

# CenterPoint

Metro Atlanta Al-Anon/Alateen Information Service

## MAIS Office is Temporarily Closed



The MAIS Office is temporarily closed due to the pandemic, so we are currently unable to process literature orders. We suggest you place your literature orders with Georgia Al-Anon Central Services [www.ga-al-anon.org](http://www.ga-al-anon.org) until we are able to resume that service. We apologize for any inconvenience.

We continue to operate remotely, receiving mail, taking phone calls and responding to emails. Our temporary mailing address is:

MAIS C/O Dixie Petit  
255 Jones Bridge Place Circle  
Alpharetta, GA 30022

In addition, we need the email address for your group's MAIS Representative so we can invite them to our upcoming virtual MAIS general meeting **July 8, 2020**. Send your contact information to [maisboardchair@gmail.com](mailto:maisboardchair@gmail.com).

## COVID-19 Meeting Updates

For a list of temporary electronic Al-Anon meetings, as well as temporary closed meetings please visit [alanonatl.org](http://alanonatl.org) or [ga-al-anon.org](http://ga-al-anon.org)

2

UPDATE FROM AFG OF  
GA

4

WSO RESPONDS TO  
COVID-19

5

MAIS NEEDS YOU

6

RECOLLECTIONS

## A Word from the AFGG Board of Trustees

As the Chair of the Board of Trustees for Al-Anon Family Groups of GA, Inc. (AFGG), I was asked to share with the readers of the CenterPoint about how the Area is responding to the effects of Covid-19, and I eagerly said “Yes!” That’s because I’m so proud of the “good personal leadership” (Concept 9) that is evident in the hard work of so many of the trusted servants who have given so willingly of their time and talent in their service positions at the Area level. Georgia Al-Anon is able to effectively respond – not react – to the crises that surround us because of the firm foundation that we’ve worked so hard to put into place.

AFGG is an umbrella serving four entities at the Area level: Area level activities (Assembly/AWSC, public outreach, archives, website, Delegate’s link of service to the World Service Conference, etc.); Georgia Al-Anon Central Services (GACS) – aka the Area office; the Al-Anon/Alateen Convention; and the Alateen Conference. The Area voted to restructure at the May 2019 Assembly. Three Trustees at Large were subsequently elected and, along with 4 Area officers, a Board of 7 trusted servants began fulfilling their responsibilities in January 2019. I was elected the Board Chair and it has been a wild ride, I don’t mind telling you, as we’ve learned over the past 15 months what is and is not our legal and fiduciary responsibility. And then the pandemic hit....

Beginning mid-March, our Web Coordinator, Gale, and members of her (fabulous) Technology Work Group (TWG) leapt into action. They effectively informed members about how to list their **virtual meetings** on the website and continue to help members throughout Georgia with questions about how to set up meetings on various platforms. There are now prominent links on the home page to: *Temporary Electronic Meetings*; *Temporary Meeting Closures*; *How to Submit Meeting Updates*, and *Protecting Anonymity in Electronic Meetings*. The meeting information is kept current and so we can all have confidence that it is accurate. As of this writing we have approximately 80 virtual meetings listed on the Area website [www.ga-al-anon.org](http://www.ga-al-anon.org). After learning that some groups experienced some very unpleasant “zoom-bombing”, in mid-April the TWG held a very informative discussion forum to learn about how to proactively block ‘bad actors.’ That discussion was so helpful that additional discussions addressing various aspects of on-line meetings were held on 4/17 and 5/1. The latest one explored answers to these questions, among others:

- Anyone still experiencing safety issues or technical problems? [The TWG can help with that.]
- Anything about using the Zoom platform you would like to learn or need help with? [Again, the TWG is willing to help any member with this question.]
- Have you had newcomers visit your meeting? If so, how are you welcoming them and/or providing them access to CAL and members’ contact information?
- Have you had members from other groups/states/countries visit your meeting? [I have – from as far away as Australia and Spain!] Have you visited other meetings? [Yes – and they’ve ALL been GREAT!]

These informal discussions have been very helpful, not only in picking the brains of the TWG members, but also in learning from other groups about how they’re smoothing the rough edges as they gain more experience with hosting virtual meetings, communicating how/when to mute, and how to make 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition contributions. There will be other opportunities to participate in similar discussions surrounding on-line meetings and, specifically, if your group is considering how to proceed once social distancing restrictions are lifted. If you would like to be added to the distribution list to receive an invitation to future discussion forums, send a request to Vicki B, the Alternate Web Coordinator, at [yb.ala.altweb@gmail.com](mailto:yb.ala.altweb@gmail.com). In addition, the Area will be hosting a virtual workshop about transitioning from virtual to face-to-face meetings on June 6th from 9-10:30am called **Recovery is Contagious - We Don’t Have to Be!** Any interested member is welcome to attend. The invitation link will be sent through the links of service to DRs and GRs soon.

## A Word from the AFGG Board of Trustees (Continued)

The Area office – **Georgia Al-Anon Central Services (GACS)** – is a literature depot and serves as an AIS (Area Information Service) for members throughout Georgia. They haven't missed a beat and have remained open for business since the beginning of the shutdown. Mail was immediately forwarded to the part-time office worker at her home. She goes in to the office alone to fulfill orders. Literature is being shipped via UPS so she doesn't have to physically go into the post office. <https://www.ga-al-anon.org/ga-central-services/>.

The **Area World Service Committee meeting (AWSC)** was held virtually on April 18<sup>th</sup>. Approximately 40 members attended to plan the agenda for Assembly (their primary purpose). Gale and her TWG held multiple training sessions for members of AWSC so that they could successfully log on and participate in the virtual meeting regardless of the platform they were using, and they participated in the meeting itself to help participants navigate various obstacles in real time. Rewording motions and voting proved to be the most challenging aspect of the meeting. We have since learned more effective methods to do both of those things. Thank goodness, because Renelle, our Area Chair, had to call an emergency virtual AWSC meeting on April 29<sup>th</sup> to vote on accepting the recommendation of the 2020 Al-Anon/Alateen Convention Committee to cancel the convention scheduled July 30-August 2. The committee had determined that it isn't feasible to hold the convention this year. Jenny B., the Convention Chair, HP, and I called the Marriott to discuss the \$25,000+ AFGG contractually owed the hotel by cancelling; within 24 hours we learned that the new owners waived all costs. (A lot of grateful tears have been shed by a lot of members since we received that news.)

Rock Eagle cancelled the **2020 Alateen Conference** because the facility won't be open the end of May. The committee has chosen to roll over the deposit and reserve the space for next year's conference. More news about that will be forthcoming.

The schedule for a **virtual Assembly** planned on **May 16<sup>th</sup>** will be abbreviated. Instead of two days, it will be a one-day business meeting to begin at 9am on Saturday morning. Reports have been distributed in advance. Officers and Coordinators will have an opportunity to highlight aspects of their reports and answer questions. After a break for lunch, a past Delegate from Tennessee will join us virtually to serve as the facilitator for our Assembly inventory, which we conduct in the middle of each 3-year panel to explore answers to two questions: *What are we doing well at Assembly?* and *What can we do better?* The beauty of this moment in GA Al-Anon history is that groups who, for a variety of reasons, haven't been represented at Assembly can now do so easily without a financial burden. What an absolutely golden opportunity for greater participation (the key to harmony) for groups throughout the state. <https://www.ga-al-anon.org/events/area-assembly-may-16-17-2020/>



Good personal leadership at all service levels is, indeed, a necessity and, as you can see, your trusted servants at the Area level have been working non-stop to continue to meet the needs of new and long-time Al-Anon members throughout the state (and beyond!). Don't hesitate to contact us – you've got our number and web address. We're here for you.

Vicki L.  
Chair  
Board of Trustees  
Al-Anon Family Groups of GA, Inc.

## WSO Responds to Covid-19

On behalf of the Finance Committee, I am writing to inform you of the impact COVID-19 is having at the World Service Office (WSO). Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, donations and literature sales have decreased significantly at the WSO. I know many of you are experiencing similar situations at your home group, District, Al-Anon Information Service (AIS), Literature Distribution Center (LDC), or Area.

At the end of April, literature sales were down 75% and contributions were down 34% and we are projecting a \$1,600,000 operating deficit at the end of 2020. Given reduced revenues, the Board has approved a transfer from the Reserve Fund to the General Fund of \$250,000 to provide cash necessary for operations. Significant cost cutting measures have been implemented including elimination of Staff merit and cost of living increases for 2020; all Staff travel through the end of the year; and Board, Executive, and Finance Committee travel through the end of August.

Additionally, after prayerful consideration of our projected cash position, Staff furlough and layoff actions were taken Friday, May 1. All Staff who were impacted are eligible for the expanded unemployment coverage due to COVID-19.

Despite these actions, the WSO is doing business as usual, processing literature orders through customer service and shipping products ordered, fielding calls for public outreach and electronic meeting information, and keeping our presence known on social media and other services. To continue, we need your help. Some thoughts I have been having about Seventh Tradition donations:

- Do your groups, Districts, or Areas have money that was planned to cover Group Representative, District Representative, or Area officer travel which could now be donated because the District or Area meetings were held virtually?
- Is your group making announcements at your meetings to let members know they can go online and donate directly to WSO?
- How is your group handling the May Appeal Letter during this time of meetings happening virtually? Will it even be read?
- How can we keep the Seventh Tradition money flowing through the links of service from the groups to Districts to Areas to the WSO?

In the past, when members have been asked to help the WSO your response has been overwhelming. So once again we are coming to you. The pandemic has increased the incidence of alcoholism. The WSO would appreciate any contributions you and your group, District or Area can provide to help us continue to serve the families and friends still suffering in these uncertain times.

We can process checks mailed to the WSO, 1600 Corporate Landing Parkway, Virginia Beach, VA 23454, or you can use the link below to contribute online (<https://al-anon.org/contributions/member/>).

Love in service,  
Cathy T.  
Treasurer  
Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc.

### Did you know?

Many of Al-Anon and Alateen's most popular books are now available as eBooks and audiobooks. Ebooks and audiobooks can be purchased at [Al-Anon.org](https://Al-Anon.org), click on "Members", then "Literature."





## Share your experience, strength, and hope from home!



There are many ways to remain active in Al-Anon and Alateen while staying safely in your homes. One way is to share your experience, strength, and hope in written form.

*The Forum* is in need of a few good men! Gentlemen, consider sharing your stories with readers. Your experiences as husbands, partners, fathers, brothers, and sons of alcoholics means that you have a story to tell from a unique perspective, which could greatly benefit others still suffering from the disease. Please submit your writings online at [al-anon.org/for-members/members-resources/literature/literature-resources/](http://al-anon.org/for-members/members-resources/literature/literature-resources/)

In addition, you have the opportunity to participate in the Members Blog at WSO. Writers can share about each of the three legacies as well as a new topic that will be introduced each month. Member sharing on the Member Blog may be used in future Al-Anon publications. Visit [al-anon.org/for-members/members-resources/member-blog/](http://al-anon.org/for-members/members-resources/member-blog/)

## MAIS NEEDS YOUR SERVICE

**Your generous donations are critical to keeping our website current, our meeting information and phone line accessible, and ensuring we can resume processing your literature orders after the pandemic. Our website : [www.alanonatl.org](http://www.alanonatl.org) provides a PayPal Button for donations, and you can still send us a check and drop it in the mail:**

**MAIS C/O Dixie Petit  
255 Jones Bridge Place Circle  
Alpharetta, GA 30022**

**(Include your group name and number on your check.)**

**In addition, the following service positions are vacant:**

- **Secretary**
- **MAIS Committee Chair**
- **MAIS Office Chair**
- **Telephone Service Chair**
- **Website Chair**
- **MAIS Anniversary Party Chair**

**Visit [www.alanonatl.org](http://www.alanonatl.org) for a description of these vital roles.**

Inside Al-Anon Xtra

### The Road Map to Alateen Safety

Area safety and behavioral requirements provide the road map, and increased safety at Alateen meetings and events is the destination. Developing appropriate area requirements is similar to planning a trip. First, we select a destination; next we map out the best possible route; and last, we decide what we are going to do once we get to our destination.

In the first stage of this road map, we decide on Sponsor safety and behavioral requirements. These may include requirements to attend an annual Alateen Sponsor workshop and district meetings, to secure their Al-Anon home group's recommendation, and to have other service experience, or rotation of service. We can also take into consideration other safety measures, such as background checks that are standard for youth organizations in our area, state, or province. Such requirements would be in addition to those listed in the 2002-2004 *Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual* (P-24/27).

Another part of the plan might be requirements for Alateen and Alateen Sponsor behavior—clearly defining what is unacceptable behavior, and providing examples. These safety and behavioral requirements would include behavior before and after the event, socializing at the facility, and being sure the parent or

guardian has picked up the Alateens. The last leg of this journey includes documenting how our area will support the plan. What does our area hope to accomplish? What resources can we utilize? What support measures can our area provide to ensure success? Whom can we contact if there is a breakdown during the trip—if an Alateen group, Sponsor, or member needs assistance?

We could include members from the area—Alateens, Sponsors, Area World Service Committee members, and Group Representatives—to compile the safety and behavioral requirements, or ask an action committee to make a recommendation. We could form an ad hoc committee or ask the Area Alateen Coordinator to compile a draft at a Sponsor workshop. All Al-Anon members are encouraged to help create the area road map by find-



Inside Al-Anon Xtra

ing out where your area is in the process and by participating in the Alateen safety conversation.

Al-Anon has a moral, ethical, and legal responsibility for the safety of its younger members. Safety and behavioral requirements are the formal written plan (road map) to reach the destination of safety. Alateen safety includes physical as well as

emotional safety and behavior, and knowing what measures we take when there is a situation that threatens the safety of an individual or Al-Anon or Alateen as a whole.

The road may, at times, include some bumps and the plan may occasionally need minor repairs. However, reaching the destination of Alateen safety is worth our effort.

### Is Al-Anon Listed in YOUR Local Phone Book?

Here are some questions to think about and discuss at your group meeting and your district or information service/intergroup meeting.

- How do newcomers find your meeting?
- Is there a local information service or answering service?
- Do you have a local meeting list available?

There are so many ways to inform the families and friends of alcoholics in your community that help is available! Try inviting everyone in your district to a "Family Fun Event" (see *The Best of Public Outreach* [P-90] for ideas). Everyone can suggest the best activities for your community.

Whether you initiate a campaign to contact professionals, the media, put up posters in town, or simply list a local phone number in the phone book, you will help to answer the most important question, "How do newcomers find our meeting?"



### Calling All Groups!

Beginning this year, the Forum's "Round Table Topics" will feature questions from groups. See page 33 for details.



## Recollections

### Your MAIS Archives

Nancy B.

The Board Presentation at the April 24-28, 2003 Al-Anon World Service Conference, "Talking with the Delegates" focused exclusively on the subject of Alateen. This decision was based on a poll taken during the same session at the 2002 conference. The Delegates collectively came up with the genesis of what would become our current Alateen Safety and Behavioral Requirements. A memo from the Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters (WSO) Board of Trustees dated December 10, 2003 made its way to the Conference Members, announcing their motion regarding these proposed guidelines. The memo also explained the impact the new guidelines had on existing Alateen literature. The Board of Trustees made three determinations that would be addressed by their motion: (1) Not all areas have written safety or behavioral requirements for Alateens and individuals involved

with Alateen Service. (2) The WSO registration procedures and policies should support areas that have developed safety and behavioral requirements. (3) The Al-Anon fellowship should take all necessary steps to provide a safe environment for Alateens and the Al-Anons involved with Alateen service. In short, the lengthy motion stated that Areas had one year to develop their own safety and behavioral requirements that would meet those of the WSO. Any members participating in Alateen service must adhere to the requirements set forth. Areas must have a process to certify members involved with Alateen service. Only Alateen groups that met the requirements would be registered with WSO. Any Alateen groups failing to meet the requirements were to be reported. Thus the arduous process of each Area developing its own Alateen requirements was initiated.

Above Image:

Pages 22 & 23 from the January 2004 Forum magazine published by WSO

## AL-ANON STANDS TALL DURING CORONAVIRUS

The May Assembly held on May 16 for Area 11 was a wonderful success! Some of the noteworthy highlights are as follows:

1) Al-Anon is creating an Al-Anon Mobile App anticipated to be released this summer. It will be available in three languages: English, Spanish, and French. There will be terms when app is set up that states whether a person is a member for contribution purposes. A member must be 13 years of age to register for the App. Alateen is planned as a secondary roll out for the App.

2) Each Electronic Meeting CMA now has access to an Electronic Meeting AFG Connects Community. The WSO Group Services staff now hold conference calls every other month with electronic meeting CMAs. The Work Group is discussing ways in which these meetings can be incorporated into our service structure. Electronic Meetings have similar concerns as face to face meetings, involving safety and service, but also have unique needs like electronic resources available for newcomers. WSO has now created a welcome newcomer email that can be sent to electronic meeting newcomers with links to relevant information on the al-anon.org website.

3) There are now Alateen Chat meetings that are available on the [al-anon.org](https://al-anon.org) website. Registration is required for Alateens. Click this link for details to share with them:

<https://al-anon.org/newcomers/teen-corner-alateen/try-an-alateen-chat-meeting>. Alateens should be informed that these meetings are only accessible from a computer, not a mobile device, tablet or iPad.

4) The 2nd Annual GA Al-Anon/Alateen Convention that was going to be held from Friday July 31 - Sunday Aug. 2, 2020 at the Marriott Macon City Center in Macon has been canceled.

5) The enhanced 2018-2021 Al-Anon/Alateen Service manual Version 2 is available for purchase online at the [al-anon.org](https://al-anon.org) website. The printed edition became available on January 31. This new version reflects extensive changes due to the WSO procedural changes and motions.

In conclusion, I would like to mention some of my impressions of the virtual Assembly. Although there were some technical issues among some members (I personally had issues with the microphone), I found Google Meet to be a viable alternative to the real Assembly. Yes, it could not duplicate the camaraderie and closeness that one finds at the actual Assembly participating in workshops and meetings, but the business of Al-Anon got accomplished despite the obstacles that the coronavirus had brought. It was a huge success, and Al-Anon stands tall whether there is a pandemic or not.

Tim M.  
MAIS Liaison to Area 11



While the office has been closed, calls for meeting information have been forwarded to my phone. I'm a past Telephone Volunteer Chair and long-time volunteer to answer calls to MAIS for meeting information. Babs, our Area Delegate, immediately sent out an email appeal through AWSC for volunteers to help and 15 members across Georgia reached out to help. Since 3/16, we've responded to 25 calls and emails.

Vicki L.



**Virtual Area 11 Workshop - Recovery Is Contagious-We Don't Have To Be!**

Many groups are beginning to have discussions about having in-person meetings.....Some groups have already decided to resume in-person meetings.....Some groups are discussing staying "electronic" until a later date.....Some groups never stopped meeting in-person.....Some groups are trying to figure out what a "hybrid" meeting might look like.....Each group is faced with making decisions to proceed in a way that is best for the group, safest for each member, protects the community and Al-Anon as a whole.

Area 11 would like to aid Georgia groups in their discussions and decisions around these choices. Please join us for a workshop where tools will be presented and information shared you can use in your groups.

**WHO:** All Area 11 GR's, DR's, AWSC, and interested Georgia AFG members

**WHAT:** Workshop to assist in group discussions and decisions related to in person meetings

**WHERE:** Contact your Group Representative or District Representative for sign in details

**WHEN:** Saturday, June 6, 2020

**SIGN-IN TIME:** Begin signing in at 8:15am

**MEETING STARTS:** 9:00am-10:30am



## LIVING OUT THE SERENITY PRAYER

Families with school-aged kids are posting yard signs with "joke of the day." The kids research jokes, write legible signs, track number of viewers, etc. They are creatively engaging with neighbors, exploring new options, safely distancing, and positively impacting their world. Serenity, courage, wisdom.

Submitted by Deborah M.

Email [CenterPointATL@gmail.com](mailto:CenterPointATL@gmail.com) to submit your idea for the next CenterPoint!



## MAIS FAQ

Learn more about MAIS and stay up to date on all events and announcements by visiting [alanonatl.org](http://alanonatl.org) regularly!

A general MAIS meeting is scheduled to be held virtually on Wednesday, July 8 at 7:30PM. Please send the email address for your group's MAIS Representative to [maisboardchair@gmail.com](mailto:maisboardchair@gmail.com) to gain access to the meeting.

MAIS Board meetings are being held virtually. Contact [maisboardchair@gmail.com](mailto:maisboardchair@gmail.com) for board meeting schedule and access information.

## Contact Info

### GA Al-Anon's Literature Distribution Center:

Georgia Al-Anon Central Services (GACS)  
2733 Sheraton Drive, Suite F-160  
Macon, GA 31204  
Telephone: 478-254-3414  
Toll Free: 855-254-3414  
E-mail: [officearea11@gmail.com](mailto:officearea11@gmail.com)  
Website: [www.ga-al-anon.org](http://www.ga-al-anon.org)  
Make checks payable to: GACS

### GA Al-Anon:

AFG of Georgia Inc.  
PO Box 7644  
Macon, GA 31209-7644  
Make checks payable to AFG of GA, Inc

***\*When making contributions to Al-Anon service arms, please include the name of your group, your group number, and your district number.***

### Al-Anon's World Service Office (WSO):

Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc.  
1600 Corporate Landing Pkwy  
Virginia Beach, VA 23454-5617  
Group Info: 800-344-2666  
Other: 757-563-1600  
Hours: Mon–Fri, 8am - 6pm  
Email: [wso@al-anon.org](mailto:wso@al-anon.org)  
Website: [www.al-anon.org](http://www.al-anon.org)  
Make checks payable to: AFG, Inc.

### MAIS Address and Phone:

Temporary Mailing Address  
MAIS C/O Dixie Petit  
255 Jones Bridge Place Circle  
Alpharetta, GA 30022  
Meeting Information / Hotline: 404-687-0466  
Literature Orders / Office: 404-687-0467  
Hours: Temporarily Closed  
Email: [atlmaisoffice@gmail.com](mailto:atlmaisoffice@gmail.com)  
Website: [www.alanonatl.org](http://www.alanonatl.org)  
Make checks payable to MAIS