

Region 9 Assembly report to SEEIG

The Region 9 assembly was held in Hoeven, The Netherlands, from Wednesday 26 October to Friday 28 October 2016. The assembly was hosted by the Dutch Intergroup, and the venue was Conferentiecentrum Bovendonk, a former seminary, about 50 miles from Eindhoven.

Facts and figures

There were 21 reps, 3 board members, the R9 trustee, and a parliamentarian present. Countries represented at the assembly were: England, Ireland, Sweden, Israel, France, Greece, Belgium, Iceland, Poland, Portugal, Netherlands, Scotland, South Africa, Italy, Spain and Germany.

To be quorate, the assembly needed 5 Region 9 countries to be present. As there were 16 countries present, the meeting was quorate.

Of the 21 reps, 13 did not have English as a first language. And over half of the reps were Green Dots (i.e. it was their first time attending the Region 9 assembly). I was appointed to mentor two Green Dots (from Poland and Portugal). There was an abstinence countdown, and there were members present with over 30 years of abstinence. The 7th tradition was collected on Thursday, and the total was 175.24 EUR, £14.50, and \$0.01!!!!

Business commenced at 17:00 on Wednesday, and finished around 17:00 on Friday. The convention commenced on Friday evening and finished Sunday afternoon.

Wednesday evening

The assembly opened with the serenity prayer in English and Dutch. There were a number of readings and all the members introduced themselves. There were announcements on housekeeping and etiquette, and a credentials report to ensure the meeting was quorate.

The chair explained a different approach to service this year by using task forces instead of committees. The assembly would pick 9 tasks for the year, which is more manageable and attainable than leaving the number of tasks/goals open ended. Region 9 has set three goals for the year and these are:

- Prioritizing abstinence
- Promoting a culture of service; and
- Grow unity

The parliamentarian explained his role and a bit about parliamentary procedure. The agenda was approved, the ground rules were adopted, the 2015 minutes were approved without any objections, and the 2016 minutes approval committee was appointed. Each rep then briefly shared about what's going well in their service bodies.

The treasurer asked reps to remind groups that when they send money to Region 9, they should use their group as the reference, and not their name. Otherwise it is very difficult to ascertain where the funds have been sent from.

There was a workshop on Friday night where reps could share about the challenges their service bodies are facing, and also share potential solutions to these common problems.

Thursday

Business started at 9am, with officers reports. There was an opportunity for any additions/updates and questions from reps on the reports.

The parliamentarian and Bylaws committee chair held a workshop called “Fun with motions” which explained in a light-hearted and accessible way how motions are dealt with (deliberation, questions, voting etc)

The consent agenda was amended to include BM4 (about online banking). The consent agenda therefore consisted of:

- **BLB** (The motion brings Region 9 Bylaws into compliance with the new definition of a group (does not have to meet in real time) adopted at WSBC 2016)
- **BM1** (The motion generalises our current situation with regards to electronic communication business)
- **BM3** (creates a policy which will be of use when no host has come forward for organising next Assembly/Convention)
- **BM4** (It will help to use online banking more effectively within Region 9. It can also be used for money transactions and not only for an overview)

The consent agenda was unanimously adopted. The remainder of the agenda items were deliberated and voted on:

BLA (to add two new officers to the Region 9 board – a member at large and a communications officer). An amendment was proposed to change ‘member at large’ to ‘general officer’ and this change was instituted. There was a request to ‘divide the question’ (in other words to vote on the two additional officer roles separately, rather than as one). This was successful and the motion was split.

The motion to add a communications officer failed.

The motion to add a general officer was adopted.

BM2 (It emphasizes the importance of officers using their Region 9 generic e-mail). A simple majority was required. A clear majority was obtained and the motion was adopted.

BM5 (It removes most of the Finance and Budget Manual (appendix A) from the R9 Policy and Procedures (P&P). This is information which is mostly used by the members of the Finance and Budget committee). There were no cons and the floor was unanimously in favour of the motion. Motion adopted.

BM6 (Housekeeping to remove references to Appendix A from the P&P). There were no cons and the floor was unanimously in favour of the motion. Motion adopted.

Following deliberation of new business, we approved and adopted the new budget. There were some corrections to the budget that had been circulated prior to the assembly, and I am awaiting distribution of the updated version.

The chair reminded reps of the chain of communication in OA. That when we have queries, questions etc (for example about service or the traditions), the first point of contact should be the service body beyond yours. But the Region 9 board are a resource when there is a question, concern etc, and they are a stop on the chain of communication.

The first taskforce session was held on Thursday afternoon. Three groups were formed and asked to brainstorm what we would like Region 9's tasks to be for the year, with an emphasis on coming up with ideas (rather than focusing on obstacles or past failures). The aim is that eventually we would have 6 tasks: two for each of the Region 9 goals for the year (**prioritizing abstinence, promoting a culture of service, and grow unity**).

There were two workshops held on Thursday evening. The first was a Virtual meetings workshop. This was really interesting as we actually all logged on to two different online OA meetings, so get hands on experience on how these are conducted. Following this was the translations workshop, ran by the Region 9 trustee. You can find slides for this workshop here: <http://www.oaregion9.org/region-9-membersgroups/region-9-assembly/hoeven/>

Friday

Business started at 9am with elections. The following officers were elected:

Secretary – Emma, England

Treasurer – Una, Ireland

General Officer – David, Israel

WSBC delegate- Olafia, Iceland

Task Force Coordinators – Ewa, Poland. Isabella, Sweden. Margaret, Ireland.

Spanish Language Service Board rep – Monica, Spain

Other service positions were filled on a 'volunteer basis' (for example, bylaws coordinator, website coordinator, sponsors list, newsletter, absentee country outreach). These were for the most part filled from the members present, although some members not presented had already committed to do service prior to the assembly.

Bids to host Region 9 Assembly and Convention 2017 and 2018

Iceland presented a bid to host 2017. The proposed dates were 1- 5 November 2017. The venue is a budget hotel near Reykjavik. The prices are approximately 85 EUR per night, 13 EUR per lunch per person and 16 EUR per dinner per person. The venue is approximately 35-40 minutes from the airport, costing around 25 EUR by bus. The bid was successful.

I presented a bid on behalf of South and East England Intergroup to host the 2018 assembly and convention at Imperial College London in September 2018. The bid was successful. Following the bid, I was made aware that the dates we had originally presented (5-9 September) coincide with a Jewish holiday, and this would have a detrimental impact on some reps ability to attend the assembly, as well as overall attendance at the convention. Following the assembly, the bid committee contacted the venue to confirm other dates, and a more suitable timing of 12 – 16 September 2018 has been agreed.

The committee put a lot of time and effort into producing the bid, and provided me with an excellent document with all the relevant information, beautifully presented. I was able to answer most of the questions I was asked. I am very grateful to the enthusiasm and persistence of the bid committee.

However, now we have been successful in securing the bid, the real work begins!! Whilst 2018 may seem like a long way off now, we do need to start getting preparations underway, and of course that means we need members willing to give service. *Please consider if you are able to give service on the assembly and convention committee. It is also very likely you know other members who would like to get involved. This is not limited to intergroup reps, so please tell your groups about this service opportunity during the announcements at the meetings you go to.* Anyone who is interested, or who wants to know more, can get in touch with me at: region9@oasouthandeastengland.org.uk

Task Forces continued

Each of the three groups presented their 6 tasks to the floor. Each task fell within one of the Region 9 goals for the year. The following tasks were agreed by the assembly:

Prioritize Abstinence

- Create a daily reading/journal/calendar with an abstinence focus
- Start a Region 9 e-mail group for certain languages
- Setting up a virtual meeting with a Twelfth Step Within focus

Promote a culture of service

- Form a fundraising/financial awareness committee
- Create a service desk (containing a help desk and useful documentation)
- Create a Financial OA Glossary

Grow Unity

- Twinning of Intergroups with different countries
- Translate the 'Translations Workshop' material/slides
- Visit meetings/country outreach

I will be serving on the 'Promote a culture of service' task force. I have been in contact with the Task Force Coordinator since the assembly to confirm my commitment to the Financial OA Glossary and Service Desk tasks.

Finally, once business was concluded, each member had the opportunity for personal sharing about their Region 9 experience. There was also a 'Green Dot' ceremony to congratulate the newcomers on their first assembly, and to remove their green dots! The assembly closed at 17:00.

Region 9 Convention

The convention started on Friday evening and the session consisted of 'speed sharing', where members got the opportunity to share and 'break the ice' with many members in the room. On Saturday, there were a number of workshops and meetings (held in English and Dutch), including a speaker meeting, a lifeline reading meeting, an OA slogans meeting, and a workshop entitled 'Where am I in my recovery'. In this workshop, the leader read out multiple choice questions about your recovery, and you would move to a space in the room depending on your answer to the question. There was then opportunity to share on the answers.

Unfortunately, because of my travel arrangements, I missed the convention on Sunday. I was grateful however to have had some recovery opportunities on Saturday, following the business of the preceding days. I also had the opportunity to enjoy the beautiful grounds of the venue, and spend time connecting with my fellows from all over the world.

It was great to catch up with people I had met at least years assembly, as well as make new friends. I feel that it was of great benefit to me that I had attended the Region 9 assembly last year as a rep, as I understood the process a lot more, and was therefore able to be of more use. This helped me to be of greater service to both SEEIG and to Region 9.

I came away from the assembly and convention feeling inspired, encouraged, and with a renewed hope of what we as individuals and as an Intergroup can do to carry the message to compulsive eaters. I also felt humbled by the dedication and commitment of the Region 9 members who travelled to carry out the business of OA (often not in their native language) in a spirit of love and service. I am grateful to have been a part of that process, and I look forward to serving Region 9 and our Intergroup over the coming year.

If you have any questions about my report, about the assembly, or anything else Region 9 related, please do let me know. I would be very happy to talk to you about it.

In gratitude and fellowship

Holly

November 2016