



Network Newspaper

The Magic of the Network Commission

By Maria Morozova

The Network Commission or the NetCom of AEGEE-Europe calls itself one of the most mobile and active bodies of AEGEE-Europe. This is true, as the NetCom is a magic tool that keeps the network together and fuels cooperation between the local and European level.

How old is the NetCom?

It is already 12 years old, as it was introduced at the Agora in Athena, November 1996. By the next Agora in Enscheda (Spring 1997) a Network Commission Implementation Team had created present structures of the NetCom.

Who are these heroes of practical networking?

These are 11 Network Commissioners that are elected at Agoras for the period of one year. Each time after an Agora these 'wizards' gather for their secret magic conference where they divide the Network among themselves according to their clandestine principles. After a small investigation some of these principles were revealed: language area, number and strength of locals, and logic thinking.

Usually the 'magicians' have their small helpers known as SubCommies that serve as bridges between the NetCommies and the locals. Furthermore, as a result of negotiations with the PRWG, PR Subcommies emerged recently to help the locals specifically with various PR issues.

What this magic body usually does?

Network Commissioners have a bunch of tasks, and therefore their functions best describe the tasks they fulfill:

- Pillars: they support locals and working groups with everything from PR to moral support;
- Creators and Developers: they create new locals and support existing ones, especially those on the brink of extinction;
- Stick & Carrot: they motivate the locals to remain active, cooperate with other locals from their region and fulfill the requirements towards AEGEE-Europe;
- News Megaphones: they enhance the flow of information between the locals at European level;
- Managers: they coordinate the organization of Network Meetings and motivate locals to organize various events;
- Secret Advisors: they assist the Network Development Director in his/her tasks;
- Walking Encyclopedias: they provide information and help to all bodies at European level.

What's next?

AEGEE is very proud of the NetCom and wishes it long-lasting success and fruitful work, as AEGEE believes in the real NetCom magic that is needed for networking. The NetCom never stops and always comes up with new surprises and magic tricks to the network during Agoras so get ready for some stunning news from the NetCom at the Agora-Aachen!

Autumn Network Meetings 2008

By: Network Commission

What? Fall Network Meeting in Szombathely
When? 16-19th October
Where? Szombathely, Hungary
Who? 25 participants
How? 35 euros
Contact? agee@sek.nyme.hu

What? FNWM Novi Sad
When? 6-9th November
Where? Novi Sad, Serbia
Deadline? 20th October
Who? 23 participants
How? 35 euros
Contact? networkmeeting.aegeenovisad@gmail.com
Main topic? Employment

What? Fall Network Meeting Coruña 2008
When? 7-9th November
Where? Coruña, Spain
Who? 45 participants
How? 35 euros
Contact? nwm.coruna@gmail.com

For other Autumn Network Meetings check www.aegee.org/events for regular updates and information!

Have you ever wanted to have a twin?

By Agnes Leyrer

Imagine how great it must be when there is someone with whom you can share everything! Someone whom you can always ask for support, who you can visit whenever you want and with whom you can share your good and bad moments! You can have parties together, you can help each other or even judge each other (in a constructive way), because you know, the other will always be there for you!

What I am talking about is: having a twin. In AEGEE now you have the opportunity to become twins with another antenna somewhere in Europe and enjoy all the benefits of joining together!

The concept of twin-antennae has been existing for years; however none has really implemented it yet. This year the NetCom is making progress to realise the dream and bringing AEGEE-antennae from different countries together even closer to each-other.

Having a twin, like in real life, can mean various things. For example, you can agree on becoming thematically twins (through thematical working groups), technical twins (support in HR, PR, FR etc.), Agorae twins (guiding each other through how to register, how to understand proposals and so on), exchange twins, project twins or event twins. As you see, the list of twin-kinds is long and open, thus the kind of co-operation is basically up to your creativity.

What you have to do is to publically sign a certificate with your twin at a Statutory meeting (EBM or Agora) or Network Meeting. In it you state that you become official AEGEE-twins, and describe how you plan to co-operate. If the idea of a twin-antenna winds you up, please, contact the NetCom at the Agora for further information and get home with a new sibling! ;)



SPEAKING: Patrick Kabasci, Speaker of the Network Commission, already looking forward to the AGORA

Patrick: "With this Agora we try to form partnerships among locals" - "Twin antennae" will be the focus

By Anne Hoffmann

1. How are you? Are you excited about the AGORA?

I am fine. Quite a lot to do though! I am veeeery excited about this AGORA, since it is in Aachen, and I am also part of the Organization team.

2. Could you state in short, which tasks you are responsible for as Network Commission?

SPEAKING: Vitaliy Gavrashko, AEGEE-Minsk, Netcom 2006-2007, will never forget his experience as a NetCom

Vitaliy: "It was a team of cheerful, easy-going and talented people."

By Maria Morozova

1. Tell us about yourself: how did you decide to become a Network Commissioner?

By 2006, the Spring Agora in Warsaw I had some experience, knowledge and skills. I organized several events and projects on the local level and visited more than a dozen of European events. I had good contacts in the region, big ambitions and a huge wish to work and develop myself. For the moment I was President of AEGEE-Minsk continuing at European level seemed like common sense.

2. Which antennae did your network include?

These were more than 10 Ukrainian antennae: Kyiv, Kharkiv, Zaporizzhya, Uzhgorod, Odessa, etc., 2 Belarusian – AEGEE-Grodno and AEGEE-Minsk, and also one Russian – AEGEE-Moscow.

3. Which responsibilities did you have, how busy were you?

Frankly speaking, I was not too busy. My main responsibilities included: contact with the CD,

The Netcom has a motto: To serve and protect. This is basically what we are doing. We monitor the network, and if our help is needed, we help. Also we are responsible for a good information flow between European bodies and locals, and to foster cooperation between locals.

3. Is there any focus you have especially during this AGORA?

Yes! This AGORA we try to form partnerships among locals, which we call "Twin Antennae". This is about forming permanent partnerships, not just an exchange or two. There will be several ways to get involved in this, and you will definitely find out... all we need is some locals that want to get in close cooperation with a partner!

4. The topic of the AGORA is "Visions for Europe". What are your imaginations concerning Europe and the Network Commission?

My vision for Europe would be one of closer cooperation in all fields, especially promoting Europe as something with which people can actually identify, but being aware and fostering our differences in culture, as this is what makes things interesting. About the Network this is more or less the same!

writing reports, answering questions to the region, organizing a couple of regional meetings, going several times a year to NetCommies meetings and attending weekly MSN meetings. It was very interesting, as it is very easy to do what you like and what brings you satisfaction.

4. How often did you travel and visit your antennae?

Not as often as I wanted. The major obstacle was financial. I had plenty of time as I was in my 3rd year of study, but I did not have enough funds. However, I managed to visit 6 or 7 antennae, some of them, several times.

5. How effective and successful was cooperation with your antennae?

It depended. Some did not want to establish a contact at all. In order to get a response from an antenna I needed not only to send 10 e-mails, but also call and in some cases go personally to the antenna. On the contrary, cooperating with other antennae was easy and enjoyable. The third category of antennae could be characterized as an antipode to the first non-responsive type antennae: they literally overwhelmed me with questions and initiatives which required me to give answers. Overall, I had good impressions from the work. There are no bad and stupid people in AEGEE,

5. How do you think that locals can realise these visions best?

The feeling of belonging to a network should grow even stronger. They should regard themselves as part of AEGEE, and use the opportunity the network provides. If one cannot do it, maybe 2 or 3 can? But as AEGEE is made of many different people a distinct "style" here and there can really not hurt.

6. What are the most important aspects for locals during the AGORA in your opinion?

Meeting each other in person cannot be replaced by anything else. At the AGORA, locals can form bonds, promote their activities, and on a personal level meet their friends. This is a huge boost in motivation, especially for quite new locals or members. But they should also never forget that the AGORA is where they can shape and decide on the structure of AEGEE.

8. And lastly but not least: If you could only take three things with you to the AGORA, what would they be?

Hmm... Definitely something to write, to note contacts. Something for the European night, and... good mood!



everybody is young, active, interesting... Cooperating with such people is truly rewarding.

6. How can you describe the Network Commission team of that time?

It was a team of cheerful, interesting, easy-going and talented people. I will never forget the moment I came to Brussels for the first Netcom meeting of freshly elected NetCommies. The amount of energy I got during 6 days in the CD house, I used for several months afterwards in my network activities.

7. Can you describe an 'ideal Netcom' in one sentence?

There is no ideal person, moreover, ideal people would be boring and they do not provoke any interest. In my opinion the qualities of a good Netcom are: ambition, sociability, light approach to stress, vitality and a wish to learn and develop oneself.



AEGEE Paris is the oldest antenna in the European network - Vice President Julien Penalba:

“The magical recipe is friendship, fun and work”

by Anne Hoffmann

Take your chance: During the AGORA you can meet the “successors” of Frank Biancheri, the former “Science Po” student who founded AEGEE in Paris 23 years ago. According to Julien Penalba, Vice

President of AEGEE Paris, all the members are very proud of the former AEGEE-ans who have always kept AEGEE Paris lively. Nonetheless, the current members are successful in handling the “heritage”.

The successful story of AEGEE Paris continues until today. Students from Paris and Europe have met, discussed and travelled around Europe so many times - “always keeping in mind the flame, the motivation to discover and shape Europe”, underlines Julien Penalba.

Motivated members of AEGEE Paris managed several times to prevent their local from wasting away, by organizing new events and bringing in new members. Four years ago AEGEE Paris had to start from scratch again and the managed it well. The 30 members are not only active at local level but many of them are also involved in European projects and Working Groups.

Julien Penalba, Vice President of AEGEE Paris, says: “Our magical recipe is very simple: a perfect mix of friendship, fun and work.

AEGEE-Ogre: with Shrek in our pocket

Text: Agnija Kazusa, PR Subcommie & AEGEE-Ogre PR Responsible

Pictures: AEGEE-Ogre archive

The idea of establishing what is at the moment the youngest AEGEE local, AEGEE-Ogre, originated in July 2007. The ones that came up with the idea were four girls – Anita, Anete, Ilona and Agnija – who met up on Yahoo group discussions on the Internet, talking about possible events and the ambiguous and confusing name of the city Ogre. Even the famous cartoon character, Shrek served as an attribute of the prospective local.



One of the greatest AEGEE-Ogre strength is help from their parents, especially during their first Summer University!

The European Day of Languages (EDL) was decided to be the first (local) event organized by this prospective local. It appeared to be a good reason to organize the first real meeting taking place on 13th of September, 2007 in the restaurant “Čili Pica”, located in the shopping centre of Riga. Though the meeting was rather short, it brought results for further activities. Duties were divided and after much work the EDL finally took place in the Ogre Secondary School No.1, on 22nd of November. Icelandic, Norwegian, Italian, Spanish, German and Vietnamese were the represented languages each with 10-15 visitors. Ilona Nukševica, the coordinator of the EDL evaluated the first experience as successful. “The lectors succeeded in raising the interest from our target audience – pupils and students. Besides, there were also some elderly people,” says Ilona.

After the EDL the prospective local started acquiring more members in order to ensure more permanent activities and regular meetings. The organization grew bigger and shortly the board elections were held, all before it finally gained the official status at the European Boards Meeting (EBM) in Delft 2008. After that AEGEE-Ogre started to get ready for the summer events – Midsummer Night in collaboration with AEGEE Culture Working Group and Travelling Summer University “Three Countries – One Love” organized in collaboration with AEGEE-Vilnius and AEGEE-Tartu.

Whatever the difficulty might be we always face it together, enjoying the challenges, taking our share of fun whenever possible and always being serious when needed.” He also knows how to deal with difficult times: “Always remember why you are involved in AEGEE, always remember the good times and never be afraid of challenges.” He advises all active AEGEE-ans to ask “the oldies”, if there are any problems, “because they are of invaluable help.”

Actually, the objective of AEGEE-Paris is very simple, but effective: “Vivre l’Europe”, live and feel Europe – you should also do this during the Agora!



As for future plans, the antenna is now concentrating all its energy for the preparation of two projects supported by the program “Youth in Action”. The first one is an initiative project, „We are here, too!”, that consists in making postcards, souvenirs, then street action and European Language Day to inform local people about foreigners living in Latvia. The second one is an exchange „Between two words”, which will be implemented in Latvia together with AEGEE-Samara, AEGEE-Maskva and AEGEE-St Petersburg. We are going to look at the media to find out about relationships between Latvia and Russia, Russian minority life in Latvia, and we will also visit the most populated Russian city in Latvia, Russian school and organization. We hope to change each other’s stereotypical opinions and open minds!



Signing CdA in EBM Delft 2008 and showing the presentation about city Ogre.

Let's save AEGEE's Mary Rose!

Language problems during NWM's
by Brigitta Kelbert

"Historians have always believed that the Mary Rose sank when it performed a sharp turn during a battle in 1545, but a new theory suggests that Henry VIII's flagship sank because of a disastrous misunderstanding. Namely, the crew spoke little English and did not understand the orders of the commander of the warship."

Network Meetings are facing a similar problem when taking place at international level. English is a way to open these events to any AEGEE member, to get to know different points of view and it is also a special opportunity for the participants to improve their language skills in an intercultural environment. Therefore, workshops, presentations and debates at NWMs are in English, but sometimes, depending on the number of foreign participants and the language level of those who attend the meetings, the organizers choose using the mother tongue instead.

Why may this be a reasonable decision?

NWMs give a perfect chance to learn and create a unique atmosphere by sharing experiences, exchanging plans and ideas, discussing problems, finding possible solutions – to deal with local needs in general. These long weekends are very important in order to motivate people, to support the locals and to transmit enthusiasm for projects and activities.

If participants cannot follow the discussions at full pace and spend the workshops trying to understand instead of actively participating, they might miss the opportunity to improve themselves, their antenna, but also some possible developments or solutions could remain unspeakable. There might also be a case where someone's English knowledge is not quite perfect, thus leading to misunderstandings.



Moreover, if the participants are new members they can lose motivation on account that they cannot express their opinions the way they would in their own language and therefore, this stops them from becoming more active participants.

But let's take a look on the other side!

What happens to participants who do not speak the language of the specific antenna and end up being completely excluded from the debates? Or even from the cultural or social program?

Fortunately, most organizers are aware of this problem and there should be someone available for interpreting at all times. However, we all know that after a while this can become a tiring job and also some information can be lost since the majority of us are not professional interpreters. Depending on personality, the "outsiders" might still enjoy the cultural differences and diversity or might end up bored, since they cannot understand a word!

So the question is, should the number of foreign participants be increased for equality purposes or should NWMs only bring together people from one language area? How can we find the right balance? Is there a solution to this common issue?

As for many other things, there is no perfect recipe. NetComms are trying to come up with different solutions to the problem. In the Spanish region, for example, organizers decide on the language used during workshops when they have the final participants' list. When AEGEEans at the NWM in Ankara were facing a similar situation, they appointed a staff for translating. Therefore, after the meeting was held in Turkish, they interpreted it for the rest of the group. As a result, the program was delayed and the people, who attended, have not got enough time to rest for the next day. So, another solution was found and they ended up dividing the participants into two groups. While a group could work on problems of the region in Turkish, the other had a project development meeting in English – although it took all the energy of the organizers'.

@ Giovanni, Hayal, Julien, Maria, Oana, Peter, Svetlana and Virginia: a big thank for your help and contribution!

All you ever wanted to know about PR SubComms!

PRWG's and NetCom's cooperation
by Brigitta Kelbert

PR SubComms are kind of SubCommissioners specialized in PR.

So far there are 7 candidates for these position, 4 of them already approved, but the aim is to have at least 11 people - each of them responsible for one region.

You may already heard about us, since one of our first tasks were connecting our regions antennae. About our second task – I guess you are reading it already. :-)

Our main task is to connect PR one European and local levels in ways like:

- ~ helping locals doing their PR,
- ~ coordinate communication between the locals,
- ~ reporting requests regarding PR of the locals to PRWG,
- ~ bringing you the European levels strategy and 'corporate' vision,
- ~ promoting upcoming initiatives, like LTC about PR,
- ~ and of course, we would be more than happy to join your upcoming PR events as trainers or advisors.

I wish all of us a fruitful cooperation for the future!

For further information please contact:

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