



# The Mid Southern California Area 9 Newsletter

The Monthly General Service Newsletter for Area 9 of the General Service Conference  
P.O.Box 51446, Irvine, CA 92619-1446 [www.msca09aa.org](http://www.msca09aa.org)

Nov. 2009

MSCA Area 9 includes all AA groups in the counties of Los Angeles (South of Rosecrans Ave.), San Bernardino, Riverside, and Orange.

## The How and the Why of the Budget

The Finance Committee met on the 18th of October to prepare the Preliminary Budget. Seven members and one guest were present. Armed with our best red pencils, stacks of paperwork and \$79,716 worth of budget requests, we started the process at 10:15AM.

The "Process" was as follows;

First, we decided to leave the mileage at 30 cents a mile, thinking that we would leave that part of the process up to the Assembly. A 5 cent change in mileage amounts to about \$1,850.

Next, we looked at the projected ending bank balance for 2009. That amount was a negative \$2,825. That figure, combined with the \$58,000 in projected income for 2010 left us with \$55,000 in income and \$79,716 in budget requests. Obviously this would not work.

Next, we compared last year's budget and spending to the Budget Requests received. We found in many instances that more funds were being requested this year than had been requested and spent last year. At this point the Committee adjusted the requests to what they believed was an accurate representation of what was possible given the current state of the Area's finances. This process reduced the starting budget by \$11,524 and was applied to all areas of spending except the Archive's rent and the Area website since those amounts are not adjustable without terminating a 3 year contract in regards to the Archives and not having a website.

At this point things started to get interesting since we still needed \$13,000 to bring the Budget into balance. It was decided to leave the Delegate's budget, Archives rent, the Website and all of the items listed under items d.3 Other and d.4 Miscellaneous (which includes Area Meetings, Servathon, Interpreters, and many others. There were only two ways left to improve the bottom line. One was to increase income, which we did by \$5,000, based on the advice of our guest, Linda C., the Delegate-elect, who was sitting in for Joe B., the Delegate, who could not make it.

...continued on p.3

## Delegate's Corner

November is Gratitude Month;

As I sit here waxing reflective, I have so much to be thankful for,

Let's just take this last weekend as an example...I was able to be of service to my fellow AA's, met with some of the men I sponsor, I participated in an Area event that was very well attended, and I was able to meet some old and make some new friends. On the way home from there, I stopped by my mother's house and helped her with a few things that she needed done around her house and received a home-cooked (Mom's) meal in return. As I left, she told me that she loved me, like she has almost every day of my life, (except for those last few years of my drinking where [she said] it was too painful to even look at me). Then I was off to pick up my 4-year-old grandson. He and I went to the park where he played in the playground until I could figure out how to put his kite together that looks like an airplane. After I figured how to do that, we flew that kite. Then I was able to witness the great joy and wonderment of flying a kite through his four-year-old eyes. Then it was off to lunch, a marathon race of hot wheels cars, dinner, then to bed where I was treated to a story about a talking biscuit and an orange dinosaur (he has such a great imagination). That led to a good night's sleep. The next morning my grandson was able to come to work with me and spend a few hours helping me at the office before his mother came to pick him up. And as they were getting into the car my daughter and my grandson both gave me big hugs and told me that they loved me. That's the stuff of my days today.

So many of my days are filled like this, days that lead to months, then into years, decades.

Thanks to all of you, and your example of love and service! You have made this life of mine possible

And to think... I could have missed it all!

Joe B., P58 MSCA Delegate

Let's be grateful for those who give us happiness; they are the charming gardeners who make our soul bloom.

~Marcel Proust



## Anonymity At The Public Level

In the light of some recent celebrity anonymity revelations, it may be of interest to re-read the letter which is periodically sent to many of the major media companies in the U.S. & Canada. (reproduced with permission by AAWS and GSO):

**Anonymity Letter to Media**, General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous March 2009

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

A NOTE OF THANKS - A REQUEST FOR CONTINUED COOPERATION

From time to time we write our public media friends to thank them for helping us observe our long-standing tradition of anonymity for members of Alcoholics Anonymous.

First, let us express our deep gratitude to you. From the beginning of A.A.

in 1935, its members have recognized that word-of-mouth is not sufficient by itself to carry the program's message of hope and recovery to the many people still suffering from alcoholism. The public media has been a vital part of this effort, and today we estimate that there are more than 2 million successfully recovering members of Alcoholics Anonymous in more than 180 countries.

Second, we respectfully request that you continue to cooperate with us in maintaining the anonymity of A.A. members. The principle of anonymity is a basic tenet of our fellowship. Those who are reluctant to seek our help may overcome their fear if they are confident that their anonymity will be respected. In addition, and perhaps less understood, our tradition of anonymity acts as a restraint on A.A. members, reminding us that we are a program of principles, not personalities, and that no individual A.A. member may presume to act as a spokesman or leader of our fellowship. If an A.A. member is identified in the media, we ask that you please use first names only (e.g., Bob S. or Alice F.) and that you not use photographs or electronic images in which members' faces may be recognized.

Again, we thank you for your continued cooperation. Those who wish to know more about our fellowship are welcome to visit the "For the Media" section of AA.org. Our fellowship does not comment on matters of public controversy, but we are happy to provide information about A.A. to anyone who seeks it.

If you are a professional and wish to e-mail us your postal address so that we may mail you additional information on A.A., please [Click Here](#).

Sincerely,  
Public Information Committee of Alcoholics Anonymous

## The GSR – Part I

Oh No, Not the GSR!!

Yep, the GSR – The General Service Representative. In fact, dear reader, you are going to be subjected to two articles about the GSR – one this month and one in the next MSCA Newsletter. The first article will relate my experience, strength and hope as a GSR, (including an opinion or two). The second article, will introduce to the reader, a moving presentation by a non-alcoholic, of his look at the General Service Conference. Why two articles – well, Bill W. described the GSR as probably the most important job in A.A. Who am I to disagree?

In my first Home Group, a munchkin-like man by the name of Ken '45 continuously disrupted our meetings week after week with an insistence that the group elect an Alternate GSR because the GSR we had elected wasn't showing up at the District and Area meetings. After listening to him one more time, I volunteered to be the Alternate GSR simply to shut him up! I went to my first District meeting in May 1991 and met some wonderful people that very first night. They seemed to know what they were doing. I admired their commitment to a job they thought was important to AA's welfare – I didn't see it, but they did. The guy who was chairing the meeting, (the late Ron P., past DCMC, District 05) announced that our District would be hosting the Area Service Committee meeting, (ASC) Sunday, June 10th. He asked for volunteers to help host the meeting, and I was immediately volunteered by the munchkin, Ken '45.

When I showed up at the ASC, I was shocked to find out that the meeting would last from 9:30 in the morning until 4:00 in the afternoon. My first General Service miracle – I didn't leave! A very enthusiastic gentleman by the name of Alan R. was giving an orientation for new GSRs – once again, he seemed to know what he was talking about and he was extremely committed to what he was doing. That seemed to be a constant among these people!

...Continued on p.5, col. 1

### PLEASE TAKE NOTE

Give your districts and committees the widest distribution of your needs, activities and events. Have them published here in your Area 09 Newsletter.

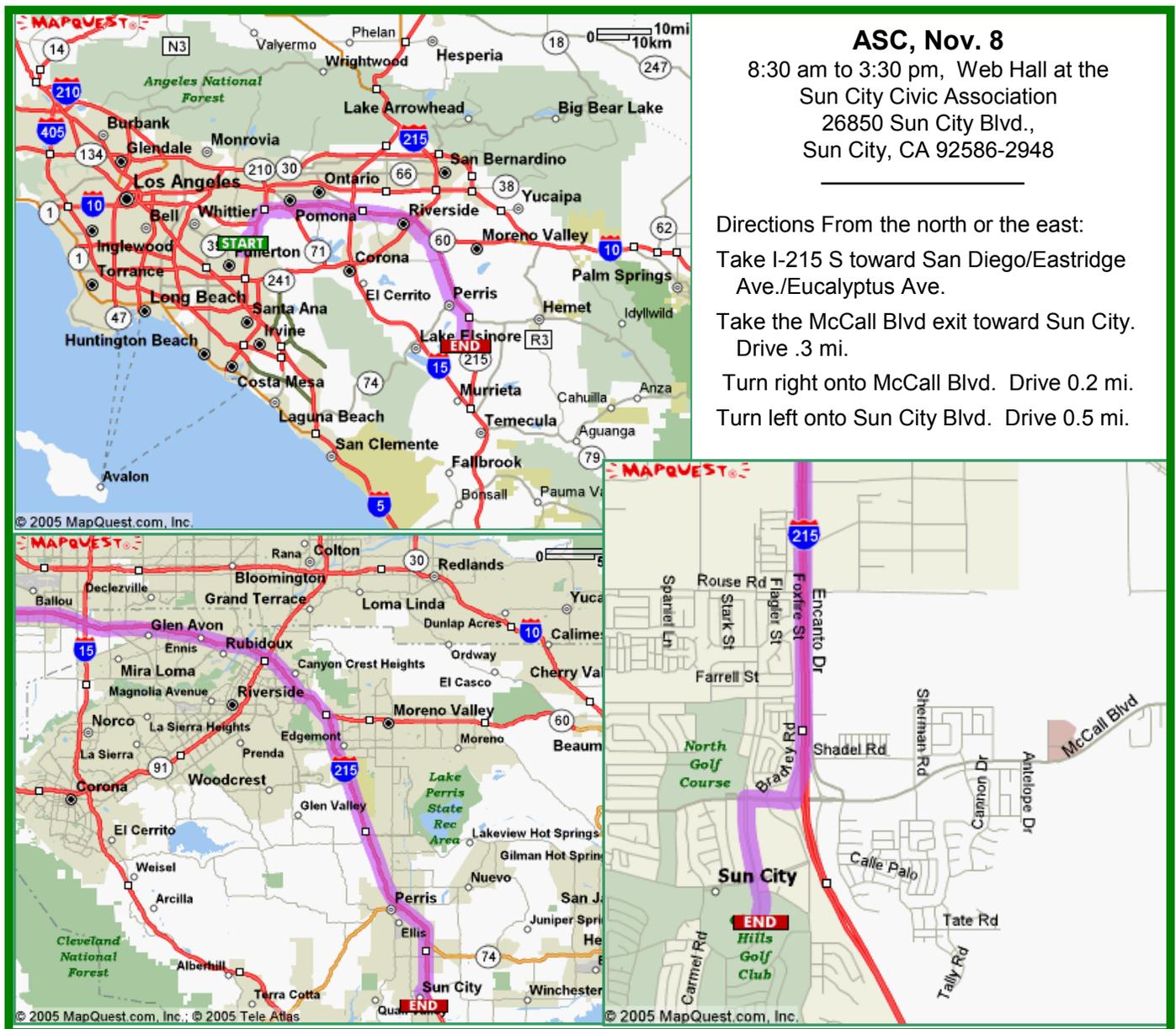
## Budget ... continued from p.1, col. 1

Her input was that she had seen the Groups of the Area rise to the financial needs of the Area on several occasions and this looked like one of them. Another \$600 was added to the expected income for the "Food Kitty" to better reflect expectations. If this had not been done, it would have been necessary to cut the Officers and Committee budgets a further 55 percent. As it turned out, those budgets were cut by 30 percent and we ended up with a negative \$29 for the bottom line. Why we did it. Since 2006, we have been trying to spend down approximately \$20,000 that the Area had accumulated over the Prudent Reserve of \$4,800. We have accomplished that and

then some. This year, the Area has had an 11 percent drop in contributions from all sources. We are now put in the position of having to live within available funds. This will not be pain free.

The Committee hopes that The Groups of the Area will become informed of our situation and respond to the need. We do realize the impact that this budget will have on the Area Officers and Committees and hope that they will be able to make it through this trying time.

*Joseph M., Finance Chair*



**ASC, Nov. 8**  
8:30 am to 3:30 pm, Web Hall at the  
Sun City Civic Association  
26850 Sun City Blvd.,  
Sun City, CA 92586-2948

Directions From the north or the east:  
Take I-215 S toward San Diego/Eastridge Ave./Eucalyptus Ave.  
Take the McCall Blvd exit toward Sun City.  
Drive .3 mi.  
Turn right onto McCall Blvd. Drive 0.2 mi.  
Turn left onto Sun City Blvd. Drive 0.5 mi.

## Concept 11– Who Really Does the Work

*While the Trustees hold final responsibility for A.A.'s world service administration, they should always have the assistance of the best possible standing committees, corporate service directors, executives, staffs, and consultants. Therefore the composition of these underlying committees and service boards, the personal qualifications of their members, the manner of their induction into service, the systems of their rotation, the way in which they are related to each other, the special rights and duties of our executives, staffs and consultants, together with a proper basis for the financial compensation of these special workers, will always be matters for serious care and concern.*

Okay, if you tried to read the above text in one breath, and have now regained consciousness from the oxygen-deprived state which that would have brought about, let's take another approach. Simply stated, (a) the General Service Board of Trustees should take great care in selecting the people who will compose the service boards and committees and those people who will be employed at the General Service Office and the A.A. Grapevine, and (b) where these people are employed, they should be paid commensurate with the requirements of their job.

In Bill W's essay on this Concept, he relates that the people we employ at the General Service Office and the A.A. Grapevine will always be the first line of communications and direct service to the Fellowship, in essence they will be the "face of Worldwide A.A. service". If you have ever met any of these staff people from G.S.O., you probably agree that we are fortunate to have these committed employees working for us. And how about those 13 staff positions that require that the employee be a recovering alcoholic – wow, can you imagine the application!

That's it. Simple, huh?

A member of A.A. in Orange County.

### Tradition 11 (Long Form)

*Our A.A. experience has taught us that:* Our relations with the general public should be characterized by personal anonymity. We think A.A. ought to avoid sensational advertising. Our names and pictures as A.A. members ought not be broadcast filmed, or publicly printed. Our public relations should be guided by the principle of attraction rather than promotion. There is never need to praise ourselves. We feel it better to let our friends recommend us.

## Welcome Panel 60!

Panel 60 officers/directors for the Mid-Southern California Area were selected at the Election Assembly on October 11, 2009. Three women and three men will serve as your Board of Directors for 2010 and 2011. Please welcome:

Linda C., Delegate  
Cesar F., Alternate Delegate  
Jeryl T., Chairperson  
Sharon K., Secretary  
Joseph M., Treasurer  
Michael M., Registrar

Continued thanks to Panel 58!

Although their service is not yet over, thanks and gratitude for service to the six members of the area board for 2008 and 2009:

Joe B., Delegate  
Mike M., Alternate Delegate  
Jason S., Chairperson  
Sharon K., Secretary (and  
Ruth D., too!)  
Linda H., Treasurer  
Cesar F., Registrar

## In and Out of the Hat

There was a wonderful turnout of willing candidates for each of the area officers' positions at the election assembly on Sunday, October 11th. For the delegate's position, it came down to the hat...Cesar and I in the hat together. For those of you who have not been in the hat, I can attest that it was an exciting, time-suspending moment!

I am sincerely respectful of the element of chance that gave me the opportunity to serve and, although I'm not sure I could claim humility, I take seriously my responsibility to listen and hear the voices of all the members of the area assembly.

I am so excited about serving with your new panel of officers!

I will bring all my love for Alcoholics Anonymous and the Mid Southern California Area to the position of Panel 60 delegate and look forward to serving with and for each of you.

*Linda C., Panel 60, Delegate Elect*

## The GSR – Part I ... continued from p.2, col. 2

The big discussion of the day was about whether a new Spanish-language district should be formed to serve the AA Groups in Riverside County. I remember with great clarity, the gratitude of the Spanish-speaking members who had asked for the new district. They were grateful we were even considering the proposal! I fell in love with the Spanish-speaking AA community on that day. I didn't understand much about what was going on, but I understood gratitude! We also celebrated the 56th birthday of Alcoholics Anonymous that day with a big cake shaped and iced to look like a giant Big Book. One month later I became the GSR for my Home Group and the rest is history.

All the discussions have not been as captivating as the discussions at that first area meeting. The tone of the discussion has sometimes descended to the level of personalities before principles. The number of groups represented in General Service has continued to decline. I have gotten older and the road trips seem to be longer. But the people - thank God for the people!

....continued top of next column

### Panel 58 Area Officers

Delegate: Joe B, 714-423-3808,  
delegate2008@msca09aa.org  
Alternate Delegate: Mike M  
Chair: Jason S                      Treasurer: Linda H  
Secretary: Sharon K              Registrar: Cesar F

Nowhere is gratitude for A.A. more evident or demonstrated so profoundly, as among the people who do this work. Gratitude for A.A. is the only possible reason why anybody would stick around for a 2-year commitment. At the end of two years, I gave up my commitment with mixed emotions. Then, that munchkin, Ken '45, nominated me for editor of the Newsletter of the Area Assembly, and I have been in General Service, with one commitment or another ever since. Thanks, Ken.

The politics of AA? I only hear that from people who haven't done their two years, because those who indulge in politics are made irrelevant. The Big Book says that *Love and Tolerance is our code* – we get to learn and practice both principles in General Service. I have loved my time in General Service – and the people - thank God for the people!

Nick M. – Past Delegate, Panel 48

## Upcoming Events

<u>Date:</u>	<u>Event Type:</u>
Nov. 8 (Sun)	ASC (Proposals will be presented but not voted on), District 17 - Sun City Civic Association - 26850 Sun City Blvd. Sun City, Ca 92586-2948
Nov. 14 (Sat)	SERVATHON, District 9
Dec. 13 (Sun)	ASC (vote which proposals to put onto Assembly Agenda), District 30
Jan 10, (Sun)	Assembly (District 5) - Santa Ana Elks Lodge, Opal & Emerald Rooms, 212 Elk Lane, Santa Ana, CA 92701-5011

The MSCA Assembly includes permanent committees responsible for conducting much of the AA business activity in the Area. We have Standing and Coordinate Committees. Chairs and Co-Chairs of the Standing committees are listed below.

### Panel 58 Area Standing Committee Chairs, Co-Chairs, et al.

Archives Chair...Joseph H	Finance Committee Chair...Joseph M
CEC Chair...Rick H	Grapevine Chair...Kimberli A
	La Viña Chair...Angela R
Communications Committee Chair...Linda C	GSR School...John H
Newsletter Subcommittee Chair...Steve S	GSR School, Spanish... Paco G
Electronic Media Sub-Committee Chair...Henry B	Literature Chair... Ernesto M
Web Coordinator...Becky B	Literature Co-Chair, Spanish ...tbd
Equipment Subcommittee Chair...Al W	Public Information Chair...tbd
Translation Subcommittee Chair...Jorge	Public Info., Sp...Francisco D
	Registration...David T
Convention Liaison...Mike	Special Needs Chair...tbd
Convention Liaison, Span...Jose A	Special Needs Co-Chair, Spanish....tbd
Corrections Chair...Alex O	Treatment Facilities Chair...Al F
CPC Chair...Michael M	
CPC Co-Chair, Span...Santiago S	
DCM School...Scott R	Sound Dude... Raul C
DCM School Spanish .....tbd	Coffee person...Mauricio T

Please send articles or information for the Area Newsletter to [newsletter2008@msca09aa.org](mailto:newsletter2008@msca09aa.org)

