

## **Delegate AWSC Report, 5-14-22, SCAFG**

Greetings everyone! Great to see you all today.

Since our last Assembly in February, I have been fortunate to have been on two trips on your behalf- in person! In March, I attended the SERDGT (Southeastern Region Delegate's Get Together), in San Juan, Puerto Rico, and in April I attended the World Service Conference in Tarrytown, NY.

First, SERDGT. (I will give the history and purpose of SERDGT at Assembly.)

On March 18-20, 18 in person participants and forty on Zoom attended the first ever hybrid SERDGT in San Juan, PR. There were several technology issues, but we persevered and had a successful conference. The major CAI (Conference Agenda Item) concerned technology and we voted to continue our 3-year trial of the hybrid meeting task force.

Linda R. our 2021 SE Regional Trustee, gave a superb report based on the 2021 Annual Report of AFG, Inc. on Zoom, as she could not attend in person.

Being in person at this event was special for me, as it was the first in-person conference held since the pandemic, and my term as Delegate, began. Maria V, panel 60 WSC Delegate from Puerto Rico, was our host, along with several past Delegates, including Blanca P, panel eighteen. I had a lovely conversation with her, mentioning our own Bessie L, our own panel 18 Delegate. The host committee gave us great insight into the history and vitality of Al-anon in Puerto Rico, and their hospitality was most appreciated as they translated,

took us to dinners, and showed us around the island. Thank you, Puerto Rico Region!

Now on to an overview of this year's 62<sup>nd</sup> Annual World Service Conference, held in person for the first time in three years in Tarrytown, NY.

Again, being at the Conference in person was an experience I will never forget. To be able to meet fellow Delegates face to face after two years of meeting electronically, was so incredibly special. By sheer coincidence, my mentee, Ozzie A, a potential panel sixty-two delegate of the proposed Global Electronic Area, and I arrived within 15 minutes of each other at LaGuardia Airport in NYC, on Monday, April 25<sup>th</sup>, and were able to share a shuttle to Tarrytown, about 40 minutes away. Of course, he had a million questions; I did not have a million answers! After settling in for a little while, my other mentee, Gregg R., panel sixty-one, Illinois North, invited us to his room for a mini reception and ice breaker. Some folks went out to dinner in Tarrytown that night, but we kept it simple and ate dinner in the hotel.

Tuesday was an orientation day. After breakfast, 7-8AM, each panel met separately and were given a short Task Force to focus our attention. Ours was how to best report this amazing experience to our Areas. After that, the various Thought Force and Task Forces were given time to rehearse their presentations. Then, a boxed lunch and later in the afternoon, Sharing Area Highlights, a yearly feature of the Conference where each Delegate shares the successes and challenges of their Areas from the previous year. During this time, we played a game in which a program tool, Slogan, Step, Tradition or Concept was taped to our back, and by asking other

members three questions not only did we try to guess the answer, but we also got to meet and greet. The day concluded with the opening dinner and a spiritual speaker, Terry F, an outgoing At-Large Member of the Executive Committee.

Before I go any further, let me make quick mention of the food! Hotel food seems to me to be ho-hum, but at Conference we had excellent fare. Aside from two boxed lunches, all our meals were taken together and were buffet style. The meals were healthy, delicious, varied, and included plenty of salads, soups, roasted, grilled and steamed vegetables, chicken and fish, breads and rolls and Desserts with a capital D! After a couple of days, I had to cut out the bread! Kudos to the Conference Leadership Team (CLT) for their menu planning with the hotel!

Wednesday, April 27, began with an optional Al-Anon meeting at 6AM. I exercised my option and slept in. Meetings were offered every day before and after, and I did make a few of them, which really helped of course.

At 8AM sharp, Nancy S., Trustee and Conference Chair gave the opening message, gaveled the Conference in session, and attendees were introduced. After a brief discussion on Conference Etiquette and Voting Procedures, our first Motion, the motion to Admit the Global Electronic Area, was brought to the floor, and I am happy to report that it carried overwhelmingly. The GEA is the first new Area to be admitted to the World Service Conference structure since Alaska in 1988, with Ozzie A. as an official Delegate. The relief and gratitude in the room was palpable after more than 5 years of discussion, preparation and challenging work by the Board of

Trustees, The Electronic Meeting Work Group, the WSO staff and others. Al-Anon history was made.

Other activities on Wednesday included the 2021 Auditor's Report, a presentation and discussion on Electronic meetings becoming Al-Anon groups, a Mega Issue discussion of the Trustee application process which included breakout rooms, and our first Chosen Agenda Item, Helping Members Recognize that Service Participation is Vital to Personal Recovery and to the Future Availability of Al-Anon to Family and Friends of Alcoholics. In addition, The Sharing Ourselves Three Minute Spiritual Talks given by outgoing delegates began, and continued throughout the Conference.

After breakfast Thursday, everybody boarded buses for the 40-minute trip to Stepping Stones, the home of Bill and Lois Wilson, which has been designated as a national historic landmark. As we were expected, there was a full staff of administrators and docents on site to guide us and answer questions. One of them was kind enough to take my picture in front of Lois' desk. When she died in 1988, she left the property intact, knowing that future generations of AAs and Al-Anons would make the trip to see where it all began. It was a bright, brisk spring day and all the gardens, many of which Lois planted and tended, were in bloom.

Thursday afternoon included a Finance Committee report, a Task Force Presentation titled Encourage Service Participation, the Conference Committee on Trustees segment where the process for affirming Trustees for Trustees at Large and Regional Trustees was clarified, and the new Trustees were given Traditional affirmation. Thursday evening, we all worked together on the rewording of the World Service Conference Charter, which was necessitated by the

new Global Electronic Area's presence, and another CAI, Rebuilding Alateen meetings after the Pandemic.

Friday was a busy day. All delegates were invited to an Open Policy Committee meeting, (the second largest group conscience in Al-Anon). The Policy Committee is composed of a chairperson, all the members of the Board of Trustees, the members of the Executive Committee, and the voting members of the WSO administrative Staff. The topic of the day was the naming of Al-Anon Family Groups. It was a privilege to sit in and listen to the patient, respectful Knowledge Based Decision Making discussion. All participants were given the opportunity to share. After a break, Sue P. gave a stirring presentation and lead the discussion on the Alateen Recertification Process. Due to the pandemic, 11 Areas lost their right to use the Alateen name in 2021 because they were not able to complete their process in time. Thanks to our AAC and AAPP (Lindi and Shawn) South Carolina was not one of the Areas that lost their Certification. For those that did lose it, it is a lengthy process of revisiting their legal counsel, and resubmitting their process to WSO for approval, in order to comply with the 2003 Motion. The impacts to Alateens, WSO and the Fellowship were widespread.

Two more Thought Forces were presented in the afternoon, Diversity Today, and Maintaining a Sustainable Future Using Abundant Thinking, of which I was privileged to Chair. Later, our own Jeri W., TAL, shared her heartfelt feelings on Being of Service to AFG, Inc. The evening session included a PowerPoint of the preparations for the upcoming (June 29-July 2, 2023) International Convention in Albuquerque, NM. The theme will be New Hopes, New Friends, Renewed Recovery. More details and room reservations will be available next January. Road Trip! the new you and your Board Connect event (replaces TEAM) was also talked about, it will be in Cleveland, OH, this coming October.

First thing after breakfast Saturday, I was privileged to give my three-minute outgoing delegate spiritual share. I will be happy to read to you at Assembly if we have time, or it will be in the WSC Summary later this year. Other agenda items on Saturday morning included a revisit of the BOT CAI, discussing the information obtained in the Delegate breakout rooms on Wednesday. Then Sarah S, Director of Programs gave a talk on Alateen Group Feasibility of Online Meetings. Saturday afternoon the International Coordination Committee gave a presentation detailing the 2021 Zonal Electronic Meetings (European Zonal Meeting, hosted by Germany, 14 General Service Offices, or GSOs, 4 evolving structures, WSO Staff last September, the Ibero-American Zonal Meeting hosted by Peru, 14 GSOs, 3 evolving structures-WSO Staff last October and the Central American Zonal Meeting hosted by Costa Rica, 3 GSOs, 3 evolving structures-WSO Staff in December.) In the planning stage is the IAGSM (International Areas General Services Meeting to be hosted by the UK and Eire live in London, Oct. 12-15, 2022. The openness of the participating countries and the WSO allowed all present to express an appreciation for the chance to come together at the service event and share information and to directly confront the challenges shared by many.

The meeting has led to new opportunities for Staff to work one-on-one with service representatives in these structures.

The Conference closed after a summing up by Lynette K., Chairperson of the Board.

After a break, everyone was invited to the Annual Open Board of Trustees meeting, where the newly affirmed Trustees were given official, legal approval.

Saturday night's Closing Dinner was a joyous affair with two more spiritual speakers from Panel 60. Presentations of certificates of appreciation were given to outgoing Conference members. After dinner, Panel 60 Delegates entertained with song and skits, closing the festivities in a rousing fashion.

Now, one more small item which I need to pass along. WSO needs for a member of Al-Anon, one who has been in the program for at least six to eight years and has served beyond the group level, to lead WSO efforts to develop and implement plans and programs to serve Al-Anon Family Groups internationally. Perhaps someone you know springs to mind who you recognize has the experience and passion for fulfilling this vital need in worldwide service and would consider relocating to Virginia Beach. We encourage you to reach out to that member and let them know personally that you believe he or she would be enough.

So, thank you South Carolina for your trust in me to be your Delegate. I will be forever grateful and remember this WSC the rest of my life.

Please consider running for Delegate if you have the qualifications. As my sponsor put it when he encouraged me to stand, "it will change your life!"

Respectfully and Gratefully submitted,

Bob Colborn

SC/60

