

Convention Brainstorming

Part A) Committee of the Whole on Conventions at Region 5 Assembly July 11, 2015

Part B) Intergroup input during and after the conference call on September 23, 2015

A) COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE ON CONVENTIONS July 2015

- Mini Convention:
 - Some intergroups were very excited about the mini convention idea.
 - Some people feel a mini convention would be just as much work as a full convention.
 - A mini-convention would give IG's a chance to host without the burden of a full convention.
- Attractive locations for Conventions:
 - Canada
 - UP of MI
 - SW MI
 - Mackinac Island
 - SE Ohio
 - Athens, OH
 - Hocking Hills State Park, OH
 - Wisconsin Dells
 - Madison, WI
 - Brownsville, OH
 - Brownsville, IN
 - Toledo, OH
 - Brown County State Park, IN
 - Bloomington, IN
 - Indianapolis, IN
 - Lake Geneva, WI
 - Door County, WI
 - College towns
 - Somewhere with an airport/hot tub/ ...
- Why have people not gone to conventions
 - Financial reasons
 - Relatively expensive
 - Big hotel - expensive
 - Transportation
 - Registration expensive
 - Are there alternative ways to make money?
 - Are there less expensive venues?
 - Did not feel welcomed at a convention
 - Not enough abstinence – not helpful to recovery
 - Scheduling conflict
 - Time
 - Travel

- Too close to other events
 - Is convention style attractive to younger people?
 - Maybe vary topics for different demographics
 - Same speakers over and over
 - Speakers not stay on topic
 - Room capacity insufficient
 - Having to stay overnight (commitments, comfort level, not have roommate to defray cost, ...)
 - Hard to sit so long – need motion
 - Hiking, Yoga, Exercise, Dancing, ...
- Hosting convention
 - Bigger convention in desirable place
 - How does region attract virtual members?
 - Region 5 as whole (not board) host with help from local IGs
 - Have local fellowship just work on the local part (venue, local info, ...)
 - Hosting a convention can provide an IG with a lot of money they may need.
 - Hosting could be done by more than one intergroup.
 - An IG that is experienced in hosting conventions could “sponsor” an IG that is new at it.
- Assembly with convention
 - Assembly Thursday and Friday, convention Fri through Sun
 - R1: Assembly Thurs, Fri am, Convention Fri pm-Sun
 - R9: Assembly followed by convention (this year in Paris)
 - R10: Assembly followed by convention
 - R8: 3 assemblies combined with convention per year, rotating around region
 - R4: 1 convention every other year
 - R6 & R7: Like R5 financially
 - IG bid on location
 - IG offer services as host for locality:
 - Restaurants
 - Services
 - Hotels
 - Maps
 - Local stuff
 - The region deals with the rest of the planning
 - IGs don’t get burned out
 - IG does not share in the funds
 - R7 had convention in the same place for many years
 - Beach location due to low attendance
 - Starting to rotate now
 - R3: 2 assemblies, convention tied to one
 - Florida: State convention – not related to Region 8
- WSC will soon be on a 5 year cycle.
- Not having annual conventions: have bigger conventions and plan ahead to have funds on years when not holding convention, or have other fund raisers.
- R6 makes between \$10,000-\$15,000 from convention.

Other notes:

- Convention Hosting IGs may need to sit on the income for a year to make good use of income.
- Bloomington, IN, is a lovely location and a miniscule IG. Perhaps could partner with Indianapolis, etc to have convention
- Maybe region should sponsor convention.
- Intergroups experienced in hosting may be able to sponsor other intergroups.
- How literally must convention focus on the steps, traditions, concepts.? We need clearer information for planning the convention program, what is required and what is allowed.
- Why is convention always in the fall?
 - P&P?
 - Summer convention for family vacation during summer break
 - (Not for retreat, just for convention)
- Maybe IG could share funds from their events with R5 so we don't need to have convention every year.
- Find other ways to raise funds.
- Family friendly.
- Assembly at State Park, cheaper, get lodge, activities for family, not big cities all the time.
- Region get behind the hosts – assign states or IGs to help with various parts
- Seasoned convention people on Region convention committees.
- Smaller conventions, one family friendly, maybe other somewhere else.
- Business and convention together
- What about 2 retreats?
- Suggestion that Region 5 hosts 2017 convention
- Cincinnati is considering 2017

Themes:

- 1) change in topics/focus
- 2) change in format
 - a. combine with assembly
- 3) R6&7 model:
 - a. Not share profit
 - b. Host IG just do local stuff
 - c. Region convention committee do the work
- 4) Change in the timing
 - a. Summer – for family friendly
- 5) Change in location
 - a. Family friendly
- 6) Smaller events instead
- 7) Hold convention alternate years
- 8) Multiple IGs hosting together
- 9) MN, IA, FL host state convention, OH Day of Sharing, Hoosier Recovery Weekend
- 10) Give better information on flyer as to what convention is
- 11) List general topics like WSC offers on flyer: 100 pounders, focus on anorexia & bulimia, ...
- 12) Use word “recovery” wherever we can.
- 13) Let different areas in region work on various tasks for convention.
- 14) Find other ways to raise funds – smaller events, products, ...

B) Convention Conference Call September 23,2015

Board: Denise, Patty, Linda, Susan

Background: 2 year lead time with convention bids, until the 2016.

What can we do different? July 24th email notes from committee of the whole on convention at the July assembly.

- **Central Illinois** (Di C)
 - Most do not want to be gone for an entire weekend. Like it closer – but didn't go to Schaumburg....
 - Some interest in vacation location.
 - Keep cost down
 - Have schedule ahead of time
- **CSSI**
- **CHI-WIF**
- **Forest City**
- **SNI** (Chris B)
 - Reached out to all on email list.
 - Received 2 responses: Date and timing needs better consideration – 2016 is only 12 days after WSC
 - Economical, easily accessible location
 - Vacation location place? Prefer easy convention weekend...
 - More early birds sessions and workshops (Can register at 3, but first sessions started at 6:30).
 - Reentry speaker, what to expect when go from convention to home.
- **Turning Point**
- **Central Indiana**
- **KISS**
- **Northwest Indiana** (Robin K subbing for Kevin F)
 - Discussed at last IG meeting.
 - Like idea of mini-conventions (one day) in more convenient location, rotating around region.
 - Keep costs down
 - Not in favor of summer dates (family conflicts)
 - Would it be just as much work? Raffles – just fifty-fifty to Keep it Simple
 - Concentrate on recovery
 - Keep mini events simple to avoid the same amount of work as a convention.
- **Three Rivers**
- **Louisville Metro**
- **Bluegrass**
- **Greater Ann Arbor**
- **Greater Detroit**
- **Jackson Area** (Emailed by Carol D)
 - Related to the concern of the cost to participants:
 - We appreciate the efforts made to arrange more reasonable hotel, registration, and banquet costs by the region.

- JAIG members expressed they could give up the luxury of a hotel for a college or other meeting location
- **Southwest Michigan**
- **UP of Michigan**
- **Western Michigan**
- **Central Ohio Service**
- **Cleveland Central** (Emailed by Juliette R)
 - Overwhelmingly in favor of not changing a thing. We really cannot see the problem. Chicago was well attended and Detroit has stepped up.
 - Suggest that smaller IG's pair with larger ones based on geographic proximity or other relationships, (i.e. within the same state) to bid and do the work.
 - If within our guidelines: bylaws, traditions and concepts: we suggest Region 5 create a fixed rotation schedule of locations/IG's/"sister" IG's and we follow a calendar, knowing our "turn" comes up every so many years and allowing the local IG's to plan ahead. Then the Region board and delegates assist the given IG to succeed.
 - We should not deny the greater fellowship the opportunity of annual conference service.
- **Crossroads of Hope**
- **Greater Canton**
- **Greater Cincinnati**
- **Greater Dayton**
- **Mad River Valley**
- **Land Between the Lakes**
- **Madison**
- **Milwaukee Area** (Emailed by Lynn H)
 - A Region 5 convention every other year would be preferred
 - The idea of connecting assembly to the convention was well received.
 - The group did not seem to think choosing a vacation destination for the family would increase attendance.
- **Rock River**