



Al-Anon/Alateen Matters Newsletter

September 2015

AIS-DCSMD Officers and Chairpersons

Leave a message at (202)635-2023 or info@al-anon-alateen-dcmd.org

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Alternate Chair	Martha B.
Secretary	Nancy F
Alternate Secretary	Ruth C.
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Directory Chairperson	Zan K.
Fall Luncheon Chairperson	Suzanne T.
Literature Distribution Center	Angie S.
Newsletter Chairperson	Flavia F.
Public Outreach Chairperson	Maureen M.
Spring Workshop Chairperson	Rebecca D.

Calendar of Events

September 24	7:00	AIS-DCSMD Business Meeting
October 3	7:15	District 12 Hayride, Germantown, MD
October 17	9:30	Area 24 Assembly, Silver Spring, MD
October 31	11:00	AIS-DCSMD Fall Luncheon, Gathersburg, MD
November 6-8		Area 24 Fall Convention, Hagerstown, MD

If any local school system (DC, Montgomery or Prince George's County) is closed for after-school activities, the AIS-DCSMD meeting is postponed to the following Thursday.

Public Outreach Service Opportunities

- September 19, Domestic Abuse Panel, ADW Council of Catholic Women, Burtonsville, MD 9am-12 noon
- October 10, AFSP Out of the Darkness Walk, Sylvan Theater, Washington, DC 11:30am-4:30pm
- October 18, The Beacon 50+ Expo Health, Silver Spring, MD Civic Center, 11:00am-4 pm

Our AIS Inventory: A Hopeful and Spiritual Experience

The Al-Anon information Service (AIS) business meeting on June 25 was devoted to an inventory. It was a wonderful, spiritual experience. Joanie N, past chair of the Baltimore AIS, conducted the inventory. She started by suggesting that everyone focus on maintaining an open mind, a willing spirit, and loving approval. That set the tone for the inventory.

We read from the WSO guideline G-4 the services that an AIS provides to the groups that it serves. The primary services are to handle inquiries and to maintain a local meeting directory. During our discussion, the main concern of many of the Information Service Representatives (ISR's) was the lack of information they had available and the feeling that they did not have the authority to make any recommendations or decisions. They just came to the meetings and were told what was going on. It sounded to them like the decisions were made at the steering committee meetings a week before the business meetings. Some members felt that there was no point in their coming to the meetings because everything was already decided. They wanted to be more involved in the process, especially since the AIS serves the groups and is responsible to the groups. The groups need to be more involved in the functioning of the AIS.

The comments after the inventory of some members who had been involved with the AIS for a while made it clear that the real problem was not that the decisions were made without the ISR's input, but that many things are being done because that's the way they had been done for years. These members felt that what is really needed was a close look at the purpose of the AIS and the best way to fulfill that purpose. Or to put it another way, if we were starting an AIS today, how would we do it?

It would be useful to talk to officers of the AIS's in Baltimore and nearby states. Joanie shared some ways that the Baltimore AIS does things differently that sounded very attractive. There is also an online community of AIS's where ideas about improving an AIS are discussed and questions can be asked of other AIS's.

The inventory cleared the air and started us moving in a new direction. We need to keep discussing these issues and moving forward to maintain the feeling of renewal and hope generated by the inventory!

Concept 1: The ultimate responsibility and authority for Al-Anon world services belongs to the Al-Anon groups.