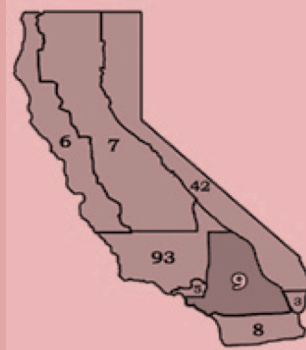


# Mid-Southern California Area 09 Newsletter

Mid-Southern California Area 09 includes approximately 2,000 A.A. Groups in the counties of Los Angeles (south of Rosecrans), San Bernardino, Riverside and Orange



42 = Part of Nevada  
3 = Part of Arizona

## DELEGATE'S CORNER

*Presented by MSCA 09 Panel 62 Delegate at the 2012 Pacific Regional Forum, September 14-16, in Fairbanks, Alaska*

### **"How Does General Service Fulfill Our Primary Purpose?"** ***At My Region?***

General Service, or service in general, is what we AA's have in common. From the oldest, driest, crotchety member to the newest, drippiest of the wet ones. Service, or at least the opportunity to be of service gives us purpose and the chance to be used by our Higher Power to do His will. As Bill said, everything from a ten-cent phone call to the General Service Conference is service. I believe from giving of your time and talent, to listening to a fifth step; we AA's live for service. Look around!!

I believe the Primary Purpose, to stay sober and carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers, is fulfilled every time one of us steps to the microphone and says, "I am an alcoholic." Never mind where we come from or which panel we represent. It is the fact that general service has rendered us sober another day to be at a gathering like this, with people from all over the Region, to talk about how we can better serve AA, and better carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

How does General Service fulfill our primary purpose on a regional level? I can only talk about my experience, strength and hope, and I can only do that in story form.

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## UPCOMING AREA EVENTS

### Area Assembly

Sun., Jan. 13<sup>th</sup> - 12 noon

Youth Center

4658 Woodruff Ave., Lakewood  
(Proposals voted on by all assembly members, including GSRs!)

Hosted by District 2

**(Note: agenda and map available on Area 09 website:**

[www.area09.org](http://www.area09.org))

### Area Service Committee (ASC) Meeting

Sun., Feb 10<sup>th</sup> - 12 noon

Murrieta Community Center  
41810 Juniper St., Murrieta, CA.  
92562

Hosted by District 17





**7111 Arlington Ave., Suite B**  
 Riverside  
 (951) 785-0845  
 (Next to the Airport in the Riverside Air Park)

**Show Time:** Doors open at 7:00  
 The movie starts at 7:30.  
 Stay after the show and tour the Archives  
**+ Cartoon**  
**Cost: Free!**

*Bring your lawn chairs or chaise longue and enjoy classic Hollywood movies about AA in our own unique theater. Refreshments available.*

My Name is Bill W. (1989) Saturday, Jan 19  
 When Love is Not Enough (2010) Saturday, Feb 16

**VOICE OF A.A.:** "While no one can speak for A.A. officially, the Conference comes close to being A.A.'s voice. It cannot be an A.A. authority, but it can bring into free discussion problems and trends and dangers that seem to affect fellowship harmony, purpose, and effectiveness. When an entire Conference (or a vocal majority) has expressed concern about a possible threat to our A.A. program, the fellowship has listened. It probably always will."

--The A.A. Service Manual  
 (page 69, 1985-86 edition)



*Delegate's Corner – Continued from page 1*

Well, I started out as a GSR for one of my meetings in the beach community of Newport Beach, California (or as I affectionately call it, "New Porsche Bleach". I liked the attention, both good and bad, that the GSR was receiving whenever they were making their report. I had no idea where the information came from, but when it was time for a report, people began to stir in an uncomfortable way, and that job was for me! I like to rub people in a way and get a little reaction.

I went to my District meetings once a month, and came home not having comprehended a single word that was spoken that whole night. "CPCs, PRAASAs, DCMs, PIs, ASCs, Regional, Service Assemblies." All I knew was that New York was running things and they weren't happy with us. And we had to get it right before April or someone was going to go there and tell on us. So everyone was tense, and I didn't know why. **They talked fast and everyone knew what was happening except me.** So I nodded my head a lot like I really understood.

That head nodding got me elected to the DCM position of my sub-district four months into this adventure. What's a sub-district, and what's a DCM? "Here, read this book, it will tell you all about it." Hmmmm...**Service Manual** combined with **The Twelve Concepts of Service** (sub titled, The greatest sleeping pill ever invented). Six months later, I was sitting at head table as an Alternate DCMC. Someone had quit, and they grabbed the head nodding willing guy to take their place. All I knew was my meeting, District and that New York was still mad at us.

I was elected for Alternate DCMC a year later, and spent two years in that capacity. Slowly learning what General Service was, and what really happens in it. I still hadn't been to any of those secret meetings. Then came that fateful day in November when I was elected to be the Chair of the District, and I could no longer avoid those all day Sunday commitments at the Area meetings.



Being connected at the Area level was more than enough for me because I was sponsoring 9 or 10 guys, going to 13 meetings a week, and being asked to speak all over town. I was carrying the message to many alcoholics, and they were getting it. I was giving my all to AA, and I was sure many people recognized my prowess as an orator, sponsor, and leader. My District encouraged me to go to this PRAASA thing that I had heard about for the past three years, and since they would pay my expenses, I agreed to go.

Anchorage, Alaska! Yes, indeed, I will show them what sacrifice was all about. I would go all the way to Alaska, be recognized for my willingness to go to any length, and be paraded around California as some kind of hero when I returned to tell all how it was in that lost, lonely cold space called ALASKA. Little did I know that I was to be twelfth stepped like I had never been before. I was about to meet the Pacific Region of Alcoholics Anonymous.

We land in Alaska, since I knew I would be the only black guy in all of Alaska, I brought with me a sponsee who was also the registrar for one of our districts, you know just in case. The first thing I see is a moose cruising down the street, and you know in Alaska, the moose rule!! They come in the store, you leave. A little different existence for a dude from south central L.A. I know this is going to be an adventure. We get to this hotel, where I know there will be maybe 100 people to have this conference, and I walk in and there are 750 alcoholics in this room who are all there for the same purpose...To learn and discuss how to better carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers. I just burst out in tears. Tears of joy because I had known all this time that no one possibly loved AA like I did, and to walk into this room full of people talking about how to better serve AA, I was whooped!!

Then people started to come to the microphone, one by one to tell their feelings, experiences or just to hear themselves talk. Then came this lady who started speaking in a language foreign to us all, Russian. Through her interpreter she explained that her group wanted her to come to PRAASA to tell how AA was alive and well in Russia, and give gratitude for all that AA had done for them. She said she lived 200 miles away from Anchorage in her town in Russia. But in order to get to

PRAASA she had to fly from her home to Moscow. From Moscow to Atlanta. From Atlanta to Seattle. Then from Seattle to Anchorage, 200 miles away. And when she got done she would repeat the trip so that she could report back to her group. There was not a dry eye in the house!! Got ME!

When the closing circle repeated the responsibly pledge in unison, we all started hugging, kinda randomly, and I spied upon another black man sitting on the stage, and approached him. We hugged, and asked how I liked the experience. In about 10 seconds, I spewed on him all that I had experienced and how I couldn't wait until next year to return to PRAASA. I asked if this was his first PRAASA too? He chuckled in a kind way, and explained that his name was Bill Moore, had been a delegate and a service junkie for a while. That now he was going to and fro to Africa to work with doctors there, who knew nothing at all about alcoholism and educating them on AA. He said I should think about how our brothers over there needed what we have been given, and they need to get it real. "We have to carry the message to the man who is still sick," he said. Then he gave me a button, **Oakland 09**, which I still wear today. Bill passed a year later just after Oakland's PRAASA. I will never forget that man and what he did for me.

At the bottom point of our inverted Regional triangle is our Regional Trustee, Rod B., the first of his kind to hold that post. I, too, am the first of my kind, tall, dark and handsome, to hold the post of Delegate of Area 09. (*Before, they were all short, light, and ugly, at least according to one of our past delegates.*) So we have Regional Trustee, Rod, from his tireless service, mushrooms a growth that roots the nine states, to fourteen Areas, to 13,031 Groups, to 344,307 members who then can carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers. That means that in our Pacific Regions alone, we have 30.73% of the registered groups in the United States and Canada and 25.06% of the membership. (*These numbers come from our 2011 Conference Report pages 78 and 79.*) And we all get along. He, according to S65 of

Continued on page 4



*DELEGATE'S CORNER (continued from p. 3)*

Service Manual, **brings to the Board's discussions a regional AA point of view and experience that is invaluable.** He brings our message.

(A Group without a GSR is like a leaf that falls off the tree. It is still a leaf, but it is no longer connected to the vine, and gets no nourishment. And you know what happens to a leaf that is no longer connected. It withers up and blows away. Without being connected to headquarters, no information is being passed, no voice is heard, and no direction can be given. Sure alcoholics are being helped, but to what?)

At our Pacific Regional Forum last year, I heard the Delegate from Oregon say that they had an enormous contingency of Russian alcoholics that needed help. Two months prior, one of the members of my Home Group somehow received a case of big books in Russian. We had had Spanish books, which we easily distributed. We had had Polish books, which we found a group very happy to utilize. But these books had been sitting for months with nowhere to go. Through a series of emails, I was able to ship from my Group in Area 09 to Skip A., Alternate Chair at the time in Area 58, where their CTF Chair, Juve, had been in contact with a Probation Officer who kept getting Russian clients with alcohol problems and no meeting or reading available. They put some of the books in his hands and their DCM, Carol, took the rest and distributed them throughout her District. Our Primary Purpose, Regionally.

What have I found here in General Service at our Regional level? I have found an amazing diversity of our areas, that we all work independently together, perfectly imperfect with the autonomy of a 9 state 14-area individual collective. Some areas have few groups and others have many. We share different opinions and experiences, but all display the overall joy of Service to AA. Many different strategies and procedures, and all are willing to share the wants and woes of each, as well as the good news that independence from alcohol has brought all. And we all have the same purpose, to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

Jeryl T., Panel 62 MSCA 09 Delegate

I double dare you to give this newsletter to someone who is not in General Service and encourage him or her to sign up on [www.area09.org](http://www.area09.org) to receive it each month.

(just click on the "newsletter" box on the right side of the home page and follow instructions to get on the automatic email list.)

## Officers/Directors Reports

**Delegate:** Announced that the newly revised Service Manual is now available; reported on visitations, presentations and commitments throughout the area, including attending the area elections for areas 05 and 93, AOCYPAA, District 25's 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Party and many others. Reported that efforts to charter a flight for PRAASA was not financially feasible but reminded everyone to get registered and make arrangements to attend. Reported that the AA Grapevine is over \$66,000 ahead of budget expectations; that the Trustees' ad hoc committee had reported that no Facebook presence can be established at this time that would be consistent with our Traditions.

**Alt. Delegate:** Reported on visitations and commitments, including success of the Servathon (over 150 attendees); announced that the 2013 Workbook will be available on the website by the end of the year.

**Registrar:** Continues to update information; asked anyone who has changes or new groups to contact him.

**Treasurer:** Area is in the black in November; encouraged everyone to get expense requests in before the end of the year! Also reminded groups that email receipts save money that can be spent elsewhere and that the Area copier is available for area printing and will not come out of committee budget when used.

**Chairman:** Had submitted resignation based on planned move out of area, but when plans changed, he will remain for the remainder of his commitment and thanked the Board for their understanding. He announced meeting sites and that the 4-Area Sharing Session will need volunteers as Area 09 is hosting this year..

## New Business

**Change in mileage reimbursement proposal:** A proposal to change the area mileage reimbursement was proposed and failed to be forwarded to the assembly for consideration by substantial unanimity (four votes for; all the rest against)

## Old Business

### **Proposals that will be considered at the Jan Assembly:**

- 1) To replace the Standing Committee Meetings in the Nov. ASC in odd number years with the Servathon (30 for/29 against)
- 2) 2013 Budget for approval at Jan. assembly.
- 3) GSR School Guidelines for approval (49 for/15 against).
- 4) That the MSCA 09 apply for a fee-free bank credit card to be used by the Area Treasurer solely for the purpose of paying for Area 09 expenditures and establishing Area 09 credit history. It is further proposed that strict and explicit guidelines for the prudent use of an area credit card would be written by the members of the Finance Committee, affirmed by the board of directors, the Area Assembly and added to the Area Guidelines before application for the card is made. (45 for/17 against)

**These proposals will be presented as seconded motions at the Area Assembly for discussion, amendment and vote by all members of the Assembly.**

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### **By vote of the members of the ASC, the following proposals will not be forwarded for consideration by the Jan Assembly:**

1. Proposal to create an online "Virtual Archive" of the Area archival material that would be available to the membership by Jan 1, 2014. (15 for/remainder against)
2. Proposal that the Treasurer track and report quarterly the income and expenses of the East and West sides of the Area. (6 for/remainder against)

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**The following proposal was not considered by the ASC as the presenter was not present.**

1. Proposal to elect standing committee chairs and co-chairs from opposite sides, respectively, of the area.

## From the Archives: January 1993 Newsletter Delegate's Report

Mainstream A.A.: In July, I received a copy of a letter from the Panel 41, Area 06 (California Northern Coastal) Delegate addressed to the Trustees of the General Service Board. In that letter, she stated her Area's objection to "the gathering of experience of carrying the A.A. message to minority groups." A motion expressing its objection to this Trustee's outreach program was passed by CNCA at its May, 1992 Assembly.

The substance of their motion was that: "A.A. does not have an opinion on minority representation within our membership. A.A. has only one message, and it doesn't change according to whom we are speaking. A.A. has only one classification of membership: ALCOHOLIC. A.A. is a program of attraction, rather than promotion."

Later in July, I attended the Pacific Regional Forum in Santa Clara, California. There I participated in a workshop on A.A. literature and heard some of the same types of objections to specialized literature. Some felt literature that is directed towards young people, gays, native Americans, and other minority groups emphasize our differences and divides us into many classifications.

We have four Spanish-speaking Districts in the Mid-Southern California Area, and we simultaneously translate our Area meetings into Spanish and American Sign Language. We do this to enable these alcoholics to participate in service. We believe this helps foster unity with those who are alcoholic, but "different". In our Area we have many specialized meetings. These include: men's meetings, women's meetings, step and/or tradition meetings, gay meetings, young people's meetings, over 40/50 meetings, beginner's meetings, sponsorship meetings, etc.

All this started me thinking about what we are trying to accomplish with all these specialized meetings and literature, and wondering if we are engaging in what Bill W. might have described as "the good being the enemy of the best." My conclusion was that the specialized meetings, and literature, are valuable as long as they serve their intended purpose. In my view, that purpose is to help newcomers who feel different (could that be all of us when we were new?) relate with people with whom they can identify. After all, when Bill W. and Dr. Bob made their first 12-step call, they didn't lecture Bill D. They told him about their own lives and their drinking history, and because of his identification with them, he was convinced there was hope. Then they told him how they were staying sober, and he believed it might also work for them.

In my view, if there is a problem with specialized meetings and literature, it is that newcomers may get a narrow view of A.A. They may even get stuck in specialized meetings, and never join mainstream A.A. A home group may have several meetings and some of them may be specialized meetings, however, the members of the group are asked to participate and serve in all facets of A.A. That is mainstream A.A.

Perhaps newcomers in A.A. are similar to those who immigrate from another country. Many of those immigrants don't speak the language, or understand the customs of the new country. Information is provided in their native language in order to help them function in a strange land, but when these newcomers feel more comfortable with their new country they are encouraged to join the mainstream and participate fully in their new society.

Specialized literature is mainly for those who think they are different, and it helps them understand our fellowship. A few years ago we were having trouble in our Area with court card holders disrupting meetings. They became irate if they didn't feel welcome, or the meeting secretary refused to sign their court cards. One theory was that they were probably fearful about something they didn't understand. Subsequently, our Area published and distributed a pamphlet which described what A.A. is and is not. It stated that A.A. cooperated, but was not affiliated with, the judicial system. It also described several different types of meetings: open, closed, men's, women's, speaker, newcomers, etc., peculiar to our Area. This specialized piece of literature helped provide information about A.A. to people who knew they were different. It helped create an atmosphere of understanding so the new people could overcome their "differences."

Although it is true that A.A. has only one message, and it doesn't change according to whom we are speaking, I want to make A.A. accessible to people in the language they can understand. Perhaps then they will be able to learn our language of the heart and join mainstream A.A.

Love, Jim C., Panel 42 Delegate, Area 09

# MARK YOUR CALENDAR

January 13—Sunday  
**Area Assembly**  
**Youth Center**  
 4658 Woodruff Avenue, Lakewood  
*Hosted by District 2*

February 10—Sunday  
**Area Service Committee (ASC) Meeting**  
 Murrieta Community Center  
 41810 Juniper St., Murrieta CA 92662  
*Hosted by District 17*

March 10—Sunday  
**Area Service Committee (ASC) Meeting**  
 Millikan High School,  
 2800 Snowden Av, Long Beach  
*Hosted by District 4*

April 14—Sunday  
**Pre-Conference Workshop**  
*Hosted by District 25*

May 19--Sunday  
**Area Assembly**  
**Delegate's Conference Report**  
*Hosted by District 8*

June 9—Sunday  
**Area Service Committee (ASC) Meeting**  
*Hosted by District 30*

July 14—Sunday  
**Area Foro**  
**Spanish-speaking with English Translation**

## Usual Area Meeting Schedule *at most assemblies and ASCs*

9:00 a.m.	Delegate's Sharing
9:00 a.m.	GSR Orientation
9:00 a.m.	Finance Committee Meeting
10:00 a.m.	Standing Committee Meetings
10:00 a.m.	DCM Orientation
11:15 a.m.	Lunch
12:00 Noon	Area Meeting

## Who's Who

### Officers/Directors

**Delegate:** Jeryl T.  
**Alt. Delegate:** Sharon K.  
**Chairperson:** Cesar F.  
**Secretary:** Jesus O.  
**Treasurer:** Annie D.  
**Registrar:** Raul C.

### Committee

#### Chairs, Co-Chairs

and other Area Service Positions

Archives (Eng) Matt W.  
 Archives (Sp) (open)  
 CEC Patricia P.  
 Communications Martin J.  
*Elec. Media* Kris C.  
*Elec. Equip* John W.  
*Translation* Santiago S.  
*Newsletter* Linda C.  
 Convention (Eng) Lois L.  
 Convention (Sp) Mauricio T.  
 Corrections Julio I.  
 CPC (Eng) Catherine  
 CPC (Sp) Jose F.  
 DCM School (Eng) Nikki N.  
 DCM School (Sp)  
 Finance Tina B.  
*Grapevine* Catherine E.  
 GSR School (Eng) Marita H.  
 GSR School (Sp) Marcelo C.  
*La Viña* Paco G.  
 Literature (Eng) Scott B.  
 Literature (Sp) Martin G.  
 P.I. (Eng) Bob D.  
 P.I. (Sp) Magdaleno  
 Registration Kristin F.  
 Spec. Needs (Eng) Jennifer C.  
 Spec. Needs (Sp)

*Archivist* Pete B.  
*Coffee* Tony M.  
*Copier* Jim C.  
*Sound* Jim B.  
*Web Coordinator* Rainer F.

## v. ex·trap·o·late

*1. To infer or estimate by extending or projecting known information.*

**LET'S JUST SAY... SOME TIME IN THE FUTURE...hypothetically, extrapolating from known information that this message was sent to members of A.A....**

"In a continuing trend over the past several years, the number of areas represented by delegates to this year's conference will fall to less than 10% of the number of areas in the United States and Canada. The conference will be held in a small conference room at GSO, where the Trustees, Staff and Conference Delegates will confer and discuss the proposals submitted for the conference agenda this year. As there are not enough delegates to populate committees, all proposals will be discussed and voted on by the conference attendees. It is estimated, based on past years, that because of the erosion of interest and lack of participation throughout the U.S. and Canada, that the Conference deliberations will be concluded in no more than three days of discussion and voting, possibly less.

*"In 1954 Bill W. wrote: 'Since 1951 we have been holding these yearly Conferences, to see whether this movement was interested enough, was responsible enough, felt those services were worthwhile enough, to maintain so long as God will need this Society. And I think it is the conclusion of every delegate who has been there that yes, we should take these things over. So, in 1955 we propose to hold an International Convention, at which time, on behalf of the oldtimers, and of Smithy and me, we shall say to you, here is the remainder of your Third Legacy [Service]. This Conference shall become our successor. To you we hand the last torch. Carry on. Face your destiny with surety and courage, and God love you.'*

"For many years, the members of A.A. seemed to embrace this legacy with enthusiasm, respect and responsibility. But as the years went on, things changed. Now, looking back, perhaps we should have seen the signs of change long before they became so self-evident. For example, over the years, an increasing number of groups decided not to elect General Service Representatives and, at the same time, many of those same groups decided to cut back or to cut out contributions to the General Service Office, to their Districts and

to their Area Assemblies. The lack of participation at the district and area levels fell in many areas to less than 10% to 20% and, in some areas, GSRs attended only district meetings and therefore were not involved in or informed about the Area needs and responsibilities.

"As the contributions waned and participation fell, it became less and less feasible for the General Service Office to maintain group services to all the groups and serious cutbacks became imperative...resulting, of course, in the minimal staff now employed at the General Service Office.

"One of the items on the agenda for this conference is to change the shape of the AA triangle. As the Third Legacy of Service is no longer considered an equal part of A.A. (with Recovery and Unity), it seems appropriate to shorten that side of the triangle to reflect the fellowship's lack of interest and participation.

"As there are so few delegates now, the pool from which Class B Trustees are chosen has fallen below a critical level and it will also be considered this year to change the structure of the Board of Trustees to reflect a majority of Class A (non-alcoholic Trustees).

"The fellowship clearly is not interested enough, responsible enough, feels those services are worthwhile enough, to maintain,' stated a long-time member of A.A. 'We seem to be at the point now where, if Bill was right, God no longer needs this society. How sad that we could not see or address this in the early years when so few groups felt it was important or worthwhile to take their place in the legacy of Bill and Bob...the legacy they so lovingly and trustingly put into our hands. When was that moment? Could we have recognized it at the time if we'd been aware enough? Could we have done something about it? It appears to be too late, now.'

"Sadly, this will be the last year when a General Service Conference will be held due to lack of funds, interest and participation. It's sad to think what could have been."

