

Al-Anon Sense

D14 Saint Louis, MO Newsletter — Apr/May 2023



Introducing D14 Groups

MAKING IT THROUGH COVID

One of the duties of the District Representative is to visit the groups in the district. I have had the privilege of doing that these past three years. This has all taken place during the time of COVID.

In the spring of 2020, I called all the groups I had contact information for. I discovered that most groups were meeting via Zoom, which was fantastic since the COVID restrictions had just started. I was proud of how versatile our groups were. By the time I visited the groups that fall, they had settled into electronic meetings and seemed to be proficient at it.

Some members were texting and calling one another to keep in touch more personally. Some even held their summer socially distanced meetings in a park.

By 2022, more than half the groups were meeting in person. Some continued to have an electronic component. Zoom meetings were feeling more comfortable. Groups began picking up members from out of state and even out of the country.

GROUP VARIETY

At present, six of the sixteen D14 groups are meeting in person. Things are still in flux and membership is lower than pre-Covid for most groups. Another five groups have in-person meetings and an electronic component, using phones, iPads, computers and even large screens. Four are Zoom only. One is a permanent electronic group (PEG).

IMPORTANCE OF UPDATING RECORDS

During March and April, I again visited our groups to help keep our records up to date. It is the beginning of a new panel and time to check our records. This is even more important during this time of fluidity when so much change is taking place in our group meetings.

There are three roles that are important for each group. The Group Contact: A phone number so that new members can easily find your group and be able to connect with someone for questions and information.

The Current Mailing Address: This role is crucial to all the links of service in Al-Anon. Each active group is listed on a national data base with the World Service Office. If the WSO staff is not able to contact your group through your CMA, they wonder if the group is still active. Luckily, we have Area Group Records Coordinators and District Representatives who are here to help to verify the information.

The Group Representative: This person represents your group at the district and area levels. The GR is the one who votes for changes and elections at the Area Assemblies. The GR votes for the Area Delegate who represents the Missouri Area at the World Service Conference. It is an important role.

DISTRICT PACKETS

Our district developed a resource so that our groups know where they can go for help, information and support. It also lists all the groups in the district and how to access them in person or online. And there is information

(D14 Groups, continued on page 2)

(D14 Groups, continued from page 1)

in there about how you can get involved in service to your group, the district and the area. As I visit each group I will give them a hard copy packet and I will email them an electronic one as well.

MEET SOME GROUPS

In this year's issues of Al-Anon Sense, we will feature some of our groups, so you can get to know them better.

FRIENDS IN AFG

This group was the first one in the district to begin meeting in person during COVID restrictions. They developed protocols that included questions about travel, feeling well and being exposed to the virus. They took temperatures and asked those in the room to use hand sanitizer, sit six-feet apart, wear masks and bring their own literature.

Now this is the first group in the Area to be a permanent electronic group (PEG). They are truly adaptable and ready to find solutions to new challenges.

Their format is to read from Conference Approved Literature and share their experience, strength and hope. On the first Tuesday of the month, they discuss the Step of the month, the second, the Tradition, third, the Concept or a topic chosen by the chairperson, on the fourth Tuesday, they have a book study. They meet on Tuesday evenings, 7:15p.m. Meeting ID: 810-1700-2774; Passcode: 612876.

WOMEN IN RECOVERY AC AFG

This is an in-person women's group where, although their

focus is adult children of alcoholic issues, all are welcome. There are designated topics for each week of the month, with a speaker. On the first and third Saturday, they share on the Steps; on the 2nd and 4th week it is an open topic. If there is a 5th week they discuss and share around the Tradition of the month.

Members are invited to join together for lunch after the meeting at a local restaurant. You can find this group on Saturdays at 10:30a.m. at Gethsemane Lutheran Church, 3600 Hampton Ave.

RAINBOW CONNECTION AFG

This is a newer group, registered with the World Service Office in 2004. They are meeting in person at the Steps Alano Club, 3974 Humphrey St. About half of their members log in online. This group is gay and lesbian friendly, yet everyone is welcome. They meet on Tuesdays at 6:30p.m. You can get their ID and passcode by emailing them at: rainbowconnectionalanon@gmail.com.

They read from a daily reader at each meeting. On the first week of the month, they share on the Step of the Month. On the second Tuesday, they have a speaker, on the third week they read from How Al-Anon Works and for the fourth week, they have an open topic.

I encourage you to visit the various groups in our district. I find it amazing to reflect on how each group has its own personality and yet we are all united in the Al-Anon Family.

—Respectfully submitted, Marge O., D14 DR

Contact Al-Anon Family Groups **AFG WSO – World Service Office**

Meeting Information: **1-888-4AL-ANON (1-888-425-2666)**

Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc., 1600 Corporate Landing Parkway, Virginia Beach, VA 23454-5617

T: **(757) 563-1600** F: (757) 563-1656 E: wso@al-anon.org W: al-anon.org

Missouri Area— <https://www.missouri-al-anon.org/> (Round Robin newsletter, MO Area event calendar, Area info)

Al-Anon Family Groups of Greater St. Louis—Al-Anon Information Service

14 Sunnen Dr., #144, Maplewood, MO 63143 T: **314-645-1572** E: aisoffice@stl-al-anon.org W: www.stl-al-anon.org

Illinois Area: District 18: N. Metro East Meetings: www.siafg.org or call **618-463-2429** **District 14:** Southern IL, call **618-398-9470**

***Al-Anon Sense* is for your whole group!**

To get newsletter, email: modistrict14news@gmail.com
Please make copies for group members. If your group can't afford to print copies, contact us with your Group Name, a mailing address, and number of copies needed. District 14 will pay printing and mailing costs.

An *Invitation to share your experience, strength, and hope* with *Al-Anon Sense* readers – please send 200-400 word articles about:

Event News, Reviews, or Announcements, Photos, Articles, Art-work – anything Al-Anon related.

'Anonymous' bylines for submissions: please supply first name and phone number or email in case we need to contact you.

SUBMISSION DEADLINE—Friday, June 9, 2023

Errata: *If you notice any factual errors or omissions, please email us at: modistrict14news@gmail.com*

STATEMENT: *Al-Anon Sense* is published 6 times a year by AFG District 14 in St. Louis, MO. *Al-Anon Sense* is not copy-righted or Conference Approved Literature. We reserve the right to edit or not publish submitted materials due to content or length. *"Anybody can start something, but carrying it out is the real challenge. And all the rest of you are doing that job. You're all founders in your own right, carrying the message."* -- Lois W, 1987 WSC

Powerless, Not Helpless

Wow, let me tell you about my gratitude for the GOD of my understanding. And about the understanding, peace, and love of the program that are—true to the promise of our closing script—growing in me one day at a time.

Recently I've been able to experience (which I believe is a form of understanding) just how deep and wide the effects of the family disease of alcoholism are in my life.

Recognizing, in my self, where and how I'm still an apologetic and frightened child.

Today I can see clearly just how little acceptance—of my self and other people/places/things—I have in general.

Acknowledging that I am often tense or angry, which separates me from God's care and is a consequence of considering my self as separate from Love Incarnate, my higher power is crucial in regaining my agency.

Some recent medical diagnoses, a breakup, and emotionally-demanding work as a counselor have tipped me into wanting peace for my self. The other day at work brought me a crystal clear 'first things first' moment.

I thought, "when the next right thing feels impossible maybe it's a cue from my higher power to be still, don't just do something, sit there." Part of my step work is recovering my trust of my own instincts. To no longer judge what I need, or draw a lot of attention to it in a self-deprecating way. To honor my needs.

For me to "sit there" I have to mind that I'm not just dwelling. Before recovery, I lived in an entire home of hopelessness and helplessness. Come to think of it, that home was my literal childhood house as well as a metaphor once I left it.

Today 'sitting there' is a practice of feeling-over-thinking. Feeling is what my body practiced not doing for years, so I try my best to apply easy does it in the pursuit of feeling my feelings.

In Al-Anon, I am practicing the care of a new kind of home. Specifically I want my nervous system to believe it's okay to experience peace and relaxation. Although our Al Anon literature doesn't talk a lot about the physiological effects of growing up with alcoholism (which I did) it does remind us of physical states like tired and hungry.

Much of the love that I'm beginning to offer myself more and more regularly is love for my actual body and nervous system.

Through our gorgeous fellowship I experience a group of people who are bravely encountering their hurt and moving through with honesty and humor. God bless my sponsor and the healing in that relationship.

The gifts of "growing up" in this program over nearly five years unfolds as my Higher power sees fit.

I used to be repelled by other people's vulnerabilities or 'signs of weakness,' even though I was a mess! (I say that with a lot of love and a smile). And had no acceptance nor mercy for my own sadness and struggle.

Compassion is not such a rare commodity today. And I can recognize more quickly when I continue to be brittle and work to soften. To not withhold care.

Today I am aware of my part in mending the hole in my bucket, so that I can seek and receive what I need. To be powerless but not helpless is where it's at!!

—Tess S.



Photo by Janet R.

Home Sweet AFG Home #1

Home Group: The **home group** is the group a member attends regularly and commits to participate, vote and give service. It is frequently the strongest support for an Al-Anon member since relationships tend to be developed through close and regular contact. (from the Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual)

I have attended multiple Al-Anon meetings but have one group that I call my ‘home group’. My home group survived the pandemic by learning how to Zoom. After large gathering restrictions were lifted, we learned how to do hybrid meetings, in-person and Zoom. Unfortunately, that proved to be unworkable for us and we split into two separate groups. The in-person group kept the original format, name, and location. The Zoom group met for a few months, then folded due to a lack of participation.

At our first in-person meeting, after restrictions were lifted, everyone remarked that Zoom meetings were needed and useful during the quarantine, but they missed the face-to-face contact and nuances – hearing someone laugh, seeing someone’s response, talking one on one.

Since then, our in-person group has almost doubled in weekly attendance. Some of that is because there are fewer in-person meetings in the Metro area. This has resulted in more participation which is a positive outcome. Our group has all of our service positions filled for the first time in my memory.

Several of our members attend multiple meetings and even do different service in those groups. It makes me think that we can have more than one ‘home group’. One or two groups we attend regularly and support however we are able. It reminds me that really, any AFG meeting I attend is ‘home’.

Parti-Word Puzzle 4/16

Find the answers to the 7 clues using the word parts listed. The number in parentheses is the number of letters in the word. Each word piece can be used only once. All pieces must be used. See answer on page 5.

CLUES

- 1 engagement (5)
- 2 guidance (3)
- 3 belief (4)
- 4 knowledge (3)
- 5 preparedness (3)
- 6 puzzling over (4)
- 7 acknowledgment (3)

ANSWERS

AWA	IP	GN	MED
PEC	LIN	ION	GRA
ESS	REN	ITAT	EX
SH	LEA	WIL	IPAT
ION	TAT	PAR	ESS
TIC	DER	TI	DE
	TU	ION	



Please consider writing about one of the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, or Twelve Concepts of Service, as your World Service Office receives very few sharings about them. Submissions should range from about 200 to 400 words.

NOTE: Submissions in Spanish or French must be accompanied by an English translation. Submit online, or send your articles to *The Forum*, 1600 Corporate Landing Parkway, Virginia Beach, VA 23454-5617, or to wso@al-anon.org. --From the April *In The Loop* WSO email

D14 MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

March 9, 2023

INTRODUCTIONS

Members introduced themselves and Traditions and Concepts of Service 1 and 2 were read. Members reflected on the impact of the Traditions and Concepts in their service work.

REPORTS

Secretary - Minutes from the January 9, 2023, District 14 meeting were emailed to members prior to the meeting. Laurie moved to accept the minutes as submitted; Tess seconded. Motion carried.

Treasurer - Hilda W. presented the financial report. D14 received \$1,396.00 in billboard donations— \$119.00 came from the 2022 picnic.

After subtracting our \$1500 ample reserve the district had \$334.88 in available funds.

Newsletter – Connie reported the submission deadline for the district newsletter is Friday April 14, 2023. She is seeking articles submitted in word document or plain text from members. Connie expressed gratitude for the photographs from Janet and all the writers who submitted.

Public Outreach – Billboard is up! And will likely remain indefinitely, until a different buyer wants the space. Cost was \$1,200.00. Marge asked if anyone had seen it; Hilda has seen it.

Spending the remaining \$125.00 in donations on a second billboard was discussed. Loretta R proposed using it

for the health fair because groups are responsible for raising their own Public Outreach funds.

Marge brought up the outreach to school professionals. Meagan wondered what the goal of the project is?

In January, two members had agreed to take packets to schools where they have contacts, and Tess S. spoke to the unrealisticness of a practical application of students and Alateen in a high school setting. Meagan, Laurie and Marge will meet on a subcommittee to decide whether or not they want to pursue outreach in schools.

DISTRICT SUMMER PICNIC – The summer picnic will be held Sunday, May 21, noon to three pm. Janet spoke about getting water; ordering chicken; and finding a speaker. Hilda’s group will order the chicken. Marge will bring water. Will need help setting up a space.

Laurie is asking for donations of unwanted jewelry. If every group could bring some literature, that would be good.

DISTRICT INFO PACKETS – Informational packets regarding the District were finalized and offered at the March meeting for distribution to groups. Marge has the packets. Anyone is welcome to join ongoing conversation.

ELECTRONIC PAYMENT OPTIONS

– Motion made to set up Venmo as a payment option for District contributions. Motion approved. Hilda has set up her Venmo payment account: @hilda-willman on Venmo.

UC bank also has Zelle, a mobile banking app, which will also be used.

[Ed. Note: Update per Hilda W., Zelle is not available for our bank account.]

GROUP ISSUES -

In May we will talk about what makes a group healthy. Hilda vocalized wanting to ensure that the group is healthy: working the steps, using sponsorship, etc. Laurie spoke to the need for healthy rotation of service work.

GROUP REPRESENTATIVES --

New GRs were directed to the Group Rep Guidelines (G-11), found on the World Service Office website. Suzanne spoke to her gratitude for the PowerPoint presented at the January meeting. We discussed the responsibilities of a Group Rep and mentioned that the new Service Manual is now available! Price has gone up to \$11.00.

PANEL 63 AREA ASSEMBLY DATES

May 6&7, 2023 November 4&5, 2023
May 4&5, 2024 November 2&3, 2024
May 3&4, 2025 November 1&2, 2025

CLOSING – Marge closed the meeting with the Al-Anon/Alateen Declaration at 7:48 p.m.

--Excerpts from D14 Secretary, Tess S’s report

NEXT MEETING

May 11, 2023

Answers to page 4 puzzle

- 1 PARTICIPATION
- 2 LEADERSHIP
- 3 EXPECTATION
- 4 AWARENESS
- 5 WILLINGNESS
- 6 MEDITATION
- 7 GRATITUDE

AFG Tool Box

Be teachable.

Did they ask for help?

Don't just do something,
sit there.

TRADITION 4: Each group should be autonomous, except in matters affecting another group or Al-Anon or AA as a whole.

TRADITION 5: Each Al-Anon Family Group has but one purpose: to help families of alcoholics. We do this by practicing the Twelve Steps of AA *ourselves*, by encouraging and understanding our alcoholic relatives, and by welcoming and giving comfort to families of alcoholics.

CONCEPT 4: Participation is the key to harmony.

CONCEPT 5: The rights of appeal and petition protect minorities and insure that they be heard.

D14 Ledger Balance	
Starting Balance as of 1/1/2023	3,114.98
D14 Receipts	241.99
STL Billboard Donations	
Expenses	(1,396.99)
Ending Checking Balance	1,959.98
Less Future Expenses	
Less STL Billboard Donations	(125.00)
Available Checking Balance	1,834.98
Ample Reserve Goal \$1500	1,500.00
Less Available Checking Balance	(1,834.98)
AVAILABLE FUNDS (w/o Ample Reserve)	334.98

****NEW MAILING & VENMO INFO****

Hilda Willman, 5239 Westminster Place,
St. Louis, MO 63108-1122
Venmo: [@Hilda-Willman](#)

Please write D14 and Group Name on Memo line.

For security reasons, don't write 'Treasurer' on envelope.

Contact: d14afgtreasurer@gmail.com or text 314-277-0714

New D14 Treasurer

Venmo Now Accepted

As part of the new Panel 63, District 14 has a new Treasurer. Hilda W. has taken over the duties of Treasurer from Connie L., who served as Acting Treasurer throughout Panel 60. Hilda served as District Secretary for Panel 60. She is the Group Representative of the Hampton Al-Anon Family Group.

The new mailing address for check or money order donations to the district is:

Hilda Willman,
5239 Westminster Place,
St. Louis, MO 63108-1122.

For security purposes, please do not mark Treasurer on the outside of the envelope.

New this Panel, District 14 can accept contributions through Venmo, the mobile payment app.

The address to Venmo a contribution is [@Hilda-Willman](#).

Be sure to note in the description that the funds are for District 14. If the donation is on behalf of an Al-Anon Family Group, please note the name of the group so it can be credited properly. "Most young people I know don't use checks and rarely carry cash," said Hilda, the new treasurer. "We want to make it as easy as possible for Al-Anon members of any age to honor the Seventh Tradition, so now we've added Venmo to our options for making a contribution."

Questions regarding Venmo or how to make a donation to District 14 should be emailed to d14afgtreasurer@gmail.com or texted to 314-277-0714.



MISSOURI AREA AFG DISTRICT 14
ANNUAL PICNIC
SUNDAY MAY 21, 2023

12 NOON TO 3:00 P.M.

TOWER GROVE PARK HUMBOLDT SOUTH SHELTER
4257 NORTHEAST DRIVE ST. LOUIS, MO 63110

SPEAKERS AT 1:30 P.M.

DENNIS M. (AA) AND SARAH M. (AL-ANON)

BOTTLED WATER AND FRIED CHICKEN WILL BE PROVIDED

PLEASE BRING A SIDE DISH TO SHARE

AND A LAWN CHAIR JUST IN CASE TABLES ARE FULL

ATTENDANCE RAFFLE ~ CAL

JEWELRY SALE

BRING YOUR JEWELRY DONATIONS!

QUESTIONS ?? CONTACT JANET R. 314-616-9618

2023 Area AFG Events

PLEASE CHECK MISSOURI AREA AND STL AIS CALENDARS FOR UPDATES AND CANCELLATIONS

APR 21-23, Fri-Sun: CBAT (Come be a Teen-Alateen Camp). Encounter Cove, Roach, MO.

APR 21-23, Fri-Sat: 15th Annual Spring Fling Convention. "Rocketed Into a Fourth Dimension". AA event with AFG participation. Hilton St. Louis Airport. 10330 Natural Bridge Rd., St. Louis, MO 63134. AIS

MAY 6-7, Sat-Sun: MO Area Hybrid Assembly. Old Kinderhook Golf Resort, 678 Old Kinderhook Dr., Camdenton, MO 65020. MOA

MAY 11, Thurs, 6:30-8:00pm: D14 Hybrid Business Meeting. Redeemer Evangelical Church, 6450 S Kingshighway, St. Louis, MO 63116. Contact Marge O. at modistrict14dr@gmail.com. MOA

MAY 21, Sun, 12-3pm: D14 Annual Spring Picnic. Tower Grove Park, 4257 Northeast Dr., St. Louis, MO 63110. Humboldt South Pavilion address 4144 Main Dr. AFG event with AA participation. Speakers at 1:30pm: Al-Anon, Sarah M., AA – Dennis M. Fried chicken and bottled water provided. Please bring side dish to share. Bring chair/towels for seating. Attendance Raffle, Jewelry Sale, Fellowship. Questions – contact Janet R. 314-616-9618. AIS/MOA

JUN 3, Sat, 9am-3pm: MO Area Day In Service. Join the Lively Links of Service. Hosted by Districts 13 and 28. Keynote speaker – Debbie G. Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Creve Coeur, MO 63141. AIS

JUN 4, Sun, 11am-3pm: Central Services 8th Annual Picnic. AA & AFG speakers at 1:00pm. Deer Creek Park – Rocket Part, 3200 Laclede Station Rd., Maplewood, MO 63143. Meat and drinks provided. Bring your favorite dish. Activities for everyone. AIS

JUN 10, Sat, 3pm-Sunset: D15 Picnic. "Gratitude in Recovery". Emmenegger Nature Park, 11991 Stoneywood Dr., Kirkwood, MO 63122. Friends and families are welcome to share outdoor fellowship & fun. With AA participation. Attendance prizes and raffle baskets. D15 will provide fried chicken, water & ice. Please bring side dish, salad, or dessert to share. Chairs/blankets recommended. AIS
Email: modist15dr@gmail.com.

JUN 10, Sat: D9 Picnic, Maryland Heights, MO, Vago Park 270 Fee Fee Rd., Maryland Heights Shelter. Flyer and details to follow.

JUN 29-JUL 2, Thu-Sun: Al-Anon International Convention. "New Hopes, New Friends, Renewed Recovery", Albuquerque, NM. You can reach them at: events@al-anon.org or by calling 757-563-1600. Or, <https://al-anon.org/wso-events/2023-al-anon-international-convention/> AIS

JUL 28-30, Fri-Sun: 73rd Annual AA Missouri State Convention. "AA's Three Legacies; Our Common Solution". With AFG Participation. Capital Plaza Hotel, 415 W McCarty St. Jefferson City, MO. Prison Ghost Tour, Long Timer Meeting, Karaoke. MOA/AIS

AUG 13, Sun, 3-5pm: D13 Ice Cream Social/Speakers Event. Des Peres City Park, 12325 Manchester Rd., Des Peres, MO 63131 (Behind City Hall).

AUG 26, Sat: MO Area AWSC

AUG 27, Sun: Alateen Super Sunday

SEP 22-24, Fri-Sun: MO Al-Anon Convention - "Courage to Be Me". Old Kinderhook Golf Resort, 678 Old Kinderhook Dr., Camdenton, MO 65020. With AA participation. Early registration for discounted room rates. Questions: convention@missouri-al-anon.org MOA

2023 WSC Theme

**"Live, Laugh,
and Grow
Together"**