



MYNAH BIRD

HAWAII AREA #17 NEWSLETTER

P67 Issue #4 June 2017



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This, too, is service to AA!

**Next Issue of the Mynah Bird will be published
for the August Budget Assembly**

**DEADLINE TO SUBMIT YOUR ARTICLE
Saturday August 19, 2017**

UPCOMING AREA ASSEMBLIES AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS for Panel 67

(Please purchase tickets early and use the Area's code for Hawaiian Air if you purchase air travel from Hawaiian. It can be found at Area17aa.org)

August 26 & 27, 2017

Budget Assembly
West Hawaii District #8

October 2017

Committee Meeting
Windward District #4

November 2017

Assembly (Optional)
Hilo Hamakua District #7

January 2018

Inventory Assembly
No Ka Oi District #5

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Service Position – Alternate Webmaster

Would you like to increase your skill set? Ready to advance your learning curve? Best yet, would you like to be of service to Area 17?

There is an opening for an Alternate Webmaster. There will be almost a two-year training period with the possibility of becoming Webmaster for the next panel. There is no need to be a member of the Website committee, just a willingness to learn and be of service. Contact me at webmaster@area17aa.org

Val V. - Webmaster

Heard at a Meeting

“I’m still sick when I try to make a name for myself in an Anonymous Program”

GOD'S LOVING GRACE

I remember sitting in a class at the treatment center where my Dad was being treated for his alcoholism. I really didn't want to be there but I was more concerned with what people would think if I didn't go. All my life I had been plagued with this nagging sense that somehow, some way, if I could just figure out how to fit in, I would be okay. But I never fit. I never felt good enough, smart enough, pretty enough and in the end of my drinking I was so completely filled with self-loathing that the only thing I desired was to not wake up in the morning.

While sitting in that class at the treatment center, the instructor was blabbing on about the symptoms of alcoholism when something caught my attention and my ears perked up. I was hearing something I'd never heard before. What I realized for the first time ever was that she was talking about me! Never had I considered alcohol to be a problem for me, it had been my solution for everything. As much as I tried, it simply didn't work anymore but I couldn't see that. I had blamed everyone and everything, including myself for my problems, never had I considered that alcohol was a problem. It was then I had my moment of clarity that placed me in a position to hear the truth about my disease.

Timidly I raised my hand and asked, "How do you know if you're an alcoholic?" I don't know what she answered but she handed me a questionnaire to fill out if I wanted. I answered YES to all questions but two simply because they did not apply to me. It wasn't long after that I said for the very first time, "My name is Barb and I am an alcoholic." When those words came out of my mouth the compulsion to drink and drug was lifted right out of me. It was the first of many miracles to come. A voice spoke to me and said, "Barb, if you drink again you are going to die." I understood then that I really didn't want to die but I couldn't go on living the way I was. This was my first conscious spiritual experience. Looking back over my life as I proceeded through the steps, I could see how all along there had been a guiding force that, time after time, kept me safe from harm's way.

I started attending AA meetings as soon as I returned from that family program in the treatment center. I wasn't willing to fully surrender to the program of AA for another three years. It is a painful life living in a state of dry drunk and I felt more insane than I ever had drinking. It took what it took to bring me to my knees and admit complete surrender, hands up saying, "God, please help me, I can't do this."

I asked a woman to be my sponsor, she was someone who had a sponsor, had worked the steps and had a working knowledge of the book "Alcoholics Anonymous". As we walked through the steps, I came to understand that not only was I powerless over alcohol, I was powerless over people, places and things in my life. I was able to see the destructive nature of my thinking and that I suffered from a spiritual malady. Slowly I developed a relationship with a Higher Power and over time, that relationship has become the most important in my life. Without it I am destined to misery and despair. I have learned to sort through the belief systems (BS) that I acquired over my lifetime and take out the garbage that no longer serves me. I have been able to repair relationships that I thought could never be fixed, through the amends process. I found self-worth in being able to give back to others and be of service in and out of the program.

As I continue my journey in AA I am often amazed at God's loving Grace. I hear stories of how God has worked in people's lives to bring them to their knees and about the gifts brought about through surrender. Life is still life, and I have been thrown some curveballs, but nothing that a drink would make better. I realize how quickly I can get frustrated or judgmental when I think something or someone should be different than it is. So, it is important for me to remember that "the main problem of the alcoholic centers in his mind, rather than his body" (AA Big Book pg. 23). It is none of my business what you do or what's happening in the world, my responsibility is how I react to that. When I am tapped into my Higher Power, I am able to show up with kindness, compassion, honesty, integrity and be of real service to another. Once I get away from that power and start thinking I know something, I stand in judgement, fear, and blame, and dishonesty, selfish and self-seeking behavior. My motives become misguided and I become depressed and isolated. Fortunately for me (and you) I don't live in that place for very long without recognizing what's happened. I can plug back in and

have peace and freedom in an instant. I am part of a fellowship I never knew I wanted. Today I am good enough, smart enough, and pretty enough. I fit wherever I go. My name is Barb, and I am an alcoholic.
Barbara, KMS

The Friday Meeting at GSO

On my recent trip to New York City I was blessed to be able to attend the regular Friday 11:00 AM meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous hosted by the staff of the General Service Office, not once, but twice! For those who don't know, Friday is one of the most popular days to visit the General Service Office at 475 Riverside Drive because it's also the day you can attend an A.A. meeting there in addition to your tour and visit to the archives.

I'd been to the G.S.O. before on a day trip to New York after the 2015 International Convention in Atlanta. I did take the tour of the offices, before their recent remodeling, but because I couldn't schedule it on a Friday I missed the meeting. My loss, and I mean that!

This time I wasn't to be denied. I arrived in Rye Brook, New York, on Thursday prior to the GSC. I had planned on using Friday to get adjusted to the time zone and recover from the flight. Of course, my friends from the Pacific Region, now delegates and also in town early, had other ideas. "Let's go to the city on Friday!" they said and of course I wanted in.

We left Rye Brook early on Friday morning on the train to Manhattan. As we are not a glum lot, we were shushed by commuters who weren't quite as enthusiastic about heading to the city as we were. While on the train we caught each other up on what was new since PRAASA the month before. We'd been busy preparing for the GSC, but today we could relax.

Once we arrived in the city we checked out Times Square quickly. Barry, the Idaho Panel 66 Delegate showed us the Crowne Plaza where the 68th GSC will be held next year. Specifically, we learned where the bathrooms were and what were the best places to shop and eat in the neighborhood. Then we hopped on the subway and made our way to 475 Riverside Drive and the General Service Office.

It would be a busy day for the G.S.O. staff, in addition to the regular visitors a few of the other delegates arriving in New York had the same idea. Still, being good Pacific Region A.A.s we were the first visitors through the door, a fact commented on by Greg T., the current G.S.O. manager, with a smile and a hug. We checked out the archives room and then headed down for breakfast at the cafeteria in the building. G.S.O. is housed in The Interchurch Building, a location that also houses other non-profits and our location for several years now. The cafeteria in the basement is open to all and offers a great selection and reasonable prices for New York. I'm given to understand the staff eats there regularly.

Then it was time for the meeting. Because of the expected crowd, the meeting was held a block down the street at the lovely Riverside Church. We all tramped down the block and entered a meeting room at the church and discovered that A.A. in New York at the G.S.O. is, yep, a lot like A.A. at home, where ever home happens to be. And I can tell you that Hawaii was not necessarily the most exotic location announced either. There were folks from the neighborhood who show up every Friday for a meeting, just like we do. There were staff members taking a break from their work week for a meeting because, after all, they are alcoholics just like us. And there were visitors from all over, this week included member from the Ukraine and Ireland. Wow!

The speaker shared his story for fifteen or twenty minutes and the meeting was opened for general sharing. It was, you guessed it, a lot like meetings at home. For an hour everyone in the room, whether they were on staff, a delegate to the GSC, a trustee, a visitor, or just from the neighborhood were the same, just regular A.A. members.

After the meeting a line formed to thank the speaker, who wasn't someone special they'd flown in, just a member who'd been asked to share their experience, strength, and hope. And then it was over, just like at home. Of course, many of us weren't headed back to our regular lives and homes, most of us were headed for the tour back at the office.

In my mind this was one of the best meetings I've attended, and one of the most special. Why? Because it wasn't special. Sound contradictory? That's A.A. for you. It was special because it showed me that A.A. is A.A. wherever you go. Just because there were folks from around the world, staff, and GSC participants in attendance we weren't special. We were joined together because we are just regular alcoholics with a shared problem and more importantly, a shared solution. It works, it really does.

Two weeks later I would be back, this time attending the meeting while on vacation in Manhattan. I didn't have a gang with me this time, I was just another visitor attending a regular meeting of A.A. The meeting was a bit smaller and held, not at the church, but in a first-floor conference room at 475 Riverside Drive. Once again there were folks from all over, including me, staff from the offices, and just regular New Yorkers for whom this a regular weekly meeting. The only difference for me was that somehow, I'd been asked to be the speaker. And, just like I do here at home when I'm asked, I say yes and do my best. It was very moving and spiritual experience for me; not because I was special, but because I wasn't. Just another drunk sharing his experience, strength, and hope, when asked, in the hope of staying sober one day at a time.

Bob H.

AA Service of Carrying the Message

It can be a lonely job to be the District Committee Chair with no committee members so Maui's three districts have joined forces and started an Ad Hoc Committee that includes Public Information, Cooperation with Eder Community, Cooperation with the Professional Community, Corrections, and the Mynah Bird.

In three months they have tackled:

- Educating districts on exactly what these committees do;
- Developing a script and team ready to do non-AA presentations;
- Follow up calling to the 250 letters sent out last panel to the mental health community, psychologists, and churches.

How did they do the education piece? **AA Service Committee Jeopardy!** (See photo below).

Public information for \$300. Who is responsible for making sure the library has a Big Book and pamphlets? How long does a big book stay in circulation before it gets tossed?

It's a fun service group that is accomplishing a lot; we meet the last Saturday of the month at 3 PM at Central Office on Central Avenue in Wailuku. Come join us.

Mare L., Hawaii Area 17 Public Information Committee Chair



GROUP HISTORY FORM

When completed, please return to:

archivist@area17aa.org and archives@area17aa.org

Name of Group: _____

Previous Name: _____

Date Founded: _____

Founders: _____

Early Members: _____

Place and time of first meeting: _____

Do the early members continue to attend? _____

Current Meeting (place/time/format): _____

Current Membership #'s: _____ each mtg _____ home group _____ business mtgs _____

Did the group move? _____

Dates: _____ Location: _____

Dates: _____ Location: _____

Dates: _____ Location: _____

Dates: _____ Location: _____

Group History (such as anniversaries, special meetings, outside speakers, notes about the founders, etc.):

Note: Please include any/all information you may be aware of, not asked for on this form, as it will result in a clearer or more factual account of your group. Other pertinent details:

Prepared by: _____

Date: _____ Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Long-Timers Interview
**Suggested questions **

1. What is your full name and sobriety date? (last names will remain anonymous)
2. How did you first learn about AA?
3. Where and when did you attend your first meeting?
4. Have you stayed sober since your first meeting?
5. Were there many meetings that were active when you got sober?
6. Are they still active today?
7. Did you have a sponsor? Tell me about him/her.
8. Did someone take you to meetings in the beginning of sobriety?
9. What kind of service activities have you participated in?
10. Are you still active in AA today?
11. Have these activities aided in your sobriety?
12. What were the twelve step calls like in early sobriety?
13. Can you name some of the founders of your early group?
14. Do you have the names of any other long-time members who would like to share their stories with the Hawai`i Archives Committee?
15. Is there anything else you would like to share that has not been covered in this interview?
16. Please list suggested questions below to add to this Long-Timers interview for the Hawai`i Area 17 Archives.

When completed, please return to:

archivist@area17aa.org, archives@area17aa.org

SAFETY IN AA

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

ACCEPTABLE

AUTONOMY

BEHAVIOR

COMMUNICATE

EMERGENCIES

FINANCIAL

ILLEGAL

INAPPROPRIATE

INVENTORY

LAW

POLICE

PREDATOR

SEXUAL

SOLUTIONS

SPONSORSHIPTRUST

WORKSHOP