
**Reporting on July 2015 - September 2015**

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#### WSI Committee Reports

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Dear FA Members:

First, please reserve the following dates for the FA conventions in 2016!

- Business Convention: June 3-5, 2016, Danvers, MA
- Fellowship Convention: October 15-16, 2016, Tampa, FL

If you are able to make either or both of these conventions, you will have an opportunity to be of service as well as celebrate the huge accomplishments we have achieved in our fellowship and in our individual recoveries.

World Service and Intergroup committees continue to do extensive service to better reach and support newcomers. We are making huge strides in getting FA out into the world. The Board continues to find ways to reach and support our members on the Frontier, and this topic was a central focus at our board retreat in October. We have been gathering ideas since the June Business Convention and we used the retreat to plan how to implement the ideas that will better support those on the Frontier. I grew up in this program on the frontier, am aware of the unique challenges in small fellowships, and we remain committed to make this a central part of our work as your trusted servants. I encourage you to read the World Service Quarterly Report with updates on the tremendous service from all of our committees.

Here are a few highlights:

- We are happy to say that out of 574 meetings, 566 meetings are re-registered as of the September 30th deadline. This is a remarkable improvement over our last re-registration in 2012 where only 65% of the meetings were re-registered during the same time period. The FA Office thanks the Intergroup Chairs for all of their support in helping us reach this goal.
- A large print version of the FA book is now available to order from our website! [http://www.foodaddicts.org/FA-book-information](http://www.foodaddicts.org/FA-book-information)
- The Meeting Guidelines documents have recently been revised and upgraded on our website. I urge everyone to be familiar with these documents and for the WSI contact or Meeting Health Person to lead a discussion about these at your business meetings. [http://www.foodaddicts.org/meeting-guidelines](http://www.foodaddicts.org/meeting-guidelines)
- A thorough rationale why FA meetings are defined as in-person meetings can be found on the FA website. It’s worth your while to read this document. [http://www.foodaddicts.org/why-meetings-in-person](http://www.foodaddicts.org/why-meetings-in-person)
- Every June at our Business Convention, new positions come open for re-election. If you have more than seven years of continuous abstinence, I encourage you to step up to and run for these positions. We are always looking for good people to sit on our board!

Keep coming, stay abstinent, and continue to put your hand up to do service in whatever way you can. Our program needs everyone to help us continue to grow in our recovery, both individually and collectively.

With Gratitude,

Dave I., WSB Chair
Officer Reports

WSB Inquiry Response Committee Quarterly Report Oct. 2015
(Jamie M., IRC Chair)

The Inquiry Response Committee (IRC) is responsible for handling inquiries made to the FA World Service Board or to the FA World Service Office. Responses are made by telephone to inquiries received from both FA members and non-members. An IRC member attempts to reach the inquirer within two weeks of the initial inquiry. The IRC consists of four FA members with at least seven years of abstinence and the WSB secretary, who serves as an ex-officio member of the committee.

The IRC Committee often submits Traditions-related issues to the Traditions Review Committee (TRC) or meeting issues to the Meeting Effectiveness, Safety, and Accessibility Subcommittee (MESA) for review and response. If necessary, the IRC may ask a member of the TRC or MESA to make the phone call to the inquirer.

Samples of recent inquiries and responses:

• **Inquiry:** A mother’s inquiry was referred to the IRC by the FA Office regarding a question about her adolescent son starting the FA program.

• **Response:** We had a conversation about the various aspects of the FA program of recovery that might be problematic for a young teenager. We suggested that the mother might want to first look at our website and then perhaps attend a meeting with her son. It was suggested that they both could speak to a potential sponsor to see what was involved. We explained that she would have to help him and that it would be a good idea to talk to his pediatrician to see if the doctor would approve of his food plan. Having known nothing about FA she appreciated the information and then decided that FA would not work for him as he was off to a boarding school. Through the discussion she concluded that it would be difficult for him to attend meetings and adhere to our definition of Abstinence.

• **Inquiry:** An inquirer had some concerns about a meeting “leader” who told him that it wouldn’t be acceptable for him to share at the meeting because he didn’t call his sponsor everyday. He had more than the 90 days of continuous abstinence requirement for sharing at the meeting and was sponsored by an FA sponsor. He wanted to know if there was anything in our By-Laws that would prohibit him from speaking.

• **Response:** We explained that one only needs 90 days of continuous abstinence in FA and working with an FA Sponsor to share at an FA meeting and that there is nothing in the FA By-Laws which would prohibit him from speaking.
Vice Chair (Jamie M.)

This quarter I have had the privilege of playing a role in supporting the WSB Chair. I serve on the Executive Committee assisting in matters related to the WSB and I have offered support and suggestions to many of the chairs with inquiries regarding their committees. As Vice-Chair of the WSB, I sit on the Finance Committee and lend my support, when necessary, on behalf of the WSB and the Executive Board.

I also serve as the IRC Committee Chair and the liaison to the WSB. I continued to give ongoing support to the IRC for issues brought to the Committee’s attention from our fellowship. We had conversations with the various members of the fellowship when they have had general inquiries or have requested help regarding issues in their group meetings or their local fellowship.

This quarter as chair of the Personnel Committee, along with committee members, we assisted in providing support to the chair of the Office Committee on personnel issues related to new hires. We were fortunate to have hired a new office manager and we are smooth sailing.

Treasurer (Holli N.)

No report.

WSI Committee Reports

Bylaws Committee (Marti Mc., Chair)

The Bylaws Committee continued to update the Board and Standing Committees Manuals and began preliminaries for receiving potential Board, Committees, Intergroups and Chapter motions for the 2016 WSBC.

Service Group Support Committee (SGSC) (Paul B., Chair)

- The SGSC continues to support Intergroups, Chapters and Local Service Groups with a bi-monthly conference call
- The SGSC has completed a document titled “Local Service Group Guidelines and Recommendations” which is posted to Foddaddicts.org under Local Service Groups
- The SGSC maintains a sub-committee: Guidelines and Recommendations Committee that meets quarterly to review new questions to be addressed in the LSG Guidelines and Recommendations
- The SGSC core committee meets bimonthly to discuss agenda items
**connection Committee (Adrienne P., Chair)**

- connection's new website is well under way, along with plans to launch our digital version of the magazine
- We would love more original art submissions for our cover. Please check the website for specific guidelines
- Writing coaches are available for anyone seeking help in submitting articles, please contact connection@foodaddicts.com for more information
- connection is continuing to thrive and evolve thanks to the support of our wonderful fellowship. Thanks so much and please keep those submissions and subscriptions coming!

**Convention Planning Committee (Ebony F., Chair)**

The Convention Planning Committee is gearing up for TWO conventions in 2016! More information about both conventions will be available on the FA website: http://www.foodaddicts.org/convention

**2016 Business Convention**

- Planning is currently underway for the 15th annual WSI Business Convention
- Volunteers are needed! If you are interested in volunteering and have at least 6+ months of abstinence, please fill out this form. As we get closer to the convention, committee chairs will be reaching out to volunteers as needed. Thank you for your willingness to do service: http://bit.ly/1N5ICDK
- Convention Details:
  o Dates: Friday, June 3 - Sunday, June 5, 2016
  o Location: Danvers, MA at the Doubletree by Hilton Hotel

**2016 Fellowship Convention**

- Convention Details:
  o Dates: Friday, October 14 - Sunday, October 16, 2016
  o Location: Tampa, Florida at Saddlebrook Resort
- Stay tuned for more information!

**Public Information Committee (Annie H., Chair)**

**HEALTH CARE SUBCOMMITTEE:**

- Increasing impact at healthcare conventions:
  o Updated the health care tri-fold
  o Recruiting a team for follow up of interested participants
- Healthcare conventions confirmed
o Oct 1-3 2015 NEDA (National Eating Disorders Association) – San
  Diego
o Oct 6, 2015 Kaiser Hospital Drug and Alcohol Treatment Program –
  Oakland
o Oct 17, 2015 Diabetes Expo Houston
o April 1-4 Endo Expo Boston

MEDIA OUTREACH SUBCOMMITTEE:

• Articles Published
  o Food addicts find AA-style help
    ▪ Posted July 20, 2015 Houston Chronicle
  o “Hello, my name is Helen and I’m a food addict”
    ▪ The Age, a major newspaper in Australia

• Interviews
  o Sound of Ideas show on WCPN (public radio station in
    Northeast Ohio)
    ▪ 8/25/15 9am
    ▪ Topic: Mindless Eating

Media Watch Statistics:

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<tr>
<td>Personal responses</td>
<td>13</td>
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• Working on adding more volunteers to Media Watch Core Team – lost
  several members with recent reorganization

• Positive Responses (examples)/Follow Up
  o Carmen Chai
    ▪ Senior Web Coordinator, Globalnews.ca
    ▪ Enthusiastic response, considering writing story about food
      addiction
    ▪ Offered to send her literature and potential interviews if
      interested
  o Jocelyn R Lebow
    ▪ Eating disorder fellow at the Mayo Clinic
    ▪ Thanked us and said that she planned on “checking out” our
      material
    ▪ Plan on sending her FA Book
  o Angela Berrill, RD
    ▪ Registered Dietitian in New Zealand
    ▪ Thanked us for email and said that she would pass the
      email to other dietitians in NZ
Scott Anderson, MD
- Planned on checking out our website and commented that he may write “follow-up” on FA
- Plan on sending FA Book

- Creating a central list of FA interviewees for quick media response

PI TOOLS SUBCOMMITTEE:

- FA Survey:
  - Clarified survey goals
  - First draft of questions completed
  - Currently interviewing survey companies for survey design, data analysis and data visualization

- PI Web Tools Project:
  - Enlisted team to start excavating website for PI tools, and noting areas of confusion
  - Started file of PI FAQ’s, many of which relate to website navigation

WEBLINKS SUBCOMMITTEE:

SEO:
- Initiated SEO project with Placemaking Group (PMG)
- Identified 10 pages to optimize; providing keyword information to PMG

Weblinks/AdWords Statistics:

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<td>New college websites</td>
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<td>New other websites</td>
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<td>Google Ads Viewed</td>
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<td>Ad click-throughs to FA Website</td>
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New Colleges:
- Fresno City College, CA
- Universidad PanAmericana, Guadalajara, Mexico
- University of Houston Counseling and Psychological Services: Eating Disorders
- Wellington University of Technology, New Zealand
Literature Committee (LC) (Jennifer N., Chair)

Operations Subcommittee (OC)
- In collaboration with PI committee facilitated the completion of the Healthcare Trifold to be used at Health Care conferences.
- Set the price of the large-print FA book at $16 and made available to purchase on the FA website.

Writing and Editing Subcommittee (WES)
- Finalizing Living Abstinently (LA) pamphlet and will be posting online by Jan. 1 for review by fellowship.
- In collaboration with OC, drafted motion for LA to be considered for the 2016 Business Convention.
- Developed secondary committee to review and determine next steps for existing pamphlets as well as consider the possible need for additional pamphlets.

Translation SubCommittee (TC)
- Finalizing edits on two German pamphlets – Just for Today and Before You Take That Bite, should be available for sale by Jan. 1.
- Working with fellows in Taiwan, China and Israel to provide content for FA Website and new international tabs.
- Determining what pamphlets/documents we need for a starter packet in different languages.
- Researching professional translator that will manage any public facing documents moving forward.

Audio Recording Subcommittee (ARC)
- No report

Projects Committee (PC)
- Obtaining costs of translating FA book into different languages using different formats. (Print on Demand, E-Book)

Office Committee (Margaret H., Chair)
- Pricing for the large-format FA Book was determined
- A new office manager was hired and trained
- All but a handful of FA meetings worldwide were re-registered by the end of September
- The office director worked with Place Making Group, the Design Committee, and connection committee to create a new website for connection
- The office director worked with Place Making Group to get the Vault system up and running which will allow the office to upload documents to the FA website more efficiently.
• Assistance was given to EAI for its online registration for the November service group weekend
• New meeting guidelines documents were posted online, and numerous email inquiries about the new format and requests for documents in Word were handled
• Reasons FA Meetings Are Defined As In-Person Meetings was posted online
• Discussions were had about the best software for the sharing of files among board members and others in FA service groups
• Discussions were had with some of our vendors about ways to improve delivery of connection and of literature orders
• Discussions are in place to improve our online search engine for wording in PDF documents

Traditions Review Committee (Dan B., Chair)

• Individuals, meetings, chapters, intergroups, or the World Service Board may submit Traditions related inquiries by email to the Traditions Review Committee (TRC) at traditions@foodaddicts.org
• Since the April Annual Report was published, the TRC received ten new issues, referred nine others to board committees, and held three conference calls (May, July and September and an in-person meeting at the World Service Convention)
• In addition, the TRC subcommittees continued their work on the following projects:
  o Historical Index Subcommittee – continued archival of TRC records
  o Communication Subcommittee – published TRC content in GIA Newsletter
• The TRC provided input into two new World Service documents posted on the FA website, in response to TRC inquiries this year:
  o Reasons FA Meetings Are Defined As In-Person Meetings
  o Thoughts Regarding Live-Streaming Of Video Qualifications Into FA Meetings

The following are selected examples of Traditions issues resolved since the Annual Report was published in April:

1) Member Marketing Book to FA Members
2) 7th Tradition Used For Expensive Trifolds
3) Intergroup Printing Company Referral
4) Posting Trifolds At OA Meetings
5) Wedding Invitation to FA List
6) Political Clothing at Meetings
7) FA Poster - Before & After Photos
8) Promotion of a Meeting Held at a Church
9) Security Sign In At Meetings
10) List of Meeting Chairpeople
11) FA Meetings And Religion
12) Big Donation Request
13) AA Yellow Card Sign Posted at FA Meeting
14) Sponsoring Roundtable Event
15) FA PSA On Christian Radio
16) “Short AWOL” Announcement At FA Meeting

1) Member Marketing Book to FA Members

- **Issue:** An FA member who, professionally, specializes in human behavior wrote a book and sent a mass email to many FA members to promote sales of the book. The email noted that “this book is not affiliated with FA, it is not approved by FA and (the author has) not asked for permission from FA or for their blessings to let you know about it. This book doesn't have anything to do with FA. However, that being said, it would be very helpful to you and your sponsor in giving your sponsor relationship another direction for personal growth.” Included in the email, there were several photos of the book jacket (which included photos of the FA member), links to online videos, the affiliated website, and an order form, along with a fax number or email address so recipients could order a book. Another FA member, who received this email and brought up the issue to the TRC, did not know this FA member (the author). The member who received the email was surprised at what felt like overt promotion of the book. They noted that they felt it was odd for an FA member to promote themselves as an expert to other members and try to market their product to what they assumed to be FA members listed on meeting or convention email/phone number lists. They asked the TRC for their thoughts.

- **Response:** The TRC reviewed the material provided and provided the following thoughts to the member. Though it was declared in the email that FA did not endorse the book, it went on to say that the book would be a wonderful enhancement to one’s recovery and that it would be something to discuss with one’s sponsor. The TRC understands that many FA members work fields related to aspects of their recovery program, some of which have written books, and the TRC does not see this as a Traditions related concern. The TRC was however concerned that an FA distribution list was used to promote the sales of a book, notwithstanding the disclaimer. It could be perceived that FA was endorsing the enterprise (Tradition 6) as some members receiving the promotion may not read all the content and confuse the email as coming from FA. Traditions 11 & 12 were also discussed, as there could be a perceived breach in anonymity when an FA distribution list has been used for commercial purposes. The TRC provided this feedback to the member who brought this issue and they were appreciative, but chose not to reach out directly to the sender, hoping instead that the author may read the TRC response in this WSI Quarterly Report.

2) 7th Tradition Used For Expensive Trifolds
• **Issue:** A member submitted an inquiry to the TRC. At the member’s FA business meeting, the group passed a motion to spend $750 to have trifolds printed and have the company that printed them distribute them by direct mail (to letter/mail boxes). Another meeting in the area also agreed to this practice. The member was concerned that $1,500 of 7th Tradition funds will be spent on a direct mail campaign. The member noted that their personal experience indicates that this type of material that arrives mainly ends up in their recycling bin. The member inquired if there are any regulations or by-laws that could not allow this practice to occur that they could bring to the attention of the members at the business meeting so they could save these funds for other 7th Tradition purposes.

• **Response:** The TRC discussed this issue and came to a consensus that this expenditure and the distribution of the trifolds raises questions concerning Traditions 7 and 11. TRC members felt that a “direct mail” campaign leans towards “promotion” rather than “attraction,” because it is a blanket form of marketing to households and because of how this marketing medium is typically used. This is in contrast to providing information to people who have requested it or shown an interest in receiving the information or more widespread media at more reasonable prices (i.e. posting trifolds in locations where permission has been granted, placing non-paid ads in newspapers or paid ads based on the FA policy listed on the FA website). The TRC members were concerned about the use of meeting funds for this purpose, and in particular, the magnitude of the expense. Tradition 7 guides meetings to be self-supporting and to collect and use funds to pay for meeting expenses. Although the motive of spreading the word to help the sick and suffering food addict was apparent in this idea, 7th Tradition funds are limited, and the TRC felt that spending this amount on a direct mail campaign was not in proportional alignment with the intent of the 7th Tradition. Tradition 4 states the critical principle that all meetings are autonomous, but caveats that this does not apply when it affects FA as a whole. The TRC questioned whether FA as a whole would be better off spending these funds more effectively on other weighed and measured and less expensive public information initiatives.

3) **Intergroup Printing Company Referral**

• **Issue:** An informational document is being created by an Intergroup to help members print their local area meeting directory. This document would contain a recommendation of a printing company that the Intergroup had previously used – specifically as this company has been recognized for their high quality and low prices. The IG wonders if this is a break of tradition to mention the name/company and the contact information on this document, which is found on the FA website.

• **Response:** The Traditions Review Committee feels that naming a specific company could be seen as an endorsement on the part of FA as a whole (Tradition 6). The intergroup would be better to recommend using a local office supply store, a local printing company or perhaps recommend looking online for those types of companies – without naming specific
stores or brands. The TRC appreciates the importance of gaining good value when spending 7th Traditions funds. Hence, if the pricing is in question, a member may want to get quotes from more than one company to find the lowest price among the competitive options. Another option would be for a member to contact their local Intergroup office committee chair for recommendations, as that may be a better source of referrals rather than posting specific recommended companies on the FA website. During subsequent discussions with the intergroup, it was made clear to the TRC that the informational document does indeed provide several options. Moving forward, the intergroup has decided to eliminate listing any specific names/companies, keep it generic, and direct people to the FA office if they have further questions.

4) Posting Trifolds At OA Meetings

- **Issue**: A member contacted the TRC because they had an interest in posting some FA tri-folds in their community and were thinking of bringing them to facilities with community bulletin board (churches, senior centers, etc.) where AA meeting may be held. In addition, the member inquired whether any “Traditions issues” would arise if the member looked up locations of OA meetings close to their home and posted tri-folds in those locations, should they have a community bulletin board. The rationale for this was that there may be some OA members at those meetings who are “food addicts”, rather than “compulsive overeaters” who may not be aware that FA exists. The member expressed a concern that this may be considered “promotion” rather than “attraction” and did not want to “stir up any ruffles” with OA. Additionally, the member asked whether posting tri-folds in bathroom stalls would be a Traditions issue.

- **Response**: The TRC considered these issues in light of Tradition 11 (attraction vs. promotion) and had mixed feelings. Posting tri-folds in the community, with permission, has been a method of attracting new members that is outlined in the Public Information section of the FA website and the TRC does not see an issue with this practice. However, the idea of specifically targeting OA meeting locations, in the view of the TRC, seems to cross the line into “promotion”. If the location housed only OA meetings, this practice could antagonize the OA members and appear as a “competitive” marketing tactic that does not seem spiritually guided. If the location was home to many 12 step or other support groups that also post their material, provided permission was granted by the facility, the TRC believes this would be an appropriate practice and in line with Tradition 11. The member was also encouraged to contract their local intergroup or local service area to discuss recommended public information practices and service opportunities in their area. Regarding posting the tri-folds in the bathroom stalls, the TRC did not see a particular “Traditions issue” with this idea, provided permission was granted by the facility. As noted by the inquirer, since a bathroom stall is a private area, someone may be less embarrassed to pocket a trifold rather than taking one in public.
5) Wedding Invitation to FA List

- **Issue:** A member inquired as to whether the TRC believes there are any Traditions related issues associated with a member sending an open invitation to FA members listed on an FA meeting phone list. The member had received the invitation by email but did not know who the couple was. Her understanding was the phone list was to be used strictly for FA matters.

- **Response:** After further clarification with the inquirer regarding this particular situation, it was not certain that the email was sent to “everyone” on the FA meeting list. The member might have received a forwarded invitation from someone who did not want this member to feel left out. That said, the TRC has addressed issues in regards to the meeting phone lists being used by businesses. Although the TRC did not see a clear “Traditions” issue, the use of an FA list for personal matters is best practice concern. The TRC felt it is best that meeting lists not be used for anything but FA related communication. If this is an ongoing issue, the group conscience may choose to add a note at the bottom of meeting list stating, “Please do not use this list for business or personal mailings.”

6) Political Clothing at Meetings

- **Issue:** A member attended a meeting where another member was sharing from the front of the room wearing a sweatshirt with the name of a political activist organization in big letters. The inquiring member, who is not supportive of the actions of this particular organization, was offended and concerned about the impact on others, particularly newcomers. The member asked the TRC to consider the issue and provide their thoughts.

- **Response:** Traditions 10 states “Food Addicts in Recovery Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues, hence the FA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.” Calling attention to outside issues by any means is not appropriate at FA meetings, especially when the activity or statement could be considered controversial. The TRC believes that wearing clothing with a political message could be seen as divisive and may polarize members. This could detract from the primary purpose, to carry the message to the still suffering food addict. Although this may be an unintended consequence of a wardrobe choice, it is still be problematical if even one member or potential member takes offence and chooses not to return. Tradition 1 states “our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on FA unity.” Wearing clothing with a political message could disrupt the unity of the group. The group needs unity to foster support for each other and to reach the newcomer who still suffers. Anything that detracts from the unity of the group short circuits our efforts in pursuing our fundamental mission.

7) FA Poster - Before & After Photos
• **Issue:** A member inquired about creating a poster advertising FA times and locations that portrayed before and after photo of an FA member who experienced extreme weight loss in program. They said the head would be cropped out to avoid issues of anonymity.

• **Response:** Tradition 12 reminds us to place principles before personalities. FA avoids the “diet club” approach that focuses merely on the physical aspect of body size and weight loss. FA approaches our disease recognizing that this is a three-fold disease that affects the mind, body and spirit. Our principles support recovery of all three conditions. Showing images of a large member, before and after, places the emphasis on the physical aspect recovery only and places FA in the public eye as just another diet club. Tradition 11 speaks of attraction rather than promotion, and this type of poster seeks to promote body size reduction rather than inform or attract.

8) **Promotion of a Meeting Held at a Church**

• **Issue:** An FA member inquired about a new FA meeting starting at their church. The member said that the church likes to make a video interview of a member from each group renting space at the church to promote the group on the church’s visual announcement screen. They want to know if having their names and faces in the church announcements and on the screen is in line with the Traditions of FA.

• **Response:** The committee discussed Traditions 6 & 11 in relation to this inquiry. Having an FA member’s name and/or face on a church’s visual announcement screen could be seen as an endorsement (Tradition 6). Having a spokesperson from FA giving a recorded interview with their face visible could be seen promotional and conflict with the principal of maintaining personal anonymity (Tradition 11) even understanding that it is not at the level of “press, radio or film.” Should the FA member in the video either gain weight or leave FA, it could be interpreted by someone at that church that FA does not work. Therefore, the committee felt it best to eliminate from the announcements any video interview and also not associate the FA meeting with any specific member’s full names and/or faces. Rather, the meeting could simply include the full name of the program, the day, the time of the meeting and list the FA website as a way people could access more information or a contact person for the meeting.

9) **Security Sign-In At Meetings**

• **Issue:** The secretary of a meeting inquired whether issues of anonymity applied to their meeting facility which requires that members sign-in at a front desk before going to the meeting. For security reasons, they ask for both first and last name and the purpose of the visit, though no ID is requested. Particular concern was expressed about newcomers being put off if they think this is supposed to be an "anonymous" meeting.

• **Response:** The Traditions Review Committee (TRC) reviewed this issue in light of both Traditions 11 and 12. Tradition 12 focuses on the concept
of individual anonymity, asking that we conduct ourselves from a place of personal humility and respect for others, regardless of personality. Tradition 11 concerns our relations in the public sphere. The committee does not see any conflict with either of these Traditions in a request for a security sign in, as long as its intent is to ensure our safety and the safety of others in the building. And in fact, many FA meetings are held in facilities such as hospital and public/government centers which require sign-ins. If the group wishes, it may ask the building contact for assurance about how the list will be used. FA members who are uncomfortable may choose to sign in using their first initial and last name, use their middle name, or simply list “meeting” or the room number as the purpose of the visit. Generally, most newcomers will not know about “anonymity” at their first meeting unless they have experience with other 12 Step groups. If such a person questions this practice, another member can simply explain the assurances received from the facility and that the information is kept secure.

10) List of Meeting Chairpeople

• **Issue:** A member inquired about a meeting that voted to start to use a journal to keep track of who leads (chairs) the meetings each week, how many members attended the meeting as well as who shares in the meeting because some members of the meeting were not being asked to qualify or chosen to share after the speaker. The plan would be for the speaker seeker to look in this book, see who has not been asked from the meeting and decide on a chair for the meeting. Then, during the meeting, the chair would use the book to log the date of the meeting, and the name of the secretary for each meeting, and the names of the people who shared. Also, they would track the number of people in attendance.

• **Response:** There are several Traditions called into question here. Tradition 3 states that “the only requirement for FA membership is a desire to stop eating addictively.” There is no “rule” that one must share or that anyone “cannot” share his/her experience, strength and hope unless he/she does not yet have 90 days of continuous FA abstinence. Regulating who shares, who attends, who qualifies and registering the names in a log book could make a newcomer feel uncomfortable believing that their actions and the actions of other members were being monitored and tracked. Tradition 2 speaks of the “group conscience.” This raises the question of how many members with 90 days actually wanted this practice for the meeting. Was it a decision that was contemplated by all, over some months, before voting on it and instituted? This Tradition states that the group has one ultimate authority – a loving God. Could the group trust that God will work through the speaker to choose who will get to come up rather than those listed in a log book? In regards to Tradition 4’s message, each group should be autonomous, so ultimately the decision comes down to the meeting’s group conscience. Tradition 12 was also considered as the speaker seeker keeps the log book of names and then passes it on to the next speaker seeker. Those names are a written record of the
meeting. This log could endanger the anonymity of those who tell their story and those who share after the speaker so it’s safe keeping is of paramount importance. Although these names are not used on the level of press, radio and films, ultimately, using this log could be distracting and could be a privacy issue that might make members and newcomers uneasy.

11) FA Meetings And Religion

• **Issue:** A member explained that an incident occurred at their meeting location that upset some members of their fellowship. They hold several meetings each week in a particular church. They received a letter from the church’s administrator signed by the Pastor inviting them to attend a church service where they would be introduced to the membership as a group using their campus. After the service was over, they would be welcome to pass out literature and speak to the members about FA. The FA Local Service Group sent two members to the service. The Pastor of the church came to a meeting a few days prior to the church service, he waited until the meeting leader asked if any members would like to speak and said he would like to speak. He was told by at least three members that he could not speak. He was visibly shaken but continued, he stated he simply wanted to invite the group personally to the church service. Many of the members were upset by the situation. Four newcomers were in attendance. Approximately 15 members attended the church service where FA was given a glowing recommendation, however, the pastor did state that he was given a hard time at the FA meeting. FA was given a table where literature was distributed for two services and invited to pass out literature on any Sunday after service. The member asked: Was a tradition “broken” because the pastor spoke at the meeting? What is the protocol for this type of situation? Is it appropriate for members of FA to go to a service where (the church leadership) will be recommending for people to attend FA meetings?

• **Response:** After discussion, the TRC did not see that any Traditions were “broken” when the pastor insisted on speaking at the meeting. The pastor is not an FA member so his speaking is not an FA Traditions issue. The group was powerless over his decision to speak, since he did not ask to speak, rather he just began to speak. The members of the group who asked him not to speak had an understandable reaction in the moment. Their intention was obviously to stay within the FA Meeting Requirements that they had agreed to during the registration of their meeting. Had they been given the opportunity it might have been an option to ask the Pastor to share following the close of the meeting, rather than during the meeting. Perhaps an experienced member of the group could speak to him, one on one, to gently inform him that in the future, should he want to make a similar announcement directly to the group, it would more appropriate for him to make announcements before or after the FA meeting, but not during the meeting, because of the FA meeting requirements that all speakers have 90 days of abstinence in FA. This discussion might still be
worthwhile to have with him just to help him understand why some members reacted the way they did. Regarding the church service, the TRC does not have an opinion on whether FA members attend the church service. In attending these meetings, FA members may choose to break their own anonymity when attending. However, Traditions issues could arise depending on how FA members present themselves. In order to avoid these types of issues, the TRC suggests that groups in this situation consider speaking with the Church representatives about holding an FA Information Session for Non-FA Audiences using the guidelines set out in the FA Public Information Kit. This package provides the necessary information to pass along the FA program in a manner that does not raise Traditions related concerns. This would avoid the situation where the FA program is being presented within a religious service/ceremony that could lead to Tradition 6/10 issues. The FA Information Session could be held at the church, but, ideally, it would not occur during a religious service, and ideally not be held in the sanctuary.

12) Big Donation Request

• **Issue:** A member contacted the TRC wondering if it was a Traditions violation to request “extra” funds from the meeting attendees to cover their prudent reserve. The meeting had, at one time, an ample reserve but it had dwindled recently due to a “struggling membership”. The suggestion was for each member to donate an extra $20 or what they could afford.

• **Response:** The TRC does not see this request as a Traditions related issue. The TRC agreed that this issue ought to be brought up at the member’s business meeting. It could be confusing to the newcomer if it were discussed at a regular meeting. The TRC believes that best practice would be for the sponsors to pass the information on to their sponsees, and from member to member instead of making an announcement at an FA meeting with newcomers in attendance. It is also not appropriate to put pressure on members to give more than they feel comfortable with.

13) AA Yellow Card Sign Posted at FA Meeting

• **Issue:** A member inquired about a situation involving someone in their meeting who has gossiped and broken someone’s anonymity. They asked whether it was allowable to use the “yellow card”, as used in AA which states something like “who you see here, what you hear here, let it stay here.” The member thought it would be a good reminder to all. They asked to know the TRC’s thoughts on this or which other FA committee could be of assistance in this matter.

• **Response:** The TRC reviewed the issue and responded as follows:
  - The TRC understand your concern regarding the anonymity of members. As I’m sure you know, the 12th Tradition states: Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities. As for the use at FA meetings of AA’s “Yellow Card,” although the TRC agrees with the principle of anonymity, the use of AA’s
material is of concern. The TRC has received similar inquiries about the use of AA material three times before, in 2008, March 2014 and earlier this year from other worldwide meetings, mainly dealing with the use of AA banners at FA meetings. The TRC did not see an FA Traditions related issues with this idea other than Tradition 6, which states “An FA group ought never endorse, finance or lend the FA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.” The concern is whether AA material, posted at an FA meeting is endorsing AA (which is an enterprise outside FA). In the case of the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions, FA does have permission to use these, but not necessarily post the banners with the AA logos. With other material like the “Yellow Card”, FA does not have permission, as far as the TRC is aware. Additionally, you will note the following from the FA Meeting Guidelines: DOCUMENT 6: LITERATURE, PHONE LISTS, AND SPEAKER CDs LITERATURE, which states “FA conference-approved literature, conference-recognized material, and WSB-approved material are displayed at all FA meetings. This includes printed FA pamphlets, Food Addicts in Recovery Anonymous, speaker CDs, connection (our FA magazine), Alcoholics Anonymous, Twenty-Four Hours a Day, The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous, and The Little Red Book. World Service has received many questions from individuals and meetings regarding literature at meetings. Only the materials needed by FA members or necessary for FA service work are displayed. This includes some or all of the books above; telephone lists or directories of registered FA meetings; the literature price list*; notices of FA information sessions; newcomer packets; and materials distributed by boards or committees of WSI, FA intergroups, or FA chapters. Documentation and other materials (i.e. signage, flyers, banners) from other Twelve Step programs or other outside enterprises being displayed or distributed at meetings (on the literature table or elsewhere) is not in keeping with FA Tradition.” You may want to discuss this idea with the Public Information Committee or the 12th Step Committee who may consider designing and selling similar signs that could become FA approved materials. In the meantime, the TRC refers you to the Meeting Guideline’s for the suggested action (to refrain from posting AA material at FA meetings).

14) Sponsoring Roundtable Event

- **Issue:** The TRC was asked by a member to review a document related to a Local Service Area’s “roundtable” discussion, “Sponsoring Perspectives”.
- **Response:** Although the Local Service Area’s document clearly states in all of the event literature that it is not sponsored or endorsed by FA, references to FA and the FA program are clear. As such, the TRC believes that several issues involving FA Traditions may be of concern here. The TRC agrees that the intent of the group is to provide a service to newcomers and recent sponsors seeking guidance. However, the meeting’s format and written resource materials seem designed with the...
purpose of teaching or instructing, rather than with sharing a variety of experiences, which raises concerns with Tradition 2 (God as the ultimate authority; our leaders are but trusted servants). Even in the “roundtable” format, where there may be no definite meeting chair, there are often perceived informal leaders (e.g. those with the most time in the program, the unofficial organizers and promoters of the event, etc.). The many background pages provided to attendees clearly present the writer(s) as an authoritative voice, including clear “do’s and don'ts” as well as the suggested "tone" to use when speaking with sponsees. One could also read a certain philosophy in the questions themselves, presenting opinions on outside issues, which impedes on Tradition 10 (FA has no opinion on outside issues). The TRC believes that the “teaching” modality conflicts with the principles of FA as it takes emphasis away from the recovery found in our meetings and through working the FA program as it is passed down from our sponsors, our fellows and our higher power. FA’s Concept 11 states in part, “... Notwithstanding our immeasurable debt to Alcoholics Anonymous and other Twelve Step programs, our ultimate source of direction must always remain our collective experience of recovery through the FA program and our personal understanding of the will of God, as each of us understands God.” For example, although the FA conference approved booklet, “Some Thoughts on Sponsoring” is noted as having “valuable information” the document presents the text of “Questions & Answers On Sponsorship”, an A.A. General Service Conference approved brochure. In addition to Concept 11, this calls into question Traditions 6 (An FA group ought never endorse any outside enterprise). Meeting formats used historically by FA Chapters and WSI Committees with the same intent have been organized around asking speakers to share from their own experience on a broad topic, rather than addressing specific questions. That removes any perception of one or more “authorities” providing definitive answers. One local service group in particular learned the wisdom of this when their effort to provide answers to pre-written questions caused much disunity and confusion in the group. The TRC also cautions against any actions that would threaten the unity of our FA fellowship (Tradition 1 - Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on FA unity). The TRC also questions the group’s use of a sample food plan in the handouts. Although one of FA’s founding principles is a shared definition of abstinence, within that definition there are many variations and providing only one option would be citing one plan as “expert” or “approved”. Again, this could cause confusion among members whose sponsors do not provide that same plan. This again calls into question Traditions 2 and 10 (diets as an outside issue) and perhaps Tradition 9, lending itself to too much organization.

15) FA PSA On Christian Radio

• **Issue**: A member inquired whether it is a break of tradition to send the FA public service announcement (PSA) to a local Christian radio station.
There was a concern that it may appear as a religious affiliation with the radio station.

**Response:** The TRC reviewed the long form of Tradition 10 which states that FA should never imply or express an opinion on the issue of religion, should oppose no one, and not express any views whatever. The TRC believes that providing the FA PSA to a religiously affiliated radio station would not conflict with the intent of Tradition 10 or any other Tradition. There are other similar practices that regularly occur in 12 step programs such as: encouraging members to take information packets to faith community leaders, locating meetings in places of worship, and posting FA information session brochures in places of worship. Requesting the radio station to play an FA PSA is akin to putting a notice on a bulletin board in a place of worship. These practices do not suggest that FA is affiliated with the religion, but simply provide information about FA to that religious group should they be interested in learning more about FA. The FA meeting may consider simultaneously sending the FA PSA to other radio stations, including those affiliated with other religions, as well.

16) “Short AWOL” Announcement At FA Meeting

**Issue:** A member wanted to know if there is a break in any tradition if an announcement is being made at my meetings for an “Intro to AWOL” meeting announcement. The meeting goes over Steps 1, 2 and 3. Is this an appropriate announcement at our regular FA meetings? Perhaps it's not a break in our traditions but I am unclear if it's deemed an “FA or AWOL announcement”.

**Response:** Assuming the meeting is a registered FA meeting, it has agreed to abide by the FA Meeting Requirements and Standards. As part of this agreement, the meeting has agreed to use FA Sample FA Meeting Format (Document 4). In addition to the announcements already embedded into the FA Sample FA Meeting Format, the format asks “Are there any other FA or AWOL ANNOUNCEMENTS?” Document 5 outlines the Suggested Wording For Service Announcements, including the suggested AWOL announcement as described, this announcement covers a type of meeting that is not an AWOL based on the AWOL definition in the FA By-laws, which states “A Way of Life, or AWOL, is a comprehensive method of studying and working the Twelve Steps of FA in sequence.” So this announcement does not fit into the criteria your meeting agreed to. It’s neither an FA nor an AWOL announcement. Where the Traditions could come in would be if your meeting decided to allow this announcement, notwithstanding the conflict with the Meeting Requirements/Standards. The meeting could do so based on the first part of Tradition 4 which states: “Each group is autonomous except in matters affecting FA as a whole.” However, the TRC feels that a group making a decision to make announcements in conflict with the Meeting Requirements/Standards and the FA Bylaws could affect FA as a whole.
Twelfth Step Committee (Linda N., Chair)

- Held two bi-monthly conference call meetings, July and September. Discussion focused primarily on ideas/requests presented at WSBC 2015 re improving support for frontier and outlying area members.
- Coordinated first ever Frontier Support Call to be held in October 2015.
- Began development of Frontier Tab for website, which could provide links and resources targeted specifically for frontier and outlying area members.
- Together with EAI and WAI 12th Step Committee Chairs and Thank-a-thon Coordinators, organized 30 Thank-a-thons to be held on November 26, 2015, U.S. Thanksgiving Day.

MESA Subcommittee

- Completed process of FA meeting format translation to Braille. Copies of format now available at World Service Office. The first leading of an FA meeting using the Braille format took place in September, and MESA reports hearing it was a very exciting moment both for the member who led meeting and those in attendance.
- Received inquiry about emotional support dogs and whether they were required to be allowed at meetings. There was a member whose dog was quite a distraction, and even growled at a service dog who was also present in the meeting. One MESA Subcommittee member happens to be in the process of acquiring such a dog for one of her children, and was able to share with MESA the legal difference between a service dog (as in a guide dog for a visually impaired person) and an emotional support dog. It turns out dogs in the latter category do not have the same legal standing as service dogs, and MESA suggested the group speak with the member who had the dog about leaving the dog outside of the room.
- One inquiry about closing the meeting saying the Serenity Prayer holding hands in a circle. MESA suggested that, although there is nothing in the meeting guidelines about this, it is not common practice, and could easily make a newcomer uncomfortable due to physical contact, and the exposed nature of this type of practice.
- Another inquiry about fragrances at meetings with a chemically sensitive member. MESA helped her hone her format wording for the disciplines.

Frontier Subcommittee

- The WSI Frontier Phone List was updated and distributed monthly to all frontier members on the list and WSI Contacts. WSI Contacts were asked to maintain current copies at their meeting’s literature tables.
- The Frontier Sponsor List was updated and distributed quarterly via email to WSI Contacts for placement on meeting literature tables. It was also
sent to over 70 people from June 01, 2015 to September 30, 2015. Sign-ups for this list were encouraged via intergroup and chapter meetings.

- Continued with the creation and distribution process of the E-Communication piece for members on the frontier. FA members from several cities in the United States, Canada and Australia demonstrated their commitment to service by writing relevant stories for people on the frontier.
- The Frontier Subcommittee continued to meet regularly to report the subcommittee's progress and voice concerns and ideas regarding our work of helping FA members on the frontier.

Communications Subcommittee

- Published Fall Gratitude in Action Newsletter for October distribution. Focus included keeping spiritually fit through the holiday season, travel, staying connected through service, and provided one issue presented to the Traditions Review Committee and the TRC response. It also listed pertinent information for upcoming events such as Thank-a-thons, the WSI 12th Step Committee Frontier Support Call, Local Service Group Calls, and the 2016 FA Business and FA Fellowship Conventions.
- Universal Language List was updated and distributed quarterly, as scheduled. List currently contains 59 members from 9 countries, with 13 languages spoken.