

Winter/Spring

Ohio Al-A-Notes

Issue 1 - AFG of Ohio

Spring 2023 / 47-01

www.ohioal-anon.org

Service - Experience, Strength, and Hope.



From our Delegate:

The Delegate is the primary communication link between the groups and the World Service Office (WSO),” 2022-2025 Service Manual, Page 75.

My role as Delegate is to pass information from our WSO to our District Representatives and Area World Service Committee (AWSC) members. As Delegate I have the privilege of attending our annual World Service Conference (WSC) and bringing the information shared there back to our Area, through a Delegate Report as our Ohio Area Assembly.

I will attempt to describe some of the day to day activities, time and travel commitments:

Daily - Review of email and respond when necessary. A majority of the email comes from the various AFGConnects Communities (DR's, Coordinators, etc.). These are informational only, and do not require a reply. They can be received in a condensed daily digest, which is very helpful.

I usually read these every morning. It takes roughly 10-30 minutes. Responding to Area emails (upcoming events, concerns, Area committees) can take some time, especially when preparing for each of our four Area meetings (AWSC and Assembly).

Area Committees - As Delegate, I am invited to participate on all Area Committees, including Thought and Task Forces. Since all of these have been via Zoom for the past three years, they have not required travel time. The busiest times are around our four Area meetings, preparing for the meetings, and tasks that result from the meetings.

Travel Time - Because so much has been done virtually, my travel has been limited. I expect that in the future it will involve the four Areas meetings (Spring AWSC and Assembly, and Fall AWSC and two-day Assembly). The Delegate also attends a North Central Regional Delegate Meeting in the spring prior to the WSC. The WSC is currently scheduled as four full days in April at the World Service Office in Virginia Beach, VA.

Service at the WSO level - As Delegate I have an opportunity to serve at the WSO level. It has been a true privilege to serve on the WSO Literature Committee. This involves quarterly meetings, with literature assignments to complete as requested. I have also had the opportunity to serve as a mentor to an incoming Delegate, a member of the Regional Committee on Trustees, and a member of our Panel 61. All of these meetings have been virtual.

I guess if I were to try to quantify the numbers of meetings, I would say 3-6 per month. And while here in Ohio we have done many meetings in the evening, it does not work well for Delegates spread across time zones. The majority of the WSO meetings have been done on Saturday or Sunday afternoons.

In summary, I can only say that being involved with the people I have met and learning more about how Al-Anon works has given me far more than I have ever put in.

With love in service,

Your Panel 61 Delegate

Ann F.

From our Chairman:

Being the chair:

- The “work” of the Chairman is to schedule with the input of Officers the 2 Area World Service Committee (AWSC) and the 2 Ohio Area Assembly (OAA) meetings each year. During the pandemic,

these were all on Zoom as well as Orientation Meetings for new District and Group Representatives. Officer meetings were also scheduled and held on Zoom to discuss Area business. I also schedule the Zoom meetings for the Committees that I was a member of.

- I start each morning scanning through all the AFGConnects messages and limiting myself to responding only to the Area Chairs and Current/Past WSC Members. Part of the commitment to being on AFGConnects is that I stay in my own lane even though I have access to all but the current WSC (World Service Conference) Members. I continue to check my email during the day for other correspondence. I try to answer questions as quickly as I can. I have attended and participated in our Ohio AFG and AA Conventions when possible. I have stayed in contact with many of my Panel 58 members as we transitioned into new service positions and have kept in contact with my various sponsors (personal and service). I continue to sponsor members both as personal and as a service sponsor in Ohio.

Motivation for taking the job:

- Guilt! It has been “traditional” in the Ohio Area that the Delegate serves as Chair after their term as Delegate. I had realized the principle behind that “tradition” during my term as Delegate – gaining a deeper understanding of how our structure works. I also knew that it would be a challenge during COVID. I had a bit of experience from attending the first virtual World Service Conference in 2020 due to the pandemic. I had found and participated in a Zoom home group. I had to acknowledge that with the help of my Higher Power, I could do an okay if far from stellar job.

What I have learned about myself:

- It is not my job to “save” Ohio AFG, but to be encouraged by the members who continue to come to learn and serve at the Area level.
- I will always need to ask for help and that empowers others.
- I am a bit more organized, though it is still a struggle to tackle only one job at a time.

Areas of personal growth from taking on this position:

- I hope and believe that I act with more compassion to those who have struggled during these 3 years of COVID restrictions.
- I am better at listening to suggestions/criticisms with respect and boundaries.
- I have been able to apply lessons from our structure and the benefits of adhering to the wisdom of those who came before us to family issues and concerns.
- I have managed to let myself feel the enthusiasm of those members who contribute their time to service and use it to nourish my trust in the future of our program. This helps to lessen my need for perfection and promote humility from living on life’s terms.

Theresa M, Ohio Panel 61 Chair (2021-2023)

From our Secretary:

Becoming Secretary of Ohio Area

How can I give back to the program that has given me so much?

Asking my HP: what would you have me do?

Asking my personal sponsor and my service sponsor about ways to do Step 12. Where do I start?

What would Lois do?

The doors were open when I walked in - how can I help?

Suggested term of office is three years.

Rotation of service is important - it greatly helps if everyone takes a turn.

Here's what I do in my term as secretary:

1. Attend Assembly, AWSC, and monthly officer's Zoom meetings (16 meetings per year - four are well over an hour-12 under an hour).
2. Have an email address and a post office box that I use to receive mail & reports
3. Gather and organize reports from committee chairs & coordinators in the email
4. Take notes and audio record four meetings per year and produce minutes for them
5. With the assistance of the area group records coordinator, use the WSO database to extrapolate area 44 (Ohio) GR's for email distribution
6. Send meeting minutes to all Ohio area GR's
7. Print reports and approved minutes for storage with archives coordinator

The most important qualities are organizational skills and willingness. Ohio provides a computer for the secretary to use. On it, one would keep up to date with emails, use minimum word processing skills, download, and organize reports. I would be willing and available to assist the new secretary. Questions? Please email Mary Jo at secretary@ohioal-anon.org.

Mary Jo M.

From our Public Outreach Coordinator:

Being the public outreach coordinator for our Area is an incredible opportunity to live the 12th step and 11th tradition. The purpose of public outreach is to inform the general public about Al-Anon through the media, professionals, facilities and organizations. Our goal is to attract to our program those whose lives are or have been affected by some else's drinking so that those who need our program can find the help and hope we offer. The majority of that effort occurs at the district and group level.

At the Area level, the public outreach coordinator serves as a link from the WSO to the districts, information services, and groups throughout our Area. All Area public outreach coordinators are given access to AFG Connects, which connects us to WSO public outreach professionals and fellow public outreach coordinators around North America and the world. The WSO posts public outreach information and links to resources that we then share with our Areas to inform and encourage activities at the local level. Both formal and informal zoom meetings of Area public outreach coordinators happen throughout the year for us to share new ideas and learnings about what is working or not working in our particular Areas. The community of support across the program is remarkable.

I've shared the information I get from the WSO and other POCs through a monthly email, a monthly Public Outreach Zoom, and through regular updates to the AWSC and the Area Assembly. Coordinators before Covid also helped organize public outreach activities at professional conferences and other events when opportunities presented themselves. Occasionally I also get the opportunity to connect an organization that has reached out to WSO with districts or groups who can partner with them to share information about the help and hope Al-Anon has to offer.

As with any effort, we will only be successful if we continually strengthen our approach with new voices and new ideas. If you'd like to learn more public outreach or get involved at the local or Area level, please reach out to me at swbogardus@gmail.com.

Sherri B./ POC Coordinator

From our AAPP:

Want to serve as an AMIAS?

Alateens can benefit from your service as an AMIAS (Al-Anon Member In Alateen Service) "Let It Begin with Me. When anyone, anywhere reaches out for help, let the hand of Al-Anon and Alateen always be there, and—Let It Begin with Me"

Let me introduce myself to you, Irene Bland, your new Ohio AAPP (Area Alateen Process Person). I have witnessed the miracle of this program work within the Alateen meetings - within their peers. Please consider helping in this important part of our Al-Anon fellowship. It has also helped me in my own Al-Anon program in immense ways.

Annually we Re-Certify our AMIAS and that time is NOW until the end of May.

Also, annually we update/confirm our Alateen Meeting information.

Both of these forms get sent to me, your Ohio AAPP

FOR NEW AMIAS, you have to be an Al-Anon member regularly attending Al-Anon meetings, have at least 2 years in Al-Anon, be 21 years or older and there are behavior requirements including an FBI background check and fingerprinting.

(FBI checks and fingerprints can take a number of weeks to get processed and sent to the AAPP.)

For any AMIAS that have been inactive and want to recertify, contact me to see if you are due for the FBI documentation (we are required to renew it every 5 years).

We have a short window when the paperwork is due to the WSO. Please fill out the information and have your GR and DR fill out their portions on both forms, then return to me ASAP, but definitely by the end of May.

You can send the completed form to my email: aapp@ohioal-anon.org

You can also postal mail to the NEW AAPP address:

AFG of Ohio AAPP

PO Box 167804

Oregon OH 43616-9998

Any questions, please contact me.

WSO recently sent out the Annual Alateen Group Form with the old mail address to the CMAs for the Alateen Groups, so if you are the CMA for your Alateen Group, please also return that form to me.

If you are interested in starting a NEW Alateen group, please contact me for information and forms for that process. You must be a certified AMIAS before you can start an Alateen meeting.

For AMIAS forms, email request to Irene at aapp@ohioal-anon.org

or go to <https://www.ohioal-anon.org/documents.html>, scroll down to "AFG of Ohio Handbook (pdf)", download and print out the AMIAS form, pages labeled 46-48.

Thank you for Serving in this Amazing Opportunity,

Irene B. / Ohio AAPP

From our Archives Coordinator:

TOP 13 REASONS WHY ARCHIVES ARE COOL

-for AFG of Ohio, Inc., Area Information Services; Districts, and Groups!!

1. You can travel through time and space, linking the generations of the family groups.
2. You get to handle historical documents.
3. The archives tell the story of any Al-Anon service structure in diary form.
4. The archives are a clearinghouse of memories and joy.
5. You get to share in experience, strength and hope from all over Ohio for over 60 years, from people you can't meet in person.
6. The archives show the wide variety of people who make up Al-Anon.
7. The archives are testament to the wide variety of activities engaged in by Al-Anon members.
8. You get to learn things you would not know until you can see it, read it, touch it.
9. The archives give a 3-dimensional aspect to the life of the program by seeing the ways in which AFG's in Ohio conducts business.
10. The archives is a repository of the love and service given to AFG by those who have gone before us.
11. The archives respect all ages, beliefs, abilities and backgrounds.
12. You can witness first-hand how AFG has adapted, changed, grown, and stayed current.
13. The archives demonstrate the countless ways AFG carries the message of welcome and comfort to families of alcoholics.

Thank you for letting me serve you,

Darla H. / Archives

From our Group Records Coordinator:

The Group Records Coordinator (AGRC) position is part of the Area World Service Committee, responsible for maintaining the WSO database with information about the groups in area 44, Ohio.

Groups who are making changes to pertinent information will complete a Group Records update form online, which is delivered to the AGRC, who updates the database. New face to face groups also complete the form online which goes to WSO. The AGRC works with the WSO to verify information for the new group and share it with the appropriate District Rep so they can reach out to them.

I work closely with WSO who provides training and updates and is there to answer any questions that arise.

I have found this position very rewarding. I am able to perform this service in my home, when it is most convenient for me. I try to work on updating records once a week at the very least.

I also submit reports 4 times a year, at Spring AWSC, Spring Assembly, Fall AWSC and 2 Day Fall Assembly.

This term expires December 31, 2023 and the next begins January 1, 2024. As I have served for 2 terms, 6 years, and rotation of service keeps our organization strong, I will not be serving next term. I highly encourage you to consider this position. The time commitment is minimal and the relationships I have formed are priceless.

In very grateful service,

Shelly Cassidy-Area 44 GRC

From our Review Committee Chairman:

The blessing of service

Review committee

I have been a grateful member of Al-Anon since 1983. My kids were small, ages 4 and 2 when I came in. After my divorce I worked 2 jobs. Service was not on my list of “must do’s” (not an excuse but asking for grace). As I was thinking about what life would be like after I retired I felt a strong pull to get into service and finally be able to pay forward for this life saving program. I started out with being a GR (group representative). As I was learning the ropes of being a GR, Teresa asked if anyone would like to do the review committee. I felt the nudge of my Higher Power to say yes but I let fear stop me at first. After I arrived home, all night I couldn’t sleep. Finally, at about 4 AM, I emailed Theresa and said yes. What a nice surprise this piece of service was. The Review Committee is an added check and balance needed to keep the program flowing. The committee members drive about an hour to meet with our treasurer, Merri G, and we have a meeting to review the books and ask our questions. At the Spring and Fall assemblies I present a report. All this time I thought it would be too hard or too timely to do this service job. That’s not true and I’ve found that it’s fun getting to know such wonderful people while doing it. We all share our experience, strength and hope because that’s how we help one another in Al-Anon.

Terri N.- Review Committee

From our Treasurer:

The treasurer position in so many ways has been a blessing even through the learning phase.

I learned how to file the 990-N postcard which I thought only a CPA could do.

This helped me train another treasurer who now knows this tax filing clue.

Besides renting a small a 1-year po box and becoming a signer on the banking account,

I met with the former treasurer which for me was paramount.

The duties of the treasurer mimic other nonprofits who accept donations and write checks for submitted expense vouchers.

The job is manageable because the work for each deposit and expense reimbursement takes less than 2 hours.

Ohio Al-Anon is unique in that the treasurer sends out 2 plea letters per year.

With the permission from the officers, I created two separate tabs to keep track of donations that come from groups and from plea letters which for me was less complicated and clear.

Filing yearly reports with the Ohio Attorney General is a must.

But it is much easier since we don't sell anything but I have learned that I must take notes to keep my brain fresh from rust.

For example: in helping another nonprofit who has inventory as an asset,

I failed to include this in their asset total which I regret.

If balancing your checkbook to the penny is a priority for you.

Then the Ohio Al-Anon Treasurer job may be worth looking into.

If you have an interest in this position, the service manual lists in detail what the treasurer job entails.

I continue to have plenty of support and being part of the budget committee has helped define the various account details.

Thank you for allowing me the privilege of serving in this position.

I will be willing to help the next treasurer as needed in the transition.

With Love, your Treasurer, Merri G.

From our DR's:

I am finishing my last year as a District Rep and also my home group's GR. There has been such an evolution of the positions due to almost two years of having to meet virtually. This was true for groups, Districts and State Assemblies.

I feel this time tested everyone's commitment to their recovery in Al-Anon. I witnessed a lot of people stepping up in their groups and taking over zoom meeting responsibilities. With perseverance the groups were able to help people not only in our immediate area but from anywhere in the US and beyond. For me, this was an awareness and awakening of the new far-reaching capabilities of our Fellowship and meeting the challenges of our post pandemic world. The best part is we have been meeting face-to-face in our groups and will start getting together periodically in person at Districts while still doing zoom for some of the meetings. AWSC and Spring/Fall Assemblies will resume in person for Ohio Al-Anon this year.

On a personal note, it's been a real joy and privilege to be able to go to the various groups in District 30 and be with these amazing members who kept the fires burning. I'm happy to say I'm seeing more returning and new faces coming through the doors. There have been so many dedicated people who have contributed to the healthy navigation of Toledo Al-Anon. I would sincerely like to thank all the help and support I have received from my Service Sponsor, my Sponsor, my alternate DR and especially the other DR's, Kasha and Rose as well as all the dedicated District and group members. My appreciation and understanding of our Program has grown so much and will continue as I "keep coming back".

I encourage anyone who is relatively new or has been in the rooms for awhile, not to be afraid to step up to the next level of service. Each one of us has unique gifts to offer and help keep Al-Anon strong in Toledo and the State. As the Alateen motto tells us, "together we can make it"

Tam H. / DR #30

I have been in service since the very beginning of my journey on Al-Anon. I feel blessed that my very first meeting was with a group of members that felt service was a necessity if I wanted to recover from the effects of this disease. How right they were! I never would have thought that getting involved would help me get better but it did.

Since that time in 1990, I have served this fellowship in many capacities and never regretted a moment. There have been times when I felt doubt about how good I could do the job or when it was over, how well I did the job but never once did I ever hear, "you didn't do that right" or anything that led me to believe I wasn't the right person for the position. All I ever received was encouragement.

Serving as a DR is a learning experience because it requires that you may be called on to visit a group in your District to sort out issues they may be having. This requires use of the tools World Service provides such as the Service Manual which has all the answers if you look for them. Remembering that I never have to do things alone, I can take another DR or experienced member with me to that

particular meeting. Remembering I don't have to do anything alone. There are Guidelines to suggest to me how to carry out my responsibilities. If I have questions, I can ask and I do!

As an Alternate Delegate I still have doubts about my abilities, believe me! Being the Al-A-Notes editor was my biggest fear. I did what I can always do in this amazing fellowship though and reached out for guidance. This time my help came from the younger generation of recovering members, Alateens! The design and format of your Al-A-Notes has been their ideas. It's been a journey of trying and failing then figuring out what went wrong and doing it over. Patience and practice is what I've learned and continue to struggle with, but I'm growing!

That being said, I am concerned with the lack of participation I see today due to Zoom meetings and not a lot of face to face contact. Maybe we need to encourage one another more and I do think getting back together will help also. Bringing another new member to functions such as Assembly and stepping up to volunteer is what's needed as Al-Anon gets back on its feet again. Don't be afraid to serve. It's an amazing journey and I've learned so much along the way. I've also forgotten a lot too but that's ok because there are still many around who will help me figure out what I've forgotten and lead me forward to new ideas and solutions. We need some new faces to move us further down the road though because a lot of us are wearing out and would like to see a new regime drive the bus for a while.

How about you? You can do it because if I did, I know you can!

With love and gratitude in service,

Rose R. / DR#6 / Alternate Delegate

Upcoming events

April 1, 2023

Spring AWSC (Area World Service Conference)

Beech Maple Lodge

6975 E Livingston Ave,

Reynoldsburg, OH 43068

April 15, 2023

Alateen Spring Rally

10AM-3PM

Faith Lutheran Church-Fairlawn
2726 W Market St, Fairlawn, OH 44333

April 20-23, 2023

WSC (World Service Conference)

MORE INFORMATION COMING

May 13, 2023

Spring Ohio Area Assembly

Spring Hollow

W. Main St.

Westerville, OH 43081

MORE INFORMATION COMING

June 29-July 2

Al-Anon International Convention

Albuquerque, New Mexico

MORE INFORMATION can be found on: al-anon.org

July 28th-30th, 2023

KOMIAC (Kentucky, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana Alateen Conference)

Held in Kentucky this year

More information will follow when it becomes available.

August 4-6, 2023

Ohio State AA Conference with Al-Anon Participation

Dayton, OH

MORE INFORMATION COMING