

## November 2011

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The DA Focus is published quarterly on a fiscal year basis by the D.A. General Service Board and emailed to all subscribers of the D.A. eNews. It is also available to download from the D.A. website at [www.debtorsanonymous.org](http://www.debtorsanonymous.org)

### Seeking Class A and Class B Trustees

Thirteen Trustees are currently serving on the General Service Board: eight Class As (recovering debtors) and five Class Bs (non-debtors). The Conference is looking for three Class As and one Class B to help do the work of the Fellowship. Please go to [debtorsanonymous.org](http://debtorsanonymous.org) for the qualifications for this rewarding service.

### Issues & Concerns Now Online

The General Service Board is archiving Issues & Concerns on the web site, with their replies from the committees. In a second phase, D.A. members and groups will be able to submit their Issues & Concerns on the web site.

## Self-Support and Growing D.A. A Message from the GSB Chair

Perhaps none of the Twelve Traditions is as difficult for members of Debtors Anonymous to observe as Tradition Seven: "Every D.A. group ought to be self-supporting, declining outside contributions."

As compulsive debtors, we have a long history of believing and expecting that someone else will pay for our wants and needs. Even when we've stopped debting in every part of our lives, this ingrained attitude often carries over to our groups and Intergroups, and to the World Service level. We have dreams, goals, and visions for our Fellowship, but we hope (we call it "trust") that someone else—someone more affluent or more capable—will pay for them.

This D.A. paradox was addressed head-on at the annual World Service Conference this August. The Conference marked a double anniversary: D.A.'s thirty-fifth birthday and the twenty-fifth WSC, which has now served for a quarter century as our Fellowship-wide group conscience. As chair of the D.A. General Service Board, I used the time allocated to me for an annual "State of the Fellowship" talk to share an historical perspective on this issue.

For twenty-five years, D.A.'s trusted servants have gathered annually to talk about how we can grow and where we want to go. Each year, our enthusiastic committees create an extensive list of dreams, goals, and projects that could build our Fellowship, and realize its

potential. We are absolutely second to none when it comes to developing visions. But sadly, we have not been in the same ballpark when it comes to paying for the visions we so passionately say we desire.

Each year we return to the Conference with most of those projects undone, or barely started. Each year, for more than two decades, we have come up with virtually the same list of prospective books, pamphlets, web site improvements, technological innovations, public information outreach programs, foreign-language translations, and many other critical items that could carry our message to a world in desperate need of it.

We watch as we see other Twelve-Step Fellowships smaller than D.A. embrace more fully than us the principles of self-support embodied in the Twelve Traditions. To be sure, we have made tremendous progress, but that progress has been painfully slow. We have experienced only a fraction of the growth the talent and financial resources of our membership could foster.

Only half our registered D.A. groups and Intergroups, and only a tiny percentage of our individual members, contribute anything at all to carry the D.A. message.

We often talk about the dream so many of our members have that D.A. will "come of age", as other Twelve-Step Fellowships have once they left the years of their

*(Continued on page 5)*

## General Service Board Committee Reports

### Communications

Following a suggestion from the Communications Committee, Issues & Concerns and replies from the Conference are being archived on the web site.

ComCom published the summer issues of *Ways & Means*, D.A.'s "meeting in print," and *The DA Focus*, the World Service newsletter to the Fellowship. Both publications are free downloads on the web site. ComCom also produces the eNews blasts announcing Fellowship-wide conference calls on various topics, new issues of *W&M* and the *Focus*, and service opportunities. ComCom is also working with the GSB Legal Affairs committee on the permissions and releases necessary to create audio files downloadable from the website.

### Conference Support

With the WSC Conference Committee taking on the tasks of reviewing and updating the Host Committee Handbook, reviewing the John H. Scholarship guidelines and the WSC bidding guidelines, the Conference Support Committee has turned their attention to other responsibilities. These include refining the Issues & Concerns processing and publishing, setting the topics and schedule for WSC training / orientation phone meetings, researching electronic survey options, reviewing the flyer policy, and several other developing projects.

### Information Technology

Info Tech is working to make mp3 recordings of recovery and service material available on the D.A. web site, [www.debtorsanonymous.org](http://www.debtorsanonymous.org). Based on the successful "broadcast" (via telephone conference call) of a segment of the Fellowship Day program at the 2011 World Service Conference, the committee is also exploring how such an event can be

repeated and possibly expanded. Info Tech continues to make periodic enhancements to the web site and to explore ways in which a major redesign can be done once funds become available.

### Legal Affairs

The Legal Affairs Committee is working with the 2012 Host Committee to ensure that D.A.'s interests are protected during the next WSC by vetting and clarifying contract language with the conference site as needed. Similar work with a hotel in Phoenix for the 2013 WSC will begin as soon as a site is chosen. Legal Affairs continues its work of verifying copyright permissions for our works and any permissions required of adapted A.A. material. The committee advises the Board with recommendations of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act for not-for-profit corporations.

### Literature Publication

LitPub revised the "Debtors Anonymous" pamphlet in both English and Spanish, removing material adapted without permission from *Alcoholics Anonymous* (the "Big Book"). They have also composed a letter to A.A. World Services to apologize for including that material without permission. In addition the committee is planning reprint changes for specific D.A. pamphlets, as recommended by the WSC Literature Committee, to bring them into better alignment with our primary purpose.

### Long-Range Planning

LRPC was gratified by the response to the first GSB International Phone Forum on October 30. More than 25 DA members joined four trustees on the call to discuss the results of the 2011 WSC, literature updates, and the new D.A. Manual for Service (DAMS). Upcoming GSB-IPFs will

feature presentations on D.A.'s Finances, Intellectual Property, History, Traditions, and Concepts. Watch the e-News for information about the upcoming calls on January 22, April 1, and June 17.

### Nominations

NomCom continues to work towards filling the remaining positions on the Board. A change to the By-Laws was presented to and passed by the Board stating that Class B (non-debting) Trustees are exempt from regional limits. This created openings for two qualified Class A (compulsive debting) trustees. The Committee is looking for qualified members to fill these two Class A trustee positions. Please see "How to Become a GSB Trustee" under the Service tab on the D.A. website.

### Office

No report.

### Public Information

PI is focusing efforts on helping both professional and under-served populations and locations; holding media-contact trainings; and supporting WSC PI efforts, such as outreach. The GSB PI group's vision for the year is to finalize policy and procedures for future GSB PI committees, and to re-evaluate the current PI manual and other PI needs of the fellowship worldwide. Since the 2011 WSC, we received three media requests and one offer to be a part of a recovery-type conference in Southern California. We held one Media Contact Training at the WSC in Detroit, with about twelve members participating. Our second training for the year will be by conference call on Saturday, December 3. The goal is to have one per quarter. The trainings are announced by eNews; please see the web site to subscribe.

## General Service Board Committee Reports

### Finance

The D.A. Finance Committee gave a detailed end-of-fiscal-year financial report at the 2011 World Service Conference. Please look for the full version of this report in the WSC 2011 Conference Report, when it becomes available. Key points include:

1. There will be a 10% increase in D.A. literature prices beginning January 1, 2012.
2. The three most important sources of income for D.A. are literature sales, group contributions, and individual contributions. Over the last three years we have seen an increase in group contributions but our overall annual income has decreased, mostly due to a decrease in literature sales.
3. Of 563 total registered groups, only 313 groups (55.6%) sent in group contributions in fiscal year 2011 (July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011).
4. The fiscal year 2011 spending plan projected having to use \$35,000 of DA's savings in order to meet projected expenses. The actual deficit ended up only being \$19,000 (\$16,000 less than projected) but the Board feels it is important that in fiscal year 2012 we need to limit our spending to our planned annual income. This means we will have to limit and / or postpone many of the projects outlined in D.A.'s current five year plan.

Here is the fiscal year 2011 statement of financial activity, one of the seven financial reports that were presented at WSC 2011.

### DAGSB Statement of Financial Activity

July 2010 through June 2011

Accrual Basis

	Jul 2010 - Jun 2011 Actual	Plan	Over / Under Plan
<b>Inflows</b>			
Group Contributions	50,260.68	44,000.00	6,260.68
Individual Contributions	26,419.35	21,000.00	5,419.35
Other Contributions	500.22	0.00	500.22
World Service Month	2,237.17	2,000.00	237.17
Literature & AV Sales	55,510.99	61,100.00	-5,589.01
Shipping	9,787.44	11,800.00	-2,012.56
Conference Income	49,237.71	52,000.00	-2,762.29
Miscellaneous Income	6.22	3,000.00	-2,993.78
Interest Income	341.78	1,000.00	-658.22
<b>Total Inflows</b>	<b>194,301.56</b>	<b>195,900.00</b>	<b>-1,598.44</b>
<b>Outflows</b>			
Cost of Goods Sold	34,861.61	50,900.00	-16,038.39
Payroll Expense	60,783.19	66,000.00	-5,216.81
Office Rent & Administrative Expense	16,229.51	20,250.00	-4,020.49
Board Expense	26,266.27	27,450.00	-1,183.73
General Administrative Expense	9,561.54	13,280.00	-3,718.46
WSC Event & Committee Expenses	65,584.81	53,400.00	12,184.81
<b>Total Outflows</b>	<b>213,286.93</b>	<b>231,280.00</b>	<b>-17,993.07</b>
<b>Surplus / Deficit</b>	<b>-18,985.37</b>	<b>-35,380.00</b>	<b>16,394.63</b>

Unaudited - For Informational Purposes Only

## World Service Conference Committee Reports

### Business Debtors Anonymous

All four subcommittees of the 2010–11 rotation concluded their projects, and this year four new subcommittees have convened. (1) The Spiritually Based Marketing Action Plan subcommittee supports BDA members in obtaining prosperity through concrete action-taking that integrates the Twelve Steps with formal marketing techniques. (2) The BDA Innovations subcommittee is a conduit for innovations among BDA groups that make the program live and that forward individual recovery. (3) The BDA Clearinghouse subcommittee will connect, gather data from, and disseminate information to BDA meetings and individual members around the world, and act as a BDA resource for the other three subcommittees and the DA conference as a whole; the subcommittee also plans to pursue creation of a BDA Intergroup. (4) The BDA Literature subcommittee wishes to further consideration by the WSC Literature Committee of future development of individual pamphlets for the twelve BDA tools; five DA/BDA pamphlets are now in process.

### Conference

The Conference Committee is working with the 2012 (Seattle) and 2013 (Phoenix) WSC host committees to insure smooth planning for abundant and successful conferences. The Conference Committee is also engaged in the following projects: updating the Host Committee Handbook; creating a Site Bidding Process and Checklist to help future aspiring WSC hosts know what information to gather, organize, and present to the GSB so the Board can make an informed decision at least two years in advance; drafting a letter based on this document to be sent to all D.A. Intergroups inviting and encouraging them to consider hosting a future WSC; and reviewing and revising the John H. Scholarship Fund policy and guidelines.

### Fellowship Communications

The GSB approved the FCC's "Traditions and Social Media" statement and a Fellowship-wide conference call on the topic. Work on the "Group Sponsorship" program continues, with the committee responding to inquiries to the [gsponsorship@gmail.com](mailto:gsponsorship@gmail.com) address, providing resources to sponsee groups, and making efforts to connect them with potential

sponsor groups. In mid-November FCC made its first match! FCC is creating a D.A. Resources document (PDF) that catalogs all resources available on the web site—direct hyperlinks will help users navigate the current site. To aid the RDC in increasing Seventh Tradition contributions, the FCC seeks ways to communicate information to new treasurers. As the result of an FCC initiative, the Office will include the Treasurer's Manual in its packet to new groups.

### Hospitals, Institutions, & Prisons

No report.

### Internal Operations

The committee's mission is to support the work of the General Service Office (GSO) of Debtors Anonymous. The IOC 1) focuses on the overall operations of the GSO and 2) interacts with the General Service Board liaison and with the Office Manager. The IOC's theme for the 2011–12 Conference year is "Clarity and Action." The committee's action plan is to 1) develop a training manual for telephone weekend volunteers in keeping with the Twelve Traditions and 2) work with the Tech and Resource Development committees to make achievable and fundable changes in office operations. Two members of the IOC will be visiting the GSO to meet with the Office Manager and, with him, prioritize action steps for the future.

### Literature

Lit Com has set its agenda for the year. They will assist getting the Writer's Pool set up on *Ways & Means* as an additional means to attract D.A. writers; categorize stories for D.A.'s Basic Text, based on the symptoms of debting that D.A. addresses; recommend covering underrepresented symptoms caused by cuts to *A Currency of Hope*; help develop a strategy for translating information on the D.A. web site and literature into multiple languages; accept or reject pamphlet recommendations; create an audio file prototype with WSC Tech and GSB Info Tech; and carry the message that D.A. is in need of increased funding, per the Board chair Jan S.

### Resource Development

RDC's action plan, intended to encourage D.A. members to increase their contributions of money and service, includes creating (1) a tool to communicate how contributions are used, (2) a visual for the web site that will depict the funds needed to accomplish D.A.'s goals, (3) the annual John H. and World Service Month appeal letters, (4) a sample group spending plan with line items for contributions to Intergroup and the General Service Office / General Service Board, (5) a piece of service literature entitled "50 Ways to Do Service. RDC will also (6) work with the Board to add more RDC-related elements to D.A.'s next five-year plan, and (7) write articles for *Ways & Means* on how D.A. service has changed the writers' lives.

### Technology

Besides supporting GSB and WSC projects, Tech focuses on improving D.A.'s Internet, telephone, and information technology to increase communication within D.A. and to reach the debtor who still suffers. Tech distributed an informal questionnaire on actual and desired website usage to a sample of D.A. members; the report will go to the Board. Tech is analyzing the web sites of other Twelve Step fellowships, and exploring the electronic reformatting and delivery of D.A. literature and information and designing a pilot program for it. The committee is planning a phased redesign of the D.A. web site.

### Diversity Caucus

Committed to reaching debtors in underserved populations and locations, the caucus is supporting the forming of new meetings in Harlem and East Washington, D.C., and the creation of more phone meetings for underserved communities. Diversity is identifying national and local service and community centers that may be in contact with the underserved debtors. So far, these organizations include the American Indian Center; the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, & Transgender Center (NYC); the NAACP; and the National Association of Community Health Centers. The Caucus is asking active, recovering members of these populations to submit their recovery stories to *Ways & Means*.

### Self-Support

(Continued from page 1)

infancy behind. Five years ago, at the 20<sup>th</sup> WSC in San Diego, D.A. began addressing the crucial issue of our Singleness of Purpose, and that focus has brought us increased clarity and a new emphasis on working the Twelve Steps of recovery. The GSB and WSC committees work tirelessly throughout the year to carry the message to the debtor who still suffers.

Now, in 2011, as the Conference enters its second quarter century, we must face with equal determination the simple fact that we must become self-supporting through our own contributions, that when it comes to paying for the Fellowship we say we want, there's no "them"—there's only "us." When we support D.A., we support ourselves, our well-being, our very lives. The WSC committees and the General Service Board are working hard this year to carry the message of self-support to the Fellowship as a whole. Even a small increase in the number of groups and individuals who contribute can make a major difference in our effectiveness, and our ability to grow. When debtors anywhere reach out for help, I want the D.A. message to be there. I hope you do, too.

Jan S.  
Chair  
D.A. General Service Board

### Telephone Forum Series Begins

The first in a series of telephone forums featuring live questions and comments for members of the Debtors Anonymous General Service Board debuted in October.

Three GSB Trustees gave presentations on actions at the 2011 World Service Conference, the development of D.A. literature, and the Fellowship's new Debtors Anonymous Manual For Service on the worldwide conference call. Despite some technical difficulties that interfered with the first part of the call, more than two dozen D.A. members participated by asking questions and making comments.

Four telephone forums are scheduled for the 2011–12 World Service Conference year. The Oct. 30 forum will be followed by forums on January 22, April 1, and

June 17, all on Sundays and all at 5 pm Eastern time for one hour.

The telephone forums are meant to supplement the in-person live Regional Forums that have been held in major cities in recent years. A pilot forum held in June 2011 was so successful that it was decided to hold four in the 2011–12 Conference year.

Topics for future forums will include D.A.'s finances and the principle of self-support, D.A. history, and the application of the Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts for World Service to D.A. service. Advance notice of all of the forums and the call-in numbers to use will be given through the General Service Office's eNews service. To subscribe to the D.A. eNews, see the home page at [debtorsanonymous.org](http://debtorsanonymous.org).

### Open Service Positions

**Three Class A (recovering debtors) General Service Board Trustees**

**One Class B (non-debtor) General Service Board Trustee**

**Appointed Committee Member for Finance Committee**

**Appointed Committee Member for Legal Affairs Committee**

**Appointed Committee Member for Conference Support Committee**

**Appointed Committee Member to Edit D.A.'s *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions***

**Two Appointed Committee Members for Literature Publications Committee**

**All positions are on a volunteer basis.**

**For more information, see**

**"Open Service Positions" at [www.debtorsanonymous.org](http://www.debtorsanonymous.org).**

### Pat B., Class B Trustee

"What is Debtors Anonymous?" That is what I said when I was asked to think about serving on the D.A. General Service Board, as a Class B Trustee. My next thought was, "There is not one thing I could bring that could benefit D.A. or any of its members." I didn't even know what a debtor was. So, I asked for some time to think, pray and check out this thing called D.A. What a wonderful time I had checking out the website and literature. I even attended a local D.A. meeting, where I heard discussion relating to sponsorship, the Twelve Steps, Traditions, and Tools. What an eye-opener about what D.A. is all about!!

I also found out I was being asked to serve because of the twenty-three years of General Service experience I had, as an active member of Alcoholics Anonymous. So, maybe I could be helpful. Isn't that what we are asked to do? Aren't we to share

our ESH, when asked? At least, that is what my sponsor and service sponsor always said. They also reminded me to feel very privileged, when asked to serve. That it was sign of my own recovery, and that people felt they could trust me today. Believe me, I was not too trustworthy before the Twelve Steps and Traditions were taken and applied into my life.

What have I learned, since being asked to serve D.A.? First, and foremost, I have learned how devastating it is to be a debtor. I have heard stories that helped me realize people die from this disease, too. I see D.A. members active in service, working hard, sacrificing time and energy; all for one purpose. I get to meet the trusted servants, who try to follow all the thirty-six principles, so that D.A. will still be there for the next debtor. I am just grateful to the D.A. Fellowship for allowing me to be a small part of it.

### World Service: Thinking Globally

#### Sue F., Class B Trustee

*Alcoholics Anonymous*—the "Big Book"—instructs the alcoholic that "practical experience shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics." It further instructs that "if an alcoholic failed to perfect and enlarge his spiritual life through work and self-sacrifice for others, he could not survive the certain trials and low spots ahead."

In Debtors Anonymous, for those who sponsor and participate in PRMs, service to others has likely become an integral part of your recovery program. These passages from the Big Book are not a theory. Chances are that they have been repeatedly proven through your own experience. In other words, service is the secret. It is not only the secret of our own recovery, but also of continuing spiritual growth and improving our ability to face the bumps in the road when they come.

The goal of all our service work, of course, is carrying the message of recovery to those who are still suffering. The work we do in our home community, one on one, is invaluable. The goal of General, or World, service, however, is making Twelfth Step work possible *around the world*.

Participating in World Service as trustees, GSRs, and ISRs, we learn to think globally. Through World Service, we develop literature to aid in carrying the message and organize workshops to educate our members and other service workers. One piece of well-crafted literature or one workshop can potentially carry the message to hundreds or even thousands of those caught in the pain of debting.

As workers in General Service, we still act locally to carry the message though our home groups and sponsorship. Yet our focus changes when we arrive at the World Service Conference. There, we begin to see the big picture, and we imagine the future of our Fellowship as we find ways to spread our lifesaving message to every corner of the planet.

World Service is indeed about "work and self-sacrifice for others." It involves a commitment of time and energy, the sharing of ideas and talents, plus responsibility and accountability. The World Service Conference is a week of work for our future and for the future of our children. There is laughter and camaraderie, greeting old friends and making new friends; but the spotlight is on making our Twelfth Step work possible year-round and around the world.