

Ohio State Convention

Southwest Ohio General Service Area 56 hosted the 2011 Ohio State Convention this year. Ohio State Conventions focus on general service work so the speakers and presentations include experience with all three of our legacies: Recovery, Unity and Service. The theme of this year's convention was *Passing on the Spiritual Keys*. In A.A. Comes of Age, it says "Dr. Silkworth gave us the needed knowledge of our illness, but Sam Shoemaker had given us the concrete knowledge about what we could do about it. One showed us the mysteries of the lock that held us in prison; the other passed on the spiritual keys by which we were liberated" (p.39). On Friday evening we were treated to readings of Sam Shoemaker's writing, including his moving poem, *Stand at the Door*.

We had four great open lead meetings during the weekend. Sharon and Bill F. from Marietta, OH shared their stories Friday evening. Pauline W. from Newport, KY shared her recovery in the Al-Anon Fellowship. Don M., our Trustee-at-Large from Metairie, LA, told us about his recovery Saturday night and Mary D. from Bloomfield, NJ shared her experience, strength and hope with us on Sunday morning. Both Don and Mary also gave reports about the General Service Board and Office and encouraged questions and discussions from members of our fellowship through out the weekend. We were lucky to have a Trustee-at-Large at our convention this year. Don has the honor and privilege of carrying A.A.'s message around the world and shared some of his global experiences with us.

The programming committee approached panel presentations with a new idea this year. Instead of having customary Traditions and Concepts panels, the committee had panels about Sponsorship, the Home Group, Service Work and Finding a Spiritual Path that incorporated the Traditions and Concepts into their topics. It wasn't always easy making the connections, but the presenters did a wonderful job describing the functional application of our spiritual principles.

The programming committee introduced discussion roundtable topics at this year's convention. Their goal was to create a space for sometimes difficult fellowship conversations and how our Traditions are applied, and sometimes not applied, in our fellowship. Stimulating discussions about biases in the Big Book, being too autonomous, having a powerless purse and the traditions police court were held with a spirit of love for A.A. and gratitude for the freedom we have found in Alcoholics Anonymous.

Area 54, Northeast Ohio, will host the 2012 Ohio State Convention. Their Planning Committee discussed the possibility of having Akron A.A. tours the day before the Convention. The Ohio State Convention is usually held in July. I'm sorry; I didn't grab a flier so I can't give you an exact date. I'm grateful to the members of Area 56 attended and I am grateful for all the love, time and energy the Ohio State Planning Committee put in to the 2011 Ohio State Convention.

In Love and Service,

Alicia R.
Panel 60/Area 56
SW Ohio Delegate