The Prison Outreach Committee Reaches Out

The Prison Outreach Committee is one of over a dozen committees composed primarily of SLAA members who serve as delegates to the SLAA Annual Business Meeting (ABM). Delegates to the ABM are called "the Conference" when they meet to discuss the Fellowship's business. The committees that the delegates choose to work on during the year are called Conference Committees. The Prison Outreach Committee is a Conference Committee.

The Prison Outreach Committee provides a service on behalf of the entire SLAA Fellowship. It responds to requests from and maintains communication with people in prison. The chair of the committee is a delegate from an Arizona Intergroup, and other committee members are from various places in the United States. However, the committee is small, with only 4 members currently.

This is how the committee provides service to prisoners. People in prison write to the Fellowship-Wide Services (FWS) office in Massachusetts for usually one of three reasons: to obtain SLAA literature, to get an SLAA sponsor, or to find an SLAA meeting.

(Continued on page 2)

"Like people, every snowflake is unique and special"

Time Line for the 2000 Annual Business Meeting!

- January: Announcement of ABM: Delegate Sign-up, Board of Trustees Nomination, etc. forms distributed
- March 6: Deadline for Delegate Registration
- March 23: Deadline for submission of motions and issues
- March 30: 1st Business Meeting Items Summary (BMIS) distributed to Intergroups and Conference Members
- May 1: Deadline for early ABM/C Registration and for BOT nomination letters
- Mid-May: 2nd BMIS and BOT nomination letters distributed world-wide
- July 6-9: S.L.A.A. Annual Business Meeting

inside... Step Ten Focus, Tradition Ten Focus Announcements Donation Drive Acknowledgments, Office News Pages 3-4 Pages 5-6 Pages 8-9
Currently about 6 to 8 letters per month are received from prisoners by the FWS office. These letters are sent to the Prison Outreach Committee, which responds.

If a prisoner is requesting literature, the committee provides for SLAA literature to be sent to the prisoner. Literature for this purpose is paid for out of the FWS budget. Groups and Intergroups throughout the Fellowship support this committee by practicing the 7th Tradition and contributing to FWS. One problem the committee has encountered is that since all mail to prisoners is screened, not all literature sent to prisoners actually gets to them. As it is able, the committee is working to find ways to improve the delivery of SLAA material to prisoners.

If a prisoner is looking for an SLAA sponsor, the committee tries to find someone who is willing to serve as a sponsor for the prisoner. The potential sponsor is given the address of the prisoner to contact about being a sponsor. Currently, most sponsors of prisoners are from the Intergroups of members of the Prison Outreach Committee. The committee would like to know of other people who are willing to be of service in this way.

If prisoners are about to be released, they often write to the FWS office to find out about SLAA meetings in the areas that they plan to go to when they’re released. The committee contacts the FWS office to find the Intergroup phone numbers for these areas and then writes to the prisoners with this information. In this way, local Intergroups help prisoners find the meetings best suited for them.

All communication from prisoners to the Prison Outreach committee is through the FWS office. When a SLAA member responds to a prisoner, the FWS post office box is used as the return address. In this way, the committee practices the 12th Tradition of protecting the anonymity of its fellow members.

Although Conference Committees use delegates to the ABM as their core membership, Conference Committees are open to anyone in the Fellowship. The Prison Outreach Committee needs additional members beyond the 4 delegates currently on the committee. If you are working the Steps and are willing to be a sponsor to a person in prison, this committee provides a wonderful way to practice the 12th Step. The committee may be reached by writing to the Prison Outreach Committee, c/o Fellowship-Wide Services, P.O. Box 338, Norwood, MA 02062-0338.

Respectfully Submitted
By: Sam M., Austin, TX

The Conference Literature Committee (CLC) is in the process of discussing Agenda Items for the 2000 ABM/G and is asking for assistance. They want your input in order to arrive at a group conscience for one of the matters before them.

Re: 99o04/97-1 “To change the cover of the SLAA Basic Text so that it is non-descript and supports anonymity.”

It has been offered to the CLC as a suggestion to offer a choice of two (2) covers. One would be as it currently is offered. The second would have no printing on it at all including on the binding. We are asking for feedback from the fellowship. Please contact the groups that you represent and ask them if they would purchase a book that does not have any printing on it. Send your answers to us: CLCFEEDBACK@hotmail.com Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Proposals Sought for Hosting International Recovery Convention and/or Annual Business Conference

The Board Convention Committee (BCC) is currently seeking proposals from interested Intergroups or Groups to host the 25th Anniversary International Recovery Convention in 2001 and/or the 2001 Annual Business Conference (ABC).

The previously established deadline for proposals regarding the 25th Anniversary Recovery Convention has been extended to March 31, 2000. A Recovery Convention consists of 3-4 days of workshops and topic and speaker meetings all focused on the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions of S.L.A.A. Group meal gatherings, talent shows, auctions, etc. can also be included in the planning. Convention attendance is generally around 300 people and the facilities should be able to accommodate that number. Since we are seeking to attract members worldwide, the event should include proximity to an international airport, reasonable housing rates, and various food options, both on- and off-site. Interested Intergroups or Groups should contact the FWS office to request the final report from the 20th Anniversary Recovery Convention for assistance in preparing the proposal.

The deadline for submitting proposals to host the ABC is March 31, 2000. The ABC is where the Annual Business Meeting takes place and is generally a 4-day event at which delegates, members of the Board of Trustees, and FWS office staff gather to conduct the business of the fellowship. Requirements for a suitable site include sleeping accommodations for up to 75 people, meals included on site, one large meeting room that can accommodate everyone in a circle, six to ten smaller meeting rooms (able to hold up to twenty people), proximity to an international airport (with available transportation to and from the facility), air conditioning east of the Rockies, and a target cost of $50 per person per night, including sleeping accommodations, meals, and meeting rooms.

Proposals for either event or both, as your Intergroup or Group chooses, should be submitted to the BCC, in care of the FWS office, by the above stated deadlines.
Step Ten

"Step Ten: "Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it."

Very early on in my sobriety, I was told that the basic point of SLAA could be summarized by two key aspects: the first is to help me clear away the wreckage of my past (the fruits of my sexual and emotional acting out) and the second is to help me learn to live differently from today forward. Everything that I do in my program today helps me do one or both of those things. The best explanatory analogy that I've heard is that it's like a Santa bag. I envision that big bag that Santa Claus carries over his shoulder, crammed full of stuff, heavier than anything. My Santa Claus bag contains the wreckage of my past and, boy, was it full when I first got to SLAA! All of the guilt, anger, hurt, frustration, loneliness that I had decided not to feel was stuffed into my bag. All of the pain I had caused others was stuffed in that bag. All of the misery and bitterness that I had was stuffed in that bag. You get the point; it was heavy. I came into SLAA feeling extremely weighed down - and I was.

For me, clearing away the wreckage of my past is the same as emptying out my Santa bag and learning to live differently in today means not refilling my bag with new stuff. Steps I through 9 help me dump out the contents of my Santa bag. I get to see the stuff that's in it, admit it to other people, pray for help getting rid of it, and do the footwork to make right all that I dumped out. That's only the first part though. If I stop after Step 9, then I just go right back to refilling my bag all over again because I don't know a different way to live. Step 10 keeps stuff from falling through the cracks and into my bag. It helps me live so that once I've emptied the bag, I don't refill it. Life is much lighter that way!

In Step 10, I get to review the circumstances in my current life and figure out where I'm on the right track and where I'm a little off-course. And, thankfully, the skills that I've developed along the way help me get back on course when I find that I'm veering into an unhealthy direction. Doing the steps through Step 9 does not guarantee me perfect coping skills. Sometimes I get tempted to go back to my old way of coping. Sometimes I get tempted to stuff my feelings and pretend that things are okay. Sometimes I get tempted to ignore situations that are compromising my serenity. Sometimes I get tempted to cover my feelings by behaving inappropriately. Sometimes I even begin doing all of these things; this program certainly doesn't promise perfection! But, Step 10 is my filter. Step 10, done on a regular basis, is my tool for spotting those red flags and putting a stop to any actions I've taken in unhealthy directions. It keeps me honest with my Higher Power, my sponsor, and myself.

Here's how our Basic Text puts it - on page 96: "We found that we now felt remarkably free of the burdens of guilt and longing for the past. However, if we were to continue the lifetime process of reconciliation and intimacy with ourselves and others, we would need to learn how to process life as it happens.

From the Newsletter Committee...

In the October issue of the Newsletter, FWS published an article which used the phrase "recovering Catholic". The Newsletter Committee realizes the controversial nature of this statement and would like to apologize to anyone who may have been offended.

The content of the article reflects the opinion of the author as an individual and does not represent the standpoint of Fellowship-Wide Services as a whole.

Thank you for your understanding,

The Board Newsletter Committee
Tradition Ten

Tenth Tradition:
"SLAA should have no opinion on outside issues; hence, the SLAA name ought never be drawn into public controversy."

The Tenth Tradition offers our groups the opportunity to agree to disagree. There are many issues facing society today that other members and I have an opinion on, and those opinions are not always the same. This Tradition allows us to have the freedom to feel what we want to feel about a given situation and then let it go. We can even discuss it as individuals. As an organization there is no one opinion that must be offered to express the viewpoint of our group or any particular group. We do not focus our energy on outside issues, but invest that energy in maintaining our common purpose – helping other addicts with our addiction.

A heated controversy is very dangerous for any group or organization. The fear that fuels the controversy and causes dissection among members can bring about the destruction of the group. Words spoken in anger at the moment are like grains of sand in a windstorm, never to be completely gathered together and removed forever. We too often are dealing with emotions and feelings that get hurt. This can cause members to feel uncomfortable with other members in the group, and groups may possibly dissolve. This may cause meetings to disband. I know for me as an addict, I need the meetings for support to assist in my recovery.

I have always admired those who came before me and assisted with putting this program together. The Traditions were written to give guidance to all of us and help us through situations that will arise that may destroy the very foundation of our fellowship. There is wisdom and strength in the words that help us as addicts live our lives in recovery.

Respectfully Submitted by:
Mary D., Houston, TX

Step Ten

(Continued from page 3)

was happening, day by day. The blockage which had kept the poison of our undigested past buried within had been cleared, but we needed to stay current with our emotions and needs, or the same poisonous stagnation would soon build up again."

Whether I call it "poisonous stagnation" or the stuff in my Santa bag, the wreckage of my addictive behavior was killing me. Slowly, but certainly. I don't ever want to go back to that slow death again. With Step 10, and by the grace of my Higher Power, I don't have to.

Respectfully Submitted by: Marcella M., Los Angeles, CA

Houston... Houston...Houston!!!

SLAA Women's Retreat – Houston, TX

When: February 18th - 20th, 2000
Location: Surfside (Freeport Area)
          2450 Blue Water Cove
Focus: Steps One through Twelve

Registration Fee: $65.00 before 1/25/00
                 $75.00 after 1/25/00
The cost includes conference, room and meals. No registration refunds after February 8th for any reason!

Mail checks and registration information* to: Ava P., 9610 Lawngate, Houston, TX 77080.
Must bring own bed linens, toiletries, blankets, towels and a gallon of drinking water!

*Name, address, phone number and e-mail address.

More conference and event information on page 8.

!!New Houston Meetings!!

Houston Wednesday Night
Anorexia Meeting
7:00-8:30pm
At: St. Luke's Church
Room: C-263
Focus: Anorexia

Houston Friday Night Meeting
7:30pm
At: St. Luke's Church
Room: C-263
Focus: SLAA-food issues and body image

For more meeting updates, turn to page 8!

Houston hosts the 2000 A.B.M.
!!Round Two!!

Houston is excited about being the host city for the 2000 ABM/C. We are encouraged to do a better job than...

(Continued on page 5)
ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Member Retention Committee NEEDS your feedback!!
Please fill out the enclosed flyer and send it in TODAY!!

!!!1999 World Directory is available!!!

Unfortunately, five meetings in North Carolina are missing from the directory. A list of these meetings has been prepared and will be added to the directory with every purchase!

Anyone who has already received their directory and would also like the list of North Carolina meetings can give us a call or drop us a note and we will send it out to you!

We apologize for this error.

Sincerely,
The FWS Office Staff

WEB SITE NEWS!

OOPS...

The FWS-SLAA website was down between Thursday, November 18th and Tuesday, November 23rd. If anyone tried to visit our site during this time period and was not successful, we apologize. The web page was not available due to a lack of communication by our service provider. The communication problem has been resolved and we are up and running again! FWS does not anticipate such problems again.

Thank you for your patience!

Please visit our site:
www.slaafws.org

Year 2000 A.B.M. In Houston, Texas!

(Continued from page 4)

last year as we learn from our mistakes from the previous year. The planning committee will be formed earlier in the year and meetings will be coordinated in a more timely manner. The enthusiasm is rising and is contagious! There has even been talk of putting a packet together for a step by step guide to hosting the event for other intergroups.

The Houston fellowship has often seen ourselves as friendly, accepting people. We are very social after meeting and encouraging to newcomers within our community. We are grateful for the opportunity to extend that welcoming hospitality to people all over the world as the hosting Intergroup for the ABM/C.
Announcements Continued!

Thank you to those who contributed to the FWS “Gratitude Month” donation drive! You helped us to raise a total of $1169.55!!

Your contributions play an integral part in the functioning of Fellowship-Wide Services and we are proud to say that we exceeded our last drive by $384.27, thanks to the support of the Fellowship. (May Appeal raised $760.28!)

The FWS staff feels that we have in fact received more than this total! During the drive, contributions have gone up, but we cannot attribute them to the drive unless you specifically request it. If you or your group is donating to one of our specific drives, please indicate this on your check or envelope! This will help us to more accurately calculate our totals and properly acknowledge our contributors.

Thanks for your help!

Fellowship-Wide Services
Bulk Mailing

Volunteers at the October 16th, 1999 FWS Bulk Mailing
*Doreen A.  *R. Owen R.
*Natalie H  *Gene H.
*Richard D. *Wayne A.
*Jen K.  *Carole K.
*Tedd T. *Bob M.
*Bob R.  *Gere

The October bulk mailing wouldn’t have been the success that it was without the service and enthusiasm of the above volunteers!

Here is what one volunteer had to say about the experience:

(Quoted from the New England Intergroup Newsletter, October 1999, Volume 14, Issue 8. Pg.2.)

“FWS NEEDS HELP!!
BULK MAILING

Volunteers needed. Please call FWS.

How many times have you seen this kind of request in our newsletter? Have you ever responded?

As Editor of the Newsletter, I have to confess I hadn’t until October 16th. What a fantastic experience!

There were about 14 volunteers plus the FWS staff. The place was decorated for Halloween, and coffee and pastry were available. Door prizes were provided. Almost the entire mailing was completed by noon.

Working together was a wonderful experience. The fellowship and sharing was great. Many hands made a daunting task easy to accomplish.

None of this could have been done without the fantastic organization by Megan at FWS. Thanks Megan.”

Your enthusiastic help and great company makes the mailing of our newsletter and other important materials a great experience to be a part of!

A warm and sincere thank you!

***If ANYONE is interested in volunteering for future bulk mailings, please contact Megan, Jacquie, or Nancy at (781) 255-8825 or E-mail us at slaafws@aol.com
Board of Trustees (BOT) Meeting Minutes Summary

June 5, 1999

- The Legal/Copyright Committee is working on issues related to fair use of copyrighted material and the question of whether we should charge for it.
- The Journal Committee liaison reported that subscriptions are way down for The Journal. Not enough stories are being received for inclusion in The Journal. It was suggested that our website be used to help increase subscriptions.
- Motion from Board Finance Committee passed to move $400 from salary expense to Conference Committee expense for allocation.
- Motion passed as follows: "All SLAA groups/intergroups currently registered with FWS have permission to use the SLAA logo, reprint the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions and Twelve Recommended Guidelines, and reproduce up to 300 words from SLAA Conference-approved copyrighted materials. All SLAA logo reproductions must include the trademark symbol. All citations must include the source of the citation and the statement 'Reprinted with permission, as registered group #____, by The Augustine Fellowship, Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous, Fellowship-Wide Services, Inc.' This copyrighted material shall not be presented with any citations of literature copyrighted by anyone other than The Augustine Fellowship, Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous, Fellowship-Wide Services, Inc. or a registered SLAA group/intergroup."
- Motion passed that those (other than board members) attending a board meeting to present information, would present the information and then be asked to leave the meeting.
- Motion passed to allow one person who commits to volunteer for the entire ABM would have room and board paid.

August 28, 1999

- General Manager reported that she is considering changing the long distance service provider in order to get lower rates.
- Nancy A. was hired to fill the part-time position.
- Motion passed to continue the practice, for this year, of the B.O.T. Chair being the supervisor of the General Manager.
- Motion passed that the General Manager not have a vote on the board.
- Motion passed to raise the price of the basic text $1.00 per copy at all quantity levels to all those purchasing it effective October 1, 1999.
- Board meeting dates were set for the coming year: November 6, January 8, March 4, May 6.
- A motion passed to confirm the formation of Board Committees and liaisons as they stand including the additions made in this meeting.
- Appointment of ninth person to fill the 2-year B.O.T. seat was tabbed until the November B.O.T. meeting.
- A motion passed as follows: "If anyone calls FWS staff regarding an illegal activity, that the staff person should advise the caller to consult an attorney (since FWS has no opinion on outside matters such as this and must guard against becoming involved in public controversy). If the caller indicates an imminent threat, the FWS staff person should advise the caller to contact the police."
- Referral made to the Office Operating Committee, the Human Resource Committee, and the Board Legal Committee to investigate a new location for FWS in an area of the U.S. which may provide operational cost reductions, and that this be done in conjunction with planning for the move of our office at the end of our current lease, taking into consideration economic and non-economic costs.
- Motion tabled regarding putting the financial statements on the website.

July 11, July 17, and September 18, 1999

Minutes from the above meetings are not available at this time. They will be published in the next F.W.S. Newsletter.
Miracles Of Recovery II
Time for S.L.A.A.’s Third Annual Valentine’s SHARE-A-DAY and Talent Show!

When and Where: 9:00am to 5:30pm, (Saturday) February 12, 2000
Public School #41, 116 West Eleventh (SW Corner of 11th and 6th Ave.) New York City

Scholarships are available!! $10 before the event - $13 at the door
To register, send a check or money order to: Share-A-Day, c/o Greater NY Area Intergroup, P.O. Box 8086, New York, NY 10116-4650

New Meetings
from 09/03/99 - 12/15/99

California
Berkeley Tuesday Morning Men’s

Colorado
Durango Thursday Night

Florida
Tallahassee Saturday Night

Georgia
Chamblee Sunday Men’s

New Hampshire
Concord Sunday Night

New York
Clifton Park Saturday Night

Tennessee
Albuquerque Wednesday Night Bartlett Saturday Women’s

Texas
Houston Friday Night Houston Wednesday Anorexia Odessa Thursday Night

Germany
Berlin-Mitte Friday Men’s Dinkelsbuehl Loner Freiburg Sunday Women’s Hamburg Sunday Night Koeln (Cologne) Monday Night Koeln (Cologne) Thursday Men’s

Koeln (Cologne) Thursday Women’s Muenster Friday Night

Uruguay
Montevideo Monday Night Montevideo Wednesday Night

Disbanded Meetings
from 09/03/99 - 12/15/99

California
San Francisco Thursday Night San Francisco Tuesday Night

Minnesota
Minneapolis Sunday Women’s

South Carolina
Greenville Saturday Morning Greenville Thursday Women’s Greenville Wednesday Anorexia Spartanburg Monday Evening

Germany
Hamburg Thursday Women’s Kassel Thursday Evening Kiel Friday Evening Nagold Thursday Women’s Regensburg Thursday Evening Rosenheim Tuesday Night Wuerzburg Tuesday Afternoon

For more information on these meetings, please call the FWS Office at (781) 255-8825

FWS OFFICE NEWS CORNER

Nancy A., our newest staff member, completed her 3-month probationary period on December 7 with flying colors. She is our outreach/mail order department coordinator. She plans to attend the 2000 A.B.C. and looks forward to meeting all the participants. She previously worked at a car dealership and says the environment at F.W.S. is much nicer!

Megan H., our office administrator, has been employed at F.W.S. for one year as of December 2. She has suggested and implemented many new ideas that have been helpful to office operations, such as: having a suggestion box in which ideas for improved office functioning are put as well as nominations for Employee of the Month...... and the winners are:

November - Jacquie; for her effort and assistance in the production of the World Directory!
December - Megan and Jacquie for helping to make Nancy feel at home in her new job!

And a hearty congratulations to Megan for completion of the World Directory! It was a project that took many, many long hours of hard work. The directories are now available for sale!

If anyone would like to nominate a staff member for outstanding work or assistance, please e-mail your nomination to me at: jtsrosegm@aol.com.

Submitted by: Jacquie T.S. R
General Manager, FWS

NEW OFFICE HOURS

Beginning in January, the FWS office will be open from 9:30am-8:00pm on Thursdays for a three-month trial run. This is being done in response to requests to more fully accommodate members on the West Coast and throughout the world. On Mon.-Fri., our hours will remain 10:00am to 5:30pm.
Beloved and Devoted Long-time Member
Passes Away

Charlie D., of Jamaica Plain and Lynn, Massachusetts, passed away on December 24, 1999. For those of you who did not know him, he was involved with S.L.A.A. since the early 1980's. He was one of the first members of the Board of Trustees. He put in thousands of hours of service through his work at the F.W.S. Office, beginning when it was in a church attic in Newton through its move to quarters on Cherry St. in West Newton.

He performed all the office tasks before our first employee was hired, and hired our first office manager. For many years, he single-handedly headed up the Prison Outreach program, corresponding by mail with hundreds of prisoners. He also corresponded with members who lived in isolated places and could not attend meetings. He sponsored many people, taking their phone calls consistently no matter what he was going through personally.

During his time at the office, he answered many phone calls, giving unselfishly of his time and sharing his experience, to help the still-suffering addict.

He was an incredibly caring person who opened his heart to many and gave many years of his life to this program. Let us remember him with open hearts. He set an example for all of us about doing service. If you wish, donations in Charlie’s memory may be made to F.W.S. The family will receive a note informing them of the donation and who gave it.

Jacquie T.S.R.
Norwood, MA
WHY DO YOU STAY?
WHY DID YOU LEAVE?

Some SLAA meetings and intergroups retain more more longtime members than others. SLAA’s Member Retention Committee is charged with finding out why. We hope to draw on the experience, strength and hope of the entire fellowship, worldwide, to learn what keeps some of us coming back.

We will share what we learn with local groups and intergroups via the Conference Newsletter. We will also spread the word about meeting formats and other activities that keep longtime members in the program. In the spirit of autonomy, we will only share information and experience about what works. We will offer no direction.

Please take a moment to copy and distribute this highly unscientific survey. We would love to hear from anyone and everyone. Tell us what you choose to and leave the rest. If you know anyone who’s left the program and can get them to answer the questions at the bottom, we’d love to hear from them as well. Return this survey to your intergroup rep or mail it to: FWS Survey, PO Box 338, Norwood MA, 02062-0338.

This survey can also be answered online at: http://www.slaafws.org/MRC_form.html

LOOKING FOR A SERVICE COMMITMENT? WANT TO JOIN OUR COMMITTEE? WRITE TO US!

ACTIVE SLAA MEMBERS:
What city is your home meeting in? _____________________________________________

How long in SLAA? __________________________ How long in self-defined sobriety? ____________

What keeps you coming back?
__________________________________________
__________________________________________
__________________________________________

What service are you doing/have you done?
__________________________________________
__________________________________________
__________________________________________

Please tell us about any meetings or formats you especially like and why you like them.
__________________________________________
__________________________________________
__________________________________________

Please tell us about any meetings or formats you won’t attend and why not.
__________________________________________
__________________________________________
__________________________________________

FORMER SLAA MEMBERS:
How long were you in SLAA? __________________________ Why did you leave? __________________________

__________________________________________
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### Contributions 4th Quarter 1999

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