



MYNAH BIRD

HAWAII AREA #17 NEWSLETTER

PRAASA 2010

T	Y	D	Y	W	Q	W	G	W	P	U	P	U	W	J	K	R	P	Y	I
F	E	G	T	A	F	K	A	R	O	L	C	R	O	O	R	B	T	P	C
S	C	I	Z	K	A	C	I	E	K	Y	L	B	M	E	S	S	A	A	K
V	G	P	A	S	S	N	E	E	D	U	C	A	T	E	O	R	S	S	C
L	D	H	Z	E	C	K	A	N	L	S	S	U	P	P	O	R	T	A	O
K	R	J	P	I	H	S	W	O	L	L	E	F	I	X	P	A	U	A	M
Z	F	M	P	S	A	U	E	N	R	I	C	H	I	N	G	O	C	R	M
Z	I	L	C	E	C	N	E	I	R	E	P	X	E	W	U	Q	I	P	U
V	E	S	U	A	T	J	A	W	F	U	B	J	K	G	I	U	R	X	N
S	Y	T	I	L	A	U	T	I	R	I	P	S	Y	T	I	F	O	C	I
K	N	E	R	I	P	S	N	I	E	E	T	U	B	I	R	T	N	O	C
W	A	G	G	T	Q	A	A	D	E	L	E	G	A	T	E	X	Z	H	A
L	B	X	M	A	T	U	N	I	T	Y	R	Q	U	F	D	Z	F	A	T
M	S	T	R	A	D	I	T	I	O	N	S	X	R	I	A	Q	F	T	E
R	O	U	N	D	T	A	B	L	E	H	Y	A	W	H	T	A	P	H	T
U	P	E	H	K	U	T	C	W	J	A	E	Y	F	O	F	L	T	O	B
V	J	A	H	G	N	I	T	A	P	I	C	I	T	R	A	P	P	L	Z
N	L	S	P	G	Q	H	M	P	R	E	N	T	H	U	S	I	A	S	M
W	U	T	Z	U	U	A	G	R	Y	T	I	M	Y	N	O	N	A	D	N
R	E	W	A	R	D	I	N	G	H	U	B	P	D	W	D	Z	P	U	U

- | | | |
|-------------|---------------|--------------|
| Anonymity | Enthusiasm | Principles |
| Assembly | Experience | Rewarding |
| Communicate | Fellowship | Roundtable |
| Contribute | Inspire | Spirituality |
| Delegate | Participating | Support |
| Educate | Pathway | Traditions |
| Enriching | PRAASA | Unity |

SPECIAL PRAASA 2010 EDITION

“Practicing A.A.’s Principles – the Pathway to Unity” 2010 PRAASA – Los Angeles, CA

During the first weekend of March, 2010, 1500 members gathered to talk about service, sobriety and Alcoholics Anonymous and to share our love of service and to be *of* love and service.

The purpose of PRAASA is to develop greater unity among the members, groups, and 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 AA. The Assembly and the PRAASA committee should always foster the Recovery, Unity and Service legacies of AA.

Back when I was a brand new GSR at 18 months of sobriety or so, I heard Jeanette F., our Panel 51 Delegate; say that PRAASA was the college education of General Service! That attracted me, and in 2004 I attended my first PRAASA. I have gone every year since then, and each year I have had a spiritual awakening.

Hawaii Area 17 was well represented with 47 members in attendance! Many of us gathered on Friday night in the hotel restaurant to have dinner together. I truly love and value the members of my Area, and it such an honor and privilege to serve you all.

This year, my PRAASA experience was very different as a second year Delegate. I spent a lot of time with the other Pacific Region Delegates and our Trustee, Madeleine. Eight Panel 60 Delegates rotated on in January, and I got to be of love and service to the new Delegates as were the Panel 58 Delegates to me last year. It was a joy to share my experience of the Conference last year and the Board Weekend in January with them all.

I met with the PRAASA Delegates Advisory Board early Friday morning, and I brought a request from our PRAASA 2011 Chair to have better continuity, information keeping and communication from year to year for the hosting Committees.

I had the opportunity to once again give a two minute Area Highlight at the opening on Friday along with the other Pacific Region Delegates, and Sunday morning I sat on the Panel “Delegates Ask It Basket”, fondly known as “Stump the Delegate”. I was asked if could share one highlight of this past year, what would it be? I replied that at Conference on Friday night, there was a moment when it looked and felt as though the body was not going to vote to accept the slate of incoming Trustees and Directors of the Boards had a very emotional moment when for just a split second I wondered what would happen to Alcoholics Anonymous if these slates for Trustees vote voted down? I felt scared for AA as a whole. Later that evening, during a smoke break, I related what I had felt to my friend Elaine, from Washington DC. She told me “Girl, that’s when I just knew that AA is going to be just fine. I know that our Higher Power was present.” I love that! How we can just share with another, and their perception helps our perception! The interesting thing is that one of our Area’s DCMs had actually asked the question, put it in the box, it was “randomly” assigned to me. The DCM came up to me crying after the Panel and told me that she had asked the questions, and what I shared was exactly what she was remembering from my Report Backs last year as she wrote the question. That is one of those spooky chicken moments that I like to call a Higher Power working in our lives.

Hawaii Area 17 participation – our Registrar Sue gave a thoughtful and excellent presentation on agenda item “Should Areas be able to opt out of the 30-day New Group Pending Process?”; our Alternate Delegate Linda and our Treatment Chair Erin each lead one of their respective round tables, Bob the Webmaster and Paul West Hawaii DCM were time keepers for separate Panels, and Kathy GSR from West Hawaii did a super job moderating Panel 4 on Friday afternoon. Hawaii Area is involved, active and enthusiastic, and you all make my job a pleasure.

On Friday evening and Saturday afternoon, I actively participated at the Delegate round tables.

Before the banquet on Saturday night, I met with the 8 of the 15 Area Coordinators for the Pacific Region Hospitality Suite at the 2010 International Convention in San Antonio, TX. Planning is well underway for our suite, and it has been so awesome coordinating this for the Pacific Region.

During the business meeting on Saturday afternoon, a motion put forth by the PRAASA Delegates Advisory Board (on which I sit) to fund the previous years treasurer to the current PRAASA for the purpose of presenting the treasurers report was defeated.

SPECIAL PRAASA 2010 EDITION

The Panels this year were simply awesome, very parallel to this year's General Service Conference agenda. In fact, 9 out of our 12 topics we selected for our Inform the Delegate process were presentation topics.

As many of you know, we will be electing a new Pacific Region Trustee at the Conference this year. Hawaii Area's candidate is Scotty C, Panel 49 Delegate. One of the things I took it upon myself to do throughout the weekend was to meet each Pacific Region Trustee candidate present at PRAASA. I didn't quite meet my goal, however I had fun trying!

Because I am such a huge fan of bulleted lists, here are some things that stand out for me from PRAASA this year:

- We lead rather than drag.
- No sacrifice is too big to preserve our Unity.
- Honesty, openness and willingness: relationships based on these can only flourish.
- In Area 07, 46 groups meet in correctional facilities!
- In Area 06, officers visit district meetings every month.
- It cost each group \$142 per year to be self supporting, average contributions received in 2009 was \$102 per group.
- One former Trustee shared that this is where he feels most comfortable.
- In 1992 and earlier, Delegates only received final agenda background on their Conference Committees.
- Be open, making sure AA is relevant to everyone.
- The highest you can get in AA is sober.
- If you don't trust your trusted servants, you've elected the wrong person.
- In service, the more I give the more I get back.
- A former class A (non-alcoholic) Trustee shared that when we get into General Service our life takes on a new dimension.
- Another former trustee shared that while his brain is diminishing, his heart is overflow

PRAASA had a special meaning this year as we are hosting next year! On Sunday afternoon after the closing, I attended the PRAASA wrap up meeting with many members of our Area, and we got lots of practical information to assist with our planning for 2011! As most of you are aware, PRAASA 2011 will be on Oahu March 4-6, 2011 at the Sheraton Waikiki. We are going to need many willing and able bodies to be in service for this fantastic service event. You can talk to me later for information on how to get involved.

I want to say a special thank you to our Chair, Ken, who made me feel so supported over the weekend. He went above and beyond to be helpful to me, and it made a big difference during a very busy time for me. Thanks Ken.

I would like to let you know how grateful I am to have experienced this weekend of love and service. I truly recharged my service batteries. I feel more connected with AA as a whole, more informed, better educated and most important – of maximum service to God and those about me.

I heard someone say that events like PRAASA are the rebar, cement and glue that hold General Service together. Thank you for this opportunity to be of love and service.

Elizabeth M.
Delgate
Hawaii Area 17 / Panel 59



OMG!

I have recently returned from my first PRAASA. The two best words I can think of to describe my experience are amazing and grateful. Naturally, I was a bit nervous at first faced with over 1500 other A.A. and Al-Anon members, most of whom I had never seen. However, our fellow A.A.s from Hawaii Area 17 guided me along so that I was right there in the middle of the action, and, for that, I am grateful. The older I get in this life, the more I realize how much I do not know. And the more embedded I become in our general service structure, the more I realize how much there is to learn. I am

SPECIAL PRAASA 2010 EDITION

grateful to have great teachers on our side.

And another "OMG!" We of Area 17 are hosting PRAASA 2011! And for that I am grateful!

The following are a few memorable quotes I heard this year:

- AA is a continuum, pass it on.
- Service makes 12th Step work possible.
- Groups have the final authority over AA.
- "The highest you can get is sober. If you get any higher, you have to start over." (Quoted from a Grapevine)

Linda McD.
Alternate Delegate
Area 17, Panel 59



Returning from PRAASA 2010 in Los Angeles I am excited, looking forward to the challenges ahead as Area 17 (Hawaii) will be hosting PRAASA 2011. As your past Delegate I had the opportunity to attend the General Service Conference two years ago and was so happy to bring the news back that our Area had been chosen to host. Keith H., also past Delegate, will serve as Chair and I will serve as Program Committee Chair.

2011 will be a golden opportunity for members who don't know or haven't particularly cared about PRAASA to experience what happens there. The last time Hawaii hosted PRAASA was 1999 held in Kona on the Big Island. I remember my sponsor coming to me very excited, "Vernon PRAASA is coming to Hawaii!" I remember thinking, "and? Do I care? Why would I?" I did not attend nor see the value of PRAASA or spending one minute of my life participating. A lot has changed since then. I have become a PRAASA enthusiast. PRAASA (Pacific Region Alcoholics Anonymous Service Assembly) happens once a year rotating among the 15 Areas in the Pacific region which includes areas in California, Oregon, Washington, Nevada, Arizona and Utah and is a precursor for the General Service Conference in New York held once a year.

In 1955, after a five year experiment as a vision for A.A.'s future, the General Service Structure was put in place as the responsibility of our fellowship was turned over to the fellowship from our founders by Bill W. at the 20th annual convention of Alcoholics Anonymous in St. Louis, Missouri.

The purpose of the General Service Conference to ensure that A.A. will be here for the suffering alcoholics, our children and their children, to ensure the decisions for A.A. as

a whole are made with direct input from the members.

Although the General Serve Structure does not always live up to the vision, the principles are what we aspire to as we members aspire to live the principles of the twelve steps and traditions. A.A. is a world wide movement that receives about 13 million dollars in contributions and literature sales a year. The Big Book has been translated into 80 languages to reach alcoholics everywhere in the world we can.

Who conducts the business of A.A as a whole? Who makes the necessary decisions? The General Service Conference conducts the business of A.A as a whole as the members of home groups conduct business or group conscience meetings making decisions on the group level. How do the groups know what is going on? What is the business agenda? How can the membership be informed and served? PRAASA is a part of that process as the agenda of PRAASA generally follows that of the General Service Conference. Our Inform the Delegate Assembly held in late March carries the group conscience of our groups. Our delegate Elizabeth M. is a conduit of information from New York and carries a sense of our Area's conscience back to the conference. PRAASA can be part of the preparation for the conference so we are informed as Agenda presentations as well as Conference workshop topics, Round tables held for GSRS, DCMS, Area officers, Delegates and yes, past Delegates.

Yada,Yada,Yada!! Yes, but what was discussed? More will be revealed at the PRAASA Report Back coming soon to your district! PRAASA topics were Carrying the Message, agenda items on finance, literature, self support, traditions, and grapevine carrying the message in correction facilities. Late night discussions were held on Sexual Predators in A.A., young people in A.A. and service. Discussions on literature, possible pamphlets on special needs, atheist and agnostics and a book on early pioneer women in A.A. There is also a chance to speak "what's on your mind?"

The proposed pamphlet on Atheists and Agnostics in A.A. was presented as a proposal from a group on Maui. That particular proposal was not adopted however other Areas also had requests since then and the Maui group serves as an inspiration for the present agenda topic. Changes in the language for the flyer, "Message to Teenagers" was proposed to the conference and adopted originating from a home group on the big island. These are examples of how members of one group can affect A.A as a whole.

I would encourage members who haven't experienced PRAASA to keep an open mind and take advantage of the opportunity that only comes around about every ten years.

SPECIAL PRAASA 2010 EDITION

PRAASA 2011 will be held at the Sheraton Waikiki in the first weekend of March. See you there!

In Love and Service,

Vernon G.
Past Delegate
Area 17, Panel 57



Panel Presentation

Topic: **Should Areas be able to Opt-out of the 30-day New Group Pending Process?**

Aloha, my name is Sue, and I am a grateful, recovering Alcoholic. My home group is the Phoenix Big Book Group in Kāneʻohe, Hawaiʻi. It is a blessing to be able to share my thoughts and research on this topic this morning.

I have based the content of this presentation on the material provided to us, discussions with GSO staff, my experience, strength and hope as a Registrar, and the experiences of those around me that were gracious enough to share their thoughts with me on this subject.

In talking to staff at GSO, I discovered that the 30-day pending process was initiated at the request of the areas of AA. The areas wanted an opportunity to visit the new groups, welcome them into the area, verify the information, etc. Although, and I must emphasize this, as GSO staff was very emphatic on this account, **THIS IS NOT INTENDED FOR POLICING PURPOSES.** There has been the rare occasion that an AI-Anon group, or a 24-hour group, or a therapy group has mistakenly registered as an AA group, such circumstance is truly the exception. There is the occasional case that the group does not get off the ground, or the meeting place is incorrect, or they don't know how to get in touch with area or district. Many districts and/or areas have welcome packets that they would like to distribute to new groups, and this gives them the opportunity. I requested data, or numbers, or how many each year, are withdrawn during the 30-day processing, but the only answer I received was, "It is very rare."

The request to opt out of the 30-day pending process was put forth in a letter from the Area 54 Delegate. The reason stated is that they do not visit the new groups, or welcome them, or verify that they are actually groups. This letter was in the background material. The reasons that they wanted to have the 30-day pending process optional was so that their "oft-impatient" GSRs would not have to wait an additional month before receiving materials from GSO, and so that the Registrar could add missing information sooner. Being an impatient Registrar and an ex-

impatient GSR, I can surely understand this reasoning! However, having seasoned just a bit, I am grateful for those around me who did not react immediately to my requests each time I wanted to change something, or every time I had the best idea ever! And, actually, for those groups very eager to receive the New Group materials from GSO, all of the essential materials are readily available at www.aa.org for downloading.

Let's ask ourselves how it will affect the AA body as a whole to allow entire areas to opt out of the process. One month does not seem like a long time to wait for a brand new group. And, remember, that once a group is in the system, in your area, they are there for time immemorial. Adding a group is not a step to be taken lightly! In our area, new groups are not put on the city-wide schedule, published by Central Office, until they have been in existence, meeting regularly, for 6 months. In our history, many meetings start, with wonderful expectations, but, like many expectations, end in disappointment, for one reason or another. This practice has served us well, and when someone goes to a meeting on the schedule, it is likely (almost always) there. So, one month seems in line, even conservative, and according to the general spirit of moderation that we try to infuse into our new life of sobriety. As a Registrar, having to wait a few weeks to make any changes seems a small inconvenience, to accommodate Tradition 1, our common welfare should come first. In addition, for areas where the Delegate, or DCMs or other local representatives, actually visit the groups during the 30-day pending period, some embarrassing and potentially dangerous situations may be averted. I did hear a story about a "24-hour" group that was listed as an AA group. If you are familiar with these groups, they are actually de-tox groups that restrain addicts or alcoholics through the de-toxification phase. One of these groups was evidently registered or mis-named as an AA group when they had a medical mis-hap, resulting in death, causing a lot of nasty press for Alcoholics Anonymous. Now, this type of extreme case is very rare. The more likely case (but also not frequent in any respect), is the case of an AI-Anon Family Group, or a restricted Medical Therapy Group, or a group that charges an entry fee, listed with GSO. These are not actually A.A. "groups,"

EURYPAA

All Europe Young People in AA
Join young people from Europe and around
the world

July 23 – 25, 2010
Stockholm, Sweden

For details: www.eurypaa.org
Questions? Info@eurypaa.org

SPECIAL PRAASA 2010 EDITION

violating at least one of our traditions. Al-Anon has its own World Service structure, and Al-Anon groups can be lovingly directed there. The others I mentioned, and similar groups, are actually in violation of Tradition 3. From the Long Form of the Twelve Traditions, Tradition 3 states that "...alcoholics gathered together for sobriety may call themselves an A.A. group, **provided that, as a group, they have no other affiliation.**" The same tradition states that "**membership should never depend on money or conformity.**" Once the group limits participation to those who belong to a specific ward, program, or category, or charges for services, the group is no longer a group that should be listed with GSO. Not to say that they should not meet or practice the twelve steps, but not under the auspices of an A.A. Group.

On the other hand, does this 30-day pending process actually violate Tradition 4, that every group should be autonomous? You might think so, until you read the second part of the tradition, "except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole." Registering with GSO, representing A.A., a group now affects A.A. as a whole. A group, when they register as a group, chooses to become part of the body of A.A., and may indeed be the only Big Book a newcomer sees. A visit from the district or the area, welcoming the group and inviting the group to A.A. General Service activities, I imagine would be welcomed by any group. Any specific area or district may choose not to take advantage of the opportunity to do this, but I ask myself, why not? And, yes, the group is autonomous, but all are welcome, if they have a desire to stop drinking, once they have listed with GSO; is that not true?

Through the process of researching and developing the text for this panel, my opinion and personal feelings on this subject have changed significantly. Like the alcoholic I am, I had an immediate opinion (prior to investigation). I thought, "Great, I get this topic! I can't see any reason for

this pending process; it has just hindered my rapid response!" Then I received a LITTLE information, anecdotal in nature, that threw me way over to the other side, showed how very necessary this process was, to keep us from those critical mistakes that can cause some renegade group to sign up as an A.A. group falsely. Which again, is a total over-reaction, having happened only once in corporate memory. Then I took the time to talk reason with GSO staff, and to think about how I do my service, and to reflect on the eager ambition of those new in service (myself included). When I first started I generated lots of paper, and lists, and systems, which turned out to be unnecessary, trying to do a good job, when sometimes a calm, step-by-step approach is better. I love that we are enthusiastic, but we shouldn't get our wheels turning too fast, too soon! We just end up digging a hole and then have to work harder to get out of it.

After my journey through both sides of this topic, I came to the conclusion that it would be better to keep the 30-day pending process for all than to allow areas to opt out of it. It does no real harm, may keep us out of harm, and allows us time to do some important things in our area. Even if those things are just learning to be patient.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to share with you today in love and service.

Sue B.
Registrar
Area 17, Panel 59



"Practicing A.A.'s Principles---the Pathway to Unity", theme of PRAASA, played out wonderfully for the Assembly of 1, 534 registered members. At 12:45PM, Madeline P., our Pacific Region Trustee, opened the Assembly with the inspired words...to practice the principles

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

www.bigislandbash.com

Questions? bibinfo@bigislandbash.com

SPECIAL PRAASA 2010 EDITION

of A.A. in all our affairs during our time together. Mary T., the PRAASA Chair set the stage for the rest of the day. Panel 1: **Delegate Introductions and Area Service Highlights** set me to thinking about our hosting of the Area17 Inform the Delegate Assembly at the end of this month. Panel 2: **“Practicing A.A.’s Principles---the Pathway to Unity”** gave me a personal feeling that my service inventory is in order. There were three topics, Setting an Example...Attraction to Service...I thought about my default service commitment...and smiled, knowing that two trusted servants are eager to give “good orderly direction” to our District 8 next year. The second topic, What Happens After Inventory? It got my attention and inspired me to pencil some outcomes of my service for my last year as the DCM. The last topic, Discuss the GSC Agenda Selection Process is exactly what I have in my mind for our March District Committee...more will be revealed...Panel 3: **Conference (GSC) Agenda Items on Our Traditions**, provided us with four topics: A. Anonymity in a Digital Age. Our Area17 Web Master has done an excellent job in educating our Area Assembly trusted servants. B. Protecting the Anonymity of Live Members in Memorial Announcements...this brought to mind Ray F.’s and Archie’s memorials this past month. C. Our Traditions, Their Regulations...Signing Corrections Facility Agreements. This brought about a lot of questions in my mind, should we ever get a jail in Kona. D. Should Full Faces of Actors Playing A.A. Members be shown? Well the cat is out of the bag on this topic. GSO approved full faces of actors for A.A. video materials.

B. Replace pie Charts in the Self-Support Pamphlet? I thought the mike brought out the best in all of us. Finance is a main topic in A.A. C. Include Seventh Tradition Stories in the Self-Support Pamphlet? Yes, however, perhaps more of these stories printed in The Grapevine and La Vina? D. How Do We Communicate Self-Support to the Fellowship? I quote the A.A. Service Manual, page 66, **“In about half of the last twenty years, A.A. Group contributions have failed to meet our world needs. But the Reserve Fund, constantly renewed by book sales, has been able to meet the deficits--and save money besides. What this has meant in the lives of uncounted alcoholics who might never have reached us had our services been weak or nonexistent, no one can guess. Financial prudence has paid off in lives saved.”** I suggest that each of us read those pages following this statement. Of course, this is one of my primary responsibilities as spelled out in the “Your D.C.M. Pamphlet”. So, you will hear more from this trusted servant on this finance topic...I suggest that all of us read it to better carry the current information about the business of A.A. General Service Organization. **Spirituality and money mix in the basket!**

Panel 5: **Conference Agenda Items on the Service**

Manual, Directories & GSC Final Report. A. How Often Should We Publish the A.A. Service Manual? Present costs were given with the number distributed and also destroyed. Perhaps someone from District has those numbers presented? I got the impression that AA will be frugal... B. Should Areas be able to Opt-out of the 30-day New Group Pending Process?

Panel 6: **Conference Agenda Items on Policy** Topic: A. Relationship between Grapevine Entities...a lot of selfishness on this issue...more will be reviewed and revealed... B. Are La Vina and the Grape Vine Equal? I don’t think so...and others agreed with me. C. Do We Need New Stories from Atheists’ and Agnostics’? The mike indicated a yes on this topic. It will ever be on the minds of all of us, and that is just my opinion because I am an alcoholic... D. Should We Have a Book about Early Pioneer Women in A.A.? So as not to discriminate, the mike thought an author could best carry this message outside of A.A.

At 11 PM I went to the **Late Night Discussion Group, Making A.A. Safe for the A.A. Member.** This turned out to be a hot topic on sexual and financial preying by people who appear to be predators in A.A. GSO has said it is up to you and me to carry this safe message to every group in A.A. It is time we raise awareness regarding nonspiritual behaviors that may adversely affect our members...in and outside of the A.A. meeting. So, let us talk about in closed and open meetings of our fellowship. A.A. is a spiritual program. Anything else is not A.A.

Ask It Basket...questions from the registered attendees answered by the Area Delegates...I was brain dead and only know that I did not disagree with anything said...it may be your turn next? In closing, I felt the presence of a power greater than all of us put together... Aloha!

The Post PRAASA Committee Meeting was held and I attended to its completion at 4:30PM. It was very informative and the torch was passed to our Area17 Past Delegates.

See you all in Honolulu for the 44th PRASSA...it has been revealed...thank you for allowing me to be of service!

**Paul K.
DCM District 8 West Hawaii
Area 17, Panel 59**



P.R.A.A.S.A. Report Back

P.R.A.A.S.A (The Pacific Regional AA Service Assembly) was a divine event filled with wonderful people, and great minds, working together to unfold what is the best way we

SPECIAL PRAASA 2010 EDITION

can continue to help the still suffering alcoholic. It was a weekend of the Traditions and Concepts in Action.

The bright spot of my weekend, was talking to people at their first PRAASA and seeing how “on fire” they had become about Alcoholics Anonymous, and Service, by being there. They had experienced an awakening to all the intricate details that go on beyond our A.A. Group. As Jim E. stated, in the Panel called Past Trustees’ Experience Strength and Hope, “Another dimension of sobriety happens when you get involved in General Service.”

For me the weekend served to recharge my DCM batteries. At the close of the first night, I wrote the following journal entry on my experience:

“Gratitude. Recharged by the enthusiasm for service. So many wonderful tools I hope I can suggest to my district, my home group, my sponsees, and myself as an AA member. Grateful for the sight through the eyes of a G.S.R. at their first PRAASA. As Bill noted, he had no idea there was so much behind the scenes. Without this side of 12th step work, there wouldn’t have been a meeting for him to show up at in the first place. Grateful for the groups that fund their G.S.R.s. Grateful to see my sponsee here – self-funded and not even a G.S.R. (yet!). Happy to meet new friends and learn tid bits of gems scattered throughout the day. . . Many reminders of why we do this. Tears and a giant smile coming across my face when we said the responsibility pledge.”

Throughout the weekend I was infinitely reminded that a higher power is the main current running in and through us, and through our service work. That despite our egos and opinions, we are able to work (all 1,536 registrants) together in brotherly and harmonious action. As Alex P. stated, in the Panel called Past Trustees’ Experience Strength and Hope, “the audience wave through the stadium at the International Convention is representative of the big picture of A.A. Some people didn’t stand up for it, others stayed standing, but either way, the wave just blew over them and kept going.”

I was reminded of what an important part General Service has played in my development as an AA member, the development of a power greater than myself, and the practice of AA’s principles. Tandy W. put it very well in her talk on Practicing AA’s Principles: Attraction to Service, “spiritual development requires participation in service.”

Tradition 12, seemed to be the thread that sums up both my experience of this year’s PRAASA, as well as a common theme discussed in the panels. As a reminder, this tradition states: “And finally, we of Alcoholics Anonymous believe that the principle of anonymity has an immense spiritual significance. It reminds us that we are to place principles before personalities; that we are actually to practice a genuine humility. This to the end that our great blessing may never spoil us; that we shall forever live in thankful contemplation of Him who presides over us all.”

In Panel 3A, Joel C (Delegate from San Diego) discussed Anonymity in a Digital Age. He shared with us experiences that he had with people breaking their anonymity on Facebook. He described people acting much like the “AA Super Promoters” described in AA’s early years, seeking personal prestige and power through posts. Joel shared with us how places like Facebook might serve to assist us in reaching alcoholics in ways we have never been able to, but hopes we can do it in a way that practices “genuine humility.”

As described in this Tradition, we practice this anonymity and humility in an effort to show and maintain our gratitude for AA. This gratitude in action was the focus of Panel 4 on Finance. The presenters gave compelling talks in English and Spanish on Self Support, Pamphlet Pie Charts, Seventh Tradition Stories and Examples, and on the topic I am always looking for guidance on, How do we Communicate Self-Support to the Fellowship. I can’t say I left this year’s discussion with any major “Aha! moments” or profound answers to the questions on self-support – but I did immediately come home and redo our district flyer with the listings of contribution addresses and I made sure that the flyer, along with the pamphlet “Self Support – Where Spirituality and Money Mix,” were available at our recent district meeting. “Lead by example” and “share enthusiasm” seemed the primary methods described to honor our AA blessings through financial gratitude. In an effort to do this, I often share about what I learned at PRAASA last year which had a big impact on me. Someone at the mic, in reference to self-support, suggested that when we put our contributions in the hat, we give \$1 for Unity, \$1 for Service and \$1 for Recovery.

I have thirty-seven pages of notes from panel presentations, roundtables, discussions, shares and wrap-ups; spanning from 1:00 p.m. on Friday to Noon on Sunday. . . I have ideas for my district that could employ several workers with full time jobs. . . but beneath all the pen scribbles, I find a message of love, hope, faith, courage, and grace.

I think Bill W. beautifully summed up what I am feeling in a letter he wrote in 1964.

SPECIAL PRAASA 2010 EDITION

“My experience as an old-timer has to some degree paralleled your own and that of many others. We all find that the time comes when we are not allowed to manage and conduct the functional affairs of groups, areas or, in my case, A.A. as a whole. In the end we can only be worth as much as our spiritual example has justified. To that extent, we become useful symbols – and that’s just about it.”

I would like to thank the Kihei District for all of your contributions that allowed me to go to PRAASA and hopefully better serve you. I know it has heightened my growth and awareness, and I thank you for that.

Nora T.
DCM District 11, Kihei
Area 17, Panel 59



PRAASA 2010 Report - No Ka Oi District 5 – Hawaii Area 17

Aloha all. I start this report as I did last year’s. Thank you all for your financial and spiritual support which allowed me to attend PRAASA 2010.

This was my 4th PRAASA. The first two I paid my own way. The last two No Ka Oi District and its’ members paid. Personally, it was a lot more spiritual knowing I had the trust of our members from our District.

There were approximately 1,500-1,600 members in attendance from throughout the Pacific Region.

This PRAASA was a little different from last years. Last year I felt I had to listen to every little tidbit and take notes on all topics discussed. I had to be the perfect “note taker” because who knows who might ask me a question on a topic and I did not know the answer.

This year, I let myself be more open to experiencing this process and it worked. I made myself available to our GSR’s who were in attendance. Answering questions and supporting them. I know I put this on myself but I was being the “mother hen” to our GSR’s. Kawika, Noel, Mike, and Steamer please forgive me if I was overly protective. There were 6 panels presenting topics on agenda items to be discussed at the General Service Conference in April.

Those topics which stood out for me were:

- 6,000 members anonymity were broken online.
- Discussion on the new DVD “Alcoholics Anonymous – Hope” where actors portrayed alcoholics. A question arose “What if those actors became

alcoholics?” Never thought of that

- Is General Service oversized for our needs?

Heard at PRAASA 2010:

- Fear blocks new ways.
- Service makes 12 step work possible.
- Uncover, discover, discard.
- “Knee jerk” discussions take three (3) years.
- Let’s carry the message of financing AA.
- Can’t be a good sailor in calm waters.
- Trust your trusted servants.
- Rise to the level of AA. Not bring AA down to my level.

Clifford S.
DCM District 5, No Ka Oi
Area 17, Panel 59



PRAASA Perspectives and Nonalcoholic Trustees

I am not a social creature, and have not attended PRAASA before for a variety of reasons, but the main reason was that I was fearful of the unknown. I had some preconceived ideas of the PRAASA experience, but nothing was as I thought. Each individual’s experience will be different, but I can truthfully recommend attending PRAASA to anyone in our fellowship. Last weekend, I got a tiny glimpse of how Recovery, Unity, and Service work on a larger scale and it amazed me. If you ever get a chance to attend PRAASA, like say we host PRAASA in Waikiki or something crazy like that, I hope that you can make it a priority to attend and that your life can be enriched, as mine was last weekend.

I took so much away from this weekend that I wrote a five page report for my district and I don’t want to monopolize the Mynah Bird issue with my missive, but I wanted to share about the past Trustee’s sharing session. This is what I wrote in my District 9 report:

March 7, 2010

9:15 AM: Past Trustee’s-Experience, Strength, and Hope discussion-This was absolutely my favorite part of the assembly. There were seven older men and one woman on the panel. The first past trustee stood up, looked over at the panel, and said, “We are too male, too pale, and too stale,” and went on to encourage diversity in AA. Each speaker had a wealth of experience to share in their short allotted time. One of the past non-alcoholic trustees, who gave the impression that he might be having serious health problems said, “My mind is diminishing, but my heart is overflowing,” referring to his AA service. I could have listened to those trusted servants for hours.

SPECIAL PRAASA 2010 EDITION

I have always wondered about Nonalcoholic Trustees. Why would they want to work with alcoholics? What kind of breed are they? After hearing W. Jim Estelle, share the statement above, I found an excerpt from *A Newsletter for Professionals* published for the Winter 2000-2001 by AA World Services, Inc. After reading this and listening at PRAASA, I have a much greater appreciation for our trustees, both alcoholic and nonalcoholic.

Below is the excerpt:

Sharing the Experience

Recently, the A.A. General Service Office asked past and present nonalcoholic trustees to share their experience of serving on the board. One theme that ran strongly through the replies was that of gratitude to A.A. Some cited family members or close friends who had been restored to sobriety and sanity through the Fellowship; others had cooperated with A.A. members in the course of their work, and discovered that A.A. has much to give professionals who work with active alcoholics, both professionally and personally; and most had discovered that being associated with the Fellowship had brought new dimensions to their personal lives as well.

Past trustee and board chair W. Jim Estelle, a correctional administrator, became interested in A.A. when he observed members who brought meetings into prisons. "Imagine, if you will, my astonishment when I realized that among those faithful and persevering pilgrims were a few ex-convicts! Smiling and sober, no less. At that point, I realized the potential this Fellowship of alcoholics represented. And as a prison administrator and steward of public monies, it struck me that the prison budget was not even dented by this program; to the contrary, the outside sponsors.

wanted to know how Alcoholics Anonymous might furnish literature which augmented one drunk talking to another drunk." Jim added that "several of my co-workers and close friends (with drinking problems) have chosen A.A. as a way to safety and sanity. For this reason alone, I have a debt of gratitude which cannot be discharged."

Gary Glynn originally became familiar with A.A. because a close family member found sobriety. He says that, "My debt to A.A. is immeasurable. Originally I got involved in service to try to repay that debt, but my reasons for wanting to serve have gone well beyond just that. A.A. is the most remarkable group of people I know. . . . I always feel better at the end of an A.A. function than I did at the beginning, and love to see how people put their personal desires and ambitions aside in the interests of unity."

Another businessman, current trustee Art Knight, says: "My prior experience taught me one paradigm for con-

ducting business, but my participation on the General Service Board taught me a new, and much better, model. . . . I've learned that one can disagree without being disagreeable. . . . I have discovered a deeper and more meaningful relationship with my higher power that has helped me to change. And the more I practice those Twelve Steps in my own life, the more I change – for the better."

Past trustee Peter Roach, an educator who considers his trusteeship "one of the most rewarding experiences of my life," numbers several alcoholics in his family and was highly critical of them as "stupid" and "irresponsible." He says that "A.A. helped me understand the disease."

Trustee Linda Chezem writes: "When I became a trial judge, I wanted to be a good one. It took me several months of seeing the same defendants, hung over and miserable, charged with public intoxication or disorderly conduct, to realize alcohol was a major factor in a large part of the criminal justice caseload.

"I did not know much about alcoholism. . . . I started to seek resources, only to learn there will never be enough money for every alcoholic to receive hospital care. . . . But I learned that the hand of A.A. is there for any alcoholic who will accept it. I have also learned, on my personal journey, that the Twelve Steps are there for any of us to use."

George Vaillant, M.D., wrote: "I am not a Class A trustee because A.A. helped save my life. I am not a trustee because A.A. saved the life of someone that I loved. I am a trustee because of all the organizations I have ever been involved with, A.A. is the one that has evoked my deepest admiration. I am a trustee of A.A. because A.A. works." Educator and alcoholism counselor Leonard Blumenthal echoed those words: "I saw again and again that the A.A. program works. I realized that if I did nothing more than bring alcoholics looking for recovery to this Fellowship, I would come a very long way." And he adds, "I found out early on that the Twelve Step program of A.A. could be applied to anyone's life."

Corporate lawyer Michael Alexander first came across A.A. when he was a young associate working for Bernard Smith, who helped Bill W. plan A.A.'s service structure. Mike, who served as a trustee for 17 years, five of them as chairman of the board, says that the first alcoholic he ever met was Bill W. In a farewell talk when he rotated off the board, Mike said: "Nothing I had learned at law school prepared me for my first encounter with A.A. But Bill W. and Bernard Smith believed in A.A. and had given their lives over to A.A., and that was good enough for me.

"My term as chairman has been deeply rewarding to me spiritually. I will sorely miss the excitement, challenge and

SPECIAL PRAASA 2010 EDITION

satisfaction that come with the office. Most of all, I will miss the almost boundless opportunity to share views with members of A.A. at all levels of service.

"I am a different person because of A.A., and I believe a better person. I am not an alcoholic. No member of my family is an alcoholic. Until I came to A.A., I had no friends who were alcoholics. It has seemed to me that destiny had to work very hard to bring A.A. and me together. But it happened, and because of it I am a lucky man.

Sheri B.
DCM District 9, Central North Shore
Area 17, Panel 59



PRAASA 2010, held in Los Angeles was the first PRAASA I have attended, and the first time I had ever been in a room with 1500 sober alcoholics in service. Now I understand why my sponsor was so excited for me going.

The meetings while informative and inspiring were not the highlight for me. Although for the record, atheists and agnostics still want their pamphlet, inclusion first, and we all need to be responsible if we see any predators having their way with newcomers be it sexual, free labor or borrowing money.

The highlight for me was the profound feeling of peace and serenity. There is a question "What would you do if you knew you would not fail?" I kept thinking of that question and this is how it feels to be surrounded by people who were on my side, and would help me anyway they could. Being of service requires very little energy for the huge benefits received. The feeling of Peace and Seren-

ity that comes from knowing I have led a useful life.

Mahalo for sending me to PRAASA 2010, and giving me the great privilege of being of service.

Carol McK.
GSR
Waikoloa Night Owls
Area 17, Panel 59



My first PRAASA,

I want to thank my higher power ,and my home group for sending me to PRAASA 2010. It was one of the highlights of my 2010 year. It was so good to meet other alcoholics from all over the pacific region, all with a singleness of purpose—to help pass the message to the suffering alcoholic ,and to make sure AA will be strong and alive for the newcomer.

I came away from PRAASA with a new sense of being a part of and a new excitement for service in district, and area, to pass the message to my home group ever strengthening our service triangle.

One last message of how grateful I am of my district and area for keeping me and my home group so well informed. That made me proud to represent Daily Reprieve and District 8 at PRAASA.

With love and service,

Tommy G.
GSR
Daily Reprieve
Area 17, Panel 59

HANA CARAVAN 2010

Last Sunday of every month

April 25

July 25

October 31

May 30

August 29

November 28

June 27

September 26

December 26

Wananalua Church

Potluck Dinner 4:30 PM

AA Meeting 5:30 - 7:00 PM

Questions??? dcm5@area17aa.org



CINCO DE



MAYO

2010

FIESTA

**AA MEETING AT 5:00PM
FIESTA AT 6:00PM**



**TACO BAR, BEVERAGES AND PIÑATA PROVIDED
THIS IS A POTLUCK EVENT AS WELL**

**HOSTED BY THE HAPPY HOUR GROUP
NAWILIWILI PARK KAUAI**

Questions?? happyhourkauai@gmail.com