

Will WCNA 34 in San Diego Bankrupt the Fellowship?

When I got clean in the mid 80's, I knew I was going to need something good to look forward to. That year, the World Convention (WCNA 17) was going to be held in New Orleans, Louisiana, and sounded like just the ticket, since I didn't think it would ever again come that close to where I lived. It was so important to me that I decided to borrow money from my credit union to pay for the trip. That was the first loan of my life, and I knew I would be responsible for paying it back.

That's called **personal** responsibility, and I think most of us can get our arms around that. But how many of us understand the kind of **direct** responsibility our service boards and committees have to those they serve? "Responsibility" keeps things above-board, ensuring honesty, integrity, and sound financial principles.

I have been fortunate since then to attend many more World Conventions. I stopped attending for a number of reasons, not the least of which was what I saw as financial irresponsibility on the part of our WSO and the World Board. **How on EARTH do you lose more than \$800,000 on the last two conventions - without a full accounting for how those losses happened???**

Would you accept that type of financial irresponsibility from your Regional or Area convention?

Back in "the good old days," the World Convention Corporation (WCC) was guided by this premise: "... N.A. conventions are part of N.A. and, as a celebration of recovery, are a service of N.A. Therefore, regardless of legal title, a gathering of addicts for the purpose of recovery in N.A., and an organization created by these members to facilitate its function must then be governed by the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of N.A.. This makes their actions a direct reflection of Narcotics Anonymous. So, no N.A. service committee or corporation is autonomous from the fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous. The corporation...must be responsible to a service branch of N.A. for it to qualify as an N.A. convention."

However, five years ago, our Convention guidelines were completely gutted and the publication was removed from WSO inventory. This language was removed, "the requirement to issue a complete treasurer's report within three months of the convention", and (**get this**) the three goals of having the Conventions in the first place: "Provide a suitable celebration of recovery, be financially responsible and minimize the expense to those attending."

Is it a coincidence that the year the World Board moved away from operating under those guidelines that the World Convention started hemorrhaging money?

We may never know, since NAWS is no longer required to provide a complete report. Are you, like me, curious? How many Fellowship dollars go

toward travel and lodging of NAWS staff and the World Board? We'd expect that kind of information and accountability from our own Area and Region – why not NAWS?

If we as a fellowship look at this issue of accountability we will associate it with the spiritual principle found in the 9th Tradition, to be **directly responsible**. How can we be good stewards of our Twelve Traditions and not ask the tough questions? Just like my very first loan repayment, the accountability rested with me, and I will not be supporting WCNA 34 in San Diego because NAWS seems to not be accountable to anyone.