

2011 Adult Children of Alcoholics Annual Business Conference –2011 Hosted by ACAWSO Board of Trustees

Minutes submitted by Joan B. - secretary

2011 ACA ANNUAL BUSINESS CONFERENCE

Smyrna, Georgia, USA

April 29 – May 1, 2011

ACA World Service Organization Board of Trustees present:

George S., Chairperson (Georgia); Scott R, Treasurer (Arizona); Phyllis R, Vice-chair (Arizona); Anja H., (Denmark).

Guests:

Eva, Denmark; Bonnie, San Antonio, (Delegate); Mack, Richmond, VA.; Joan B., WI. (Delegate); Jeneane S., GA; Janette, IL.

Meet & Greet Friday a.m.

Friday, April 29, 2011; 9:30 a.m.:

George welcomed all present to the ACA 2011 Annual Business Conference held at the Ridgeview Institute in Smyrna, Georgia. He remarked about the night-long tornado warnings experienced in the Atlanta area on Wednesday night and offered prayers and thoughts for those who lost family, friends, and property during the disaster throughout the Southeast. George commented on the progress and growth the annual reports, being presented at this conference, will convey. ACA is a worldwide fellowship, and Atlanta, like other areas of the world, has experienced a rebirth of the fellowship since the development and sale of the Big Red Book (BRB). George also noted the diverseness of those involved and benefiting from ACA around the world, and reminded all of us that we are unique, yet the same. Since we are a World Service Organization, we must think internationally, allowing us to think beyond our street, city, country, and look at our responsibilities with a worldwide perspective. Through such thinking and behaviors, we will be able to see the needs of others as shown in the group consciences we receive.

George then opened the conference with the Serenity Prayer. He also announced that Board member, Larry A, NY, was unable to attend due to cancellation of his flights.

ACA Tradition #1 meditation was read: *Higher Power, I am your trusted servant seeking to support my ACA group and its primary purpose. Please remind me that the life of my program and my own recovery depends upon my willingness to put the group's welfare above my own will. Help me recognize unity.*

Scott R. read the *Operating Policy and Procedures Manual (OPPM) Purpose and Role* as well as *Concepts 6, 7, and 8*. These items related to the responsibility of the ABC on behalf of the ACA and the role of the Trustees, which is to manage the affairs of the World Service Organization through the primary committees.

George S. read the Commitment to Service for ACA.

Introduction of Board members, guests, and committee chairs present was made.

Committee chairpersons present: George S., Hospitals & Institutions; Phyllis R., Outreach; Scott R., Webmaster;

Elect 2011 ABC Chairperson:

George nominated Scott R. to be the 2011 ABC Chairperson; Phyllis R. seconded the motion, and the motion carried with a consensus of those board members present.

Phyllis R. read the Twelve Traditions of ACA.

Scott R. nominated Joan B as the secretary for the 2011 ABC. There was a consensus of the whole.

George S. presented the Annual Report. This report reflected the increases in Big Red Book sales as well as increases in meetings being held around the country and the world. (This report can be accessed on the web page of ACA.)

Scott R., Treasurer of the Board, gave the Treasurer's Report. He noted during his tenure the income and expenses continued to grow considerably. 7th Tradition income continues to grow and the largest expense is payroll, since now there are 7 part-time employees in the Signal Hill, CA., office of WSO. He reported the hiring of Wilshire Financial Services to provide standardized accounting for WSO, which has greatly reduced the workload of the treasurer. Patricia Wilshire, owner of Wilshire Financial Services, recommends the use of GetMyTime.com timekeeping services, which will allow for accurate payroll time entries and direct uploading to Intuit through QuickBooks for payroll processing. Scott reported on the now defined roles of the treasurer, office bookkeeper, and the accounting service. The treasurer's role is now more management and approval of funding distributions, including initiating reimbursements processed through Pay Pal and initiating bank transfers to foreign organizations where applicable. The office bookkeeper processes all incoming checks and reporting the results to the treasurer and accountant. The accounting service maintains all the accounting records in QuickBooks and distributes checks as approved by the treasurer.

Efforts continue to minimize distribution of paper checks, using direct deposit and payment where possible. Scott distributed a copy of the 2010 Year End Profit & Loss Statement and the 2010 Compilation Report developed by the accounting service.

There was some confusion about our organization being considered to do "fundraising". Scott explained what that means in California law as it relates to non-profits and our 7th Tradition collections. He had obtained this information from Patricia Wilshire, the ACA/WSO accountant. He said "fundraising is within the ACA group (internal) and it is the same for Outreach. He will be placing an explanation of fundraising on the website. Scott also reported growth in books sold and income and expenses growing for the group. A complete report may be found on the ACA/WSO website.

Handbook/Translations Report: A written report was submitted by Omer G., Chairperson, who was not in attendance this year. George and Scott read Omer's report. The growth of the ACA fellowship was reported, noting that currently there are about 950 ACA meetings and groups across the world. That is a 65 percent increase since the publication of the Big Red Book in

2006 and the Twelve Steps of Adult Children Yellow Workbook in November 2007. Another printing of the Big Red Book has been authorized as has been another printing of the yellow workbook. Omer noted in his report that sales of the red books and the yellow workbooks helps keep the ACA WSO maintain its office in Signal Hill, California, meet payroll for the part-time employees, helps pay for group services, Outreach, and other fellowship expenses.

ACA WSO is making history this past year with the translation of the Big Red Book and the Twelve Steps of Adult Children yellow workbook into Finnish, Danish, Russian, Spanish, Japanese, and several other languages. Spending on translations in the next four years is expected to increase slightly as new projects are added. The Translations Committee welcomes the support of Valentina who will be assisting in this growing area of translations. She is a part-time worker, approved for between 10 to 15 hours per week. Five hours are dedicated to translations work. Trustee Larry A, New York, and office volunteer Jeannie W. from California also volunteer for translation work.

Omer's report also included committee priorities for 2011. A complete report may be found on the ACA/WSO website.

Hospitals & Institutions Report: George S. gave the report for this committee, noting that Joan B. is a committee member. He mentioned the need for H & I people by region, which can allow for more effective placements of books. He noted requests have been received for giving books to people who cannot afford to purchase one. This is a subject that may require more WSO discussion and protocol formation. George S. also mentioned that a need was seen for the development of an H & I pamphlet that set out guidelines and noted safety issues for those going into the prison systems for placement of books and attending ACA meetings there. A tri-fold was developed and is being presented at this ABC and for review of the fellowship for opinions. The full report may be accessed on the ACA/WSO website.

Literature Committee Report: Larry A. was unable to attend, but submitted his written report hereby summarized. He asked that the ACA office staff obtain prices for posters of the Laundry List, slogans, and an ACA sign, which could be purchased and used by local groups in their meeting rooms. He also asked for an estimate of the workload this would create for the office staff. He noted that work continues on the Spanish translation of the Big Red Book, and that the team is also working on translations of the yellow workbook and the tri-fold "ACA is...".

George S. summarized the content of the OPPM, saying it is a guideline for operation of the group. The Laws and Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation are according to California law.

Webmaster Report: Scott R., Webmaster, gave his report. He noted there are about 12 new meetings listed per month. In January 2010 there were 714 registered meetings and it increased in January 2011 to 877, and is currently at 955 registered meetings. There currently is a need for meetings to be updated yearly on the website so as to avoid being flagged as outdated information and deleted. Scott also reported on the difficulty experienced with the ACA Community Forum hosted by the WSO. This forum was discontinued and replaced with a WSO Information Forum. The Community Forum had experienced increased numbers of posts requiring moderation along with administrative actions, coupled with complaints alleging unfairness in the moderating activity. Hence the Board decided that it was best to shut down the Community Forum and use the resources and time for creation of new meetings. Scott also distributed a report showing the active meetings by country and quantity in each country. He

also had a chart showing the “unique inquiries” by location, the number of visitors, and what percentage that was of the total number of inquiries. It was heartening to see that people from around the world can relate to and benefit from the services of ACA/WSO. This information may be obtained on the ACA/WSO website.

Outreach Committee Report: Phyllis R. gave her report for this committee. She brought to our attention the possibility of there being inactive meetings and inaccurate information on the website for meetings, and the need for those to be updated. Discussion was held on how that may be accomplished. She reported getting as high as 10 to 15 emails per day seeking information on where to find meetings in their area or asking about the Internet and telephone meetings. She also helps people find out how to start a meeting, directs people to our literature on the Website, and tells people about the Big Red Book. She also gets email from around the world, and uses a translation website to assist her in translating the question and her response to it. She finds it quite exciting to be able to communicate with people around the world. She noted assistance from Anja from Denmark. Anja has been emailing the various meetings in Europe to find out if they are still meeting. Phyllis appreciated the assistance from Omer G. and Linda in doing this work while she was on vacation a few weeks ago. She finds the job interesting and gratifying and even though she cannot answer all the questions people have, she finds it a privilege to do this work.

Recognition was given to the 2011 ABC Committee who made this meeting happen in Georgia. They were George S, Monique, Lori, Melissa, and Jeneane.

12:00: Lunch break. Reconvened at 2:00.

Opened afternoon session with the Serenity Prayer, reading of Tradition 2 by Bonnie, and reading of the Twelve Concepts by George.

Newly Elected Officers: The Board ratified by unanimous vote to accept Anja and Joan as new Board members for the 2011 ABC.

Old Business: Discussion of the three pamphlets was tabled until later Saturday.

New Business: The group read through the new Hospitals and Institutions tri-fold that Omer and George had worked on creating. There were two corrections noted and one word change. This pamphlet, as corrected, was unanimously approved for submission to the fellowship for review.

Presentation of Group Conscience Survey Ballots Totals, Discussion, and Voting Results:

Item 2011-1: *A motion is made, that every five years the ABC will take place outside of the USA. Further, that this be done the first time in 2012.* Fellowship votes: 97 Ayes; 11 Noes. Board approval by consensus with slight changes: “That about every five years, as specified by the WSO Board, the ACA ABC will take place outside of the USA. Further, that this be done the first time in 2013. Discussion by the Board indicated that 2012 may be too soon for some people to be able to afford to go overseas for the ABC meeting. By having the first overseas meeting start in 2013, it gives a chance for finances to be planned for, to cover the expenses of such a trip. The Board has discretion in changing when the overseas meeting is held.

Item 2011-2: *We are proposing that the next ABC meeting can take place in Denmark.* Fellowship votes: 90 Ayes; 18 Noes. Unanimous approval was given for Denmark to host the 2013 ABC convention.

Item 2011-3: *Request a pamphlet to be developed to expand on how to have an open friendly meeting without cross talk. What is cross talk and what is acceptable interaction during a meeting? What is the proper response by attendees in an ACA meeting when cross talk, or accusations of cross talk, occurs?* Fellowship votes: 88 Ayes; 20 Noes. Consensus was given to develop a pamphlet to offer guidance on cross talk through stories and examples of cross talk, and done with humor. Such a pamphlet will be developed and at the appropriate time will be distributed to the fellowship for their review.

Item 2011-4: *That ACA/WSO explore the requirements to hire an outside service to provide certificates of insurance for meetings. The insurance would be paid for by the meeting under a blanket policy.* Fellowship votes: 71 Ayes; 37 Noes. This is not a 2/3 vote in favor of discussion by the board, so this topic was not discussed.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 4:20 p.m. and closed with the Serenity Prayer.

Saturday, April 30, 2011; 12:30 p.m.:

Brunch had been supplied by the local ACA group at Ridgeview and enjoyed by all those board members and guests in attendance.

2:00 p.m. The session was opened with the Serenity Prayer and reading of the ACA Twelve Traditions.

The Old Business which had been tabled from the Friday session was taken up, which was discussion of the three pamphlets that had been circulating for review among the fellowship groups this past year.

Item #1: Motion to approve new ACA pamphlet, titled: *Hosting an ACA Sponsorship Workshop*. The background and history of this pamphlet were read, as was the pamphlet itself. It was found that the word “a” was missing on page 3, first paragraph, second last line after “have”. Discussion indicated conditioning the addition of the word “a” on whether it will fit properly on the page. If the printing process reveals it will not fit properly, the letter “a” will be left off. It is not vital that it be placed there. A motion was made with that in mind. Delegate votes: Ayes, 3; Noes, 2; Abstaining, 2. Adoption of the pamphlet, itself, was unanimous.

Item #2: Motion to consider approval of a new Sponsorship/Fellow Traveler Pamphlet. This pamphlet background and history were read as was the pamphlet. One correction is needed and the change was agreed to by consensus of the group. Two typographical errors were found and will be changed if it does not upset the balance of the pamphlet. These two errors are not vital to the understanding of the pamphlet. A motion was made to accept the pamphlet with possible changes noted above. Delegate votes: Unanimous.

Item #3: Motion to approve a new pamphlet “*25 Questions: Am I an Adult Child?*”. This pamphlet’s background and history were read as was the pamphlet. This review found an

unimportant typographical error. Discussion by the group resulted in direction being given to the Literature Committee to be sure the hyphenation rules used in this pamphlet are correct. It was also noted and accepted that minor cosmetic changes to the margins in the numbered and bulleted areas should be done if possible. Delegate Bonnie reported having distributed this pamphlet at a large group session and she received positive responses that this pamphlet may be useful to those who read it. A motion was made to accept the pamphlet. Delegate votes: Unanimous.

This concluded the discussion and action needed on the Old Business before the conference.

Discussion was begun again on the Group Conscience Survey Ballots Totals and Voting Results.

Item 2011-5: *We make a motion that WSO clarifies in all literature for meetings: what a "closed meetings" is.* Fellowship votes: 81 Ayes, 27 Noes. In addition to the argument in favor, history, and WSO analysis, Bonnie read page 566 from the Big Red Book which was the definition of "closed". Conference attendees felt this was excessive and not necessary. The Website and Big Red Book indicate what is a closed meeting, and allows for each group to determine if their group is open, closed, etc. The group noted that Tradition 3 was incorrectly stated in the item offered. A motion was made and seconded to have the topic of what constitutes an open and closed meeting be addressed in the ComLine and a statement of clarification will be put in the Frequently Asked Questions section on the Website. This motion carried unanimously.

Item 2011-6: *We propose anyone attending the ABC be charged a \$20.00 registration fee.* Fellowship votes: 85 Ayes, 23 Noes. Janette commented that this is service to ACA but she gains from service she gives. She would gladly pay a registration fee. Joan commented that maybe in the future as ABC attendance increases, the charge a registration fee to help cover the costs of materials provided at the ABC. George offered that this is something that can be address when we grow. The motion was made and seconded that a 7th Tradition contribution box be made available for contributions at local meetings. The motion was carried unanimously.

Item 2011-7: *We propose a new group that registers with ACA WSO be sent a welcome packet for free.* Fellowship votes: 92 Ayes, 16 Noes. Phyllis noted that a "New Meeting Packet" can be downloaded from the Internet. Bonnie noted not receiving the binder that was supposed to be in the new meeting packet she bought a couple of years ago. Scott noted there are two different packet elements and she may have been sent the incorrect one. Phyllis will check on with the Signal Hill office to clarify what they are sending out as new meeting packets. Discussion of the group also revealed problems with the primary contact addresses and emails for the groups registered. The motion was made that the process of registration be altered to include sending out a letter of acknowledgement asking the primary contact person to verify the addresses and including a literature order form and list of guidelines for starting a new meeting. With such an approach it is hoped that accurate addresses will be received. It is believed this can be done on three or less sheets of paper thus using only 1oz. Postage for each. Delegate votes: Unanimous in favor.

This concluded the discussion of the items proposed and the session was adjourned for the day, which was then closed with the Serenity Prayer.

Sunday, May 1, 2011: 1:30

Brunch was offered again at Ridgeview and enjoyed by all present. The conference opened with the Serenity Prayer and Bonnie read the Twelve Steps.

Scott asked for feedback to guide next years ABC committee. A brief description follows:

George commented he was happy to see that we can resolve conflicts when they occur, can apply recovery to keeping ACA healthy and moving forward.

Janette said she was struck by how cooperative the group of people here was. All were working for the common good. She was appreciative for the opportunity and experience of attending the ABC.

Joan offered her appreciation, too, for the cooperation present in the group, the level of inclusiveness felt, and the opportunity to serve the ACA fellowship.

Bonnie reported she has been in attendance now for the 2010 and the 2011 ABCs. She noticed the ability of those present to cooperate and she didn't see conflict. She acknowledged the amount of behind-the-scenes work that was done. She felt inspired and hopes to inspire others.

Phyllis said she was happy with the ABC and how it went, but was disappointed with the lack of attendance by group members from across the country. However, she acknowledged the difficulty that people may have in getting to Atlanta. She reminded us this is her last time on the board but she will continue to do the Outreach committee work.

Mack stated this first experience with the ABC for him was educational. He got what he was looking for by attending and acknowledged there is more to learn and some can be done from the Big Red Book.

Eva indicated she was very comfortable in the company of strangers here in the U.S. She hopes to go back to Denmark and do more in support of the fellowship.

Anja said it was amazing to experience and see how the ABC is done. She was shocked at the smallness of the group but was accepting of it.

Scott said he enjoyed the unity and that we did a good job of hearing the minority. He was pleased with the way the meeting went and like some others, was disappointed in the lack of attendance by other members of the fellowship.

Next Year's ABC Conference:

Phyllis made a motion that the 2012 ABC be held at the WSO office in Signal Hill, California and she volunteered to chair the 2012 ABC at Signal Hill. She noted there are two facilities that could be used for the conference, depending on the number in attendance. Bonnie commented that by attending the ABC in Signal Hill, she feels like she will be "going home" prior to going to Denmark in 2013.

George commented that the staff from the Signal Hill office wanted to come to this Atlanta ABC, but were unable to do so and that they would be happy to host the 2012 ABC.

Vote: Unanimous for the next ABC to be held at the WSO office in Signal Hill, California.

George made a motion, Janette seconded it, to close the 2011 ABC. Vote: Unanimous.

Phyllis presented George with a token of our appreciation and a card for his chairman of the committee that hosted the ABC and all the work his ACA volunteers did to welcome us to Atlanta and see that each of us had all the pertinent information.

The 2011 ABC was officially closed with the Serenity Prayer.