

Virginia Area Assembly, October 15-16, 2022

Stacy Lewis, VA Area World Service Delegate, Panel 62

Enhancing Our Recovery through Abundance, Unity and Understanding

Delegates Report

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Chairman of the Board Meeting Highlights (8/6/22) - Lynette K., Debbie P., Jeri W.

- **Finance** – Literature sales are up slightly for the year, but have not returned to pre-pandemic levels. Contributions are still below expectations.
- **Finance Board Meetings** – The January Board meeting will be held virtually on a permanent basis.
- **Literature** – The Board approved making all remaining printed books available as e-books. Work has already been started on this project and is expected to take several months.
- **Board Evaluation** – The Board had their first Evaluation Survey among its members. This is their version of a Group Inventory. The inventory was very informative and will be done after each Board meeting. What works at the group level works at the Board level!
- **Thought/Task Forces from 2022 WSC** - The Board decided not to create new Thought or Task Forces for 2022, but rather to continue the discussions about inclusivity and diversity.
- **2022/2023 WSO Projects** - Here are the projects the WSO is working on behind the scenes that support our groups. New Daily Reader, Translation of the Service Manual, Electronic Meeting Transformation, 2023 International Convention, 2022 Road Trip, IAGSM in London, First Longitudinal Study.
- **Additional Info** – The Quarterly Appeal Letter always shares insights into the work at the WSO. Please make sure you read this at your meetings.
- **Conference Leadership Team** – The 2023 WSC will be held on April 20 through April 23, 2023 at the Founders Inn in Virginia Beach. In 2021, a motion was approved to reduce the Conference to 4 days beginning in 2023 for a trial period of 3 years.
- **Policy Committee** – A discussion was held to discuss “whether Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. has the responsibility to reply to social medial comments to correct misinformation.” The committee considered Warranty Four, Tradition Ten, our core purpose and the importance of public outreach in their discussions. It was concluded that the WSO will not respond to these circumstances and left it to our Groups and Areas to produce consistent messages regarding Public Outreach.

1. During the summer, I attended most of the District Meetings in our Area and it has been very informative! As of 10/3/22, I have attended 16 meetings virtually and have 1 more on the calendar. If you haven't notified me of your upcoming meeting, please send me an email and let me know.

At the Virginia Beach District Meeting in August, they had Sue P. walk us through the Members area of the Al-Anon.org website. As a seasoned member, I found this presentation showed me information I had missed before. One item I want to share is listed under Members/World Service Conference/Chosen Agenda Items Index and then select Index filter.

This is where you can search for discussions that were highlighted during past World Service Conferences.

For example, in the index filter, search for Diversity, Dual Members (discussed at 21 conferences), Service, Legacies, In-Reach (keeping newcomers and members coming back). Read the real statements and conversations Delegates had on these topics and possibly get new ideas to use in your District and meetings.

Listed below are some of the aMaZiNg ideas I got from attending your District Meetings. Some of these were already posted in my VAWSC report, but I have added additional ideas as well.

- Create a meeting list bookmark to add to your newcomer packets. Better yet, create a QR Code that links to a list that is kept current.
- Encourage reading from Alateen literature
- Add these items to your newcomer packet: Alateen Info, Meeting Info, Suggested books to purchase, 12 Step Card, Forum subscription form
- As a District, support a new group by sending them books (new or gently used and donated from current groups), Alateen books, Forum subscription, and anything else that will help them get started. Encourage members to attend the new group to offer additional ESH.
- Get together with your GR's and their CMA's socially – meet for coffee or a meal. Create a book club or walking group. Get to know each other and this will help prepare to fill service positions in the future. (Note – some of these ideas must be discussed before or after meetings – not during)
- Encourage AA participation in your meetings – have speaker meetings with an AA and Al-Anon or a potluck. Each AA will bring at least their sponsor and maybe other AA's when they speak. Educating the AA's about our program LIVE is your #1 Public Outreach tool.
- Continue to remind virtual and hybrid meetings to support their service arms. Meeting virtually doesn't change how the WSO supports each and every group.
- Consider adding a Men's Meeting to your District if you do not have one already. The Loudoun District has a hybrid meeting that attracts 40+ weekly. The need is there.
- Have a 5 minute share by a member on their favorite piece of literature.
- Create a meeting/District chat group to share and comment on a daily reading. This keeps members engaged outside of the meeting.
- Have an AA liaison at your District Meeting. This is a great – non-voting – service position for a dual member.
- Make public outreach simple – focus on 1 type of outreach at a time. Use the WSO downloadable posters/bookmarks and add your meeting information. Choose grocery store bulletin boards one month, then hair salons/barbershops another month, then Dr. offices. Think outside the box.

2. Did you know that there are only 16 Conference Approved slogans? Find them on the WSO website under Members/Literature/Slogans.
 - Live and Let Live “Our only concern should be our own conduct, our own improvement, our own lives. We are entitled to our own view of things, and we have no right to inflict it on anyone else.” *Alcoholism, the Family Disease (P-4). P. 17*
3. The WSO is now open again for tours and you must book 24 hours in advance. Information can be found on the website.
4. Dress code changed from business casual to casual. Kudos to WSO!!!!
5. For Members, District Representatives and District Treasurers. Districts do not have to contribute to service arms. A District IS a service arm. Members and Groups contribute to service arms. We, as members, have the sole responsibility for the 7th tradition and supporting our Districts, Area, Service Centers and the WSO. We do that by passing the basket at meetings and events. When we pass the basket at the close of Assembly, those funds support the Area only. When you attend a workshop hosted by a District or service center, the money collected by 50/50 raffles, ticket prices, silent auction etc. goes directly to support that group.
 - How can we break the buck barrier?
 - Would a budget help us contribute at least \$281 annually to the WSO for their support?
 - Do we understand that 7th Tradition is not just money, but also service? S-21
6. My observation is that our District coffers are overflowing thanks to generous members. I encourage each District to take a serious look at their treasury and item 1 under the General Warranties of the Conference – That only sufficient operating funds, including prudent reserve, be its prudent financial principle. It is probable that treasuries in Districts jumped because they couldn’t spend their money on workshops etc. during the pandemic. **Ask, ‘If we didn’t spend money during the pandemic, what would we use our prudent reserve for?’** Now may be a good time to rethink your reserve. If your District finds they have more money in their accounts than they can spend in say, 6 months, 12 months, are you keeping to the principles of the program? Are there surplus funds in your treasury that can be used in other areas of Al-Anon, such as helping the WSO reduce its deficit? Remember, we don’t have to do things just because they have always been done this way. Our primary purpose is to help family and friends of alcoholics.

As your Delegate, I encourage you to share with your groups how much the WSO AND your service arms do to support your meeting and its members. Think back to the very beginning of the pandemic, when we were all faced with the fact that we could not (or should not) meet face to face. What we thought would be temporary has touched all of lives in a long-term way we could not even imagine. From day 1 of the pandemic, the WSO, your VAWSC officers and coordinators and the service centers have continued to be there for you and your meetings. The WSO created electronic newcomer packets, the Area has supported your virtual meetings on Webex and your service centers have kept your meeting information up to date. I hope we never take for granted the love, support and fellowship the Al-Anon program as a whole has given to each of us so that we may pass it on to those who seek us out tomorrow.

Fun Fact: The Conference theme in 1999 was ‘Carrying the Message – Our Primary Purpose’. As true today in 2022 as it was 24 years ago.