

*A.R.T.S. Anonymous Inc.
Conference Reports
2007*

MINUTES OF THE
2007 WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE

October 27, 2007
New York City

PARTICIPANTS (present):

<u>Trustees</u>	<u>WSMRs</u>	<u>Founder</u>
Frank Lagerstedt	Valerie G.	Abigail B
Eva A.	Sherrie L.	
Margi Briggs-Lofton	Michal M.	<u>Office</u>
Mary F.	Victoria S.	Garry N
David P.	David S.	
Don T.	Joyce B.	<u>Committees</u>
	Megan (afternoon only)	Bill W
	Jay M.	

The meeting convened at 10:30 a.m.

Introduction of Voting and Non-Voting Attendees

Frank Lagerstedt, Chairperson
Margi Briggs-Lofton, Acting Corporate Secretary and Trustee-at-Large
Sherrie L., WSMR Monday night "Double Winners" meeting, NYC
Bill W., Special Events & Website Standing Committee
Garry N., Office Manager
Michal M., Tuesday night Plan meeting, NYC
Abigail B., Founder
Victoria S., WSMR Thursday "Show & Tell" meeting, NYC
David S., alternate, Saturday "Artists' Way" meeting, NYC
Val G., WSMR Saturday "Artists' Way" meeting, NYC
David P, Trustee and Treasurer
Mary F., Regional Trustee
Don T., Eastern Regional Trustee
Eva A., Trustee, Special Events
Joyce B., WSMR, Montclair NJ
Jay M., Monday night NYC alternate, Website Standing Committee

WSMR Meeting Check-In

- Sherrie L: Monday Night "Double Winners" Meeting, NYC

Attendance has dropped to an average of 7 per meeting; newcomers are not returning on a regular basis. A position of greeter has been created, to welcome newcomers, answer questions and help people stay connected. Newcomers seem to like it but it is too soon to tell how effective it is. The meeting started a new format, where every fourth week is a visions and meditation meeting, and there is a monthly brainstorming meeting on how to increase attendance. The meeting has an extensive email list.

- Joyce G, Montclair, NJ Meeting

The meeting is 5 months old; consistently 5 members attend and meeting is doing well.

- Michal M., Tuesday Night Plan Meeting

Between 5 to 10 people attend regularly and the meeting is doing well. The energy is high.

- Victoria S., Tuesday Night Times Square "Show & Tell" Meeting

Group has 4 regular members with occasional "pop-ins." It is a good meeting where members present art and perform.

- Val G., Saturday "Artists' Way" Meeting at Cabrini

It is a healthy meeting with 10 – 15 regular participants, and ARTShares on the first Saturday of the month. It continues to make donations to the WSO.

- David S., Saturday "Artists' Way" Meeting at Cabrini

He maintains an active email list for his meeting and keeps people informed about the meeting and other A.R.T.S. activities

- Mary F., NJ Meeting

Meeting attendance is seasonal due to location on Jersey shore. Winter averages 3 – 6 attendees and summer 5 – 8. The first meeting of the month is a Step meeting; the second is Works in Progress; the third is Leader's Choice; and the fourth is for finished work. Each meeting gives participants a chance to share.

Approve Conference Agenda

Motion 1: (Mary F.) (2nd) Accept 2007 Conference Agenda as presented

Vote on Motion 1: Yes – unanimous. **Passed**

Approve Conference Minutes

Motion 2: (Sherrie L.) (2nd) Approve 2006 Conference minutes as amended with correction to the spelling of Frank's name

Vote on Motion 2: Yes – unanimous. **Passed**

Trustee Reports

1. Frank L, Chairperson introduced the Trustees
2. **Finance & Budget** – David P.

David presented two financial reports, an Income & Expense Report for FY 2006 and an Income/Expense Comparison Report for FYs 2005 and 2006 (attached hereto).

David discussed variations in income between the two fiscal years. Most notable were decreases in income in 2006 from the convention, individual gifts and the year-end appeal, adding up to an overall total drop of \$2915.48. There were increases in the cost of literature but this was offset but a reduction in office expenses. It was noted that 2005 was the 20th Anniversary year, which could account for higher income levels. Also, costs of venues and other services tend to rise each year.

Total cash position as of end-of-year 2006: \$13,715

Frank added that most money comes from the convention and individual donors, as has been the case in previous years, and that the general financial situation is relatively unchanged.

It was questioned if there has been a survey of how increased and improved internet access has impacted A.R.T.S. participation, growth and member satisfaction. This has not been measured specifically, but impact has not been seen in the financials.

Abigail B. stated that literature sales are key sources of revenue, not the contributions from meetings. David P. reported that it is difficult to accurately measure the cost of literature because Garry's time preparing the literature is not reflected in the numbers. An analysis of this would be welcome, and should factor in inventory as well.

Jay M. questioned if there was an interest-bearing account. Eva A. reported that there is discussion of creating an interest-bearing account. David P. will look into this, and any potential ramifications.

Motion 3: (Bill W.) The treasurer's report in the future should include a six-month financial report for the current FY.

Friendly amendment: The Annual Conference should include financial reports from the nearest financial quarter. The amended motion was approved and seconded.

Vote on Amended Motion 3: Yes – unanimous. **Passed**

Sherrie L. raised the question of establishing a prudent reserve. The Board is looking into this and will be report back to the fellowship as it gathers more information.

Victoria S. discussed the idea of a "money magnet" that is money set aside and never touched. This will also be considered.

3. **Special Events** – Eva A.

The bulk of the special events position's work in recent years has been planning for the convention, conference and ARTS Halloween/birthday party. Eva acknowledged Garry, the Board, Sherrie L., Bill W., Ed S., and Jay M. for all their assistance with special events

and activities. She also oversees day-to-day financial transactions with Garry and David P. and assists in ongoing Board planning activities.

4. **Eastern Regional Report** – Don T.

Don reported that his job consists of handling internet and phone queries, and assisting people who want to start new meetings. He also supports new meetings, and tries to attend local meetings and sometimes ones that are further afield, if possible. Over the past year or two, the number of calls coming in has increased. An ongoing frustration is that a significant number of people ask about meetings, but when there is not a local meeting available to attend, they are reluctant to start one. The phone meetings are very helpful in these situations.

5. **Trustee-at-Large**, Margi Briggs-Lofton

Margi is currently acting as Corporate Secretary, and is also involved in overall planning and operational issues. She manages the year-end appeal.

6. **Regional Trustee, Liaison to WSMRs** – Mary F.

Mary F. is charged with making personal contact with WSMRs and has been frustrated by the lack of phone numbers available for them. She has called WSMRs in the U.S. and Canada. There are approximately 33 meetings for which we have contact names, 10 of which are on the East Coast. The personal contact she has made has been rewarding as she was able to strengthen connections with existing meetings and individuals. She is updating information and passing that on to the office. She is pleased about on-line registration for meetings that will soon be active.

It was suggested that names be googled to find phone numbers.

7. **World Service Office** – Garry N.

Things in the office are running smoothly. Garry has just completed a drive, with Don and Mary, to increase meeting registration. Now almost all meetings are registered. There are 33 active meetings, with 363 names on the active member base, which is international. Members can now contact the A.R.T.S. office through the website. Garry's email address has changed to artsofficemanager@yahoo.com.

The meeting registration form has been streamlined to one page, and Jay M. is working to make it possible to register meetings online and make the information legible and easily accessible. An upcoming project is to streamline the literature order form. It was noted that the stability Garry provides for the office is much appreciated.

8. **Website Status** – Jay M. & Bill W.

Bill W. manages the special event "sub" websites and ensures that they are functional and timely. He would like to make it possible for people to register and pay online for the

Convention. He addressed the possibility of creating a web strategy for the A.R.T.S. main website.

Jay M. handles the day-to-day operation of the website, and has made online access to many A.R.T.S. forms possible. He has not been able to develop more sophisticated forms and functions, which could help the office manipulate member and meeting data easier, but would like to see that happen and is open to assistance with this. A major focus of his work is immediately updating meeting information so that it is available to all in a timely manner. Jay has also made it possible for people to send in snail mail and email addresses via the website. Jay also receives information requests via the website, which he acknowledges and forwards to Garry.

The speed and diligence that Jay and Bill bring to this work is appreciated.

There was discussion about whether tech support would assist Bill and Jay, and the Board, in better defining and accomplishing an improved website. The idea of creating an Outreach Committee that would include web issues was suggested. The Board will work to get this started.

In summary, it was concluded that, although there is room for growth, the website and its functionality is better than it has ever been.

All Trustees, Committee Members and Staff were acknowledged by those present for their good work on behalf of A.R.T.S.

9. Website Quotes

Abigail B. presented a handout of A.R.T.S. quotes that have been pulled from existing literature. The meeting participants were asked to review them during lunch, after which there will be discussion about which ones are best suited for use on the website and in other outreach materials in the coming months. It was also suggested that we ask members to send in comments on a more interactive basis.

Motion 4: (Margi B-L) (2nd) Break for lunch and reconvene at 1:00

Vote on Motion 4: Yes – unanimous. **Passed.** Everyone went to eat!

The meeting reconvened at 1:15 p.m.

Participants suggested their favorite quotes for the website, and Abigail noted them. It was recommended that quotes used not be overly long, as they should serve as sidebars and motivation, but not distract attention from page content. Others suggested displaying only very few quotes with a link to a separate page of quotes, so as not to clutter the website. This approach would provide readers with the option to scan the quotes or read them in depth. A “quote of the month” was suggested. These suggestions will be shared with the Outreach Committee for the web planners to consider.

The benefit of including testimonials from program members was discussed, and it was suggested that everyone attending today's conference write a testimonial before leaving and give it to Abigail.

Literature Report:

Abigail B. stated that literature is progressing very well. The Step Books are selling well at the price of \$25 for three books. Abigail receives positive feedback on the books from users and is always looking for additional input.

All Conference participants received a copy of a new pamphlet – "Say it Quick, Say it Short" - which is based on quotes that came out of the Plan Meeting. She would like to receive feedback on it, in preparation for circulating it to meetings and starting the Conference approval process.

Abigail also circulated the cartoon book that originated from the Boulder, CO meeting. We have permission to publish and use it.

Confirmation Slate of Trustees:

Motion 5: (Sherrie L.) (2nd) Accept Slate of Trustees as presented

Vote on Motion 5: Yes – unanimous with Trustees abstaining. **Passed.**

Abigail B. suggested that next year we indicate the terms for each Trustee.

New Business:

1. How to get more people to come to the conference?

Key points and questions raised during the discussion are addressed herein. Participants were asked to refer to last year's discussion in the 2006 Conference minutes. More outreach from existing WSMRs who participate, the creation of ground-up enthusiasm, and perhaps a survey could help us get a better sense of what people want. Additional possibilities include promoting the conference on the website and post minutes to build awareness.

Response from WSMRs is historically weak and was again this year. Plans were originally to have an A.R.T.S. weekend, but were cut back due to the low response. In many cases, people are struggling just to keep their meetings alive and attendance at the conference is not feasible nor a priority.

Is there a way to connect the meetings and WSMRs to each other throughout the year to promote the sense of fellowship as intergroup offers in other 12-step programs? Meetings seem to be isolated from each other and this lack of connection can negatively affect overall organization health. If the standard 12-step model isn't working, is there another way? The possibility of holding monthly conference calls for WSMRs was raised.

The “attraction not promotion” concept can cause confusion. Perhaps it would be helpful to have a standard format flyer with room for local contact information that could be sent to meetings, along with a draft press release that could be sent out and altered as needed for specific locales. On this topic, Abigail B. has an article that she would like to receive comments on from the members. Abigail B. and Victoria S. will work on creating the above documents.

The major question to be addressed, before we can deal with issues such as conference attendance, is why A.R.T.S. is not thriving. Mary F. suggested that next year’s convention include a discussion on this topic. Sherrie L. described the DA approach to the conference where it is scheduled and announced a year in advance, which allows enthusiasm and participation to build.

A.R.T.S. needs to promote its success stories and show how people can change and thrive through A.R.T.S. It can also be helpful to connect A.R.T.S. and its members to other artists in the community. It is important to focus on the positive, hopeful message and results. Perhaps a stream of literature can be created that focuses on success stories and positive attributes, and that does not dwell only on underlying problems.

Abigail B. suggested that the Board embark on outreach to medical communities, high school teachers, arts schools, etc. in cities where there are currently meetings, and in key target cities. All convention attendees can also be asked to provide testimonials before leaving the weekend. Also, we need to consider what it is that A.R.T.S. offers that people can’t get elsewhere? Unconditional support, integrity. Is desperation, and awareness of it, the necessary key to draw people to A.R.T.S.? And how do you keep successful people coming back instead of moving on? Should A.R.T.S. establish paid workshops for members to attend that focus on different steps? Can A.R.T.S. drop “anonymous”? Is the Bill W. 12-Step model outdated for A.R.T.S.?

The following phrases were suggested, that could help focus on success through A.R.T.S.:

- “I’m an unblocked artist. Ask me how!”
- A.R.T.S. Works
- Can you imagine being so recovered that you can share that with others?

Can the A.R.T.S. program adapt to address the evolving needs of its members as they grow and progress through the program? Another issue is how to increase service in A.R.T.S. and to promote the value that service brings to the individual.

Frank commented that this is a good and lively discussion, but much of it has taken place at previous meetings and there has been no subsequent action. The challenge to this group now is what is going to happen as a result of this discussion? Will people take action and ownership to get things done?

David S. raised the possibility of bringing back the “Artists’ Muse” newsletter as a means of showcasing artistic expression and increasing communication with the A.R.T.S. community. David S., David P. and Megan volunteered to make this happen and to recruit additional people to assist in the process. They will keep the Board apprised of their efforts.

The issue of where and when to hold the conference was raised. It was explained that a survey will be sent out to all members to better ascertain what is preferable for the fellowship.

Motion 6: (Eva A.) (2nd) To adjourn the meeting

Vote on Motion 6: 13 in favor, 1 abstention. **Passed.**

Check-Out: (highlights of comments made)

Collaborative discussion
Website growth and progress
Need to find a way to reach more people
Glad to be here
Unresolved re. where next conference is
Encourage people to read literature
Forward energy that will show concrete results
Can we include a letter with minutes inviting WSMR/meeting input (from a rep)
Communication is the key
Twice as many participants and twice as many people doing service next year
Enthusiasm around abundance, creating, success
Thanks to Frank for good leadership of meeting

Closing Remarks:

Frank thanked all participants for their fearless and enthusiastic participation in the conference. He finds nothing cooler than coming up with a concept, creating a structure that will support it, and seeing it put in place. Service allows people to be involved in this process and also to personally stretch in unexpected ways. It is much appreciated and he hopes that A.R.T.S. will thrive as a result of everyone's efforts in the coming year.

Serenity Prayer

Meeting Adjourned at 4:00 p.m.