

Report from World Service Business Conference, 2016 in Albuquerque, NM
May 2-8, 2016
Cathy L, UDDI delegate

Thank you to all desert OA members for contributions enabling me to attend WSBC! I will be sending all original receipts to our Region 2 Treasurer for possible reimbursement up to \$1000. Our members' willingness to donate to our 7th Tradition special collection has encouraged our Region to support our efforts once again. Thank you to all of us..!!

Our theme this year was, "Responsibility to Carry the Message." It has been requested that we say the OA Responsibility Pledge at each meeting: "Always to extend the hand and heart of OA to all who share my compulsion; for this I am responsible." Our conference workshops all spoke to this: Extending the hand and heart of OA, Responsibility of Abstinence, The Real Deal—Sharing experience, strength, and hope. Each workshop was recorded and will be available on OA.org in a few weeks. The "Real Deal" was the Young Person's workshop led by Matt from Los Angeles. Many of us were at our Saturday morning PD meeting when he was our speaker four years ago. The younger members who shared had such insight and willingness to be open to recovery; they also shared the difficult feelings of when a longtimer repeats how "fortunate they are to have found OA so young." It helped us older members remember not to assume, or project ourselves onto them, but to simply offer experience, strength, and hope. They had much to share on OA's entering into the virtual world, which is where our younger members are found. It can be lonely and difficult to find members with long-term recovery. This virtual world was re-visited often throughout the conference, and OA is truly tiptoeing into new territory. The Board of Trustees is embracing this now.

Our Region Chairs Committee again created the kickoff Forum, entitled, "A Carry-On Message." In table groups of 8, we were given real-life scenarios to explore how we might carry the message: obese family member, stranger in a waiting room, seat mate on an airplane, healthcare professional. Each group created a skit, shared it with another group for feedback, and then chose one of the two skits to be performed for the delegation. There was much laughter, and great appreciation for maintaining the Traditions while reaching out to other suffering compulsive eaters. Forum is interactive and always enriches our understanding of our Steps and Traditions. It is a privilege to participate and witness it. I hope one of us will joyfully step up for this position of WSBC Delegate 2017, as this is my last year for this service.

Wednesday morning, when Forum was complete, delegates met throughout the day with their committees. Each committee brainstorms issues, selects the most crucial, and meets again several hours after lunch to organize the committee work for the year. Delegates select a committee and the work is done by virtual contact throughout the year. It often requires some group emails to keep track of tasks completed, and there are 3 reports delivered to the Trustee Co-Chair. She or he in turn, reports progress to the Board of Trustees, and final work becomes part of the record for the following year WSBC Binder. OA at this level is an amazing example of Representative Democracy at its best—truly something beautiful to behold.

My committee is Bylaws, and my sub-committee will be creating a correlated glossary to be included as an addendum. Throughout our Bylaws, there are differing definitions of terms. My sub-committee will attempt to rectify this. I also serve on Reference Committee during Conference. More to follow below regarding Reference.

Wednesday evenings are set aside for each Region's Fellowship Meeting. Ours included an opportunity for Meg to say a fond farewell, and for us to thank her for dedication and service to Region 2 and OA as a whole. We were also treated to special information about the upcoming R2 Convention in Milpitas in June. Volunteers at all levels are needed as timers, moderators, speakers. Contact r2convention@oar2.org if you'd like to serve.

Wednesday evening there is also a Literature Q & A for people wishing more information on Literature motions during Convention. It is highly informative; I was unable to attend this year due to my early morning Reference Committee schedule, but my roommate, a "Green Dot" delegate, (newcomer to WSBC,) found it extremely informative. I was able to get questions answered from her..!!!

My Thursday morning began with breakfast at 6:30am and Reference Committee at 7:00am. We reviewed policies and procedures and planned for upcoming motions with some controversy. Our job in Reference is to preview, discuss, and make recommendations to the general delegation regarding motions which may affect OA as a whole. Reference Committee consists of only two delegates from each of our ten Regions worldwide, thereby achieving international representation. Several motions were expected that required our input. We ended up meeting at 5:45 Thursday evening after daily WSBC business was complete, and again at 9:00pm Friday to receive an emergency motion. Some items discussed in committee were: Whether Region Chairs Committee should meet only in North America. The ramifications are complicated, as frequently OA has had only two Region Chairs living outside No. America. As our membership internationally is growing exponentially, Reference Committee recommended the delegates defeat this motion. It was defeated after much energetic discussion, both in committee and on the floor of the Convention.

Another motion handled by Reference was the issue of anonymity and the use of social media. I had chaired this committee last year to suggest re-writing of the WSBC Policy 2011a; we were unsuccessful in achieving this, but the BOT (Board of Trustees) picked it up and created a motion. The former policy had recommended against using social media for OA purpose because anonymity could not be guaranteed. This is outdated and has had the consequence making OA inaccessible to many groups of sufferers, particularly young people who use social media extensively and people unable to participate face-to-face. Reference discussed, amended, and recommended passage of a new policy which the Delegation adopted...!!!

The new statement is written below.

Statement on Public Media

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.

A motion to establish a brand new Conference Committee was also adopted, Proposal Item: G. This important issue creates a Virtual Services Conference Committee which will assist Virtual Groups to form service bodies, present virtual workshops and projects, and to offer support to Virtual Service Boards (VSBs.) There is currently a Virtual Services Trustee who has worked alone to perform all virtual tasks. The Trustee will now have a full committee to participate as well.

Several Bylaws motions were presented that clarify wording and definitions of our groups, service bodies, and responsibilities. One in particular, Proposal Item: 6 changes the wording of Article V—Groups. This adoption may require our Intergroup to re-word our own Bylaws. We will seek assistance about this over the next year. Our Bylaws must be aligned with those of OA as a whole in order to send a delegate to WSBC. Our new Trustee, Hanna, will help us do this..!!! Thank you, Hanna.

At the beginning of each of the Five Business Meetings, our Member Services Manager, Sandy Zimmerman, gives a credentials report. Throughout most of Conference, we had 17 Trustees present and 192 Delegates from 19 countries. To open meetings, the Serenity Prayer was said in Swedish, Danish, Portuguese, German, and Gallic, as well as in English.

Friday's meetings included a vote for new Trustees, and the delegation voting on new Literature Motions. We have approved a new 12 Traditions Pocket Guide, and a new book, Twelve Step Workshop and Study Guide. There was heated conversation over the adoption of this work; its committee had spent nearly four years in its production. It outlines a closed, 15-week, 30 hour workshop process for working OA's 12 Steps. It was adopted and will return for automatic revision in 10 years.

Friday night at 9:00pm, Reference Committee met on an emergency motion to require the BOT to schedule at least one of its meetings to be Virtual. Many members of the BOT were present. Reference determined this not to be an emergency; however, due to its import financially, the Board will be working to implement this during its 2016-2017 term.

The fifth and final Business Meeting was held on Saturday; all Board and Committee Reports were given, with time for questions made available.

Chair

Highlights: launching of new oa.org website; welcoming of new managing director— (this was truly a challenge, as previous director had been with OA, Inc since the purchase of the Rio Rancho in August of 1994;) and the consideration of creating an 11th Region. Lifeline, our journal of recovery, continues to be an issue of finance. It is suggested that when we finish reading our “hard copy” issue, we donate it to the waiting room of a healthcare professional, a wonderful way for us to “carry the message” of the Responsibility Pledge.

Treasurer

Tina reminded us that recovery is not free. OA has no dues or fees, but it certainly has expenses. We have 60,000 members worldwide, and our oa.org Automatic Recurring Contribution button has only 244 contributors. If we were to each give \$5/month, OA would be self-supporting at this time. It is especially important for members using virtual services. It is painless and simple. Isn't recovery worth \$5 or \$10 per month extra? (Forgive me, but I am happy to say, I am one of those 244.)

Lifeline is considered **vital and an ongoing service** to the OA Fellowship. Please enhance your commitment by writing/submitting articles, renewing your subscription or purchasing it for a fellow or sponsee; discuss it in meetings.

Managing Director

Briefly: \$8600+ was authorized for literature translations into Korean, Portuguese, Estonian, Chinese, Dutch, and Russian. Several pieces of new literature were revised or approved for publication. A complete and final report from 2016 WSBC will be online at oa.org shortly.

Region Reports Highlighted

We said a fond farewell and thank you to Meg, who passed the gavel to Hanna. Meg reported that our two IG's in Hawai'i have become one, with the name OA Hawai'i. Our Region contributed \$106,000 to WSO in 2015.

Stella C, Region 9 Trustee, reported that her region has a total of 883 groups representing 32 languages in addition to English..!!!! Wow..!!!!

Virtual Services Trustee Stephanie reported growth of virtual groups from 336 to 469, and an increase in contributions from \$7500 to \$18,800. She was pleased that the Delegation approved the new anonymity policy for the use of social media. We were again reminded to sign up for the Automatic Recurring Contribution.

Of particular note from committee reports is the Twelve and Twelve ad hoc committee, which hopes to bring the revised document to Conference 2017.

To hear even more, “World Service Business Conference Fun,” please come to my luncheon..!!! With gratitude for the honor of serving as your 2016 Delegate,

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy L, WSBC Delegate 2016

