

Greetings,

I am happy to report that I've heard from several sponsors that they thought the Alateen Serenity Weekend went very well. I'm also hearing there were good comments from the teens. There were 11 Alateens and 10 AMIAS that attended. The weather was great! Warmer than last year. We stayed at the Buxton Lodge this year as our numbers were down slightly. This also saved us a little money.

Friday evening, each group talked about the banner they made and displayed and decorated their cardboard boxes. Then around 10:00, at the campfire, they threw in their God boxes and we talked about our Higher Power.

We were pleasantly surprised that we were invited to take part in an Easter Egg Hunt Saturday morning that Wesley Woods was holding so we all had lots of fun with that. There had to have been thousands of eggs that they had thrown out.

The Unconditional Love that is done every year Saturday morning is giving us something to think about. Although it is beautiful and meaningful, we are finding that there are teens that are uncomfortable with it. And we had several this year that sat out. There might need to be some thought on it for next year.

After streaming a funeral in my town of a senior boy that committed suicide over a breakup of a girl, I decided to take on a workshop on Depression. Some of our Alateens are going through a lot in their homes, and I felt maybe this is a topic we should talk about. I had some pages picked out to talk about. One of the Alateens read the 1st page and then I asked if anyone wanted to comment. It was an hour workshop and for 45 minutes we got no further than the 1st page. Since it's such a heavy topic, I felt maybe it should not be repeated next year. The attending AMIAS felt it definitely should be on the schedule again next year.

There was 15 minutes left, so after a heavy subject the teens got some free time to go outside.

Then they decorated their wooden God Boxes. These boxes are a little bigger and they take them back to their group to use in their meetings. I've heard that the groups really like having them. These boxes are used for them to put something down in writing to say that maybe they don't want to talk about in a meeting. They give it to God.

Then there was hiking or a hay rack ride. I heard there were some that were able to do a little of both. It was a real nice long ride this year. I did not take part in it but wish I had. I heard it's beautiful!

Then the AMIAS put on a skit titled There's No Place Like Home. It plays off of The Wizard Of Oz. The AMIAS playing Dorothy and the Wicked Witch were especially awesome. I think probably the AMIAS had more fun with the skit than the Alateens enjoyed watching. Thank you Beth K. for giving me a copy of the skit.

We brought items for breakfast Sunday morning. This saved us a little money.

After breakfast, the Alateens had some free time and the AMIAS had a meeting where we talked about the weekend and we put together a tentative schedule for next year. We came up with a few changes. One, doing away with the Saturday night dance. A big percentage of the teens are younger and the last 2 years the dance didn't amount to much if anything. Hopefully the schedule we came up with will be helpful for the new Alateen Coordinator next year.

Next we had a workshop on Gratitude. And then at this time I like to have everyone write down what they felt was good, bad and best about the weekend. They really enjoy the campfires. Several mentioned the food. They like the God Boxes. Some of the bad was not enough free time to get to know others.

We ended it with our dinner at the Pizza Ranch in Indianola. Some wore their Alateen Serenity Weekend t-shirts that we all signed earlier. This seems to be a nice way to end the weekend and say our goodbyes.

For me, I would say this weekend is the highlight of my service job. It's a lot of work and planning, but so fun and rewarding to spend the time with the Alateens and AMIAS. I am really going to miss seeing their faces next year. They truly are a joy to be around.

Judy V.

Alateen/AAPP Coordinator