



the bits newsletter

Seattle AI-Anon Information Service

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April 2023

Someone to Talk To

by Dave M



Photo by Clif H

AI-Anon has taught me many things about myself; things I don't necessarily like but that I need to be aware of if I want to be a better person. The experience has been humbling and I would like to share an example of that with you.

I pride myself on being a member "in service" and one of my contributions is to answer the AIS Phone Line during the week. Phone Volunteers answer AI-Anon questions: help people find meetings, buy literature, and access our website. A relatively simple task that I think I do well.

A member called repeatedly requesting information on meetings. Repeatedly, I answered the questions and referred the individual to the meeting directory on the AIS website. I repeatedly explained how to access the directory and "how to use it". The calls kept coming.

In a moment of frustration, I vented to my wife, explained all the things I was doing to provide the required information and questioned why the person calling "didn't get it"! She looked at me and said, "maybe the person doesn't need information on the directory; maybe they just need someone to talk to!"

The silence in the room was deafening! "Someone to talk to!" Why didn't I get it?

Fortunately, my Higher Power has a sense of humor and the member called yet again. I answered, introduced myself and asked, "How are you today?" Twenty minutes later we said goodbye to each other. We did not talk about the meeting directory once.

They just needed "someone to talk to." Thank you, AI-Anon!

National Poetry Month Meets Al-Anon

by Clif H, Newsletter Associate & BITS Editor

I'd like to thank all of the members that submitted poems for our Al-Anon celebration of National Poetry Month.

Parched

by Rose R

Your grief and my aloneness are Jack and Jill,
up on that hill.
Broken crown,
tumbling, tumbling after.
How we thirst for a drink of water.

Spanish Conference Participation

by Evelyn B

“Cuán Importante es Florecer el Espíritu”

XXVIII Reunión Nacional de Al-Anon para Hijos Adultos de Alcohólicos en Estados Unidos
Seattle, WA
El 24, 25, y 26 del marzo 2023

“Conociendo, Aprendiendo, y Recuperando”

Más de 300 personas vinieron a Seattle para juntarse en comunidad de Al-Anon y como comunidad Latina. Vino gente de tan lejos como Colombia, México, Guatemala, Canadá, ¡y otros países! También vinieron de muchos estados en los Estados Unidos, como California, Kansas, Florida, Texas, Connecticut, y más. Representaron lugares locales en Washington como de la comunidad de Seatac, Puyallup, Auburn, Yakima, Spokane, y Vancouver. Unas personas volaron solas por la primera vez, para poder recibir las bendiciones del programa del Al-Anon, en comunidad Latina.

En la conferencia, hubo talleres y charlas acerca de los Afectos del Alcoholismo, Características de los Hijos Adultos, Obstáculos al Éxito de Al-Anon, Guías para Nuestras Relaciones y más.

En los pasillos se escuchaba los participantes riéndose, celebrando, abrazando, y conversando juntos de sus experiencias de recuperación en el programa del Al-Anon. Una señora conto que las amistades, apoyo, y las soluciones que ha encontrado en el programa del Al-Anon son milagros que no se puede descontar ni olvidar. Otros amigos se conocieron hace 25 años por medio del programa. Y claro q también dieron la bienvenida amistosa a los recién llegados al programa.

La gente compro literatura para si mismos, para sus grupos del hogar, y para sus hijos y nietos. ¿Un tema que se escuchó seguido? “Hay tanta negatividad en el mundo. ¡Vamos a enfocarnos en la solución!”

Para más información sobre reuniones de hijos adultos en español, busque en la página del web:

<https://www.rn washington23haa.org/>

"The Importance of Growing the Spirit"

**XXVIII AI-Anon National Meeting for
Adult Children of Alcoholics in the United
States
Seattle, WA
March 24th, 25th, and 26th, 2023**

"Knowing, Learning, and Recovering"

More than 300 people gathered in Seattle to come together with the AI-Anon and Latino community. People came from as far away as Colombia, Mexico, Guatemala, Canada, and more countries! They also came from all over the United States, such as California, Kansas, Florida, Texas, Connecticut, and more. They represented our local communities, as well as other Washington areas such as Puyallup, Yakima, Spokane, and Vancouver. Some people flew alone for the first time, to receive the blessings of the AI-Anon program in the Latino community.

At the conference, there were workshops and talks on the Affects of Alcoholism, Characteristics of Adult Children, Obstacles to AI-Anon Success, Guidelines for Our Relationships, and more.

In the hallways participants could be heard laughing, celebrating, hugging, and talking together about their experiences of recovery in the AI-Anon program. One lady shared that the friendships, support, and solutions she has found in the AI-Anon program are miracles that cannot be discounted or forgotten. Other friends met 25 years ago through the AI-Anon program. And of course, they also gave a friendly welcome to the newcomers.

People bought literature for themselves, for their home groups, and for their children and grandchildren. A theme that was heard often

was "There is so much negativity in the world. Let's focus on the solution!"

For more information about meetings of adult children in Spanish, look on the website: <https://www.rnashington23haa.org/>

Spanish Conference Literature Sales Report

by Karen L



Seattle AIS was invited to sell Conference Approved Literature at the event. Thank you for the wonderful support, advice and time during the event from the Conference Literature committee and our local members. The sale of Spanish and English literature was a huge success as demonstrated by the below results.

- Sold \$3,253 in total.
 - Sold to 120 members
 - Sold 637 items (Pamphlets and Books)
-

A Step One Poem

by Clif H

Through all the years and all the fears,
we slowly stopped going out due to all the
jeers.

I managed our lives as best I could,
it seemed best if only I would.

And yet despite my best effort,
my world came crumbling down.

One day due to happenstance, we were
exposed,
to these programs called AA and Al-Anon.

Step 1 stated I was powerless over alcohol,
that part I understood.
Recovery began, yet I still didn't feel good.

The next part says life was unmanageable.

How could that be?
I was getting along in life, can't you see.

I kept coming back and slow,
but sure, the understanding became so pure.

My life of survival had a new rival.
Working the steps, starting with Step 1, and
soon I had a name for this new rival,

Serenity!



ASTAR
SAVE
THE DATE


APRIL 14-16, 2023
STARTING AT 5 PM
AT: www.lazyfcamp.org

ALATEEN SPONSOR TRAINING AND RECOVERY WEEKEND (ASTAR) is for any Al-Anon Member who is interested in serving or supporting Alateens. We plan to:

- Have fun
- Do training
- Enjoy the beautiful surroundings
- Focus on Recovery
- Enjoy Good Food

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Eliza D. alateen@wa-al-anon.org
Michael S Alateen -safety@wa-al-anon.org



**Bothell Sunday
Night AFG
Spring Speaker Meeting**



We'll have an Al-Anon Speaker
and an AA Speaker

Please join us Sunday, April 30th, 2023
from 7:00 - 8:30 pm

First Lutheran Church
10207 - NE 183rd St
Bothell, WA 98011

NATIVE AMERICAN AL-ANON CONFERENCE
APRIL 28-30, 2023
SAVE THE DATE!



SHERATON PORTLAND AIRPORT HOTEL
8235 NORTHEAST AIRPORT WAY
PORTLAND, OR 97220

ALL ARE INVITED: AL-ANON, ALATEEN, AND AA MEMBERS ALIKE!

SPONSORED BY THE OREGON AREA AFG AND NAAC

LEARN HOW TO START AL-ANON/ALATEEN IN YOUR COMMUNITY!
 HELP FAMILIES IN RECOVERY!
 NEW FRIENDS AND FELLOWSHIP!
 HEAR PERSONAL STORIES OF FAMILY RECOVERY!



FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE EMAIL
 NATIVEAMERICANALANONCONF@GMAIL.COM

Happy Birthday Lois W

by Solveig W, Outreach Coordinator



On Saturday, March 4th, Seattle AIS celebrated Lois W.'s birthday with cake, coffee, balloons, a raffle, literature sales and much fellowship at the Seattle Capitol Hill AIS Office. About 20 Al-Anon members and newcomers dropped by the Office, in addition to those mentioned below who volunteered their time to staff the Office.

With delicious chocolate cakes baked by member Heather R, posters created by members Tami G and Polly E, and literature sales by members Mary R, Dave M and Linda H, it was truly a group effort. AIS Chair Karen L made an appearance as well to cheer us on. Five pieces of Conference Approved Literature were raffled off, with the money raised donated to Seattle AIS.

Saturday Office openings are a great opportunity for groups to browse and purchase literature in person, and it has been flying off the shelves at both the February and March Saturday Office Openings. All profits from Seattle AIS literature sales go

KENT ALL MEN'S AL-ANON FORT WORDEN WEEKEND

June 2 - 4, 2023

Arrival: Friday, June 2nd at 4:00 p.m.

Departure: Sunday, June 4th at 12 noon

The 40th Annual K.A.M.A. Fort Worden Weekend is packed with remarkable meetings, lasting fellowship, spiritual growth and recovery that goes on and on and on.....



With all that there is still time for games, music, good food and yes, the Saturday night bonfire.

An experience not to be missed and then made a tradition!

Set aside the first weekend in June and join us!

toward supporting the AIS website, phones, free Newcomer pamphlets and other Outreach activities such as the recent digital ad campaign. Thank you to all groups and individuals who have donated, volunteered their time, or otherwise supported the AIS - we can't do it without you. Having an AIS provides comfort and support to newcomers, as well as, important services for groups and members.

Seattle AIS will continue its monthly office openings the first Saturday of each month from 11 AM - 3 PM at All Pilgrim's Church, 500 Broadway East, Seattle, WA 98102. We hope to see you April 1st, May 6, or any 1st Saturday you can make it downtown!

Phone Volunteer Opportunity

Volunteer Opportunity to Answer the Seattle AIS 24-Hour Phone Line

- Sign onto the Zoom app on one's smartphone
- Provide meeting information
- Share one's ESH (experience, strength, and hope) in the Al-Anon program

If you can do all of the above, then Phone Service (3-hour slots or overnight) might be FOR YOU! Contact phones@seattle-al-anon.org

Step Four

Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

Searching and Fearless by Zenia D

When first I came, I heard the words,
Searching and fearless moral inventory...of
ourselves.

Like every step before it,
At first, I felt I'd best ignore it.

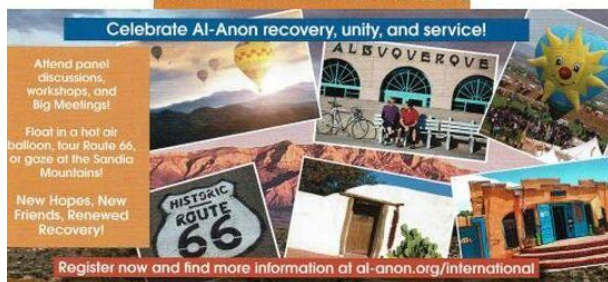
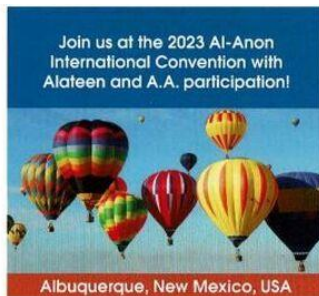
By the time I made it to Step four,
As I started to reflect, the words began to
pour.

My fingers flew,
But how, I never knew.

With shocking dread,
I'd nearly seen red.

What I discovered about myself,
Should I hide them on a shelf?

To continue to grow,
By now you must know,



I should take them forward,
Don't be a coward.

To unravel the mysteries, this is just prep,
And keep moving on to the next step.

We Are Coming Home

by Rose R

Under post mortem bones and brawn,
under lost coins and bottle caps,
under the shards of crockery,
under the precipice,
I stand up.

Reciprocate bird calls 100 miles away.
Sing a song I've never heard before.
Reach a hand in the brook and pluck out a fish.
Strike the flint once to blast a bonfire.
Listen to the wind.
Bathe in every fat raindrop in the desert.
Signal to the twinkling stars that we are not alone.
That we are not alone.
That we are not alone.

It's a game of chance.
Nerves trill the cool spin of the roulette wheel,
butterfly stomach flip of the first date,
airy fluff soufflé crisp from the oven.

We write in the margins of the great book.
Sing in the cathedral ante room.
Count coins in the bank lobby.
Shuffle cards in the outfront smoking section
of the gambling house.
We are not alone.
We twinkle to the stars.
They look to our constellation to navigate
the ships of state under the new moon nights.

We are not alone
We are not far from home.
We are coming home.
We are coming home.

2023 Seattle AIS Office Opens!



First Saturdays of the Month
11 AM - 3 PM

February 4
March 4
April 1

Seattle AIS Office
All Pilgrim's Church
509 10th Ave E.
Seattle, WA 98102

Join us for treats, coffee and fellowship! No speakers, just lots of Conference Approved Literature to browse/buy and friends to see.
Newcomers and Long Timers Welcome!

Note: Enter on 10th Ave via the BLUE DOOR (NOT on Broadway). PUSH THE AL-ANON DOORBELL. Free street parking available. Paid Parking at the QFC or on E. Republican between Broadway and Harvard.



Volunteers: Do we need you?
Of course we do! Email
chair@seattle-al-anon.org
for more info

2023 Abriendo la Oficina de Seattle AIS!



Los Primeros Sabados del Mes
11 AM - 3 PM

Febrero 4
Marzo 4
Abril 1

Oficina de Seattle AIS
All Pilgrim's Church
509 10th Ave E.
Seattle, WA 98102

¡Únate a nosotros para disfrutar de golosinas, café y compañerismo! Sin oradores, solo mucha literatura aprobada por la Conferencia para echar un vistazo y/o comprar y ver a los amigos.
¡Los recién llegados y veteranos todos son bienvenidos!

Nota: Ingrese por la 10th Ave por la PUERTA AZUL (NO por la Broadway). PRESIONE EL TIMBRE DE AL-ANON. Estacionamiento gratis en la calle. Hay dos sitios que se paga el estacionamiento que es QFC y E. Republicán entre Broadway y Harvard.



Voluntarios: ¿Te necesitamos?
¡Por supuesto! Envíe correo electrónico al
chair@seattle-al-anon.org
para más información

Service Great and Small

by Milton H



Photo by Clif H

Recovery and service go hand in hand
It started out simply, not leading the band

My journey took years
Sometimes there were tears

First coffee, room set-up, and group
secretary
Searching and finding the best parts of me

Afraid that a request for help might never
come
I sat and I waited, not beating on him like a
drum

And then, there it was, a simple request for
help
My brother, he did it, one day he reached out

Two days in his yard, cleaning up that big
mess
At the end of each day, well, I'd never have
guessed

His gratitude spilled out, It came out
overflowing
The hugs and the thank you's, he was
positively glowing

To me, it was a simple task
To him it was a huge, huge ask

My service in Al-Anon's paid untold dividends
Among other benefits, my brother and I are
once again friends

Tradition Four

Each group should be autonomous, except in
matters affecting another group or Al-Anon or
AA as a whole.

Al-Anon Groups
by Ralph D

My group is autonomous,
While I am anonymous.

Each one of us working together.

To weather all storms,
We keep to the norms.

In the end, all are the better.

Cosmic Cat Helps Me up the Steps

by Rose R



Going up the steps, I stumble,
splash the electric socket.
Pussy cat nuzzles my toe and says,

“Hey, if you’re not ready for this much soul,
I’ll try to understand.
I know that all the light
can be blinding for your little eyes.
You relish the cave of failure,
the plank you walk
and the railroad ties you’re tied to.
If you ever decide to focus
the magnifying glass that you are,
shovel coal into the steam engine blaze,
and let the laundry soak for days
before we spin off dirt and grease
that left you dingy,

I’ll be your guide.

I will lick your wounds,
hold your purse
while you fill your dance card,
and bring home fried crispy nuggets
of something delectable for you.
I’ll braid your hair
and caress your eyelashes,
feed you mint chip ice cream
that I softened with the back of a spoon.
I’ll burn my whiskers on the ceremonial flame.
I will test your game
and call your name

across the chasm of faith.
You only have to want it enough
to work for it though you feel like a slave.
All you have to do is ask,
every day and every second
for the rest of your life,
and know in every crest and valley of time
circling out from you like radio waves
that your spine is an antenna.

Your locomotive lifestream pommels.
Your homebound express
barrels down the squealy tracks
and thunders through your heart.
Never fear the rainstorm and lightning
or the silken wormhole moment of your death.
You are a cluster of galaxies.
Your sealed envelope breaks open.
Your message is
wax melted through paper to form a wick
for the flame at the heart
of the pressure and mass
at the center of your black hole.

But you really don’t suck.

You are a light and a force,
the turning point of contraction, paused,
in frequency alive now.
Blasto---Expando-----Maximo-----Frequentis!

Continue conversing
with who you are now, who you will be,
and who you will be to the others,
yesterday and today,
where there are no days, but only
the event horizon and the pulse in your ears,
throbbing your celestial body,
squeezing forth your status as an organism,
moving among relations:
asteroids, comets and constellations.

Sing yourself home down the mountain,
stretch out from under the mystic tree,
trot a lap round the cosmic stadium,
high-fiving your cadre,
blowing kisses
to the masses.”

AIS Council Meeting

The next Council meeting is Thursday, April 13, 2023, 7:30-9:00 pm. Click the AIS website *2023 Calendar* link on the *Events* page (<https://www.seattle-al-anon.org/events>) for the zoom information.

AIS Board Meeting

Thursday, April 20, 2023 at 7:00 pm. Check the AIS website calendar (<https://www.seattle-al-anon.org/events>) for the zoom link

DO YOU WORRY
ABOUT HOW MUCH
SOMEONE DRINKS?

Al-Anon can help.



Al-Anon and Alateen are mutual support programs for those affected by someone else's drinking.

Find out more at a meeting in King County

Speak with an Al-Anon member at 206-625-0000



seattle-al-anon.org

Concept Four

Participation is the key to harmony.

Internal Harmony by Faith B

I've heard it said that participation is the key to harmony.
To that I propose this homily.

In each meeting I care,
So, often I share.

Service work is rewarding,
And I feel like I'm forwarding,

Growth the program can offer.

Has Your Meeting Changed?

- Gone back to meeting in person
- Become hybrid or concurrent
- Has a new physical location
- Made other changes that members need to know about
- Has an alternate Holiday Schedule
- Has disbanded

Please send all meeting changes to the WA Area Group Records Coordinator <https://wa-al-anon.org/meeting-changes/>

Changes and Updates are made Weekly. (Seattle AIS is automatically cc'd in the change request)

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the Seattle AIS updated meeting schedule, please contact

meetingdirectoryeditor@seattle-al-anon.org



Out of the Toolbox

by BITS Columnist Callie D.

Taking Inventory of The Collateral Damage



Living around active alcoholism has taken quite a toll on my life. The insanity and chaos creeps under the door and seeps into the

walls of every room. I can't ignore it. I feel I would be living in denial, if I did. I, at least, have to be honest with myself, my God, and my journal.

Every day I am faced with the irresponsibility and irrationality of the circumstances. Not for the lack of trying, I have discovered I am powerless to resolve any of it. I don't have any standing. Yet, the alcoholic continues to try to shove their remaining responsibilities off onto me. I have invested my time, energy, love, and other resources into an already bankrupt situation.

I have lived in survival mode for too many years. My mind is tossed back and forth as my perception is called into question, with frequent gaslighting. When the alcoholic doesn't get their way, they fly into a terrifying rage or sarcastic childish tantrum. This is to gain compliance with their every whim.

I do have intermittent seasons of denial. Pain slaps me back into the reality that I have gotten sucked into the orbit of the alcoholic, once again. Regrettably, another year has passed as my life continues to stagnate and my goals and dreams lay by the wayside. Broken sleep, waking up in the middle of the night, trying to resolve the insidious labyrinth created by the disease.

I was eating healthier and had started to lose weight. However, now it has been soda, processed meats, sugar, and mainlining junk food for days. I've got to pull myself out of this toxic cycle and reverse the powerful jets of these engrained dysfunctional patterns. Generational alcoholism and maladaptive living do not retreat silently.

I have to let go and surrender this agonizing feeling that I am responsible to keep the alcoholic loved one alive. "The Enabler is a person who feels he must not let the alcoholic

suffer the consequences of his drinking when he can so easily prevent this by a simple rescue operation” (Alcoholism, A Merry-Go-Round Named Denial, Pamphlet).

In my experience “rescue operations” may appear “simple” but often they are just the tip of the iceberg. Underneath lay vast tentacles of continuing obligations and unresolvable conundrums. The double bind. Damned if I do, and damned if I don’t.

There is powerful resistance, internally and externally with the letting go of my loved ones. Grieving the ongoing losses and the dream of what could be, and accepting what is. Trusting that my higher power will guide me through this process and supply the resources needed along the way.

[Order the Forum Magazine](#)



Al-Anon’s monthly magazine features timely sharings from Al-Anon and Alateen members, suggested meeting topics, and the latest information on worldwide Al-Anon recovery. Experience and insight you won’t find anywhere else!

March 2023 AIS Council Meeting Minutes (Summary, not yet approved)

Meeting Opened at 7:30 PM with the Serenity Prayer

Attendance: 19 individuals

Introductions: all

Readings: Concept 3 by Will W

Secretary: Kathy K: February meeting minutes were approved.

Chair: Karen L: AWSC was held Feb. 25 and Karen L attended. PEM’s have changed nomenclature to PEG (Permanent Electronic Groups). There is a task force formed and Jackie T is a member to look at issues of incorporation of PEGs into the WA Area. There are currently 4 vacant DR positions in our districts.

Pre-Con will be held 3/31/23-4/1/23 and will be hybrid. Karen L anticipates that Fall Assembly will also be voted to be held hybrid as well.

International World Service Conference will be held June 29-July 3, 2023: It was decided that there will be no watch party due to costs and lack of Sat programming.

Treasurer: Gary H: Seattle AIS continues to be financially stable.

Vice Chair Report: Dave M: The March open house on Sat 3/4/23 was a success and was combined with celebration of Lois’s Birthday. There were Literature sales of approximately \$1000.00 . We are fully staffed for the April opening. Action: It was moved by Solveig W. to open the office for the rest of 2023 on the first Sat of the month. It was seconded and passed unanimously.

Coordinators:

LDC: Mary R and Linda H: They are training a new shipping volunteer but need 2

more. They have been invited to sell literature at Spanish speaking conference held at Sea Tac at the end the month, as well as, at Pre-Con on April 1. The 2020-2025 Service Manual is now in stock and the Spanish language edition is ordered and expected soon.

Communications: Jackie T: We have a new Web editor. The BITS Editor is looking for article submissions. The new process for submitting flyers is available on the website.

Phones: Dave M (outgoing Coordinator): The coordinator position is open. The ZOOM phone transition has been successful. Phones were staffed 67% in Feb between 10:00 AM and 4:PM, M-F. There were 64 calls in Feb. with 42 that were AI-Anon. Calls continue to be primarily during the daytime. We received 3 texts which is the first in the new zoom phone system. The manual has been edited to reflect the phone system change and he is still in need of more volunteers.

Outreach: Solveig W: Outreach in a Box-Available to groups wishing to do outreach.

Tech: Pierre J: He has changed the Broadband service to save money.

Old Business: Need a phone coordinator

New Business: AIS has been asked to present a workshop at SSA about AIS.

Next Council Meeting: Thursday, April 13th, 2023 from 7:30-9:00 PM

Next Board Meeting: Thursday, April 20, 2023 at 7:00PM

Adjournment: AI-Anon/Alateen Declaration at 8:35 PM

Submitted by Kathy K, Secretary

Thank you for your donations and your support of AIS!

Our funding now comes primarily from:

*Donations by Members, Groups, and
Districts

*Literature Sales

Please send all AIS mail, including
checks for literature orders and
donations, to:

Seattle AIS

505 Broadway E #400
Seattle, WA 98102-5023

[Donate Now](#)

And More ...

MEETING SCHEDULE: registered Al-Anon groups in the Greater Seattle Area. Hybrid, Concurrent, and in-person meetings are listed.

MEETING SCHEDULE

Please visit our **Members** section for the most up-to-date information on:

- [List of AIS Officers and Coordinators](#)
- [Where to Send Donations](#)
- [District Representatives and Business Meeting Information](#)
- [AIS Financial Information](#)
- [Calendar of Events](#)

they want to continue to have that note in their listing. If you would like the note removed, please make the change by using the form on the WA Area website.

The following changes were made from February 26 through March 21.

- Saturday, 10:30 AM, Renton Saturday Morning AFG, In-Person Only with Face Masks Optional {updated 2/26}
 - Saturday, 11:00 AM, Search for Serenity AFG, Face Masks Optional [updated 3/7]
 - Thursday, 6:30 PM, Women Living in Focus AFG, Hybrid {updated 3/20}
 - Tuesday, 10:00 AM, Renton Tuesday Morning AFG, Changed physical access information {updated 3/20}
-

Meeting News

News from the Meeting Directory Editor

Very few groups reported changes to their meetings in March. So if you see a date at the top of the Meeting Directory that is a week or two old, please don't assume that our schedule is not up to date. All changes are usually made within a couple days of their submission to WA Area via the form on their site. AIS is immediately notified when you submit the change to WA Area.

Many groups with the note "Face Masks Optional" may not have reviewed whether