

SOUTH JERSEY INFORMATION SERVICES

Volume 10, Number 1

AL-ANEWS

February 2010

A Note From Your Chairperson

Hello my name is Ken K., from Manahawkin. After serving one year as Vice-Chair, I became Chairperson November 1. The new Steering Committee, elected in October, is listed on the last page. As a team, we will address SJIS' two primary purposes: serving those individuals and groups already in the fellowship and getting the message of hope of Al-Anon and Alateen to those who are unaware.

What do we hope to do this year for groups or individuals already in the fellowship? Make it simple and easy for the members and their groups to connect to SJIS, enjoy its fellowship events, receive literature, and get updates.

We continue to do offer email notices(over 400 people have signed,) so you can get information directly. We'll offer new services such as being able now to have SJIS ship literature orders to P. O. Box addresses.

New Website —As soon as Al-Anon Headquarters, WSO, gives approval, SJIS will shortly launch its first website. WSO checks that our citations to Conference Approved Literature (CAL) are accurate and gives us written permission to include Steps, Traditions, Concepts and other Al-Anon and Alateen information on our website. Lynn M. is our website creator and will be its webmaster for the first year.

You will be able to: download Group Record Change Forms, Literature Order Forms, any announcements of Group Anniversaries and SJIS Events (Workshop, Luncheon, Al-Anon Program at the AA Area 45 Convention, and the New Years Eve Party). You will also be able to volunteer to be the Coordinator of these events, or just offer to help (registration table, setting up the rooms, being a moderator of a session, etc.) Our N.J. Delegate, Paul G., has been involved in the review of the website. SJIS will link to the excellent N.J. Assembly website (www.nj-al-anon.org) so people can find meetings by zip code.

Also, with a SJIS website, we will have a place to direct those targeted in our SJIS Public Outreach. Whether those people are doctors, teachers, counselors, or just individuals seeking help, our website will provide the needed information about Al-Anon and Alateen.

Some other examples of planned new initiatives by SJIS:

- Our Alateen Coordinator, Tracy S., will hold a luncheon inviting all current SJIS area AMIAS (Al-Anon Member In Alateen Service) and anyone interested in Alateen service to share their experience, strength, and hope. Hopefully, more Alateen meetings will result.
- Our Public Outreach person, Rich N., will communicate to the groups to get local public access "scroll TV" announcements to include one slide on Al-Anon and Alateen meetings citing our new website and the SJIS phone number for more information.
- Our Groups Services person, Linda Z., will mail/email to all groups a "SJIS Email Sign-Up Form." This form, and our process, keeps your anonymity but allows you to get email updates and announcements.

I hope you will support us in these new efforts and join us too in service to the Al-Anon and Alateen fellowship in the SJIS area.

Ken K, Chairperson

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SJIS to SJIS Inc. Transition

As many of you know, SJIS is in the process of incorporating, an action long overdue, and one advocated by Al-Anon's Concepts of Service. Al-Anon's Area 36 (New Jersey), Jal-Con, (Area 36 Annual Convention), and North Jersey Information Service (NJIS), the other three arms of Al-Anon service in N.J., have already been incorporated, providing legal protection for those who serve as their Trustees.

The 2008-2009 (terms ending 10/31/09) SJIS Steering Committee entrusted to Ken K., Nancy B., and me the task of completing the incorporation.

The most recent ISR meeting was attended by a record 30 voting ISR's, GR's, or Group-Elected Representatives. Twenty-eight were present for voting and overwhelmingly approved the initial Bylaws, which will form the foundation of SJIS, once incorporated. At this meeting, I expressed my personal gratitude for such an awesome turnout.

I explained the logic and essence of the major structural change to SJIS that is presented in these Bylaws. This structure came from my experience of serving two separate times on the SJIS Steering Committee for a total of seven and one half years of the ten ending October 31, 2009. It also came from having personally recruited at least 15 initially reluctant people to serve on this Committee, which has never, in my experience, had all eighteen available positions filled (currently we have nine filled.) Energy for this structure also came from seeing persons like Anita S., Keith P., Ann G., Audrey G., O'B, and me remaining on the Committee for longer than good Al-Anon rotation of service suggests.

Upon examining the reasons many were reluctant to serve on the Steering Committee, it became clear to Ken, Nancy, and me that the current SJIS Constitution does not make a clear distinction between Trustees and Project Coordinators. We believe that many who would "step up" to coordinate an SJIS event like a Workshop, New Year's Eve Party, or Luncheon want nothing to do with the "Business" of Al-Anon, and do not want to

attend a monthly meeting that has little or nothing to do with the scope of their service.

Accordingly, the new structure reduces the number of Trustees to seven. We recognize that this narrows the span of control, but our hope is that we can broaden the number of Coordinators, prompting more people to serve SJIS without it being burdensome to them. We also believe that with only seven Trustee positions to fill and with only three of them changing each year that we will have "control" broadened by more Trustee participants for shorter periods of time.

We worked very hard to map the current Steering Committee positions into the new structure:

Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, and Immediate Past Chair are the Trustee positions that seemed obvious to us. It is at this point that we created some change. We believe that SJIS serves two purposes: 1) To facilitate Public Outreach; and 2) To connect the groups we serve. Therefore; it seemed that of the remaining two Trustees, one should focus on Outreach (Public Outreach Trustee) and the other should focus on current and new Groups (Group Service Trustee). All the other positions on the current Steering Committee, then, will be Coordinator positions, supported by specific Trustees. These Coordinators will not be responsible for the "Business" of SJIS, and they can participate in it at the level they choose.

The outline below displays how the current Constitutional responsibilities are mapped into the new structure:

- 1) Chairperson
 - Coordinators: 1) Website
 - 2) Al-Anews
- 2) Vice-Chair – SJIS Events
 - Coordinators: 1) New Year's Eve Party,
 - 2) Participation in Area 45 AA Convention,
 - 3) SJIS Workshop,
 - 4) SJIS Luncheon

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- 3) Secretary
- 4) Treasurer
- 5) Immediate Past Chair – Liaison to Assembly and Office Staff/Volunteers
- 6) Public Outreach Trustee
 - Coordinators: 1) Event Requests,
 - 2) Institutions,
 - 3) TV/Radio
- 7) Group Service Trustee
 - Coordinators: 1) Contributions,
 - 2) Literature Sales,
 - 3) Group Records,
 - 4) Alateen Support

The proposed new structure, then, will require thirteen Coordinators who do not have to concern themselves with the "Business" aspects, but can grow in service with focused responsibilities supported directly by a specific Trustee. Our current Constitution allows for three Members-At-Large who have a voice, but no vote at Steering Committee meetings. In reality, for all the time that I have been on the Committee, only Anita S. (Past Delegate) has chosen to serve in this capacity, and has offered us over and over again her Al-Anon wisdom accumulated through 30 plus years of service.

It seemed to us that having a Trustee with no vote (that is, liability without real control) is not fair to the individual. However, we do not want to lose the wisdom of long-time trusted servants like Anita. Therefore, we will make it clear that current Delegates, Alternate Delegates, and Trustees of Jal-Con, as well as Past Delegates are always welcome at Trustee meetings.

Descriptions of responsibilities for the various Coordinator positions will be sent out in future emails. If you have just a glimmer of interest in growing (yes it really does happen) your recovery through service, please contact the SJIS office by phone or email, and let me know the best time and way to reach you. Thank you.

Larry A. - Immediate Past Chair and Liaison to Area 36 Assembly

SJIS ISRs Overwhelmingly Approve Bylaws of SJIS Inc.

When SJIS was created many years ago, it was done as an unincorporated association. All the other arms of service in N.J., N.J. Assembly Inc., Jal-Con Inc., NJIS Inc., are all corporations. Al-Anon headquarters, Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters Inc. (also known as WSO), has been incorporated since the mid 1950's. The Al-Anon Service Manual encourages arms of service organizations to consider being incorporated. Why? It offers more protection for the organization, trustees, staff, and volunteers.

A key first step to becoming a nonprofit corporation in N.J. is to agree on the Bylaws that define the structure of the organization and the roles of its trustees, officers, and voting members. On January 23, the Bylaws of South Jersey Information Inc., were a key agenda item at the quarterly Information Service Representatives (ISR) meeting. The vote: 24 voted yes, 2 voted no, and 2 abstained. If you would like a copy of the SJIS Inc. Bylaws, email the SJIS office.

Next steps include applications to N.J. to become a nonprofit corporation, registration as a public charity, and also an application to the federal IRS for tax-exempt status. SJIS already is a tax-exempt nonprofit organization but it is not transferrable to SJIS Inc. The entire process of getting both N.J. and IRS approvals will take many months. We will keep you informed.

The ISRs, under SJIS Inc., will continue to meet quarterly, elect our leaders, approve the budget, and bring their experience, strength, and hope to the meetings.

SJIS continues to operate, as we have before, serving our member groups and the public who want to learn about Al-Anon and Alateen.

Ken K., Chairperson

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Opening for Coordinator for SJIS Spring Workshop

Last year over 150 people attended the SJIS Workshop in Toms River, NJ. This year we do not have anyone to Chair the workshop. Help us help you, by volunteering to do the workshop.

It will be easier to head it up this year. Why? We have detailed information on what food and beverages to order. We have templates in Word for the announcements, program, and registration forms. Registration is handled by SJIS office staff prior to the event. The workshop is listed on the N.J. Assembly calendar for Saturday, May 1.

The job description for the workshop coordinator is available from SJIS. If you are interested, just email the office and put in the subject "Workshop Coordinator". Your assignment starts ASAP and ends in May. You will get volunteers to help you!

Want to volunteer to do some of the other things, other than Coordinator? Again, just email or call the SJIS office.

Public Outreach

January 2010 brings the beginning of a new year and the continuation of building a more modern SJIS. What better time to expand our South Jersey Public Outreach efforts. In the coming months, we will be looking for members who would like to join us in our Public Outreach efforts. In addition to important traditional outreach efforts, new ideas are welcome. We want the public to hear about our program, not only in print and public speaking, but also via television and radio. Have you been called to service? You can volunteer to share your story, help spread the word about Al-Anon, share your knowledge in broadcasting, and help attract those affected by someone else's drinking to our program. Spreading the word about Al-Anon and Alateen to those unfamiliar with our 12 step recovery program, will make our groups stronger and more united. What a great feeling to walk into your regular meeting and see new faces! I hope our Public Outreach efforts this year help bring the hope and serenity that we've come to enjoy, to all those in need. Volunteers please contact SJIS or me by phone at 856-833-0117.

In Service, Rich N., SJIS Public Outreach Chair

A Message From Your

Alateen Coordinator – Tracy S.

I'm Tracy S. from Manahawkin, and I'm grateful to announce that I will be serving as Alateen Coordinator for SJIS. I have been a member of Al-Anon for four years and an AMIAS (Al-Anon Member In Alateen Service) for one year. I have always been interested in service with the Alateens. About two years ago, I was beginning to hear a gentle voice guide me into Alateen service. Last year I took the AMIAS training, with some members of the groups I attend, and we started the Sunday night Manahawkin Alateen meeting. Currently we have eight Alateen meetings in South Jersey. I would like to see that number increase. My first goal would be to reach out to Al-Anon members and find people interested in Alateen service. We need trained AMIAS to provide the children and teens a safe place to go and receive the experience, strength, and hope we have been given.

There will be trainings throughout the year in North Jersey as well as in South Jersey. Another goal I have is to improve communication among AMIAS in South Jersey. There is an Alateen Action Committee Meeting scheduled for February 28, 1-4 p.m. at St. Cecilia's Church in Iselin. All AMIAS are welcome; please RSVP if you can attend. The slogan that comes to mind is, "Together We Can Make It." I would love to share ideas about topics, have speaker meetings, and also get the Alateens together for outreach or just for fun! I'm planning a luncheon for early spring for AMIAS and anyone interested in becoming an AMIAS.

I'm going to ask you all one thing, please consider serving as an Alateen Group Sponsor. Read in our CAL, sharing's about Alateen Sponsorship, to see if it's right for you. Turn to your higher power and ask if service in Alateen will benefit you. Maybe you know someone in your home group or someone you sponsor who would benefit from service in Alateen, please encourage them to give it a try. **You may contact me by cell phone at 609-618-9588 or email at tracys24@comcast.net**

The N.J. Assembly has elected a new Alateen Coordinator serving a three year term. Her name is Christine S. I am looking forward to participating in Alateen service with her. She may be reached at www.nj-al-anon.org, go to contacts and click Alateen.

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Al-Anon Program and Skit at AA Area 45 Convention March 26-28, Crowne Plaza Hotel, Cherry Hill, N.J.

AA's Area 45 Convention has cooperated for years with SJIS in offering an Al-Anon program. There are lots of reasons to take the time to attend this convention!

- Registration to attend the convention sessions is only \$35 for the day or weekend.
- Al-Anon is offering many sessions both on Friday and Saturday.
- An Al-Anon Recovery Skit is being performed on Saturday afternoon – it is a real treat.
- SJIS has a huge offering of Al-Anon and Alateen Literature for sale!
- All AA sessions are open, so Al-Anon members can "hear the other side."
- You can make a weekend of it by staying at the hotel and attending the Saturday night banquet hearing wonderful AA and Al-Anon speakers.

For a flyer and registration forms go to the AA web site:

<http://www.snjaaconvention.org/register.htm>

The Al-Anon meeting sessions for Friday and Saturday are listed below:

Friday, March 26

Keeping Your Hand In: *Service*

Never Let Your Left Hand Know What the Right is Doing:

Denial and Secrets

Candlelight Session-A Bird in the Hand Is Worth Two in the Bush: *Gratitude*

Saturday, March 27

Lending a Hand: *The 12 Steps and Traditions*

Hand In Hand: *Using the AFG Fellowship*

The Handy Al-Anon Toolbox: *Using the Tools of the AFG Program*

Hands Off!: *Detachment*

To Force One's Hand: *Control*

If you would like to volunteer to be a meeting session leader at the AA Area 45 Convention contact Sue C. at scollins1956@gmail.com with two choices. Each meeting should have two facilitators so if you have a buddy, send me both names. If not, I can match you with another person. Include your name, email address, and phone number.

Also note: this year we have set aside Plaza III for a Spanish language meeting of the same topic. If you wish to lead one of those meetings, please let me know.

New Year's Eve Party

The SJIS sponsored New Year's Eve Party was a great way to celebrate continued recovery with others in the fellowship. This was the fifth year for this event, and it continues to be a fun and successful endeavor. The New Year's Party started as a fundraiser to help carry the Al-Anon message at the Area 45 AA Convention, but has become much more. Our DJ, 'Digital_K' had everyone dancing the night away. As usual the food went fast, but Al's coffee flowed all night. Many thanks to the set up and clean up folks, and those that brought covered dishes. But special thanks to Kathy and Al K., Chairpersons of the event.
In Service, Keith P.

SJIS Working on A Website Want To Give Comments?

Lynn H., our Webmaster volunteer, presented snap shots of pages of the new website to the SJIS Steering Committee at the January meeting. Lynn had many suggestions to work on. All agreed Lynn could use more feedback from others in the fellowship.

She does not need technical help. We seek ideas on topics, appearance, color, layout, what is on the first page versus later pages, Alateen, etc. We already have a draft layout. We need people to give comments. Have an eye for layout and color? Use websites and have an opinion on what we should put on our website? Join a group, for just 30 days, working from home by email, to provide some feedback to our webmaster.

Just email sjis@verizon.net and put in the subject line: "Web Site Feedback."

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A Crisis of Service in N.J. Arms of Service

Tradition Seven says: "Every group should be fully self supporting, declining outside contributions."

The arms of service organizations of Al-Anon and Alateen in N.J., are not self supporting in terms of people volunteering their service for the many things that need helping hands to get done.

Fully self supporting includes service, not just money! Just as a local group could not operate without someone getting the mail or chairing a meeting, the arms of service organizations are dependent on service volunteers to do most of the work. We have a crisis in terms of members serving!

Over exaggerating? Recall the letter from Jal-Con saying that Jal-Con's annual convention was on the verge of being cancelled? Well they "dodged the bullet" when several members saw a real crisis and stepped up for service. Now the convention will be held on July 16-18, 2010, in New Brunswick. To one degree or another SJIS, NJIS, Jal-Con, and N.J. Assembly are hurting.

Jal-Con has seven voting trustees but only five in service. N.J. Assembly elects their six officers every three years. At the election, back in November, only five people were willing to serve. N.J. Assembly still has no Treasurer. Another part of the N.J. Assembly structure is District Representatives (DR.) Of the 27 Districts in N.J., only eight have DRs. There are 19 Districts without a DR.

Our situation at SJIS? Of 18 Steering Committee members' slots we have nine filled with people in service.

Our N.J. arms of service organizations are sick. We are suffering from a lack of awareness but also a lack of commitment of people to serve. The few that do serve are asked to do more than they should to make up for others not serving.

There are many types of service that range from simple one day assignments (registration table at an event) to being a trustee of one of the arms of service. You can start to crawl, then walk, then run at your own pace. Other articles in this newsletter will give some examples of opportunities to serve.

Talk to your Al-Anon friends and volunteer together! Speak to your sponsor about service benefits

in your personal recovery. Reason it out with someone else about how you may be able to serve-even in a small way. Doing so will encourage those in service and inspire those not serving to join you.

If you are interested in serving just email sjis@verizon.net and put "Service" in the subject line of your email, or call our office from 10 a.m.-3 p.m., Monday through Friday at 856-547-0855. In service, Ken K., Chairperson

Upcoming Events

- **March 4** – Lois W. Birthday
 - **March 6** – N.J. Assembly Meeting
 - **March 18 and April 15** – Steering Committee Meetings
 - **March 26, 27** – Al-Anon Program as part of 46th Annual Area 45 AA Convention, Crowne Plaza Hotel, Cherry Hill, N.J.
 - **April 17** – ISR Meeting, Manahawkin, N.J.
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Steering Committee Members:

*Chairperson – Ken K.
Secretary – Kelly B.
Treasurer – Nancy B.
Contributions Chairperson – Linda Z.
Public Outreach Chairperson – Rich N.
Liaison to Assembly/Office Staff – Larry A
N.J. Area 36 Delegate – Paul G.
Member-at-Large – Anita S.
Al-Anon Participation in AA Convention
(2010) Chairperson – Keith P.
Alateen Activities Coordinator – Tracy S.*

Coordinators:

*Al-Anews Editor – Karen S.
Webmaster – Lynn M.*

A Note From the Editor - Please submit your Al-Anon group announcements or personal sharing for inclusion in future editions of Al-Anews directly to me at karen4serenity@hotmail.com or contact me through SJIS. All submissions to Al-Anews are brought before the Steering Committee for approval to assure that the traditions are followed. In service, Karen S., Al-Anews Editor