

# **WORLD BOARD** ***NEWS FLASH***

## **Help Us Plan the Worldwide Workshop Project!**

The board needs your input to make the worldwide workshop project successful. This is a new project approved at WSC 2000. The budget allows the board to hold up to six worldwide workshops this conference cycle. We are committed to having one workshop in Europe, one in Latin America, one in Asia-Pacific, and up to three in North America. The purpose of the workshops is to improve face-to-face communication between NA World Services and the fellowship. Our vision is that these workshops will help world services to be more responsive to the fellowship we serve. We want to create an opportunity for dialogue, training, and an exchange of experience, strength, and hope. We believe that these workshops can aid in laying the groundwork that will allow the new world service system to be effective, and will assist delegates, World Board members, and WSO staff to become more proficient in their world service roles. We want your ideas to generate participation and enthusiasm!

- ❖ What do you want to see happen at the worldwide workshops?
- ❖ What are your ideas about how to get maximum participation and benefit for the fellowship?
- ❖ What ideas do you have about choosing locations for workshops?

We want to involve group, area, regional, zonal, and world-level experience in choosing workshop topics and participating in panel-type presentations. We also hope to attract a broad range of experience—recovery and service experience—in the members who attend.

### **Background**

We want to emphasize that we see the workshop project as an experiment. We never have done this before. We plan to take some risks ... and, we expect to make some mistakes. We would like to try various formats and approaches in the different workshops so that we can learn as much as possible from the experiment. We hope the workshops will generate enthusiasm and unity to carry the NA message of recovery and service more effectively.

We are considering several kinds of workshop formats. These include:

- ❖ One-day events tagged onto an existing fellowship event;
- ❖ Combining a worldwide workshop with World Unity Day;
- ❖ New, stand-alone weekend events; and/or
- ❖ Combining a worldwide workshop with a willing regional convention or multi-regional event.

Experimenting with a worldwide workshop combined with a regional convention or multi-regional event has benefits we are exploring. This kind of partnership, if we could find a willing community, would help us to achieve the combined recovery and service focus that attracts a cross-section of members. We could offer a series of workshop-type meetings mixed in with a local convention's program. This would include at least one prime-time recovery meeting hosted by us as well. The workshop events might look more like a small-scale version of the service workshops that NAWS has offered at world conventions. Like world conventions, we want to attract members to events featuring workshops on topics about service and/or fellowship issues mixed into a recovery event featuring meetings and a social function that builds community.



In certain zones, particularly outside of North America, it is very difficult to bring together members throughout a zone or continent. So we are also open to an event like a regional convention or a new stand-alone event that might attract a large number of members, even if most of those members come from a single country in that zone. Rotating events within a zone could—over time—spread the benefits to other members.

We want to also emphasize that we see these workshops as different from World Service Meetings. World Service Meetings focus on a dialogue between delegates and the board about world service issues and projects. We believe that type of dialogue already takes place at the World Service Conference, at World Service Meetings, and at zonal forum meetings where the board regularly interacts with the delegates. We believe the objective of the workshop experiment is to build something new. We see the workshops focusing on both recovery and service—exchanging experience with our basic principles. There will be some room for discussion of world service issues, of course; but we want to attract as many members as possible. We feel NAWS-issues should not overshadow fellowship issues and local needs for training, education, and help with local problems. Also, we think these workshops will accomplish more if they are similar to the fellowship development trips we have taken to specific communities over the years. The workshops would not replace such trips or take the place of existing meetings with the zones, but would complement such activities.

### **The Project Timeline**

We do not think it is possible to have the first workshop before July 2001. We also need to complete all of the workshops by March 2002 to avoid conflicts with WSC 2002 in April. As a practical matter, holding six workshops within a span of eight or nine months will be quite a challenge with everything else going on during that timeframe. At this early stage, we have made no final decisions about any workshop locations or formats (nor have we made any decisions about the time and place for World Unity Day or any World Service Meeting.) But we do expect to begin to make *preliminary* decisions as soon as our next board meeting in January 2001. This decision-making process will continue at our April 2001 and July 2001 board meetings, as planning for the staggered series of workshops evolves. Over these three meetings, we will need to decide where and when to hold the various workshops, as well as the specifics about what each event might include. We realize that many regions and zones meet infrequently so responding quickly can be difficult. At the same time, we need to deliver a set of workshops within the confines of the practical and budgetary restraints. The workshop project is a high priority. But, we must make it work within the context of our overall workload and the timeline we are faced with this conference cycle.

### **We Need Your Help to Accomplish These Goals**

Accomplishing these large objectives would amount to historic progress for NA World Services. Obviously, we cannot do this alone. We are looking for good ideas and new ideas, regardless of the source. Of course, nearly everyone would welcome one of these worldwide workshops in their own backyard. But naturally, that is impossible due to limited resources. There are over 90 regions and a dozen zonal forums. To make these workshops happen, we will need cooperation and flexibility between us and both the regional delegates and the zonal forums. We want to hear from every community that has a strong interest in working with us to put on a workshop. We also want to avoid competition among regions or zones to host a workshop. Instead, we want to build cooperation to make this first set of workshops as successful as possible, no matter where they are held. Only a few communities will get the direct benefits of a worldwide workshop this conference cycle. But if we experiment successfully and creatively, we have the opportunity to build a workshop system that will benefit the entire fellowship through a system of rotation in future years.

We need your feedback as soon as possible. We do not want to put any deadline on receiving fellowship input. Nonetheless, we would appreciate your support for the general approach we have outlined so far, *as well as any ideas you have about what would help make the workshop events successful*. Requests to work with us to host a specific workshop are also welcome. Although we have some general ideas, we really are open to other ideas or perspectives that we have not considered. We are trying to think outside of the box in a visionary way. We look forward to hearing from you soon!

