



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

May 2009

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

Concept 5 – The Right of Appeal

Throughout our structure, a traditional "Right of Appeal" ought to prevail, so that minority opinion will be heard and personal grievances receive careful consideration.

This Concept is commonly referred to (when referred to at all) as the "right of the minority to speak". Of all the 12 Concepts for World Service, this Concept is probably the most familiar to the Fellowship as a whole. Who wouldn't want a Concept where they are always guaranteed the last word, as long as we vote against everything. And, unfortunately, that is sometimes the case – the people who vote against everything are offered the chance to get the last word in.

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Treasurer's Thoughts

As always, a big Thank You to all of the groups, individuals and conventions for their contributions. It is such a pleasure, as your MSCA Treasurer, to open up each envelope. The only thing I would like to change is if all contributions had a group number on the check or envelope so your group, individual or convention gets credit. Once again your Area Treasurer thanks all who contribute so that we can help the alcoholic who still suffers.

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The 2009 DCM 4 Area Sharing Session

My friend and I drove down to Oceanside Friday afternoon and experienced along the way some glorious, cool spring weather and ocean views that were crisp and clear and bright.

We arrived at the Days Inn, which, as promised, was right on the water, and checked in. Our room had a lovely view of the ocean and the rustic shops along the water's edge. We unpacked and decided to walk down to the water's edge and eat dinner at Joe's Crab Shack right on the water.

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Delegate's Corner

Hello everyone;

I am writing this as I prepare to leave for New York in the morning. I can only begin to tell you how much I am looking forward to serving as your delegate this year at the conference. It is truly a privilege to represent Mid-Southern California Area 9 at the General Service Conference. I'm looking forward to all the work, long days and the prospect of meeting with new folks and forging lifelong friendships with people I haven't even met. Man... only in AA!

I would like to share a story with you:

There's a question I like to ask the men that I sponsor whenever they come to me confused or concerned about how a meeting is not doing things correctly or they don't understand some people or the way they share in meetings: things that aren't quite the way that they believe that things should be done.

I ask him if he likes tuba music. Almost always I am told, "What?? You're nuts, no way!"

"You're not alone," I tell him. "There are lots of people who don't like tuba music."

So, does the fact that lots of people don't like tuba music mean that we should abolish the tuba? Or, perhaps we should work harder to bring a better sound to the tuba? Almost always he says something like, "I would care if I never heard tuba music again for my whole life." To some the tuba just doesn't make a beautiful noise.

Then I ask him, "And what do you think a symphony orchestra would be like without a tuba." They have different answers, but most are along the lines of, "I think there would probably be a big hole in the sound of the symphony without the tuba."

Granted, the tuba isn't as flashy or melodic as any of the string instruments that are usually put in the front of the orchestra, but it does have its purpose.

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Concept 5 – Right of Appeal...continued from p.1, col. 1

Now, that is the callous way to look at, and who wants to come off as callous? Certainly not me. So let's take a look at it another way. Suppose that there was a proposal made at the monthly Orange County Intergroup meeting to close the Central Office and let the Groups fend for themselves. The arguments on both sides are persuasive and compelling, but the argument to close the office wins out. The Intergroup Reps just sit there stunned! How do they go back to their groups and explain that there will be no more Central Office in Orange County?! Surely, all is lost! But, a solitary figure stands up and asks for the "right of the minority to speak" – the "right of appeal". One by one, the Intergroup Reps stand up and state their reasons that they believe the Central Office should remain open. You see, they hadn't stood up during the discussion because they never believed that it could happen – the closing of the Orange County Central Office! This Concept has given them the opportunity to express themselves as representatives of their groups. A re-vote is called for and the re-vote defeats the proposal to close the Central Office. Whew!!!!

Far-fetched? Maybe, maybe not. But matters just as dire to our Fellowship are being discussed every day somewhere in the world. I recall one year our Delegate came back from the General Service Conference and stated that the proposal to create the pamphlet "To the Black/African-American Alcoholic" had been defeated by the Conference, but a Class "A" member of the General Service Board had exercised the "right of appeal" and the Conference completely changed their minds, (after much loving discussion) and voted to develop the pamphlet, given the new experience and information offered by a single member.

The exercise of this cherished "right of appeal" has often turned the tide – a lot more often than you probably think. Concept 5 – what a Concept!!

A member of A.A. in Orange County

Tradition 5 (long form)

Our A.A. experience has taught us that:

Each Alcoholics Anonymous group ought to be a spiritual entity having but one primary purpose – that of carrying its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

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So I suggest to him that he listen, just listen to the music of AA. It is because of the differences that we are so wonderful...in fact it takes all of us to make it happen.

I love listening to the music in AA. Each and every single day my life is enriched by it.

So... remember; sometimes you even have to appreciate the tuba for the whole thing to make sense.

Thank you all for everything you do to make my life and the life of everyone around me, better.

Joe B.

Treasurer's Thoughts

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I know we continue to contribute because we know that Alcoholics Anonymous was there for us and by contributing, hopefully it will be there for the next alcoholic. It's truly an amazing program which I am honored to be participating in and hope to continue to do so.

I was privileged to moderate the Finance table at the Pre-Conference Workshop and asked Annie D., a member of the Finance Committee to take notes. Her enthusiasm was great! It brought back the days when I was asked to do a C.P.C. Roundtable (they call them workshops now) and I included my co-chair, Gregorio, and the P.I. Chair, Annie D. to join me. We had to move to a larger room and had a huge, enthusiastic group that had lots of questions and we also had translators. It is still important to me to work with others to this day.

I am looking forward to the Delegate's report in May; as well as his guests from other Areas. I always look forward to the Foro in July and of course our 50th Anniversary followed by elections.

Thru love and service, Linda H.

2009 DCM 4 Area Sharing Session

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During dinner we had a dock side view of the setting sun and watched the 'real' fishermen, the ones that actually make their living fishing, come in for the night with their dogs and stern persons and wash down their boats and go home for the evening. When we finished dinner, we went for a walk along the dock. It was just lovely.

The following day we arrived at the location of the DCM 4 Area Sharing Session early to offer our help in setting up and getting ready for the event. My friend had valiantly stepped up and agreed to take notes at one of the round tables and was a little nervous in the beginning. It was discovered that one person from Area 09 scheduled to be a moderator was not going to attend and another friend graciously agreed to be of service and became a moderator for one of the roundtables. I was able, for the very first time, to be a spectator and move to whatever round tables I was interested in.

The venue was beautiful. The room had various portable walls which allowed most all of the round tables to be closed off from each other, making a huge and positive difference in being able to hear others share their DCM experience, strength and hope.

The turnout was wonderful. There were approximately 120 people that attended, including volunteers.

District Leadership and AA Commitments: How to Delegate Responsibility and Pass on the Importance of Rotation, was the subject of my first roundtable. We had approximately 15 people, Spanish to English translation. Hector did a great job of translating, Sergio was the moderator and Mauricio was the notetaker. I heard one person share, "A Leader is only one person. Leadership is many people." Several members shared their experience, strength and hope about the benefits of rotation and how if someone holds on to a position too long they run the risk of becoming a bleeding deacon or becoming resentful and unhappy. I also heard, "Be kind to new GSRs.", "Keep it Simple." and, "It's a duty to be present and a responsibility to pass it on."

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Love and Tolerance is our code!



DCM 4 Area Sharing Ses. ...continued from col. 1

The subject of the next roundtable I visited was "Humility and Sacrifice in General Service: Keeping balance in your personal program while maintaining enthusiasm for general service." Here I heard, "Sacrifice proceeds growth.", "Learn to listen.", "Leaders are good followers.", and, the funniest and, perhaps, the truest, "After an Area meeting, sometimes I need an AA meeting."

Then we had a delicious lasagna lunch, which was served to us by all the dedicated volunteers. Talk about humility and sacrifice in general service!!!! And during lunch my friend told me she was enjoying being note taker very much. She said she'd rather listen than talk. I needed to hear more of that! :O) And I was lucky enough to sit next to a young woman who was very motivated about her district level CPC committee and what they were doing. She had some wonderful ideas and I agreed to put her on our email list and send along the PowerPoint presentation for her to utilize and to stay in touch.

The third roundtable I attended had for it's subject, "Service Sponsorship: Learning and teaching the Traditions, Concepts, and General Service Manual." I listened to one person note, "Whenever I ask my service sponsor a question, he tells me, 'What does your Service Manual say?'" Another individual noted that the steps were to the AA member, what the traditions were to a meeting, what the concepts are to General Service. Still another participant commented, "I have been able to use what I have learned from the Steps, Traditions and Concepts in my every day life and it has made such a big difference in how I handle myself in business and personal affairs."

The last roundtable I was lucky enough to attend was entitled, "Goals, Duties, and Responsibilities of the DCM to GSRs and the Area.", and this is what I heard: How do we increase the number of GSRs? How do we keep them interested? By organizing and holding two events per year. DCMs should show up and be an example. DCMs should learn to delegate. Encourage GSRs to read all the information received via mail and email, such as Box 459, AA Comes of Age, Newsletter, Service Manual. Find new energy and be excited.

At the end of the day, my friend and I helped to take down the tables and chairs and then left to come back up to Orange County and home. We were both full of gratitude for being a part of Alcoholics Anonymous and having the opportunity to experience new events such as the 2009 4 Area Sharing Session in Oceanside.

a member of AA

Is it Change or Control?

The above statement applies to the past ASC that was held in March 2009. It also applies to many other ASCs and Assemblies that have been held in MSCA 09 throughout the past 50 years.

When I got to AA I was told to stick with the winners, get to the front of the line and take the cotton out of my ears and put it in my mouth. I was also taught the 12 Steps, the 12 Traditions and the 12 Concepts. I was taught to be *of* service, to be *in* service, and to practice the principles of Alcoholics Anonymous in all my affairs.

After learning a lot about the program of Alcoholics Anonymous in the past 17 years, I believe it is not only my right and responsibility to speak up when I see something that is amiss—it is my *duty*.

After much thought and guidance, I composed a series of proposals to be presented to the MSCA that I thought could improve the Area and, in turn, improve the fellowship that it serves.

The First Tradition states that *our common welfare should come first and that personal recovery depends upon AA unity*. Do we at MSCA 09 hold up to that First Tradition? You can have your own opinion on this – but my answer is, “No.” The infighting, the accusatory tone of some members, the disrespect for others, the lack of tolerance for new ideas and other obvious (or not so obvious) problems, pull at the very fabric of this unity that holds AA together.

I expect that Trusted Servants should be held to a higher level: a level where they are doing their best and being of maximum service in the position that they are in. If I am in a service position, and am not able to perform to the high level that is needed, I would want to be told and offered assistance to be of maximum service.

AA teaches us that each member is entitled to an opinion. That is true. Each member is entitled to bring the group’s conscience to the ASC or Assembly.

However, should Area Officers be at the microphone expressing their opinions during the discussion of motions? I think not, for the following reason: The Area Officers have had much time to ask questions and make comments on proposals and motions before hand. Yet they remained completely silent on the proposals I put forward. Then, on the day of the vote at an ASC to place the proposals on the agenda for the Assembly, the discussion from some of the Area Officers turns to personal attacks and attempts to state untruths about the motions for what appear to be their personal agendas.

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Change or Control? ... continued from col. 1

I think that the Area Officers’ opinions, stated during the discussion period of any proposal, unfairly sway the fellowship and lead to confusion about what we are indeed voting on.

In my opinion, the Area Chair (or chair of any body) should have no opinion at all. His job is to moderate the process. By stating a personal belief from the microphone as chairman he is being disingenuous to the fellowship. If he wants to let people know about the process, reasons behind the ASC setting the agenda, and the fact that GSRs do not vote on a motion, that discussion should be done at a different time. Perhaps BEFORE the motions are called or in the time allotted for his report.

Now, should the rest of the Area Officers be coming to the microphone over and over, giving opinions and asking questions? Yes and no. If they want to ask questions to get a clear picture of what is being talked about, then that is fine. If they want to ask questions to try to make the motion maker look stupid, then I think not.

In the past few months I have been subjected to various slights from the microphone at the ASC of MSCA 09. One member stated that I was being rude when I asked a question that neither the Treasurer nor Finance Committee Chair were able to answer. It has been stated, in a round about way, that I am a racist because I proposed that the Foro had come of age and could possibly function without the oversight or support of an English-speaking District. I have been called out of order and told that I want to control people’s thoughts and ideas. My idea of a Policy and Procedure Committee was met with what appeared to me to be fear and disdain from some current Area Officers. The idea of submitting written committee reports prior to the Area meetings turned into a negative discussion about my attempt to control all committees and districts. I also was told I was wasting everyone’s time.

You may be surprised to hear that that stuff doesn’t bother me. When I got to AA, I had a lot of fear also. But I learned to manage my fears and trust others. As far as wasting your time, maybe we do need a Policy and Procedure committee so that that wouldn’t happen. Oh, I forgot – that turned into a discussion about how to present motions and how we already have a procedure in place to take care of that (I don’t think we do).

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Is it Change or Control? ... continued from p 4, col. 2

The bottom line is that a lot of members state, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." But how do we find out if it "ain't broke"? I think some things may be broken. I would welcome the chance to have you all prove me wrong. But I don't think you or I got a fair chance to find out.

Am I bitter that my proposals failed? No. Knowing that I tried to do what I think is good for the fellowship is good enough for me.

Thankfully the members of AA allowed Bill W. to introduce the Traditions to guide the groups and the Concepts to guide the fellowship. He could have been stopped and things could be a lot different for all of us.

I would like to thank the fellowship of MSCA 09 for giving me a platform to write this. I am sure when they started the newsletter, some people had a lot of fear about the written word and having people see it. I am also glad that I was able to vote to give the area a website so that the newsletter can get to more people.

And finally, Concept One states: *Final responsibility and ultimate authority for AA world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole fellowship.*¹

I hope that each General Service Representative has a chance to voice his or her group's conscience and to participate in living the 12 Concepts.

In conclusion, I would like to state the purpose of the ASC:

ARTICLE IV AREA SERVICE COMMITTEE

A. PURPOSE – The Area Service Committee has the following purpose.

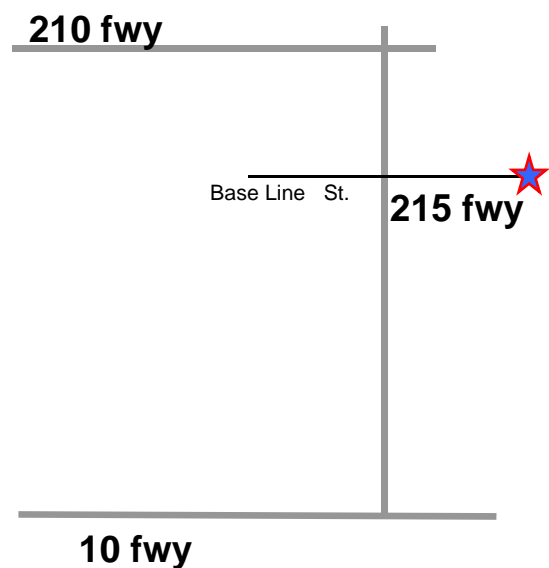
1. Identifying, defining, and discussing Area, District, and Groups problems and issues.
2. Obtaining the conscience of each District and its Groups.
3. Acting as an advisory committee to the Assembly, Executive Committee and Delegate.
4. Establishing the agenda for the next Assembly.

We are to discuss problems and issues. We are to obtain the conscience of each district and its groups. We are to advise the Assembly and the Executive Committee and the Delegate. If we don't discuss things then who does?

*In Service,
Alex N, a member of Alcoholics Anonymous*

**May 17 Assembly
Knights of Columbus**
1729 E. Baseline St., San Bernardino, 92410

**Our Delegate will tell us what
happened at this years General
Service Conference.**



Upcoming Events

Date: _____ Event Type: _____

May 17 (Sun) ASSEMBLY, Dist 25 , Knights of Columbus, 1729 E. Baseline St., San Bernardino, 92410
 June 14 (Sun) ASC (Proposals will be presented but not voted on), Dist 24
 July 12 (Sun) FORO de MSCA, Dist 23 & 11
 Aug. 9 (Sun) ASC (*vote which proposals to put onto Assembly Agenda*), Dist 14
 Sept. 13 (Sun) ASSEMBLY, Dist 2

Special Two Day Event:

Oct. 10 (Sat) MSC AREA 9 50TH ANNIVERSARY, Area 9
 Oct. 11 (Sun) ELECTION ASSEMBLY, District12

Nov. 8 (Sun) ASC (Proposals will be presented but not voted on), District 17
 Nov. 14 (Sun) SERVATHON, District 9
 Dec. 13 (Sun) ASC (*vote which proposals to put onto Assembly Agenda*), District 30

Panel 58 Area Officers

Delegate: Joe B, 714-423-3808,
 delegate2008@msca09aa.org
 Alternate Delegate: Mike M

Chair: Jason S Treasurer: Linda H
 Secretary: Sharon K Registrar: Cesar F

Schedule for most MSCA Assemblies/ASCs

9:00 am....GSR/DCM/DCMC Schools, Delegate's Rpt
 10 am..... Committee Mtgs
 11:30 am... Lunch
 12 noon ... ASC or Assembly mtg

The MSCA Assembly includes permanent committees responsible for conducting much of the AA business activity in the Area. We have Standing and Coordinate Committees. Chairs and Co-Chairs of the Standing committees are listed below.

Panel 58 Area Standing Committee Chairs, Co-Chairs, et al.

Archives Chair...Joseph H CEC Chair...Rick H Communications Committee Chair...Linda C Newsletter Subcommittee Chair...Steve S Electronic Media Sub-Committee Chair...Henry B Web Coordinator...Becky B Equipment Subcommittee Chair...tbd Translation Subcommittee Chair...Jorge Convention Liaison...Mike Convention Liaison, Spn...Jose A Corrections Chair...Alex N CPC Chir...Michael M CPC Co-Chair, Span...Santiago S DCM School...Scott R DCM School Spanishtbd	Finance Committee Chair...Joseph M Grapevine Chair...Kimberli A La Viña Chair...Angela R GSR School...John H GSR School, Spanish... Paco G Literature Chair... Ernesto M Literature Co-Chair, Spanish ...tbd Public Information Chair...tbd Public Info., Sp...Francisco D Registration...David T Special Needs Chair...tbd Special Needs Co-Chair, Spanish....tbd Treatment Facilities Chair...Al F Sound Dude... Raul C Coffee person...Mauricio T
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