



SUNSHINER

Letter from the Area Chairperson

The new Service Manual can be downloaded at

<https://al-anon.org/for-members/members-resources/manuals-and-guidelines/service-manual/>



Area 10 Reports

Please go to the following link to see all reports from the AWSC Meeting Jan 13-14, 2018:

<http://www.southfloridaal-anon.org/servicemainpage/members-documents/>



September 11, 2018. Who would have thought that another September 11th would show up in my world and once again reek havoc and destruction?

Monday, September 11th, was the second half of Hurricane Irma. Our home had made it through the first half of the storm with only minor damage. But, the 2nd half of the storm came on with a vengeance. When the tide turned and the water started coming back into the canal behind our house, it was obvious we were in trouble. For whatever reason, my husband, Lee, refused to believe me when I'd asked him to come look. After about twenty minutes, the rushing water had already filled our backyard and was making its way steadily up the stairs. By the time I could get him up out of his chair, the water was coming through the vents in the floorboards.

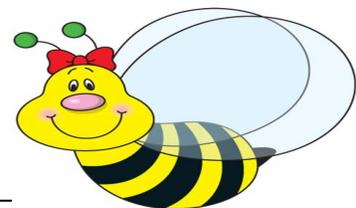
We escaped through about four feet of raging storm water with debris and roof parts flying all over the place. With the incessant winds howling, we'd spent the night on a neighbor's second floor back porch hoping the gas fumes didn't kill us before the building blew apart. In the morning, we slogged home through the mud in about a foot and a half of water. Our lovely home was in shambles; everything inside had been tossed about and smashed up against doors and walls. Our clothes lay in soaking wet heaps. Our screened porch was gone except for one section of roof that had rolled up like an old tin can. The outside utility room was a mountain of two freezers, a washer and dryer, debris and yard furniture with the refrigerator sitting at the very top all jammed against the ceiling pushing out the sliding glass doors. Our dock was

gone and the yard was in shambles. Thus began our cleanup.

We worked for days, sun up to sundown, sloshing mud from one area to another trying to get it outside, working to save what was salvageable and piling what was not on the ever-growing rubble pile in front of our home. Following a bout with cancer and a stint in Hospice, Lee was not in good health. He mostly sat and washed the stuff I'd lugged to him with the hose. On Friday morning, Lee had a horrible spell. In agony, he'd finally agreed to let me call 911 and have the EMTs bring him to the hospital. Hoping they'd be able to give him something for the pain in his legs, our plan was to meet up at the hospital after I'd picked up the rental car; we'd also lost our car in the storm. By the time I got to the hospital three hours later, Lee was on a respirator. He never woke up. The bacteria from the storm waters had caused massive internal injuries; he died around 11 the next morning. In less than 24 hours, he was gone.

My Higher Power seemed to surround me with His Grace feeding me my grief one molecule at a time; any more than that caused a desolation so deep inside I don't know that it had a bottom. I'd grabbed my program with both hands and hung on for dear life and I'm not kidding. I went to meetings like a dying man; it seemed like that's the only place I could breathe.

Prior to the Fall Election Assembly, I'd had a long talk with my Higher Power. It had been on my heart for some time to stand for Delegate but I truly didn't know if I'd be capable of serving the Area in that position at this time in my life. My grief was palpable, my home was in shambles and we didn't have insurance; the



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But, I was given the green light so I stood for Delegate. When I didn't win the position, I'd headed back to my seat thinking, "Ok, I can go sit down now, no Area Service for me this Panel." But before I could sit back down I'd gotten an insistent, *No!* No what? *No, don't sit down.* What? *Stand for Chair.* Stand for Chair? *Stand for Chair!* Oh hell. So, I stood for Chair. And I won.

After I'd gotten home I'd asked God, What's going on with this Chair business? It's not what You and I had discussed! God was quiet for a long time and I'd cried when He gave me the following insight - if I didn't have the Chair position, in my grief I would have sucked into myself and never come out. In the past, I'd seen where Service had saved my life; but this time, I knew it had saved my very soul.

Taking things one day at a time, and very often one moment at a time, please know that I am delighted to serve as our Area Chair. With our very first AWSC meeting behind us, we're off to a great start. We've got a panel chock full of dedicated, amazing members who have also been called to serve at this time. It's onward and upward from here!

Lovin Service!

Lisa M.

Get To Know Panel 58

My First Meeting

I went out of desperation and looking for a lot of answers on how to fix my qualifier. I remember that all I did was cry. My Pain was severe that I did not know how to handle it. However, at the same time I felt such peace at the meeting and kept coming back.

Area Webmaster

My First Assembly

I did not fully comprehend what was going on but I did come out with a service position (voluntold/suggested)

Guess Who

My First AWSC

I attended my first AWSC as a GIP when I was a fairly new GR.

It gave me a broader picture of the structure of Al-Anon. Now here I am as a DR in Al-Anon.

Which DR Is It ?

Blast From The Past

Gift of Enthusiasm

I wondered what my special gift or talent was from God. Others had the gift of speaking, singing, cooking, and other artistic abilities. Was there no visible gift for me?

After speaking one day at an Al-Anon meeting a member commented on my enthusiasm for the program. I came across a sentence later that read: "it is a gift of God to be capable of great enthusiasm." It clicked! That's my gift; the gift of enthusiasm. I'm so pleased with it because it is the natural thing for me

Loretta R.—1978

Catching Up

I have a lot of catching up to do! I want to make up for lost time, wasted energies and all the years I spent feeling sorry for myself.

Already I feel a whole lot better. I laugh more and cry less. I'm busy accepting the things I can't change and am constantly working at fixing the possible, not the impossible. What a blessed relief!

I've found its no use pining over past mistakes. My miserable yesterdays have been replaced by a fresh start, a brand new outlook each day.

What strengthens me is the way I feel right now, as shiny as a new penny. I'm like a girl again running barefoot in clover. I can appreciate beauty because I've survived ugliness. I've waltzed right into a saner, healthier way of living. The Al-Anon life with good, clean wholesome attitudes is mine for the taking.

Jeanne H.—1978

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My First

Prior to my first time, I knew two things about Area Assembly: 1—it is “where the business of Al-Anon gets done” (blank stare) and 2—there appeared to be a lot of politics involved (gasp). Before attending, my sponsor, outgoing GR and other Al-Anon friends assured me that I had nothing to worry about, that I just needed to vote and follow my conscience and everything would be fine. Not necessarily believing it, I walked into Assembly. Immediately, I was greeted by a sea of happy, excited faces and was warmly received by the other members of my district, as well as my sponsor. I could feel the buzz of excitement and purpose in the room. During the first night, I witnessed the first roll call and participated in the workshop for new GRs. I became acquainted with the process, and despite my initial trepidation about Assembly, I left looking forward to the next day.

Day two was the day that I got to see what “the business of Al-Anon” looked like, sometimes dry, sometimes exciting, but all necessary. I also got to see true grace brought about by this program as I watched the Chair handle the whole room, no matter what was thrown at her, with confidence and patience, as well as conviction in and dedication to the program. I watched as people stepped out of their comfort zones and volunteered for positions and projects that I knew would require a great amount of work and dedication. Just a few weeks later, these members inspired me to volunteer for a position in my district.

Throughout the day, I was able to make new friends and strengthen other friendships. I felt accepted and guided. I saw creative uses of the Serenity Prayer as a guidepost for the large group, whether it was to quiet the room and restore order or provide a moment for the members to reflect and decide if they wanted to make a decision or accept a responsibility. Last, I was given a wonderful gift through a book raffle, a copy of *Many Voices, One Journey*. During a break, I started reading it and it has been an eye-opener, telling the chronological history of Al-Anon blended with personal stories that reminds me of the true nature of this worldwide fellowship and confidence to branch out my service past the group level.

Virginia G.

My sponsor **ALWAYS** says...

- ◆ I'm going to give you an assignment and you are not going to like it
- ◆ Let me know how that works for you
- ◆ Trust your Higher Power
- ◆ It is what it is
- ◆ Don't punish yourself
- God loves you
- ◆ Service is not convenient but it is very rewarding
- ◆ Think
- ◆ Stay in your own hoola hoop
- ◆ Acceptance
- ◆ “Principles above Personalities”
- ◆ Take care of yourself

Those golden words of wisdom, which at times, you may think your sponsor actually has on a tape recorder.





Literature

H.O.P.E

Recently at a meeting I attended, the topic was hope. The chairperson shared her thoughts on what hope meant to her by breaking down the meaning of the word letter by letter. Here's what she shared:

H = I hear others share their courage, strength and hope, which can benefit me on my road to recovery

O = I open my heart and mind to different ideas and become willing to consider that what has helped others may help me too.

P = I practice what I learn using the Steps, Serenity Prayer, slogans and other program tools to gain peace of mind.

E = I educate myself about the disease of alcoholism, so I can better understand what my loved one is going through. And I use the Al-Anon Conference Approved Literature to work toward recovery

By: Linda C., New Brunswick

The Gift of Compassion

I was at a meeting recently and the topic was "Just for Today." I changed this slogan into "just for tonight." Just for tonight, I will treat the alcoholics in my life as fellow human beings with respect and dignity. This is sometimes hard for me to do, but as I continue to work the program, it becomes easier most of the time.

This led me to wonder how, coming from my family, I did not end up an alcoholic. My grandfather, father and youngest son may have all been alcoholics. And, because I accept that it is a disease, I started thinking: "What if I had been born an alcoholic? What would my life look like today? How would I cope with the disease? How would others in my family treat me?"

My son and I are alike in so many ways, except for alcoholism. Asking myself these questions opened my eyes and my heart. Though I received no definitive answers, I began to feel more compassionate toward him. It has allowed me to walk in his shoes and to detach with love.

By Jim M., Ohio

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Calendar of Events

◆ May 11-13, 2018 Spring Assembly Meeting

Doubletree Sunrise-Sawgrass Mills 13400 West Sunrise Blvd. Sunrise, FL 33323

◆ TBD Summer AWSC Meeting

Drury Inn & Suites Fort Myers—9950 University Plaza Dr Fort Myers Fl 33913

◆ July 20-22 2018 Alateen Conference—North Florida

Gotham Florida

◆ August 3-5, 2018 FL South Convention Under The Sea

Hilton West Palm Beach—600 Okeechobee Blvd West Palm Beach, FL 33401

◆ September 21—23, 2018 Fall Assembly Meeting

Doubletree Sunrise—Sawgrass Mills 13400 West Sunrise Blvd. Sunrise, FL 33323





UNDER THE SEA

"Discovering Hidden Treasures"

29th Annual AFG Florida South Convention with A.A. Participation

August 3, 2018 - August 5, 2018



AL-ANON & A.A. REGISTRATION

Must be postmarked by 07/02/18

- 10/01/17 to 12/31/17 \$25
 01/01/18 to 07/02/18 \$30
 After 07/02/18 - \$35 *ON-SITE ONLY*

ALATEEN REGISTRATION

Ages 8-17 - includes Sat. Night Pizza Party \$15
Notarized Travel & Medical Release Form Required

EVENTS

- Friday Night Social—Get Out of Your Shell \$20
 Saturday Night Banquet \$45
Chicken Beef Vegetarian
 Package Savings—Fri/Social & Sat/Banquet \$60

Total Amount \$ _____ Check # _____
NO REFUNDS

HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS

Hilton West Palm Beach

Across the Street from CityPlace
 600 Okeechobee Blvd.
 West Palm Beach, FL 33401

King / Queen (per night + tax) \$109

Check-in 3:00 p.m./Check-out 11:00 a.m.

All rooms equipped with mini-fridge & in-room WIFI
 Complementary Airport Shuttle

VALET PARKING ONLY

12.00 daily / 15.00 overnight

Reservations: 1-855-757-4985

Don't forget to mention Group Code ZAFG to receive the AFG FLS Convention Group Rate!

On-line Hotel Reservations:

<https://aws.passkey.com/event/49382353/owner/14106173/home>

Out-Off Date for hotel registrations is July 1, 2018!

WORKSHOPS

SPEAKERS

BANQUET

DANCE

FELLOWSHIP

Program Choice (circle one)

Al-Anon

Alateen

Al-Anon Spanish

A.A.

Checks/Money Orders Payable to: AFG Florida South Convention, 2697 SW Fair Isle Rd., Pt. St. Lucie, FL 34987

Complete One Form for each person:

Date: _____

Name: (First & Last) _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Badge Name: _____ District/Group: _____

Credit Cards Accepted for On-Line Convention Registration — www.southfloridaal-anon.org



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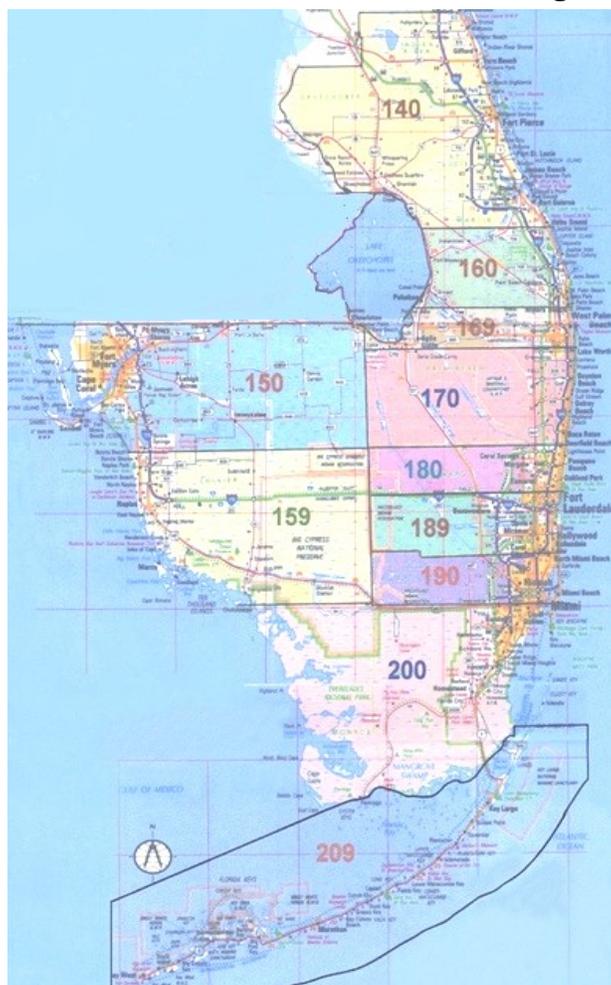
The Sunshiner is YOUR Area newsletter!

Please freely submit service sharings, reports, information,
 answers to questions, quotes your Al-Anon
 Sponsor always says, comments, feedback,
 and suggestions to:



newsletter@afgfls.com

Next deadline May 11, 2018



The opinions expressed here were strictly those of the person who gave them. Take what you liked and leave the rest.

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