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*District 18's*  
*Voice of Reason*



## **2023 International Convention in Albuquerque, NM!**

I had been looking forward to this World Conference for quite a while. We registered early. My other experience was an AA World Conference in San Antonio a few years back.

Upon our arrival in Albuquerque on Thursday I found the hotel and shuttle system to the Convention Center where the Conference was happening to be very accommodating.

We were directed to get the Whova app which had the whole four day conference laid out. All of the events, workshops, speaker meetings, and the parade were all laid out. I could custom make my own event participation plan and transfer it to my phone schedule. There was a place to take notes and communicate with others at the conference. I was able to get this weeks in advance.

Some of the workshops were repeated during the day, so if you missed the workshop in the morning you might be able to pick it up later in the day. This was all predicated on availability of course.

The speakers were rich in recovery and I got a lot out of their stories. We had over 3500 in live attendance on the Friday morning event. The parade consisted of Al-Anon folks from roughly 20-30 countries and our 50 states parading in this giant hall, some wearing or donning clothing or special items that represented their areas/countries. I

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saw a lot of pure joy. I looked at all these 3500 people across the hall and thought, Wow, at one time all of us started our own personal journey into the rooms of Al-Anon as alcoholism was kicking our butts and look at us today!!

Greg F

This was my first time at an international convention. I didn't know at all what to expect, but figured I couldn't go wrong if I was going to be in a place full of Al-Anon members. There were so many different sessions to choose from and I ended up hearing different speakers and panels ranging from topics on conflict resolution, living the legacies, intimacy, and making amends. The most impactful session for me was a panel on conflict resolution. One of the panelists talked through several examples on how she employs the program into family conflict with her twin daughters. Hearing her experience, strength, and hope helped me to see where I could benefit from using these same tools. The speaker went through the conflict resolution wallet card, which I'll admit I have had in my wallet for years and not once have I read it, much less used it. Hearing her speak through it was awesome! My biggest takeaway from that was to acknowledge feelings and seek to understand rather than be understood. That has helped me to both detach and truly *hear* the person with whom I am in conflict. If I am hearing anger, often it is a byproduct of fear. That is something I can more than relate to, and it puts me and the other party on equal footing. Being able to see through the behavior to the root of the situation helps to relieve the pressure and tension and helps me find compassion for the other person. From there, I am much better able to listen to what they say and work through the conflict to find a solution rather than either mirroring their anger or just trying to get past it.

Krista

Going into my first international conference at 21 years in recovery. How amazed I was that the new hope was shown to me even in the struggles of the heat, lack of access to food, I found pleasure in connecting in person, focusing on a puzzle and the pieces showing up.

Hands showing up to receive a great massage, then seeing that gift given to others. How I have enjoyed the face to face importance of recovery. I didn't get to many meetings but I did get to the ones I needed.

I was reminded of the ABCs to help me with my gratitude and seeing all the humanness, love and acceptance. My greatest lesson was to be in the moment, with New Mexico at its peak in heat and altitude walking was uncomfortable. Seeing others I hadn't seen in

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sometime whether weeks, months, or years was the family reunion I wanted, not the one of my family of origin.

I traveled with a friend for the duration between my leg cramps and her boot from a fractured foot and not having access to a vehicle, we did pretty well, even on the day we thought we would have a good ride, the restaurant was a block from the hotel where the car was and five blocks between the hotel and the convention center so it made sense to walk that last block to eat.

The Whova app was a great way to see the pictures others had posted that were in the parade as our area "Yeah NorCal" was at the front and not able to see well. I was excited to view all the other members in the crowd as familiar faces were waving at us with just as much excitement as we were waving at them. I spoke with a young lady from San Francisco who would be sharing her story at her home group the next week. It reminded me of when recovery was new, through her eyes it was being renewed in me. I had a member reach out to me from the Whova app because she has a second home close to my area. Mine in Monterey County CA, her's in Las Vegas NV. Two weeks later she showed up at my home group on Saturday morning and even went to lunch with us after. All in all I had New Hopes, New Friends with Renewed Recovery.

With much appreciation and gratitude for what Al-Anon has given me.

Debbie O

District 24 California North Area 3

Thank you for asking me to write something for the newsletter. I don't think I'm the right person to ask. My experience wasn't the best. I wasn't feeling well when I arrived and spent most of my time in my room resting. I was able to make it to a couple sessions, but not much. Turns out when I got home my daughter asked if I tested for covid. When I did, I tested positive. I feel so bad about maybe sharing covid at the conference. Though I have tested negative now, I'm still trying to recover.

### **New Hopes, New Friends, Renewed Recovery**

**There is no better way to hang out with your 4,000 plus BFFs than at an Al-Anon International Convention, even if you can only name about 20 of them. That only made it easier to practice my program and acceptance of glitches. The weather took a break from its brutality and managed to be relatively reasonable.**

The Conference started with Thursdays' "A day of Connecting". Presentations were made by World Service Office employees and volunteers, the Executive Committee, Trustees, Delegates, and Officers. Where else can a regular member actually talk and share with the movers and shakers of an organization. Being able to put a face to a name is great. There were five topics in three sessions. I enjoyed "Stepping Out of Your Comfort Zone into Concept Nine", "WSO: Your Friends at the Clearinghouse", and "Get It Done! Service Stories of Success". The first one emphasized leadership and asked a couple of thought provoking questions. What fear or character defect stands in the way of my stepping out of my comfort level? When thinking about taking on a service commitment ask the outgoing office holder, What did they wish they knew before taking the position? In the second one I attended, it was stressed how important the Group Representative is to the structure of Al-Anon. The presenter also went over what the World Service Office provides each group. This is usually the information from the back of the quarterly individual appeal letter. The last session I attended that day, one of the presenters was able to walk in with her luggage just in time to make the last presentation of the day.

Friday opened with the spectacular "Language of Love Parade", the number of participants and where they were representing was amazing. It made one feel that they were witnessing a truly international event. The speakers who shared were inspiring, they helped emphasize looking for similarities not differences. Then the really hard work began of CHOICES. It would have been great to be able to split ones self into many clones in order to get to all the intriguing meetings. Topics included Steps, singular and grouped, Slogans, Writing Workshops, the new daily reader, and Intimacy in Alcoholic Relationships (B-33) one chapter at a time. There were also Alateen meetings and open AA meetings.

Saturday night's big meeting again had great speakers and so did the Sunday morning Spiritual Meeting. I felt that for the topic meetings when I chose a small room I got more out of the meeting because there was always more participation from the attendees. I think my favorite meeting was a small one of "First Things First". Another favorite was "Progress Not Perfection". From the latter I gleaned the quote, "I will make myself available to hear the whisper of my Higher Power".

Of course the rage was the new daily reader, A Little Time for Myself - Collection of Al-Anon Personal Experiences, (B34). It is wonderful! It has a very extensive index with many topics that have not appeared in the other daily readers. Also with each page at the end is a question. It works great for topic discussions or for journaling.

If one starts putting change (\$) away starting now, it will be possible to attend the next Al-Anon International Convention in 2028. However, we have to wait until the AA International Convention in 2025 at Vancouver, British Columbia, to find out where our next convention will be.

*Hugs,  
Barbara*

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## District elections for the 2024-2026 panel

The next district meeting is November 5th. Come find out what happens and check out the open positions. The District Rep (DR) and Alt District Rep (ADR) descriptions are on page 147-148 of the current service manual. Both positions need to be filled by an incoming, outgoing, or past Group Rep (GR).

Other than District Rep (DR) and Alt District Rep (ADR), Coordinator positions can be filled without the Group Rep (GR) requirement.

Here is a link to the Service tab of the district website with the descriptions of the Coordinator positions: [Service](#). The current Coordinators have all said that they would be happy to answer questions about their positions.

### **The positions still open:**

District Rep (DR)  
Alt District Rep (ADR)  
Alateen Coordinator  
Archives Coordinator  
Group Records Coordinator  
Hispanic Liaison/Diversity Coordinator  
Literature Coordinator  
Newsletter Coordinator  
PI/CPC Coordinator  
Website Coordinator

I have personally served in a few Coordinator positions as well as the Alt District Rep (ADR). Meeting and working with the others who were serving at the district helped expand my program. I learned so many things about myself as well as how Al-Anon really worked in all of my affairs.

Vicki B.

# SPECIAL EVENTS

## **District Meetings:**

- When:** The 1st Sunday of every month from 1:30-3:30  
**Where:** New Beginnings: 1425 Standiford Ave, Modesto (behind Fleet Feet store)  
**Who:** Open to everyone!

Check the calendar on the District 18 website for more events including speaker meetings:  
<http://alanonsanjoaquinvalley.org/events.htm>

Check the NCWSA calendar for events in other districts:  
<https://northerncaliforniaal-anon.org/calendar/>

## **In The Loop News from the WSO**

To sign up to receive the monthly emails from the WSO, click on the link below, fill in the following fields and click on Submit. [In the Loop Sign-Up](#)

Did you know that the WSO has a blog where you can share on the current topic?  
Here is the website: [Member's Blog](#).

Young Al-Anon Members Meeting list: [Young People Focus Meeting List](#)