



July 2009 Northern CA Regional Delegate Report



ADMIN TEAM START-UP MEETING

The 2009-2010 Administrative Committee, at least those we have so far, met for the first time on Sunday June 14th. The first half of the day was spent doing a series of exercises called the “*Team Startup*”, which helped us identify our common interests, concerns, goals, and ultimately vision, for the coming year. I want to thank all the members of the administrative committee for going along with me on this idea and allowing me to facilitate this exercise. This initial investment in time coming together as a team will reap rewards for us throughout the year if we remain vigilant. Working on the NAWS Service System Working Group as well as watching the process of our inventory changes here at the region has me convinced that, unless we do more to fundamentally change the culture of service in NA to one that more closely embodies the mutual respect and empathy we find in our recovery meetings, then all we are really doing with structural models is re-arranging deck chairs on the Titanic.

After opening the meeting in a circle for a recovery check-in, we all got out of our seats to wander around the room and write on Post-its with headers consisting of the open-ended questions below. The questions were given to the group in no particular order, although there was a method to the madness as you can see from the parenthetical comments.

- In today’s meeting I hope this team accomplishes...(*agenda, managing expectations for outcome*)
- During meetings I hate it when...(*ground rules - “work group values”*)
- The concerns I have about this group and/or our tasks are...(*concerns to be discussed by the group*)
- I volunteered to serve on this team because...(*common interests and commitment*)
- It’s important to me that this team succeed because...(*common interests and commitment*)
- The best thing about serving on this team will be...(*Appreciative inquiry: combat negativity*)
- I believe our team has been tasked to... (*our Mission*)
- I can spend ___ weekend days a month doing our teams work (*our Mission – how much can we take on?*)
- We’ll know this team has succeeded when we see or hear...(*our vision; criteria for success*)

As a group, we then reviewed our answers to these questions. In the interests of brevity, I won’t share all of our results with you here, but I will share what resulted as our group’s vision, or touchstone, to guide us through the coming year:

Our Vision

- ❖ *That our service this year excites and inspires members to do service at the RSC*
- ❖ *We have filled all regional positions and have others ready to step up*
- ❖ *That we have clear communications and 2-way dialog with the RSC (understand what’s going on)*
- ❖ *That we complete our goals/objectives for the year – action plan.*

In future sessions, we may use a neutral facilitator drawn from the regional pool so that we may all participate equally as members of the group. Having said that, I believe this is a great process for focusing and grounding area administrative committees, and we now have a new resource in our regional tool kit. **We would be happy to facilitate these exercises for you as a neutral party if you believe your area leadership could benefit from this.**

NAWS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR COMPENSATION

A recent string of emails and postings on online discussion boards concerning the NAWS Executive Director's salary. This information conveyed in these discussions has contained both accurate and inaccurate information. Although NAWS is always accountable to the fellowship, this particular method of raising concerns via mass emails contained accusations and information ranging from straightforward and accurate in some instances to outlandish and potentially destructive in others. It's important to note that NAWS does not disclose the specifics of people's compensation at the WSO as a matter of privacy and respect. However, NAWS has always strived to be transparent with the fellowship by disclosing the general range of compensations paid based on job function at the WSO.

The Executive Committee (EC) of the World Board serves as the personnel committee of the board and is charged with annual review and appraisal of the Executive Director. In 2002, after we changed from having a "Co-Executive Director" arrangement to having a single Executive Director, the EC undertook an exhaustive comparison of our executive compensation compared to other similar organizations. To find our place in the picture, The EC looked at such things as number of employees, branch offices internationally and annual revenues. We also sought to equalize cost of living factors to account for the location of our office in Los Angeles. For this analysis, we used Guide Star (<http://www2.guidestar.org/>), a leading resource for just this sort of information on non-profits.

As a result, the EC had determined that our executive compensation was quite low compared to the market. So much so, in fact, that in order to bring our Executive Director to a level more in line with a fair market compensation, The EC felt it would be more prudent to implement a series of salary increases over the next few years rather than taking a single dramatic jump. This was done, of course, in conjunction with an assessment of our Executive Director's performance. Our ED had, over the past several years, been rigorously pursuing his own personal and professional development, including pursuing a degree, serving as the chairperson of two committees for an international association of non-profit executives, currently serving as an association committee member, and leading NAWS through a process of adopting and implementing strategic planning that was transforming our organization. In the EC's assessment, our Executive Director's performance was excellent by virtually any measure, yet he was significantly under-compensated.

The general principle here is that NAWS does periodically look at the compensation levels of other similar organizations for their staff, and does attempt to ensure that the staff is fairly compensated for their efforts on our behalf. We cannot always pay staff at the level we'd like to based upon their talent and dedication, but we do evaluate their performance regularly and make reasonable efforts to retain the excellence, experience, and dedication that is so common among our staff through fair and equitable compensation practices.

WSC SEATING UPDATE

The following regions have contacted NAWS and formally indicated that they are interested in seeking seating at WSC 2010:

- ❖ Malta
- ❖ Lithuania
- ❖ Denmark



The decision was made at WSC 2008 to place a moratorium on the criteria for seating of regions that result from regional splits until 2012. This moratorium still allows new regions, not resulting from a regional split, who have never been represented in any way at the WSC—those NA communities growing and developing throughout the world—to apply for seating. None of these regions were created as a result of a regional split. Therefore, the World Board will engage in a discussion with each of the three regions in an effort to determine if now is the best time for each of them to be considered for WSC seating. Many factors go into that discussion and the World Board will report their recommendations in the *2010 Conference Agenda Report*, with the final decisions being made at WSC 2010.



WCNA 33 20–23 AUGUST 2009 BARCELONA, SPAIN

There are almost 3,000 people from 43 countries registered for WCNA 33. The vision and desire to celebrate recovery with 5,000 registrants on the Mediterranean Sea in Barcelona may become a reality. With all of the people who have already booked cabins on the week-long cruise leaving Barcelona at the conclusion of the convention, NAWS will be looking into having meetings during the cruise. In addition to the cruise, NAWS is encouraging areas and regions surrounding Barcelona to host events that are either pre- or post-WCNA 33. If it is your plan to see the Costa del Sol or make a quick trip to the south of France (a five-hour drive) you may be able to attend some local NA events while you stay in these world renowned vacation destinations. As those NA events are planned, you can check for updates at www.na.org/wcna.

With all the expenses associated with entertainment, the economic downturn, and desire on the part of many for Spain to be the beginning or ending of a longer European vacation, it was decided that we would have no paid events at WCNA 33. Of course, there will be a festival on Saturday night and we will have coffee houses with live music on Thursday and Friday nights outside the convention center on the beach. This is in addition to dances at the AC Barcelona each night. All of these activities are included with registration. You won't need to incur any further expense for entertainment at WCNA 33.

The WCNA 33 Support Committee met with NAWS staff responsible for planning the convention on 9–10 May 2009 in Barcelona. At this meeting they worked on volunteer recruitment, the primary responsibility of the support committee, as well as input on other areas of the convention such as the coffee houses and festival, to give this recovery event the distinctive feel of Barcelona, Spain. If you are planning to attend the convention and have not signed up to volunteer yet, please go online to sign up. This is a great way to meet people from all over our fellowship.

Our public relations efforts in Barcelona for this convention have been unique, and we are utilizing the skill and experience of the support committee to assist us. We have been working with a PR firm in Barcelona whose aim is to help us raise awareness of NA. This has been necessary in order to get some assistance from the local government for the convention. The support committee has been assisting in this process, and our hope is to leave Barcelona and Spain with a group of NA members who can continue the PR efforts that have begun.

NAWS FISCAL UPDATE

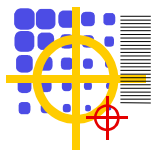
WSO Europe has operated at a loss for the past few years. For this fiscal year, this loss is slightly over \$60,000 with two more months to go in our fiscal year (as of April 2009). We find ourselves in this position at WSO Europe primarily because world services began a practice, years ago, of setting our literature prices based on the Dollar-Euro exchange rate each month in order to ensure the availability of literature in Europe. For a branch that has expenses in Euros, as well as additional expenses like VAT (value added tax) that are not incurred by NAWS in the US, this practice does not make sense. When NAWS analyzed prices for the last ten years, the average exchange rate for that time period was approximately 1.14. The problem for most European customers is that in looking at this fiscal year alone the average has been about 1.37.

NAWS began standardizing pricing at WSO Europe on July 1 2009 for one year. This pricing is an average increase of about half of the difference from current exchange rates and will remain in effect until 30 June 2010. World services will try to use this time to have discussions with the communities in Europe about what can be done to find fair and equitable pricing over the long haul. Hopefully, splitting the difference in the pricing change originally planned for 1 July between NAWS and the local communities will allow this discussion to occur.

The price for translated texts that only contain the first ten chapters of the Basic Text was originally set to ensure the availability of this material rather than being priced like other literature. With the Sixth Edition Basic Text being priced at \$11, it seems past time to adjust the cost of these alternate versions. Effective 1 July 2009, the price of these versions will go from \$5.50 to \$7.50. Of course, NAWS will continue to work with the many affected communities that receive either additional discounts or subsidies or free literature.

NAWS does everything in their power to ensure that literature is available to all members. In addition to extensive translation and production efforts, NAWS provides free or subsidized literature to NA members around the world. For the first ten months of this fiscal year, that figure already totals over \$617,000. For years the issue of literature pricing has not affected Europe in the same way as it has affected the US. This is simply not an issue for US members to ensure that the needed funds are available to fulfill our primary purpose. All NA communities bear that responsibility.

There is some good news. March 2009 we saw gross literature sales of over \$1,000,000 for the first time in NAWS history! This is truly a worldwide fellowship, where we continue to strive for all addicts to experience recovery from the disease of addiction in their own language and culture.



NAWS 2009 ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

As I reported in April and June, a comprehensive “Environmental Scan” of our fellowship as an update to the NAWS strategic plan was included in the preparation materials I had been given for the April 2009 combined Service System Work Group and World Board meeting. An environmental scan is similar to an inventory; NAWS looked at external and internal factors that may influence Narcotics Anonymous. This scan provides a variety of information about drug use, criminal justice, and treatment trends throughout our worldwide fellowship. I believe the Environmental Scan contains valuable information both for the RSC and the PR Sharing forum. I have put this material into a PowerPoint, and will present the findings to you today if time permits.

The environmental scan is the World Board’s first step in the development of project plans. The World Board held their second planning meeting in June. With each identified trend, NAWS considered how this will affect our members, our meetings, our service communities, and our public relations. The Board will take all identified trends, especially ones that would benefit from a more immediate response to help us maintain the integrity of our message of recovery, and develop the goals and objectives to help us address these trends. This work will result in the project plans for the 2010–2012 conference cycle, as well as the NAWS 2009 membership survey below:

NAWS 2009 MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

For those who receive the NA Way you will find the survey in that magazine; for those who will be attending WCNA33, there will be an opportunity to complete the survey onsite; and for those who have access to a computer, please help us by completing the survey online. With the 2007 survey, we had over 13,000 members respond; with more than five months to complete the survey in 2009, we hope 25,000 members will participate. This is an anonymous survey. We are asking that you help us actively encourage members in your areas to participate. You can do this by emailing this link, <http://questionnaire.disc.na.org/> to the online version or by distributing paper copies of the survey yourselves, collecting the responses, and either mailing them or

faxing them to the WSO or ideally by inputting the information. The deadline for survey completion is 31 December 2009



JUNE 2009 REGIONAL PUBLIC RELATIONS REPORT

In the absence of both PR Coordinator positions, Frank has asked that I cover the PR forum and Public Relations matters for the region in the interim. Although I am willing to do this for the short term, the RSC needs to understand that this is a World Service Conference year and my Regional Delegate duties will become “full time plus” this winter. Over the long haul, I do not anticipate being able to be both your Regional Delegate and PR Coordinator. Some of you may recall our last Regional Delegate resigned after carrying RD, RSC Treasurer, and NCCNA responsibilities for the majority of last year. I also anticipate being in Barcelona during the August forum, so I’m hopeful that we will have elected at least one PR Coordinator by the August RSC.

We held the first official meeting of the Regional PR forum in 2009 on June 27th. We had 4 members of Admin present and 6 members representing 5 areas. In addition to myself, Karina, Jerome and Tanya, the areas in attendance were Greater San Jose, Lake, Napa/Solano, Marin (2 members), and Mendocino. We began the meeting with a candid review of the 2008-2009 year. Out of necessity this required us to look at what did not transpire over the course of the last year. As stated above, the PR forum did not have a real meeting in 2009. A conference call was attempted in April, but due to poor communication and planning, it was not well attended. The forum had steadily dwindled down to about 5 areas in attendance, and questions surfaced about the value of attendance by those that were still coming. The California Association of Drug and Alcohol Educators was the only professional conference the region attended this last cycle, and that was pulled together in a haphazard fashion about one week prior to the event.

We then turned our attention towards solutions to improve the quality of the Regional PR forum over the coming year. We reviewed what worked and didn’t work with our first attempt at an online conference call. Despite sound quality limitations with using VOIP, the forum participants remain committed to containing to experiment with conference calling technology as a way to connect our more remote areas into the forum. We will continue to move forward with technology adoption by providing a simulcast conference call for our August forum on www.gotomeeting.com. Once we have the meeting number confirmed, we will send this out to you via email to pass on to your area PR folks.

Next, we decided to move the Public Relations Forum to the same day as the H&I Forum (provided they will have us), so that we may have an hour or so of “cross-over” time to improve the dialog between local H&I and PR/PI subcommittees. In addition to decreasing the number of weekend days your regional trusted servants need to devote to these forums by 50% (Admin and H&I/PR liaisons currently attend both forums on different months), we believe that closer integration of local PR and H&I efforts may result from this exchange. The idea is that H&I would meet in the morning and PR in the afternoon, with an hour of overlap and interchange between the two. The H&I forum has yet to discuss this idea, but if they are willing to have us, we may begin by joining H&I this September.

We’re attempting to improve communications amongst the PR forum members by other means in addition to the conference calls. We have a Yahoo Group that any and all who want to stay abreast of regional PR discussions can join. Please pass this along to any interested local PR folks in your areas as the address is not publicly searchable:

➤ <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/NaNorCalRegionPR>

Some exciting Public Relations endeavors are occurring in the areas that were present at the forum. Marin County is hosting a Public Relations booth at their county fair, a PR fundraiser on August 22nd, and a combined PR event with Contra Costa on August 29th.

Lake County is holding a “community meeting” on Sept. 25th in Clearlake. The meeting will include a PowerPoint presentation about Narcotics Anonymous, as well as a “fish bowl” *Just for Today* recovery meeting of selected participants for members of the community to observe. The targeted audience for this event is Supervisors, CPS, judges, police, schools, hospitals, etc. The community meeting concept is something called for in the Public Relations Handbook adopted by the 2006 World Service Conference. It is exciting to see Lake County actually running with this concept. We are hopeful to get at least one administrative committee member there to observe in the hopes that the experience can be shared and replicated with other communities throughout Northern California.

PR BOOTH: RECOVERY HAPPENS

Recovery Happens is a rally and information fair scheduled for September 2nd, which will be held on the west steps of the State Capitol building in Sacramento. The event is sponsored by the California Association of Addiction Recovery Resources and will feature speakers, information booths, singers, food, NA meetings inside the Capitol, fellowship, etc. It all starts off with a complimentary pancake breakfast at 8:00am and activities run until 4PM. It is anticipated there will be about 6,000 people in attendance. Needless to say, we want to partner with the American River and Sac Fellowship Areas to make sure we are well represented at this event. In the event that American River or Sac Fellowship has not yet made arrangements, we would like to work with them to secure a table for the event. The cost for a table and two chairs is \$75.00 and \$50.00 for non-profit, 501.c.3 organizations. Tables must be reserved by no later than August 21st



IMPORTANT DATES

- July 24-26: Western States Zonal Forum, Tempe, Arizona
- August 1: Regional motion deadline - Motions must be received by this date and must be in CAR-ready form by 28 August.
- August 20-23: WCNA 33, Barcelona, Spain
- August 22: World Unity Day Celebration
- August 31: Deadline for submission of nominations to the NAWS HRP for service positions at WSC 2010
- August 31: Deadline for submission of Regional Motions for the 2010 Conference Agenda Report
- September 12-13: Travelling RSC in Eureka CA
- September 15: Deadline for review and input on Living Clean chapters 1 and 2
- October 23-25: WSLD, Fresno, CA
- October 31: Deadline to submit reference paperwork to the NAWS HRP for regionally nominated candidates for positions at WSC 2010
- December 31: Deadline for completion of 2009 Membership Survey

Thank you for all you do in service to the fellowship.

Matt Schmeck
Northern CA Regional Delegate