

# FAN & FANonline



***NEW EDITOR COMING SOON !***



## Letting go!

**“People have a hard time letting go of their suffering. Out of a fear of the unknown, they prefer suffering that is familiar”. *Thich Nhat Hanh.***

**“Breathe. Let go. And remind yourself that this very moment is the only one you have for sure”. *Oprah Winfrey.***

Families Anonymous is a self-help organization for relatives & friends

£1

concerned about another's use of drugs or related  
behavioural problems

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# Greetings !



Dear All !

What have I included in this edition ?

- LETTING GO! - which has the potential to fill us with dread or elation, depending where we are on our journey.
- Contributions from the Groups, the **most important input** to this Newsletter – *your* response to the editor's requests for individual or group efforts
- BoardWalk – what is going on with the FA Board
- Convention and AGM corner
- FAN&fanonline is to have a new editor starting with the next edition in the autumn. Kate S. from Hitchin Group introduces herself
- FAN's abridged FA UK Service Board 2015-2016
- Still in search of more Board members
- Selected Quotes and Clip Art

Dear All,

Again it is my pleasure to address you all at the start of the third year of my service as Chair of FA UK, being also the start of the 2015/2016 FAN cycle following the vote at the AGM in Birmingham in April. I thank all those who voted for me and regard it as a special privilege to be Chair of our fellowship in the UK for the maximum of three years running.

The really welcome news that I have to report has been provided by the Higher Power of us all. An FA member has felt moved to give Board service and to take on the FAN Editorship. For this we have to thank Kate S. of Hitchin Group who has taken up the challenge. I am at present passing on FAN's modus operandi to Kate who introduces herself to us all later in this edition. Well done Kate!

In last year's Summer FAN, I reported that Trustees' Reports in the future were not going

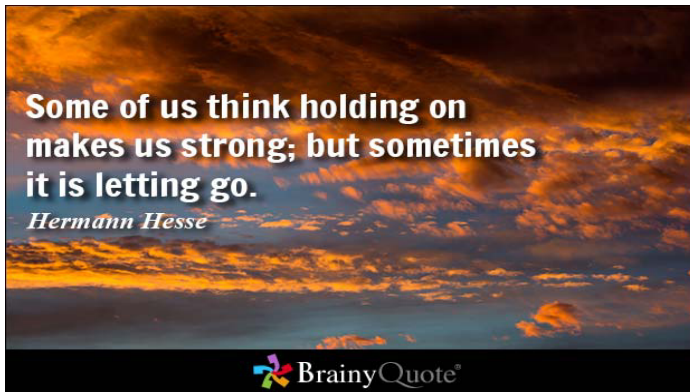
to have the same unchartered and difficult feel about them. That is exactly what happened this year as we took the Trustees' Report in our stride, the initial learning curve being firmly behind us now.

2014-2015 FA year has been another one in which we had two Conventions – a National one this spring in Birmingham and one in Glasgow at the very end of last summer. It is pleasing to know that this formula will be followed in the present 2015-2016 year, although Edinburgh group is up to be host of the Scottish Convention instead of Glasgow this time. Thanks to volunteers who make this all possible; we hope to see as many of you who can make it at either or both of these events. In FA we are very recognisant of the reasons which prevent this being possible in many cases. To those who would like to come

but cannot, we will spare a thought when the time comes.  
What about our recovery, you may ask or think! Well, for this edition I have chosen as the main theme: **LETTING GO**, an important keystone of our philosophy.

Do remember that your views about FA and FAN can be made known on these pages. Simply contact Kate through the FA Office. Happy Summer! WLITF Richard –  
*Chair & outgoing FAN Ed.*

# 'Letting Go' as seen in 'Today a Better Way'



What is *letting go*? It's a gift from our Higher Power, a gift so powerful that it can erase past hurts. It allows us to love freely and accept our children as they are. It means no expectations - not even a birthday card. It means "I love you, because you are a child of God and worthy of love". It means I will love today, no matter what is said or done. It

means I will stop trying to control, trusting in a loving Higher Power. It means detaching from other people, places and things in order to fulfil hopes and dreams of my own.

*Letting go* means getting started!

*Letting go* is a lifetime project. We never graduate with honours. Some days we achieve a good grade, some days not so good, but we keep trying. Every glimmer of growth makes it worth the struggle.

*Letting go* is giving my loved one the dignity to lead his own life.

As I grow in my ability to let go, I can begin to learn about me and see the beauty within me. My crisis times were stormy and troubled and I did whatever I could to survive.

Now when I detach I see the storm end and often find a beautiful rainbow, my serenity.

**TODAY I WILL** let go. [August 31 reading in *Today A Better Way* © Families Anonymous]

How often do we hear at our meetings a consensus of opinion that 'letting go' is probably the most difficult of the tasks that faces us? If not the number one aim, it is certainly high on the list of the hardest nuts to crack. The idea is especially difficult for those of us who are new to the programme and the advantages of the logic of what might look like forced alienation take time to be understood. But by listening to those members who have grown to appreciate these advantages by practical experience, we can start to map out our own way forward. It is, of course, not our role to map out any opportunities for growth for our addicted loved one and deprive him or her of achievements to be proud of. But it is likely that he or she will be indirectly helped by a modification in our own behaviour which might become more consistent, focussed, understanding and accepting within better evaluated norms. Letting go allows both parties to grow and is the end of any ideas about control

"Cry. Forgive. Learn. Move on. Let your tears water the seeds of your future happiness."

— Dr. Steve Maraboli

## LETTING GO!

For me, this meant initially letting go of my son and his problems. This was the fundamental 12 step message that I needed to hear and take on board to allow both myself and my son to have the freedom to progress and change. Without it, we would still be stuck on that destructive merry go round. After Acceptance, it is the second most important message to act on, in my view.

Then, I realised that to enable growth within myself, I had to Let Go of the past. It was unhealthy to hang on to it. All of those negative memories, experiences and thoughts in the past needed to be freed. I let them go. I had had a misguided sense of responsibility for something that was not mine to own. I Let It Go!

But as the years have gone on, and I have gratefully had clarity and been able to see the wood for the trees, I have noticed that by applying this message of "Letting Go" to other things, my life has become even more calmer and more manageable.

I can now Let Go in work when colleagues may have different ways of working to me. The job still gets done. My way is not the only way!

I can also Let Go when other members of my family or friends make their views known. I may not agree with them, but unless it affects me directly, I choose to Let Go! They have the right to believe what they choose. If it does affect me directly, I try very hard to apply another

FA message, and say what I need to say in a calm and kind way.

Lately, I have found myself in the situation of having my adult (non addicted!) daughter and 3 year old granddaughter to live with me again. My house is no longer always the peaceful, quiet place it used to be. Neither is it as tidy as it used to be!! If I allow these two changes to "get under my skin", and get annoyed, I would feel that I had let myself down somewhat. Instead I ask myself "How important is it?" I realise that in the grand scheme, it comes way down the list. I have gained the company of two loved ones who have the capacity to make me smile! So I Let Go of these tiny grievances of mine.

These are just a few examples of how Letting Go has benefitted me, as well as the one that brought me to FA in the first place.

Finally, a few words on this subject in Today A Better Way has reminded me that I also need to Let Go of days to come. Projecting an image of the future leads to disappointment! Most days, I need to practise this concept. If I allowed myself, I could wallow in fear of the future. But what's the point in that? I cannot control the future, so why let my fear of it control me?

The only sensible way is to Let It Go and live my life just One Day At A Time!

Anon, Cardiff

## **Our new FAN Editor starting in the autumn introduces herself to us all !**

My name is Kate and I am part of the Tuesday night Hitchin group in Hertfordshire. I recently joined the Board at the convention this year and am very much looking forward to my editorship! I want to take this opportunity to formally thank the outgoing editor Richard, for all his hard work over the last five years in producing FAN regularly. FAN can be an interesting ten minute read for some of us over a cup of coffee, a chance to unwind and an opportunity to read other members' contributions. On the other hand it is also a way to reach out to potential new members who may be searching online for help in the small hours of the morning. With the advent of the internet, our reach is widespread! Contributions from everyone involved in the fellowship are always valued and are greatly encouraged. Even if you think that what you might have to say is "not important", it could make all the difference to someone else looking for answers. If you have any ideas about things that you would like to see in FAN please do let me know.



WLITF Kate



### **A Difficult but Necessary Decision'**

Dear Friends,

It is with much regret that, due to family commitments, I must inform you all of my decision to give up my Board duties as Groups Coordinator Chair for FA UK. I have been struggling for a while now & feeling guilty for not being able to "do it all" When I took on this exciting role I had little or no commitments but since then I have become a grandmother for the first time! My daughter (now in recovery for a few years) has had to go back to work off-shore around 20 days per month and as a result I am caring for my grandson 24/7, mostly alone, as my husband also works away from home. I have no family to help as my mother is an alcoholic and father is too ill and I'm an only child. My grandson is our wee miracle and we love him dearly but he is quite a handful at 15 months old as I'm sure you can imagine. I've enjoyed my time as Groups Coordinator Chair and made many new friends and I hate to give it up but I know I cannot continue as the Fellowship needs someone who has time to take on this important role. I must also admit I found it difficult to admit defeat. This is progress for me!

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to sit on the board of this wonderful Fellowship.!

Always in friendship - WLITF Audrey, Aberdeen Group

## Some thoughts from Gants Hill.....

The impact and influences of FA are wide and far reaching. At a recent family gathering a relative asked how my son (my addict) was. I replied openly, honestly and with enough detail to illustrate the situation, but kept enough back to protect their sensibilities.

It was a conversation and not a confessional. It has become easier, over time, to speak without getting tearful or angry. It was definitely not matter of fact, but it flowed and it wasn't as painful as it had been when we were lost... before FA.

It is easy to take things in life for granted. I guess we all muddle along when things are going o.k., but when a bad thing happens, a relapse, a lie, we realise the power of the fellowship. We read our literature. We listen to the readings. We share with the other members. We become humble again, stop pitying, we have perspective. We can find comfort and hope.

I don't know if my relative was shocked by my story or thought I was foolish or heaven forbid, a bad parent, but it didn't matter. What mattered was that I could say I have a son, he is an addict and I love him. Anything else is their opinion and the rest, the rest I leave to my higher power. WLITF Philippa

## The FA UK Helpline.....A Necessary Re-Think



First of all, let us thank Paul from Gants Hill group for organizing the FA UK Helpline over a generous period. His efforts and those of the helpline volunteers have brought solace and info.about FA UK to wherever callers have taken the plunge to see help. Thanks are also due to Sue from Westminster and Chelsea groups for volunteering to take over from Paul. Before handing over to Sue, Paul wrote to our Group Secretaries as follows:

*Dear Group Secretary,*

*Please would you read this to your group at your meeting, perhaps more than once so that you are sure you have appealed to all the members. I am handing over the planning of the Telephone Rota to Sue from Chelsea. Regrettably I am handing over the the list of telephone volunteers in a worse state than when I took it over in 2008. This is because more volunteers have dropped off the list than come on. Sue is going to find it difficult to fill the slots without more volunteers.*

*If you are regularly attending Families Anonymous meetings you are qualified to be a telephone volunteer.*

*This is the first contact that prospective members make. It's not difficult. You just help someone as you were once helped. Whilst it is not difficult it is vitally important.*

*If you can give up an evening or two, a Saturday, Sunday or a couple of afternoons per week or month, then please volunteer. Help someone as you were once helped.*

*Thank you, Paul*

NB More about this on the next page



# BoardWalk

BOARD MEETING HELD AT BATTERSEA OFFICE ON 30th. MAY 2015



their service.

- Being the first Board meeting in the new FA Year 2015-2016, it was the time for the old Board to hand over to the new Board as provided for in our By-Laws. Three Board members rotated-off: Jan (Office Manager), Paul (Helpline Organizer) and Toni (Prisons and Fellowships). All three were warmly thanked for their service.
- As always at the first meeting after the AGM, it was necessary to establish the roles which new Board members would take on. Kate S. of Hitchin Group was welcomed to her first Board meeting as the only new Board volunteer and chose to take on the role of FAN editor. Phyllis offered to take on the role of Vice-Chair vacated by Jan S. Our World Service Board member, Bev, agreed to take on additionally the role of Office Manager. The results of our deliberations are set out on the page following this Boardwalk. If you are reading this FAN online, you will easily be able to see in red those Board posts which are not filled because of a shortfall in volunteer numbers. We discussed the fact that we still have gaps in our line-up. Obviously, our readers are welcome to contact any Board member they wish having obtained the relevant details from the Office. Readers can see which Board member represents their own group on the next page.
- The question about continuing, or not, the voicemail facility on our Helpline was discussed at length but the final decision to withdraw this service was unanimous. The use of members' donations to return calls was thought not to be the best use of our money whilst the widespread use of answerphones and the related problem of anonymity resulted in too many useless goose-chases and time wasting. Only live calls between caller and volunteer within the published hours now exist
- The signing-off of the 2014 Accounts was agreed by another unanimous vote ready for their recording by Companies House, the Charity Commission and relevant parts by HM Revenue & Customs.
- All members of the Fellowship are reminded that they are more than welcome to come along and observe any Board meeting. This would entail a discussion with a Board member about the possible reimbursement of travel costs by FA to the person attending.

WLITF Richard - Chair and outgoing FAN Editor.

**Remember ! Ask for a Board discussion on any preoccupation you may have!**

**Future Board meetings: 19 September 2015, 5 December 2015, 20 February 2016**

**AGM: Sunday 10 April 2016**



# FA UK SERVICEBOARD 2015/16 showing group allocation

Phone numbers. further details given or queries answered at the Office – 0845 1200 660. Your Board Member is there to help!

Name	Board Role	Non-Board Role	Groups represented
Richard (Brighton & Horsham) 2016	Chair		Barnstaple, Clydach, Bournemouth, Bristol, Chelmsford. Harrow, Welshpool
Phyllis (Sevenoaks) 2016	Fellowship Secretary / Vice Chair		Chelsea, Tower Hamlets, Dudley, Walsall, Brighton, Hamilton
Simon (Gants Hill) 2017	Treasurer		Horsham, Glasgow Tues, Glasgow Thurs., Glasgow Sat., Sonehouse, Cardiff
Bev (Westminster/ Chelsea) 2016	Office Manager /World Service Board Member		Birmingham Tue., Hitchin, Leeds, Sevenoaks, Gibraltar, Edinburgh
Volunteer sought	PI Chair (Standing Comm. By-Laws Clause.2)		>>> In the absence of a PI Chair. please refer to Richard (Chair)
Volunteer sought	Website Chair (Standing Comm. By-Laws Cl.2)		
Cassandra (Chelsea) 2016	Literature Chair (Standing Comm. By-Laws Clause.3)		Liverpool Wed, Swansea, Exeter, Inverness, Bermondsey , Borehamwood
Kate S. (Hitchin) 2018	FAN Editor (Standing Comm. By-Laws Clause.3)		Aberdeen, Chiswick, Bexley&Erith, Churchdown, Westminster, Gants Hill
Volunteer sought	Groups Coordinator Chair (Standing Comm. By-Laws Clause 4)		
Sue (Westminster/ Chelsea)		Telephone Rota	
Toni (Bermondsey)		Prisons/Fellowship (By-Laws cl.2)	
Kate S. (Walsall)		New Group Liaison	





## & CONVENTION

### SCOTTISH CONVENTION 2015

This years Scottish Convention will be held in Edinburgh on Saturday 26th September at Serenity Café, The Tun, 8 Jacksons Entry, 111 Holyrood Road, Edinburgh EH8 8PJ

Registration 9.30-10.00am finishing at 5pm

Ticket prices £7.00 and £2.00 concessions

Hot breakfast roll, Buffet lunch, Unlimited tea and coffee plus a Raffle.

Theme for the day – SERENITY – with Guest Shares

Evening entertainment local venue to be confirmed.



### UK NATIONAL CONVENTION AND AGM 2016

Having had another successful and enjoyable weekend there in April, the National Convention & AGM will be held again at The Hilton Metropole at the Birmingham NEC in 2016 according to the vote at this year's AGM. Our thanks go to Sue from Chelsea and Westminster Group for leading the Convention Committee this year and to her volunteers. Sue has agreed to do a handover in offering advice on practicalities to the 2016 Convention Committee. Dates for next year's Convention and AGM are the weekend of::

**9 & 10 APRIL 2016 .**

The Autumn FAN this year will actively seek new volunteers to organise the 2016 Convention and all Board members have agreed to discuss this event at their own group meetings. Ideally the Cross-Group Convention Committee including its 2016 chair needs to be set up by December 2015. Anyone interested should kindly contact Sue through the FA Office. Please complete the flyer enclosed or simply tell the Office by phone of your willingness to give service. It's never too early to declare your readiness to give your support!

All FA members and interested parties are encouraged to put this event in their diaries and to take the opportunity to attend the FA UK 2016 National Convention

# NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS EUROPEAN CONVENTION 2015

14, 15, 16 August

The UK Region of Narcotics Anonymous is hosting this European Convention in Birmingham and they have invited Families Anonymous to be there with an information table. In addition FA Meetings will be held on Friday 3pm, Saturday 11am and 4pm, Sunday 1pm. You are reminded that any FA members would be very welcome, not only to attend the FA meetings, but also to help man the FA stall which will be there for the whole Convention, and of course to listen to the NA shares.

***Why not be inspired by the sunshine into considering to give SERVICE to FA?***

As ever FA is in search of volunteers of all descriptions! Our By-Laws say that we must have minimum eight directors + chair.  
We have only 5+chair now !



**You can see on page 8 which board positions need filling. Do consider asking about one of them make a difference to FA and to your own life!**

Michael has pointed out that out-of-the-ordinary computing knowledge or skills are not required to take on the role of Website Chair. Why not consider this and give the office a call to find out more without obligation?

Don't live near London or would prefer a much smaller job than going onto the Board? With today's technology you can play your part through attending a meeting without even being there or with the help of a PC you can help maintain FA's records and information sources.

**Kindly give it your consideration!**

"Volunteers are the only human beings on the face of the earth who reflect this nation's compassion, unselfish caring, patience, and just plain love for one another". **Erma Bombeck, American Humorist 1927-1996**



## This issue has focused on Letting Go!

The content, unless specifically identified as from another source, is written entirely by FA members and presents each author's personal experience, strength and hope as part of their individual Twelve Step journey. Every editorial effort is made to ensure that the articles present a positive attitude "in spite of unsolved problems".

Once again, if you read something that does not agree with your viewpoint, please try to apply what we read at meetings: "take with you that which you can accept and leave the rest. As before, active feedback is welcomed about any changes you, the membership, would like to see in this newsletter. You may, for instance, want the focus to be on particular aspect of our recovery.

## In the next Autumn issue

The focus will be on **Humility**. All contributions will be more than welcome! They certainly do not have to be about our focus subject. The more topics on offer the better! Write a letter to the Editor, get something off your chest, or offer - perhaps the most valuable and important element in our fellowship – a share.

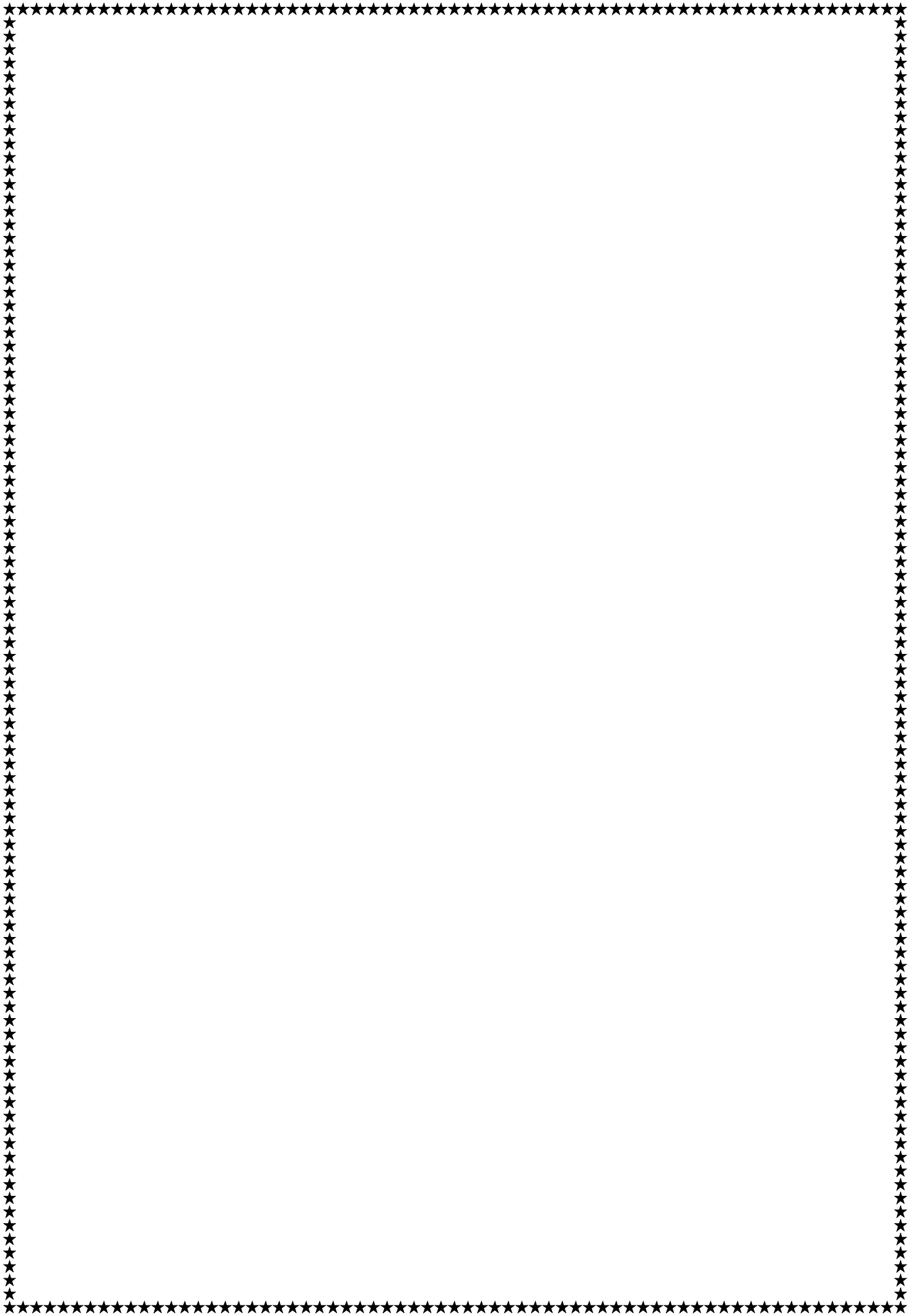
.For the oncoming Autumn issue, the following groups are asked to make a special effort:: Aberdeen, Barnstaple, Glasgow Thurs. and Glasgow Sat. Those groups that have not been approached for over 30 months might expect an invitation to contribute  
If you can't think what to write about, I'll give you some suggestions. Together, we can work it out! Of course nothing is compulsory!



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Web: <http://famanon.org.uk>

& in: [USA \(HQ\), Australia, Canada, Gibraltar, Greece, India, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Mexico, Portugal, Russia, Spain and online meetings](#)







Hilton Metropole, National Exhibition Centre,  
Birmingham.

## FAMILIES ANONYMOUS

UK CONVENTION & AGM 9-10 APRIL 2016

### Cross-Group Convention Committee Volunteer Nomination Form

*Please complete this form if you are interested in giving valuable service for this event  
Alternatively telephone or email the FA Office to declare your interest*

Member's Name (first name only) \_\_\_\_\_

FA Group Attended \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Phone number \_\_\_\_\_



2015

Phone: 0845 1200 660 Email: [office@famanon.org.uk](mailto:office@famanon.org.uk)