

“OUR PRIMARY PURPOSE”



***WORLD SERVICE
BUSINESS CONFERENCE
28/04/2014-03/05/2014***

Susan, Region 9 Chair

World Service Business Conference 2014

The 2014 World Service Business Conference (WSBC) took place from April 28 to May 3, in Albuquerque, New Mexico, USA. This year's theme was "Our Primary Purpose" (Abstain from Compulsive Eating, Twelve Steps of OA, Carry the Message). There were 12 of us from Region 9. Countries included were Denmark, England, Ireland, Sweden, Iceland, Italy, Greece, and Germany – 6 green dots among us this year! And we got to hear the Serenity Prayer in Danish, Gaelic, Italian, Icelandic, Greek, German, Portuguese, and Spanish.

Like previous WSBC's, there were many OA meetings, and a Forum (Who Wants to Stay Abstinent? Play the Game & Stick with the Winners!). Workshops included Sponsorship; Abstinence; Working All Twelve Steps; and Carrying the Message. There were also 3 more meetings – All About Conference; New Strategic Plan 2014 – 2016 (Our Primary Purpose, which puts increased focus on Abstinence, Working all 12 Steps, and Individual's Responsibility to Carry the Message); and Literature Questions & Answers. Also, there was a Celebration of Rozanne's Legacy.

There were several times for committee meetings, and 5 business meetings took place. We had elections of Region Chairs, Virtual Services Trustee, and General Service Trustees. There were New Business Motions & Proposed Amendments to Bylaws during the business meetings. "Unity with Diversity Checklist", and the manuscript, "Overeaters Anonymous, Third Edition" were granted the Conference Seal of Approval.

As Region 9 Chair, I also attended the Region Chair's Committee meetings, and joint meetings with the Region Chairs and the Trustees. Wednesday evening, over dinner, we had a casual meeting amongst the Region 9 Attendees. The week ended with a Banquet/Dinner Dance, and once again, we region 9'ers were great on the dance floor!! Here's to another successful WSBC, with a lot to take home to our service bodies. For more information about WSBC 2014, the Chair's Report of WSBC 2014 was emailed and in the R9 Website. Reports will be available, including material from the Forum, on the OA Website.

I want to thank everyone for giving me the opportunity to represent Region 9 as the R9 Chair. Besides service, it is truly a pleasure, always strengthening my Abstinence and my Recovery. Thank you again.

Susan
Region 9 Chair

Esti, Region 9 Trustee

From Our Trustee's Desk

I have arrived to Albuquerque, New Mexico, on Sunday afternoon and started my meetings early next morning. It was a long and very busy week but it was worth.

To spend a week with so many abstinent OA members is a blessing beyond my wildest dreams. We had our Board meetings where we discussed the Strategic plan, motions to amend the BRM and our

Bylaws and many other subjects that we referred to in informal meetings. In this way we can each express our views and make a decision that the outcome is to submit a motion for the next meeting. Other times it is sufficient to talk about it and have it brainstormed.

We had OA meetings 3 times a day and sometimes even more so everyone could choose the right time for his meeting. It was an opportunity to meet people from all over the world to hear their sharings, recovery and to get strength and hope.

WSBC was overwhelming, opening every business meeting with the serenity prayer in a different language and then in English. We were 200 people in the room but everything was so quiet and in order. If somebody felt any stress from what went around he would ask for the serenity prayer and the Chair stopped whatever was on the agenda to say the prayer and go back to business more relaxed and serene.

We discussed some motions as to have a research if the fellowship would like to change the name of OA to something more conclusive which failed. The motion that suggested changing the gender of God in the Steps and Traditions also failed.

The motion that suggested that OA loops will be put on the OA website as a list of courtesy passed and so did many other motions that were on the Agenda Questionnaire.

The theme of WSBC this year was Our Primary Purpose. I enjoyed the Forum and the workshops that were dedicated to how to carry the message to others who still suffer in and outside the fellowship.

And last but not least, a lot of work is done in the Conference Committees, they meet for almost a whole day to discuss what has been done the previous year and decide of the long term and short terms goals for next year and decide how to communicate during the year as the members are spread out in the world.

Region 9 delegates were very active in the WSBC and being Region 9 Trustee, it made me very proud. We were not a lot but we had a voice there.

Thank you all and love in service,
Esti

Mette, Region 9 Secretary

WSBC 2014

This year was my second time at WSBC. I represented NSB Denmark, and I am very happy that I could go there. It was a very different experience to be at Conference this time because I knew about everything, and I felt much more relaxed and calm.

I joined the Santa Fe Tour on Monday, and it was a very beautiful and exciting trip.

On Tuesday night, I had a meeting with R9 Board over dinner in the restaurant at the hotel, and on Wednesday night all the R9 delegates had a meeting and dinner at a fine restaurant. I liked both meetings, and I find it important to have those meetings when we are gathered and have the chance since we won't meet except when we attend R9 A&C.

I attended several workshops and the Forum.

Since this was my second year, I said yes to participate in the Green Dot/Mentor program, and it gave me a lot to be able to bring on my experience from last year.

Before I came to Albuquerque, I was asked if I was willing to join the Reference Subcommittee. I knew this would require my participation in Bylaws Committee as well, the two committee goes together, and I said yes to do the job because I think the work with Bylaws and amendments is very funny and interesting. Beforehand I was aware, that the amount of tasks and meetings on Reference Subcommittee could be demanding, and they did, but I never, not once, thought the work was annoying or boring. The Bylaws Committee did a good job. I chose a subcommittee where we worked on the Statement of Purpose of Bylaws Committee, which did an efficient and good job. The group conscience in Reference Subcommittee was amazing. Everything we discussed, each voting, and the timing, were done in a very professional and proper way. I really loved what we did, no one in that committee had ever thought we could get through all the new amendments we got from conference, no one...but we did! I am proud to have been a part of Reference Subcommittee 2014.

The Business Meetings were not only business, they were also very funny, we laughed a lot. I think business meetings at Conference are so rewarding.

I met a lot of people I knew from last year, and from Region 9, and a lot of Green Dots! What a gratitude I felt to be part of this beautiful Fellowship!

Thank you all for allowing me to do service this way

Love in Service
Mette
Region 9 Secretary

STEPS/TRADITIONS/CONCEPTS/GOODTOKNOW

Steps

- 4) Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
- 5) Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

Traditions

- 4) Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or OA as a whole.
- 5) Each group has but one primary purpose-to carry its message to the compulsive overreater who still suffers.

Concepts

- 4) The right of participation ensures equality of opportunity for all in the decision-making process.

- 5) Individuals have the right of appeal and petition in order to ensure that their opinions and personal grievances will be carefully considered.



1. Be represented at R9 Assembly & Convention 2014 - have a voice !

2. Look in the R9 Website - a lot of R9 Assembly & Convention information already there...

3. Also new in the R9 Website - Welcome to OA Video and Sponsorship Workshop 2014

4. Pass the word on- focus on Abstinence, Working All 12 Steps, and Individual's Responsibility to Carry the Message.

Check out R9 Website's "What's New" And... the OA Website's "What's New"

THE NEWIES!

OA WEBSITE

- [Unity with Diversity Checklist](#)
- [Ask-It Basket](#)
- [Now Online: Second-Quarter Issue of A Step Ahead](#)
- [Strong Abstinence Checklist](#)

REGION 9

- [Chairs Report of WSBC 2014](#)
- [Welcome to OA: video](#)
- [Registration form to Bacharach \(Germany\)](#)
- [Sponsorship Workshop 2014](#)
- [What are Assembly & Convention? \(17-21/9/2014 in Greece\)](#)
- [Region 9 Newsletter, Vol 4, issue 2 March 2014](#)
- [Bacharach Germany English language retreat \(19-21 Sept. 2014\)](#)
- [Translate OA Public Information Video To Your Own Language](#)



Dates to Remember:

- ASAP – R9 A&C 2014 Hotel Registration Form deadline
- ASAP – R9 Convention Registration Form deadline
- June 17, 2014 – proposed bylaw amendments to bylaws committee
- July 1, 2014 – translation/projects fund applications to r9 treasurer

- July 2, 2014 – assembly registration form in to r9 secretary
- July 17, 2014 – assembly agenda & material mailing (invitation already emailed & on web)
- September 1, 2014 – trustee nominee applications to r9 chair
- September 1 – 8, 2014 – Region 9 Week
- September 2014 - Contributions to Region & WS, to r9 treasurer
- Host 2016 r9 a&c... let r9 chair know before r9 a&c 2014

15th Reading on Sponsorship (ANSWER TO WHICH PIECE OF LITERATURE THIS IS COMING FROM ON PAGE 14)

Styles of sponsorship vary from person to person. We are each free to approach it in our own way. It is important to explain one's approach to a sponsee up front, reaching understanding and agreement. As we change, our style of sponsoring my change. This is not uncommon and is a natural part of evolving in the program.

Sponsors share the experience, strength and hope they've found in Twelve-Step recovery. Support, honesty and a positive attitude enrich most sponsorship styles.

There is a fine line between being supportive and giving advice. Sometimes a sponsee will look to a sponsor to solve a particular problem. Often the best solution is to encourage the sponsee to apply one of the Steps or Traditions to the situation.

Communication and feedback are important in both directions. The key is honesty, open-mindedness and willingness. Ideally, sponsorship is a two-way relationship based on acceptance and respect.

There are structured approaches to sponsoring as well as easy going and flexible ones. Some sponsors, in varying degrees, may encourage sponsees to read and write daily, make daily phone calls, commit food for the day, and/or attend a certain number of meetings. Others may make few such suggestions. Most sponsors, however, stress that a sponsee's eventual commitment to some type of OA service is vital to her or his continued recovery.

'I turn to my God, pray and read my spiritual literature. I pull out Lifeline and read stories of recovery. I remember that my home group is meeting right now back in Chicago, and I visualize the room, faces and hugs. I can feel the warmth, love and acceptance in that room. I try to remember what section of the Big Book we're on and imagine what the leader might say about it. Even from afar, I can feel the commitment to recovery and the loving support during the painful times. I can be myself, and I am loved. At 10:15 a.m., I'll recite the promises and the Serenity Prayer along with the group. Even though I am in a car hundreds of miles away, my hand is in theirs and I am home!

Remembering my meeting and how good it feels to belong there will help me as I make the transition to camp. Only when I receive my "emotional and spiritual food" from God and OA do I have enough to give to the rest of the world.

Thank God for OA and that I will never be alone again!' Reprinted from Lifeline Magazine.
(<http://www.oa.org/membersgroups/program-inspiration/recovery-story/>)

MESSAGES FROM OUR TWELFTH STEP WITHIN COMMITTEE

OA REGION 9 TSW SPONSOR LIST

We have updated the list of available sponsors within R9 who are willing to sponsor by email, phone or Skype. This list is current to to May, 2014.

Represented on the list are available sponsors who can sponsor in many languages. Besides English, so far the list includes German, Russian, Hebrew, French, Greek, Spanish, Hindi, Tamil, Farsi, Dutch, Yiddish, Swedish, Danish, Italian, Polish and Afrikaans.

We are asking each of you to forward this email to all of the intergroups in your countries, requesting that they in turn pass it on to each and every OA group's secretary or contact person.

To be added as an available sponsor or to receive this list as a sponsee looking for a R9 Sponsor, kindly email us through tsw@oaregion9.org.

Any available sponsor should make sure to include the following pertinent information: name, email address, Skype name, home/cell phone numbers, & languages in which you can sponsor.

In the interest of assisting OA members to find the right sponsor for each one's needs it would be helpful if available sponsors would also like to tell us if you can be an OA-Mainstream/ OA-HOW sponsor/ OA-90 Day sponsor, &/or a sponsor who can work with anorexic /bulimic sponsees, &/or vegans/vegetarians, &/or a sponsor for male sponsees.

Thanks so much for your service!

"Together we can do what we could never do alone!"

In loving OA fellowship and service,

Reva OA Region 9 Twelfth-Step-Within Sponsors sub-committee
& Catherine OA Region 9 Twelfth-Step-Within Committee Chair

ENCOURAGE SPONSEE TO SPONSOR, AN ITALIAN EXPERIENCE

'I can see how difficult is for me sharing that I'm serving as a sponsor. I have been in OA for over a year now, I'm working the steps with a sponsor and I have got few months of abstinence.

It has been difficult to find a sponsor since I was looking for someone to whom explain what do with me, as confident I was to know what I needed. Only once I surrendered to the fact that I've never been able to take effectively care of myself, I accepted to surrender to a sponsor that, although not perfect, is grateful to the program and works it, one day at a time, at the best of her capacities.

Thanks to the sponsorship my first abstinence – and it changed over the time - started and my life began to change one day at a time.

Only after two months of abstinence, once I began working the steps, a girl asked me to become her sponsor. I had just started to recognize those emotions that I had repressed for a whole life thanks to food. In that moment I could feel my fear and I was grateful for that; thinking that I could hurt someone made me answer "No, I can't do it". She cried and apologized to put me in a difficult position. I saw her fragility, how hard it was for her to ask for my help and get my rejection. It couldn't end up that way.

I discussed that with my sponsor and began to sponsor from the day after. One day at a time, I asked God to use me to carry the message every time I got her call.

I had spent my whole life hurting myself in the attempt to save someone else. This time though, helping someone meant helping myself. I started immediately to deepen my steps work. I didn't want to give the sponsee my personal opinions, so it became essential understanding the program and trying to do it at my best.

My abstinence improved as well since keeping it became important not just for "my recovery" but for "our recovery". I've realized the importance of the sense of "us", of being united and holding our hands.

I receive from one hand and I give it back with the other, it's the only way to keep it.

I was afraid to share this, I was afraid of being judged, but it was only in my mind. You don't need to get a master in OA to sponsor, you don't need to have worked all the steps or to have several years of abstinence. If we really believe that God grants us what we need, then we can be sure that if someone asks us to be sponsored God thinks we are ready for it and this sponsorship is important for the recovery of both of us. Will that last 24 hours or longer is in God's will. Now I'm grateful I accepted God's times, I'm grateful I didn't wait to feel ready to sponsor as I would probably never feel "ready enough".

Today my first sponsee is sponsoring someone else. In this process I see one of the many OA miracles becoming true'.

E., Italy



STORIES REGION 9 REPRESENTATIVES WSBC

Nelly, Italy

I attended the 53rd Conference of the OA World Service !

My first thought : are you feeling okay ? It 's true ?

Yes , it is true , for me this has been an action " beyond my wildest dreams ": the miracle that OA did for me. And it's also a miracle that I have the courage to write even if my English is not so good, but I want to share my happiness. Twelve years ago, when I participated my first OA meeting I was afraid of everything, today the fear is still present in my life , but with the difference that I pass through it and I try to live one day at a time.

And I go back to the WSBC : it was a very touching experience for me, especially from the spiritual side. I met many members of OA with whom I felt very well. I was asked to say the Serenity Prayer in Italian and for me it was an honor and a privilege : that moment for me was very intense , I knew

that I was not alone, not only because in front of me there were about 200 people, but also because I represented all members of my country.

I have seen that OA is really worldwide, and I am deeply grateful to Rozanne for her intuition and then the courage to make action in order to achieve its vision.

I attended the celebration of her memorial. It was a very touching moment. I listened to some of her interviews that had been made over the years, which resumed the birth of our association. I participated, in addition to the Business Meetings, also various workshops with topics relating to our Strategic Plan with focus "Our primary purpose." I was also very happy to participate to the Conference Literature Committee and now I have a little service in this committee. During the week I also attended some meetings of recovery (there were three meetings every day), that was very useful for me, stopping to see in my heart how all those situations were working inside.

Finally, there were also moments of hilarity and socialization with all Regions' Chairs (for us Susan was very funny!) followed by a game in teams with questions about the history of OA, and also a banquet abstinent dinner and dance on Saturday night.

If I want to remember a current phrase? The most frequent phrase "To Carry the Message". I wish you all (and myself) to transmit the message the best I can do.

A hug to everyone, thank you and good 24 hours.

With love in the service.

Nelly

Representative R9 and WSBC Delegate

Una, Ireland

I attended WSBC 2014 in Albuquerque from 28th of April to 3rd of May this year, and I have to say that it stands as one of the most amazing experiences of my whole life to date.

I attended as a delegate from "THE SPIRIT OF HOPE INTERGROUP" in Ireland.

Even though I attended the REGION 9 Assembly in Israel last year, and was overwhelmed by that experience, this was for me on a different level.

I was a green dot, and had a mentor, who was extremely helpful.-THANK YOU!!!

I feel so privileged to have experienced at first hand all of the many different workshops, forum, OA meetings, Roseanne's tribute. I joined the Finance Committee for the next 12 months, and will be reviewing 3 documents in the near future. It was fantastic to be part of the business meetings, and have a vote on many issues-this was very special for me an OA member from Ireland voting on issues that will affect all of the fellowship in the future. One of the things that I cannot get out of my head is the question that was to be uppermost in my thoughts as I was voting on different business proposals or bylaw amendments- Is it beneficial(or detrimental) to OA as a whole? I have come home from WSBC with many new friends, with an amazing surge in my confidence and my self-esteem, and with amazing memories. My sincere gratitude to my intergroup for electing me, to my many friends from Region 9(old and new),my new American buddies, to everybody that welcomed me with open arms, and above all to my HP for looking after me and allowing me to have this opportunity, because it has strengthened my recovery, and reminds me of the many many benefits that I can receive by working my program. I can now honestly say that I really do feel as if I have come home!!!!

Soffia, Iceland

What an experience going to the WSBC 2014. Having served as a delegate to the Region 9 assembly in Poland in 2012 I felt a little bit about how the proceedings are. It's like that, only bigger. 200 compulsive over eaters from all over the world. What an amazing group of people to belong to. The early bird workshops were like answers to how we should tackle our projects at the NSB in Iceland. I laughed hard at the fun forum the Region Chairs had planned on Wednesday morning. Committee work for a whole day was challenging and I am looking forward to continuing that work over the next year.

I remember feel a sense of awe before the start of the first business meeting: "OMG, I'm in the heart of OA!" The proceedings, though formal, were enlightening. The best part though was that at every given moment you were able to ask for the serenity prayer, the conference would stop, and every one said the serenity prayer together. What a wonderful way to conduct business! It helped clear the mind and focus on the issues, not the egos. I wish parliaments around the world would take up this custom when discussing delicate and explosive matters.

It wasn't all business, we got to see Santa Fe for a day, and have a lovely evening out as a Region. The best part of the conference for me was meeting all the amazing people who make OA what it is. Where else would be able do dance with 200 people from all over the world, most of whom you've only known for days, and sing "We are family" at the top of your lungs and mean every word?

Miranda, Greece

WHY DO I LOVE SERVICE?

I love service because it connects me with other compulsive eaters. Like meetings, I consider it a super-tool; a force that this deadly disease finds difficult to beat.

This was my first WSBC. It was also the first time in OA Greece's 30 year history that we sent a delegate, as a result of funding provided by the WSO. It was an unforgettable experience - similar to my first R9A&C two years ago.

Is service slimming? No. But meeting and working with so many recovered overeaters may well be. I met so many of them at WSBC! I take home a message of strength and hope that I could not have imagined had I not witnessed it. I also take home new ideas to help our IGs and NSB serve our groups better; materials to boost recovery; and dear new friends from around the world.

In gratitude

Miranda

Greek NSB, R9 rep and WSBC delegate



WSBC 2014 Strategic Planning Notes

During the World Service Business Conference, a Strategic Planning workshop was held, the goal of which was to brainstorm and share ideas based on the 2014 BOT Strategic Plan.

Here are the top ideas from your delegates. Please feel free to share them with your groups.

What can we do (take home) to increase actions on abstinence?

- Have a newcomer plan
- www.oahelps.org
- Difference between a plan of eating and abstinence education (this is more specific than an action plan)
- Service and all the tools
- Qualifying literature-focused meetings
- Sponsors identify themselves at break, talk to newcomers or maybe even have long-timers take them aside to talk to them
- Intergroups – add “how are we helping members?” on agenda every month, have Web materials available (e.g. Strong Abstinence Checklist) for reps

- Workshops on how plans of eating help abstinence
- Strong Abstinence Checklist and talk about it at meetings – share ways to use it
- Don’t make food the enemy. Do we have to have a group conscience to be able to mention specific foods?
- Fellowship after the meetings
- Qualify when we share
- Need for more sponsor workshops
- Encourage meetings be open so new ideas, if needed, do group inventory

- In groups and meetings
 - ❖ Celebrate abstinent birthdays
 - ❖ Recovery coins
 - ❖ Step up sponsors at your meeting
 - ❖ Sponsorship training
 - ❖ Encourage people to identify as abstinent
 - ❖ Abstinence vs a plan of eating education
 - ❖ Meeting formats include definition of abstinence
 - ❖ Have sponsors qualify
 - ❖ Spotlight/encourage abstinence focus in meetings
 - ❖ Abstinence checklist
 - ❖ Intergroup workshop about abstinence
 - ❖ Day in OA workshop – focus on plans of eating
 - ❖ Sponsor contact list
 - ❖ Encourage about abstinence feels like
 - ❖ Temporary sponsors at meetings

- At intergroup:
 - ❖ Abstinence workshops/conventions/marathons
 - ❖ Abstinence individual action plan
 - ❖ Newsletters, flyers, hand outs

- At World Service – interactive Q&A step-by-step guide to customize at your own abstinence; abstinence individual action plan completed at a workshop

- At meetings:
 - ❖ Give out recovery chips
 - ❖ Hold abstinence workshops
 - ❖ Strong Abstinence Checklist
 - ❖ Call each other struggling
 - ❖ Approach/greet newcomers
 - ❖ Updated meeting list at meetings
 - ❖ Work Steps/use tools
 - ❖ A new-to-me greeter
 - ❖ Specific abstinence-focused meetings
 - ❖ Phone lists – use them to call people you haven’t seen
 - ❖ Abstinent buddy match ups
 - ❖ Recovery OA insurance policy
 - ❖ Pamphlet meeting – Dignity of Choice, Plan of Eating, Abstinence
 - ❖ Q&A meetings, especially for newcomers
 - ❖ Abstinent Action Plan “on the spot” part of meeting format

- Individuals:
 - ❖ “What’s my abstinence?”
 - ❖ Struggle 1:1 work right away
 - ❖ Define food plan/follow it, written down and share with sponsor
 - ❖ Focus on the total package
 - ❖ List trigger foods and share with sponsor
 - ❖ Get actively working with sponsor
 - ❖ Food list (red, yellow, green) with sponsor
 - ❖ Accountability (report food, call/write it down)
 - ❖ Take a sponsee to the supermarket/restaurant
 - ❖ Use newcomer packet as foundation for starting to sponser.



ANSWER & IN SERVICE

Answer to 15th reading on Sponsorship - “A Guide for Sponsors” pamphlet, page 6 & 7

Region 9 Board

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Region 9 Website

World Service Website