

NA WORLD SERVICES UPDATE

NA World Services News

Volume 1, Issue 1

PO Box 9999, Van Nuys, CA 91409
world_board@na.org

June 1998

Aloha, G'day, Greetings,

Guten tag, Hello, Hola, Kia Ora

Welcome to the first newsletter from your new World Board. (For more information about who makes up the World Board, please refer to box below.) With this issue, we are starting a new type of communication, one that we hope you will find easy to understand, yet comprehensive. Our intent is two-way communication, so please let us know if this format meets your need for information about our activities. All input is gratefully accepted and will be carefully considered.

We want this information to be readily available to all, but we need your help. Please share this newsletter with your areas, groups, and any interested members. We will publish the News after every meeting in English, French, German, Portuguese, and Spanish. We also hope to use The NA Way Magazine to communicate with the fellowship about a variety of issues of concern to our membership. We adopted the Twelve Concepts for NA Service as our operating principles^{3/4}it is our most sincere hope that these efforts will herald a new level of communication called for in Concept Eight. But, as stated before, we must do this together, so please help us with your comments and suggestions.

The NA world service structure,

as we knew it, is no longer . . .

As you are most likely aware, the participants of WSC'98 made the most significant structural change in NA's history since 1976-the existing world level system of our service structure was completely revised. The former structure was eliminated and replaced by a single board, empowered to fulfill all of the responsibilities of the previous world service committees and boards.

Who serves on this new World Board?

The World Board was designed to have twenty-four members, but the participants of WSC'98 chose to elect only eighteen NA members to serve a variety of terms. The individual terms of office were arrived after a drawing by lot. Our members are:

NAME	REGION	TERM
Bella A	Australia	6 years
Bob J	Florida	2 years
Cary S	Chicagoland	4 years

Claudio L	Mexico	4 years
Craig R.	Carolina	6 years
Daniel S	German-speaking	2 years
David J	United Kingdom	2 years
Floyd B	Metro Detroit	2 years
Jane N	Connecticut	6 years
Jon T	New Jersey	4 years
Larry R.	Hawaii	4 years
Lib E	Aoteroa-New Zealand	6 years
Mario T	Australia	2 years
Mary Kay B	Carolina	2 years
Michael M	Northern California	4 years
Steve L.	Southern California	4 years
Susan C	Washington/N. Idaho	6 years
Tony W.	Carolina	6 years

The first meeting

Going where no one has gone before . . .

The only thing we all knew, prior to our first meeting, was that we would be serving on the new World Board, in a structure unlike any previous system at the world level. We had varying amounts of experience at this level as members of world service committees, boards, and former regional delegates. Many of us felt some anxiety as we headed off to this first meeting.

The Interim Committee, which would cease to exist after the first day of our meeting, had felt strongly that we needed to start out differently. Most previous committees felt the pressure to begin work immediately on their assigned tasks, and had "hit the ground running." It was their belief that, in order to fulfill the board's commitment to the fellowship, we needed to explore our members' individual strengths, and our ability to work together as a board.

In the first part of our meeting we identified some strengths and skills as important. They were: clear communication, willingness to listen and respond to people, policy and guidelines development, organizational experience, consensus-building, capacity for hard work and faith in a higher power. We worked together to review our goals for the Board and shared our hopes for world service and NA as a whole.

It was inspiring to find out that, although we came from different backgrounds and with different recovery experience, we all had very similar dreams for NA. Our collective dream was: "That every addict seeking recovery has an opportunity to experience NA recovery in their own language and culture, and that NA becomes accepted by the public as the program of choice for addicts seeking recovery." Once we knew that we were all willing to work in the same direction, we then explored ways to work quickly and effectively in small and large working teams.

We adopted some ground rules for how we would act as a board: we would practice mutual respect by offering all members equal attention and encouraging open and honest communication. We would share information, accept collective responsibility, practice trust and empowerment, and stay away from personality-based discussions and negativity in general.

We agreed to practice creative problem-solving methods in our efforts to accomplish our goals. As an example, we used a closing session for our meeting, allowing each member to share their experience with this meeting, and to take care of any unresolved issue, regardless of its nature. We also committed to establishing an atmosphere of recovery in our board meetings, and to seek spiritual guidance and direction in our efforts.

We continued on, holding to these ideals, and began to look at our workload. We quickly saw the necessity of selecting a group to serve as our Executive Committee to work with the World Service Office management between our meetings as well as to take a much more in-depth look at what needed to be accomplished during this conference year. To that end, we chose Michael M to serve as our first Chairperson, Mary Kay B as Vice-chairperson, Jon T as our Secretary, and Susan C as our Treasurer. These members have the daunting task of developing some recommendations for our collective consideration about our workload.

Our meeting schedule

The more we looked at our workload, the more we came to realize that we had to have four more meetings between now and next year's conference. For example, we have the responsibility to develop two budgets: one for the first six months of 1999, and one for the 1999-2000 conference year. We also need to present some recommendations to conference participants about the various projects being worked on by the previous service bodies, perhaps some proposals about how segments of the Fellowship Development Plan may be implemented, not to mention looking at the development of our internal guidelines.

Our next meeting is scheduled for October 8-10, 1998, in Chatsworth, California. We also plan to meet around the beginning of December, and twice next year prior to the conference, in January and March. We will continue to update you about our progress and our plans on a regular basis.

In closing,

We would like to thank all of you for the confidence you have expressed in us. We ask you to join with us in a unified effort to: help us assist efforts to carry the message of recovery from active addiction to the still-suffering addict and to help heal some of the wounds in our fellowship. If we as a fellowship are to heal, we can only do it through a unified, collective effort.

We intend to maintain open and clear channels of communications between our board and you as conference participants, and the fellowship as a whole. If you have any suggestions, ideas, comments or questions, please contact the World Board through the WSO.