



### UPCOMING EVENTS

September 13, 6:00pm  
Loudoun District Meeting  
Galilee Methodist Church  
Sterling

September 15, 7:30pm  
Falls Church  
District Meeting  
Idylwood Presbyterian  
Church, Falls Church

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

September 21–13  
Eastern Seaboard Alateen  
Conference (ESAC)  
Makemie Woods Camp  
and Conference Center  
Lanexa

September 24  
Bull Run District  
Anniversary Celebration  
Manassas Baptist Church  
Manassas

October 13 & 14  
Fall Assembly  
Blackstone

October 7, 2:00–4:00pm  
Alateen Forum Meeting  
Springfield

October 7, 6:00pm  
Springfield/Annandale  
District Meeting  
Messiah Methodist  
Church, Springfield

October 11, 6:00pm  
Loudoun District Meeting  
Galilee Methodist Church  
Sterling

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Gratitude Brunch


The 34<sup>th</sup> annual Al-Anon Gratitude Brunch will be held on Saturday, November 3, at the Holiday Inn Eisenhower. Registration opens at 8:30am and the program begins at 9:00am. A limited number of seats are available for this event and will be reserved on a first-

come-first-served basis; there will be no ticket sales at the door. Please plan accordingly and get your tickets soon. See the attached flyer for additional information.

### Fairfax District Meetings

The Fairfax District is now holding regular monthly meetings on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month. Meetings begin at 7:00PM at the Fairfax Church of Christ, upstairs in room 207. Group Representatives and other Al-Anon members are encouraged to attend!

### Butterfly Submissions

Please submit information for publication in the November/December issue of *The Butterfly* no later than Saturday, November 3, 2007. Send material by e-mail to [butterfly@alanonva.com](mailto:butterfly@alanonva.com) or by snail mail to the Service Center, ATTN: Butterfly. 

## ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR

I read a lot of Al-Anon literature, and one of the interesting things I have noticed is that there are many readings in multiple Al-Anon books on the topic of unacceptable behavior. For example, there are indexed readings that point out that violence, physical abuse, and verbal abuse are unacceptable—whether coming from an alcoholic or from a member of Al-Anon. Other indexed readings suggest that alcoholic behavior intended to provoke anger or anxiety is also unacceptable.

On the other hand, there are no indexed readings that come to mind on the topic of “acceptable behavior.” This doesn’t necessarily mean that Al-Anon does not suggest what may be acceptable. It is just harder to find. For example, page 180 in *Hope for Today* suggests that treating myself and others with love, dignity, and respect is

acceptable behavior. Page 267 in *Courage to Change* suggests that treating others with courtesy, whether or not they respond in kind, is also acceptable. Also, the *Just for Today* bookmark may be construed as a list of suggested acceptable behaviors.

Reflecting on the subject of acceptable behavior, as encountered in the Al-Anon literature and in my own experience, has lead me to surmise certain general principles, lumped into three groups, that may help me choose acceptable behavior for myself. These principles, however, serve only as guides that may be applied flexibly.

**The Golden Principle...**Just about everyone has heard of the “Golden Rule,” which succinctly

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# FROM THE CHAIR



2007  
"The Year of Renewal,  
Rededication, and Recommitment"

Hello Family,  
Summer is almost over and school has started. I hope each of you had a great time vacationing and that all of the fun things you planned were successfully carried out.

Now it's time to get back to our "regular" routine~whatever that is. No more half days or weeks off, traveling to visit family, friends, and vacation sites.

As I mentioned, JoAnn O. and her husband, Martin, are relocating to Richmond, Virginia, in the near future. I would like to take this time to say "THANK YOU" for the great job she has done.

I am appointing Dorothy S. (from Centreville, Virginia) to complete JoAnn's term. The transition is already in process.

Remember the Gratitude Brunch (at the Holiday Inn Eisenhower) is Saturday, November 3, 2007, and that only 190 tickets can be sold. Send your ticket returns to your Group Representatives (GRs) as soon as possible. Once the count reaches 190, money sent for any additional tickets will be returned to the GRs who sold them. We have three wonderful speakers who will share their experience, strength and hope; back-ground music during the meal; and drawings. We look forward to sharing fellowship with you once again.

If you remember, a flyer was distributed asking each district to prepare a theme basket for the drawings (i.e. Literature Basket, Refreshment Basket, Holiday Basket, Gardening, Fruit or Snack Basket, or maybe you want to provide a "Use your Imagination Basket"). There will also be a "money" drawing. District Representatives,

please let Forest B. know the kind of basket your district will provide. (See the attached flyer for more information).

The Steering Committee meeting will be October 27, 2007, and the General Service meeting will be Saturday, November 10, 2007, both at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church (Route 50 and Woodlawn Avenue, Falls Church, Virginia). We look forward to seeing everyone there.

At the Virginia Area World Service Committee meeting in Charlottesville, Virginia (August 12, 2007), no one came forward to host the Virginia Area Convention (June 20-22, 2008). After some discussion and a short meeting during the lunch hour, a few members met and a convention committee was formed. 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 will appreciate any amount of time that you can spare.

I pray that each of you will help with and support the 2008 convention. Looking forward to seeing you there.

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 \$600.00 to help with the expenses of the move and to provide us with the additional funds necessary to continue 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."

~Acceptable Behavior,  
continued from page 1~

stated is "treat people the way I want to be treated." This is a good default principle for guiding me to acceptable behavior. If I like being treated in a certain way, then it's probably reasonable to treat others in the same way. If I don't like certain behavior, then it is reasonable to refrain from subjecting others to such behavior. For example, if I like honest communication, then I must communicate honestly with others and refrain from dishonesty. A cornerstone of the Golden Principle is compassion for other people.

**The Platinum Principle...**The Platinum Principle is "treat people the way they want to be treated." This is a step up from the Golden Principle because it is not so egocentric and it takes into account that people are different. Application of this principle often involves communicated needs and boundaries. The Platinum Principle often applies to close or intimate relationships, or in situations where people have special needs. To apply this principle, I have to know the other person's needs or boundaries in order to respect them. For example, I like strawberries but my daughter is allergic to strawberries. If I applied the Golden Principle, I might offer to share strawberries with my daughter. However, once I know she is allergic to them, then it would be inappropriate to offer her strawberries. Instead, according to the Platinum Principle, acceptable behavior may entail

either not offering to share a strawberry with my daughter or offering her a fruit she likes and can eat, such as a pear. A cornerstone of the Platinum Principle is respect for other people.

**The Silver Principle...**The Silver Principle applies when neither the Platinum Principle nor the Golden Principle are appropriate, and is summed up by the slogan "Do the Next Right Thing." Sometimes a relationship with another person is so difficult that I cannot treat that person the way he or she wants to be treated, and I cannot even treat that person the way I would want to be treated because to do so may be harmful to me. For example, if a person is repeatedly abusive towards me, then when I see this person I may choose to apply the Silver Principle and "do the next right thing" by avoiding contact with this person in a courteous manner. A cornerstone of the Silver Principle is acceptance that things are what they are.

There is one caveat to each of the Golden, Platinum, and Silver Principles, and that is I ought never apply these principles in a manner that would harm me, or another person, in some unacceptable way. Acceptable behavior begins with me. Thus, I must first learn to treat myself in an acceptable manner before I can learn to behave towards others in a truly acceptable way. I have learned that it is never necessary for me to treat myself, or another person, in an unacceptable fashion in order to follow these principles.

~Scott A. 

## EYE ON LITERATURE

**Just For Today**  
**Al-Anon Bookmark**  
(\$0.10, catalog number M-12)

I worry a lot, and maddeningly enough it's something I do very

well. Visions of catastrophes spring to mind easily and settle in for the long haul, right next to the "what if?" scenarios and

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~Events, continued  
from page 1~

October 15, 7:30pm  
Falls Church  
District Meeting  
Idylwood Presbyterian  
Church, Falls Church

October 27, 9:30am  
Steering Committee  
Meeting  
Holy Trinity Lutheran  
Church, Falls Church

November 3  
Northern Virginia Service  
Center Gratitude Brunch  
Holiday Inn Eisenhower  
Alexandria

November 4, 6:00pm  
Springfield/Annandale  
District Meeting  
Messiah Methodist  
Church, Springfield

November 8, 6:30pm  
Loudoun District Meeting  
Galilee Methodist Church  
Sterling

November 10, 9:30am  
Northern Virginia Service  
Center General Meeting  
(Service Center Committee  
and Group  
Representatives)  
Holy Trinity Lutheran  
Church, Falls Church

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

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, continued  
from page 3~*


the “what will I do then?” thoughts.

Every now and then, however, the clouds of doom and gloom part and I enjoy the warm rays of serenity. My mind temporarily quiets and clears, and I manage to take in the ‘now’ around me for what it really is. I forget about the past—it’s finished and not able to be changed—and I stop obsessing about the future—it will always be just that.

I savor these tranquil moments but they are rare. At least they were until I began keeping the *Just for Today* bookmark with me. It holds my place not only in whatever book I’m reading on the train to and from work every day but also in my life. It

grounds me in the present; referring to it often throughout the day helps me remember that right now is most important. Who knew that such simple words as “just for today I will be unafraid” or “just for today I will be happy” could be powerful enough to help me as I journey toward overcoming years of tormenting myself with what had been and what might be.

Truth be told, though, my favorite words from this bookmark are the few I myself have written on my well-worn copy: just for today I will read this bookmark.

*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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## **New Team Needed!**

The current Butterfly volunteers finish their service in November. To keep *The Butterfly* going, new volunteers need to take up the mantle.

Here’s thanking Trish K. for her creative input and consistent support in formatting the newsletter, managing the mailing list, and contributing articles for the past 2 years. Kudo’s to Scott A. , who also contributed many articles. The Service Center’s webmaster, George T., played a big role in helping us go “cyber”. He researched and implemented a way for Al-Anon members to sign up to receive e-mail alerts when a new Butterfly is published. Thanks, George. To all those who showed up to help collate, staple, fold, and stamp 150 newsletters every other month for the past 2 years,

thanks for showing up!

One downside to my tour of duty as Butterfly editor was that we lost Dave C. along the way. He was the senior member of our group, and helped us “newbies” figure out what we were doing. We miss him.

Whoever takes over as Butterfly editor for the next tour of duty – may you find as many wonderful souls to work with as I have enjoyed.

Do call me (through the Service Center) if you are interested in chairing, or serving on, the next Butterfly team. The current team publishes its last newsletter in November & you are invited to join us to see how it’s done.

- Beverly M, Butterfly Editor 



THE AL-ANON SERVICE CENTER OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA

34<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL AL-ANON  
**GRATITUDE**  
**BRUNCH**

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2007**

*REGISTRATION 8:30 AM ~ PROGRAM 9:00 AM*

**SPECIALTY BASKETS**

**THE STEERING COMMITTEE VOTED TO HAVE SPECIALTY BASKETS INSTEAD OF THE MANY SINGLE ITEMS IN ORDER TO SAVE TIME. EACH DISTRICT (OR GROUP) WAS ASKED TO SELECT THE THEME FOR THEIR BASKET (i.e. LITERATURE BASKET, SNACK BASKET, SPA BASKET, BABY/TEEN BASKET, SPORTS BASKET, ETC.)**

**~ PLEASE BE CREATIVE WITH YOUR BASKET ~**



**PLEASE CONTACT FOREST B.**

**NO LATER THAN OCTOBER 27, 2007**

**THANK YOU GRATITUDE BRUNCH COMMITTEE**

