

Ala Gram

WINTER 2001

The Newsletter of the New Jersey Assembly

**Dear Treasurer
Don't forget your
regular contribution
to Assembly. Use the
group contribution
coupon on Page 7.**

Most mailings are received by the group secretary. The Alagram is intended for your entire group to read. Scan the Alagram. During your report, highlight any articles of interest. Consider using some as a topic for a service meeting. Finally, pass this copy around the room for three consecutive meetings so everyone can read it. Then leave it on the literature table so it can be read at any time.

**ASSEMBLY
MARCH 3, 2001**
*will be held at the
New Dover
Methodist Church,
687 New Dover
Road, Edison NJ.
It will begin at
10:00 with 'coffee
and' beginning at
9:30 AM*

How Did You Find Al-Anon?

We lived a fairy -tale life. We were both handsome and outgoing, with successful careers, large and active social circles, and futures — both individually and as a couple — that looked brilliant and promising. We were going to marry and have children and be absolute pillars of the community. But something went wrong. It started as a feeling of dis -ease. Nothing was tangibly wrong, but everything was not-quite-right. The dream was falling apart. Addiction was re-writing the ending to our “happily-ever-after.”

While my head was spinning with grief, anger, fear, and hopelessness, I was reluctant to recover. But I'd run out of resources. My favorite confidante would listen to my stories and gently ask “Did you share that in an Al-Anon meeting?”

Thank God for her. And for the institutions meetings. And for you. You see, the fantasy life I was most recently living wasn't the first in my life that was shattered by the “ism.” You lovingly helped me to see that.

Then my HP tapped me on the shoulder and presented an opportunity to do 12th step work. How could I say no? Al-Anon saved my life and showed me miracles well beyond my wildest fantasies.

Can you identify? Please help us to carry the message. Help others to find Al-Anon. Participate in Public Outreach activities.

E-mail publicoutreach@nj-al-anon.org.



SOUTH JERSEY INFORMATION SERVICE 25th ANNUAL SPRING WORKSHOP

**APRIL 28, 2001
9:00 AM TO 3:00 PM
Sterling High School
501 S. Warwick Rd.**

Somerdale, NJ

**Al-Anon, Alateen & A.A Speakers
Breakfast provided, bring a covered
dish to share for lunch**

**Call SJIS for further information
(856) 547-0855**

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Assembly Highlights

The 2001 calendar was beautiful. Once the GRs saw them, buying their own copy became the first order of business.

Please forward your articles for the Spring edition of the Alagram to the editor by April 10.

You can contact Assembly by writing to:

PO Box 391
S. Plainfield NJ
07080-0391

Please mark your correspondence "ATTN: _____"

"Treasurer delegate Literature Coord. etc."

Or through our web site at: www.nj-al-anon.org

The meeting opened with the Serenity Prayer followed by reading the Traditions and Concepts. Then each DR and GR stood to be counted.

The election was further down on the agenda and a motion was made to make it first, which was passed unanimously. The DRs were given 20-30 minutes to caucus with the GRs from their district. Carole started the voting process. Each position was announced and the vote took place. The following were elected: Delegate - Karen P. Alternate Delegate - John S. Chairperson - Tim S. (past delegate) Treasurer - Nancy B.

Recording Secretary - Kathy B. Corresponding Secretary - Donna G.

After the elections a big round of applause was given to the outgoing and incoming officers. The announcement was made that all groups designate a GR to represent them at the assembly; this new group of officers needs all of the support that the state of New Jersey Al-Anon can offer. Bagels, donuts coffee and tea are at each Assembly. Each District takes a turn supplying them and at the November Assembly District 7 brought the refreshments (the Assembly thanked District 7).

After a short recess, the assembly continued with the following Area Coordinator reports:

Please remember that along with the officers there are the Area Coordinators who hold chair positions such as Archives, Literature, Institutions, etc there are still a few chair positions open. If you are unable to chair a position, volunteers are always needed and appreciated. Remember, many hands make light work.

Al-Anon turns 50 and New Jersey is celebrating by hosting a picnic on May 19 at Turkey Swamp Park. Look for the flyers at your meetings, if you don't have a flyer please log on to www.nj-al-anon.org for further information. Volunteers and attendance are needed for this to be the success that we have all received from the fellowship.

2001 Calendars are available, the GRs received an amount on consignment. These calendars have important Al-Anon information such as Information Ser-

vice dates and Assembly dates. For the calendars to be a success, it is up to the GRs to bring them back to their home group and sell them. This is one of the fundraisers that the Assembly holds. If your meeting does not have a calendar for sale, please contact your LDC.

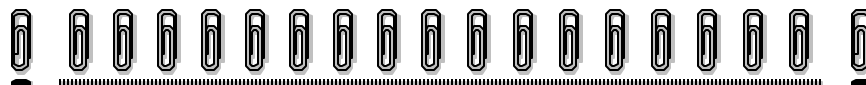
GRs were asked to announce at their meeting that when ordering the literature, please contact the Information Service LDC. They are dependent on the sale of literature to keep going.

Jal-Con reported that there were 460 attendees, which was down from previous years. They broke even financially and were unable to donate to the Assembly or the Information Service Offices (North and South). With your participation, the attendance can get back to what is once was, mark July 27-29 2001 on your calendar.

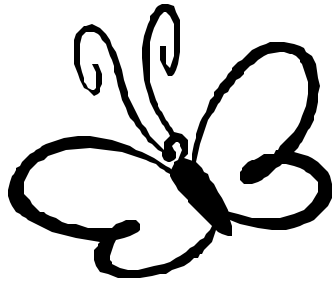
The report on finances was given and along with The audit report. We are ok for now and need to monitor the budget. As always, we look to our groups to help support the work that is done at the Area. Without the budget it would be impossible for us to spread the word for New Jersey Al-Anon and Al-Anon as a whole.

As the day drew to a close all of the outgoing and incoming officers got up and sang to the assembly with songs written by Joan E. and Virginia. The fun and the support that is so evident at the assembly is truly what service is all about.

The meeting closed with the Declaration of Unity.



**Al-Anon's 50th Anniversary Picnic
(with AA participation)
May 19, 2001
Turkey Swamp Park
Sandy Run Campsite
Freehold, NJ**



**Bring your family, bring your friends, and bring a newcomer!
Come celebrate with us!**

Hours: Noon to sunset

Al-Anon and AA speakers — spiritual meeting at sunset.

- Pavilion Shelters — Have fun, rain or shine!
- Athletic field available. Games for kids of all ages!
- Prizes for winners of picnic games!
- Relay races, horseshoes, volleyball, hiking trails, softball, and more! Bring your bats, balls, gloves, Frisbees, etc..
- Playground available for small children.
- Paddleboats available for a small fee (\$1.00 for 20 minutes) from a private dock!
- Campground available for overnight stays. (Call Monmouth County Park System, 732-462-7268 for Information (Not affiliated with Al-Anon Family Groups.)

**Bring your own food, or buy food at the picnic!
(You have choices!)**

Hot dogs	\$0.50	Hamburgers	\$1.00
Cheeseburgers	\$1.25	Water	\$1.00
Potato Chips	\$0.25	Coffee/Tea	\$0.25
Cake	\$0.50	Soda	\$0.50

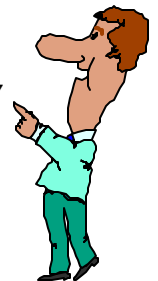
Sponsored by the New Jersey Assembly.
Volunteers needed and greatly appreciated.
Bring Chairs and blankets for your comfort

DIRECTIONS

*NJ Turnpike to Exit 7A to Interstate 195 East. Follow I 195 to Exit 22. Turn right onto Jackson Mills Road North. Follow Jackson Mills Rd. to Georgia Rd., turn left and follow Georgia Rd for 1.7 miles to main park entrance.

Garden State Parkway to Exit 98 to Interstate 195 West. *195 West to Exit 22. Turn Right onto Jackson Mills Road North. Follow Jackson Mills Rd. to Georgia Rd., turn Left and follow Georgia Rd. 1.7 Miles to park entrance.*

State Highway 9 to Route 524 West. *Follow 524 West to Georgia Road, turn left and follow Georgia Rd. to main entrance of the park.*



From the Desk of your State Delegate. Karen P.

The year 2001 is here and what an exciting time for Al-Anon world-wide and New Jersey Al-Anon.

First of all let me introduce myself to those who do not know me. I am Karen P. from Manchester just north of Toms River and East of Lakehurst in Ocean County I have been in Al-Anon 20 years and involved in service about 15 years or more. My first sponsor told me never to say no to Al-Anon and that is why I am here today as your very humble Delegate. I want to thank all of you who trust in me and ask you to keep me in your prayers this coming year.

Your previous delegates told me about the brown envelopes that start arriving from **WSO** the first of January. Well let me tell you that not a day goes by without getting an envelope or envelopes, some of them are big and brown or just plain white, and this is only the beginning. Oh what my mailperson must be thinking.

This year Al-Anon is celebrating its 50th Anniversary. How exciting to be part of this. The WSO Conference is April 23-27 in Virginia Beach. The theme is **Happy 50th Birthday! Al-Anon's Hope** begins with **Me**. If you would like to drop me note or card during that week letting me know I am in your thoughts and prayers, I would really appreciate hearing from you. Please address it to the following:

Karen P
AFG World Service Conference April 23-27,2001
Ramada Plaza Resort Hotel (Attn. Rich Lindgren)
5700 Atlantic Avenue
Virginia Beach. VA 2345 1-2236

On Saturday April 28th there is an Al-Anon Anniversary Banquet open to everyone. The tickets are \$35 each and reservations must be made by March 28. 2001. Make you check out to AFG. Inc. and send it to AFG, Inc.. 1600 Corporate Landing Parkway Virginia Beach. VA 23454-56 17.

Exciting things are happening in New Jersey also. May 19th we are having a 50th Anniversary picnic at Turkey Swamp Park in Freehold. **MARK** your calendars. For more information check our Website: www.nj-al-anon.org. Be part of what else is happening in NJ this year by attending the next Assembly meeting, March 3rd in Edison. Looking forward to seeing you there. Just come up introduce yourself and say Hi.

See you March 3rd.
KAREN



HOPES OF LEN F. INSTITUTION COORDINATOR

Primarily, family groups at rehabs and persons who are in prisons and have been affected by someone else's drinking will be seeking Beginners Meetings at those institutions.

Since Assembly deals with communications within Al-Anon, my job will be to ask you to volunteer for these meetings, or perhaps start them.

I hope you will contact me to chat about Institutions.



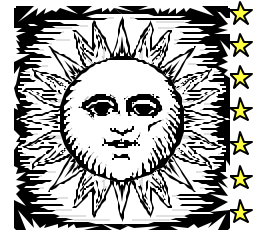
Moving Forward

Along with the New Year we in New Jersey Al-Anon ushered in a new millennium and new Area Officers and Coordinators. Our new Area Delegate, Karen P., is already piled high with correspondence from World Services, and running about the State fulfilling her various commitments. The new and old Boards and Coordinators have held the traditional Transition Meeting, exchanged experience, strength, and hope, as well as piles of information, projects, and data relating to Area operations. Those of us continuing to serve you are looking forward to new Experiences. Those just beginning service on the Area level are anxious to start their new jobs, and to serve you, the members, to the best of their abilities. We all are looking forward to the challenges and opportunities the next three years will bring.

I believe that as a Board we are unified in our belief that our primary purpose is to continue to carry the wonderful message of Al-Anon to those in need, and to serve you the members as you so direct us. You will note that I said, "As you direct us".

I have always been told that Al -Anon is a we program, and we, your trust servants, need your participation and input, as to how we can best carry the message, and how to do it most effectively. To that end, I invite you all to our first Assembly meeting of the millennium on March 3rd. Come as a Group Representative, or just to see what service above the Group level is like. The coffee and refreshments are free, the people you meet may become your friends for life, and I can assure you the feeling of being able to give something back to the Program is priceless. I look forward to seeing all the familiar faces I've grown to know and love, and meeting all the new GR's, DR's, and visitors. We will do our best to make you feel welcome, and will welcome your ideas and willingness to help move NJ Al-Anon forward on its mission.

Yours in Service
Tim S
Area Chair



Translation of a short letter postmarked December 2000. Received 1 January from our adopted ~Anastasia~ Group in Duminichy, Russia.

Dear George and all our friends from the Al-Anon family in New Jersey,

We are happy to write to you and say that because of the ideas of Al-Anon, our lives improve. We wish you a Merry Christmas and send our best wishes for the coming New Year.

We have many problems which make it difficult to write of ten, but we always remember the Al-Anon prayer "God grant us the serenity..." and the Lord gives it to us. It helps us to be patient and we will be better to each other in the group.

We beg you to write to us! We wish you and the members of your groups the best of health, success in business, and happiness in your private lives.

With love in Al-Anon,
Zoya P. and members of the group "Anastasia"
Duminicy 20 Dec. 2000

(NJ Area sent some ODAT's for Christmas to each of our three adopted groups-two in Russia and one in Ukraine. Based on the date. I think the above letter was probably written before the books arrived. At least one of the difficulties she referred to as reasons for not writing more often is the cost of postage. In an economy where the majority of the people have so little, the high cost of postage is indeed a luxury. I once included an international postage coupon in a letter to Ukraine to try to help with this problem. The response was one of sincere thanks with the comment that they would prefer we not do that because they would like to be as self- supporting as possible. How's that for pride with humility in working the program?!)

George K.
Russian Group Coordinator



**MISSION IMPOSSIBLE?
AL-ANON LITERATURE IN EVERY LIBRARY
IN NJ!**

World Service has asked us to try to place Al-Anon literature in every library so the public can be more informed of our existence. After 50 years, people may forget that we are still around, so we have to gently do our 12th Step and drop gentle reminders wherever people go to read about alcoholism and it's effect on them. If your group has some extra money, try purchasing one of the books below to donate to your local library.

First, go to your local library and ask them where the literature is on alcoholism and look to see if they have any Al-Anon literature. If they don't, ask if they would accept a donation from the local group and if you could place a sticker with a toll free number to call, or a hand written number. Then, someone could contact World Service or the local literature depot, which would provide a number to call for a meeting in their area.

Then, the next time your group places a literature order, get an extra book to place in the library, or you could take a special collection to purchase some books. This is the group's choice as to how to finance. This can be done at the local public library; middle and high school, or if you have a college in your town, ask there also. The books that World Service suggested are:

Elementary, middle or high school:

Alateen: Hope for Children of Alcoholics (B-3) \$5.50

Alateen-A Day At A Time (B-10) \$7.00

Courage to Be Me-Living with Alcoholism (B-23) \$9.00

Church Library:

As We Understood (B-11) \$8.50

Having Had a Spiritual Awakening (B-25) \$10.00

College, University or Medical Library:

How Al-Anon Works for Families & Friends of Alcoholics (B-22) \$11.00

Paths to Recovery-Al-Anon's Steps, Traditions and Concepts (B-24) \$15.00

From Survival to Recovery: Growing Up in an Alcoholic Home (B-21) \$13.00

In All Our Affairs: Making Crises Work for You (B-15) \$10.00

Courage To Be Me- Living with Alcoholism (B-23) \$9.00

Public Library- Any of the books listed above. My suggestion would be at least one book from each category.

So, that is the mission as World Service has asked us to do.

Should you feel free to participate in this program, please drop me a line know how you did. (www.nj-al-anon.org)

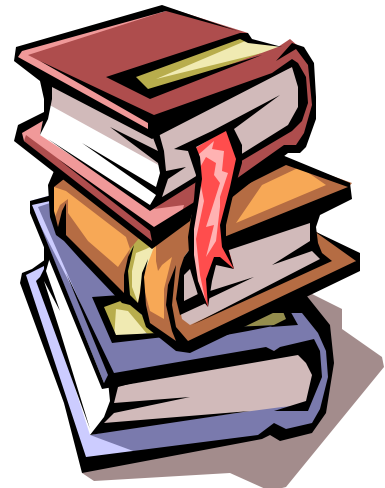
Better yet come to the next assembly meeting

(send your GR) and talk to Anne P, the NJ Literature Coordinator.

For literature orders contact:

South Jersey Information Service at (856) 547-0855

North Jersey Information Service at (973) 744-8686



FROM THE EDITOR

For readers of the AlaGram, you might notice that there are some new names on the articles and familiar names are listed for new responsibilities. Our program not only offers us a wonderful way of living our personal lives, it also gives us opportunities to learn to do Service in a wonderful way.

Concept 4 states, "Participation is the key to harmony." In keeping with this Tradition, New Jersey Assembly held an election in the Fall to select new area officers. This gives Al-Anon members an opportunity to participate fully in all areas of service. The only requirement to perform service above the group level is that the person be an Al-Anon member and not a member of A.A..

In any service position, we are more than volunteers, we are trusted servants with a job to do, Guidelines to follow and a group conscience to consult. Those who do service at the Area level are answerable to the Chairperson, the World Service Committee, the Assembly, and the groups and their members. The Guidelines are published by the World Service Office. Other guidance for service can be found in the Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual. To be a "trusted servant" suggests that the principle of delegated authority and responsibility to the group conscience is the cornerstone of service to Al-Anon on all levels.

Doing something new can be scary. We are constantly reassured that few people know how to do the service job they are elected or appointed to. If we stick with it for 3 years, we learn how to do it; many of us learn new skills that can be applied outside of Al-Anon. We learn new ways of dealing with people individually and in groups, this can serve us well in our families. Then, it is time to move on and allow another person the opportunity to grow through service to Al-Anon. For myself, I am learning how to use a computer in a way I never have before. I suspect that by the time 3 years have passed, I will have acquired a skill, learned some things about myself, and learned some things about Al-Anon. For now I feel a bit apprehensive, but also honored and excited about this new opportunity for growth. Thank you for allowing me to be your trusted servant.

The previous AlaGram Coordinator/editor, Bob B did a tremendously professional job of putting your newsletter together. For the past 3 years, the AlaGram has been called one of the best area newsletters in the country. Bob, thank you for your dedicated service to us and to Al-Anon.

The AlaGram is the way Al-Anon members, groups and the area communicate with each other. Please send your articles, announcements and news to the address in the sidebar. Pat D

Please send all correspondence and articles for the AlaGram to:

E-mail through www.nj-al-anon.org



GROUP CONTRIBUTION COUPON

Please send all contributions to: New Jersey Area Assembly P.O. Box 391 S. Plainfield NJ 07080-0391 ATTN: Treasurer

Group Name: _____

Town: _____

Meeting Day: _____

WSO-ID (if known) _____

Contribution: \$ _____

If the address on the reverse side is incorrect, Please show corrections on this coupon.

Three horizontal lines for corrections.

Your donations to Assembly help fund service projects like this newsletter.

PO box 391
South Plainfield, NJ 07080-0391

Place
Stamp
Here

