

# World Service Business Conference

## Introduction

It was a privilege to serve as the Sea to Sky delegate to the WSBC as Faye D. was unable to attend this year. The Embassy Suites Albuquerque Hotel was a different hotel since my last WSBC meeting in 2010 but the agenda was familiar. Monday and Tuesday were the days to use the bus shuttles to buy groceries. My roommate and I decided to eat our meals in our room where it was much easier to maintain our abstinence. As the hotel provided breakfast, we only had two meals to prepare. In the afternoons of Monday and Tuesday, there were early bird workshops and Board of Trustee meetings where visitors were invited. There were four OA meetings every day; early morning, noon, dinnertime and evening. We were allowed to bring our meals to the meeting, as the agenda was voluminous. The huge binder was packed with what we needed to know including a brush-up on OA parliamentary procedure. As delegates, we were there to consider new or amended policies and bylaws, elect trustees and consider proposed literature.

## World Service Structure

There were 199 delegates from 19 countries. There are 10 regions. Regions one through seven are Canadian provinces plus the northern and western States. Region two includes California, Mexico and Hawaii. Region eight is nine southern states plus Puerto

Rico, Virgin Islands, Central and South America. Region nine includes Africa, Europe, Middle East and Western Asia. Region 10 includes Australia, New Zealand, the Far East, Southeast Asia and Western Pacific Basin. The Virtual Service Boards includes seven phone lines plus online service.

Sea to Sky is a part of Region one which includes Alberta, British Columbia, Northwest Territories, Saskatchewan and the Yukon in Canada. Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington and Wyoming are in the United States.

Each region has a trustee that sits on the Board of Trustees (BoT) and a Region chair. The region one trustee is Margie G. (Web and Technology chair) and Beverly M. is the region one chair. There are also six general service trustees (GST) whose positions are: second vice chair, Treasurer, BoT Bylaws chair, Chair of the Board of Trustees, 12 Step Within, conference planning chair as well as Virtual Services totalling 17 trustees, including the 10 region chairs.

The current OA's 2016-2017 Board of Trustees are Margie G. (Region one), Vicki W. (Region three, first vice chair), Cyndy L. (Region four, second vice chair), Karin H. (Region six), Barbara G. (Region seven), Stella C. (Region nine), Stephanie D. (Virtual Services Trustee), and General Services Trustees Karen C. (chair), Tina C. (Treasurer), Janice S., and Bonnie L.

The delegates elected are the following members to fill open Board of Trustee positions for 2016-2017:

Hannah S., Region two

Linda J., Region five

Linda H., Region eight

Letitia M., Region 10

Steve M., General Service Trustee

Gloria L., General Service Trustee

## **Conference Proceeding**

As delegates from around the world, we conducted the business of OA with our commitment to abstinence, recovery and carrying OA's message, taking part in decisions that affect the entire OA Fellowship. Monday evening ended with the workshop "Responsibility Pledge: To Extend the Hand and Heart of OA". The theme of this conference was "Responsibility – To Carry the Message." Tuesday afternoon had three early bird workshops and a Board of Trustee meeting in the afternoon. Tuesday evening ended with "All About Conference" workshop as well as the OA parliamentary procedures, having the opportunity to ask questions afterwards.

In addition to attending all the business meetings and workshops; we were also required to serve on a committee. I chose the 12 Step Within committee and am part of the "Fun Committee" (a subcommittee to explore fun activities for members).

Wednesday at 8:00am started with the Forum; "A Carry-On Message" was the theme.

Each delegate was assigned to 1 of 10 tables with a region chair to facilitate the discussion. The delegates were asked a series of questions designed to help deliver the message. We were asked to devise a role-play to "share the message" with the other tables at the end. One of the scenarios was then performed for all the delegates. One

example is: Visit To A Health Care Professional. You are visiting your visiting family doctor. The doctor looks at your history and notices an 80-pound weight loss in the last two years. Do you tell your doctor about OA and your experience? What can you say to the doctor? Is this a situation where you choose to carry the message? If not, why not? What I learned was that on future doctor visits is to talk about my 15 years in OA.

The business meetings began at 8:00am Thursday through to Saturday at noon. All the delegates were seated according to their regions. The 17 trustees were seated at the front with a monitor situated in the middle of the room to answer questions or give permission, or not, to speak at the central microphone.

There was a daily adoption of credentials report and standing rules. The procedures are based on Robert's Rules of Order. However the OA incorporated bylaws and Conference Standing Rules supersede Robert's Rules of Order. It is the best business meeting that I have ever attended. It is a pleasure to attend a meeting where there were no loud voices arguing or any fighting. (Definitely not what seems to happen at Ottawa's parliamentary sessions! ) There was a five-page glossary of all terms utilized in our conference binder as well the procedures were all included.

Many motions were updating language, to bring further clarity or to remove redundancy or all three.

The two new pieces of literature were approved – the Twelve Step Workshop and Study Guide (70+ page document) and a pocket guide to the traditions.

The motion to change Unity Day to the first Saturday of June was defeated and remains the last Saturday of February. The most contentious motion (Proposal Item: 4)

saying that the Region Chair Committee to meet only in North America, was defeated. Our Region one chair, Beverly M., made a strong argument against the motion.

The delegates voted to amend OA's Statement on Public Media, opening the door for the Fellowship's participation and presence on social media websites and networks. The new statement reads:

“While Overeaters Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues, including social media, the delegates of the 2016 World Service Business Conference recommend that any OA member, group, or service body using social media for OA public information and public awareness maintain the personal anonymity of OA members.

Members of Overeaters Anonymous are anonymous. The Fellowship is not. Members of Overeaters Anonymous using social media are responsible for maintaining their own personal anonymity and respecting the anonymity of other OA members.”

## **Finances**

Revenue exceeded expenses by \$41,500. OA now has a reasonable prudent reserve. The net gain in 2015 was the receipt of two bequests totalling \$116,000 while total revenue from all other sources was down from 2014. However, in 2015, contributions dropped 8% compared to 2014.

Subscriptions to Lifeline continue to decline in 2015 and the Board of Trustees has reaffirmed OA's commitment to this publication. Lifeline produces a valuable service to the Fellowship and must be maintained in both print and electronic versions. The back cover will have a blank space providing local meeting or intergroup

information. Share your Lifeline with your doctor, dentist, hairdresser or auto mechanic and ask if you can leave a copy in the waiting area.

The OA fiscal year runs from January 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup> of each year. The healthy balance sheet has adequate income in reserve (greater income generated than expended; 30% income generated within OA - the major source of income being literature sales). The US budget, \$1,926,300 is the most aggressive budget OA ever.

## **Strategic Planning**

An Automatic Recurring Contribution (ARC) account is for everyone wanting to make a donation. It's also for those attending virtual meetings to consistently donate to 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition. To sign up for ARC accounts, go to OA.org and click on the "contribute button". The strategic plan goal for 2016 is to increase the fellowship's progress on the individual's responsibility to carry the message. Tasks in progress are a Sponsorship Training workshop promoting the Responsibility Pledge, "Tips for Carrying the Message;" Service and My Recovery virtual workshops/podcasts.

The "Find A Meeting" database was completely rewritten in 2015. A new online bookstore was completed earlier in the year, taking your online order directly from the bookstore through fulfillment and shipping.

OA literature has been translated, or is in the process of being translated, in 29 languages in 42 countries. There were two staff changes this past year; long-time managing director, Naomi Lippel, resigned in the end of 2015. Sarah Armstrong, a

member of the management team, controller and associate director, is now the managing director. The new controller is Jim Clyner. I could go on and on; in fact, the amount of information was enormous. It will be available on the website soon.

The updated website was unveiled the 22<sup>nd</sup> of February 2016, to a 19,000+ email list. It is divided into three sections: newcomers, existing members and service bodies making information easier to locate.

## **Summary**

This was the hardest workweek I have had in years. It helped having been a delegate previously and having been abstinent for the past 15 years. It was also a joy; a wonderful exercise in democracy. OA has become the passion of my life. Thank you for allowing me to participate in this conference.

Respectfully submitted, Greta Hurst, delegate

Sea to Sky Intergroup, Vancouver, British Columbia.