

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

March 2007

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

Concept Three

The Right of Decision

Concept 3 - To insure effective leadership, we should endow each element of A.A. -- the Conference, the General Service Board and its service corporations, staffs, committees, and executives -- with a traditional "Right of Decision." "C'mon, you're telling me I have a "right of decision"? Well, fine, then I am making the decision to stay as far away as possible from any of that political crap! What does that have to do with my sobriety?!"

That's right, you have the "right of decision". And as long as you sit comfortably in your home group and don't participate in service outside the group, you don't have to worry about any "right of decision". You've made your decision - the same decision that the majority of A.A. members make - I'm not going to get involved in all that politics!

Of course, there just might be a downside to that thinking. While everyone who participates in service outside the home group is making decisions that effect all of A.A., including your home group, you sit ignorantly by on the sidelines. (*Now, don't get mad at me for calling you ignorant, I'm just quoting Herbert Spencer, from appendix II of the Big Book*).

"But there are no decisions they make that effect me". Well, that could be true, but do you have a Big Book? A fourth edition? That was a decision that was made in the year 2000 to add 23 new stories, and maybe remove one or more of your favorites. And when you turn to page 449 in your Big Book, does it give you that sage advice on acceptance, like it always has? Or is that missing from page 449?

...continued on page 2, col. 1

Delegate's Corner

Bruce H.

I would first like to thank Area 09 for the honor and privilege to serve as your Delegate. I will have a detailed report on PRAASA 2007 in the May 2007 Newsletter. Now I guess it is time to reflect on PRAASA's past. My first PRAASA was in 1993 in Torrance, at the time I was involved in H&I, and I would have said that you were insane if 14 years later I would be attending my 9th PRAASA. At the time I had no idea what was in the future as I did my AA service. The next PRAASA was in San Diego where the PRAASA program chair Paul C. asked me to moderate a roundtable on Bridging the Gap, which at the time I was not a big fan of, but I showed up because I learned to never turn down a viable AA request. Then I had a time lapse of attendance at PRAASA due to my other services in AA. Having been elected CPC Chair in May 2000, I decided to attend in Spokane.

I would never say that this was my most memorable PRAASA, but it sure was near the top of the list. The reason for this was because I began to make spiritual connections with the drunks who felt the same way about AA that I did, and that has continued until now.

One name that sticks out with me is Jerry C who also was CPC chair in Area 08. We instantly struck up a friendship which has continued as we were elected as Area Treasurer, Area Chair and now Area Delegate. I am sure Jerry like me would say if when we met in Spokane if someone would say in 6 years that we would be getting ready to attend our 2nd General Service Conference I would say that you were crazy. However I have always said to never underestimate what my GOD has in store when I just show up and perform the service. Ever since Spokane I have every year looked forward to the first weekend in March, and that feeling has never wavered. Then when Area 09 hosted PRAASA in Irvine in 2004, I began to see another level of service. The long hours of work that it takes in the hosting process is unreal. I was involved as the Guidelines Monitor which is perfect for someone like me who believes in Guidelines. I would like to thank Roberta L. from Area 42 for suggesting to our PRAASA chair that I might be good in that service. Now I would like to share my feelings about PRAASA in Woodland Hills, well I can not put in words this experience. However I will say it began the process of another level of spiritual growth that I have experienced since my name came out of the hat as the Panel 56 Delegate from Area 09. I do not know if what I experienced last year can be topped, but I have learned to stay out of expectations and just show and do the service. I would in closing like to say if you have not caught that bug known as the PRAASA bug for which there is no cure or vaccine, just show up in Portland and see what happens like I have every year since that first PRAASA in Torrance. If you do catch this bug pass it on to the newcomer. Remember that the drunk stumbling in those streets looking at the darkness of our disease has a chance to experience the light of hope that is AA. This only can happen if events like PRAASA and the General Service Conference are allowed to continue and we have the responsibility to make sure that happens.

Concept Three... continued from p.1, col.1

“What happened to it? Who said **they**, (yes, it’s **them** again!) could change that”? Why, you did, of course, when you abrogated your right of decision and gave it to others, you know those political types.

“Well, that’s in the past, there’s nothing I can do about that”. Uh-huh. Did you know that they are discussing modifying a piece of A.A. literature to say that “only those with a drinking problem may attend closed A.A. meetings”.? Whatever happened to “a desire to stop drinking” – our 3rd Tradition?

Well, those groups that send GSR’s and Intergroup Reps to the monthly meetings will make those decisions, and your group has an Intergroup Rep, so you can tell your Rep how to vote on everything. Uh, not quite. That is the heart of the “right of decision”. Your rep is vested with the right to make the best decision for all of A.A., which sometimes differs with what the group would prefer. It happens more often than you think. When your Rep gets to the monthly meeting, they will hear a diversity of experience that they might not hear in your home group. Based on this new experience, the Rep is vested with the “Right of Decision”.

On page 5, you can read about another right, the “Right of Participation”.

An anonymous A.A. member in Orange County

PRAASA Memories

All of the nine PRAASA’s I have had the privilege to attend have been memorable in one way or another.

Spokane, WA was my first and I was fully funded by District 1 as a General Service Representative. We toured Spokane before catching our flight to LAX and watched Lacrosse’ game. Also, we were required to take notes and report back to the District. This got all of us more involved.

Panel 52, I was CPC chair and had the privilege of leading a CPC/PI roundtable. I invited MSCA 09 PI chair and CPC co-chair to help with moderating the meeting. It was huge and a great experience. It was there that I started meeting other AA’s from the 15 Pacific Region Areas. My most special relationship was with Judy R., Alaska. Judy started a newsletter for Cooperation with the Professional committee. This was great!

Then I had the honor and privilege of being elected Area 09 Registrar and was able to lead the Friday evening session, which was quite interesting as it seemed I was the only Area Registrar that enjoyed the new system. That was probably through some tedious training via phone with late Elaine Soroka (non-alcoholic).

I also led an impromptu table on corrections that was quite successful.

This year I have the great privilege of listening and not leading. I can assure you that if you attend PRAASA and catch the bug of General Service, you will always be dedicated to General Service.

Thru love and Service, MSCA 09 Public Information chair, Linda H.



The GSR – Part I

Oh No, Not the GSR!!

Yep, the GSR – The General Service Representative. In fact, dear reader, you are going to be subjected to two articles about the GSR – one this month and one in the next MSCA Newsletter. The first article will relate my experience, strength and hope as a GSR, (including an opinion or two). The second article, will introduce to the reader, a moving presentation by a non-alcoholic, of his look at the General Service Conference. Why two articles – well, Bill W. described the GSR as probably the most important job in A.A. Who am I to disagree?

In my first Home Group, a munchkin-like man by the name of Ken '45 continuously disrupted our meetings week after week with an insistence that the group elect an Alternate GSR because the GSR we had elected wasn't showing up at the District and Area meetings. After listening to him one more time, I volunteered to be the Alternate GSR simply to shut him up! I went to my first District meeting in May 1990 and met some wonderful people that very first night. They seemed to know what they were doing. I admired their commitment to a job they thought was important to AA's welfare – I didn't see it, but they did. The guy who was chairing the meeting, (the late Ron P.) announced that our District would be hosting the Area Service Committee meeting, (ASC) Sunday, June 10th. He asked for volunteers to help host the meeting, and I was immediately volunteered by the munchkin, Ken '45.

When I showed up at the ASC, I was shocked to find out that the meeting would last from 9:30 in the morning until 4:00 in the afternoon. My first General Service miracle – I didn't leave! A very enthusiastic gentleman by the name of Alan R. was giving an orientation for new GSRs – once again, he seemed to know what he was talking about and he was extremely committed to what he was doing. That seemed to be a constant among these people!

The big discussion of the day was about whether a new Spanish-language district should be formed to serve the AA Groups in Riverside County. I remember with great clarity, the gratitude of the Spanish-speaking members who had asked for the new district. They were grateful we were even considering the proposal! I fell in love with the Spanish-speaking AA community on that day. I didn't understand much about what was going on, but I understood gratitude! We also celebrated the 55th birthday of Alcoholics Anonymous that day with a big cake shaped and iced to look like a giant Big Book. One month later I became the GSR for my Home Group and the rest is history.

All the discussions have not been as captivating as the discussions at that first area meeting. The tone of the discussion has sometimes descended to the level of personalities before principles. The number of groups represented in General Service has continued to decline. I have gotten older and the road trips seem to be longer. But the people - thank God for the people!

Nowhere is gratitude for A.A. more evident or demonstrated so profoundly, as among the people who do this work. Gratitude for A.A. is the only possible reason why anybody would stick around for a 2-year commitment. At the end of two years, I gave up my commitment with mixed emotions. Then, that munchkin, Ken '45, nominated me for Editor of the Newsletter of the Area Assembly, and I have been in General Service, with one commitment or another ever since. Thanks, Ken.

The politics of AA? I only hear that from people who haven't done their two years. The Big Book says that *Love and Tolerance is our code* – we get to learn and practice both principles in General Service. I have loved my time in General Service – and the people - thank God for the people!

Nick M. – Past Delegate, Panel 48

3rd Forum Topic posted

The MSCA on-line forum was established last year to serve as one way of discussing selected topics that affect the MSCA or AA as a whole. The third topic (posted on Feb. 14, 2007) is

“Our Twelfth Step Responsibility – Are We Going To Any Length?”

This question is actually the theme for the 2007 General Service Conference. What we would like to get from you is your experience with the 12th Step Responsibility of every A.A. member, namely, “I am responsible.... When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of A.A. always to be there, and for that: I am responsible”. If you have access to the web, we invite you to participate in our on-line forum by going to our website,

www.msca09aa.org, clicking on “Forum”, and submitting your opinion. Please submit your experience as it applies to any or all of the following questions:

If you believe that A.A. is meeting all its responsibilities, please tell us why you believe this?

If you believe that A.A. is failing in its responsibility, where do you see this failing?

How can A.A. remedy this failure? How can an individual A.A. member contribute to the remedy? How can an A.A. Group contribute to the remedy?

No April Newsletter

Remember, the MSCA Newsletter does not get published in April. So our next newsletter will be published on May 1.

Website Use Climbs

Usage of the MSCA website, www.msca09aa.org, continues to climb each year. In January 2007, it averaged 242 visits (sessions) per day, up from 107 visits per day in January 2006.

MSCA Archives Open House

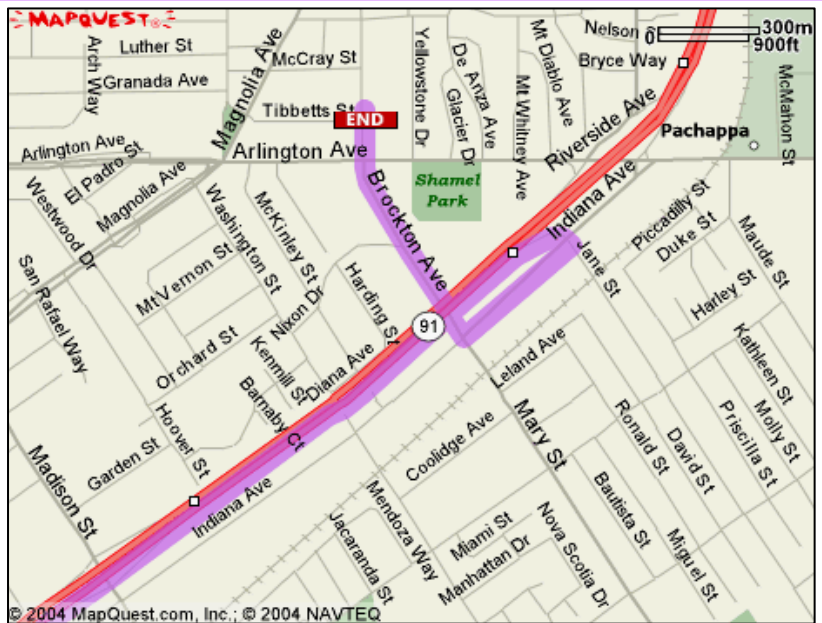
Sunday Apr. 1, 2007

9 am until 4 pm. Program starting at 10 am

“The Doctor’s Opinion”

Over the years, physicians have had much influence in the field of treating alcoholism, both good and bad. Come learn about the impact that several doctors had and how many embraced and helped our fellowship throughout our history.

Directions to the MSCA Archives Repository
From the South: Take CA-91 toward Riverside. Take the exit toward Arlington Ave. Turn RIGHT onto Indiana Ave. Turn RIGHT onto Brockton Ave. End at 6922 BROCKTON AVE RIVERSIDE CA.

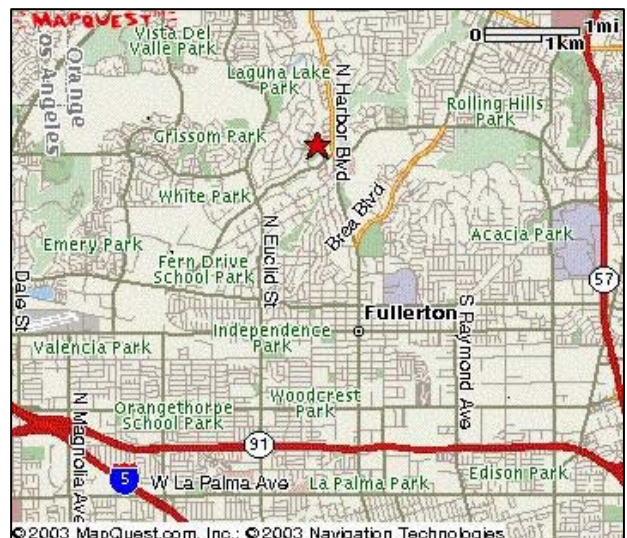
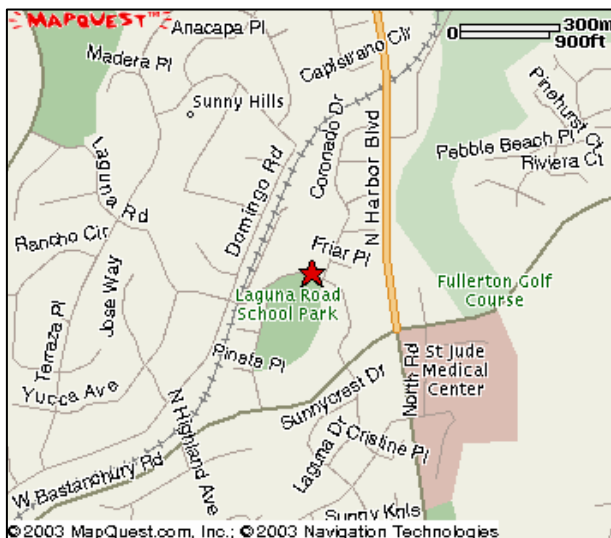


MSCA Pre-Conference Workshop, (GSRs vote their groups’ conscience) Apr. 15, 2007, hosted by District 15, Ebell Club, 313 Laguna Road, Fullerton, CA 92632

Directions

From the 91 Freeway, go north on Harbor Blvd (in Fullerton) for about 3 miles. Turn left on Bastanchury. Go right at the first light onto Laguna Road. The road curves in an S curve. The Ebell club is on the right, on top of a hill, about 1000 feet from the light at Bastanchury and Laguna Road.

From the North East, go south on the 57 freeway to Imperial Highway. Turn West (right) on Imperial Highway and go to Brea Blvd (about 1 mile). Turn South (Left) on Brea Blvd and go to Bastanchury (about 1/2 mile). Turn West (right) on Bastanchury and go to Laguna Road (the first street after Harbor Blvd). Turn right on Laguna Road. The road curves in an S curve. The Ebell club is on the right, on top of a hill, about 1000 feet from the light at Bastanchury and Laguna Road.



Committees in Partnership
In AA
Presents an

Informational Workshop

Hosted by the following Area 9 Committees:

Archives Committee
Grapevine Committee

Cooperation with the Elder Community (CEC) Committee
Cooperation with the Professional Community (CPC) Committee
Treatment Facilities Committee
Special Needs Committee

There will be guest speakers from various professions sharing their experience with Alcoholics Anonymous.

Date: Saturday, April 14, 2007

Location: First Evangelical Free Church, 2801 N. Brea Blvd.,
Fullerton, CA 92835
9 am to 4 pm

A delicious spaghetti lunch complete with salad, Italian bread and dessert will be served.

Please Note: All participating committees will have individual tables set up and staffed by committee members, ready to answer any questions. Literature will be available free of charge.

Sponsored by Mid Southern California Area 9

49th ICYPAA

Aug. 31-Sep.2, 2007

ICYPAA (International Conference of Young People in AA) is an annual celebration of sobriety among young people in AA. This conference provides an opportunity for young AA's from all over the world to come together and share their experience, strength and hope as members of AA. This year's ICYPAA (the 49th one) will be held from Aug. 31 through Sept. 2, 2007 (labor Day weekend) in Los Angeles. More information can be found on their website, www.49thcypaa.org. Please note that the mention of their website in this newsletter does NOT imply any sponsorship, endorsement or oversight of this event or this website by the Mid-Southern California Area (Area 9). You can also find out more info by calling the ICYPAA info-Line: (310) 216-8771.

Concept 4

Throughout our Conference structure, we ought to maintain at all responsible levels a traditional "Right of Participation," taking care that each classification or group of our world servants shall be allowed a voting representation in reasonable proportion to the responsibility that each must discharge.

Huh!? Simply put, those trusted servants who do the actual work should not be denied the right to participate, through exercising a vote in matters being discussed. There are 11 paid staff positions at the General Service Office where one of the requirements for employment in any of those positions is that the person be an A.A. member - probably the only place in the world where employment depends upon the applicant for the position being an alcoholic. Can you imagine the resume or the employment application? These employees of G.S.O. work the year around in a very narrowly proscribed field - Public Information, Cooperation with the Professional Community, Corrections, Treatment, and the General Service Conference.

As an example, when the employee on the Corrections desk comes to work in the morning, the entire day will usually be spent working with our Correctional Facilities literature and Correctional Facilities Committees and Hospitals and Institutions Committees throughout the

Concept 4...continued from previous column

United States and Canada. Their job is to help those committees do the best job they possibly can to reach the alcoholic who still suffers while incarcerated. Each year at the General Service Conference, these 11 staff members share their experience with the Delegates of the General Service Conference in the field in which they are working at the General Service Office. They are as busy, sometimes more so, than any Delegate or Trustee member of the General Service Conference. This concept says that when the time comes to vote on recommendations or proposals from the floor, these 11 staff members are full voting members of the General Service Conference.

This also works outside very well outside the General Service Conference. If you elect people in your Home Group and give them responsibility, they should have a voting right in all group matters - a right of full participation.

We still retain Bill W.'s quest that 2/3 of the General Service Conference be composed of Delegates elected by the Groups, and the people who are often most knowledgeable about the matters being discussed and voted upon have full voting representation. What a concept! Who thinks up this stuff?

A member of A.A. in Orange County.

Where all the Monkeys have Bananas

By Russ D

Life is not fair - if it was, all of the monkeys would have bananas. I used to have an underlying unease with the world around me and alcohol was a solution for these inequities that I sought to remedy; either with a case of the f...-its or grandiose ideas about my role in life and how I might change things. When it all panned out however, Alcohol was king and I was his subject - alone, afraid, despondent and not sure what to do. Through a series of events I now believe as pre-destination, I found the program of Alcoholics Anonymous and a partial solution to my problems. I say only partial because though I was able to give up drinking at this time, it took years later until I was ready to give myself wholeheartedly to this program. When the pain became great enough, I became ready – the master appeared and I gradually had my Spiritual Experience.

After this, I began to look around in my local meetings for how I could be of service, taking several commitments and doing them to the best of my ability. A good friend of mine was in General Service and suggested I come along to one of their local District business meetings. I enjoyed learning about the Service Structure of AA and was attracted to the level of commitment many of those in attendance seemed to feel towards the AA program. Soon after I was given the opportunity to attend my first PRAASA in Reno, and it was an event I won't soon forget; from the Round Tables where I learned just how Members of AA are reaching out in different ways to the still struggling alcoholics, to the incredible Speakers who had a wealth of knowledge concerning AA that I never before encountered. When our former Delegate Al P. gave his message during the Banquet, I was overcome with emotion & feel this really was a stepping stone to my own future commitments. Even the regular AA meetings that went on outside of the PRAASA structure were incredibly moving and some of the best I had ever attended.

I believe that I left my first PRAASA with an increased awareness of my place in AA, and it certainly was a big kick in that Spiritual Experience I am having (of the slow variety) through the 12 Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous. Soon after this event, I took a position in the District I had been visiting and also ended up getting involved in my local H&I Committee. 4 years later after that first PRAASA, I sometimes start to feel that I have too many commitments and that I should give many of them up to pursue "personal goals". Yet I have come to know powerful moments of Spiritual Enlightenment when I am in the Service of a cause greater than myself and these moments have all come because of my AA commitments. I will continue to attend PRAASA's whenever I can over the coming years – for that Spiritual

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Where the Monkeys... continued from col. 1

whenever I can over the coming years – for that Spiritual refueling and the ideas that are shared from the experience of others that can only help my own endeavors for service should I be astute enough to listen; even perhaps when I disagree. Alcoholics Anonymous has made my life worth living today & PRAASA as a collective Spiritual Experience, has been one of the cornerstones of this program for me. I hope to see you this year in Portland and for many more PRAASA's years afterwards; as we trudge this happy road of destiny together with bananas to spare....

Recently Posted on the MSCA website

A number of items have recently been posted on our website, www.msca09aa.org, so that all AAs can have access to them. These recently posted items include:

- **General Service Board Report** from its January 2007 meeting (written by our Pacific Region Trustee)
- **AAWS Highlights**, Jan. 25, 2007 (This is a publication that comes from our AA World Services)
- **Final Conference Agenda Items** (This list describes the items that will be discussed at the upcoming yearly General Service Conference, where all AAs have a chance to express their opinions (via their delegates) on AA issues of the day)
- **Flyer for the April 1 MSCA Archives Open House** (This flyer describes this year's open house that is held at our MSCA Archives Repository, where AAs can view AA memorabilia and learn much about the history of AA in the Mid-Southern California Area.)
- **Flyer for the Apr. 14 Committees in Partnership Information Workshop** (This flyer describes an event being put on jointly by 6 of our MSCA committees)
- **March MSCA Newsletter**
- **Maps and directions to upcoming MSCA events**

Many districts, GSRs and committees download items posted on the MSCA website so that they can pass them out to other AAs, and thus inform them more fully of things going on in General Service. This website is maintained for the purpose of serving the still-suffering alcoholic. Any suggestions you have for improving the website, in terms of content, format, ease of use, etc. are welcomed by our website committee.

Upcoming Events

Mar 2-4 **PRAASA**, Red Lion Hotel on the River, Jantzen Beach (I-5 Exit 308), 909 N. Hayden Island Drive, Portland, Oregon 97217. Hosted by Oregon Area 58. GSRs and other AAs from the west-most states in the U.S. will be attending and sharing their experience, strength and hope. More information can be found on the PRAASA.ORG website.

Mar 11 **ASC**, ABC Club on 44359 Palm Street Palm Street in Indio, CA, (District 9) *(The ASC will vote on which proposals to put onto the next Assembly Agenda)*

Apr. 1 **Archives Open House**, 6922 Brockton Ave., Riverside, 9 am until 4 pm, Program ("The Doctor's Opinion") starting at 10 am

Apr. 14, **Informational Workshop** (hosted jointly by the following six Area09 committees: Archives, Grapevine, CEC, CPC, Treatment Facilities, and Special Needs), 2801 N. Brea Blvd., Fullerton, 92835, 9 am to 4 pm.

Apr. 15 **Pre-Conference Workshop (GSRs vote their groups' conscience)** (District 15), Ebell Club, 313 Laguna Road, Fullerton, CA 92632

May 20 **Assembly (GSRs vote)** (District 6)

June 10 **ASC** (District 19) *(The ASC will present proposals, but no vote will be taken on them)*

Jul 8 **Foro** (Districts 4 and 21)

Aug 12 **ASC** (District 14) *(The ASC will vote on which proposals to put onto the next Assembly Agenda)*

Sep 9 **Assembly (GSRs vote)** (District 12)

Oct. 6 **Heritage Day**

Oct 14 **Assembly (GSRs vote)** (District 8)

Nov. 3 **Servathon** (Dist 17)

Nov. 11 **ASC** *(The ASC will present proposals, but no vote will be taken on them) Dist 18*

Dec. 9 **ASC**, (D 23) *(The ASC will vote on which proposals to put onto the next Assembly Agenda)*

Tradition 3 (long form)

Our A.A. experience has taught us that:

Our membership ought to include all who suffer from alcoholism. Hence we may refuse none who wish to recover. Nor ought A.A. membership ever depend upon money or conformity. Any two or three alcoholics gathered together for sobriety may call themselves an A.A. group, provided that, as a group, they have no other affiliation.

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 56 Area Standing Committee Chairs, Cochairs, et al.

Archives Chair...Pete B	Literature Cochair, Spanish
CEC...Michael M	...Cesar F
CPC...Ernesto M	Newsletter Chair...Russ D
CPC Cochair, Spanish...tbd	Newsletter Cochair,
Convention Liaison...Gary M	Spanish...Raul C
Convention Liaison,	Public Information
Spanish...tbd	Chair...Linda H
Corrections Chair...Alex N	Public Information,
DCM School...Jim B	Spanish...Damien
DCM School Spanish	Registration...Ben
Cochair.....	Special Needs Chair...Rich
Electronic Media Sub-	W
Committee...Nick M	Special Needs Cochair,
Finance Chair...Joseph M	Spanish....vacant
Grapevine Chair...Linda C	Translation... Jorge M
La Vina Chair...Francisco D	Treatment Facilities
GSR School...Scott R	Chair...Phil L
GSR School, Spanish... Jose A	Webservant...Nancy R
Literature Chair...Patrick C	Sound Dude...Joseph M
Coffee person...Ana S	

Schedule

for most MSCA Assemblies/ASCs

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

Chairperson: Craig S,
 chair@msca09aa.org,
 Delegate: Bruce H,
 delegate@msca09aa.org,
 Alt. Delegate: Joe B,
 altdelegate@msca09aa.org
 Secretary: Oscar G,
 secretary@msca09aa.org,
 Treasurer: Mike M,
 treasurer@msca09aa.org,
 Registrar: Jason S,
 registrar@msca09aa.org,