

Chapter Eighteen

An Exciting Year

Each year I worked for the fellowship proved to be more fulfilling than the one before it. As the years passed, we found and hired more talented people and we were better organized. Although the last year had proved that we could still make significant mistakes, we were determined not to let them occur again. This next twelve-month period proved to be fulfilling and exciting. NA was truly on the move. The Conference came off well, the trustees began to get organized and show signs of becoming productive, the New Jersey office was running well, and we prepared to open a branch office in London. To have moved from a two-person office in 1983, to having over forty employees and two branch offices within five years or so, was exciting. All of us were looking forward to a wonderful year.

Chuck called the 1988 conference to order a little after 9:00 AM on Monday, April twenty-fifth. Fifty-six regions answered the first roll call and two more regions were added soon after. There were eighteen other votes among the trustees, conference committees and officers for a total of seventy-four voting participants. The RSR's had more than a clear two-thirds majority of the vote. The conference buzzed with the usual whispers and intrigue as new RSR's and old-timers got acquainted and the standing opposition tried to work their own miracles.

The morning agenda was devoted to an open forum session. After about an hour, I asked to be recognized and then to have my written report distributed. Most of the speakers had been talking about the Fourth Edition issue, and I felt my annual report might begin to answer many of the questions being raised. I hoped that by providing the details about the omissions, we could answer many of the questions and free up the conference to focus on a solution and move on to other important matters. This was quickly done. The rest of the day was then devoted to the forum, followed that evening by committee meetings.

On Tuesday, Administrative Committee reports were given along with action on motions the Joint Administrative Committee had pro-

posed. I was acting as parliamentarian until my replacement arrived, but things went quite well. The motion to allow statistical updates and publication of treasurer work books were adopted. After lunch Don Cameron, our new parliamentarian, arrived and took over. Don was immediately put to the test, as motions with little real value but laden with procedural mischief were thrust forward one after another. Finally a motion of substance was proposed: to "approve in principle the JAC draft cost equalization policy and urge the JAC to continue the project ... on a time scale that allows for adoption at WSC '89." It was adopted, much to the dismay of the Administrative Committee.

Late in the afternoon, Jim gave his report as chairperson of the office Board of Directors. I then gave my report and answered questions. My report was another massive piece of work. Among the various details presented, we reported there were 470 area committees we knew of, and that ten years earlier, there were not even that many NA meetings. Considerable attention was given to the non-US fellowships and their problems. I made sure the conference was aware of the complexity we faced when dealing with their needs. I reported 273,659 copies of the Text were sold during the year, bringing the total sold since 1983 to 744,922. About meeting numbers, we reported there were 2,341 new meetings in the US we were aware of, which if added to the previous year total would then have reflected 10,052 meetings. The total of non-US meetings was 1,030. A worldwide meeting total was then 11,082. However, I emphasized that this was considerably inaccurate, as we were not getting enough up-to-date information from groups and area committees. The numbers were reasonable "ball park" figures, but they were very likely less than the number of meetings that actually existed.

Much of my report and the subsequent period of questions was devoted to the Fourth Edition omissions. I explained what had happened and took full responsibility for the error. I made it clear that I was the one in charge and no one else should be blamed. I was not terribly surprised when the conference majority was quick to seek solutions rather than continuing to berate WSO or to pursue the conspiracy theory, fearing we had been part of some large and secret plot to change the words in the Text.

Although Michael and Vince later gave detailed reports about literature and the *It Works* ad hoc committee, I also gave a review of our support for their activities, which had been substantial. In my comments about the *NA Way* Magazine, I reported success with each issue and with rising subscription rates, but that we lost money again. We were delighted to have available for the conference the first phonenumber directory. We were glad the phonenumber directory would

replace the *World Directory* of meetings. I raised again the dilemma I believed we were then facing of having a bigger shopping list of things we wanted World Services to do than we could support with existing resources. I urged the conference to consider giving thought to creating a master plan for world services and establishing a priority list for the use of our resources. My report ended with photocopies of the pages from the Third Edition and the Fourth Edition showing each of the specific omissions that had occurred.

We recessed for dinner, after which I responded to questions about my report. After a few hours, motions pertaining to the office were considered. The first adopted was the new description of the WSO in the *Temporary Working Guide*. The vote was sixty-four in favor of the change and six opposed. A motion was proposed and adopted to direct that we publish a phonenumber directory, and a motion to require us to publish a directory of meetings was defeated. After four hours we adjourned for the day.

Wednesday morning began with the adoption of a motion to authorize the creation of a second vice-chairperson. Michael's Literature Committee report followed. They offered for approval; *Staying Clean On The Outside, Hey! What's the Basket For?, Am I An Addict? - Revised*, and *The Group - Revised*, which were all adopted with near-unanimous votes. However, the procedural gymnastics that the conference went through in adopting the motions consumed nearly two hours. Much of the controversy was resolved when publication of the revised items was made conditional upon depletion of the stock of the existing edition. This was supported by the office as a way of not wasting the old pamphlets or getting stuck with the idea of people returning them to the office for credit or revised editions. The vote to approve the new *Working Step Four in Narcotics Anonymous* was seventy-two in favor and two opposed. The Literature Committee's new guidelines were approved after another bout of parliamentary gymnastics.

The next issue was resolution of the Fourth Edition fiasco. Chuck wisely ordered a committee of the whole discussion, during which everyone who had their own solution was given an opportunity to present it. All the choices were put on a list that was kept on the overhead projector for all to see. When all the talking was over, this motion was adopted: "To insert the twenty-five omissions (plus two more that were discovered) into the Basic Text, Fourth Edition, on a time and production schedule not to exceed four months. The Fourth Edition, with current errors, will continue to be sold as conference-approved literature until such time as the corrected Fifth Edition is ready. An error sheet [giving details of all omitted language] would

be available [from the WSO] upon request [and without cost to the requester]."

As a demonstration that the majority of the conference was really tired of the continual fighting over the Basic Text, a motion was soon adopted to add this declaration, "That the Basic Text, Fifth Edition is not eligible for revision for five (5) years from this conference." As a safeguard against mistakes in the Fifth Edition, a "proofreading" committee was to be appointed by Michael and charged with the duty of making sure no mistakes would be found in it. The standing minority was not altogether silent during this process. They did their best to sidetrack the consensus and to get the Third Edition resurrected as the approved edition of the Text.

Chuck did a masterful job in getting this accomplished. It was done in less than an hour and a half. It was his finest hour as chairperson of the conference. Credit needed also to be awarded to Michael and Vince. They, like the rest, were appalled at the office's mistakes, and aggravated that it had taken place while they were on the Literature Review Committee. Nevertheless, throughout the entire crisis, both were levelheaded and exhibited superior leadership skills.

I had been on the verge of tears since learning the full extent of the omissions ten days before. I maintained my courage as best I could, hoping to be strong enough to endure the week without breaking down. The action of the conference was more relief than I could have expected. While fearful that the conference might take the opportunity to reduce the office to a pile of rubble or fire me (an option not without merit at the time), the conference didn't. They looked for positive solutions and chose not to tear down the office despite the enormity of the mistake. Several days after the conference was over, I had a good long cry.

Following all the literature actions, the Policy Committee chairperson Ed D. came forward to shepherd through changes to the *Working Guide* the committee devised. A description of the Joint Administrative Committee had been added, along with precise wording to describe the Administrative Committee, and language pertaining to the *Agenda Report* and *Fellowship Reports*. As usual when the Policy Committee issues were under debate, the perennial motion to remove the voting power of anyone but RSR's was put forward. The motion failed again, this time with twenty-seven voting to approve the idea and forty voting against (nine opted to abstain — mostly trustees).

As the evening wore on, Biff stood at the podium to present the Public Information Committee report and proposals. One after another the committees proposals were adopted, while proposed amendments were cast aside. Finally, near midnight, H&I chairperson Randy J. had his turn and delivered a detailed and well-organized

report. He brought no motions, and everyone seemed to be so tired that there were not even any questions; adjournment was called at 12:50 AM. It had been a long and emotional day.

Nominations were the order of business when Chuck reconvened the conference eight hours later. The most important moment in the nominations period came when Michael L. announced he would not stand for reelection as chairperson of the Literature Committee. I knew he had been working long hours and was under a lot of stress, but I had been hopeful he would serve another year. He had proven to be a good leader, objective and levelheaded. It was clear that Vince was probably going to succeed him. Vince, too, had matured some during the year. He had outgrown some of his less admirable qualities and was approaching his committee responsibilities with a little more organization and skill. After three hours of nominations, a report from Bob R., chairperson of the trustees, informed the conference of what the trustees had accomplished during the year. There were some questions, but only two motions, both disposed of quickly.

Convention Corporation items followed, which were presented by Steve B. He discussed site location alternatives for the 1989 convention, and after some questions, the conference selected Florida. The Oregon/Washington zone was chosen for 1990, and the Australasian zone for 1991. All of the proposals for changes to the convention handbook were adopted.

Billy Z. then gave a report on the Additional Needs ad hoc committee. Although a valiant effort was waged by Michael L. to dissolve the committee after Bill's report was over, a sympathy vote extended the committee's activities for another year.

Vince then followed with the *It Works* ad hoc committee report. He thanked the fellowship for the support and participation and announced there was now enough material submitted from the members that a Steps book could be written. As there were no questions, he proposed the committee be dissolved. The vote was unanimous.

Select Committee member Mary V. gave a report from the committee and proposed the committee be given another year to complete its work. A follow-up motion changed the name of the committee to "WSC Ad Hoc Committee on NA Service" (later referred to as "the Committee on NA Service" or simply "NAS").

Elections followed, with the following results: Chuck L. (Arizona) as Conference Chairperson, Bob H. (Ohio) as Vice-Chairperson, Ed D. (Massachusetts) as Second-Vice Chairperson, Sherri B. (Oklahoma) as Treasurer. Vince D. (Maryland) as Literature Committee Chairperson and Bryce S. (Georgia) as Literature Vice-Chairperson. Ruben F. (San Diego) became Policy Committee Chairperson, Biff K. returned as Chairperson of PI, Barbara J.

(Kansas) became Chairperson of H&I. Elected to the Board of Trustees were Kim J. (chairperson of PI in 1984/86), Becky M. (RSR-Sierra Sage) and Garth P. (RSR-Australia). Elected to the WSO board were Martin C., Jamie S-H and Oliver S. In a shocking turn of events, three trustees, Dutch H., Bo S. and Sydney R. each stood for reelection but were not returned to office.

On Friday morning Bob H., outgoing treasurer, presented a proposed budget for the conference year. A month before the conference, he had taken the extraordinary step of obtaining a budget proposal from each committee, consolidating them and mailing the consolidated view to all participants two weeks before the conference. A total of \$252,000 was requested, but the motion authorizing a budget for 1988/89 was "not to exceed \$210,000," although it was left to the JAC to determine precise allocations.

It was a much larger spending plan than before, based on having three conference committee workshops scheduled for Detroit, Miami and Dallas. The projected income was based on the assumption that the income of \$156,930 for the 1987/88 year would grow by some \$24,000 to \$60,000. Fortunately, when the JAC met and finalized the budget, they set the spending plan at \$180,000, with an alternative to spend \$210,000 if that much came in. With this kind of planning, I felt we could weather through the year and still accomplish the primary work that everyone wanted to do.

There had been a lot of discussion over the years about how the office underwrote conference activities and actually spent money in support of the conference. As each year passed, we collected another paragraph or two of policy that spelled out our practices. Finally, with this budget, we decided to include those policy statements in the approved budget. They were good tools to keep handy when others, not familiar with the agreements, began to become suspicious.

I was pleased with the outcome of this year's JAC budget meeting. Chuck and I had gotten along quite well, considering our otherwise simmering relationship. Not surprisingly, Bob R. was becoming strong-minded about the trustee budget. While he had been amenable to reducing it the previous year, he was pretty firm that the trustees were under-funded and needed every penny they were allocated.

The day after the conference, a WSO board meeting was held. The board authorized funds for a printing consultant to help us produce the Fifth Edition correctly and find another printing company, as everyone had lost confidence in Arcata Graphics as our printer. When I reported on personnel matters, I explained about my decision to recommend Jim W. as the person we should send to manage the ESO. Although there was some discussion, there were no substantial

objections. The board voted unanimously to appoint Jim as an administrative assistant.

After the conference was over, we published a *Newsline* that included excerpts from the conference discussion about the Fourth Edition, including the resolution the conference adopted. It was mailed the week following the conference, so that members throughout the fellowship would be informed as soon as possible.

Once the conference was over, I began in earnest to look for a new location for the office. Through my contacts with the real estate industry, I had been keeping an eye on building leases and purchase options since the beginning of the year. During May and June we looked at several buildings in the Valley, and later we looked at buildings to the west in Simi Valley, and then finally to the north in Valencia. At board meetings over the previous two years, we had discussed the possibility of moving the office. We discussed at length the idea of purchasing the property rather than renting. Since the board was disposed to moving and buying, that is where we centered our efforts. We wanted a location that was more attractive in a physical sense, much larger, and more conducive to a pleasant work environment than our current converted warehouse. During this period, I wrote several special reports to the board to make sure they were fully informed on the search. I was particularly concerned that they didn't get cold feet about either moving or purchasing a building while I was out trying to get it done.

Another more urgent project was to prepare the Basic Text for printing. In order to be positive the book contained no errors, our staff repeated the earlier effort and read our computer file of the book against an edited version which contained corrections for all the omissions made earlier. This "verified file" was then printed and sent to Michael L. and a committee he appointed to help him proofread the book. All of this took until July to accomplish.

In late May, Jim and Willie met at an airport in New York City and flew to Paris for a two day planning meeting for that year's European Service Conference. Jim later reported all the details of their discussion and the results of his explanation about plans to open the ESO branch of the office. The idea was generally well received. On the second day, Willie conducted a PI workshop that helped some of the Europeans to better understand the range of PI activities and how not to break the Traditions in this area.

They visited with an official of UNESCO the following morning, and in the afternoon traveled to Geneva. On Tuesday they met with a high official of the World Health Organization. Jim wrote about the response of Dr. Grant, the man they were meeting: "He started by staying that he was very pleased to be able to meet with us. He was

delighted to discover that NA in its development was willing to embrace a larger scope than AA. No other anonymous self-help organization had approached them." Dr. Grant explained he is the director of a project that will serve to recommend to the 166 member nations of WHO alternative methods of addiction recovery. Jim wrote, "we could not have come in contact with this particular person at a more appropriate time." The meeting lasted nearly two hours.

From this meeting came a combined effort of the conference PI Committee, the office and trustees to stay involved with meetings and follow-up contacts resulting from this connection. For the next two years we expended considerable money and effort to make the existence of NA known to the governmental and non-governmental agencies affiliated with the WHO.

Jim returned to California the next day, but Willie remained in Europe to attend two other meetings in Austria and Norway. At the Norway meeting, he distributed a supply of literature to participants attending an international conference on addiction.

Jim and I worked together almost on a daily basis. He was working on revising the cover pages of all the pamphlets, but we were also meeting to discuss the ESO. We eventually developed a comprehensive job description for him which outlined the objectives we wanted to achieve in London. Later we expanded on this work list and added a time line so that when he got to London, there would be little doubt about what he was expected to accomplish.

At the annual meeting of the board in June, Donna M. was elected chairperson and Stu T. was elected vice-chairperson. Donna and I had gotten along quite well, and I was glad to be working with her. She had worked closely with Jim and me while she had been the Vice-Chairperson, so she was quite familiar with the status of things when she took over. The board also approved my request for a second administrative position on the same level as George. This new position would take control over shipping/receiving, accounting and some publication services. We began looking immediately. When the board acted to renew my contract, I asked for a second time that they not give me a salary increase, but set aside another month's salary to be paid after my service with the WSO was over. Everyone clearly understood this was not a signal I was expecting to leave, but recognition that such a day would come.

Another personnel matter of consequence occurred soon after the meeting when Leigh R., who had been my secretary for over a year, announced she was leaving in September. I wasn't happy about this because she was becoming the best secretary I had had, and now I would need to find an alternative. It would take some time.

To help us solve one of the problems we faced in Canada, we decided to open an account at a Canadian bank and mail all our small Canadian checks there for deposit. In this way we would avoid the ten dollar per check processing fee our bank charged us. I went to Toronto later that summer to set this up, and we began to accumulate funds in that account. From time to time we would transfer a thousand dollars or so into our California bank and pay only one processing fee.

We also began to examine the idea of a branch shipping facility along or east of the Mississippi river. We decided to do periodic checks to determine if there was enough savings (from the shipping expense) to justify opening a branch warehouse in that area. Our idea was to receive the orders at the office in Van Nuys, and each day send the orders by fax or computer modem to be filled by the branch that day. We thought it could be handled by one full-time and one part-time employee. Later in the year we prepared a comprehensive report on what we found.

Because of our dissatisfaction with the existing printer, the board spent considerable time on printing issues. We agreed to use a book consultant, and I soon set out to find one. Later Jim suggested he had an acquaintance in San Francisco that we might use. While I was reluctant to use someone associated with a board or staff member, I was eventually persuaded to meet the guy at an initial fee of nearly eight hundred dollars. His name was David C., and although not a member, he had a considerable understanding of the fellowship. He proved to have a vast knowledge about the publishing business and served us well for the remaining years of my time with the office. His immediate task was to help us prepare for typesetting and printing the Fifth Edition. The second task was to find us a better printer, which he did, and we switched to using the Donnelley company. The cost for printing the Text was comparable to our previous printer, but the number of problems diminished to almost nothing. With his help we were able to produce the Fifth Edition without errors.

Over the weekend of June 18-20, the conference committees met in Miami for their first working meetings. Progress seemed to have been made by all the committees, especially the Literature Committee. Vince later reported the committee decided to publish the Traditions portion of *It Works* in a review and input form. It contained all earlier composed or received material on the Traditions. It was about this time that discussions began on the idea of having the trustees take over the task of composing the Traditions portion of *It Works*. At first Vince was not strongly opposed to it, but not very keen on the idea either. On the trustee side, there was doubt as to whether they should be put in the position of taking on such a large project. Bob,

George, Sydney and I talked about this possibility over the summer, and the idea began to sound better.

If there had been any doubt about the Additional Needs ad hoc committee wanting to build an empire, they were washed away at the Miami meeting. They were busy working on guidelines for area and regional Additional Needs committees during that meeting.

In early July, Michael and his ad hoc committee arrived at the office to proofread the Fifth Edition. Using Jack B. (trustee), Sally E. (trustee), Bob G. (RSR-So. Ca.), Judy G. (member) and Jim W., the omissions were reinserted. After staff had revised our computer file and printed another copy, it was sent back to Michael's committee for verification. This file was later given to a professional typesetting company who proceeded to convert our computer file into a typeset file. This was then printed out and sent again to Michael's committee for verification. Another proofreading session was held to ensure that the book was correct. It was then ready to be printed.

In mid-July, Vince held a workshop in Chicago to integrate all of the Steps material that had been gathered into a usable file. In a sweltering Catholic school, small committees worked through all the input for each step to eliminate redundancy and put the material in some order. About fifty people came to help and worked long hours under conditions reminiscent of the writing of the Basic Text. Their output, however, was not adequate for even a draft publication. It was clear after this meeting that the "Chicago Draft" needed more work; Vince began to search for how to do it.

The Committee on NA Service also met in July. With Chuck at the helm, they began to work on the *Guide to Service*, and to discuss the development of a set of "principles of service" which might be similar to AA's Twelve Concepts. Chuck wrote in the next report from the committee, "Most of these ideas focus on a one-board approach, combining the WSO, WSB and/or the Joint Administrative Committee..." Since I was strongly opposed to the single board concept, I kept as far away from their meetings as possible. However, as time pressed on, they continued to ask for my input, which I gave, and which usually ended in strong disagreements.

In July, when the *Fellowship Report* was sent, Chuck started it by strongly refuting reports circulating in some regions and newsletters about how the motion to restrict voting to RSR's had been handled at the conference. He criticized the reports, calling them "inaccurate statements and misinformation and were in my opinion, unduly harsh and critical..." He refuted claims that there had been "political arm twisting" which resulted in RSR's changing their votes. His statement that, "Many of the members who have been most critical of the handling of the motion were not at the conference and, in

my opinion, are perhaps not in the best position to condemn the actions of others [who were there]," was evidence that he was not going to abide undue criticism from the standing minority.

In late July I sent to the board one of my typically long reports. I had included a financial report covering the first six months of the year. We had already received \$1,827,792 in sales income against an anticipated twelve month income of \$3,600,000. We were right on target, especially since the last four months of each year were our biggest income months. Another item in the packet was a review of the WSC financial condition. It presented a fairly optimistic picture, in that the income stream was ahead of the prior year, and the decision by the Administrative Committee to make a big push to request money from the regions had not yet gone into full effect.

Included in my packet was a memorandum, written earlier in the year and modified somewhat after discussions with Bob R. It centered on a proposal to provide a much higher level of staffing for the trustees. Up to that time, we provided assistance to the trustees only through one coordinator and their secretary. This proposal, modified to meet Bob's preferences, would have required a much higher staffing commitment. In my opinion, the WSO board would have to consent to such a change in staff assignments.

Bob felt that the trustee chairperson should work directly with the Executive Director rather than a coordinator. I was reluctant, but eventually agreed to make this change. I felt it would mean a lot more work for me, but if that is what he wanted, I was willing to do it. Since this was coming in the midst of a major reshuffling of staff, I felt we could find a way to make it work.

The second major aspect of this was to change what the trustees did. Bob decided he would activate the trustee committee system outlined in the *Service Manual* and not have a trustee assigned to each conference committee. To make his idea work properly, we would need to assign our coordinators to each trustee committee and give them the same kind of service and attention that we had been giving to the conference committees. We decided to have all project coordinators attend the trustee meetings starting in August. They were to give reports on activities in their area of responsibility and be available to participate in discussions. It meant the coordinators would be working another five weekends a year, but I felt it was worth a try.

On July twenty-third Willie, Jim, Chuck and Bob R. all arrived in Paris for the European Service Conference. It was a strong crew capable of handling any world service matter that arose. One of the hot issues was how to handle the use of TV for NA Public Information efforts. Equally important were discussions about the duties of the WSO, and the feeling among many Europeans that the WSO was not

adequately serving their interests. This was especially true, they felt, in translations and literature sales.

Chuck gave a talk about the service structure. Bob agreed to talk about the Traditions. All four were engaged between meetings in answering questions on a wide range of subjects.

Jim took the lead when it came time to discuss the WSO, its duties and future plans. Before he left we had prepared a one-page statement about the ESO, stating our hopes and intentions. He presented the plan and explained that we hoped that it might happen as early as October of that year. The ESO, he explained, should produce a European edition of the *Newsline*, and perhaps even a European edition of the *World Directory*. Jamie S-H addressed these and other issues when he spoke during the discussion of the WSO. He suggested that the Europeans might better be able to take on the responsibilities of a European convention. He envisioned the creation of a committee of some stature to which the ESO might report in the future report instead of the WSO. But he made no promise.

The ESC again discussed the purpose of their meetings when it came time to plan for the next one. Some wanted a convention, and some wanted a business event like the World Service Conference, while others wanted the usual workshops like they had been having. A convention with workshops was one thing, but having a business event like the conference was considered too much of a change. They selected Barcelona, Spain for the next meeting using the existing format.

After the meeting ended on Sunday, Chuck and Bob returned home, but Jim went on to London. There he met with the UK service office board and had a long meeting with Kevin who managed their office. Jim also met with some members of the Italian fellowship who were in London on vacation. Altogether, Jim was in London for five days, meeting people, looking for a place to live, and getting a general view of the cost of living. He seemed to have diligently worked on the list of things we had established for him to pursue on this visit. One of the important things he did was to pick up the applications we would need to open a bank account so we could have an account in London when he arrived in the fall.

Willie went on to Geneva to meet with the International Labor Organization to discuss their "work place" drug recovery programs. The following day he met with the director of the International Council on Alcoholism and Addictions. Their periodic international conventions were the gathering place for decision-makers and leaders in government and non-governmental policy around the world.

Two days later, Willie kept an appointment with officers of the WHO at their headquarters in Geneva. Willie pressed the case for

getting the WHO to use its newsletters and other communications tools to inform their own agencies, workers and client government agencies about NA. His next stop was Vienna to meet with several independent agencies associated with the UN, but which were not located in New York City. His last stop was an international meeting in Oslo, Norway. Here he manned an NA exhibit and gave out thousands of pieces of literature to representatives at the conference from countries around the world.

During the following week, he attended general sessions, listening to speakers from various countries talk about addiction in their cultures. He met many of the participants and shared about the existence of NA. After two weeks on the road, he returned home to New Jersey. I would like to be able to write that these meetings with WHO, ICAA and ILO brought others in official positions into direct contact with NA and that they were supportive, but I cannot. The work started in this area was cut short after the end of the year and the opportunity to capitalize on these contacts was lost.

The three Canadians from Quebec, who had come to Paris at WSO expense, were meeting with the French translations committee to iron out their differences. They had disagreements over edits to the Basic Text and other literature. The previous fall (October 1987), we had allowed the Canadians to select a translation company in Quebec to make a draft translation of the Basic Text, minus the personal stories. That draft was then given to both the Paris and Quebec translation committees, and each took half of the translation to verify or revise. During the spring of 1988 they had traded the work between the committees and reviewed each others' work. Their meeting in Paris at this time was to finalize the translations. It took ten days, but they were all satisfied when it was over.

Throughout the summer, I was frequently engaged in conversations with Donna and Stu about the status of things in the New Jersey office. It became clear that they had decided that they were opposed to the venture and didn't have the same level of confidence in Willie that I had. I did my best to keep them informed, tried to keep an open mind myself, while at the same time keeping Willie pumped up and hard at work. On the last score, I had no need to worry, as Willie had shown he was a self-starter and always on the job. I didn't require that he send time sheets that reported the hours he worked, but the evidence was clear that he worked nearly sixty hours each week. He was determined to demonstrate that he was doing a lot of valuable work and capable of operating independently. In my view he succeeded.

Bob started the August trustee meeting with an announcement that he intended to put the trustees on track by implementing the committee system outlined in the *Service Manual*. The announcement was electric. He described the support we had worked out to make their committees productive. He assigned a chairperson for each committee and other trustees to serve under them. He made a determined effort to balance the committees in order to get the most out of them. He wanted them to provide leadership to the fellowship. Gone were the days, he said, when the trustees would not fully understand what they were supposed to do and how they were going to do it.

He organized the Internal and External Affairs Committees into one unit, with Greg P. as the chairperson. The Policy and Structure Committees were combined with the Training and Education Committee under Sally E. as chairperson. John F. was to head up the Literature Review Committee. They met on Saturday in those subcommittees and began to wrestle with goals and objectives, and to figure out how to interface with the conference committees. They soon decided to reduce trustee involvement in the work of the conference committees. Only four trustees were sent to the subsequent conference workshops, and they were instructed to avoid the traditional involvement. We assigned our senior staff to participate in one or more of the trustee committee meetings.

Bob expected it to take about a year for the committees to really understand what they should be doing. And although Bob was an impatient man from time to time, he understood that only time could make the committees work. It was a far-thinking decision on his part to move the trustees in this new direction. We were both hopeful his foresight and understanding of what the trustees should be doing would pay off.

Later in the month, with Bob's reluctant consent, we reassigned Steve S., who had been working with the trustees for two years, to other duties and decided that I would work with Bob myself. We also moved Cindy S. from PI coordinator to become my secretary, working with both Bob and me. The trustees and office board would be treated in an equal manner, both having direct access to me.

When the office board met in August we tackled a long list of important issues. First, we authorized our accounting consultant to conduct a full financial audit of WSO books at the end of the year. It had been my plan to move the office a little closer, over each of the past five years, to the time when a full audit could be performed. I was aware of what a full audit required, and knew that in the early years we would have failed a full audit. Our failure would not have been for mismanagement of money, but for lack of established written

practices that were based on actual needs and reflected what we actually did (which would be based on sound financial management practices). In earlier years we frequently changed procedures, and there were some things we simply didn't do that were required. We didn't use purchase orders to show proper preauthorization for purchases, for example. However, I had confidence that as we went along, those policies would emerge.

By 1988, we had developed our financial policies and procedures such that a full audit could be done. I felt that a full audit would bring to the surface the remaining defects in our financial management. About seven months before, I had an accountant come in and investigate our procedures, policies and practices to find any weaknesses. He gave me a list of thirty-one separate recommendations. I gave that list to the board along with a plan to correct each item. By the August meeting I believed we were ready.

A full audit would also remove another irritation that continued to arise at each conference, as the standing minority expressed doubts about our financial management. Conducting an audit this year, and possibly on alternate years after that, would help keep us in order, yet not be terribly expensive. We also needed full audits in order to give confidence to a bank or property owner in the event that we would begin to realize our hope of buying a building for our new offices.

On the subject of a building, I presented to the board a proposal from the owner of the building we then occupied. I had shared with him our desire to relocate and consolidate our operations into one building, with the possibility of purchasing it. He proposed a deal where he would build a building and lease it to us with an option for us to buy it within three years. The board liked the idea and gave the go-ahead to pursue it.

During the summer we studied typesetting equipment that could replace the system we had purchased several years earlier. The existing equipment broke down frequently and the company provided less than desirable repair service. I recommended to the board and they approved purchase of new equipment from the most reliable company in the business. For years after I left, this new equipment was successfully preparing our publications for printing. There was a considerable learning-curve for our operator, but David M. mastered it well.

When the board considered personnel matters, I reported we were having a hard time finding a replacement literature coordinator. Danette had departed, and we had interviewed several prospective candidates, but nothing worked out. I informed the board that we had hired Ann R. from Arizona to become the coordinator for PI and the Committee on NA Service. About finding the new assistant ad-

ministrator, I explained we had received applications and were ready to submit to them the testing we had developed for that job.

The board decided to have posters made of the Third Step Prayer, and they adopted a motion to be published in the next *Agenda Report*. The motion would authorize the WSO to include in its inventory a variety of general merchandise such as jewelry or other items with the NA logo. The discussion of this had been going on for several years. Our attorney had recently discovered that if the fellowship did not sell these miscellaneous items that contained the logo, others could do so without our permission, and develop legal rights to use our logo on those products. The action at this meeting was the first step in bringing under control the issues surrounding the use of the NA logo.

There were a number of options for the long-term production and sale of such items. The office could do these things, as the motion clearly permitted, or we could enter into license agreements authorizing others to do it. The objective was not to make money, but to extend protection and control of the logo. I had already engaged in discussions with some of the manufacturers of jewelry, and most had agreed to cooperate with us. Each was hopeful we would purchase some jewelry from them once the conference gave permission; when the time came, we did just that.

As a final important action, the board authorized money to bring a selected list of fellowship members to a special meeting of the Committee on NA Service. The committee wanted to gather input from a panel of service leaders that would not otherwise be likely to attend a Committee on NA Service meeting. The committee felt this input was essential to their development of the sections pertaining to area and regional committees. The meeting was held in late September.

The Literature Review Committee held another of its work sessions in August to work on the Steps and Traditions materials. Vince was searching for the best way to convert the massive input on the Steps and Traditions into a publication that would be practical and easy to read. Everyone had been wanting an answer to this one since the conference shot down the approval form sixteen months earlier. He found the answer, as he told it, quite by accident.

He concluded that the work should be done by a small committee working with a volunteer member who had exceptionally good writing skills. The idea was to have discussions with the volunteer present. Between meetings, the volunteer would compose the material from that discussion and send it to the committee for study. At the next meeting they would review the draft and discuss the next step or part of the step in a logical sequence. He found a member with about seven

years clean time who not only had the skills, but was interested in volunteering.

In August, they tried the first of these sessions with a discussion of the First Step. A working group of the Literature Review Committee met to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the Chicago Draft. The volunteer made many notes, and after studying the material, developed a draft for the Literature Review Committee to consider. They were greatly impressed. It was exciting enough that they decided to continue this way, at least to refine the first three Steps. In a subsequent report to the fellowship, Vince briefly summarized what was going on, but couched it in such a way that few recognized the old "massed meeting approach to writing" was not going to be used. Despite efforts by the standing minority to force defeat of the approval form, in part on the basis of using a professional, the committee seemed to be going in that direction again. Only this time they were using a volunteer who as also a member of NA. Over the months that followed, the committee met several times. By the end of the year, they were nearly finished with three Steps.

The World Convention Corporation met a week after the WSO Board. It was an uneventful meeting, except it was acknowledged that only one bid for the convention to be held in 1990 had been received by the deadline. By default, Portland, Oregon would host the convention that year. The board also clarified the process for determining speakers for conventions. Most of the meeting was spent discussing the 1988 convention in Anaheim, then only weeks away. Planning for the Anaheim convention had been a lot easier than previous conventions because it was just forty miles away. The host committee meetings were held even closer, so it took only thirty minutes to get there rather than hours in an airplane.

Early in the planning we decided to invite anyone who came to the convention to come and visit the office. We felt this was a good idea for us, so as to meet more of our members and for average members to gain a better perspective of what the office was and who worked there. We knew a lot of people would rent cars and drive out, but we decided to offer a one-day bus outing to make it easier on them and us. We scheduled two bus routes, so that we would not have all the members at the office at one time. One group came directly to the office, then drove back through Hollywood Boulevard and then to the city of Venice before going back to the convention. The others went to Hollywood and Venice before coming to the office. It was a great idea, and made it possible for a lot more people to visit the office. Dee and the staff who had to remain at the office to serve as guides and hosts

did a tremendous job. Over two hundred members visited the office on these bus trips.

The convention was the most elaborate so far. When it opened on September first, nearly five thousand had already pre-registered. Kicking things off that evening, Billie P. (Washington DC.) and Mike S. (California) shared the podium. Friday night Mary C. (Pennsylvania) and Mark Z. (Kansas) shared the podium. On Saturday, the main speaker was Mac M. (Hawaii) who had been the convention chairperson in 1975. Mac spoke to the largest group ever assembled in an NA meeting up to that time, and in a meeting room almost as large as three football fields. Nearly 4,300 people were seated for dinner before the meeting started. There were another 5,000 who came in after dinner to listen to Mac talk about his crazy days.

The following morning, Susie H. (England) was the spirituality speaker. One of the features of this convention was the number and variety of things in the program that were not recovery or service related. There were so many people in attendance that four events, a top 40 band, a DJ dance, a talent showcase of performing NA members, and a comedy show were all running simultaneously after the main speaker meetings.

Nearly 9,000 people registered, and it was estimated another 1,000 were also in attendance. The chairperson of this convention had been Janice W., who performed admirably. The vice-chairperson was Valerie R. Both women were a pleasure to work with. My one regret was that Vida M. was in line to chair a Southern California convention, and had to be passed over for this one because she worked at the office. As much as it was a joy to work with Janice, I would have loved to see Vida get her chance to chair a world convention. This was an example of our concern that some claim of impropriety might have been lodged against Vida or the office. For the interests of showing that the host committee chairperson was not a WSO lackey, Vida had to sacrifice the honor and distinction that would have been hers.

Financially, the convention was a great success. A little over ninety-three thousand dollars in profit was made from the event, which made it possible to adequately make preparations for the next five years of conventions.

Even as the convention was taking place, I sent a notice to the office directors about the search to find an administrative assistant to handle shipping, accounting and related activities. As it turned out three staff members had spoken to me about it, but only one, Anthony E., actually applied for the job. We received no other applications by the deadline of September first. I notified the board that wanted to

go ahead and promote Anthony to the position. I followed up on this with a conference phone call and received concurrence from the board. Anthony was pleased, and so was everyone else.

Since we shifted Steve S. from Group Services to PI, Anthony's promotion left us with three coordinator positions open: Group Services, H&I and Literature. We did our best to put the word out that we needed new coordinators, but it took months to fill the positions and a few more months to get the people moved. We were without adequate staffing for nearly six months. One thing that helped was that we moved Freddie A., who had been in our shipping department, into the Group Services Department to help out. He had expressed interest in an administrative position, and we felt he had plenty of ability for it. He worked under Steve S., who was then doing double duty in Group Services and PI. Freddie is a quiet guy with a tremendous sense of humor and good communications skills. It was some months before we hired a replacement for Steve, but Freddie did a great job in the interim.

Later in September, the conference committees gathered in Detroit for the next workshop. Anthony came to this workshop and those that followed. Having him was simply another excellent resource that made the workshops even better and relieved me of some of the strain. Several of the committees simply went about doing their business and got things done: Public Information, Literature and the H&I Committees most notably. The PI Committee, for example, discussed the idea of having portable PI display cases for use by regional and area PI events. We obtained a supply of the display cases, and over the following years nearly twenty-five of them were purchased through the office.

However, there were two meetings where things didn't go very well as far as I was concerned. First, the Additional Needs Committee continued to march toward making a new bureaucracy. Second, I was dragged into the Policy Committee meeting because they were discussing something that bordered on an office matter. At issue was a decision by the Administrative Committee to withhold selling cassette tape copies of the master tape recording of the previous conference. The standing minority members of the Policy Committee (actually a majority of the committee) were working themselves up to try and force the Administrative Committee to back down and allow the tapes to be sold. After listening to the discussion for about five minutes, (I was told they had been at it for about an hour), I got a chance to speak and I blew my top.

The objective of the standing minority was to "prove," by taking the tape recordings around the country, that the RSR's had been bamboozled and arm-twisted to violate their regions' group conscience

when they voted against the motion that would have denied anyone but RSR's a vote at the conference. Several people had asked the office to sell them copies of the tape. I had responded, back in June when the requests came, saying that the Administrative Committee had control over that. I could sell them only if they said I could. The Administrative Committee had said no.

I told the committee, "I find your whole discussion of the issue M---- F---- revolting. I cannot not understand why you had discussed the matter for more than five minutes when there were more important things to do. And why anyone would suggest spending \$175 for the set of thirty-five tapes instead of literature to hand out to newcomers is beyond my understanding. I want the Policy Committee to tell me how many addicts lives will be lost or saved because we discussed the issue of the tapes or who votes? Why should the fellowship permit these types of discussions to divert conference attention or WSO staff attention, or keep regions and areas from working on our primary purpose of carrying the message of recovery to those who are still suffering from addiction? I fail to see how many addicts have lost their lives or continued to suffer in active addiction because someone votes or does not vote at the conference! How many addicts will be saved from more suffering if the policy changes?"

"When your region has too many volunteers to help on the phonelines, and there is a month-long waiting list to get on the phoneline list, or when each area has too many volunteers to attend H&I panels that are carried into every hospital and institution, then there is time to listen to this B.S., and to listen to tapes of meetings long past where a decision was already made by group conscience.

"The issue of who votes at the conference, in my opinion, is a battle between NA politicians. Between those who believe they can get more power if the system changes and those who see no value in the discussion at all. If anyone can prove to me that on a twelve step call to a newcomer, discussing who votes at the conference will help them keep clean, then I think the discussion should continue.

"If during the past ten years that the policy has remained in place, the fellowship had been falling apart or not carrying the message to the newcomer, then I believe we should spend the time to find out what part of the problem is attributable to the voting issue. However, the fellowship has continued to grow, from about three hundred meetings to over 16,000, so I fail to see why we should discuss the issue at all. I have instructed the office staff to refrain from future discussions and correspondence about these tapes or who votes at the conference. I hope you will join us in putting aside such B.S. and spend our time on matters that help oldtimers and newcomers alike to recover from addiction."

I was truly pissed; I stormed out of the meeting. They let the issue drop and went on to something else, so I was told later. I was also pissed at the trustees over this issue. From time to time individuals and committees went crazy like the Policy Committee and wasted time and resources rather than doing things that truly needed to be done. And some trustees were silent witnesses if not actually willing participants. It was the job of the trustees, I felt then and continue to feel, to put an end to such foolishness. Apparently the standing minority got the message in this case, since the issue about the tapes soon died. However, it was the duty of the trustees to be the heavy hand in such matters, not mine. But usually the trustees didn't have the guts or the sense to do it. As a result of this continuing failure, the fellowship wasted tens of thousands of dollars, and thousands of hours of effort simply catering to the illogical, unproductive games played by some individuals and the standing minority.

I found it interesting that Ruben F., the Policy Committee chairperson didn't even mention the issue in his next report to the fellowship, published soon after the workshop. Meanwhile Billy Z. and his committee were getting the personal attention of Bob R. Just as I had done long before, Bob came to the conclusion that the Additional Needs Committee was going to use a lot of resources and produce very little. Bob spent some time talking with Billy and others and began to get the committee to wonder whether they should continue or not. Bob was so successful that Billy and the committee discussed it at the Detroit meeting and included the question in his next report to the fellowship.

In October, I prepared a report for the board concerning the nearly ten months of activity of the New Jersey office. Unfortunately so many other things had been going on that I had not visited Willie enough to fully satisfy the board's concerns for the office and its value. In one of the few actions that I later regretted, I wrote a lukewarm report that unfortunately undermined some of the confidence in the venture that board members still had. I expressed less than complete knowledge of how things were going, and suggested renewal of the lease for a period less than a year. Perhaps bending to the pressure from Donna and Stu, I suggested a joint evaluation of Willie and the entire venture be conducted by myself and several board members. It was one of the few times I admitted being unprepared about one of our major endeavors.

Included in the report was a detailed financial report of expenditures for the New Jersey office to that point. The total cost to us for the ten months was \$44,515, a figure less than I had expected, but more than many of the board felt we could sustain. This covered all expenditures from rent and telephone to Willie's salary and that of

his clerical staff. Unfortunately, for those opposed to the venture, nearly any amount of money was too much. I enclosed a report from Willie that gave considerable detail about the meetings he attended, the organizations he met with and the PI activities he had participated in. I was amazed at the variety and extent of the work he had accomplished, and quite pleased by it all.

About the tenth of October, Jim finally boarded a plane and was off to London. We had a lot riding on this, and he knew he was under a lot of pressure. We had been touting this office for over a year, and the expectations were high. But I had few doubts at the time about the plan, the timing, or the selection of Jim for the job. During the weeks just prior to his departure, we had finally dedicated some time together to the ESO. We worked out an outline of each task we needed to accomplish and placed them in sequence along a timeline. The key elements were for him to find a place to live, (large enough for him to work out of for at least six months), immediately install a phone and mail out the first European newsletter. Until he found an apartment, or "flat" as they call it in London, we were going to pay to keep him in a hotel. It took almost five weeks to find and get moved into a flat.

Unfortunately he ran into troubles as soon as he arrived. Getting the bank account established and then resupplied by electronic transfers proved to be more complicated than we had expected. It seemed to him that English banks simply didn't want to be bothered with an American branch business account. In the months that followed, getting money there when it was needed was always a problem. I believe it was really no problem, but simply a business tactic the English bank used so as to hold our money for five or ten working days while they invested it in short term money markets before releasing it to us. Jim and I talked on the phone every four or five days for the following six weeks.

At the office board meeting at the end of October, we had a lengthy discussion about Canada. In the light of concurrent discussions in the Committee on NA Service, the board concluded an effort should be made to get the Canadians together to discuss matters that pertained only to Canada. Although literature distribution concerns were foremost in our minds, there were other things they should discuss among themselves in the areas of PI, H&I and possibly a Canadian national meeting. After the meeting we set about organizing an effort to host such a meeting the following year. The board considered and approved again the motion to permit the office to engage in the production and sale of non-literature merchandise commonly found in NA conventions.

Sadly, I had to report that we could not find a suitable location to move to, and our prospective builder/landlord had exhausted every alternative. And to add to the disappointment, we had to put our plans to move on hold while other priorities were addressed.

At the time of the board meeting, the Fifth Edition of the Text was nearly ready to be printed at the factory. We expected to run out of hardcover copies of the Fourth Edition before the Fifth Editions arrived, but we expected to have about four thousand copies of the paperback Fourth Edition left over. Knowing we were not going to be able to sell these left over Fourth Editions, the board decided to sell them to the H&I Committee at a discount, which we soon did.

Prior to the meeting, I had mailed to the board the draft of a plan for finding my successor. I had proposed that a standing committee be appointed each year, just to be on hand when needed. It was to be a balanced committee, with two each of the following: RSR's, trustees, WSC officers (or committee chairpersons), current office directors, and former directors. The committee would work to be ready to find a successor at any time, in the event of my death, removal or announced departure. Although it was discussed, the board took no action, and the proposal was shelved. Concerning other personnel matters, there was better news. Steve L., a Northern California member, was selected from among a number of applicants to become the new H&I Coordinator. Steve is a methodical and rather quiet person, but a hard worker. From Austin, Texas we found and hired Mary V. as the Literature Coordinator. Mary had been an RSR from Texas, and had served on the Committee on NA Service. She was bright, personable, and rather out-spoken. Both Mary and Steve arrived to work about the first of the new year, and made a considerable impact on the office during the time I was there.

In my report, I expressed the need to have all of world services begin to discuss the total cost, as well as the cost-effectiveness, of what we were doing. It seemed to me that the conference committee system was an ever-growing monster. It was consuming larger amounts of money and staff time, while not producing nearly as much as should be expected. Many of the committees were encouraging regional and area people to attend, at their own expense, just to be part of the event. This increased our financial support requirements, as we needed ever-larger space to house their meetings. At the same time, this practice diverted region and area finances away from other needs, including contributions to the conference budget. I suggested something needed to be done to put a ceiling on conference budget growth.

Among the business decisions was an action to extend our New Jersey office lease for three months and to have our next board

meeting there. This discussion was based on growing opposition to the office by Donna and Stu. Their lack of support for Willie, and their desire to close the office, was growing even clearer. It took some effort on the part of several directors and myself to avoid closing the office on January first and letting Willie go. The board resolved to conduct a more thorough review of the New Jersey activities at its January meeting.

On the international scene, George had discovered the Brazilians were planning to include stories of their own members in their translation of the Text. It was true we had previously decided not to translate American stories in the Text into other languages, but there was no procedure to approve stories written in another language. And to make things more complicated, the translation was being done by the group in Brazil calling themselves TA. The discussion resulted in a conviction that we needed to resolve the differences in Brazil between the NA and TA factions and get one NA fellowship there.

In early November I went to Orlando, Florida for the fall meeting of the Convention Corporation. It was a productive Friday afternoon meeting, although Stu and I had an interesting confrontation. While we were discussing the budget proposal I had sent to the board before the meeting, Stu unexpectedly challenged me as to why we didn't have anything that related to long-term financial planning for the Convention Corporation — a five-year plan, for example. I was more than embarrassed and miffed. We spoke to each other regularly during the week at the office, and he could have expressed his ideas or concerns in advance. It was an attack that took everyone by surprise, but the rest of the meeting went well. I gave him a five-year plan about a week later (but accurately forecasting that far ahead with so many variables was very hard). He responded in such a nonchalant manner it was as though he didn't understand why I had made it. But as it turned out, the first three years of that draft were pretty close to the mark.

Two bids for the 1991 convention were reviewed (Montreal and Toronto) and they chose Toronto. Stu was elected chairperson to replace Steve B., who was retiring from the position and from the corporation. He was to take a two-year vacation from service before being elected as a trustee. Stu was going to be both easy and hard to work with. Although he was predictable most of the time, he had another side that was more impulsive and hostile, as demonstrated at this meeting.

On Saturday, the host committee for the 1989 convention had their meeting. Their subcommittees worked with the WCC board members assigned to them. The host committee had so many experi-

enced convention workers that the Orlando convention was expected to go off without any catastrophes.

After Orlando, I flew to Crawfordsville to oversee the printing. It was a productive visit. Even though I was there to observe the first printing of the Fifth Edition of the Text by this company, my first meeting with plant representatives included ordering paper for the second printing and setting time in their schedule for the second, third and fourth printings to be done during the coming year.

The printing was accomplished, for the most part, in about thirty-eight hours. I observed the printing at various times during that day, that evening and following morning to verify the quality of the imaging. When I left, they had printed fifty thousand copies of first two thirds of the book. Assembly of the book would take place several weeks later. We didn't have anyone come back to observe it. Their quality control and supervisory personnel did a good job of looking after those details. The books would not be shipped until December fifteenth and would not arrive at the WSO for a week after that.

From Crawfordsville I went to New Jersey to spend two days with Willie. We arranged for the three-month extension of the lease. We outlined goals he was to achieve, established an evaluation process to be conducted jointly by a board member and myself, and then made arrangements for the Board of Directors to meet in a nearby hotel in January. While I was in New Jersey, I learned from George and Anthony that a building on our block was going to be vacant soon, and we might be able to lease it. I was excited that we might find a solution to our overcrowding without having to move. We eventually rented this building and had some remodeling done.

Thursday afternoon I arrived in Dallas for the third conference workshop of the year. It was better than most conference workshops, though not without its share of issues. During the JAC meeting on Thursday night, I presented my concerns and those of the board about the overall financial planning for world services. I challenged the effectiveness of what world services was doing for all the money spent. The matter was not resolved, of course, but the JAC seemed to understand the issue and agreed that it merited further study.

Fortunately most of the committee efforts that year were productive and straightforward. The Additional Needs Committee was still a pain in the side, although they didn't have enough committee members at this workshop to have a meeting. It was a disappointment to Billy Z., but not to me.

Anthony also came to the workshop. Although he didn't have direct responsibility to work with any of the conference committees, his presence was strongly felt. He often reminded me of the teacher who

roamed and controlled the halls in my high school days. He could spot a problem and make decisions to resolve it in a flash. He and George worked so closely together you would think one could read the other's mind. At long last, I could honestly feel the office was able to meet every need a committee might uncover or create.

Bob R. had come to each of the conference workshops during the year as well, and his presence was even more significant. Although he was constantly barraged by questions from committees, regular members were with him all the time just learning about world services from the grand master. His influence was calming and disarming. I recall many occasions when a committee member talked to him about some hair-brained idea they intended to pursue, and when they finished talking with Bob, they understood their idea had more holes in it than there were stars in the night sky. Bob and I would use these weekends to spend a lot of time together talking, between interruptions, about what he thought or felt concerning the trustees and world services. Throughout the years these had been good times for both of us.

I returned to Los Angeles on Sunday night, and on Monday I began to prepare for the trustee meeting the following weekend. Unfortunately the agreement Bob and I had reached months earlier for me to work directly with him had not worked out. I continued to be so busy, and gone so often, that most of his communications had been through Cindy, my assistant; he was not very happy. But we spent one evening together working out his agenda and plans for the meeting.

His biggest concern was over trustee financing. He resented the fact that the conference chairperson could control some trustee activities by simply claiming the conference was broke. Bob felt the trustees alone should have the ability to control their spending, not the conference or the office. His preference was to have funding come from the World Convention, and if that didn't fly, then from the WSO (without the ability of the WSO board to intervene). If funding must continue to come from the conference, then it should be separate from the regular conference budget and controlled by the trustees.

It was true that some trustee plans had been abandoned each year for lack of funds. The compromise between the conference resource needs and the trustee resource needs was usually worked out. Everybody cut a little, and through a fairly commonly accepted annual priority list, everybody reduced their meeting plans and expenditures. Bob was growing impatient with this system because some meetings were funded that he considered "useless" while the trustees couldn't get enough money to meet and properly refine their purpose.

I believe this is why he joined the struggle to terminate the Additional Needs Committee.

The next day, acting as his assistant, I drafted a plan for his consideration that would accomplish the stable trustee funding he wanted. The memo suggested that the WSO underwrite the trustee budget from WSO funds. If there were conference funds at the end of the year to get reimbursement, then it would be made. But if no reimbursement were possible, the WSO would simply write it off. He presented this idea at the meeting during the weekend and proposed that the idea be put forth at the conference in the form of a motion.

Of course the big problem in this idea would be to get WSO board support. When I discussed it with the board, understandably they were unreceptive. It took all the muscle that Donna and Stu could muster to convince the trustees to abandon the idea. I often wondered how they thought of the idea years later when they were both trustees and had to contend with the shortage of money for trustee meetings.

Three issues dominated the meeting when Bob called the trustees to order: trustee funding, writing the Traditions portion of *It Works*, and what the trustees should be doing. The trustees supported his efforts to obtain secure funding. On the *It Works* issue, there was immediate consensus that the trustees should be writing the Traditions portion. When it was proposed to the full board, their eyes lit up and there was an audible "yes, that's right, the trustees should be writing them!" It was not going to be an easy task, but they were unified in deciding it was the right decision.

About finding a consensus of what the purpose of the trustees should be, there was a wide range of answers. During this meeting and for the next few months, this was the primary focus of their energies. Each trustee wrote their ideas and the staff were also enlisted in this discussion. Altogether nearly a hundred pages of text was generated, circulated and debated. When the trustees met next, they continued the discussion.

On Tuesday following the trustee meeting, I flew to London as the first leg of a lengthy journey. I was pleased to discover upon my arrival in London that Jim had found a place to live. He was subletting a flat near the Chelsea district. It was a nice area for both residence and temporary business. Jim informed me that office rental costs he was finding were nearly twice what we had expected. He took me to several places where office space could be obtained, but I was not happy about the choices at all. It seemed to me that he had not really put much effort into it. For the moment, I let it pass. About the other things on the work plan, he had achieved very little.

I tried my best to motivate him, but went away more than a little pessimistic.

We traveled together to Dublin to meet with the Irish fellowship and introduce Jim to their members. It was a pleasant visit and Jim got along quite well with them. Before I left for home, we went over the work plan again and he promised to work tirelessly to find an office and get connected with the fellowship in London and throughout Europe.

On my return from London, I went through New Jersey to work with Willie for a few days. I went on to Boston to visit friends, and then drove with one of them across country back to LA. I had been hopeful it would be a relaxing venture, but arrived home cranky and tired.

In November, Ron prepared a lengthy report about the magazine for the *Newsline*. Since Ron had come to work at the WSO he had been one of the unsung heroes. He ran his department with relatively little supervision. When he had suggestions for improving the magazine (and he often did), he presented them logically and convincingly. Over the years he had experimented with various efforts to increase the subscription rate and readership. He proposed changes to the content and format and usually got his way. The biggest battle was to get the conference to acknowledge that the magazine was a "conference-sanctioned publication," even though it wasn't "conference-approved literature." Giving it that special designation, he argued, would clarify the issue of whether the magazine could and should be used by committees in carrying out their mission, particularly H&I and PI Committees.

Although each issue of the magazine was not conference approved like pamphlets, Ron held, it had gone through two review processes, including the editorial board, which contained a trustee and a conference-appointee. He had been scrupulous in keeping magazine content within common boundaries of accepted NA philosophy. His improvements in content and editing had truly produced an excellent magazine. In recent years he had broadened the content, with motions adopted by the conference, to include current events and an opinion section.

In this report, he addressed the transition from having the magazine distribution handled by our staff (which it had been since we took over full control) to being accomplished by a fulfillment company. Although there were to be some transition problems, he wrote, in time those would pass and the fellowship would be satisfied with the change. He was right, as usual. His efforts at increased circulation had paid off, because the end of year financial analysis showed

the magazine was almost self-supporting. This was a major accomplishment and a demonstration of his management ability and editorial skill.

While in Europe, I had written a report of my findings and activities. I sent it along with a proposed budget for the coming year to the board. I also reported that we were sold out of the Fourth Editions. This brought the number of Basic Texts sold to a total of 942,477 copies since it was first put on sale in 1983. Because of this, I wrote, we would sell our one millionth copy from among the books then being assembled in Crawfordsville. I proposed that we publish a commemorative edition with a different cover and a commemorative page inserted. We had set aside 5,000 copies from the current printing to make into a paperback edition. I suggested we use these for the commemorative edition and print the paperback books with the printing to take place in February.

The proposed budget was crowded with notes related to the expectation that our expense might exceed our income. Total income was projected on the basis of percentage increases ranging from ten to twenty-seven percent. I suggested a twenty percent increase was the largest we might likely expect, and that is what the board adopted. Based on income of \$4,071,091 and expense of \$3,922,142, we would show a surplus of \$93,949 at year's end.

However, this did not include the operational costs for the New Jersey office or the activities in London. I reported our financial support for the conference was likely to exceed \$150,000, operating cost for the New Jersey office about \$145,000 and the London office cost seemed to be creeping higher than I wanted to admit at the time, so we needed to cut something loose. We simply could not do all we wanted to do.

As the end of the year approached, a contractor we had hired was making alterations to our new building down the street. The new facility would provide space for the growing number of staff members we accumulated in 1988 and 1989. It also had space for a conference room large enough for meetings of the board, trustees, JAC and most of the conference committees. Our staff began to occupy the building in early January.

In the last *Fellowship Report* for the year, Chuck wrote about the number of people who had attended the Dallas workshop as observers at the expense of regions. He pointed out, as I had to the directors a month earlier, that a lot of money seemed to be needlessly invested in sending these observers. Altogether there were nearly 145 people who were there just to see the show because they were not participants. Although some were local members, a lot had flown in from

other places. Using conservative mathematics, he showed where that meeting alone probably cost \$47,000 to regional budgets and personal expenditures. He felt that money would have been better spent in other ways.

An extension of this matter was a decision by the Administrative Committee to have a meeting in 1989 to discuss among the JAC, trustees and office directors what world services is doing vs. what it should be doing. This was Chuck's response to the discussions I was pushing about making sure all the money and effort spent on world services was moving NA in the right direction. This meeting was later scheduled for March. It may well have been the early catalysts for the inventory process the fellowship embarked on two-years later.

Ed D., writing as second vice-chairperson, addressed the issues under discussion in the Committee on NA Service. He reported the committee had been spending time developing a body of ideas under the working title, "Principles of Service," that might become the underpinning of the work the committee was doing. The committee was attempting to identify the spiritual and philosophical concepts underlying service, and seeking to define NA's service efforts in these terms rather than proceeding to simply reorganize the structures that already existed. It was a novel approach that, if successful, might provide for a more spiritually based body of trusted servants.

Sherie B., the conference treasurer, included another detailed financial report. Sherie, like her predecessor, had been a meticulous trusted servant. She worked closely with Hazel M. of our staff in keeping track of the daily financial transactions for the conference. They were a good team. Sherie reported that there was an actual cash balance as of the end of November, but reminded everyone that the majority of that money was needed for the conference meeting in April.

As the year came to a close, I was able to report total income for 1988 was \$4,199,117 (before discounts and allowances). After adding miscellaneous income and our own production costs, we netted \$1,935,679. General expenses for operation of the office (not connected with shipping and receiving) came to \$1,772,178. This produced a net "profit" for the year of \$163,501. While it was true that at the end of the year we had a considerable financial reserve, that was mostly because of the surge in sales connected to the pending delivery of the Fifth Edition.

The new year began with the JAC meeting at the office. Right away problems developed. Chuck and several others were unhappy with some of the motions from regions and conference committees that were slated to be included in the *Agenda Report*. Lacking clear foundation in the *Temporary Working Guide to the Service Structure*,

they decided to include a report from the JAC to address concerns about those motions. In effect, the JAC report urged the fellowship to reject or modify or send the motions back to committee. This was a very "gutsy" thing, and I still applaud Chuck for leading the JAC to make that decision. The Policy Committee (still weighted with standing minority membership) offered one motion, the Literature Committee offered one, and there were three from the PI Committee that were targeted.

Despite JAC reservation about these five motions, there was still plenty for the fellowship to wrestle with. Altogether there were thirty-seven motions from boards and committees and twenty-two from regions. The motions and attachment, including complete publications of the *H&I Handbook*, *Literature Committee Handbook* and addenda from the PI Committee, were published on time — about three hundred pages of printed material. The JAC was also inventive, offering three motions of their own. The most important was to increase the clean time requirement for conference officers to eight years. More controversial was their proposal to empower the JAC to reject a motion proposed by a committee or board if less than two-thirds of the JAC was in favor of it being in the *Agenda Report*.

The Administrative Committee also proposed three motions, none of which was particularly earth-shattering. The Policy Committee offered eight motions and one request for input. Only one of the motions carried much value: a description of regional motions and the procedure for handling them. In part it was intended to clarify procedure and respond to complaints, mostly from the standing minority, that their motions were lost in the shuffle of the conference and that their motions were not treated fairly in the agenda or at the conference.

The Literature Committee offered a revised *Literature Committee Handbook*, along with a number of amendments to existing literature guidelines. The PI and H&I Committees offered a series of housekeeping motions to their policies and procedures. The H&I Committee also proposed a complete new handbook of its own. The motion that brought a smile to my face was from the Additional Needs Committee. After some hard bargaining, Bob R. had overcome Billy Z.'s reluctance to consider allowing the committee to disband. Bob, with the support of a lot of people — myself and most of the trustees included — had convinced Billy that an ad hoc committee of the trustees would be able to address and respond to the "Additional Needs" members as effectively as, but less expensively than, the current ad hoc committee. Very likely, Billy himself would have been appointed as a non-trustee member of the committee. Regardless of

the incentive, the Additional Needs Committee proposed that their committee be dissolved. I was elated!

The cost equalization matter was handled by including a draft plan, but the JAC refused to propose it as a motion. In a companion report, the JAC addressed the issue of simultaneous translations at the conference so non-English speaking members could participate. It suggested that the cost for such simultaneous translations might be as high as \$120,000. Less would be needed if fewer languages were targeted, or fewer hours were worked, or similar restrictions were imposed. In an attempt to deflect the slough of regional motions — twenty-two in all — from getting to the floor of the conference, the JAC included all the regional motions at the back of the *Agenda Report*. They indicated that they had all been assigned to conference committees for study. Altogether, the agenda did not include any earth-shattering new issues. Still, as usual, the standing minority was going to wage war one more time.

The office board met in Secaucus, New Jersey on the second weekend of January. On the day before the board met, Jamie, Martin and I worked with Willie to review the activities of the office. Throughout the day, Willie showed letters, reports, communications and other materials that evidenced the work he had performed. It was a convincing show that Willie had done more than he was asked, and was eager to continue.

When a report was made the following day at the meeting, the disagreement that ensued was not so much about how Willie had performed, or what he had achieved. The criticism was directed more at my management of the project than Willie's performance. The concerns seemed to be a perceived lack of direct focus on the project, a lack of direct supervision by me over the project, lack of relationship to the work of the WSC PI Committee, and uncertainty about the value of the office to the long-term goals of NA or the WSO. Although these lines of attack were different from what had been at issue before, I was glad they finally understood that Willie had worked hard and done more than he was asked or expected to do.

It seemed strange, however, that the directors who were most vocal in questioning our ability to manage the New Jersey office were also the most anxious to get the London office going. No resolution was achieved in the first round of discussion. After dinner, the adoption of the budget came in sections, in accordance with the way I had structured the budget. The general budget was easily adopted. The budget for the European Service Office came next, and after discussing some board members' concerns about my ability to properly manage the ESO from Van Nuys, the ESO budget was adopted with none voting against it.

Consideration of the New Jersey office budget then followed. Donna, Stu and Bob McD. were in favor of discontinuing the New Jersey office, while Jamie, Oliver and Mark D. were most strongly in favor of keeping the New Jersey office going. After two hours of unrestrained debate, the budget was voted on. Six voted to approve the budget and four voted against. Discussion continued, however; after a while, and a moment of silent meditation, another vote was conducted. This time there was a five vote tie, and the budget was not adopted. After another quick matter, the board adjourned at 12:25 in the morning. It was a sad ending to a project that held great promise. The doors that were open to us with the WHO and the NGO were slowly closed. It is still my belief that we lost the opportunity to reach tens of thousands of addicts with relatively little cost because we closed the New Jersey office.

In addition to the budget, a lot of other work was accomplished. To celebrate having sold one million copies of the Basic Text, the board adopted a motion to make five thousand of the Fifth Edition as commemorative copies. A special cover was to be selected, a silver foil affixed to the page edges, and each copy would be hand numbered. The board wanted a system to assure anonymity in the sale of numbered copies, and each copy was to be sold for thirty-five dollars. The extra income was to be set aside for translation expenses.

In discussions about "merchandise" I advised the board about a company in Northern California which was producing jewelry with the logo on it. Our attorney was preparing a letter requesting that they discontinue. They also voted again to include in the *Agenda Report* the motion allowing the office to sell jewelry and other merchandise. In recognition of the fact that I had not really been successful in dedicating the time necessary to support the trustee chair, the board authorized a new coordinator position to work exclusively with the trustees.

Jim had come over from London to attend the board meeting and give a first-hand report on his activities. Several members of the board spoke to me after the meeting saying they were a little unsettled over how little progress Jim reported, and what they perceived to be his uncomfortable situation. Jim, they said, used to be so confident and outgoing, now he seemed withdrawn and alone. Without trying to add to their concern, I didn't refute their worries, but suggested the next thirty days might show better progress. The day following the board meeting, Jim and I spent two hours together. We went over the plan and I did my best to bolster his resolve. Over the next several weeks we had more phone calls, but there was no real progress on finding an office or the other things on our work list.

In January, when the Committee on NA Service met, they tried an experiment that they felt might help their work. They borrowed three staff members to work with them. They intended to have the staff attend the meetings and, after the discussions, compose what the committee concluded then mail it to the members. Revisions were made at the next meeting and the process repeated. The committee concluded this "staff writing team" approach was what they needed, and proceeded to use this approach until after I left in 1990.

During January we were finalizing the selection of coordinators for PI and Group Services. After selecting Vandy A., a former RSR from Washington State, for the Group Services post, and Hollie A., who had been an RSR from the Volunteer Region, to handle PI, we considered shifting them to different assignments. When the dust settled, we assigned Vandy to work with Steve and become the second PI coordinator. Hollie was assigned to the trustees, and we promoted Freddie A. to take over the Group Services Department.

While things were getting settled for staff members in their new positions, things were not going well for Jim in London. After having frequent communications with him since the board meeting, I had begun to lose hope that it was going to work out. It was with this background that Donna, Stu and I had a dinner meeting on February fourth, at which they were very up front about their separate conclusions that we needed to bring Jim home and find someone else for the position. We then discussed everything with the board Personnel Committee and they concurred. Most of the board was then informed of the situation and they concurred. Jamie and Oliver were not included in these discussions so as to avoid a compromising situation in case Jim talked to them while these discussions were going on. Donna and I flew to London together the following Thursday to break the news to Jim in person. It was a hard thing for both of us, and harder on Jim. But our conclusion was that Jim wasn't getting the job done, and we needed to bring him home.

A special meeting of the Administrative Committee was held on February twenty-fourth to develop a budget to submit to the conference. When the JAC met in January they had not yet written a budget, so this special meeting was necessary. It was a taxing session, but a plan was developed. In a memorandum I wrote after the meeting, I included the full range of understandings I thought reflected the discussions. I proposed a formula for reserving a percentage of funds received by the conference to be set aside for the trustees. Further, it suggested changing the nature of how the conference committees worked. Unfortunately the solution was not accepted by all parties concerned, and we continued to have friction on finances.

Nevertheless, Sherie developed and distributed the proposed budget before the conference, based on my percentage formula proposal. It would allocated \$210,200 for the conference and thirty percent, or \$58,300, for the trustees as baseline budgets. That percentage breakdown would be continued for additional spending if more money came it.

The office Personnel Committee met a few days later to consider what to do about finding a replacement for Jim in the ESO. I proposed Steve B., who had earlier been my first choice (although he would have been expensive to bring on as an employee because he was making more in his own business than the position salary was then set at). The committee wasn't amenable to my recommendation, and a whole host of alternatives was considered, including all who had applied originally. Among those considered were three directors, a trustee and ten other people. The committee could not agree on any of them. Jim was still in London winding down his activities (we carried him on the payroll for two months), and the work was about to come to a stop. A lot of alternatives were considered. The interim solution was to ask Jamie S-H. to take on the task of completing some specific assignments as a volunteer, or perhaps as a part-time paid worker. The committee concurred with this recommendation. I contacted Jamie and we worked out a short list of specific things he was to do. He was to take possession of the equipment and supplies that Jim had and store them at our expense.

The Board of Trustees meeting in March was, perhaps, a turning point in the structure of the fellowship. Since the last meeting, essays and papers were written and circulated in an effort to clarify what the trustees should be doing. As the discussions evolved, it seemed obvious they were far apart in their opinions about what the trustees should be doing. The major points of agreement were that they should have a stronger role in developing NA literature, stronger influence on decisions about overall policy, and a greater role in approving translations of approved literature. They agreed that the trustee liaisons to conference committees were often ineffective, and were changed so often, that there was no consistency in their advice or participation.

I believe Bob was disappointed that he had not been able to move the trustees in the direction of a more commonly held range of attitudes and views about what they should be and how they should be doing it. He was successful, however, in one area — getting them to take over the writing of the Traditions portion of *It Works*. He explained their view of this in the March *Fellowship Report*. He wrote:

The trustees have always been expected to have particular responsibility concerning the Traditions of NA. The *Temporary Work-*

ing Guide to Our Service Structure even contains this direct quote: "Although the primary aim of the board is to ensure the maintenance of the Twelve Traditions, the trustees also serve in many other capacities and have other responsibilities." However, the development of the Traditions publication is currently being done by a conference committee which is already overwhelmed by its work on the Steps and other major projects. And if the trustees' only role in the completion of the Traditions publication is to review it at some later date for possible violations, we will have wasted the years of work and energy the fellowship invested in the trustees, with their knowledge of the Traditions.

It seems foolish to assign "maintenance of the Traditions" as the primary task of the trustees, but to exclude them from the primary work on our major publication on the Traditions, except to a passing review.

This convincing declaration was the final push in an effort that had been moving forward since the previous summer to wrestle the work on the Traditions away from the Literature Committee and put it into the hands of the trustees. Vince had already agreed to this, but it was necessary to be sure that the fellowship as a whole, and the conference in particular, were supportive.

On the subject of finances, the trustees had been visited by Donna and Stu, who had been convincing enough to persuade the trustees not to push ahead with plans to offer a motion to require unrestricted funding from WSO coffers. They had accepted the plea to hold off on that course, mostly, I believe, to avoid a 1982-type confrontation between the trustees and the office. I believe Bob was concerned about being seen as greedy for the trustees and insensitive to the overall conference financial situation.

Although his second year as trustee chairperson was running out, he might return for another term and be able to resolve the financial matter later. It was a tactical maneuver rather than a real concession. Besides, the answer lay in what the Committee on NA Service was writing about how NA would be organized in the future. And Bob was not going to sit by and let that be written without having his say. Bob was also hopeful that by returning as trustee chairperson for a third year, he would have time to shape the course for the trustees from the discussions and input that he had generated over the prior year.

As Bob was trying reshape the trustees and establish a secure financial base, he was intruding onto the turf of conference chairperson. Chuck was, at the time, opposed to automatically giving the trustees a percentage of conference income, and was probably jealous

of the idea of guaranteed funding from the WSO. He wanted the trustees to be funded like the conference committees, and subject to his control. He loved being the chairperson of the conference, and although he got along with the trustees generally, he felt the conference chairperson should have considerable authority to interpret the will of the conference between meetings of the conference. He was not about to simply let the trustees carve out a portion of the conference budget and let them do what they wanted if it meant the committees and the conference funding became more perilous. At this time, Chuck and Bob were not on particularly good terms anyway, and this matter kept them further apart. Several months later, when he became a trustee, he immediately changed his view and agreed with Bob on a long list of things.

Since the previous November, our contact with the Brazilian members of TA and NA had increased, and our concerns grew. The philosophical and personality differences needed to be resolved. Through discussions with Chuck and Bob, we decided I would send a letter to the TA folks. They had requested permission to print the NA literature with the TA name in it. We felt we could not abandon those who went by the name NA, by allowing the TA people to use the same literature. My letter was sent in late March explaining that we could not consent to their use of NA literature and urged that the differences between the two groups be resolved.

In another international matter, we made a decision about a translator for Spanish language material. During the World Convention, George and I had the opportunity to meet with three members from the Panama fellowship. Each spoke both languages perfectly; in fact one was a linguist for the US Army. Through them we got in touch with a translator in Panama. Over the winter we used this woman to translate a number of letters and pamphlets. We faxed the material, and a week or so later it came back. Fortunately it was cheap, and well done, so we decided to contract with her to translate the first half of the Basic Text into Spanish. For about a thousand dollars the draft translation was completed and delivered to us on computer disk in the word processing program we used! However, the refinement of the Text translation was going to take a while, and would require the involvement of Spanish-speaking members from across the fellowship.

Jim and Jamie had gotten together on several occasions since we asked Jamie to pick up the things Jim was going to leave behind. He began, as agreed, his own search for a possible office location. Jamie had been one of the top contenders in the original application process.