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## Share Your Stories & Group News

The newsletter can bring a world of local information your way. Send in your stories & news from your groups! Email the Newsletter Coordinator at [district5news@ncbermudaafg.org](mailto:district5news@ncbermudaafg.org) You can find & print this newsletter at [www.charlottealanon.org](http://www.charlottealanon.org). Spread the word! - KC, Newsletter Coordinator

### District News

Members can make donations and payments to District 5 by using our Venmo account. Make donations at @Donation-District. Please note the purpose of the payment.

The District Literature Office hours have changed. The Office will be open from 10-2 on Wednesdays only and the first Saturday of the month. Beginning in February, the monthly Saturday office day will change to the second Saturday of the month.

Re the 2023 International Convention being held on June 29 – July 2, 2023 in Albuquerque, NM. : Registration for the Al-Anon International Convention is now open. Visit [alanon.org](http://alanon.org) for details. To receive the early bird rate, please register before January 11, 2023.

Activities:

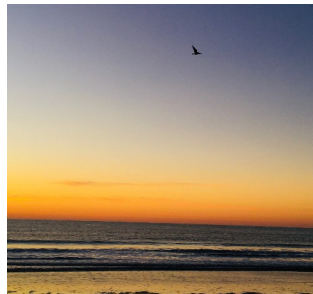
- There will be a Day of Connecting during the day on Thursday, June 29-a celebration of service designed to bring members

together.

- We'll party in Civic Plaza right outside of the Convention Center Thursday evening with music, dancing, and food trucks.
- Daytime sessions on Friday and Saturday will include speaker meetings, panels, book studies, next picks, & workshops.
- There will be a Big Meeting on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday.
- There will be a parade and a reimagined Pioneer Luncheon.

### In Memoriam

Helen B. Jan. 19, 2022



### Life is a Mystery

During the past two years I have been carrying out the duties of being the trustee of my mother's will. It entailed the selling of a tract of land and distributing the contents of the house where I grew up.

This very house was the scene of

serious abuse which has had painful repercussions across the course of my life. It affected not only me but my husband and children as well. Because of this, I have said more than once to family and some friends that when I emptied that house, I'd love to walk around it with a tipped over can of gasoline. Then light a match, step away and watch it burn.

Finally, a couple of weeks ago, I was back there, going through each room and sorting everything into three piles: give away, throw away, and sell. In the last room, I came across saved cards and letters, old photos and an older scrapbook. To my surprise, I was suddenly overwhelmed with half-forgotten happy memories of my life growing up there with my three sisters. We had fifteen acres of woods and a creek to play in, two ancient oaks in the front yard to climb up and rest under, a huge garden, chickens, guineas and pigs. We played softball in the front yard and performed acrobats in the backyard. Across the road were two green pastures with a pond nestled between them dotted with a herd of black angus cows. Baby calves each spring cavorted with each other for the sheer joy of being alive. Every April third or fourth, a whippoorwill would announce spring to our world. Many more similar memories flooded my soul.

To say the least, I had a lot to process in the following days. The stark contrast of the memories that seemed

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to make arson a good idea and the

memories that brought joy was overwhelming.

And here's the burst of brilliance our Al Anon gifts speaks of: my life was not either/or, i.e., all horrible or all fabulous. No life is both/and. It's a mystery. It can be and most often is, just awful in ways and yet wonderful in so many other ways as well.

Program gave me the tools and the fellowship that enabled me to see my life in its true perspective. Through them, I was able to be willing to see the Family Myths for the lies they were, in order to be able to see and accept the actual truth of my family. Through years of discovery along with many tears and some raging and heartfelt prayers, I was able to let go and forgive and be free of blame and resentments.

I believe dismantling the lies freed me to be able to see the rest of the truth - the many good memories of my childhood.

Al Anon's three legged stool -

➤ Steps and Slogans

➤ Meetings

➤ Sponsorship

- enabled me to embrace "life's mystery and awe" for which I am forever grateful.

- Susan H.



## Holiday Alanonathon

The Alanonathon is the gift that keeps on giving each year. Each holiday season before Covid, Al-Anon members were treated to the Alanonathon, a set of meetings for members to find fellowship and celebrate Christmas and the New Year together. These were held at the Anuvia Recovery and Prevention Center in conjunction with, but separately from, AA's Alcathon. The Alanonathon went on Zoom when Anuvia closed its doors in response to Covid. This year, Anuvia has reopened and the Alanonathon at Anuvia is back!

When the Alanonathon went on Zoom, we found that the desire to be with others was still there. With that need in mind, the Alanonathon on Zoom will continue this year.

These Zoom meetings will be held on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Eve, and New Year's Day. They will be independent from those at Anuvia (i.e. not hybrid). Times are still being finalized, so keep an eye out for more details to come.

Give and get the gift of the Alanonathon. Join us at Anuvia, on

Zoom, or both and share this special time with others.

## 2023 Winter Roundup

Get out your party hats and join us on March 4, 2023 for the 45th Winter Roundup. Yes, we've been doing this for 44 years and don't plan on stopping! This year, we will return to St. Mathew in Ballantyne.

For those who don't know about the Winter Roundup, it's a gathering of Al-Anon members to enjoy a day of meetings, speakers, celebration, and fellowship. As in past Roundups, we will have three sessions of meetings, with several discussion topic options in each session, and a guest speaker to close the day.

Also, technology permitting, we will hold a Zoom Roundup concurrently for members who cannot attend in person like last year. Both in-person and Zoom Roundups will gather together hybridly to hear the Welcome and closing speaker, but conduct meetings separately in their respective real or virtual rooms.

We're still in the early stages of planning. If you want to be a part of the planning committee and/or help out with activities on March 4th, please contact John B, this year's chairman, at [jfbrien00@gmail.com](mailto:jfbrien00@gmail.com). What better way to shake off the gloom of winter? Save the date and join us for a day of joy and recovery.

## Does Al-Anon Have Promises?

Many members have referred to something called the “Al-Anon Promises.” Yet, unlike the Twelve Steps and Twelve Tradition found in nearly all our Conference-Approved literature, the “Promises” are often talked about but rarely seen.

This mystery was solved by Tom C., Al-Anon Associate Director – Literature, in an April 2014 article in The Forum. According to Tom, “After much thought and thorough discussion, it was the consensus of the Policy Committee that Al-Anon has no ‘promises.’ They determined that the passage in question was not any more or less valid than any other sources of hope in our literature, and that it should not be promoted as ‘promises’ or ‘gifts.’” The passage that Tom referred to above is from Al-Anon’s book From Survival to Recovery.

I agree with Al-Anon’s view that the program can’t make promises to members. That would create an expectation it has no power to fulfill. However I see the passage as promises I can make to myself with the help of the program. I can set my own expectations.

For me and so many other members, these words are a source of comfort and hope and worth repeating here for newcomers.

If we willingly surrender ourselves to the spiritual discipline of the Twelve Steps, our lives can be transformed.

We can become mature, responsible individuals with a great capacity for joy, fulfillment, and wonder. Though we will never be perfect, continued spiritual progress can reveal to us our enormous potential. Many of us discover what our fellow members already know –that we are both worthy of love and loving. We learn to love others without losing ourselves and we accept love in return. Our sight, once clouded and distorted, can clear enough for us to perceive reality and recognize truth. Courage and fellowship replace fear. It becomes possible for us to risk failure to develop new, previously-hidden talents.



Our lives, no matter how battered and degraded, will offer hope to share with others. We begin to feel and know the vastness of our emotions, without being slaves to them. Our secrets no longer have to bind us in shame. As we gain the ability to forgive ourselves, our families, and the world, our choices expand. With dignity, we stand for ourselves, without standing against others. Serenity and peace will have meaning as we allow our lives and the lives of those we love to flow day

by day with God’s ease, balance, and grace. No longer terrified, we discover we are free to delight in life’s paradox, mystery, and awe. We laugh more. Faith replaces fear and gratitude comes naturally as we realize that our Higher Power is doing for us what we cannot do for ourselves.

In accordance with Al-Anon requirements, the passage is shown above as it appears in From Survival to Recovery (Revised 2007) pages 267 to 268. (Other editions show the passage with editorial changes in pages 268 to 269.) - King

## We now have a Computer!

A gracious and loving member of our District gifted our District with a computer for the Literature Office's use as well as to connect us during our hybrid District Meetings. The use of this computer will touch the lives of so many in our District.

## Letter from our District Rep

Greetings to My Al-Anon Family,

How can it be the last edition of our Newsletter for the year!!!! Time for reflection on Progress Not Perfection. Those tiny steps taken in the beginning of the year grew into leaps  
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with each passing day. I'm thinking in terms of Olympic high jumps! Well, realistically not quite that high. Sounds pretty good though. Right?

We began the year with so many groups in flux - groups asked themselves should we stay on zoom, return to in-person only, become hybrid (a member in the room with a laptop to connect with zoom members), run concurrent meetings (a member in the room with a laptop connecting zoom members but the meetings are held separately, at the same time), or **lastly become an electronic only meeting.**

Today, many groups in our District have settled into their comfort zone practicing Tradition 4 through the group conscience process while listening to the voice and guidance of the WSO.

The discussion to accept Electronic Only Groups into Area 42 has begun and will continue into the 2023 Spring Assembly. In the interim, Town Halls will be set up and held ensuring members' voices are heard in a patient, gentle and tender manner.

2022 began with Alateen diminishing at a rapid pace in the District. Many AMIAS (AlAnon members In Alateen Service) left this service and groups were closed. Today, we have more than a handful of new AMIAS and groups are reopening in person. While we still have a lot more work to do, much progress has been made in HP's time. A huge thank you to our Alateen Coordinator, Debbie B.

The Literature Office survived COVID - thanks, Barbara; changes are being made to bring accessibility and user friendly tools to all our members. Through Thought Force members, ideas to refresh the Office post-COVID is in the works.

Charlotteanon.org new design has been launched. Our Website Coordinator, Elisabeth, is hard at work and her creativity and ingenuity are continuing; her spirit is always open to suggestions and ideas. Parts of the website are still under construction as we await the arrival of the online bookstore! The website is now secure and no longer on a temporary domain. Yay!!!

Together with the enormous help of KC, our Newsletter Editor, members and newcomers are experiencing the strength of AlAnon's Legacies, bringing our District together in Unity.

District 5's group records are in great shape District wide. The WSO is catching up with all the paperwork and changes submitted. Our Group Records Coordinator is keeping a keen eye on our records as well as ensuring we are communicating with one another through our email system. She has led the change to G-Suite emails from gmail.com to [ncbermudaafg.org](mailto:ncbermudaafg.org). Here's her new email - [d5.group.record@ncbermudaafg.org](mailto:d5.group.record@ncbermudaafg.org).

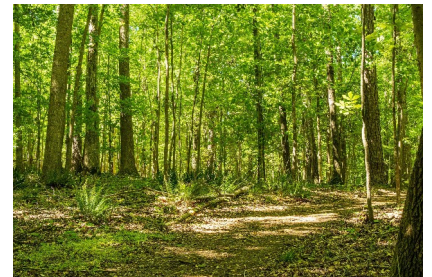
We have an Interim Secretary, Spanish Liaison and an interim Tech Coordinator. Thanks Ann, Eva, Peggy and Ted for bringing connectivity to all our District

Meetings and the Spanish speaking AlAnon community.

Lastly, our treasurer, King C., has kept us solvent, directing, guiding our funds in the areas of our District that need financial support, while bringing the financial needs of the Area and WSO in balance with the District's needs. His workshops provided a layer of understanding and knowledge to finances for group treasurers.

This year's end has me standing still, arms extended in gratitude for all the hard work, dedication, experience, strength and hope our Group Representatives, Officers, Coordinators and members have given to the District and to me personally. It is truly humbling to be showered in the love language of AlAnon.

- Serenity In Service, Vita



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## Treasurer's Report

Al-Anon family groups and

individual members donated over \$3,500 to the District in the third quarter.

Thanks to this District's continued generosity, our GRs were able to approve additional investments in new projects and donations. The GRs approved spending up to \$2,000 to refresh the District website including training for our Website Coordinator, and another \$2,000 to purchase electronic equipment so we can continue to conduct hybrid District meetings and replace the Office's ancient computer. (Since that decision was made, a very kind and generous member donated a brand new laptop to the District.)

In addition, the GRs agreed to donate \$1,000 to the Area Service Office and \$2,000 to the WSO. All of this would not be possible without the support of our members.

- King