



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

June 2010

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

My Friend, Henry B.

I learned on May 17th, 2010 that my good friend, Henry B., had passed on. I informed everyone I could that Henry had gone, and was stunned by the outpouring of love and affection returned regarding Henry. I was not so much stunned by the sentiments expressed, but by the sheer number of people that Henry had affected in a positive way.

Henry pretty much did most of his work "below the radar". It wasn't important to him how much recognition he received, but it was important to him that he complete his work. I was fortunate enough to share several trips to Southern California state prisons with Henry where we were charged with picking up a paroling inmate, transporting them to their home community and taking them to a local A.A. meeting, (a little known A.A. service called "Contact Upon Release"). I don't think any of the gentleman we transported ever became active in local A.A., but Henry and I stayed sober by doing our part. And I got to enjoy Henry's subtle sense of humor on long road trips to Tehachapi State Prison and California Institution for Men at Chino.

Among other service positions Henry brought a high level of commitment to were:

DCMC – District 06 (quickest District meetings on record)

Chair, Area 09 Electronic Media Sub-Committee; during the committee's formative years

H & I Intergroup Rep from the Inland Empire

H & I Committee to Southern California H & I Intergroup Committee

Policy Chair, Southern California H & I Intergroup

Panel Coordinator – West Yard, California Institution For Men, (CIM) at Chino

Panel Coordinator – E Yard, Kern Valley State Prison

Etc.

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Delegate's Corner

Is The Door Open To All Alcoholics Who Wish to Recover?

Here are some questions for you and your group:

Is the door of your group open to

The single parent who can't afford a babysitter?

The deaf newcomer?

The wheelchair bound alcoholic?

The member who speaks and understands only another language?

Those who have other accessibility or special needs?

And, in general, is the door of Alcoholics Anonymous open to

Alcoholics who live in geographically remote communities?

Those alcoholics who are culturally, religiously, or philosophically different than our "normal" or "customary" communities?

Every alcoholic in treatment facilities, institutions, and hospitals?

Some of our long-time members are resistant to General Service...they refer to it as "AA politics" and believe that they have to choose between an isolated recovery group that serves the needs of the "wet one" coming in the door and AA as a whole.

I believe differently.

It is my opinion (and I may have another tomorrow) that the work of General Service is to explore every possible way to **open the door** of A.A. wider for the "wet one"... sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly... but always wider, so that more (dare I dream "all"?) alcoholics who want to join us can do so. I believe all of this "general" service supports the group and individual work and makes 12th step work even more effective and attractive.

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My Friend, Henry B. ... *continued from p. 1, col. 1*

Henry, Jim T., and I, took an H & I panel into the East Yard at CIM, the 2nd Friday of every month, for many years. Jim and I would meet Henry for dinner at Flo's Airport Café prior to going to the prison yard, and Henry and Jim kept the restaurant staff in stitches with their humor. One evening in the restaurant, the conversation came around to the U.S. Marines, as it often did, (Henry, Jim and I were all former Marines). Jim and Henry discovered that they had sailed to Korea during the Korean Conflict on the same ship, the General Brewster. Their lives took them on separate paths, only to be brought together in A.A. Life's funny like that.

Life without Henry will be a little greyer. But I will cherish the many times I "got in the car" with Henry and went wherever God's will took us. As Henry got more and more ill, he did not shy away from what was happening. He referred to the process as "his final rotation". As my Friend, Jim T., said when he heard about Henry's passing, "Breathe easier, Henry". I'm gonna miss that boy.

Nick M., a friend of Henry B.

Will AA Ever Have a Personal Government?

Service Center Only

The answer to this question is almost surely "no." That is the clear verdict of our experience.

To begin with, each A.A. has been an individual who, because of his alcoholism, could seldom govern himself. Nor could any other human being govern the alcoholic's obsession to drink, his drive to have things his own way. Time out of mind, families, friends, employers, doctors, clergymen, and judges have tried their hand at disciplining alcoholics. Almost without exception the failure to accomplish anything by coercion has been complete. Yet we alcoholics can be led, we can be inspired, coming into A.A. we can, and we gladly do, yield to the will of God. Hence it is not strange that the only real authority to be found in A.A. is that of Spiritual Principle. It is never personal authority.

Our unreasonable individualism (egocentricity if you like) was, of course, the main reason we all failed in life and betook ourselves to alcohol. When

Will AA Ever Have a Personal Government? ... *continued from previous column*

we couldn't coerce others into conformity with our own plans and desires, we drank. When others tried to coerce us, we also drank. Though now sober, we still have a strong hangover of these early traits which caused us to resist authority. Therein probably hangs a clue to our lack of personal government in A.A.: no fees, no dues, no rules and regulations, no demand that alcoholics conform to A.A. principles, no one set in personal authority over anyone else. Though no sterling virtue, our aversion to obedience does pretty well guarantee us freedom from personal domination of any kind.

Follow Program by Choice

Still, it is a fact that most of us do follow, in our personal lives, the "12 Suggested Steps to Recovery." But we do this from choice. We prefer recovery to death. Then, little by little, we perceive that the spiritual basis of life is the best. We conform because we want to.

Likewise, most A.A. groups become willing to follow the "Twelve Points of Tradition to Assure Our Future." The groups are willing to avoid controversy over outside issues such as politics, reform or religion; they stick to their single purpose of helping alcoholics to recover; they increasingly rely on self support rather than outside charity. More and more do they insist on modesty and anonymity in their public relations. The A.A. groups follow these other traditional principles for the very same reason that the individual A.A. follows the "12 Steps to Recovery." Groups see they would disintegrate if they didn't and they soon discover that adherence to our tradition and experience is the foundation for a happier and more effective group life.

Nowhere in A.A. is there to be seen any constituted human authority that can compel an A.A. group to do anything. Some A.A. groups, for example, elect their leaders. But even with such a mandate each leader soon discovers that while he can always guide by example or persuasion he can never boss, else at election time he may find himself passed by.

No Place for Dictators!

The majority of A.A. groups do not even choose leaders. They prefer rotating committees to handle their simple affairs. These committees are invariably regarded as servants--they have only the authorization to serve, never to command.

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Will AA Ever Have a Personal Government?

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Each committee carries out what it believes to be the wishes of its group. That is all. Though A.A. committees used to try to discipline wayward members, though they have sometimes composed minute rules and regulations and now and then have set themselves up as judges of other people's personal morals, I know of no case where any of these seemingly worthy strivings had any lasting effect--except, perhaps, the election of a brand new committee!

Surely I can make these assertions with the greatest of confidence. For in my own turn I, too, have tried a hand at governing A.A. Each time I have strenuously tried it I have been shouted down; so loudly, in fact, that on several occasions it looked as though I was due for swift and certain excommunication!

Sitting at a desk in our Central Office I often watch the incoming floods of personal, group and intergroup problems as they flow in. The tide has been rising so fast of late that each morning's mail brings us an avalanche invariably containing at least one very critical problem from some place or other in the world. The A.A. Central Office has become a hot spot; so hot, indeed, that a "crisis" a day is getting to be routine.

Once upon a time my temptation was to take a strong position on every one of these problems, to exert every bit of pressure and authority that I could bring to bear, to write hot letters telling erring groups or individuals where to head in. At such moments, I used to be convinced that A.A. needed a strong personal government--someone, for example, like myself!

After struggling a few years to run the A.A. movement I had to give it up--it simply didn't work. Heavy handed assertion of my personal authority always created confusion and resistance. If I took sides in a controversy, I was joyfully quoted by some, while others murmured, "And just who does this dictator think he is?" If I sharply criticized, I usually got double criticism on the return bounce. Personal power always failed. I can see my older A.A. friends smiling. They are recalling those times when they, too, felt a mighty call to "save the A.A. movement" from something or other. But their days of playing "Pharisee" are now over. So those little maxims, "Easy does it"--"Live and let live" have come to be deeply meaningful and significant

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Will AA Ever Have a Personal Government?

... continued from previous column

to them and to me. In such fashion each of us learns that, in A.A., one can be a servant only.

Here at the Central Office we have long known that we can merely supply certain indispensable services. We can supply information and literature; we can usually tell how the majority of A.A.s feel about our current problems; we can assist new groups to start, giving advice if asked; we can look after the overall A.A. public relations, we can sometimes mediate difficulties. Similarly, the editors of our monthly journal, *The A.A. Grapevine*, believe themselves simply a mirror of current A.A. life and thought. Serving purely as such, they cannot rule or propagandize. So, also, the Trustees of the Alcoholic Foundation (our A.A. general service committee) know themselves to be simple custodians, custodians who guarantee the effectiveness of the A.A. Central Office and *The A.A. Grapevine* and who are the repository of our general funds and traditions--caretakers only.

Service Center Only

It is most clearly apparent that, even here at the very center of A.A., there can only exist a center of service--custodians, editors, secretaries and the like--each, to be sure, with a special vital function, but none of them with any authority to govern Alcoholics Anonymous.

That such centers of service, international, national, metropolitan area or local, will be sufficient for the future, I can have no doubt. So long as we avoid any menacing accumulation of wealth or the growth of personal government at these centers, we cannot go astray. While wealth and authority lie at the foundation of many a noble institution, we of A.A. now apprehend, and thoroughly well, that these things are not for us. Have we not found that one man's meat is often another man's poison?

Shall we not do well, if instead, we can cling in some part to the brotherly ideals of the early Franciscans? Let all of us A.A.s, whether we be trustees, editors, secretaries, janitors or cooks--or just members--ever recall the unimportance of wealth and authority as compared with the vast import of our brotherhood, love and service.

Bill W.

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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.

There is this bear, right, and he walks into a bar. He goes up to the bartender and says
"Can I have a large Gin and
..... Tonic Please?"

The Barman replies "Yeah sure, but what's with the big pause?"

The bear holds up his paws and says "I'm a bear!!"

Is The Door Open To All Alcoholics Who Wish to Recover? ... continued from p.1, col. 2

Take a look at the names of the Standing Committees in this newsletter! (see last page) Each one is focused on a specific opportunity to carry the message to the alcoholic who still suffers: public information, cooperation with our professional friends, cooperation with the elder community, literature, Grapevine and La Vina, preserving our archives for reference and enlightenment, treatment facilities, special needs, and so many more.

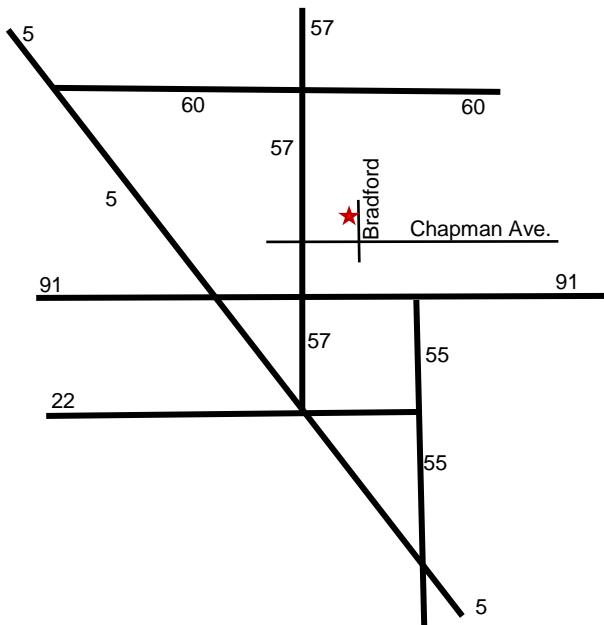
If you haven't found your "place" in A.A. yet... or you're getting a bit "bored" with A.A., try us out...

We've got a chair saved just for you!

Linda C., Panel 60, MSCA 09 Delegate

ASC , June 13, Sunday - (District 10)
and also the
Foro, July 11, Sunday (Districts 21 and 3)

**Kraemer Memorial Park, Backs
Community Building – Main Room, 201
N. Bradford Ave., Placentia, CA 92870**



Directions:

From the South:
Take the 57 North
After you cross the 91 Fwy, exit at Chapman Ave.
and turn right onto E CHAPMAN AVE.
Turn LEFT onto N BRADFORD AVE.
Arrive in 201 N Bradford Ave, Placentia,

Directions:

From the East or West:
Take the 91 freeway to the 57 freeway
Take the 57 North
Turn right onto E CHAPMAN AVE.
Turn LEFT onto N BRADFORD AVE.
Arrive in 201 N Bradford Ave, Placentia,

Directions:

From the North:
Take the 57 South
Take the NUTWOOD AVE exit, EXIT 7, toward
CHAPMAN AVE/FULLERTON.
Keep RIGHT at the fork in the ramp.
Turn LEFT onto E CHAPMAN AVE.
Turn LEFT onto N BRADFORD AVE.
Arrive in 201 N Bradford Ave, Placentia,

Concept VI

The Conference recognizes that the chief initiative and active responsibility in most world service matters should be exercised by the trustee members of the Conference acting as the General Service Board.

Now, wait a minute, you say! All along you have been telling us that the Groups are the boss. This concept says, flat out, that the General Service Board has *“chief initiative and active responsibility in most world service matters”*. That sounds an awful lot like a definition of “boss”.

The 12 Concepts For World Service, when taken as a whole, define legal authority as opposed to practical authority. Because the General Service Board, through its charter, is a legal entity, it must be governed by legal language. This language gives the General Service Board the chief initiative and active responsibility listed in this Concept.

Bill W. basically set up the A.A. Service Structure along the lines of a corporation. In Bill’s essays on the 12 Concepts, found in the A.A. Service Manual, he outlines his reasons for choosing that structure, as opposed to an institutional or government-like structure (the what!? That’s right, we actually have An A.A. Service Manual – check it out at the Central Office, or online at aa.org under SERVICES FOR MEMBERS). However, and this is vital to the working relationship between the General Service Conference and the General Service Board, the Board has always realized that the practical authority held by the Conference grants the power of a *final decision* to the Conference. The Board has NEVER vetoed or over-ruled the Conference. And we’ll see why next month in the report on Concept VII.

An Anonymous Member of AA in Orange County

Concept 7 – Legal vs Traditional Authority

Concept 7 (short form) The Charter and Bylaws of the General Service Board are legal instruments, empowering the trustees to manage and conduct world service affairs. The Conference Charter is not a legal document; it relies upon tradition and the A.A. purse for final effectiveness.

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Concept 7 – Legal vs Traditional Authority

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This concept spells out the exact relationship of the General Service Board to the General Service Conference, and therefore to the A.A. Groups. It says that the General Service Board, out of necessity, is given legal authority, through the Charter and Bylaws of the General Service Board, (whoa, doesn’t that sound like legal terminology!) to manage the affairs of the General Service Office and the two legal corporations – Alcoholics Anonymous World Service (AAWS) and the A.A. Grapevine. I can hear you now, “Hey, you told us earlier that the Groups are in charge. This sounds like some board of trustees is making all the decisions”. *Please read past the semi-colon in the Concept short form.*

The concept goes on to say that the General Service Conference, representing the Groups, relies upon tradition and the A.A. purse for final effectiveness. In the long form, it is much more descriptive – it says that the General Service Conference “.... relies instead upon the force of tradition and the power of the A.A. purse for its final effectiveness” (Italics, bolding and underlining added by author). Looking especially at Traditions 2 and 9, we see that the ultimate authority comes from the Group conscience, and that the Service Boards and Committees are directly responsible to those they serve. This is the force of tradition spelled out in this concept.

But what about the *power of the purse*, what is that? In the power of the purse lies the ultimate power, one that has never had to be used on a massive scale. This is where the Groups simply withhold their voluntary contributions to the General Service Office, (G.S.O.) because they believe that the General Service Board, or the General Service Conference has grossly erred in their decision(s). Without voluntary group contributions, G.S.O. would cease to operate. Strong medicine, indeed!

It should be evident that the *power of the purse* works at all levels of service, G.S.O., the District Committee, the Area Assembly, Central Office and the Hospitals & Institutions Committee. All service boards and committees must remember that the A.A. Groups hold the purse strings. The consequences of ignoring this power invested in the A.A. Groups are dire.

A member of A.A. in Orange County

Day of AA History,

Commemorating AA 75th Anniversary

Presented by GSR District 2

Presented by SCA District 2

Saturday, June 5, 5pm-7:30 pm

Saturday, June 3, 8pm-11:30 pm
Cerritos Park East, Malibu Room, 113234 E
166th St., Cerritos 90703

Directions from the 91 Freeway: Exit Bloomfield Ave. and head north. Turn right onto 166th. Park will be on the right side, less than one mile away.

From the West, exit the 91 Freeway onto Artesia Blvd, and turn right onto Artesia, then left on Shoemaker, and right on E. 166 St.

- 5 pm: Light Refreshments and MSCA 09 Historical Archive viewing
- 5:30 pm: GSR District 2 and DCMC Greetings and Introductions followed by Jay S Presentation
- 7 pm: Q & A Session

Movie Night

Movies will be shown at the MCSA Archives, on the schedule shown below. Doors open at 7 pm with the movie starting at 7:30 pm. The cost is free. Bring lawn chairs or chaise lounges and enjoy a classic movie about alcoholism and recovery. Refreshments will be served.

The Archives is located at 7111-B Arlington, Riverside CA 90503 in the Riverside Airpark, next to the Riverside Airport. For more information, call (951) 785-0845.

2010 MOVIE NIGHT SCHEDULE

All dates are Saturday

Come Fill The Cup (1951) June 19

Tradition 6 (long form)

Our A.A. experience has taught us that:

Problems of money, property, and authority may easily divert us from our primary spiritual aim. We think, therefore, that any considerable property of genuine use to A.A. should be separately incorporated and managed, thus dividing the material from the spiritual. An A.A. group, as such, should never go into business. Secondary aids to A.A., such as clubs or hospitals which require much property or administration, ought to be incorporated and so set apart that, if necessary, they can be freely discarded by the groups. Hence such facilities ought not to use the A.A. name. Their management should be the sole responsibility of those people who financially support them. For clubs, A.A. managers are usually preferred. But hospitals, as well as other places of recuperation, ought to be well outside A.A. – and medically supervised. While an A.A. group may cooperate with anyone, such cooperation ought never to go so far as affiliation or endorsement, actual or implied. An A.A. group can bind itself to no one.

Tradition 7 (long form)

Our A.A. experience has taught us that:

The A.A. groups themselves ought to be fully supported by the voluntary contributions of their own members. We think that each group should soon achieve this ideal; that any public solicitation of funds using the name of Alcoholics Anonymous is highly dangerous, whether by groups, clubs, hospitals, or other outside agencies; that acceptance of large gifts from any source, or of contributions carrying any obligation whatever, is unwise. Then, too, we view with much concern those A.A. treasuries which continue, beyond prudent reserves, to accumulate funds for no stated A.A. purpose. Experience has often warned us that nothing can so surely destroy our spiritual heritage as futile disputes over property, money, and authority.

Upcoming Events

Date - Event:

June 5 – Saturday – District 2 presents “Day of AA History” 5 pm – 7:30 pm, Cerritos Park East, Malibu Room, 13234 E. 166th St., Cerritos, CA 90703

June 13- Sunday - ASC (District 10) – Kraemer Memorial Park, Backs Building – Main Room, 201 N. Bradford Ave., Placentia, CA 92870

July 1-4- International Convention – San Antonio, TX

July 11- Sunday - Foro (District 21 and 3) – Backs Kraemer memorial park, 201 N. Bradford Ave., Placentia, CA 92870 (same as June 13 ASC, see map on page 4)

July 17, 2010 - Service Workshop - Your Group: The Heart of AA - 10 am to 4 pm, Golden Era Golf Course, 19871 Gilman Springs Rd. San Jacinto, CA 92583

August 8- Sunday - ASC (District 7) -

Aug 27-29 - Pacific Regional Forum, Torrance Marriot , 3635 Fashion Way, Torrance CA 90503

Sept 12 - Sunday - Assembly (District 20)

October 10- Sunday - ASC (District 4) -

Oct 24- Sunday - Heritage Day (District 6)

Nov 14 - Sunday - Servathon (District 12)

Dec 12- Sunday - ASC (District 19)

Panel 60 Area Officers

Linda C., Delegate

Cesar F., Alternate Delegate

Jeryl T., Chairperson

Sharon K., Secretary

Joseph M., Treasurer

Michael M., Registrar

Schedule for most MSCA Assemblies/ASCs

9:30 am....GSR School, Delegate's Rpt

10:15 am..... Committee Meetings

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 60 Area Standing Committee Chairs, Co-Chairs, et al.

Archives Chair... Joseph H

CEC Chair... tbd

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... Bob D

Convention Liaison, Span... tbd

Corrections Chair... Alex O

CPC Chair... Bill G

CPC Co-Chair, Span... Martin G

DCM School... tbd

DCM School Spanish ... tbd

Finance Committee Chair... Jim B

Grapevine Chair... Doug M

La Viña Chair... Mauricio T

GSR School... David B

GSR School, Spanish... Renaldo A

Literature Chair... Ernesto M

Literature Co-Chair, Spanish ... tbd

Public Information Chair... Keith S

Public Info., Sp.... Marcelo C

Registration Chair... Devon F

Special Needs Chair...Scott R

Special Needs Co-Chair, Spanish...tbd

Treatment Facilities Chair... John O

Archivist... Pete B

Coffee person... Paco G

Regional Forum (2010) Coordinator...Bruce H

Sound Dude...Leandro L & Raul C