

Website News: A report from the Fellowship-Wide Services Webmaster

F.W.S. Newsletter, April 2008

After all the time spent planning and building, it was exciting to see our new Online Store go live just as the January 2008 Newsletter was being finalized for release. It has been rewarding to hear that people are enjoying ordering on the store and to see the improvements in efficiency at F.W.S. With that major hurdle overcome, it is now time to begin a new phase in the development of a more useful F.W.S. website.

Much has happened for our Fellowship on the web in the past several months, and more good things are yet to come. We are working with the Conference Internet Committee and the Board Public Relations Committee to further the plan of giving the website a new role for our Fellowship. These are the changes and improvements that will happen soon:

- Completely new sections are being developed that will offer practical information and support to newcomers and members in the program. There will also be areas for all levels of S.L.A.A. service along with helpful sections for professionals and the media.
- To bring all this new content together, you will soon see a new navigation bar on the website with simple labels to quickly get you to the information you need.
- There will be a new area appearing that will greatly improve the way you find meetings in the U.S. and worldwide. This area will include the many groups that meet in areas where there is currently no Intergroup. Plans are also being formed to create a searchable database that will be used by both the office and the website, meaning every piece of meeting information held by the office will be accessible online.
- We have completed the new internet tool for Intergroups that will allow those with limited or no presence on the web to create their own autonomous website.
- We have built a forum that will initially be used for orientation of new Conference Delegates and for discussion of BMIS items before the Annual Business Meeting in July. This forum can potentially be a valuable tool in the future for people to share their experience, strength and hope on a variety of topics in a safe, moderated setting.
- Work is ongoing in the task of updating and expanding on existing pages of the website such as Frequently Asked Questions, and our front page, which has recently received new content that makes our website easier to find in search engines.
- All the free pamphlets on the website have been revised and corrected and are now available for download at <http://www.SLAAFWS.org/approvedpamphlets>. The contact information and mailing address for F.W.S. have been corrected and the margins have been fixed so that all pamphlets fold correctly. No changes to actual content were made.

A Word About Human Resources:

It seems to be a common belief among the Fellowship that somewhere in the world there is an office full of people who answer phones and e-mails and ship out orders

from the online store, and a dozen or more on a website team who have redesigned F.W.S. on the web. I'd like to set the record straight on this assumption. Staying within our budget means that our F.W.S. office is run by one very busy and dedicated Office Manager and one part-time person. The web team is made up of myself, our Board of Trustees Chair, and our Office Manager, when she is able to participate. There are a few willing volunteers, whom I greatly appreciate, who have worked hard on some of these projects, but frankly, we are all volunteers and we need more help if our website is to reach its full potential. With all that said, we are asking you to step up and join us in this gratifying work. It has been amazing to see this much progress happen with the people and resources we have, but now we need you in order to continue toward our goals. We are aggressively moving forward with these plans within our monetary and manpower constraints, but obviously the more of both we have, the more quickly and efficiently we can get the task done.

Website Needs:

Please see the list of needs below and consider how you might be of assistance.

- We invite you to join the Conference Internet Committee (CIC), where you can contribute in the development of new ideas and participate in the approval of new web content. Contact Eric G. at eric_g@slaafws.org for more information.
- In order to continue improving the accuracy and completeness of our *Find a Meeting* area, we ask that if you know of a group (including those not part of an Intergroup), telephone meeting, or online meeting that is incorrect or not listed on the website, please e-mail webteam@slaafws.org and let us know.
- We are in need of volunteers to act as tech support for the Intergroup website project. You would be trained in how to use Drupal, which is what Intergroups will use to build their new websites. The sooner we can get people to fill this need, the sooner we can make this available. Contact webteam@slaafws.org for more information.
- Our new forum project needs reliable moderators. We cannot offer an S.L.A.A. forum to anyone if we can't be sure there are people in place to ensure its safety. Again, the only thing keeping this from becoming a reality is people to help make it work.
- We need qualified people to join the F.W.S. Web Team. Training in Drupal would be provided. Tasks include adding submitted recovery events, group and Intergroup information, and other updates.
- If you are able, consider becoming a Delegate for your Intergroup and go to the ABM in Florida in July. Topics that directly impact our website and the entire Fellowship will be discussed and voted on, and every Intergroup possible should be represented there.

An Important Note About E-mail:

Over time, Fellowship-Wide Services has accumulated many e-mail addresses to be written to for a variety of subjects and information. This has become a big confusing problem not just for people sending e-mails, but for the office as well. We have decided to set up new permanent addresses, and have deleted many outdated and unnecessary ones. To send an e-mail, please visit www.slaafws.org and go to Contact Us. Be sure to choose the appropriate link for your question, or your response will be delayed (this also creates extra work for our staff). Below are the

addresses we will be using. If you send to addresses other than these, your message may not be received.

- *General Questions, Media & Professional Relations, and Request Meeting Information* will go to generalinfo@slaafws.org.
- *Order Queries* will go to store@slaafws.org
- *Website Questions and Intergroup Updates* will go to webteam@slaafws.org

We also have an important request. If you would like to include F.W.S. contact e-mail information from your Intergroup website, please do not display these addresses as links. Displaying e-mail links allows spammers to send us overwhelming amounts of junk e-mail. Please display this address instead: <http://www.slaafws.org/contact/list>. This is a direct link to the Contact Us page. Thank you.

In Conclusion:

I am very grateful that I get to be of service to the program that saved my marriage and probably my life. It really is true for me that service is sobering, because it helps to keep the program on my mind all the time. Keep the communication coming, and send in those upcoming recovery events, I enjoy getting those ☺. I'm really looking forward to seeing all the things we're working on get done and be used by people who will benefit from all we're doing.

In service and gratitude,
Beth S.
F.W.S. Webmaster