

# NCWSC Committee Meeting Minutes

July 26, 2008

Red Lion Inn Eureka CA

Approved 2/7/09 with several minor correction

Joan moved, Charlene seconded; passed with substantial unanimity.

**Note:** The meeting minutes for this meeting are not chronologically ordered. In an attempt to make the minutes more easily used as a reference, the minutes will be ordered in a topical fashion.

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**Meeting Convened:** The meeting was convened at 9:00 am with a moment of silence followed by the AI-Anon/Alateen declaration. The traditions, concepts and warranties were read.

**Chairperson's Welcome:** Thank you to Elaine in D1 for a great weekend in a beautiful area of California. Welcome to Nancy B. our past regional trustee, who will be doing our area inventory today. This is our last committee meeting of this panel. This panel has made a lot of changes, one being adding a second assembly in May that was very successful. Thank you Nancy for the love gift you brought home from the International (made by Canadian members) and gave to me. I was not able to go because of illness. Thank you for all the phone calls and emails when I was ill.

**Roll Call:** Results reflected in Secretary Roll Sheet. There were 3 visitors.

## Motions:

- **# 0807.01 passed substantial unanimity**  
Moved: Johanna  
Seconded: Joan  
Motion Text: **To approve the May 2008 NCWSC minutes as amended.**
- **# 0807.02 passed substantial unanimity**  
Moved: Susan  
Seconded: Patti  
Motion Text: **To present to the Assembly the budget as Presented.**
- **# 0807.03 passed unanimous**  
Moved: Kim H.  
Seconded: Jennifer G.  
Motion Text: **Move to change the Website Chair position to become a Coordinator**

Position for

NCWSA.

### Discussion:

- Originally created as a chair position to only update the web site, a technical position and not have an input into the process or vote on the committee or how it works.
- Reality of doing the job. The Web Site Chairperson attends all NCWSC and NCWSA meetings, giving reports, contributing information and experience to the meetings as well as gathering information to update web site.
- We are relying more and more on web sites. They are not going away.
- The web site can be seen by anyone in the world. This is a very responsible position. It represents No CA AI-Anon to the world.

## Elections

- EC Member at Large. Joe G. D 17 was elected by substantial majority vote of Delegate, Officers and DRs.

## Committee Reports

### Executive Committee Report: Chris AC

- Officer interviews: All officers have been interviewed except Lori.
- Review of May Assembly survey. We are still working on that.
- Need treasurer for Convention
- Binders – Our EC binders need to be updated.
- On EC agenda; Conflict Resolution issue
- Credit Card use: At the May meeting it was brought to our attention that NoCAC was requesting the use of the credit card to hold their hotel so they can have their conference. We understood there was a conflict between the officers and NoCAC and the use of the credit card. We met at lunch time to resolve this issue. We reviewed the request felt it was ok for them to use the credit card, then as we went along we got more information. Today: We pulled the two parties together and it worked out well. We discussed the use of the credit card and the difference between the area events, such as the Assembly, Convention and NoCAC convention. We found some significant differences that needed to be addressed regarding financial and how the hotel holds that information. Officers request that NoCAC provide a contract from the hotel because it outlines what is liable and how that is addressed. EC is stepping out of it and NoCAC will be working it out with the officers.
- Erik has resigned as EC at large member.
- Joe D7, Linda D. PI/CPC and Kathy F. member at large has volunteered for above position. The DRs and Officers voted Joe D7 as EC member at large.

### Budget Committee Report: John S.

- Budget was presented, and discussed.

#### Discussion

- Have we budgeted to help support DRs and GRs to attend assemblies?
- John: Not really – We have not had any guidelines requesting these funds. We could add it in, but at this point we have no idea of an amount to set aside or how much to give anybody.
- Are the funds there?
- John: Yes, there are funds in the accounts. No we have not budgeted for this because we do not have any guidelines.
- Ok from this information you have assimilated, there is funds available for the incoming DRs and GRs to attend Area events, at the expense of the area. Do we not bring it up because there is no direction?
- John: At this point that question needs to be asked of assembly. Because Assembly has not yet committed to support GRs expenses. They have agreed if necessary for the Spring Assembly that we could provide support but they have not committed to General Assembly or committee meetings as yet. This needs to be added to the agenda for the Assembly.
- Jackie will add the item to the agenda.
- Motion: Present to the Assembly the budget as Presented. Passed

### Long Range Planning Committee: John S.

- Topics discussed by the LRPC since May was the turnover process and how to implement rotation of representatives for districts every third year.
- Rotation of representatives for districts:
  - The LRPC suggests: To have our area elect 1/3 of our districts (DRs and GRs) each year. (reminder this committee does not implement suggestions, the purpose of this committee it to make suggest ideas and bring them to NCWSC to possibly research and implement)
  - For example in year 1 of the delegates term, districts 1-9 would also be in year 1 of their term, districts 10-18 would be in year 2, districts 19-27 would be in year 3.
  - How to implement this was discussed and suggestions were: by section, by districts volunteering, drawing out of a hat, or some other method to be discovered.
  - The intent of this suggestion is to provide continuity during panels as only 1/3 of the DRs would be new in one year, as opposed to now when all members change at the same time as the delegate.
  - We know that Southern CA has been doing this and find that it works well for them. They started with volunteering for the rotation. See bins for list of other area rotations and experience.
- Turnover process: This topic grew out of the need for training new members of the area committee on the NCWSC processes and practice. Frequently, it takes the new members a panel to learn how we work.

- Suggestions to accomplish this were: Use the February meeting as a training meeting on the guidelines, process, and responsibilities. Past panel would need to attend the February committee meeting to participate in this.
- Have a committee turnover meeting the Saturday evening after the elections in October at the assembly. In this case the newly elected officers and coordinators could immediately meet with their predecessors to discuss their jobs and establish contact.
- Hold a committee turnover meeting in January as usual, but more formal and focused on training the incoming panel.
- As a result of this process the Districts might implement a process to ‘turnover’ at the local levels as well to train new GRs, officers and coordinators.

#### **Discussion:**

- Clarification: when you say training the committee do you mean all of NCWSC including DRs?  
Answer (John): yes all of NCWSC including DRs. They need be trained from the stand point of how the committee works and their roll in the committee. As DR to DR, hopefully by example the outgoing DR will pass their experience to the new DR. We would include all outgoing committee members (including DRs) as well as incoming committee members at this turnover meeting. Presently Delegate, officers and coordinators participate in the Delegate’s potluck turnover meeting. LRPC feels this has been really inadequate in the past.
- A show of hands shows interest in changing the rotation of DRs and GRs to 1/3 each year. How do we do it? How do we implement it? How do we organize it?
- When running for Delegate, Officer or Coordinator positions, the group that rotated out the years before elections would not be known by the newer GRs as they had been out of NCWSC for 1 or 2 years.  
Response: The majority of the committee would remain in place every year with 1/3 rotating. This could create great conservations as 2/3 of the group has some experience while the newer group brings fresh ideas. The group rotating out could volunteer for one of the various open positions (alternates) or help on a committee. There are always opportunities to help.
- Connecticut is currently in the process of switching to this type of rotation.
- Not all GRs start when the panel starts. Is it viable to tell the meetings when their GRs start?  
Response: We do that now although, it doesn’t make any difference. When the GRs are elected they show up. We would like to have them all start currently when the Delegate is elected and serve with the Delegate.
- If 1/3 of the people are always new, it changes how you do business, as you would always be planning how to train.
- Suggestion to vote the alternate coordinators into position part way through the panel and they would become the coordinator when the position came available. This would create a clear growth path, a training ground and keep people involved.
- Intergroup rotation: How would it rotate?  
Response: It is autonomous. Districts of each Intergroup determine the rotation of their Intergroup officers. It is different to start with. For example, some are one year officers while others are two years.
- Suggested to create an Ad Hoc committee.

#### **Summary**

- The LRPC is an idea committee not an action committee. If the LRPC gets tied down with implementation of ideas, there would not be time for researching creating new ideas. LRPC presents the ideas to NCWSC. NCWSC decides if they want to pursue the idea. One avenue of idea investigation is an AD HOC Committee.
- A show of hands indicates NCWSC is interested in this idea.

**Action to be taken:** Jackie (chairperson) to develop Ad Hoc Committee to research and recommend to either Assembly in October 2008 or Committee Meeting in February 2009 their findings.

#### **NoCAC Committee:** Savannah G.

- Bash: Previous Bash was small but great fellowship and fun. Next Bash Aug 1 -3<sup>rd</sup> at Lake Mendocino;
- NoCAC registration forms were given out.
- Last Chance Fundraiser Oct 11, 2008 in Walnut Creek check for flyer on Web Site.

#### **2009 Convention Committee:** Patrick B

- June 12 – 14, 2009 at Santa Clara Marriott theme: *Keep the Change*. Our logo selection (a butterfly with a caterpillar crawling up a tree) was submitted by Jennifer G.
- Help! Hospitality Committee needs a co-chair and 3 or 4 committee members. Contact Clara 650-508-8494 email: [edendooven@gmail.com](mailto:edendooven@gmail.com).
- We need a treasurer
- We would like an Alateen on the committee.

- We are looking for speakers. Send us a CD or tape.
- We have lots of opportunities for co chairs.

## Coordinator Reports

### **12-Stepper Editor:** Bruce H.

- Next submission deadlines August 2<sup>nd</sup>. That allows time to get it published, printed and mailed by Sept 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting CA laws requiring notification of material 45 days before the assembly.
- This issue is large because we have minutes from two assemblies and the bylaw changes.
- When you do your reports keep in mind this is the end of a three year span and maybe give a global perspective of your position.
- December issue: the new coordinator might like to participate in the publication.
- New acronyms added to list in the *12 Stepper*.

### **Alateen Coordinator:** Chris M.

- A mailing and email is going out to the sponsors with information.
- Contact me ASAP (by end of August) with resumes for Alateen Advisory Committee (AAC).
- We are hosting the AAC at the assembly.
- NoCAC Flyers are out.
- Sponsors Weekend – Refresh and Rejuvenate Oct 3-5 2008 at Westminster Woods.

### **Archives Coordinator:** Irma C.

- Archives committee consists of Linda D. and Bruce H.
- Working on cleaning up backlog.
- Asked Budget committee to budget funds for new Archives Coordinator to attend the National Archives Workshop in 2009 in Woodland Hills CA.

### **Bylaws and Insurance Coordinator:** Peggy P.

The report for Bylaws and Insurance was delivered in two parts.

### **Bylaws and Guidelines**

- My sincere thanks to the bylaws committee for all their work any many hours of work. We started with Vicki, who had to walk away when she received a regional position, also Art, Joan, and John thank you so much.
- If we were to print separately from the *12 Stepper* printing approx costs \$500; mailing \$300 bulk mail; 1<sup>st</sup> class \$750. The savings is substantial including in the *12 Stepper*.
- Hard copy notification is required by the state, besides not everyone has electronic access. There will be a notice on the list serve that DRs can let GRs know that they can go to the web site when they are available on the Web site.
- GRs are encouraged to review draft copy in advance and prepare their questions and concerns in advance, so that they are prepared for the assembly discussion.
- I am hoping to a humorous presentation of the bylaws and looking for volunteers to help.
- The Bylaws draft was presented for review and discussion. Several additional revisions were suggested and will be incorporated into the draft prior to distribution to the GR's in the *12-Stepper*, which will be sent out by September 2<sup>nd</sup> to meet the California Non Profit requirements. The proposed revisions will be presented to the GR's at Assembly for approval.

- Assembly Motions: The purpose of making motions in advance is to have them listed and explained in the *12 Stepper* so the GRs may understand them prior to the Assembly. This makes the discussion based on the substance of the change rather than on the wording of the amendment. Two motions will be presented to the assembly prior to Bylaw revision discussion.
- Peggy did a roll call to determine who was not in attendance and placed copies of bylaw revision draft in their bins.

#### **Binders:**

- An inventory of individual NCWSC binder contents was done. Determining if you have a binder and if so what you have and what you are missing in the binder. Not if the individual form or guidelines are correct just if a binder has them included.
- The binder contents may be viewed on the website: [www.ncwsa.org](http://www.ncwsa.org), on the home page, click services, then click forms or guidelines.
- Recommend it might be helpful to inventory the binders at the beginning of a panel for new NCWSC members to become familiar with binders and their contents.
- Recommend updating some of the guidelines as many are old.

#### **Issues for discussion:**

- Do we want to continue to use the binders? How do we notify people of updates? How necessary is it to have the binders when we have it on the web? It is responsibility of Bylaws Coordinator to have a current edition of the binder available for reference at area meetings.

#### **Discussion:**

- Every coordinator and officer is responsible to update their own guideline. Probably best at the end of their term as they then know best the changes or corrections needed.
- Did we decide a couple of years ago that it was not necessary for individual copies of guidelines be included in the binders, except when people did not have access to the internet? We were going to use the Web as the current updated place for the guidelines.
- Peggy has a file that says 'plans for updating NCWSC binders' presented to the committee Oct 2005. It looks as though there may not have been a follow up.
- Would like to have a few binders available at NCWSC committee meetings as well as other committee meeting (ex: budget, executive, convention etc.), for use of the members, as there are often questions individuals may like to look up and web access is not always available. It is important that all members who want them can have them.
- Peggy responds: I agree. I used to bring 2 to the meetings. Seldom used one and never the second one. As these are very heavy and the second one was not being used, I have been bringing one. That has seemed sufficient.
- Jim found on the web the motion to remove the forms from the binder. Feb 2005 "That we remove WSO forms from the guidelines binder but leave the contact position name. Leave the title of the form in the table of contents."
- Revisions: Peggy: It seems revisions are being sent directly to Jim on the web site, bypassing the Bylaws coordinator who is supposed to be responsible for the Bylaws and Guidelines. Consequently the 'official' document is not current. Needs to be worked out between the Web Site Coordinator and Bylaws coordinator and written into B & I guidelines. Members need to look to see how to update guidelines.
- Binders going forward: Peggy: Getting binders produced – review costs reported at May meeting: for 50 binders \$65.36 = \$3268. 75 binders = \$4221; includes printing, collating, tabs and binders. Just get them printed; 10 copies \$230; 50 copies \$740; 75 copies \$1110 the cost of tabs is 35cents per tab. Then have a binder assembly session party; maybe do it at orientation. What do you want to do? Does everybody get a binder? Make it available to certain positions?
- Do we have \$ to purchase binders. Might be a gift to give to the next panel and let them decide what they want to do. I take my binder to every committee meeting and assembly. I like paper and I am not as computer savvy as others. I do not want to be looking things up electronically at the assembly. It is just a thought if we have some surplus funds available this might be a nice way to use it.
- I would like a binder for use at our district for member not having access to the web.
- Response Peggy: asks for a show of hands of people who would like a binder for yourself or the person to whom you are handing it over (approximately ½ raised hands). How do we maintain binders going forward? Suggest maybe ten people have hard copy binders – Officers – EC chairperson - certain coordinators – and every body else responsible for going to the web, that's manageable. It's not manageable for 2/3 of the panel to want hard copy binders and 1/3 using the web, and then the next panel that changes.
- If we require a service person to use the web for the binder then that person would be required to have a computer and web access. That would be an extra criteria they would have to meet to be able to serve.
- I don't see that it's a requirement. They could still request a binder. B/I could get a copy via the web or copy machine for them. It would not be a job requirement.

- I don't know that it is necessary for everybody to have a complete binder. You would want what is relevant to you and be able to access other information as needed.
- As we went through the binder inventory form there were numerous items needing updating. Before we invest any money in reproducing binders I suggest we get a committee together to determine updating needs. We are becoming a paperless society and I like the idea making a defined amount of binders available to the officers, etc, a few extra available for the meetings and a few for people not with web access.
- We have a form we fill out with the address of a person assuming a new position. Could we revise this form to ask whether or not they want a copy of the binder and make reference that the content of the binder is on the internet? But if someone wants hard copy binder check this box.
- It is important to have a hard copy binder to pass on to the next person. It is each person's responsibility to keep their binder current out of their own budget and as always if they need help they can request funds.
- Having the ability to have all the like documents (ex: forms) condensed into a PDF file, then that file could be taken to be copied. We would not have to go through each web page to find what we might need.
- A CD or memory stick of the binders, with the option of hard copy binder available as requested.
- Update hard copy binders now for everyone and with the turnover this panel to let next panel know they can request a CD or memory stick and it is also on the Web.
- A binder library. With a full copy available to officers, EC, and DRs. The Districts use the binders at their meeting answer questions that come up like how do we host a committee meeting, what is involved hosting a convention. Maybe for the coordinators, they keep a slimmer binder that has coordinator functions and forms related to their position.
- Jackie (chairperson) stated that her binder was lost in a fire and if anyone has one they could part with she could sure use one.
- As a new DR when I got my binder, I went through it and familiarized myself with material I had no idea was available. As years have passed, the only time I really use is at assembly. But quite often at assembly I have found need to use it. I don't think it is good to assume everyone has internet access. Isn't the whole idea is to encourage new area service people to get as much information as they can, and not make it a chore for them. If we can spend a few dollars to make that happen I think it is money well spent.
- We should get copies to everyone who wants one and have them available at the turn over meeting as references.
- A hard copy binder is an intelligent decision because our computers could crash, and we need to reference data and we could continue as necessary.
- Peggy: Are we printing the binders as is without revisions? Or are we revising guidelines and forms and then printing? That would probably be a year down the line.
- In this group six people do not have a binder and want one.

#### **Action to Take:**

- Peggy will print 10 binders now: If you want one of the 10 let her know via the binder inventory we did or via email.
- A committee will be formed (to include LRPC in discussion) to review, recommend and give this collected information at the turnover meeting letting the next panel decide binder distribution. Kim, Jim, Jennifer has volunteered for the committee.

#### **Insurance**

- I have given several insurance presentations at district meeting and continue to learn and gain information. I am still available if your district has questions about insurance.
- Completing the insurance renewal application and obtaining the required paperwork. Yearly process.
- Insurance certificates delayed due to an organizational shuffle at the brokers. We are so nonstandard that they do know what to do with us. Let your GRs know who have sent applications in about the delay.

#### **Diversity:** DeDe W. (Alt)

- At the October Assembly which is three days, we will need translation equipment is in present and in working order. We anticipate needing volunteer as well as professional help.

#### **Group Records:** Debbie O.

- All data is currently updated. Requested reports and label sets have been sent out.
- As of July 25<sup>th</sup> there are 711 groups registered with the area. Of them 11 are Alateen; 21 H & I; 51 Spanish Speaking; 23 men's; 21 women's.

#### **Literature Coordinator:** Carol K.

- New book *Discovering Choices* is now available. Literature Coordinators have been asked to write a review for WSO.
- Items committee received via their bins:

- Order blanks for the *Discovering Choice*.
- Copies of the guidelines for Area Literature Coordinators and Area Forum Coordinators.
- An announcement about a page on the member website about “Using the Concepts in Our Personal Lives”.
- An order blank for *Opening our Hearts, Transforming our Losses*.
- A new literature project due Oct 15, using *Paths to Recover* for meeting topics. Select a topic using a quote from the book, write five questions that can stimulate conversation on that topic and send them to WSO. Selected topics and questions will appear on the CAL Sample Chapter at the members’ website [www.al-anon.org/members](http://www.al-anon.org/members) from January to March 2009.
- From now through September, topics and questions using *Opening Our Hearts, Transforming our Losses* are on the website.
- They received 30 submissions for the Sample Chapter project on *The Dilemma of the Alcoholic Marriage*. Selected topics will be posted from October through December. You might want to print them out for use at your meetings.
- Updated information about any audio or CD production: Tom Coffey at WSO stated “We have received several bids for producing an audio file of "How Al-Anon Works," but at this point, no decision has been made.” I don’t have any other additional information regarding audio books or other electronically-copied literature to report.”
- **Forum** .... We had a conference call on June 14 with over 40 participants, including Bob Schneider, Director of Communications, and Julie Miller, Communications Manager, at WSO. These are really great as a way for us to share with one another. Bob opened with his thoughts about the Forum:
  - It is the only way WSO communicates to EVERY group as they are sent a free copy (Be sure your groups keep an address for an active person in their group who can receive this copy).
  - The difference between the Forum and other literature is it’s current and relevant to now.
  - 24,000 subscriptions were mailed last year, 20,000 this year. The Forum is self supporting.
  - He would like to see the Forum more actively used at meetings and not just tossed on the table. One of the ways it hopes to be useful to the meeting is the Meeting Topic section.
    - Ideas submitted by the participants for getting the Forum “out of our pocket, onto the table” were:
      - ★ Give a copy with each newcomer packet
      - ★ Give a subscription to the new Group Representative
      - ★ Raffle a subscription at Assembly
      - ★ Have a can on the table at the meeting; people put their name in if they would like a subscription; people drop in any money they want to contribute; then when there is enough for a subscription, pick a name for winner.
  - Remind your GRs they are Forum Reps for their group. Maybe this could also be a GR Orientation agenda item.
  - Index of subjects. The December issue has an index, and it is also on the website.
  - Writing for the Forum and what gets selected (which takes quite a while); Bob said they looked for depth in how we work through our problems to the solution. Don’t just say “talked to my sponsor, read some literature and went to a meeting”. Share your feelings and thoughts.
- Carol sat in on the workshop about writing for the Forum and other literature at the International in Pittsburgh. The process is long, don’t get discouraged. Send it in and turn it over.

**PI/CPC:** Linda D.

- Previously handed out flyers for people interested in media (WSO requesting help) and web marketing. Ask for copies.
- PSA radio scripts are available. Ask for copies.
- Will request Assembly to change name PI/CPC to Public Outreach.
- See updated PI/CPC coordinator guidelines for position recommendations.
- Linda opened her report with a prayer reflecting on the third step.
- After an accident in April 2007 I felt I could continue in this position but it has been a struggle and felt there were many things I had to let go. After another surgery I still am not mobile and I have placed this in God’s time. The first year I was able to do my job as described. The remainder of my term I have not been able to do my job as described and I apologize. I will turn over to my successor all my projects, ideas and experience.

**Web Coordinator:** Jim S.

- Web Site Committee members are Art B., Bruce D and Jim S. Jennifer has offered to help. Other volunteers at the District/AIS level keep the Independent and separate web pages updated. Thank you for volunteering to work on the committee and your time in working on updates and additions.
- Looking for an Alternate Web Site Chairperson. If you are interested in this position please contact Jim S. at [JL-stewa@pacbell.net](mailto:JL-stewa@pacbell.net) or 925-362-4325.

- The forms on the NCWSA web site have listed next to them a person's name that is responsible for them, including a master copy. If changes are needed contact that person and they are to send the corrected document to web site chair (Jim). The forms are posted on the Web in PDF with .doc in the background. If you click on the PDF and change to .doc it will come up in word.
- Contact e-mails for the Web Site Committee for meeting changes, flyer posting to the calendar or questions can be sent to these three e-mail addresses: [changes@ncwsa.org](mailto:changes@ncwsa.org), [info@ncwsa.org](mailto:info@ncwsa.org) or [contactus@ncwsa.org](mailto:contactus@ncwsa.org).
- Please pass this information to your Group Reps and District Speaker Meeting Coordinators. All flyers with any Alateen involvement must be cleared through our Area Alateen Process Person who is Lori K. at [AreaAdministrator@ncwsa.org](mailto:AreaAdministrator@ncwsa.org). All flyers handed out and/or posted to the web must follow Guideline B-17.B.3.D.4.c: and have the underlined sentence on the flyer:
- In order to use the Alateen name in the geographic area served by NCWSA, Alateen Conferences and other conferences that include Alateen activities are required to abide by the [B-17] NCWSA Requirement for Alateen Member Safety, register their intention to do so by notifying the Area Process Person of procedures placed into service for their function and place the following statement on any flyers publicizing their activities – 'The [name of conference or convention] abides by the NCWSA Requirement for Alateen Member Safety.'
- Lori K. has the WSO updated list of Alateen meetings. I will send her a list of the meetings and contacts from the independent web sites and she will send a list of the meetings with WSO numbers to the independent web site chairperson or coordinators and DRs... Only Alateen meetings with current WSO#s may be listed on those web sites. If they are on the Web and not on that list they need to be removed from the Web.

**Discussion:**

- Could there be a prominent spot on the Web that tells us how to post flyers etc. and a reminder if Alateen related it needs to go the Area Alateen Process Person first.
- Jim's response: I am hoping DRs pass that on to any event planners in their districts. The reason this is going back to the committee (DRs) as explained in the last *12 Stepper* the procedure is explained in B17 and if we post in multiple locations it is bound to get out of sync.

**Delegate's Report:** Sandi C.

- It's really great to be meeting in District One.
- It's really exciting to be doing an inventory today.
- The International Convention was great. I would like to thanks the area for allowing me to attend. There were about four thousand people registered. Approximately thirty countries were in attendance.
- There is a new blog on the WSO Website where you can read people's comments on the International, or join in or make your own comment. The link is <http://al-anon.org/members/2008internationalconventionblog>. You will need to log into the members web site with a password: Your group name followed by AFG.
- Next International July 5 – 7, 2013 will be in Vancouver, British Columbia.
- New book was introduced at the International, *Choices*, which deals with relationships.
- New event at the International this year was on the day before it started there was a special service day titled, Connecting with the WSO. Contact me for hand outs and CDs.
- Resumes for Regional Trustee and Trustees at Large were due August 12, 2008 to Delegate.
- I would like to personally recognize Louse, our Institutions Coordinator, for her work getting Al-Anon into prisons as a result of her meeting with the Department of Corrections 12 Step Advisory Board meeting in Sacramento. As a result of her position she is a member of that group. She has also contributed a lot of literature to several CA prisons. Per WSO, it goes to show that Lois's statement about one person starting something, but many people carrying it out is still alive after 57 years.
- Long Range Planning Committee (LRPC) has been looking into orientation/training of incoming DRs as well as possible rotation terms. A possible rotation of terms so we would always have 2/3 of our DRs in attendance with knowledge about the previous year or two's activities/business. They asked me for input how other areas are doing it: WSO – rotates Delegates this way. Southern CA has also found this successful. A show of hands showed a few DRs would be willing to continue participation an extra year to help the new DRs. (just an idea)
- Last month WSO approved a trail structure for the Literature Committee and they are looking for five volunteers members at large who are in an area that their Delegate is not on the Literature Committee. Volunteer requirements are a member of Al-Anon for at least five years and not a member of AA. This is not a grammar editing job. It is an Al-Anon experience knowledge job. The business will be conducted via conference calls, email and the internet. Contact me for more information and the resume/application.
- In your bin is an open letter "When electing a new Group Representative, the future of Al-Anon depends on You".
- When this panel is over I will chair the Al-Anon portion of PRAASA (Pacific Region AA Service Assembly) in 2009. I will be putting together a small committee.
- Alateen Advisory Committee from WSO will be attending our Assembly as an experiment. It will be about four hours in a separate room. Doris a trustee and Mary Lou who chairs the Alateen Committee will be available if we would like them to talk.



## Officer Reports

### Treasurer's Report: Nancy M.

- Balance sheet and Profit and Loss reports as of April 30, 2008. Alateen entries are incorrect, not because of anything they have done, actually they have been great, the reason is various posting delays. The books are balanced but there are account posting corrections to be made to place entries in their correct place. These will be corrected for the *12 Stepper* Assembly issue.
- Donation: important to include WSO# on your check.

#### Discussion:

- Is it possible to get Pay Pal on our Web Site so we can make contributions to NCWSA electronically?  
This process is already in place. Check with Art for details.

### Chairperson Report: Jackie B.

- See *12 Stepper* for detailed report.
- I have continued to fulfill my duties as outlined in the Guidelines

### Secretary Report: Connie F.

- I exchanged the recorder used at the May meetings for a new one. The previous did not work correctly. I thought it was operator error, nope, equipment malfunction!
- Minutes and motions passed failed are current on the web site.
- The roster is current on the list serve.
- How to access list serve: Go to Yahoo. Click Groups; Sign in (your id); on left: click files; click roster. I will keep this current for this panel and pass that information on to the next person.

### Area Alateen Process Person for Alateen Safety: Lori K.

- The 2008 annual Sponsor Renewals was due to WSO on June 30, 2008. I submitted the required paper work. Most everybody had their paper work to me on time, and those that did not were required to send the A-22-2 form along with the renewal to re-activate their sponsors. On 7/12/2008, I sent an email to each DR with a list of those sponsors that I had not received renewal forms.
- DR's to be sure that any communication I send to you be *immediately* forwarded to your District Safety Administrator and/or District Alateen Coordinator. This is a vital step in our communication process.
- WSO sent out individual group renewal forms to each group contact and instructed them to forward the form to me if there were changes. They have all been forwarded and scanned at WSO.
- Since those updates, WSO sent me an updated listing of all the groups by district. I have made copies for each district and they are in your folders. Forward those to your Safety Administrator and/or Alateen Coordinator for follow up. As with any reports/listings received from WSO, there is always a time lapse between when they create the reports and when I receive them so new group or changed group information sent in that time frame may not be reflected on the listing in your folders.
- The new Alateen Safety Advisory Committee has not been able to meet, as yet. I still welcome any suggestions for the ASAC to address along with our first commitment to review all of the safety guidelines for Alateen participation in any events they attend as it regards our presence as an organization in public venues.
- I continue to receive new applications for sponsors, and new groups. Some districts have more sponsors than meetings. It is exciting for me to see that our Alateen groups are being supported and growing!

**Discussion:** Reminder that it's the DRs responsibility to determine if the 'candidate' Sponsors are character

### Alternate Delegate Report: John S.

- I signed a lot of checks. Wore my arm out. And I did not loose any.
- I was invited to share at a district.
- I went to the International in Pittsburg. It was great. In five years it will be on the West Coast.

## Intergroup Liaisons

### AIS District 6-10 (Sacramento area): Denise E.

- Recently had our annual fundraiser and all five districts came together to host this event with lots of recovery.
- Revising our bylaws to update. Issues would come up and it seems the bylaws do not cover the items.
- Four of our five districts have agreed to provide volunteers to help open our AIS office on Saturdays; we have been training our DRs with a projected start date in September.

- Hosting an AIS workshop early next year. Chris AC., SCVI and Spanish Intergroup have agreed to participate.

### **Santa Clara Valley AFG Intergroup:** Chris AC.

- District 20- 22; about 75 groups.
- D22 is making physical improvements to the office with new paint and carpets. Thank you.
- Public Outreach: Position needs filling but carrying the message of Al-Anon continues. Participating with AA's Unity Day Aug 24<sup>th</sup>, working to get the Spanish speaking Al-Anon's to participate. Will run PSA's. We also have a speaker meeting.
- Special Events:
  - September 14<sup>th</sup>, speaker Father Tom W. of Oakland, CA.
  - D21 "Beach Blanket Al-Anon" August 16th. Speaker Lisa M. Also Alateen Speaker.
- Newsletter: Two very good coordinators who have put forth great effort creating a quarterly newsletter. Check them out on our website which is linked to the area website. (<http://www.ncwsa.org/scvfg>).
- Subletting our office for Area Archives: After discussion it was decided that it would not be prudent for the area to rent storage with SCVI be of high cost. A motion was made that we not rent out space to NCWSA for storage of its archives.

### **Spanish Intergroup East Bay:** Elisa G.

- Located in Pittsburg. Meet monthly with Alt GRs. Serve 10 areas: including Sacramento, Napa, Fairfield, Stockton, Antioch, and Concord.
- There has been good response and activities. Speaker meetings successful with the last one with over 200 attendees of the 14 were new.
- Two Alateen groups: Napa and Pittsburg. Working to motivate Spanish speaking to become sponsors.
- We are all new and working hard for success.

### **Hispanic Liaison:** Julieta D.

- July 29<sup>th</sup> Al-Anon Alateen Hispanic Convention; Palm Springs, CA.
- Aug 1- 3 we are invited to Hispanic Convention Santa Clara Marriott
- 40 groups 2 Alateens

#### **Discussion**

- We have Spanish interpreters for English Speaking events. Can we get English interpreters for Spanish speaking events?
- Julieta response: We are working on that.

## **Other Business:**

### **Area Inventory: Nancy B.**

- Nancy B., previous Trustee, facilitated NCWSC's Conflict Resolution Inventory. Sources used for questions in inventory; Service manual; Concepts; Path to Recovery; Al-anon Family Group Service Plan 1977. The inventory presented here is a summary of written responses as well as additional responses during the meeting.

#### 1. In what areas of my life could I practice prudence?

- ★ Listening better and not responding before I think.
- ★ Every area
- ★ All areas - Think before speaking, but its progress, not perfection. Try to base my thoughts on the facts.
- ★ This principle makes me understand where I am financially in so far as I manage my finances with budgeting, understanding costs of short term and long term needs. In my personnel life, in my Al-Anon work, with my family and friends I want to be reasonable, but not excessive. I must respect others financial values and I must be able to work with them.
- ★ Today, I try to practice prudence in all areas of my life. Per the 12<sup>th</sup> step, I try to practice these principles in all my affairs.
- ★ With my finances, time management, eating habits, and allowing someone to finish talking before I respond.
- ★ Practicing prudence could apply to all areas of my life. My tendencies are on the conservative side of life.
- ★ Speak less and buy less shoes.
- ★ Perhaps we err on the side of too much prudence. We need to be very cautious regarding issues of safety, (as in Alateen safety), and anonymity; but must we as an Area be so cautious regarding recovery terminology, methods of outreach, or strict adherence to outdated restrictions on who can serve? Change can be good!

- \* Financial inventory using the Concepts: I went through the Concepts every reference to finances, money, and power and write about it. Prudence began to take on a different thing. Sounded like it had balance.
- \* When I begin a study I look up the word in the dictionary to find what does it really mean. Sometimes my perception is off and the dictionary lets me know what the word really means. Definition: Prudence; carefulness, care, cautionness, discretion, good sense, forethought.
- \* Worry does not change the outcome. What can I do right now about something that might or might not happen. Example: prudent reserve. What if we run out of money? We can set a little aside now for later.
- \* Warranty One says ....an ample reserve should be its prudent financial principle.
- \* When I am in a meeting being passionate about something and someone else is being prudent, I do not see that as something attractive, I am usually quite angry about it. For me to practice prudence means that I will be understanding of others who have a little bit more than I do. I will acknowledge it when I meet it, as I often want to discount prudence.
- \* I am good with my ideas but I am way too prudent with my actions. It often holds me back.
- \* This principle makes me understand where I am financially. (how I manage my finances with budgeting, understanding costs, short term – long term.) However in my personal life, my Al-Anon work, my family and friends is where I want to be reasonable but not excessive. I must respect others financial values. I think finances are a good example but it spills over to everything else.
- \* Let Go and Let God.
- \* Discretion – How often do I blurt out what I am thinking? Often I am hurtful with my words, tone of voice. When I watch what I say I am prudent.

2. Do I ever assume unqualified authority? Does my group allow this?

- \* No
- \* As a mother, I sometimes am required to assume such authority since my child is a minor. Within the context of NCWSA/NCWSC, however, I do not. I think we do a pretty good job of monitoring ourselves re: persons assuming unqualified authority. I have not observed this practice, and that's a good thing.
- \* No - there is only one authority...tradition 2. My group allows me to present the facts.
- \* In my daily living, Al-Anon has taught me to connect with and understand others so that my decisions reflect a harmony between us when questions arise and decisions are necessary.
- \* Without qualification” means that processes are instigated regardless of the wishes of others. Here, I am divorced from the group as a leader due to lack of respect for them. Does my group allow this? The Group is the penultimate of this thinking so that a Higher Power is resorted to in discussion. We commit to a consensus in thinking and decision-making.
- \* At this stage in my recovery, I am a trusted servant. Though my district looks to me for leadership as the DR, my job is to grow them by teaching them, using tools of the program, such as the service manual, conference summary, and Cal.
- \* I do my best not to assume authority where not directed or indicated. I check with my groups and other members before making any decisions that impact them. Yes, there are members who do speak up and ask if they believe there is a problem with representation and they are encouraged to do so.
- \* Having had service experience as a GR, DR, EC Chair, and officer, I have worked very hard at just being a member of Al-Anon while trying to demonstrate good personal leadership skills. Our principles, traditions, and concepts are well stated and wonderful format for success. Also, I have learned much by watching those who have gone before me.
- \* No and no. We cannot think of a single incident of Area coordinators or reps assuming unqualified authority.
- \* Sometimes I look and sound like a know it all. When the group allows me to be the authority it makes it easy for them.
- \* Encourage the group to get active beyond their borders so I am not the group authority.
- \* Encourage people to find the answer themselves in our manual, literature, etc.
- \* Non rotation of leadership creates unqualified authority.
- \* As a DR when something came up I put it back to the GRs and let them respond to the issue or question. After the discussion if there was something I could add I did at that time.
- \* Gently nudge Alateens.
- \* After serving at the District level for a long time in various jobs, when a new DR was elected, I choose to not participate for some time. This was respectful to the new DR. Otherwise the group continued to turn to me for confirmation and advice.

3. Can I listen to all sides of a discussion before making a decision?

- \* Usually
- \* This is one of the areas where I have observed improvement in my behavior as a direct result of doing service.
- \* Yes.
- \* I truly have to hold my tongue; I want to jump in so badly (and control). But to express a quiet comfort and confidence in the midst of discussion makes my eventually expressed opinions agreeable in the group setting.

The Group is the ultimate source of ideas when anything is considered, and individual shares adds to what any one person can share. This becomes the best source for decision-making.

- \* I may have an opinion prior to listening to all sides of a discussion, but I do listen to all sides, and take that as input into any decision.
- \* I prefer to listen to all sides in order to make the best decision. I do check to see if I feel one way or another at the beginning, and do another check in at the end to see if I have changed my opinion. A prime example is with the dual membership issue. Our WSO Delegate led a group discussion on the issue and it was surprising how my mind was changed by the end of the discussion.
- \* Yes, I believe I have been in numerous situations where this is required of me and felt I did a good job. I believe that most people are able to get past their own wishes and look at what's good for the whole once they feel their concerns have been heard, thoroughly.
- \* We occasionally feel that issues that are very important to us, (double-winners as voting group reps; gender-specific terminology in literature), are not as important to other districts, so we are not fully heard.
- \* Are you a good listener especially when what you were going to say has already been said at the mike? One time at the mike. You are not hearing or feeling the same as everybody else. How you can listen with grace.
- \* As a DR, I sat quietly and let the GRs discuss. I facilitate the meeting and when it came time to vote I held my vote unless it was necessary because of a tie. I told them that is what I would be doing.
- \* I do not have to reinvent the wheel since I got here. There is a lot of experience in the room. I just need to listen to it.
- \* I read the Manual, guidelines, bylaws, items to give me the answers – keeps me from being the authority.
- \* As a new GR but longtime member of Al-Anon I came to my first assembly opinionated, yet too shy to go to the mike and voice them. I sat and listened and learned there were lots of great Al-Anon ideas and once in a while I even changed my mind. I have overcome my reluctance to come the mike and state my opinion.
- \* As a DR it was important each person had a voice in our district meetings. When a discussion came up I would go around the room asking each person if they had a comment. Before taking the vote I asked if everyone was ready for the vote. We all agreed to disagree.
- \* As a GR I loved the discussions and personalities. I did not take it personally. I had my opinion but it was not something I had to hold on to.
- \* My ego tells me I have to have all the answers, consequently it makes listening hard. Today I said God I am going to leave my ego at home. God said, just listen. My ego seems to go with me wherever I go.
- \* We are a disco ball. It would look dumb being one bit mirror. We like the ball need all the tiny mirrors showing all the different viewpoints to make a complete ball. If one mirror is missing its just not as good.

4. Can I keep principles above personalities at all times? Why or why not?

- \* I can by not saying anything about it, but it will eventually get to me and I have to speak up to the offender.
- \* No, not at all times. I'm doing better, but not at the level I want to be yet. Why not? Well, I believe the main problem is my impatience, which I've come to believe is rooted in my arrogance. When I have thoughts like, "Why can't that person realize the comment they are making is the exact same thing the person who spoke before them said?!" or "Oh, no, please sit down – you can't construct a succinct sentence to save your life!" I'm at a perspective of arrogance and not acceptance. When that happens, personalities definitely come before principles.
- \* Yes. I listen to what is being said, not who says it.
- \* When I view us all as equals, and none is better than, helps this lot. Sure, there are personalities that grate in my mind like a chalkboard. But when I have a loving feeling for everyone in the group, and accept them as they are because I am not going to change them, then I see us all as unique and special and individual. To be affected by personalities means I am self-centered and there is no other way but mine. Closed mindedness is divisive. So, I go to meetings, listen and share, and we close the meeting in a circle.
- \* My biggest struggle in recent years in keeping personalities out of it is with my ex-wife. I'm still working this relationship to remove all my resentments and see her through God's eyes.
- \* With one in particular it's very difficult to not let the personality influence my behavior.
- \* It's a good thing this is one of our traditions and that it is read continually. I find it very useful for all aspects of my life, and yet it is not the easiest thing to do. Many times I wish to give people the benefit of the doubt because they are friends or I like them or I feel sorry for them. And other times there are those who I do not like at all but have to admit what they are saying has merit. I try to not judge the messenger and listen to the message, no matter what.
- \* This is something I will always have to work on as some people are just difficult for me to deal with. I have been around long enough to know when I am resisting someone and give myself time to work that out instead of reacting to the situation/person. I'm doing that right now and when I am required to respond quickly, I act as if the person were my neighbor (act as if) I guess.
- \* This is the most important thing that I have learned in my life. "What is the Principle" is what my sponsor taught me to ask whenever I am uncomfortable.
- \* At all times???? We feel the Area makes a consistent effort to follow this Tradition, as we do at the District level.

- \* When I can put my baggage down I can let go of the personalities and see the principles.
- \* It's not principles and no personalities.
- \* When not everyone applies the principles it trips me up.
- \* Let it Begin with Me.

5. Do I like to stir things up? If so, why?

- \* No.
- \* The answer to that would be no in almost all situations. The only time this might become an issue is when our group needs to cooperate with the hospital where we meet. I might need to remind members that we are guests and cannot make decisions on where to store our materials, leave literature for patients, etc. without consulting with the manager first.
- \* In general, I don't like to stir things up. I like harmony and lack of conflict. I can sometimes ignore issues in an effort to avoid conflict; however, I have seen improvement in myself in this area. I do, however, sometimes raise issues that I believe might be barriers to the successful outcome of an idea or proposal. I believe that is sometimes perceived by others as "stirring things up." I tend to take this action in the work place; less so at NCWSC/A.
- \* No, unless something is very wrong.
- \* Sometimes I am that elf with a wee bit a' mischief, or my thinking drifts into tangential sarcasm. Tending not to be harmful but to raise a little stir as a consequence. But it represents a searching of the other person's values where I indirectly want to make them think and express their position. I think sometimes if one uses an indirect approach that may make an answer come, but it lead to pushing (the other) people away and that is not good.
- \* I don't stir things up to stir things up; however, when things are unacceptable, I will call them out and not ignore them.
- \* I realized a long time ago I was an excitement junkie, due to past conditioning. So now I try to keep to the principle. However, I will stir things up and play devil's advocate if it is indicated and it appears groups are being too complacent about pertinent and important issues that I might have experience with. Typically I will do a quick check in with my Higher Power for a sign that something needs to be said/done. I find things end up working out the way they are supposed to be.
- \* No, quite the opposite. In fact, these kinds of people are the most difficult for me to deal with.
- \* I believe I need to have the courage to ask sometimes difficult questions, or ones that are uncomfortable for other people as well as myself. I don't like to stir things up, but often this happens as a result of my questions or statements that I believe relevant.
- \* Yes. If you don't stir the pot, the pot burns! (Stirring things up appears to be the role Northern California plays in general in our nation!)
- \* It is ok to be a devil's advocate. Sometimes it is necessary. Sometimes it stirs things up. I do not mean to stir things up. I have an inquiring mind.
- \* Disturb the comfort and comfort the disturbed. When the room leans one way without personal opinion asking questions to get them thinking about the other end of the spectrum.

6. Does my group practice democratic thought? In action?

- \* Some people in authority think they have all the answers and do not let others speak or finish speaking.
- \* My group's members are good at keeping an open mind about how our time is spent together. We rotate secretary (the person leading the meeting) weekly; so several members get a chance to participate in service a little.
- \* I believe it does.
- \* Yes.
- \* Any issue brings forth the originator. That person I feel is viewed with compassion and respect by the rest of the group. I see during the meetings, the format is held the same for everyone, and therefore each is treated equally and given the same opportunity.
- \* The area does a pretty good job in practicing knowledge based decision-making and democratic thought.
- \* I believe so. We have lively discussions at District meetings; all points of view are encouraged. If we need more information on an issue, we will invite AI-Anon representatives and chairs to give a presentation. And groups are always encouraged to vote and take action that works best for them.
- \* Yes, we have a great group in my opinion.
- \* My three meetings that I attend do a wonderful job. I wish the area would practice the same democracy in thought and action.
- \* Use knowledge based decision making.
- \* Sometimes things get cut off because of time constraints and do not get discussed completely.
- \* Whether we call it knowledge based decision making, group conscience or democratic thought the object is dignifying every person.

7. How can I apply the Concepts to my life?

- \* I need to study the concepts before I can know what they are and practice them. Understanding what my part is and dealing with that only. One thing that comes to mind right from the beginning is Concept 3 – not taking over others responsibility or job.
- \* First, by having a better understanding of them so that I can apply them.
- \* By studying them.
- \* Area work in service gives me the chance to practice the Concepts. Sometimes when complicated subjects involve lots of discussion it is hard to apply the Concept or Tradition and I have to really sit down and think about it. Also I talk with or ask a more senior Al-Anon member how a Concept is applied. In my personal life if I am serene then I am doing OK; if not serene then I have to reinterpret the Concept application to myself.
- \* As I heard at the International – the steps prevent suicide, the traditions prevent homicide, and the concepts prevent genocide. I try to apply the concepts to both my Al-anon service and my professional life. The concepts provide principles to allow us to effectively function as trusted servants.
- \* Starting to get to this point.
- \* A good beginning would be to read them regularly, perhaps at District meetings, to become more familiar with them. They could also be a topic of discussion at District meetings, speaker meetings, roundtables, and group meetings. I'll bring this up for discussion at the next district meeting!
- \* Too many ways to state them all. Mostly, I have been able to be a member of my family, not the boss.
- \* Yes, although sometimes difficult.

8. Do I participate in frequent discussions of how we are working together?

- \* Yes.
- \* I participate, but not frequently. If I speak up it comes across as criticism or taking another's inventory. Also, some tend to put me on a pedestal as if I'm all knowing and I continually have to remind people that I am a member before I'm in my service position.
- \* When I am asked to participate, I do so. I believe we could do a much better job at evaluating our effectiveness as a decision-making body.
- \* There are few discussions about this. I thank those who do their job well.
- \* I believe this means listening, asking leading questions, bringing up creative ideas that may change the content, contributing to what others are saying. There are times before and after meeting time that discussion can be very productive. Program people are easy to talk with and in discussion a lot gets accomplished. Goal oriented discussion makes us go from here to there; standing back and appraising our group-process like in a business meeting, is very helpful.
- \* I don't think as an area, we effectively review how we're working together. The officers are reviewed by the Executive Committee, but this is the first area inventory I've participated in.
- \* Not per se. We do spend time planning events together; recognition is given at district meetings and in the newsletter about teamwork, and groups will bring difficult problems to the district level so we can share with one another about problem solving, without getting into particulars. It's been two years since our last District group inventory and we will be having another one shortly. But after seeing this question, I am going to encourage my district to talk about it if they perceive a problem at the District level or if they want to give kudos.
- \* No, not nearly enough. Something I think about but do not follow through on because it is often difficult to get others to participate.
- \* Would love to see this implemented at the Area. I will put this on the next district meeting agenda as a discussion topic. I'm sorry I hadn't thought of this great question before.
- \* We miss some Area assemblies and committee meetings because of travel distances and lack of funds for travel. As a result, we lack a comfortable working relationship with the Area Coordinators. For example, the last time we submitted paperwork to register an Alateen group, there was no response for almost two years despite a real effort to connect on the part of our Alateen sponsors.
- \* Put a time limit on each topic as chairperson.
- \* Put a 2 minute limit on all discussions instead of just 'heated' ones, so that it doesn't appear chairperson is picking favorites.
- \* We don't have session discussion guidelines for NCWSC but we do for NCWSA Assembly, even there they can be suspended. Why are there not discussion guidelines for both bodies and why are they not enforced? Is it needed?

9. Do I focus on the solution, rather than the problem?

- \* I try to, but am not always successful. For me a solution comes after discussion and then I'm back to taking other's inventory.
- \* I believe I do try to focus on the solution rather than "admiring the problem." My observation is that we as a group do entirely too much of that at the Committee and Area level.
- \* I try to keep my mouth shut when I don't feel I have anything of value to contribute to the discussion. My observation is that we are sometimes guilty of "grand-standing", saying things at the microphone that would be better discussed in a one-on-one with our sponsor, and most of all, talking too much and listening too little.
- \* I try, but I have a tendency to get irritated at those who cause the problem.

- \* People are interested in assisting with problems and there is a time for that; but more so is the idea of working to move forward. Solving problems means making a strong effort to change and this means that where we are today will be different tomorrow. A problem deserves a certain amount of time about which everyone is comfortable.
- \* When raising concerns, I try to work on the solution, and not identify the problem. I also recognize that I need to suggest solutions, then turn over the results. My suggestions may not be the best suggestions.
- \* Most of the time.
- \* Certainly, although there must be ample discussion on what someone perceives the problem to be in order to let off steam and get to the root of it. Many times it is a matter of perspective and people want to be heard and validated, after all. Then comes the time for focusing on the solution(s). If everyone gets a chance to do this, there is a buy in of sorts and they feel they have a hand in it and will promote the solution. It's more positive and draws more good will than the complaining.
- \* You know, I think I do a pretty good job of focusing on solutions. I worked in customer service for large corporations for many years and that was how you were successful at your job. We were trained to think that way and it has carried me through many situations over the years. That along with what I learned in Al-Anon has helped me sleep through most nights over the last many years.
- \* I like to think so.
- \* We are of two minds regarding this. On the one hand, it seems like narrow thinking inhibits change and focuses only on the problems. On the other hand, thought provoking exchanges such as this inventory really point the way towards solutions.
- \* Our literature says we share experience, strength, and hope. As a newcomer (to any meeting) I have only experience. I have no strength and I have no hope yet. So after being here for a while I gather strength so I can generate hope. That happens a lot that we spend a time answering questions for people who haven't been here a lot. They do not know what our strengths are yet and they need to learn. It is important to listen to those people without that knowledge so that we can repeat what we have done in the past and change those things that we can do better.
- \* I don't want to hear the problem. I just want to fix it. Many times when in a discussion with someone they want to define the problem. I want talk about the solution. That can be a problem also, as a newcomer stated one time, I hear the solution but what was the problem. We need all of us for clarity.

10. Is my participation effective in achieving harmony within the group?

- \* Yes.
- \* Most of the time it feels as if it is.
- \* See above response
- \* I hope so.
- \* I believe so. In our Area meetings, which is a large group, maintaining a conservative décor is vital so as to not disrupt the meetings. I tend not to react or be a perpetrator of anxiety, anger or conflict, and on any issue that requires significant discussion, a quiet demeanor keeps control or helps control the flow of the meeting. By interacting in a respectful manor with all the attendants, acknowledging individuals and maybe adding humor keeps us on a useful track.
- \* Not always. In raising concerns about Alateen behavior last year, we were unable to have honest conversation about the issues. It is difficult to achieve harmony when not everyone is willing to listen to the problem. This is much like Lois in Bill's drinking days not listening to her good friend Elise Shaw about the trouble Bill was causing and the effect it was having on Lois. Most of us have had that same challenge at points in our lives with different issues. Even in the bible there are numerous passages about speaking the truth, yet they do not hear. We are at different levels of personal recovery, and some of the more difficult issues are challenging to resolve due to this.
- \* Yes, I believe the leader sets the tone. In discussions, I revert to the role of facilitator unless a chair has brought something forward for discussion. If I as a leader chose not to participate, it could be construed as complacency or compliance and participants could get mixed messages. I believe decisions are most effective when you can achieve as much unanimity as possible.
- \* Yes, I think so. I have some experience and wisdom to share at this time in my life.
- \* I love our district and think that there is harmony with the district members. Every meeting has a group representative who attends district and area meetings regularly. We rotate responsibilities, support each other and have a great sense of humor.
- \* I have felt as though I should leave the Area due to a difficulty with the Area Chair. I have served the Area under many Chairs, this is the first time I have felt "less than" and "frustrated" with communication.
- \* Yes. Area assemblies and committee meetings emphasize consensus, encouraging ongoing participation.

11. Do I trust other members of the group sufficiently to honestly and accurately share information, perceptions and feedback?

- \* Most of the time; however, I don't feel it's my job to call someone on their stuff in front of everyone. Then when I do mention it to them privately, they brush it off or ignore it, and I feel it's detrimental to the group and/or Al-Anon as a whole.
- \* For the most part, yes.
- \* Yes.
- \* I look at us as equals. However there are people with unique characteristics which I feel are admirable. I also know I can add my uniqueness to the discussion. A good meeting is a sharing by everyone and using their ideas to create the concept at hand. This is like a symphony with a variety of instruments that are playing. Making others comfortable, emphasizing their ideas and putting things together into a unified product makes everyone a part of this work. I am willing to accept others and their ideas to make the meeting successful.
- \* No. The area is in denial about certain behaviors and struggles with a searching and honest moral inventory. We love our Alateens, however, we struggle with setting boundaries, much as we did with our alcoholics prior to finding recovery in Al-Anon. In raising concern about illegal behavior at Alateen events, long time sponsors refuse to accept we have illegal behavior, yet we allow minors to smoke cigarettes at Alateen functions, and don't seem to feel that indecent exposure is illegal behavior.
- \* My experience has been that they have and so I trust that they will. It is important that group leaders encourage discussion from everyone so everyone knows they have a voice and that their voice will be heard, no matter how insignificant a question or issue might be. If someone appears not to be participating in a discussion, I may ask how they feel about the issue. In this way, active listening is going on. We have had GRs who misrepresented an issue to groups and were called on it at their group meetings. They called me and we further discussed to clarify the issue. That is why we try to all participate in discussions at the district level until we all believe we have a clear understanding. And when we do not, it's important not to take offense and to continue to clarify.
- \* I can only hope that they do. It doesn't seem like a matter of me trusting them. More so, are they trusting of me to give the information/feedback?
- \* Yes, many members of the Area. I have had meaningful discussions with many. Reasoned things out with many and have used my service sponsor when I want honest feedback.
- \* Do not sigh or roll your eyes or anything that connotes a judgment. It takes courage to listen courteously to someone we do not agree with.

12. Do I believe that as a result of all members' participation, the common welfare of the group, and individual recovery is achieved?

- \* It can be if all are willing to participate and accept each other and each other's differences. Everyone needs to be treated with respect whether we agree with them or not, and I sometimes feel as if that is not happening in our group. What that does for me personally is help me grow or watch my behavior so I don't either retaliate or be hurtful. It makes me stronger, but I'm more concerned about group harmony and would like the group, as a whole, to be stronger by participating more and using acceptance, tolerance, respect and cooperation with each other.
- \* I've seen this happen, so I know it is possible. We have a small but welcoming group that seems to be helpful to returning members and the newcomers that arrive practically every week.
- \* I can only speak for myself and my own recovery, which has been boosted enormously by participation in Area-level service.
- \* Yes.
- \* Most definitely. Common goals, an accepted meeting format that everyone understands, rotation of leadership and rotation of service positions tests everyone's conscience and sense of responsibility. If I have been an elected or selected position long enough, then it is someone else's turn to benefit and produce. Service enhances our recovery and by its particular nature we must work at providing service. This activity inherent in service draws us all together.
- \* Participation is the key to harmony; however, there is a balance between participation and unity. It is important to hear the minority opinion, but this does not give one license to put individual needs above the needs of the fellowship as a whole. Our trusted servants should exercise good personal leadership. We have allowed Alateens to have positions of unqualified authority without supporting them with good personal leadership. Other areas run Alateen conferences by ensuring each major position on the committee is lead by an Alateen with an Al-Anon sponsor to support that Alateen. NoCAC has become more of a popularity contest in recent years, and good sponsors have been driven from the event due to unacceptable behavior both at the committee level and at the conferences. This has led a number of long time sponsors to find other ways to serve the fellowship.
- \* Yes, if all members are actively and honestly participating then the common welfare is achieved. Although I cannot say what is good for someone's individual recovery, philosophically I believe that on an individual level when a person is allowed to honestly communicate and is listened to and has a vote in a group conscience, then it builds trust. It sets an example for truth and respect which can only help to benefit the individual in the long run. However, the individual may not always be consciously aware of this.
- \* Yes I do! I have experienced and witnessed this in action at the group, district and area levels many times over.
- \* I believe many members of the Area are reluctant to speak up for progress of us all. Many members have discussed not having the courage to "risk".



- \* Yes, due to reliance on Higher Power in group, district, and area meetings.
- \* This group in general everyone comes here with good intentions, wanting to accomplish the goals of the area. They come to support each other. We do that by respecting each other and listening to one another, and working with each other. We have all been in the place where personalities were dominating, and seen how damaging that can be. I seldom see in this group that level. We can get excited, we can get intense, but in the end we seem capable of recognizing we disagree and come back and make a decision. I have found this group incredibly supportive when I was failing and even when I acknowledged I was failing. They were there, available and helpful in loving and supportive ways that I could actually accept. In Al-Anon I have learned how to fail successfully. It was a growth process and it was this group that let me do that.

General comments:

- \* I believe this panel has been less effective than previous panels for these reasons:
  - Agenda management is an art that improves with practice, from my experience. That sometimes means that one must deal with difficult, time-consuming issues early, rather than later. I believe it is disrespectful to the members of an organization to start a meeting late, to end it late, and not to abide by designated breaks. That sometimes means that the meeting facilitator needs to make some personal adjustments to accommodate on-time meetings; e.g., bringing in food rather than going out to eat, making reservations in advance at a restaurant that is close by, etc. The nature of my job is such that I frequently chair/facilitate meetings, and I have learned these lessons from my years of work experience.
  - Member remarks are not always purposeful with too much repetition, even when the request is made not to do that. As such, I believe it is the chairperson's prerogative to give gentle reminders; if he/she doesn't do so, people believe that they don't have to abide by the rules of the meeting and it can get out of control.
  - I don't believe we have been completely honest about our strengths and weaknesses as individuals who make up the Committee. For example, I don't think we've adequately addressed long-standing problems such as the divisiveness that exists around the Alateen program
  
- \* Our Area Representative to the World Service Organization asked all the district representatives in Northern California to answer 12 questions in preparation for an Area Inventory that will be completed at the Al-Anon World Conference in July. I brought these questions to our district meeting and asked for input since I am a brand new district rep! I am very grateful for the help. Here are the questions and the answers, so we can all learn from the experience of our group reps and trusted servants. Note: The questions are written in the first person, but we were instructed to look at the inventory as if "I" refers to district representatives, officers, and coordinators in our Area, and "my group" refers to the entire Area.
  
- \* A different inventory was received with the following information:
  - Suggestions: Sometimes they start late: 10-15 minutes due to people not being ready: Secretary, translators, etc. The chair is usually ready to start on time.
  - Adequate time: Time is cramped, that's why we added an additional Assembly. We'll see. We have discussed the DR reports taking too much time. DR's need to stick to the 3 minute report time.
  - AWSC communications with Assembly: Mostly...ugh! Personalities do appear at times, and tension gets high.
  - Like: Agenda, breaks, a fun chairperson, interacting with others in No CA, new ideas and information.
  - Dislike: People who talk negatively amongst themselves, complaining and gossiping - instead of speaking with the person directly and privately.
  - Dominance: Mostly not. Sometimes one person will repeatedly come to the mic on one subject.
  - Opinions heard: Mostly. Sometime the chair just has to cut off the speaker, or discussion, for the sake of time.
  - Delegate's report useful: Yes, especially now that we added the May Assembly.
  - Suggestions for attendance at Assemblies: More fun- a skit; free time after dinner on Saturday (no more meetings after dinner); the Assembly ending by 3:00 Sunday.
  - Instead of WSO speaker or workshop: Downtime to visit with friends we only see 1-2 times a year.
  - Feel after Assembly: Exhausted.
  
- Notes from Nancy's Share:
  - ♥ As I have listened to your reports
  - ♥ When my sponsor suggested to me to do an inventory is usually was as a result of my complaining about someone else. When I started the inventory, it was usually to change someone else. After I finished the inventory I always ended up changing me.
  - ♥ Knowing our Higher Power is in this process, after the discussion, what are you willing to turn over to your Higher Power. What commitment to changes as an individual can we make as a result of this inventory?
  - ♥ Conflict Resolution is not trying to figure out how I can always win. No one has to be right or wrong. Al-Anon has taught me that.
  - ♥ My black and white thinking often led me to believe everything was a contest.

- ♥ Now I know that when I have to be right I am usually wrong. It doesn't mean the idea I am supporting is wrong, but a danger signal that my behavior probably is.
- ♥ My passion about something does not make me right.
- ♥ When I was on the board my worse behavior was when I thought I was the sole voice of reason: Self will run riot. As with all my service positions I learned AI-Anon did not need me as much as I needed AI-Anon. I learned some valuable things.
  1. Assume good intentions.
  2. This is not a competition with a giant score card. An idea will happen when the time is right.
  3. Nothing is forever.
  4. Conflict Resolution is not giving up or figuring how I can win, but about changing my perspective. (you could be right)
  5. Together, which includes my Higher Power, we can solve any problem.
- ♥ This morning listening to you all give your reports, I realized every report was an inventory. When I listened with my heart good work was happening. You were aware, accepting and you were taking action.
- ♥ Lord lead me to those that can give me what I need and let me love those who can't.
- ♥ As with any inventory there are steps following step four. What are you willing to do as an individual and as a group as a result of this inventory to change?

### **DR Meeting Report:** Elaine District Representative, District One

DRs discussed the following topics

- Welcome to Eureka District One and thank you all for making the long drive.
- Although, many items were discussed and we are suggesting two for implication.
- At assemblies we would like a 5 minute limit on DR and Coordinator reports.
- Area financially helps DRs attend assemblies from districts needing assistance. There is already a plan for GRs to apply for scholarships.

### **Open Positions**

- Alt. Facilities
- Alt. Web Site
- Alt. Archives
- Alt Literature

### **Announcements**

- Art's wife Sarah died in July. A celebration of Sarah's life memorial August 10<sup>th</sup> at New Almaden Community Club followed by a potluck lunch. Sarah requested that Art bring the ham. Sarah is loved and will be missed by many. Our heartfelt sympathy to Art and his family.

### **New Business**

1. The Treasurer and Secretary " may attend seminars, conferences and meetings as may be authorized by NCWSA". Why not SWRSS?

**Discussion:**

- Currently, they can go if the Chairperson or Delegate or Alternate Delegate does not go.

**Response:** Chairperson Jackie: There will be a motion at the Assembly to send all 5 officers.

2. Address how to make a complaint against the EC or a member of the EC and the fact that we do not have a policy in place for that: Patti M.

**Discussion:**

- If a member of EC has a problem with another member of the EC they deal with it within their own body first.
- If there is a problem between the EC chairperson and a member, who does the member go to?
- The EC committee as a body.
- The regular policy says you go the EC chairperson second after talking to the person who is the problem.
- We have the Conflict Resolution Guidelines, but there is nothing really stated in the guideline specifically for the EC. We would like to develop conflict resolution guidelines for the EC.
- Why would it have to be so specific? Why won't the ones we have work for EC?
- Bylaws: page 9; Section 10 'Executive Committee: If any Executive Committee Member fails to perform any responsibilities of that office or does not attend any two successive meetings, including Executive Committee,

Assembly and NCWSC meetings the NCWSA members may remove him or her by a majority vote of the DRs, Delegate and officers then in office.’ We would be removing the by the same vote that voted them to office.

- That is not the issue. The EC is responsible for dealing with conflict resolution throughout the entire body of NCWSA. How do they deal with conflict resolution within their body?
- Why doesn't the EC come up with a proposal of what they would like and present it to NCWSC?
- There is already a process in place. The Conflict Resolution Guideline which is deliberately broad states. 1) Talk to the person involved. 2) put it in writing with a copy to the EC chair 3) EC chair mediates if possible 4) if not then it goes to the entire EC. It's the same process just starting at the top. If you end back with the EC they are required to take action. If you have 5 members on the EC and the Chair is the problem, they elected the Chairperson they can remove the Chairperson.

3. Extending the term of the EC from 18 months to 3 years. Patti M.

**Discussion:**

- If we are ready to make this decision it would need to be included in the Bylaws revision draft being presented to the Assembly. .
- Why do they want to extend it?
- I feel it is disruptive for the job we have to do. We started in the middle of the term. It took a while to figure what was going on. We all have other current responsibilities (DRs). EC takes a back burner and I think it deserves more. Eighteen months on NCWSC and NCWSA timeline is actually 6 days to work on EC issues. If the panel had a longer term we would have better continuity. I see this as a supervisory position and yet the supervisor doesn't know what is going on yet the supervisor is supposed to evaluate.
- Sandi: When the Bylaws were originally written there was fear with the Assembly that attended that approval process because we had never had anything like an EC, they were afraid of the control of the EC issues. That was one way to limit their control and authority.
- Art: I would like to go back and see early minutes regarding this. What I recall we saw this as a position being filled by active DRs. One of the feelings was asking them to do two jobs an entire term seemed inappropriate. But we did not put in a limit the number of times you could run for EC, with the expectation that most could run again if they wanted to.
- Anything that comes up now that requires a Bylaw change needs to be set aside until this revision is completed and then we start the process again. There will be changes in the future and this could be one of those. We might even expand on the EC qualifications to avoid the dual functions.
- It seems the option of being able to run again is the answer and helps with continuity.
- My experience on the EC is when we rotated 3 remained and 2 were new and when we rotated again 2 remained and 3 were new. Part of what our group did was to create an excel spread sheet that listed all the EC we had over time and every single time there was at least one person stayed on if not more. Continuity has been there with the capacity to handle whatever burning issues there were.

**Summary:** Jackie, Chairperson: Part of the EC rotates each 18 months for continuity. If a member wishes they may run again. If there is to be a change to the Bylaws there is to be some research done in the matter that it is normally done. A show of hands confirmed substantial agreement.

**Bids:**

**Committee Meetings**

Feb 2009 Committee Meeting

- None submitted

May 2009 Committee Meeting

- None submitted

**Assembly**

2009

- None submitted

**Meeting adjourned:** Jackie B. Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 6:30 pm. closing with the Let it Begin with me Delectation.

Respectfully submitted: Connie F. NCWSA Secretary

**Next Assembly:**

- October Burlingame  
Patrick: Registration forms available  
D13 Non GR help needed to serve.

**Next Committee Meeting:**

- Feb. 2009