



MYNAH BIRD

HAWAII AREA #17 NEWSLETTER

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| Assembly | Mirror | Serenity |
| Blueprint | Participate | Sobriety |
| Continue | Powerful | Spiritual |
| Forgiveness | Principles | Steps |
| Harmony | Responsible | Tradition |
| Honesty | Rigorous | Unity |
| Inventory | Self love | |

Delegate Report — Inventory Assembly

Welcome everyone to our second year of Panel 59. By the end of this year we can look forward to knowing how to do our current position, just in time to rotate out! That is the true spiritual meaning of the Spirit of Rotation. It is so good to see all of you, and I am excited to share with you a lot of news from A.A. near and far. This is going to be a great weekend for us as an Area, doing some fact finding and fact facing through our Inventory. I read this recently from the Final Conference Report from the 1st General Service Conference in 1951: "Genuine faith is more than insight; it is always the beginning of action. It is propulsive. It fortifies the will. It begins as an experiment, and ends as an experience." Thank you all for this experiment that is becoming an experience.

I received my Conference Kit in the mail the first week of this month, and am already preparing for the 2010 General Service Conference April 18-24, 2010 in Rye New York. The theme of the Conference this year is "Practicing A.A.'s Principles – The Pathway to Unity." I was assigned to an incoming Panel 60 Delegate as her buddy, and I have already communicated with her via email.

As the Chairperson of the International Conventions / Regional Forums, I have communicated with the Committee via email encouraging participation and inviting any proposed agenda items prior to the January 15, 2010 deadline.

I have been attending the planning meetings for PRAASA 2011, which will be held here on Oahu the first week of March 2011. Work is well underway on that Committee, which I am sure you will hear more about later this weekend.

January 2010 Board Weekend

Later this week I fly to the mainland in route to Rye, New York to attend the General Service Board Weekend. I have received the schedule for the weekend, and look forward to the once in a lifetime experience. I will arrive in New York late Wednesday night, and have Thursday to rest and get used to the time change. I am looking forward to taking the train into the city to meet Evelyn, our previous Puna DCM. The Board Weekend runs from Friday, January 29 through Monday, February 1.

While at the Board weekend I will meet with the Committee co-secretaries for the International Conventions / Regional Forums Committee, of which I am the Chairperson, and get to attend the Trustee Committee meeting as well. Monday morning I will attend the General Service Board meeting. I will present you all with a report back on my experience at both the February Committee meeting and the Inform the Delegate Assembly.

An issue came up about the expense of room nights for the Hawaii Delegate, as they have a policy that if a Delegate arrives prior to Thursday and departs after Monday, the Delegate is responsible for the room cost. I sent an email to the CFO, Don M., our Pacific Regional Trustee Madeleine, and the GSO Manager, Phyllis, regarding these concerns. Here is an excerpt:

After much thought, consideration and prayer, I feel it is my responsibility and duty to bring to your attention the special needs to be considered regarding Delegate travel from Hawaii to New York. Given the distance and five to six hour time difference, the trips are more strenuous than for most other Delegates. I am concerned about the precedent that this sets for future Delegates from Hawaii. According to our literature, financial standing should never be a consideration when making ourselves available for service in AA. Neither should age or physical strength. If a member is elected as Delegate who is on a fixed income, for whom the expense of extra hotel nights would cause financial hardship, or whose health is not so completely robust that leaving New York immediately following the Conference or a Board Weekend would pose a physical hardship, then that person may not be able to fulfill the responsibilities attached to the Delegate position. In conclusion, I ask that you consider including two additional hotel nights for the Area 17 Delegate travel expenses when flying to and from New York is scheduled.

I did not receive a direct reply, however some time after that the Conference Coordinator emailed me confirming that I would be arriving Wednesday night. More shall be revealed.

PRAASA 2010

What is PRAASA?. PRAASA is the Pacific Region Alcoholics Anonymous Service Assembly. The Assembly meets once a year at different locations within the Pacific Region. The Pacific Region consists of 15 Areas in Alaska, Hawaii, California, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Nevada, Utah, and Arizona.

The PRAASA Preamble: "The Purpose of PRAASA is to develop greater unity among the members, groups, Areas of the Pacific Region, to encourage the exchange of ideas and experiences: and to provide an opportunity for members to discuss pertinent aspects of A.A. The Assembly and the PRAASA committee should always foster the Recovery, Unity, and Service legacies of A.A."

The PRAASA agenda usually parallels largely with the Agenda items to be discussed on the General Service Conference in New York and is an excellent opportunity to be more informed on a personal, group, district, and Area level about A.A. and to learn about how other Areas do things, conduct business, and find solutions to some of our common challenges.

PRAASA 2010 will be held March 5 – 7, 2010 at the Radisson Hotel at LAX in Los Angeles, CA.

I have a signup sheet this weekend for people who are pre-registered. I will need this information to put forth names to the PRAASA committee people as possible presenters, readers, round table facilitators and timekeepers. As you all know, Hawaii Area will be hosting PRAASA in 2011.

Inform the Delegate for 2010

I am looking forward with enthusiasm to the Inform the Delegate Assembly in Kona during the last weekend in March 2010. Our Alternate Delegate and I have already got together once to go over the preliminary agenda items for the 2010 GSC, and will be meeting the week the final agenda is sent out to finalize the agenda items prior to the February Committee Meeting. We will be doing panel presentations again, and districts will be pulled from the hat for their assignments. I have previously given out several items which I asked for input on, please see your DCM for more info on that if you don't have a clue about what I am talking about.

International Convention 2010

Celebrating 75 years of Alcoholics Anonymous, the 2010 International Convention, "A Vision for You" will be held in San Antonio, Texas July 1-4, 2010. We currently have over 26,000 people registered for the event. Sales of the souvenir, soft cover edition of "AA Comes of Age" is flourishing, with over half of the registrants purchasing the optional item.

As I mentioned earlier in the year, I am serving as the Coordinator for the Pacific Region's Hospitality Suite. We are selecting Coordinator's from each Area in the Region, who will then schedule the service position time slots. I am pleased to introduce Hawaii Area's Coordinator Kunane. Please talk to him directly if you have an interest in serving in the Pacific Region's Hospitality Suite.

News from AA US / Canada

The General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous, Inc. held its quarterly meeting the last weekend of October, 2009. Here are the highlights:

During the General Sharing Session entitled "Addressing Spirituality in A.A. – Do Our Practices Match Our Principles? Are We Exclusive? Are We Inclusive?" One GSO staff member shared that based on her experience in terms of spirituality in Alcoholics Anonymous, our practices are sometimes exclusive when compared to our principles. When she first heard our stories, she felt she had found a place she belonged, and found hope. But at the end of the meeting everyone held hands and recited the Lord's Prayer, she felt despair and loneliness because; although the prayer itself was "a perfectly lovely prayer" she associated it with church.

After thoughtful consideration by the GSB, the "Hope" video was moved forward as the board did not feel this rose to the level of a Concept V Minority Appeal as detailed in our Twelve Concepts. This video, along with the "Young

Peoples Videos" will be premiered here tomorrow morning for your viewing pleasure.

The AAWS Board approved the nomination of Joseph D. of Kingston, Ontario to be a non-trustee director on the A.A.W.S. board and Roberta L., currently serving non-trustee director, to be their nominee for General Service Trustee on their board.

Michelle M. was appointed Archives Director effective November 1, 2009. New staff member on Corrections, Jim M., began work on September 1 and Mary S.C., started as a new staff member on CPC on October 5, 2009. Valerie O., who was on the International assignment, was promoted to the position of Publications Director. Welcome to these changes and additions to our GSO family.

Publications

Through September, 2009, 1,852,873 books were distributed, up 14.9% from the same period in 2008. Total AA. purchases through September, 2009 were 1,379,096 units, while non-AA.s accounted for 473,777 units, or 25.6% of the total purchases.

Financial

For the first nine months of 2009, ending 9/30/2009 49.68% of groups in Hawaii contributed to G.S.O., compared to this same time period in 2008, in which 50.00% of groups in Hawaii contributed.

Contributions through September 2009 were \$4,371,000, \$303,000 less than budgeted and \$277,400 less than the first nine months of 2008.

AA Grapevine

Year to date, circulation of the Grapevine averaged 103,300 (106,099 in print and 1,143 in audio), an increase of 3.3% over budget. Circulation of La Vina was 9,775, a decrease of 717. The Grapevine distributed A.A. stories in 87,283 books, CDs and other items. The Grapevine financial results through September 2009 reported a loss of \$95,500. La Vina realized a net loss of \$36,780. On a very positive note, Frances Brisbane, Class A trustee, has agreed to serve on the AA Grapevine Board. Her service is greatly appreciated.

The Grapevine has a new version of the Grapevine representative Handbook, of which I have a sample if anyone wants to take a look at it.

General Service Conference

The following suggested changes to the agenda for the 2010 GSC have been preliminarily approved:

- The GSC will start earlier on Sunday, April 18, 2010. Registration and the opening session will start before lunch.
- The trip to GSO/Grapevine offices will be alternated for every other year.
- The Remote Communities Meeting will be on Saturday afternoon.

These changes most likely as the result of being in session well after 12 am this past two years.

Treatment Facilities/Special Needs

A progress report was given regarding the story submissions for the proposed Special Needs pamphlet and after suggestions were made, an updated progress report will be made at the next quarterly meeting. I am pleased to announce that Hawaii Area had one submission for the pamphlet from Maui which I happily forwarded on to the TF/SN Staff assignment.

CPC

There is a revised information service piece for drug court professionals that was approved and will be included in the workbook.

The agenda topic of "full faces in videos" was forwarded to the trustees' committee on Public Information.

Corrections

The Trustees Committee on Corrections is seeking applications for an Appointed Committee Member to work on the subcommittee for the revision to the pamphlet, "It Sure Beats Sitting in a Cell." Hawaii Area was able to submit forth one resume, that of Vernon G., our immediate past Delegate. I will let you all know once someone has been selected.

At the 2009 Conference, the Corrections Committee, on which I am a member, had the task of reviewing the Corrections Kit and Workbook, and offer suggestions on how it could be improved. I had suggested that maybe we include the Conference Approved booklet "*A.A. In Prison – Inmate to Inmate*", which is a short booklet containing stories about members who had been introduced to A.A. in prison and have maintained sobriety. As many of you know, my story is in the latest edition of this booklet, and I had to check out my motives prior to making this suggestion. I asked myself if I was making this suggestion because my story was in the booklet, or was I making it in the spirit of helpfulness and service? I concluded the latter, and after discussing this topic in depth, the Conference Committee decided to put this forth as an Additional Consideration. To refresh your memory, an Additional Consideration is basically a strong suggestion to the Trustees' Committee to take a look at something; and take action if it a good idea and prudent to implement.

In the November 2009 Quarterly Report from GSO it was reported that the Trustees Corrections Committee agreed to add a copy of *A.A. In Prison – Inmate to Inmate* to the Corrections Kit. I would like to share with you guys that when I read that sitting at my dining room table, tears came to my eyes. I felt such a connection to Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole, and was simply amazed and in awe of the Conference process and the Group Conscience of A.A.

Literature

The committee reviewed the report and suggestions from the Publications Department on the pamphlet, "The AA Member – Medications and other Drugs" and asked for a new introduction and that a final draft be brought to the next quarterly meeting.

They agreed to forward new changes and suggestions to the subcommittee on the pamphlet "Questions and Answers on Sponsorship" and have a final draft from that subcommittee presented for review at the next quarterly meeting.

The committee agreed to forward to the Conference Committee on Literature the request from an area to change a sentence in the pamphlet, "Frequently Asked Questions About A.A".

The committee agreed to forward the suggestion that the Conference Committee on Literature consider a revision of the pamphlet "AA and the Armed Services" that would include new stories reflecting recent experience and a review of the title to reflect past and active duty.

Public Information

The committee agreed to forward to the 2010 Conference Committee on Public Information the following text for inclusion in the pamphlet "Understanding Anonymity" under Facts About Anonymity:

"A.A. members generally think it unwise to break the anonymity of a Member even after his or her death, but in each situation, the final decision must rest with the family. A.A. members, though, are in agreement that the anonymity of still-living A.A. members should be respected in obituaries or in any type of printed remembrance or death notice."

There was a report that all permissions had been received from three out of four segments of the first volume of AA Videos for Young People. One outstanding permission is being negotiated.

The Committee also agreed not to remove the A.A. PSAs from YouTube at this time.

This report is in the current Mynah Bird, and on our website at www.area17aa.org. Thank you all so much for my life filled with love, light and laughter and for the honor and privilege to serve you all and AA as a whole.

**Elizabeth M.
Delegate
Area 17, Panel 59**



ALTERNATE DELEGATE REPORT

One of my duties as Alternate Delegate is to "conduct orientation sessions for GSRs," so I thought I would take this opportunity to say a few words about service commitment. The cover on the pamphlet "G.S.R." says that the General Service Representative "may be the most important job in A.A." The most vital part of your commitment as GSR is to act as a conduit for exchange of information between your home group and district, area, and A.A. as a whole. That means that you report to your group the business conducted by area and district on a regular basis and that you carry your group's collective conscience to those service bodies. Then you report back to the group the results of actions taken by area or district and so on. I know that's a lot of reporting, but if you fulfill your service responsibilities as GSR, then your group stays connected to this service structure so lovingly handed to us by our founders. If can, can. If cannot, cannot. (Then let someone else who can.) It's that simple.

**In love & service,
Linda McD
Alternate Delegate Area 17, Panel 59
altdelegate@area17aa.org**



**Our Greatest Danger: Rigidity
By Bob P**

Bob P (1917-2008) was General Manager of the General Service Office from 1974 to 1984, and then served as Senior Advisor to the G.S.O. from 1985 until his retirement. His story is in the Big Book as "AA Taught Him to Handle Sobriety," 3rd edit. (1976) pp. 554-561, 4th edit. (2001) pp. 553-559.

During the 1986 General Service Conference, Bob gave a powerful and inspiring closing talk to the conference at the closing brunch on Saturday morning, April 26. It was an especially significant occasion, because he knew that he was going to retire early the next year, and that this would be his last General Service Conference. The following excerpts are taken from that farewell speech, as published in the Conference's final

report: The Thirty-Sixth Annual Meeting of the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous 1986 (Roosevelt Hotel, New York City, April 20-26, 1986), Final Report.

This is my 18th General Service Conference -- the first two as a director of the Grapevine and A.A.W.S., followed by four as a general service trustee. In 1972, I rotated out completely, only to be called back two years later as general manager of G.S.O., the service job I held until late 1984. Since the 1985 International Convention, of course, I have been senior adviser. This is also my last Conference, so this is an emotionally charged experience.

I wish I had time to express my thanks to everyone to whom I am indebted for my sobriety and for the joyous life with which I have been blessed for the past nearly 25 years. But since this is obviously impossible, I will

**Dying to be published?
Can't wait to share your
service stories, successes?
Heard a great quote in a
meeting?
Next **Mynah Bird** Deadline
Monday, February 14, 2010**

**PRAASA 2010
March 5 – 7, 2010
Los Angeles, CA
Radisson Hotel at LAX
(LA International Airport)**
Questions?? Go to www.aasca.org
Click on link to
PRAASA 2010 Information

fall back on the Arab saying that Bill quoted in his last message, "I thank you for your lives." For without your lives, I most certainly would have no life at all, much less the incredibly rich life I have enjoyed.

Let me offer my thoughts about A.A.'s future. I have no truck with those bleeding deacons who decry every change and view the state of the Fellowship with pessimism and alarm. On the contrary, from my nearly quarter-century's perspective, I see A.A. as larger, healthier, more dynamic, faster growing, more global, more service-minded, more back-to-basics, and more spiritual -- by far -- than when I came through the doors of my first meeting in Greenwich, Connecticut, just one year after the famous [July 1960] Long Beach Convention. A.A. has flourished beyond the wildest dreams of founding members, though perhaps not of Bill himself, for he was truly visionary.

I echo those who feel that if this Fellowship ever falters or fails, it will not be because of any outside cause. No, it will not be because of treatment centers or professionals in the field, or non-Conference-approved literature, or young people, or the dually-addicted, or even the "druggies" trying to come to our closed meetings. If we stick close to our Traditions, Concepts, and Warranties, and if we keep an open mind and an open heart, we can deal with these and any other problems that we have or ever will have. If we ever falter and fail, it will be simply because of us. It will be because we can't control our own egos or get along well enough with each other. It will be because we have too much fear and rigidity and not enough trust and common sense.

If you were to ask me what is the greatest danger facing A.A. today, I would have to answer: the growing rigidity -- the increasing demand for absolute answers to nit-picking questions; pressure for G.S.O. to "enforce" our Traditions; screening alcoholics at closed meetings; prohibiting non-Conference-approved literature, i.e., "banning books"; laying more and more rules on groups and members. And in this trend toward rigidity, we are drifting farther and farther away from our co-founders. Bill, in particular, must be spinning in his grave, for he was perhaps the most permissive person I ever met. One of his favorite sayings was, "Every group has the right to be wrong." He was maddeningly tolerant of his critics, and he had absolute faith that faults in A.A. were self-correcting.

And I believe this, too, so in the final analysis we're not going to fall apart. We won't falter or fail. At the 1970

International Convention in Miami, I was in the audience on that Sunday morning when Bill made his brief last public appearance. He was too ill to take his scheduled part in any other convention event, but now, unannounced, on Sunday morning, he was wheeled up from the back of the stage in a wheelchair, attached with tubes to an oxygen tank. Wearing a ridiculous bright-orange, host committee blazer, he heaved his angular body to his feet and grasped the podium -- and all pandemonium broke loose. I thought the thunderous applause and cheering would never stop, tears streaming down every cheek. Finally, in a firm voice, like his old self, Bill spoke a few gracious sentences about the huge crowd, the outpouring of love, and the many overseas members there, ending (as I remember) with these words: "As I look over this crowd, I know that Alcoholics Anonymous will live a thousand years -- if it is God's will."

Remember
Mail Area Contributions to:
Hawaii Area Committee # 2107
575 Cooke Street Suite A
Honolulu, HI 96813

A few words (of wisdom??) from your Mynah Bird Chair...

The last few days have been very challenging to say the least. My computer crashed and all my work was lost. Back in my drinking days, that would have been cause for another glass of "fine red wine." But by the grace of God and the help and support of my AA friends, I am sober today. And we have another Mynah Bird...of sorts.

Mahalo for your understanding!

Cheryl N.
Mynah Bird Chair
Area 17, Panel 59





? ? ? Did you know... ? ? ?

- A.A. can be found almost everywhere, almost all the time- in more than 113,000 groups throughout the world.
- Gender of members - Men 67 % and Women 33 %
- 33 % of our members have been sober 10 years or more and 31% have been sober for less than one year
- 85 % of the members belong to home group.
- 79 % of members have a sponsor and 73 % got a sponsor within 90 days.
- Members attend an average of 2.4 meeting per week.

*Alcoholics Anonymous 2007 Membership Survey



Big Island Bash

The Next Frontier: Emotional Sobriety

The **22nd Annual Big Island Bash** will be held:
At the magnificent Sheraton Keauhou Bay
Resort and Spa on the beautiful Kona Coast
April 23, 24, and 25, 2010

Speakers include:

Ajit S. - Irvine, CA

Kristina W. - Marin, CA

Steve A. - Sherman Oaks, CA

Paul W. - Sunset Beach, CA

Registration, schedule of events
and activities, all available at:

www.bigislandbash.com

Questions? bibinfo@bigislandbash.com

