

**SAN FRANCISCO GENERAL SERVICE, DISTRICT 6**

**General Service Meeting Minutes**

**Tuesday, August 14th, 2012**

**7:00-7:30: Bridging The Gap Orientation**

**7:00-7:30: New GSR Orientation**

**7:00-7:30: 12 Concepts and Service Manual Study**

**7:30-8:00: Sub-District Meeting**

**Karen S** (District Committee Member Chair) **opened with the Serenity Prayer and the General Service Preamble.**

**Amir E** (GSR: *Show of Shows*) **read Tradition 8.**

**Max F** (GSR: *Women's Kitchen Table*) **read Concept 8.**

**New GSRs:** Anthony Z (GSR: *Wharfrats*), Gilbert G (Alternate GSR: *Goodlands*), Max F (GSR: *Women's Kitchen Table*), Chris B (GSR: *Each Day a New Beginning*), Ron G (GSR: *Sometimes Slowly*), Amir E (GSR: *Show of Shows*), John B (GSR: *Sunday Night Castro Discussion*), Megan W (GSR: *Sunday Night Trudgers Discussion*), Chris R (Alternate GSR: *The Leaky Cauldron*), Mike W (Alternate GSR: *Wharfrats*)

**Birthdays:** Ron G, 28 years.

**Visitors:** Raymundo L (CNCA Registrar), Peter M (CNCA Archivist), Rich G (CNCA Finance Committee)

**Volunteer for Concept 9:** Cheryl F volunteered.

**Presentation of Concept 8:**

**Raymundo L** (CNCA Registrar): Basically we as a community have to have custodians, trustees to look over us. Money plays important role in AA. Election of directors is very careful vetting: we ask for resumes, and run candidates by the Areas and non-directors.

**Approval of minutes:** *Approved.*

**Approval of financials:** *Approved.*

**Karen read the DCMC letter and shared some thoughts on being a DCM:**

DCM can be a mother hen for meetings, especially those without GSRs. Go around to meetings, share service experience. As a DCM I would sometimes help with the business meetings. Often there is trouble with the treasury or something like that. Secretaries rotate every 6 months but we stay for 2 years; can share lasting knowledge. Groups should sponsor GSRs. One reason I couldn't step up as a DCM initially was I didn't have a group that could pay for me to go to assemblies/etc. But this district has decided to put money aside for DCMs. As a DCM maybe 3 or 4 of us would go and divide up that money. Didn't pay the whole bill but really helped.

**Election: Web Committee Chair**

**Karen:** We already have a web designer. This election is for a chair. People can also still join the committee.

**Peter** presented on the 3<sup>rd</sup> legacy procedure.

**Karen:** Position is for the rest of the panel, but we're anticipating that the person will carry on until the next panel since there's so little left of this one.

**Peter:** It's a new position for this district so a chance to be a trailblazer.

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**Karen:** Current members of the committee: Myself, Teddy, Al G [REDACTED]

*Patti B [REDACTED], Chris B [REDACTED], Anthony [REDACTED], and Robin McG [REDACTED] made themselves available. Robin was elected in the first round.*

#### **Election: Assembly Co-Chairs**

**Karen:** 3 assemblies for next year and 4 for the following year still awaiting bids. Our area is from Monterey to Oregon, on the coast. We did one last year and Ingrid was the chair. SF can do it. Used to be sort of an idea that we couldn't do it: too expensive or whatever. From listening to you guys talk about it, decided that we do want to do one. Next step is to get two co-chairs involved. Will go to all district meetings/planning meetings, liaison with area coordinator. Turn in monthly report to district identifying suitable venue. Present options + recommendations to district. Attend area committee meeting 4th Saturday of the month.

*Kristina [REDACTED] and Susan [REDACTED] made themselves available and were elected by acclamation.*

#### **Announcements**

**Rich G [REDACTED]** (Liaison: PI/CPC): We take the AA message to the public; talk to DUI classes, etc. One thing the CPC committee does is talk to professional groups about what AA is and isn't. One thing that is rewarding: having achieved 3 opportunities to attend DUI classes during my path to AA, I find it very rewarding to be able to talk to these mostly young people about what AA is/isn't and engage in Q&A, dispel myths/conceptions. We hold workshops quarterly. Just had one in July, next one @ Unity Day on Nov. 10<sup>th</sup>. Requirements: 2 years sobriety, attend workshop and observe a DUI class. Then you fill out a form to get into the database and have your choice of DUI class or other monthly opportunity to go represent AA to the public. Not like H+I where you have "2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of every month"; you pick. Check with me after the meeting to learn more.

**Ken K [REDACTED]** (GSR: *Bernal Big Book*) presented on Unity Day: There's an Excel spreadsheet listing committees that need help: lots to help with! Announce at your meetings. Got 3 months to get there. Unity Day is 10AM – 4PM Nov 10<sup>th</sup>. Everyone has a meeting: GSR, PI/CPC, H+I, Teleservice. Talk to me if you have any questions.

**Cheryl P [REDACTED]** (Bridging the Gap Coordinator): Need volunteers. What we do is when someone is going to be released, they can fill out a card w/ information that they want someone to meet them, take them to their first meeting. Need people who can take them to that meeting. Also need people who can help us give presentations to institutions we'd like to be working with. Monthly meeting here before the district meeting @ 7. If you or anybody you know is interested, please come. Would love to have some help.

**Astrud C [REDACTED]** (Grapevine Chair): Have here the editorial calendar for the Grapevine. They suggest to carry the message by contributing your stories. They need your stories no later than 5 months before the issue comes out. Email me and I can give you the link. Brought guidelines for contributing to the Grapevine. Great magazine. Have subscription cards if you need. There is also Grapevine Quote of the Day: free service. Quote will be featured excerpts from the deep well of classic Grapevine stories. Any questions see me after the meeting.

#### **Local Forum Recap**

**Robin:** In January, I had come to SF. Wasn't sure if I was staying or not, but made myself available to be liaison to this committee and I lost: Alex won. But I started going to the committees anyway, really wanted to be a part of it. Really excited by idea of having speakers come from GSO and talk to us. Was with the Spanish-speaking community, love them even though I don't speak Spanish: caused a little extra work for everybody. First meeting was in February, basics: arranging for the hall, how much to charge for registrations, all that. Over the

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months we got details worked out. One of the committee members was hell-bent on having a dance so we worked that out too. Planning meetings were conducted in Spanish; had to have translators (Alex and this other guy). But always felt included, even though I couldn't understand what was going on all the time. Really cool.

Day of the event I had to get up earlier than I had wanted and just remember being really tired. Forgot my radio, which was kind of essential: half of the presentations were in Spanish. Big deal if you didn't have a radio. Ended up having to go get my radio so I could know what was going on. Panels all day. Topics: focused on service. History of the local forums. Rod B [REDACTED] (Pacific Regional Trustee) presented, talked about what trustees do, his experiences. Other person from GSO was Eva S [REDACTED] works at GSO in NY. Gets up and goes to work there every day. That was really cool. Had other topics, like General Service structure, group's importance in general service, why I need a home group.

First day was really fun, dance was really fun. Exactly 4 English speakers there, including me and Alex. Really fun: haven't danced to that much Latin music in quite some time. I requested that they play the Electric Slide, but they played the Spanish version: guess what, it translates! Second day was scariest part of the whole weekend, because I presented. My topic was: "encouraging diversity". I had suggested this to planning committee and they were like "well, why don't you do it then"? Wrote it that night after coming home from the dance. Feverishly researching who wrote the stories. I've noticed that it's mostly white people in AA, and not as many women as there are men. I was nervous talking about this, it was hard. This is the biggest group of people I've ever spoken in front of. Probably 150-200 there. Nobody threw eggs at me, guess I didn't offend anyone.

I was on a panel with Raymundo: pretty cool. The Spanish-speaking presenters are like orators: very passionate, much gusto. Then there's me, kinda bookish with my notes and all. Main theme that emerged through the weekend was that there are not enough Spanish-language women's meetings: severely under-served community. Good to hear about the good stuff we're doing, but nice to get some feedback about where we can make improvement. How do you encourage those meetings, within our traditions, to start/be healthy? Main other thing that emerged was wonderful sense of unity within AA community here. Really glad to participate. Everyone had a really rewarding experience. If you haven't volunteered for anything extra, it was really rewarding for me. Would really encourage you to do that. Thanks!

**Alex:** Really glad that Robin joined us. Although I grew up speaking two languages, I primarily spoke English. Spanish-speaking meetings always intimidated me for two reasons; they always seemed really butch and really straight (and I'm neither). But went to these planning meetings and I was welcomed as a member of AA. There was this great sense of community that I felt during the planning and especially when the local forum started. Robin did point out that women are represented differently in the Spanish-speaking communities. Large group of women who have been sober 20+ yrs and they're amazing people but they were so excited that there was a forum that they could participate in, because usually they don't participate in the men's meetings. We're not judging, but just saying that that's what the tradition is. Trying to change that; really neat to hear that that's a process that's gonna start happening. Eva told a story when she talked about how she got a phone call from a Spanish meeting and the person said "there's a guy in the meeting who speaks Chinese only and he won't leave". She said to him: "let me send you something". Went and got a Chinese Big Book and some pamphlets and mailed it to this group and the guy called her back and was crying, saying "that was amazing because you were helping this guy and he really loved the book, but he still won't leave!". Couldn't help but get choked up because that's AA right there. Just reminded me that we're all the same as long as we stay sober; that's what I got out of it.

**Visiting Area Officer Presentation**

**Raymundo** (Area Registrar) presented on "Am I Available?"

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I have the honor to serve as the CNCA registrar. Thanks to Karen for sending me the agenda with my topic tonight. Clearly she, too, is making herself available for the District.

Service Manual, in "AA's Legacy of Service" says:

*"Our Twelfth Step – carrying the message – is the basic service that the A.A. Fellowship gives; this is our principal aim and the main reason for our existence. Therefore, A.A. is more than a set of principles; it is a society of alcoholics in action. We must carry the message, else we ourselves can wither and those who haven't been given the truth may die. - Bill W."*

Hence, service = anything that helps us reach a fellow sufferer, from 12th step to a phone call and coffee, to working at GSO. Sum total of all these = Third Legacy of Service.

Services include meeting places, publications, and good publicity. Require committees, delegates, trustees, conferences. And not to mention voluntary contributions from the fellowship. These services are vital to our existence and growth. Can't simplify AA by abolishing these. Would only be asking for complication/confusion. Must ask of each service: "Is this service really needed?". If it is, we must maintain it, or we fail in our mission to those who need us.

Question: "Am I Available?" Feel like I learned this the hard way in first election at my home group. Afternoon meeting could probably not be held if no-one available to be secretary, and that was the only meeting I could attend. Had barely 3 months of sobriety at the time. No-one was available at that time, so I asked myself, "Am I Available?" and the answer was easy, because I had no choice. In my case, this service was really needed!

Reading the Service Manual and thinking of my experiences in GS, I remember what my service sponsor has told me. Says that being available or not has to do w/ willingness. Nothing to do w/ whether I am too "dumb" to do the job or have no skills. Must know the requirements, though. Have to realize that if I don't know or understand the description, I will probably end up stepping down. Need to know when I have to show up, how much time is required, whether computer skills are needed, and if I'm willing to learn those skills I don't have w/o affecting commitment. Past delegate once said - "God doesn't call the qualified, He qualifies the called."

Another service sponsor taught me that raising my hand to be available for service is another example that I am still willing to save my life. When I begin to put a small piece of myself in service for others, I feel gratitude. Service is our legacy of gratitude; availability for service = willingness to be grateful.

One thing to make very clear for all of us: I am an alcoholic. I have a real great treatment that I couldn't find anywhere else. I serve AA not only because AA has saved my life but because I continuously enjoy a different life. Been so many places, met so many people just by being in service. When I used to drink I was always in San Jose: I wouldn't go nowhere. When I started to get into service, I got to go to Petaluma. I got to go to other places. International conventions. Seattle. Canada. Holding so many peoples' hands and praying the Lord's Prayer. Don't know if anyone went to San Antonio. One thing I will never forget is that was the second time I ever heard Amazing Grace whilst holding hands w/ thousands of people. You can feel the spirit of AA. AA has given me so much that really the only way I can pay back is by sharing AA w/ another human being AA. Thank you very much.

**Discussion: Subdistrict Structure**

**Karen:** Not everyone uses subdistricts. Mainly established as a way to vote in the area.

**Peter:** Way to reflect how large different districts are. It's how districts have votes at the area committee and stuff.

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**Robin:** Not many GSRs other than me in the Outer Sunset. DCMs can be a good resource for new GSRs, encouraging meetings that don't have them to elect one. Don't know if having them geographically divided helps or hinders, but I think that either way we should have more DCMs because I know that GSRs need support, have a lot of questions when they're new. Also know that more meetings need GSRs. Should find a way to do outreach to meetings w/o GSRs.

**Nikki F** (GSR: *Reality Farm*): One thing I noticed last time we talked about this is that meetings are unevenly distributed amongst 24 subdistricts. Some have too many meetings for one DCM to attend in a period of time and some have two. Would be initially something to look at, in looking at subcommittee structure. How are we serving subdistricts; what is our intent? What is DCM supposed to do for their subdistrict? Are we fostering that with the way things are today? Clearly by having 4 DCMs/24 subdistricts, question may be answered: "no". For me, kind of nebulous idea what DCM is, what they do, how they help their subdistrict. Might even be good to do an inventory on subdistricts and see if what we're doing is appropriate or beneficial.

**Susan G** (GSR: *Women's Kitchen Table*): I don't understand the map at all. Have been on this panel for a year. Didn't understand it then, don't understand it now. Couldn't get any information about it when I first started. Not sure what DCM does. I do know that when we have a new GSR we need somebody we can talk to. Somebody who knows what's going on with other meetings. I'm a GSR in Noe Valley but I don't live in Noe Valley; live in the Richmond. Go to meetings all over the city. Would like to see the subdistricts restructured, or at least have a conversation about what they're supposed to serve and how they're supposed to serve. Need to see how the subdistricts serve, and if they do and I'm not participating, then I'm not doing my job as a GSR. Now I'm trying to put out in a different way: "how do we make this work"? I have been so excited about this whole process of being a GSR and attending assemblies/meetings where I get to see how this organization functions and how well it functions, how we come together and share experience/strength/hope and also our beliefs, wisdom, and that everybody has a voice.

**Mike B** (District 6 Recording Secretary): I would really like to be a DCM next panel. Geographic subdistricts aren't helping us at all. DCMs really have two duties as far as I can tell, and neither is served by forcing them into particular areas of the District. Duty #1 is to serve as basically a service sponsor for those GSRs that don't have one. This could be done collectively by a pool of DCMs. Why should a GSR have to be in a particular subdistrict to get help from a DCM? Duty #2 is to help carry consciences from meetings in areas of the city under-served by General Service; best way to do this is let the DCMs figure out what meetings to go to. I suggest we simply decide how many DCMs we need and get rid of subdistricts entirely. I have no problem cutting down on the number of DCMs; whether we have 4, 12, or 24 people at the Area meeting, their job is to carry a diversity of consciences; we're not there to stack the deck w/ votes!

**Alex did the 7<sup>th</sup> tradition.**

**Area Business**

**Karen:** It's proposed that CNCA provide 2 Spanish-language interpreters at each summer workshop to avoid more than 30 minutes of continuous interpretation.

**Raymundo:** What I've heard at the area meeting is that they're trying to get one more interpreter because they feel that the regular professional interpreter, after 20 minutes of interpreting, can get busy or uncomfortable. Asking for someone else to help interpreting. At same time, cost is \$65/hour. Would have to increase budget because of extra interpreter.

**Karen:** These are professional quality translators. The cost depends on if we're able to use them for just three hours, or if we have to pay for a minimum of four hours. If the former, we're looking at a minimum fiscal impact of \$540. \$720 if the latter.

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**Karen:** Another thing that happens at the Area is that they're thinking that each officer needs to visit a minimum of only 2 districts in a month. We are very fortunate in SF; Jeff came here several times because he lives here. We're so lucky in a 7x7 mile city. That's another discussion going on at the area. All of us are welcome to get up to area meetings the 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of the month in Petaluma. Some old business at the Area level got voted on at the Summer Assembly: the motion that "Men and women" in the AA preamble be replaced with "people of all ages" did not pass. It will stay the way it was.

**Karen thanked everyone, especially Raymundo.**

**Teddy** gave a sample GSR report.

**Closed with the Responsibility Statement**