

Chapter Ten

“We have a book!”

As the year 1982 dawned, an important event was about to unfold — the adoption of a book on recovery written by addicts, for addicts. Long thought to be an impossible dream, it was, through sacrifice, dedication and giving, about to come true. The prime movers in the book movement were determined to see it through. They needed one more literature conference to finalize the story portion and get it distributed in time for approval at the World Service Conference. The year was to have its twists and turns, but it was opening to great expectations.

Page had nearly taken control of the Literature Committee, because Roger had, for all practical purposes, vanished from the face of the earth. Several discussions were held with Steve B., the conference chairperson, and he wrote two letters, one to Roger at his last known address, and the other to Page, both on January second. In the letter to Roger, he requested his written resignation as a result of his “lack of attendance, availability and visible participation.”

This was more a formality than a request, as the letter to Page offers “congratulations on your selection as the second vice-chairperson of the WSC Literature Committee. Roger’s inactivity has disqualified him of the chairpersonship, and I understand that Jim M. disqualified himself as first vice-chairperson due to other responsibilities, which leaves you, as the active chair of the Literature Committee of the WSC.” Steve’s letter was simply confirmation of what had already taken place.

Members across the fellowship were excited as the year began. Many had received a copy of the approval form of the book from the November mailing. Many of those who received copies made photocopies for others, many of whom did the same. So in a short time tens of thousands of copies were being passed around and read. The Literature Committee had encouraged this as they wanted to achieve overwhelming acceptance of the book when the conference voted on it. It was a radical departure from how things had been done in the past, and different than it would be in the future as well. Photocopy machines all across the nation began to crank out first dozens, then

hundreds, and then thousands of copies. And despite some criticism, the fellowship was truly elated that so much had been done at last.

As I was told later by people who made copies, "people really wanted it and needed it and it wasn't going to get printed by the office for at least a half a year. Besides, they needed to see it, to use it, to decide if they really wanted to approve it." There is no accurate way to estimate, but some suggest more than five thousand copies were made and given out in the first year. Nearly two years later, there were still a few who were giving them away, or selling them for about cost, even when the approved and printed edition was becoming readily available from the office.

Arrangements had been made for the Literature Committee to meet in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania beginning on Friday, January 15, 1982. When Page called the meeting to order a little after six in the evening, fifteen members were present. As most of the people had not ever been to a literature conference, they spent time discussing how the work is processed. Although they started with about 130 stories in the files, there were no copyright release forms for many. They decided to review the stories, concentrating on well written stories with release forms. And they went to work.

By the next morning they identified twenty-five good stories and thirty-one promising stories. And the work force had grown to include twenty-five members. After an hour and a half of discussion they had decided to work in groups of three to categorize and polish the twenty-five good stories as they typed them. And back to work they went.

By late afternoon thirty-four people were present. Much discussion centered on the issue of whether they should substitute "clean" for "sober" and "recovery" for "sobriety," and similar word choices. After nearly an hour of discussion, the uncertainties about what to do were smoothed out and work resumed. When the next group meeting took place, the letters from Steve B. to Roger and Page were read. Discussion then turned to voting Page in as the chairperson of the World Service Conference Literature Committee. There was some reluctance as no response had been received from Roger. It was subsequently decided to have Page continue to serve as acting chairperson. Another vice-chairperson, Pete B., was elected to serve with Page. Before going back to work, they reviewed where they were in the story selection process. They needed to find more stories to fill in the "cross section" table they were working from.

Thirty were present at the next group conscience meeting. Considerable debate ensued about getting stories from other countries. Bo was assigned to find one or more stories from other countries while the rest went back to work. And so it went, hour after hour. At

the final meeting on Monday morning, contact was reported with members in London, England; Frankfurt, Germany and Tokyo, Japan. Each place was going to send one or more stories.

It was an exhausting four day experience, but it was typical of the dedication and sacrifice it took to produce the book. When it was all over, the cover letter to the approval form said there were fifty stories included. However, in reviewing the contents, they were a few stories shy of fifty. But there were enough to keep most everyone happy. As the committee members headed home, the final typing was getting done and duplicate copies were made. And like the first portion of the Text, copies were made and mailed throughout the fellowship. In a matter of weeks, ten thousand or more copies had been made on photocopy machines across the country. At meetings and at homes, members read one story after another. They were thrilled and filled with awe that they finally had a book of their own that they could relate to. As the conference approached, few would have thought approval would have been denied.

The office directors held a meeting in early February to review and amend the bylaws. They added the associate member classification so their advisory board would actually exist. They also added a provision that a director could not be expelled for any reason except for using drugs. Apparently they had misgivings about their removal of Greg P. and Bob B. a year earlier.

Seven members were present at the trustees' February meeting, and Chuck S. presided. Resignations from Dennis M. and Mel H. were read and accepted, but they quickly elected David C., James N., and Jack B., increasing their membership to thirteen. The trustees considered a number of specific requests for Tradition interpretations from the Milwaukee Convention Committee. They advised the committee to abide by all the Traditions, including protecting the anonymity of members, and advised that soliciting funds through the mail was a Tradition violation.

The most important discussions were of complaints they had received about the office. A committee headed by Sally was appointed to investigate and solicit input from the fellowship concerning the nature and number of such complaints. While they were at it, they decided to ask about their own service record too. A letter from Sally was sent out requesting input. The office predictably objected to this "witch hunt," claiming they were being unfairly maligned and only their known enemies would respond.

Sally kept her committee small, but used a number of people to help with specific issues, when she felt it was desirable. She got help from several who were not trustees, and was confident everyone was

working on this simply as a way to help the fellowship. She did not feel she or her committee were "out to get the office" as they charged.

Two of the three new trustees were well known in the Southern California area, but Jim N. was the surprise. He had lived in the Midwest and had not been part of the California fellowship. He came to everyone's attention through his role in the Lincoln literature conference. Jim seemed to fit the mold that many trustees came from. He was quiet, unassuming and undemonstrative most of the time. There were exceptions to that mold, however. Jack and David, for example, were both outspoken and assertive.

Steve B. mailed out a comprehensive preconference agenda near the end of February. The packet included a financial report, brief reports from each committee and selective news items from different regions. Also attached were excerpts from a number of letters that had been received by the Administrative Committee addressing a wide range of issues. These were forwarded for discussion purposes so that RSR's might be given some idea of what the conference might address. A copy of the letter from Sally asking for input on the WSO and WSB along with minutes of the February trustee meeting were also included.

Perhaps the most controversial items were the new conference location (nearly twenty miles from the office), and the expanded meeting time (now nearly five full days). The ballots sent some months earlier had come back with all but one vote cast in favor of a longer conference. Bob R. had arranged to use the Retail Clerks Union Hall in Santa Monica.

The Policy Committee held a meeting at the end of February during the Southern Regional Convention in Atlanta. It was a well-attended event presided over by Larry N., the committee vice-chairperson. Immediately as the meeting got underway, Charles K's expressed concern that this meeting and the one held in Memphis in November were being held without giving the requisite thirty days advance notice to the committee. Those present went ahead and conducted business anyway. They considered a wide range of issues about fellowship structure and policy. George H. submitted a letter protesting the written ballot that had been received which sought to get a vote on extending the conference by two days. The committee ignored his complaint.

Proposals were offered to allow areas not represented by regions to have a role in the conference. A detailed public information kit revision was offered, and a confidentiality statement was proposed to be included in the *World Directory*. But the most important issue concerned the office. Jim M. of Ohio proposed the "WSC disenfranchise WSO and create a new service center administered by a Board of Di-

rectors elected by WSC." Guido A., on the other hand, offered a moderate transition plan that envisioned a take over by the conference of the existing corporation. Jim also proposed the establishment of a magazine to be published about recovery the "NA Way."

Sally received thirty-one responses to her letter, with both complaints and suggestions. In her report she simply included each letter, even though several were more than a page long. There were ten letters about the trustees, mostly containing suggestions for improving the trustees rather than complaints. Members wrote their opinions of trustee selection criteria, voting privileges at the conference, terms of office and similar matters. From this the trustees recognized that some changes in their own structure and operation were needed.

Letters about the office were more detailed and critical. Although a few simply complained about poor response to letters, orders or phone calls, there were serious concerns about CARENA and the inability of the fellowship to control the office. Sally made several recommendations for changes in the office as a result of the letters. Unfortunately, the office was not given an opportunity before the report was presented to the conference to examine it or respond to the complaints.

Steve B. gaveled the conference to order on Wednesday evening, May 5, 1982, at the Retail Clerks Union Hall in Santa Monica. After introductions were made, some reports were handed out and a discussion of the schedule occurred, the meeting adjourned.

Later that night the trustees held a brief meeting to hear about Sally's report and go over some of the things they thought might come up in the next few days. Sally explained there was lots of feeling out there that the conference ought to elect the trustees, and also that the trustees' voting rights at the conference ought to be removed. Chuck echoed this expectation, and after some discussion they resolved to oppose the elimination of their voting rights. Chuck also raised the idea that perhaps each trustee ought to be affirmed in office by the conference each year. This was not well received, and few expected that idea to pass. More likely, they thought, some term limitation might be imposed. Chuck S. didn't want Sally to read or hand out copies of her report at this trustee meeting. He feared that Chuck G. and Bill B., who were present at the meeting, might take the information back to the office and work through the night to blunt its impact. He felt maximum value would be received from the report if everyone — including himself — were kept uninformed about the details. The report was not given.

Thursday morning, twenty-two regional reports were given, five more than the prior year. This brought the vote count to twenty-three RSR's (one arrived the next day). There were eleven trustees votes (there were thirteen trustees, but two were absent the entire conference). Administrative and committee votes numbered nine, and the office had one vote. This added up to a total of twenty-one. The balance of power had, in theory, shifted. For the first time, there were more votes by RSR's than by boards and committees.

Regional reports were the first order of business, and they revealed a variety of problems; but they also showed the determination of recovering addicts to overcome distance, poverty and inexperience and come together in substantial numbers to address their common challenges.

Next came reports by the Administrative Committee, trustees, conference committees and the office. Steve gave a modest report, true to his character. Bo, in a rather detailed report, explained about Administrative Committee interaction with committees and outlined progress in both Literature and Policy Committee projects. The only outstanding administrative report was from the treasurer, Joseph P. His report was sketchy and did not adequately cover the full year. It was not approved, and many unanswered questions were left when it was over. For several years following this conference, people would ask repeatedly for an accurate accounting. None was ever made. In 1984 Joseph did give the records he still had to the office, and I made a reasonable effort to compile a report from them. I was unable to do for lack of sufficient data.

When it came time for the trustee report, Chuck S. introduced all the trustees present with special emphasis on the new members. They included; Chuck S., Cliff C., Sally E., Carl B., Bob B., Chuck G., David C., James N., Greg P., Michael Bohan (non-addict), Jack B., Hank M., and James D. As Chuck spoke about the report from Sally, he was careful to call the report a report of the chairperson of the board rather than a report of the full board (perhaps a "distinction without a difference"). He then called for the report to be distributed while he went on, declaring that no one other than Sally had actually seen the report before. As he continued, people began to read the report. It revealed a number of complaints about the office and more than hinted at the office's indifference to such complains. As Chuck continued talking and people were reading the report, many began to get upset. Office enemies were thrilled, but maintained a stern exterior.

When Chuck S. finished, Bob R. began the Policy Committee report and Chuck G. got a copy of Sally's report in his hands for the first time. He too began to get angry as he read it. Those who al-

ready opposed the office were strengthened. Those on the fence began to slide toward the forces clamoring for change. I could almost feel the shift that was taking place. While the next reports were being given, few people were paying much attention. There were lots of little discussions springing up all over. Sally's report had brought to the surface all the complaints and objections about the office and trustees. It soon became the focus of attention. Some major change was going to take place at this conference regardless of how vocal the office or trustees were.

As Bob R. carried on with his report, more and more people were getting their copy of Sally's report, and losing focus on the proceedings. In spite of his growing irritation with the murmurings, he told the conference about the development of the green Service Manual and talked about the workshops the committee had held throughout the year. He explained the Policy Committee didn't write policy, they just organized the input from the fellowship for action by the conference.

Bryan S. came next with his report from the Finance Committee. Bryan explained how they had attempted to raise money for the fellowship. At the previous conference their committee adopted a letter for distribution throughout the fellowship. The committee divided up the country by geography, and each member was to send out copies to meetings in an assigned set of states. He reported sending out over 400 copies, and some came back with address corrections, but the majority appeared to reach their destination. Even so, he had no idea how much money was raised as a result of it. The project was never tried again.

Page C. gave the Literature Committee report. It was impressive. He gave a clear picture of a hectic year in which thousands of pages of material were received, written, revised, edited, copied and compiled. He told of phone calls, administrative meetings, committee meetings, workshops, conferences and letters, letters and reports, seemingly without end. Looking back at the record years later, it was obvious that an army would have been required in order to accomplish all the things they did. An ominous note at the end of his report told of the continuing encroachment on WSO duties, "so we have in the process a good *World Directory* and I think that's great." The office representatives should have been ready to pounce when his report was over, but they didn't.

Larry N., acting PI chairperson, followed with his report. Appropriately, his report said, "We didn't do very much." Larry was pressed into service by the committee since the chairperson elected at the last conference didn't come to this one. Bob B. came next and gave another blistering H&I report, punctuated with his colorful

metaphors, and not an expletive deleted. His committee had collected tremendous amounts of information on what is being done with addicts in the nation's thousands of jails, prisons and camps. The committee showed tremendous success in organizing the disjointed H&I efforts and getting both literature and new meetings into facilities all over.

When Bob was done, Phil P. came to the podium and gave the office report. He started out with surprise and dismay at the report handed out by the trustees. He was not prepared to give a complete report, but did as much as he could. What Phil didn't say was that other directors had taken Sally's report and were at that moment trying to build their defense. Phil was hopeful they would finish before he concluded his report. He started with the financial data, which showed a gross income of \$64,987, of which \$11,726 came from donations. Expenses amounted to \$52,361, leaving a net income of \$12,626. Most of the net was in fact converted to inventory and equipment, and some was still in accounts receivable. He informed the conference that the office had just purchased a word processing machine that would facilitate the accurate and economical production of the *World Directory* and similar complicated documents.

Phil explained that this was his first year on the board, and the new board was just trying to do its job. The report from the trustees as well as other criticisms, he said, had taken him by surprise. He seemed to be opening the door to better cooperation with others when he said, "What we'd like to do, in working with the Literature Committee, is send out review copies so we don't have that conflict. That the Literature Committee would compile and we would distribute all review copies to the fellowship. This hasn't been done in the past. I don't know why." As he went on with his report, he finally explained that he was expecting someone to be showing up with information that addressed many of the concerns in Sally's report. He finally asked to suspend his report and give the rest of it later. Steve prudently agreed, and there were only a few objections.

Steve proceeded to read a letter from an area committee, then went back to the place in the agenda where they had been. Several people were just waiting to make motions. What followed then was an aimlessly wandering discussion that went from minutes of the conference two years earlier to what to do with the trustee report and when to call Phil back to finish his report.

After Chuck S. had completed his report earlier, he read Sally's report and discussed it briefly with several others. The more he talked about it, the more angry he got, and was soon just downright hot! Others too, were having the same reaction. When Phil was ready, he asked for permission to have Doug F. take over and present

the report. Steve said the rules didn't allow Doug to address the conference since he wasn't a delegate. Phil immediately proposed a motion to waive the rules to allow Doug to read the WSO report. A recess was then called while Steve and I, and a crowd of others, sorted out a practical solution. The solution was to suggest to the WSO that they go back and write a new report that covered everything and present it the next day. After the huddle was over, Steve announced this decision and on with business the conference went.

Elections followed in which Bob R. was elected conference chairperson for the next year. To serve as his vice-chair, the conference selected a relative unknown from Florida, George H. Nicky C. from Southern California was elected secretary and Kevin F. from Southern California was elected treasurer.

On Friday morning, Steve began the meeting by calling on Phil P. to finish the WSO report. Phil reported the WSO board had met the night before, examined each of the accusations in the trustee report, and had a proper response for each item. He then launched into a defense on item after item, brandishing copies of copyrights, letters, minutes, bylaws and other papers as evidence. The thrust of his presentation was that the WSO, while not perfect, was not guilty of the extremes they were being charged with.

Among his papers was a report that addressed a series of the critical issues. It was poorly written, contradicted itself in places, and was inconsistent with previous pronouncements by WSO representatives at earlier conferences. I was discouraged at the report, and felt it was damaging the office rather than defending it. Clearly, whatever level of confidence in the office may have existed before was quickly eroding. During the questions that followed, Phil did his best to respond, but was unable to neutralize the growing opposition to the office.

Mercifully, elections of committee chairpersons quickly followed Phil's report, and the heat was turned down for a while. They needed the break, even if it was brief. Elected to serve for the next year were: Larry N. (Virginia), Policy; Martin C. (Oregon), Finance; Page C. (Georgia) Literature; Bob B. (San Francisco, California), H&I; and Lorraine D. (British Columbia, Canada) PI.

The heat on the office returned immediately after elections. Kevin F. rose to propose a motion to create an ad hoc committee to review Sally's report the WSO report responding to it. The motion passed. Steve appointed a balanced committee and instructed them to meet that day. On the committee were: Phil P. and Doug F. from the office; Sally E. and Jim N. of the trustees; and Bob R. and George H. for the conference. Nicky was sent to act as secretary. Steve also asked me to go along to help.

The conference then recessed for committee meetings. The ad hoc committee went by twos and threes over to Bob R.'s home to meet. I went expecting a fist fight of a meeting. The entire committee was there except for Jim, who had left the conference earlier with Sydney R., who took him on what seemed to be a shopping tour. They got to the meeting after it was over.

There were a few strong words during the hours the group met, but I was surprised at the civil demeanor that prevailed. It was not long into the meeting that I began to sense there was a middle ground emerging. The resolution centered on the notion that the WSO had to gradually take control of the office. This, the ad hoc committee reasoned, could be achieved by having the conference elect some members that year and others in years to follow as terms for existing directors expired.

There were other specifics in the resolution, but this was the main theme, and as the different items fell into place, I made note of them. When agreement had been reached, I retired to another room where Bob had an old typewriter (about 30 years old) and I typed the agreement, spelling errors and all. Within twenty minutes it was typed, and after a final review by the committee, it was a done deal. When we returned to the Retail Clerks Union Hall the committees were still meeting. The general session would begin the next morning, so I left for the day.

In the morning, Steve called the conference to order and recognized Don D. from Northern Nevada, who gave a report and was approved as a voting participant. The committee reports began with Martin C. and the Finance Committee. He informed everyone that the committee had decided to establish written guidelines during the coming year on how to handle money. Martin explained how each input item was addressed by the committee and suggested a number of policy statements that should be adopted by the conference.

When Martin was done, Steve called for the ad hoc committee report. Bob R. presented the report and explained its provisions. When he was done, the penned up feelings began to show. During a discussion of the need to make copies of the report, a motion was made "that the WSO hire a manager full-time," but it was called out of order. Before more confusion could take hold, further discussion of the report was postponed until later when copies were available. Committee reports resumed.

Lorraine D. reported on the PI input forms. Most of them, she reported, pertained to deficiencies in the PI Information Kit. She explained that it needed to be expanded, and the committee would do that if funds were available for the committee to operate. A motion was then adopted giving them a hundred dollars a month, if avail-

able. Bob B. then gave the H&I report on input they had received. The two critical issues were how to conduct H&I meetings with an understanding of the Traditions and how to define meetings within recovery houses where special rules exist that are inconsistent with our Traditions.

After lunch, the ad hoc report was brought to the floor again, and discussion lasted an hour and a half. Steve had me explain several of the provisions of the report, which led to open and colorful debate. There were charges, counter charges, insults and four letter words in profusion. Perhaps the most telling comment from the WSO forces came from Doug, who was finally allowed to talk. He said, while explaining why the WSO was the way it was, "There are only two things in our charter, that makes us impregnable really, makes us answerable to nobody" and he went on to explain.

But he soon showed a conciliatory side suggesting, "What we're about, right at this moment is to try to cause unity. We are going to gamble on you... It's called letting go." He then explained concerns about one aspect of the ad hoc committee suggestion (dealing with tax problems), but closed by suggesting that the office be given one-year to make the types of changes everyone wanted. Then the office would turn its management over to the conference at the next annual meeting. However, few believed things would get better or that they would eventually turn the office over to conference control.

His "olive branch" didn't get much space to wave before Chuck S. came forth with a motion that would force an immediate change of directors, replacing the existing board with directors elected by the conference. This motion, allowing no transition period or opportunity for the existing board to exhibit the kind of cooperation Doug spoke of, did not pass. The conference was then once again plunged into motions and amendments temporarily halted by a provident recess.

In time, an acceptable package was crafted and adopted. It provided for the election of five directors selected by the conference to be added to the office board. Changes in the bylaws were to be made to accommodate this and other concerns that had been expressed. As soon as the motion was approved, five directors were elected along with a list of alternates in the event someone failed to serve. Those elected were: Kevin F., Steve B., Sally E., Cindy P., and Gene H.

Even as it was adopted, I knew its success rested on the willingness of the WSO board to change their attitude and actually place the office under the authority of the conference. Previous pronouncements from Bill B. at the last conference, and from reports by Jimmy before that, had all declared that the WSO could not be subject to control by the conference. I had the feeling the WSO would later reject the decision. Legally they could do so and probably win if

the matter was brought to court. The alternative to WSO acquiescence, I told people then, was to form a new corporation in another state, using a new name, and to ignore the office in California. This would leave the existing WSO in the position of having to sue the new corporation to cease and desist, an unlikely event.

The Literature Committee began its report with Page C. at the microphone. Since the approval form of the Basic Text had been mailed, most participants had read it. Certainly there were some who had objections to parts, but in general most members felt this was a good beginning. When the book was finally presented for approval, there was a feeling among many that improvements would be made to the book from time to time in the years ahead.

It seemed almost anti-climactic as the action to approve the book went so smoothly and quickly. After giving a history of the book and news about progress of other projects, Page said, as quoted in the minutes of the meeting, "I would like to make a motion to accept the Basic Text approval form as the First Edition of our Narcotics Anonymous Book." After the vote was announced, he shouted, "We have a Book!" His joy was shared in the hearts of an entire fellowship. The meeting adjourned for the day soon afterward.

The next morning session began with Bob R. reporting for the Policy Committee. It took hours to go through the issues in his report. There were motions, discussions, votes, more motions and more of the same. It was critical work for the fellowship. At stake was the organizational language that the fellowship was going to live with for the next few years. Bob did a masterful job at objectively presenting the work of the committee but also suggesting changes he wanted that the committee didn't. In fact, he had decided to abandon a crucial part the committee wanted. The committee proposal to make the office a sub-committee of the conference, he had decided, was not the best thing to do.

He led the conference through the material, page by page and section by section. It was complicated, but nearly everyone followed as he went. In the end, the conference did basically what he proposed. It was a good demonstration that the conference had been right in selecting him as the next chairperson. When it was done, a new service document existed. Although amended in nearly every subsequent conference meeting, the foundation established by Bob's committee was strong and proved reliable.

Before work on the service guide was over, once again there was an attempt to remove the votes held by everyone but RSR's. As at prior conferences the attempt failed. The motion was tabled until the next conference.

Chuck S. took the podium next to give the trustee report. He gave his usual rambling oratory complete with a few expletives, giving praise to those he felt deserved it and acknowledged the will of the conference in resolving the office matter. As he wound down, he said what could be thought of as his farewell statement, a year early. "I want to thank you for letting me serve as your chairperson of the Board of Trustees. I'm sure I won't [serve] again. ... You know you can legislate away the Board of Trustees, you can legislate away the *Service Manual*, but you cannot legislate away my twenty-one-years." As soon as he finished, several motions were offered, one of them stated "that a fixed term should be set for trustees (such as five years) and that direct elections of trustees [be conducted] by WSC," but these motions were not adopted.

An effort was made several times to adopt a motion creating a magazine, and it eventually succeeded. After the magazine motion was adopted, three members were elected to be on that committee and were given the authority to pick their own chairperson. The conference elected Jim M., Bill Z. and Linda G. to serve as co-chairpersons. They divided up the duties with Jim as manager and editor, while Linda would be in charge of subscriptions (both money and subscription list). Duties given to Bill were not specified, but his participation was reported to have ended by October anyway.

A number of participants had voiced concern about the World Convention, and in response, a motion was adopted authorizing the chairperson to appoint a committee "to formulate guidelines" for conventions. Bo was given this task and over the following year gathered considerable information from across the fellowship.

The conference also adopted a proposal to have the Administrative Committee publish a quarterly *Fellowship Report*. This was to have lasting consequences as the fellowship would now be able to get information about the business of the fellowship directly, four times a year. This was positive in that it would keep everyone informed, although it also fed the eccentricity of "service junkies."

The conference ended on Sunday, on schedule. It was a particularly successful conference, I thought at the time, complete with its share of colorful language, strongly stated opinions and forceful accusations. The conflicts seemed more sophisticated and better organized, perhaps because many of the principal participants were returning for the second or third year. The Administrative Committee had been better funded and seemed to have been more successful in managing things throughout the year and at the conference.

The Administrative Committee became an important body during the coming year as its members were called upon to take a more active role in managing the activities of the fellowship. At the time I

didn't really know them personally, but I had formed some opinions. Bob R. had done such an impressive job handling the debate on the "green manual" that I felt he would do a good job as conference chairperson. Bob was a strong personality, prone to quick decisions, although he usually considered all points of view. He was genuinely fair, but harsh with foolishness and deception. As a man of middle age, his maturity was also an advantage for his position. Like his predecessors he had a solid determination to hold the duty of chairperson of the conference in high regard as a sacred but practical responsibility. In the following years, Bob was to have great impact on the fellowship.

George was harder to characterize. I hadn't paid much attention to him during discussions, although he had been an articulate participant. He was very bright, listened to every viewpoint, quickly absorbed written material and then arrived at reasoned decisions. His family situation afforded him great amounts of time to devote to service and the ability to travel frequently without cost to the fellowship. He was to play an important role as a conference leader for the next four years.

Kevin, the treasurer, was a diligent although hesitant worker. When he took on a task, he applied one hundred percent of his effort to it and he didn't know the meaning of the word "quit." Sometimes unsure of his judgment, he was not as forceful as he could have been. However, when he had made up his mind on some issue, he was tenacious. Kevin was to voluntarily shoulder the burden of being the office watchdog for several years and did a magnificent job. During the crisis that came the following winter, Kevin kept the pressure on to inform the fellowship and pushed to have decisions made that reflected an objective view of office management.

Nicky, the secretary, would not complete her term, and would fade into the background only to be replaced by an appointee named Carol K. Carol had only a short amount of clean time when she was pressed into service, but she did a great job. She was a hard worker and dedicated both to the fellowship and to her friends in recovery.

The office board held its next meeting on May twentieth. The primary issue was what to do with the five people elected to serve on their board by the conference. After discussion, Bill B. made a motion to, in effect, seat them as voting members, but it was tabled for two weeks so their legal counsel could advise them about it. Doug F. and Sally E. (although Sally was not yet a board member) were then appointed to be a committee to investigate printing requirements for the book.

When the board met on June third, their first action was to modify their bylaws to increase by five the number of directors. This was

followed by the motion, "We, the Board of Directors of the World Service Office, at this time to be effectively immediately, accept and confirm the election to this board of Sally E., Steve B., Gene H., Kevin F., and Cindy D." When I learned of this later, I knew that in His own mysterious way, God *must* be the guiding force in the fellowship.

I was surprised the old board members decided to accept them as equal and voting directors. Under California law, the conference did not have a legal right to impose these additional directors on the board. The office board could have simply refused to acknowledge the power or authority of the conference and could have refused to allow these new members to participate in meetings. Once they did accept them, they lost forever the absolute control they previously held. This would not become fully evident until the printing fiasco and the crisis over language changes in the text unfolded.

Another decision made by the office board was to retain the existing officers in their same positions for another year. A few routine matters then followed: They agreed to buy a service contract for a word processor, establish a volunteer work schedule for each director and increase the price of the White Booklet to \$.50 (from \$.35).

Phil announced he had talked with Cindy D. about helping Jimmy put out an edition of *The Voice*. On matters pertaining to the book, they decided to produce a "Special Edition" of the book in a different color cover and sell it for \$25. They also voted, "to have the first Special Edition go to the archives, the second copy to go to Jimmy K., and the next eight to go to the World Convention for auction." The premium price would be advertised specifically for raising money to pay for the first printing. They wanted orders in hand and money in the bank so they could sign a contract to have the books printed. This was adopted in the form of a letter to the fellowship to be sent out about it. In a few days the letter was sent. The response was overwhelming. Within weeks several hundred orders had been received and they kept coming every day.

When the office board met next on July tenth they continued to move ahead. They decided to send copies of their minutes to other service branches as well as all regions and independent areas registered with the conference. They voted to suggest that a meeting be held annually with all service branches. About the book, "discussion of size of type was held with the decision being reached of 250 words per page, which was the same as in the book *Thirst for Freedom*, published by Hazelden." This was the book written by Jimmy's friend in 1960, which he chose as the model to imitate.

Martin C., one of the most conscientious persons ever elected to chair a committee, sent a letter out to regions seeking their involvement in the development of guidelines that the Finance Committee

could recommend to the conference. At issue was creation of systems to assure proper management and expenditure of funds, particularly at the group level. He would later follow this up with more letters and phone calls to his committee.

Although the conference had ordered important changes to take place in the WSO, Page and many members of his committee were concerned about the future of the book as they prepared to turn it over to the office for actual publication. Their opinion of the office was pretty low; they felt that the office failed to properly serve the fellowship. But there was no alternative to turning it over when the manuscript was ready. Unfortunately, it took them more than five months to get it into the hands of the WSO.

There has been some speculation that the manuscript was edited, or at least proofread, after the conference and before being sent to the office. Although never publicly acknowledged, insiders in the committee at the time have acknowledged it was done. Substantiation was received in 1986, when a man visited the office to inquire about the book. He claimed his mother had been used by the committee to do the editing and had been promised a commemorative copy. I had to inform him all the commemorative copies were gone. How much was changed I never knew.

The Literature Committee also went to work on a long list of other matters. At the 1983 conference they would offer thirteen pamphlets for approval. To accomplish this enormous task, Page had to spend countless hours on the phone and in committee meetings. It was a tremendous sacrifice, but he was determined, and he delivered the work on time.

He assigned work to committees and followed up on their progress. The largest pamphlet was a *Guide To The Fourth Step Inventory*. This one became controversial after it was approved for publication. It was removed at the next year's conference primarily on the strength of arguments from gay members that it treated homosexuality in a manner similar to bestiality or incest. They felt it was demeaning, and asked that it be removed and reworked for improved sensitivity to that issue. That request was honored by the conference. For the year it was on the literature tables, however, it provided a much-needed piece of literature for which the demand was substantial.

Several other items produced for the 1983 conference by the Literature Committee were two-page items with very specifically-focused messages: *Am I An Addict?*, *Just For Today*, *Sponsorship*, *Youth and Recovery*, *For the Newcomer*, *Living the Program*, *The Triangle of Self-Obsession*, *One Addict's Experience...* and *A Physician's Viewpoint*, just to name some examples. Another piece was the *Starter*

Kit, a practical tool for new groups. This pamphlet helped thousands of groups to start new meetings in the following years. The committee also proposed revisions to the White Booklet.

The Policy Committee, under Larry N., had several meetings and came forward with a number of proposals at the conference in 1983. However, the committee was not as well-organized as the prior year's committee had been, and the quality of its work suffered. None of the major proposals from the Policy Committee were to make much impact at the conference that year.

During the summer, Martin C. sent out a letter to the fellowship at large at the direction of his committee. They wanted "to establish written guidelines for the utilization of funds throughout the fellowship in order to further our primary purpose." It was a questionnaire intended to get some idea of how groups handled money. After the deadline of September fifteenth, he wrote a short report about their findings.

The *NA Way* magazine was slow in getting started, but quickly headed for disaster. By July, the first draft issue was assembled from articles in other fellowship newsletters and a few new pieces. It was discussed by Jim at the conference. He discussed an informal editorial team he had assembled which included friends interested in the magazine. He sent a letter in late July to Bob R. asking for money from the conference treasury. He wrote, "I know we didn't propose a budget at WSC and we do plan to be self supporting through subscriptions, but I feel that this first informational letter should be financed by WSC or included in *Fellowship Report*, or both."

Bob, who didn't like the magazine (and wasn't too private about his disdain for Jim M.), referred the matter to the trustees to determine if it was all within the Traditions. Chuck S., who received Bob's letter and a copy of the letters from Jim, promptly marked on his copy "I feel this is a violation of the Traditions and should be taken up at the next meeting." His note refers to a closing salutation which read "In Loving Service, 'The NA Way' sub-committee of WSC." This undoubtedly upset Jim, but he moved ahead and produced the first issue to take to the World Convention anyway.

At the August meeting, the office board continued to sort through and approve actions relating to the production of the book. It was decided the regular book price would be twice as much as the actual publication cost (although from looking at the records it is not clear that the actual cost was known at that time). In the financial report, the board was told they had received advance orders for 1,096 copies along with the money totaling \$27,400. The actual production of the book had not proceeded with the same ease and speed because the "approved" manuscript had not been received. The Literature Com-

mittee informed the board, in an August letter, that the Book had not been completely typed for submission to the printer (7 or 8 chapters were still not done) and there was interest by the committee in omitting at least one story. The committee found an individual they had confidence in and had them give the book a final light edit. The editing and re-typing took months.

Deciding not to wait, the office used the approval form to approach three printers for bids on the whole job. An area Sir Speedy Printer and two other local printers, Starr Printing and Thought Process Printers then submitted bids. No traditional book printing company was contacted, which later proved to be a critical mistake.

Under the banner, "Our Gratitude Speaks," the Twelfth World Convention opened on Thursday, September second at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Friday evening George P. (California) was the kick-off speaker. The convention was a great success. Nearly 800 people were present to hear Doug F. (California) as the main speaker on Saturday night. Jimmy K. had been invited, but he did not feel well enough to make the journey, and sent Doug in his stead. The following morning Heather (Winnipeg, Canada) and Greg P. (Oregon) shared the podium at the spirituality meeting. The event's success was a great tribute to Steve S., the convention chairperson, and his dedicated committee.

Steve might not have wanted to claim credit for what took place at the auction, though. For a reason still unexplained, some bidders began to offer money if Bob B., the H&I chairperson, would sell his pants. It was funny for people, and the price began to escalate. Finally when the bidding ended, Bob took off his pants while on stage. Part of the convention profit was sent to the New York host committee as seed money for WCNA-13.

The New York bid was put together by six members who had pooled their money and drove to Milwaukee where another of their members joined them. The development of the New York fellowship had been hampered by the "Rockefeller Laws," which had only recently been repealed. With NA actually legal for the first time in that state, a very small fellowship had taken root, but was about to grow explosively. At the time the New York bid was placed at the Milwaukee convention, there were only about ten meetings in New York City with around 50 regular members.

Since the New York contingent had little money among them, they convinced Doug F. to let them "bunk" in his room. Their resources were pretty slim. They didn't have much but bravado, bluff and exaggeration to base their bid on, but despite the doubts of many present, the excitement and support for the growing fellowship there

won out, and their bid was selected. They had to return to New York and prepare for a large convention involving thousands of people. With only ten meetings and fewer than fifty regular members, they began this awesome task while at the same time coping with the sudden and dramatic growth their home fellowship was experiencing. They did not even form a regional committee until after the convention.

The trustees held their meeting at the convention as scheduled, although only four members were present. The principal matter addressed was the letter from Bob R. about Jim M.'s letter. Jim was there and presented his case. But after considerable discussion, the board decided by a three to one vote that the magazine could not be endorsed, as such endorsement was prohibited by the Sixth Tradition. But, they added, "the Board of Trustees wishes to encourage the continuation of this particular enterprise as it is very beneficial to the fellowship." They declared the magazine was an outside enterprise, just like the office had been claiming about itself for years. They suggested the magazine put itself under the WSO or start its own corporation. That was not what Jim wanted to hear, and it seriously undermined his ability to sell subscriptions. Jim was not happy with the decision and later appealed it.

Nevertheless, he pressed ahead during the convention. As he wrote in his 1983 conference report about their first issue, "It was produced as the September issue and distributed primarily at WCNA-12 in Milwaukee. Many members purchased single copies and subscribed." Unfortunately for Jim, his co-chairperson, Linda G., who had the money and subscriptions list, then effectively resigned and he never saw the subscription list or money again.

Despite efforts to retrieve the money and the list, Jim was unable to get either. Exactly what prompted Linda to disassociate herself from Jim and the magazine was not revealed to the conference in his year-end report or for years afterward. Linda, because of her closeness to Jim and his associates, was able to observe exactly what was going on. She became disillusioned about what Jim was saying compared to what he was actually doing. However, she correctly recognized that a public fight over what she saw them doing would only lead to a nasty fight that she felt she could not win. Her only defense (and offense at the same time) was to simply withdraw and hold on to the list of subscribers and their money. She knew by doing this she was committing political suicide as far as world services was concerned, but her conscience dictated she had to do something.

She kept the money in a checking account and held on to the subscription list, refusing to respond to Jim's incessant attempts to com-

municate. Jim called, wrote letters and had people in the Atlanta area go and see her in an attempt to get the money and the subscription list, even if she wasn't willing to continue to participate in the magazine production. Since she wouldn't respond, Jim had to carry on as best he could on his own. He started from scratch again and began selling magazines and producing subsequent issues.

Bob B. of San Francisco was moderately successful with the H&I Committee. While meeting at the World Convention, the committee worked on internal guidelines and two pamphlets for use within the H&I framework. Unfortunately, none of the projects were advanced for approval at the conference in 1983. Success in the development of H&I tools was not to be achieved for two more years. The committee improved communications with a growing number of area and regional H&I committees, while also reaching into many new institutions to start meetings.

On the negative side, there was growing resentment against H&I for their use of the "H&I can" to raise money. Some members and committees felt this was an inappropriate way to single out a particular effort within the fellowship, whereas other essential programs without a similar fundraising technique saw their activities suffer by comparison. The Literature and Public Information committees were particularly jealous. Bob spent a lot of time defending the use of H&I cans for raising money.

About the time of the convention, Greg decided to move again. The project he moved to Oregon for had not worked out and he needed to find work elsewhere. Among the alternatives was one suggested by Bo. Bo thought his silk screen printing and painting business would be large and profitable enough to sustain Greg if Greg moved to Atlanta and took over the daily management of the business. Greg visited Bo in August, studied the business, and concluded he would give it a try. So during September and October, Greg and his family moved. Whether or not Greg gave any thought to the impact of his move on the final termination of a relationship with Jimmy is not known. But after he arrived in Georgia, it became clear that Jimmy would have nothing to do with his former friend.

One of the delays with the production of the book was the WSO's decision (on the advice of their attorney), not to proceed until they had a release statement signed by Page, on behalf of the Literature Committee since they had earlier claimed to have copyrighted it. The WSO attorney had recommended this and they were complying. Finally, about September seventeenth, the manuscript and signed release from Page were received at the office. The board then felt secure in its authority to proceed with the printing.

At an interim board meeting on September twenty-third, to which only four directors came, it was decided Thought Process Printers would become the book printer. Their verbal bid was an all-inclusive package — typesetting, printing and binding — and was lower than the two written bids submitted. Thought Process was the company which had been producing nearly all the pamphlets and White Booklets for several years, and going to them was a natural course of action. This was the second step taken toward tragedy.

In early October, Jim wrote to the trustees, seeking a reversal of their September decision. His letter pointed out that only four of their members were at that meeting, not enough for a proper quorum. Further, he added, the motion was worded in a declarative manner, as a decision that "a sub-committee is null and void." He argued that the trustees do not govern, but rather "provide guidance." He presented other arguments too, and it was quite persuasive, or so he thought.

It is not known exactly when the manuscript was turned over to the printer, as the contract was not actually signed until October eighteenth, nearly four weeks later. It seems, however, that the action took place on October fifteenth, as that was the date a check was written to Thought Process for the initial payment. It is possible that someone decided to guarantee Thought Process Printers would do the work since the first payment was made the day before the board met next and the decision was reviewed once again.

One of the factors in the book production catastrophe was that many decisions, some of them major, were made between meetings. Frankly, this is normal for routine decisions. All businesses that operate with a Board of Directors leave the day to day decisions to the staff to be made between meetings of the board. Boards cannot realistically oversee and approve every decision in advance. Volunteer boards are expected to establish policy and make major decisions. The problems arise when the operational manager doesn't consult with the board on major decisions. This situation existed with the office at the time. The minutes of board meetings lack any mention of many of the substantial issues of the day about which the office staff was making major decisions.

Only five of the twelve members were present for the office board meeting on October sixteenth, an attendance problem that was becoming routine. The board acknowledged that the actions taken on September twenty-third were not valid. They proceeded to make the decisions over, but produced the same results. They discussed minor matters — packaging for the book when they mailed it and their at-

tendance problems — but the major decision was to select a printer. They again chose Thought Process Printers.

Professionals in the book printing industry would have quickly pointed out the vast difference between having a book printed by a neighborhood "print shop" and a book publishing company. With such a large project in the works, Thought Process demanded and received an advance payment of ten thousand dollars. As they actually sub-contracted with a typesetting company to accomplish that task and had to pay for this service in advance, the payment schedule was not unreasonable.

The contract required Thought Process to print and deliver the pages to a bindery. There were to be pages for 2,500 limited editions and 9,500 regular editions. Their cost for this work was \$20,000. The bindery costs were not included. Bindery for a publication of this type in a small shop should have been about \$10,000 for the 12,000 copies being made. The cost of printing the cover would probably have added another \$4,000.

The typesetting apparently went very slowly, about twenty pages a day at most. Almost on a daily basis, Jimmy proofread them to identify errors and mark them for correction. Sometimes he was aided by others. They were trying to be extra careful to avoid errors, but unfortunately the manuscript had a fairly large number. It was loaded with mistakes in grammar, syntax and spelling. Jimmy was reluctant to make changes, knowing the accusations that would be made, yet he was unwilling to be responsible for publishing a book with so many obvious errors. Some corrections were made, but they were mostly at the level of punctuation changes.

On November third, Jim wrote a letter to concerned members, article contributors, and others actively involved with the *NA Way* Committee. He asked for help. He explained the difficulties he had been facing, particularly about the loss of the mail list and money. The October issue was then being printed but he said they only had \$240 in the new bank account. By the time the November issue was edited he hoped to have a cash flow adequate to the situation.

When the office board met on November eleventh, they made additional decisions about the printing. They considered sending a postcard to those who had ordered copies telling them when the book would be done, but the motion was not adopted. Proofreading was going along, although the work on it was still going pretty slow.

The fall trustees meeting was held on November thirteenth with eight of the twelve members present. They considered the letter from Jim M. They voted to reaffirm the opinion reached in September. They discussed election of officers, but elected to defer that until later. It was a short meeting.

Four days after that trustee meeting, Jimmy found errors in the proofreading that were beyond grammar, syntax or spelling. They were statements he believed were inconsistent with his understanding of the philosophy of Narcotics Anonymous. What these statements said, in effect, was that the service structure was not part of the fellowship. It was as though the office, trustees, conference, regional and area committees were being taken out of Narcotics Anonymous. Jimmy knew that to publish such statements would clearly remove the office and those boards and committees as stable foundations for the fellowship.

Jimmy was in an awkward position. Since the conference meeting in 1978, he and his office board had maintained that the office was, in relationship to the conference and the fellowship at large, an outside issue. It was not under the direct control of the conference or the fellowship. The offending language actually supported that concept in clear terms, and was confirmation of what the office had been saying for years.

I believe he finally saw the error of that position, and although he was unwilling to publicly admit it had been an mistake, he realized he had to change it in the book. His public stance was to ignore the earlier statements and simply attack the offending language as being incorrect statements of NA philosophy. After discussing it with office President Phil P., he bravely decided to make a stand. I don't know if he realized or imagined the consequences, but knowing Jimmy, he was going to do what he believed was right, regardless of the personal consequence.

He called Chuck S. and Bob R. to inform them of the problem. A meeting was held that evening with at least six persons present. This meeting produced the fire that was to consume the fellowship for a long time. A memorandum was typed on December seventh that reported on the events and it reports:

On November 17th, 1982 having been apprised that there were some obvious errors [in] Traditions four and nine in the NA book a meeting was called.

Those present were: Chuck S., (trustee chairperson), Bob R., (WSC chairperson), Phil P., (WSO President), Doug F., (WSO vice-president), Kevin F., (WSO board member). [Although not listed as being there, Jimmy K. was also present.]

The purpose was to arrive at a decision which would be suitable to the task. The information in question being in content, incorrect, and had to be dealt with before we could continue to print the book. [In] Tradition Nine - lines that were deleted were: **none of them has the power to rule, censor, decide or dictate - this is incon-**

sistent with NA philosophy. [In] Tradition Four - **The answer is that these things are not NA [and] all else is not NA.** This is just not in content at all true. Because all parts of the structure are NA, and bound by the Traditions, otherwise why have them, because if our service boards and committees are not a part of use, then why would they be bound by them.

The price of waiting would have been prohibitive because of the contractual agreements with the printer. The present members of all the service boards felt that we could take the initiative and make the decision thus stopping any further delay in the printing.

It is not unusual for the Administrative Committee to make decisions for the conference, nor the Board of Trustees making decisions for the fellowship in terms of Traditions, because this is their responsibility.

Those passages that were deleted were nearly (sic) incorrect. The people responsible for the overseeing caught the oversight, and corrected same.

Yours in service to the fellowship, all of the above.

Remembering the event some eleven years later, Chuck recalled that "after studying the sentences I too was convinced they needed changing. Several alternative ways of changing the wording were considered and finally one made the most sense. We each had our say, agreed to the change by signing the proof sheet page, and the die was cast."

Jimmy reported and maintained until his death that the decision was jointly made by Chuck S., Bob R. and an officer of the WSO board. Chuck's more recent recollection supports Jimmy's memory of the meeting. Bob R. however, has maintained that was not the case. He claimed only to have acknowledged that Chuck had approved the change that Jimmy was going to make, but did not approve the change himself. Knowing Bob's philosophy, and his sense of duty as conference chairperson, I find it hard to believe he would have felt he had the authority to approve such a change, even if he agreed with it. Chuck later felt that Bob had forsaken his approval when the heat was turned up over the delay in the actual printing. Chuck's statements at the conference some six months later tend to support Bob's recollection, although I have always felt Chuck took the lion's share of blame in order to divert anger from others.

It appears the memorandum was written by Phil and not widely circulated. Fortunately it was written reasonably soon after the event and probably recounts the meeting accurately.

The office board met on the twentieth, three days after the book changes were made. They discussed work allocations among the

board, received a treasurer's report, and discussed the book cover. "It was decided that the special edition would be two-toned, the color to be decided by the preference shown on the book orders. The service emblem will be on the spine of the book. It was suggested that we mail out post cards stating the date the book will be done." They also discussed what to do about inactive members and poor attendance. Finally Sally proposed a motion to open their meetings to observers, but not to allow them to participate unless invited by the board. Nothing appears in the minutes of the meeting about the special meeting three days earlier nor the change made in the Text!

A day before the next meeting, a letter came from Cindy D. expressing her interest, but explaining that travel costs made it impractical for her to come each month. She suggested a speaker phone in the meeting room would make it possible for her to be involved during the meetings. Also, she suggested the agenda be sent in advance so everybody would know what was going to be discussed.

Just before the December board meeting, Thought Process was given a second progress payment of five thousand dollars. At the meeting two days later, the board seemed unaware of the firestorm that was about to engulf them concerning the change in language or the pending failure of the printer. They proceeded with business as usual, but finally resolved to send a member to meet with the printer and determine more fully what was taking so long. Also, "there was much discussion about a letter re: the changes to the Book, explaining the WSO's action following the decision by the *Board of Trustees...*" (emphasis mine) but no action was taken! It is particularly curious that the directors didn't vote to approve the change that had been made. It reflects the autonomy they allowed Jimmy to have.

There was an odd discipline at work among the directors. One group, the old directors, were extremely loyal to Jimmy and seemingly never questioned his judgment while leaving to him all the operational office duties. The new directors were opposed to most things Jimmy was doing, yet failed to challenge him or his decisions at board meetings. This issue was a good example.

The board did authorize funds at the December meeting for a part-time employee to help do shipping in the office. Just before Christmas, Jimmy asked a local member and part-time college student to work at the office a few hours each day shipping orders. The pay wasn't going to be much, he admitted, but it was going to be steady work. Greg R. agreed, and right after the holiday started coming in on most days for a few hours.

Greg reports it was a good place to work. Jimmy always had a positive attitude and was on the phone constantly responding to orders and requests for help. Only about half the orders actually came