

What is the SZF ? ? ?

In order to cover the topic a small amount of history needs to be told so that you might have an idea of where we started, went and arrived at today.

Motion carried 5/2/92

The World Service Conference affirms that zonal forums, as service-sharing sessions that provide the means by which NA communities can communicate, cooperate, and grow with one another, are valuable components of NA. We support the continued work of the zonal forums that exist today worldwide and encourage any further efforts NA communities may take to support one another.

So was born the Southern Zonal Forum. It had as its supporting regions Lone Star, Oklahoma, Best Little Region, Louisiana and Mississippi. Today we have had the support of ten regions in the geographical region loving called the Southern Forum.

We had no direction as to what we were supposed to be. When asked after three years what I thought the purpose of the forum was I responded that we were set up to be another level of service. At the time there was a lot of talk of downsizing the conference body and the forums were thought to be a way to provide this avenue. So as a body along with trying to figure out just what it was we were supposed to be we set ourselves up in a formation of service that could easily be a voting body.

There always has been talk about the bang for the buck and were we getting it from this body. After some soul searching this forum began a change into a more of an internal fellowship development service oriented meeting of regions that had the same thinking caps on. We went from 5 regions supporting the things that we were trying to do to 10 regions that thought along th

This body did not want to be hindered by the Robert's Rules of order so at an early time we started using what we knew as Consensus based decision making. Learning how this worked was a challenge. We came from loosely gathered members with no direction to a more service oriented group of NA members with still no light at the end of the tunnel. As we struggled along though some things were getting done.

20 years 2 months and 26 days have gone by since the formation of this forum. In that time we have accomplished some things of significance. Hopefully you will agree with some of the things that I have seen over this time.

A. Local interaction -

- The touching and interacting with members over a wide spread area. Outreach before there was any.
- Over 65 different home groups visited.
- Events to publicize something new

Showing local fellowship a group of caring motivated members with time sharing the message of recovery

B. HOSTING OPPORTUNITIES

- Local communities get event experience. Often committees form or hosting organizers gain service experience.
- Hotel interaction, planning, and communication
- Tee shirt production
- Hospitality, Saturday night event planning, meals, fundraising
- Topic selections, area concerns coinciding with a topic

c. The Fellowship of travel - Back to the good old days. Getting to and from Forums has given thousands of addicts opportunities to travel together and bond and grow in unity.

- D. Recovery Meetings - Nothing like them to set the tone of service
- Experience, Strength and Hope are always present in our meetings
 - A meeting with diversity - A “fresh once in a while feel” yet great unity from the SZF bond.
- E. Functioning Trusted Service Platform
- Years of development in our past to get here
 - Positions have always been filled
 - We focus on the importance of developing good transition practices and strive to come up with new and helpful guidelines
 - The recording of our sessions has created an amazing archive of NA service
- F. WEBSITE - szfna.org
- An investment for the Forum
 - A growing platform for the fellowship interaction (over 700,000 hit) we were the first forum to have one linked to NAWS website
 - Plenty of room for new creativity and participation
 - **Totally underused**
- G. Forum as a Network for Regions and other Forums - one of the strongest calls to service now. “Communicate, cooperate, and grow”
- The sharing of experience in all matters from conference agenda to convention procedures
 - News shared on events, workshops and areas in common geographic spaces
 - Unity building process on like mindedness and Trust among Regions

- The inclusion and support of emerging unseated Regions
 - Looking to help other zones with our experience and learn from them
- H. RD Development - Pre-conference opportunities to be around experienced RD's and have new RD's get a new and larger experience than at their own RSC
- Service members out of their home comfort zone meeting new diverse challenges
 - The effect of presentations and the stirring up of new ideas
 - Showing new RD's that this is really a world wide fellowship by meeting at the SZF and seeing diverse experiences
 - The learning of different ways to improve NA service from the support of kindred spirits
 - Honing communication skills
- I. Consensus based decision making - One of the longest running CBDM bodies in the fellowship
- We have come through a lot with our own hard won experience
 - We have a fairly consistent participation, some longevity and smooth transitions
 - We continue to grow and form consistency in establishing trust in the process
 - We affect our member areas and regions as we move from a motion driven fellowship to a topic discussion fellowship
- J. Fellowship Concerns - A process of communication and empathy that involves both identifying and listening for the group as a whole

- Focuses on all levels of our Fellowship
 - Gives an opportunity to address a large body, sometimes for the first time
 - A different sort of sharing that allows members to inventory their own fellowship surroundings and try to stay hopeful with an eye toward the solution
 - A rare chance to see that we are very similar in the problems we face and the challenges we are up against
- κ. Topic Presentations - Studying and learning about our fellowship
- A great educational tool
 - Dissemination in both directions from the forum
 - The Sky's the Limit; we can pursue any and all fellowship concerns
 - A time for Creativity, Inspiration and Motivation

The Southern Zonal Forum is a gathering of NA members, no matter where they are from, to seek out solutions to everyday opportunities that arise before us. Everybody is welcome to participate.

Finally I leave you with these thoughts:
With enthusiasm and using audience participation, we propose to grab the attention of each participant through communicating avenues for solutions with humor and brevity. Our purpose is to cultivate an atmosphere of excitement and unwavering commitment for the solutions to fellowship needs utilizing effective communication and member participation. We fulfill our purpose by sharing our experiences and validating those techniques with evidence of the results. By gathering input from our participants we encourage the fulfillment of this purpose, inviting open communication and

participation. As a result, our topic is communicated using presentation tools showing everyone are input as a part of the solutions. We summarize by grabbing the participants with their own solutions to a topic and restating the purpose with the information from their own examples, letting them touch the results with their own hands.