

# THE DA focus

The Quarterly World Service Newsletter for the Fellowship of Debtors Anonymous

**December  
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.*

## Updated Readings Maintain Our Unity

DA unity is maintained when groups everywhere carry the same message to the debtor who still suffers.

In recent years, the World Service Conference has modified or updated three of the governing documents or readings commonly used at DA meetings—the 12 Recovery Tools, the 12 Signposts On The Road to Becoming a Compulsive Debtor, and the 12 Concepts for World Service. Most groups use the updated versions in their meetings, but a few groups still have not replaced the older, no-longer-approved, versions.

The current, Conference-approved versions of all of DA's readings and documents are available on the DA world service website. Versions of the Tools and Concepts, as well as several others, are also available in printer-friendly formats perfect for use at meetings through the Literature link on the website.

## Conference Stands Behind Steps, Traditions; Endorses Plan For DA's Long-Term Growth

Delegates to the 23<sup>rd</sup> annual DA World Service Conference, held this August in Dallas, Texas, stood staunchly behind DA's 12 Steps and 12 Traditions and endorsed an initiative for the growth of the "Beloved Fellowship" over the next five years.

By a margin of 2 to 1, the delegates rejected a proposed Charter change that could have altered the Steps and Traditions as the core program for DA's recovery and unity. Those opposed to the proposal, which would have allowed a much less rigorous procedure for changes to the Steps and Traditions, feared that it could embroil the Conference in controversies and take the Steps and Traditions out of the hands of the DA groups, where they reside now.

The Conference also unanimously endorsed a 5-Year Plan for growth that had been mandated by the 2006 Conference. The plan sets forth an ambitious, but realistic plan for DA's growth over the next half decade. The product of over two years' intensive work by the General Service Board's Long-Range Planning Committee, the 5-Year Plan sets forth a large number of specific actions aimed at helping DA grow and be of greater service to the debtor who still suffers.

Perhaps the most touching event in a largely positive Conference was the coining of the phrase, "The Beloved Fellowship" to refer to DA. Used early in the Conference week by one speaker, it resonated with many members and was picked up

and used again and again as the week progressed, expressing the affection many delegates feel for the fellowship and its members.

The Dallas Host Committee, wearing trademark silver-and-pink tiaras, worked tirelessly to house, feed, and move delegates smoothly from room to room at the hotel in suburban Irving, Texas, just outside Dallas. As at any DA Conference, there were a few humorous moments. The DA Conference was cheek-by-jowl with the annual meeting of the Texas Municipal Clerks Association, and many GSRs and ISRs were surprised in the dinner line or elevators to be asked which city or town they served as clerk.

Several committees and caucuses of the Conference used motions and recommendations to encourage work on the 12 Steps as a key factor in personal recovery and the fellowship's growth.

Committees also endorsed proposals for expanded 12th-Step work. One motion, by the Hospitals, Institutions, and Prisons Committee, asked that copies of the book "A Currency Of Hope" be sent to all federal prisons in the U.S. Details of how to accomplish such a mass mailing in line with federal prison regulations are now being researched.

The 2010 WSC will be held in Denver, CO. A more complete report on the Conference proceedings will be mailed to all Conference participants in the near future.

**Communications**

This year the Communications Committee is planning on putting out four issues each of the recovery newsletter *Ways & Means* and service newsletter *DA Focus*. The next issue of *Ways & Means* will focus on the movement toward working the 12 Steps which is growing throughout DA. The committee also hopes to complete a Unified Style Guide for all DA communications media.

**Literature Services**

The Literature Services Committee reports that the long-awaited book on DA's Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions is in process. The committee is currently reviewing the first chapter submitted by the contract writer.

Work on revising the Pressure Relief Groups/Pressure Relief Meetings pamphlet is temporarily stalled due to the writer's resignation. A new volunteer writer is being sought.

**Finance**

The Finance Committee of the General Service Board meets monthly by telephone conference call to discuss all matters of finance related to the General Service Office and the GSB on behalf of the fellowship as a whole. The Finance Committee is working with its bookkeeper preparing the final accounting report on the 2009 World Service Conference as well as developing responses for Issues & Concerns assigned to the committee.

**Conference Support**

The Conference Support Committee has been in regular contact with the 2010 WSC Host Committee and has reviewed and approved its spending plan for the event. Final approval of the spending plan

awaits action by the full GSB. Additionally, the CSC has reviewed the proposed contract with the hotel for the 2010 WSC in Denver and approval of that awaits further action by the GSB.

The Committee has been attempting to prioritize its work for this year and will shortly be setting up planned telephone conference calls on service for the coming year. Four are planned. Committee members are working on responses to the Issues and Concerns referred to the Committee at the 2009 Conference and are reviewing the evaluations submitted by GSRs attending that WSC.

The CSC is still awaiting the final Treasurer's Report for the 2009 WSC from the Host Committee. It also plans to undertake a review of the John H. Scholarship distribution guidelines.

**Information Technology**

The Info Tech Committee of the GSB has been working to get a major redesign of the DA website up and running. As demonstrated at the 2009 WSC, the site will be much more newcomer friendly, with easier navigation. InfoTech has also been working on security issues that have come up over the past few months.

Here are website statistics from 07/01/09 through 10/24/09:

- Visitors: 62,886
- Unique Visitors: 38,382
- Page Views: 293,381
- Average Time Spent On The Website: 3:32 minutes

The following is a summary of the number of hits received on some of the pages.

- Index/find: 50,245
- Literature: 18,255
- Find a Phone Meeting: 13,011

- Signs: 9,059
- Getting Started: 8,932
- Recovery Stories: 8,608
- Help: 8,606
- About: 5,895
- Steps: 5,669

**Nominations Committee**

The Nominations Committee is considering the nomination of a candidate for Class A (debtor) trustee, and is talking with other potential candidates.

The committee is also carefully reviewing the GSB bylaws with an eye toward making further revisions to the process for electing trustees and clarifying the language used in DA's governing documents. A number of revisions were made last year, and more will be considered this year.

**Public Information**

The Public Information Committee is considering a mailing of the DA Public Service Announcement to various radio stations. It is considering which types of stations to send these to, and also working on a spending plan for this to present to the full GSB for approval. The committee is also considering which professional conference to establish a DA presence at in the coming year.

**Ad Hoc eCommerce Committee**

An ad hoc committee of the GSB is studying a proposal by the WSC Internal Operations Committee for the increased use of eCommerce in DA. The committee has been working with eCommerce professionals to evaluate the proposal, and expects to make a report soon.

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 2009-10 committees and caucuses have undertaken over the past few months.

### Fellowship Communications

The Fellowship Communications Committee is discussing the best ways to help loner members of the DA Fellowship. An Adopt A Loner program that was previously active has become largely obsolete because of the growth of telephone and Internet meetings.

The committee is considering the development of a type of 12<sup>th</sup>-Step list that would make contact information more available, either on the national level, or by developing a template for Intergroups to develop local 12<sup>th</sup> Step lists.

### Business Debtors Anonymous

The BDA Committee met in September and October. It has divided into three subcommittees. The first uses telephone conference calls to sustain BDA through sponsorship. It involves an extensive step study and has 16 participants. The second is trying to prepare a step study guide supplement; it will involve a sharing of experiences in working the Steps. The Committee understands that it is not writing literature, but is collecting material for future literature writers. The third subcommittee is designed to develop a clear understanding of what it means to be debt-free in business. It intends to do so by means of a questionnaire, interviews, and sharing of experience.

### HIP Committee

The Hospitals, Institutions, and Prisons Committee met by conference call for the first time since the WSC in October 3, 2009.

Reports were given on a contact with the sheriff of Los Angeles County, California, connecting with a local women's correctional program, and on an ongoing prison meeting at the Wyoming Women's Center in Lusk, Wyoming. The DA group

there has been approved for inmate credit, and DA has been introduced to professionals and social workers at the facility.

A presentation has also been made to a community-based mental health facility in Chester, Pa., informing the staff about DA and providing a copy of *A Currency of Hope*. A committee member will be returning to the facility to address clients who are ready to reenter society.

The committee's GSB liaison is gathering information on the logistics of a proposal to purchase and mail copies of *A Currency of Hope* to 129 federal prison facilities, with an eye toward implementing the project if and when details can be satisfactorily worked out.

### Internal Operations

The Internal Operations Committee hopes to schedule a trip to the General Service Office for an efficiency assessment. The items to be addressed during that assessment are an ongoing discussion in the IOC's monthly calls.

The members have also committed to working closely with Tech Caucus. The plan is for each member to join the Tech Caucus group and have at least one IOC member attend the monthly call.

### Resource Development

Revenue for Debtors Anonymous is the focus of the Resource Development Committee. This includes finding ways to increase Seventh Tradition contributions and clarifying the use of Seventh Tradition funds, encouraging Debtors Anonymous member participation in service at all levels, and increasing awareness about the concept of self-support in Debtors Anonymous at the levels of group, Intergroup and World Service. The Resource Development Committee is

meeting once per month via conference call to address these challenges.

To that end, all six members are contributing thoughts and input towards finalizing the 2009/2010 John Henderson and World Service letters to be submitted to the General Service Board for approval. Once approved and finalized, both letters would be distributed to the fellowship at large.

Once the letters are completed and distributed, the RDC will begin to address the following questions and statements: Why should groups send money to the GSO? Why don't prosperous members give more? How can long-term members be encouraged to stay and give back to DA? How do meetings keep track of long-term members? Why is DA literature not as inexpensive as other 12-Step literature?

Other questions and statements include: Is there more to DA than my home group? Why doesn't my meeting contribute to Intergroup or the GSO? Why should meetings be self-supporting? Why isn't my group listed in the online meeting list? How can groups generate self support? Holding a meeting PRG. Developing clarity around a group spending plan.

### Public Information

The PI Committee has formed the following three subcommittees: Media, Helping Professionals, and Local/Regional PI Groups. Each subcommittee meets monthly in addition to the monthly meeting of the full committee. The PI Committee is working to develop ways to utilize the recently approved PI PowerPoint presentation to help carry the message. Work will continue on a flyer centered on outreach to the Spanish-speaking communities. The creation of a piece of service literature explaining the role of a local group PI representative is being considered.

## 'Hybrid' Meetings Now More Common In DA

Face-To-Face meetings still predominate in DA, despite the advances in technology that have made Internet and Telephone meetings more common in recent years. But now, various types of "hybrid" meetings are beginning to spring up to make recovery even more accessible.

For some time, several Intergroups and GSR Area Groups have had a telephone component to their service meetings. In some cases, the meetings are still face-to-face, but with a cell phone in the room so that others can call in to attend and participate. In others, the meetings are now all by telephone, or phone meetings alternate with in-person sessions.

For the first time, a regular face-to-face weekly DA meeting is offering a telephone option for attendance. The Super Solvency Group of Lexington, Kentucky is one of only two DA meetings in the Bluegrass State, and has tried to build membership for years. Now, it is inviting members from anywhere to join in its weekly meetings by cell phone. The call-in number and other details are widely publicized on message boards used by DA members.

## The **DA**Focus

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## Debtors Anonymous Spending Plan to Actual

	<b>PLAN</b> <b>7/1/2009</b> <b>to</b> <b>9/30/2009</b>	<b>ACTUAL</b> <b>7/1/2009</b> <b>to</b> <b>9/30/2009</b>
<b>REVENUE</b>		
Literature Sales	\$ 18,550	\$ 16,757
Group Contributions	11,750	9,784
Individual Contributions	8,000	7,180
Other sales	188	31
Invitation to Prosperity	-	-
World Svc. Month Contributions	650	-
12 & 12 Book Appeal	-	-
JH Scholarship Fund	625	933
Interest Income	513	260
Misc. Income	175	2,783
World Service Conference	52,000	49,669
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$ 92,451</b>	<b>\$ 87,397</b>
<b>COST OF GOODS SOLD</b>		
Phamphlet Printing	\$ 5,510	\$ 2,057
Book Printing	938	3,195
Audio Visual Cost	143	(302)
Production Cost	190	1,500
Shipping & Postage	2,185	2,003
Shipping Supplies	213	94
<b>Total Cost of Goods Sold</b>	<b>\$ 9,179</b>	<b>\$ 8,547</b>
<b>GROSS PROFIT</b>	<b>\$ 83,272</b>	<b>\$ 78,850</b>
<b>EXPENSE</b>		
Board Administration	\$ 1,400	\$ 551
Board Travel	5,775	2,757
ACM Admin	-	-
General Administration	14,905	4,461
Office Administration	3,358	1,969
Payroll Expense	11,375	13,369
Other Related Expenses	54,500	52,718
<b>TOTAL EXPENSE</b>	<b>\$ 91,313</b>	<b>\$ 75,825</b>
<b>NET INCOME FROM OPERATIONS</b>	<b>\$ (8,041)</b>	<b>\$ 3,025</b>
<b>Other Revenue &amp; Expenses</b>		
Funds Transferred from Reserve Account	\$ 8,041	\$ -
<b>SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 3,025</b>

Note: Unaudited—for information purposes only.