

THE DA focus

The Quarterly World Service Newsletter for the Fellowship of Debtors Anonymous

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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.

GSR Area Groups

Almost everyone in Debtors Anonymous knows what a group, or an Intergroup is. And most have heard of the General Service Board and World Service Conference. But what is a GSR Area Group, and what does it do?

The GSR Area Group is the least-well-known component of the DA service structure, but is by no means unimportant. The DA Service Manual states that an Area Group consists of all the GSRs from a city or region who meet monthly, or sometimes bimonthly, throughout the year to continue the work they began at the annual World Service Conference. It is different from the WSC committees that GSRs serve on, which also meet monthly throughout the year.

In practice, only the largest cities have had enough GSRs to form Area Groups. Historically, Greater New York, Southern California, and Northern California have had Area Groups for many years. The Capital Area centered on Washington DC established DA's fourth GSR Area Group about a year ago. Other cities may form Area Groups as the number of local meetings and people willing to be active in service increases. ■

22nd World Service Conference Does DA's Business in Salt Lake City

Stunning views Of Utah's Wasatch Range greeted delegates to the 22nd annual DA World Service Conference in Salt Lake City this past August. The striking physical location was matched by an atmosphere of serenity, as 102 GSRs, ISRs, and General Service Board Trustees gathered to do the business of DA in what many described as the most harmonious Conference in several years.

The small Utah Intergroup Host Committee proved more than equal to the task of providing comfortable accommodations and an efficient workspace just blocks from downtown Salt Lake.

Perhaps the most important action taken by the Conference was the revision of the Literature Approval Process. Frustration over the time it takes to produce Conference-approved literature has led to changes in the process over the years, but some glitches uncovered during the past year led to a proposal for a further revision, designed to eliminate unnecessary roadblocks. The motion to revise was approved by a vote of substantial unanimity.

The Conference also voted to create a Recovery Stories Page on the World Service website www.debtorsanonymous.org to share accounts of strong recovery in Debtors Anonymous. As of

today, 14 stories of long-term members have been added to the site, with more being posted all the time.

The Conference also:

--Welcomed Willie W. of California as the new chair of the General Service Board, replacing Carol B. of Oregon, who rotated out of this level of service. A new trustee, Donna W. of Kentucky, was also ratified, and an existing trustee, Alan J., was renewed for another term of service.

--Narrowly defeated a proposal to create a new Technology Committee of the Conference to replace the Technology Caucus. The majority voting no felt the continued existence of the caucus would benefit all of the committees of the Conference.

--Set the locations of future WSCs as Denver, Colorado for 2010 and Detroit, Michigan for 2011.

--Defeated a proposal to create a Health Care and Debt caucus.

--Considered several proposed pieces of DA and Business Debtors Anonymous literature, and moved some of them forward in the Literature Approval Process. More details on the status of DA literature projects is found on page 4 of this issue.

ACMs Play Important Role In World Service

Among the trusted servants who play an important role in carrying the DA message are the Appointed Committee Members (ACMs) who serve on committees of the General Service Board.

ACMs are neither GSRs, ISRs, or Trustees, but their special skills help the GSB greatly to serve the fellowship as a whole. Each ACM serves as a working and voting member of a GSB Committee--currently one ACM serves on the GSB Information Technology Committee and two on the board's Literature Services Committee.

ACMs are chosen by the GSB and need to have many of the same qualifications as prospective Trustees do--a minimum of three years of not incurring unsecured debt and service at the World Service Conference. Other requirements and instructions on how to apply to be an ACM are found in the DA Service Manual.

Office Committee

The Office Committee has been conducting an extensive review of salary, benefits, and job descriptions for DA's employees. Work continues on assembling a compensation package in keeping with the fellowship's needs.

The DA Archives, located near the General Service Office in Needham, Mass., have received several important contributions of materials from New York and Chicago. The new materials are currently being examined and catalogued.

Literature Publications Committee

Literature Publications is pursuing an offer to purchase a Spanish-language website and its contents for DA for \$1, including several Conference-approved DA materials that have already been translated into Spanish. It is in the process of confirming the accuracy of those translations.

The committee has proposed that the DA pamphlet entitled AA Literature be made available as a free download on the DA website. It also supports revising the Beginner's kits that are offered for sale on the DA literature order form by replacing some of the less useful materials with materials more relevant to the newcomer. Literature Publications has also adopted a five-year vision to "develop a process to make DA literature available in other languages; publish one new full-length DA book; and ensure that all DA literature contains a consistent message about our primary purpose."

Nominations Committee

The Nominations Committee continues to review and interview possible trustee candidates. Currently, each region of DA can have as many as three trustees on the General Service Board at one time. The committee is reviewing the regional structure to determine if changes are needed. Nominations also created a five year vision in conjunction with the board's effort to present its five-year plan at the 2009 World Service Conference.

InfoTech Committee

Information Technology continues to build on the successful launch of the searchable meeting list earlier in the year, and has continued to make changes and enhancements designed to make it easier for users to find a meeting.

The committee's next project is a major redesign of the DA website. The committee has started the process of creating the design to make the website useful to newcomers while serving the existing needs of the fellowship. The comprehensive redesign will not only affect the look and feel of the web interface, but also content and the way the site is maintained and updated.

Public Information Committee

The Public Information Committee is working to increase the number of DA media contacts who have received PI training from the WSC's Public Information Committee. The committee is also working on ways to improve public information to underserved communities.

Communications Committee

The GSB Communications Committee has been collecting and publishing stories from veteran members for the successful new Recovery Stories page on the DA website, which has attracted much favorable attention.

The committee continues to increase the number of pages and breadth of articles in the fellowship's quarterly recovery newsletter, Ways & Means, and later in the year will begin work on a standardized style guide for DA publications.

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee reviews the previous month's financial reports on each month's call. In addition, the committee is working on the following projects- creation of an Audit Committee, and development of a Financial Policy Statement and an Investment Policy. The Finance Committee will also be working with the 2009

WSC Host Committee as they prepare their spending plan.

Long-Range Planning Committee

The Long Range Planning Committee is composed of four trustees who meet monthly via telephone conference calls. The committee has been assigned two important projects for the 2008 conference year.

It is working on compiling the results of the DA's Primary Purpose Survey which was circulated and completed by 81 respondents at the 2008 World Service Conference. SC. These results are being compiled for future dissemination to the fellowship.

The WSC has also asked the GSB to prepare a five year strategic plan for the fellowship that will include, but not be limited to, a comprehensive vision for DA, a mission statement, Goals, objectives, capabilities analysis, trend analysis, action plan and prosperity spending plan.

GSB Holds F2F In Florida

The DA General Service Board traveled to the Deep South for the first time ever in January, as it held its annual face-to-face midyear business meeting in West Palm Beach, Florida. The GSB held three days of intensive business sessions, attended a Friday night DA meeting in Delray Beach, and met with members of the Fellowship from several Florida cities.

The board travels each year to a different location around North America to conduct Fellowship business that cannot be done on telephone conference calls, and to encourage the growth of DA in areas where there are not a large number of meetings.

The work done at the F2F helps implement projects that are approved at the annual WSC. In addition to visiting the South for the first time, the board in recent has also carried the message of DA service in person to Canada, the Pacific Northwest, and the Southwest.

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 2007-08 committees and caucuses have undertaken over the past few months.

Literature Committee

The Literature Committee has completed its responses and resolutions to the 38 issues and concerns that had been directed to the committee by the DA groups.

The committee is also in the process of reviewing all of DA's literature to ensure that it is in alignment with DA's primary purpose, and to suggest possible clarifications and corrections. To date, four of the existing pamphlets have been reviewed by committee members and comments are being finalized. The committee is further reviewing a draft of a proposed pamphlet entitled Clarity in Business Finances. The concept for this pamphlet was formulated by the Business Debtors Anonymous Committee and approved by the WSC in August.

Business Debtors Anonymous

The BDA Committee is working on the following pamphlets and booklets: Annual BDA Business Plan pamphlet, BDA Numbers pamphlet, and BDA Step Study Guide supplement. They are also working on matching individuals for sponsorship and PRGs, and BDA group sponsorship. Each member of the BDA Committee, except for the officers, is a member of one of the subcommittees working on each of these projects.

The committee also spends time at the beginning of every meeting discussing one of the 12 Concepts for World Service, to become better and more informed trusted servants.

Conference Committee

The primary focus of the committee continues to be a proposal to amend the Conference Charter. The committee intends to send out notice of the proposal at least 180 days prior to the start of the 2009 WSC, as required by the charter.

The committee also continues to work on a proposal for a Conference Committee Board Liaison Panel to address grievances against the GSB by members of the fellowship or WSC. One of the primary issues is the membership of such a panel.

Public Information

The Public Information Committee conducted training for media contacts by phone in November. Subcommittees are exploring ways to improve DA public information through outreach to the media, Spanish speakers, mental health professionals, the Armed Services, college counselors, those who work around foreclosures, and other 12-Step fellowships. The committee also worked with ten local DA members in the Washington DC area to set up and work a DA booth at the annual AARP conference in September, where 172 attendees visited and received DA literature.

Hospitals, Institutions, Prisons

The HIP Committee has submitted items to both the Literature Committee and the GSB for approval. Working their way through the discussion process are a proposed letter to professionals, a set of frequently asked questions, and a proposed pamphlet and prison story.

The committee has also responded to letters from prisoners, supplied DA literature to those unable to attend meetings and to those who might be able to spread the word to those unable to attend meetings. Committee members have also been exploring how to serve the needs of those confined populations who might benefit from DA while observing the 12 Traditions.

Internal Operations

The Internal Operations Committee has concerned itself this year with the use of technology to improve services offered by the General Service Office. It is investigating ways in which literature might be purchased from and contributions made to the GSO electronically, which staying within the boundaries DA's 12 Traditions.

It has also endorsed a proposal to have group registration and re-registration forms enhanced so they can be e-mailed to the office as well as printed off the website and sent by postal mail.

Intergroup Caucus

The Intergroup Caucus is working to help DA

telephone meetings establish an intergroup. Such an intergroup could help the growing number of phone meetings by providing access to speakers, sponsors, and PRG members. The caucus is discussing other possible benefits of an intergroup, and how best to introduce the idea of an intergroup to members of the phone meetings, many of whom have not had experience with an intergroup.

Technology Caucus

The Technology Caucus is addressing ways in which it can help regional DA webmasters. Some of the ideas discussed to date include creating a list of email addresses for regional webmasters so that contact is possible, creating and offering templates or standardized content to help webmasters who may not have the technical skills to create a site from scratch, and to provide consistent content and appearance. Other possible projects include providing a forum where webmasters can ask questions and exchange information, and making enhanced technical information available.

Diversity Caucus

Four officers have been elected to serve the Diversity Caucus--Lynda L. as chair, Beth P. as vice chair, Dani N as treasurer, and Mickey M. as secretary. The caucus plans to focus itself to be a resource to all committees by helping them to think about how they can become more inclusive. in regard to a number of diversity issues in DA.

WSC Host Committee

Planning is well under way for the 2009 World Service Conference, to be held in Irving, Texas (a suburb of Dallas) August 19-23.

The Dallas Host Committee is focused on utilizing the Conference as an opportunity to become more engaged in DA recovery. Monthly planning meetings are ongoing, and the work is becoming more intense as the Conference nears.

A suggested spending plan for delegates will be available in the spring; a rough estimate GSRs and ISRs can use for planning purposes.

Lit Projects—Updated

Many DA members are curious about the status of different literature projects that have been presented at the World Service Conference level. Here's an update:

12 & 12 Book

After an extensive review of 11 proposals that were received by the General Service Board, the Literature Services Committee, Literature Publications Committee, and GSB are getting close to selecting a writer for DA's proposed 12 Steps & 12 Traditions book.

Daily Meditation Book

The WSC Literature Committee has spent more than six years requesting, collecting, organizing, and reviewing submissions from the Fellowship. At the 2008 WSC, the Literature Committee voted to turn over all materials related to the project to the GSB Literature Services Committee.

Step Guide/Workbook

The concept of a full-length Stepworking guide with material specific to both DA and BDA was approved by the WSC. However, since DA is in the process of creating the previously mentioned 12 & 12 book, this project is currently on hold.

BDA Literature

Some of the items currently in process with the Literature Services Committee and their respective writers are the Clarity in Business Finance pamphlet, BDA Signposts and Tools, and BDA Newcomers' pamphlet

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Debtors Anonymous Spending Plan to Actual

	PLAN 7/1/2007 to 8/31/2008	ACTUAL 7/1/2007 to 8/31/2008
REVENUE		
Literature Sales	\$ 26,633	\$ 26,691
Group Contributions	14,333	14,709
Individual Contributions	8,333	10,466
Other sales	267	154
Invitation to Prosperity	-	-
World Svc. Month Contributions	833	5
12 & 12 Book Appeal	-	-
JH Scholarship Fund	2,333	993
Interest Income	1,100	794
Misc. Income	33	340
World Service Conference	2,333	26,163
TOTAL REVENUE	<u>\$ 56,200</u>	<u>\$ 80,315</u>
COST OF GOODS SOLD		
Pamphlet Printing	\$ 7,347	\$ 4,374
Book Printing	1,520	1,017
Audio Visual Cost	127	103
Production Cost	253	-
Shipping & Postage	2,913	2,452
Shipping Supplies	507	177
Total Cost of Goods Sold	<u>\$ 12,667</u>	<u>\$ 8,123</u>
GROSS PROFIT	<u>\$ 43,533</u>	<u>\$ 72,192</u>
EXPENSE		
Board Administration	\$ 2,217	\$ 483
Board Travel	6,666	854
ACM Admin	-	-
General Administration	15,420	4,571
Office Administration	4,826	4,165
Payroll Expense	17,833	12,839
Other Related Expenses	5,166	52,271
TOTAL EXPENSE	<u>\$ 52,128</u>	<u>\$ 75,183</u>
NET INCOME FROM OPERATIONS	<u>\$ (8,595)</u>	<u>\$ (2,991)</u>
Other Revenue & Expenses		
Funds Transferred from Reserve Account	\$ 8,595	\$ -
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ (2,991)</u>

Note: Unaudited—for information purposes only.