

THE DA focus

The Quarterly World Service Newsletter for the Fellowship of Debtors Anonymous

August
2009

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The DA Focus is published quarterly on a fiscal year basis by the DA General Service Board. It is mailed to all registered DA groups and emailed to all subscribers of the DA eNews.

Conference Has Diverse History Over The Years

From the beginning, the Debtors Anonymous General Service Board was determined that the annual World Service Conference would support DA's growth as a diverse national, even international, Fellowship.

Although most DA meetings were still in the New York area in 1987, the GSB made an extraordinary commitment to rotate the location of the WSC to cities that then had only a handful of DA meetings. In its first six years, it rotated between DA's early centers of New York, Los Angeles, Washington, DC, Chicago, San Francisco, and Boston, helping to lay to rest the accusation by some early members that DA was run exclusively by "those New Yorkers."

And after 23 years, only two cities (New York and Boston) have been the location of the Conference three times. Los Angeles, Chicago, and Dallas have hosted it twice, and the rest of the Conferences have been spread (once each) among Washington DC, Seattle, Albuquerque, Ann Arbor, Minneapolis, Baltimore, Philadelphia, Sacramento, and Salt Lake City.

The 2010 Conference will be held in Denver, Colorado, and 2011 in Detroit, Michigan.

DA Delegates Flock To Dallas To Forge Annual Group Conscience

About 100 recovering debtors will descend on Dallas, Texas the third week in August to reflect on the state of Debtors Anonymous and forge a group conscience going forward.

The 23rd annual DA World Service Conference will convene for 5 days at the Sheraton Grand Hotel in the Dallas suburb of Irving. It marks the second time over the years that the Conference has met in the Dallas area. A more-than-full schedule of orientation, committee meetings, Fellowship Day workshops and a two-day formal Convocation will occupy General Service Representatives (GSRs), Intergroup Service Representatives (ISRs), and General Service Board Trustees, who make up the voting delegates to the Conference.

A Host Committee composed of DA members from the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex has been working with Trustees and the staff of the General Service Office for more than two years on the logistics of the Conference. Veteran delegates are hopeful it will continue the smooth and mostly trouble-free experiences of recent Conferences in Sturbridge, Mass. and Salt Lake City, Utah.

The World Conference is the highlight of the year for many DA members who are active at the World Service level. GSRs and ISRs work on Conference committees year round, but it is at the Conference that dozens of issues of great importance to DA are studied in depth, discussed intently, and brought to a vote in an effort to reach both a spiritual and practical consensus on where the Fellowship has been and where it wants to be in the future. The Conference also provides guidance to the General Service Board and General Service

Office, which work to implement the Fellowship's wishes during the rest of the year.

Debtors Anonymous established the first World Service Conference in 1987, still early in its history, with only a small number of members and meetings in a few places. The Conference came after a trial run of five "annual meetings", all held in the DA heartland of New York City, where the Fellowship was founded. By 1987, however, DA had begun to spread around the country, and trustees were eager to encourage that national growth by taking the Conference to a different location each year (see related story on this page).

The Conference is run on a very formal protocol, because in addition to being the primary means for establishing a group conscience for DA, it is also the annual meeting that is required for all non-profit corporations. By virtue of its status as a registered non-profit, DA is required to hold an annual meeting and observe a number of state and federal laws and regulations.

One of the questions to be answered at this year's Conference is the location of the 2012 WSC. Because of the substantial lead time required to put together a major event of this sort, the Conference normally picks its future location up three years in advance.

Denver has already been selected as the site of the 2010 Conference, and Detroit for 2011. It is not yet known which cities will submit bids to the Conference Committee for the right to hold the 2012 WSC. Bids from various cities go to the Conference Committee, which makes a recommendation for approval by the full Convocation.

Office Committee

The Office Committee oversees the operation of the General Service Office in Needham, Massachusetts. In recent months Office Manager Howard S. has been attending part of the committee's monthly conference call. The committee has been reviewing the Office's personnel needs, and is working on a revision of the GSO Personnel Manual.

Literature Publications Committee

The Literature Publications Committee has been working with an attorney to finalize the contract to be used between the writer of the 12 Steps & 12 Traditions book and DA. It is also working on having a standardized contract to use when having existing DA literature translated to languages other than English.

The committee recently approved the third draft of the new pamphlet that combines the Communicating with Creditors and Debt Payment pamphlets into one. This work will be presented to the WSC Literature Committee for approval this year.

Literature Services

The Literature Services Committee, a subcommittee of Literature Publications, is reviewing the first draft of the BDA Annual Business Plan pamphlet, and is also doing the final edit of a How To Start An Intergroup pamphlet. The committee anticipates receiving drafts of the BDA Numbers booklet and the DA Newcomers booklet soon for review and edits. As approved in concept by the World Service Conference, and with recent input from the WSC Literature Committee, the PRG/PRM pamphlet will soon be the subject of a revision process to include more "nuts and bolts" direction on how to conduct a Pressure Relief Meeting.

Nominations Committee

The Nominations Committee has updated its list of potential Trustees and Appointed Committee Members, drawing on a list of GSRs and ISRs who have attended the World Service Conference from 2003 to 2008. The committee is working on updating the Trustee Manual and preparing its report for the 2009 WSC.

InfoTech Committee

InfoTech has made a lot of headway with a major redesign of the World Service website www.debtorsanonymous.org. It now has a prototype of a design and is populating the pages to get an idea of the way the site would flow. The committee expects to have a demonstration of the website redesign at the 2009 World Service Conference.

The committee is also tracking activity on the website as part of DA's ongoing statistical reporting. A breakdown of recent statistics from April 1 to June 30 follows:

Website Visitors: 36,135

Unique Visitors: 24,642

Page views: 223,468

Top 3 downloads include the 12 Steps--2,032; the Tools--1,721; and the WSC registration packet--1,093.

Public Information Committee

The Public Information Committee has been identifying mental health providers in the Chicago area in order to do a mailing of the PI Manual letter to professionals along with the DA Pamphlet, and the Twelve Signposts and Twelve Questions flyers.

Communications Committee

The Communications Committee continues its work building the Recovery Stories section of the World Service website. The Recovery Stories model strong, long-term recovery in DA and

with recent additions, total 15 stories, with more being added regularly.

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee of the General Service Board of Debtors Anonymous meets monthly by telephone conference call to discuss all matters of finance related to the General Service Office (GSO) and the General Service Board (GSB) on behalf of the fellowship of Debtors Anonymous as a whole.

In addition to reviewing the monthly financial reports, the Finance Committee has forwarded to the GSB a final draft of the *Treasurer's Manual* for its approval as service material. The *Treasurer's Manual* was originally produced by the Resource Development Committee of the World Service Conference and then forwarded to the Finance Committee for review. The Finance Committee has been working on the 2009/2010 Annual Spending Plan and the Annual Report to the World Service Conference.

Conference Support Committee

The Conference Support Committee continues its work on the structure of the annual World Service Conference, identifying ways in which the Conference can work more smoothly and productively. It also works with the Host Committees of the 2009 and future Conferences on specific Conference details.

Long-Range Planning Committee

The Long-Range Planning Committee has been at work all year on the 5-Year Plan requested by the 2007 WSC. Details of the plan have been finalized for presentation at this year's Conference.

DA members use the 11th Tool (Service) by performing service at every level--individual, group, intergroup and World Service.

There are eight committees and three caucuses that meet at each annual World Service Conference to work on DA's business. Here are some highlights of the work the 2008-09 committees and caucuses have undertaken over the past few months.

Literature Committee

The WSC Literature Committee has nearly completed its review of the existing DA pamphlets. It received input from the Diversity Caucus on language in the Sponsorship pamphlet, and will discuss it further.

The Lit Committee has been reviewing pamphlets for their relevance to DA's primary purpose, as requested by the GSB. They also hope to review A Currency of Hope, if time permits.

Business Debtors Anonymous

No Report.

Conference Committee

No Report.

FCC

The FCC has completed most of the Issues and Concerns that were assigned to it at the 2008 World Service Conference. The subcommittee dealing with the development of the Adopt A Loner program is still hard at work to come up with the proper way to handle the program. The FCC is also creating an action plan to take over administration of literature grants.

Public Information

There were no reports from the Armed Services, Hispanic Outreach, Outreach to Professionals, or Public Service Announcements subcommittees.

A presentation for outreach to professionals was revised to incorporate suggestions from the General Service Board. The Hispanic Outreach subcommittee intends to submit a flyer about a Spanish-language online meeting for GSB approval.

The committee is considering how it might utilize its remaining funds for a presence at national or local conferences for professionals before the end of the Conference year. Two dates will be set for future media contact training sessions via telephone conference call.

The dates will be announced at the World Service Conference.

Hospitals, Institutions, Prisons

The HIP Committee has been busy reaching out to persons who are confined and unable to attend face-to-face meetings. One member brings weekly DA meetings to a women's prison in Wyoming. Another is becoming certified to be a volunteer at a prison in Pennsylvania, a requirement for starting a DA meeting there. Another has been working to try bring a meeting to a prisoner in Texas, and have sent DA materials to an inmate there. Other HIP outreach has included placing DA literature in hospitals and rehabilitation institutions. One member has scheduled a meeting with the chief of programs for a Los Angeles jail.

Internal Operations

The IOC met on July 13, for the last time during the 2008-2009 Conference year. It is awaiting feedback from the General Service Board on a proposal it developed to accept electronic payments for literature and contributions at the General Service Office.

It also applauded the work of the GSB Info Tech Committee on creating an online group registration and re-registration form. This was one of the committee's recommendations at the 2008 WSC.

Intergroup Caucus

As the Conference year draws to a close, the main focus of the Intergroup Caucus is supporting the telephone groups in creating an Intergroup specifically for telephone groups. Caucus members have attended telephone meetings and announced that the caucus is available to support them if they choose to form an Intergroup, and also to inform them of the possible advantages of forming such an Intergroup.

Interested DA members have been invited to attend the Intergroup Caucus calls to get more information. The Intergroup Caucus understands that the formation of an Intergroup needs to be done by the participating groups

rather than by the Intergroup Caucus. The caucus members see themselves in more of a support role rather than a leadership role during this process.

Technology Caucus

The main project for the Tech Caucus has been the development of a DA website template for any intergroups or individual groups who want an Internet presence. This template would be a standardized template with the correct versions of the Steps, Tools and Promises. The template is complete and is ready for consideration at this year's WSC.

Another project is to have workshops by phone. There are a lot of DA members that attend phone meetings that don't have the capability to attend a share-a-day so the idea is to have workshop on the phone. The workshop last approx. 2 hours and can be on any topic. The moderator decides on the topics and finds speakers for that workshop.

Diversity Caucus

The Diversity Caucus' main focus this year was the formulation of diversity-related questions to pass along to each caucus members' committee; the questions would serve as a group inventory for the GSRs and ISRs on each committee.

Recently the caucus was asked by the Literature Committee to come up with a response for the Sponsorship Pamphlet dealing with LGBT (lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender) DA members choosing a sponsor. After much discussion and revision, the caucus drafted a response to send to the Literature Committee.

WSC Host Committee

Each city that hosts a World Service Conference has a dedicated Host Committee, that works closely the General Service Office to put handle hundreds of logistical details involved in a successful WSC.

Dallas is busy finalizing the 2009 plans, while committees in Denver and Detroit are already working on plans for 2010 and 2011.

Archives Issue A "Wish List"

DA's Archives have a wish list.

Since the General Service Board created an Archives Committee a little more than 3 years ago, Board members have been busy collecting, sorting, and cataloguing the thousands of bits of DA history that have been donated to the Fellowship. The cataloguing process has reached the point where they are beginning to identify which specific items are missing from the Archives collection.

Among the most-prized items that would help close some of the gaps in the current collection are issues of the G.S.B. Quarterly News, a newsletter that was published from 1997 to 1999 by the GSB. Some issues are missing, while others are in poor condition. Also being sought are issues of Board Call, another GSB newsletter that was published from 1999 to 2004. Again, a few issues are missing and clean copies are needed of others.

Another category of items being solicited are meeting directories. DA published several national and international meeting directories during the 1990s and early 2000s, and contributions of these would be greatly appreciated, along with older copies of local meeting lists.

Contributions to the Archives are always appreciated, and should be sent to the Archives, care of DA General Service Office, PO Box 920888, Needham, Mass. 02492.

Questions and comments can be directed to the office e-mail at office@debtorsanonymous.org

The DA Focus

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Debtors Anonymous Spending Plan to Actual

	PLAN 7/1/2008 to 6/30/2009	ACTUAL 7/1/2008 to 6/30/2009
REVENUE		
Literature Sales	\$ 79,900	\$ 74,021
Group Contributions	\$ 43,000	\$ 46,402
Individual Contributions	\$ 25,000	\$ 31,515
Other sales	\$ 800	\$ 722
Invitation to Prosperity	\$ -	\$ -
World Svc. Month Contributions	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,535
12 & 12 Book Appeal	\$ -	\$ -
JH Scholarship Fund	\$ 7,000	\$ 2,249
Interest Income	\$ 3,300	\$ 2,011
Misc. Income	\$ 100	\$ 704
World Service Conference	\$ 7,000	\$ 52,650
TOTAL REVENUE	<u>\$ 168,600</u>	<u>\$ 212,809</u>
COST OF GOODS SOLD		
Phamphlet Printing	\$ 22,040	\$ 17,832
Book Printing	\$ 4,560	\$ 3,541
Audio Visual Cost	\$ 380	\$ 539
Production Cost	\$ 760	\$ 255
Shipping & Postage	\$ 8,740	\$ 8,023
Shipping Supplies	\$ 1,520	\$ 792
Total Cost of Goods Sold	<u>\$ 38,000</u>	<u>\$ 30,982</u>
GROSS PROFIT	<u>\$ 130,600</u>	<u>\$ 181,827</u>
EXPENSE		
Board Administration	\$ 6,650	\$ 2,929
Board Travel	\$ 20,000	\$ 16,097
ACM Admin	\$ -	\$ -
General Administration	\$ 46,260	\$ 16,147
Office Administration	\$ 14,475	\$ 8,329
Payroll Expense	\$ 53,500	\$ 43,813
Other Related Expenses	\$ 15,500	\$ 53,396
TOTAL EXPENSE	<u>\$ 156,385</u>	<u>\$ 140,711</u>
NET INCOME FROM OPERATIONS	<u>\$ (25,785)</u>	<u>\$ 41,116</u>
Other Revenue & Expenses		
Funds Transferred from Reserve Account	\$ 25,785	\$ -
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 41,116</u>

Note: Unaudited—for information purposes only.