

WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

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WSC PUBLIC INFORMATION COMMITTEE REPORT TO THE WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE APRIL 27, 1987

As was mentioned in the last Fellowship Report, Bruce A. resigned as WSC P.I. Chairperson effective February 9, 1987. The details were discussed in the March, 1987 Fellowship Report. Since the resignation, with the support of the WSC Administrative Committee, I've been the acting chairperson of the WSC P.I. Committee. The following report is a summary of the P.I. Committee's activities in the last conference year and includes some views to the future.

Ongoing activities and completed projects -

Two areas in which WSC P.I. took an active role with very positive results are 1) regional and multi-regional P.I. learning days and workshops and 2) non N.A. events. We participated in five regional and multi-regional P.I. workshop/learning days so far - NYC, Upper Midwest, Alaska, Greater Illinois and Show Me. Another two upcoming in May and June are in the Lone Star and Washington/No. Idaho regions. *TE/NA*

It has been our experience that these opportunities provide a most effective method of carrying the P.I. message throughout the Fellowship. We therefore encourage regions to consider P.I. learning days. Ones that seem to be the most successful are those of a multi-regional nature. Please coordinate with your surrounding regions when planning one of these events. WSC P.I. is committed to supporting learning days and workshops and will make every effort to send representation. We must ask that regions give us sufficient notice to ensure our participation.

As for non NA Events, five have been done with two upcoming in May. Information was received on another forty which were inappropriate for world participation for one reason or another. The decisions on which events WSC P.I. participates in are made by a standing committee. Of the forty additional events which we received information on, nineteen were forwarded to regional P.I. subcommittees for follow up. We are hopeful that, as we get more familiar with this type of activity, the majority of contact we have from these non N.A. organizations will result in participation by N.A. members at a regional or world level.

There has been a policy change regarding WSC P.I.'s participation in these events. We believed, prior to this conference year, that a member of WSC P.I. needed to be in attendance at these functions. Our experience has shown us that this is not necessary, unless the hosting region does not have an active and viable P.I. subcommittee. If you are aware of any of these events occurring in your region, please contact the WSO P.I. Coordinator as soon as possible, so that the Committee can evaluate and cooperate in our efforts to support them.

The P.I. 500 mailing was a goal set over a year ago to send introductory letters to the 500 top names in the professional world in fields which may include

contact with addicts. That list was completed through the efforts of one of our task forces, and inputting of that information was done at WSO. The mailing of the first batch of about 350 informational letters was accomplished. Response from people receiving the mailings has started, and it seems clear that professionals are interested in Narcotics Anonymous. Several follow-up phone calls and letters indicate that information about N.A. is being used by national organizations whose work involves dealing with addicts. The remainder of the mailing is still being prepared at WSO and will go out in the upcoming weeks.

Media Contacts -

We had quite a few national media contacts this year. There was only one which ended in an actual interview and it resulted in one line from a member, who was not even identified as a member. There was excellent input received as a result of that experience from the members involved which helped with additions to the Guide and world P.I. contingency plan. One of the most important lessons of this year's contacts is that very few require anything more from us than simple information giving responses. We, as N.A., do not fit into many of the categories of shows which are regularly produced about drugs.

Billboards and Tradition Questions -

One problem that continues to be an issue is attraction rather than promotion. Where are the lines to be drawn? When is it in fact attraction and when do we cross that invisible line into the area of promotion? When, in fact, are we violating the 11th Tradition, and, in doing that, violating the other eleven as well?

WSC P.I., as well as concerned members, have been requesting guidance from the Board of Trustees. At a recent meeting, WSC P.I. established a task force to deal with this issue. The use of billboards, signs, etc. was the motivating force that created the need for this task force. The task force began researching, polling the Fellowship and requesting input from the Board of Trustees. The Board, in response to this request, and in conjunction with WSC P.I., set up an ad hoc meeting in Philadelphia on March 21, 1987. Some interesting issues which may affect the entire Fellowship, were raised during the ad hoc meeting discussions. Most of these revolved around the 7th Tradition. Exploration of these matters is continuing both by the Board of Trustees and WSC P.I.

Attachment #1 is the summary of recommendations made by the AdHoc Committee on Billboards to the WSC P.I. Task Force on Billboards. Those recommendations were forwarded on to the P.I. task force on billboards for their further review and input immediately after the ad hoc committee meeting. They were accepted without change by the task force.

Final discussion by the WSC P.I. Billboard Task Force regarding this item will have been held by the time of this report. It's final recommendations will have been given to the entire committee. What that task force will be recommending to WSC P.I. is that an inventory be developed to allow P.I. subcommittees to determine which, if any, PSA materials are suitable to their needs. This inventory will consist of criteria, both relating to content and funding, to ensure a thorough evaluation by the subcommittee prior to implementing billboard and related projects. Should there be any changes at the meeting, an addendum to this report will be attached.

Other task force activity -

Addicts with additional needs - there was a recommendation from this task force to the whole committee to form a standing committee of WSC to address these additional needs, which include physical, mental and learning disabilities. It was agreed to discuss this recommendation at the JAC. Another motion, passed unanimously by the WSC P.I. committee in Charlotte regarded the change in language from "addicts with special needs" to "addicts with additional needs". It stated that this new wording should be used in all correspondence and written material within N.A.

After much discussion and confusion, neither of these motions were included in the WSC Agenda as action items. We know that there are motions and recommendations from other regions regarding the concerns about addicts with additional needs. WSC P.I. supports the need for a committee, the structure and type to be decided by the conference, to begin the task of evaluating the Fellowship's responsibility to addicts with additional needs. We are aware that a report will be offered to the conference by Bill Z. which will further detail a year's worth of research into these areas.

Another of our committee's task forces worked on a revised section of the Guide to P.I., entitled "P.I. and the Media", including a subsection entitled Ask An Addict, which presents sample interviews. They made excellent progress this year and, in addition to the section, made suggestions on other reorganization for the Guide. A first draft of the entire work has been handed out to the committee participants for their review. Copies of the Ask an Addict subsection have also been mailed to various P.I. subcommittees, as requested, for their input. Additional mailing will occur to P.I. subcommittees after the conference, as part of our review process.

Another item that will have been considered at the WSC P.I. Committee meeting Tuesday morning is to further amend our contingency plan, which is currently being presented for conference approval.

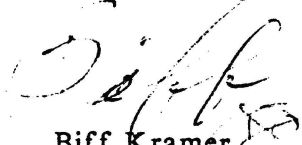
Although P.I., this year, did not produce large amounts of literature, it accomplished much. WSC P.I.'s direction for the future is beginning to become more clear. Learning days for the WSC P.I. Committee members, so that they may learn to conduct learning days in regions and areas, is a priority. Another issue that will be dealt with will be an inventory of the WSC P.I. Committee by the WSC P.I. Committee. Further, we will be looking at who the public is that we are trying to inform and what information that public now has about Narcotics Anonymous and what other information it still needs to have a clear understanding of who we are, and what we are about,

It is with great enthusiasm that we approach the upcoming conference year. Several regions, through their P.I. chairpeople and/or through their RSR's and alternates, have expressed interest, enthusiasm, willingness and a desire to get on with the message of public information.

I wish to thank the committee, its task force leaders and the Fellowship as a whole for their support and cooperation. Special thanks go to the WSO P.I. Coordinators, for facilitating the implementation of the committee's concepts. Without their work, many of the accomplishments would have taken far longer to achieve. It has been an exciting year and I have learned much. Thank you again

for the opportunity to serve and the many blessings which the personal contact I've had with so many have given me.

In loving service,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Biff", with a large, stylized flourish extending from the end of the signature.

Biff Kramer
Acting Chairperson
WSC P.I. Committee

WSC P.I. COMMITTEE
REPORT TO THE CONFERENCE - APRIL, 1987

ATTACHMENT #1

DATE: March 25, 1987

TO: WSC P.I. Task Force on Billboards

FROM: Ad-Hoc Committee on Billboards

Biff Kramer, William Allen, Mac McFadden,
John Farrell, Dutch Huber and Mike Bohan

RE: Ad-Hoc Committee Meeting
Philadelphia - March 21, 1987

The committee divided its discussion into two areas:

1. Concerning the content of billboards.
2. Concerning the financing of billboards.

The committee was in general agreement that billboards themselves were within the N.A. Traditions and that they were generally an appropriate form of public information activity.

In terms of content, the committee reached the following conclusions based on the premise that any billboard should answer the questions who, what, when, where and how:

1. Billboards should always include the N.A. name and a local helpline number.
2. The message on the billboard should be tasteful and in keeping with N.A.'s positive message of recovery.
3. The message should be simple and easily comprehended by active addicts.
4. The message should be clear and uncluttered with extraneous material.
5. The message should mention drugs in general, that N.A. is a program of recovery from drug addiction.
6. The message on billboards should be rooted in N.A. approved literature taken in context.

The Ad-Hoc committee's discussions on the financing of billboards were not conclusive, but the members agreed on the following:

1. Billboards are a sophisticated form of public information and only relatively mature and established service entities should consider them.
2. Billboards should always be paid for by N.A. To accept any offer of free billboard space would be the acceptance of an outside contribution.
3. The form of payment is up to the service committee paying for it. Some committees believe it is acceptable for N.A. to accept special billboard rates for non profit organizations, others do not. Some committees bargain for better rates; others do not. Right now, our Fellowship does not have a clear group conscience on these issues and hopes that it will receive input on them from areas and regions.

Both the WSC P.I. Committee and the Board of Trustees are continuing discussion and work on these matters and further guidance will be presented as becomes available.

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