

Southern Illinois Al-Anon Family Group

News-O-Gram

Fall 2021

SIAFG Area Assembly Information

November 6, 2021

ZOOM Meeting Details

To be announced

8:30-9 am Sign On and Get “Settled”

9:00 am Meeting Starts

Who attends these meetings??

Southern Illinois Al-Anon Family Group

SIAFG Area Assembly meeting is open for all members of Al-Anon, everyone is welcome! This meeting is specifically for the groups. Group Representatives (or alternate if GR cannot attend) are the only ones who have vote. Discussions will include minutes from previous meeting, financial reports, group records, any old and/or new business and sharing of group concerns/successes/information, districts, and area coordinators. Your Delegate will also share information from WSO.

SIAWSC MEETING Information

September 18, 2021

Zoom Meeting Details: TO COME

8:30 - 9 am Sign On and Get “Settled” 9:00 am Meeting Starts

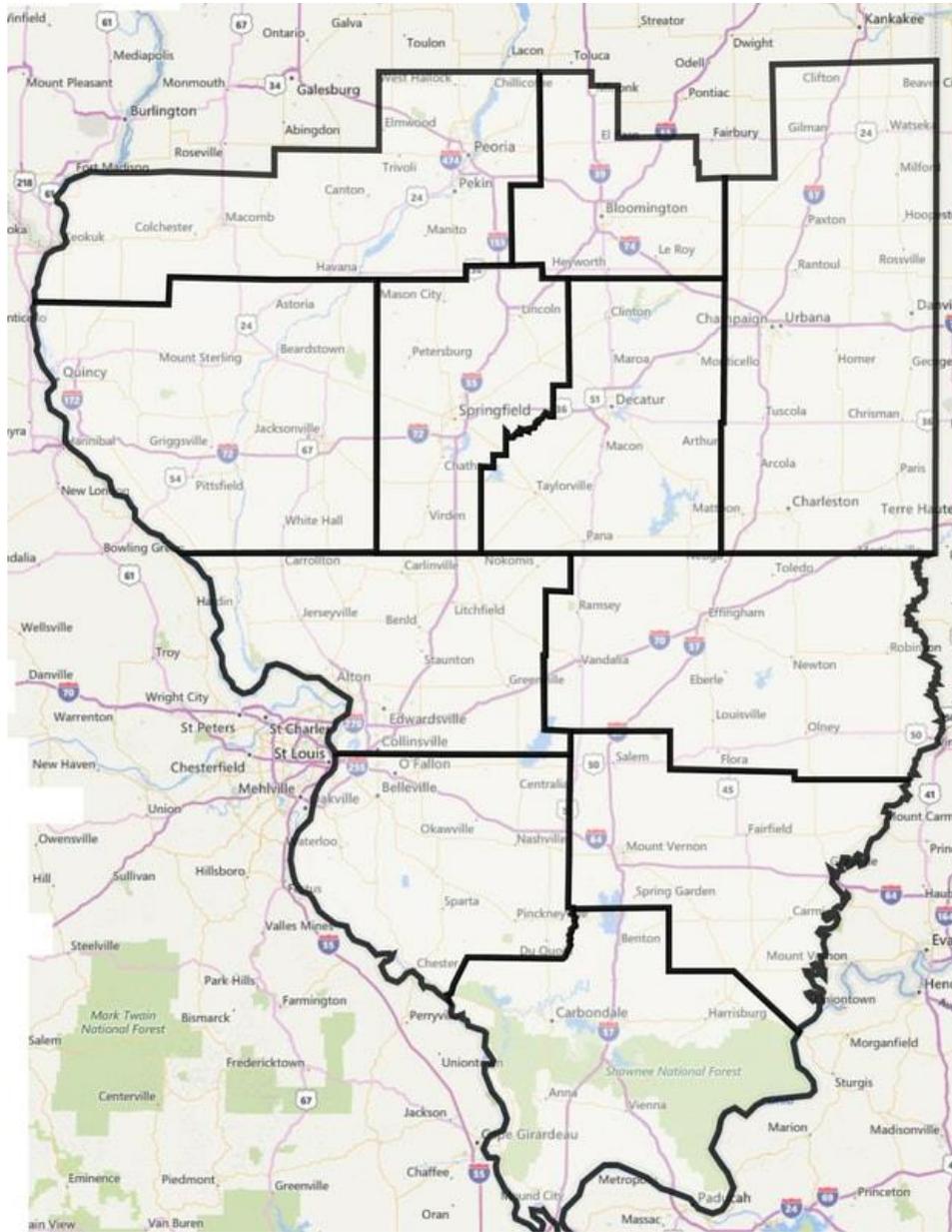
Who attends these meetings??

Southern Illinois Al-Anon World Service Committee

SIAWSC meeting is open for all members of Al-Anon, everyone is welcome! This meeting is for the districts, officers, and coordinators. However, input from everyone is welcome! Attendance from everyone is greatly encouraged. Topics from Area Assembly will be discussed, and any suggested improvements for Area Assembly meetings, suggestions for group support, district support, or suggestions from WSO are considered. Decisions will be made and the agenda will be set for the next Area Assembly meeting. Everyone has a voice, but only DR's, Officers, and Coordinators have vote.

Access to the minutes and other information regarding Area Assembly business is available at <http://www.siafg.org/area-business.html>. This is a password protected area of the SIAFG.org website. The password is available by contacting webmaster@siafg.org.

If you have any changes to group meeting times, date, contact person, etc., please contact the Group Records Secretary at siafg.group.records@gmail.com.



Can you name the District numbers?
 Check it out on the SIAFG.org website.

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SIAFG Chairperson's Report

Happy Late Summer/Early Fall to the SIAFG membership! It has been yet another summer for “the books”. So many twists and turns in daily life right now. I know I am so thankful I have an Al-Anon program to help me navigate life as we are all new to these twists and turns. J I want to thank the SIAFG membership over this past year and a half as I have been in the chairperson's position. You have all pivoted your engagement and collaborated so beautifully to continue the fellowship, service and recovery of the Al-Anon program. I personally want to thank you for all that you do to keep sharing the messages of recovery and maintaining the principles of the Al-Anon program.

Another highlight I am so very proud of our SIAFG membership is how we have continued to work as groups, districts, and area to keep moving forward to improve the program in the SIAFG area and provide recovery for all friends and family members of alcoholics.

There are a couple of business items I would ask you to search your heart, your service commitments (even your sponsees) to see if we might be able to find some individuals willing to share their gifts with SIAFG.

We have a number of SIAFG Coordinator positions open. We would REALLY like to fill these in order to continue the important work of the SIAFG area. If there is no one in these positions, the work doesn't continue.

OPEN COORDINATOR POSITIONS – Links to job descriptions on the SIAFG.org website for each open position are included.

Public Outreach – <http://www.siafg.org/uploads/1/2/2/2/12228429/publicoutreachcoordinator.pdf>

Convention Liaison - <http://www.siafg.org/uploads/1/2/2/2/12228429/conventionliaison.pdf>

Archives - <http://www.siafg.org/uploads/1/2/2/2/12228429/archivescoordinator.pdf>

Forum/Literature - <http://www.siafg.org/uploads/1/2/2/2/12228429/literaturecoordinator.pdf>

Ways & Means - <http://www.siafg.org/uploads/1/2/2/2/12228429/waysmeanscoordinator.pdf>

I'd encourage all Al-Anon members to engage in the SIAFG Area Assembly meetings. These meetings are held 3 times per year and all Al-Anon members have a voice in the meeting. Only Group Representatives can vote in the meeting but I'd HIGHLY encourage you to attend just to see how the business of Al-Anon works so you can become more comfortable and maybe even volunteer for a position. Right now our meetings are held via zoom. They are typically held on a Saturday, starting at 9 am and ending around 2 or 3 pm with a couple breaks in between. Yes, I understand this is a LONG day on a zoom meeting. Believe me it's a long day for me too. You can attend as much or as little of the meeting as your schedule will allow. As our 4th Concept outlines, “Participation is the key to harmony”, so I would really like to encourage all who are interested to engage in this important work to help keep the program of Al-Anon moving and growing for the Southern Illinois Area.

Our next SIAFG Area Assembly will be held: **Saturday, November 6, 2021 on zoom**. Please refer to the SIAFG website (www.siafg.org) for zoom details and the agenda.

Finally I'd like to thank all the current Officers, Coordinators, District Reps, Past Delegates, Group Reps and all others who continue to volunteer their gifts to give back to the program of Southern Illinois Al-Anon Family Group. Your area all an inspiration to carry the message of recovery to all who are in need.

Becky Ropp

**2021 SIAFG Chairperson
Southern Illinois Area Treasurer's Report**

Hello, I hope everyone had a wonderful summer and are looking forward to cooler fall weather. The table below shows district and group donations from May - August 2021. When sending a donation, please use the contribution form that I return with your donation receipt. The donation form is also available on SIAFG website and is listed below, after the contribution table. In order to keep complete records, I need to know **Group Name, District Number, and WSO ID number**. In addition, it helps if you print the name and address of the person sending the donation, because I cannot always read the signatures. The below donations were given to Area's general fund.

On behalf of our Area Assembly, I thank you for your contributions. It is because of your support we can continue to carry the message to others. I look forward to seeing all of you on zoom at the next Area Assembly in November.

Yours in Recovery,

Carol W
Area Treasurer



District or Group Name	District Number	Group Number	District or Group Name	District Number	Group Number
Alton Mon. E. 12th Street	18	3451	Monday Morning AFG	20	24161
Bethalto Wed. Morning AFG	18	3491	Open Door AFG	18	3812
Birthday Donation			Personal Donation		
CMA Friday Morning AFG	20	30790	Progress Not Perfection	19	30633415
CMA Hope AFG	20	35525	Saturday Morning Serenity Seeker	10	25455
District 18	18		Stepping Stones AFG	17	30673249
District 20 AFG	20		TGIF AFG	14	29620
Edwardsville Fundamentals of Recovery	18	30584718	The Last Resort	18	50020
Happiness Is	19	4811	The Monday Night Serenity Group	18	26501
Hopeful Serenity Seekers Adult Children AFG	18	34856	Thursday Night AFG	18	30528380
Keep Coming Back	14	4025	Troy Joy	18	63747
Monday AM	10	3493	Twelve Step AFG	16	50819
Monday Hilltop AFG	20	4020	Wednesday Morning Glories	20	4022

Have you ever noticed that 2 Traditions and 1 Concept have word/wording differences?

Do you know that, as early as 1967, the World Service Conference (WSC) approved a motion stating that “No changes are to be made in the Al-Anon or Alateen Traditions, the Steps, the Concepts of Service (except the descriptive text), or the General Warranties of the Conference Charter (item 12) without written consent of three-quarters of the Al-Anon Family Groups. (From Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual, page 224-225, #3d)?

Over the years I have noticed that there were some word/wording differences in: Tradition 6 (said “Our Al-Anon Family Groups” or “Our Family Groups”); Tradition 11 (said “press, radio, TV and films” or “press radio, films, and TV”); and, Concept 5 (said “assure” or “insure”) and wondered when the changes were approved.

Through research, mostly in the 2003 World Service Conference Summary, in Board Presentation on page 31 “certain typographical errors had occurred over the years in printing the Steps, Traditions, Concepts of Service, and General Warranties for which there was no documentation to indicate that the World Service Conference had approved any of these changes”, WSC approved motion #9 on page 59 “That future printings of the Legacies return to the text as originally printed.”, and Appendix on page 87-88 “Current and Original Printing” of The Twelve Steps, Traditions, and General Warranties.

So, word/wording of these Legacies in all future publications of Al-Anon’s literature was changed to: Tradition 6 - “Our Family Groups”, Tradition 11 - “press radio, films, and TV”, and Concept 5 - “insure”.

Thanks for letting me share this information with you.

Jan Tucker,
Past Delegate,
Panel 30, Illinois South

Alateen Coordinator

ALATEEN COORDINATOR duties have been on hold pending outcome of the WSO verdict on NIAFG updated behavioral and safety standards for ALATEEN meetings, events.

Effective September 30, 2021 I am resigning my ALATEEN COORDINATOR position to concentrate on my role as 2022 CONVENTION Chairperson.

My resignation was accepted by Becky, SIAFG Chairperson.

Debbie Mc,
in service

RAMBLINGS FROM A GRATEFUL AND RECOVERING AL-ANON MEMBER

Crosstalk

Over the years, I have truly come to appreciate the guidelines laid out by our predecessors for Alanon meetings and have come to use those meetings as a rehearsal studio for real life. A place where I can learn from my mistakes in the kind reflection of fellowship.

In the early days, I must admit that one of the most difficult rules for me to follow was the crosstalk rule, which asks that we listen to others share without comment, criticism or advice. I thought to myself, how am I ever going to learn to listen to friends share about their problems and concerns without jumping in and helping them resolve their issues? After all, that was my role in life...but you know my husband was the sick one! I spent most of those early meetings biting my lip and learning how to keep my mouth shut, but it was surprisingly difficult. After a while, it was downright humorous to witness my own struggle with this. It felt like being in a straightjacket to stay quiet sometimes, and even still, there are days when I can't help myself.

I am such a stubborn soul and quite the reluctant student when it requires me to climb down off my righteous soapbox. It took something subtle and a just a tad bit sneaky to teach me this important lesson. Therein lies one of the truly brilliant tactics of Al-anon. It keeps me distracted in the kitchen, while it sneaks a lesson in the side door.

As I learned to stay quiet, I noticed was that I was starting to truly listen to others. Up until then, I really had no ability to "hear" others because I hadn't been listening to them, so much as I was listening for an opportunity to jump in and help them, and by doing so, create value in my life (again, let me remind you that my husband was the sick one!). I listened so I would know how to behave, not to learn how another felt. But when I cannot run to the rescue, there's really nothing else to do but listen, and without my reactions getting in the way, I slowly started to learn how to hear, without becoming involved.

The crosstalk rule was in fact my segue towards learning about detachment. I used to think of that as a dirty word, something selfish people did to protect themselves when they were in trouble. But struggling with crosstalk compliance taught me the other side of that coin. I needed to learn that listening without commenting or offering advice was the most effective way to not only show compassion, but also respect for the other person. Something I desperately needed to learn. I didn't always have the solution, and I certainly didn't need to take advantage of another's pain in order to create value in my own life. The crosstalk rule taught me to listen, with humility and respect for those whom I listen to, and magically when I practiced what I had learned out in the "real world", it had amazing results.

Especially with the sick one....me.

May 2011. Reprinted with permission

2022 IL State AFG Convention UPDATE

With SIAFG's Convention Liaison coordinator position being vacant, Cathy B. the former SIAFG Convention Liaison, has stepped up to help coordinate SIAFG hosting the 2022 IL State AFG Convention only. Please know this is a temporary assignment to help coordinate launching the 2022 IL State AFG Convention only. She is not fulfilling any of the other associated coordinator position responsibilities for SIAFG.

Convention co-chairs, Debbie M. and Janese H., and interim Convention Liaison Cathy B. have been working together since early May 2021. Running out of time to select a venue for the 2022 IL State AFG Convention, we contacted four

(4) possible venues in the Springfield area. Northfield Inn, Suites & Conference Center; the Crowne Plaza; President Abraham Lincoln Springfield, a Double Tree by Hilton; and The Wyndham Springfield City Centre. After some discussions with each potential venue, we were able to eliminate Northfield Inn because it simply did not have the space requirements. After touring the three remaining venues on June 4th, we eliminated the Crowne Plaza due to costs (meeting spaces, food & beverage min., added costs for AV, tables, linen, skirts, etc.) and the inability to keep the meeting spaces required together and consistent for the entire weekend.

We were impressed with both the Wyndham & President Abraham Lincoln. It's true what they say ... a picture is worth a thousand words! Seeing the actual space versus looking at the floor plans on paper made a huge difference. With these remaining two choices, we were able to place a hold on the spaces and dates until after our July 10th Assembly meeting. Since the convention is hosted by SIAFG, we're asking the members to make the final selection.

Here is a quick summary of the two choices:

The Wyndham Hotel

Dates: October 14-16, 2022

Hotel Rooms: \$104/night + tax, for 1-4 occupants per room (includes 2 complimentary parking passes per occupied guest room)

Special Concessions: - (5) Complimentary three-day attendee parking passes for the planner to distribute, additional passes may be purchased, for the planner to distribute, at a discount of \$5.00 per day pass.

Complimentary Wi-Fi in all guest rooms, public areas, and meeting space. Discounted suite upgrades available upon request. Complimentary shuttle service to and from the Springfield airport and train station.

Meeting Space: Start time at 3 PM on Friday night and concludes on Sunday at noon. All located on the same level and separate from any other events that weekend.

Cost: \$1,000 for all meeting spaces, \$100/day for AV equipment, no other additional charges (Note: meeting space rental amount is based on a sliding scale of guest room pick up of 96 or more; committee is planning for 60 rooms on Friday, and 60 rooms on Saturday, which makes 120 total)

The President Abraham Lincoln Hotel

Dates: October 28-30, 2022

Hotel Rooms: \$109/night + tax (includes 1 complimentary parking pass per occupied guest room)

Special Concessions: - Additional parking passes may be purchased at \$7.00/day. Garage price is \$1/hr; \$7/day max charge. Complimentary Wi-Fi in all guest rooms, and meeting spaces. Complimentary shuttle service to and from the Springfield airport and train station.

Meeting Space: Start time at 3 PM on Friday night and concludes on Sunday at noon. Location of meeting spaces would be split between the main floor (General Session Room & Banquet Room) & second level (all other spaces). The general session room is separate from other events on Saturday night only.

Cost: \$1,000 for all meeting spaces, \$100/day for AV equipment, no other additional charges. (Note: meeting space rental amount is a flat fee and is not dependent on the total number of guest rooms booked)

After the presentation to Area Assembly, and vote approved, the choice was made to have the Wyndham host our 2022 IL State AFG Convention. The contract has been signed! Keep an eye out for a 'Save the Date' flyer coming soon!!

Yours in service,
Cathy Blakey
Interim 2022 IL State AFG Convention (only)

SAVE THE DATE
for 2022 CONVENTION:

OCTOBER 14-16, 2022
Wyndham City Centre Hotel,
Downtown Springfield, IL
More details to follow

For information on how to volunteer,
contact debbiemccoy67@gmail.com.

First CONVENTION planning committee meeting
to be held via ZOOM on
October 17 at 4:00
Open invite at this time to potential volunteers

Appointment of committee Chairperson/leaders
left to discretion of Convention Chairperson/Co-Chairperson

Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/229846323>

Meeting ID: 229 846 323 Password 191212 485406

To dial in by phone, call any of these US numbers:
312 626 6799 (Chicago)
346 248 7799 (Houston)
929 205 6099 New York)

District Coordinator Reports

News-O-Gram Coordinator

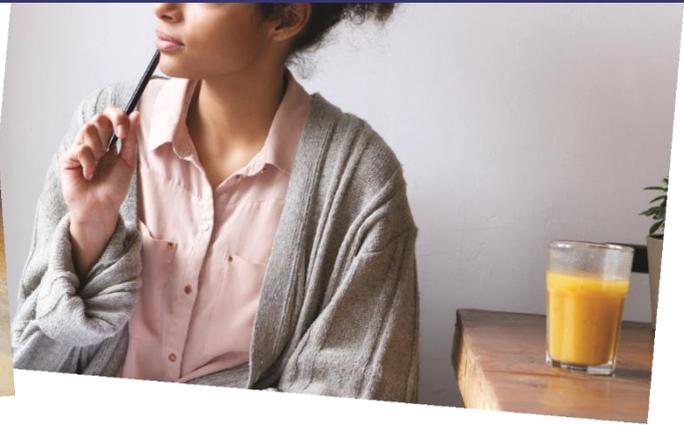
This media forum is meant to include personal and business sharing, including personal-sharing by Al-Anon/Alateen members of their experience, strength and hope. It is also an opportunity for Business sharing by principally concerned members pertaining to Al-Anon/Alateen business, organization or procedures (sharing must include references to Al-Anon Conference Approved Literature).

Please share your thoughts and concerns with Carol Holterman, 3321 West William Street, Champaign, Illinois 61821; text/call 262-729-0946 or email to Carol53115@Yahoo.com.

Service is truly the key to personal growth, and I appreciate the opportunity to continue my journey.

Peace,
Carol H.

We still need your experience for our new daily reader!



The 2014 World Service Conference gave conceptual approval for “a new daily reader that reflects the diversity of the Al-Anon fellowship” and its members as they are today. We continue to need sharings. For most of our literature, we simply ask members to send us their recovery stories, but this new daily reader has some specific requirements:

- Like all our daily readers, this book will be a collection of meditations to help us throughout our day. Focus on a single insight that you found helpful in your personal growth and recovery.
- Apply an Al-Anon principle—a slogan, a Step, Tradition, or Concept; the Serenity Prayer; or other Al-Anon tool—to a real-life problem or challenge.
- The new daily reader is intended to convey the rich diversity of personal experience that we share as a fellowship. Indicating this diversity can be challenging, since our books don't include the names, faces or voices of those who write. Because gender, age, relationship to the alcoholic and other differences are not always evident from members' writings, please feel free to reveal these details as you focus on a particular topic or idea.
- Keep the sharing between 200-300 words, so it will fit onto a single daily reader page.
- Keep the focus on yourself and your own experiences, not the alcoholic or others. Write in the first person singular “I”. Please avoid the use of the pronoun “you”.
- Avoid generalities, outside issues, treatment center language, and religious philosophy or doctrine, although you may include your own personal interpretation of “a Power greater than ourselves,” unless it advocates a specific religious tenet or philosophy.

- Feel free to include a “Today’s Reminder” type summary of your sharing, a thought-provoking question, or a pertinent quotation from existing Al-Anon literature (including source and page number).

Grammar and spelling are not as important as your heartfelt experiences, feelings, and insights. Please help us make this new daily reader a vital, rich, and multifaceted expression of the Al-Anon program of recovery.

If printed, your sharing will remain anonymous, but please include your name and postal or e-mail address with your sharing so that we can acknowledge receipt. If your sharing is not used for the book, it will be forwarded to the Forum Editorial Advisory Committee for review. If published in The Forum, you will be notified by letter and receive a complimentary copy of the issue in which your article appears.

Note: All sharings become the property of Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc., and may be used in whole or in part to develop Al-Anon/Alateen printed or electronic material.

Please mail, fax, or e-mail your completed sharing to:
Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc.
1600 Corporate Landing Parkway Virginia Beach, VA 23454-5617
Attn: New Daily Reader. Fax: 757-563-1656 e-mail: wso@al-anon.org
(Please put “New Daily Reader” in the subject line)
Please photocopy and distribute locally.

DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVES REPORTS

District 12 News:

District 12 Report for Area Assembly Meeting 11/08/2021

District 12 – Cathy B. The district met on July 18, 2021. We had 11 members in attendance, and this time, there were enough GRs in attendance to have good discussion and vote on district matters.

We currently have 13 registered groups, 6 are meeting F2F, all others are meeting on Zoom. Group discussion included progress of group meetings that are meeting F2F vs Zoom vs hybrid. Of the 7 groups meeting on Zoom, there are a couple of them investigating ways to become a hybrid meeting. There are some technology challenges that need to be worked out, as well as potential cost restraints to overcome.

Unfortunately, one group meeting, Serenity Seekers AFG meeting in Mattoon, has become inactive due to lack of attendance. However, they are leaving the door open to reactivate the group later should that become an opportunity.

Our latest meeting lists (as of August 1, 2021) has been posted to the SIAGF website.

I also shared with the district; the information discussed at the last Area Assembly meeting concerning the restriction for a group to be defined by geographic boundaries, and the upcoming changes from WSO. This also sparked more conversation concerning the definition of a hybrid meeting. I shared some insight found in AFG Connects, and coming from WSO, that helped with that definition.

Our financial health is still stable, no real expenses right now other than the monthly Zoom room payments. No events or public outreach projects are on the immediate horizon. Group donations are low, but do not present any issues at this time.

Elisabeth J., our public outreach coordinator, continues to monitor our district website (www.centralillinoisalanon.weebly.com) along with our twitter account (@D12alanon) for any communication responses that need to be addressed. Our website has links to both siafg.org and WSO’s websites, and a note for those looking for information about Al-Anon, or meeting information, to click on those links.

Elisabeth will also be pursuing opportunities with the University of Illinois, along with the 4 treatment facilities in our district, for sharing Al-Anon information, or ways Al-Anon can help/participate. These may not come to fruition until sometime in 2022, due to the continuing COVID-19 restrictions. Our next district meeting will be November 11, 2021. Election of officers will take place as current positions will end on December 31, 2021. New officers will take over effective January 1, 2022.

Yours in service,

Cathy Blakey

District 12 Representative

District 14 Report:

There will be a District Meeting on Wednesday, October 13th at 6p.m. via Zoom. We will hopefully be replacing the Secretary and District Representative. One of our face to face is seeking a new location as the facility they have been meeting at will be closing.

In July, WSO received information that our Beginner Meeting was no longer meeting. It had been online and the Zoom information had not been posted at the facility. The website has been posted at the location and WSO notified of the resolution.

We are posting the website as that is the most easily updated way to convey changes in these uncertain times.

Respectfully,
Katie G.

DISTRICT 19: (SPRINGFIELD, ILLIOPOLIS and area)

SUNDAY August 22, 2021 3:30PM on ZOOM-www.spi-alanonweebly.com

MEETING MINUTES:

Opening - Serenity Prayer, 12 Steps/Traditions/Concept

Representatives from groups: Sue W, Travis Y, Debbie M, Charlene V, Gayle R, Sarah, and Suzanne D .

Treasurer report and website: Travis Y

After discussion, motion made and carried to discontinue the Yellow page ad and the voice mail recording. The website is updated regularly and easy to find meetings and also a contact person/ phone number listed. Area agencies have been given current copy of meeting list.

Treasury: \$1300/United Community Bank

Discussion of electronic donation submission. Information will be posted on the District 19 website-www.spi-alanonweebly.com.

During Covid donations came in from groups to the District treasury. Some were from groups, individuals, and our Lincoln, Il group closed and check sent for \$225.

Zoom portal just paid: \$150 annual fee. Zoom is used in 8 group meetings so very much needed. The District meeting today conducted by Zoom and works efficiently.

Noon meeting Friday at St. Paul Episcopal church attendance is down and several are attending virtual. Motion made and carried to help the group with rent in order to keep this meeting open which has been vital for 35 years.

Meetings in need, please seek out the District for guidance.

Our treasury contributes to

#1: WSO

#2. Southern Area Group; Carol Wielgus 1000 Bethel Mine Rd. Caseyville, Il. 62232
carolwielgus@hotmail.com

**Next Southern Area Zoom meeting Sat. Nov. 6, 2021 9-2pm.

With District 19 meeting in Jan. 2022.

Respectfully submitted,

Charlene V. District 19

217-891-2981 for any questions/comments.

An Index for Gratitude

Where can you find some inspiring sharings on the topic of gratitude in Al-Anon's Conference Approved Literature?

- *Courage to Change* (B-16), pages 264, 282, 304, 340
- *Discovering Choices—Recovery in Relationships* (B-30), pages 58-59, 257
- *Hope for Today* (B-27), pages 23, 151, 247
- *How Al-Anon Works for Families & Friends of Alcoholics* (B-32), "Gratitude," pages 78-79
- *...In All Our Affairs* (B-15), pages 232-233, 235
- *Just for Tonight* Bookmark (M-81)
- *Living with Sobriety* (P-49), pages 44-45
- *One Day at a Time in Al-Anon* (B-6), pages 46, 126, 319, 345
- *Opening Our Hearts, Transforming Our Losses* (B-29), "Gratitude," pages 170-172
- *When I Got Busy, I Got Better* (P-78), pages 33-34

Available from local Literature Distribution Centers or [online](#).

Be on the Lookout for the New Al-Anon PSAs!

The World Service Office (WSO) is pleased to announce the release and the YouTube Premiere of the 2021–2022 Al-Anon Public Service Announcements (PSAs). New this year is the *Benefits of Al-Anon Recovery* PSA.

Please join us for the YouTube Premiere that will take place on August 28, 2021, at 7:00 pm EDT:

- Go to [YouTube](#), either log in to your account or create one
- Subscribe to the Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. channel, and
- Click the bell to set up a reminder.

While the faces and voices in the PSA are those of actors, the quotes are real. They were taken directly from members who submitted them through the anonymous Al-Anon Membership Survey and speak to the regained hope and peace of mind that members found in Al-Anon.

The PSA campaign will still feature the *Questions* PSA, which introduces Al-Anon Family Groups to the public—encouraging people affected by another person’s drinking to try Al-Anon for help.

The PSAs are available in English, French, and Spanish and will be distributed to nearly 2,200 broadcast television stations and networks and more than 7,800 radio stations in the US and Canada. Thanks to the generous commitment of stations offering free airplay, the PSAs reach millions of people every year with the Al-Anon message of help and hope.

Due to the tremendous increase in airplays during last year’s campaign, the WSO will be using the same vendor to distribute the PSAs again this year. As a result, member outreach to local TV and radio stations is no longer necessary. We are very grateful for your participation in prior years!

Members can still participate, however, by sharing the PSAs, from [YouTube](#) or [al-anon.org](#), to their social media networks. Please remember to protect your anonymity on social media by not making comments that would reveal your Al-Anon membership. Please contact your Area Public Outreach Coordinator with any questions you may have.

The entire course of my life has been in reaction to those hidden, denied feelings. I became rigid, trying to control change in my life and in other people’s lives too. I looked to others to fill the emptiness in my heart and provide the safety and security I longed for as a child. I rigidly clung to the same job, the same house, and the same faltering marriage. I even passed on my coping mechanisms to my children, who followed in my footsteps.

“[One day,] my Sponsor asked me, ‘Have you forgiven yourself?’ It took me some time to be able to say, ‘Yes, I forgive myself.’ I was a child coping and surviving as best I could. I didn’t know there could be a better way until I came to Al-Anon. Before then, I didn’t have the support and love I needed to face those fears.”

“I learned how to be honest with myself,” “The Forum,” April 2017 Reprinted with permission