

A Brief History of the Carolina Region*

The Carolina Region was formed after a meeting of addicts under the grandstand bleachers at Myrtle Beach, S. C. at an AA convention (Surrender by the Sea) . This meeting was held on October 10, 1981 and groups from Greenville, S.C., Charleston, S.C., Myrtle Beach, S.C., and Waynesville, N.C. voted unanimously to form the Carolina Regional Service Committee. The purpose for forming the region was to carry the message to the addict who still suffers and to promote unity between the groups of North and South Carolina. The first formal RSC (stated as 2nd meeting in minutes) was held in January of 1982 in Greenville, S.C. with approximately six GSRs or their Alternates in attendance.

Our region has always included groups from North and South Carolina, and since late 1983 a small part of Virginia. It is of special interest, that the region was formed prior to any areas formation. Areas did not begin to form until after July 1982. GSRs, as representatives, were still attending the regional meetings as late as 1984. The first Area to register with the world was the First Carolina Area: the geographic area from Columbia to the South Carolina Coast. Other early areas included Asheville (Western Carolina), Greenville (Upper South Carolina), Charlotte (Greater Charlotte), and Foothills (Hickory & Winton-Salem). These were soon followed with the formation of Twin City Area (December 1983) N. C. Coastal (March 1984, Coastal Carolina) and Capitol Area (December 1984). Growth has continued in the region until today when we have over 400 meetings taking place in 22 member areas.

In early 2001, two Areas (Greensboro and Inner Coastal) broke off from the Carolina Region and formed the North Carolina Region. They have been joined by the Down East Area and the Central NC Area a new area formed near Burlington/Graham.... But that is their Story to tell.

Meetings in the Carolinas have an erratic history with meetings starting and closing. The earliest meetings reported in the World Directory were in 1978 with meetings listed for Jacksonville, N. C. and for Gastonia, N. C. Meetings have been reported in Greenville, S. C. (1978), Bryson City, N. C. and Columbia, S. C. (1979). The longest continuous meeting (Clean & Green) was started in Greenville, S. C. (January 1980) with help from members from Atlanta (Ron from Atlanta moved to NC and started this meeting) and fresh AA recruits. About eight week later, another meeting started in Myrtle Beach, S. C. A meeting was also starting in Asheville about this time. As far as where the meetings went from here is a very debatable issue due to poor documentation. Hopefully more will be revealed. By 1983, however, there were meetings in at least 16 cities in North Carolina and at least 10 cities in South Carolina.

Just as the region formed before we had areas, the first regional convention was held in July 1980 before we had a region. It was put on by Asheville and Greenville SC groups with help from members in Atlanta. The convention was called the Blue Ridge Mini-Convention named after the location at Lookup Lodge in Blue Ridge, S.C. Approximately 50 addicts attended this event, which at the time was considered an overwhelming number. The name Blue Ridge Mini-Convention stuck and the convention was called this until 1987 when it became the Carolina Regional Convention. Our convention was held at Warren Wilson College for several years and then in Cherokee, N. C. for two more before being moved around the Region on a rotation basis (motion to do this made April 1986). The convention was changed to a biennial event beginning in 2001 alternating with the world convention. This decision was made partly due to the number of Area conventions held in our Region.

Area conventions started early in this region with Greenville (Upper SC Area) having the first followed by First Carolina with Serenity Fest in September 1983 and Twin City in April 1984. Some people consider the First Blue Mini- Ridge Convention as the first one held by the South Carolina Area. The Jan. 24, 1982 RSC minutes state that Clean & Green, New Day, and Agape agreed to turn the Blue Ridge Mini Convention over to the Region

Other early service involvement's included both P. I. (date not available) and Literature Review (April 1982, Phil H. chair). Not much information is available on P. I. subcommittee. Literature Review was responsible for the review and distribution of literature. These two functions remained together until January 1988 when the subcommittee was split into Literature Review and Literature Stockpile. The Literature Review subcommittee also was responsible for producing the regional directory until October 1988 when this

function was moved to the Public Information sub-committee. They also published the minutes of the Regional Service Committee meetings until July 1984 when a regional Secretary was elected. Today the directory has been replaced by our web page which has a current list of meetings in the Carolina Region (www.CRNA.org)

As one might imagine, the stress of literature distribution and storage on one individual eventually became too great. A motion to look into forming a Regional Service Office was passed in September of 1987. After much investigation, the office opened at 1327 Beaman Place, Suite 9, Greensboro, N.C. in March of 1989. The literature stockpile was moved there from its location in Burlington, N. C. Marc F. was the first acting manager followed by Bill S. in January of 1993. First year sales were in the neighborhood of \$80,000.00 and have continued to grow. Fortunately, the office has always operated in the black and we are grateful to our RSO managers for their part in accomplishing this task. The RSO has not only served as a distributor of literature, but also as a meeting place for subcommittees and as a source of copying & mailing for other literature such as minutes. The office operates under the direction of the Office & Finance subcommittee. A secondary function of the office is to store and maintain a list of our Archives. It is nice to have a place to store records that does not relapse.

Another literary service was provided to the region through our newsletter known as the *Freedom Express* first published in August of 1982. At that time groups were really spread out through the region and meetings were small. The idea of a newsletter was born to disseminate information around to the groups. Originally, the newsletter contained the regional minutes, status reports from subcommittees, and a list of meetings as well as original recovery literature. Since the region was small with limited funds, it was necessary for the newsletter to be self supporting. Subscriptions rates were \$9.00 per year (6 issues) or \$2.00 per issue. Copies were mailed to individuals who subscribed. Now, the newsletter is a free service provided by RSC to its member areas and is published quarterly. The *Freedom Express* was produced by the Newsletter subcommittee until June 1990 when this function was moved to the Literature Review. **Ross C.** was the first editor. The newsletter has been a great source for keeping our fellowship informed as to what's happening and as a way to carry the message to the still suffering addict.

Our region has a long history of H & I service. The first regional subcommittee was formed in July 1984 with Pete C. as chair. The NA message was being carried to facilities (detox. center, hospitals/treatment centers and correctional institutions) prior to the concept of H & I service. Meetings held for those incarcerated were called "prison meetings." According to the N.C. Department of Corrections, the first prison meeting in NC was held in early 1982 at the Forsyth Advancement Center in Winston-Salem, N.C. Meetings sprang up through out the Carolinas shortly thereafter. A major catalyst to meeting in South Carolina resulted from a lawsuit (1984 or 1985) against the SC Department of Corrections making it mandatory for NA meetings to be available to anyone who requested a NA meeting. One city, Columbia, SC became known as the H&I capital of the region with 11 H & I meetings being supported by the only two existing home groups. H & I has continued to grow. A H & I Awareness Weekend started in 1991 (August 16-17 in Greenville, S.C.) and continues today. It has grown and is now know as the Awareness Weekend and includes PI presentations.

The policy subcommittee (originally policy & procedure changed to policy 10-6-90) has also been essential to the development of this region. In April 1982 the first policy subcommittee was formed and consisted of the RSC officers. At the August 1984 RSC, a motion was passed to form a separate policy subcommittee with Mike B. as chair. The purpose of this subcommittee was to review proposal on policy change and make recommendations to RSC as to their feasibility. In 1985 a motion was passed that all motions affecting policy should go to Policy subcommittee. This act itself was instrumental to the development of this subcommittee and its' involvement at the RSC. Policies made were listed in the minutes and from time to time collected and printed out with the date they were passed. These early "lists" were passed out to members. Over time some of the data was lost and in July 1989 a new direction was set for the policy subcommittee with the election of Susan V, as chair. Work on a guide to policy began by culling out existing policies from old minutes. Seven core members did most of this work. The final result was a booklet which was accepted by the CRSC with the exception of the election section. This section was redone and those operational guidelines received final approval on January 1

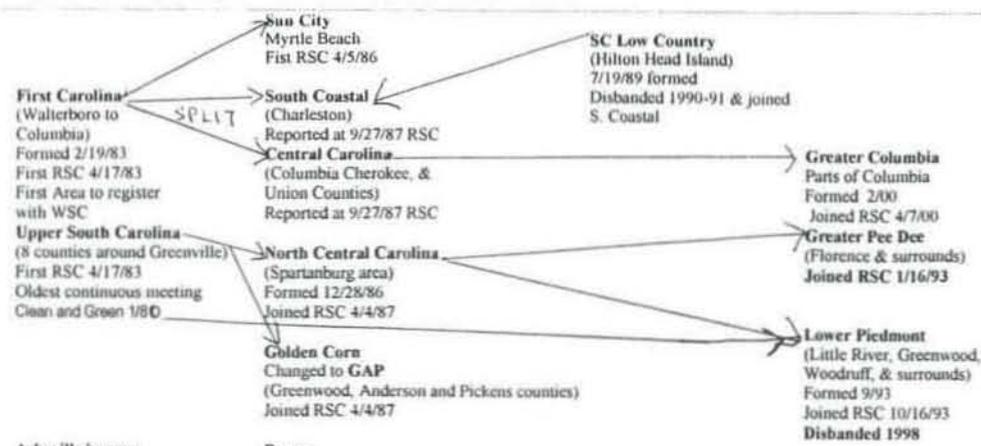
During the next two years a "fine tuning"

of the guide took place. At present the guide is reviewed and amended as a ongoing process. This document has been of great assistance to the flow of business at the CRCs meetings.

Other notable accomplishments of the CRSC are *a Disaster Preparation Handbook* (1990) and an *Information Booklet for Making our Meeting Accessible to Addicts with Special Needs* (1995). Both of these booklets were produced by ad hoc subcommittees.

The Carolina Region has come a long way from its' humble beginnings under the bleachers. We have learned a lot over the past 22 years and hope to learn more. We are grateful for those addicts whose selfless service has made us what we are today. Service has always been a large part of the Carolina Region "we keep what we have only by giving it away." We have been privileged to be able to host a world quarterly meeting in October 1986 Charlotte, NC and the May1996 WSC in Greensboro, North Carolina. A number of our members have been able to serve the fellowship on the world level and share a little of their Carolina experience with those around the World. They have also brought the world experience back to our region and helped us improve our services.

* This information was gathered from countless personal interviews, region & area minutes, flyers, and any other documents. As we all know individual memories are subjective.



NA Spreads:
10-10-81

7/3/82 Decision to form Areas

7/8 World Directory Groups from meetings in cksouville & astonia, NC

Asheville became **Western Carolina** reported at 10/7/90 RSC (Asheville & west to Tenn.) 2nd meeting 8/7/83

Groups from Greenville, Asheville, Waynesville, & Myrtle Beach decide to form the Carolina Region

