



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.

December 2005

A Little Bit of Service Goes a Long Way

By Scott R

When I got sober 24 years ago, the old timers always told me to get involved, become a part of Alcoholics Anonymous, and all it has to offer. I was taught the ABC's (Ashtrays, Brooms and Chairs) in my day. We even washed coffee cups. It was all about responsibility, and accountability....what length were we willing to go to in our recovery. Every one needs to find their niche in service. Check out every aspect you can. Don't let someone tell you that a branch of service is bad. Just because they did not like it, does not mean it won't be your thing. It's what is going to really light that fire. Do not fall into "contempt prior to investigation." In fact, talking down about any branch of service, especially to a newcomer, is irresponsible.

Some people are good at circuit speaking, where others are good at sponsoring. But even as sponsors, it is our job to introduce that newcomer to every aspect of the program, including service work. **Intergroup** is local

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Recovery Unity Service

by Bartolomé T

My name is Bartolomé, I am an alcoholic and I have the privilege of being a member of AA. I came into AA on July 22, 1995 and became a member of my home group 3 de Abril in Gardena, Ca. From then on I have participated in different levels of service. As many in AA, I began leading a meeting on Sunday nights from 8 to 9:30 pm. Then, after 5 years working traditions 2 and 9 in my home group our GSR at the time who later became my service sponsor invited me to a district meeting as a guest and a few weeks later I was elected alternate GSR in 1998. I found it interesting the way they ran the meetings ... attraction not promotion (Trad. 11). It was a spirit of Recovery, Unity and naturally, SERVICE.

My first real participation as a voting member at the district was during the officers' election because I was allowed to vote as alt. GSR since the GSR did not attend that day. Then in 1999 my home group elected me GSR and they strongly suggested that I attend area assemblies, pre-conference workshops, GSR appreciation days, the area Foro, Regional Forum, Special Hispanic Forum, Servathon, PRAASA, the area

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The Opportunity to Serve

by Craig S

Service work in Alcoholics Anonymous is as varied as the composition of our diverse Fellowship. There are hundreds of ways to be of service in A.A.. Some tangibly manifest themselves as Twelve Step calls, making coffee, being a meeting Secretary, giving a ride to an old-timer, answering phones at Central Office, taking a Panel into a prison, etc. The connection between these types of activities and "service" is fairly easy to grasp.

To a Member, we can almost always agree that these service activities are essential. The benefit to the person doing the service work is often more profound than the benefit received on the other end. The spiritual nature of our program is somehow connected to this work. After all, the primary purpose of our miraculous Fellowship is to "help the Alcoholic who still suffers"... in a word, to *serve*.

And then there is General Service. "*Oh the political wing of A.A.*" as some of our more cynical A.A. members have been heard to observe. Or, "*It's a two-year commitment you know*", the discouraging comment accompanying an elbow in the side of a potential, bright-eyed G.S.R. Or, "*Next week*", the weekly refrain from a disinterested group when asked at the end of the meeting if there are any reports.

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Convention Liaison

by Jason S

For the past two years it has been my privilege to serve Area 09 as your Panel 54 Convention Liaison Standing Committee Chair (English). The Convention Liaison (English) Co-Chair (Spanish), and the Convention Liaison Standing Committee provide an interactive display of Literature and audio-visual materials describing and detailing the functions of the General Service Office, AAWS and The Grapevine/La Vina, the General Service Conference structure, the Conference Committee structure, the Area Assembly and Committee structure, and services available to Districts, Groups and individual members by Area Committees within the geographic boundaries of the Mid Southern California Delegate Area.

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Could it be that the connection between General Service and “service work” is not well understood? To many, the General Service structure is simply confusing. To be sure, our work in General Service is not short on cryptic acronyms, procedural formalities, or structural complexity that can be intimidating to a new G.S.R. Let’s remember that it is incumbent upon all of us to make the new G.S.R. welcome, to reach out our hand, to be helpful, positive and inspiring. As we embark on a new two-year rotation, let’s remember to be encouraging to one another, open-minded, respectful and loving, for we have been graciously given *the opportunity to serve*.

The opportunity to serve is indeed profound. True, we may not always see the immediate results of our General Service work such as the person making coffee at a meeting might see. Sure, our “loving” discussions on twelve Sunday afternoons each year may not produce the same immediate satisfaction that performing a successful Twelve Step call can provide. In the end, however, I believe that our work in General Service helps to preserve and protect the legacy of Alcoholics Anonymous, ensuring that the hand of A.A. is always there. What can be more gratifying?

The point here is not to promote General Service work as being more important than any other service work in A.A. Rather, the point is to challenge us all in striving to more directly connect our work with “service”. As an example, we will soon have a new slate of Officers and Committee Chairs. While keeping Committee guidelines current is an important aspect to our work, how refreshing it would be to see each Committee come up with creative, new ideas on how to *carry the message*. A healthy Area is made up of strong Districts. Strong Districts are comprised of informed Groups. How can our standing Committees help forge a stronger Fellowship in this, the largest and potentially most diverse Area in all of Alcoholics Anonymous? The question can be daunting. The answers are yet to be revealed, but what an opportunity for A.A. in Mid-Southern California. Let’s embrace new ideas while being ever vigilant to hold such ideas accountable to the Traditions and Concepts litmus tests. Let’s support each other in endeavoring to do more. Let’s be respectful of our Fellows as they push the proverbial envelope.

Budgets, guidelines, structures, procedures – these are all tools that enable us to do service. As such, they are extremely critical to our efforts, but let’s not relegate the power of our collective passion for service to simply being the guardians of budgets, guidelines, structure and procedure. Let’s use these essential tools to build, to help other Alcoholics – in a word, to “serve”.

As Panel 54 comes to a close, let’s join in thanking our outgoing Officer’s for their sacrifice and commitment. Let’s be appreciative of our progress at the Committee levels.

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Let’s show our gratitude to our departing DCMC’s for serving their Districts faithfully. Most importantly, let’s extend our gratitude to our Groups and remind them that their voice is what truly matters.

As Panel 56 embarks upon a new journey during which mistakes will inevitably be made and challenges will surely be faced, let’s remember that we’ve all been graciously given the *opportunity to serve* and what an opportunity that is!

Here’s to wishing you all a wonderful and joyous Holiday season.

In Service, Craig S.

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Convention Liaison services are available to Conventions, Conferences, Workshops and Round-ups, which operate within the General Service Office “Guidelines for Conferences and Conventions” and to Area Functions, District Meetings and Special Functions inviting Third Legacy participation within the geographic boundaries of Area 09.

The Convention Liaison and Spanish Co-Chair provide these services at an average of 7 events per year and may provide information, facilitate discussion, stimulating interest which may encourage groups and individuals to become active in our Third Legacy. We frequently receive comments and feedback regarding Area activities which we can communicate to the members of the Assembly and to the Standing Committee Chairs. Due to the great enthusiasm for recovery and the large number of well attended conventions within Area 09, we are pleased to be able to carry the message of the General Services of Alcoholics Anonymous to approximately 9600 registered participants at various events each year; with the help of more than 50 dedicated volunteers who assist at our interactive display table and share their experience with service in the Third Legacy.

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Area Group Inventory Taken

Thank you to all of you who participated in our MSCA Area Inventory at the November ASC. There was a great deal of useful feedback and many good suggestions for how we can improve in the future. We all look forward to the report of the results being compiled by our Area Secretary.

Website Hits are Up

Our MSCA website had 16,996 hits during the month of October 2005. That is the largest number of hits we’ve had in any month since we started our website.

.....**A Little Bit of Service**... continued from page 1, col.1

Service where you are the link from your meeting to your local central office. In **General Service** (being a GSR) you are the link in communication from your group and the hand around the world. If your group has no representation, then your group has no voice. We are part of Mid-Southern California Area 9 at the area level. We have our Delegate that represents all of us at the conference in New York. That person takes the group conscience of this area to GSC (the General Service Conference). The job that needs to get done, we get done. Find out what district you're in and go to that meeting. Find out when the next area meeting is and go to it. Same with intergroup. Investigate. They are all open.

There is also **Hospitals & Institutions** (H&I) that is where we take meetings in to people that cannot get out, Hospitals, psych wards, jails prisons, and detox's.

Our responsibility is to educate and teach that newcomer. The Big Book says you can not transmit something you haven't got. If we're their sponsor, and we have not worked through all 12 steps, we're not teaching them the traditions, and we are not showing them about service, then our job is not being done. The people we work with emulate what we do. If you lead them, they will follow. What direction do we want to lead them? Just going to meetings is not enough. Just not drinking is not enough. We need to stay connected in every aspect we can. For me it's like putting money in the bank. That is why I am still here. Service has always been a life saver for me.

Scott R. Anaheim, CA.

..... **Recovery Unity Service** ...continued from page 1, col.1

delegate's Election and Area Officer's Election. In my second year as GSR I was a liaison between the District to the Spanish Intergroup Office. I also acted as news letter editor for district 21 and I help organize the District Anniversary event in the year 2000. The celebration consisted of presenters with topics related to the Action Items of the General Service Conference. We invited past DCMCs from Spanish speaking districts and area 09 officers. The following year we did it a little different and instead of having one speaker meeting at the district we had speaker meetings at the groups of with low membership. Each with 2 speakers with over 20 years of sobriety and conference related topics.

In 2001, I was elected district treasurer and I attended PRAASA in Spokane, WA. I was district secretary in 2002 and 2003 and also secretary of the Area 09 Foro in 2003. I had the opportunity to participate in the Panel 54 area elections and I served as DCMC of district 21 the last two years, 2004 and 2005. As the District Committee Member I have had the privilege of visiting all 33 groups in District 21 including the Catalina Spanish group. We had a chance to visit Catalina about ten times since I've been involved in

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service at the district. In the last 2 years we had combined delegate report backs with District 4. I want to take this opportunity to thank the members of the groups in the District that have supported the district officers in doing the district work. The last 7 years have been a great experience for me.

In addition, we are still visiting two groups per week on Tuesdays and Thursdays. In previous years, district meetings were held on Saturday from 4 to 6 pm and we changed that to Wed. nights from 8 to 9:30 pm. For the most part we did this in order to allow the GSRs that work on Sat. to show up for the meetings. The first Wednesday of the month is for GSR reports, the second Wednesday is the district's business meeting and the fourth Wed. is book study (Traditions and Concepts). I've had a chance to experience the growth of the district both materially and spiritually. For example, we used to type our newsletter on an old typewriter that I bought in a yard sale. Today we have a computer for the newsletter editor and instead of paying someone to make the copies, we make them in our very own copier. This is all thanks to the group contributions and to the South Bay English Speaking Central Office. God has certainly smiled on our district. We used to average 13 GSRs per meeting and we now have an average of 22 GSRs attending. In the year 2004 we hosted one area assembly and 5 Intra-District meetings.

Finally, I want to thank the district officers and the different committees chairs who help make up the district for their support in the last 2 years. I'm grateful to my Higher Power for giving me the opportunity to serve as DCM #10 since the beginning of the District in October, 1986. When I first came to AA and to my home group, I was fortunate enough not to have any fights with the old timers in the group. I honestly believe that the Twelve Traditions and the Twelve Concepts are guideposts that help us stay spiritually strong. God as I understand him is watching over me since my third step and in tradition three when I declared myself an alcoholic I became a part of a bigger whole. I've met hundreds of alcoholics in this journey and many of them I consider my close friends. There were a few who tried to discourage me, yet others encouraged me but in the end I decided to seek what you all had. I'm glad I did.

Sincerely yours in the service; Bartolomé T.

Tradition 12 (long form)

Our A.A. experience has taught us that:

..we of Alcoholics Anonymous believe that the principle of anonymity has an immense spiritual significance. It reminds us that we are to place principles before personalities; that we are actually to practice a genuine humility. This to the end that our great blessings may never spoil us; that we shall forever live in thankful contemplation of Him who presides over us all.

At almost all of these events, the Convention Liaison Chair or Co-Chair is a member of the convention planning committee and may act as the General Service Meeting Chair inviting and coordinating speakers for the Service portion of the convention. The convention Liaison or Co-Chair participates fully in each event, attending the convention business meeting when possible.

In my 13 years of being active in the Third Legacy, the Convention Liaison position has been, to date, the most rewarding of the many positions I have been trusted to serve in. But it didn't start out that way two year's ago. In January of 2004 it looked like too many boxes to carry in and out of the car, usually in 100 degree heat in the desert, a heavy T.V. and VCR to make me sweat and look bad, and a general plan to work me harder than a rented mule setting up the display in strange hotels or convention centers just to pack it all up and load it back into the car 2 days later. Over time, however, my perception changed, and in December of 2005, as I am now rotating out of this commitment; I believe it has allowed me to grow into an increased appreciation of the vital role which our Third Legacy plays in the survival of AA as a Fellowship and ultimately in the survival of me as an individual alcoholic. You have given this alcoholic the chance to gather in the spirit of unity with thousands of persons from all localities, of all backgrounds, to share our experience with the Twelve Traditions, the Twelve Concepts, and our service in the Third Legacy, and for that, I am grateful.

The Convention Liaison Standing Committee is currently encouraging anyone interested in serving in the capacity of Convention Liaison (English or Spanish) to consider these service positions for the upcoming Panel 56 term. Again I wish to thank all who have allowed me to be of service as Convention Liaison during Panel 54; my Co-Chair Arturo F. for his dedicated and outstanding service on Panel 54, and for the gift of your trust in allowing me to continue serving Area 09 as your incoming Panel 56 Registrar.

Jason S,
Outgoing Panel 54 Convention Liaison Standing Committee Chair, and Incoming Panel 56 Registrar

Committee membership begins in your home group

by Melissa B

Ever wonder why committees at the District and Area level are either without a chair and or membership? The missing people are folks in your home group who are not showing up. You know them, the ones who are getting bored because the only Legacy they know is Recovery. As their service sponsor, yes you, General Service Representative and District Committee Member, you are the one who can carry the message of the other two Legacies of AA - Unity and Service.

Find that person who needs to do a 12th step call on your Home Group by helping them get into Service and work in Unity with the other Home Groups in your District and in this Area. GSRs are not required to sit on the committees - just find someone in the Home Group to do it!! They are waiting on you. If they knew enough to ask, I bet they'd have their hand up, asking for help. Remember, we do all this in order that AA will be here for the baby born today who will need us in the future. (ref. Bernard B. Shaw, "Why we need a Conference")

Merry Christmas,
In His warmest Love and Service, Melissa B



Dec. 11, ASC Meeting, (recreation center) **16400 Brookhurst St., Fountain Valley, 92708-2000**

Directions:

From Palm Springs: Head west on I-10 (drive 18.5 miles). Merge onto CA-60 W via the exit on the LEFT toward RIVERSIDE (drive 22.9 miles). Take the CA-91 S exit toward RIVERSIDE / BEACH CITIES (drive 0.3 miles). Take the CA-60 exit toward LOS ANGELES (drive 0.2 miles). Merge onto I-215 S. (drive <0.1 miles). I-215 S becomes CA-91 W. (drive 22.5 miles). Take CA-91 EXPRESS LN toward 91 EXPRESS TOLL (Portions toll) (drive 8.3 miles). Merge onto CA-55 S. (drive 5.1 miles) Merge onto CA-22 W toward LONG BEACH (drive 7.6 miles). Take the exit toward BROOKHURST ST. (drive 0.2 miles). Turn RIGHT onto TRASK AVE. (drive 0.1 miles). Turn RIGHT onto BROOKHURST ST. (drive 2.8 miles). Turn LEFT onto THISTLE AVE. (drive <0.1 miles). End at **16400 Brookhurst St**

From Newport Beach: Head north on I-405 N toward LONG BEACH (Drive 2.9 miles). Take the BROOKHURST ST exit- EXIT 14- toward FOUNTAIN VALLEY (drive 0.4 miles). Take the BROOKHURST ST NORTH ramp (drive 0.3 miles) Merge onto BROOKHURST ST. (drive 1.2 miles). End at **16400 Brookhurst St**

From Long Beach: Head south on I-405. Take the WARNER AVE EAST exit- EXIT 15A. (drive 0.2 miles). Merge onto WARNER AVE. (drive 0.7 miles). Turn LEFT onto BROOKHURST ST. (drive 0.6 miles). End at **16400 Brookhurst St**

PRAASA 2006

March 3, 4 and 5, 2006... PRAASA (Pacific Region AA Service Assembly), Warner Center Marriot, 21850 Oxnard Street, Woodland Hills, CA 91367. More information can be found on the praasa.org website (note that the mention of the praasa.org website in this newsletter does not imply any endorsement, approval or oversight of the site by the MSCA. This information is provided only as information to our readers.). PRAASA is attended by GSRs and other AAs from the 9 west-most states in the U.S. At this Assembly, we share experience, strength and hope about being a GSR, providing General Service, etc. We strongly encourage all GSRs to attend.

Concept 12 (long form)

General Warranties of the Conference: in all its proceedings, the General Service Conference shall observe the spirit of the A.A. Tradition, taking great care that the Conference never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds, plus an ample reserve, be its prudent financial principle; that none of the Conference Members shall ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority over any of the others; that all important decisions be reached by discussion, vote, and, whenever possible, by substantial unanimity; that no Conference action ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy; that, though the Conference may act for the service of Alcoholics Anonymous, it shall never perform any acts of government; and that, like the Society of Alcoholics Anonymous which it serves, the Conference itself will always remain democratic in thought and action.

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 cochairs of the Standing committees are listed below.

Panel 54 Area Standing Committee Chairs, Cochairs, et al.

Archives Chair...Pete B	GSR School, Spanish...Felipe G
Archives Cochair...Ron E	Literature Chair...Craig S
CEC...Michael M	Literature Cochair, Spanish ...vacant
CPC...Maggie R	Treatment Facilities Chair...Patrick S
CPC Cochair, Spanish...Miguel M	Newsletter Chair...Nancy R
Convention Liaison...Jason S	Newsletter Cochair, Spanish...Jesus O
Convention Liaison, Spanish..Arturo F	Public Information Chair...Christine S
Corrections Chair...Alex N	Public Information, Spanish...Luciano P
DCM School...Phil L	Registration...Henry B
Electronic Media...Nick M	Special Needs Chair...Nancy B
Finance Chair...Mike M	Special Needs Cochair, Spanish..vacant
Grapevine Chair...Melissa B	
La Vina Chair...Raul C	Archivist...Charles K
GSR School...Jim B	Audio Equipment...Joseph M

Panel 54 Area Officers

Delegate: Nancy J, delegate@msca09aa.org
Alt. Delegate: Carlos M, altdelegate@msca09aa.org
Secretary: Cesar F, secretary@msca09aa.org
Treasurer: Joe B, treasurer@msca09aa.org
Registrar: Linda H, registrar@msca09aa.org
Chairperson: Bruce H, chair@msca09aa.org

Upcoming Events

Dec. 11, 2005...ASC (Host: District 6), 16400 Brookhurst St., Fountain Valley, CA (western side of Mile Square Park, at a Recreation Center)

Jan. 8 (Sun.), 2006 **Assembly (GSRs vote)** (host Dist.23)

Feb. 12 (Sun.) ASC Meeting (Hosted by District 17)

Mar. 3, 4, and 5...PRAASA 2006

Mar. 12 (Sun.) ASC Meeting (Dist 21)

Apr. 2 (Sun.) Archives Open House

Apr. 9 (Sun.) Pre-Conf.Workshop (Dist 10)

May 14 (Sun.) **Assembly (GSRs vote)** (Dist. 18)

June 11 (Sun.) ASC Meeting (Dist.22)

July 9 (Sun.) Foro do MSCA (Dists 5 & 20)

Aug. 13 (Sun.) ASC Meeting (Dist 7)

Sept. 10 (Sun.) **Assembly (GSRs vote)** (Dist. 4)

Oct. 8 (Sun.) ASC Meeting (Dist. 24)

Oct. 15 (Sun.) Heritage Day

Nov. 11 (Sat.) Servathon (Dist 30)

Dec.10 (Sun.) ASC Meeting (Dist 1)

Schedule for most MSCA Assemblies and ASC meetings

9:30 am....GSR School
9:30 am....Delegate's Sharing Session
10:15 am....Committees meet

11:30 am.....Lunch

Noon... **Main Meeting** (which normally includes introductions of new GSRs, Area officers' reports, presentation/ discussion/ voting on proposals, committee reports, other reports)
3:30...Adjournment

Panel 56 Area Officers

These officers will begin their term of office on January 1, 2006.

- Delegate: Bruce H
- Secretary: Melissa B
- Alt. Delegate: Joe B
- Treasurer: Mike M
- Chair: Craig S
- Registrar: Jason S

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