

Caterpillar



4521 Jamestown Avenue, Suite 5
Baton Rouge, LA 70808

(504) 924-0029 (24 Hours)

April [redacted] 1995

"Don't Sit and Glow ... Reach Out and Grow!"

This is the title of Al-Anon's 1995 Public Information Program and I would like to dedicate the 1995 Caterpillar Newsletter to that theme. Hi, my name is Patty and I am your new Caterpillar Editor. Al-Anon has given me so much and in return all I am asked to do is carry the message that was given to me. "Service work" was a scary sounding phrase (and sometimes still is), "What can I do?" is the question that always came to mind, but in Al-Anon and Alateen I've learned that all I have to do is be me to the best of my ability, let people know where I was and where I am today. Service work allows me to work our 12 steps and change my life in a way I never thought I could. It brings me closer to my Higher Power, by getting out of myself and allowing others in. For this issue of the Caterpillar I have asked several Al-Anon and Alateen members to share their growth in our program through their service work. I was not sure who would or would not - as you can see "they were willing". I hope that after reading these sharings if you feel a little lost or like you are not going anywhere - perhaps "service" is something for you to look at - by sharing our experience, strength and hope in whatever way we each can, not only helps us grow, but carries the message of hope to another.

Patty B.

*Don't Sit
and Glow*



*Reach Out
and Grow!*

NIGHT PHONE LIST

Ruth H., Telephone Chairperson

This is the list of groups responsible for the night phone during the months of May through July 1995. A letter requesting volunteers will be mailed to each Group Representative (GR) a couple of weeks prior to that group's turn. If your group elects a new GR, please notify the A.I.S. Office at 924-0029 as soon as possible. Thanks for your help.

<u>Group</u>	<u>Meeting Time</u>	<u>Phone Duty Dates</u>
Keep It Simple (Denham Springs)	Tuesday 9:00am	May 1 - 7
T.G.I.M. AFG	Monday 7:30pm	May 8 - 14
Thursday Huggers	Thursday Noon	May 15 - 21
Came To Believe	Tuesday Noon	May 22 - 28
Powerless Step Study	Friday Noon	May 29 - June 4
Wooddale Sunday Step	Sunday 6:00pm	June 5 - 11
Brownsfield AFG	Thursday 8:00pm	June 12 - 18
Denham Springs Weekend Relief	Friday 7:30pm	June 19 - 25
T.G.I.F. AFG	Friday 8:00pm	June 26 - July 2
Listen & Learn	Sunday 7:00pm	July 3 - 9
Courage to Change	Tuesday 8:00pm	July 10 - 16
Goodwood AFG	Thursday 8:00pm	July 17 - 23
Finally Friday	Friday 7:30pm	July 24 - 30

**"Resistance to what another person is offering may be our natural response.
But the passage of time highlights the value of the experience."**

Before this wonderful program, institution work was not anything I would ever have imagined myself doing. I remember in high school, I would take a failing grade, rather than get up before a group to speak. When I was asked about going to a treatment center to share with family members, fear was my first response. I've learned to feel the fear and just "do it." That didn't mean that the fear went away - but today it doesn't have to immobilize me. It was decided that we could go in pair, and that seemed more comfortable. Each time my turn came, "it always seemed", as if I was in a bad place. God gives us what we need (hum)! At first I felt like I was trying to "sell Al-Anon", because I wanted them to have what this program has to offer. I had to remind my self that this program is based on attraction rather than promotion. All I had to do was ask God for guidance, share from my heart my experience, strength and hope. The anxiety was there each time I went, but what I got from giving it away was overwhelming. Today a lady that was in one of those rooms, one of those nights has become a special person in my life. So the opportunity to carry the message has certainly been a growing experience through service work. I thank God and the Al-Anon program for giving me willingness to share this program.

Evie V.

OUR MESSAGE OF HOPE IS SHARED ALL OVER THE WORLD!

"Hello my friend in Al-Anon." This was the greeting in a letter I received from G.A.L., an Al-Anon member in Mirgorod, Russia. Imagine, I now have a friend half way around the world. This friend speaks a different language, and lives a different culture yet we share a "language of the heart". This friend is a gift I got when we, LA Al-Anons, adopted a Russian group. WSO asked us to commit to furnish a Russian group with literature (there are only 3 pieces of CAL translated into Russian) for 2 years since they are not yet able to publish in their country.

This service work project has been one of the most rewarding (seeing Al-Anons in LA working together to "carry the message" and easiest (collecting the monies, sending it to WSO, who sends it to the "Easy Does It" group in Mirgorod, Russia) I have experienced.

So, if you feel you can't possibly get involved in service work because you don't have the time or the talent to make a difference remember - the opportunities are varied. All you need do is ask someone involved in service work what you can do. They can help you find something that is just right for you. You never know what "gift" you will receive in return.

Love in the program,
Pebble

Here is a translated version of the letter Pebble received:

08.25.94

Hello my dear friend from Al-Anon.

For more than a year I have been in touch with Al-Anon group from New York. I received a letter from them the other day. Enclosed was a little map with the place where you are located.

If you feel like writing to me or to our group from Mirgorod, we will be happy to correspond with you. Although I do not think that you write letters in Russian, nor read them. Just to show me that you received this letter, please let me know.

315600 Ukraine
Mirgorod Doltausky Region
28 Tkatskaya Street
G.A.L.

*Happy Birthday Al-Anon
May, 1995 Al-Anon will be 44 years old*

COMING EVENTS

11th Annual Heritage Day Luncheon Barbara M., Speaker

Founder of our Heritage Day Luncheon
Saturday, April 22, 1995

Baton Rouge Radisson Hotel
(formerly the Sheraton)
4728 Constitution

Luncheon and Speaker: \$15.00

(1 free Bingo card with lunch registration)

Speaker only: \$3.00

Deadline to register is April 18th!

Send registration to the
AIS Office; Attn. Heritage Day,
4521 Jamestown, Suite 5,
Baton Rouge, LA 70808
942-0029

Al-Anon Area Assembly May 5th, 6th & 7th

Come to Area Assembly and see what is
happening in other groups around the
state. There is a workshop and speaker
meeting on Saturday as well as various
informal meetings throughout the day.

Get a few Al-Anon/Alateen friends
together and share a room.

Ramada Inn, 2211 McArthur Dr.,
Alexandria, LA
318-443-2561

Please call for reservations at least 2
weeks before Assembly.

New Meetings:

Tuesday, 8:00PM, Club 12, 1695 Beaumont

Thursday 8:00PM, Club 12, 1695 Beaumont

Friday, 7:00PM, Club 12, 1695 Beaumont

Please call the A.I.S. Office at 924-0029 to
check on the latest updates on meetings.

Office Hours:

The A.I.S. Office is open Monday through
Friday from 9:00 A.M.-3:00 P.M. Come by
and check out the literature we have available
for sale all sharings from Al-Anon and
Alateen members.

If you are thinking of service work and have
some free time please consider volunteering
in the Al-Anon office, just call 924-0029 and
leave your name and phone number for Clara.

Treasures of Al-Anon 12, 12 & 12

22nd Louisiana Al-Anon Convention

June 2, 3, & 4, 1995

Lafayette Hilton & Towers
1521 Pinhook Road
Lafayette, La 70508
318-235-6111

Come join us for a wonderful weekend of
sharing, fellowship and growth!

Rooms \$63.50 flat rate + 10.5% tax

Make reservations at least 2 weeks prior
to convention if possible.

Registration Fees: Al-Anon & AA \$10.00;

Alateen and other Youths \$3.00

Look for registration flyers at your
meetings or call the AIS office 924-0029.

SERVICE WORK IN MY OWN HOME

At the start of my process and journey of recovery I was a mother of a six month old little boy. The thought of adding one more activity where I would have to pack what felt like "everything but the kitchen sink" or find a babysitter was too overwhelming, not to mention much added stress to an already unmanageable life. Therefore when service work was mentioned I felt this surge of guilt.

Then one day while attend my noon meeting (attended during my lunch hour so I did not have to worry about the diaper bar or getting a babysitter), I saw a copy of a "Lone Member Letter Box". The World Service Office Member Correspondence Service offers a way to exchange information about Al-Anon/Alateen to individuals who are unable to attend meetings. It is not a Lonely Hearts Club or a Pen Pal service, nor does it provide assistance with employment, housing, clothing, legal matters, money or gifts. After reading about this opportunity of service work in the Al-Anon fellowship I contact WSO and became a "Lone Member Contact". I had finally found an area of service that I could do in my own home during those nap times for my little boy. I have been corresponding with two members of the Lone Member Correspondence Service for 8 years, and many more whose situations have changed and can now attend a meeting and no longer need the service. Although my baby is not eight years old and my area service work has expanded, I still write to those members who need Al-Anon but are unable to attend meetings. This was my first opportunity to give back what was so freely given to me and I am grateful!

Sylvia G.

SERVICE WORK IS JUST ONE OF MANY GIFTS

About 3 years ago I reached a point where I believed I was not getting much out of the Al-Anon meetings. I felt I had reached a plateau in my personal and spiritual growth and I felt stagnant. My meeting attendance dropped to less than once a week. A thought came to me that there was a time I needed three to four meetings a week and I really received a tremendous amount of growth, why can't I try once more and see what happens. I started to go to three Al-Anon meetings per week. Surprisingly a new message "to do service work" emerged as a result. Just about that time an opportunity came to start a new group in my neighborhood and I decided to be a Group Representative for the new group. This has been a real spiritual and personal growth experience for me. I have witnessed many miracles happen in my group. It is a sheer joy to see the newcomers grow spiritually and begin to smile. Witnessing such miracles is the greatest gift I have received from my Higher Power and I am thankful to God for planting an idea of three meetings a week in my mind. I continue to go to three meetings a week and have also gotten involved in many other Al-Anon service activities. This has strengthen my faith and belief in the Al-Anon fellowship. Through service work I have received a tremendous spiritual growth and have made many friends throughout the state. I believe there is no such thing as a plateau, as long as I am willing to work the program and do the service work, the spiritual growth is endless.

Jay P.

SERVICE WORK IS FOR ALL OF US

When most people hear "service work", they think of volunteering 10-15 hours a week, but the wonderful thing about Al-Anon is that it doesn't even have to be two hours a week. You can simply chair a meeting, set up chairs, display literature or take care of the money for a week if the treasurer has to miss a meeting.

I'll never forget my first venture into service work -- chairing a meeting. I was so nervous I almost said the Lord's prayer when I should have said the Serenity Prayer, and I almost said the Serenity Prayer when I should have said the Lord's Prayer. In subsequent meetings that I have chaired, I have forgotten to have everyone introduce themselves, and I have forgotten to ask if there were any newcomers. But the "old-timers"* gently guided me through each time. That's one of the gazillion things I love about Al-Anon. You can help carry this message to others if you've been coming to Al-Anon for 1000 weeks or one week.

I'm still not sure I understand how "service work" works. When my sponsor puts up her money once a week to eat lunch with me only to have to help me through a rough spot, she tells me it helps her. When I wonder why so many "old timers"* continue to come to meetings and continue to do all the little things that keep a meeting going, even though they no longer have an alcoholic in their life, they tell me they need to do that.

Compared to the "old-timers"*, I am practically a newcomer, but I have learned two things in my short time here -- I want what they've got and it really must be "more blessed to give than to receive."

Karen V.

*People who have attended Al-Anon for many, many years - not necessarily old.

SPECIAL THANKS!

A special thank you to Sandra, our past Caterpillar Editor for her dedication to carrying the message of Al-Anon and Alateen through her commitment to service work - we wish you well and want you to know that you are missed!

Also, a big round of applause for all the committee members and volunteers that made the AIS January Workshop a huge success and wonderful opportunity for fellowship and growth. Everything was great!

ALATEEN BULLETIN BOARD

THINGS TO PONDER.....

Alateens depend on the assistance of an Al-Anon member to have a meeting. If you are at a meeting where an Alateen meeting is being held and their sponsor is late or does not come, consider sitting in the meeting. The Alateens cannot have a meeting without an Al-Anon sponsor. **This is a wonderful opportunity for service.**

Offer to be a person sponsor to an Alateen. It is sometimes difficult to find other Alateens who have the experience, strength, and hope we all need to continue to grow in our recovery.

Try to remember that in many situations children cannot get to a meeting on their own. Those Alateens who are not old enough to drive depend on their parents to get them to a meeting. Alateen is an important component to families in recovery. Alateen meetings provide the teens with the same opportunity to change their lives that we have. Young children of alcoholics become adult children of alcoholics. Alateen is an opportunity to break the cycle of the disease.

GRATITUDE LIST...

The members of the Alateen skit for the January workshop did a fantastic job! Thanks to: Adam, Katie S., Brandon S., Elizabeth L., Amy T., Christine S. and Amanda W. They worked hard and the results were great! In case you missed the fashion show, they will be doing a repeat performance at the Louisiana State A.A. Convention in July. Thanks to Andi S. (Tuesday Alateen Sponsor) for her help and support to prepare for the show. As well as the parents who provided rides and costume assistance the day of the workshop. **We would**

not have made it without your help!

Thanks to Clara and Teresa who have volunteered to sit in with the Thursday night Pre-teen group. **We are in need of a permanent Alateen Sponsor for this group.** Without this type of commitment, there would be several children without an opportunity to have a meeting. If you are interested in sponsoring this group, please call the AIS office (924-0029) and leave your name & phone number.

Welcome to Chris, who has come forward to co-sponsor an Alateen group. Welcome aboard!! We pray that you will stay with us for a long time.

Thanks to Elizabeth L. for telling her story at the Friday Night Club 12 A.A. Meeting; Katie and Brandon S. for sharing their stories at the A.A. Speaker meeting at the Tau Center; Elizabeth and Katie for sharing their stories at the Monday night Comite AFG. Thanks to these A.A. and Al-Anon meetings for inviting Alateens to share.

Thanks to the Al-Anon groups and individuals who have given a scholarship donation for Alateens to attend D-SAC. They allowed several Alateens to attend D-SAC this year. **Your support is greatly appreciated!**

*Happy Birthday Alateen
1995 Alateen is 38 years old*

TREASURER'S REPORT

GROUP NAME:	DECEMBER	JANUARY	FEBRUARY
Bayou AFG (Plaquemine)			10.00
Comite AFG		43.95	
Courage to Change		50.00	
Essen Lane		25.00	
I Am Important		40.00	
Just for Today AFG			300.00
Listen & Learn	150.00		
Molly/Sharp AFG	50.00	60.00	
New Roads Monday			76.17
Powerless Step Study	15.00		
Recovering Parents		96.00	
Saint Frances (Denham Springs)	20.00		
Saturday Newcomers	10.00	10.00	10.00
Stepping Stones AFG	20.00	30.00	
Steps to Serenity		40.00	
Strength & Courage			97.00
T.G.I.M. AFG		30.00	
T.G.I.F. AFG			45.00
Together We Can		50.00	
Triangle AFG		30.00	
Tuesday Children			35.00
Tuesday Sereniteens			3.00
Wednesday Noon		30.00	30.00

Please remind the groups you attend that it is very important for them to contribute to the local A.I.S. Office, State Area Assembly, and W.S.O. in New York so that we can continue to "Carry the Message".

TRADITION SEVEN

Every group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.