



HISTORY OF AL-ANON FAMILY GROUPS IN GREATER ST. LOUIS

THE BEGINNING

The Al-Anon Family Groups of Greater St. Louis (our official name), or better known as the Big Bend Intergroup Office, was started before there were any guidelines for establishing a Literature Distribution Center (LDC) or Al-Anon Information Service (AIS). St. Louis Intergroup (local An-Anon groups) was formed around 1968 and held monthly meetings. They had a Board and Committees. During 1974 St. Louis Intergroup approved of having an office which they would support. It became a reality on October 21, 1974. The office was the first in the state of Missouri. It was staffed by volunteers for about 6 weeks. This did not work out very well because the office was opened only half of the time it should have been. We needed stability, so it was decided to hire a full-time employee. Our very own Pat S. was hired and started to work on December 2, 1974. She worked 9-3 (while the kids were in school). We only paid her the amount she could make without losing the Social Security she received as a widow. In 1985 the Board did a survey of the salaries of office managers in the St. Louis area and increased Pat's salary according to the medium salary at that time. According to WSO guidelines, we need to treat employees fairly, including a benefit package. So when you look at the financial statements and see the salary figure, it includes benefits, but only some of which WSO recommends. According to our by-laws, we are "to maintain an office with PAID employees and Non-Paid volunteers."

Shortly thereafter, the St. Louis Intergroup elected to become incorporated and established a not-for-profit status. We officially became incorporated on February 25, 1975. Our by-laws stated that we be guided in all activities by the TWELVE STEPS, TRADITIONS AND CONCEPTS OF SERVICE under the auspice of Intergroup, which was passed unanimously by the members. (Intergroup does not follow the guidelines or the policy manual when they conflict with our by-laws.)

There are less than a dozen intergroup offices throughout the United States that were started prior to any official guidelines and all were "grandfathered" in by the WSO when guidelines were established. These intergroup offices are some of the largest and most stable LDC & AIS offices in the country. At the second annual AIS/LDC Workshop held in Louisville, Kentucky in March 1993, during a brainstorming session it was said that offices in large metropolitan areas do not seem to be as stable when run by the Districts. (There seems to be rivalry in whose district the funds are spent and where the events are held, instead of for the greater good of the entire metropolitan area.) Offices run by a District seemed to be better served when the District has a large geographical area with a spread-out population (rural areas).

MEMBERSHIP

Intergroup Representatives (IRs) are representatives from each group in the many districts in our service area (Metropolitan Greater St. Louis). *Each Al-Anon Family Group in the St. Louis area shall be entitled to select a representative, hereafter referred to as an "INTERGROUP REPRESENTATIVE" and an Alternate. Each such IR and Alternate shall be a member of the corporation, hereinafter referred to as "MEMBER" or in the plural as "MEMBERS" upon submitting to the Secretary of a Meeting of the Members his or her name and the Group name. AGENTS & REPRESENTATIVES: The Board of Directors may appoint such agents and representatives of the corporation with such powers and to perform such acts or duties on behalf of the corporation as the Board of Directors may see fit, so as may be consistent with these by-laws and to the extent authorized or permitted by law.* Quoted from the 1984 By-Laws. Our By-Laws were updated in 1984 and voted on unanimously by its members (IRs).