



# Al-Anon Sense

District 14 Saint Louis, MO Newsletter — June-July 2025

## CARRYING THE MESSAGE —Submitted by Laurie K.

Step Twelve suggests, in part, that we try to “carry the message to others.” That phrase, carry the message, is such a familiar one and resonates as one of the efforts that I wish to continue doing as I work this marvelous Al-Anon program.

### FIRST MEETINGS

Members carrying the message of Al-Anon and Alateen have surrounded me ever since I came tentatively to my first meetings. I was so fortunate to come to a meeting that shared all of the program with me from the beginning. I heard, over a period of time, all those practices that helped me to deal with the effects of someone else's alcoholism and use the Three Legacies in my life, a little at a time.

Additionally, at each meeting, even when there were only three of us there, upcoming program events and opportunities to learn and grow were always announced. In those small meetings, the other two members knew about those events and opportunities but were sharing

them with me – and others where there were more of us present – so we could check out and participate in the whole of recovery.



District meetings, Area Assemblies, speaker meetings, and workshops seemed always to be popping up and I was invited. No one had been inviting me anywhere for quite some time and now I felt noticed. Those mem-

bers knew that if I got to some of those events, I would grow and meet other members from whom I could learn.

I often heard that one should take the Steps in order and I was just beginning to do so but there were no secrets. I could get what benefit I might find in the rest of the Steps, in any of the Traditions that spoke to me. I could follow the example of speakers or try the ideas presented in workshops.

### GROWTH IN TIME

I couldn't have put it into words but those seasoned members trusted me to take what I could. I have found that ideas that didn't make sense to me at the time came back to mind later when I could use them. Just knowing that Al-Anon had such positive effects on speakers and trusted servants said to me that I had the potential to benefit also: I had value. My newness didn't have to get in the way of my picking up whatever program gems that made sense to me at the time.

Our area newsletter then, the

*Please turn to page 2, “MESSAGE”*

## PRACTICING THESE PRINCIPLES IN ALL OUR AFFAIRS

After a tornado damaged our home last month, I realized that “practicing these principles in all our affairs” meant, first, admitting our powerlessness over Mother Nature, snapped trees, lack of electricity, the pace of repairs, insurance adjusters, and on and on. Our neighborhood looked like bombs had been set off in it and we struggled even to know what the “next right thing” was to do.

When I am fearful, I turn to page 150 of *Courage to Change* (a page that helped me so much during the COVID-19 pandemic): “Worry and fear can alter our perceptions until we lose all sense of reality, twisting neutral situations into nightmares. Because most worry focuses on the future, if we can learn to stay in the present, living one day or one moment at a time, we take positive steps toward warding off the effects of fear.”

“Most of our fears will never come to pass, and if they do, foreknowledge probably won’t make us any better prepared. But as we grow in faith, self-esteem, and trust in our Higher Power, we become capable of doing for ourselves what our anticipations could never achieve—taking appropriate action in any situation.”

As we face the task of rebuilding, the Serenity Prayer helps me be at peace. The daily readers remind me to adjust my attitude and then get to work. The friends I’ve made in the program offer support and love and even helping hands to pick up broken glass and empty a stinky refrigerator.

Though I wouldn’t wish alcoholism—or a tornado—on anyone, I am so grateful we have this program to help us face whatever situations life brings our way.  
—Submitted by a Grateful Member

### MESSAGE, continued from page 1

*Round Robin*, was always at our meeting for me to pick up. From it I learned more about recovery but especially about the existence and benefit of Service. The whole program seemed to be laid out in front of me.

#### CARRYING THE MESSAGE

A member of my home group was serving as a coordinator for the Missouri Area concerned with connecting with institutions like the burgeoning treat-

ment centers, as well as prisons, hospitals, and other such places. She wrote a column for that newsletter which she called “Carrying the Message.” Every month she encouraged members all over Missouri to get out and let those institutions know how Al-Anon and Alateen could help those they served.

Since every one of us can carry the message of this program in one way or another, just think of all the hurting people who have the possibility of learning about the help that can be found in our meetings!

#### 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](mailto:wso@al-anon.org) W: [al-anon.org](http://al-anon.org)

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

To subscribe, email: [d14afgnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:d14afgnewsletter@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, Reflections, Announcements, Photos, Artwork – anything Al-Anon related. **‘Anonymous’ by-lines** for submissions: please supply first name and phone number or email in case we need to contact you.

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## NUDGES FROM A POWER GREATER THAN MYSELF

When I make small decisions about how I live my days, I do so on the basis of Al-Anon's slogans. And since I often berate myself that I don't stop to listen to my Higher Power as much as I would like to, I just realized that thinking of a slogan is a hint from that Higher Power.

*“As I have always thought our literature is divinely inspired, so can my days go better with use of the Slogans from minute to minute.”*

As I move about the house and decide what little task to do next, First Things First comes to mind. On my way to the kitchen, I can pick up those papers that I left out last night. Then I notice some other little job that I can do on the way and that becomes the First Thing. My every action is really guided and I haven't been aware of it.

When, as I get older, I overdo it one day with a fun task like dyeing Easter eggs, I figure out that I need to take on shorter tasks and space them out over days. Easy Does It comes to mind as I adjust to the reality of my old age. Now where does that realization come from?

As I have always thought that our literature is divinely inspired, so can my days go better with that habitual use of the Slogans from minute to minute. What is this except that I am using what I learned from listening to seasoned members in my group from the beginning? The sharing in our meetings by individuals who come hoping to say something that will help others is also manna from my Higher Power.

I am recovering from a surgery and then an infection and sometimes my progress doesn't come as fast as I would wish. One Day at a Time, that little

voice tells me, and I am more satisfied with small progress.

I am reminded by a sponsee that what attracted her to ask me for help was the smile on my face and the rueful humor that I inject into my sharing. I could be grateful for my choice of words that often surprises me. Now where did that come from?

When the events of the world threaten to overwhelm me, I fall back on thinking, “How Important Is It that I follow the news just now?” I am sure that Power that I think guides my life is prompting me to Take Care of Myself.

My early efforts at prayer were what I call Thank You prayers but when alcoholism was running the events and reactions of my days, members re-

mind me that an Attitude of Gratitude lightened my outlook.

And when I am tempted to judge and criticize those around me - or the people in our Area meetings - strangely I am reminded of Principles above Personalities. I can love my fellow members better when I step back and think about that Saying.



In other words I have been surrounded with nudges from a Power greater than myself all these years and I wasn't aware of where the inspiration comes from.

—Submitted by a Grateful Member

## GOODBYE TO A FRIEND

“Now that we have opened our hearts to experience our feelings, we realize that we can’t remain the same. This is both one of the gifts and hardships of feeling with an open heart.” --*Opening Our Hearts, Transforming Our Losses (B-29)*

A woman I sponsored passed recently and I am processing my feelings through my Al-Anon program – attending meetings, reading CAL, meditating, reminiscing.

I was surprised when she asked me to be her sponsor. She was almost the age my Mom would be. She was a member of a religious community, and I don’t have any religious affiliation. She was well-educated, a world traveler, a former teacher.

### WHAT DID I HAVE TO OFFER?

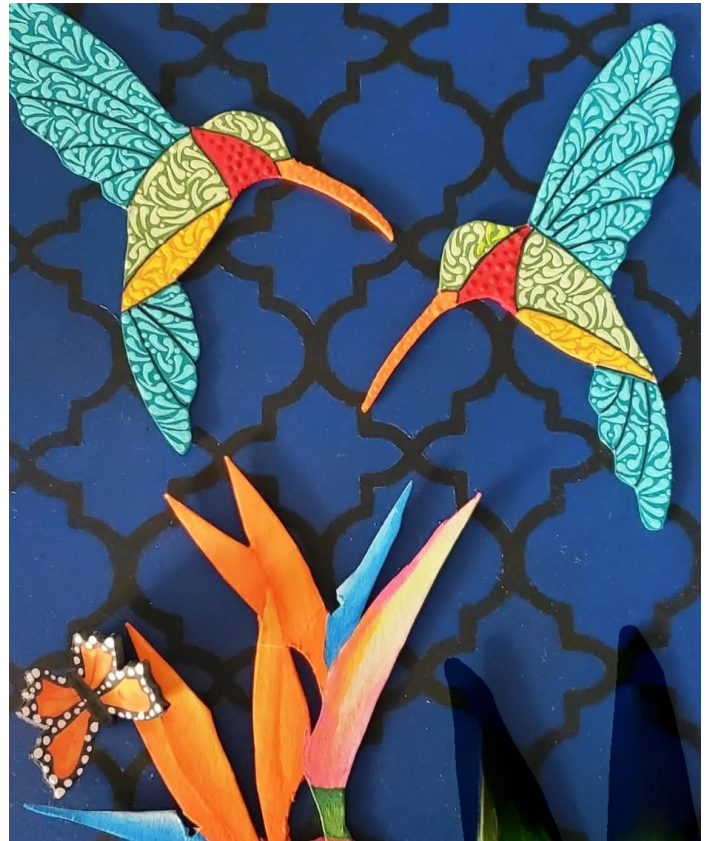
I think my initial doubt was a reflex from my unrecovered life where I felt intimidated by people with her life experiences and seeming confidence and authority. What did I have to offer her? I accepted because I believe that in the Al-Anon rooms we are all equals, not one above or over another despite our personal accomplishments, experiences, or circumstances.

We had talked a lot at our after-meeting fellowship lunches, and it was an easy flow. Over time, she felt comfortable with adjusting her personal anonymity level and shared more with us at lunch – that’s where I heard the things that made me think maybe I wasn’t qualified to sponsor this accomplished and religious woman.

### SOMETHING TO OFFER

Who was I? I was an Al-Anon member. One of a world-wide fellowship of members united by our one purpose – to help families and friends of alcoholics. I accepted that I had some experience, strength and hope to offer in the Al-Anon context. Her life outside the rooms mattered only where there was or had been a problem with alcohol and its effects on her life.

As our Sponsorship pamphlet says, we became more than sponsor-sponsored, we became friends. And friendships can be challenging, even if all par-



ties are fully steeped in Al-Anon, because we’re human and challenges still happen.

### INITIAL HESITATION

At first, she wasn’t sure that Al-Anon was the right place for her even though a counselor had suggested she try it out. As we talked, she mentioned relationships and situations that were Al-Anon 101. She wasn’t yet able to name it alcoholism and that was okay. Z

We butted heads a bit about being on time for our calls. She admitted she was chronically time challenged and rationalized it by saying she was on ‘southern time’. I learned to set a flexible boundary that worked for both of us.

She sometimes wandered outside of CAL into religious text or topics – not to proselytize – it was just such a large chunk of her being that it was like breathing. At first she felt I was being harsh by gently reminding her that certain topics are best left outside the rooms – and to take those topics to her friends or peers from her community.

## FRIEND, continued from page 4

### PUTTING ON HER AL-ANON HAT

I used the ‘hat’ method, borrowed and modified from a Missouri Area Assembly presentation, where I encouraged her to put on her Al-Anon hat in the rooms and then put on her community or social justice hats when outside the rooms.

We had several discussions about using the word God or Higher Power. She did not like the term “Higher Power.” She didn’t even like to read it in our CAL. I told her that was okay.

That evolved into a deep discussion about language and the meaning of words. One point she made was that other cultures often have words that describe different types of snow or love, and our culture does too but we seem to mostly choose the one-size-fits-all by using love or snow as generic terms when we mean “like,” “can’t live without,” sibling love, slushy snow, hard snow, fluffy snow.

In our talks, we sometimes strayed off the Al-Anon path onto the friend path, but I usually

was able to tie it back to Al-Anon or get back to the topic.

### ALL ABOUT SERVICE

Her life outside Al-Anon was all about service to others and self-sacrifice so she, of course, jumped right into group service,

*‘Grief brings me back to Al-Anon, back to recovery, back to life.’*

—Opening Our Hearts, Transforming Our Losses

speaking, chairing, leading small group.

That is where she sometimes forgot her AFG hat. She did practice and became more comfortable with switching hats when in the rooms. She had the experience and skills to speak and lead meetings, but it took a little time for her to fold Al-Anon Traditions into the mix. Yet she didn’t give up and always wanted to help and participate.

When she passed, she was on her Al-Anon recovery journey. She came to it late in life. She brought a lot of energy and willingness, and I hope that I have that energy and willingness when I’m at that point in my life.

### ACCEPTING MY FEELINGS

As for my feelings, I’m aware and accept them. I’m sad. And grief seizes my voice, I can’t talk.

I was astonished when I heard she had passed because I had spoken to her recently and she sounded strong and sassy and ready to go back to her community activities and Al-Anon meetings and shopping at Goodwill for deals on clothes and bringing candy to the group meetings to share. Then she was gone.

Never forgotten. And missed and loved.

‘Grief brings me back to Al-Anon, back to recovery, back to life.’ -- *Opening Our Hearts, Transforming Our Losses*

—Submitted by Connie L.,  
a grateful friend and sponsor

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR AN AFTERNOON WITH LEGENDS

Al-Anon members and guests will have an opportunity to hear living legends Laurie K. and Loretta R. reflect on their combined 100+ years of recovery and service at District 14’s History Celebration Part II, set for 1:30-4:30 p.m., Saturday, August 18 at St. Cro-nan Parish Center, 1202 Boyle Avenue in The Grove neighborhood. The two former Missouri Area Delegates will participate in a talk-show-



style session moderated by member Geri W.

Participants will be invited to share what Al-Anon means to them and to envision how to take the fellowship into the future.

Light refreshments will be provided. For more information, call or text 314-616-9618. The building and parking lot are fully accessible.

# WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

## GROUP NAMES

The World Service Office (WSO) adopted a new policy about the wording concerning group names last year. **It was meant for new groups**, and was to no longer allow groups to have the group focus as a part of their name, for example, adult children of alcoholics, or women, or sexual orientation.

After this was announced there was confusion about existing groups which already had such designations in their names. This misunderstanding was clarified at the World Service Conference (WSC).

The Policy Committee Chairperson stated, “I want to reinforce that it was never the Policy Committee’s intention to one day direct the WSO Staff to enforce this Policy on existing groups – EVER!” So the WSC voted to suspend the Policy about group names for existing groups to allow next year’s Panel to address it. They also want to emphasize that **all groups, regardless of their specific focus, are to allow any member to attend.**

*Minneapolis, MN, won the competition to hold the 2028 International Al-Anon Convention with AA Participation*

Further, it was recognized that Delegates were not able to discuss the proposed Policy with their groups before the 2024 Conference. Thus, groups did not have the opportunity to express concerns and inform Delegates adequately.

The Committee acknowledged its mistake in not foreseeing the possibility of misinterpretation and expressed regret for the harm caused by this oversight. This will be discussed in the Areas and at future WSC meetings. (See pages 7-9.)

## INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS

The **2028 International Al-Anon Convention (with A.A. Participation)** will be held in **Minneapolis, MN**, on July 20-22. Kansas City was in the running but lost the bid to Minneapolis. It has a great Convention Center with two hotels attached to it and others within walking distance. It is an easy flight and reasonable driving distance from St. Louis and Kansas City.

The AA convention (with Al-Anon participation) for 2030 will be in St. Louis.

This year’s Road Trip: You and the Board Connect will be in Omaha, NB, on October 25, 2025. Omaha is also within driving distance of St. Louis.

## IAGSM

International Groups make up 41 percent of registered groups worldwide. The purpose of the International Al-Anon General Services Meeting (IAGSM) is to share the experience of Al-Anon national services around the world through their Delegates. It encourages the growth of a sound service structure; maintains worldwide unity, and represents an expression of a worldwide group conscience.

The IAGSM is held every two years, alternating between another country and Virginia Beach, VA, home of the WSO. Only those structures with a General Service Office (GSO) can participate, and the meeting is held in English. More information about IAGSM is available online at <https://al-anon.org/formembers/international/>.

## WSO REVENUE

These are the WSO’s main sources of revenue: Literature Sales 39%; Contributions 40%; Magazine Sales 3%; Other Income 18%.

## PROFESSIONAL OUTREACH & YOUNG PEOPLE

This project is taking a multi-faceted approach to reach young people aged 13–25 who may be affected by someone else’s drinking, along with those professionals who are able to refer these young people to Al-Anon and Alateen.

Plans are to develop podcasts geared toward teenagers and young adults. Al-Anon will participate in having exhibits at professional conferences and ads in trade journals focused on reaching social workers, school counselors and others who work with teens.

And WSO will develop a dedicated LinkedIn advertising campaign to raise awareness of Al-Anon and Alateen among high school and college educators.

## FUTURE LEADERS

The Growing Future Volunteer Leaders Task Force will study how to harness knowledge and experience for service; understand the links of service; and how to use service tools and to apply Concepts of Service.

*Please turn to page 7, “CONFERENCE”*

# GROUPS ASKED TO PROVIDE FEEDBACK ON NAME ISSUE

Each year the Missouri Area sends a Delegate to the World Service Conference, known as the largest Group Conscience of Al-Anon Family Groups. At the Conference changes to the Service Manual Policy Section are discussed and voted on.

In 2024 changes were made to the Choosing a Group Name Policy. The World Service Office (WSO) staff later proposed implementation of that policy to eliminate group identifiers such as Men, Women, LBGQTI+, Parents, Adult Children etc. from new group names when registering groups.

Appeals were received by the WSO as the implementation was seen as a policy decision, with most requests calling for the Policy to be rescinded.

After discussion at the 2025 WSC a motion was made to suspend the implementation of the 2024 policy until the 2026 WSC. This allows groups to provide feedback on the policy and its impact.

For the Missouri Area Delegate to gather this feedback from the Missouri Area Groups the following request is being made. Please read this aloud if time permits at your group Business



Meetings and then follow the discussion guidelines. (See page 9.)

This is being sent now so your group can answer the provided questions over several Business Meetings. Your Group Representative will bring the feedback to the November Area Assembly.

## INFO TO AID IN YOUR GROUP'S DISCUSSION

### The Policy Committee made the following acknowledgments:

- The Committee admitted to a lack of clarity in updates and expressed regret for the unintended consequences of the policy.
- They emphasized that the policy was never intended to be enforced retroactively on existing groups.

### WSO Implementation Process

The WSO Staff process for reviewing names, which may not be in alignment with the Policy, includes thoughtful reflection on the applicability of the Policy:

- WSO Staff notify Area Group Records Coordi-

*Please turn to page 8, "FEEDBACK"*

## CONFERENCE, continued from page 6

WSO also is fostering leadership by:

- ♦ Identifying and inviting leadership potential in Al-Anon members who are our fellowships' future leaders;
- ♦ Through the Policy/Guidelines/Service Manual, to ensure that future leaders have awareness of, appreciation for, and access to a proven collection of resources;

- ♦ Training and education, to engage in the active intentional transfer of Al-Anon history and collective service experience, strength and hope to future leaders as a means of fulfilling AFG's primary purpose; and
- ♦ Through Sponsorship/Mentoring, to build bridges of personal connection, tangible investing in future volunteer leaders while simultaneously enriching recovery, unity and service.

—Submitted by Marge O., District 14 District Rep

## FEEDBACK, continued from page 7

nators when names are not accepted.

- In speaking with those registering groups with names containing identifiers, Staff are regularly told the group will not welcome or even accept those who do not match the identification.
- When sharing with groups whose name is not accepted, Staff share education about the Traditions and our primary purpose of welcoming at any meeting all those struggling with alcoholism in a loved one.
- When reviewing names, Staff do not interpret identifiers as affiliation.
- For reference, Staff practice is not to apply new policies retroactively, in other words, Staff do not enforce new policies on existing groups.
- Searching for groups by participant designation has been simplified on both al-anon.org meeting searches to make these searches easily accessible.
- Searching by name is not available on the geographic meeting search and cannot be added given current technology.
- Newcomers and even long-standing members have shared and demonstrated that they do not understand they are welcome at meetings with group names or participant designations with which they do not identify.

## Approved Policy found on page 85 2022-2025 Al-Anon Service Manual v4 “Choosing a Group’s Name”

When choosing an Al-Anon or Alateen group name, consider the welcoming and comforting focus of Tradition Five. Anyone affected



by someone else’s drinking is welcome at an Al-Anon meeting. It is vital that group names are inviting and attractive and that they avoid public controversy. Our spiritual growth has its roots in the principle of anonymity to enhance the sense of belonging and unity.

A group’s name may be a person’s first impression of Al-Anon. Consider the lasting impact the group name can have on newcomers, members, the public and professionals.

The group’s name and meeting information may appear on local meeting lists, printed materials, websites and other venues for sharing public information (see “Publicizing Meeting Locations” in the “Policies” section of this Al-

Anon/Alateen Service Manual).

Members weigh the guidance of the spiritual principles found in the Twelve Traditions when choosing a group name:

- Common welfare for the greatest number in Al-Anon depends upon unity.
- Al-Anon does not affiliate with or endorse any outside enterprise, such as other Twelve Step groups, self-help groups, religious groups, rehabilitation facilities, or commercial businesses.
- The only requirement for membership in Al-Anon is that there be a problem of alcoholism in a relative or friend.
- The name does not affect another group or affect Al-Anon or A.A. as a whole.
- Al-Anon has no opinion on outside issues.

The Policy Committee and the World Service Conference have delegated authority and responsibility to the WSO to review proposed group names for adherence to Al-Anon Policies and principles.”

For members of your group wanting more information here is a link to a [folder](#) containing the following documents

- 2025 WSC-Choosing a Group’s Name Policy Timeline
- Delegate Report Choosing a Group’s Name Policy Section
- MEMO WSO Policy Committee-Choosing a Group Name Implementation Statement Final

# Choosing a Group Name Policy

## Feedback Requested from the Missouri Area Groups

### Discussion Guidelines

Over the next few months please consider using a portion of your group business meetings (group conscience) to discuss at least one of the questions below. Be sure to take notes so your Group Representative can bring your group's feedback to the November Assembly.

#### GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDELINE

- Make the Feedback Requested Document (pages 7-8) and these guidelines available to your group.
- If time permits read the Document at Business Meeting before you discuss the issue. Before Discussion begins read this guideline.



#### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Tradition Three: The relatives of alcoholics, when gathered together 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."
  - **Do identifiers, such as men, women, parents etc. in group names uphold this tradition? Why or Why not?**
2. Tradition Four: "Every group should be autonomous, except in matters affecting another group or Al-Anon or AA as a whole."
  - **How do identifiers in group names affect Al-Anon as a whole?**
3. Tradition One: "Our common welfare should come first; personal progress for the greatest number depends on unity."
  - **Do identifiers in group names create unity**

**and allow for the personal progress for the greatest number? Why or Why not?**

4. Tradition Five: "Each Al-Anon Family Group has but one purpose: to help the 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."

- **How does your group welcome and give comfort to families of alcoholics?**

5. **If your group has an identifier in your name**

The motion that was passed stated: Allow group names to continue to include identifiers

such as those currently listed on page 28 of the 2022-2025 Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual (P-24/27) v4(a) including "men, women, parents, adult children, young adults, other gender identification/sexual orientation, etc. with the understanding that in keeping with Traditions Three and Five the groups will welcome anyone affected by someone else's drinking" until the 2026 World Service Conference to allow WSC Structure Areas to discuss the implementation of the 2024 WSC - approved "Choosing a Group's Name" Policy.

- **Have you ever turned anyone away from your meeting because they do not meet the identifier in your name? Why?**
- **Do the actions taken uphold Tradition Three? How?**
- **How could you welcome anyone affected by someone's drinking whether they meet the identifier in your group name or not?**

# HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MAY 2025 DISTRICT 14 MEETING

District Representative Marge O. called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

**TREASURER** – The starting balance at the beginning of 2025 was \$2,400.50. This is a change from the last report, which incorrectly reported the year’s starting balance to be \$80.00 less than was the case. Receipts for the first four months were \$546.95 and expenses were \$407.05. The bulk of that expense—\$219.55—was for the purchase of 250 pens for public outreach. Setting aside the \$1,500.00 ample reserve, the District has \$1,040.40 in available funds.

**PUBLIC OUTREACH** – Pens are available for Public Outreach. Marge was asked before Covid to start an Al-Anon group at a largely Spanish-speaking Catholic parish. Marge explained that outside enterprises are not allowed to sponsor groups. Motion approved to authorize the purchase of Spanish language CAL for St. Cecelia Parish in south St. Louis.

**EVENTS-FALL FESTIVAL** – Janet considering booking St. Cronan’s for the Fall Festival as the building is available from 1:30-4:30 p.m., Saturday, October 18. St. Cronan’s does not specify an amount required to rent the space; other places want as much as \$200.

**All Are Welcome**  
**July 10, 2025**  
**Next District 14 Meeting**  
**6450 S. Kingshighway**  
**6:30–8 pm**

**Or via Zoom**  
**Meeting ID: 816 821 7594**  
**Password: 7594**

**HISTORY CELEBRATION** – Janet reported that History Day is set for 1:30-4:30 p.m., Saturday, August 16, also at St. Cronan’s Parish Hall. The event will include showing of the film “Early Pioneers.” Janet will set up the TV the day before. Geri W. will facilitate interviews of Laurie and Loretta. We need a tech person to record the interview session.

**VISITING GROUPS** – Marge has a packet to hand out to the groups during her last tour of their meetings before the panel ends. Only 4 groups in the district have active GRs.

**DISTRICT INVENTORY** – Meaghan will conduct the follow up from the District Inventory at the July meeting.

**TOPICS/SPEAKERS FOR 2025 -**  
 July 10 – Lynn C-R will speak on Leadership Development. The topic is appropriate as we prepare for District elections.

September 11 – Sue K. on the WSO Update and Service as a Delegate

November – Elections and plans for next year

**SPEAKER** – Michael C., Missouri Area Chair, spoke on “What I’ve Learned in Service.” Excerpts from his talk will be featured in the August-September issue of *Al-Anon Sense*.

*—Excerpts from the meeting minutes submitted by Hilda W.*

District 14 gratefully accepts donations from groups and members. Please mail or Venmo to:  
 Hilda Willman, 5239 Westminster Place  
 St. Louis, MO 63108-1122  
 Venmo: [@Hilda-Willman](https://www.venmo.com/@Hilda-Willman)  
 Please make checks out to Missouri District 14 AFG & write Group Name on Memo line.  
 For security reasons, don’t write ‘Treasurer’ on envelope.  
 Contact: [d14afgtreasurer@gmail.com](mailto:d14afgtreasurer@gmail.com) or text 314-277-0714

District 14 Ledger Balance as of 05-8-2025	
Starting Balance as of 1/1/2024	\$ 2,400.50
D14 Receipts	\$ 546.95
Expenses	\$ (407.05)
Ending checking Balance	\$ 2,540.40
Ample Reserve Goal	\$ 1,500.00
AVAILABLE FUNDS (w/o Ample Reserve)	\$ 1,040.40

## SAFETY IN MEETINGS

I have been in an Al-Anon meeting in which a visitor voiced angry accusations at a member of our group. It was quite unsettling.

Recently I have heard of other incidents in which visitors or members became argumentative during a meeting. One of our groups took the initiative to develop a statement to read before each meeting about disruptions. They have also outlined some protocols about how to handle these incidents.

We live in a more divided world these days—one in which there are fewer constraints about inappropriately expressing negative emotions.

### AL-ANON IS A SAFE PLACE

Al-Anon meetings are a refuge for all of us. They need to be a safe place for each of us to find healing from the effects of alcoholism in our lives. Many have experienced past trauma and abuse. They need to experience the comforting embrace that we extend to one another around our tables.

The World Service Office has released a document called “Let’s Talk About Safety in Al-Anon Meetings!” In it you will find extremely helpful ideas and suggestions based on members’ Experience, Strength and Hope.

### ENCOURAGEMENT TO DISCUSS GROUP SAFETY

The WSO document explicitly addresses “Dealing with Disruptions” and “Group Safety and Unity.” It suggests groups discuss the topic of safety and encourages groups to focus on Al-Anon’s primary purpose as stated in Tradition Five: “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.”

The document can be accessed at: <https://al-anon.org/pdf/safety-in-al-anon-meetings.pdf>

—Submitted by Marge O.

## DISTRICT 14 PICNIC: NEW LOCATION, SAME GREAT FELLOWSHIP

Forty grateful members of the worldwide fellowship of Al-Anon gathered June 8 to share a potluck meal, enjoy a beautiful park on a breezy Spring day and listen to inspiring stories of recovery. The District 14 picnic was held for the first time in Shaw Park in Clayton, a location offering accessible amenities, plenty of picnic tables and nearby parking.

Mike P., the AA speaker, claimed he “was born an alcoholic.” With 50 years of sobriety, Mike remembered his first group, which was named “Shipwreck.” Their slogan was, “Don’t drink, don’t die and get here early.”

He recalled a new member of the group said the name Shipwreck meant to him that “all these guys were underwater, but then, that’s where you find the treasure.”

“I’m a real thumper of the Big Book (of Alcoholics Anonymous),” Mike said, quoting, “‘Our real purpose is to be of real service to God and the people around us.’ If I want to be happy, I need to be of service to others. I try to do that without being codependent or caretaking.”

Mary C., the Al-Anon speaker, grew up in a chaotic, alcoholic household. The family moved a lot and she attended many

schools. Eventually, her parents divorced. Her sister, with whom she lived during graduate school, began going to Al-Anon. “She was emotionally honest; she wasn’t petty,” Mary said. “My sister said she had a sponsor and she tricked me into going to my first meeting.” The group was called “It Did Happen to Me AFG” and Mary kept going back because the members were honest.

Her current group, “Easy Does It AFG,” has helped her live by the Traditions and to open up about issues that were off limits in her family of origin.

## AL-ANON EVENTS

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

**THURSDAYS, 12 noon: Conference Approved Literature Meeting,** Grace United Methodist Church, 6199 Waterman, St. Louis, MO 63112. Flyer [here](#).

**JUNE 21, Sat, 10 am-4 pm: Missouri Area Day In Service,** hosted by District 19, Highlands Community of Christ Church, 7615 N. Platte Purchase Dr., Kansas City, MO 64118, <https://www.missouri-al-anon.org/uploads/1/1/6/7/116772009/savethedate2025dis.pdf>

**JUL 3-6: AA 2025 International Convention with Al-Anon Participation,** Vancouver, BC, Registration open now. Must register early to secure downtown hotels! <https://www.aa.org/international-convention>

*“My life is much better since I resigned my job of being Director of the Universe.”*

—Part of a sharing at a recent meeting in the District

**JUL 10, Thurs, 6:30-8 pm: District 14 Hybrid Business Meeting,** Redeemer Evangelical Church, 6450 S. Kingshighway, St. Louis, MO 63116 or via Zoom, Meeting ID: 816 821 7594; password: 7594. All are welcome.

**AUG 1-3, Fri-Sun: Missouri State AA Convention with Al-Anon Participation,** Capitol Plaza Hotel, 415 W. McCarty St., Jefferson City, MO. More information and registration at [www.mostateconvention.org](http://www.mostateconvention.org).

**AUG 16, Sat, 1:30-4:30 pm: District 14 History Celebration Part II,** St. Cronan’s Parish Hall, 1202 S. Boyle Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63110.

More information on page 5 and by calling/texting 314-616-9618.

**AUG 23, Sat: Area World Service Committee (AWSC) Meeting,** University Plaza, 333 South John Q. Hammons Pkwy, Springfield, MO 65806 and on Zoom.

**AUG 24, Sun: Alateen Super Sunday (Business Meeting)**

**AUG 31, Sun, 1-3:30 pm: Ice Cream Social & Jewelry Sale,** Al-Anon & AA Central Service Office, 14 Sunnen Drive, Suite 144, Maplewood, MO 63143. Presentations on AA & Al-Anon history. Flyer [here](#).

**SEPT 26-28, Fri-Sun: Missouri Area Al-Anon/Alateen Convention “Together We Thrive in 2025,”** The Lodge at Old Kinderhook, 678 Kinderhook Dr., Camdenton, MO. Save the date flyer [here](#).

**OCT 11, Sat, 1-4 pm: District 25 Serenity Walk,** Cuivre River State Park, 678 State Route 147, Troy, MO 63379.

**OCT 18, 1:30-4:30 PM: District 14 Fall Festival,** at St. Cronan’s Parish Hall, 1202 Boyle Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63110. Save the date flyer [here](#).

**OCT 25, Sat, 9-5 pm: WSO Road Trip: You and the Board Connect,** Doubletree by Hilton Omaha Downtown, 1626 Dodge Street, Omaha, NE 68102.

**NOV 1-2, Sat-Sun: Missouri Area Assembly,** The Lodge at Old Kinderhook, 678 Kinderhook Dr., Camdenton, MO and on Zoom.

**JULY 20-22, 2028, Thurs-Sat: Al-Anon International Convention with AA Participation,** Minneapolis, MN. See article on page 6. Save the date!

**Many thanks to members Laurie K., Connie L., Marge O., Sue K. and Janet R. who submitted sharings and photos for this issue. Member sharings are vital to the success of this newsletter. Please email submissions to [d14afgnewsleter@gmail.com](mailto:d14afgnewsleter@gmail.com). Thank you!**