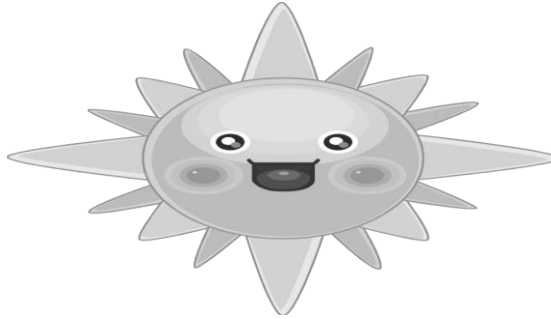


June – August, 2011

KANSAS STEPFINDER

Let the Sun Shine In



And “Keep an Open Mind”



Kansas AFG Area 20 Calendar of Events

***June 4, 2011: Lawrence Al-Anon Day, Lawrence, KS**

***June 17-19, 2011: 39th Annual Kansas Al-Anon Conference, Great Bend, KS**

***August 20, 2011: District 15 Meeting with Area Delegate workshop, LaCygne, KS**

***September 10-11, 2011: AWSC meeting, Salina, KS**

***September 16-18, 2011: Kansas AA Conference, Hays, KS (AA with Al-Anon participation)**

***September 24, 2011: Southeast Kansas Serenity Conference, Chanute, KS (AA with Al-Anon participation)**

***November 5, 2011: KS Area Assembly, Salina, KS**

***February 4-5, 2012: AWSC meeting, Salina, KS**

***May 5, 2012: KS Area Assembly, Salina, KS**

*** *September 8-9 2012*: AWSC meeting Salina, KS**

*** *November 3, 2012*: KS Area Assembly Salina, KS**

Please note Area Assembly is held at the Heart of America Best Western & AWSC meeting is held at the Mid America Best Western. These are the dates contracted with the hotels through 2012

FROM THE EDITOR

It's that time of year again. Summertime! So let's let the sun shine in and "Keep an Open Mind". Before I came to Al-Anon, I never noticed whether the sun was shining or not. My world was always dark; as was anyone I encountered. I could not trust. I could not feel anything but despair and hopelessness. I could not open my mind to anything positive at all. Al-Anon has taught me how to open my mind. Only then can the sun come into my life and brighten my days with serenity. Through service work I have learned that by keeping an open mind, I have the confidence to accomplish that which I never thought possible. Happy summertime everyone and let the sun shine in!



-Stevie W.-, Stepfinder Editor

"If you keep an open mind, you will find help. You will come to realize that no situation is too difficult to be bettered and no unhappiness too great to be lessened."

(Hope For Today, p. 366)

DELEGATE REPORT FOR THE STEPFINDER May 2011 Assembly

Hello Everyone – FYI my report at the May Assembly is on the web site. If you were not able to attend, please print off the report for



yourself, your group. There is a lot of important information in it. When I was a GR I thought it was wonderful – even though I didn't do everything perfect and I did have some criticism, I learned a lot and grew a lot. That's when I first read parts of the service manual. I never wanted to be a DR but my district's DR was moving to another part of the state and no one else was willing to stand so I took it. I had many personal challenges during this time but I continued to grow and was glad I was in that service position. My service sponsor told me to read the service manual so I read "parts" of it. Just enough to get me by – to answer those immediate questions. Then God and I had a talk. I'm done Lord ! Do you hear me ? This is as far as I am going in service and I have grown as much as I can or want to. I'm done. But I always added "but I am willing – your will to be done." I was elected Co-Chair and the out-going Co-Chair told me my job was to make sure the bathrooms at meetings had enough toilet paper. That was supposed to be easy. Instead, the AWSC added more responsibilities and I learned and grew. Moving into the Chairperson position was an easy transition. Or so I thought. Wow ! Did I ever learn and grow in that position ! It was one challenge after another and I soon learned that a good part of that position is being a leader – being the one others look to for direction and example.

The best advice I received from my service sponsor was that it was my job to look at the

whole picture, not just parts of it. I never worked so hard in my life, but oh my how I grew. And I read all of the service manual, not just the easy, fun parts. Tolerance – patience – unconditional love – organization – self-discipline – keeping an open mind – and vision all became deeper and richer and unbelievably valuable in my life. Then I was elected Delegate. To say I have loved every minute of my term is an understatement. And – I have read the service manual from front to back and sideways. From January 1st until Conference, the delegates receive e-mails every other day. These documents are annual reports and financials and other items – each totaling multiple pages. This year, my printer gave out on me and I had to go shopping right in the middle of all those e-mails. I continue to learn about ALL of Kansas AI-Anon and the dynamics of the service positions and groups and its members. In the past six years, serving as Chairperson and as Delegate, I know there are things that could work better, give all of us more clarity and direction and strengthen us as individuals and as groups and as districts and as an Area. We must move into the technology generation and go forward in all of our service positions. I have heard about other Areas ways of doing things that amaze and impress me. We just can't sit back and say "it's not my job" or that's the way it's always been done". One of the things I learned at Conference this year, was what a past delegate does. Modeling good program – speaking up when necessary – being a leader – and with my personal growth these past six years, I will be speaking up – I will be bringing KBDMs to the table for discussion – I will not be afraid to do so. The discussions will be good – the decisions will be all of ours. I hope you will be there too. As our elections are coming up soon, I want to suggest that all current GRs talk with your DR and see if you could do that job. No one says that all districts have to be exactly alike or that you have twelve meetings a year. Go to the Area website

and read the guidelines for DR and get your service manual out and read the guidelines and then go to the WSO members web site and take a look at the G-15 and G-37 guidelines. I would encourage you to give this prayerful thought. You might be surprised at what Higher Power has in mind for you. With the Coordinator and Area Officer positions, please go the Area members web site and read the guidelines for any position you are interested in. Look at the duties and responsibilities and requirements. If you don't possess all the skills needed, be honest enough to know whether or not this is something you may never learn or possibly can with lessons. Take lessons first ! Then see if its for you. As we often say, if you can't keep a checkbook, please don't stand for the treasurer position. Some of us are good with figures and some aren't. That is neither right nor wrong – we all have talents and skills – they are just different. The Area and all its members deserve to have your best. With that being said, the World Service Office and most other Areas have determined that "just being willing" is not good enough any more. While at the World Service Conference these past three years, we have had this discussion on the floor as well as at the dinner table and in hallways Some folks like the travel and fellowship with the various meetings – Conference, AWSC, Assembly, etc. – but that is their only reason for being in service – so Kansas AI-Anon can pay for these travels. That is not a good motive for service work and it is not your best. May I suggest that everyone is capable of doing something – find out what that is and go for it. Kansas AI-Anon deserves the very best. I hope I don't come across harsh, but I feel our elections are too important not to know everything possible. Like I said earlier – I am not afraid to speak up ! Hope to see you at the 39th annual AI-Anon / Alateen Conference in June in Great Bend. Lots of great stuff for everyone.

Much love to all, -Charla C., Kansas Delegate Panel 49

ALTERNATE DELEGATE REPORT

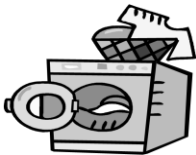
May, 2011 Area Assembly

Hello! I am Claudine W, your Alternate Delegate, a very grateful member of Anon Family Groups. Charla, Laurel and I attended the South Central Regional Delegates' meeting in March in Houston. Charla has been very busy. *The Forum's* familiar tagline, "A meeting in my pocket" has been changed to "sharing recovery, unity and service". This started with the April 2011 Issue. "Thank you for your dedication, Charla". As your "Forum" Coordinator, I want to remind you to send in your sharings and to subscribe to your own issue. "The Forum" has been described as a new book that comes out in monthly installments – a chapter a month. Include "The Forum" in your next meeting. Suggestion: Place a "Forum Kitty" in your meetings; and when enough money is collected, draw a name for a subscription. This makes great gifts for newcomers and sponsees.



-Claudine W.-, Alternate Delegate

Group Records Report (May 2011 Area Assembly)



Keeping the group records current is kind of like doing laundry – once you get the last load in the dryer, you spill mustard all over your shirt! I am so happy to be able to make changes to the WSO database immediately. This has made things so much faster and easier. Since we met last

November, I have only heard of two groups becoming inactive and we have had 7 new groups!! Hiawatha AFG in District 7 went inactive and Friendship Alateen 1, the Sunday meeting, disbanded. The new groups include: Phoenix Alateen in Wichita (Dist 19), Harmony Alateen in Overland Park (Dist 10), Goodland Adult Children (Dist 1), Serenity for Women in Concordia (Dist 5), Open Door in Wamego (Dist 6), Happy, Joyous, and Free Tuesday Evening AFG in Prairie Village (Dist 10), and Hope Abounds in Pittsburg (Dist 22). I have heard about some other new groups starting up but have not received registration forms for them as yet. Currently we have 146 Al-Anon groups, including 2 institutional groups and 6 Spanish groups. In addition, we have 13 Alateen groups and 2 Literature Distribution Centers/Information Services. I have an Electronic Group Registration/Change Form available on our Kansas website. This is a form I created to use here in the Kansas Area. You can download the form, save it on your computer, fill it out, and attach it to an email to me. It gives me all the information I need to make the changes with WSO. Please remember – send them to ME, not WSO! I will make the changes and let the necessary people, such as WSO, the area secretary, and the area webmaster know. You will need to inform your local directory person yourself. As always, you can contact me at my Area address group-records@kansas-al-anon.org. As for Alateen, all changes must be sent to our Area Alateen Process Person, Janet Mc. Thank you so much for allowing me to serve the Kansas Area.

-Terry R.-, Group Records Coordinator

TREASURERS REPORT TO MAY 2011 ASSEMBLY



Our ending balance in the check book as of 4-30-2011 was \$14019.91. The beginning balance on 01-01-11 was \$12357.52. We had an income of \$4819.05 and expenses of \$3156.66. Our Reserve Fund balance is \$11897.57. So far this year, we have accrued \$38.78 in interest. Our total contributions from groups, Districts, and individuals, so far this year was \$1686.06. That was \$98.23 less than last year at this time. \$1489.06 was from our AI-Anon groups, \$130.00 from Districts, \$45.00 personal, \$22.00 from B-Day contributions. Contributions received this year to date were from 38 out of 140 groups. That is 27%. It breaks down like this: 38 AI-Anon, 3 Districts, 3 personal and 1 B-Day. Our total income, so far this year, was \$2919.34 more that last year at this time. That was due, in part, to a generous contribution from our Literature Depot and the other part from a reimbursement made by the World Service Office. Your trusted servant made a generous contribution the World Service Office in December of \$2181.95 instead of \$1181.95. Thanks to Charla, we were able to get the \$1000.00 in overage sent back to us. Our expenses, so far this year, were \$170.21 less that this time last year. I will be working with my tax man in the next couple of weeks to file our 990 forms with the IRS. I have already filed our annual "Not for Profit Corporation Report" with the Secretary of State. I will be sending the next Appeal Letter to each group in June along with the total amount your group has contributed from January thru May 2011. Please send Area contributions to me at: Kansas AFG PO Box 281

Leavenworth, Ks. 66048. I do have the Memorial Book available for your viewing. I do have B-Day and Memorial cards available for your special contributions. If you need a receipt for your contribution, as an individual, please let me know.

Any questions or comments?

Your Trusted Servant, -Cindy H.-, Area Treasurer



Kansas Area AI-Anon/Alateen Webmaster Report (Area Assembly May 2011)

Hi everyone!
Surf's definitely up! The site traffic has increased substantially in the last 2 months. Besides using it to find a meeting in Kansas, one can also find a plethora of useful information on the site. You can use it to find exciting events for Kansas AI-Anon and Alateen by checking out the calendar page. You can also download the agendas and minutes from the area meetings, fill out a group change form electronically,



download forms such as group expense form, Alateen permission form, Literature order form, and an AMIAS form. The Stepfinder is free to download. Be aware that there are 2 versions of the Stepfinder. One has been edited to remove last names and any other personal information. The other Stepfinder version is located in the members secure site. This secure version will contain member's last name, phone #, etc. Every month a willing Al-Anon member does a small write up we call a "Sneak Peek" of what interesting articles are in the Forum magazine each month. The Web site team has been working on putting together some questions and answers to post that newcomers might be curious about regarding Al-Anon and attending meetings. I have added the anonymity statement to the home page as well as a link to go to our newest book, "Many Voices, One Journey". From the link you can read an excerpt from the new book and view the table of contents. I was invited to do a workshop for District 6 in Manhattan last month. Many of the members brought their laptops and I led them through a tour of the Kansas web site, as well as the World Service Office web site. I showed them how to find, download and use audio podcasts for a meeting topic. The word "podcast" is a combination of the word broadcasting and iPod and it is basically a digital audio or video file that can be played or downloaded to play. They are usually in MP3 format. Speaking of the WSO site, it is undergoing a facelift and has a new look. Check it out at www.al-anon.alateen.org. They have some wonderful stories, podcasts and videos of members sharing. The WSO recently emailed me to let me know that they have added a web coordinator position to its database. They will be communicating with all the area web coordinators/webmasters via e-communities. e-Communities is a password-protected Web site where WSO staff will post news and information that will be helpful to me. I am very excited about this new communication link with WSO. Remember to send me flyers and information via

email or snail mail to post for special events. As always, I am available to come do a workshop on using the website and how it can help y our group. Thanks again for allowing me to serve the area.

Love in AFG, -Candy M.-, Kansas Area Al-Anon/Alateen Webmaster

AREA PUBLIC OUTREACH COORDINATOR (May 2011 Assembly)

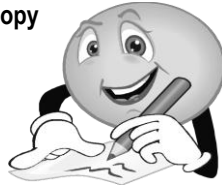
I apologize that I am unable to attend Assembly this weekend. My doctor will not let me travel anymore (the twins are due in ten weeks). I want to give a big "thank you" again to the Al-Anon members that continue to share ideas and projects with "Taking Action in Al-Anon with Public Outreach". I am continuing with the "Public Outreach Post Project 2100". Public outreach posters will be mailed to all groups within the Area this summer. Groups will then be responsible for distributing the posters within their communities. I will also enclose a letter with the posters to update group members with the details of the project. I also have several copies of the 2011 "Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism". If you need copies for your district or group, please contact me, and I will send you some. I hope everyone has a great Assembly; and please contact me if you have any public outreach questions.

-Janell G.-, Public Outreach Coordinator

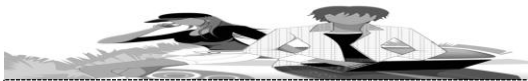
KANSAS STEPFINDER REPORT

May 2011 Assembly

To date there are 27 hard copy subscriptions and 5 email subscriptions to the *Kansas Stepfinder*. The subscriptions have continually increased since I began serving as *Stepfinder* Editor. I am very excited by that! I appreciate all the personal sharings I have received. I would like to receive more! I always include a personal sharing in each issue. If I don't get one from the Kansas Area, I find one from other Al-Anon literature. I think, however, it would be great to have sharings from the Kansas Area. There is a sample of the *Stepfinder* on the back table that you can take a look at, along with subscription forms if anyone would like to subscribe as an individual or for your group. I thank you for allowing me to serve as Kansas *Stepfinder* Editor, and for all the encouragement I have received. I HAVE GROWN SO MUCH IN MY RECOVERY AS A RESULT.



-Stevie W., Stepfinder Editor



“Alateen is a safe haven where I can release my feelings to others who understand them the most. It is the place where I can be accepted.”

Alateen Coordinator and Assistant Alateen Coordinator Report

Since we last saw each other, the Alateens have attended the 36th Annual Midwestern Alateen Conference in Lawrence Kansas. There was a great turn out with participation from Kansas, Arkansas and Oklahoma. Aaryn W. from Courage finders and Elaine from Together We Can Make It were the Alateen speakers at Sunflower Round-up in Kansas City February 26, 2011 Richard R was the Alateen speaker in Wichita at the Spring Round-up in March. Courage Finders had their Annual Hug In March 11, 2001 with good participation. Alateen Sponsor Get A Way was held March 19 & 20 at Living Water Ranch, Olsburg KS. There were 12 in attendance and we had a great time. Shanna facilitated Alateen Sponsor/AMIAS training that was provided by WSO and customized to fit our Area. I thought it was really successful and plan on have several conference/web training sessions before the end of the year. Many Areas are having mandatory training for their AMIAS/Sponsors. Shanna and Jessica had the privilege to speak at Al-Anon/Alateen Days in Topeka March 26. There were excellent workshops and the lunch potluck was out of this world. Kansas Alateen Round-up is just around the corner and the teens are getting excited. It will be held July 22-24. Jessica and I are sad as this will be our last year as coordinators for Round-up, but we are really looking forward to this year as it will be a special time for us. Our theme this year is “I Run to KARU” and the theme song is “I Run To You” by Lady Antebellum. Thank you for allowing us to serve as your Alateen and Assistant Alateen Coordinators.

Love you all! Shanna G. and Jessica A.

2011 CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Conference Committee – They have worked hard and



have come up with some new and exciting ideas for a great conference. The members of the Conference Committee are: Co-

Chairman – Terry R; Finance

Chairman – Lori R; Publicity

Chairman – Joyce H; Program

Chairman – Phil G; Registration

Chairman – Selia C; Hospitality – Lucy C; Alateen

Coordinator – Shanna G; Asst. Alateen Coordinator –

Jessica A; AA Liaison – Dee Y; and myself, Judy W.

your General Chairman. (GIVE THEM A HAND!)



Our Theme is “60 Years of Transforming Lives”. The conference will be June 17 – 19, 2011 at the Highland Convention Center in Great Bend, KS. Pre-registration is \$18 (give to Stevie today); or at the door \$20. Cut- off date for pre-registration and block of rooms at the hotel is June 3. For pre-registration, the money must accompany the registration form. Visit our Conference table. We have Registration forms there with envelopes with names on them. We want to save on postage, so look for yours. When you do, there’s snackies there for you. Also, sign up to help Selia at the Registration Table at Conference. She will need a break now and then. Lucy will also need help in the Hospitality Room. Alateens need a filled out and notarized medical form. Get one from Shanna or download off our Al-Anon web site. Hotel rate is \$68+taxes per night. There may be 1-4 persons in a room. Ask for Al-Anon/Alateen Conference block and use toll free phone number on form. Banquet: Western Buffet with choice of BBQ ribs, BBQ chicken or BBQ brisket served with all the trimmings. Dessert is a choice of apple or peach cobbler. Please note that if you want Diabetic or Vegetarian plates. The price is \$20 and it is poolside. Activities: MIXER: (involves

chocolate) – KARAOKE – CRAZY BINGO (bring gift in brown bag) –WORKSHOP by Charla entitled “Let’s play Family Feud”EARLY BIRD MEETINGS; CANDLELIGHT MEETING with topic “God of Your Understanding” given by Alateens and open to everyone. PANEL OF EXPERIENCE, STRENGTH AND HOPE ; LUCKY CHANCE drawings (bring a nice item and help y our Area). A couple of SPECIAL DRAWINGS will be held this year only – Charla has a set of very special CD’s she is donating. Our taper is also donating a set of CD’s of our Speakers. YOU HAVE TO BE THERE TO WIN!! In order to keep our banquet prices down, we asked Districts if they would like to be Speaker Sponsors for our speakers banquet. If they choose to do so, they can sit with that speaker. Our Speakers and their Banquet Sponsors are: Zelda R., from Lincoln, NE, (she grew up in Salina). Zelda will be sponsored by District 18. Becky D., from Topeka, will be sponsored by District 8. Bo T., (Al-Anon) and his wife Shirley T. (AA) , from Brockton, AL. They will be sponsored by Districts 19 and 20. The Alateen Speaker is Aimee Steward sponsored by District 16. Volunteers to make Favors for Registration Table are District 6, the Nitty Gritty Group in District 10; New Joy Group in District 16; and Districts 19-20. If any group wants to make and bring something, we certainly appreciate your thoughtfulness. Decoration for the Speaker Table will be done by Districts 19 and 20. Decoration for the Banquet Table will be done by Phil and District 8. If groups or districts would like to contribute books for the Book Giveaway, either give them to a committee member or bring them with you to the Conference. Money contributions are always appreciated. Last year some who attended said it was the best Conference they’d been to. We know this year’s will be just great. This is your Conference; and we hope you ‘ll come and have a great time with us! -Judy W-, Conference Chairperson

DISTRICT REPORTS



“Participation is the key to
harmony”



District 5: District 5 has 9 Al-Anon groups and one Alateen group. We have one new group in Concordia named Serenity for Women AFG. It meets on Thursdays at 6:00 pm. Serenity AFG has added another hour meeting. There is now a 6:00 pm regular meeting; a 7:00 pm beginners' meeting; and an 8:00 pm regular meeting – all on Monday nights. Serenity AFG is also one of the groups chosen to fill out the survey from WSO. On October 2, 2011 Lori, from Serenity AFG, spoke at the Larned group's Fall Fest. On February 20, 2011 I was asked to speak at an AA Round Robin in Concordia. On March 5, 2011 Stevie from Serenity AFG spoke at the Salina Alateen's Chili feed. On April 30, 2011 Keo and I were asked to speak in Scott's Bluff, Nebraska.

-Judy W., DR

District 8: District 8 has 16 active Al Anon groups and 1 active and growing Alateen group. The Alateen group has recently picked up extra

sponsors and is working toward the potential of opening a second group. A recent meeting at 16 Alateens present which led to the group dividing their meeting that night with sponsors and splitting up to cover both sub groups. The district hosted our annual Al Anon/Alateen Day in late March at new location in Topeka. Shanna G was our Al Anon speaker and Jessica A was the Alateen speaker, both doing a great job. We had workshops on Step Four, The Traditions and The Concepts each led by Phil G. (District 8 Representative), Charla C. (Area Delegate) and Betty R. (Area Chairperson) respectively. The second half of the Step Four workshop involved a separate breakout specifically for the Alateens on their own style of Step Four. Great fun, food and fellowship was shared with a wonderful crowd. We very much appreciated the support of people coming from Ark City, Wichita, Emporia, Manhattan, Lindsborg, Lawrence and all around Topeka. As we head into the summer we are active in planning a special Fall Workshop. We are bringing Ellen C. up from Addison, Texas (near Dallas) who will share her workshop titled "The Traditions in Relationships". This promises to be a day filled with great fun and growth in recovery. We are inviting AA participation as well. Ellen will be the Al Anon speaker the next day at the annual Topeka Area AA Banquet. Registration forms for the workshop are available on the Area Webpage for this great event being held October 1st. We are also excited about the upcoming elections. We have spent time preparing and really talking up the importance and value of service in Al Anon. As Group Representatives and District Officers we have learned how important service is to our personal recovery and we want to share that enthusiastically with others. Rotation in service is one of the signs of healthy groups and the district in our opinion. we have been talking and planning for the elections as well as personally approaching members to discuss the opportunities with them. We believe it is our enthusiasm that will help guide others to step up

For the amazing oportunites that lie ahead. We have scheduled elections to be held in September that the new Group Representatives will know who they are in time to be present for the October District meeting when the District Officers are elected and then all of the upcoming trusted servants will be available to present for the Area elections in November.

In Grateful Service ODAT, -Phil G.-, DR

District 12: District 12 has 3 groups. “*Paths to Recovery*” is in Larned and meets once a week; The” *Great Bend AFG*” group has two meeting times in Great Bend; the “*Grapevine*” group meets once a week and is also in Great Bend. At this time District 12 has a new meeting time at the “*Great Bend*” group. Two of our groups have started Step meetings. “*Paths to Recovery*” group in Larned has a Step meeting an hour before their regular meeting. The “*Grapevine*” group in Great Bend has a Step meeting an hour after their regular meeting. These meetings have been well attended, and many questions have been asked and reviewed. The District 12 AA’s had a Chili Feed April 16, 2011 with Al-Anon participation. Because of health problems our Al-Anon speaker was not able to attend; so instead an Al-Anon member answered questions about what Al-Anon is. Attendance is down in most groups.

-Jayme T.-, DR

District 15: Our District meeting was held Saturday , April 23, 2011 in Baldwin. Due to the Easter weekend, we had a small attendance ; but the groups reported that they are able to stay self - supporting. It was reported that the group in Spring Hill is looking for a new meeting place. This would include the “*Risk* “ Alateen group. At

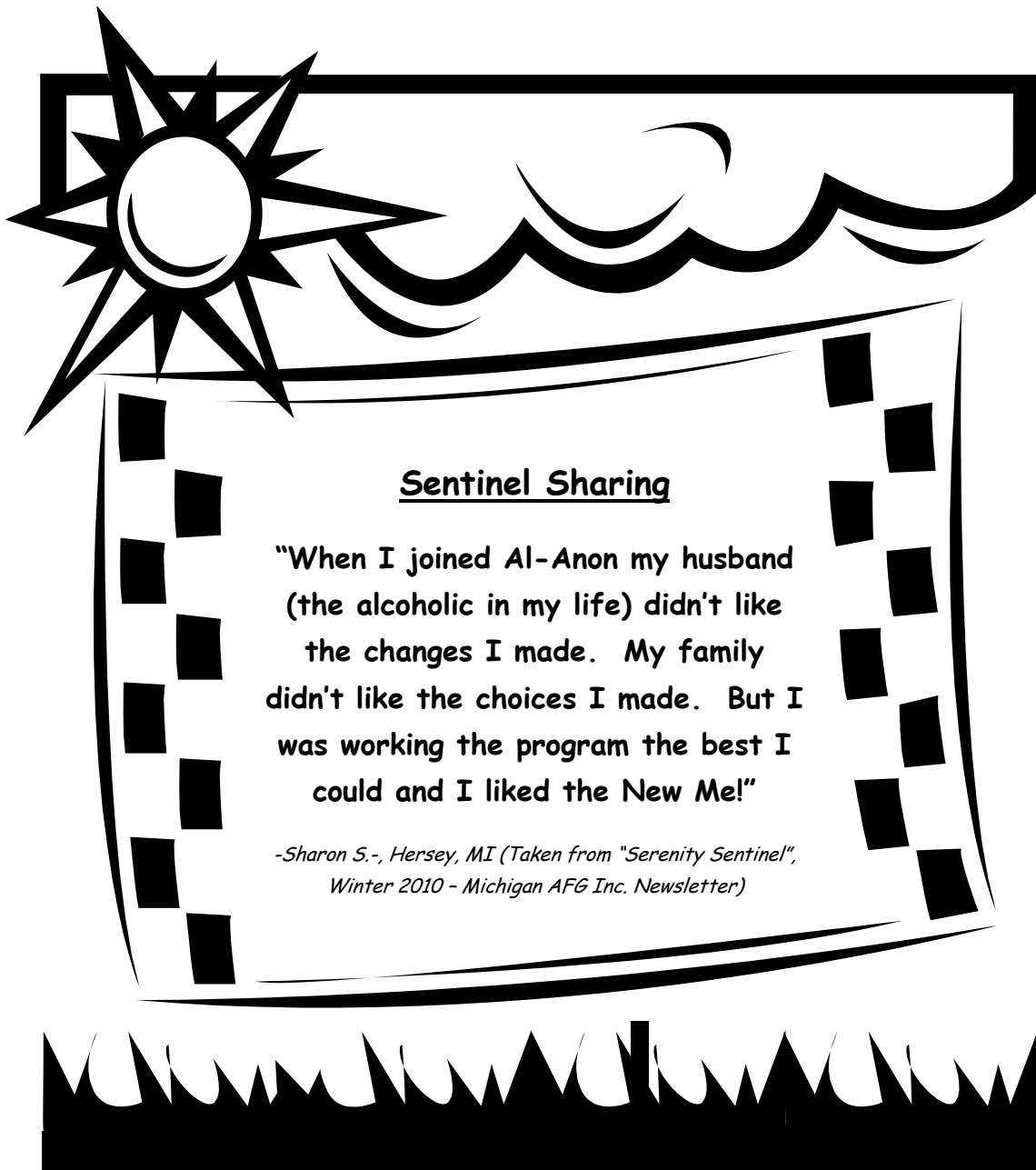
our District meeting in August, Charla is going to speak to us about service work. We will have a pot luck lunch. Everyone is invited! If you would like more information, please visit our District 15 website for location and time.

Love in Service, -Sherree S.-, DR

District 16: I was not going to give a report because I had nothing to report!!! Then I realized something needs to be in the minutes and the “*Kansas Stepfinder*” from District 16. If you are a member of a group in District 16 and you want to see us listed---COMMUNICATE WITH YOUR DR.

-Selia C.-, DR

District 22: District 22 held its meeting March 26, 2011 at Independence, KS the “*2nd Chance AFG*” as host. Gloria P, DR, opened the meeting. Updates of the groups were given. A big welcome to the new group “*Hope Abounds*” from Pittsburg was given to Dawn and Barbara. There were four AFG groups that attended with 14 people. Information and flyers about upcoming events were handed out by Gloria. The Treasurer’s report was given by Bob W. It was voted to send Charla a love gift. Discussion over the use of Podcast at the meeting and the change of the Forum wording on it along with other topics had good input. A workshop on the slogans and Al-Anon’s Promises was given by Andrea S. with group participation. It was wonderful! Gloria gave out Easter eggs and candy with a slogan- “*Happy 60th*”. Our next meeting is set for October 8, 2011 in Pittsburg with Hope Abounds AFG as host. I received a blessing as it was a great fellowship. The Sunflower AFG group and myself were at Hope Abounds AFG for their first meeting. What an enriching fellowship for all!. I have appreciated each AFG and give thanks. Al-Anon is working well even after 60 years! *With Grattitude, -Gloria P.-, DR*



Sentinel Sharing

**"When I joined Al-Anon my husband
(the alcoholic in my life) didn't like
the changes I made. My family
didn't like the choices I made. But I
was working the program the best I
could and I liked the New Me!"**

*-Sharon S., Hersey, MI (Taken from "Serenity Sentinel",
Winter 2010 - Michigan AFG Inc. Newsletter)*

PERSONAL SHARING

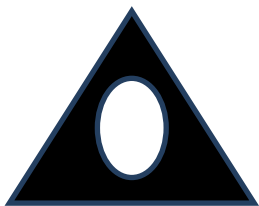
This year's Conference theme took me back to the first night I walked through the doors of this wonderful program. Little did I know how much it would change my life. I was extremely invisible, leaving immediately after the meeting so I wouldn't have to talk to anyone. Words such as unmanageability and powerlessness had no meaning to me. To surrender to a Power greater than myself was a strange thought. I wanted a scientific solution to my problem, not a spiritual journey. I was confused, miserable, angry, and resentful. I didn't know I was only a thought away from a change in attitude; that I had to learn a new language and the meaning of love, heart, and spirit would have a rebirth. For me, love was the beginning of the miracle, a miracle that allowed my mind and spirit to have visions of hope. I began to understand that the mystery of this program was a spiritual understanding that leads to a remarkable recovery. What a change from the past I had known, filled with injury, darkness, despair, doubt, and sadness. Anonymity to me means finding oneself in this program. In order to express gratitude, I need to understand the meaning of some words. Compassion is when I open my heart, mind, and soul to the pain and

suffering of others and then reach out to discover the rewards and obligations of deep feelings. Devotion is when I express my feelings of praise and adoration through devotional practices, praying with words and sharing through actions. Faith is when I recognize and accept that there is another dimension to life, other than what is obvious to me. It's living with obstacles, doubt and paradoxes, knowing that God is always present. Listening is when I am able to cultivate the art of listening in which I lean towards the world in love. All things in the universe want to be heard, as do the many voices inside of all of us. Joy is to see and feel, then rejoice and be glad in finding this Divine energy in daily life. Imagination is when I set my mind free, giving it free rein to explore images and ponder their meanings. Gratitude is to be thankful for all the blessings in my life. Today, I'm not invisible. I've entered the spiritual arena of Al-Anon. Through the grace of this program, my world has become larger, deeper, and fuller than I could have possibly imagined. This change occurred when I became willing to serve this fellowship within my group, area, and as delegate. Thank you Al-Anon for this gift.

-Sue Ann B., Rhode Island (Taken from 2002 Summary - Al-Anon Family Groups World Service Conference)

"It's time for help. Alcoholism is a family disease. It affects everyone who is close to the alcoholic. Most of us believe that the alcoholic is the one who needs to change. It comes as a shock to hear that we also need to change and it's time to look at ourselves." (Pamphlet P-89, *Doubting Your Sanity?*)





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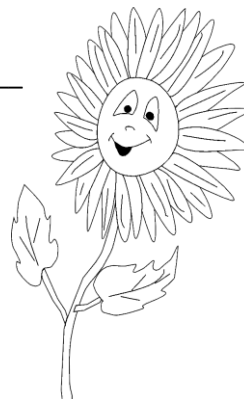
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