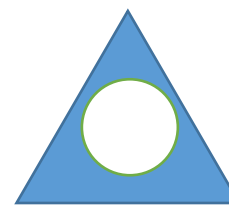


AI-A News



Kern County's District Six Newsletter December 2018

These terms of service end on December 31, 2018. Please consider a service position.
 "When I got busy, I got better."

District Officers 2016-2018

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Literature	Kym C.	661/301-4459	kymcampbell12@gmail.com
Our Round-Up Chair 2019	Debbie T.	661/333-0188	dtisler@pacbell.net
Our Round-Up Co-Chair 2019	Sean N.	559/704-7329	seannagel69@gmail.com



Upcoming Events

January 19, 2019	Sharing of Service	Glendale First United Methodist Church, 134 North Kenwood Street, Glendale, CA	Pre-Registration Begins November 1, 2018, Contact SCWS Alternate Delegate Eva B. 619-200-5828 eva.scws.altdelegate@gmail.com
March 29 – 31, 2019	43 rd Annual Southern California AI-Alon Family Groups Convention	DoubleTree Hotel 222 North Vineyard Avenue, Ontario, CA	"Where Hope Grows Miracles Blossom" Steve F. (Chairman) 949/307-4483, dezinefreak@gmail.com Nancy B. (Registration) 370/344-7369 nancy@actionwrks.com



Prayer for Today

Lord make me an instrument of Thy peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; and where there is sadness, joy.

O, Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled, as to console; to be understood as to understand, to be beloved, as to love; for it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned, and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

Wonderful Holiday Commotion

As a child I always enjoyed the holidays, especially Christmas. I grew up in a large family that didn't have any alcoholism. We always celebrated with lots of wonderful commotion—baking, presents, and happy family gatherings.

Being married to an alcoholic, who was a child of an alcoholic, brought a whole new set of commotion and changes into the holidays. Many times, I heard my dear mother-in-law say holidays were the same as any other days and their family merely tolerated them. Her experience of being married to an active alcoholic definitely influenced her thoughts.

I decided I would not let my mother-in-law's sentiment become mine, even during my husband's active drinking years. I did a much as I could to control our holidays. I acted as if I enjoyed doing most of the gift shopping for our children and the extended family. Over the years I learned not to expect any gifts for myself because my spouse rarely bought me anything. I often volunteered to have the family gatherings at our home, so I could be as festive as I wanted to be, in spite of the moods that others brought with them. Even so, many times the dinking took over and I found myself disappointed at the end of the day, often crying after a terrible argument.

After my husband and I found our respective programs of Alcoholics Anonymous and Al-Anon, the holidays changed again. We learned to discuss what we could do to bring the true spirit of the season into our home. Many times we still entertained his family but alcohol was not part of the menu. Sometimes people left early but we learned that was their choice. If we went to a family member's home, we decided ahead of time how to signal it was time to leave so we could avoid getting into any arguments later. We began to share shopping and decorating more than before, and now my spouse makes sure there is a gift of me without me needing to remind him. I still like to make plans, but I've learned not to plan the results.

This past Christmas I experienced a new situation regarding control. Our children are grown and have their own little ones, so they are trying to set holiday traditions for their families. A couple of weeks before Christmas we discussed exactly when the family would gather in our home to share a meal and open gifts. I tried very hard to let our grown children make the plans because they have in-laws to spend time with as well.

Several times I mentioned that everything would work out as it should, because we had plenty of time to make a decision. I felt sometimes as though I was standing outside a circle of arguing adult children. I kept praying that my Higher Power would guide me to do and say the right thing. Actually, when I said nothing I knew it was guidance from my Higher Power. Plans for our sons-in-law changed and the family arrangements fell into place very nicely. We had a beautiful gathering and I was glad that I didn't have to control this holiday season. The best holiday gift I have every received is the way Al-Anon operates in my life.

Carol V., Iowa
December 2000, Pages 22 and 23
The Forum

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Al-Anon Family Groups Hdqts., Inc., Virginia Beach, VA



Al-Anon's Declaration

Let It Begin with Me

When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help

Let the hand of Al-Anon and Alateen

Always be there, and – *Let It Begin with Me*



2018/19 Family Speaker Meeting Schedule

December 27, 2018 – Tuesday Night SW
January 31, 2019 – Monday Stockdale West 7:00 pm
February 28, 2019 – Sunday Night SOS and Saturday Progress Not Perfection
March 28, 2019 – Wednesday Night Courage to Change 7:30 pm
April 25, 2019 – Thursday Night Serenity Seekers 6:30 pm
May 30, 2019 – Friday Night LOL 7:00 pm
June 27, 2019 – Monday Stockdale Serenity 12:30 pm

Family Speaker meetings are always held the last Thursday of the month at the Alano Club, 1001 34th Street, Bakersfield. Groups are responsible for organizing the meeting, getting readers, speakers, and a cake for birthdays. Each group is responsible for donating an Al-Anon book to be raffled off at the end of the evening. If you can get a flyer printed and/or e-mailed in advance of the meeting that would be awesome.

*If you need help or have questions please call Roxanne B.,
Ways & Means Chair at 661/444-1776
e-mail: randylovesroxanne@gmail.com*



Opening-Up to Al-Anon Service

Recently, we were asked at a meeting to think about what serve has done for us. I recalled growing up in my home, where doing my best was never good enough. No matter what I accomplished, there was always more to do. I was a failure for not thinking things through and leaving them unfinished.

When I walked into Al-Anon, I believed what I had heard all my life—that I was scum and couldn't possibly justify my existence. Because of this mindset, I did not volunteer for service. Even leading a meeting was beyond me. I knew that I would mess it up, let everyone down, and turn the meeting I loved into chaos.

Years later, one of the longtime members sat next to me just before the meeting started. She said, "I need your help." I loved this woman so much, I responded that I would happily do whatever she asked.

She smiled and said, "The person who signed up to lead the meeting isn't able to make it today. Would you please reading the Opening and lead the meeting?" My heart stopped. I must have gone pale because she laid her hand on mine and said, "Don't worry. I'll sit right next to you. You can't do it wrong, only differently." After the meeting was over, member after member came up to me and thanked me for leading. They said I did a good job!

That day, I began to open up. Since then, I have held many service positions at the group, district, and Area levels. What I have learned through Al-Anon service is that I am responsible to do my best.

If I am doing my best, and others are unhappy, I can love them and walk away. I don't have to change so they will be happy. I do not need to grovel to get them to like me. Some of them never will.

Asking for help is strength, not weakness. It gives others a chance to sept up and learn what I did all those years ago. You love me because I tried. I gained self-esteem and new skills that gave me new opportunities for growth, which in turn build more self-esteem and give me more opportunities for growth.

Viki M., Washington
July 2013, Page 3
The Forum

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The Perfect New Year's Eve!

Every New Year's Eve during my marriage, I sat in front of the TV and watched the ball drop – alone. Usually my husband had passed out earlier in the evening. He was sober the last couple years of our marriage, but he still went to bed before midnight. I had a big resentment about that.

After we divorced, I decided to have a New Year's Eve party. I was finally going to have the perfect New Year's Eve, just the way I wanted it to be! All of the guests were Al-Anon and Alcoholics Anonymous members. I had the food catered. A good friend in the program co-hosted the party with me. We decorated the house, bought party hats, and had noise-makers. It was going to be grand!

In mid-December, I realized that I hadn't yet contracted a carpenter to fix the hole in my kitchen ceiling. Now, this wasn't just a little hole—this was a very large, square piece of ceiling *missing*, where my ex-husband had attempted to repair a leaking pipe under the upstairs shower. He had temporarily fixed it, and then we separated before he finished the job. I, of course, had been quite angry that he never finished anything and left me with this gaping hole in the ceiling. Hmm. . . then why hadn't I hired someone to repair it during the last ten months since he left? With the holidays, I was unable to find a carpenter to make the repairs before the party.

Of course, I called my sponsor in a panic. "What will I do?" She gently reminded me about Al-Anon tools regarding resentments, expectations, taking care of the things I can, and progress not perfection.

The night of the party finally arrived. I had taped a sign to the kitchen ceiling. The letters were large enough so that squinting wasn't necessary. The sign read, "This is the elephant in my kitchen. You remember how to ignore it, don't you? Thank you, for your cooperation." I watched quietly as my guests noticed the sign and hole. The Al-Anon members read the sign, smiled or giggled, and walked away. The AA members, read the sign, smiled or giggled, and then found me at some point during the evening. They would ask, "So, what's with the hole in the ceiling?" I'd reply, "What hole?" Then they would laugh and continue, "Very funny, but seriously, what is wrong with your plumbing?" Without fail, each one proceeded to explain how to fix my plumbing problem. It was the most amazing and amusing occurrence to watch.

I learned a few things that night, mostly that I don't have to be perfect. Watching my fellow Al-Anon members, I also learned that while I still know how to pretend the elephant isn't in the kitchen, I have also learned that I cannot fix another person's problem. Oh, and I also learned that a sense of humor is a wonderful thing to find again!

Patty T., Pennsylvania
December 2000, Pages 8 and 9
The Forum

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Resources

Kern County Al-Anon	www.kernal-anon.org
Southern California World Service	www.scws-al-anon.org
World Service Office, Virginia Beach	www.al-anon.org
www.al-anon.org	www.al-anon.org/members



Thank you!

This issue of Al-Anews concludes my three-year commitment as Newsletter Coordinator. This position has taught me many things about the program, myself and has given me many opportunities to grow.

Thank you for letting me be of service.

Linda M.

Words to Live By

In a Chinese fortune cookie, I found the lines, "Fear of danger is ten thousand times more terrifying than danger itself."

Immediately I thought of myself in early Al-Anon days and of the hundreds of newcomers to our program who spend countless days and endless nights tortured by infinite fears.

I couldn't define them, exactly, nor can these newcomers. There never was time to think – I just spent it being afraid. Everything milled around in my mind until the line between sanity and insanity thinned to a thread, and a cob-webby one at that.

Fortunately for me the Serenity Prayer gave me my answer. I could not ask for courage to change the things I could change unless I knew which things they were. I couldn't accept those I couldn't change, either, unless I had the wisdom to know the difference. And there was no wisdom in my uncontrolled spinning from one fear to another. I had to sort out and distinguish which was which.

In that process of sorting, I had to face my fears. From an instinctive pushing aside of something nebulous but horrible, something I'd rather not think about, I had to dig out and bring to light just exactly what kept me in chaos.

When I did this, I found serenity (patches of it) which comes from acknowledging the worst. At absolute rock bottom, any place else is UP.

Once on the way up, I could help myself rise higher, just as I could allow myself to slip back. At that point "Just For Today" was invaluable: "Just for today I will not be afraid." Sometimes "Just for this minute I will not be afraid" got me by some bad spots.

Thus, serenity grew and flourished.

Gradually I reached the point where I could realize that "Fear of danger is ten thousand times more terrifying than danger itself." I didn't put it in those words, but they surely rang a bell for me when I read them recently. They are words to live by.

Al-Anon's Favorite Forum Editorials

Pages 81 and 2

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Al-Anon Tools for Recovery

The Serenity Prayer

Al-Anon suggest the words of the Serenity Pray can help us gain perspective, sort out what we can and can not do, and know when to act and when to let go.

God grant me the Serenity
To accept the things I cannot change,
Courage to change the things I can,
And wisdom to know the difference.

Al-Anon Acronyms and More

Three A's: Awareness, Acceptance, Action

Three C's: I didn't cause it, I can't control it, I cant's cure it.

DETACH: Don't Ever Think About Changing Him/Her

DENIAL: Don't Even Notice I Am Lying

FEAR: False Evidence Appearing Real

Three G's: Get off their back, Get out of their way, Get on with your own life

**Southern California World Service (SCWS) Group Contribution Form
For use during the term 1/01/2016 thru 12/31/2018**

_____ Al-Anon _____ Alateen Group Name: _____

Group Address: _____

Group City: _____ Day: _____ Time: _____

WSO ID # _____ Contribution Enclosed: _____

Name Submitted by: _____

E-mail address/Phone number: _____

Please make check or money order payable to SCWS

Please mail contributions to:

**10073 Valley View Street, #260,
Cypress, CA 90603**

The WSO ID# can be located on the mailing label of the Bulletin.

**Any questions and/or comments,
please contact Tarisa Ramserran at 818/681-9531 (text preferred) or treasurer@SCWS-al-anon.org**

District 6 Contribution Form

Group Name: _____

Group Address: _____

Group City: _____

Group WSO ID# _____ Contribution Enclosed: _____

Please make check or money order payable to Al-Anon District 6

Please mail contribution to:

**Al-Anon
Attention: Treasurer
Post Office Box 894
Bakersfield, CA 93302**

**If you have any questions, please contact:
661/302-2608**