

MARGENSER

Fostering Unity and Carrying the A.A. Message in Area 29 MARYLAND GENERAL SERVICE

Delegates Corner: Highlights of the 59th General Service Conference

Tom R, Area 29 Delegate

As I return home from the 59th General Service Conference, I reflect back on a week of enthusiasm, hard work, a full agenda, high emotions, new friends, exhaustion, exhilaration, old friends, excitement, and love and service. All at the same time. I arrived at the Crowne Plaza Times Square on April 25, Saturday afternoon. Our Conference experience began on Saturday evening with a delegate's only meeting – an informal orientation providing an opportunity for Panel 58 delegates to share with first year Panel 59 delegates their Conference experience. Conference registration took place on Sunday, and roll call was taken at 1:00 pm. As roll call was completed, the 59th General Service Conference had officially begun.

Our Conference Committees met with our respective trustee's committees on Sunday afternoon, and met again Monday morning and Tuesday morning. It was during our Committee meetings we reviewed and discussed our Conference Agenda Items and

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You Don't Have to Go Through This Again

Larry H, Tues. 12 15 Sharing & Caring Group, Annapolis

Although there are several memories from my rehabilitation center experience, this particular one remains stronger than most of the others.

When I entered rehab I was a smoker. There was the typical small, smelly and smoky room into which the smoking patients crammed themselves at every opportunity. It was here where I witnessed first hand, the terrible withdrawal of a patient from methadone. It was here that I eventually began to believe that I wasn't that much different from the others... we were all addicts trying to recover from one substance or another. The choice didn't matter, the recovery from the addiction was pretty much the same although more severe both mentally and physically for some individuals than others. And, it was here where you engaged in those short conversations that over the period of 28 days could lead to a friendship or respect for what the other person had been through.

I don't recall the man's name that I'm going to talk about for the next few minutes, but I can tell you that this man's experience had a drastic effect on my opinion of recovery from alcoholism.

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This Is How We Serve Everyone

Charles L, DCM/District 10

When you are down and out, you seek assistance. I personally have experienced several miracles. People met, discussed, and voted on concerns for District 10 Workshop. I recall an individual's statement of "It's Gods Work." I tend to be a pessimist; so many doubts were flying in my mind. But because people used the basics of calling, talking, and handing out flyers, 58 people signed in for the Workshop. Due to an accident, I was not 100% physically well, however when the event was over, I was flying high spiritually. So if you have not received a personal thank you for your attendance, serving as committee members, monetary donors, supply personnel, set up and clean up people, computer geeks, behind the scenes personnel, and those who offered their prayers, please accept our heartfelt thank you and continual support.

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MARGENSER STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Area 29 MARGENSER newsletter is published to foster unity and facilitate communication among AA members, groups, districts, and intergroups within the Maryland General Service Area. The MARGENSER aims to be instrumental in carrying the AA message. This quarterly newsletter seeks to publish AA-related material, including personal stories of experience, strength, and hope. Material will be reviewed by the MARGENSER committee chairperson or by a member of the committee. Nothing published in the MARGENSER should be thought of as a statement of Area 29 or AA policy. Finally, publication shall not constitute endorsement by the newsletter itself, Area 29, intergroups, districts, local groups, or AA as a whole.

From Here to There

Melody B, City County Group, Brooklyn Park

Standing on the deck
In first mornings light
Overlooking wood and water
Awed and humbled.

I wondered.
How did I get here...
To this place
Surrounded by love?

I heard that still, small voice once again.
"You followed me little one.
You surrendered.
You allowed Me to guide you

From that place,
Of isolation and despair
To this one precious moment
Of love and fulfillment.

You allowed Me
To map the course of your life
And you followed
Step by baby step.

Though scared of reaching out and letting go.
Of placing your life in My care
You trusted, you had faith in Me.

Walking slowly...
Day by day...
With your hand in Mine
That's how you got from there to here"

"Oh", I said,
We smiled
And the robins sang.



What Happened to the Hand of AA

Joe F, Early Birds, Severna Park

My name is Joe F. and I'm an Alcoholic. My sobriety date is April 14, 1960. Although I didn't drink over a long period of time I consumed large quantities of booze when I drank. I started drinking when I was 16 and quit when I was 26. From the very start I was a blackout drinker and I continued that way until I stopped drinking. There are bits and pieces that may come back when I hear someone speak at a meeting, but for the most part, most of it is blank. In 1957 I got married but don't remember when I was divorced. Like my drinking I can only remember bits and pieces. I made my amends but I know now that it was not enough. I must have put her through hell.

What caused me to stop drinking so young was being locked up in an institution. That is when I found the Program. I didn't think that I had a problem...I just liked to drink. The reason I went to meetings was to get out of the cell. Slowly I began to realize that I might have a problem and that I was an alcoholic. From then until now I haven't found it necessary to take a drink. I firmly believe that my Higher Power had a lot to do with this. If I had not been where I found the program I would be dead by now.

I have encountered many people through my journey that have influenced me, not by what they said but by what they did. This is what I do today. As an "Elder Statesman," I lead by example. I still go to meetings on a regular basis, usually four to six a week. I have a home group and support it. I have a sponsor and I still sponsor people and make sure that I stay in touch with the people I sponsor on a regular basis. I pray and do my readings everyday. I'm sorry to say that I haven't prayed during my entire period of sobriety, but I've prayed well over half of it. But most of all, I try to pass this program on. To me, the key to my success is not to drink on a daily basis and to pass it on.

When I came into the program, we had a 75% success rate. For every 100 people that came into the program, 50 stayed from the start. Of the 50 that went out, 25 came back. What's happening today? We now have only a 5% to 8% success rate.

The other evening I encountered three young men at a meeting. The meeting was strange to me, but a friend of mine was celebrating an anniversary and I was dropping off a gift. As I walked into the room there was no greeting. The questions I asked were answered with one word answers. Then I left.

What if I were a newcomer? What if I had needed some immediate help? From what I saw, the young men were too engrossed in their own business and could care less about passing it on.

I would like to issue a challenge. Become more interested in the members around you. First greet and welcome the members of your home group. Then branch out and greet members of meetings that you attend. All a greeting needs to be is a hug, or a hand shake or a kind word to really be concerned about other people. To me, this is really passing it on, not because we have to, but because we want to. ▲

(You Don't Have to...continued from page 1.)

I saw this quiet man, who appeared to be in his mid-sixties, sitting in the smoking room of the rehab on numerous occasions. He was always courteous and offered a "Hi" or "Hello" to persons coming into the room but seldom appeared to get involved in any lengthy conversations. He had the appearance of a "loner."

One day when I was outside enjoying the sunshine, he walked over to the picnic table where I was sitting and asked if he could join me. He sat down and asked, "Is this your first time in a rehab?" I replied, "Yes."

With that he said, "You don't have to go through this again. Alcoholism is a terrible disease and I can speak from personal experience. I've been in seven or eight rehabs and so many detox units I can't count them. I'm in here this time because I nearly died from drinking. I was passed out on the floor of my apartment, bleeding from several orifices of my body because of acute alcoholism when my son stopped by to check on me. After a ride to the hospital in an ambulance and wondering whether I was going to live or die, they pulled me through and I spent quite awhile in the hospital. Now I can't tell you about this from my first hand recollection... most of it my son had to tell me. The point is, that I was near death's door because I kept thinking I could handle alcohol when I can't. If I had listened and did what A.A. teaches us to do to stay sober, it's pretty likely that I wouldn't have ended up in all those rehabs and detoxes and nearly killing myself."

"I sit here in this rehab," he continued, "listening to the same things I've heard over and over before and wonder why I keep ending up in these places. Then I see people like you who are here for the first time and I hope that you get it and don't have to go through the hell that I've been through because of alcohol. And the reason I'm telling you this is because alcohol has a terrible hold on me and I don't know if I will be able to get it this time and stay sober, or whether I'll go back to drinking again and

continued on page 2

(You Don't Have to...) continued from page 2...

end up dead this time. This alcoholism is not something you'd wish on anybody and I really hope that you get into A.A. and stay sober from here on out." With that, he stood up and I quickly thanked him as he walked off towards the building.

I've never seen him since the rehab, but I hope that with God's help he "got it" this time and has been able to stay sober.

"One alcoholic sharing his experience, strength and hope with another suffering alcoholic" appears to have started here at a picnic table and has had a lasting impression with me throughout the years. When I hear people talk in meetings about wanting to take a drink, or how good a drink would taste, I often think about this quiet alcoholic who on a bright sunny day at a picnic table in a alcohol and drug rehab shared his hope for a newcomer to stay sober and eliminate all the pain and suffering that he had gone through in his lifetime fight to overcome alcoholism. ▲

(How We Serve...) continued from page 1...

When the beans were spilled about my injury; you answered the call to communicate, offer assistance and support with prayers. You have reawakened my desire to be a servant. Before arriving in the "We" program, I did my living mostly by self and selfishness. Yes, I performed the outward signs of concern and love without true meaning.

District 10 accepted some challenges for a small unit of servants. One was finally elected to be of service to all, and he requested their assistance and prayers. I may be known as the squeaky wheel at Area meetings, but it is done to educate myself to become a leader and not just a follower. These opportunities have provided the tools needed. I learned that people are willing and able to assist, if you offer up yourself.

This February Area Committee meeting was a culmination of numerous alcoholics who accepted the mission with loving care towards the so called servant host.

Finally, please accept my gratitude for everything. I hope to increase my service awareness and opportunities to attend various events. ▲

(Delegates Corner) continued from page 1...

made recommendations or Additional Considerations. Our trustees were always available to answer questions so we could arrive at an informed group conscience.

During the week, we heard reports from the A.A.W.S., Inc. and A.A. Grapevine, Inc. corporate boards, and the General Service Board. We heard presentations on the Conference theme of "*Our Commitment to Carry A.A.'s Message – Enthusiasm and Gratitude in Action.*" Presentations were delivered by Panel 58 delegates, GSO staff, and our trustee-at-large U.S. On Tuesday afternoon, we braved the New York City subway and travelled to our General Service Office and Grapevine Offices. We were given a warm welcome and a friendly tour of our offices. Wednesday afternoon was devoted to election of a Southeast Regional trustee (Eleanor N.), East Central Regional trustee (Pamela R.), and Trustee-at-large U.S. (Don M.). Committee reports and discussion began Wednesday evening, and continued through the day on Thursday and Friday, into the wee hours of Saturday morning. A closing brunch was held on Saturday morning, May 2, followed by closing remarks from rotating trustees. I can not say there was sadness felt as we all departed, as I know that we will continue to meet as we travel this journey in sobriety.

Some highlights of the Advisory Actions of the 59th General Service Conference are – It was recommended:

- that the revised draft pamphlet "A.A. for the Native North American" be approved.
- that a Special Needs recovery pamphlet for newcomers or prospective members be developed with stories from members with special needs, for example, members who are deaf, blind, wheel-chair bound, etc. The committee looks forward to reviewing a draft pamphlet at the 2010 Conference. [Note: the approximate cost is \$6,850.]
- that a sentence encouraging newcomers to obtain and study the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, be added to the pamphlet, "A Newcomer Asks."

- that the title of the pamphlet "44 Questions" be changed to "Frequently Asked Questions About A.A."
- that the updated pamphlet "A Message to Teenagers..." containing selected text and graphics from the current Too Young" pamphlet, be approved with minor changes.
- that the wall poster for young people with information about Alcoholics Anonymous be approved with minor changes.
- that the four selected A.A. Videos for Young People be approved with minor changes.
- that the videos "A.A. Rap With Us" and "Young People and A.A." be discontinued.
- that the draft 2010 Membership Survey Questionnaire be approved.
- that the video segment directed to professionals in the employment/human relations field to be streamed on G.S.O.'s A.A. web site be approved.
- that the revised video "*Hope: Alcoholics Anonymous*" be approved.
- that the title "Conference Language" on page S19 be changed to "Glossary of General Service Terms" and the subheading "*A Glossary of terms frequently used in general service activities*" be removed. (Regarding the A.A. Service Manual)
- that the theme of the 2010 General Service Conference be "Practicing A.A.'s Principles – the Pathway to Unity."

I cannot express enough what an honor and a privilege it is to serve Area 29 and Alcoholics Anonymous at our General Service Conference. Our alternate delegate Nancy B. has reminded me that my work is not done – that there are "report backs" to be given to the Area, the districts and all of our intergroups. It's good to have an alternate delegate. So then I look forward to seeing many of you as I travel the roads of Maryland, and please feel free to contact me. I can be reached at delegate@marylandaa.org. ▲

Mrs. Marty Mann- Part 3

(Final)

(10/15/1904-7/22/1980)

Ron M. (BYOL Easton)

Marty was not to be totally successful on her journey to sobriety. She was to have a number of relapses along the way especially in the 1939-1940 period. Bill & Lois continued to work with her and had her as a house guest even though they were having major financial difficulties themselves. One of her early memories was a comment of an older member (a few months sobet) "If you don't take that drink, you'll be like me and if I take that first drink, I'll be like you."

Possibly a little known fact but a very important one is the fact that Marty was a lesbian and for many years, until their deaths, she lived with a lady named Priscilla. Because of the social status of both ladies, and living in the New York area, they were instrumental in starting AA meetings in the Cherry Grove area of Fire Island. This area was well known as a gathering place for gays and lesbians and became America's first gay and lesbian town. Although there is no direct evidence it is possible that AA's Third Tradition came about, in part, because of Marty.

Another interesting but little known fact is that when the Jack Alexander, Saturday Evening Post article was published in 1941 Marty's story was briefly told at the end under the pseudonym Sarah Martin. In that very same article

appears a photo of what appears to be an early AA meeting (long before anonymity was discussed) in which frontal images were displayed. Marty is one of the women shown in that photo. It cannot be determined just how much help that was to bringing the message to other women at that time, but it certainly must have provided a start to opening the door. As a result of the immediate success of the article Marty became convinced that public education was the answer to helping the alcoholic. She commenced a lifelong effort to convey a message of public understanding on the issue of alcoholism. Her personal basic message was:

1. Alcoholism is a disease and the alcoholic is a sick person
2. The alcoholic can be helped and is worth helping
3. This is a public health problem and therefore a public responsibility

It apparently was an idea whose time had come and Marty took the reigns and went with it. Marty and a single secretary opened the New York Office of what she called the National Committee for Education on Alcoholism on October 2, 1944. Utilizing the local newspapers and Macy's department store (where she worked) as advertising vehicles she was able to get national coverage by way of the wire services. Their byline was to call the effort the "new rational approach." The combination of the newly formed organization of Alcoholics Anonymous along with its meeting in print

"Grapevine", and the release of the motion picture "The Lost Weekend" created a ready market for information regarding alcoholism at the termination of the Second World War. As time passed, the name of the organization changed to reflect the changing times. It is now called the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence but is still headquartered in New York City.

It is interesting to note that Marty was never very concerned about her anonymity as it related to alcoholism (sometimes to the consternation of Bill & Bob) but she always seemed to be concerned about her life style given the fact that she always identified herself as "Mrs. Marty Mann." Along the way she had in fact been married and divorced and chose to retain that title.

The life of this energetic person could easily take up many pages of material and so the focus of the author of this series of three articles is to generate sufficient interest on this one of many AA pioneers so that we, as current AA members, will be interested enough to delve into the fascinating history of AA and its early members.

For those interested the following sources are recommended:

1. AA Big Book – Women Suffer To – Marty Mann's story
2. Google "National Council on Alcoholism"
3. Mrs. Marty Mann – A Biography – by Sally Brown & David Brown ▲

THE MARGENSER IS YOUR NEWSLETTER

The Margenser Committee welcomes submissions. We are here to serve you. Submissions should be no more than 750 words and about service or recovery. Please include your first name, last initial and home group. Email all correspondence to Margenser@marylandAA.org or mail to Maryland General Services, P.O. Box 2683, Salisbury, MD 21802. The submission deadline for the next issue is August 1, 2009.

REACHING OUT TO THE "DARK DISTRICTS"

Many of our neighbors do not actively participate in Area 29, nor are their voices heard within AA as a whole. We encourage you to reach out to those districts without active GSRs or DCMs, sharing your experience of service beyond the home group and carrying the message one-on-one. Area 29 welcomes your ideas on how we can best do this and offers our support.

SEND YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS TO...

In accordance with the 7th Tradition and abiding by the group conscience of your home group, you may send contributions in support of Area 29 to:

Maryland General Service, Inc.
P.O. Box 2683
Salisbury, MD 21802

39th Annual Area 29 Maryland State Convention

Hosted by
Maryland General Service, Inc.
with Al-Anon Participation

June 18—21, 2009

Back at the NEWLY RENOVATED...

Clarion Hotel and Hager Hall Conference Center
901 Dual Highway
Hagerstown, Maryland 21740



39th Maryland State Convention

Workshops—Speakers—Banquet—Alcathon—Archives—Fellowship—and more!

AA Speakers

Trish W.
Roanoke, VA

Hollis D.
Staunton, VA

Tim T.
Cleveland, OH

Brenda L.
Wayzata, MN

Wayne B.
Santa Monica, CA

Terry L.
Wayzata, MN

Mystery Speaker
Could it be YOU?

Al-Anon Speakers

Connie C.
New Market, MD

Teddie B.
Parkville, MD

*Schedule

Thursday, June 18

12:00 p.m. Registration Opens
4:00 p.m. Open AA Mystery Speaker Meeting
5:00 p.m. Alcathon Begins
8:00 p.m. Open AA Speaker Meeting
9:30 p.m. Fellowship & Fun
12:00 a.m. Last Daily Alcathon

Friday, June 19

6:00 a.m. Alcathon Begins
8:00 a.m. Registration Opens
8:15 a.m. Prayer & Meditation
9:00 a.m. Open AA Speaker Meeting
11:00 a.m. Open Al-Anon Speaker Meeting
1:30 p.m. AA and Al-Anon Workshops
2:45 p.m. AA and Al-Anon Workshops
5:00 p.m. Dinner—Buffet
7:00 p.m. AA Play
8:30 p.m. Open AA Speaker Meeting
9:30 p.m. Ice Cream Social & Fellowship
10:00 p.m. Open Mic with DJ (Bring your guitar!)
12:00 a.m. Last Daily Alcathon

Saturday, June 20

6:00 a.m. Alcathon Begins
8:00 a.m. Registration Opens
8:15 a.m. Prayer & Meditation
9:00 a.m. Open A.A. Speaker Meeting
11:00 a.m. Open Al-Anon Speaker Meeting
12:00 p.m. Barbeque Lunch
1:30 p.m. AA Old Timers Panel and
Al-Anon Workshops
2:45 p.m. AA and Al-Anon Workshops
6:00 p.m. Banquet Dinner—Buffet
8:00 p.m. Sobriety Countdown
8:30 p.m. Open AA Speaker Meeting
9:30 p.m. Ice Cream Social & Fellowship
10:00 p.m. DJ Dance
12:00 a.m. Last Daily Alcathon

Sunday, June 21

6:00 a.m. Alcathon Begins
8:15 a.m. Prayer & Meditation
9:00 a.m. Last Daily Alcathon
10:00 a.m. Open AA Speaker Meeting

**Schedule is subject to change.*



Registration information on back

51st International Conference by Young People in AA

THEME: "Carry the Vision" - Big Book, page 85

DATES: Memorial Day Weekend May 21-24, 2009

INFORMATION: www.icypaahost.org, outreach@icypaahost.org, or 678-428-9279

LOCATION: Atlanta Marriott Marquis, 265 Peachtree Center Ave., downtown Atlanta, Georgia, 30303

REGISTRATION: online at www.icypaahost.org. Flyers to register by mail can also be downloaded at www.icypaa.org.

PRICE: before May 1, \$25; after May 1 for \$30.

HOTEL RESERVATIONS (group rate \$105/night single-quad): use group code "ICYICYA" when calling 1-866-469-5475 or online at www.marriott.com

ACTIVITIES: Meetings (speaker, discussion, panel, workshop), Pre-conference day of fish and fellowship at the Georgia Aquarium (\$30), Saturday Night Banquet (\$32), dances, and much more.

Sign language (ASL) and Spanish language interpretation will be available at the conference

MARYLAND GENERAL SERVICE 2009 CALENDAR

Area Assembly Meeting (Delegate's Report Back and Day of Sharing)	May 30	Brooklyn Heights Methodist Church, 110 Townsend Ave. Brooklyn, MD 21225
Area 29 State Convention	June 18-21	Clarion Hotel and Conference Center, 901 Dual Highway Hagerstown, MD 21740
Northeast Regional Forum	June 26-28	Doubletree Hotel, 200 Atrium Dr. Somerset, New Jersey 08873
Area Committee	July 18	Lexington Park, MD
Area Assembly	August 22	Hagerstown, MD
Area Committee (Budget)	September 19	Crofton, MD
Area Assembly (Election)	October 17	Annapolis, MD
Area 29 Fall Conference	October 29-November 1	Clarion Resort Fontainebleau Hotel Ocean City, MD
Area Assembly (Budget and Rotation of Officers)	December 12	Unknown @ Present