



# Al-A-Gram

Area 48 Area World Service Conference

Spring, 2016



*Please visit  
**pa-alagram.com**  
to sign-up to receive  
the Al-A-Gram by Email.*

Photo by Nana B Agyei

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## Al-a-gram Coordinators' Report

**Who's excited about recovery? We Are!** Hoping to see everyone at the 44th Annual Al-Anon PA Area Convention!

**Yours In service,**

Robin C. & Scott G. — Al-A-Gram Co-Coordinator

## Al-Anon PA AFG Convention

LET IT BEGIN WITH ME...

### What is your IT?

- Is IT Gratitude???
- Is IT Acceptance???
- Is IT honing in on your Writing Skills???

### Discover your IT!!! at the 2016 Al-Anon PA Convention

- \$135 per Person/Double Room
- \$150 Single Room
- BYOP: Bring Your Own Pillow
- Four Meals
- Fellowship
- Workshops
- Speakers
- Fun, Games, DJ/Dance



Register Online Today!  
[pa-alanon-convention.org](http://pa-alanon-convention.org)

## 44th Annual Al-Anon Pennsylvania AFG Convention

**June 3 – June 5, 2016**

Susquehanna University  
514 University Avenue  
Selinsgrove, PA 17879

### Registration:

Opens February 21, 2016

**REGISTER EARLY!!**

DEADLINE May 7, 2016

## Around the Area:

**April 16:** District 4 & 5 Workshop. For more information, contact Marge G. at 484-766-3999 or [camgowen@comcast.net](mailto:camgowen@comcast.net).

**April 15-17, 2016:** "Swing Into Spring" AA conference in Erie, with full Al-Anon participation. Visit [aaeriepa.org](http://aaeriepa.org) or contact Bill B., Al-Anon liaison at 814-572-3093 for more information.

**June 3-5, 2016:** Let IT Begin with Me. What's YOUR "IT"? Find out at the 44th Annual Pennsylvania Al-Anon Convention, June 3-5th, 2016 at Susquehanna University, Selinsgrove. There will be AA participation. Visit [www.pa-alanon-convention.org](http://www.pa-alanon-convention.org) for more information or to register.

**June 25, 2016:** Northwest Sector Interim Service Seminar, Erie. For more information, contact [dr12@pa-al-anon.org](mailto:dr12@pa-al-anon.org) or visit [erie-al-anon.org](http://erie-al-anon.org). Our Delegate, Barbara G., will be speaking.

**July 24, 2016:** District 12 (Erie area) is hosting a showing of the 1971 film *Lois's Story* about the founding of Al-Anon and AA. There is no fee, but please bring a snack. For more information, contact Lori D. at 814-897-5320 or email [dr12@pa-al-anon.org](mailto:dr12@pa-al-anon.org).

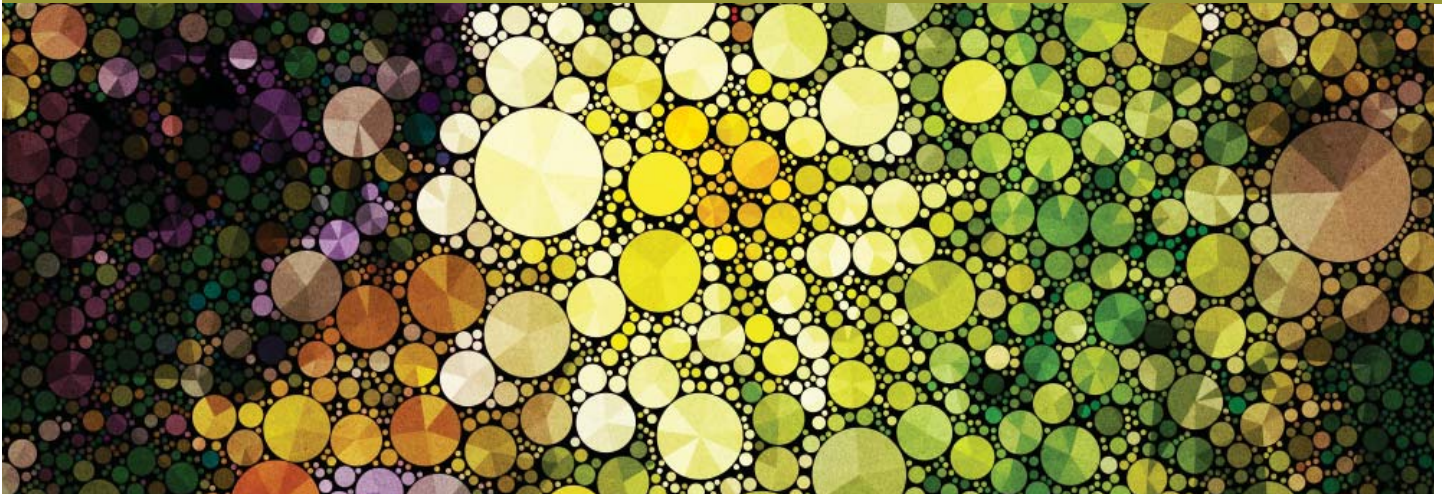
**September 30-October 1, 2016:** Districts 3 and 20 are hosting Fall Into Serenity: 2nd Annual Al-Anon Step Study weekend, Jamison, PA. For more information, visit [alanonstepstudy.com](http://alanonstepstudy.com).

*Do you have an event for Around the Area? Send the information to [area48alagram@gmail.com](mailto:area48alagram@gmail.com)*

*Events are listed in accordance with Tradition Six, which states that "our Family Groups ought never endorse, finance or lend our name to any outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary spiritual aim. Although a separate entity, we should always co-operate with Alcoholics Anonymous." In that spirit of cooperation, AA events are listed provided that there is Al-Anon participation.*



Photo by  
Mikel Agirregabiria



## Brown Bag Workshop Idea

Judi DR District 26

Fund-raising for our districts can be a challenging process. One of the most-discussed concerns is keeping the ticket price for a workshop or other event within the means of all members. I personally remember times when the \$20 or \$25 fee was out of my reach. In District 26, we have an event that I think nicely addresses this issue.

A bit of background. In 1993, a discussion was underway regarding the price of a fund-raising workshop and a somewhat off-hand remark by one of our dear, long time members got everyone thinking. "Why can't we have a workshop like we used to have where everyone brings their lunches?" It seemed like a very "Keep It Simple" idea and plans were made to go ahead. As we usually do, a committee was formed, guidelines created, and \$300 in seed money was set aside. Thus, the first District 26 Brown Bag Workshop was established.

The committee chose a church where an AA meeting met because it was one of the only ones around that had a PA system. Over the years the Brown Bag Workshop has relocated twice and currently is held at a church in Plum Borough.

This location works well for us in various ways. The social room affords enough space for approximately 100 attendees. A full kitchen is located adjacent to the room. There is a stage and sound system. It is also handicap accessible. There are classrooms nearby that are excellent for our break-out sessions. Parking is more than adequate. All of these are important considerations.

***It seemed like a very "Keep It Simple" idea and plans were made to go ahead.***

The format for the day includes two sessions on the four topics decided by the committee. Each of the sessions has a chairperson who is recruited by committee members. The session chairperson then recruits two speakers in advance. Those speakers share for about ten to fifteen minutes. This allows time for sharing by those attending the sessions. Alateens are also encouraged to attend these sessions and to share. The day concludes with an Al-Anon lead.

The cost of the event this year is \$7. This amount covers the church hall rental, decorations, coffee, tea, continental breakfast items (some of which the members donate), custodial fee, publicity, and a gift for the Al-Anon lead speaker. Groups donate baskets for a drawing and we also sell tickets for a share- the- wealth drawing. Our Alateens sell white elephant items provided by members to raise funds for NOMAAC. They also have love gifts for sale. It should be noted that the event has been fully self-supporting since 1996.

Members bring their lunches and oftentimes share items they have brought with each other. Some members actually order food from a neighborhood restaurant and have it delivered. In recent years our Alateens have sold hoagies and wraps. These can be ordered in advance on the registration form and are a way for them to raise money as well.

This format has worked well for us and we have excellent attendance including folks from as far away as Erie and West Virginia. We raise approximately \$1000 each year. The 24th Brown Bag Workshop will be held on April 2, 2016. Hopefully, the above information will be useful to other districts. △

***...the event has been fully self-supporting since 1996.***





## When I Got Busy, I Got Better! My Path to Recovery through Service

by Barbara G., PA Area Delegate

My name is Barbara G., and I am a grateful member of the world-wide fellowship of Al-Anon.

Thanks to you for inviting me to share with you my path to recovery through service. I have always found it to be the most difficult to share most honestly with my family and, of course, you all are my nearest Al-Anon relatives.

Some of you know that **I am privileged to serve as the PA Delegate. I began a three-year term in January of last year. At the PA AWSC** in February of 2014, someone I respect and admire suggested that I consider standing for the position. She explained that **I did not need to decide to do it.** I just needed to be willing. **The Higher Power would decide**

through the actions of the PA Area Assembly. It took me six months of praying and reflecting until I knew I was willing.

As the Delegate, I represent Al-Anon in Pennsylvania to the World Service Conference. It is the largest Al-Anon group conscience in the world.

What a privilege it was to take part. Thank you from the bottom of my heart for sending me there and allowing me to represent you.

So what is the World Service Conference?

Who attends WSC? (See Service Manual, p. 66)

What's it got to do with my group, my district, my recovery?

The WSC is there to ensure that Al-Anon has

the vision and the means to ensure the fellowship will be there for us and for all who come after us in need of healing and support.

If you want to learn more about the WSC structure, check out the Al-Anon/Alateen Service Manual, pages 66 and 166.

As a delegate, I represent the groups in Pennsylvania at the World Service Conference, which is held each April in Virginia Beach, VA. At the World Service Conference, our spiritual principles (12 Steps, 12 Traditions, and 12 Concepts) are put to work!

- Open communication
- Participation
- Dialogue before deliberation
- Patience
- Common access to full information
- Honesty and generosity
- All carried out in a culture of trust and unity.

Every session, presentation, discussion, and motion had something to enrich my world in service, as well as my personal recovery. What a joy to be surrounded by people and processes that live the spiritual principles.

In 2016 we celebrate 65 years of recovery in Al-Anon. How great is that!

**But let me go back and talk about how it all began for me.**

I attended my first Al-Anon meeting on April 13, 2004. That evening, I knew I had come

home. Having grown up in an alcoholic family, I was living in the rubble of a second failed marriage to an alcoholic. I appeared to be standing on my feet, but emotionally and psychologically, I crawled into that meeting on my hands and knees.

In the 11 years since, Al-Anon has transformed my life beyond my wildest dreams. So, I keep coming back.

I was fortunate to have been adopted by my first Al-Anon sponsor almost immediately. Our brothers and sisters in AA know what I'm talking about. I think "adoption" happens more regularly there than it generally does in our Al-Anon program. But Judy was an old-timer with 20-plus years. She knew what it took to recover in this program. She did not underestimate the effects of the disease of alcoholism: cunning, baffling, and powerful.

I was the oldest of three. My brothers Jack and Pat were five and eight years younger than I. As the disease progressed in our home, I became the other mother, the protector, the manager of calm. It was up to me to make sure that quiet was maintained and "the boys" (still called "the boys") remained out of the way at "those times".

I learned over responsibility well and my obsession – addiction – became to control, judging the safety of a situation. I could scan for a mood from the next room. Avoid. Deny. And no matter what, put on the good face

and don't let anyone know!

Beginning in college, I became one of those "volunteer people". Always ready to take up the cause, to fight for the right and to brag about how well I suffered in the process. I continued to "take control", so to speak... oh, yes! Over the years, I got lots of opportunities to perfect my defects.

When I met my first husband, I was ready; I had a plan! Everything about his upbringing was different than mine – PERFECT! Everything, that is, except one thing. They were all raving alcoholics. You see, I had no idea that alcohol was the problem and it would take me over 15 years to discover it. I woke up one day and realized that despite all my plans and intense "management", my life looked an awfully like the life I had in my family of origin. There was only one answer: "He" had to go! Problem solved!

It was only a matter of months after the first marriage ended that I met and fell madly in love with my second alcoholic husband. Madly being the operative word. Do you know the definition of insanity? That's right... I pulled out all the stops; this time it was going to work!

So, in the spring of 2004, when I finally crawled into the rooms, Judy did what good sponsors do: she put me to work. The

***It has been true for me that to keep growing in recovery, I must give it away...***

meeting was Tuesday Night AFG. We met in Dining Room B at the Lancaster General Hospital. Within a month of my first meeting, I was charged with getting the literature from a locker in the staff women's locker room. I still have the locker combination on a post-it in the back of my ODAT.

I would drag that well-worn wheelee suitcase filled with experience, strength, and hope through the halls of the hospital's ground floor to Dining Room B. It made a horrible racket that was music to my ears.

Later, Judy suggested – perhaps it was more than suggested – I take on a real service position of treasurer/literature person for the Friday Night Step meeting in Lancaster. Later, I became GR.

I didn't much like attending district meetings. There was a lot of conflict in our district at that time. I put my well-developed skill of avoidance to work and simply did not show up at the district meetings. Then one night at an Al-Anon meeting, the Fourth Concept was read: Participation is the key to harmony. It was then that I knew I had to start suiting up and showing up at my district meetings if I wanted things to be different, if I wanted harmony.

The time came when the three-year term was coming to an end. The day of the district election

had arrived. As I drove to the meeting, I was practicing saying “no” to being DR. Behind the wheel, I’m saying out loud in my car “No”, “No, thank you”, “I respectfully decline”. At the district meeting, we went round-robin around the table where GRs were seated. One after the other, my fellow GRs were saying “No”, “No, thank you”, “I respectfully decline”. Then someone said “yes”. Wait a minute! That someone was me! I left that meeting a little dazed but I knew I had made the right choice.

Seven years into my recovery journey, I became DR for District 22. It provided me with many, many opportunities to practice my program and to enhance my recovery.

Steps, sponsorship, and service have been the backbone of my recovery.

I’ve heard it said that ours is a disease of relationships. Whatever the manifestation of the disease, we all struggle with relationships.

It has been true for me that to keep growing in recovery, I must give it away and service has provided me with an abundance of new opportunities to practice the 36 principles of our program (steps, traditions, and concepts) and to turn my defects over to my Higher Power along the way. So I’ll keep coming back.

I’m excited and a little nervous at times to be serving as the PA Delegate. I also know where to turn for guidance and help.

Service has been the greatest driver of my

recovery in the program. I do the footwork. I practice every aspect of the program and leave the outcomes to my Higher Power. Sometimes, that’s easy; sometimes, it’s hard. But God is always there when I am ready to turn over my will and my life. I’ll keep coming back.

Thank you for letting me share. △





Sign Up for the Al-A-Gram

Keep up with PA Area 48 events and service . get the Al-A-Gram in your inbox!

Email Address \*

First Name

Sign Me Up

# Sign Up to Receive the Al-A-Gram

The Al-A-Gram is available to all members by signing up on our website.

### It's easy just:

- Visit [pa-alagram.com](http://pa-alagram.com)
- Enter your Email and First Name in the sign up form.

## How to Submit Material to the Al-A-Gram

The Al-A-Gram welcomes your submissions!

### We especially want:

- Stories about personal recovery through service.
- News about upcoming events in your district.
- Original photography. In keeping with the spiritual principle of anonymity, please do not identify individuals by name or whether they are members of 12 -Step fellowships.
- Because we are a service arm of Al-Anon Family Groups, we adhere to the Steps, Traditions and Concepts. Service stories should be written in first person

("I" and "me," not "you") and focus on the Al-Anon member, not on the alcoholic or other people. The Al-A-Gram coordinators reserve the right to edit stories for language, but we will leave the essential message intact. ▲

### Submissions may sent to:

#### E-mail:

[area48alagram@gmail.com](mailto:area48alagram@gmail.com)

#### or by mail to:

**Robin C.  
PO Box 1028  
Carlisle, PA 17013**



Please share this information with your group.

# 2016 Pennsylvania Al-Anon AFG Convention - June 3, 4, 5

## REGISTRATION FORM

### REGISTRATION and PAYMENTS ARE AVAILABLE ONLINE

Registration Opens: February 21, 2016    Registration Deadline: **May 7, 2016**

**OPTION 1: Go to [pa-alanon-convention.org](http://pa-alanon-convention.org)** Major credit cards accepted (processing fees apply).

or

**OPTION 2: Mail this registration form with check/money order to below address:**

**Robin C. – Registrant, PO Box 1028, Carlisle, PA 17013**

Make check/money order payable to: "Pennsylvania Al-Anon Assembly"

(Registrations are transferrable, but not refundable)

Plan A (Full Plan)	Plan B (No Room)	Plan C (No Room/No Meals)
Registration for Fri, Sat, & Sun	Registration for Fri, Sat, & Sun	Registration for Fri, Sat, & Sun
AC Room, Fridge, Microwave	No Room	No Room
2 Breakfasts, 1 Lunch, 1 Dinner	1 Lunch, 1 Dinner	No Meals
Single Room - \$150	\$65	\$40
Double Room - \$135 per person	Saturday only - \$25 (no room/no meals/Sat registration only)	

If you would like to register as a group, or if you would like a townhouse, please email for more information:

**Email:** [penna.alanon.convention@gmail.com](mailto:penna.alanon.convention@gmail.com)    **Phone:** 717-745-5204

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Please check your preference: Each person must register separately.

Plan A (Full Plan) \_\_\_\_\_ Single Room (\$150) \_\_\_\_\_ Double (\$135/pp): \_\_\_\_\_

Plan B (No Room-\$65) \_\_\_\_\_

Plan C (No Room/No Meals-\$40) \_\_\_\_\_

Saturday only registration (No Room/No Meals - \$25) \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\*\* Only full payment is accepted; partial payments will be returned**

**Please print clearly.**

**Circle:** Al-Anon                      Alateen                      AA

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ FEMALE: \_\_\_\_\_ MALE: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Roommate\* (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

*\*Any person registering for a double room without a roommate will be assigned a roommate.*

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ CELL: \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

List any special needs you may have that would impact room assignment (wheelchair access, oxygen, dietary needs, etc):

**Volunteers Needed at Convention – Are you willing to serve: Please circle:                      YES                      NO**