

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



DELEGATE'S CORNER

Our Hope for the Future

I just got done praying. Praying for the well being of my Area in the light of the events of yesterday. I attended an Assembly, and was just blown away by my *perceived* misinformed, misdirected, not so well intentioned business portion of the day. I really need that prayer today, yesterday, and I am sure for the rest of my term as Delegate of the MSCA 09. I thank God for being God, and not me, because I could never wield such power always in such a positive direction. So all must be all right because God is running, and has been running the show for a long time.

I spent yesterday in a room where people thought it would be good to pass a budget that they had never seen before, and that it would be ok to misrepresent facts to those who knew no better. My job as Delegate is to be responsible for the overall well being of the Area, and I felt it much better to watch and observe than to step in and render that which I perceive to be true. In doing so, I could have really upset the belief that we are serving the same Master, and that we are doing His will with all our efforts. I could have opened my mouth and rendered someone disillusioned about the whole General Service thing, and lead them to believe that the others were right: *"That General Service is a political farce, all about*

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UPCOMING AREA EVENTS

(more on page 7)

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Area Service Committee (ASC) Meeting

Sun., Feb 10th

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

Hosted by District 17

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USUAL MEETING DAY SCHEDULE

9 am: *Delegate Sharing, new GSR
Orientation & Finance
Committee*

10 am: *Standing Committee meet-
ings & new DCM Orientation*

11:15: *Lunch*

Noon: *Area Meeting called to or-
der.*

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Registration Workshop

Sat., Feb 23—10-2

MSCA Archives Repository
7111 Arlington Ave., Riverside
Hosted by Registration Committee

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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)	Sat., Feb 16
When Love is Not Enough (2010)	Sat., Mar 16
Clean and Sober (1988)	Sat., Apr 20
28 Days (2000)	Sat., May 18
Come Back Little Sheba (1952)	Sat., Jun 15

*"We do talk about each other a great deal, but we almost in-
 variably temper such talk by a spirit of love and tolerance."*

BB p.125, The Family Afterward

Delegate's Corner – Continued from page 1

the money, and a waste of my time." At least that is what some of the Groups I have attended are being led to believe by their elder statesmen.

Did you know that of the 93 Areas in the U.S. and Canada, Area 09 has the highest Archives budget of them all. Without the ability to display large quantities of our archived material, we have almost 3 times the budget of next closest Area. In fact, Tennessee, who was number two realized that the \$9,000 they were spending each year consumed so much of their budget, that they decided to dissolve the archives and go to a much more current method of displaying their Archive's efforts. They went to a Digital Archives. Much like the General Service Office in New York who have rendered their Archives digital, as well as still housing material in the main office building where thousands of people each year come to view our history. In fact, it was stated yesterday that Area 09's archives got 1150 visitors last year. Compared to the 1250 that GSO got in the same period, it would seem that we must be doing something right.

(I took sick immediately after writing to this point, and 4 days have passed not being able to function. I feel a little better, so I will continue.)

It seems though, that GSO is talking about 1250 unique visitors, where our Archives is referring to how many times people came to the building. Be it for a movie, committee meeting, pick up printing, service the printer, man the phone, repair the plumbing. In fact, I was 15 or 16 of those visitors myself, and my wife another 11. The board's visits to the building as well as any committee's visits constitute a visit to the Archives, even though it has nothing to do with the Archives or their committee. In fact, the visits by the Archive Committee to do Archival actions is also counted as a visit to the Archives. What exactly are we trying to do here? Show some great numbers, create argument for our own agenda, or actually carry the



message to the man who is still suffering?

I watched and heard a GSR re-read the GSR preamble to the Assembly in hopes that he could take the proposed budget back to his Group, since that is his job, with the motion tabled to give him the opportunity to do that. Only to see that motion overturned by those saying, "we have to vote today on the budget." "We have to have a budget in place or no one can spend any money." Pressured into the need to act immediately, the budget was passed without any study, conference, or informed group conscience. I am truly glad that the General Service Conference doesn't work like that. We would all be in jeopardy of losing this most treasured Gift, our recovery through the Program of Alcoholics Anonymous if it did.

At the Conference last year, I wrote a paragraph, which was forwarded to Publications to be developed and returned this year, on the "Spirit of Rotation," which until now, has not appeared in the Service Manual. The Spirit which allows participation and encourages people to step up in rotation doesn't appear in the book nor does it seem to appear in our Area. We rotate around, not out. We stay in positions of perceived esteem, and never rotate out of that perception. It is as if there are only a few people who can read the Holy Grail, the Golden Tablets, the Sacred scroll, and all are subject to their translations of what all this really means. ROTATE!

New blood is discouraged into thinking that they don't matter. That they don't understand General Service, and that they should just accept what they are being told as fact and truth. I heard people at the microphone explain how the Servathon has been run, who weren't even there at the last one. But those not in "the know" would easily be swayed by the fact that the teller has been involved in GS for 24 years, so he knows. I believe we need to allow people to have their own experience with General Service as much as we have with our own recovery. I believe we should spend more time on telling how it works than how to work it. We will be more effective in the end.

I sincerely hope that over the next few months, with the Pre-Conference Workshop, the General Service Conference and the share back Assembly coming

up, that we help the true process of the Area to happen. In that we will have Agenda topics for GSRs to discuss with their respective Groups, engage in discussion, render an informed Group Conscience, and report back to the Area their collective voice so that I can do my job better in New York in April. I hope we can take this time to encourage participation in Service through facts not fiction; truth not misrepresentation, and transparency not denial.

We have a lot of work to do ahead, as well as immediately. I just hope, with the last Assembly behind us, that we can move into the future with good motives and actions. I love General Service. I love Area 09. I love all the Districts we serve. And most of all, I love AA. God has made my life worth living, and has made it my job to give. So I give you, me...Right, wrong, good, bad. Just me. Help me be that Tool for Good for God that I am meant to be. I pray now that we will enjoy the freedom under God to grow in His likeness and image as is forever to be the stated quest for AA (*Concept 12 in the Service Manual*).

Jeryl T., Panel 62 MSCA 09 Delegate

We've moved!

District 15

has moved its meeting
place to

820 W. Imperial Hwy.

Room 303

Brea

Main meeting at 7 p.m.

GSR Orientation at 6:45 p.m.

OPINION

Financial Priorities – Area 09

My name is Pat, I am an alcoholic. I am currently privileged to serve as Alt. DCMC for Dist. 18 (Costa Mesa and Irvine).

I would like to address a topic which is very close to my heart & which I believe is very important. The topic is our money, and what are we doing with it. I do not want to go into a lot of detail about the 7th Tradition nor the economy as I believe most of us are somewhat familiar with these topics. If you want to learn more about Tradition 7, I suggest you check out http://msca09aa.org/area_finances.php and/or http://www.aa.org/en_pdfs/mg-15_finance.pdf. I want to address the financial priorities and practices within local AA.

AA Groups send donations to the various service entities: Intergroup Committees (Central Offices), General Service Districts, Areas and the General Service Office (GSO) in New York. Also, some groups choose to donate to local H and I Committees. This is all great, and I am convinced that each Group is actively participating in the spiritual process of being responsible.

My personal belief is that we are contributing to one of the most important aspects of what AA does and what AA stands for – carrying the message. Helping to ensure that AA continues to thrive, especially for future alcoholics yet to come, is important for them and it also enhances our recovery.

Speaking of alcoholics yet to come, I believe it important for us to not only understand the value of donating, but also that we understand and pay attention to how our donations are used. Are we doing the best for AA as a whole and for the alcoholics who are, or will be, coming to us for help?

Exactly what are we doing with our money? Where is it being spent, and what is the best way to use this money?

When Committees hoard money which they receive from the Groups, I believe that they are doing a huge disservice to our Groups, to AA as a whole and ultimately to each individual alcoholic (those of us who are already enjoying sobriety and also those yet to come).

So I would ask you this: do you know where your Groups donations go? After paying your expenses, when your Group treasurer mails off donations, where does that money go? What is done with that money? And perhaps first and foremost, do you even care?

Does your Group have an active GSR? If so, great – that is an awesome start! But does your representative know about the finances of the District, the Area the Standing Committees and AA as a whole? Is your GSR properly informed? Is he or she given the opportunity and authority to communicate and be effective? Perhaps more importantly, does your Group value them for the service they are providing?

For me, it is very sad the way so many Groups simply do not seem to care. Some AA members seem to feel that this is merely a necessary nuisance, and members are willing to listen to a 30 second report about an upcoming picnic or event. But there is a common attitude that says: “Don’t you dare take up too much time making your announcements during our meeting – we simply want to hear sharing about recovery and not all that other stuff. In some Groups, this attitude is even worse. “That’s just the politics of AA and I’m not into all that.” People consider all politics as just stupid and take pride in the fact that they ignore all of “that stuff.” I will admit that I understand this feeling, and even share in the frustration expressed. But to me, what we do in service in AA is very spiritual. Nobody is getting rich or wielding power in AA. It is wrong to compare service in AA typical politics. There are some similarities, but politics is about money, property, prestige and power. AA service is very, very different.

The above statement are literally sentiments I have heard, in one form or another, more than once. I can’t help but scratch my head and wonder why? Do you or your Group really not give a damn at all?

Continued on page 5

The above statements are literally sentiments I have heard, in one form or another, more than once. I can't help but scratch my head and wonder why? Do you or your Group really not give a damn at all? That is your choice. But I want to suggest that you consider the ramifications of this. And I am hopeful that perhaps you and your Group will care a little more after I share some facts with you.

First of all, I want to share some disturbing information about the OC Intergroup Association. Are you aware that OC Central Office has nearly a quarter of a million dollars in assets? Their most recent Balance Sheet (dated Nov. 30, 2012) shows that they have over \$216,000 in assets. Does this not concern you? It does me. My Home Group does not donate money to OC Intergroup anymore, and hasn't for awhile. We simply believe that they have much more money than they need, so we donate all of our excess money to other AA service entities.

As for General Service, are you aware that Area 09 has approximately \$60,000 per year in Income? After Officer and other expenses, there is approx. \$24,000 left over for Standing Committees. This is where a lot of 12 Step work is done and these Committees do a great job of doing different forms service. But here is something you might find interesting: of this \$24000, did you know that 1 Standing Committee gets 70% of that money? There are 15 separate Committees but rather than each one receiving approximately 7% of the money, one Committee gets over 70% and the other 30% is divided up amongst the other 14! I have to say, to me this is absolutely insane! If anybody can explain to me why we are doing something so unfair, I am all ears! 4 of our Committees only get a budget of \$200 (which is less than 1% of the Standing Committee budget) and one Committee (Treatment Facilities) gets only \$100. So one Committee gets nearly ¾ of the money and one Committee gets .4% of the total. What are we doing? And more importantly, when are going to change this atrocious situation?

If you Group was not aware of this situation, I hope that you will enlighten them. And if you are concerned about this, please come to a District meeting and speak up! Let's figure out what went wrong and, more importantly, what do we need to do to fix this nightmare. I would like to extend a personal invitation each and every AA member to look at these facts. Have a conversation with your Intergroup and/or GSR and simply ask if they are aware of these facts and inquire why we are not doing something to rectify our finances?

It is OUR responsibility to pay attention to these important issues. Each one of us needs to look at these realities and participate in being a part of the solution. If any part of this concerns you, let's talk about it. Let's try to work together and figure out what we want done with OUR money. Come to a District, Area or Intergroup meeting and speak up. Participate! If you do not care, Ok – that is your choice. But if these issues concern you, then please – simply get involved! It is up to us to determine what is done with our money. We have the right – or rather, an obligation to express our concerns and to be a part of the solution.

*With love and respect,
Pat S., concerned AA member and Dist. 18 Alt. DCMC*

At the 2013 General Service Conference, in April, the theme will be,
"The General Service Conference Takes Its Inventory."

Each of the Conference members is assigned to a specific Inventory Group, and asked to discuss 5 questions. Listed below are the questions that our Area 09 delegate, Jeryl T's Group will be discussing, and he would like much input from Area 09 members. He is interested in the opinions, recommendations, hopes and fears regarding these topics. You may send responses to the MSCA P.O. Box 51446, Irvine, CA 92619 c/o Area Delegate, email to Delegate@msca09aa.org or these questions will be on the www.area09.org website on the FORUM page. You may post your ideas and responses to others' ideas there and Jeryl will see them.

1. Reflecting on Concept One, how does the Conference ensure that it is the conscience of AA as a whole?
2. How well is the use of floor actions serving us?
3. Reflection on Concept Ten, how well is the authority of the Conference defined?
4. How well does the Conference fulfill the General Warranties of Concept Twelve?
5. Should delegate areas be more consistently based on actual membership numbers?

Officers/Directors Reports

Delegate: Honored to be serving. He has been invited back to Canadian Conference this year. Asked, "How well are we doing in carrying the message to the alcoholic who still suffers?" He said his job is simple, but area members' jobs are much more difficult; committees do most of the work of the area. He hopes that debate and votes will be carried out with love and respect. He has received information about the upcoming GS Conference, including his "buddy" who is Randy R. from So Wisconsin. He has spoken at several groups and districts. He will participate in Area 08 report back and invited Area 08 delegate to participate in ours. .

Alt. Delegate: Reported on visitations and commitments; visited District 9 farewell to DCMC, Brian; getting ready for PRAASA; also received conference packet (prays for Jeryl's continued good health); will chair agenda committee for Conference item summaries; Pre-conference workshop will be in San Bernardino; she is liaison to all committees. Literature and P.I. need Spanish co-chairs; her goal is to visit more coordinate committees.

Registrar: Said he is more comfortable with the position. Encouraged new GSRs to see him. Registration Workshop next month.

Treasurer: She also is more comfortable with her job. She encourages groups to use group number or as much information about the groups as possible, especially email address. 25% are now getting email receipts, which saves lot of money. Contributions are off to a good, strong start for 2013.

Chairman: Thanks to District 2 for hosting and good food; also thanks to Coffee Guy (Tony), Sound Dude (Jim). Welcomed new GSRs. He is waiting for information re 4-Area-Sharing at end of Feb. Pre-Conference Workshop will be at 1729 Baseline St., San Bernardino. As soon as background material is received, summaries will be prepared by committee. District 20 is renting vans to drive to PRAASA. Deadline for Conference items is January 15th.

New Business

- 1) To replace the Standing Committee Meetings in the Nov. ASC in odd number years with the Servathon **(Motion failed)**
- 2) 2013 Budget **(Motion passed)**
- 3) GSR School Guidelines for approval **(Motion passed)**
- 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. **(Due to lack of time, this motion was tabled until the May assembly)**

PRAASA HISTORY

The 1st Pacific Region AA Service Assembly (PRAASA) was held in Fresno, CA., Jan 26-28, 1968. It was then called the **Western General Service Assembly** as was the event in 1969 in Reno, NV. All Pacific Region areas were invited to the 1st one except Idaho...an oversight the first chairman, Stan W., later apologized for.

In the initial resolution it is stated that the assembly is never to be *glamorized* (no dances, etc.), that unity, service, and recovery is the theme and that service always be addressed.

In 1969, GSO expressed support and recognized PRAASA as an important event.

We will celebrate the 46th Annual PRAASA this year in Boise, Idaho.

Many AAs have discovered a special and deep respect for General Service while attending PRAASA and bring back to their groups an enthusiasm and understanding of AA as a whole.

For more information on the history of PRAASA, visit www.praasa.org/2012/content/history

**For registration info visit
www.praasa.org/2013**

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

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

February 23—Saturday—10-2
Registration Workshop
MSCA Archives Repository
7111 Arlington Ave., Riverside
Hosted by Registration Committee

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

April 14—Sunday
Pre-Conference Workshop
Knights of Columbus
1729 Baseline St., San Bernardino
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

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.
<i>Elec. Media</i>	<i>Kris C.</i>
<i>Elec. Equip</i>	<i>John W.</i>
<i>Translation</i>	<i>Santiago S.</i>
<i>Newsletter</i>	<i>Linda C.</i>
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.
<i>Grapevine</i>	<i>Catherine E.</i>
GSR School (Eng)	Marita H.
GSR School (Sp)	Marcelo C.
<i>La Viña</i>	<i>Paco G.</i>
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)	

<i>Archivist</i>	<i>Pete B.</i>
<i>Coffee</i>	<i>Tony M.</i>
<i>Copier</i>	<i>Jim C.</i>
<i>Sound</i>	<i>Jim B.</i>
<i>Web Coordinator</i>	<i>Rainer F.</i>

April 2002

PRESENTATION
RELIGION/SPIRITUALITY IN A.A.
The Spiritual Life Is Not a Theory
Jan P., A.A.W.S. Director

The sentence on page 83 of the Big Book, *"The spiritual life is not a theory. We have to live it,"* should probably be followed by another familiar sentence, "What an order! I can't go through with it." Yet, we know that we can and must find the way to live a spiritual life if we are to remain sober.

As with most experiences in A.A., nothing is ever wasted. The past year I have served on a literature subcommittee tasked with reading all our Recovery pamphlets to see if they adequately distinguish between religion and spirituality, and if they reflect A.A.'s spiritual basis. This was a major undertaking, which led me to the conclusion that, taken as a group, our pamphlets do paint a picture of a fellowship soundly rooted in spiritual principles.

This probably has never been more important for us to know than it is now. A.A. does not look the same as it did at its inception. And we have some new issues to consider. I would like to look at three of them today.

As you know, A.A. membership continues to grow everywhere, but it is more dramatic outside North America and Canada. This growth has been aided by literature translations and trips abroad by our trustees and General Service Office staff who encourage local service structures. Sharing our experience with those in other countries makes it clear that we need to embrace diversity, not because it is politically correct, but because it is spiritually correct. Sometimes we are more comfortable with those who look and talk like us. It requires less effort; it is an "easier, softer way," which is always tempting for some of us. As A.A. grows internationally, we need to be sure that our words have weight. We translate our literature but our actions need no translation. The ready smile, the welcoming hugs are all universal and guarantee that the and of A.A. will always be there. That hand can reach across a room or across a continent.

Another challenge for us today is the increasing numbers of newcomers who feel they are spiritual, but not religious. Whether called atheist or ag-

nostic, they are entitled to the richness of A.A.'s spiritual life. The Big Book talks about the "arch" through which we pass. It is our solemn duty to make sure that this arch is always as wide as possible. Left to itself, the arch may shrink inward unless we stand, shoulder to shoulder, to keep it open.

The third issue is the fact that some outside agencies, courts, and treatment professionals view A.A. as a religious organization. We should not engage in controversy over this; however, we do need to be sure that our own writings about A.A. are clear and concise and do not lead to misinformation on the part of those looking at us from the outside.

So, both the world around us and the world within A.A. present us with opportunities to practice a spiritual life. How do we get *"into action?"* We can avoid rigidity, both in our meetings and in our writings. We can ask why some groups seem to feel the need for more and more written "rules." We can honor the rights of those who do not want to participate in The Lord's Prayer. It takes courage to stand mute when those around you are reciting a prayer. We can continually review our recovery literature and our service pieces with a fresh eye, and an emphasis on diversity and accessibility. In 1999, the Conference revised the statement on diversity which appears on our [GSO] employment applications. This was the direct result of discussions among the Board of Trustees about our being perceived as non-inclusive. We hope that when members look at the G.S.O. staff and the General Service Board, they see a microcosm of the Fellowship. We have been taught to *"keep it simple;"* let us also remember to *"keep it loving."*

When I was a delegate in 1984, I heard a presentation by Ralph R. who talked about gratitude for the opportunity he had been given to share in the Conference. I feel as he did—I am overwhelmed every second of every minute of every hour of every morning, of every afternoon and every evening of the Conference. And, as I rotate, I pray that I will continue to hear its sound and the feel of its rhythm and move with it every day of my life. That, to me, will be living the spiritual life.

