

2015 ABC Ballot for Adult Children of Alcoholics

Please present the Ballot Proposals to your group and take a Group Conscience vote on each one.

The following pages include the proposed ballot results for the 2015 ABC as submitted by the ACA fellowship, along with WSO Analysis related to the proposals.

Guidelines for voting:

1. Each proposal includes the Issue, History/Reasoning, Argument in Favor and WSO Analysis. Please indicate whether your group thinks the proposal should be on the ABC agenda by indicating Yes, No, or No Opinion.
2. If your group would like to add a comment about a proposal there is space provided.
3. All proposals that receive a 2/3 favorable vote of those groups who vote will be put on the agenda for discussion and voting at the ABC in Austin, Texas, on April 24th and 25th.

The fellowship received 14 unique proposals/motions for each group's consideration. One was withdrawn by the submitting group because it was incomplete.

Proposal 2015 – 1

Submitted on 9/26/14 by Ft. Myers, FL (FL157 and FL180)

Issue: We propose the shipping charges on purchases materials from WSO are out of line for what is being ordered.

History/Reasoning: FL157 needs to order 1 Meditation Book and 8 Newcomer Booklets with the cheapest handling/shipping being \$13.12. That works out to \$1.46 handling/shipping charge FOR EACH ITEM. If we order just 20 Welcome Chips [the minimum \$10 order] it cost \$11.85 handling/shipping. These charges are out of line for what is being ordered.

Argument in Favor: WSO needs to look at what other 12-step groups are charging for handling/shipping materials and make ACA pricing comparable.

WSO Analysis: The WSO Board believes this to be a non-issue as the new website shows shipping prices that are accurate. GoDaddy would not provide the means for WSO to upload the accurate shipping prices on the old website, so shipping adjustments were made for most orders, which is no longer necessary.

If this proposal receives a two-thirds positive vote from the fellowship, it will be included as part of the ABC agenda, with the result of that discussion provided as part of the ABC minutes.

Proposal 2015 – 2

Submitted on 10/30/14 by Torrance, CA (CA012)

Issue: We get ACA info into medical doctor's offices. The handouts for the pts to read while waiting in the exam rooms.

History/Reasoning: Doctor's offices always have reading material in their exam rooms on health conditions. We can ask them to include the pamphlets on ACA. This is not pushy, not advertising it is just good to know information. I have worked in healthcare, we use to have pamphlets on domestic violence in the exam rooms. I think they would be open to this too.

Argument in Favor: So many folks need help. Most of the folks in my group were referred by their therapist. However, there are a lot of folks who never go to a therapist but do go to a medical doctor. Like most of the folks I have met in ACA after reading ACA materials you can immediately relate and know you want to learn more. This is an easy way to get our information into more hands.

WSO Analysis: Individual meetings are free to do service work by providing tri-folds and pamphlets to Doctor's offices in their area, with the permission of the Doctors. WSO is not equipped to do so. There is,

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however, a WSO initiative where Red Texts are provided to therapists and therapy groups who may not be aware of ACA. The fellowship is welcome to supply names and addresses of such groups to the Members and Public Service committee.

If this proposal receives a two-thirds positive vote from the fellowship, it will be included as part of the ABC agenda, with the result of that discussion provided as part of the ABC minutes.

Proposal 2015 – 3

Submitted on 11/7/14 by Central Coast Intergroup (IG076); Grover Beach (CA915 and CA1006)

Issue: WSO institute a program of planned, phased-in, on-going Public Service Announcements (TV, internet, radio, periodicals) to let the general public know ACA exists, who we are, that we work on personal recovery from growing up in alcoholic and dysfunctional homes, and give a phone number and web address to find meetings in local areas. No faces are to be on the announcements and no promises of outcomes are to be made.

History/Reasoning: In the past WSO did not have the money to fund or the expertise to plan and implement public media announcements; it now has the money and can hire the talent needed. The input from WSO on the 2014 ballot misinterpreted "personal anonymity" to mean the PROGRAM anonymity. We feel that our primary purpose IS to carry the message from meetings, from intergroups, and certainly from WSO - it's why we exist.

Argument in Favor: Step 12 tells us that once we individually have a spiritual awakening, we individually try to carry our message to others who still suffer. Tradition 5 reminds us that EACH GROUP (meeting, intergroup, and board) has but one primary purpose --- to carry its message to the adult child who still suffers. Tradition 11 reminds us to attract, not promote, newcomer interest. We can only do this by getting the message out there that we exist. Tradition 11 reminds us to maintain PERSONAL, not PROGRAM, anonymity in the media. Tradition 12 speaks to the need for PERSONAL anonymity to keep recovering, yet still somewhat dysfunctional, egos harnessed, so we can get the message out (our primary purpose) and focus on the principles of the program (how we do it). Tradition 12 also refers to the need for PERSONAL anonymity to protect the integrity of the program message to avoid the tainting of the program in the event of personal relapse of a "face" of ACA. Concept 8 endows WSO Trustees to act as principal planners and administrators of over-all policy. Concept 9 endows WSO Trustees with the responsibility of leadership to carry out the program goal --- to carry the ACA message to adult children who still suffer. We hear newcomers and counselors tell us they never heard of Adult Children of Alcoholics. We hear no mention of our ACA program when other 12 Step programs are cited or listed in newspapers, magazines, books, radio, internet, and on television. Furthermore "ACA" to others either refers to the American Canoeing (and Kayaking) Association or the Affordable Care Act ("Obamacare"). Finally, we've seen public media (televised announcements of other 12 Step Programs.

WSO Analysis: The Board has received a very preliminary estimate that it would cost between \$5-10,000 to produce a very short Public Service Announcement. It would then be available to be aired in local markets as groups and Intergroups are able to afford to do so. If the Fellowship believes that this is a way the word can be spread while still following the 12 Traditions, then WSO can move forward with such a project.

If this proposal receives a two-thirds positive vote from the fellowship, it will be included as part of the ABC agenda, with the result of that discussion provided as part of the ABC minutes.

Proposal 2015 – 4

Submitted on 11/7/14 by Central Coast Intergroup (IG076)

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Issue: Move to have WSO upload all trifold in unalterable PDF forms in all available translations so members worldwide can download them for free.

History/Reasoning: In the past trifolds were the only literature available; we now have books. In the past WSO needed the money from the trifolds to operate; that is no longer necessary. Cost of labor and time spent in filling and shipping orders domestically in USA isn't cost effective for the revenue they bring in anymore. More cost-effective to focus on book, medallions, chip orders. Shipping trifolds outside the USA is prohibitively expensive, time delayed, and/or never received with customs impounding. Making them accessible for downloading will allow cost-free documents, immediate distribution, and no customs delays. Pdf documents that make the trifolds unalterable will put these documents readily in the hands of the membership worldwide which carries the message, unifies and solidifies the ACA program, and stipulates a focal point worldwide.

Argument in Favor: Step 12 tells us to carry the message. This will allow our message to be distributed worldwide, inexpensively, and immediately. Tradition 5 reminds us that EACH GROUP (meeting, intergroup, and board) has but one primary purpose --- to carry its message to the adult child who still suffers. Freely distributed literature will help carry the message. Concept 8 endows WSO Trustees to act as principal planners and administrators of over-all policy. Concept 9 endows WSO Trustees with the responsibility of leadership to carry out the program goal – to carry the ACA message to adult children who still suffer. The key to making this possible is that the message remains the same. While there are programs to convert Pdf files into Word programs, there are also Adobe programs to stop this from occurring (password protection and level of professional encryption program), keeping the ACA message intact.

WSO Analysis: The WSO is entrusted with protecting the proprietary interest of the fellowship's literature. The Board makes every effort possible to spread the word to those who still suffer while making sure the revenue obtained from the sale of literature continues to allow that message to be spread. Although the revenue from the tri-folds is not nearly as large as that of other products, it still helps pay for outreach efforts.

If this proposal receives a two-thirds positive vote from the fellowship, it will be included as part of the ABC agenda, with the result of that discussion provided as part of the ABC minutes.

Proposal 2015 – 5

Submitted on 11/10/14 by San Antonio, TX (TX081)

Issue: We propose that copies of any material referenced in a ballot proposal be made available with the ballot or on the WSO website for groups to review before voting. (Exclusive of the 500 word limit.)

History/Reasoning: In the past ballot proposals have requested action regarding specific materials without making them available for review. There currently exists no codified standard vetting of ballot submissions. Proposals are placed on the ballot and presented to the fellowship largely as submitted, reviewed for form but not clarity of language or factual accuracy.

Argument in Favor: Materials could easily be attached to paper or electronic ballots, posted on the webpage, links or at least citations provided. However, without access to the material in question an informed group conscience is not possible. (Of course, we would gladly withdraw this proposal should any changes to the OPPM render it moot.)

WSO Analysis: The publication of literature referenced in a ballot item could be copy protected and made available on the website at a nominal cost and energy expense to WSO.

If this proposal receives a two-thirds positive vote from the fellowship, it will be included as part of the ABC agenda, with the result of that discussion provided as part of the ABC minutes.

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Proposal 2015 – 6

Submitted on 11/13/14 by the Austin, San Antonio, LaGrange, TX Intergroup (IG600)

Issue: We propose a requiring future WSO Trustees be qualified by at least one year's active service to an Intergroup, Region, or other intermediate-level service body. If needed, this requirement may be implemented incrementally, intending to apply to all trustees by the 2025 ABC.

History/Reasoning: Currently prospective trustees are required to attend five monthly Board teleconferences. Other than suggesting prior service with the WSO Board itself, the current Operating Policies and Procedures Manual requires no previous service experience; neither does the Board currently accept nominations for trustees from the fellowship at large.

Argument in Favor: Trustees without prior service experience may find it difficult to “hit the ground running” once seated, increasing the workload for other trustees and leaving the Board less responsive to the needs of the fellowship. Developing servant leaders at the intermediate level will create a more vital and effective Board. This requirement will also enhance the Trustees' commitment to the wider service structure by emphasizing intermediate levels of service. It will establish a more effective and consistent means for the Board to draw on the Experience, Strength and Hope of the wider fellowship. Furthermore, it supports the traditions' ideal of bottom-up servant leadership.

WSO Analysis: A Committee of the Board is in the process of updating the OPPM and requirements for Board membership is being examined. We agree that showing a record of service to the fellowship is ideal before an individual becomes a WSO Trustee. Therefore, a long-term goal like the one suggested is reasonable. WSO will also presumably be in a position at that time where the role of Trustee will be more advisory rather than the level of work the current Board is required to do due to lack of volunteerism.

If this proposal receives a two-thirds positive vote from the fellowship, it will be included as part of the ABC agenda, with the result of that discussion provided as part of the ABC minutes.

Proposal 2015 – 7

Submitted on 11/14/14 by Espoo, Finland (FIN044)

Issue: ACA WSO needs to stop distributing the Big Red Book as an eBook through any distribution channel and eBook platform that uses Digital Restrictions Management (DRM) technologies to prevent copying and format conversion of the book. This includes Amazon and their Kindle platform as well as Barnes and Noble and their Nook platform. It also includes any other platforms which use DRM.

History/Reasoning: Reasons: 1. Copyright law and DRM technologies are intended to prevent people from making copies of digital works at the actual price of making those copies. They do this by creating artificial scarcity by making a digital eBook legally reproducible only by the publisher who can then set the price artificially high. ACA WSO should be distributing the Big Red Book at the actual price of making the copies. The actual price of digital copies is very close to zero. 2. DRM Creates a vendor lock-in situation. Amazon and Barnes & Noble both have their DRM encumbered eBook reader platforms that prevent users from legally moving their eBook to other platforms. This allows these corporations to lock the user into using their platform rather than any possible competing platforms. By publishing the Big Red Book on these platforms ACA WSO is giving these business practices undeserved legitimacy. 3. Circumventing DRM has been criminalized in the United States as well as in the EU. In the U.S. the law used to do this is known as the Digital Millenium Copyright Act (DMCA). In the EU the European Union Copyright Directive (EUCD) does the same. The penalties for Circumventing DRM measures vary from one EU member state to the next and can vary from fines to imprisonment. In the U.S. first time offenders may be fined up to \$500,000, imprisoned

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for five years, or both. For repeat offenders, the maximum penalty is a fine of \$1,000,000, imprisonment for up to ten years, or both. By distributing the Big Red Book with DRM ACA WSO has publicly taken a copyright-maximalist position. This may cause relapses among kopimists within the ACA fellowship.

Argument in Favor: See reasons above.

WSO Analysis: The WSO is lawfully entrusted by the fellowship to protect its proprietary interest in its literature for the exclusive use and financial benefit of the ACA fellowship. The WSO protects such interests by obtaining copyright protection and using Digital Rights Management technology where applicable. DRM is software protection against unauthorized copying of digital media. This legal and technology copy protection also provides the WSO, and thereby the fellowship, the financial resources to carry the message to the worldwide fellowship, hire special workers, and pay for costly projects and capital improvements needed. Removing this protection would violate the WSO's legal responsibility.

If this proposal receives a two-thirds positive vote from the fellowship, it will be included as part of the ABC agenda, with the result of that discussion provided as part of the ABC minutes.

Proposal 2015 – 8

Submitted on 11/14/14 by Exton, PA (IG599)

Issue: We propose that the ACOA website be updated to have better communication with meeting leaders when their meetings are about to be given a “yellow caution warning” signifying outdated information.

History/Reasoning: Periodically, the ACOA website gives a “yellow caution warning” next to a meeting without informing the meeting designate. This makes it appear to new comers that the meeting may no longer be in existence. Many new comers have contacted me over the years to inquire whether the meeting is still in existence. It would be less confusing if the designated contact person for the meeting was contacted by ACOA WSO to ask if the information is up to date rather than putting a yellow caution sign up on the webpage. There are 34 meetings in my area and 10 of them have the yellow caution sign next to them as I write this and the meeting designate probably does not know about it. I can see why a new comer might assume these 10 meetings are no longer running. As it stands now, new comers are usually the ones communicating with the meeting designate about the status of the meeting.

Argument in Favor: If there was better communication with the meeting designate, the information on the webpage would be kept up to date and create less doubt in the minds of new comers. New comers would be less apt to think the meetings are no longer in existence.

WSO Analysis: Changes are made to a meeting’s information, or not, based on what is submitted/updated by group secretaries. It is part of each secretary's responsibilities to regularly update their group's information, as described in the Handbook Chapter of the BRB. Because the meeting list software does not send a warning to WSO when a yellow caution is placed in front of meeting’s information, WSO has limited resources for ensuring the accuracy of information beyond what is received. Emails are sent to groups several times a year about the Annual Business Conference (ABC), including due dates for proposals, voting on ballot items, and other announcements. If any emails bounce back, our special worker tries to contact the group to see if they are still meeting. We also find out when groups may not be meeting or information is incorrect when individual ACAs let us know.

If this proposal receives a two-thirds positive vote from the fellowship, it will be included as part of the ABC agenda, with the result of that discussion provided as part of the ABC minutes.

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Proposal 2015 – 9

Submitted on 11/14/14 by Polish Intergroup (IG602)

Issue: We propose that ACA WSO will change the rules of printing and publishing of the translations of ACA fellowship text and Yellow Workbook so it will be allowed to print the translated books in the home countries (without limitation to one-time printing) in the case when costs of printing in the foreign country are significantly lower than printing in the US and shipping to the country of translation language. This is the case of Poland, where printing and publishing of the book is much cheaper than in USA. Of course the income from selling the translated books will still go to the purposes of ACA WSO.

History/Reasoning: Polish intergroup is in the process of translation and we are concerned that the restriction to one-time first edition printing in Poland will force us to choose much more expensive and less convenient solution which is printing books in the US and shipping them to Poland. This would higher the price of polish translation and make the book hardly available for polish readers.

Argument in Favor: The prices of printing in Poland are much lower than prices in the US. Printing in the US would make the book more expensive. -If we print in Poland, we avoid high costs of shipping books. Money that we save this way, can be used to spread the message of ACA instead of giving it to shipping companies. - What is more, polish alphabet has more letters than latin alphabet what can cause mistakes in editing and printing in the United States. - Income from selling the book can be send to ACA WSO regardless to where the book is printed. - We are young intergroup and we may be not able to afford big number of books in the first edition. Limitation to one-time printing in Poland will complicate the publishing process for us.

WSO Analysis: To reduce the cost of shipping literature outside of the U.S., WSO is actively investigating several options, including the feasibility of printing abroad, including print-on-demand and/or using a foreign fulfillment service. Logistical issues would have to be resolved by the country seeking to print ACA Literature outside of the United States and presented to the WSO Board for consideration. Because the WSO is lawfully entrusted by the fellowship to protect its proprietary interest in its literature for the exclusive use and financial benefit of the ACA fellowship, a per book surcharge would also have to be negotiated.

If this proposal receives a two-thirds positive vote from the fellowship, it will be included as part of the ABC agenda, with the result of that discussion provided as part of the ABC minutes.

Proposal 2015 – 10

Submitted on 11/14/14 by Exton, PA (IG599)

Issue: We propose that the ACOA website be updated to be more modernized, organized and easier to navigate when looking for things such as meeting locations or purchasing literature.

History/Reasoning: Although the webpage for ACOA is fully operational, it could be more organized and modernized to make it easier to navigate, especially for the new comer. For example, it may be easier to navigate from one page to the next by having a centralized home page at the top. Most webpages are like this now. The current ACOA webpage is designed so that a person has to hit the “back” button to return to the main page. If the various pages (Main, Mission, Meetings, etc.) were at the top of each page at all times, a person could clearly see all the various options for the entire website instead of backspacing to return to the home page. It would also be more clear to the web viewer to have “Purchase ACA Literature” on the webpage rather than the current “ACA Shopping Cart”. The webpage seems to be outdated and would benefit from being more modernized.

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Argument in Favor: If the webpage were modernized and more organized, it would be easier to view all page options and more easily navigate to the various pages on the website. And changing the caption “ACA Shopping Cart” to “Purchase ACA Literature” would be more clear for the web viewer as to where to buy our Big Red Book and other literature. Anything we can do to make the website easier to navigate, more user friendly and more clear will help the web viewer to have an easier experience. Our program is so awesome and ever growing! Our webpage could use some changes to make it more modernized, organized and easier to navigate.

WSO Analysis: We have a new website that is live or will be shortly, so this has already been taken care of.

If this proposal receives a two-thirds positive vote from the fellowship, it will be included as part of the ABC agenda, with the result of that discussion provided as part of the ABC minutes.

Proposal 2015 – 11

Submitted on 11/15/14 by Kihei, HI (HI020 and HI023); Haiku, HI (HI204)

Issue: ACA/WSO provide Hawaii ACA Meeting Groups with the option to use USPS Media Rate Service when literature orders exceed \$500.

History/Reasoning: We have received previous shipments via both 'Priority Mail' and 'Flat Rate Priority Mail'. As the cost of USPS Media Rate is substantially less than both Priority Mail methods to Hawaii, we would be able to pass the cost savings to our members. Please note that the cost of living in Hawaii is one of the highest in the United States. We are also growing new meetings here and want to pool our resources as much as possible to support both newcomers and existing members.

Argument in Favor: Shipping costs are substantially less when using USPS Media Rate for program materials. The lower add-on cost of shipping would be appreciated by our members while allowing recently-formed Groups (having limited reserves) to keep some ACA Literature “on hand” for Newcomers. We request your consideration to add this shipping method for our growing ACA groups in Hawaii. We appreciate your consideration.

WSO Analysis: The new website is giving WSO the freedom to explore more shipping options that are as inexpensive as possible.

If this proposal receives a two-thirds positive vote from the fellowship, it will be included as part of the ABC agenda, with the result of that discussion provided as part of the ABC minutes.

Proposal 2015 – 12

Submitted on 11/15/14 by Signal Hill, CA (CA1150)

Issue: That WSO improve current communication tools in support of the ACA Fellowship to allow for direct communication of WSO-listed ACA events to any ACA meeting or Intergroup that so elects to receive such communications.

History/Reasoning: ACAWSO has long maintained a valuable website with various services for the Fellowship including basic program information, conference approved literature, ACA event notifications and tools to find ACA meetings and Intergroups. The website also provides for interactive communication with the Fellowship, as evidenced by activities in support of the Annual Business Conference (ABC) and WSO’s own monthly teleconference of the ACA Board of Directors.

Argument in Favor: This proposal supports an important fundamental principle of the ACA Fellowship; that is, to carry the message of ACA recovery to those who still suffer. This principle is embodied in our

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Twelfth Step and our Fifth Tradition. Improving communication within the ACA Fellowship directly supports this principle by making known and available ACA recovery resources to adult children who still suffer.

WSO Analysis: The WSO OPPM entrusts the WSO Board with using "exemplary care" in guarding meeting and Point of Contact (POC) information. Because the meeting registration form makes it clear to POCs that the information they are submitting will be used by individuals to locate meetings, the use of the information for other purposes outside of WSO communication is not currently permitted. We are one of the only Fellowships that display meeting POC information, while others give only a list of meetings. But because providing POC information is still the way we do it in ACA, then it is the Board's opinion that the information should only be available on the website for its intended use that allows individuals to ensure that a meeting's information is viable before attending.

If this proposal receives a two-thirds positive vote from the fellowship, it will be included as part of the ABC agenda, with the result of that discussion provided as part of the ABC minutes.

Proposal 2015 – 13

Submitted on 11/15/14 by United Kingdom Intergroup (IG530)

Issue: The 2 Trifolds, " 25 Questions, am I an Adult Child ", and " ACA Sponsorship: Fellow Travelers" should be provided free by download from the ACA Website.

History/Reasoning: While the costs of shipping Internationally probably mean that few leaflets/trifolds are sold outside the USA, our motivation is for the benefit of ACAs the world over. Communication via the Internet is now fast and easy, and there is to be a new website soon. We would hope consideration could go further than these 2 Trifolds, but these seem to be the most important ones to get to the fellowship at large. Paper copies could still be sold individually, or in the New Meeting Packet. The cost to the fellowship would probably be minimal as sales of books increase.

Argument in Favor: "25 Questions" is an important guide to possible newcomers as to whether this programme is relevant to them, and helps spread the message to suffering Adult Children. The sponsorship leaflet provides guidance on the distinctive approach that ACA has to Sponsorship: so both are important and should be readily available to all at no cost.

WSO Analysis: The WSO is entrusted with protecting the proprietary interest of the fellowship's literature. The Board makes every effort possible to spread the word to those who still suffer while making sure the revenue obtained from the sale of literature continues to allow that message to be spread. Although the revenue from the tri-folds is not nearly as large as that of other products, it still helps pay for outreach efforts.

If this proposal receives a two-thirds positive vote from the fellowship, it will be included as part of the ABC agenda, with the result of that discussion provided as part of the ABC minutes.

Proposal 2015 – 14

Submitted on 11/15/14 by Palo Alto, CA (CA477, CA682 and CA1015); Campbell, CA (CA1057)

Issue: WSO contact AA and Al-Anon and inquire how their program that offers the meetings the opportunity to purchase insurance under a blanket policy works and set up such a plan for ACA meetings.

History/Reasoning: Many meeting places require proof of insurance which at the present time is beyond the financial ability of the meeting.

Argument in Favor: Such a plan would allow meetings to meet their insurance requirements and open up new places for meetings to be held.

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WSO Analysis: In checking with AA and AL-Anon, their world service office does not provide liability insurance to its meetings for the same reason ACA WSO has not provided insurance for groups. Groups are autonomous, and if ACA WSO provided insurance, it would remove the autonomy of each group. Groups may work directly with the entity requiring the insurance and pay for it on their own. Intergroups may also assist if they so choose by group conscience. Many meetings that have been asked to provide proof of insurance have either moved to a location that does not require proof of insurance, or they have paid a small fee to have their group meeting added by a rider to the entity's insurance policy.

If this proposal receives a two-thirds positive vote from the fellowship, it will be included as part of the ABC agenda, with the result of that discussion provided as part of the ABC minutes.