



Subject: **Fellowship
Concerns**

**KENTUCK-IANA – TEJAS BLUEBONNETT
SHOW ME – LOUISIANA – VOLUNTEER
ARKANSAS – LONE STAR – MISSISSIPPI**

Compiled by: Travis F.
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Created on 6/27/2003 6:58:00 PM

Jackson, MO – Hosted by Show-Me Region

April 26, 2003

Called to order at 9:15 a.m. by Facilitator Tom R.

12 Traditions, 12 Concepts read.

Introductions and announcements from the floor.

SZF Representative not present today.

Change in address for Travis SZF Secretary: na4lif@consolidated.net

Next SZF August 2-3 in Gatlinburg, TN.

Floor opened for concerns or questions from GSRs, RCMs or subcommittee chairs.

Sandy – Volunteer Region discussed conflict in home area with group breaking off and forming a new area with one meeting. Also a couple of groups struggling. Do we face this more since we cover more rural areas?

Tim – Greater Nashville – had similar situation with area splitting due to personalities. Turned out to be a great learning experience. Have had success supporting groups with the “capture the banner” idea.

Tammi – Northeast Mississippi – similar things over past few months having to do with personalities. Also in home area having issues with newer members taking H&I meetings to facilities without working with H&I committee or using approved literature, etc. PI and H&I have both been struggling recently. Workshops are being scheduled to help get information and interest. Working to get people to take responsibility as subcommittee chairs.

Steve – Tejas Bluebonnet – Have large rural geographic areas as well. The isolated groups got together and formed a co-op to work together and address common issues. Personalities have long been involved in area formation.

Patty – SEMO Area – similar problems with personalities and groups not participating in ASC. Several groups decided to withdraw. Left essentially one group in the formal area. Those left in the area structure went around and talked with the different groups to find out concerns and how the areas could all work together. Things have worked out well, with all groups having rejoined the area and even new groups joining as well. Region was supportive, offering to come and do



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workshops. Had been rotating area meetings and have now decided to centralize to middle of the large area.

Keith – Memphis - New chair and vice chair in the area that has been a good infusion of new people. A lot of positions coming open at region this summer. Conventions have been a unifying force.

Deanne – Volunteer Region – How are we supposed to deal with illegal immigrants who call the NA hotline in the region and want to come to NA meetings? Had an instance recently of person calling the hotline and stating was illegal immigrant, but had been living in the US for 22 years. Would like input from others who have experience. Have had regional assembly recently. Sent \$22,000 to WSC this year. Thanks to everyone in the Zone who has given support as this is last meeting as RD.

Lee – Mississippi – Much disunity in area with some groups not attending ASCs. Problem with GSRs not being able to vote on all issues. Have motion being brought to the floor to address GSRs having voice on all issues, not just the admin committee.

Tom – Greater St. Charles – discussed last SZF theft of money from area treasurer. That person has returned to making payments and is actually ahead of payment schedule. Have had many people step up to fill open area positions. Things are going very well in the area.

Following break input from RDs. Dickie reminds everyone that attendee list has been sent around for updating and \$10 registration donation (voluntary). Zone tapes are available for sale at \$20 per set (usually 5-6).

Mindy – RD Show-Me Region – still looking at incorporating region. Currently have RSO and convention committees that are incorporated. Also looking at region-wide help line feasibility. New Ad Hoc committee formed to review and make housekeeping revisions to regional guidelines. Recently had elections with some former officers from previous years returning for positions. Decided to start AWAM committee at the regional level again. Had not been a subcommittee for years, as the region has been hosting centralized RSC meetings. Have also made CampVention a subcommittee position as this convention has grown to that level. Recently had discussion at RSC open forum regarding special interest group for women requesting regional support for Circle of Sisters convention in the region.

Bill – NW Arkansas. Most regional positions filled. In bad financial shape at present. RD funded self to attend SZF. Have regional phonenumber in place and many areas have dropped individual lines. Has been in place for multiple years and it has worked very well. Is also central point for people to call and update meeting lists and websites. Updates are faxed to central phonenumber. Due to large rural geographic area, have “loner groups” at the regional level. Those who can’t participate at areas can come to RSC to have voices heard.



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Tammi – RD Mississippi Region – secretary and treasurer positions not filled at present. In the past, region has put warm body to fill positions and is trying to avoid this and not put people without clean time requirement in positions. Phonline is costing about \$4,000 per year which the region can't afford. Trying to find other options such as areas having own lines or others for region to continue to maintain line. Discussion on which area will host SZF in January 2004. Checking into hotels for a couple of locations.

Doug – RD Louisiana – Region doing well. Areas are now donating to the region. In the past, money came mostly from convention. Having phonline fundraiser in May in Hammond if Mississippi could attend, should be many people there that could offer experience.

Mike - Lone Star – www.dallasrso.com online now. Lone Star Regional convention held Easter weekend and went very well. dallasareana.org is also up and running with meeting schedules, literature. Has one area, Heart of Texas that has dropped from supporting region. Region has moved to consensus based decision making as has Dallas area. Have found that it frustrates those who rely on Roberts Rule of Order to facilitate meetings.

Lee – RDA Mississippi – another thing being discussed currently is guidelines: convention, RSO. Would like copies of guidelines from other regions if possible.

Steve – RDA – Tejas Bluebonnett – Region experiencing growth with groups from outer boundaries seeking to join. Seeks input on how regions are gathering conscience i.e. with regional assemblies. Thanks to everyone who attended World Workshop in Austin in February. Regarding guidelines have always used “Guide to Service” as basis. Guidelines are guidelines and they aren't written in stone. Also remember that in ASC, the GSRs are the ones with the voice and power to vote.

Ron – Kentuckiana – KRCNA held recently and was very successful. Planning underway for next year. Most positions at region filled. Bringing donation for SZF today.

Mike – Input on guidelines that policy is there to guide and direct and if it isn't working, it needs to be changed. GSRs are the ones running the show and the Concepts address this issue. Administrative officers are elected by the members of that body and they answer to those members.

Mike – RDA Volunteer Region – Big topic within the region is tax issue with larger areas seeking ways to avoid paying taxes.

John – RDA Show Me – glad to be back in regional service. Thanks to SEMO area for hosting.

Mindy – RD Show Me – issue brought up at last RSC that Sponsorship IP is done. Confusion with regional literature committee thinking this was 2 phase process and that input was still being taken, but apparently the IP is done and input is no longer being taken. Asks if other regions have concerns. Several nods “yes.” Asks for input as to what action should be taken.



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Tom R – Facilitator – Show Me RSO onsite selling literature. Working to complete Quality Service Manual. Chairman of the Board resigned due to family commitments.

World Service Issues:

Dickie – SZF Treasurer – letter read by Dickie from Joanne M. resigning as SZF representative. Joanne has spoken with Travis and Board members will take care of CAR Workshop in Mississippi. Will need to determine workable date when US-based board members are available to facilitate.

Question as to when is deadline for motions for CAR from regions? August 25.

Dickie - Louisiana region has a couple of areas that are not supportive of SZF. Convention committee in Louisiana had asked SZF if members might be willing to attend and conduct workshop. Seeking someone outside Louisiana. Joanne was making arrangements to attend 3 weeks ago, Dickie needs to discuss with her to see if she is still planning to do the workshop. Any SZF members willing to do this should contact Dickie.

Mindy – Have heard other regions with concerns about SZF and we need to look at what we want to say about ourselves as a Zone. Can we come up with a plan for who we want to send to functions like the convention, what is it we want to say about the Zone, what presentations do we make?

Andy – Isn't really as important who we actually send from the Zone, as it is what they say. Person will need to be able to think on his or her feet and present issues well to these people who may be nonsupportive.

Mike – Lone Star – Discussing having a workshop on SZF at convention. Have an area in the region as well that questions spending money for the Zone. Question as to what happened to the Solutions pamphlet as it works well for explaining the Zone. Just putting it out that may be asking for representative to attend regional convention.

Mindy – We need to be careful about going to a convention if the region is unsupportive. Don't want to be inserting ourselves between the groups (as convention committee is responsible to that region). Dickie explains that in his region, it's one area that is opposing the forum, not the region.

Tom R – Facilitator – Joanne had approached about his attending Louisiana convention. Will bring up in new business for discussion and consensus.

Presentation – Doug – IP 25, Self Support



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Reviewed the IP and some other information and made report which was distributed to members. Self support is being able to support yourself or a group without relying on others. The Seventh Tradition is written in a way that states we decline outside contributions and accept only NA donations. Freedom is the result of this action. Self support allows us to focus on recovery in our meetings.

Not having self support leads to dependence on others, not being able to control our meetings. The advantages self support brings are freedom to meet on a regular basis, being able to produce literature for addicts.

How do we become self supporting and maintain this? Work and live the steps of NA and apply the principles. Self support starts with the individual member at the group level. Having a regular meeting place, supplies, literature, coffee, etc., depends on members putting money in the basket. All subcommittees require funds to help the group carry the message. Self support also means supporting NA with our time. It's important when we elect trusted servants that we support them in activities required by that position so that any addict may serve, regardless of financial status. By the same token, no addict should give more than his or her fair share in money or service.

Service bodies like the area, region and world exist to support the primary purpose of the groups. It is up to group members to fund these bodies if they are to carry out this function. Each group determines how much money to allocate funds. There are general guidelines as to how money can flow up the service structure from group to world services. These are guidelines only. Groups need to take care of providing local group services first, before forwarding money on. The same goes up the remainder of the service structure.

Where does money go when donated? To provide services at the group, area, regional and world services levels. It pays for refreshments at meetings, literature, phonelines, and travel for trusted servants, and to provide administrative services in support of our primary purpose. We keep what we have by giving it away, and we must remember to let others do the same. It's important to let others get involved. Need to remember that it takes time to become self-supporting as an individual and a group.

Doug also asked another addict to provide input on self support and her ideas and report were passed out to the group.

Suggestion from member that SZF purchase copies of Self Support IP and send copies home with RDs and make remainder of those brought by the RSO be passed out at this evening's function. Donation basket passed around to cover costs associated with this. Pamphlets usually sell for 25 cents each. Any excess money will be put into SZF treasury.

Input from members regarding Self Support presentation:



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Keith – has noticed that people often donate minimal amounts at the group level, then spend a significant amount at a convention or on merchandise. Not always sure that money is passed on to world services and considering direct contribution method.

Bill – Have guidelines for passing on excess money from one service body to the next.

Mike – In home group, 1/3 goes to area, region and world. So they don't have to worry about money making its way to the world. Had issues at one point with area not having treasurer and not getting good reports. At that time, group had donated directly to area H&I committee rather than to area. His group pays attention to where its money goes. Seems like when area comes into a lot of money that forwarding policy goes by the wayside. People get scared that more money won't come in. With the convention, it has strict guidelines that 40% of proceeds comes right off the top and goes to world services, no matter what. The region relies heavily on the convention for funds. Seeking input on suggesting members donate money at the group level, not just at the convention.

Sandy – when first got clean, knew for certain where that dollar put in the basket went. Didn't have prudent reserves. If there was extra, it was sent on. Seems like there is a lot of waste and stockpiling supplies that aren't used, etc. Home group has decided to send \$5 per month directly to the world. Important to remember that when that dollar goes into the basket that it becomes the fellowship's money. Also are refreshments a necessity for all meetings? Isn't it more important to have literature and a place to meet and to actually host a recovery meeting? It's also about self service, not just giving money. More concern now about where money is going...are we clear with telling people that and then following through.

Steve – had opportunity to talk with member who had 40 plus years about the Seventh Tradition. That member said they were very lucky to have anything more than change to put in the basket. Members would discuss putting \$1 a month in the basket. Since the 80s, \$1 per meeting became a norm. But maybe we need to consider inflation, or consider putting \$1 for each year clean in the basket, or consider that we may have gone to more meetings when first clean and don't attend the same volume later on and so need to increase the per-meeting donation.

Tim – Need to get away from the buck in the basket mentality and that that may not cover it any more for those who can. Home group donates regularly to the world. Problem with groups stockpiling things that aren't used.

Andy – donates \$1 for every year clean to home group and others, where ever home is, where there is a vested in the survival of that group. At home area, campout function formed and held twice a year with \$200 being donated to regional and world services each time. Asked to do workshop on Seventh Tradition and found that dollar in the basket came about back close to WWII. At the time of the workshop (several years ago) that would equal \$6.13. As trusted servants we need to consider how we contribute individually.



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Mike – one of the biggest joys in traveling to Zone, region or other meetings is being able to take information learned back to local members. We must be an example for others and continue to give as we stay clean. Pays attention to what groups, area and region does with funds. Are we, as experienced members, telling younger members where the money goes and what we're doing at the world service level? Had regional assembly recently that 8 people attended and had numerous members attending a local convention down the street instead.

Deanne – one of the main problems is that GSRs don't know what happens at the region or WSC. Many don't care to know.

Tom – home group doesn't have a prudent reserve and consistently donates to WSC. Also need to educate our sponsees.

Break for lunch.

Topic for discussion – helping struggling regions:

Andy - Has witnessed the ebb and flow of groups, areas and regions as a normal part of growth. Pray.

Tim – Volunteer Region – having experienced people and teaching them what is expected from a position is key. Also teaching sponsees on the importance of service and setting positive examples. Consider having a “meet the region” workshop during conventions or other service meetings. Spend a couple of hours educating people on who trusted servants are and what they do. Also, clear the way and support new people coming into service.

Keith – what the region can do for me as an area participant, first get me to show up, be something that I can model back to my area. Seems to work best in his region to centralize the RSCs for more reliable participation. With issues like taxation, look to the region to provide leadership and support.

Susan – live in isolated area and it was important for the area to demonstrate to the region that it was serious...about participating and about needing help. The area made sure it asked for regional support and didn't wait for the region to just act.

Mike – as far as Lone Star is concerned, don't have a lot of thoughts on helping areas in trouble as the RSC feels like it's at the end of its rope. Recently lost the Heart of Texas area at ASC. Getting ready to lose another area from the RSC at this weekend's meeting. The region has done all the things that have been discussed today. Hate to see these things happen, but they do and it's part of growing pains.

Steve – has one area that still functions in terms of meetings, etc., but don't have enough people to have a service structure. When the region asks if they need help, the reply is “we're okay; we



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just don't have enough people for a service structure." Ebb and flow is just how it is for individuals, groups and service committees.

Tom – thinks of the SZF as one of the greatest ways to help struggling areas. SEMO area was struggling when Show Me asked them to host this SZF. They brought this up as a topic and not only are they getting input, all these people are here for the SZF and to show support. Struggling areas have also learned to ask the region for help and expect the region to be a mind reader. Sometimes it's hard to ask for help.

Break.

Mindy – Recognizing the signs that an area is having trouble. Inability to carry even the most basic of services. Area loses focus meaning administrative committee and subcommittee chairs forget who they answer to. Don't have the ability through donations to make financial ends meet and rely on single fundraisers. Trouble keeping trusted servant position filled. Normal for there to be peaks and valleys, but when several positions remain open for long periods of time. Loses sight of where trouble spots are within the groups in the area, not aware of who needs help. Isolates from other areas or region; just as it's not good for an addict to isolate, it's not good for an area to isolate. Lack of ability to meet financial commitments. Seems to be constantly re-addressing the same complaint over and over.

Things that have helped in Show Me. Rather than always expecting areas to come to region start taking things out to them, like workshops, subcommittee meetings in different areas, etc. Last conference cycle rather than having one regional assembly, had five smaller ones around the region and went from having 70 participants to 350. Have found that planning an event is a good way to reach out to area...telling an area that the regional subcommittee or representatives will come to the area for workshops, etc., if the area will plan an event around those workshops. People turn out for events, often better than for just service meetings alone. Offer project-type service work for old timers. They may not be able to take on a 2 year service commitment, but they can do a guideline or ad hoc project. Having "sister" areas where services are shared by areas, but they remain autonomous.

Break for day.