

3rd Quarter 2018

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The DA Focus is the service newsletter published quarterly by the General Service Board (GSB) of D.A. It is available as a download from the official D.A. website at:

www.debtorsanonymous.org/share

The General Service Board seeks qualified trusted servants to fill a number of service positions. The positions are non-paying. Positions include Trustee and Appointed Committee Members. For details, email:

office@debtorsanonymous.org

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WITH YOUR GROUP**



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www.debtorsanonymous.org

- ▶ Fellowship Services
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Highlights of the 2018 WSC in Minnesota

Thrills! Chills! Goodwill! Are you thrilled by Traditions, record keeping, and the Tools of the D.A. program? Then you'll love hearing about the 32nd World Service Conference, which convened this summer in a beautiful, briskly air-conditioned hotel in Minneapolis, MN, hosted by the friendly and helpful DA Minnesota Intergroup. A grateful time for the greater good was had by all.

The General Service Board (GSB) of Trustees arrived days earlier for meetings, during which the Online Contributions webpage was activated (www.debtorsanonymous.org/onlinecontributions). An eBook version of the *Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts of Debtors Anonymous* was briefly activated, but formatting issues were reported and that project has gone back to committee for now. (D.A. members with expert IT experience are especially needed to volunteer for World Service via GSB@debtorsanonymous.org). The GSB also voted to explore hosting audio recordings of speaker shares from Fellowship-wide Calls on the D.A. website.

The first session of the Conference commenced on Wednesday with inspiring reports of Committee and Caucus activities throughout the year. (Visit www.debtorsanonymous.org/wsc for past reports.) The WSC Caucus meetings started that night and Committee meetings the next day during which representatives responded to Issues & Concerns from the Fellowship, voted in officers, developed action plans for the year, and much more.

Every Conference features an Open Forum where attendees have allotted time to share ideas. This is often where new developments happen in D.A., and this year featured many wonderful shares. On Thursday night, the GSB hosted an open session so attendees could experience a sample Board meeting. Two topics were chosen: whether to add the Twelve Traditions into the rotation of WSC themes (approved unanimously) and a timed discussion on a significant question: "What is debting?" Saturday's Fellowship Day was a major event, and the speaker shares and keynotes are available for purchase at www.daminnesota.org

Allen T., the outgoing GSB Chair, presided over the Convocation. Votes included approving a new pamphlet on the Twelve Promises and raising the individual contribution limit. With two new Trustees ratified, there are currently five Class A (debtor) and five Class B (non-debtor) Trustees. For the first time, a Class B Trustee was elected as GSB Chair, and there was much spoken respect for the dedicated non-members who serve our Fellowship. The GSB has room for five more Class A Trustees, and D.A. members who meet the requirements are encouraged to apply.

With all the goodwill this year's Conference generated, it feels like the Fellowship itself is living the Promises.

Literature Publications Committee News

The News in D.A. Literature

We are very excited to announce that a new D.A. Conference-Approved pamphlet, “The Twelve Promises of Debtors Anonymous,” was approved at the 2018 WSC in Minneapolis. It is in the final stages of production and an eNews announcement will be sent to the Fellowship as soon as it is available for purchase from the General Service Office.

The editorial section of GSB Literature Publications—the GSB Literature Services Committee—develops each piece of literature by selecting writers and participates throughout the entire development of each project. GSB Literature Services selected writers and is currently reviewing the early drafts of both the Basic Text of D.A. and the Step Study Guides for D.A. and B.D.A.

This year, there will be opportunities for the Fellowship to contribute to several literature projects. The WSC Literature Committee will soon be requesting submissions from members for the D.A. Meditation Book. Additionally, the GSB Literature Services Committee will be collecting stories to be considered for inclusion in the “Stories” sections of the D.A. Basic Text. Look for eNews announcements about both of these projects within the next month.

At the 2017 WSC, the Convocation approved the concept for a Diversity Pamphlet. After consideration by the GSB Literature Publications Committee and the GSB, it was determined that this topic might better serve the Fellowship as D.A. “service literature,” and the GSB will be developing service literature on this topic. The 2018 Debtors Anonymous Manual for Service (DAMS) describes service literature as follows:

“In addition to Conference-approved literature directed to recovery and unity, the General Service Board also produces service-related literature. Because this literature is intended for use only within D.A., and not for use by newcomers or outsiders, there is less need for recourse to the Conference approval process. Service literature represents an effort to share the experience, strength, and hope of individuals and groups on their journey in carrying their message of recovery to the still-suffering debtor and discover new ways of carrying the message. Service literature carries the statement:

This is D.A. service material, produced in response to the needs of D.A. members for information and shared experience on specific service-related subjects. It reflects the guidance of the Twelve Traditions, the General Service Board (GSB), and the General Service Office (GSO), and is developed from the shared experience of D.A. members throughout the Fellowship. Since service material reflects the current and ever-developing conscience of our Fellowship as a whole, it does not undergo the usual D.A. literature approval process, which requires final approval by the World Service Conference (WSC). Instead, service material may be updated periodically under the auspices of the General Service Board to reflect current Fellowship experience.

and represents a rare exception to the idea that only Conference-approved literature may be used at D.A. meetings.” (DAMS, 2018, pp. 95-96)

Translating existing D.A. literature into additional languages also remains a priority for the GSB. A new General Service Board committee, Literature Translation and Licensing, was convened in May 2018 and is now responsible for coordinating all aspects of translation and licensing.

The Literature Publications Committee continues to explore options for electronic literature, such as eBooks. D.A.’s *Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts* has been formatted for an electronic version, and we are working with a vendor to complete this process.

—Sharon S., Class A Trustee,
Chair of GSB Literature Publications Committee

IMPORTANT LINKS

www.debtorsanonymous.org/enews

Sign up for special announcements from D.A.

www.debtorsanonymous.org/free

Download free literature for members & meetings.

www.debtorsanonymous.org/register

Register your meeting annually with the D.A. website to keep online information current.

www.debtorsanonymous.org/contribute

Contribute to D.A. as a member and as a meeting to help publish literature and support the GSO.

Meet the General Service Board of Trustees

Mary Clare L.—Class B Trustee

Hi, my name is Mary Clare and I am one of the new GSB Trustees ratified at the 2018 D.A. World Service Conference. It's great to have this opportunity to be in touch and to briefly share my story. As a friend in another fellowship wisely said, "It was more than miles that brought us here!"

I've been retired for almost two years and transplanted myself from New York City to the Sonoran Desert in Arizona. When I look back on my life, I see it as fundamentally being one of service, presence, and caring. The road started with direct work with delinquent teens, later on to battered babies, followed by ten years of teaching and social activism as a Franciscan nun. After leaving the convent, I worked in non-profit administration and in January 1990 became sober. Service is love in action, and mine continued in my sobriety fellowship. My home group and sponsor encouraged that, and every term it seemed I was doing something: coffee, set-up, clean-up, out-going speaking commitments, hospital visits; it all came naturally. I didn't engage in service outside of the group because I had a really busy career and eventually a small Reiki practice as well.

Life changed after 9/11 when I became one of many suddenly unemployed New Yorkers. I was desperate to survive sober and heal. My meetings became the bookends to every day and service kept me sober, conscious, and sane. I kept on trudging, seeking employment. After a year and a half, I had a fascinating day-long job interview with and was hired by the A.A. General Service Office in New York, and remained there until my retirement.

Working within such a complex global fellowship is so helpful to me as I serve on your Board! My work included many service desks and took me to A.A.s serving throughout the U.S. and Canada and later around the world. Along the way, I met a member of D.A., and I was most impressed with how she worked her program. She was open about sharing her experience, strength, and hope with me, and I remember feeling such deep respect for her. I never forgot our time together, and how D.A. saved her life, so when I was asked to consider serving D.A., she came to mind, and I knew, "Yes, I would love to help her fellowship any way I can." D.A., I thank you with all my heart for this opportunity to serve!

Michalene R.—Class B Trustee

Hello, my name is Michalene R. and I am a friend of D.A. Currently I have the honor of serving as the Chairman of your Board of Trustees. As a Class B trustee, I am not a member of Debtors Anonymous, but I do have 28 years of experience in another Twelve Step program. I started as a General Service Representative in my fellowship after two years of attendance and have participated in different levels of service ever since.

I live in Bloomington, Indiana, where I attended graduate school and was lucky enough to find an incredible position I was able to retire from a little over a year ago. I have three daughters, four granddaughters, and five great grandchildren. They are the center of my world and I am blessed to have the Twelve Steps in my life to guide me in those roles. A little over three years ago I was honored to be elected as a trustee for D.A. Had you told me that three years later I would be the Chair of the Board, I would have not taken you seriously. But I also know that willingness is the key—the key to a life that is free from bondage of self.

So, what is it like to be the Chair of the Debtors Anonymous Board? Being the Chairperson of a Twelve Step organization just means you are of service to more people. It's pretty much like any other position on the Board. You have meetings. You have assignments to complete. You work within the confines of the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts to try to make the best decisions you can for Debtors Anonymous as a whole. You coordinate the work of the Board and give extra assistance where it is needed. Oh yes, and you receive email, lots of email. Some from people who are pleased with the Board and some who are not. I answer those emails and work with the Board as a whole to respond to the needs and concerns of the Fellowship. I spend around two to four hours a day on D.A. work, and sometimes a little more.

So why does someone who does not have a debt problem volunteer to serve on the D.A. Board? My program taught me that selfishness and self-centeredness is the root of my problem. When I am being of service to you, the letter "I" is not the center of my universe. It feeds my soul and keeps me humble. It brings a freedom and a happiness I never knew when all I could do was think of myself. It expands my world and provides a sense of satisfaction when the job is well done. But most of all, it gives me the opportunity to know all of you. It means that the road to happy destiny has much less trudging, and for that, I am truly grateful.

From the Archive:

Discovering the Joys of Service

I can't begin to express my gratitude for D.A., but a quote I once heard was that "Service is Gratitude in Action."

I began my D.A. recovery in 2001 and stopped debting one day at a time on the 6th of March, 2002. I was out of debt within a couple of years. I shared about not knowing what needs and wants were. I remember questioning if I needed a kettle, and my only glimmer of hope was that my income may be low enough to be entitled to live in a hostel. I had friends in London about 200 miles away who came to D.A., and I was desperate. At that time there were no meetings outside London, and I had no idea about phone meetings or even if they existed. With help I set upon an action plan to move to London for my recovery.

My life has changed immeasurably: spiritually, physically, mentally, financially, materially, abundantly, and prosperously. Through working the Steps, having home groups, doing service, using the Tools, giving and receiving PRGs, praying and meditating, asking for help, having visions, keeping figures, not debting, having a spending plan, and doing this all simply and imperfectly, my life is beyond my wildest dreams.

A few years ago I became GSR for my home group and started attending Intergroup. It took a while to work through the stuff around voting for my group, reporting, and speaking up, but I became more and more confident and after a few times I really embraced it. One of the business discussions was whether the UK could host the World Service Conference. I joined the working group and we realised that, if we were to bid, someone would need to attend the WSC to really understand if it were possible. In that moment I realised I was willing to attend.

I do find it difficult to put into words the journey that has now taken me to the WSC twice! First I got all the files and work from the previous UK delegates. I checked that I met the requirements and that I could

commit to the time involved of attending and the service work in the following year. I had many PRGs about all the preparations to go to the States. I haven't travelled often—getting a flight, insurance, booking hotels was all terrifying to me—and at the same time feeling not worthy of being 'the one' to go even though I had checked this out many times with many members and was voted in by my group and Intergroup.

It took 17 hours to get to Dallas; I arrived the night before the conference. The first day was registration and introductions with reports from the last year's Committees and Board; I was excited meeting members from all over the States and one member each from Ireland, France, and Canada. I wrote down every word and made a decision to say yes to everything I could. This felt like the most important job and the biggest responsibility I had ever had.

Day Two: the business of the Conference commenced for the following year. I joined the Public Information Committee. A process of gelling, brainstorming, and voting was again pure HP. We began the days with many ideas and much input and ended up on Day Three in a total unanimous agreement of our recommendations and motions to be presented at the Convocation on the last two days of Conference.

The whole experience was very humbling and fun. It's incredible the work that goes on beyond group level to help the still suffering debtor. I attended the WSC again in 2010, and I didn't actually think that a second time could beat the first. Well it did. I was no longer quite the newcomer and the continuity helps everyone. I had been working through the year on the conference calls. I saw progress, actions, and results from all the Committees. I personally felt emotional and privileged to be a part of so many aspects and issues in which the UK was more involved. D.A. is amazing.

—Victoria D. London, England
— *Ways & Means*, 2010 4th Quarter

Service is
Gratitude in
Action.

Calendar of Upcoming Fellowship-Wide Calls

CONNECT WITH D.A. ACROSS THE GLOBE

Fellowship-Wide Calls in October/November!

Everyone is welcome to attend!

Announcing a Dedicated Dial-in Number: 1-605-472-5540, Access code: 617093#

For International and Online Access, visit: www.debtorsanonymous.org/call-in-access

For recordings of Fellowship-wide calls (when made available), visit:

www.debtorsanonymous.org/podcasts

Saturday, October 13, 2018, 12:00–1:30 pm EST

GSB-PI: Media Contact Training

Participants: Training will be open to all D.A. members, both those who wish to learn how to respond to requests by the media for information about D. A., and members who would like to learn more about how to discuss D.A. with people outside of the Fellowship, presented by the GSB Public Information Committee.

Purpose of This Call: To train D.A. members who may wish to respond to inquiries from the media about D.A.

Contact Person: Siobhan, Appointed Committee Member (ACM) to GSB-PI, siobhanwithgratitude@gmail.com

Sunday, October 21, 2018, 1:00–2:00 pm EST

Ask the General Service Board: WSC 2018 Recap

On this Fellowship-wide Call presented by the GSB Long Range Planning Committee, three members of the Fellowship will share their experience at the 2018 World Service Conference in Minneapolis, MN, USA. This portion of the call will be recorded. Participants will have time to ask questions and make comments. The question and comment portion of the call will not be recorded.

Sunday, October 28, 2018, 1:00–2:30 pm EST

Building Support: The Magic of Pressure Relief Groups (PRGs)

On this Fellowship-wide Call presented by the WSC Fellowship Communications Committee, three dynamic speakers will share their experience, strength, and hope on how they moved from inhibition and embarrassment in their thinking and action around money to receiving the Twelve Promises of D.A.

Sunday, November 4, 2018, 5:30 pm EST

HIP Training: It's Cool To Be HIP

This Fellowship-wide Call presented by the WSC Hospitals, Institutions, and Prisons Committee will share how to spread the message of D.A. to Hospitals, Institutions and Prisons (HIP) where people cannot come to us. Get experience, strength and hope on the most efficient ways of reaching out.

Please share these D.A. events at your meetings and kindly forward to other D.A. members.



The Latest D.A. Pamphlet:

“The Tools of Business Debtors Anonymous”

“The Tools of Business Debtors Anonymous (B.D.A.), together with the Twelve Steps and the Twelve Traditions, allow us to operate our business without incurring new unsecured debt and to do business in the spirit of service.”

“The Tools of Business Debtors Anonymous,” a 14-page pamphlet, is available for purchase by individual members or groups. The Literature Order Form, which has been updated to include this new pamphlet (P-132), is available on the Debtors Anonymous website at debtorsanonymous.org.

Please share this information at your meetings, and please forward this announcement to other D.A. members.

An Important Message from the Debtors Anonymous General Service Board:

Over the last several years, expenses for the General Service Office, the Board, and other administrative requirements have increased, while contributions and literature sales have remained basically the same. This has resulted in a deficit, which the General Service Board has met by using a small portion of our prudent reserve.

To avoid using more of our prudent reserve, the Board is asking all D.A. groups and individual D.A. members to **consider increasing contributions to Debtors Anonymous.**

Some D.A. members may not know that, in addition to putting funds in the basket at their D.A. meetings, they can

also make direct contributions to D.A. to help cover the expenses of the Fellowship as whole.

Any amount that fits into your spending plan is welcome. A contribution of even \$5 or \$10, made every month, can make a big difference.

Regarding Seventh Tradition contributions from groups, D.A. members can remind their Treasurers that their group’s commitment to regular contributions is a part of their group’s commitment to support the Fellowship.

Thank you for your continued support.

The General Service Board of Debtors Anonymous

www.debtorsanonymous.org/contribute

For the Good and Wellbeing of the Fellowship

Have you signed up for **eNews**? Has your group?

Get connected to D.A. worldwide.

Receive newsletters, announcements, event info, and more—about 3-5 emails per month.

To subscribe, visit:
www.debtorsanonymous.org

Share your personal story in **Ways & Means**, our meeting in print!

Have you been of service to a meeting by giving a **lead share**?

Write it down, send it in!

You can also email us your original photo, drawing, or poem that represents your recovery and/or vision in Debtors Anonymous.

Email your story/artwork to:
waysandmeansDA@hotmail.com



DEBTORS
ANONYMOUS

ANNOUNCEMENT CORNER

Here are possible announcements for members—especially General and Intergroup Service Representatives (GSRs & ISRs)—to make during D.A. meetings:

1. Announcing D.A. Announcements! The D.A. website has a new section for announcements that you can share—and printouts that you can distribute—at your meetings: www.debtorsanonymous.org/announcements
2. Consider submitting a bid for your city to host the World Service Conference in 2020 and/or 2021. Details about what to include in your bid can be found on the last two pages of the 2018 WSC Registration Packet at www.debtorsanonymous.org/2018wsc. Bids and inquiries should be forwarded to GSB@debtorsanonymous.org by or before 11:59 pm ET, Feb. 15, 2019.
3. The 2019 World Service Conference will be in Los Angeles. Details will be posted in early 2019 at www.debtorsanonymous.org/wsc
4. The Motions and Recommendations from the 2018 WSC are available on the D.A. website at www.debtorsanonymous.org/2018convocation
5. From now on, Fellowship-wide Calls will all use the same U.S. call-in phone number: 1-605-472-5540, Access code: 617093#. Information about international phone numbers and online access is available at www.debtorsanonymous.org/call-in-access. Here are upcoming calls:
 - Saturday, October 13, 2018 from 12:00-1:30 pm Eastern Time titled “**GSB-Public Information: Media Contact Training**”
 - Sunday, October 21, 2018 from 1:00-2:00 pm Eastern Time titled “**Ask the General Service Board: WSC 2018 Recap**”
 - Sunday, October 28, 2018 from 1:00-2:30 pm Eastern Time titled “**Building Support: The Magic of Pressure Relief Groups (PRGs)**”
 - Sunday, November 4, 2018 at 5:30 pm Eastern Time titled “**Hospitals, Institutions, and Prisons (HIP) Training: It’s Cool To Be HIP**”
6. Podcasts of Fellowship-wide Calls are now available for free on the D.A. website at www.debtorsanonymous.org/podcasts
7. Attention D.A. Intergroups: Michalene R., Debtors Anonymous Board Chair, is offering an opportunity for Intergroups to get short, direct reports from the GSB. If your Intergroup would like the Chair to attend one or two Intergroup meetings by telephone during the current conference year, contact her at tjek1011@gmail.com. She can provide your intergroup with a Board Update, a Finance update, or just listen to the concerns of your Intergroup.
8. D.A. members can now make online contributions on the D.A. website using USA-issued debit cards only.
Visit: www.debtorsanonymous.org/onlinecontributions
9. If it fits in your spending plan, please increase your 7th Tradition contributions!
10. Let your meetings know they can sign up to receive eNews announcements about D.A. by email at: www.debtorsanonymous.org/enews
11. Share your story in *Ways & Means*—the recovery magazine of D.A.—or share an article about service in *The DA Focus* newsletter.
Go to: www.debtorsanonymous.org/share