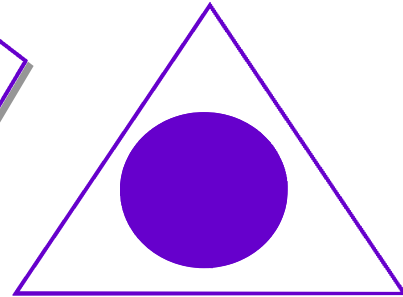

May 2010



Published by Northern Illinois Al-Anon Family Groups

NIAFG Assembly

May 14 8:00pm

May 15 9:00am-3:00pm

Bethlehem Community Ministry Center
417 W. Main Street (Route 72)
Corner of 5th & Main
West Dundee, IL 60118

Directions:

If coming from the North or South (on major highways), wherever you do it, you will hook-up with I90 going toward Elgin; either East or West.

Coming from the North, South, East or West, the exit you will take is Route 31 North (very close to the Elgin toll Plaza). There is a toll to pay at this exit. You will travel 2.2 miles from here to reach your destination.

Go north through 3 stop lights. At the 4th stop light, which is Route 72/Main Street, turn right.

At the 1st stop light (5th street) turn right and immediately left into the parking lot of the Bethlehem Community Ministry Center (the beige church/building on the corner).

There will be a sign on the corner and one directing you to the parking lot.

Hosted by District 15

Sign up for Email Subscriptions to The AIMS & other NIAFG newsworthy emails at www.niafg.org

From Your Delegate!

Build circles of hope with friends in 2010!

It's April and in less than two weeks I will be attending my second World Service Conference. The agenda is full and after receiving the 2010 Strategic Plan I am thrilled to see Al-Anon's growth and movement.

Here is a sample of the topics at the 2010 World Service Conference:

1. Travel to three countries in Europe and South America
2. Approval of two Alateen projects
3. New mailings to the District Representatives and Spanish-speaking groups
4. New Table cards for Al-Anon given by Alateen members to each group
5. Collection of data from the Unlimited Abundance Resource Survey
6. Professional conventions and gatherings the WSO will be attending to help professionals refer Al-Anon
7. New Trustees, selection of new members for the Executive Committee for Real Property
8. New General Service Office in South America
9. New thought force and task force committees and the areas of improvement within Al-Anon
10. Continuing to improve communication and the successes of the radio and television PSA, google PSA, Podcasts, and the website.
11. New Blog unveiling in English, Spanish and French
12. The expansion of eCommunities
13. New book slated for completion in 2011
14. A presentation on Cultural Diversity "Understanding Ourselves and Others" by Ramona C. and Roger C.

This is just fourteen subjects out of 26 pages of material being discussed at the World Service Conference.

Please plan to attend the May assembly to learn about Al-Anon in other countries, new literature, new projects, new blogs, new Public Service Announcements on the radio and TV. Please send your GR or a representative from your group so every group is connected to Al-Anon worldwide. Thank you for this experience in service.

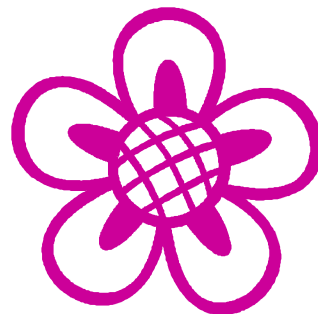
I am truly grateful to be representing the Al-Anon members of Northern Illinois.

Here's a wonderful quote from our founder: "Al-Anon has grown so fast and so far, it takes my breath away! The more it grows the greater the contrast between the early days and now."

Lois W. Path To Recovery, Page 249

RAMONA

*Illinois North Panel 49 Delegate
and your friend*



Queridas compañeras,

Aquí está el artículo de Mayo y con tan sólo, a 12 días antes que asistir a mi segunda Conferencia Mundial de servicio:

Es Abril, y en menos de dos semanas asistiré mi segunda Conferencia de Servicio Mundial. El programa es completo y después de recibir el Plan estratégico 2010, me entusiasma muchísimo ver todo el movimiento y crecimiento de Al-Anon.

Aquí hay una muestra de los temas en la Conferencia de servicio mundial de 2010:

1. El Viaje a tres países de Europa y América del sur.
2. La aprobación de dos proyectos de Alateen.
3. Los nuevos correos a los Representantes de Distrito y de los grupos de habla hispana.
4. Las nuevas tarjetas de mesa Al-Anon dadas por los miembros de Alateen a cada grupo.
5. La colección de datos por la encuesta de Recursos de Abundancia Ilimitada.
6. Convenciones de Profesionales y reuniones de la WSO para ayudar a los profesionales a recomendar Al-Anon.
7. Nuevos Custodios, selección de nuevos miembros para el Comité Ejecutivo para inmuebles.
8. Una Nueva Oficina de Servicio de General en América del Sur.
9. El pensamiento de una fuerza nueva, de tareas de los Comités y de las áreas de mejoramiento dentro de Al-Anon.
10. Continuar mejorando la comunicación y los éxitos de la radio y televisión PSA, google PSA, podcasts y el sitio Web.
11. Un Nuevo diario (Blog) por el internet que será en inglés, español y francés.
12. La expansión de e-Communities.
13. Nuevo libro que se complete para el 2011.

14. Una presentación sobre la Diversidad Cultural "Entendiéndonos a nosotros mismos y a otros" por Ramona C. (nuestra Delegada) and Roger C.

Esto es sólo catorce temas de 26 páginas de material que será debatido en la Conferencia de Servicio Mundial.

Por favor, planee asistir a la Asamblea de Mayo para obtener información sobre Al-Anon en otros países, nueva literatura, nuevos proyectos, nuevos blogs, nuevos de servicios al público. Anuncios en la radio y la TV. Por favor, envíe su GR o una persona que represente su grupo, para que cada grupo esté conectado con todo el mundo de Al-Anon

Gracias por brindarme esta experiencia de servirles. Estoy realmente agradecida por estar representando a todos los miembros de al-Anon del Norte de Illinois y grupos hispanos de Indiana y Wisconsin.

Aquí es algo maravilloso que dijera nuestra fundadora:

"Al-Anon ha crecido tan rápido y hasta la fecha, me deja sin respirar!

Entre

más crece más grande es el contraste entre los primeros días y ahora."

Lois W. Ruta hacia la recuperación, página 249

Ramona,

su delegada y su amiga Illinois Norte, panel 49.

Service is the rent we pay for being. It is the very purpose of life, and not something you do in your spare time.

Marian Wright Edelman

Dear Family Group,

I sponsor someone who became a Group Representative (GR) and went to their first District Meeting last night. After she attended the meeting we talked about her experience. I asked her to tell me one thing that surprised her most about the meeting. She didn't mention anything that happened at the District Meeting, instead, her response was, "That there were so few GR's at the meeting." I understand her amazement.

There are two main reasons that there were so few GRs at the meeting last night.

- 1) Many Al-Anon groups do not have a GR
- 2) The group has a GR who doesn't go to District Meetings or Assemblies.

Either way, the group misses one of the key purposes of the GR: to unite the group with other groups in the District, Area, and Al-Anon worldwide. Think about what it was like before you came to Al-Anon. Most would describe the feelings of isolation—a feeling of being alone with all the problems alcoholism brings and no solution, no escape out of the hopelessness of the disease. A group that is not connected to the District or Area is also isolated. Many groups become "sick" because there is no connection to the unity of Al-Anon which provides healthy solutions to problems and the ability to heal.

It's not just the group that suffers the consequences, so does the individual. There is a compelling reason to become a GR and follow through with the commitment. It's called recovery. There's a saying and even a title of one of our booklets called, "WHEN I GOT BUSY I GOT BETTER." It's true, the service we provide is the key to our personal growth. I'm sure that the woman I sponsor, who attended her first District Meeting last night, had a little voice in the back of her head that said, "And I have to

give up yet another night to go to the District meeting?" She doesn't know it yet, but she's begun to embark on a journey that will become instrumental to her feelings of self-knowledge and worth.

Whether from the group or the individual standpoint, there's one important lesson: Being a GR isn't a duty or sacrifice, it's a privilege. A privilege because the group entrusts GRs to unify us with other Al-Anon groups, keeping the group healthy which ultimately helps the individual members. It's a privilege for the individual to be able to tap into and harness an incredible opportunity for growth.

I hope if you participate in a group without a GR, after reading this, you'll be motivated to become the GR. If you have a limitation that prevents you from doing so, read this letter to your group and ask if anyone is willing to step forward.

If you are a GR but not going to District Meetings or Assemblies, why not? If there's a reason you can't fulfill your commitment, then step down and let someone else have the opportunity. If you don't have a legitimate reason, then there's only one thing left to say. . .get busy and get better! You can start by attending the upcoming Assembly on May 15th.

With love in service,

Sandy

P.S. There will be a special Alateen baked goods sale at the May Assembly. Proceeds collected will be used to help District 15 Alateens defray the costs of attending Midlake. Please help support both the Alateens and your sweet tooth at the same time!

Being a GR isn't a duty or sacrifice, it's a privilege.



Ser un GR no es un deber o sacrificio. Es un privilegio.

*El servicio es el alquiler que pagamos por ser.
Es el propósito de la vida, y no algo que haces en
tu tiempo libre.*

Marian Wright Edelman

Queridos Grupos de Familia Al-Anon,
Amadrino a alguien que se convirtió hace poco en un Representante de Grupo (RG) y fue a su primera reunión de Distrito anoche. Después de que asistió a la reunión, me habló sobre su experiencia. Le pedí que me dijera la cosa que más le había sorprendido de la reunión. No mencionó nada de lo que ocurrió en la reunión de Distrito. En su lugar, su respuesta fue: "Que había tan poquitos Representantes de Grupo en la reunión." Yo entiendo su asombro.

Hay dos razones principales por las cuales había tan poquitos RG en la reunión de anoche.

- 1) Muchos grupos de Al-Anon no tienen Representantes de Grupos.
- 2) El grupo tiene un RG que no va a las Reuniones de Distrito o de Asambleas de Zona .

De cualquier manera, el grupo pierde uno de los propósitos fundamentales de los RG: unir el grupo con otros grupos en el Distrito, Área y de Al-Anon en todo el mundo. Piense en lo que era antes de venir a Al-Anon. La mayoría describimos sentimientos de aislamiento, una sensación de estar solos, con todos los problemas que trae el alcoholismo y sin ninguna solución, no poder escapar de la desesperación y de la enfermedad. Un grupo que no está conectado con el Distrito o el Área también está aislado. Muchos grupos se convierten en "grupos enfermos" porque no hay conexión con la unidad de Al-Anon, la cual nos proporciona soluciones sanas a los problemas y la capacidad de sanar.

No es sólo el grupo el que sufre las consecuencias, también lo sufren las personas. Hay una razón grande para convertirse en un Representante del Grupo y seguir adelante con el compromiso. Se llama Recuperación. Hay un dicho y hasta un título de uno de nuestros folletos llamados, "Cuando me mantuve ocupado, me senti mejor que nunca." Es verdad. El servicio que ofrecemos es la clave para nuestro crecimiento personal. Estoy segura de la mujer

que amadrino y que asistió a su primera Reunión de Distrito ya desde anoche ya escuchaba una vozcita en la parte posterior de su cabeza que decía: "Y yo tengo que renunciar a otra noche para ir a la Reunión de Distrito?" Pero ella no sabe todavía, que ha empezado un viaje que se convertirá en un instrumento de sentimientos de auto-conocimiento y valor por sí misma. Ya sea desde el grupo o desde el punto de vista individual, aquí hay una lección importante. Ser un RG no es un deber o sacrificio. Es un privilegio. Es un privilegio porque los grupos confían en los Representantes de Grupo nos uniran con otros grupos de Al Anon, manteniendo el grupo sano, que en última instancia ayuda a cada uno de los miembros. Es un privilegio para que la persona sea capaz de explotar y aprovechar una oportunidad increíble para su crecimiento.

Espero que si usted participa en un grupo sin RG, después de leer esto, usted se sentirá motivado para convertirse en el RG. Si usted tiene una limitación que le impide hacerlo, lea esta carta a su grupo y pregunte si alguien quiere dar un paso adelante.

Si usted es un RG, pero no va a las Reuniones de Distrito o Asambleas de Zona, por qué no?

Si hay una razón por la que no puede cumplir con su compromiso, deje que otra persona represente al grupo, dele esa oportunidad a otra persona. Pero si usted no tiene una razón grande, a continuación, sólo hay una cosa que decir ... Manténgase ocupado sirviendo y mejorara.

Puede comenzar con asistir a la próxima Asamblea el 15 de mayo.

Con amor en el servicio,
Sandy, su Presidenta.

PS: Habrá una venta especial de bocadillos horneados en la Asamblea de Mayo. Los fondos recaudados serán utilizados para ayudar a Alateens Distrito 15 para sufragar los gastos de asistir a Midlake. Por favor, ayude y apoye tanto a estos Alateens como a sus "dientitos".

Ask Flac

**Your questions answered
out of CAL by the
Fellowship Literature
Action Committee**



At the January Assembly, the following questions were asked by a member through the Ask-It Basket:

I am a new member and could use some help finding a sponsor. I hear so many people talk about so many ways in which they find and/or use their sponsors. Is there some Al-anon guide that helps?

First of all, bravo to this new member for thinking about taking the next step in his/her recovery. Going to meetings, reading the literature on a daily basis, and applying the slogans, steps, and traditions to our lives are all very important in the recovery process. However, they are not the whole picture. It's only by working one-on-one with another member, a sponsor, that a member can truly reap the benefits of the program, regain trust, and come to a much deeper understanding of recovery. Probably the best guide to sponsorship and related issues is *SPONSORSHIP, WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT* (publication P-31).

According to this pamphlet, "A sponsor is someone with whom a member can discuss personal problems or questions; someone who willingly shares the experience, strength, and hope of the Al-anon/Alateen program." While daily or weekly meetings provide members with a voice and are a source of mutual support, a meeting is not always the proper forum for more personal problems. Meetings often have time constraints as all members are given an

equal opportunity to share. When a member needs additional, more personal guidance, especially between meetings, a sponsor can fill the need. The pamphlet equates the need for sponsorship to being lost in the woods. A sponsor is someone who helps us out of the woods by taking our hand and showing us the way. Ours is a program without rules—no "musts" or "shoulds", so a sponsor will not be someone who tells us what to do. Instead, he/she will gently help us find our own answers and discover our choices through applying the principles and tools of the program. As the pamphlet says, "Sponsors do not wave magic wands, resolve difficulties, make decisions, or become responsible for us. Sponsors may suggest available options for us, some of which we may not have thought of ourselves." In the September, 2009 issue of *Forum* (page 3), Dianne V. shared her experience about NOT working with a sponsor in "I Was Trying to Work the Program on My Own." She admits, "I knew that I needed to stop trying to work the program on my own. I needed to reach out and ask others for help." She goes on to say, "I have learned to call her (her sponsor) in the middle of a crisis instead of trying to survive on my own. She cares about me and gives me encouragement and support. With her help, I am finally starting to work the steps. My life is becoming a good place to be." Working with a sponsor can indeed open the door to a new life in the program as opposed to

living a lonely and unhealthy existence. We finally accept the idea that we need help and become willing to work with a sponsor. How does one go about finding a sponsor? Keep in mind the slogan "Listen." Going to a variety of meetings and listening to what various members have to say can be very helpful when choosing someone to ask. There is usually someone who stands out—someone who has what we want and someone we feel comfortable with. Many of us have been unable to trust due to having misguided expectations of our qualifiers and have been unable to communicate our true feelings for fear of being put down. When we finally meet and ask the right person to sponsor us, we can begin to feel validated and trust in our fellow human beings can be restored. Because of anonymity, we know that whatever we say to our sponsor will be kept just between the two of us. To our new member, good luck in finding a sponsor and growing in the program!

Send your questions to "Ask FLAC" at
ask.flac@gmail.com

Or to the FLAC chairperson, care of
NIAFG

P.O. Box 2044

Oak Park, IL 60303.

The committee will select and publish as many letters as possible, striving for a good representation of the experience, strength, and hope in our CAL.

**FOR AREA HAPPENINGS
PLEASE CHECK THE
EVENTS PAGE ON
WWW.NIAFG.ORG OR SEE
THE CALENDAR PAGE OF A
PAPER COPY OF THE AIMS
NEWSLETTER**



I've pulled out the Alanon 12 & 12 lately and am rereading some of the traditions and step 12. I've always considered this one of my old favorites, so I've

decided to keep it out on the night stand so that I will refer to it more often. The reading on Tradition 12 is excellent and always helps when I'm being of service at either an assembly, district meeting or home group.

I want to put a pitch in for "AS WE UNDERSTOOD". The Forum is looking for your strength, hope and experience around this book and submission of same. As I was thinking about the title, it really comes from our Step 3. The book is filled with love and hp. It is another one of my favorites.

I hope you have a good start to the summer...

Yours in Service, Deborah

From Your CPI/CPC

Free Copies of "Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism" Available for Your Outreach Efforts!

The Northern Illinois Area just received 2000 copies of the second printing of "Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism 2010." These are free to any district or group that wants to conduct an outreach effort. For more information, contact Marc (see a paper copy of The AIMS for Marc's contact information.)

Gratefully, Marc

Coordinator for Public Information &
Cooperating with the Professional Community

From the Archives... or Did You Know?

To be able see where we are at today, it is always good to know from which we came...

Did you know... the *family group* idea is nearly as old as AA itself? In the pioneering days of AA—1935 to 1941—wives and relatives of recovering alcoholics began to realize that they still had a common problem even though their partners had sobered up! They saw it as a serious dilemma which had two aspects:

1. a need for a deeper understanding of what alcohol had done to their partners
2. the more difficult problem of how living with an alcoholic ...warped and deformed their own personalities. *



Sooooo we began to meet, informally at first...perhaps in the kitchen of the home where the AA's were getting sober.... But this was the inkling (I love that word) the *beginning* of what we know as Al- Anon today.

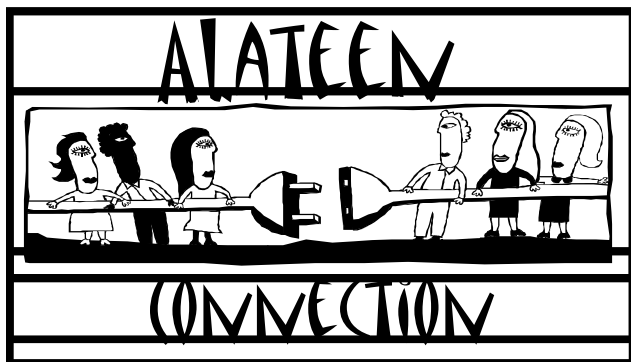
Did you also know that

Sometime between 1941 and 1949 as meetings were beginning to form specifically with the family groups in mind, one was in Chicago? Yes! Perhaps one of the very groups that Lois originally contacted by letter was right here in Northern Illinois!

Welcome to Archives for this is what it is all about! Good to know and be grateful for "the shoulders" on which we stand today

*Taken from The Al-Anon Family Groups - Classic Edition

Liz, NIAFG Archive Coordinator



May is Midlake time!! On Memorial Day weekend about 100 teens and their sponsors, that come from Illinois Wisconsin and Minnesota, will gather for fellowship and fun. For those who may not be familiar with Midlake, let me explain what it is. On Friday, everyone arrives at Devil's Head Resort in Baraboo, Wisc, mayhem ensues! The kids are so excited to see fellow teens who they have not been with for a whole year. I would say that we all get up on Saturday morning for breakfast and meetings but no one really sleeps. Meetings around the clock, intense sharing and lots of snacks keep the kids going all day and into the night. We have speakers and a banquet on Saturday night that leads to dancing. Sunday morning we gather for one last hug, pictures and phone numbers. And as we leave we just don't want it to end so we all end up at the Subway at the end of the road for one last goodbye.

Sound like fun?

It is **PURE MAGIC!**

Please don't forget that we can't make it without the support of all of the members of Al-Anon, in fact in these hard economic times we have more children than ever that need some form of assistance in order to attend. If you or your group would like to help support us please send you donations to, Wendy (see a paper copy of The AIMS for contact information.)

Make the check out to Midlake Alateen Convention.

By the way the theme for this year is "Midlake, Pure Magic"

Nancy O.
Alateen Coordinator



NIAFG Treasurer

***For group and district treasurers and other NIAFG contributors:
Keep It Simple when contributing to Northern Illinois Area and make
checks payable to "NIAFG"***

Please supply the following information with your check:

- Group name
- Group ID #
- Group Meeting Place
 - District #
- Meeting Day & Time
 - Contact Name
 - Contact Phone #

Complete information ensures your group and/or district is credited for the contribution.

NIAFG Directory Order Form

(Check quantity desired in the ✓ column)

✓	Quantity	Price	Shipping & Handling	Total
	6	6.00	3.38	\$ 9.38
	12	12.00	3.77	\$ 15.77
	18	18.00	4.16	\$ 22.16
	24	24.00	4.85	\$ 28.85

Mail this order form with payment to:
(see a paper copy of the AIMS for contact information.)

Make checks payable to **NIAFG**.

For questions, email Martha at (see printed copy of AIMS for email address).

Please allow up to 3 weeks for delivery.

Directories can also be purchased at NIAFG Assemblies.

Please see your Group or District Representative or visit www.niafg.org for Assembly dates.

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone Number: _____

E-Mail Address: _____