

NA World Services News

Volume 1, Issue 2

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Greetings from your World Board.

Welcome to the second edition of the NAWS News. These newsletters, covering the World Board's (WB) discussions and decisions, will be developed after each meeting of the board, not as a replacement for minutes, but an overview of WB activities. The News is translated into four languages, so we hope it will remain easy to understand, easy to translate, yet include all relevant information.

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Feedback Received

A big "Thank You" to everybody who gave us feedback about the first issue of the News. We received letters from people from many different communities with very different viewpoints--some people wanted more details about our activity and others were happy that the newsletter was easy to read and to translate. One thing that the letters had in common was a desire to receive news from the World Board and to increase communication.

The board is in complete agreement with your requests for more communication. As you will read later on in this issue, we felt so strongly about the subject of communication, on all levels, that we made it our top priority.

What are the current publications from NA World Services and their purposes? (if an item is translated, it is noted)

The NA Way Magazine - published four times a year, mailed to all registered groups and other members who wish to receive it. The *NA Way* is the fellowship's journal. Translated into four languages (French, German, Portuguese, and Castilian Spanish).

NAWS News - published after every meeting of the World Board and mailed to World Service Conference (WSC) Participants, Regional and Area Service Committees. The *News* contains updated info about the board's activities. Translated into four languages.

Conference Agenda Report (CAR)- published ninety days before annual meeting of the WSC, contains info on items for fellowship consideration and decision. Mailed to all WSC Participants and Regional Service Committees free of charge and available by purchase to all other interested parties. Body of *CAR* is translated into five languages (all of the above and Swedish).

Conference Report - published three or more times per year including the *WSC Report*, delivering information about conference activities and deadlines, and reports from all conference bodies. Mailed to conference participants and regional service committees, and is also available through subscription.

Quarterly Financial Updates - published once every quarter, this report provides information about world service income and expenditures during the previous quarter. Also included are planned and completed travel activities. Sent to conference participants.

Meeting by Mail - published and mailed to isolated addicts and members of the Loner Group.

Reaching Out - published four times a year and mailed to local H&I subcommittees and members in an institutional setting. Bulk copies are available through subscription.

Welcome to LA - October 8-10, 1998

The World Board meeting agenda was large and intimidating; we spent three long days in discussions. All board members were in attendance and we began by taking part in an exercise designed to reconnect us as a team and to affirm our common goals and dreams for NA as a whole and the board.

We have found that team building exercises and sharing sessions at the end of each day, increase the quality of our discussions and remind us to keep a spiritual focus in everything we do as a board.

Participating in such exercises was established as a regular process by consensus at our first meeting.

At our first meeting, we had asked our Executive Committee to look at all the ongoing tasks, projects previously started, and those items committed to us by the conference, and present us with their recommendations. As we began looking at the material resulting from their meeting with WSO Executive Management, we realized that the majority of the services provided by world services may be considered "routine," as these services are being conducted by the WSO on an ongoing basis. (A list of routine services is handed out at each conference, and may also be obtained from the WSO.)

Additionally, certain functions of our board, such as the Executive Committee, Translations Evaluation workgroup, the Reaching Out workgroup, and the NA Way Editorial Board, had to continue, leaving us with seventeen (17) general areas of responsibility and specific tasks that we had to prioritize.

Some of us came prepared to tackle the workload and immediately begin to work on the development of the various committees, while others of us believed that we needed to continue to go forward as a full board, lest we overwhelm ourselves with detail, and miss the big picture in the process. We needed to see what would be the most effective way to utilize our resources and what would be items we could and could not complete this conference year. We quickly concluded that while we could break up into committees, we needed to take another look at the purpose and function of the WB.

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Who we are, what do we do, and how do we do it?

Through our various team-building exercises, we realized that discussions may be more effective in smaller groups than in our full board of eighteen. We decided to split up into three groups and tackle the same questions. The questions included, "What does it mean to administer world services?" and "What are the most important issues facing world services today?"

When we returned from our small-group discussions, we were struck by the similarities in our answers. Through our discussions of the questions, we generally agreed that for our discussions, world services is essentially a "Communication, Coordination, Information, and Guidance System."

In answering "What does it mean to administer world services?" we agreed that:

- WB to provide oversight rather than hands-on work, maintaining the common vision
- WB to provide guidance, direction, and support
- WB to delegate tasks effectively, keeping in mind the need for accountability
- WB to encourage fellowship awareness and participation through effective communication

As to the list of the most important issues, the major items were:

- Communication
- Fellowship Development
- Trust
- Encouragement of Cultural/Language Diversity
- Public Relations
- Fostering common understandings of NA principles
- Financial Stability

We realized that all of the items listed were part of the Fellowship Development Plan, which was presented to the conference during recent years. Through our discussions, we generally agreed that trust would result from our work, rather than something to be focused on as a separate item. We were then faced with prioritizing the seventeen areas and/or tasks, which we did through a system of ranking.

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Communications is our top Priority!!

By consensus, the World Board agreed that Communications, including the Communications Task Force (CTF), would be its top priority. This item was presented to the conference previously as a part of the Fellowship Development Plan, recognizing that it is one of the top problems identified by the world services inventory. This problem, however, was not adequately addressed by the Resolution Group in their resolutions, other than that by reducing the size of the conference and eliminating the duplication of effort, it would lead to more clarity and, hopefully, better communications.

It was recognized some time ago by both, staff and trusted servants, that communications was an issue, which needed to be addressed as a top priority. To that end, WSO staff developed a proposal to form the Communications Task Force, whose purpose would be the evaluation of communications, from world services to the fellowship and vice versa, within world services itself, and finally within the fellowship at large. The proposal was adopted by the former WSO Board of Directors, and included in the Fellowship Development Plan presented to the conference by the World Service Board of Trustees and the WSO BOD. The World Board, through its decision to make communication its top priority, has placed this issue at the top of its list. We were not yet ready to identify members to perform this task, but will do so at our December meeting. We will continue to report on how this item/issue will be addressed.

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Meeting with the Human Resource Panel.

We knew that the members of the HRP have been discussing how best to carry out their assigned work and that they too are involved in developing something completely new. Like us, they want to develop a system that provides for the long-term needs of the Fellowship. We met with them in a face to face meeting and, after discussing the relationship between the HRP and the WB, the consensus was that while the two bodies remain in communication, the board would not become involved in any of the HRP issues.

We discussed the HRP concerns including the:

- a) Facilitation of elections - We suggested that they access former WSC Policy Committee members for assistance to develop guidelines regarding the election process.
- b) WSC co-facilitator - We suggested that they explore options to assist the conference, should the conference ask for it.

The Board and the HRP enjoyed an easy and respectful relationship at the meeting, and have decided to meet again before WSC'99.

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WSC Co-facilitator

The board was approached about the subject of the role of the WSC Co-facilitator as well as what steps to take to address the fact that the body only elected one member to facilitate next year's conference. After some discussion, the board believes that the co-facilitator role was clearly identified at WSC'98--to facilitate the WSC annual meeting. The board also decided that, since the conference clearly identified the co-facilitator position and the HRP as being separate from the World Board, the WB will plan to be prepared to assist the conference in any way which it may find necessary.

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Reports, reports and more reports

As mentioned previously, we received a variety of reports from staff and/or existing workgroups on the routine, ongoing work. In a brief manner, we shall attempt to present the highlights of these reports. (For a listing of the membership of our various workgroups, please see the box on page 4.) While we made a decision to establish our committees prior to WSC'99, we will continue, for now, to use workgroups to do our work in the meantime.

Translations evaluation workgroup- this group is responsible to interface with the translations department of the WSO and local translation committees (LTCs). Work is ongoing in assisting the

translations of literature and approving the production of translations. WB decided to maintain this workgroup through WSC'99.

NA Way Editorial Board- responsible for editorial planning for the magazine. Four members of the WB were assigned to serve on the editorial board until further notice. Prior to this meeting, the chairs of the two previous boards and the WSC Chair served in this capacity. We thank these members for their service during the previous years.

Reaching Out Workgroup - responsible for editorial content of this periodical aimed at H&I subcommittees and the institutionalized addict. This workgroup has been maintained through WSC'99, or until the board's committee system is in full operation.

WCNA-28- while there is no specific workgroup assigned to this task, a member of the board is working with WSO staff on addressing issues related to NA's next world convention to be held in Cartagena, Colombia. A full report will be given at the December board meeting regarding this issue.

Unity Day - Another task with no assigned workgroup, but a recognition that it has to continue as a task of the WB. We discussed whether or not to hold Unity Day in conjunction with another activity in 1999, or have it as an entirely separate event. While there are merits for both sides of this issue, we decided to ask the Executive Committee to come back with a recommendation to the full board.

Development Forum (DF)- As a result of input received at WSC'98, changes were made to this year's Development Forum. For the first time, eligibility has been expanded to include North American and Canadian regions and other NA communities. The criteria for consideration are that there must be an established service committee that serves the country or region, and secondly that there is an inability to fund a representative to the WSC. The deadline for your request and return of the completed form is December 25th. If you have any questions or need more information, please contact the WSO. The WB assigned four members to this workgroup.

Fellowship Development - The WB also discussed the strategy used to determine Fellowship Development trips--at present to rotate developmental trips to each zone outside of North America on an annual basis. We focus on zonal forums because they provide the best opportunities to meet with members from the various communities in the zone. Exceptions are those communities, which have a significant need to address. Within the United States, our efforts are generally aimed at responding to requests that we receive. These are typically multi regional or zonal workshops or forums but we also have responded to requests for specific assistance from individual regions.

Public Relations - Currently Narcotics Anonymous has consultancy status with the United Nations, as a non-governmental organization. This status allows for six members to be credentialed. At present the WB decided to maintain the staff assigned to this project and will decide later this year which WB members would be assigned to this area.

Unified Budget - A workgroup of present and former world service treasurers are working with WSO staff to develop the framework for the Unified Budget. At our December meeting, the board will approve the Jan-June 1999 budget, and then at the March meeting we will address the 1999-2000 budget. It is this second budget which will reflect the project plans for that conference year.

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Existing and new workgroups

WB Executive Committee: Michael M, Mary Kay B, Susan C, Jon T

Translation Evaluations: Susan C., Eddie E., Tata M.

NA Way Editorial Board: Jane N, Bella A, Craig R., Stephan L.

Reaching Out: Craig R., David J.

Unified Budget: Susan C, Mary C-V, Bob McD.

Development Forum: Larry R, Mary Kay B., Claudio L, Cary S.

NAWS News: Bella A, Stephan L.

WCNA-28: Cary S

Issue Discussion Papers for WSC'99:
Resolution A: Jane N, David J.
Communications: Bob J, Tony W, Bella A, Stephan L.
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Fellowship Intellectual Property Trust

This meeting was the first time we sat as Trustees of the FIPT. We received an overview of the responsibilities involved, and listened to the report from the WSO about day-to-day trust management activities.

We had a discussion about recovery literature on the Internet, and agreed with the previous trustees that, until there is more clarity about the intellectual property rights and the Internet, no recovery literature would be posted by the WSO nor should be by other individuals or service committees. We also discussed ways of informing the fellowship about the issues involved, but decided to hold off until after our December meeting, when we will have had a more in-depth discussion about our website and the Internet.

As we received information about new items such as the Miracles Happen book, the Step Working Guides, and various service-related handbooks and guides, our discussions focused on what constituted recovery literature and service literature, in terms of the FIPT. The final FIPT-related discussions centered on possible trademark infringements and how trademark registrations around the world are prioritized.

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World Service Office and the Audits

One of our most significant responsibilities is oversight of your WSO. We received a report from Executive Management about the current financial status and were gratified to see that the office appears to be meeting or exceeding the projections in terms of its 1998 budget. Executive Management gave us an overview of how to examine the financial reports we receive.

Our major concern with the office centered on staffing levels. Many of us were around in 1997 when the WSO had to layoff some staff in order to counteract a downward trend in sales. We commented that it was our hope that more staff could be hired to do the work so that existing staff would not be burdened further--in fact that the load upon the staff could be lightened somewhat.

The final discussion in this section was a brief discussion we had about the upcoming scheduled price increase--the WSO is scheduled to implement a 5% across the board price increase every three years, the next increase to take place in January of 1999. We had some discussion about steps taken this past year to decrease the discount levels and its effects upon regional service offices and the WSO. We left the final decision to the Executive Committee who has since communicated to the fellowship that this increase has been delayed until January of 2000.

During our meeting, we had a two-hour session with a representative of the independent auditing firm who presented us with the 1997 WSO and 1996 and 1997 World Convention Corporation audits. We had a lengthy question and answer session, during which many of our members asked about the qualifications listed in prior audits. During this session we found out that the two qualifiers centered around the fact that the WSO had to switch auditors in 1997, so they were not physically present for the final inventory of 1996.

Additionally, under the existing system, neither the office nor the convention corporation were following a functional classification system. (Such a system requires that the accounting be based on specific functions and/or projects, rather than general responsibilities.) We did, however, discover that the auditors had received all information requested and provided both companies a clean bill with the exception listed above. They were present for the 1997 final inventory, and we will be using a functional accounting system in the unified budget, answering both qualifications. The auditor has provided a letter that explains these qualifications in more detail. This letter is available on our website or by request from the WSO.

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Miscellaneous Items

Earlier in our meeting, we had a discussion about developing a code of ethics for the board. While we all agreed that each member of the board recognized that we should uphold NA principles contained in our Steps, Traditions, and Concepts, we believed that we needed to look into this a bit deeper. We asked staff to collate the various ground rules, values, and other items we had agreed to in one list, and we would discuss it further at our next meeting.

One of the first decisions we made as a board was to adopt the Twelve Concepts for NA Service as our guiding principles. During our meeting we determined that we needed to follow-up on this decision by coming to a consensus on their meanings for us, as a board. To that end, each member agreed to write out the salient points and look at the study questions in each chapter of the booklet. We will use our notes as a focal point for our discussions on the concepts during the opening of our future meetings.

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A final "Thank You" from the Board

Thank you for having confidence in us. We are finding the work challenging, but very rewarding. The energy level at the meeting was high. Our December agenda looks no less daunting as we prepare for the CAR, discuss the CTF, work on prioritizing the 16 other items, and continue the discussions from this meeting.

We managed to complete the agenda during our three days together, and most of us have assigned tasks to complete, such as this issue of the News. Again, it is our hope that you will continue to provide us with feedback on our reporting. Until then, thank you for letting us serve, as your World Board.