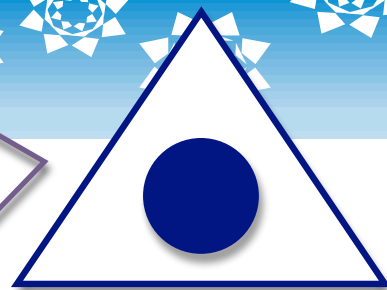


January 2012

AIMS Newsletter

Al-Anon • Interest • Meetings • Service



Published by Northern Illinois
Al-Anon Family Groups

NIAFG Assembly

hosted by District 20

Open Meeting

Friday, January 20, 2012 8:00pm

Assembly

Saturday, January 21, 2012

9am-3pm

registration 8:00am

new GR orientation at 8:20am

First United Methodist Church

108 E. Central Blvd

Kewanee, IL 61443

handicap access from parking lot located behind church
on Burr Blvd

Directions

from Chicago Area: I-80 West toward Iowa

Exit 33 toward Kewanee (11 miles)

from Western Chicago Suburbs:

I-88 West toward Moline/Rock Island
take exit 41 toward Rock Falls/Sterling
take IL 40 South to I-80 West toward

Moline/Rock Island

Exit 33 toward Kewanee

from Quad Cities Area:

I-80 East toward Chicago

Exit 33 toward Kewanee

from Galesburg Area: US 34 East toward Kewanee

Host District Needed for September 2012 Assembly Please contact Vinnie

Amtrak Schedule

Chicago to Kewanee
leaves Chicago Union
Station at 7:35am
Arrives Kewanee
Station 9:44am

Kewanee to Chicago
leaves Kewanee Station
7:27pm
Arrives Chicago Union
Station 9:58pm

Kewanee Taxi Services

Taxi Plus 309-852-5050
J&L Taxi 309-853-6969



Accommodations

Super 8
901 Tenney St
Kewanee, IL 61443
309-853-8800

Americinn Lodge & Suites
925 Tenney St
Kewanee, IL 61443
309-856-7200

Aunt Daisy's Bed & Breakfast
223 W. Central Boulevard
Kewanee, IL 61443
309-853-3300

Best Western
315 Canal Street
Annawan, IL 61234
309-935-6565
800-780-7234

Chestnut Inn Bed & Breakfast
301 E. Chestnut St
Sheffield, IL 61361
815-454-2419

❄️ CALENDAR ❄️

WHEN	WHAT	WHERE
Sundays 7:30pm	Open Al-Anon Meeting First Sunday of the month includes Alateen speaker	Northwest Community Hospital 800 W. Central Road Arlington Hts, IL 60005
January 20-21 Friday 8pm Saturday 9am-3pm	NIAFG Assembly	First Methodist Church 108 E. Central Blvd Kewanee, IL 61443
January 27-29	Al-Anon Weekend Workshop Opening Our Hearts/Transforming Our Losses Please see events page at www.niafg.org for registration flyer	Cabrini Retreat Center 9430 Golf Rd Des Plaines, IL 60016
January 28 9am-2pm	Snowy Day Serenity Saturday <i>Open to Al-Anon and Alateen members</i> Speaker, Meeting Sessions, Games Soup for lunch provided & bring a dish to share Proceeds to benefit the Alateens	Riverside United Methodist Church 712 16 th St Moline, IL 61265
March 2-4, 2012	NIA Spring Conference with Al-Anon Participation www.niaspringconference.com	Georgios Banquets & Comfort Inn Suites 8800 W. 159 th St. Orland Park, IL 60462

Look for AIMS online at www.niafg.org/AIMSNewsletter.asp

GET IT IN THE CALENDAR

If your group or district has an upcoming event, send it to the AIMS Editor:

Position of AIMS Editor is open

ISSUE	DEADLINE
January	December 1
February	January 1
March	February 1
April	March 1
May	April 1
June	May 1
July	June 1
August	July 1
September	August 1
October	September 1
November	October 1
December	November 1



A Service Story

As I write this toward the end of November, I am looking forward to being your Delegate for the next three years. I thought I'd start by sharing with you my service story to date.

I started in Al-Anon with my wife Carolyn in April 1988 because we had a son who was drinking a lot. Carolyn preceded me in service work, being the District Representative (DR) for about five years. While Carolyn was a DR, I became a Group Representative (GR). I chaired the Information Service committee for Districts 9 and 10, and then later became the DR and started attending the AWSC meetings.

At that time we were thinking of putting together an NIAFG web site, and I joined the committee that would ultimately develop the website. I'd done computer programming early in my career, so thought it would be fun to go back to that activity, and took several classes on website programming at the local community college. At that time the web was just becoming a "big deal" and I knew many Al-Anon members did not have computers. I remember being concerned that the web site might not be terribly relevant. Well that concern got blown away as the "hits" on the website have "exploded" since then. Now probably 75% of newcomers find their first meeting from our website!

After a couple "panels" as website coordinator, I became the group records secretary, a position I enjoyed because of the contact it gave me with all the groups. I'll share with you one area of angst that I had in that job; it was discovering maybe six months after the fact, that a group had closed, but the meeting was still on our records. In my area we get maybe one new person a week coming to a meeting, so that means perhaps 25 people went to the location of a closed meeting and did not find a meeting! So...help our new Group Records Secretary keep the meeting information for your area up to date!

My current job has been as Alternate Delegate. It is a little like a Vice

President's job - you get the odds and ends, and there were about five of them. The biggest of these was being the Area Alateen Process Person, handling Alateen sponsor certification. When an Alateen sponsor recertifies each year, they have to say why they want to be a sponsor. Memories that I will carry from this job are some of the very poignant "stories" of recovery that sponsors shared as their reason for wanting to be an Alateen sponsor.

So... think about your service story: what it is to date, what it might be ten years from now, and the memories you will carry forward!

Gene W

Delegate, Illinois North, Panel 52

Una historia de servicio

Mientras escribo esto a finales de noviembre, estoy esperando a ser su delegado para los próximos tres años. Pensé que empezar compartiendo con ustedes la historia de mi servicio a la fecha.

Empecé en Al-Anon con mi esposa Carolyn en abril de 1988 porque tenía un hijo que estaba bebiendo mucho. Carolyn me han precedido en la obra de servicio, siendo el representante del distrito (DR) por cerca de cinco años. Mientras que Carolyn era una DR, que se convirtió en un representante del grupo (GR). I presidió el comité de servicio de información de los Distritos 9 y 10, y más tarde se convirtió en la República Dominicana y comenzó a asistir a las reuniones AWSC.

En ese momento estábamos pensando en armar un sitio web NIAFG, y se unió al comité que en última instancia, desarrollar el sitio web. Que había hecho la programación de computadoras a principios de mi carrera, así que pensé que sería divertido volver a esa actividad, y tomó varias clases de programación de páginas web en la universidad local. En ese momento la web estaba convirtiéndose en una, ¿big acuerdo, la Unión Africana y conocía a muchos de Al-Anon no tienen computadoras. Recuerdo que me preocupa que el sitio

web no puede ser terriblemente relevantes. Así que la preocupación se soplado lejos como el Áhits, la Unión Africana sobre el sitio web tienen, Áexploded, la Unión Africana desde entonces. Ahora, probablemente el 75% de los recién llegados a encontrar su primera reunión desde nuestro sitio web!

Después de un par, Ápanels, la Unión Africana como coordinador de página web, que se convirtió en el grupo de registros de la secretaria, una posición que disfrutaba, debido al contacto que me dieron con todos los grupos. I, compartir con ustedes Áll una zona de la angustia que yo tenía en ese trabajo, fue descubriendo tal vez seis meses después del hecho, que un grupo se había cerrado, pero el encuentro estaba todavía en nuestros registros. En mi zona tenemos quizá una nueva persona a la semana que viene a una reunión, lo que significa que tal vez 25 personas acudieron a la ubicación de una reunión a puerta cerrada y no encontrar a tu pareja! Así que ... a nuestros registros de grupo nuevo Secretario mantener la información de la reunión de su área hasta la fecha!

Mi trabajo actual ha sido como Delegado Suplente. Es un poco como el trabajo de un vicepresidente - obtendrás las probabilidades y termina, y hay alrededor de cinco de ellos. La mayor de ellas estaba la Alateen Área Persona de procesos, manejo de certificación patrocinador Alateen. Cuando un patrocinador Alateen recertifica cada año, que tienen que decir por qué quieren ser un patrocinador. Recuerdos que voy a llevar de este trabajo son algunos de los muy conmovedor, Ástories, la Unión Africana de la recuperación que patrocina compartida como su razón para querer ser un patrocinador Alateen.

Así que ... pensar en su historia de servicio: lo que es hasta la fecha, lo que podría ser dentro de diez años, y los recuerdos que se llevan adelante!

Gene W

Delegado, Illinois del Norte, Grupo 52

❄ FROM YOUR CHAIRPERSON ❄

FUN: what provides amusement or enjoyment; specifically: playful often boisterous action or speech <full of fun> 2: a mood for finding or making amusement (as defined on Merr iam-Webster's website)

While the happenings and events within the structure of the Al-Anon/Alateen Family groups are serious business and require focus and interest for the betterment of the Fellowship for future newcomers, my program reminds me not to take things too seriously.

Before coming to Al-Anon, I had always considered myself a fairly good humored person who liked to have fun, though, by the time I walked in the doors of the program, there was little fun in my life; my humorous mood was overtaken with much sarcasm and serious was the word of the day. With each crisis I sidestepped, daily living became painfully somber as I maneuvered just to make it through another twenty-four hours. I thank God for the program that teaches me how to laugh again, without the caustic comments that seemed to quickly leap from my lips to make a joke, mostly at your expense. Today, working the 12 Steps have returned my humor in a way that feels good so I can appropriately share a laugh with others.

Amidst the work that lay ahead let's remember to have FUN this year as we serve in our new service positions that began with the willingness to stand, allowing God to show us new opportunities and adventures. Let's remember to share with each other a harmless joke, some laughter and playful whimsy along the way. Let's remember that bringing some

lightheartedness to a situation may be of benefit to everyone involved.

"More than any other change I have observed in myself, I find this the most glorious. It tells me that I see myself and my life in a more realistic way. I am no longer a victim, full of self-pity and bent on control of every aspect of my life. Today I can take myself and my circumstances more lightly. I can even allow joy and laughter to be a part of a difficult experience." -Page 205-CTC

Though, I no longer live in crisis today (a miracle I often take for granted), I rise above life's difficulties by taking hold of the hand of our Fellowship who reminds me to laugh. Standing on principles, rather than addressing personalities, we can help one another without criticism or judgment and can continue building the solid groundwork that lights the way for future Al-Anon and Alateen members. This New Year I invite you to join me in serving our Fellowship with joy, laughter and a touch of humor....Today, I choose to make FUN my word of the day.

Love in Service,
vinnie e

*Are you working your
triangle today?*



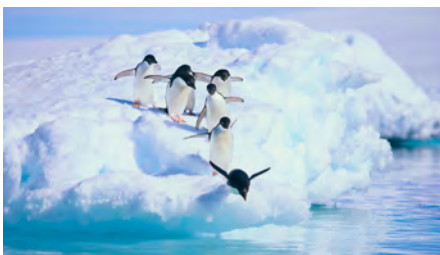
DIVERSION: lo que ofrece la diversión o el disfrute, en concreto: acción lúdica bulliciosas o <full discurso de fun> 2: un estado de ánimo de encontrar o hacer de la naturaleza (como se define en la página web de Miriam-Webster) Mientras que los sucesos y acontecimientos dentro de la estructura de los grupos familiares-Anon y Alateen son un negocio serio y requiere atención y el interés por el mejoramiento de la beca para los recién llegados el futuro, mi programa me recuerda no tomar las cosas demasiado en serio. Antes de llegar a Al-Anon, tuve siempre me he considerado una persona humor bastante bueno al que le gustaba divertirse, sin embargo, por el momento que entramos en las puertas del programa, hubo poco de diversión en mi vida, mi estado de ánimo humorístico fue superado con sarcasmo y mucho más grave fue la palabra del día. Con cada crisis que evitó, la vida diaria se hizo dolorosamente triste como yo maniobraba apenas para hacerla a través de otra veinticuatro horas. Agradezco a Dios por el programa que me enseña a reír otra vez, sin los comentarios cáusticos que parecía saltar rápidamente de mis labios para hacer una broma, en su mayoría a su cargo. Hoy en día, trabajando los 12 pasos han regresado a mi humor de una manera que se siente bien por lo que apropiadamente se puede compartir una risa con los demás. En medio de la labor que tenemos por delante vamos a recordar a divertirse este año, ya que atendemos en nuestros puestos de servicio nuevo que se inició con la voluntad de defender, lo que

permite que Dios nos muestre nuevas oportunidades y aventuras. Recordemos que compartir con los demás una broma inofensiva, la risa y la fantasía lúdica algunos en el camino. Recordemos que traer a algunos ligereza de una situación puede ser de beneficio para todos los involucrados.

"Más que cualquier otro cambio que he observado en mí mismo, me parece la más gloriosa. Me dice que me veo a mí mismo y mi vida de una manera más realista. Ya no soy una víctima, lleno de autocompasión y se inclinó sobre el control de cada aspecto de mi vida. Hoy puedo tener yo y mis circunstancias más ligera. Incluso puedo permitir que la alegría y la risa para ser parte de una experiencia difícil." -Página 205-CTC Sin embargo, ya no vivo en la crisis actual (un milagro que a menudo damos por sentado), me levanto por encima de las dificultades de la vida por apoderarse de la mano de nuestra Comunidad, que me recuerda a reír. Permanente de los principios, en lugar de hacer frente a las personalidades, podemos ayudarnos unos a otros sin la crítica o el juicio y se puede seguir construyendo las bases sólidas que ilumina el camino para el futuro de Al-Anon y Alateen. Este año nuevo les invito a unirse a mí en el servicio a nuestra Comunidad con alegría, risas y un toque de humor Hoy en día, elijo a burlarse de mi palabra del día.

El amor en servicio,
vinnie e

¿Está trabajando el triángulo de hoy?



CAL NOOK

My term as Literature Coordinator is coming to an end. I'm hoping that someone out there will be interested in this role. It is a great service position! I've read all of the literature, participated on conference calls with other Literature Coordinators from all over the world, gotten the newest updates on all literature by participating in E-community through our website, and I've gotten to meet some great people! So please think about it and let our new Chairperson, Vinnie E, know that you are interested!

In keeping my focus on the literature, I was reading *DISCOVERING CHOICES* and in the Chapter on "Choosing Happiness" I came across one of the personal stories on page 172 where it is stated, "that worry is an over-exaggerated sense of responsibility." WOW! This just popped out at me. I never thought about it that way.

I usually read literature when I am looking to be soothed, or can't get to a meeting. I always seem to find some nuggets that resonate with me. Keep reading, and maybe you will find some of your own.

Yours in service,
Deborah J.

TREASURER TIPS

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.

Send to: Lori F

See hard copy for contact info

Preserve your treasurer's anonymity by not making reference to Al-Anon on the outside of the envelope



DISBANDED GROUP

Learn to Live AFG at Central DuPage Hospital in Winfield that met on Tuesday nights at 7:00pm has been disbanded.

Please share with anyone who may be affected.

ASK FLAC

Your Questions Answered Out of CAL by the Fellowship Literature Action Committee

Thank you and welcome once again to "Ask FLAC". Recently, we were asked a question which we hear quite frequently. Let's take a look:

I remember reading in the Al-Anon literature that meeting rooms should be "well marked" with signs indicating the exact location of an Al-Anon meeting's room so that newcomers can find it easily.

Also that it is okay to put a sign near the outside exit/entrance that reads "Al-Anon room". I forget where exactly the passages are in CAL, but I was wondering if you could point some out.

It's not a very straightforward answer – after all, there are very few instances in our literature where specific language is cited, but in a general sense – yes, it is okay, provided a person's anonymity is protected.

Making ourselves "anonymous, but not to each other" can be helpful in reaching the newcomer, or as *HOW AL-ANON WORKS FOR FAMILIES AND FRIENDS OF ALCOHOLICS* states, "...because anonymity is such a critical factor, Al-Anon meetings can occasionally be difficult to find" (Page 11).



Making our meetings accessible, even with a sign that simply says "(Name of Group) AFG" - allows us to stay within the framework of our Traditions. If our public relations policy is "attraction, rather than promotion", it is not promotion to inform people of where we are. As *AL-ANON FAMILY GROUPS* states:

The Fifth [Tradition] states: "Each Al-Anon group has but one purpose: to help families of alcoholics." This Tradition ends with the words: "by welcoming and giving comfort to families of alcoholics." ... We welcome and help by making it known that there is such a fellowship as Al-Anon. Whatever we can do *that does not violate the anonymity of an individual* is permissible, provided, of course, that it is kept on a serious and dignified level. (pp. 177-178)

PATHS TO RECOVERY also helps clarify the difference between attraction and promotion:

"We can ... help make welcoming information about Al-Anon available in the community. To do this, Al-Anon needs to be readily accessible whenever someone tries to find us. Information services, districts, Areas, and the World Service Office (WSO) are there to make Al-Anon available whenever and wherever the cry for help is heard." (pp. 176-177)

Ultimately, "In the final analysis, we want everyone to know about Al-Anon's availability." (*AL-ANON'S TWELVE STEPS & TWELVE TRADITIONS* – Revised, p. 132)

It is not against our Traditions to inform people where we are – there is no rule expressly forbidding the use of "Al-Anon" in signs. However, using "AFG" may be a good substitute, allowing for a greater sense of anonymity, as well as providing comfort and guidance for those who are seeking recovery.

If you have a question for Ask FLAC, please feel free to e-mail it to ask.flac@gmail.com. We would be more than happy to research it, and it may be highlighted in an upcoming column!

Thanks for reading!

Send your questions to "Ask FLAC" at ask.flac@gmail.com or to the FLAC chairperson care of NIAFG
PO 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 literature.

A Fun Service Opportunity for YOU!



ORDER FORM

NIAFG Media Library The Al-Anon message Any Time, Any Where

Borrower Information (please print)

Name	
Billing Address	
City	
State	
Zip Code	
Telephone	
E-Mail	

Ordering Information

The catalog is available online at the link <http://www.niafg.org/tapesform.asp>

Rental Fees: 1 CD - \$3 2 CD = \$4 3 CD - \$50 4 CD - \$6 **Limit 4 CD's per order**

Rental Period: Three (3) weeks. A self-addressed stamped envelope is provided for easy, no-hassle returns.

Event	Date	Speaker/Topic

Amount Enclosed _____ (checks only, please do not send cash)

Please return this form to:

NIAFG needs one of our grateful members to step up to this service position so that we can continue to supply our members with this wonderful recovery tool.

Please make your check payable to: **NIAFG**

** Please help me preserve my anonymity and do not make reference to "Al-Anon" on the outside of the envelope*

NIAFG DIRECTORY Order Form

Indicate Quantity Desired

✓	Quantity	Price	Shipping	Total
	6	\$6	\$3.38	\$9.38
	12	\$12	\$3.77	\$15.77
	18	\$18	\$4.16	\$22.16
	24	\$24	\$4.85	\$28.85

Please make checks payable to NIAFG

Mail with payment to: *This position needs to be filled in order to serve you.*

Please allow up to 3 weeks for delivery.

Directories can also be purchased at NIAFG Assemblies.

Please see The AIMS, your Group or District

Representative, or visit www.niafg.org for assembly dates.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____

E-Mail: _____

NIAFG OFFICERS & COORDINATORS

<p>DELEGATE Gene W <i>See hard copy for contact info</i></p>	<p>ALTERNATE DELEGATE Sandy W</p>	<p>CHAIRPERSON Vinnie E</p>	<p>RECORDING SECRETARY Roberta E</p>
<p>GROUP RECORDS SECRETARY Meridith M</p>	<p>TREASURER Lori F</p>	<p>SPANISH SERVICES Ramona C</p>	<p>Coordinator for Public Information & Cooperating with the Professional Community Phyllis M</p>
<p>ALATEEN COORDINATOR Janet L</p>	<p>ARCHIVES COORDINATOR</p>	<p>P.O. BOX 2044 COORDINATOR Jennifer B</p>	<p>LITERATURE COORDINATOR</p>
<p>DIRECTORY DISTRIBUTION COORDINATOR</p>	<p>CONVENTIONS LIAISON</p>	<p>WEB CONTENT COORDINATOR</p>	<p>WEB TECH COORDINATOR</p>
<p>AIMS EDITOR</p>	<p>AIMS PERSONAL SUBSCRIPTIONS AIMS PERSONAL SUBSCRIPTIONS</p>	<p>MEDIA LIBRARY</p>	<p>INSTITUTIONS COORDINATOR Dan B</p>

NIAFG needs You to fill these positions!