



MYNAH BIRD

HAWAII AREA #17 NEWSLETTER

April 2013, Panel 63 Issue 2



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PRAASA 2014, SAN DIEGO

Upcoming Events 2013

- ◆ April 19-21, Big Island Bash "Willingness is the Key" at the Sheraton Keauhou Bay Resort & Spa on the Kona Coast.
- ◆ General Service Conference - April 21st—29th, 2013
- ◆ May 18, 2013 Area Committee Meeting - Waikiki District 10
- ◆ May 19, 2013 Possible Standing Committee Workshop (More information available soon)

Upcoming Events 2014

No exact dates have been chosen but these are the districts who will be hosting and the approximate month the event will be held. Please DO NOT secure locations until advised and dates have been chosen:

- ◆ January 2014 Inventory Assembly – District 8, West Hawaii
- ◆ February 2014 Committee Meeting – District 6, Kauai
- ◆ March/April 2014 Inform the Delegate Assembly - District 1, Diamond Head
- ◆ May 2014 Committee Meeting – District 17, Waianae
- ◆ August 2014 Budget Assembly – District 12, Puna
- ◆ October 2014 Committee Meeting – District 7, East Hawaii
- ◆ November 2014 Elections Assembly – District 13, Tri-Island

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Send Area Contributions—
Address It Exactly Like This:

Hawaii Area Committee

1253 Beretania St., #1207

Honolulu, HI 96814-1822

Please include "District #" & Group Name
on check

the AAGRAPEVINE
The International Journal
of Alcoholics Anonymous

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PRAASA 2013, OUR STORIES

BOISE PRAASA AND BEYOND.

My name is Vernon G. and I am your Past Area 17 Panel 57 Delegate. I have just returned from PRAASA 2013 in Boise, Idaho. Even though I have rotated out some time ago my debt to A.A. can never be repaid. I paid my own way and do not have to give a report but would like to share with you my experiences there. The purpose of PRAASA is to foster unity in the Pacific region consisting of 15 areas. The panels topics of PRAASA are generally reflect the agenda items for the upcoming General Service Conference held once a year in New York where are current delegate Ken K. will attend and carry our Area conscience to the conference to conduct the business of A.A. in the United States and Canada. Like a huge Home group meeting.

Quoting the Service Manual page SI, "hence, A.A. service is anything that helps a fellow sufferer ranging all the way from the actual twelve step itself...to the A.A. General Service conference for national and international action. The sum total of all these services is our third legacy of service." Whether you have never been to a PRAASA or have attended many, any service in A.A. is of great value for we are all a piece of the mosaic of a diverse tapestry.

Before coming to A.A I only knew about the problem and not the solution. Drinking and drugging were the only life I knew. I live in the solution now. I know a new life. I was gathered up by other Alkies, loved and cherished when I allowed my-self to be.

Some General Service Agendas are dry and some are juicy and more interesting. I would say that one highlight of the GSC agenda this year is a proposal or plan to have interlocking directors with A.A.W.S and Grapevine, Inc. Some say this is really a merger and would be an historical change on a scale that has not been seen in 40 years. Fortunately our Delegate will be attending the conference and is on that particular committee. Ken gave a presentation on the topic at PRAASA and I'm sure would be glad to answer any questions anyone has on this.

The other highlight is that the long awaited Pamphlet on Spirituality will be presented to the conference for possible approval.

A lesson I have learned in A.A. is respect for one another and can be used through out my whole life, learning that how we treat each other in the process is sometimes as important as the business we conduct.

My service in A.A. has given me the opportunity to promptly reverse my position when I see the bigger picture, that everyone has the right to be right and the right to be wrong.

I was re-united with old friends and made new ones. Thanks to Alcoholics Anonymous I have a life I would never have given myself because I did not know it was possible. I live in a grateful heart for my sobriety and this wonderful fellowship. I'll see you on this happy road of destiny.

Vernon G. Kihei



PRAASA 2013, OUR STORIES

PRAASA 2013 – Area Chair's Report #2

Today was the first actual day of PRAASA 2013 and a full day it was, even though we didn't start until late morning.

The structure of the first day of PRAASA is fairly simple as you may have noted if you've been the PRAASA website at praasa.org. While the timing changes a bit from PRAASA to PRAASA the general structure is as follows:

Friday:

- Orientation
- Welcome
- Panel 1 – Pacific Region Delegates
- Panel 2 – Various Topics
- Panel 3 – Various Topics
- Panel 4 – Various Topics
- Dinner Break
- Roundtables

Today we had a number of Hawaii Area 17 folks up in front in service as readers and presenters. Our Panel 63 Delegate, Ken K., kicked off our participation with a brief report of what we've been doing in Area 17 during Panel 1. While his report was factual, he remembered to leave us laughing when he said that in Hawaii our meetings are multi-lingual, being held in English, Pidgin, and The Language of the Heart.

Next up was David J. H. from Maui who presented on the topic of "How Do We Grow Leadership in a New Generation of AA's?" during Panel 2. It's an excellent question and he reminded us that we were shown by example how to become leaders in AA and not simply told what to do. It was a wonderful reminder that we should all lead by example and not by command.

Panel 3 had two Hawaii participants as Coleen W. of Maui was the reader for the Panel giving us the opening reading. She was followed by Karen N., also of Maui, who gave an excellent presentation on "The 3 R's: Rituals, Rigidity, Rules." She reminded us that while AA isn't rigid we should check ourselves to make sure that we aren't being rigid. And she finished with the biggest rule in AA, "We absolutely insist on enjoying life."

The panels ended for the day with the fourth Panel when Ken K., our delegate, returned as a presenter on the topic of "The General Service Board Gets a Make-Over: Service Do or Service Don't?" The topic was an involved one discussing the merits and problems with an idea afoot to combine the AAWS and Grapevine Boards into one body at certain times. I may have that one wrong so please check with Ken for more information.

It was then time to break for dinner and I was privileged to be able to dine with our Pacific Region Trustee, Rod B., our delegate Ken K., and our My-nah Bird Chair, Rochelle A. Conversation included, but was not limited to AA. Rod is a great fellow, a wonderful servant, and an interesting and delightful conversationalist. He gave me the benefit of his thoughts on several things pertinent to our Area and you'll be hearing more about it later after I've had time to digest both the ideas and my dinner.

Then it was off to the Roundtables. These are one of the best things about PRAASA. Much as we have roundtables for our DCMS, Standing Committee Chairs, Intergroup Chairs, and Area Officers at our Assemblies and Committee meetings so it is at PRAASA. There are Roundtables both for various service positions and for various topics. I attended the Area Chair/Alt Chair roundtable. (continue on page 4)



PRAASA 2013, OUR STORIES



AA Archives

The Month of March and April in A.A. History:

(continue from Page 3) The format of these roundtables is pretty simple. We all introduce ourselves, and tonight we had 22 chair and alt chairs in attendance, and then go around suggesting topics for discussion. Once we have enough topics to fill our time up, the person who made the suggestions gives a quick overview of their concern and we have a discussion on how our area deals with whatever the topic is. Our topics tonight were

- How can we increase participation at area level?
- Does anyone use online registration for assemblies?
- Does anyone accept online contributions for area?
- How can we maintain effective service organization?
- How can we effectively use Robert's rules of order?
- How is the registration fee for assemblies handled?
- Does your area have an inventory process for assemblies?
- Do you publish your proposed budget and final budget on your area website?

Those are the topics as I copied them down and there's definitely some overlap. Notes were kept by a volunteer secretary and we'll be getting them soon. We'll also have each other's email addresses so we, as area servants, can remain in touch with each other.

These roundtables are a wonderful opportunity to foster unity throughout the Pacific Region, learn that our problems aren't unique, share what works with each other, and just as importantly, what doesn't. I had a wonderful post roundtable discussion with the Alaska Area Chair. Alaska shares many of the same issues we do by virtue of being, like us, a place I like to describe as a "remote community made up of remote communities."

That's it for today though. It was an exciting day with so many of our Area 17 servants participating in service to PRAASA. Our Area has a well earned reputation for being very well informed, very active in service, and an area which isn't afraid to innovate to solve problems. Tomorrow is an even busier day, so it's time for me to sign-off and get some sleep! Thank you very much for the opportunity to serve and participate here at PRAASA 2013.

Bob H., Chair

See area17aa.org for more on PRAASA!!!!!!!!!!

March 30, 1941: Bill & Lois signed the contract for their home which would become known world-wide as "Stepping Stones." The price was \$6,500 and \$40 per month payments at 4% interest! Today the home is a non-project organization and a museum kept as authentic and homey as when Lois and Bill were alive. A.A. members from around the world visit "Stepping Stones" year after year, 365 days a year.

March 1942: Bill W., a veteran of World War I tries to reenlist in the army during World War II. At the age of 46, he was too old for combat.

March 25, 1965: Richmond Walker passed away. Author of the 24 HOURS A DAY book. The oldtimers say they sobered up on two books: The Big Book and the 24 Hours A Day Book. Richard joined the Oxford Group Jan. 1939. His sobriety date by A.A. is and always will be May 20th 1942. He came into A.A. in Boston.

In April 1977, Harry Lake reported on the Public Information meeting held at the Lanakila Health Center....Harry underscored the urgent need for public information by citing the 1971 General Service Office Survey which showed prevailing public attitudes toward A.A. Of 13,000 respondents: 25% knew a member of A.A.; 58% thought A.A. members were weak and unhappy; 54% thought A.A. members were neurotic; and 50% thought A.A. members were sensitive.

Apr.—May 1999: PRAASA '99—A memory. Yes, PRAASA '99 is a memory, or a series of memories...and from all that we've heard.. Very Good Memories!! The attendance was just over 700, and was all the committee had hoped for (it was in Kona). The really special reward was that over 240 Hawaii Service-Minded AA Members were in attendance. Giving so many, their first experience at PRAASA....I want to thank all those who in their own special way serve Alcoholics Anonymous. Aloha, Scott C., Area 17 Delegate, Hawaii



PRAASA 2013, OUR STORIES

Aloha, My name is Dave, from “the other Kailua,” on the Windward side of Oahu, and I’m an alcoholic. But as I write, from Boise, Idaho, I’m not drinking. I came to Boise for the Pacific Regional AA Service Assembly 2013, and have been asked to share my experience. So far, whenever I’ve attended one of the annual PRAASAs, I’ve stayed sober; I don’t want to drink anymore, so I keep on doing it.

“But wait, there’s more!” While I’m here, I’ve stayed in Boise for a few days to see one of my brothers and to ski.

PRAASA 2013 has been representative of the PRAASAs I’ve attended—wonderful. The locals (and everyone else are so friendly, the panels were informative and provocative, the PRAASA business meeting was “entertaining.” With 1100 AAs (including more than 300 Idahoans) focused and intent on working together to carry our message better to alcoholics, the atmosphere was electric. “But wait, there’s more!”

Right now I’m especially grateful for the examples of several before who showed that service comes with fringe benefits, often opportunities for fun. Gary R and Steve Y would “absolutely insist” on going early and taking their golf bags when traveling inter-island for Hawaii Area’s Treatment Facilities Committee. Another Gary would always bring his surfboard on trips for our Grapevine Committee. So, to have what they had, I do what they did: I went out to dinner with my brother, and the we went to an Idaho Steelheads hockey game (we beat the Colorado Eagles 3 to 2 on a beauty of a goal late in the third period). And now I’m up at Bogus Basin, just 16 miles outside of Boise. The snow ain’t exactly powder, but the sun is out, right now the wind is down, and today’s skiing was *fun*.

Service in AA has always had fringe benefits for me: meeting new people, making new friends,

learning new things, developing new skills, skiing in Idaho, Washington and Utah, watching others grow in recovery. As our literature says, “You will not want to miss it.”

Dave



When I attended the Roundtables at PRAASA, a place where interested persons gathered to talk about specific A.A. issues, I wanted to see what kind of support other Groups, Districts, Areas, could support the just released inmate whose problems were alcohol related. The situation there was somewhat similar to that in Hawaii—the need for volunteers.

Another way to assist those who are vulnerable to relapse when they leave prison is to take a meeting into prison so at least they know A.A. is here and the resources available to them.

Your kokua is appreciated. Rochelle A.



PRAASA 2013, OUR STORIES

Area Chair's Report #4—It's the Monday after PRAASA 2013 and I'm in the lobby of my hotel waiting for shuttle to the airport. I apologize for not getting this report up earlier, but after a full weekend of activities I was a wee bit too tired to try to write last night.

This report will be about the final day of PRAASA 2013. Sunday, the last day, is really just a half day with most of the activity, besides the wrap-up meeting, ending at noon. Of course we are slow to leave as we have so many folks to say good-bye to before we head out, and chat we do. Most of the folks, besides those of us from Area 17, are friends I see once a year. As this was my sixth PRAASA in seven years some of my relationships go back quite a ways.

On Sunday we don't break out into smaller groups, all the meetings are large ones. The format is pretty simple:

- What's On Your Mind? (Open Mic)
- Past Trustee's Panel
- Ask It Basket (Stump the Delegate as Madeleine P. calls it)
- Closing
- Wrap-Up Meeting

I didn't attend the Wrap-Up Meeting as this is really for upcoming PRAASA folks to learn how to plan one and what to expect in the way of problems. If I were on the Delegate's committee I'd have attended. If we had a PRAASA of our own coming up soon I'd definitely have attended. But as I was on our PRAASA Host Committee just two years ago it'll be a while before we need to prepare for our next one.

And now my location has changed, I'm at the airport waiting to board for my connecting flight to Seattle...but let's continue on with my report...

The "What's On Your Mind" portion of the day is much like we do at our own Area Assemblies. This is the when all those folks who never got a chance to say something take a moment and let us know who they are and what's on their mind. At my first PRAASA in Portland this is when I finally took a chance and said something. Since then I've probably said too much at too many PRAASAs so I kept my mouth shut. I'd had my say when I made a friendly amendment and that was enough.

Next up is the Trustee's Panel. This is one of my favorite parts of PRAASA (it's all my favorite part really). This when we get to hear from the Past Pacific Region Trustees in attendance, as well as any other trustee that happens to be there.

Rod B. moderated the panel and I believe we had seven past trustees in attendance. I'm sorry if I don't remember all the years represented, but it was a wonderful opportunity to hear from these wonderful servants of AA telling stories and anecdotes about their time in service and commenting on

the issues of today. Let's just say that no matter what jobs you've had in AA, your service is never really done.

Then it was time for the Ask It Basket. The basket had been sitting on stage all weekend and was chock full of questions, both hard and harder. This really is, as Madeleine P. says, "Stump the Delegate." Once again Rod was in charge doling out the questions.

Ken, our Delegate, had the question, "Why is the GSB planning to combine the AAWS and Grapevine boards when Bill W. warned against this in the Service Manual?"

Now I can't say that Bill actually warned against this in so many words so I'm going to look it up, but that was the question before Ken. Rather than say more, I'm going to suggest that we all look into what everyone seems to be calling "The Plan."

Many of the questions were about "The Plan," but many were not. One of my favorites, and I hope our Grapevine Chair is reading this, was, "Besides subscribing, what what can we do to support The Grapevine and La Vina?" Heather, what's the answer to that?

And all too soon PRAASA came to close. Idaho Area 18 did a great job...maybe not quite as great as Hawaii Area 17, but our weather is a bit nicer. Seriously though, I'd like to extend my thanks to the Area 18 2013 PRAASA Chair, David F. and his whole team who did a wonderful job of hosting the Pacific Region. The problems were minor and sometimes even apropos as when the lights went out twice during the never-ending business meeting: almost as if God was saying, "Enough already!"

I will miss Idaho, it's a wonderful place with great AA and great AA servants who really went all out to welcome us and make our stay one filled with Aloha. I'm sure they are going to do great job in 2014 when we head back to Boise for the 2014 Pacific Regional Forum. I'm hoping I'll be able to extend my stay a few days (on my own dime of course) and explore Idaho a bit more — there just wasn't time for that on this trip and, Hawaii resident that I am, I think I'll like July weather a bit more than chilly early March (though they did say we'd raised the temperature a bit).

Thank you Hawaii Area 17 for funding me to PRAASA 2013. I am honored to serve you and look forward to answering any question you may have about my experience, about PRAASA in general and how valuable it is to us all, or chatting about anything else you have on your mind.

Thank you for letting me be of service,

Bob H.
Hawaii Area 17



PRAASA 2013, OUR STORIES



When I go to PRAASA, I like to walk around and see what the host city is all about. Well it was cold in Boise and the people were pleasantly nice. On one of my exploring expeditions, I came across the above mural on the side of a building not too far from the convention center and learned a good deal of the people in Boise have a Basque heritage. Basques people come from northern Spain and have their own language. They have a community autonomous from Spain and history of fierce independence from Spain. The Basque language, music, dance and cuisine have been preserved in Boise, thousands of miles away from their homeland. Awesome!

There were other interesting sites—the State capitol was beautiful with no security at the door, a memorial park to Anne Frank, a river, a college, several parks. Boise is also known as the city of trees. At first I couldn't tell because the leaves were gone. The people in Boise also like ice hockey and I got to watch them practice from my bedroom at the Grove Hotel. Cool!

Grateful to attend PRAASA, Rochelle A.

Tradition 4: Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. or Al-Anon as a whole. (paraphrased)

Each 12 step group has complete freedom to decide for itself the program content of its meetings and the topics that will be discussed. The group can decide if the meeting will be opened or closed and when and where the meeting will be held. Each group can decide to change its meeting format and has complete authority to spend its funds as needed.

The group can also decide how it wishes to open and close its meetings. Some groups close with a prayer, while others have a moment of silence. In these matters, each group has total freedom. It is entirely up to the membership of that individual group.

But the second part of this tradition reminds each group that it has a responsibility also to the worldwide fellowship. By adhering to the traditions and principals of its program, each group can assure that it will not stray too far away from the program's basic tenets.

Getting Too Far Out

The "autonomy" provided in Tradition 4 does not mean an individual group has the authority to re-word the steps or traditions, or to create its own literature. Nor should groups introduce, discuss, or sell "outside" literature at its meeting place.

Many a meeting has gotten away from the look and feel of its primary purpose by using non-conference approved literature, showing videos of popular self-help speakers, or allowing treatment professionals to speak at open meetings on the latest therapy techniques.

There is a saying that there is no "right or wrong" way to hold a meeting, but the group can cease carrying the message if it stray too far way from its traditions and concepts. But other than that, groups have complete freedom to design its program to the needs of its members, which can result in a wide variety of formats.

“Not Doing it Right’

When I first came into this program I learned how it was in my little group, as I went to the other groups in neighboring towns I would think, "They don't do their meetings right." They have too much laughter and don't start on time and so on. Today these little things that use to bother me now make me realize that they are what makes all these groups unique and different.

I look forward to the different meetings now because we are unique in our own rights. As long as the guidelines of the program are followed and the basic message is there for us (old and new) this is one more example of why AA works.



Heard in a Meeting

Always be on the lookout for the presence of wonder. EB White

ANTs – Automatic Negative Thoughts

DNR – Drama not required.

I needed to stop telling God how big my problems were and start telling my problems how big my God was.

Learn to listen and listen to learn.

The universe is full of magical things patiently waiting for our wits to grow sharper. Eden Phillpots

The only trying I've ever done in moderation is the twelve steps.

Trying to figure out what powerlessness is is like being in a rocking chair. You don't get anywhere but it gives you something to do.

Mahalo Cheryl N. for your contribution!