

Fellowship-Wide Services Newsletter

1550 NE Loop 410 Suite 118 San Antonio, TX 78209-1626
+1 (210)-828-7900 Website: www.slaafws.org



October 2007

Welcome to the new, online Fellowship-Wide Services Newsletter!

Note: This is a printed version of an online newsletter. The online version consists of the first three pages of this version, with hyperlinks to all the material that appears after page three.

PLEASE TAKE A COPY TO YOUR MEETING!

We would really, really love it if you could share this newsletter far and wide and encourage others to subscribe for free.

- Take this printable version to all your meetings.
- Subscribe now on the F.W.S. homepage.
- Take a newsletter flyer to your meeting:
http://72.52.143.94/NEWSLETTERS/Newsletter_subscription_flyer.pdf
- Can't get online? F.W.S. will send you a printed version for a small fee. Go to http://72.52.143.94/forms/news_subs.pdf to set up a print subscription.

WHAT HAPPENED AT THE ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING (ABM)?

Every year delegates from all over the S.L.A.A. Fellowship, who together form the F.W.S. Conference, gather together at the ABM to discuss and vote on Fellowship business. There's not enough room to tell all here, but we'll share a couple of things that took place. If you have a local Intergroup then your delegate can tell you more. Also, you can download the full minutes of the ABM from the F.W.S. website. For now, we'll focus on two highlights. The first is about changes to our Endowment Fund, now called the Prudent Reserve Fund. The second is about the creation of a new Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions book that is underway. **[See page 4 for more.]**

For more information about contributing a written submission for the 12x12, go to <http://www.slaafws.org/submit1212>. Your submission is eagerly awaited.

MEET OUR THREE NEWEST BOARD MEMBERS.

At the recent ABM the Conference of Delegates elected two S.L.A.A. members to the Board of Trustees. Rico J., from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and Bob F. from Omaha, NE were elected to three-year terms. In addition, since the ABM, the Board of Trustees has appointed a third S.L.A.A. member, Liz D. from Philadelphia, PA to a vacant two-year term. The Board of Trustees is very happy to have all three new members. **[See page 5 to read letters of introduction from the new Board members.]**

UPDATE ON S.L.A.A. WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT.

Since the ABM, our volunteer webmaster and member of the BPRC, Beth S, the F.W.S. General Manager, Linda Hamilton, and our BOT Chair, Dan A., have been working tirelessly to make our F.W.S. website a better place for all of us. They wisely have broken down the task into three stages: 1) changing servers and improving the functionality of the current design (nearing completion), 2) updating the entire content of the site (just beginning), and 3) creating new functionality that

will allow us to serve visitors (potential members), members, and Intergroups better. Beth has created the following report detailing all of the exciting and important things that have been accomplished and that are in the works. Thanks Beth, Linda and Dan for all of your hard work. **[See page 7 to read Beth's exciting report.]**

A REPORT FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES.

Things have been very rough at Fellowship-Wide Services for the past 21 months, since the office moved from Boston, MA to San Antonio, TX. I've been on the Board of Trustees for exactly those 21 months, and it has been quite a ride. Since becoming the Board Chair three months ago I have spoken to people all over the Fellowship and I hear one thing loudest: "tell us what is really going on!" I'm going to do exactly that. What I have to say may ruffle the feathers of some who have served our Fellowship in good faith in the past. To those people I offer my apologies. The unity of our Fellowship demands straight talk. That unity is, and always will be, my number one priority.

In essence I have three messages for the Fellowship of S.L.A.A.

1. An unvarnished acknowledgement of serious problems.
2. An account of serious efforts to establish fiscal and operational sobriety.
3. Substantial new initiatives to carry the message to the addict who still suffers.

I'm going to go through a series of topics and I hope that you will see the thread of these three messages throughout my report. I have tried to keep my report brief, but we need your trust back, and I can't short-change that goal.

[See page 9 to read more from the BOT Chair about:]

- F.W.S. finances and budgeting.
- Book-keeping and financial reporting.
- F.W.S. Prudent Reserve Policy.
- The relationship between the Board and the Fellowship.
- Getting back to carrying the message.

If, after reading my report, you have anything, anything at all, that you want me to hear, *please* let me hear it. Email me at dan_a@slaafws.org.

ANNUAL F.W.S. BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2008.

At their September meeting, the Board of Trustees unanimously approved a budget for fiscal year 2008, which began on October 1. The budget was submitted by the F.W.S. General Manager, Linda Hamilton, and reviewed by the Board Finance & Operating Committee. In order to bring the budget into balance it was necessary to include reductions in labor expenses. The General Manager believes, and the Board agrees, that these cuts are appropriate and necessary. Appropriate because the ongoing process of streamlining office operations is making it possible to deliver essential services with less person-power. Necessary because we believe it is our fundamental responsibility to operate the office within the resources you send us. The estimates of revenue from merchandise-sales and contributions are based on real numbers from recent years. If contributions increase we will be able to expand our staff and provide more services to sex and love addicts in and out of the rooms of S.L.A.A. If contributions decrease we will endeavor to find additional expenses to cut. **[See page 13 for the budget.]**

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS. (AT LAST!!!)

We have finally brought our accounting system to the point where we can generate accurate income statements. See page 15 for an income statement for fiscal year

2007, which just ended Sept. 30, broken down by month, with some additional comments.

You will notice that we lost \$60,000 in the last fiscal year. If this troubles you, that's a good sign. Please see the report from the Board Chair for comments on the reasons for this deficit. This money came out of what was at that time called the F.W.S. Endowment Fund, but is now called the F.W.S. Prudent Reserve Fund. This transfer was made in accordance with the written policy of F.W.S. regarding that Fund, which allows for emergency withdrawals under extreme circumstances. The Board was very disappointed to have to make this withdrawal and is committed to avoiding such withdrawals in the future whenever possible.

We have no balance sheet to show you because the old accounting system, which we are in the middle of replacing, is simply not set up correctly. At present the bills we owe exceed our cash-on-hand by roughly \$15,000, which is not good. We are doing everything we can to turn this around. Meanwhile, an accurate balance sheet will be forthcoming as soon as the transition to our new accounting system is completed.

CONTRIBUTIONS.

F.W.S. receives contributions from groups, Intergroups, and individuals all over the planet. Our newsletter usually lists contributions from groups and Intergroups, for two reasons. First, because many people have told us that they appreciate seeing their group's contribution recognized. And second, because seeing all the groups that contribute is an inspiration to those groups that are not yet able to.

We can't provide the list of contributions in this newsletter. That is because our old accounting system, which we are in the middle of replacing, is so cumbersome and poorly designed that it would take many hours of staff time to generate the list, and we simply cannot afford that. It would be irresponsible. The new accounting system will generate the list at the click of a mouse. In the meantime, please know that your group's contribution is very gratefully received, and that we are doing everything we can to deserve your continued support.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO HELP PRODUCE THIS NEWSLETTER?

If you are thinking "hey, I could make a better newsletter than that," then we want to hear from you. This is just a beginning, and we would love any help we can get in making this newsletter more useful and more effective. Please contact us so we can find a way to get you involved. webteam@slaafws.org

On the following pages you will find additional content referred to in the body of the newsletter above.

What happened at the Annual Business Meeting (ABM)?

F.W.S. Newsletter, October 1, 2007

Every year delegates from all over the S.L.A.A. Fellowship, who together form the F.W.S. Conference, gather together at the ABM to discuss and vote on Fellowship business. There's not enough room to tell all here, but we'll share a couple of things that took place. If you have a local Intergroup then your delegate can tell you more. Also, you can download the full minutes of the ABM from the F.W.S. website. For now, we'll focus on two highlights. The first is about changes to our Endowment Fund, now called the Prudent Reserve Fund. The second is about the creation of a new Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions book that is underway.

1) Conference Delegates gave the Board of Trustees a lot of very valuable input about our Endowment Fund. Many delegates had discussed the Endowment Fund with members of their Intergroup, so the Board got to hear a real "Fellowship-Wide" group conscience. On the basis of your feedback, the Board has decided to change the name of the fund, transforming it from an Endowment Fund into a "Prudent Reserve Fund," and to put a cap on how big it can get: no more than 12 months operating expenses. Currently the Fund has a bit more than half that amount

The Board also received positive feedback at the ABM about the idea establishing a policy prohibiting F.W.S. or the Board of Trustees from directly soliciting contributions from targeted individuals. The Board will be discussing and finalizing that policy at an upcoming meeting.

2) The Conference Steps & Traditions Committee (CS&TC) sponsored three discussion items about the new "12 Steps & 12 Traditions" (12x12) book they are working on. Those three items had to do with the process that CS&TC is planning to use in developing the book. The committee has borrowed from Al-Anon's highly successful literature development process. The basic idea is to collect as many written submissions as possible from people all over the S.L.A.A. Fellowship, and then hire a professional writer/editor from *within* S.L.A.A. to transform those written submissions into a book. There was much discussion at the ABM of the different steps in this process, and the general consensus was one of support for what CS&TC is doing, and planning to do.

For more information about contributing a written submission for the 12x12, go to www.slaafws.org/submit1212. Your submission is eagerly awaited.

Meet our three newest Board members.

F.W.S. Newsletter, October 1, 2007

At the recent ABM the Conference of Delegates elected two S.L.A.A. members to the Board of Trustees. Rico J., from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and Bob F. from Omaha, NE were elected to three-year terms. In addition, since the ABM, the Board of Trustees has appointed a third S.L.A.A. member, Liz D. from Philadelphia, PA to a vacant two-year term. The Board of Trustees is very happy to have all three new members.

Letter of Introduction from Bob F. of Omaha, Nebraska, USA:

Dear Augustine Fellowship Members,

My name is Bob F. I have been in S.L.A.A. since September of 1986 and I have been sober since October 15, 1991.

I am married, have four children and five grandchildren. I spent the first 25 years of my life as a professional musician. For what I hope are obvious reasons I found it beneficial to change professions. I floundered around for a while doing apartment maintenance. In 1991 I was hired by a railroad in their computer department. After 15 years in the Computer field I am currently negotiating track contracts between industries and the railroad I still work for.

I first ran for the Board of Trustees in 1995 and was defeated. I came back in 1996 intending to run for the Board of Trustees but was persuaded to run for the Journal Editor position instead. I ran for and was elected to the position of Journal Editor, a position I held for four years.

This year I ran for a seat on the Board of Trustees and was elected. I hope I will be as diligent, hard working, and fair as the distinguished Board members before me.

In service,
Bob F.

Letter of Introduction from Rico J. of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil:

Dear Fellows,

I would like first to thank God, all S.L.A.A. members all over the world, and myself, for the opportunity to be a member of the BOT.

In my meditations, I believe that the primary purpose of a group means that, among all important things that we hold, to carry the message to the member who still suffers is the most important one.

I have been participating in S.L.A.A. as an active member since 1993, and I can tell that the promises listed in our Basic Text are really true. Being sober is just the first of many blessings that the program gave me during all these years. I am today a happy and a productive human being. To carry this spiritual message to all those who still suffer (outside and inside the groups) because of this addiction is a must and this action is urgent.

As you may know, Brazil is a huge country (as the United States) and after those 14 years we have an average of 40 groups spread in all regions and in 2005 we opened one group in Rio de Janeiro city which is the first Brazilian group that is open 365 days/year in Brazil, 2 meetings a day.

I have personally received emails from Portuguese and Spanish spoken countries as: Portugal and Angola – Portuguese, Spain, Mexico, Colombia, Uruguay, Argentina, Peru, Venezuela, Bolivia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Chile, Costa Rica, Porto Rico – Spanish and as far as I know only few of them have S.L.A.A. groups (mainly 1 group in the main city or capital). We really need to support and help all of them, especially having appropriate literature to support them.

That is the main reason I will be serving on the Board Finance and Operating Committee (BF&OC) in order to deal with translations & copyright issues.

I wish peace and serenity to all of you.
Rico J.

Letter of Introduction from Liz D. of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA:

Dear Fellow Members of S.L.A.A.,

My name is Liz D. and I am a recovering sex and love addict. I am so excited to be a new member of your Board of Trustees and write this letter by way of introduction to me, my recovery and my desire to serve the fellowship in accordance with my higher power's will one day at a time.

For me, sobriety is a verb -- a being state -- it is the G.O.D. given being state of showing up, being "present" -- spiritually, it is not something I own. Admitting that is an important part of "my" sobriety. The first day I was sober in S.L.A.A. was November 30th, 2003.

Recovery in S.L.A.A. through working the 12 steps forms the basis of my relationship with a Higher Power, with myself, and with others. It is my roadmap for living and I practice the principles of the program to the best of my ability one day at a time. Service is a cornerstone of the Love I give/receive through being in relationship with a Higher Power. The love I give/receive is the greatest miracle in my life and my gratitude is infinite. I hope "my" service reflects that gratitude.

It is my intent as a member of the Board of Trustees to be an open channel for the wisdom of Good Orderly Direction as I experience it and to be one voice in the group conscience that guides the actions of the Board on behalf of the fellowship.

In terms of service, I feel well prepared by my current and past experiences in the following roles: Home Group Member, sponsee, sponsor, Intergroup Representative, Intergroup Delegate to the ABM, member of the Conference Steps and Traditions Committee, Chair and then co-chair of the Conference Steps and Traditions Committee (CSTC), member of the 12 and 12 subcommittee of the CSTC, chair of the 12 and 12 subcommittee of the CSTC and non-Board member of the Board Governance and Nominating Committee. These opportunities have allowed me to grow in my ability to be present to service.

I am grateful now to be given the opportunity to be a member of your Board of Trustees. I look forward to showing up a day at a time in service to the Fellowship. I would be happy to talk with any of you in that capacity and can be reached either through fellowship wide services or at lizcstc@hotmail.com.

In service,
Liz D.

Update on S.L.A.A. Website Development

F.W.S. Newsletter, October 1, 2007

[Board Public Relations Committee Chair's note: Since the ABM, our volunteer webmaster and member of the BPRC, Beth S, the F.W.S. General Manager, Linda Hamilton, and our BOT Chair, Dan A., have been working tirelessly to make our F.W.S. website a better place for all of us. They wisely have broken down the task into three stages: 1) changing servers and improving the functionality of the current design (nearing completion), 2) updating the entire content of the site (just beginning), and 3) creating new functionality that will allow us to serve visitors (potential members), members, and Intergroups better. Beth has created the following report detailing all of the exciting and important things that have been accomplished and that are in the works. Thanks Beth, Linda and Dan for all of your hard work.

--Stephen Schall, Chair, BPRC]

As many members already know, we have a new S.L.A.A. Fellowship Wide Services website. The purpose of this long-awaited project has been to create a more user-friendly web presence that will swing open the doors for communication between newcomers, members, groups, Intergroups and F.W.S. The new site has been built with this important goal in mind.

Some of the new features of the new website include:

- Better organization of information with consideration for both the newcomer and long-timer.
- An F.W.S. Monthly E-mail Newsletter complete with online subscription.
- A listing of events happening around the Fellowship. Information about upcoming events may be submitted to our Web Team via a form that also accepts attachments such as flyers.
- A form for submitting written contributions for inclusion in the new S.L.A.A. book, *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of S.L.A.A.*
- The ability to sign up for email notification of updates (RSS feeds) for regularly updated site areas so members can stay informed of events and F.W.S. news.
- Capabilities for online member polls and questionnaires that will render useful information on topics relevant to recovery and S.L.A.A. as a whole.
- A new *Contact Us* area that uses forms to ensure that your questions are routed to the right person. This is a great way to register meeting changes and other important information with F.W.S.
- A more aesthetic and unified design to reflect the solidarity of S.L.A.A.
- Room to grow! Our new system is expandable, giving us freedom to create new functionality as needed.

Some projects nearing completion that will be implemented soon:

- A brand new online store that will include many items for purchase that are missing from the current store.
- Simpler ways to make F.W.S. donations, including recurring monthly payments, online.
- Clearer shipping-cost calculation, more shipping options, more payment options, faster turnaround.
- New and useful site areas for members, newcomers, media, and professionals, with information pertinent to each group of site visitors.

- The much-anticipated system for new Intergroup Websites, provided as a service by F.W.S. Intergroups will be offered space to create their own independent, customizable websites on our server using their own domain name, and using their own individual version of the same powerful system utilized on the main F.W.S. site. The purpose for this is to encourage those Intergroups without websites to create an online presence, and also to make available to those wishing to upgrade an existing site some valuable tools for reaching out to people. The goal of this project is to help Intergroups carry the message online. (More on this coming soon.)
- A new Intergroup Directory Hub that will allow visitors to locate information such as meeting lists and ways to contact their local Intergroup more easily. (More on this coming soon.)
- We are also developing an area specifically for those without access to local meetings. It will include helpful resources for getting sober, as well as practical information to support our members who are in this difficult situation.

We are all looking forward to seeing each of these projects finished and helping to carry the message to as many hurting sex and love addicts as possible, because that's what it's all about!

In service,
Beth S., F.W.S. Webmaster

A Report from the Chair of the Board of Trustees.

F.W.S. Newsletter, October 1, 2007

Things have been very rough at Fellowship-Wide Services for the past 21 months, since the office moved from Boston, MA to San Antonio, TX. I've been on the Board of Trustees for exactly those 21 months, and it has been quite a ride. Since becoming the Board Chair three months ago I have spoken to people all over the Fellowship and I hear one thing loudest: "tell us what is really going on!" I'm going to do exactly that. What I have to say may ruffle the feathers of some who have served our Fellowship in good faith in the past. To those people I offer my apologies. The unity of our Fellowship demands straight talk. That unity is, and always will be, my number one priority.

In essence I have three messages for the Fellowship of S.L.A.A.

1. An unvarnished acknowledgement of serious problems.
2. An account of serious efforts to establish fiscal and operational sobriety.
3. Substantial new initiatives to carry the message to the addict who still suffers.

I'm going to go through a series of topics and I hope that you will see the thread of these three messages throughout my report. I have tried to keep my report brief, but we need your trust back, and I can't short-change that goal. If, after reading my report, you have anything, anything at all, that you want me to hear, *please* let me hear it. Email me at dan_a@slaafws.org.

F.W.S. Finances and Budgeting.

Opinions vary as to why F.W.S. has experienced so much financial difficulty over the past few years. Some say 9/11 affected contributions. Some say the Fellowship has lost confidence in F.W.S. and no longer wants to contribute. I don't know if these things are true, but I know one thing that is true, because I've seen it with my own eyes. The Board of Trustees has had a hard time saying no to spending more than we take in. We have purchased or leased office equipment that was not strictly necessary for our work, rather than finding ways to make do with equipment we could afford. And we have more than once hired staff we could not afford rather than finding ways to get more work done with existing staff, or else simply admitting that we do not receive enough revenue to do everything we'd like to do.

In addition to these unnecessary and unwise expenditures, there has been a surprising degree of inefficiency in office operations. This newsletter may be the readiest example. *Scores* of staff person-hours used to go into producing and distributing the old print version of this newsletter. Just by switching to an online newsletter we stand to save thousands of dollars in labor costs annually. In almost every area of office operations we have found similar opportunities to increase efficiency. Please look at the brief report that accompanies our financial statements for details of other cost savings.

I highlight these serious problems from the past because I want to lay to rest the doubts that many S.L.A.A. members have had about whether their F.W.S. contributions were being handled in the most responsible manner possible. Let there be no doubt, they weren't.

Current and recent Board members, and the current F.W.S. General Manager, Linda Hamilton, have been working hard to turn all this around. We have a fundamentally new attitude towards making ends meet. We will run the F.W.S. office on the money

we receive, from contributions and from sales of literature and merchandise, period. We will not approve new expenditures we cannot confidently afford. If cuts are needed to keep us in the black we will make them. We will focus on cutting costs by increasing office efficiency, so that services are not reduced, but if it becomes necessary to reduce services to cut costs, we will do it. Meanwhile, we will keep you informed about our ongoing financial conditions and we will not come crying wolf when we are in the red. If you see that we are cutting services to make ends meet, and you decide you'd prefer a better-funded F.W.S. office, send us more money. Our commitment is to spend your money on the work you tell us to do, and we will do that as responsibly as possible.

But don't trust our words. Watch what we do and trust our actions.

Book-keeping and Financial Reporting

Our book-keeping and financial reporting has been awful for the past year and three-quarters. We've had computer problems that have required re-entering huge amounts of data on more than one occasion, and difficulties with simple data-entry tasks that have eaten up hundreds of hours of staff time hunting down errors, as well as sundry other problems too complicated to summarize. All of this on top of an accounting system that was clunky and inefficient to begin with. As a result we have been operating without up-to-date financial information for the better part of two years. Among other things, the total failure to maintain timely and accurate financial statements has more than once led to approving expenditures that were not within our means, and more than once we have been caught empty-handed when the time came to replenish our stocks of literature. This is very, very bad.

However, I am pleased to say that in the past two months our General Manager has succeeded in getting our book-keeping system completely current, so that the income statements attached to this newsletter are accurate and reliable for the first time in a long time. In addition, we are switching to more reliable accounting software and have taken the opportunity to redesign our entire accounting system so we can more easily keep track of revenue and expenses, and inventory and cost of good sold, as well as reducing the staff needed for book-keeping. This new system started becoming operational as of October 1. We will provide you with accurate financial reports from now on, and you will be able to see where your money is going.

F.W.S. Prudent Reserve Policy

It has become clear to me that there is great confusion in the Fellowship about our prudent reserve policy, so let me clarify. First, an organization is not solvent unless it has an adequate prudent reserve, and we have not had one for a long time. The fact that we have a couple hundred-thousand dollars in our Prudent Reserve Fund does not mean we are awash in loose cash, or that our financial problems are solved. Our prudent reserve policy is to maintain 12 months operating funds in non-liquid assets (stocks and bonds) which we can only use in an extreme financial emergency, and 2 months operating funds in liquid assets (money market) that we can use only in the case of temporary cash-flow reversals. Based on this year's budget that's a total of almost \$365,000. That number may seem high, but it is considered a reasonable number for a small organization with volatile revenue.

We are currently a very long way from fulfilling our prudent reserve policy. Our non-liquid reserve stands at about seven or eight months operating expenses, and our liquid reserve is non-existent. Furthermore, we currently have no surplus revenue with which to fill up our reserves. This is not a secure position for a small organization that lives close to the bone. Our written policy, and the strong

consensus of the current Board, is that filling up our two-part prudent reserve must be a top priority in our financial planning. We will not initiate substantial new expenditures until we have put the organization on a clear path toward fulfilling our prudent reserve goal. And we will not pretend that our budget is balanced unless it includes the surplus necessary to fill up our prudent reserve.

The Relationship Between the Board and the Fellowship.

One of the things that has concerned me the most in S.L.A.A. service, and the thing that motivated me to join the Board of Trustees, is the historical tendency of the Board of Trustees to act unilaterally on important issues without consulting the Fellowship as a whole in the form of the F.W.S. Conference. This happened when the Board created an Endowment Fund several years ago, and accepted large contributions to that fund. It happened again when the Board decided to move the office to San Antonio. It will not happen again.

Our Second Tradition says that the Board of Trustees, as leaders, must be guided by group conscience. That doesn't mean the group conscience of the Board of Trustees. It means the group conscience of the entire Fellowship, as represented by the F.W.S. Conference. The Board makes a lot of decisions about a lot of things, and it is not possible to consult the Conference extensively on every issue. But whenever important decisions are to be made the Conference must be involved so that the collective conscience of the entire S.L.A.A. Fellowship can be discovered. Without consulting the Conference there is no way for the Board of Trustees to be "directly responsible to those they serve" as the Ninth Tradition demands. Your Conference Delegate is your representative in the collective decision making process. If your Intergroup had a delegate you should know who it is and talk to them. If your Intergroup has no delegate, maybe you should volunteer. If your area has no Intergroup, you can still have a delegate, and you can always ask F.W.S. for help in starting an Intergroup.

This summer we came to the Conference for input on what to do with the F.W.S. Endowment Fund. We heard a loud and clear message: cap it and turn it into a Prudent Reserve Fund. That's what we did. In the future we will come back to the Conference to consult on other issues and it will become standard practice to actively seek your guidance as much as possible whenever important decisions are to be made. This is the only way that we can stay true to our Traditions, and that in turn is the only way we can hope to succeed as an organization.

Getting Back to Carrying the Message.

F.W.S. exists for one reason, and one reason alone, to carry the message to the sex and love addict who still suffers, in ways that groups and Intergroups, acting on their own, would not be able to. Bill Wilson, co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous, listed those ways succinctly almost fifty years ago¹:

¹ Modified for formatting from Twelve Concepts for World Service, Alcoholics Anonymous General Service Office, New York, NY 1962.

- “the writing of a uniform A.A. literature”
- “the development of a sound public relations policy”
- “handling the large numbers of pleas for help that might follow in the wake of national and international publicity”
- “aiding new groups to form and of furnishing them with counsel based upon the experience of the older and already successful groups”
- “translations of our literature into other languages”

As the Chair of the Board of Trustees, I see it as my responsibility to support the Board, the F.W.S. staff, the F.W.S. Conference in finding ways to fulfill this succinct list of tasks with the resources at our disposal. Lack of money cannot be an excuse for failing to move forward. Yes, we could do more if we had more. But in the meantime the Board, the staff, and the Conference are moving forward with a number of projects to carry the message in more effective ways, with or without more money. The Conference Steps & Traditions Committee is developing a new book on the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions. The Conference Member Retention Committee is developing a sponsorship workbook. The Conference Literature Committee and the Board Public Relations Committee (BPRC) are working together to create a whole new mechanism for producing new literature. The BPRC is building a powerful set of online tools for new members and new groups, with the idea that our website should give the suffering addict everything they need to get started on the road of recovery, and to start a meeting and build a Fellowship if they don't have one already. The Board Finance & Operating Committee is developing a plan for systematically translating S.L.A.A. literature into other languages to support the growing Fellowships outside the English-speaking world. And the F.W.S. staff is preparing to expand and improve the Frequently Asked Questions file on the F.W.S. website so that many more inquiries can be handled with limited staff resources.

I believe that if we stay focused on our primary purpose in Tradition Five, “to carry [the] message to the sex and love addict who still suffers”, and if we cling to the rest of the Twelve Traditions like the rock they are, we cannot fail.

Conclusion

I hope very much that members of the Fellowship will not be shocked by my frank account of F.W.S. finances, or any of the other issues I've addressed. My goal is to provide the transparency people are asking for. We've made huge mistakes and we are slowly and painstakingly putting them right. If you want more detail, *please* contact me so that I can answer your questions and hear your concerns. I am absolutely determined that F.W.S. will leave its financial woes behind and buckle down to the hard work of helping you help the addict who still suffers. I only ask that you tell me your concerns instead of walking away in frustration, and that, if you are willing, you give us your support so that we can work together in accordance with our First Tradition of unity and common welfare.

In service,
Dan A.
Chair, Board of Trustees.
dan_a@slaafws.org

**Annual Budget for fiscal year 2008 for
The Augustine Fellowship, S.L.A.A., Fellowship-Wide Services, Inc.**
Approved by the Board of Trustees, September 8, 2007
(fiscal year begins October 1)

Revenue		
Merchandise		
Merchandise: Books	70,000	
Merchandise: Booklets	5,000	
Merchandise: Pamphlets	40,000	
Merchandise: Bookmarks	500	
Merchandise: Starter Kits	750	
Merchandise: Tapes/CD's	5,000	
Merchandise: Medallions	14,200	
Merchandise: Other Products	0	
Merchandise: Total		135,450
Postage		19,000
Publications		
Publications: Journal	2,100	
Publications: Newsletter	0	
Publications: Total		2,100
Contributions		
Contributions: Regular: Individuals	N/A*	
Contributions: Regular: Groups	N/A*	
Contributions: Regular: Intergroups	N/A*	
Contributions: Campaign: Individuals	N/A*	
Contributions: Campaign: Groups	N/A*	
Contributions: Campaign: Intergroups	N/A*	
Contributions: Miscellaneous	N/A*	
Contributions: Total		125,000
ABC/IRC		
ABC/IRC: ABM Registration	20,000	
ABC/IRC: Travel Equalization Fund	5,000	
ABC/IRC: IRC Registration	0	
ABC/IRC: ABM Fundraisers	5,000	
ABC/IRC: ABM Other	0	
ABC/IRC: Total		30,000
Interest (Bank Account)		0
Dividends		0
Realized G/L-Unrealized G/L		0
Earnings from Prudent Reserve Fund**		0
Miscellaneous		0
Total: Revenue		311,550
Cost of Goods Sold (COGS)		
Books	8,000	
Booklets	0	
Pamphlets	14,000	
Bookmarks	150	
Starter Kits	150	
Tapes/CD's	500	
Medallions/Chips	2,800	
Other Products	500	
Merchandise Discounts	0	
Sub-Total: COGS		26,100
Revenue minus COGS		285,450

Expenses

Labor		
Labor: Salary Expense	90,000	
Labor: Bonuses	0	
Labor: Payroll Expense	6,600	
Labor: Payroll Accounting	1,300	
Labor: Unemployment Insurance	1,000	
Labor: Employee Benefits	12,000	
Labor: Contract Labor	5,000	
Labor: Education & Training	500	
Labor: Other	0	
Labor: Total		116,400
Office		
Office: Rent	28,800	
Office: Phone	7,500	
Office: Copier	7,000	
Office: Computer Leases	11,400	
Office: Supplies	7,500	
Office: Service Contracts	500	
Office: Miscellaneous	750	
Office: Total		63,450
Insurance		3,000
Accounting Services		5,000
Legal Services		5,000
Bank Charges		500
POC Literature		100
Conference Committees Expense		9,000
Board Expenses		
Board Expenses: Travel	5,000	
Board Expenses: Accommodation	6,000	
Board Expenses: Other	0	
Board Expenses: Total		11,000
ABC/IRC		
ABC/IRC: ABC Facilities	25,000	
ABC/IRC: IRC Facilities	0	
ABC/IRC: Travel Equalization Fund	5,000	
ABC/IRC: Other	0	
ABC/IRC: Total		30,000
Credit Card Fees		3,000
Postage		26,000
Miscellaneous		1,000
Transfer to liquid Prudent Reserve		12,000
Sub-Total: Expenses		285,450

Surplus (Loss): Rev minus COGS minus Expenses **0**

*We are breaking contributions down by type for the first time. Thus we can't estimate the amount of contributions by type. The amount for total contributions is based on historical data for the past three years.

**Income from the Prudent Reserve Fund is expected to be left in the Prudent Reserve Fund until the 12 month prudent reserve cap is reached.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS. (AT LAST!!!)

F.W.S. Newsletter, October 1, 2007

We have finally brought our accounting system to the point where we can generate accurate income statements. Below you will find an income statement for fiscal year 2007, which just ended Sept. 30, broken down by month, with some additional comments.

You will notice that we lost \$60,000 in the last fiscal year. If this troubles you, that's a good sign. Please see the report from the Board Chair for comments on the reasons for this deficit. This money came out of what was at that time called the F.W.S. Endowment Fund, but is now called the F.W.S. Prudent Reserve Fund. This transfer was made in accordance with the written policy of F.W.S. regarding that Fund, which allows for emergency withdrawals under extreme circumstances. The Board was very disappointed to have to make this withdrawal and is committed to avoiding such withdrawals in the future whenever possible.

We have no balance sheet to show you because the old accounting system, which we are in the middle of replacing, is simply not set up correctly. At present the bills we owe exceed our cash-on-hand by roughly \$15,000, which is not good. We are doing everything we can to turn this around. Meanwhile, an accurate balance sheet will be forthcoming as soon as the transition to our new accounting system is completed.

As you review the income statement below, you may want to take note of the following items, where expenses have been, and/or will be reduced.

- Relocation expense: We continued to pay rent on our old office in Massachusetts until June of 2007.
- Tapes/CD's expense: We are now producing these in-house at substantially reduced cost.
- Labor expenses: For much of the fiscal year we were employing more staff than we could afford, and more than we needed. We have recently made further reductions so that these numbers are much smaller in the new budget.
- Newsletter expense: All you see here is zeroes because the cost of producing the newsletter is all staff-time. We have reduced this substantially by switching to an online newsletter.
- Conference Committee Expense: This was mostly the cost of teleconferencing. We have switched to free conference calls.

The Augustine Fellowship, S.L.A.A., Fellowship-Wide Services, Inc.
Income Statement for fiscal year 2007 (beginning Oct. 1, 2006)

	October 2006	November 2006	December 2006	January 2007	February 2007	March 2007	April 2007	May 2007	June 2007	July 2007	August 2007	September 2007	Year to Date
Revenues													
SOFTBOUND BOOKS	6,663.45	2,926.67	6,769.74	10,311.18	6,095.27	6,444.67	6,929.36	4,064.85	3,706.68	7,053.98	6,706.24	6,906.14	74,432.73
PAMPHLETS	2,217.00	4,612.00	4,057.95	3,795.00	2,788.80	4,665.00	2,626.33	2,911.00	1,892.00	5,404.31	2,673.67	3,325.00	40,858.06
FOREIGN LITERATURE	7.50	0.00	0.00	1.20	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	8.00	238.80	0.00	255.50
STARTER KITS	30.00	35.00	30.00	30.00	43.00	54.00	60.00	54.00	42.00	54.00	72.00	48.00	552.00
BOOKMARKS	48.50	22.75	225.00	0.00	10.50	47.25	0.00	21.00	22.75	67.75	36.75	24.50	526.75
TAPES/CDs	275.50	137.50	546.50	701.00	385.75	543.00	562.50	214.00	311.00	766.60	616.50	817.01	5,804.36
MEDALLIONS/CHIPS	1,108.50	2,573.50	787.25	1,205.25	1,254.25	1,328.45	1,180.75	1,368.50	1,157.50	2,165.75	1,375.50	1,107.00	16,507.20
OTHER PRODUCT SALES	15.00	0.00	18.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	15.00	0.00	0.00	48.00
WORLD DIRECTORY	13.00	0.00	13.00	13.00	13.00	0.00	13.00	13.00	26.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	104.00
THE JOURNAL	224.50	107.00	54.00	121.00	200.00	179.00	282.00	149.50	291.00	305.00	241.00	250.00	2,404.00
THE JOURNAL BOOKLETS	190.00	935.00	555.00	240.00	475.00	325.00	225.00	395.00	395.00	367.30	285.00	365.00	4,732.30
NEWSLETTER	0.00	0.00	26.00	15.00	0.00	26.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	67.00
CONTRIBUTIONS	19,962.75	6,696.72	16,046.64	16,927.21	7,984.64	5,817.15	6,047.39	8,613.06	12,256.33	13,717.36	9,239.63	4,547.70	127,856.58
CONTRIBUTIONS--relocation	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	(102.00)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	(102.00)
CONTR--relocation contingency	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Mass oper/rent deposit reimb	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
CONFERENCES/ABM	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	11,939.00	4,835.00	3,554.00	0.00	0.00	20,328.00
Travel Equilization	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,700.00	1,050.00	750.00	0.00	0.00	4,500.00
CONVENTION	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
POSTAGE	2,448.38	706.97	1,659.25	1,549.07	2,037.73	2,745.19	976.99	446.88	2,017.11	2,693.60	2,460.78	2,076.08	21,693.60
INTEREST	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
DIVIDEND INCOME	0.00	0.00	0.00	9,309.72	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	9,309.72
REALIZED GAINS/LOSSES	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
UNREALIZED GAINS/LOSSES	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
5% ENDOWMENT FUND													
REVENUE	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
MISCELLANEOUS	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Revenues	33,204.08	18,753.11	30,788.33	44,218.63	21,287.94	22,072.71	18,903.32	32,889.79	28,002.37	36,922.65	23,945.87	19,466.43	329,877.80

Cost of Sales													
Merchandise discounts	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
SOFTBOUND BOOKS	2,450.05	382.04	772.12	1,314.24	784.28	711.96	716.79	425.08	400.39	786.60	806.00	566.56	10,101.31
PAMPHLETS	818.98	6,064.69	1,559.79	1,772.09	992.66	6,940.37	909.78	975.31	706.22	1,728.10	831.19	5,087.92	28,344.50
FOREIGN LITERATURE	1.77	0.00	0.00	0.48	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.54	53.55	0.00	56.34
MEDALLIONS/CHIPS	168.26	882.98	217.13	344.03	375.62	381.97	339.93	363.21	618.57	774.31	437.35	1,179.42	6,100.38
	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
TAPES/CDs	(24.47)	55.00	279.09	235.00	101.50	331.25	225.50	959.00	958.35	213.01	165.28	292.50	3,758.51
WORLD DIRECTORY	8.36	8.36	8.36	8.36	16.72	0.00	8.36	8.36	25.08	0.00	0.00	0.00	91.96
CONFERENCE SERVICE													
MANUAL	7.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	7.50	0.00	0.00	15.00
THE JOURNAL	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
OTHER PROD COSTS	18.00	187.00	119.60	48.00	98.00	65.00	53.95	79.00	79.00	83.00	57.00	73.00	956.55
STARTER KITS	4.99	25.27	5.05	5.05	11.08	13.04	12.09	16.13	11.05	10.04	18.15	10.01	141.95
BOOKMARKS	17.92	8.96	84.00	0.00	3.36	15.12	0.00	6.72	7.28	23.52	11.76	7.84	186.48
Total Cost of Sales	3,471.36	7,614.30	3,045.14	3,727.25	2,383.22	8,458.71	2,266.40	2,832.81	2,805.94	3,626.62	2,380.28	7,217.25	49,752.98
Net Revenues	29,732.72	11,138.81	27,743.19	40,491.38	18,904.72	13,614.00	16,636.92	30,056.98	25,196.43	33,296.03	21,565.59	12,249.18	280,124.82
Expenses													
SALARY EXPENSE	8,409.85	7,493.61	9,401.08	8,912.01	8,702.62	12,968.45	8,580.62	8,733.38	8,621.21	11,680.26	12,607.07	8,684.88	114,795.04
RETENTION BONUSES	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
PAYROLL TAXES	612.02	426.12	727.04	647.78	665.77	981.53	656.45	657.49	668.74	882.08	943.02	664.41	8,532.45
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE	58.81	(389.56)	43.20	228.62	234.97	143.13	32.30	30.45	14.42	48.21	37.91	28.88	511.34
EARNED INCOME CREDIT	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	1,223.45	1,827.09	3,096.81	848.62	1,098.60	852.05	2,376.89	1,077.85	942.60	(107.26)	1,056.40	1,248.14	16,405.90
EDUCATION & TRAINING	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
EMPLOYMENT EXPENSES	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
UTILITIES	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	(439.94)	0.00	374.39	(65.55)
RENT	0.00	2,363.11	2,413.32	4,562.96	2,486.93	2,616.40	2,550.12	2,616.40	2,616.40	2,616.40	2,616.40	2,491.81	29,950.25
TELECOMMUNICATIONS	1,825.07	0.00	0.00	862.11	1,472.64	59.95	0.00	1,026.56	441.22	0.00	1,700.57	865.11	8,253.23
DEPRECIATION EXPENSE	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
SERVICE CONTRACTS	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	304.00	0.00	333.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	637.00
OFFICE EXPENSE	1,356.48	4,842.64	2,657.05	3,028.51	2,355.40	4,276.93	1,281.80	5,384.84	3,233.17	1,022.45	1,858.07	3,304.99	34,602.33
PRINTING, MISC	405.94	490.69	1,365.68	358.17	2,261.47	5.51	880.05	413.25	0.00	0.00	858.84	489.11	7,528.71
COMPUTER EXPENSE	1,827.50	0.00	135.52	160.05	1,178.71	1,291.09	1,241.61	942.60	927.60	2,015.10	927.60	0.00	10,647.38
POSTAGE & SHIPPING	2,791.12	2,551.24	2,828.80	2,514.94	1,289.13	2,355.74	840.56	2,036.61	2,176.93	1,369.42	2,215.80	2,987.86	26,878.25
SHIPPING SUPPLIES EXPENSE	0.00	249.57	0.00	0.00	0.00	257.12	0.00	0.00	124.98	560.98	321.35	403.15	1,917.15
ACCOUNTING SERVICES	95.00	87.00	84.00	84.00	89.00	134.00	86.00	89.00	82.00	86.00	125.00	82.00	1,123.00
LEGAL SERVICES	647.50	0.00	5,500.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	6,147.50
OTHER LABOR	2,040.00	2,315.00	1,125.00	585.00	942.50	590.00	510.00	1,495.00	670.00	200.00	1,300.00	1,725.00	13,497.50

TOTAL CONF COMMITTEES	797.77	826.67	652.51	741.58	575.45	184.30	0.00	0.00	75.67	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,853.95
POC literature	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
CONFERENCE/ABM EXPENSE	0.00	500.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,604.91	4,952.51	24,413.44	736.63	32,207.49
BOARD TRAVEL & MEETING	565.42	1,084.01	798.71	390.06	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	861.33	1,186.24	5,309.97	0.00	10,195.74
MISCELLANEOUS	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
CONVENTION EXPENSE	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
NEWSLETTER EXPENSE	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
JOURNAL EXPENSES	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
INSURANCE EXPENSE	169.34	338.68	177.40	161.28	161.28	161.28	161.28	161.28	169.34	169.34	0.00	0.00	1,830.50
BANK CHARGES	0.00	19.00	0.00	0.00	45.00	0.00	118.00	47.87	77.37	95.30	35.00	83.53	521.07
LEASE INTEREST EXPENSE	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
CREDIT CARD FEES/COSTS	187.67	591.30	319.10	477.92	425.54	449.40	452.87	319.66	554.89	351.26	592.49	374.76	5,096.86
RELOCATION EXPENSE	900.51	0.00	3,565.31	1,000.00	1,035.88	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,017.69	1,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	10,519.39
RELOCATION-food/housing/travel	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
RELOCATION-recruitment fees	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
RELOCATION--communications	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
CAPITAL EQUIPMENT PURCHASES	1,829.49	968.06	6,142.42	1,920.23	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	927.60	11,787.80
LEASEHOLD IMPROVEMENTS	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
RESERVE FOR CONTINGENCY	500.00	0.00	(20,347.05)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4,350.00	(9,338.27)	(24,835.32)
MOVE 2005	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
TX oper/rent deposits	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
TRAVEL EQUILIZATION	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,916.16	1,883.81	0.00	158.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4,350.00	9,307.98
OVERHEAD ALLOCATION	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
TEMPORARY	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	244.22	244.22
Total Expenses	26,242.94	26,584.23	20,685.90	30,400.00	27,208.70	28,326.88	21,259.56	26,049.93	24,862.78	26,688.35	61,268.93	20,728.20	342,091.16
Net Income	3,489.78	(15,445.42)	7,057.29	10,091.38	(8,303.98)	(14,712.88)	(4,622.64)	4,007.05	333.65	6,607.68	(39,703.34)	(8,479.02)	(61,966.34)