Records forms. After review of materials and discussion, the Policy Committee recommended to the Board of Trustees “to end the trial and update the language permanently on both the Electronic Meeting Registration/Update form and Group Records forms.” This recommendation was accepted by the Board.

CHOSEN AGENDA ITEMS (CAI):

These were items chosen by the Conference Leadership Team after submission from Delegates, Trustees and WSO Staff. Out of 94 voting Conference members, 73 (17 from Panel 57, 20 from Panel 58, 18 from Panel 59, 12 Trustees, 2 At-Large Executive Committee members, and 4 Staff members) voted to discuss two topics in breakout sessions.

- **Electronic/Virtual Meetings**

How can we step out of our comfort zone—in this case face-to-face District and Area business meetings—and incorporate electronic participation?

- **Encouraging Service**

Back to Basics—Supporting Group Growth: The group is fundamental; it is the basic unit of our fellowship. What are some ways we can support group growth? How to encourage service in your Area: How can we encourage older and newer members in our Areas to participate in service?

What are some ways we can increase new member participation? How can we address the issue of gaps in the links of service?

The following topic for discussion by the whole conference was chosen by the Board of Trustees (BOT's) as it continues to frequently come up in correspondence with the World Service Office (WSO).

- **Topic: Whether or not a group that has a period of meditation or quiet time as part of its format is following the Legacies.**

Does a group violate the Traditions when it includes meditation as part of its meeting format? Is holding a period of meditation as part of the meeting format an appropriate exercise of group autonomy through its group conscience? What can a group do to assist and advise newcomers should a group use meditation during their meeting?

UPCOMING EVENTS

- 2019 Road Trip! You and Your Board Connect: Doubletree Hotel at Seattle SEATAC on Saturday, October 19. Information on how to attend will appear "In the Loop" and on the member's website in the future.
- 2020 Road Trip will be October 31st. Do we want to try again?! Deadline for application Sept 13, 2019
- 2020 International Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous; July 2-5, 2020 Detroit, Michigan
- 2023 International Al-Anon Convention – Albuquerque, New Mexico
- TEAM Events – See Chairman of the Board Letter – 5 left: 2 in Canada, one SC, one NY, one PA. There will be no more TEAM Events scheduled for 2020 as the Board is evaluating if this is the best way to continue to have effective interaction with members.

POLICY COMMITTEE

"...it is the responsibility of the World Service Office (WSO) Policy Committee to make statements that interpret and encourage use of the Traditions and Concepts. After approval by the Board of Trustees and the World Service Conference, these statements are set forth in the Policy Digest." the *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual (P24/27) p 83*

After review of material sent both before the Conference and during presentations at Conference, and then with some additional changes made, the *Service Manual (P24/27)* when final style and edit have been done.

Please continue to read about Policy Updates that will be listed in each Quarterly Report. There is a review of the decisions made and a discussion of further things to be reviewed and changed in the April 2019 Policy Update at al-non.org >Members> Board of Trustees.

Motions were made and approved to accept the revisions to statements on Concept 5 and Alateen Policy. These were made for clarification with no change in interpretation of policy. They will appear online in the WSC Summary and the *Service Manual* later this year.

BYLAWS for AFG Headquarters, Inc.

These have been revised as per changes in federal law, reviewed by legal counsel and are now in effect. Note the spelling is now without a hyphen. They will be in the 2018 WSC Summary. Read more about this in the April 2019 Policy Update on al-anon.org.

MEGA ISSUE

Once again, the Board of Trustees (BOT) used the DeBono Hat method to start a discussion of a Hybrid WSC (which is defined as a "live" in-person event at a physical location with a "virtual" online component). No decision has been made – this was just the start of a conference wide discussion to gather information on possibilities, pros and cons.

ELECTRONIC MEETING WORK GROUP (EMWG)

A letter (reviewed by legal counsel) is being sent to non-registered electronic meetings that will invite these meetings to register with the World Service Office (WSO) so they can continue using the Al-Anon name or logo. There will be a social media guideline coming this year keeping the WSO sites as the only public site for public comment - stressing our principles of confidentiality and anonymity.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES AT THE WORLD SERVICE OFFICE (WSO)

In addition to implementing Asana, a new software program, organizational changes have been implemented at the WSO since January that is believed to be critical to achieving the vision for AFG, Inc. Historically, the WSO was organized hierarchically, which created a small funnel through which all decisions needed to flow. While previous organizational structure changes "flattened" decision-making somewhat, Staff determined there was more to do. Since January, the senior leadership Staff teams have been restructured to delegate specific decision-making responsibility and authority as described in Concept Two. There are now three leadership teams:

The Staff Management Team whose purpose is to:

- Manage Staff to enable the WSO to execute the Strategic Plan Strategies and action plans as committed to the Executive Committee and Board; and
- Oversee the Performance Evaluation process and Staff communications, e.g. planning the agenda for monthly Staff Meetings, etc.

The Strategic Leadership Team whose purpose is to:

- Deliver the strategic priorities of AFG, Inc. as defined by the Goals and Objectives established by the Board, defining annually the highest priority Strategies based on the approved Strategic Plan; and
- Make necessary organizational recommendations to achieve the priorities.

The Staff Policy Implementation Round Table whose purpose is to:

Triage problems related to application of Al-Anon's policy, referring matters to the Policy Committee when necessary; and

- Determine necessary revisions to and additional WSO Service materials required.

These changes were made after consultation with the Executive Committee and the Board. They have allowed the WSO Staff to increase throughput as necessary to meet the expectations of the Board and our fellowship.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The World Service Office (WSO) is currently seeking a member with five years in Al-Anon who also has professional Spanish Copy Editor/Translator experience to work remotely on a part-time contract basis for the WSO. Information is available on the Al-Anon.org website under "Employment" at the bottom of the page.

<https://al-anon.org/employment-at-Al-Anon/>

TWO NEW PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS (PSA):

WSO will be replacing Jack & Samantha with the new PSAs soon.

One version was built using the previous formats featuring a 40-something white female concerned about their spouse's drinking (which is aligned with the most common newcomer demographic according to the 2018 Membership Survey). We refer to this version as the **Champion**.

The other version is using questions from the three 20-Questions with a wider range of images to display our diversity – the **Challenger**.

Both English versions have different phone number and special web addresses to allow WSO to determine which version is more successful in generating visits to our WSO websites and calls to the toll-free meeting line.

The broadcast quality PSAs will be distributed directly to many radio and TV stations in early August. Area PO Coordinators will be receiving the distribution list in the next couple weeks once it's finalized. And members can use the non-broadcast quality version at District Meetings, AIS meetings, special events, and show to schools, broadcast outlets, etc. Contact our PO Coordinator (or myself) for the mp4 files.

Approaching a station not on the list is considered "cold calling". This may be outside some people's comfort zone, but it is a necessary element to help broaden awareness of our program. The steps would look something like this:

- Search online for radio and TV stations in your locality
- Get the station name, address and phone number
- Call the station and ask for the contact information of the person responsible for playing PSAs
- Ask to setup a short meeting with them to introduce them to Al-Anon and to play the PSAs for them
- Ask them if they would play the PSAs
- If yes, then get the best email address and complete the PSA request for on al-anon.org

Again, I would like to thank the Assembly for allowing me to participate in this vital part of our worldwide fellowship.

Yours in grateful service,

Theresa M