

PACIFIC REGIONAL FORUM
September 14-16, 2012
Fairbanks, Alaska

Delegate Report

Last month, I represented you at the Pacific Regional Forum in Fairbanks, Alaska. Regional forums, referred to as “mini-conferences,” are designed to improve communication and intended to be sharing sessions. There is no registration fee and no meals served. There are General Sharing and Ask-It-Basket Sessions, Presentations by the current delegates, and Workshops.

Our regional forums help carry the A.A. message through service and bring GSO to you. Present at the September forum were Ward Ewing, Class A Trustee and Chairman of the General Service Board; Michele Grinberg, Class A Trustee, Phyllis H, GSO General Manager; Billy N. AAWS, Inc, Board Director, Julio E, GSO Staff, Regional Forums Coordinator; Don M, Trustee-at-Large/US; Don M, Grapevine Board Director; Ami B, A.A. Grapevine, Inc., Executive Editor/Publisher; Irene D, La Vina Editor; Rod B, our Pacific Regional Trustee; and the delegates of the Pacific Region. Each of these people is accessible during the weekend to listen to concerns, issues, and comments, and, of course, to answer questions.

Rod B, our Pacific Region Trustee, chaired the Forum. Trustees, both Class A and Class B, gave presentations explaining the various roles of the trustees. Trustees make a huge sacrifice in time for us and are to be commended. The Grapevine Magazine and La Vina editors spoke of the changes taking place in print media and how we should respond to the changing times. Delegates gave presentations on such timely topics as “Disruptive Behavior in Meetings,” “Facebook, Social Media and The Tradition of Anonymity,” and “Is General Service Still Relevant to Members at the Group Level?”

Saturday night was set aside for workshops, 10 in all, each running 1 and 1/4 hours with 5 running concurrently. I attended “Are We Providing a Safe and Welcoming A.A. Meeting Place?” I am sad for the need of the discussion but happy that it is continuing. We discussed the term “13-stepping” and that we should call it what it is. Calling predatory behavior from long-timers toward newcomers makes it sound like it is part of the Program. It is inappropriate and unacceptable and should not be tolerated by the rest of us, so let’s speak up. In addition, the use of a Christian prayer to close meetings was brought into question. Your group should be aware that it has choices on how to close its meetings. Reciting the Lord’s Prayer at the end of meetings is considered by some as exclusionary. Again, discuss the options at your groups. Perhaps members of the group would prefer an A.A. closing, such as the Responsibility Pledge.

The other workshop, which I moderated, was “The Home Group – The Heartbeat of A.A.” Here we discussed “What is a Home Group?,” “How Do You Chose a Home Group?,” and “What is the Responsibility of a Home Group Member?” Our Area Chair, Cheryl, was our reporter. You will be able to read her official report and those from all of the workshops in The Final Forum Report, which will be posted online later this year.

Our Regional Forums are educational and inspirational and are a wonderful way to reach local folks who are interested or want to become interested in service. Hawaii Area has never hosted a Regional Forum, and I sincerely hope that we can change that. More will be revealed! In the meantime, the next Forum will be hosted by Area 18 Idaho in the Fall of 2014.