

Gil's Fall Region 6 Assembly Report

The Assembly started on Saturday, September 29, 2007 at 9:15 with R6 Trustee Margaret Ann addressing 21 Blue Dots (so-called because, as first-timers) they have small blue circles stuck to their name badges). The full Assembly convened at 10 a.m., starting with the Serenity prayer in both English and French and proceeded immediately into "diversity" workshop.

Danielle S. of MBI facilitated the 75-minute workshop, which involved each delegate writing on a series of questions then sharing 1:1 with another delegate. Danielle share her own story of being "an outsider" when she came into OA and asked each delegate to recall a time when she or he felt excluded from the group. She also asked us to write about how we reacted and what it cost us emotionally if we did not take action to include ourselves in the situation we were thrust into. We also were asked to write and share on an incident in which we judged another person in OA and what that behavior cost us. I talked about coming into a meeting early in my recovery and seeing that the leader was an obese woman (by my standards). I recall saying to myself, "What does she have to tell me that will be of help? Then I heard her story: As a child, she had been repeatedly sexually abused by her father, who turned her out to prostitute herself at age 12 for his profit. She told of building a protective wall around herself – 525 pounds worth -- before coming into OA. She had lost 275 pounds by the time I saw her and had built a life for herself. Writing about her story and telling it to another OA member at the Assembly put me back in touch with the importance of accepting rather than judging all who walk into these rooms.

The full Assembly reconvened at 11:20 with a roll call. We had 66 voting delegates present, meaning 48 represented the needed 2/3 majority for certain votes. In addition, four visitors, as well as five R6 officers, the R6 trustee and the parliamentarian were present for a total of 77 people. The standing rules were adopted without objection as was the agenda for the day, after adding a time slot for the 7th Tradition collection, which was to be given in its entirety to South Coastal MA IG.

Chair Karin R-H informed the delegates that we were to bring the information back to the IG reps and to the membership at large that OAR6 has a speakers list available on line. (I am including a copy to go into the archives with this report).

The Greater Syracuse IG has begun planning for the 2009 R6 Convention and was to hold a telephone planning session October 4.; anyone interested can call 782-580-1800.

The Twelfth Step Within committee has produced a packet on how to run a sponsorship workshop. A copy is being put in the archives.

Margie from our Intergroup addressed the Assembly and publicly thanked all the individuals, groups and Intergroups who help us retire our \$15,000 debt in eight months' time. She also invited everyone in R6 to attend our arts-based thank-you sharathon on January 12, 2008.

The Assembly broke for lunch at noon.

As co chair of the Discovery '08 convention in Plymouth, I attended the Convention Committee meeting, starting at 12:45. I was dressed as Chief South Coastal Massasoit, the native person who will greet the conventioners October 24-26, 2008 at the Radisson Hotel in Plymouth. A total of 21 persons attended the session, which was chaired by Roberta of Nassau County IG. During the session she was reelected chair for another year. Barbara B. of Cape Cod IG -- the other '08 cochair -- and I gave a 45-minute presentation/update on the work of the various committees preparing for the event and our report was met with encouragement and a few questions/ideas -- including working with surrounding hotels to reserve blocks of rooms once/if the Radisson is filled, putting periodic posting of remaining room availability on the web site as the date draws nearer, and questioning the hotel liaison regarding the maximum seating capacity for the ballroom during keynote addresses. Ruth Ann from Greater Syracuse IG presented a brief outline

of the "beginning stage" preparations for the '09 convention at the Holiday Inn. She notes that the proposed dates will not conflict with the Syracuse University homecoming weekend. Barbara reported that the Convention Planning Manual, which includes all basic information from startup to finish as well as timelines, is complete and will soon be put online to assist all future convention planners. Following the close of the session Barbara and I met with Michael, a delegate from New York who has volunteered to set up a fund-raiser photo booth at the convention to take pictures during the Saturday night dance. He assured us that anonymity would be paramount, pointing out that all pictures will be taken digitally and erased immediately, avoiding any chance of unintended subsequent replication.

The Assembly reconvened for the afternoon session at 2:45 p.m. and the roll call was taken again, with the same number of delegates (66) present

R6 Chair Karin R kicked off the officers' reports, pointing out two key issues facing the region. She noted that a two-sided letter was sent to all IGs on September 4 informing them of on one side of the misappropriation of funds by the treasurer of SCMI and the need for all IGs to support us and on the other side revealing that the treasure of R6 had allowed the Region's nonprofit

exemption lapse and noting that the R6 board is working with the IRS to remove the revocation. Vice Chair Steve M. pointed out that the dates for the next two Assemblies are April 12 and September 20, 2008. He also noted that he is not seeking election at this Assembly for the position of Vice Chair, since he merely has been filling out the term left open earlier this year when Mark G. resigned. Steve also gave a report as R6 Webmaster, noting that the site is fully functional and that he updates it regularly.

R6 Treasurer Zazu spoke next and presented the budget, as well as elaborated on the issue of revocation of our nonexempt status. She noted that the former treasurer maintains that his children threw out five years worth of records last year when the former treasurer was in the process of moving from Massachusetts to Florida. The former treasurer apparently did charge the region \$300 for preparation of nonprofit status papers by a specialist, when, in fact, no such papers were turned in. She drew similarities between the situation with the R6 treasurer and the one SCMI faced with our own treasurer, then noted that, just as we did in our own IG, the R6 board has decided to move on with restoring the nonprofit status rather than focus on taking action against the former R6 treasurer. She added that the Region will need to spend \$1,000 in accounting fees in attempting to rectify the situation. She is confident the IRS "will work with us as it has with other organizations I have contacted who experienced similar problems." Zazu added that we have kept our '07-'08 expenses under budget so far and are "in the black." Zazu also discussed a question regarding the meaning and intent of "prudent reserve." As mentioned in Margie's accompanying report, the term is to be decided individually and autonomously by each Intergroup and group. She did say that many groups use two months' rent plus expenses as a guideline for their prudent reserve.

Coordinator Helen F. noted only that she was glad she switched positions with Zazu last year shortly after being elected treasurer, once she realized that many headaches and logistical problems would arise because of exchange rates and other paperwork, since she is based in New Brunswick, Canada. In light of the snafu with the tax-exempt status, she notes she did not think she could have handled the enormous pressure and praised Zazu for both her hard work and fortitude. The 7th Tradition was collected; \$300 was raised for SCMI.

The committee reports were given next, as the secretary of each lunchtime committee meeting gave highlights of their sessions

o Tina C. from North Shore IG reported that the Twelfth Step Within Committee had

prepared the sponsorship workshop packets referenced earlier in my report.

o The Public Information/Professional Outreach Committee voted to approve seed money funding for the Greater Syracuse IG to begin preparing for the '09 convention; Beth from NH IG discussed the R6 prudent reserve and said Region-produced merchandise, such as oven mitts; are available for IGs to take and sell at their functions as fund-raisers for R6.

o Gaston, chair of the Messenger/Newsletter committee said deadlines for the next issue will be November 1. Roberta reported the highlights of the Convention committee, as outlined in this report.

o The Bylaws committee reported that bylaws are being updated to make job descriptions consistent with bylaws of other regions. The committee report also noted that motions for the April 12, 2008 Assembly must be submitted by February 13, 2008. During the ensuing 20-minute break, delegates were asked to write about a "spiritual awakening" moment in their life; the writings will appear in the spring Messenger newsletter. The Assembly reconvened at 4:30 p.m. to deal with election of officers and motions. Upon the request of one delegate, paper ballots were used for each election, as is stipulated in R6 Bylaws if such a request is made. Each candidate spoke for five minutes before election for the offices were held one at a time. Karin R-H ran unopposed and was named on all but one ballot, which was thrown out because it could not be deciphered. Four candidates vied for the vice chair position; since no one earned a clear majority of 34 votes, the top two vote-getters, Diana G. of NY Metro IG and Bruce R. of Ottawa IG faced in a run-off, which Diana won, 35-33, in balloting that included board members. In uncontested balloting for two-year terms, Steve was re-elected as web coordinator, Helen was elected coordinator and Zazu was elected.

Given that the Assembly was running late, two procedural motions were held over for voting at the April 12 Assembly and just two motions were quickly approved by show of hands prior to adjournment.

♥ The first motion. The first motion passed set up a staggered sequence for election to various board positions, eliminating the possibility in the future that more than one board position will be open for election at subsequent Assemblies.

♥ The second approved motion standardizes the R6 logo – a heart with the OA6 emblazoned in the middle.

Since it was late, the Blue Dot ceremony – consisting of calling all first-timers to the front of the room and having them remove their dots simultaneously – was waived, as was the open sharing option. After a motion to adjourn was instantly seconded and lustily cheered, the amassed group joined hands and said the Serenity Prayer. The Assembly adjourned at 6:42 p.m.

Thank God!

Submitted by Gil P, 10/7/07