

WSBC 2003 Delegate Report by Carol B.

I want to begin by thanking everyone for giving me the opportunity to represent WUIG at the 2003 OA World Business Conference in Albuquerque from 4/27 – 5/4. To see the recovery and experience the love and support from OAers around the world was awe-inspiring.

There were approximately 188 voting delegates (mainly from the US and Canada but also from as far away as New Zealand, Australia, England, Spain, Israel, and Germany) plus a 16-member Board of Trustees, consisting of a Regional Trustee from each of the ten regions and six General Service Trustees (GST). Eligible voters ranged from 199 - 20, depending on the particular session.

A delegate's schedule is highly structured. Beginning Monday evening thru Wednesday evening, there were non-stop workshops, presentations and committee meetings. These sessions were recorded and can be purchased through WSO. (The Final Conference Report will be available in September.) Here are some highlights:

- **Report on OA Survey** – 2002 UNM study (results published 8/03) with many interesting findings, one of which is that 20% of OA members learn about OA through professionals. (Informative)

- **Sponsorship: the Twelve Steps for You and Your Sponsor** - Speakers discussed their views on sponsorship, with focus on the AA Big Book, Twelve Steps, abstinence and honesty. The workshop began by asking participants to write five qualities of a good sponsor and concluded by asking participants if their sponsor has these qualities and if they themselves as sponsors possess these qualities. (Inspiring)

- **The Courage to Change** – Speakers shared their strength, hope and experience. (Thought-provoking)

- **Creating Special Events** – Speakers presented an informative discussion of their experiences planning special events. (Stimulating)

- **Parliamentary Procedures** – Robert's Rules comes alive to help delegates understand important procedures for the Business Meetings. (A New World)

- **General Session on Four Committee Reports from WSBC 02 to 03**
 - **HIPM** (Hospitals, Institutions, Professionals, & Military) – The OA newsletter “Courier” can be sent to professionals via the web free of charge. The HIPM committee is looking for names of professionals to send newsletters as well as articles from professionals who have been helped by OA or seen their clients

helped. The World Service works with the prisons through a program called OACARE. Review the HIPM service manual!

- **Public Information** – Various programs were presented, including (1) the Region 6 Blitz, (2) donating OA literature to the libraries, hospitals and prisons, (3) writing a response to media articles about obesity, bulimia or anorexia, & (4) Billboard ads. Encouraged to purchase PI Manual. (Exciting)
- **12 Step Within** – Many ideas were discussed about member retention including relapse recovery workshops and promotions such as “Call 5 to Keep Them Alive”. The importance of service (the theme of WSBC 03) was stressed encouraging delegates to espouse the benefits as well as encouraging their sponsees to do service. Manual for individuals as well as groups. (Stimulating)
- **Service Structure** – Discussion of the fellowship questionnaire responses with report due WSBC 2004.
- **Reference Subcommittee** – Overview of who what, where, why and the how of this important committee in regard to upcoming motions.
- **Proposed Literature Q & A** – Presentation by Board members on the proposed new pamphlet “To the Newcomer” (later approved at the Business Meeting) and the draft of the “Dignity of Choice” (see below).
- **Procedure for Developing New Literature** – Presentation by Board members comparing our process for approving new literature with that of other 12 Step programs, such as AA, NA and SA. Delegates were asked to forward any suggestions and recommendations to WSO.

Delegates are asked to serve on committees, such as Public Information, HIPM, By-laws, Reference, Twelve Step Within, and Literature. I participated in the Twelve Step Within Committee, which focuses on reaching members who are still struggling with the disease or those who have left program, never experiencing recovery and reaching out to groups in trouble. It was really an eye-opener for me. I never realized the work that is being done by other Intergroups. I was surprised and pleased that WSO has produced a manual focusing on solutions. Hopefully WUIG will join in this worthy effort!

Because the **Dignity of Choice** has been an area of concern for us, I would like to outline the basic principles of the proposed pamphlet. As delegates, we were asked not to make copies of the draft, but we were encouraged to discuss the information with our intergroups and to make suggestions as soon as possible. I will discuss the topic at the June 3rd meeting. The basic principles are:

- The major audience is the newcomer and/or an OA member who needs help in deciding a food plan
- Pamphlet is to reflect a variety of ways members have developed their own food plans. It does not recommend any of these plans; rather it describes the experience that members have had.
- Sample plans (6) cover a wide spectrum, including non-weighed and measured as well as weighed and measured plans.
- Pamphlet emphasizes common the spiritual solution.

Then came three days of **Business Sessions**, 5 – 6 hours a day. I was impressed with the professionalism. (Even the parliamentarian was impressed!) The Business sessions began with the adoption of the credentials, rules and agenda. Next came the (1) delegate briefing, (2) reports from the Officers, Region Trustees, and Committee Chairs, and (3) speeches by nominees for Trustee positions. Highlights were:

- **Treasurer’s Report** – As of 3/03, OA, Inc has \$170,000 in prudent reserve mutual funds and \$160,000 in CD’s, totaling \$330,000. Prudent reserve noted as no more than one year’s operating revenue.
- **Managing Director’s Report** – 2002 was a “successful year.” (1)Cash position remained strong and the number of meeting groups seems to have stabilized around 6600. (In 2002, OA lost 30 meetings whereas in 2001 OA lost 896.) (2) 2002 subscriptions of LIFELINE decreased by 681 so delegates were asked to encourage OAers to subscribe or donate subscriptions to libraries and doctor’s offices. (3) The “Together We Can – Update Campaign 2002” was created to encourage all intergroups to communicate with the WSO to ensure accuracy of meeting information, contact names, phone numbers and secretary information. The director states that “It is disheartening when a person seeking help calls WSO about a meeting that wasn’t there or a disconnected contact number. With outdated information, we let people down.” Intergroups were asked to respond to WSO’s quarterly mailings with the appropriate changes. 216 of 359 intergroups responded. The campaign will continue through 2003. (4) The Web site has been updated significantly and will continue to be improved and made more user-friendly. There is an “Inspiration/Support” page and a posting of OA’s award-winning public service announcement, of which delegates were given a copy.
- **Regional Reports** - These were full of exciting events as well as interesting statistics. It is definitely worth downloading the information from the web!
- **Board Literature Committee Report** – There will be a full review in 2004 of the “Suggested Meeting Format”. A proposal has been developed to include two new sections: the new definition of cross talk and a section stressing the importance of the disease concept in our sharing. The latter was included to assist members fulfilling 2002 Operations Plan, which states the goal of educating “members in

meetings to share about the illness and its consequences, not the events of the day or week.” Large cloth banners on the Steps and Traditions are available.

- **World Service Convention 2003** – “Let the Good Times Roll...AaaaaaEeeee!” There was a tremendous amount of excitement and enthusiasm for the upcoming World Service Convention in New Orleans, August 7 – 11. Some people have complained about the weather. Their response - “It will be hot outside but the recovery inside will be hotter!”
- **Ask-It Basket** – There was a very informative session with Board members responding to written questions that delegates had submitted the day before.

Results of Elections

- Karen S-A, who had been filling a 6-month vacancy as a GST, was elected to a one year term as a GST.
- Michael B. & Ella A. - three year terms as GSTs
- Dexter J. - Region 6; Deborah W. – Region 3; Sancu M. – Region 7; and Kathleen R. – Region 9.

Results of Motions Presented

- Adopt “To The Newcomer” pamphlet – **Adopted** (by a vote of 135-59)
- Buy encryption Software for meeting info sent into WSO online – **Adopted**
- Discontinue development of “Dignity of Choice” if it is not adopted at the WSBC 2004 - **Defeated**
- Rescind the policy for the board of trustees to develop the “Dignity of Choice” and make food plans an “outside issue” again. – **Defeated**
- Rescind the policy to create the “Dignity of Choice”, and defer to the Conference Literature Committee to create a pamphlet about “honesty around the food”. **Overwhelmingly defeated**

Results of Proposals Presented

- Include the Parliamentarian, Managing Director and WSO staff as non-members who may address the body at the WSBC – **Passed overwhelmingly.**
- Develop a method allowing delegates whose credentials for WSBC have been denied by the world service office to present their case at the World Service Business Conference – **Referred to Bylaws Committee**
- Give non-English-speaking countries more time to receive agenda questionnaire information due to translation issues – **Referred to Bylaws Committee**
- Change the Eleventh Tradition so that it says “to the compulsive eater (rather than “compulsive overeater”) that still suffers. – **Overwhelmingly defeated**

In addition to the formal business, there were two social events...(1) a fun-filled Mardi-Gras style jazz reception sponsored by the 2003 Convention committee...and (2) a Saturday night dinner dance with a ceremony for out-going trustees, an introduction of the new Board and a clever musical OA spoof, based on the “Music Man”, written and directed by Karen S-A and Bob F. and performed by Karen and fellow OAers.

Personal Highlights (in no particular order)

- I had the joy of going to an OA meeting every morning before official business began!
- When I didn't even know that I felt isolated and overwhelmed, an OAer, whom I had never seen, gave me a welcoming hug...how special is that!
- At the beginning of WSBC, each new delegate was given a green dot to attach to his/her name tag and throughout the convention "green dots" were given special attention!
- I was impressed with the generosity of delegates. The basket was passed at every Business session and \$4,655 was raised!
- I now openly discuss my membership in OA...as never before.
- I am so much clearer on what the message is, what it means to carry it, and the incredible benefits of service!
- Favorite quotes: "Trust God but Buy Broccoli", "It's not the extra string bean that matters; it's the decision to eat it", and "Honesty without compassion is cruelty; compassion without honesty is fatal."
- I was touched beyond words when each business session opened with someone reciting the Serenity Prayer in a foreign language and then English...and every session ended with everyone holding hands reciting "I Put My Hands in Yours."
- At the end of the last Business Session, all the "green dots" were brought to the front of the room and were officially allowed to remove the dot. The ceremony still brings tears to my eyes!
- This entire experience was "Beyond my Wildest Dreams!" Thank you. Thank you. Thanks you.