

Bob F., BOT Member.

My name is Bob F. I am a new member of the BOT (Board of Trustees) but a member of S.L.A.A. since 1986. I have been sober from all bottom line addictive behavior since October 1991. I have served at all levels in S.L.A.A. at the group, local, and international levels. I was the editor of the Journal for four years from 1999 to 2000. I was my intergroup's delegate to the ABM/ABC (Annual Business Meeting/Annual Business Conference) for five terms. After seven years in service at the local level I decided it was time to volunteer to do service at the international level again. I placed my name in nomination for an open Board seat, was elected, and here I am.

Currently I serve on two BOT committees, BFOC (Board Finance and Operating Committee) and BGNC (Board Governance and Nominating Committee). I am the chairperson of the BGNC. I am the Board liaison to the MRC (Members Retention Committee), though I have not yet been able to attend one of their teleconferences, I will be on their next call. I also serve (again not at the level I would hope) on the CCC (Conference Charter Committee). The CCC is the committee charged with overseeing and facilitating the ABM/ABC. You will find more information about these committees in this newsletter under [Committee Reports](#).

Let me tell you a little about me. I am 59 years old, married, with four children and 5 grandchildren and a sixth on the way. I live just outside of Omaha, Nebraska. I was born in Omaha, moved to Seattle with my parents, and returned with them to Omaha two days after my 16th birthday. I have lived in and around Omaha ever since. My bottom line is any sex outside of my marriage. In my 21 years in S.L.A.A. I have yet to hear someone at a meeting disclose a behavior that I haven't tried, or at the least, thought about.

Like the other BOT members, service in SLAA has been very important for me. However, I discovered that attendance at meetings and doing service were not enough to keep me sober. After my relapse in 1991 I was shown a way through the Steps that resulted in the spiritual awakening promised in our Twelfth Step. As a result it has been very important for me to carry that message, the spiritual awakening, to sex and love addicts (both in S.L.A.A. and out) who still suffer.

The question I hear most from S.L.A.A. members is, "What is the Board of Trustees and what do they do?"

The following is from the Manual of the Board of Trustees of the Augustine Fellowship. The section is titled "Board of Trustees Orientation."

What is the BOT?

The BOT is comprised of nine persons who have chosen and been chosen to serve the corporation known as The Augustine Fellowship, Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous, Fellowship-Wide Services, Inc. The only requirement that BOT members who are also S.L.A.A. members must meet is to have three years of continuous sobriety from self-defined bottom line behavior(s); for non-S.L.A.A. BOT members, the only requirement is a contribution to the mission of S.L.A.A. Although these are the only express requirements, a commitment to service is also necessary. A BOT term is for three years, staggered so that there are three vacancies each year. The corporation has the IRS status of a 501(c)3: being on the BOT is a volunteer position. A BOT year generally starts and ends during the Annual Business Meeting (ABM), which is usually during the summer. The fiscal year begins

October 1st.

The BOT has a unique role. It is the guardian of the fellowship in legal, financial, and ethical matters as outlined in the Traditions and the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the United States. It is the business branch of the fellowship. Therefore, the BOT sets up and reviews policies that establish responsible practices in the three areas above. In addition, the BOT is responsible for communicating with Conference members, Intergroups, and Lone Groups around issues such as the roles, activities and needs of the BOT and the ways in which it provides service.

Since the role of the BOT is based on the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of S.L.A.A., BOT members provide leadership in a manner similar to how a pastor, rabbi, or priest serves and leads a constituency. This blend of a Twelve Step/Twelve Tradition foundation and a business orientation makes functioning on the BOT different from serving as a delegate, on a Conference committee, or at the local level. A different "hat" must be worn on the BOT than in a recovery meeting. Operating in this environment can take adjustments, and communicating these operational differences to Conference and local members is an important and ongoing responsibility.

To remind BOT members of this unique orientation, the following is read at the beginning of each meeting:

Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous is a Twelve Step, Twelve Tradition oriented fellowship based on the model pioneered by Alcoholics Anonymous. The only qualification for S.L.A.A. membership is a desire to stop living out a pattern of sex and love addiction. S.L.A.A. is supported entirely through contributions of its membership, and is free to all who need it. The BOT is a business meeting. We are the business arm of our recovery organization. Respecting the 2nd Tradition, we need to put individual feelings aside when we work for the BOT and focus on what serves the Fellowship best. This is a job. We are trusted servants. We abuse that trust when we do not act professionally in discharging the business of the Fellowship.

The entire Board meets for three hours via teleconference every other month. Besides these meetings each Trustee is a member of one or two Board committees, and usually is a member of one or two Conference Committees. [Please see the Committee reports in this newsletter.]

As many of you know the Fellowship has been struggling with financial issues for several years. The current Board of Trustees is working with the FWS (Fellowship Wide Services) office to set a realistic budget and stay within that budget. This means cutting some services and shortening office hours. We have trimmed the staff from three full-time employees to one full-time and two part-time employees. We are looking at literature prices, cost of medallions, cheaper mailing services, moving to smaller, less costly office space, etc. We will do everything in our power to provide the very best service we can with the funds you provide. You, the members, are S.L.A.A. The FWS office is not S.L.A.A. The BOT is not S.L.A.A.

Like the old Smokey the Bear quote, "Only you can prevent forest fires." Only you can

fund the services S.L.A.A. needs. Only you can make it possible to carry our unique message of hope to countless sex and love addicts, still crying in the dark because they have never even heard the name Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous.

Carrying our message is more than money. It is commitment. It is making certain your group's doors are open when a newcomer shows up for the first time. It is taking extra time before and after meetings to sit down and talk with that newcomer, telling him or her your story, giving them your name and phone number and inviting them to call at any time if they are in danger of acting out.

"It is easy to let up on the spiritual program of action and rest on our laurels. We are headed for trouble if we do, for [sex and love addiction] is a subtle foe." Alcoholics Anonymous pg. 84. So conversely it must be difficult not to let up on our spiritual program. It takes effort on our part. I do my level best to carry our message to newcomers and to those in our program who have not yet truly found our message of hope contained in our Twelfth Step; a spiritual awakening as THE RESULT of these Steps.

It is this message of recovery that led me into service at the local level for many years and has led me back into service now at the international level. If others work our program of action, Steps Three through Twelve, they also will have a spiritual awakening, spiritual experience, psychic change, personality change, (all four describe the same phenomenon) sufficient to recover from the disease of sex and love addiction. They too will find they can not only stay sober; but stay sober and also be happy.

If you have not found sobriety and happiness please find a sponsor who understands and has worked the Twelve Steps of our program and get into action right away. I believe your life depends on it.

In service,

Bob F.