WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE

The WSC brings all elements of NA world services together to further the common welfare of NA

World Service Conference 2004
25 April–1 May 2004
"Moving Forward Toward Our Vision"

The feeling that many delegates, board members, and staff came away with from this year's World Service Conference was of having turned a corner. Never have we seen more unity behind the consensus that we are maturing as a fellowship and confidently moving toward our vision. We are fifty years old, and we are ready for the next fifty! We saw it in the "rounds" (discussion groups set up around circular tables), we saw it in the pit (formal ringed, multi-level business seating arrangement), we saw it in the hallways, and we saw it in the special recreational activities. Excitement was in the air!

Many sessions at WSC 2004 invited participants to interact and express a group conscience in a variety of settings. We believe that these interactions were essential in building community among the group that comes together to serve our worldwide fellowship. These bonds helped us to remember the importance of our vision in the work we were about to undertake.

Venezuela and Chile, the two regions recommended for conference seating, were unanimously approved by the conference and will be funded to attend WSC 2006. Greece attended the conference for the first time at WSC 2004.

The conference elected seven World Board members, two cofacilitators, and three Human Resources Pool members. The results of that election are listed in the boxes on the next page.

As we welcomed our new board members and prepared for the work ahead, it was also with a heavy heart that we said good-bye to some of our current board members and other volunteers as they finished their terms. We said thank you to Garth P from Australia and Charlotte S from Iowa for their service to the HRP, and to Tim S from Australia for his facilitation at the conference. We expressed a special thank you to World Board members Bella B from Australia, Lib E from New Zealand, Jane N from Connecticut, Susan C from Washington, and Tony W from South Carolina for their tireless service contributions to the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous. We will miss each one of them.

Although you will find a complete summary of all conference happenings in *NAWS News* (June 2004), we wanted to highlight some of the major decisions and events of interest that occurred at WSC 2004. The conference approved the book *Sponsorship*. This was the first new book-length piece of recovery literature that has been approved since the conference adopted *The Narcotics Anonymous Step Working Guides* in 1998. In addition, a new IP #11, *Sponsorship, Revised* was adopted to replace the current IP. The new sponsorship IP resulted in changes to *An Introductory Guide to NA* and *Just for Today*. Conference participants also gave us their overwhelming support to move forward with the production of a variety of new items; see pages 38 and 39 for a full list.

We continued to inform conference participants about the principles underlying the NAWS Strategic Plan. Even though the plan directs a relatively small percentage of world services' work, it is important because it supports us as we move forward to reach the goals set forth in our vision statement.

Conference participants approved "Our Public Image" and "Infrastructure" as the 2004-2006 issue discussion topics. We held two sessions at the conference that presented some of our challenges as well as some of our recent accomplishments in these areas. These two topics come directly from our Strategic Plan and are critical to our ability, as a fellowship, to effectively carry NA's message to the addict who still suffers.

There were lengthy discussions during the conference about our current nominations and elections process. The body expressed support for allowing zonal forums and language groups, including the European Delegates Meeting, to meet in order to help their members understand the information in the Candidate Profile Reports. Conference participants supported leadership cultivation through World Board workgroups and continued to back the blind Candidate Profile Report component of the nomination process. The only action the conference took to change current policy was to allow regions, zones, and the World Board to add candidates into the process after the blind evaluations had occurred. It is important to think about how much progress we have made with our nominations and elections processes. We hope that by continuing to have these important discussions, we can move even closer to our vision.

In an effort to begin thinking about how leadership functions in NA, we had a session in which we discussed leadership qualities and the difficulty in identifying leaders. We also discussed how the stigma associated with the idea of leadership is not always helpful, and the fact that we need leaders to accomplish our work.

We left the conference with plenty of work to keep us busy this next cycle. We look forward to what we can accomplish in the service of our vision and mission these next two years.

World Board	
Craig R	Carolina Region
Mary B	Lone Star Region
Michael C	Spain Region
Mukam H-D	New Jersey Region
Piet De B	Sweden Region
Ron B	Australia Region
Ron M	Florida Region

Human Resource Panel	
Dylan J*	British Columbia Region
Mindy A	Show-Me Region
Sergio R	Panama Region

WSC Cofacilitators	
Mark H	Wisconsin Region
Ubaldo "Roberto" J	Ontario Region

Dylan resigned his position in June 2004.

Projects Update

The following is a brief summary and an overview of the projects we worked on for the fiscal year 2003-04:

Public Relations Roundtables

This project brought together groups of professionals with NA World Services personnel to discuss NA's public face. The professionals helped us identify the deficiencies in our current approach to public relations and frame goals and objectives for improvement. Ultimately we will use the information we gathered in these sessions to frame an effective, productive, long-range public relations strategy that will benefit the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous and help us all to carry the message more effectively to the still-suffering addict.

Three roundtables took place in Woodland Hills, California, USA (April, August, and November 2003); a fourth was held in Bethesda, Maryland, USA (March 2004). Now that these are completed and we have compiled and evaluated the data, we have gained some valuable insight regarding our relationships with various treatment professionals, medical doctors, a variety of officials involved with corrections, and national policy-makers. We will use this information to frame our public relations strategy.

Sponsorship Project

The Seventh Objective in our strategic plan charges us to "build a range of literature to meet the diverse needs of members and potential members." While this objective is primarily concerned with targeted literature, we began to make progress toward fulfilling this goal with *Sponsorship,* a book we believe speaks to the different needs of our diverse membership.

Another of our objectives is to "streamline and increase responsiveness of the literature development process to meet the needs of the fellowship." We are finding that different processes suit different pieces of literature. Though we set an ambitious timeline for the sponsorship project, we are happy to report that we actually finished ahead of schedule, allowing us to distribute the approval form earlier than we expected, in July 2003.

Sponsorship—the book and the revised IP—was a bit of a departure for us in that we aimed to depict the diverse ways in which we practice sponsorship, even when those practices were seemingly contradictory. Given the efforts of our international workgroup and the use of substantial input from the fellowship, we are confident that this text reflects the varied experiences our members have with sponsorship. The fellowship has been asking for new literature on sponsorship for some time now, and we hope this meets that need. The book *Sponsorship* was approved at WSC 2004 and will be available from the World Service Office sometime in November.

World Pool members who worked on the project during this past conference cycle include Billy R (Scottsdale, Arizona, USA), Chuck G (Newbury Park, California, USA), Gwen M (Chicago, Illinois, USA), Janet C (Auckland, New Zealand), Louis H (Washington, DC, USA), Ron M (Winter Haven, Florida, USA), and Lasse W (Stockholm, Sweden). As we mentioned in the previous *Annual Report*, Lasse passed away in September 2003. It was a privilege to work with him, and we will miss him.

Worldwide Workshops

The worldwide workshops are designed to engage NAWS and NA members in various discussions on a variety of service and recovery issues. In the 2002–2004 conference cycle, we scheduled five workshops: in Birmingham, England (30 August–2 September 2002), Austin, Texas, USA (10–12 January 2003), Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA (12–14 March 2003), Lima, Peru (12–14 September 2003), and Bangalore, India (17–19 February 2004). On the whole, we have received extremely enthusiastic responses from participants, and we have enjoyed fellowshipping with members around the world.

Basic Text Evaluation

We surveyed the fellowship, held extensive discussions in our board meetings, and offered a proposal in the *Conference Agenda Report* to replace some or all of the personal stories, as well as add a new preface to the Basic Text and the personal stories section. As a result of the decision at WSC 2004 that approved the Basic Text personal stories project, we will now be moving out of the evaluation phase.

The following projects had less work done on them—in a number of cases, none. To some degree, this is not surprising. As many of you know, we propose more projects than we expect to accomplish in a given cycle, in case there is an opportunity to begin work on a given project; without a project plan and budget, we would not be able to do so.

❖ Service Material Development

This project called for the creation of new and/or revised material on service and topics concerning NA philosophy. Because of resource limitations we were not able to move forward on this project; however, we know that this project is a top priority for many conference participants. We know that all our handbooks have needed to be updated for some time now—or maybe even replaced altogether with new tools. Several of the project plans approved at WSC 2004 take on the creation of tools to strengthen the local service structure.

❖ Standards for World Service Communication with the Fellowship

The purpose of this project, as stated in the plan passed at WSC 2002, was to "assess the problem profiles and recommendations resulting from the Communication Task Force, develop additional recommendations if necessary, and create a plan for the implementation of those recommendations to achieve a set of standards for world service communication with the fellowship." Despite its importance, we were not able to work on this project during this cycle.

Communications have always been a problem for world services, but to be honest, part of our difficulty in this area may come from our tendency in NAWS to "bite off more than we can chew." Rather than reassess all of world services communications, make recommendations, and draw up a sweeping set of new standards, it may be more productive for us to begin implementing solutions for some of the problems we *know* we have. In this spirit we have tried to make improvements in some aspects of world service communications this conference cycle, and we will continue moving forward on this effort in the next cycle.

❖ Information Management System

The purpose of this project was to initiate a comprehensive information management system for world services. The project plan called for assessing our information management strategies above and beyond the initial assessment for archival purposes, which was made in 2001, as well as implementing a complete system for managing information.

While we did not accomplish all of the tasks a formal overhaul of our information management might call for, we were able to make some changes in our infrastructure.

❖ Historical Data Collection

The purpose of this project was to gather historical information from some of those who have been members of NA the longest. As with the above project, we did not tackle it formally with a workgroup. To prepare for WCNA-30, we collected and digitized memorabilia from many members around the globe. We also put together a CD-timeline of NA history, which was part of the registration package for the convention, and added an NA audio archive sampler to our inventory (an item that we gave to conference participants at WSC 2002). We spent quite a bit of money over the last three years restoring and archiving the information we have on reel-to-reel tapes before the content was lost to us forever. While this work does not answer the specific call of the project plan to gather long-time members together to interview them and record their recollections, it does begin to capture some of our history and allow us to share that material with other members.

❖ World Service Meeting

We held no World Service Meeting this past year. This project was prioritized as one of the lowest at WSC 2002, and as we discussed at that conference, holding two large conventions in one conference cycle took a significant amount of our resources.
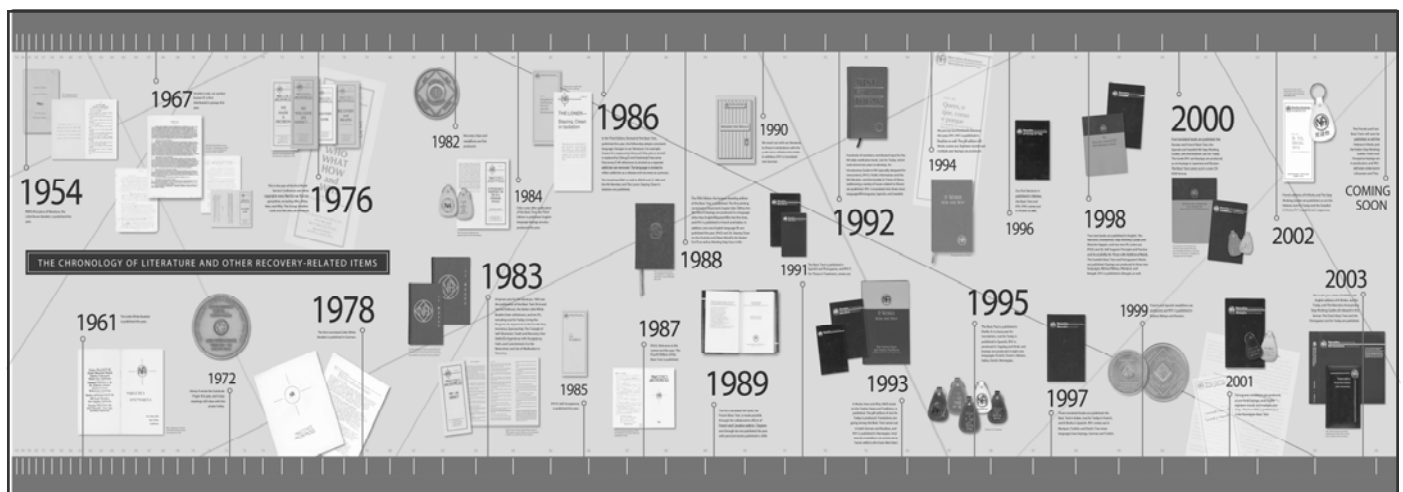
❖ Literature Distribution & Convention Workshop

As with the World Service Meeting, these concurrent workshops—one focused on literature distribution for area and regional customers, and one on convention planning— were not scheduled. When straw-polled, participants at WSC 2002 also gave a low priority to this project.

> "**N**A communities worldwide and NA world services work together in a spirit of unity and cooperation to carry our message of recovery…"

❖ Upcoming Projects for 2004-2006

The conference supported the projects that we proposed for the 2004-2006 conference cycle. As in the past, we asked approval for many more projects than we can possibly begin or complete in the next two years. At this point, we are forming workgroups and beginning work for the following projects: the Basic Text, the Public Relations Strategy, and the Public Relations Handbook. We look forward to an eventful and exciting year of new projects.

This is a miniature reproduction of the commemorative Literature Timeline exhibited at WCNA-30 in July 2003.
The original piece is 14 feet by 5 feet (4.3 meters by 1.5 meters).

From Lima to Bangalore
Worldwide Workshops Complete the Cycle

This year saw the final two worldwide workshops for the 2002-04 conference cycle. The two workshops were held in Lima, Peru, 12-14 September 2003, and in Bangalore, India, 17-19 February 2004.

The workshop in Lima was the eighth workshop conducted by NA World Services and the fourth in the conference cycle. Prior to the workshop, regional representatives and NAWS staff participated in a public information presentation at the Lima convention center attended by approximately seventy Peruvian treatment professionals and government officials. Attendance at this workshop was close to 200 members. Attendees came from other Latin American countries including Chile, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Puerto Rico. Three members from Austin, Texas, USA, found their way there, too!

The members in attendance were primarily Spanish-speaking, and NAWS staff and world board members are primarily English-speaking, so at the back of the room stood a small windowed room—the translations booth. This was not the first time a worldwide workshop bridged the language gap. The third workshop was held in Sao Paulo, Brazil, where Portuguese is the primary language.

Step, tradition, and concept banners were draped on the wall at the front of the room with a worldwide workshop banner along the side wall. There was a large screen at the front of the room with an accompanying projector and computer for slide presentations.

The workshop in Bangalore was the ninth workshop conducted by NA World Services and the fifth in the conference cycle. Bangalore, called "the Garden City" of India, is located in the southern-central portion of the country. One of the fastest growing cities in Asia, it has a population of around four million and is known globally as an information technology center. As a point of information, since, Bangalore is located in southern India, it more than half the population is vegetarian, which was good news for some of the vegan members in attendance!

The India worldwide workshop was an exercise in flexibility. Many of the common approaches the workshop incorporated were challenged and changed in preparation for the event. And although there was much in common between Bangalore and Peru, as you will see in the conclusion to this article, world board members, local members, and NAWS staff were all, in one way or another, asked to step away from their comfort zones and pull together to make the workshop the best that it could be. In an effort to make the workshop accessible to as many members as possible, NA World Services made the decision to have the workshop prior to and at the same location as the Indian Regional Convention, and following the Indian Regional Service Committee meeting.

We never held a worldwide workshop in conjunction with another NA event, but we have never had a worldwide workshop in India prior to this, either. Because of the challenges members face when traveling in India, our hope was that this would allow them the opportunity to attend both events, rather than being forced to choose one or the other. Members came from all over India, most traveling many, many hours to attend. There were also members attending from Nepal, Italy, Australia, and Great Britain. With over seventeen different languages and dialects spoken in India, we were unable to accommodate members with simultaneous translations as we had at previous workshops where English was not the primary language. We knew that most members in attendance spoke English, so we decided to conduct the workshop in English and allow for individual translations to occur at the tables. This was not as effective as we would have wished, and if we face this challenge again, we will brainstorm some alternative approaches.

There were a number of common threads between these two workshops. As usual, registration was free for the workshops and open to all members. Attendance fluctuated between a bit just under 200 people to somewhere over 200. One noticeable difference is that at the Bangalore workshop, the main meeting area was a very large tent called a "shamiana." Banners displaying the steps, traditions, and concepts adorned the walls, along with our vision statement. At the front of the tent, as in Lima, was a large screen with an accompanying projector and computer to use for slide presentations.

Despite all of the challenges with which we were faced during the workshops, we believe both events were successful in helping to carry our message of recovery, demonstrating that the language of recovery can transcend manmade barriers while showing these communities that "together we can."

Members gather around the main meeting tent during the Indian Regional Convention IV in Bangalore, India.

NAWS Publications

NAWS News

NAWS News gives an overview of world service activity, with a particular emphasis on World Board projects. It is published following World Board meetings and the World Service Conference. *NAWS News* is currently available in English, French, German, Portuguese, and Spanish. It is distributed automatically to conference participants and registered area and regional service committees. The mailing list consists of the above groups, but individuals can also request copies of this periodical after each mailing.

Conference Report

The Conference Report, a comprehensive and detailed report of world service activity, is published when the reporting needs of world services require it. This report contains information regarding the status of major world services projects, suggestions for new work, and difficulties that have been encountered. It also includes reports from the World Board, the Human Resources Panel, and any region or zonal forum that wishes to submit material. The frequency of publication may change from year to year, and conference participants are provided with the schedule for each year ahead of time.

Conference Agenda Report

The *CAR* is published and distributed in English a minimum of 150 days before the beginning of each World Service Conference; translated versions are released a minimum of 120 days before each WSC begins. The *CAR* contains information about all of the relevant WSC business, discussions, and activities that require guidance from the conscience of the entire NA Fellowship. At present, the *CAR* is published in English, French, German, Portuguese, Spanish, and Swedish. It is distributed automatically to conference participants and regions. Additional printed copies are available for purchase at cost from the WSO.

Regional motions must be submitted 240 days prior to the WSC and should include a written intent. Regions can include 150-word rationales to describe the meaning behind their motion. The WB includes a recommendation about each regional motion, so that the fellowship is provided with as much information as possible in order to engage in discussions when reviewing the motion.

NAWS Annual Report

The *NAWS Annual Report* covers each fiscal year of NA World Services activities. The fiscal year ends 30 June, and the annual report is produced in late September. It is distributed automatically to conference participants and regions. Additional copies are available for purchase from the WSO at cost.

All reports listed above can be downloaded as a PDF from www.na.org.