

August 2017

### **BOARD VISION STATEMENT**

**All people affected by someone else's drinking will find help and recovery in every community.**

### **BOARD MISSION STATEMENT**

**Anticipate the future and Al-Anon's place in it and ensure that the necessary resources are available.**

### **STRATEGIC PLAN PRIORITIES**

**Al-Anon's spiritual principles permeate our policies and practices; we apply emerging technology and communication options:**

- **To increase the visibility of Al-Anon so that it is recognized as the number one resource throughout the world for helping friends and families of alcoholics.**
- **To empower the Al-Anon fellowship to be vibrant, inclusive and flexible.**
- **To achieve a viable future for Al-Anon Family Groups, the Board will be adaptive and strategic in its use of talents, skills and abilities.**

Dear Al-Anon members,

The purpose of this Chairperson of the Board letter is to share highlights from our July 2017 Board Week. You will also find updates from our Policy Chairperson, Finance update from our Treasurer and the Conference Leadership Team (CLT) update.

At the beginning of the 2017 World Service Conference (WSC), the Board of Trustees announced we were beginning the search for the next Executive Director. I am pleased to share that following a series of interviews, the last of which was held July 19<sup>th</sup> with the full Board, we are ready to make that announcement.

It is with great pleasure that the Board of Trustees, Al-Anon Family Groups, Inc. announces that on September 5<sup>th</sup> 2017, Vali F. will begin her tenure as our next Executive Director. Vali brings with her over 15 years as an active Al-Anon member.

She served as a Panel 53 Delegate from Arizona, Area Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. Additional Al-Anon service roles include AIS Chair and Alateen Coordinator. Vali also brings over 20 years of business experience including management of teams of staff throughout the world. Vali has a keen understanding of the world's ever-changing landscape and how those changes have and will continue to impact the growth and diversity of our fellowship. Vali fully embraces the continued need to find new ways to reach those whose lives have been affected by someone else's drinking.

Our current Executive Director, Mary G., has committed to working side-by-side with Vali beginning September 5<sup>th</sup> through the October Board meeting. This transition period will ensure that our new Executive Director, our World Service Office (WSO) staff and our fellowship as a whole experience a smooth transition.

As shared in the April 2017 Chairperson of the Board Letter, the Board believes this transition period is supported by the spiritual principles of our program by offering the sharing of our experience, strength and hope. We then let go and allow the new Executive Director the freedom to oversee the World Service Office in her own way as outlined in Concept Eleven.

We ask that you share the announcement of our next Executive Director with your fellow members. These are exciting times for our fellowship, filled with hope, enthusiasm and a continued commitment to ensuring that all people affected by someone else's drinking will find help and recovery in every community.

In addition to interviewing and selecting the next Executive Director, the Board took the following actions:

The 2018 World Service Conference will be held in West Harrison, New York. The site will allow the opportunity for the full Conference to visit Stepping Stones. The Conference Leadership Team (CLT) recommended and the Board and is pleased to announce the approval of the 2018 World Service Conference theme:

**Al-Anon – There is no standing still!**

**Al-Anon – ¡No hay razón para detenerse!**

**Al-Anon – Il n'y a pas de place pour l'immobilisme!**

Please refer to the CLT Update contained within this letter for additional information on how the theme was selected and a brief history of the origin.

The 2018 International Al-Anon General Services Meeting (IAGSM) will meet October 2018 in Virginia Beach. The purpose of the IAGSM is to share the experience of Al-Anon national services around the world through their Delegates. Delegates to the IAGSM encourage the growth of a sound service structure while maintaining worldwide unity through the application of our Traditions. Ultimately, this leads to the primary purpose of Al-Anon as a whole — to seek the best way to carry the Al-Anon message of

recovery to families and friends of alcoholics amidst cultural and language differences. The International Coordination Committee (ICC) holds the responsibility of planning the IAGSM agenda and bringing forward to the Board the suggested theme. During our July meeting, the Board enthusiastically approved the theme for the 2018 IAGSM:

### **“Leading by Example: Structures Supporting Structures”**

The WSO Administrative Team joined the Board and Executive Committee members in a Strategic Planning session. The purpose of our joining together in our Strategic Planning sessions is to clarify the forward direction of the organization and the operations of the WSO and how we can appropriately connect. We discussed that the Board is the “what”—being responsible for the strategic direction, and that the staff is the “how”—being responsible for implementing the “what”. The Board and staff are committed to working together in discussing strategies. We believe it to be imperative to have staff in the room for our discussions. We are working from the belief that we support what we help to create.

Following our Strategic Planning session, the Board, Executive Committee members and staff participated in the second annual “Meet and Greet”. This is a continued opportunity to introduce staff, Board and Executive Committee members to one another. Concept Eleven reminds us that the WSO staff not only *supports* the world leadership of the Board, the staff *shares* world leadership with us. As is typical with any Al-Anon gathering, food and laughter were shared.

Staff was also invited to attend the annual Open Nominating Committee meeting. In years past, the Open Nominating Committee meeting was held in the evening and included a dinner. In an attempt to cut costs and offer the entire staff the opportunity to learn how Trustees and our Committee members are selected, this year’s meeting was held at the WSO and the entire staff was invited to attend.

In keeping with the Board’s legal and fiduciary responsibilities, the Board met with the two Financial Advisors for an in-person review of AFG, Inc.’s investments in the Reserve and General Funds.

Each Board meeting the Board and Executive Committee members hold a “Board Development” session. These discussions typically relate to the fiduciary and foresight responsibilities of the Board along with the Executive Committee. The July topic was related to our governance practices. We are working from the place that the Board is best equipped to lead when we are self-aware, function in constructive partnership with our Executive Director and staff and are committed to continually improving our performance. From our discussion came the realization that while our By-Laws have been updated to reflect changes as they have occurred, such as the amendment this past year to update the title of Director of Business Services to Director of Finance, the Board should also periodically review our By-Laws to ensure timely amendments when necessary. Our By-Laws formalize the Board’s structure and practices. The Board’s needs evolve over time, as do the external circumstances within which the Board functions. The outcome of our Board development discussion is the forming of a new

task force and thought force to review and update the AFG, Inc. By-Laws.

This year's "Road Trip! You and Your Board Connect" will be held Saturday, October 21<sup>st</sup> in Aurora, Colorado. You can make plans to attend by registering early as there are only 150 seats available. We will be meeting at the Radisson Hotel, 3155 South Vaughn Way, Aurora, Colorado. You may want to come a few days early or stay a few days after and enjoy Colorful Colorado. Registration forms can be located on the Members' website: [http://www.al-anon-co.org/images/A5\\_102117\\_Roadtrip.pdf](http://www.al-anon-co.org/images/A5_102117_Roadtrip.pdf)

By now, we hope you have taken an opportunity to visit our newly-designed website. The entire staff, led by our Digital Strategy Team, has been involved in the redesign of our website. I believe you will find the site fresh and exciting and reflective of our world today, the needs of our fellowship, and those who have yet to find our help and hope. If you have not visited our new site, please take the time to visit and share your enthusiasm with our membership by encouraging a visit.

It's hard to believe, but by this time next year our 2018 International Convention will be a memory. How exciting it has been to receive emails from those of you planning to attend. Some are coming by train, car or plane. A number of Areas are in the midst of making plans to charter a bus to Baltimore! Registration information is being finalized and will be available on our Members' website and mailed directly to registered groups by mid-September. In addition to the International Convention, a "Day of Connecting" has been planned by the Board. The "Day of Connecting" will be held on Thursday, July 5<sup>th</sup>. We have planned a fun and inspiring day, one that you will want to include when planning your attendance at the 2018 International Convention. Registration will be a separate fee from the International Convention.

The "Day of Connecting" will include several formats from which you can choose:

Presentations with topics such as:

*Our Worldwide Fellowship: Al-Anon's International Reach*  
*Telephone Book or the Internet—What's Your Digital Age? Al-Anon on Social Media*  
*Know Your WSO—Service IS Its Middle Name! What Happens at the Office*  
*Al-Anon's Financial Stewardship: Gratitude in Action*

Discussion Meetings:

*Dusty Bookshelves: Falling in Love with All Our CAL: Going Beyond the Daily Readers Tag—You're It! NOW WHAT? Becoming the Leaders Others Know You Can Be*  
*Attitudes – Are Mine Worth Catching? Searching for the Answer in Our Twelve Traditions*  
*The 3 T's of Public Outreach – Tips, Tools, and Techniques – Successful Public Outreach*

Panels:

*Are the Twelve Concepts Still Al-Anon's Best Kept Secret? Hear the Secret of Our Service Structure*

*Young Members Wanted! Alateen Opportunities: Online meetings, Resources, Sponsorship, Outreach*  
*Big “P” or little “p” - Big “T” or little “t”: What’s the difference when making decisions in Al-Anon?*  
*“Face Time,” not what it used to be! The Changing “Face” of Meetings: Online and Phone Groups*

There will also be opportunities to listen and learn more about how Al-Anon works through participation in Leadership Talks and Roundtable Discussions. The Day of Connecting will end with a “Meet and Greet” with presenters and participants.

Keep your eyes open for further details regarding the opening of the online registration for our 2018 International Convention and “Day of Connecting.”

Two weeks following the posting of this letter, the Trustees will begin making contact with their assigned Delegate. The purpose of this contact is to serve as a resource for clarification or questions from this letter, if desired. If you prefer not to have the Trustee phone you, please let him/her know when the initial contact is made.

To aid the Board and staff in further planning for our 2018 International Convention, we are asking current Delegates to please share your response to the following question when your Trustee contacts you:

**Describe ways in which you are encouraging or can encourage members in your Area to attend the 2018 International Convention and “Day of Connecting.”**

On behalf of the Board of Trustees and our staff, thank you for your kind notes, emails and phone calls of support as we have taken the steps in finding our new Executive Director. I am once again reminded and humbled by the Board, our Executive Committee and the entire WSO staff in the continued commitment to ensuring that *all people affected by someone else’s drinking will find help and recovery in every community. And the course that has been laid to anticipate the future and Al-Anon’s place in it and ensure that the necessary resources are available.*

With continued gratitude and respect,



Debbie L. G.  
Chairperson, Board of Trustees  
Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc.

## Finance Committee Update

Jennie M., Treasurer

August 2017

The following update is based on the unaudited financial statements for the period ended June 30, 2017:

The General Fund recorded a loss of \$10,349 for this period, compared to a gain of \$341,931 this period last year. That represents a net negative of \$352,280 over this period last year. This is mainly due to full staffing in the office this year, which was not the case last year. It is also reflective of the amazing bump in Contributions this time last year after the World Service Conference. Revenue from literature sales was slightly above that of 2016, and is tracking ahead of budgeted expectations. The General Fund investment income totaled about \$27,000. We are hopeful that Contributions and Sales increases will allow us to grow the Reserve Fund by not transferring funds from the Reserve Fund to the General Fund.

### **Income:**

Literature sales were \$1,899,251 for this period, compared to \$1,845,798 at this time last year, Gross profit on literature sales was \$1,506,554 (81% of sales), compared to \$1,495,171 for 2016. Contributions are at \$1,015,231 for 2017, compared to \$918,718 last year—an increase of 10.5% but falling a little short of budgeted projections. *Forum* subscription income was \$134,767 for 2017, an increase of 13%.

### **Expenses:**

Actual operating expenses were \$2,709,426 for the first six months of 2017, compared to \$2,321,645 last year and slightly over budget. Full staffing, notably in the Digital Strategy Department, is reflected in the increased expenditure over last year.

### **Reserve Fund:**

The fair value of investments in the Reserve Fund totaled \$5,585,360 at June 30, 2017, an increase in value of over \$400,000.

### **Outlook:**

While Contributions dipped a bit in the month of June, we are hopeful that the abundance demonstrated in 2016 will carry on in 2017. That level of participation, along with some encouraging Literature Sales numbers will allow the World Service Office to continue to support all the members carrying the message of help and hope.

## **Policy Committee Update**

John M., Chairperson

Bruce F., Co-Chairperson

**August 2017**

The purpose of the update sent each quarter by the Chair of the Policy Committee is to provide information and report progress regarding the following:

- Topics discussed by the Policy Committee that are generated by the fellowship and need clarification or interpretation in light of the Tradition and Concepts
- Policy motions presented to the 2017 World Service Conference (WSC)
- Policy motions approved by the WSC

The following topics were discussed at the July 2017 Policy Committee meeting:

**Group Autonomy: Tradition Four and Warranty Four** discussion, which was started at the Open Policy meeting at the 2017 World Service Conference, continued.

**Electronic Meetings** discussion, started at the 2017 WSC Open Policy meeting, resulted in a thought force created to produce a KBDM for the July 2017 Policy Meeting. The Policy Committee reviewed the KBDM and after a discussion decided to create a work group that will explore ways to reach out to electronic meetings and find ways to allow them to fully participate in the fellowship.

**“Open” and “Closed” Terminology** discussion continued. The Policy Committee agreed, by consensus, to remove the term “Closed” from the Policy Digest. The Policy Committee decided to wait for the report back from the “Policy Digest Thought Force” in October 2017 before deciding on the next steps to take.

As always, members of AI-Anon are encouraged to submit questions or shared experiences to the Policy Committee for more interpretation according to our basic guides, i.e., the Twelve Traditions and the Twelve Concepts of Service. Consider how this issue might affect worldwide AI-Anon as a whole, remembering that AI-Anon policies are simply interpretations according to principles and not rigid rules.

## Conference Leadership Team (CLT) Update

August 2017

Judy K., Chair  
Teri M., Co-Chair

The purpose and responsibility of the CLT is to prepare a World Service Conference agenda that facilitates the active voice and effective group conscience of our fellowship.

To accomplish this, the CLT began its planning work for the 2018 World Service Conference (WSC) immediately following the 2017 WSC. The Committee thoroughly reviewed all Conference evaluations.

Thank you to each Conference member who took the time to provide this valuable feedback. Input is essential in order for CLT to thoughtfully plan the next WSC agenda. The personal reflections and suggestions were very helpful and positive. Delegates especially enjoyed learning from each other while discussing chosen agenda items, engaging in break-out sessions and hearing Task Force presentations.

The 2018 World Service Conference theme has been selected:

ENGLISH	FRENCH	SPANISH
Al-Anon—There is no standing still!	Al-Anon—Il n'y a pas de place pour l'immobilisme!	Al-Anon—¡No hay razón para detenerse!

This theme, an excerpt from a statement made by our co-founder Lois W., is both a reminder and a call to action for every member. Al-Anon must continue to grow if it is going to fulfill its primary purpose of reaching millions who need Al-Anon's help but are not yet aware of the existence of our fellowship.

The CLT has formed a Task Force for Translation Options at the WSC that will consider a member's request to provide translation at the WSC. This Task Force will explore the benefits and challenges of possibly providing translation to those Conference members whose first language is not English.

Although the 2018 Conference is months away, planning an agenda for a successful WSC is a year-long endeavor. The "World Service Handbook" reminds Area Delegates that they are to send any Conference items to be considered for the agenda to the WSO Associate Director—Conference. Suggestions of all Conference members and the membership-at-large are also carefully considered.

The CLT continues to plan for another dynamic WSC, being mindful of opportunities for Delegate participation. With Conference members' input, and careful planning by the CLT, the 2018 Conference agenda will truly reflect the active voice of our fellowship.

The six members of the CLT include the Chair and Co-Chair, both Trustees; the Chair of the Board of Trustees; the WSO Executive Director, Director of Programs and the

Associate Director—Conference (formerly titled Associate Director of Member Services—Conference).