

2011 East Central Regional Forum

November 11, 12 & 13th, the East Central Regional Forum will be in Miamisburg, Ohio. This will be the first time Area 56 hosted a forum and if it continues to rotate at its present rate, it won't return for another 28 years. Regional forums started in 1975, a few years after Bill W. died, as a way for the General Service Board (including the Grapevine and General Service Office) to stay in touch with A.A. members in the U.S. and Canada. I like to think of it as the Grapevine and G.S.O. road show. Instead of us going to 475 Riverside Drive in New York to visit our offices, they are packing up and visiting us here in Ohio.

I'm a little embarrassed to admit it, but I've only been to 2 regional forums. I wasn't sure what to expect at my first forum. I was thinking something like an international convention, just on a smaller scale. It was similar in that there were over 500 people from what I thought was 'all over', but it was different in that we all met in the same room. Also, I went there expecting A.A. meetings but what I got was presentations, opportunities to ask questions and to discuss whatever was on my mind about Alcoholics Anonymous. There is no registration fee. This is another service paid for by your home group's contribution to the General Service Office. You can register at www.aa.org or you can download a form at our area website, www.aaarea56.org and mail it in. While you are there, you can meet staff members, Trustees (both alcoholic and non-alcoholic) and really get a behind the scenes look at our first tradition in action; *Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. Unity.*

Recently I heard a long timer say that A.A. isn't someplace you go to and it isn't something you do. A.A. is something you belong to. I am so grateful that my path showed me that Alcoholics Anonymous belongs to us and we belong to it. The forum will have lots of great fellowship, presentations about what is going on with our fellowship and discussion about our role in this benign anarchy. Forums are a meeting place to ask questions and spark new ideas to help carry A.A.'s message of hope to the still-suffering alcoholic. If you have been rocketed to a 4th dimension of existence, beyond your wildest dreams, or if you would like to be, I encourage you to attend the forum in November.