

# The Northern Triangle

Volume 8

MN North Area AFG Newsletter

May 2024

*Our mission is to provide information and inspiration and to encourage service by keeping us connected to each other between assemblies.*

Welcome to this issue of *The Northern Triangle* Newsletter for panel 62. “Participation is the key to harmony” (Concept 4). We need your feedback and invite any Al-Anon member to contribute. Per the MN North policy book, the newsletter is to be published in November and May. We are hoping to publish every 2 months. The next issue will be July 1, 2024.

As we go forward, any suggestions would be greatly appreciated.

Connie B. Newsletter Coordinator

Assisted by Barb D.

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## SAVE THE DATES

Delegate Report Back is **May 18, 2024**. Look at the Minnesota North Al-Anon website for the link to zoom report back from 1:00 to 3:00 that afternoon.

Every Panel chooses a slogan for their 3-year term. Panel 62 has chosen,



“It started with a shoe.” The story can be found in our  
Conference Approved Literature (CAL) book Lois Remembers.

## LINKS OF SERVICE

Member + Member = Group

Group + Group = District

District + District = Assembly

Assembly + Assembly = Conference

(Al-Anon Guidelines G-15 Revised 2021)

## IMPORTANT LINKS

World Service Office: <https://al-anon.org/for-members>

MN North Al-Anon\*: <https://minnesotanorth-al-anon.org>

\* This is a public sight with limited information for the viewing public. To access member info, you must set up a profile including a username and password and be approved to access all other content. As a member, you will be able to log-in to access as allowed, such as: Assembly info, Newsletters, District Reports, Delegate Reports and much, much, more.

If you want more information on any article, please look under the MN North Al-Anon link and then assembly.

**The WSO has updated some of the Area Guidelines on their website. The WSO website can be located at Al-Anon Family Groups and in the search bar on the upper right enter Manuals and Guidelines. When the various results are shown click on Guidelines and find the whole list of guidelines currently available.**

**Other places to find information on service positions: The Service Manual and the MN North Area Policy Manual on the MN North Area Website.**

### **Delegate Report**

Hi to all our Al-Anon Members in Minnesota North!

It's been a whirlwind April with the first weekend being our Assembly in Bemidji and a short week plus later heading to Conference in Virginia Beach. This was my last conference and I'm looking forward to what HP has in mind for who will be our next delegate when we have elections in October at the St. Cloud Assembly.

The flowers were blooming in the Botanical Gardens in Norfolk while back home in Minnesota there was a little snow!



We had a wonderful conference – full of love, laughter, and business – and I am excited to tell you all about it on May 18<sup>th</sup> at Report Back. Look at the Minnesota North Al-Anon website for the link to zoom report back from 1:00 to 3:00 that afternoon.

Just a reminder, Al-Anon's Executive Director will be attending our Fall Assembly in St. Cloud, live and in person. Our Assemblies are hybrid as are our AWSC's (Area World Service Committee meetings) and if you can't attend in person, you can attend virtually, and anyone can attend – while only Group Reps can vote.

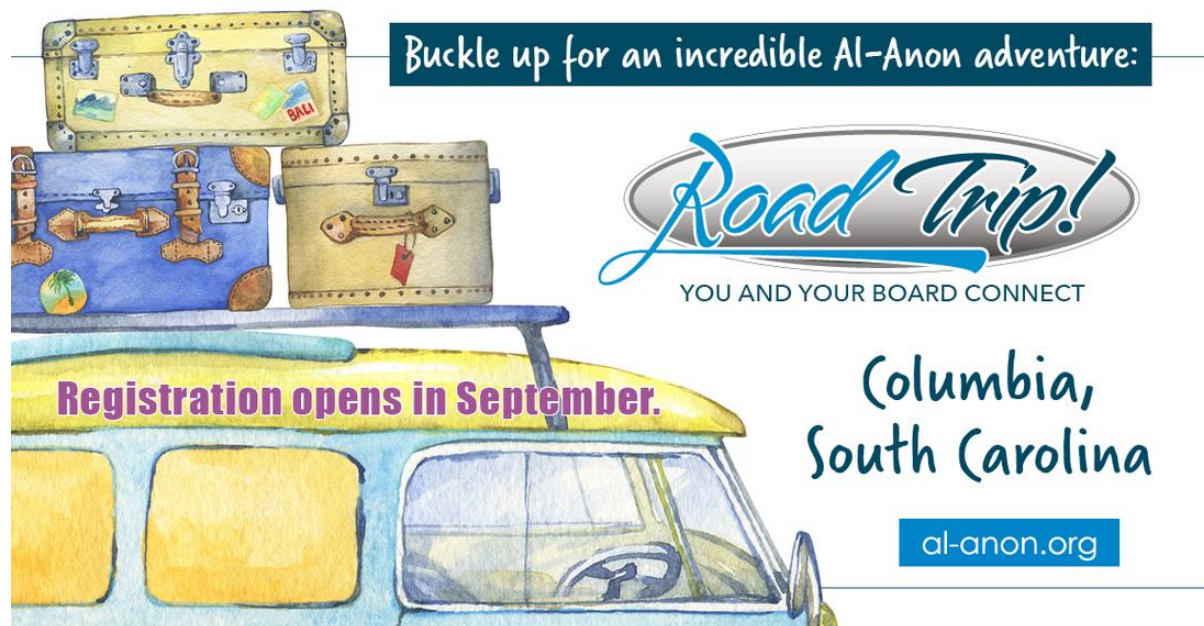
While I will miss my fellow delegates of Panel 62 now that my panel is over – there is much going on in Al-Anon as we work to move Al-Anon forward.

### **Search for a New Regional Trustee starting May 2025**

Have you been a continuous member of Al-Anon for 10 years? Our current North Central Regional Trustee (Jean L who you met at the Fall 2023 Assembly) ends her time as our Regional Trustee at the end of April, 2025. It would be wonderful to have a Regional Trustee from our Area and applications must be submitted to me, the current Area Delegate, by August 15, 2024. Applications are available on the Al-Anon Family Groups website. Please consider being a Regional Trustee for Al-Anon if you qualify. Contact me with questions.

### **Road Trip 2024**

In the fall of 2024, Road Trip will be held in Columbia, South Carolina on Saturday, October 26, 2024

A promotional graphic for the 'Road Trip 2024' event. On the left, there is a watercolor illustration of a yellow and blue van with three suitcases on its roof rack. The suitcases are yellow, blue, and tan, with various travel-related items like a beach ball and a map visible. A dark blue banner at the top of the graphic contains the text 'Buckle up for an incredible Al-Anon adventure:'. To the right of the suitcases, the words 'Road Trip!' are written in a large, blue, cursive font, with 'YOU AND YOUR BOARD CONNECT' in a smaller, sans-serif font below it. Further down, the location 'Columbia, South Carolina' is written in a large, blue, cursive font. At the bottom right, the website 'al-anon.org' is displayed in white text on a blue rectangular background. A purple banner across the middle of the van says 'Registration opens in September.'

Buckle up for an incredible Al-Anon adventure:

*Road Trip!*  
YOU AND YOUR BOARD CONNECT

Registration opens in September.

Columbia,  
South Carolina

al-anon.org

**LOVE GIFTS** Thank you to everyone who sent me a note of encouragement via text or card while I was at conference and to those districts who created the lovely “love gifts” I shared with other delegates at conference. I brought back many love gifts for us and will share them with you at Fall Assembly.

**Please share your writing about Sponsorship and Service Sponsorship Page 19**

You may remember a new booklet is being developed about sponsorship to be available this fall for \$4.00. It will be about the size of our booklet “When I Got Busy – I got Better” and sharing’s are requested. Please share this information with ALL Al-Anon members in our area for this new piece of literature.

**Watch for the 2024 Al-Anon Membership Survey Page 20**

The Al-Anon members in our Area are invited to take the survey from June 20 to July 31, 2024. Participation is important and the data helps to validate the effectiveness of recovery through Al-Anon Family Groups

Visit: [www.al-anon.org/membersurvey](http://www.al-anon.org/membersurvey) to participate when the survey opens on June 20, 2024.

In Love & Service

Linda H, Delegate  
Panel 62, MN North Area 29

*Our Path toward Grace, Unity, and Understanding*  
*Nuestro camino hacia la gracia, la unidad y la comprensión*  
*Notre cheminement vers la grâce, l'unité et la compréhension*

<b>ALTERNATE DELEGATE REPORT</b>
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When I Got Busy, I Got Better  
Pg.20 A Sense of Purpose  
How can I pass on the support I have received?

Every time I do service work, I receive more than I give. Through service I have found serenity, friends, strength for times I feel weak. I have learned that I can have gratitude at any time.

When I volunteered for Alternate Delegate, I thought I would simply be a stand in for others if they were unable to do their tasks. I do wear those hats if needed but as it turns out I have tasks of my own.

As an Alternate Delegate I chair the Policy Committee. I don't know if I would have taken the position if I had realized this. First meeting I was scared spitless. Everyone on the committee had more service time than I did, and they knew what was expected of this type of meeting. How was I to chair this?? I didn't even know what it looked like!! Turns out I do ok. The committee supports me. We are never alone in Al-Anon. I have learned so.. much about the nuts and bolts of Al-Anon through this part of my position.

The Alternate Delegate attends one Regional Delegate Meeting during their panel. Last year I went and LOVED it. I realized it was practice for the new delegates to learn more about how the World Conference experience would be. They practice voting and do business for the Region. This year I wanted to go again so I talked Linda and Tracie into driving many hours to Bloomington IL. We left Friday from DULUTH and had a meeting in the car for several hours. After a time, SOMEONE started to snooze in the back seat. I won't name names. Anyway, Linda put in a USB speaker-recording on that a friend of hers had converted from CD for her. I don't know much about how it happened but somehow each speaker was on a track and got about three minutes of their story at a time. It was great—

So, we drove 8 hours that day, Sat literally all-day Saturday and drove all the way home Sunday -total time on the road Sunday was nearly 10 hours and I wouldn't trade it for anything. Well except one thing: a Semi tire exploding right beside us. Had to pull over at the next exit several miles down and it just happened to be XXX store. Pictures shared later LOL

The RDM and Policy committee are a bit of what the Alternate Delegate does. For more information review the job descriptions. It has been an amazing journey! I have learned so much about Al-Anon and myself. Service work helps those around us- as well as growing and changing ourselves.

I will strive to be in service as long as I am able. I want to be part of growing a program that gives back again and again.

Carol M Alternate Delegate

## TREASURER'S REPORT

2023% contributed per District	% of groups donating Area level	# of Groups in District
District 1 and 2	50 %	4
District 3	75 %	8
District 4	67 %	9
District 5	60 %	5
District 6	58 %	19
District 7	100 %	11
District 8	70 %	10
District 9	67 %	9
District 10	40 %	20
District 11	70 %	20

Total Groups in Area 115

64% of groups contributed to the area in 2023, thanks all!

Respectfully submitted,

Jane E

Treasurer MN North Area

## DISTRICT REPORTS

### DISTRICT 29-003

We had 6 members at Spring Assembly: 5 in person and 1 on zoom.

With our 2024 calendar our May meeting/event will be Linda's Report back on May 13, 2024.

Our area made love gifts to send with Linda to the convention and one of our groups made "slogan sticks" that we available to take at the Spring Assembly.

We are in discussions with an individual interested in starting another Moorhead meeting.

We have a June zoom meeting planned, July we are having a district picnic, and August will be the AWSC meeting. Boy putting that into one sentence makes it

feel like summer is going fast; and it is not even here yet. I will focus on “one day at a time”.

Happy May Everyone! Thanks to all members for their service!

Respectfully submitted,

Mary H. District Representative 29/003

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### **DISTRICT 29-006-Connie B.**

On April 20 our district held a workshop in Little Falls. (see report from Doris)

*April 20th Kathy and I were so privileged to spend the afternoon with about 20 of our dear friends. We had some playtime (skits), laughs (at and with each other) and some very hard work on how to use the first Step, Tradition, and Concept in our lives. It is so rewarding for Kathy and I to present these workshops and we encourage you to let us know if you are interested in us continuing to host the workshops, where to host them and what would you like to learn with us?*

*Doris K*

Our next district meeting will be May 15<sup>th</sup> with a potluck from 5:30-6:30 with the meeting starting at 6:30. We will be working on a budget for the rest of this year and next fiscal year. We will also be updating our district job descriptions and policy manual. I am hoping that we will have most of the Group Representatives attending in person or virtual.

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## **COORDINATOR REPORTS**

### **ALATEEN REPORT-Sue M.**

2024 Spring Assembly

April 6, 2024

MN North Alateen recertification is still in progress. Sue P. from the WSO last contacted Doris K and me by email on March 26, 2024, regarding our documents.



Doris K., Linda H., and I will meet soon over Zoom. Where Linda hopes to gather information from our meeting and visit with Sue P. at the 2024 World Service Conference on April 18.

We will keep you updated with any new information.

Unfortunately, there are no active Alateen meetings in the Minnesota North Al-Anon area.

Here are some options available to children and teens:

- A variety of ages can attend regular Al-Anon meetings.
- By visiting the World Service Office website at:  
<https://alanon.org/newcomers/teen-corner-alateen/>.
- Minnesota South Alateen has several active Alateen meetings available. You can access their site [by clicking on this link](#).
- The Greater Minneapolis and St. Paul Area has several active Alateen meetings available. You can access their site [by clicking on this link](#).

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## **FORUM - Kathy K.**

"The Forum"—What Is the Process? - Al-Anon Family Groups

<https://al-anon.org/blog/the-forum-what-is-the-process>

How is the decision to publish a sharing in The Forum made? And what is the process that brings about a new issue of The Forum every month?

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## **LITERATURE – Kathy K.**

I want to encourage members to consider doing service with CAL at the district or area level. We are so fortunate to have so much great literature. I have enjoyed serving as literature/ forum coordinator and helping at the district level. I would like to encourage all Al-Anon members to come to our next district meeting to learn more about our October Assembly. Kathy K

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Literature Coordinators Update for April/May 2024 (from World Service Office)

Dear Literature Coordinators,

Greetings from your new Associate Director-Literature! I am very excited to be stepping into this new role. Those of you who are also Forum Coordinators will know that I have been the magazine editor of The Forum for the past three years. In that capacity, I worked closely with Tom Coffey, and I am so grateful for his generous mentorship and support. I will carry on his practice of posting bimonthly updates to this AFG Connects community, answering questions here and via email, responding to reprint requests, and keeping you informed of all the latest developments related to our Al-Anon Conference Approved Literature.

Please pass the following information on at Assemblies and via email to District Representatives, Information Services/Intergroups, Website Coordinators, and Newsletter Editors. Creating an email list of these members/service arms makes it easy to inform them.

The Writing Guide for new CAL on Sponsorship and Service Sponsorship is now available.

Several years ago, the Literature Committee began discussing requests from the fellowship for a piece of Conference Approved Literature on sponsorship and service sponsorship primarily made up of member sharings.

A recommendation was made, discussed, and approved by the 2023 World Service Conference, giving conceptual approval "to develop a comprehensive piece on sponsorship and service sponsorship using personal stories from Al-Anon members."

Since then, a writing guideline has been developed, approved, and translated into French and Spanish, and is now available for distribution throughout the fellowship. Please share this writing guideline, use it to facilitate writing workshops, and consider submitting your own experience, strength, and hope on this important topic.

The attached Writing Guide is also posted on the "Send Your Sharing" page of the Al-Anon website.

Sharings may be submitted online at [al-anon.org/sharing](http://al-anon.org/sharing), via email to [wso@al-anon.org](mailto:wso@al-anon.org) with "Sponsorship Piece" in the subject line, by fax to 757-563-1656, or by postal mail to Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc., 1600 Corporate Landing Parkway, Virginia Beach, VA 23454-5617.

New CAL coming this fall!

In 2021, the WSC gave conceptual approval to add a new introduction to The Dilemma of the Alcoholic Marriage (B-4) that places the book in historical perspective, and to develop a booklet of gems from this book, possibly including some new material. In case you missed Tom's announcement a few weeks ago, the GEMS Booklet (working title) has received its official title and will be published this fall!

Here's the skinny:

Healing within Our Alcoholic Relationships-A Collection of Insights from Our Shared Journey (P-95), is a 48-page booklet that provides brief but powerful messages of timeless wisdom for newcomers as well as anyone who may need to "Keep It Simple" and get back to basics. Currently being designed and translated, it will be available in English, French, and Spanish for \$4.00 US this fall.

Sharings needed for "CAL Corner"

Please continue to urge members to share in writing about how any piece of CAL has helped them with their recovery. We could especially use sharings about any of the following: Many Voices, One Journey (B-31), Alcoholism, a Merry-Go-Round Named Denial (P-3), A Little Time for Myself (B-34), the Just for Tonight Alateen Bookmark, The Al-Anon Family Groups-Classic Edition (P-5), Three Views of Al-Anon (P-15), As We Understood... (B-11), ...In All Our Affairs (B-15), How Al-Anon Works (B-32), or When I Got Busy, I Got Better (P-78).

You'll find the CAL Corner and all our writing guidelines, as well as the online submission form, here: [Send Your Sharing - Al-Anon Family Groups](http://SendYourSharing-AlAnonFamilyGroups.org). If you are announcing this verbally or in print (rather than electronically), you may use the URL [al-anon.org/sharing](http://al-anon.org/sharing).

Writing about CAL for Area Newsletters

We'd love for you to use your Area newsletter to publish your Assembly reports, members' reviews of various CAL, or sharings on how local members are

encouraging the use of CAL at their groups. In keeping with Al-Anon's copyright and reprint policies on pages 116-18 of the 2022-2025 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual v3, if you plan to quote from CAL, please remember to request and receive reprint permission prior to publication. Also please note that only limited quotations of a paragraph or less can be approved, and permission only applies to print publication, not online.

Because your Assembly or Area World Service Committee meetings might not coincide with these postings on AFG Connects, please know that you can contact the WSO anytime you need more information or have questions about literature content. The email is [wso@al-anon.org](mailto:wso@al-anon.org), with Literature in the subject line.

Thank you again for all you do to encourage your Area members to use CAL.

Carol

Associate Director-Literature

[carolcn@al-anon.org](mailto:carolcn@al-anon.org)

(757) 563-1600, ext. 1668

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### **NEWSLETTER COORDINATOR-Connie B.**

I am so grateful to have this opportunity to work on this newsletter for the Minnesota North Area. Thanks to all who have submitted articles for this issue.

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### **PUBLIC OUTREACH COORDINATOR – Peggy K.**

MN. North Fall Assembly Report

My name is Peggy K. I am the Minnesota North Outreach Coordinator. I would like to continue to state with sincere gratitude and a special thank you to Lois W., the Co-founder of Al-Anon Family Group Inc. and the wife of Bill W., the Co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous. Lois was a dedicated trusted servant representing the Al-Anon Family Groups. I have been busy attending groups across the district to talk about Public Outreach and support projects. WSO has

been helpful in setting up billboards and answering questions. I attend WSO sponsored zoom meetings which have been very helpful with great networking opportunities.

**District 001/002** Edie W. No report.

**District 003** Previous report information. Mary H. District Representative reports their area is working on the QR code at this time. Then they will work on literature distribution and group and community outreach.

**District 004** Previous report information. Ed D. At the recent March meeting of District 4, a motion was passed to spend up to \$150 for outreach materials for a new group which is starting in Glenwood Minnesota. Also, a discussion was started on a proposal to create a budget and create a position for an outreach person. District 004 rep will bring information to the June 9th meeting.

**District 005** No Public Outreach Coordinator at this time. Rachelle C. Contact

**District 006** Previous report information. Connie B. District Representative reports their area has bought 3 Forum subscriptions and distributed them at local libraries. They hand out the Public Outreach pamphlets at meetings to share the message. Sue B. is the Public Outreach Coordinator for the District.

**District 007** Laural I. The Public Outreach Coordinator Report 3-16-24 Dropped off info at Trinity Lutheran church In Sauk Rapids. Dropped off info at Lutheran church on 3rd St in Waite Park Dropped off info at Adventist church by North Jr High Dropped off info at St. Joseph. Melrose. Sauk Centre clinics Dropped off info at 3 NEW little library in book boxes in St. Cloud, Sauk Rapids, and Waite Park. Osakis had table at Cold Spring Speaker night and sold 3 books and gave literature away, ordered box of Little Time for Self-daily reader books. Got some books in that were ordered and were missed/late getting to me.

**District 008** Previous report information. Julie B. We came up with a district-wide plan, each group carrying it out in their own community. Can't get anyone to step forward into the position. We've had stickers printed with each group's meeting info to affix to Help & Hope magazines to distribute in our communities. We have also printed posters from the WSO website to post in our communities, (the green bottle poster). We also ordered bookmarks to affix stickers to w/our meeting info and are leaving them in libraries.

**District 009** Jan M. Reports January through December 2023 2022-2024 Panel Lakeview Behavioral Health: In-person; March/April - only a few times; no reply recently when I've inquired to see if there are any future opportunities. They are doing more "couples" AA/Al-Anon speakers Poster project: "Not Everyone Trapped by Alcohol is an Alcoholic" Help and Hope distribution project: Both the district as a whole, and a couple of individual groups ordered extras to do their own distribution Range Mental Health: I inquired, but only available in Virginia (District 8) Literature distribution project (Hibbing Tuesday) Community Connect (August): 3 AFG members attended/monitored our Al-Anon table; lower turnout, but members felt there was positive outreach Scenic Serenity Open Meeting hosted by District 9 (Sept. 23) Evergreen Open Meeting/Auction (Dec. 9): very successful – the auction raise \$1,400+ - funds used for public outreach Partners Behavioral Health, Hibbing: A member called and was told that Partners is interested in 1 day, a week, 1 hr. in a.m., but I have had no responses since then to confirm/set up for sure; will continue trying. Kiesler House (Grand Rapids): An Al-Anon member received a call from Kiesler wanting Al-Anon to do outreach there; District 9 DR received a response from Kiesler; they will be having a Community Resources meeting on the 2nd Thursday of each month and are looking to find people to speak at their Community Resources meetings. They seek to help providers and community members learn about support in our area that seek to keep us safe and health. A District 9 Al-Anon member attended the meeting on February 8th. It is open to the public and they usually have between 20-40 people attend from "all walks of life". Literature mailing – District 9: Three groups in the district will be purchasing/distributing. literature to schools in District 9; 2 groups will send literature to professionals; and 2 groups will. send literature to libraries; other groups will be helping groups with mailing lists, etc.; the District approved a budget of \$150 per group to spend on literature for these outreach projects. Billboard: The District approved 1 billboard project; the billboard is located on Highway 169 just west of Hibbing in Kelly Lake, and was posted in the beginning of December for 4 weeks. As of the end of January, it was still up.

**District 010** Previous report information. Rozann Bridgeman District Representative reports there is no coordinator currently. She is recruiting.

**District 011** Ann McKie Updated posters to include a QR code for quick access to the Minnesota North listing of group schedules.

Continue to provide speakers for family day for a local treatment center and a wellness fair at a local college as well as a list of possible speakers for various AA speaker meetings.

Meeting with 2 Al-Anons who will take over my work when my term is up. One of them, Mary Lou, will be speaking with a group of parish nurses and distributing literature.

Encouraging Al-Anons to bring some literature and Forums to appointments with their family physician. Leave the Forums in the waiting room.

Sent in a proposal for a 90-minute session on 12 step groups for the fall Health and Human Services Conference.

**These resources are helpful with Public Outreach** AFG Connects and WSO "In the Loop" are wonderful resources for electronic information <https://al-anon.org> website.

WSO In the Loop has been important in carrying the message of Al-Anon and keeping trusted seventhers informed. The new design of the website literature portal and other changes all contribute to positive image updates that help Al-Anon's image even more relevant in Public Outreach Activities.

Keep it Simple for Professionals, Institutions, and Public Information Media...uses the QR code as one simple tool to make it easier for the public to find Al-Anon Information. Introducing these outreach codes to the districts helps public outreach in districts by putting them on printed materials, posters, and special event announcements. They can be easily downloaded and used in electronic communication to reach those who could refer their clients or patients to Al-Anon.

Think beyond the box, beyond our outlined geographical areas, and consider regionally focused collaboration efforts.

Public Outreach Toolkit helps to inspire Public Outreach Projects. Please use the resource to share with WSO the projects you are working on in each area.

Mediakit, News releases, Interview requests, resources for professionals, and membership surveys are helpful resources.

The internet, web pages, and media resources are helpful at the current time. Billboards, electronic billboards, media ads, radio announcements (contact Peggy for WSO compliance guidelines.)

I appreciate your service dedication, commitment, and endurance. We are all part of the group learning experience. Al-Anon has taught us to be patient, kind, and gentle with our members. We learn through cooperation, collaboration, and communication. Today we celebrate the opportunity to get together again as we know the worldwide fellowship of Al-Anon continues to be alive, growing again, and thriving. We are all trusted servants committed to helping our family members, friends, and community members who are affected by alcoholism.

My goal is to continue to reach out to groups, districts, and members to reconnect Al-Anon to the communities. Please contact me if you have any questions, would like me to present to your groups, or district meetings, or help plan a community outreach project. I presented many groups and districts this last quarter. Handouts are available at the Public Outreach display table.

Thank you for your service in Al-Anon, always grateful and blessed.

## **PERSONAL SHARINGS**

### **Why do I keep coming back?**

That is a question I get from some people, simple answer is I am still sick, better answer is YOU (the members) keep loving me, hugging me and lifting me up.

People don't understand that yes, my husband is gone, he passed away 3 years ago, but I still have all of the ism's of alcoholism. I will always be very grateful for my husband being an alcoholic, as when he got into recovery, his Sponsor told him to get me to Al-Anon as we are the crazy ones.

At my first meeting I was nervous, scared, I did not know anyone at the meeting, and I wasn't even sure if I belonged there. YOU were there, you welcomed me, and loved me until I could find myself.

At my first District Meeting, the District Representative told me at my weekly meeting she needed a ride to Wadena for a District meeting, and I could pick her up at 9am at her house. I told her I had 3 young children and a husband at home, I could not go that far from home. It is almost 50 miles away. She said pick me up at



9am, wanting what she had, I picked her up at 9am that Saturday. YOU were there, you welcomed me and accepted me for where I was in my new recovery.

My first Assembly was in Elk River, right after MN N and S split. It was quite the experience, here are some of the highlights from that Assembly. Ester K was our Delegate, I thought she knew everything. I sat next to a lady ( I thought she was Lois W) but it turns out she was Maxine, and she knew even more than Ester as the Panel (all the smart people in the front) would present something and Maxine would hold up these notebooks (the service manual at the time) and say this is what we need to look at as this is how the WSO suggests. Next, I found out I was going to be sleeping with the DR from our District. I knew she was so smart as she reported on things at our District that came from the World Service Office and the newly formed Area. I was really scared now but turned out we talked most of the night and we had so much in common. YOU welcomed me and helped me to conquer some of my fears.

I never imagined being Delegate for Area 29 but come election time there was no one standing for the position, so three of us, with all of our doubts stood for the position. It was a very rewarding and challenging time for me, but YOU were there with your encouragement, love, and support. Lynette was the Alternate Delegate, and I could not have had a better right hand, she will always have a special place in my heart and recovery.

YOU have been there for me for many years, and YOU are still there with your love and your hugs, and I love YOU all for it. So, you see there are reasons I keep coming back, I am still sick, I still deal with my ism's, I am a work in progress, and I will not graduate as I continue to do the Al-Anon waltz, Step 1, 2, 3.

Loving YOU back,

Doris K. Past Delegate Panel 53, current member

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## **MY LONG DISTANCE SPONSORSHIP RELATIONSHIP**

Shortly after the CoVid-19 pandemic started, my home Al-Anon Group started meeting via Zoom rather than in person. On our Area Al-Anon Website, my home telephone number was listed as the contact number for our group. One morning, I received a telephone call from a gentleman wanting to attend our Al-Anon meeting. He lived a few hours away from where I lived. He started attending our

weekly Zoom meetings. After attending a few of our meetings, he asked me if he could call me on the phone. When he called me, he asked me if I would be his sponsor. I agreed and we decided to have weekly phone calls with each other.

As we got to know each other on the phone and at our weekly Zoom group meetings, I learned that he had been recommended to attend Al-Anon by a therapist he had been seeing to help him deal better with his anger. He had a lot going on in his life at that time. He had a family member who had a drinking problem. One of his children had recently gone through a divorce. His father was dying of cancer. In our phone calls, we talked about how to work each of the Steps, starting with Step One and progressing through the Steps, all the way to Step 12. He was very committed to working the Al-Anon program and the 12 Steps. He knew his powerlessness over alcohol and other people, and came to believe in a Higher Power who could restore his life to sanity. He did a searching and fearless moral inventory of his life and admitted to God, Himself and me his character defects and his strengths. He asked God to remove his shortcomings and made some powerful amends to people he loved. He has had a wonderful spiritual awakening as a result of doing these Steps. His radical acceptance of his powerlessness over alcohol and other people has provided the space for some of his loved ones to find recovery in their lives.

I have been his sponsor for over 3 years now and have met him in person only once. I believe I know him well as he shares from his heart with me every week. I feel so privileged to be his sponsor and tell him frequently that I have learned as much or more from him than he has from me. I am confident he will someday be a wonderful sponsor for others in Al-Anon.

Roland B.

St. Cloud, MN

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## Please Share in Writing on Sponsorship and Service Sponsorship

The 2023 World Service Conference gave conceptual approval “to develop a comprehensive piece on sponsorship and service sponsorship using personal stories from Al-Anon members.” Please share your experiences with sponsorship—the benefits as well as the challenges—so we can all learn from each other how to effectively use these important recovery tools.

### Please consider answering any of the following questions:

- How soon did I get a Sponsor? Become a Sponsor?
- What, if anything, has kept me from finding or becoming a Sponsor?
- What qualities do I look for in a Sponsor?
- What impact has having or being a Sponsor had on my recovery?
- Were the parameters of my sponsorship relationship a good fit for both of us?
- Have I studied the Steps, Traditions, or Concepts of Service with a Sponsor or someone I sponsor?
- What have I learned from having or being a Sponsor?
- What did I do if my needs were not being met by having or being a Sponsor?
- Which of Al-Anon’s spiritual principles apply to having or being a Sponsor?

- Why do (or don’t) I have a Service Sponsor? Why am (or aren’t) I a Service Sponsor?
- How is my Service Sponsor different from my personal Sponsor?
- How am I different as a Service Sponsor than as a personal Sponsor?
- Which of Al-Anon’s spiritual principles apply to having or being a Service Sponsor?

### Please keep the following guidelines in mind:

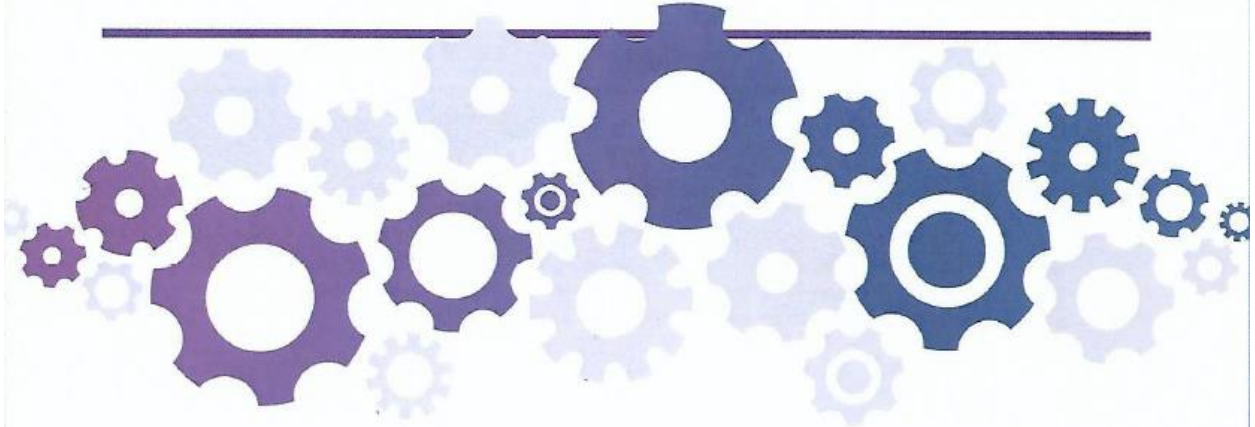
- Share personal experience from the heart, focusing on yourself, not the alcoholic or others.
- Write in the first person singular—“I.” Please avoid the use of the pronoun “you.”
- Avoid generalities, outside issues, treatment center language, and religious philosophy or doctrine.
- Kindly observe Al-Anon’s Twelve Traditions when sharing.

If printed, your sharing will remain anonymous, but please include your name and postal or email address so that we can acknowledge receipt.

If not used, your sharing will be forwarded to the *Forum* Editorial Advisory Committee for review. If published in *The Forum*, you will be notified by letter and receive a complimentary copy of the issue in which your article appears.

# The 2024 Al-Anon Membership Survey

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Calling all Al-Anon members—longtime members and newcomers alike! This service project provides data that helps to validate the effectiveness of recovery through Al-Anon Family Groups. “Participation is the key to harmony,” and your participation is important and greatly appreciated.

**The survey is open from June 20 to July 31, 2024.**

- Participation is completely anonymous
- No personally identifiable information is collected
- 10–15 minutes to complete
- Requires an internet-connected device
- Available in English, Spanish, and French.



Visit **[al-anon.org/membersurvey](https://al-anon.org/membersurvey)** to participate!

