



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

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

Jan. 2010

Why support the MSCA with group's 7th tradition?

The Area is in the unique position to serve AA in many different ways. Here are only three ways to illustrate the necessary level of service.

Your Group's voice is carried to the General Service Conference and AA as a whole through the Area Delegate. One of the main reasons for an Area is to support a Conference Delegate. When our founders turned the control of AA over to our Fellowship in the 1950s, the Conference system was used to insure that AA was always directed by its Fellowship. Our Delegate acts on behalf of our Groups and our Fellowship. Our Delegate and our Area need our support.

The Area can carry our message to alcoholics in ways that individuals, local Districts, Central Offices, or even the GSO cannot do. Many of our 12 Step activities require a service base that these other levels cannot readily provide. Manning an information table at a weeklong professional association convention can take 30-40 volunteers. The Area is best suited to provide for this amount of volunteer service. Our area needs our support.

Our Area provides a forum for communication among AA individuals and groups with common interests. Local Districts or Central Offices may not receive enough requests for help to sustain ongoing 12 Step activities of an elder community service committee, or other needs. The Area with its diverse base is in the position to sustain these activities and respond quickly when help is requested. Our Area needs our support.

This year requests for funding by our ongoing services at MSCA exceeded our expected 7th Tradition income by more than \$20,000. Area officers and committees had to be denied funding for some of their work. Our Area needs our support.

Jim B.
Finance Chair, Panel 60

Delegate's Corner

According to the most recent conference report, Mid Southern California Area (MSCA) has 1,809 groups reported. At our area assemblies, we average around 55 General Service Representatives (GSRs) who are directly representing the groups in our area (3% of all the reported groups).

In addition, of course, we have area officers, district committee members, district officers, standing committee chairs, co-chairs, coordinate committee chairs and past delegates who have voting rights at our assemblies.

There were 143 votes cast for delegate. I received, on the 4th ballot, 78 of those votes...a majority of the votes by a narrow margin. Cesar and I went into the hat together and my name was drawn out. I am grateful. And I would have been delighted and pleased to have had Cesar's name come out of the hat and I feel privileged to be able to serve with him for the next two years as our Alternate Delegate.

The point is, however, that *even counting all the other voting members as representative of groups in the area*, only 4.43% of the reported groups voted for me and only 7.56% were there to vote at all.

I am very mindful that I was not elected by representatives from a majority of the groups of our area.

Nevertheless, it *is* my wish to be your delegate, whether you voted for me or not; whether your group was represented at the election or not, whether you like me or my reputation or my program or not. **I really want to hear you.** Please write to me, talk to me, call me or email me with your ideas, your concerns, your brickbats or roses. I will do my very best to respect your input with an open mind and a receptive heart. God willing, we are in this together for two years...I want to make the most of it, with your help....

Linda C., Panel 60



2010 General Service Conference Topics

The Conference Coordinator from GSO, Adrienne B., sent a notice to us about the 2010 conference theme, presentation topics and workshop topic. She suggests that they *“are some wonderful basic A.A. topics that can be talked about and discussed throughout the Fellowship: in assemblies, districts, intergroups/central office gatherings, and in our groups.”*

The **theme** of the 60th General Service Conference is: **“Practicing A.A.’s Principles – the Pathway to Unity”**

Conference **presentation** topics are:

1. Practicing These Principles in All Our “Service” Affairs:

- a) What is the difference between General Service and service in general?
- b) Love and tolerance is our code
- c) Setting an example—Attraction to service

2. Unity Through Inventory

- a) Our common welfare should come first.
- b) This we owe to A.A.’s Future
- c) What happens after inventory?

3. General Service Conference Agenda Selection Process

- a) How it works
- b) Collective participation
- c) Communication—the key to an informed decision.

2010 CONFERENCE WORKSHOP TOPIC:
DISCUSS THE GENERAL SERVICE
CONFERENCE AGENDA SELECTION
PROCESS.

Thoughts about these topics would be great articles for our newsletter as well...don’t you think? We will probably also be hearing some presentations on these topics at the Pacific Region A.A. Service Assembly (PRAASA) in March.

As soon as we receive the preliminary agenda items for the conference, we will make sure they are published on our website and in the newsletter.

Concept One

- Okay, what's a Concept!?

Concept 1, in the short form declares, "Final Responsibility and ultimate authority for A.A. World Services should always reside in the collective conscience of our entire Fellowship". Got it? Now what does it mean?

Well, to start, it almost means that the groups are in charge of A.A. services. Almost, but not quite. It really means, as stated in Tradition 2, that God is in charge, and God's will may be expressed in our collective group conscience. Okay, so how does that come about? I'm glad you asked. It comes about through the group's General Service Representative who serves as a link to the rest of A.A., or, if you will, to the collective group conscience of A.A.

What's that you say? - Your group doesn't have a General Service Representative. Well, your group is still expressing its group conscience and participating in the collective conscience of all of A.A. Your group is simply saying, "We don't care."

Well, just how important is it for a group to participate in the collective conscience of A.A. and shoulder its fair share of the responsibility and authority? Noted Sociologist, Dr. Milton Maxwell, a former Chairman of the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous, and a non-alcoholic, declared in his book, "The A.A. Experience" that Alcoholics Anonymous was the first "mutual aid society" ever to survive the death of its founders. The first! Ever! If you're still with me, I hope you're asking yourself, Why A.A.? Again, I'm glad you asked. The principle stated in this concept may well be the answer - the principle of the A.A. groups running the whole shebang. If we fail, we fail because we dropped the ball. Not any outside entity. Not the government. Not any political party. Only the A.A. groups can determine the survival of A.A.

What is your group doing to ensure the survival of Alcoholics Anonymous? What are you, yes you, not your group, doing to ensure that Alcoholics Anonymous is here for the next generation of alcoholics who stumble in the doors. Will that next generation of alcoholics, our children and grandchildren, find locks on the doors of the meeting rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous? Will the message they find be the same one that you and I found?

Only you and I and our A.A. groups will determine that.

Signed, an anonymous member of A.A. in Orange County

History of PRAASA

HISTORIC BEGINNING: A NEW APPROACH

By Ellery S

History was being made, and I didn't even know it! Yet it was happening all about me, and it was certainly a new experience. I was Alternate Delegate/Treasurer of our Mid Southern California Area at the time. The other officers (there were only three of us back then) were Warren S, Delegate, and Bob R, Secretary. Warren died suddenly of leukemia some three years later. Bob was a very remarkable man. Despite a moderate case of cerebral palsy he took all the minutes by hand, typed them out on an old typewriter, and then reproduced them on an ancient hectograph-type duplicator. He then hand-addressed all the envelopes, and sent minutes to every GSR and officer in the MSCA; of course they were comparatively few in those days.

It was January, 1968. There were a dozen or more of us, GSRs and officers, migrating northward to Fresno, of all places - and for what? In response to a call for a conference issued by the "Four Horsemen," as they were called by some: Al M, Past Delegate from the Southern California Area (mainly Los Angeles and counties northward); Stan W of California North Coastal (he served as our Pacific Region Trustee some years later); Les E, Delegate from Nevada; and I'm not sure whether the fourth was Walter K or Pat S, or some one else. Pat was the host delegate for this Assembly, but I believe she had to miss most of it because of illness or an operation.

Now we - our Delegate in particular - had grave reservations about the reasons for this Assembly - the Western States AA General Assembly it was called, but the name was changed before long to Pacific Region AA Service Assembly, which for obvious reasons came to be known as the PRAASA.

Some of those sponsoring the Assembly were known to be pushing for a transfer of AA "power" from New York to California, since we had so many more drunks. They wanted more delegates representing California at the General Service Conference, a West Coast General Service Office, and various other schemes to shift the balance of power. It was suspected that this new Conference was another such device. Some Areas refused to participate. Others found the distances too great to invest in all that travel and time for something they had only heard about a few weeks earlier. Others, like us, felt that we had better be there so that we could keep track of what was taking place.

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History of PRAASA ... continued from col. 1

Besides, the novelty was exhilarating. To our knowledge there had never been a gathering of AA members from a number of Areas to discuss Service - apart from the General Service Conference, of course.

The Assembly headquarters were anything but pretentious, an ancient structure known as the Hotel California, whose big advantages were proximity to where we would be meeting, and moderate rates, as I recall. After things got underway there were talks by various past and present delegates and certain others involved in Service. Our first Pacific Region Trustee, Jim M, from the California Northern Interior Area, had just finished his 4-year term; he was to chair the closing meeting Sunday morning.

His successor, Eric B, had recently returned from his first Trustees' meeting in New York; he was asked to give the main talk Saturday evening. As a "Young Turk" or Eager Beaver (at that time), eager to learn more and more about Service and tangle with some of the tough problems that keep coming up, I have to admit considerable disappointment at Eric's talk. It was much more a regular pitch than a Service talk. I don't believe he said a word about what it was like to sit on the General Service Board and how they worked out their responsibilities. Before long I revised that opinion of Eric. Over the years the majority of PRAASA's Saturday night speakers have given "qualifying"-type talks at the expense of attention to Service: after all, the entire weekend is devoted to Service. I got to know Eric quite well a year or two later. He served AA well as Trustee and his keynote speech at the 1971 conference closing out his term on the Board - with the theme "Service, the Heart of AA" was outstanding. I always like to quote his key phrase: "Service begins at the end of a broom."

Friday evening there was much talking in low voices, and messages being transmitted from one person to another. The word went round: "Meet in Room 111 at 10 p.m." Like a bunch of conspirators we crept to that door and entered a genuinely "smoke-filled room", and straightway became part of "the group conscience." I don't remember much of what went on (let's face it, I didn't know what the score was), but decisions were being made. There would be another meeting like this one next year, - this time in Reno, apparently timed to coincide with the Big Storm that hit Northern Nevada that next winter. I wasn't too sorry that I missed that one, being home with a cold.... When our meeting was all over, we slunk back to our rooms, having performed our "civic duty." Sunday morning was probably termed the Spiritual Meeting (that seems to be an unofficial AA tradition, at least in these parts), and Past Trustee,

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History of PRAASA ... continued from page 4, col.

Jim M, was the leader, as I mentioned earlier. Jim gave a great talk, as usual. Everything was fine, except that we were operating spectacularly in the red. Nothing daunted, Jim obtained a King-size hat, which was passed around, and the group wiped out a \$500+ deficit (by the skin of our teeth!), so that we could head for home with our heads up.

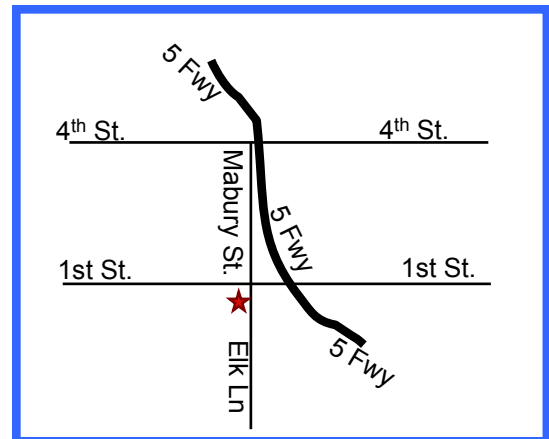
Traveling back, we compared notes. It had really been exciting to meet with so many other Service representatives from all over the Region (mostly from California, of course, under the circumstances). Some good things had been discussed, concerns aired, new thoughts introduced, and new developments announced. Nevertheless, we couldn't help feeling a little smug. From much of what had been said, and the questions asked, we felt we were considerably better informed than most of the others. This feeling was reinforced later, after Warren launched the first Symposium of Service, or S.O.S. (name recently changed to Pre-Conference Workshop, alas) – first of its kind in A.A., and later when the first Servathon was staged in 1970. Perhaps there was some basis (certainly not justification) for smugness. Perhaps not. Yet one thing has stood out over the years. As a group, the delegates that the Pacific Region has sent to the Conference always seemed to have done their homework better than the average - in some cases much better - and have participated actively and constructively in the deliberations of the Conference. This can be attributed in large measure to the PRAASA. Ever since, over 34 years, the PRAASA has been training GSRs, DCMs, DCMCs, Area Officers and Delegates (not to mention some Group secretaries and AA members active in other branches of Service) while they're enjoying themselves in a way that's unexpected and (you should excuse the expression) intoxicating!

Roundtable discussions for members with a special interest or job, introduced some 17 years ago, have proved to be one of the best ideas of the last century (the 20th, that is to say), and alkathons are held all weekend for the benefit of those suffering from insomnia.

What about those sinister plots to capture GSO? Starting in 1970, and particularly in 1971, with Carl B playing a major role, the PRAASA took a new course. If there ever were any plots or designs, they are long gone (They are History, to use the vernacular.) True, we did have a blood bath in 1976 at Tucson, over whether the PRAASA was an instrument of General Service put on by the Areas, and therefore responsible to the Delegates, or whether it was an autonomous body governed by the membership (i.e., the attendees). But no one was slaughtered in Tucson, and things have been rather mature (at least, for alcoholics) ever since. I have always loved it

...Ellery S.

January 10 Assembly 212 S. Elk Lane, Santa Ana, CA



Directions from the North:

Take the 57 freeway south to the 5 freeway
Merge onto I-5 S and drive 3.3 miles.
Take the Fourth Street exit, Exit 104A, toward First St.
Ramp becomes Mabury St.
Stay straight to go onto S. Elk Lane
212 S. Elk Lane is on the right

From the East:

Take the 10 or the 60 west to the 91 fwy.
Take the 91 south/west to the 57 fwy
Take the 57 freeway south to the 5 freeway
Merge onto I-5 S and drive 3.3 miles.
Take the Fourth Street exit, Exit 104A, toward First St.
Ramp becomes Mabury St.
Stay straight to go onto S. Elk Lane

From the Northwest:

Take the 405 south to the 22 fwy
Take the 22 east to the 5 fwy
Take I-5 S exit on the left toward San Diego
Take the Fourth St. exit, Exit 104A, toward First St.
Ramp becomes Mabury St.
Stay straight to go onto S. Elk Lane
212 S. Elk Lane is on the right

From the South:

Take the 5 fwy north, past the 405, and past the 55 fwy.
Take the Fourth St. exit, Exit 103C, toward First St.
Take the ramp toward First St.
Stay straight to go onto Mabury St.
Stay straight to go onto S. Elk Lane
212 S. Elk is on the right.

Tradition 1 (long form)

Our A.A. experience has taught us that:

Each member of Alcoholics Anonymous is but a small part of a great whole. A.A. must continue to live or most of us will surely die. Hence our common welfare comes first. But individual welfare follows close afterward.

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.

Panel 60 Area Officers

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

Upcoming Events

Date: Event Type:

Jan 10 (Sun) Assembly (District 5) - Santa Ana Elks Lodge, Opal & Emerald Rooms, 212 Elk Lane, Santa Ana, CA 92701-5011
February 14, 2010 - Sunday - ASC (District 25)
March 5, 6 & 7, 2010 - PRAASA 2010 - Radisson Hotel at LAX, 6225 W. Century Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90045 (more info on www.praasa.org)
March 14, 2010 - ASC (District 22) -
April 11, 2010 - Sunday - Pre-Conference Workshop (District 1) (TBA) **April - Archives Open House** -
May 16, 2010 - Sunday - Assembly (District 15) -
June 13, 2010 - Sunday - ASC (District 10) -
July 1-4, 2010 - International Convention - San Antonio, TX
July 11, 2010 - Sunday - Foro (District 21 and 3) -
August 8, 2010 - Sunday - ASC (District 7) -
Aug 27-29 - Pacific Regional Forum, Torrance Marriot, Torrance CA
September 12, 2010 - Sunday - Assembly (District 20) -
October 10, 2010 - Sunday - ASC (District 4) -
October 24, 2010 - Sunday - Heritage Day (District 6) -
November 14, 2010 - Sunday - Servathon (District 12) -
December 12, 2010 - Sunday - ASC (District 19)

Schedule for most MSCA Assemblies/ASCs

9:30 am....GSR School, Delegate's Rpt
10:15 am..... Committee Mtgs
11:30 am... Lunch
12 noon ... ASC or Assembly mtg

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
CEC Chair...Rick H

Communications Committee Chair...Jesus O*
Newsletter Subcommittee Chair...Joe B*
Layout Editor...Nancy R*

Electronic Media Sub-Committee Chair...Henry B*
Web Coordinator...Becky B*
Equipment Subcommittee Chair...Al W*
Translation Subcommittee Chair...Santiago S*

Convention Liaison...Mike
Convention Liaison, Span...Jose A
Corrections Chair...Alex O
CPC Chair...Michael M
CPC Co-Chair, Span...Santiago S
DCM School...Scott R
DCM School Spanishtbd

Finance Committee Chair...Joseph M

Grapevine Chair...Kimberli A
La Vifa Chair...Angela R

GSR School...John H
GSR School, Spanish... Paco G
Literature Chair... Ernesto M
Literature Co-Chair, Spanish ...tbd
Public Information Chair...tbd
Public Info., Sp...Francisco D
Registration...David T
Special Needs Chair...Steve S*
Special Needs Co-Chair, Spanish....tbd
Treatment Facilities Chair...Al F

Archivist... Pete B
Coffee person...Mauricio T
Regional Forum (2010) Coordinator...Bruce H
Sound Dude... Raul C

* Incoming chair

Please send articles or information for the Area Newsletter to newsletter2008@msca09aa.org