

REPORT TO CNMI REGARDING WSBC 2018

Submitted by Pat O. at May intergroup meeting

The 57th annual world service business conference was held in ABQ from April 23 -29, 2018. I was privileged to be one of the delegates representing our intergroup. It is an exciting, though incredibly busy, week with lots of business, fellowship, and some really tough decisions. One feature that is unique for those of us in CNMI is that it is wonderful being a delegate in our 'home court'. There is no travel or jet lag to deal with and we have old friends around us who are volunteering as support staff. (if you haven't volunteered before, be sure to do so next year – it's a kick!)

The week starts on Monday evening, but many delegates don't arrive until Tuesday or even Wednesday when the important delegate commitments begin. On Monday and Tuesday there are optional workshops and information sessions. I went early Tuesday morning to sign in and get my binder but did not attend the optional workshops. The binder was online this year which was really great because there are so many reports and things to read and study that getting it 'on site' does not leave enough time to get up to speed before the business sessions start (it's over 300 pages long). So, I took Tuesday to read and review the materials that I had, mostly, already read online. On Wednesday there was a recovery forum which was really good. I have a darling handout and the format to share with our special events chair if she might want to adapt it for our intergroup. The rest of the day was taken up with committee meetings. I chose and was assigned to the bylaws committee. I find myself the chair of one of our subcommittees tasked with the cleanup and updating of our bylaws subpart B, so I will have a busy year ahead. I also was assigned to the reference committee which was really an intense experience. Reference meets throughout the conference to try to iron out confusion and resolve conflicts in motions so that they can move more smoothly through the debate process on the floor. Wednesday evening had information sessions on the literature to be presented for conference approval and to question the makers of the motions to be presented. Those sessions were very clarifying. All day Thursday and Friday, plus Saturday morning were devoted to business sessions. The business dealt with is summarized below. Saturday afternoon was the Board of Trustee meeting and some free time and Saturday night there was a dinner, speaker, and a dance. Dinner was 'so-so', the speaker was very good, and the dance was too late and too loud for me, but the fellowship of the evening was really wonderful.

The process of the WSBC is something to behold. We do business like no others I know. We cooperate and when we get in a tangle of emotions and tensions, we pray. Yes, we debate and sometimes get ourselves backed into strange corners, but somehow we always seem to 'get it right in the end'. This year we didn't think we had a prayer of finishing all the business that we had left, and yet due to selflessness and commitment from everyone, we actually did. What an experience it is to meet so many people from all over the world who have such great recovery and are there only to share their recovery and promote the good of the fellowship. It is a loving, forgiving, honest group and I am so happy to be able to say 'I am a part of it'. I only made it to two OA meetings because most all of my free time was spent serving in reference committee, but those two were so good. For locals: the workshops and the OA meetings are welcoming of everyone. You can also sit in the business sessions as a visitor, and of course, as a volunteer. Get involved next year, I'll bet you'll like it.

SUMMARY OF BUSINESS SESSIONS BEGINNING THURSDAY AM AND ENDING SATURDAY AT NOON:

- ❖ Adoption of credentials and standing rules, delegate briefing, and consent agenda
 - 1) 188 voting members present (continued at each session until Sat. when we had 185 voting members)
 - 2) Consent agenda – 5 items were pulled for debate and then the consent agenda passed with motion C, D, H, I, N, and O left on it – these were all basic ‘housecleaning’ motions in the policy manual
- ❖ Officer reports, region reports, with question/answer periods (reports are listed in the online binder)
- ❖ Speeches from those seeking election (for: Virtual Serv. Trustee, General Serv. Trustees, and Region Trustees)
- ❖ Election results:
 - 1) Pat O’Connor re-elected as Region 1 Trustee
 - 2) Neva Schuelke elected as Region 3 Trustee (that’s us)
 - 3) Dora Prolungatti elected as Virtual Service Trustee
 - 4) Judy Harper elected and Bonnie Lewsaw re-elected as General Service Trustees
 - 5) Region 6 Trustee position is open – the candidate for region 6 did not receive a majority of the votes
 - 6) Region 9 Trustee position is open – no one ran for this office
- ❖ New business items:
 - 1) Literature presented for conference seal of approval: a revision of the pamphlet ‘To the Family’ – passed unanimously; a revision of the pamphlet ‘To the Teen’ (renamed ‘To the Young Person’) – soundly defeated (primarily because the old stories with only teenagers were used and 4 of the 5 were female, it was thought that the pamphlet didn’t live up to its name or represent the fellowship accurately); a revision of the pamphlet ‘Welcome Back’ – this item was withdrawn from consideration (the literature committee is going to combine this pamphlet with another ‘relapse’ related one and bring it all back next year for consideration. FYI: the WSO, with board approval, is moving towards consolidation of our many pamphlets in the interest of clarity and economy. It will welcome any suggestions the fellowship has on appropriate combinations of current pamphlets); a proposed wallet card titled ‘The Twelve Concepts of OA Service: An Introduction’ – defeated (it was thought to be too streamlined and misleading, also that there was no audience for it).
 - 2) Proposal F: to delete a policy that isn’t even happening – basically a housekeeping motion but the reaction to it was electric. The policy says that WSO provides website templates to intergroups (which it doesn’t) but delegates wanted it to in some fashion. There were several amendments and it was sent to reference, and in the end, the bylaws committee (as maker of the motion) withdrew the motion because it was turning into something completely different than the original intent of the motion was. This motion was tied up and confused with the motion to disband the website tech committee (see motion E below)
 - 3) Proposal M: has to do with clarifying the new policy (in 2017) regarding translations – that service bodies do not need to get permission in writing to translate/alter the literature - passed
 - 4) Proposal G: to delete an old policy that introduced our use of the internet for policy proposal forms and instructions – it is now the case that these forms are only available online, no need to have a policy to put them there. The motion passed.
 - 5) Proposal A: to direct the Board of Trustees to form an ad hoc committee to research the cost and advisability of upgrading and improving our electronic ‘front door’, (including smart phone apps, geolocator, find a meeting, etc.) the result of which to be presented next year at conference. This motion was amended slightly and passed.
 - 6) Proposal E: this is the motion to disband the web/tech committee in the interest of economy and since they were not an active committee. There was quite an uproar about it. Several techies were delegates and were interested in reviving the committee. The motion to disband failed. Therefore, we will still have a web/tech committee and after all the discussion and interest, perhaps they will be active now. For clarification – this committee is meant to help the fellowship with tech issues, not the WSO.
 - 7) Proposal S: to release the copyright on ‘For Today’ so that members could use virtual media to legally copy and share the daily readings. This has quite a convoluted story and history – call me for details – but suffice it to say, it went through reference committee and a big debate on the floor and ultimately failed. The comedy highlight of the conference happened when the maker of the motion (a gentleman from Spain) presented the motion, spoke ‘pro’ to it, and then promptly went to the other side of the

room to line up to speak 'con' to it. Over the process of debate and reference, it was quite an education in copyright law.

- 8) Proposal J, K, and L: these motions were to change our holidays to alternate Saturdays and Sundays so that all faith-based folks could attend a holiday in odd or even years. It took some work in reference and with amendments, but the end result is that we passed motions to change Unity Day to be on Saturday in even years and Sunday in odd years – still in the last week of February, but now at 11:30 AM local time, not Pacific Standard time. For the other holidays (Founder's Day in January, Sponsorship Day in August, and IDEA day in November), they will be celebrated on the third weekend of their respective months so that local groups may decide which day of weekend to hold them.
- 9) Proposal B: this motion concerns bariatric surgery – it is a statement of welcome, not recommendation. It was amended to clarify that we have no opinion on it (tradition 10) but that all those who have a desire to quit eating compulsively are welcome in OA (tradition 3). The amended motion passed.
- 10) Bylaw amendment 3 – to create a virtual region – passed. We now have 11 regions. 8 housekeeping motions 'attached to/affected by' bylaw amendment 3 also passed – these refer to '10 regions' etc. and are no longer true.
- 11) Bylaw amendment 2 – to rename virtual service boards to virtual intergroups and to rename face to face meetings as 'land based'. This motion passed. We now have a virtual structure like our US structure of: groups, intergroups, and region. And we've made a distinction between in person meetings and skype type meetings (which are 'face to face', but virtual)
- 12) Bylaw amendment 5 – to do away with 'virtual service boards', this motion passed. We no longer have virtual service boards existent in our service structure.
- 13) Bylaw amendment 6 – this amendment was to clarify issues around the virtual service boards, but since we no longer have them, the motion was withdrawn.
- 14) Bylaw amendment 4 – this motion clarifies how a language service board may affiliate. The motion passed.
- 15) Bylaw amendment 1 – this motion clarifies issues around how groups may affiliate. The motion was amended and passed.
- 16) Bylaw amendment 7 – to disband the finance committee. The motion passed. We no longer have a finance committee.
- 17) Bylaw amendment 10 – to appoint the virtual service trustee as the new region trustee for region 11. The motion was seen to be unnecessary and was withdrawn. The virtual service trustee IS the new virtual region trustee.
- 18) Bylaw amendment 8 – concerning adjustments to the qualifications for board of trustee members – this motion was withdrawn on our last day of business to make time for dealing with more important issues that would be lost if we used the time to consider this motion. They can bring this back next year.
- 19) Bylaw amendment 9 – to change the steps and traditions to be gender neutral – this motion was withdrawn due to the fact that the makers of the motion did not realize they were trying to change the bylaws regarding steps and traditions and all that involved. Their intent was merely to get 'permission' from WSBC to change the words at their meetings rather than read the steps and traditions as they are written with masculine pronouns.
- 20) Emergency new business – it came to the attention of the board during conference (by a board member being 'outed') that meetings on Facebook which are billed as 'closed' can actually be seen by everyone – not the shares, but the names and pictures of all the group members. There was a motion proposed to give the Board direction to change the requirements for getting a meeting registered on Facebook (to make them 'secret' sites, not accessible by everyone) and to 'go after' unregistered meetings that are using our logo and breaking the anonymity of the group members. This motion failed. The motion was vaguely worded and while those of us in reference knew what the motion was trying to accomplish, I believe the delegates didn't really understand and thought the board was going to close down all social media meetings. There is a great deal of passion for virtual groups and all types of electronic usage and people get very defensive when anyone tries to 'control' electronic use. This is a whole new area of growth for us and it has many challenges regarding our traditions. In terms of this particular issue, the board may be able to proceed without the directive of the delegates to protect our members' anonymity and to shut down those meetings which are infringing on our trademarks.

POINTS OF INTEREST/NEWS:

- There were delegates from 17 different countries this year (Australia, Austria, Brazil, Canada, Costa Rico, England, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Israel, Mexico, New Zealand, South America, Spain, Sweden, United States of America, and Venezuela)
- The 7th tradition collection totaled a whopping \$15,978.59 (that includes a check from region 3 for \$10,000)
- Board of Trustee elections: Cyndy Lenz was re-elected chair; Karen Beck was elected first vice chair; Lawrie Cherniack was elected second vice chair; and Bonnie Lewsaw was re-elected treasurer
- The WSO budget is 'strained' and our BOT treasurer has asked us to take up a special collection for three consecutive meetings – there is an appeals letter to be read (I'll give copies to each meeting) and instructions
- Three proposed items did not get enough votes to make it onto the agenda. These were the motions to add prayer, mediation, and physical activity to the 'tools of recovery' to make 12 tools.
- There will be formal minutes, updated bylaws, and other details of the conference posted online at www.oa.org in the next month or so for those who would like to delve deeper into the doings at conference this year. Also, please call me if you have questions that I might be able to answer for you.

My personal observations from viewing conference in past years as a volunteer and this year, again, as a delegate is that the electronic age will be having ramifications for us to deal with for years to come. It started with phone meetings many years ago and now we have a virtual region. I see a lot more young people in the delegation which is really wonderful, but I also see a certain tension between the younger generation and those of us who are older and not quite so accepting of 'all things electronic'. As a fellowship, we have new challenges in protecting and applying the traditions. In this great 'information age', our traditions can seem very outdated and unnecessary to those raised on electronics. I have faith that we will be able to work out all the details and move into the modern age and reach even more people than Bill W. or Dr. Bob could have imagined, but it will take time and be a frustrating process some of the time. I also see more men and people of color at our conferences. I'm so happy to see this growth and inclusivity. Eating disorders are no respecter of gender, race, or age so it's important for us all to be welcomed and welcoming.

Thanks to CNMI for allowing me this opportunity to serve as your delegate. It is an honor and a wonderful growth experience. Learning to balance all the emotions and activities during the week, interacting with so many different people from so many different parts of the world, and for me this year, needing to learn more about bylaws than I ever thought I'd want to know are all adding significantly to my emotional and spiritual growth and health.

In grateful service, Pat O. (281-3638)