

2018 WSBC Delegate Report – Lauren N, Chair VIIG and WSBC Delegate

Conference attended Monday April 23-Saturday April 28, 2018

In November 2017 I was elected to be your Vancouver Island Intergroup (VIIG) representative to the OA World Service Business Conference (WSBC) in Albuquerque New Mexico for 2018. I flew to Albuquerque on Sunday April 22 to be ready to attend activities beginning Monday April 23. All delegates that have never attended a WSBC before are called 'green dots'. So yes, my name tag had a green dot sticker on it for everyone to notice. I was assigned a mentor to help me through my preparation before arriving as well as all week long while I was in attendance. Roseanne was my mentor. What a kind, gentle and lovely woman. She had many years in OA and in service. She was able to provide me with history behind each motion that was voted on, even though there was a binder (a thick one) of conference material with explanations on the motions. There were 188 voting members from 16 countries around the world.

I was sent a list of the motions for discussion and voting early in 2018. I was asked to bring it forward to our IG and ask people which topics they felt warranted discussion and assign a priority to them. We held those discussions during an intergroup meeting held in January/February 2018. I and all other delegates did the same exercise. When I arrived I saw the results: the priorities were summarized and each motion noted what percentage of OA members wanted that particular motion to be discussed. So in order of world-wide members' preference, we listened to the motions, the pros and cons of each (anyone could get up to the microphone and speak to it), 15 minutes of discussion, then the vote. It was all very organized, professional and successful. No one cheered when a motion was passed: just carry on to the next one. Some required a yea/nay speaking vote because the vote was clear, others required a standing vote where we stood for the yes side, counted off, then stood for the no side and counted off. Those ones took a little longer but it was all part of the fair process. I was humbled to be part of the process among others from all over the world knowing that I had the responsibility to put principles before personalities and remember the outcome had to benefit OA as a whole. A few times, the discussions got heated. Someone from the floor would request we all say the Serenity Prayer. It would help to remind us why we were there and within minutes the discussion was complete and the vote was taken. Awesome!

I was accepted to the Unity With Diversity subcommittee. I chose that committee because I have a particular interest in making OA available to people and members wanting to do service at all economic levels. At one point in my recovery I was very strapped for money. I still looked the same and some people may not have known I was struggling. But I didn't have \$5 for gas money to get to an intergroup meeting. I needed to be funded by my IG just to attend meetings. And I could only attend meetings that were close by to be economical with my car and gas. I want all members to feel welcome to do service without the worry they would be expected to pay their way. Other members on the committee were there for issues such as race, religion, LGBT, language, diverse meeting focus (HOW, OA 90days, virtual meetings, etc.), so my eyes were opened a bit more by listening to their concerns. Our committee purpose is to make OA available to all people at all times. If you have anything you would like to discuss on this topic, please contact me at vancouverislandintergroup@gmail.com.

There were 3 items I would like to bring to your attention:

1. We have a new region: the Virtual Region with a trustee from Brazil. Virtual groups may belong to this region or a geographical region of their choice. If you have a virtual meeting or would like to start one, you can contact them for assistance.
2. Some members who are contemplating or have had bariatric surgery have been made to feel unwelcome at OA meetings. We voted to add the mention of bariatric patients to the policy manual to ensure they are included.
3. Pat O. has been acting Region 1 trustee for one year. She was voted in as Region 1 trustee at the conference. As we saw at our Intergroup Renewal workshop this year, Pat is a shining star and advocate for everything OA.

I met many other Region 1 delegates as well as delegates from other regions. I paired up with Jodi from Calgary as she had organized a hot-air balloon ride on Tuesday. Jodi and I found places to hike and visit on our spare time and really enjoyed each other's company. The members with long-time abstinence were plentiful. I am very proud of my nearly 2 years of abstinence (June 29 2018) within 5 years of OA membership (June 10 2018) and was inspired and hopeful that I, too, can do this, one day at a time. To make the most of the trip, I stayed an extra week and toured the Grand Canyon and Moab areas. This is a very beautiful part of our world and it was a spiritual experience every day. I meditated at the most amazing places.

Thank you again for trusting me in the position of the WSBC representative for VIIG and for funding me to attend the conference this year. It was an awesome experience and I hope you all would get the chance to be our delegate in the future. I was truly honoured to represent Vancouver Island.

Yours in service,

Lauren N.

WSBC Delegate for Vancouver Island Intergroup.