

# Area 25 Delegate's Report after 2026 WSC, Panel 65

Hello everyone, I am David C., your area delegate. My second year at conference was even better than the first year. My relationships with my fellow delegates have strengthened, and I have worked with the 22 Panel 65 delegates and the 12 Northeast regional delegates, as well as a few other delegates from other panels, regions, and also a couple of trustees. We have learned to work together, with no one in charge and no one carrying the entire burden themselves. We are stronger, smarter, wiser, and altogether better when we work as a group, even though we also specialize as we are inclined when working together. We always remember to include as many working group members as possible. Sometimes it is the quietest voice that has the most important perspective. Take a look at the Service Manual's Concept 9 section, which includes an essay by Bill W. on Leadership. It's worth a thoughtful read.

Concept 9 tells us that leadership is something that we all do, at any level of service. I have found that the structure of our service roles interlocks so that the burden is distributed. Service sponsors help with perspective, but we each make our service roles our own. We hope that service is something that contributes to each of our personal recoveries, and is not just an extra way to occupy our time. I know that for myself, service has challenged me to look at my own resistance to lead a productive, serene life. The peace of the program guides my actions, attitudes, and relationships so I can pass on the precious gifts I received when I thought I deserved nothing at all.

The World Service Conference was in Newport News, Virginia. The conference theme was: "75 Years, One Purpose." We met for 5 days to discuss the business of the program, share our own area's perspective, and work for the benefit of members and newcomers, world-wide. There were 68 delegates from the United States and Canada, and 91 voting members. We also had a lot of fun and fellowship with the other delegates, trustees, and WSO staff.

There are a number of topics related to the World Service Conference that I would like to share with you all today, so please make a note of topics that you would like to share with your groups and discuss in your district meetings.

## Finances

Let's start with finances. The foundation the World Service Office is built on *is* its financial health. The 2025 yearly Audit had a clean result, meaning there are no problems with our financial position as a non-profit organization. In addition, the overall income and expenses were very close to budget for 2025. I find it amazing that, given the size and complexity of the fellowship world-wide, we still manage to do so much. We are a diverse fellowship with diverse

needs, and a healthy balance sheet allows us to fulfill our legal responsibilities while serving the 20,000+ groups both here and abroad.

The World Service Office has a total of 45 employees as of the World Service Conference, with two open positions still unfilled. They are a small but mighty workforce. Salaries and Benefits for the staff are the majority of the expenses for the WSO, totaling \$4,073,765 for 2025. The total expenses for 2025 were \$6,442,721.

As far as income goes, the 2025 total revenue was \$6,628,143. The literature sales for 2025 were \$3,141,508. Contributions for 2025 were \$3,571,021, which was a \$548,178 increase from 2024 due to bequests and generous member support. Groups contributed the most—\$1,319,268, or 36 percent—followed by bequests at \$614,239, or 17 percent. The investments in the Reserve Fund fluctuate based on stock market conditions. 2025 saw improvements in the market, as it had positive returns during the year. The Reserve Fund earned \$1,059,565 in investment income in 2025. The WSO continues to be invested in mature stocks and bonds and has experienced tremendous growth in the prior years.

The budget for this year was presented at conference and approved by the WSC. The WSO is forecasting total revenue for 2026 to be \$6,680,120. The estimated literature sales for 2026 are \$3,300,000, which is a six percent increase over 2025. The contribution goal for 2026 is \$3,431,520. We still need contributions to support operations, as literature sales alone will not sustain us. Although we reached our contribution goal in 2025, consistent giving through contributions is still important. The average value of services provided by the WSO to WSC-registered groups in the U.S. and Canada is \$357.97 per group.

Remember that it is our support that extends the reach of the WSO to serve the members and offers the hand of Al-Anon those who have yet to find recovery. Ultimately, the groups are the ones that make it all possible.

## Policy

Next up, Policy. Several important decisions were made during the conference, including the following:

- The conference was given a presentation on Electronic Alateen Meetings and the Electronic Alateen Safety and Behavioral Requirements (EASBR). The conference voted to proceed with the implementation, which includes an Opt-In policy for area participation. Areas must decide whether they will adopt the Electronic Alateen Safety Minimums Policy and the EASBR, including the additional requirements for AMIAS-E Alateen Sponsors. There will be additional training this August for the Area Alateen

Process Person (AAPP), Area Alateen Coordinator (AAC) and Area Delegate. The AMIAS-E requirements include becoming a mandatory reporter, as defined by the state the AMIAS-E resides in. Teens participating in an Electronic Alateen Meeting can come from any area within the United States, Bermuda, and Canada, but not outside those service structures. AMIAS-E will need to interview each teen for each Electronic Alateen Meeting, before they join the meeting, regardless of where they live and regardless of other meetings they may attend. This is principally for age verification. If, as a mandatory reporter, an AMIAS-E reports on an Alateen's circumstances, they would report to the state where the AMIAS-E resides, not the state where the teen resides. It is expected that child protection services will communicate across states to address any such circumstances. There have been concerns about overly zealous AMIAS reporting families to child protection services, so anyone interested in becoming an AMIAS-E should be familiar with the circumstances worthy of reporting. Remember, the idea is to keep the teens safe, not to pat ourselves on the back for reporting less-than-stellar guardian behavior. AMIAS for MA Alateen meetings are not automatically mandatory reporters, unless they are mandatory reporter for another reason. The policy, should we as an area decide to participate, cannot be modified by the area. Our area ASBR only applies to in-person Alateen meetings, and the in-person part of Hybrid. Hybrid meetings would require two AMIAS in-person and one AMIAS-E online. This means that if the area wants to support hybrid Alateen meetings, it would need to opt-in to these policies for Electronic Alateen meetings and Hybrid Alateen meetings.

- The policy related to Group Names was once again discussed at this WSC. The policy was changed to once again allow for participant identifiers in Group Names and confirmed by vote. There were two opposing opinions about the policy: 1) Group names should not have participant identifiers, as it could result in a fragmentation of the program otherwise; 2) Group names with participant identifiers serve to attract potential members to the program. All this conversation revealed a more general problem that we have: Many groups do not want newcomers or members outside of the chosen identifiers to participate, and many groups are not welcoming to newcomers and members from identities they don't immediately identify with. Tradition 3 does not put conditions on who may participate in an Al-Anon group. This relates to the spiritual discipline of acceptance and non-judgement of those who come to meetings because they have been affected by someone's drinking. In locations where there are many meetings close by, meetings with a specialized focus may be helpful. In areas where meetings are few and far between, more generic group names will reach a wider audience. Personally, I am hoping that the terms "community identifiers", "participant identifiers", "population identifiers", and other related terms disappear in favor of "member experience focus", with clear indications that all meetings are open to all those

who come seeking help. We are a diverse fellowship with diverse needs, but what we have in common far outweighs how we differ. May we be generous with our program, and how we share it with all who come seeking help and recovery. That is what Lois did, and I believe we can do the same. As I heard during conference: “Do I go where I am accepted or where everyone is accepted?”

## WSO Visit

On the third day of the conference, we delegates got into busses and traveled from Newport News to Virginia Beach to visit the World Service Office. The WSO staff lined up outside the entrance in a receiving line, with lots of hugs, and many staff members saying “welcome home.” It was rather emotional for many delegates to get to know the people who are doing the work to keep the world-wide fellowship of Al-Anon running smoothly. The building itself has two main sections: the office space for the staff, and the warehouse for all the CAL publications with order fulfillment space. They are joined by a triangle and circle themed section. The grounds are quite nice, with some modest gardens and a triangle-shaped pond. We ate lunch in the on-site cafeteria and joined a recovery meeting in a tent outside the main building.

We were divided up into tour groups led by Trustees and staff, and we saw various historical displays, office spaces, the warehouse, and chatted with staff a bit as we were passing by. We also visited the Archives, where many notable historical items are kept, including letters written by Lois and other pioneers of the program. It was exciting to start to put all the pieces together into a fuller picture of the WSO, and how the WSC operates as part of the whole.

## Literature

New Conference Approved Literature (CAL) publications are still in the works. The *Personal and Service Sponsorship* book has just about finalized submissions (last call!), closing on June 30<sup>th</sup>. The *Finances in Alcoholic Relationships* book is still accepting member submissions, with no timeline yet for when submissions will close.

*Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism* (AFA) has been given a refresh as part of a continuing two-year process. It will continue to be an important outreach tool, with translations in Spanish and French as usual. You may still order AFA year-round for your local Public Outreach efforts. 86,000 copies of the magazine in all three languages combined sold in 2025.

The *Forum*, *Al-Anon y Alateen en accion*, and *Le Lien* subscriptions fell slightly last year compared to 2024. Subscriptions for the magazines totaled a bit more than 17,000 for 2025.

Please consider subscribing, as the content is good and it costs less than a dollar for each monthly issue. Our Alternate Delegate can help with subscriptions.

There is significant news related to eBooks. After the pilot publication of *Intimacy in Alcoholic Relationships* on eBook platforms last year, the Board of Trustees approved publication of the entire CAL book catalogue on the eBook platforms that support our publications. The rollout is expected to be done by September of 2026. Stay tuned!

There is also news regarding CAL published in languages other than English, Spanish, and French. Discussions are underway for Global Service Offices (GSOs) that have received permission to translate CAL titles to be able to sell them at cost to other smaller GSOs unable to support their own translations. New global structures will also be able to publish translations which were translated by another structure. The WSO has also developed a profit-sharing arrangement with GSOs for eBook orders that originate from their geographic zones, which helps them to be self-supporting.

This is not exactly the news I was hoping for, but it is going in the right direction. There is still no direct way to get CAL translations in languages other than English, Spanish, and French here in the US and in Canada. We have already committed funds to purchase CAL publications in Portuguese for a bequest project, but that is not possible right now. All metropolitan areas in the US would likely benefit from such translated publications, if only for Public Outreach purposes. Some things change very slowly in Al-Anon, and this is one of those things.

The new 2026-2029 Service Manual is now available. Please get a copy or two to share with your groups if you haven't already done so. It is full of very useful information for any member, not just for GRs, DRs, and Area Officers. It will show you not just what we do, but how we do it. It contains some of the best thinking we have, and some of the deepest spiritual insights.

How can your group help to support literature sales? Here are some ideas:

- Suggest literature and magazines as meeting topics
- Invite a member to briefly share how a specific piece of literature or an issue of *The Forum* helped them
- Consider adding a quick reminder in announcements
- Tie literature use to recovery, service, and fellowship growth
- Encourage personal recommendations
- Invite members to share about what they're reading
- A simple "This booklet really helped me last month" can spark interest more than any announcement.
- Suggest "Recovery on the Go!" with *The Forum* or newcomer-friendly articles from *Al-Anon Faces Alcoholism*
- Share the attractiveness of digital options

- Remind members about the availability of online literature and *The Forum*
- Remind members how literature sales support our Seventh Tradition

## Outreach

In 2025, the WSO has continued to participate in national conferences, including:

- American Counseling Association (Orlando, FL)
- National Council on Mental Wellbeing (Philadelphia, PA)
- National Association of Social Workers (Chicago, IL)
- American School Counselor Association (Long Beach, CA)

The WSO was also invited to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). It provided an excellent opportunity to share Al-Anon resources with SAMHSA and other family-focused agencies. This included the Toolkit for Professionals available for download on the WSO website.

## Annual Report

The WSO has given advance copies of the 2025 Annual Report to delegates, which details the many activities and accomplishments by the executive committee, the trustees, and the staff. The report will be available on the WSO website soon as final versions in English, Spanish, and French are completed.

A couple of notable projects in the WSO include:

- **Core Systems Overhaul:** The services provided by the core systems affect every part of the WSO and its operations. The core systems overhaul is continuing, and will likely take a few more years as data migration is done to the new systems and the WSO formally cuts over to the new systems. The goal is to complete the project by 2028.
- **New Accounting Software:** A new accounting system has just been rolled out this May and is giving the director of finance and the treasurer more flexibility, which we hope will lead to enhanced tracking of the WSO's financial position.
- **Website Update:** The WSO website is going to get a redesign to catch up with current technology and address security concerns, which will be carried out over a period of time.
- **"Passing It On...":** This project is very exciting, as our rotation of leadership policy often leaves current members doing service without the benefits of prior generations' experience in the program. The WSO is asking members to apply as writers to help develop content in a variety of areas. The WSO will provide guidance on applying for the

content development roles, and examples of writing samples to submit as part of the application. The Task Force will have 7 members. Current delegates may also apply. Part of the content development may be to get information from long-time members. The output of the Task Force is envisioned to be a printed study guide, and perhaps eventually available online as well.

- **CAL as eBooks:** As I mentioned before, the Board of Trustees has approved the publication all the books in the WSO catalogue as eBooks, which is expected to be complete by September of 2026.

## ICC

The International Coordination Committee (ICC) presented on the various service structures, or Global Service Offices (GSO's) around the world. The International AI-Anon Global Services Meeting (IAGSM) will meet again this year in Slovenia, in September of 2026.

Several zonal meetings were held last year including:

- **EZM – European Zonal Meeting:** This included participation from 17 countries. The Chairperson of the Board and the Executive Director both attended. Each structure presented historical background and shared current activities, with many opportunities for shared connection. The next EZM meeting will be in Denmark in 2027, with the theme “Recovery Through Service.”
- **RIASA – Reunión Iberoamérica de Servicios AI-Anon:** The meeting was conducted virtually over two days with the theme “The Fruit of Love Is Service in Unity.” 15 structures of Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking counties participated. Uruguay served as the host for the meeting.
- There are preliminary conversations starting for Oceania, for structures not already participating in existing zonal meetings.

There seems to a shift in the leadership of the GSOs to be more self-supporting. Translators for Spanish and French were provided as needed.

Outside of the zonal meetings, the WSO sent staff and a Trustee from the ICC to Latin America last year, visiting Guatemala, Ecuador, and Costa Rica. As always, the members in those Global Service Offices were very excited by the visits, and wanted to share their local way of doing meetings and operating within their structures. They also discussed coordination with AA, Alateen, and shared their enthusiasm for the program.

In Guatemala, they had 2 virtual meetings, met a pioneer of Al-Anon in Guatemala, met with 100 members in Antigua, and held a panel on *Healing within Our Alcoholic Relationships*, which included the pioneer and other local members.

In Ecuador, for many members, the visit was a “dream come true.” One member said: “We all benefit when one person takes action.”

In Costa Rica, they reviewed the Concepts of Service with great enthusiasm. They were able to meet at a late member’s farm which was given to the program. They shared about their board selection process. Costa Rica was one of the first international structures formed as Al-Anon grew outside the United States. There were many reminders of a Higher Power in action.

## Chosen Agenda Items

Two Chosen Agenda Items, selected by delegates, were discussed during conference.

**Topic #1 - Public Outreach:** After a brief review of the topic as submitted by delegates, delegates came to the mic to share their challenges and ideas for Public Outreach. We discussed ideas such as checking CAL books out of libraries to make sure they keep the books on the shelves, making sure that the area has a Public Outreach budget for material to distribute for free, and creating business cards with QR codes for online meeting lists. One member shared that we could use the idea of how Adult Children of Alcoholics have a negative impact in the workplace as a way to stir interest in the program. I’m going to be reaching out to other areas in our region to see how we can collaborate on Public Outreach, so hopefully we’ll get more good ideas on how groups and districts can have a greater Public Outreach impact.

**Topic #2 -Artificial Intelligence:** There is a great deal of hype and concern about Artificial Intelligence these days. The entire field is moving at a breakneck pace, and it is hard to know what it will do next. The main concern seems to be that AI might be trained on our copyrighted literature, and some people might use AI as a substitute for meetings and sponsorship. My big ask on AI is: Please don’t upload Conference Approved Literature into any AI applications. Some of the literature is likely already in the training of AI, but please don’t give it any more. One member shared that “If you don’t pay for the product, then you *are* the product.” AI is still very hungry for new data at the moment, but in the future, it is likely that systems and products that operate in “walled gardens” will emerge. That will give us greater confidence that our content will not be used to train AI that is available to users outside the program. So, for now, please don’t ask AI to summarize Conference Approved Literature or develop content based on it. I just remind myself that AI is not a member of the program, is not a Higher Power, and does not have a Higher Power, nor can it truly share experience, strength, and hope.

## Conference Participation

There were many opportunities to participate at conference. Here are a bunch:

- Third-year delegates from panel 64 shared their recovery journeys and spiritual insights on the theme of “75 years, one purpose.” They also did a skit at the end of conference where we were visited by angelic versions of Lois and Anne helping delegates solve their problems and giving them historical context.
- I was involved in a Task Force to encourage areas to do area inventories, and we did a presentation at conference, which included: a variety of inspiring ideas from a variety of sources, a skit showing how crisis can lead to the dawning awareness that an inventory could help, and a song to add yet more inspiration. We just did an area inventory back in April this year at the AWSC, and we could have done a lot more if we had more time. It’s not that scary, after all.
- Another group of delegates were on a Task Force to do a presentation on the Conference Charter. This included a Wizard of Oz-themed skit, a study guide, and a bunch of questions about the history of the Charter and the WSC.
- The Panel 65 delegates, including myself, got together to create a 5-minute-long presentation on helping new delegates with pointers on note-taking during conference.
- The Panel 64 delegates created a 5-minute-long presentation on Conflict, which included a skit and some useful ideas on how to focus on solutions rather than problems.
- A representative from the Mexican Global Service Office joined us during conference, and observed how the WSC organized and operated the conference, bringing it all back to Mexico to consider. She shared this: “We are all at home, no matter where we get together; I call these the sacred rooms of Al-Anon because that is where we breathe peace; in Al-Anon, we all know each other, even if we’ve never met.”
- We were encouraged to come to the microphone during each of the sessions to ask questions and share our perspectives. At the end of each day during the conference, the Conference Leadership Team (CLT) asked delegates to come to the microphone and ask unanswered question, share their key takeaways from the day for their delegate reports, and to share any spiritual reflections they gained from the sessions at conference.
- And, of course, we shared meals together, made connections, chatted with each other on many topics, and enjoyed each other’s company.

## Other Participation

A few additional kinds of participation outside of the conference include:

- The Conference Leadership Team (CLT) included delegates to help develop the agenda for the world service conference this year. In the future, delegates from different panels will be included so experienced delegates are always part of this process.
- Road Trip! You and Your Board Connect – The road trip location for 2026 will be in Rosemont, Illinois, on October 24th, 2026, at the Embassy Suites hotel. It is an opportunity to spend time with board members and hear their perspective on recovery, ask questions, and more.
- The site for the 2028 Al-Anon International Convention will be in Minneapolis, MN. The convention will be held on July 20-22, 2028. As the convention approaches, there will most certainly be a call for volunteers. I will let you know when I know more.

## Service

There are a few topics regarding Service I would also like to share.

- New members of the Board of Trustees have been elected. Toward the end of conference, the delegates were able to observe an open board meeting, in which the slate of new trustees was elected and positions for the officers were voted on.
- A single application process for regional and at-large trustees was voted on and approved at the WSC. The idea is to lower the barriers for regional trustee candidates to go through the often-lengthy application process for each candidate's area prior to going through the WSO application process that follows. Until that work is finished and approved, we will use the existing process. The Conference Committee on Trustees (CCT) will be expanded to include regional representation, most likely including delegates. This new process won't really start until 2028, after the international convention. It will begin as a three-year trial then. Our area will need to define a process for feedback on Trustee applicants. Here in the Northeast, we already have a new Regional Trustee for the next three years, so we probably won't need a new candidate for a while, but that time will fly by. So let me plant the idea in all of your heads now. Trustees and Executive Committee members are doing the work of protecting the program and attending to the legal and operational needs of the program. It is an opportunity to dive into the spiritual aspects of the program and serve the entire fellowship. Check out the Service Manual and the WSO website for more details. Maybe one of you here today will feel that impulse in the future, as your Higher Power carries you into a greater depth of recovery.
- Growing Future Volunteer Leaders – Members will feel the attraction to service when they see that service is a vital part of their personal recovery. Many people who come to the program try to avoid the judgmental attention of others, but in Al-Anon, we have principles, the goodwill of other members, and a Higher Power to help us take on the

challenge of leading by example. As Concept 9 says: “Good personal leadership at all service levels is a necessity.” By understanding the service roles of the program, many more members will consider the benefits of doing service. Most service roles do have responsibilities that require some skills, but what we mostly do is to act as a bridge between groups, districts, this area, other areas, and Al-Anon as a whole. We carry the message of the program because it is a message of love that helps us love ourselves and love others.

## Conference Takeaways

My experience at conference this year was a lot like last year, but further amplified. I am more comfortable socializing and interacting with other members in service, and I felt the great strength that we have as a fellowship when we allow the spiritual principles of the program to guide us.

We had some very good recovery meetings in the mornings and evenings during conference, and spontaneous deep sharing with each other while just chatting at a meal or during a break. There was a spiritual brightness that characterized everything we did during conference. Thank you so much for the letters I received from you all during conference, it really meant a lot to me. Please tell your groups that it really lifted my spirits to read them after a long day.

One of my key takeaways from conference is the great depth of consideration every matter that comes to conference goes through before most delegates even know about it. It is easy to think that the WSO staff and the Board of Trustees somehow act aloof and independently, but that is not the case. The policies and ideas we discuss at conference do not appear out of thin air. They go through Thought Forces and Task Forces where the current and future needs of the membership and newcomers are deeply considered. They use the history of the program for reference, but adapt as needed for the current day.

The WSO really listens to the membership, which was readily apparent during the conference. They may not pivot on everything as quickly as each of us might want, but they are fully engaged and only want every resource they have to be available for the benefit of the fellowship.

When we work together, we not only get more perspectives of many more members, but we also truly feel the spiritual nature of the program. We have conflicts and disagreements, and sometimes mistakes are made, but when we serve with honesty, integrity, and kindness, the group conscience reflects an unmistakable influence of a Higher Power encouraging us to grow and find freedom.

## 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Gala Dinner

After the conference was done, the WSO held a gala dinner in celebration of our 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the Clearing House in New York City. The gala included audio, pictures, and video from pioneers and long-time members, and several long-time members as speakers. Gifts were presented to the newest member and the member who has been in the program the longest. A recognition certificate from AA for our 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary and ongoing cooperation was shared. People from many areas came to Virginia to join the celebration. There was a place to take photos outside the banquet hall with a large “75” sign. The delegates on my panel got together for pictures.

Isn't it amazing that we have made it this far? How many lives has this program touched? May the message of this generous program continue to provide relief and recovery to anyone, anywhere, who reaches out for help.

Thank you for this opportunity to serve you all, and the program.

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