



UPCOMING EVENTS

November 18, 2:00–4:00pm
Alateen Forum Meeting
Springfield

November 19, 7:30pm
Falls Church
District Meeting
Idylwood Presbyterian
Church, Falls Church

December 2, 6:00pm
Springfield/Annandale
District Meeting
Messiah Methodist
Church, Springfield

December 7, 6:30–8:30pm
Spirituality Mini-Workshop
Ravensworth Baptist
Church, Annandale

December 7, 7:30pm
Falls Church City
Anniversary Celebration
Falls Church Episcopal
Church

December 9, 2:00–4:00pm
Alateen Forum Meeting
Springfield

December 10, 6:00pm
Loudoun District Meeting
Galilee Methodist Church
Sterling

December 17, 7:30pm
Falls Church
District Meeting
Idylwood Presbyterian
Church, Falls Church

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Seventh Annual Healthy Relationships Workshop

The Falls Church/McLean District, with the support of the Arlington District, is sponsoring a "Recovery Through Our Relationships" workshop from 9:00am–4:00pm on Saturday, January 12, 2008, at the Physicians Conference Center

at INOVA Fairfax Hospital. Please note that speakers are still needed for some topics, so if you are interested please see the attached flyer for contact information. We look forward to joining you for some fun and fellowship at this great event!

A Hug and a Cookie

The Annandale/Springfield District is sponsoring a mini-workshop on spirituality on December 7 from 6:30–8:30pm at Ravensworth Baptist Church in Annandale (5100 Ravensworth Road). See the attached flyer for more information.

Save the Date

The 33rd annual Virginia Area Al-Anon Convention, "Back to Basics," is scheduled for June 20–22, 2008, at the Holiday Inn Select's Koger South Conference Center in Richmond, Virginia. Additional details will be forthcoming.

Anniversary Celebration

The Falls Church City Al-Anon Family Group invites you to join them for some food and fun at their 56th anniversary dinner on December 7 at 7:30pm. Please bring a dish to share. See the attached flyer for additional details.

New Fairfax Meeting

Please support a new Monday evening meeting (8:00pm) at Fairfax Christian Church (10185 Main Street). See the attached flyer for more information.

Service Positions Available

Our Butterfly Editor and Public Outreach Coordinator positions are now vacant. See the attached flyer for more information and for contact details if you are interested in serving.

Butterfly Submissions

Deadline to submit articles or announcements for the January/February 2008 Butterfly is December 15th. Please send to Service Center or e-mail to alanonva.com, ATTN: Butterfly.



THREE KEYS TO GOOD COMMUNICATION

It sometimes amazes me how much wisdom Al-Anon can pack into one of its slogans. I find this especially true when it comes to communication and the slogan "Say what you mean, mean what you say, and don't say it mean." I have heard this slogan many times in meetings. Then,

one Saturday night, I heard the slogan just one more time and it hit me. This slogan is about three cornerstone principles of the Al-Anon program—honesty, integrity, and courtesy. Let me explain what I mean.

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# FROM THE CHAIR



2007

***"The Year of Renewal,  
Rededication, and Recommitment"***

Hello Family,

Fall is upon us and the weather has started to change. I am saddened that because there was not enough rain to maintain our trees the changing of the leaves was not the beauty to which Virginia is accustomed.

But, on another note, the Gratitude Brunch was held November 3, 2007, at a new location, the Holiday Inn Eisenhower in Alexandria. The speakers, food, fun, and fellowship were appreciated.

The Higher Power has a great sense of humor. I was half asleep, listening to the TV around 3:00 on Friday morning, when I heard the commentator say that crews would be working on the Woodrow Wilson Bridge from 10:00 Friday night until 5:00 Monday morning. "OOPS," I thought. "That's the neighborhood where the Brunch is going to be." Later that Friday morning, after I woke up, I started calling everyone I knew asking if they would e-mail or call everyone on their list to advise them of the approximately 10 mile/30 minute backup on both sides of the bridge. Almost everyone was contacted at least once. Man creates the problem and the Higher Power has the solution.

We walked into the Ballroom and it was decorated simply beautifully. Thanks to Georgianna and her helper.

Before the program started and during the meal we were entertained with flute music by Maria D. and Mary M.—what a wonderful touch. The specialty baskets were beautiful. Thanks to the Districts (and individuals) that donated baskets and to the Alateens who sold the tickets.

Many thanks to Forest B. (Brunch Chair) for keeping track of the tickets to be sure that we did not go over the maximum number of participants allowed. Start planning for next year's brunch, which will be November 1, 2008, at the same location.

The 33<sup>rd</sup> Virginia Area Convention will be June 20–22, 2008, at the Holiday Inn Select Koger South Conference Center. The theme is "Back to Basics." I am your Chairperson. If there is anyone willing to give some time before or during the convention please contact me. The committee appreciates any small or large amount of time you can spare.

The Relationships Workshop will be January 12, 2008, at INOVA Fairfax Hospital's Physicians Conference Center. At the workshop, T-shirts (long and short sleeves), sweatshirts, and mugs will be for sale to support the 2008 convention. I pray that each of you will help with and support the 2008 convention. I look forward to seeing you there.

Thanks to Bev M. (Butterfly Editor) and Michael M. (Public Outreach) for the great support they gave to the Service Center. Good luck in your future endeavors. We will miss you.

Love in the Fellowship,  
*Khayriyyah A.*  
Chairperson



## THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT

In response to our appeal for additional money, the groups have donated over \$800.00 to help with the expenses of the recent Service Center move and to help provide the funds necessary for the Service Center to remain self supporting.

Many thanks to all of the groups that have supported the Service Center during the move and helped us follow the Seventh Tradition:

"Each group should be fully self-supporting,  
declining outside contributions."

~Good Communication,  
continued from page 1~

**Honesty...**I hear all the time that Al-Anon is an honest program. The phrase “say what you mean” encourages me to be honest and truthful in my communication with others. Specifically, if I don’t say what I mean then I must be saying what I don’t mean. If I am saying what I don’t mean, then I am being dishonest. When I am being dishonest, it is difficult to truly communicate. There are, of course, different kinds of dishonest communication. For example, if I am people pleasing, I may find myself saying “yes” when I mean “no.” This kind of dishonest communication may leave me feeling resentful of others. Or, if I am trying to control or manipulate, I may stretch the truth or omit certain facts. This kind of dishonest communication may leave others feeling resentful of me. Whatever my motive, dishonest communication is unlikely to improve my relationships. Consequently, I need to communicate honestly if I want to have relationships based on trust and love.

**Integrity...**Keeping the focus on me is another recurrent theme of the Al-Anon program. But who am I? If I don’t know, then who else will? Thus, the phrase “mean what you say” speaks to integrity. If I don’t know what I mean, how can I ever communicate effectively with anyone else? Therefore, I need to know myself. I need to have values. I need to know what I consider acceptable and what I consider unacceptable. I need to know my boundaries. The Al-Anon program gives me tools to help me decide what are my core goals and values, and what are my boundaries without someone else defining my goals, values, and boundaries for me. The Al-Anon program gives me the tools to help me

make choices that are good for me, and teaches me how to stand by my decisions. This is all about developing integrity. Once I have integrity, my communication with others will naturally improve.

**Courtesy...**No matter what position I take on an issue, no matter what opinion, and regardless of whether I am agreeing, disagreeing, or doing neither, I can do it with courtesy. I don’t have to be mean about it. Al-Anon has taught me that I can say “no” as lovingly as I say “yes.” I have learned to remove certain discourteous communication habits, like sarcasm, from my speech altogether. In short, whatever it is that I want to say today, I have a choice of how I will say it. For me, the best way, no matter what it is I want to say, is “don’t say it mean.”

Once I began to think about the “say what you mean” slogan, I wondered if it was conference approved or simply the product of some of the freewheeling wisdom that I find in the rooms. It turns out that Chapter 13 of *How Al-Anon Works* actually asks “do we say what we mean and mean what we say?” The same chapter later states “any message can be conveyed with courtesy, even one of outrage.” Thus, the concepts of honesty, integrity, and courtesy in communication are firmly rooted in Al-Anon Conference Approved Literature (CAL) although I don’t know for sure whether the full “say what you mean” slogan has ever appeared verbatim in CAL.

Anyway, the next time you hear the slogan, “Say what you mean, mean what you say, and don’t say it mean,” give it a think if you will. Honesty, integrity, courtesy—three simple Al-Anon keys to unlocking the door to healthy communication with others.

~Scott A. 

~Events, continued  
from page 1~

January 12, 2008  
9:00am–4:00pm  
Healthy Relationships  
Workshop  
Physicians Conference  
Center at INOVA  
Fairfax Hospital, 3300  
Gallows Rd.

June 20–22  
2008 Virginia Area  
Al-Anon Convention  
“Back to Basics”  
Richmond

For more information  
contact the  
Northern Virginia Al-Anon  
Service Center

100 N Washington St.,  
Suite 212  
Falls Church, VA 22046  
Tel: 703-534-HELP (4357)  
E-mail: [info@alanonva.com](mailto:info@alanonva.com)  
Web: [www.alanonva.com](http://www.alanonva.com)

Hours: 12:30–4:00pm M–F  
and the second Saturday  
of each month

## BUTTERFLY DISTRIBUTION

*The Butterfly* is a publication of the Northern Virginia Service Center intended to communicate information about upcoming Al-Anon and Alateen events in the area; share “best practices” and logistics information that help groups stay healthy, vital, and dynamic; and share experience, strength, and hope in recovery.

It is available on the Service Center website and also mailed to Group Representatives, who are encouraged to make copies for distribution in their groups. Please make sure your group keeps its registration up-to-date, using the form available on the website or by request from the Service Center.

Individual mail subscriptions to *The Butterfly* are \$5 per year. Please include your name, mailing address, telephone number, and a check made out to NoVA Al-Anon Service Center in your request and send it to ATTN: Butterfly at the Service Center address listed on page 3.

# EYE ON LITERATURE

## **Alcoholism: A Merry-Go-Round Named Denial**

(\$0.75, catalog number P-3)


Just when I think I'm filled to overflowing with knowledge about a particular topic and that there can't be possibly be anything else to learn, a new piece of information pops up and catches my attention. I think this is particularly true for alcoholism. It seems like every day I'm discovering something I wasn't aware of before, which means that every day my journey toward recovery continues. These discoveries often occur when I'm reading a piece of Conference Approved Literature, such as the pamphlet I recently read titled *Alcoholism: A Merry-Go-Round Named Denial*.

This pamphlet departs from the typical Al-Anon member-derived format in being based on a presentation given in 1968 by the former Director of the Charlotte Council on Alcoholism, Reverend Joseph L. Kellerman. He uses the metaphor of a play to illustrate the roles of the alcoholic and those around him or her in the evolution and recovery from the disease.

In Act I, the alcoholic (referred to throughout the pamphlet as a male) drinks too much and too often but cannot stop. Yet he denies he is responsible for the consequences of his behavior and convinces himself that he's right and everybody else is

wrong. Crisis inevitably strikes. In Act II, the alcoholic does nothing but wait for and expect others to do for him. The enabler is impelled to rescue the alcoholic from his predicament, denying him the process of learning by his own mistakes. The victim is impelled to cover for the alcoholic by taking care of his responsibilities and doing his work. The Provoker “is the key person in the play, the spouse or parent of the alcoholic,...who holds the family together...[and] is constantly adjusting to the crises and trouble caused by drinking.” This provokes her into feeding bitterness, resentment, fear, and hurt back into the family.

Act III is the same as Act I but with a greater need for denying there is a problem. All three acts thus are played over and over—the merry-go-round continues unless the characters in Act II change their behavior to permit the alcoholic to experience the painful consequences of his drinking. This is easier said than done, but it is possible. The members of Al-Anon prove that every day. And these same members are helping me to finally stop acting and leave the stage.

*Conference Approved Literature (CAL) may be purchased at the Service Center or by using the website order form. We invite you to share your thoughts about a piece of CAL by e-mailing [butterfly@alanonva.com](mailto:butterfly@alanonva.com) or by writing to the Service Center, ATTN: Butterfly.* 

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## OFFICE EQUIPMENT NEEDS TLC

Long-time Service Center office-manager-in-training Ann H. needs a tech-savvy Al-Anon volunteer to help care for what she cannot—office equipment! This includes a copier, printer, computer, telephone, and other items with electrical cords or pixels (albeit not all of us even know what a pixel is...). The

position entails becoming familiar with all the office equipment and their service contracts, handling minor problems that might arise (such as changing the toner cartridge in the copier), and making calls

~continued on page 5~



~Office Equipment, continued  
from page 4~

for service as appropriate. Except for time in the office to learn about the equipment and how it's set up, the job can be handled mostly by telephone with a visit to the office perhaps once or twice a month.

Ideally, Ann would like to step down as the office-manager-in-training altogether if someone can be found to handle the "everything else" piece of her job. These duties include purchasing office supplies (paper, stamps, labels) and keeping track of the Staples card; purchasing hospitality supplies (paper plates, plastic

utensils, napkins, coffee) and providing Alateen access to them; opening the church for Service Center meetings and setting up coffee/food (entails arriving early and keeping track of the key); coordinating with the printing company as needed to reprint tri-part receipt books (maybe once a year or less); and talking to the landlord if heating/ventilation/air conditioning issues come up, etc.

Please call the Service Center (703-534-4357) as soon as possible if you can help out with the care and keeping of our office equipment or if you're available to help with "everything else." 🦋

## ANNOUNCEMENT

56th Anniversary of Falls Church AFG

The Falls Church City AFG announces its 56th Anniversary Dinner

When: **Friday, December 7th, 2007**

Potluck Dinner\* Begins at **7:30 PM**

Speaker begins at 8:30 PM

We are blessed to have **Ruth B.** from Catlett, VA as our 56th Anniversary Speaker!

Location: **The Falls Church Episcopal Church**

(Nicholson Hall on the 2nd Floor of the Church)

**115 E. Fairfax Street**

**Falls Church, VA 22046**

(Just off of Route 7, near Seven Corners)

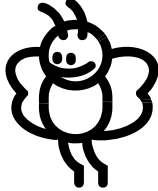
\*Turkey and Ham and beverages will be provided. Kindly bring a side dish or a dessert to share.



# **SERVICE POSITIONS AVAILABLE**

*“Do you Have a Few Hours to Spare as a Coordinator  
At the Service Center . . . if so, Please Give us a Call”*

## **Butterfly Editor** *(and team)*



Published six times a year  
(January, March, May, July,  
September, November).

A Trusted Servant with computer skills  
or willing to copy (at the Service  
Center) and to assemble and mail copies  
Please call:  
Service Center (703) 534-HELP (4357)  
or Khayriyyah A.

## **Public Outreach Coordinator** *(and team)*



A Trusted Servant to be part of the  
Public Outreach Team ~ to share your  
Experience, Strength, and Hope  
at events in the community.  
please call:  
Service Center (703) 534-HELP (4357)  
or Khayriyyah A.