

# THE DA focus

The Quarterly World Service Newsletter for the Fellowship of Debtors Anonymous

## October 2012

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The DA Focus is published quarterly on a fiscal-year basis by the D.A. General Service Board. It is mailed to delegates 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)

### Is Your Group Aware of the "Preamble" Situation?

For background and possible avenues of discussion, see the March and July issues of *The DA Focus*. Present and past issues of the *Focus* are always available on the home page at [www.debtorsanonymous.org](http://www.debtorsanonymous.org). They're available for download, printing, and distribution.

### "Debtors Anonymous" pamphlet

Groups who wish to place correction stickers on their stock of "Debtors Anonymous" and "Deudores Anónmos" pamphlets should send a self-addressed envelope stamped with "Forever" postage to the General Service Office. **Please specify the desired number of stickers in each language.**

## Joy and Transformation through Service The 2012 World Service Conference

Joy and transformation through service proved the unofficial theme of the Seattle WSC, which took place from August 15 to 19. From the Open Forum through Convocation, these words were heard over and over. For five days, a collegial, open-hearted energy flowed through the Committee meetings, enthusiastic discussions on the beautifully planted campus, and over meals. These myriad exchanges culminated in enthusiastic, collaborative discussions at the Convocation, the yearly business meeting of D.A. worldwide.

D.A. worldwide was more represented than ever before: along with members from Canada and the UK, the Conference welcomed the first delegate from Australia. She will be rising before dawn to participate in her Committee's monthly conference call. D.A. continues to grow outside the US and Canada, and this was the first year of the GSB International Committee and the WSC International Caucus. Among other recommendations, the International Caucus requested that the Board explore ways to integrate foreign groups and Intergroups into the D.A. service Structure. Other suggestions ranged from including GMT in all eNews to investigating the possibility of making recordings of the Fellowship-wide conference calls available to members who might find it difficult to attend the calls because of their time zones.

The Conference continues to mature, in several ways. Approximately four fifths of the GSRs and ISRs were returning delegates, maybe the highest proportion to date. Over the 2011-12 Conference year, the WSC committees retained their members, fulfilled their agendas, and in several cases added projects.

A strong sense of trust in and respect for the Traditions produced some lively, always positive discussions. Side by side with a clear Tradition One focus on not debting as the condition for recovery through the Steps was a commitment to the inclusiveness mandated by Tradition Three. And, as the GSB Treasurer reported, the membership responded to GSB chair Jan S.'s rousing call last year for D.A. to step up and fund the projects they ask for. In 2011-12, contributions, especially from individual members, rose. (See the Treasurer's report on p. 3.)

More than ever, the committees worked with a clear understanding of their and each other's individual missions. This understanding extended to D.A.'s newsletters, *The DA Focus* and *Ways & Means*, and the potential they offer to strengthen the Fellowship and inspire outreach to the debtors still unaware of D.A.

Another word heard at the Conference, especially from Friday night on, was "tired." After all, the WSC committees meet four times in two days, and many delegates serve on caucuses as well as committees. That's not much time to determine an agenda based on the Fellowship's concerns, learn to work with your committee, and prepare motions and recommendations to present to the Conference as a whole at Convocation. As D.A. matures, the Saturday morning and Sunday morning Convocations flow more and more smoothly, leaving space for exhilaration and satisfaction. Nevertheless, Convocation is demanding—two long business meetings. In response to this, the Conference has streamlined some of the processes and continues to study time management. However, an overriding consideration will always be to keep costs as con-

*(continued on page 5)*

**PLEASE SHARE *THE DA FOCUS*  
WITH YOUR GROUP.**

## General Service Board Committee Reports

### Audit Committee

No report.

### Communications

The downloadable document "D.A. Resources" has been posted on the D.A. web site, [debtorsanonymous.org](http://debtorsanonymous.org). Along with the A.A.-approved Spanish-language translations of the D.A. Steps and Traditions, "En Español" also offers the "Recovery Tools" and "The Promises," to be followed by "The Twelve Signs of Compulsive Debting," "A Word to Newcomers," and the Twelve Concepts. In response to a recommendation at Convocation from the International Caucus, all eNews will provide the UTC (Coordinated Universal Time) for GSB- and WSC-sponsored conference calls; following a suggestion made at Convocation, ComCom is also looking into recording these calls and making them available for later listening.

### Conference Support

No report.

### Information Technology

The Information Technology Committee has been reviewing a backlog of more than a dozen potential projects. In addition to the ongoing deletion of the D.A. "preamble," in whole and in part, from the web site, two new items have risen to the top of the priority list. First, in a small step toward e-commerce, we hope to develop an online form and "shopping cart" for placing literature orders. Though members will still have to print the form and mail payment, the calculations will be done in the shopping cart. This will save our office staff from having to interpret illegible writing and following up on calculation errors.

The second top priority item is to develop an online group / intergroup registration form. One of the barriers we face with this item includes the many requests from individuals, groups, Intergroups, and Conference committees for additional fields to enhance search ability. We are in the process of listing the searchability requests,

assessing the feasibility of each, and determining the cost and time necessary to accomplish these changes. Stay tuned to a website near you: [debtorsanonymous.org](http://debtorsanonymous.org).

### International

The newly formed International Committee met with the Literature Publications and Communications committees to discuss an organization of the translation process, which is currently being carried out on an ad hoc basis. The three committees agreed on a plan that will be integrated into International's Composition, Scope, and Procedures document and then submitted to the GSB for approval.

Following up on recommendations from the ad hoc committee on the Service Structure, International has communicated with the Nominations Committee about regionalization. International has begun studying how the Conference Charter and Concepts can support D.A. service structures outside the US and Canada.

### Legal Affairs

The Legal Affairs Committee has been mainly involved in the registration, maintenance, and defense of D.A.'s intellectual property, copyrights and trademarks. This includes all D.A. logos, literature, and service material, whether in print or other media. The scope and workload of the committee include preparation of work-for-hire agreements, translation licenses, and many other contract issues for the GSB. Legal Affairs is charged with ensuring that the governing documents of D.A. are internally consistent with each other. The committee develops policies and procedures for granting permission to use D.A. media. Legal Affairs reviews requests to quote, reprint, or otherwise use D.A. intellectual property. The committee consults with Lit Pub as it works with D.A. groups and Intergroups around the world to translate D.A. literature into different languages.

### Literature Publications

Lit Pub is gearing up for a busy year. First on our agenda is the publication of the second edition of *A Currency of Hope* and the newly

revised "Pressure Relief Groups and Pressure Relief Meetings" pamphlet. We are close to completing the Newcomers Packet, the D.A. Bookmarks, and the "Additional Tools of B.D.A." pamphlet. We plan to bring them forward in the approval process and submit them to the 2013 Literature Committee for approval and a motion before the Convocation.

Other items include working with Literature Services and the WSC Literature Committee on the D.A. *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* and on approved concepts of D.A. and B.D.A. literature. We will also be working with the GSB International Committee on translations and with the GSB Communications Committee to post translations on the website. In addition, Lit Pub will continue streamlining the Literature Approval Process and recruiting Appointed Committee Members for Literature Services.

### Literature Services

LitServ's Appointed Committee Member (ACM) is organizing the manuscript of the second edition of *A Currency of Hope*. The writer of the *Debtors Anonymous Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* has submitted a second draft of Steps One to Eleven and a first draft of Traditions One to Twelve. The WSC Literature Committee has submitted an outline for the unnamed D.A. basic text. The draft of the "B.D.A. Additional Tools" pamphlet has been forwarded to Literature Publications. Requests for proposals (RFPs) have been issued for three BDA pamphlets, "Clarity in Business Finance," "Numbers," and "Tool Ten." Two D.A. pamphlets, "The Twelve Promises of D.A.," and "Health Issues," are on hold, pending completion of several current projects.

### Long-Range Planning

The Long-Range Planning Committee continues its work of supporting the long-term growth of Our Beloved Fellowship. In 2012-13, the committee will be hosting four hourlong Ask-the-GSB Phone Forums, on various topics, on October 28,

## General Service Board Committee Reports

January 20, April 7, and June 23 (see p. 8). Three regional forums will be held in Houston, Washington, D.C., and St. Louis. If your area would like to host a regional forum contact the General Service Office (GSO), Attention: LRPC. Several passages requiring updating in the DAMS (*D.A. Manual for Service*) were identified by delegates at the 2012 WSC, and the committee will be revising the DAMS accordingly. The third printing is selling briskly at the GSO, so reserve yours today.

### Nominations

The Nominations Committee is working to fill five open positions on the Board. The Board can have a maximum of fifteen trustees on the board: Ten Class A's and five Class B's. After the 2012 Conference, two trustees (one Class A and one Class B) rotated off the board. Two trustees also resigned (one Class A and one Class B.) There are currently ten trustees and five open positions: three Class As and two Class Bs.

### Office

No report.

### Public Information

No report.

### Finance

From the report of the GSB Treasurer to the 2012 World Service Conference: Looking to Fiscal Year 2013, which began July 1, 2012, we feel D.A. is better off than last year but still not out of the woods yet regarding annual income being sufficient to fund the projects listed in D.A.'s five-year plan. We were only able to fund approximately half of the spending requests for this current fiscal year. The items we funded include: all regular operating expenses, purchasing a new computer and vacuum cleaner for the General Service Office, reinstating printing and mailing of *the DA Focus*, conducting two regional forums, and purchasing legal reference materi-

### Statement of Financial Activity — Accrual Basis

07/01/2011 – 06/30/2012

		Actual
<b>Regular Inflows</b>		
Group Contributions		53,618.38
Individual Contributions		40,491.22
Other Contributions		881.54
World Service Month Contributions		627.92
Pamphlet, Book, & Audio Visual Sales		53,665.50
Shipping		9,439.60
Conference Income		52,721.82
Interest Income		256.04
<b>Total Regular Inflows</b>		<b>211,702.02</b>
<b>Regular Outflows</b>		
General Administrative		9,167.43
Office Administrative		15,133.65
Board		17,209.80
COGS - Literature Printing, AV Duplication, Production of new literature, Shipping literature orders		31,027.41
WSC Event & WSC Committee Expense		54,006.59
Salaries, Payroll Taxes & Professional Payroll Services		63,695.56
<b>Total Regular Outflows</b>		<b>190,240.44</b>
<b>Net Income</b>		<b>21,461.58</b>
Other Inflows		
John H Scholarship Fund Contributions		5,232.27
Other Outflows		
John H Scholarship Expense		2,494.35
<b>Adjusted Net Income</b>		<b>24,199.50</b>

### UNAUDITED - For Informational Purposes Only

als for the Board's Legal Affairs Committee. The spending requests that are still denied include: a request from the Legal Affairs committee to pay a professional employment attorney to review our employee handbook, an upgrade and redesign of the debtorsanonymous.org website, and renting booths at national events where we have the opportunity to do outreach targeting professional communities (mental health professionals, employee assistance programs, medical professionals, legal professionals, etc.).

## World Service Conference Committee Reports

### **Business Debtors Anonymous**

No report.

### **Conference**

No report.

### **2012 WSC Host Committee**

The 2012 D.A. World Service Conference was held on the campus of Seattle Pacific University. General consensus amongst the host committee is that the highlight of the conference was the keynote address by Jan S. Another highlight for the outdoor-oriented host committee was seeing the delegates and Board members sitting outside on the grass surrounded by beautiful gardens and at tables under large trees discussing the pressing matters of our beloved Fellowship. The talent show was a delight, with many locals and delegates performing. Many thanks to the amazing Sue F., our Class B Trustee in her role as liaison between the Board and Host Committee. Look forward to seeing you all in Arizona next year!

### **2013 WSC Host Committee**

Four members have volunteered to serve as subcommittee chairs: Jody S., Logistics; Pamme S., Talent Show/Dance; Joy S., Meals; and Lizz B., Hospitality. However, due to health issues, our Host Committee secretary, Kathy Z., had to resign in August. We are looking for someone to replace her, and also to fill four more subcommittee chair positions: Registration/Convocation, Fellowship Day, Technology, and Volunteer Coordinator. Two of our other current activities are (1) revisiting hotels, getting more details, and reporting back to our GSB liaison by the end of September, and (2) creating a slogan and topics for Fellowship Day and submitting these to our GSB liaison by October 8.

### **Diversity Caucus**

No report.

### **Fellowship Communications**

The 2012–13 Fellowship Communications Committee assigned its plan of action to five subcommittees. The projects include: using the Fellowship-wide conference call format to

introduce topics including, but not limited to, definition of solvency, group sponsorship, using social media to carry the D.A. message, social media, anonymity, underearning definition, and healthy meetings; creating a repeatable process for sharing information and outcomes from conference calls; continuing to monitor the existing group sponsorship email account; developing and implementing ways of publicizing the group sponsorship program/email address; guided by the traditions, exploring the use of social media to carry the D.A. message; continuing to develop a tagline from the FCC visioning process to be used in all FCC communication; and soliciting and gathering D.A. group success stories to be shared with the Fellowship to help groups thrive.

### **Hospitals, Institutions, and Prisons**

The debtor confined to a hospital, institution, or prison is a debtor just like us. There is no separation. There is no us and them. They are us.

This year's HIP Committee has decided to focus our work on the following spiritual guidelines: emphasize our common experiences versus our external differences; remember that the inmate or patient is a person and a debtor first and an inmate or a patient second; treat each person/debtor with dignity and not as a second class citizen; and ensure that each person/debtor receives outreach, recovery, and a voice in that recovery.

### **Intergroup Caucus**

No report.

### **Internal Operations**

No report.

### **International Caucus**

No report.

### **Literature**

The Literature Committee is reviewing all nonupdated pamphlets for gender and Higher Power neutrality, in order to have our recommendations ready as pamphlets come up for reprinting. The Committee will make specific

recommendations for an "Other Issues" pamphlet, which will address a number of symptoms of debting, including underearning, vagueness, procrastination, and self-debting.

The Committee has proposed to the GSB Literature Publications Committee a call for diverse stories to replace those stories removed from the website for inclusion in *A Currency of Hope*, 2nd edition, and to be considered for the unnamed D.A. Basic Text. We would produce some of these stories, we will issue a Fellowship-wide call for a D.A. mission statement, and we will continue to work on our foreign language/translation/audio recording agenda and with diversity-based groups such as the Harlem Group to determine how meetings and groups such as these use and don't use literature, as well as how they feel D.A. literature can best serve them. Lastly, the Committee will write a "Responsibility Pledge," to be submitted to the 2013–14 Literature Committee for a possible motion at the 2013 Convocation in Phoenix.

### **Public Information**

No report.

### **Resource Development**

During the recent WSC, the 2012–13 RDC will be developing the following initiatives: (1) John H. Letter: provide proposed design and content; (2) Group Wellness Initiative: develop stories/articles on how unhealthy groups have become healthy; (3) World Service Month Letter: propose design and content; (4) Contributions graphic tool: alternative graphic tools for the website to communicate where our GSB funds have gone and where we would like to spend money to reach the debtor who still suffers; (5) Inform the fellowship of on-line banking bill-pay option and procedures for 7th Tradition contributions to the DA-GSB; (6) "I am Your Dollar" story for the W&M: The story of how a dollar travels from a member's pocket to various means of serving the fellowship; (7) Develop initiatives to create a Culture of Service in DA; (8) Develop ways to focus on high-potential revenue streams to increase donations.



We have fourteen members on our committee, including our GSB liaison, all of whom are energetic and dedicated to serving the fellowship.

### Technology

At the 2012 WSC in Seattle, we worked with the technology team of the Host Committee to manage the telephone broadcast of four speaker sessions during Fellowship Day. At the peak of the broadcast there were eighty-one callers on the line, and we received positive feedback about their experience. In the upcoming 2012–13 Conference year, we have subcommittees that will be working on (1) research, test options, and features for an updated Debtors Anonymous web site; (2) creating a Usability Study for testing of that site; (3) research for e-commerce options for making donations and purchasing literature online that uphold our traditions; and (4) research toward an application for mobile devices.

## Joy and Transformation

(continued from page 1)

tained as possible, so as to allow as many groups as possible to send GSRs and ISRs.

The intensity of the Conference work (and energy) evoked shares about the transformation that service makes possible, especially “freedom from the bondage of self.” Not so much change as becoming more oneself. Not a diminution of personality, but an increased capacity for compassion and love, both giving and receiving. Class B Trustee Peggy R. rotated off the Board at the Conference, after six years of dedication to our beloved Fellowship. Peggy, too, spoke eloquently of transformation through service, and about transition and change. She pointed out that some of the GSRs and ISRs in the audience would be tomorrow’s

Board members. In the last several years, the Board has made a special effort to show its workings to the delegates and the fellowship at large. This is correct: the Board answers to the Conference and the Fellowship. But it is a policy intended to attract applicants to the Board. It was inspiring to hear delegates talk about Board service as a natural continuation of service as GSRs and ISRs.

Another aspect of the Conference’s maturity was how visioning was used. The chair of the 2012 Host Committee read two lists to the Conference: “Vision for how we want to feel about serving on the conference” and “Code of conduct—vision for how we want to treat each other.” The Fellowship Communications Committee built a vision structure to support their mission. Out of these lists emerged many of the qualities that were everywhere at the Conference: Joy, passion, reason, humility . . . but also ease, humor, collaboration, and fun.

## Call for Beginners’ Meeting Formats

The GSB Literature Publications Committee is collecting Beginners’ Meeting formats. Please submit yours to [dalitpub@yahoo.com](mailto:dalitpub@yahoo.com)

## Open Service Positions

### Trustees:

**Three Class As** (recovering debtors)  
**Two Class Bs** (non-debtor)

### Appointed Committee Members (ACMs):

- Finance Committee
- Legal Affairs Committee
- Conference Support Committee
- Editor for D.A.’s *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*
- Two ACMs for The 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)

and the *Debtors Anonymous Manual for Service* (DAMS).

**The eNews delivers *The DA Focus, Ways & Means*, and announcements of World Service events and service opportunities.**

**Sign up on the home page at [www.debtorsanonymous.org](http://www.debtorsanonymous.org)**

## Bill J., Class A Trustee

My name is Bill Jaffe and I'm a debtor in recovery. In 2002, I was fortunate enough to meet one of the Trustees, who talked a lot about what happens when you've paid off all your debts, and you're living on life's terms. The conversation brought me into a whole new world of prosperity consciousness. Even after years of recovery in other fellowships it was D.A. that gave me this level of recovery. It was in this program that I was able to truly understand the Steps. I came into DA some \$100,000 in debt and today my own unsecured debt is completely gone. I live my life on a cash basis and my only secured debt is my house.

I was married at nineteen, and had my first round of credit-card problems and money issues by twenty. It was 1968. By the time I joined D.A., in 1988, I was in debt almost \$100,000, and simply couldn't keep up. There was a gerbil-wheel effect: I would get some money, get current on all the debts, but fall behind, as my spending was simply out of control.

So I came into D.A. in 1988, got a PRG, got a little notebook for 69 cents, and worked the Tools and the Steps, but mostly the Tools. I had a sponsor, but we rarely talked, and, frankly, I was focused on getting CONTROL. By 1989 I was almost debt-free. Since I was controlling my spending, I could easily pay back the debt by 1991 or 1992. Like the song, I had a fine wife, a fancy car, and a fiddle, and everything seemed great. Between 1988 and 1995 I received regular PRGs, gave regular PRGs, was sponsored and sponsored others. I served in various positions at the meeting level in Washington, D.C.

But just like my home life, the surface was not the inside, and I fell into debting. I lost the wife and everything else, and wound up living alone with—surprise—the debt spiraling upwards again. I looked around and asked myself, “How did I get here?” I had strayed from D.A., wasn't even going to meetings, and crawled back in during 1998. However, the credit cards seemed an option. I took one up on their offer (funny how they still were coming into my mail), and maxed it out all in one weekend. That scared the bejeesus out of me. I began to work the Steps again, have regular PRGs, etc.

I have had periods of being in D.A. and solvent, and out of D.A.—sometimes maintaining solvency, sometimes not. I got solvent again sometime in 2000, just in time to lose my job. Up to this point, I'd been able to “control” things because my income kept rising and money came easily. That was no longer true. Nevertheless, by 2001, my solvency was on more solid ground. Between 2002 and 2005 I attended three World Service Conferences as a GSR. In 2004 I founded the BDA Sunday night phone meeting, where I've served over the years as meeting chair, treasurer, and email group moderator. I've held the same positions for the Don't Debt online meeting. I have also been the group's moderator since our move to a new server.

I am a person who, despite an MBA, cannot control my money. I needed help, and began to build a support network of sponsors, sponsees, PRGs, and service, while also working the Steps intensively. Today, I have almost eight years of back-to-back solvency. In 2007, I became completely debt-free. My wife and I founded a business together in 2004. We run it using the BDA spiritual tools and prosperity consciousness, and it has prospered (today we employ over 175 people!).

## Tom F., ACM

My life in recovery began alongside (no coincidence) a midlife crisis, as Life Number One came utterly apart. I was open to a spiritual solution, and I remember being entirely willing to do what was asked of me.

I remember too talking with a friend (not in Twelve-Step programs) while driving. Reflecting aloud, I shared an untested hypothesis.

“I think,” my friend heard me say, “that life may be all about being of service to others.”

“Hmph,” she replied. Her disbelief and discomfort were clear.

I’m surprised I remember our unsupportive exchange so vividly now.

In 1991, my service was at the local-meeting level. Through several years of calamitous need, Debtors Anonymous served *me*. I survived the midlife crisis and was blessed with a return to stability and sufficiency. Life Number Two.

Then came a number of years in which, once again (no coincidence), my spiritual life and my material/professional/private life unfolded in parallel. In the latter, I answered what I thought was my higher power’s will for me, heeding a calling in life. In the former, unawares, I allowed my recovery to get a little too comfortable.

The nonprofit that I’d founded closed its doors after nine years, a victim of asphyxiation. (I was a visionary, an evangelist, a counselor; I should not have been an executive director or a manager.) In the same month as that passing, I raised my hand to serve my D.A. home group as GSR.

Three years of service at the conference level were transformative. Now, having raised my hand once again (and then been through a rightly rigorous candidacy), three more years of service lie ahead, as an Appointed Committee Member to the General Service Board’s Literature Services.

In twenty years, my notion about service has been tested. In that same month in which vocation succumbed to volition and I raised my hand to commit to the truest understanding of service I could find, I did an Eleventh Step of a new order.

Life Number Three?

DA: a program of reincarnation . . .

## Bill B., ACM

My name is Bill B. I’m an Appointed Committee Member (ACM) for the Long Range Planning Committee (LRPC). Previously, I served on the Resource Development Committee as the GSR from the Serenity on Sunday group from Mountain View, California. I was also a member of the Regional Trustee Selection Study Commission, which originated at the 2006 World Service Conference in San Diego. One of the recommendations from the commission was having Regional Forums; these are now being organized by the LRPC and local Intergroups. I’m active in my local fellowship and I help organize a Twelve-Step retreat each year. The retreat is open to all D.A. members and the attendees work all twelve Steps together over a weekend. I am grateful to D.A. for leading me from a life of debting and despair to one of gratitude and prosperity.

## “Ask the General Service Board” Phone Forums

A series of four phone forums during the 2012-1013 Conference year provides an opportunity to learn about, and ask questions about, D.A. world service.

**The first phone forum will be held on**

**October 28**

at 5:00–6:00 ET / 2:00–3:00 pm PT

9:00–10:00 pm UTC

**TOPIC: A Recap of the 2012 World Conference in Seattle**

**Dial-in number:** 1-218-844-0850

**Access code:** 363385#

The 2012 Conference was held in Seattle WA in mid-August. The Conference is the annual business meeting of D.A., where delegates from groups and Intergroups meet with Trustees to discuss the state of the Fellowship and vote on issues of importance to Debtors Anonymous as a whole.

Trustees from the D.A. General Service Board as well as General Service Reps who attended the Conference will be sharing their experiences, the activities at, and accomplishments of the 2012 Conference. The call is open to all D.A. members. Participants will have the opportunity to ask questions and make comments.

### **Additional “Ask the General Service Board” Phone Forums**

January 20, 2013: D.A. World Services Finances

April 7, 2013: The D.A. Traditions and Concepts

June 23, 2013: D.A. Literature, Copyrights, World Service Website