

Forum began at 9:20am.

Facilitator thanked the CBANA for hosting the SZF. Announced that lunch and dinner would be held in the hospitality room. T-shirts are for sale. Forum will be recorded. Stated that hands should be used and that people will be called in order. First we will be talking about Fellowship Concerns. Anything pertaining to your groups, areas and regions.

We are going to start off with Group Concerns and if you have a concern that's within your group, please share.

Introductions.

Group Concerns

Mike – Group is talking about doing a home group inventory and is asking for experience. Please share about any experience you might have.

Chris – Also looking to do an inventory. They don't know what the function is or how it can affect the group. Stated that it's much like a 4th step.

Lee- Home group concerns are lack of willingness for doing service work and violence in the meetings. Looking for experience, strength and hope.

Pat – Home group has had problems with interpersonal relationships. Everyone is going out with everyone else within the group and now everyone is mad at each other. I'm not sure if this is something we can solve, but harmony and the unity of my group has gone to crap.

Randall – Problems training chairperson. Going to address by having workshops to have some good training. If anyone has any information on conducting those workshops I'd like to have it. Sometimes we have meetings that are out of control, and I've had the opportunity to visit other meetings as the Outreach chair and have found that this is not a unique problem at my homegroup. I find a sense of relief when I visit the older groups that have 20 or more years of clean time and they are having the same problems and I find that it's not just us. It's a true fellowship concern that we need to maintain an atmosphere of recovery through proper training of our chairpersons.

Dawn – Looking for experience, strength and hope with helping the smaller groups in the outlying areas.

Mike B – My wife Linda is the secretary of my homegroup and I'm the treasurer. We have had in our group conscience to hold a prudent reserve. My thing has been to get off the prudent reserve because money has been so tight around the fellowship. We have finally eliminated prudent reserve and passed the money on up to the area and region. Trying to look at what the group actually needs and what is reasonable. Money is clogged up and not where it needs to be and we have since gotten off our prudent reserve.

Area Representatives

Drew (Bluegrass Appalachian Region)- Areas are doing inventories. Looking for experience, strength and hope.

Regional Representatives

Mike – Green River – Groups are discussing making new areas. Having growing pains because western area is looking like they are going to form a new area. Phoneline is fixing to go online hopefully within 30 days.

Ashley – RDA Green River – Money flow issues are a concern when forming new areas. Also having one person holding three different levels of service is a concern as well.

Dickie – A lot of these concerns that we go through, they do come out in print form. We have something that has been created by Travis, it's called the solutions Pamphlet. Some of the issues that we talked about here and some of the discussions that goes through the website are put on print. So we will have some copies here. We

have some translators from the Tejas Bluebonnet Region, to translate it into Spanish. We are trying to help get communication going and that is our main purpose here.

Lee – Kentuckiana – Last regional meeting they were talking about money matters that have been brought up before. What they are looking at is the amount of money set aside to operate on is not sufficient. Looking for ways to cut corners. Talked about it beginning with us and that the dollar doesn't go as far as it used to.

Mike – Kentuckiana – Just like all over NA, we are experiencing the service structure collapsing. We are talking about what we can do about that. Learning days are not being supported and conventions aren't being supported like it used to be. We know that it goes deeper than that. We need to start teaching people differently, and what we have decided to start doing is having a GSR assembly. A lot of the communications we were having at the regional level was not making it down to the homegroup members in the meetings. We figured the best way to alleviate that was to leave out the middleman and have this assembly. In November we decided to combine it. We would wait until after the CAR came out so that we can make them aware of the information and also take the information from the Forum and bring it back to the GSR's. Maybe if communication is better maybe the service structure will be better.

Mike – Volunteer – Having a regional inventory at the same time as the next SZF. Looking for a facilitator. Adhoc committee has been developed within the region that has developed some questions about polling for a regional inventory. Looking at the fund flow. Looking at the fact that two areas have not supported the region. PI efforts are doing very well. They are formulating a committee. Looking at the helpline and looking at buying own phone numbers. Looking at having a regional website up and running by the beginning of the year. For the first time in 8 years, we have a regional outreach chair. They have submitted guidelines and a budget. Out of 95 counties, 45 are not currently having meetings. We are working on reaching out to the smaller rural areas, and have been very proactive. We are trying to get communication established. We have a lot of new GSRs. We are taking a good look at communication and letting everyone know that we are out there.

Drew – Bluegrass Appalachian – Areas are asking region to do more work in the service area. Stated that area chair could only do some much. There are a lack of volunteers. The area is coming to the region for Outreach to come down more often. The area is asking for help but not willing to volunteer any time. Our Outreach chair is doing a great job, but his time is limited, he can't make every meeting. There is a real lack of volunteers.

John – Show Me – Have 15 total areas which makes up all of MO, some of KS and a good portion of Southern Illinois. Still working on an 800 number for the entire region. We have couple of rural areas struggling who wanted a phonenumber and wasn't sure how to make this happen. The areas that are next door to these rural areas have co-op'd them into their phonenumber. They did that for one area and one area said it would be easier if we just paid for your phonenumber, so that is what they did. I think the whole idea of having a phonenumber for the entire region is on it's deathbed in the Show Me region. What we are doing is saying that if rural areas need a phonenumber we will co-op them into a sister area or as a region we will set it up and pay for it. RSC set aside two hours for an open forum. It's where the RCM's and RD's facilitate. A lot of the issues that come up are violence in meetings and prejudice. Have started to do discussion topics, and has worked out really well. Are very interested in seeing what is discussed in the SZF so that they can use it. Are asking that the SZF be available electronically. Region would like to know what they can do to help with hurricane victims. They want him to find out what they can do to help those regions. Do they need literature replenished? Have had individual groups from all over coming to him asking what they can do. Has had a lot of direct contact from all over. Spent a lot of time at RSC talking about this. They talked about feeling helpless because they didn't know what they could do. Talking about issues of Regional Incorporation. Our RSO is incorporated, our convention is incorporated separately. We do pretty well financially, because all of our convention funds go directly to World Services because they don't want to pass it on to an unincorporated body (Region). We've decided to pull in a tax accountant and to consider putting that tax accountant on retainer for the entire year so that quarterly we can take our books to them, so that annually we can file taxes. We believe that somehow and somewhere, that some one has applied and that we have a federal tax ID number. If we haven't done the

paperwork and let them (IRS) know that we are not a business, they are assuming that we are a business and that we have not filed taxes ever. We are working to fix that. Looked at problems with convention attendance. Looking at 2006 convention being a big money maker. Looking at centralizing conventions to help with attendance. What is the point? To make money or to get the message out to rural areas? When held in less populated areas, attendance drops two-thirds. Our regional service office has a website and Public Information is tagging onto that. We are looking at putting our meeting directories online. RCM's will be responsible for providing updates to Web servant. We did the budget for 2006. RDA is not here because they are going to do an alternating rotation to help cut costs. This is a conference year, so we are having to look at ways to cut costs. Just did a regional inventory in the last quarter, turned out to be one of the best experiences I ever had. Laid out specific questions like: "Have you ever been to an RSC?" "How did you hear about it?" "What did you expect from it?" "What did you expect from the subcommittees?" I submitted those to the RCM's and asked them if this is what they wanted to know? We all agreed to it, and I sent them all out to all the RCM's and they go take them out to all the areas and then we divided those areas up into the same zones we used for the conventions. We went out and did five workshops in which we gathered regional input. All the information was sent in to me various ways. We focused on ways to make this whole thing work. The biggest task was to see us more, but with 15 areas it makes it difficult. It was a good process. Brought in our annual \$800 donation.

Dickie - Is the region incorporated? John stated the Regional Service Office is incorporated. The convention is incorporated separately. The region is not incorporated.

Randall P. – Arkansas Region – RSC has assigned the Texarkana area to investigate whether a tradition violation occurred at a group in Arkansas. Also in response to this same occurrence, we have come up with a policy committee to investigate if the Arkansas region's grievance procedure is adequate. There is also some other procedures that will be looked at regarding seating groups at regions. We have loner groups that are not seated at Areas and that are seated at region. We have some problems with one particular group.

Pat – Arkansas Region - Arkansas River Valley Area is really looking forward to hosting the Forum. Fliers are available. Friday night we will try and coordinate a Friday night get together. We have three groups that meet that night. It's going to be a really good time. Has developed a Public Information presentation for the drug court system. Did a two hour presentation to the Arkansas Juvenile Probation Office. The place was packed! Did a 50 minute presentation, then another hour just in questions. Tough questions about their kids being a part of our fellowship. We gave them great answers to their questions.

Mike B – Lonestar – There are issues going on at the Lonestar Region that makes me really uncomfortable. One is devastating and we are not going to talk about because I can't. Came back from the WSC, and Anthony wanted us to have leadership development workshops. Came back with presentations for the RSC for leadership development. There will be specific workshops on leadership development. The reason we have to do this is that our RCM's don't know how to be RCM's. Next RSC there will be an RCM workshop. I will be bringing in a former RCM who is "skilled" and who did a good job and will be sharing their experience. There will be a different topic at each RSC. Dallas area is having a hard time incorporating. Mike discussed the value of sponsorship in service.

We are going to ask John to forward the information about inventories to the website. I gave Randall the name of person from Louisiana who did a group workshop outline.

Travis stated that there are two pieces of information on the website. One is inventory based on the Twelve Concepts and another one is inventory as it relates to the Twelve Traditions.

Mike asked Randall about Tradition violations. Randall stated that there was someone in the group selling drugs.

Zean – Pointed out that Alice M. the PI chair for our region is present. Alice has done a very good job with PI in our region. She really gets the word out. TBR is doing well. 501c3 status has brought up questions. We are dealing with that well. No struggles. RD and RDA travels to ASCs within region. We make ourselves available to our region. Allows me to understand what goes on in our backyard. Discussion on NA.org about RD's traveling to ASCs and it is a pretty good discussion. The world convention will be in San Antonio in 2007. Issue that came up is our regional convention. This February will be our last regional convention until after the world convention. We decided to postpone. Another thought is our region is having too many conventions. Thinking about doing a convention every other year, that would alternate with the World convention. Discussing about seating new areas at our region. Had a proposal that was rewritten several times, that eventually failed. The website has had some much discussion because of the hurricane. Everyone has been coming together. Wanted to personally thank everyone who posted on that website. There have been people posting to our website who don't agree with what we do, and a lot of us have been sticking up for the SZF and what it is we do here. We are looking forward to seeing you in 2007. We will be having a convention in Austin in February 2006.

Bob – Louisiana RD – If I wouldn't have bought my plane ticket before the hurricane hit, I wouldn't be here today. The areas affected by the hurricane are the areas who donated the most to our region. Going to find a way to get to the next SZF. It was by GOD's will that I'm here. A week after the hurricane we had a skeletal group put together at a regional meeting. We were getting so many offers of help saying that we have a place for you to live, we have clothes to send. It's against our traditions. If you come to one of us outside the meeting place and say we have a place for you to live, that's fine. But not within the service structure. We hand out literature; we are not here to give you a place to live. I received a lot of email, but "my computer did not work!" We came up with a letter, it says: (paraphrased)

The Louisiana region met on October 1, 2005, and are asking all persons wanting to help to remain within the Traditions. We feel it inappropriate to offer clothes, housing or cash. If you want help, you can donate literature to one of our contact persons, donate a check or money order to NAWS, or donate a check or money order made out to the LRSC.

Contact names and numbers are listed. There are old meetings starting up again. Doesn't know about "Twelve meetings in Lafayette." If there were, I'd know about it. It's hard to ask for help, we are devastated. We are just trying to find some normalcy. A lot of people couldn't handle it and have relapsed. One friend of mine overdosed during the hurricane. Things are coming together slow. We have been through a lot. I was evacuated for fourteen days. I'm now living at home and the cable is on. Things are great. (lol) The WSO donated \$5,000.00 worth of literature. What ever the Mississippi region needs, we are sending it to them. Southeast Texas got hit real hard and I am waiting to hear from them to see how we can help. The email you gave me Steve, strikes me funny. This person is saying he needs books. Seems as if some are dope-fiending books. Don't just send stuff to anybody. We are not trying to be in control, we are just trying to do things right.

Travis – SZF Rep – Some concerns of communication. Strengthen our understanding of why we are here and what we do and are trying to do. We are a group of people trying to serve the best interest of our groups, areas and regions. One of things we want to talk about while here in South Texas is translation. We have worked to try and get literature, specifically the Solutions Pamphlet. We have one, a preliminary format that needs to be reviewed. Moving forward, it's important to take in consideration that when we are in the Northern part of zone that doesn't mean that the southern portion doesn't still exist. I think it's going to be real important to try and focus on getting the solutions pamphlet translated every single time and getting it sent. I live in Chicago and there are Spanish speaking meetings in Chicago that are 100% Spanish speaking. I deal with the same issues in Chicago that we have solutions for down here in Southern Texas. So I need those solutions, and one of the things we talked about is the folks are doing the language barriers presentation. I think what is imperative is addicts trying to help the fellowship, we see opportunity rather than look for something that doesn't belong. I think this is going to be the theme for me this weekend. Seeing the opportunity of the things that people say to me as opposed to how it doesn't fit with what I can offer in terms of solutions, or what you can offer me or what we can come up with together that are viable solutions for addicts within our zone that can receive recovery as long as we are working together to try and provide it an opportunity for it. That's my theme, I don't know if it's

even a concern. I just ask for help, I'm an addict trying to recovery and I need help from everyone in this room to feel positive and uplifted by the opportunity to try and serve our zone.

Facilitator - Are there any individuals that would like to talk about concerns?

Pat – Our regional PI has developed a workshop. It's a six page outline of things that can be used for juvenile presentations or the courts. If you want a copy, I can give it to Steve to post. Is this even something that can be posted?

Facilitator – We will discuss tomorrow in business on whether this would be something that we will post to the website or not. The website is a good tool, but we need to discuss what should and what shouldn't be posted.

Bob – Louisiana – People that had to leave home went on the website at different regions and said that meetings on the website were not meeting. What we did in the Louisiana region is blanked all of ours out and we started over again. We found out how important it is. No matter where we went, there were no meetings at those addresses.

Dickie - What we are here for is discussion. Our main goal is for communication and sharing. One of the things we are trying to learn, is what can we be? We try and help addicts within our geographical entities. What can we do as a body to help the still suffering addicts? Is there something we can do that we are not looking at? We now have a discussion in the chat room at the SZF website. We have a lot of opportunities to do things that we don't always see, so let us know what we can do for you.