



PRAASA Report
 Jeannie G., Chair
 Hawaii Area 17 / Panel 73
 March 1 - 3, 2024

Hello everyone, my name is Jeannie, and I am an alcoholic. I currently serve as the Chair for Hawaii Area 17. One of my responsibilities as Chair is to attend the Pacific Region Alcoholics Anonymous Service Assembly (PRAASA) and report back to the area body.

I attended PRAASA for the seventh time, thanks to the funding provided by my home group, district, or area. As a part of my service positions, I am accountable to be fully present and report back. Therefore, I take a lot of notes using my favorite digital notepad, which allows me to write faster than I can type. So, let me share my notes with you.

I typically like to arrive a day earlier, self-funded, and be well-rested. PRAASA can be a grueling schedule, but this year, I had a better idea.

We've all heard the saying, "I forgot what it used to be like?" Well, this year, I decided to take a red-eye flight, just like I used to when I was a younger traveler, but when I booked my flight to arrive at 6 AM, I never considered that my room at the Marriott might not be ready until 3 PM. I don't know what I was thinking! Also, the last time I took a red-eye, I vowed never to do it again, but I forgot that too.

Fortunately, my friend Deborah S had to arrive on Wednesday at the last minute and booked a room across the street for two nights. She kindly let me nap in her room before checking in at the Marriott. The next day, she joined me for the rest of the event. Thank you, Deborah! As for me, I've learned my lesson - red-eye flights are definitely not for me!

All right then, I was taught to share what I saw, what felt, and what I heard, so here goes:

What I saw: "1830 members came together with a common goal, to discuss their opinions and concerns about PRAASA. I saw many people serving the fellowship. Observing all this, I knew that this is what we can expect in 2026. I will explain the reason behind this later."

What I felt: I feel fortunate to be a part of Alcoholics Anonymous. Sharing experiences and laughter with fellow members over coffee is invaluable.

In the past, I shared an experience about meeting an elderly gentleman at my first PRAASA. He advised me to make it a point to sit with someone I don't know at events. Ever since then, I have made it a habit to do so. While waiting in a long line to enter the banquet hall for dinner on Saturday night, my friends Ray, Marianne, and I talked with those around us. We decided that once we got inside, it was game on; we would go our separate ways to find a table and fellowship with members we didn't know. It turned out to be an excellent experience for all of us!

What I heard:

Young people in AA:

- We need to increase the number of young people in AA; we are not retaining them.
- There is a need to carry the message into middle schools, high schools, and colleges.
- What do newcomers find when they do come in? Are we welcoming?
- Show them the Meeting App and the Grapevine App. Subscription for \$2.99/month?
- It's time to acknowledge that young people are not just the future but the current members of AA."

Our Co-Founders' writings — Sacred text or...?

- A survey was conducted in 2023 to gather opinions on editing the founders' writings.
 - Individuals mainly submitted the survey.
 - There will likely be two conference-sharing sessions at GSC.
- Some comments from the survey:
 - Make no changes, but develop more pamphlets.
 - Saying “sacred” can be controversial; it’s religious.
 - "Sacred" means something holy, devoted to a religious ceremony, or worthy of awe and respect. For instance, Jerusalem is considered sacred to many religions, just as Fenway Park is sacred to Red Sox fans.

“Plain Language” Big Book:

- In 2024 a progress report is scheduled to be presented at the Conference in 2024. The delegates will have access to the first six chapters for reading.
- The plain-language Big Book is not a replacement for the 5th edition but a companion piece that brings it to life.
- We will see the plain language edition as a victory in the future.

Our (non-alcoholic) Class A Trustees:

- Class A (Non-alcoholic) Trustees express profound faith in Alcoholics Anonymous.
- They can appear in public without anonymity.
- Invitations have been sent to twenty Class A Trustees to attend the International Convention.
- They serve two consecutive 3-year terms and possibly one more 3-year term.
- They do not get paid.
- A survey of Class A Trustees found:
 - They spend 15-20 hours a week on AA business and 20-30 days a year away from home, and the Trustees’ Chair is even more time-consuming.
 - They get reimbursed for their travel, meals, and hotel stays.
- Past Class A Trustees say our literature and pamphlets were a valuable resource.
- Bill W suggested we bring in some of our non-alcoholic friends and invite hostile critics because they frequently tell the truth.

A.A. Accessibility: Are we communicating effectively?

- "We don't always listen to the needs of our members."
- The release of Navaho Audio Big Book is impressive.
- The Braille Big Book looks lovely. I had the opportunity to touch it at PRAASA and had to fight back tears as we talked about it.
- We need ASL presenters as well as Spanish presenters.
- ASL Big Book is the abridged version; no stories.
- Over 7000 languages are spoken worldwide, but most digital translation tools fail to provide accurate translations. As a result, a more scientific approach to translation, called linguistic translation, has become necessary, although it is the most difficult to convey.

Punitive Damages:

- A.A.com appears at the top of the search results when searching for AA.org. We lost out on a \$10,000 opportunity to purchase the domain “AA.com.” We lost out on the opportunity to buy the domain “AA.com” for \$10,000. We considered taking legal action but decided against it to avoid public controversy.
- Lawsuits may be good but not beneficial for AA as a whole.

Responsibility in Service:

- Triangle? What shape is your triangle?
- Do we depend on only two sides?
- Are we doing enough on the service side?
- Is my step work more important or less important than the other two sides of my triangle?
- The goal is to keep the triangle balanced.

Alt Chair/Chair Round Tables: I attended two 2-hour Chair Round Tables. Here are some of the topics discussed:

- Use excess funds to pay registration fees for DCMs to attend assemblies and improve or purchase sound or hybrid equipment.
- Hybrid and tech issues.
- Committee chairs that are not willing to do hybrid.
- Registration/agenda/software
- Some areas had not conducted an inventory in over a decade, while some panels conducted it regularly, every panel.
- Do we have Structures & Guidelines?
- How do we handle agenda changes and proposals?
- We discussed the importance of obtaining DNO insurance to cover officers against personal lawsuits. Sean C, our area treasurer, will investigate this.

More things I heard:

- Workbooks and kits are now available.
- We can send Grapevine subscriptions to the incarcerated if we have excess funds.
- The Meeting App should be on aa.org, Area, District, and IG websites.
- The business we get done here is never as important as how we treat each other here.
- Members say, "General Service is politics," and lobbying on some of our issues makes this true.
- If I stay on my side of the street and not throw gas on the fire, things will blow over.
- GSB's financial setback due to COVID-19 will take the rest of this decade to recover. Financial people said we need 17-18 million for a reserve.
- Do I send GSO a yearly birthday contribution of one dollar for every year of sober?
- 7th Tradition Contributions are in record numbers, but supplies cost surpassed contributions.
- We don't need a code of conduct; we have the steps, traditions & concepts.
- If AA collapses, we could bring it back.
- There are no second-class or first-class citizens.
- Check my motive: "Am I trying to be the most popular girl in the mental hospital?"
- Outsiders say that even though we say we are inclusive, saying "Amen" and announcing bible study says differently. The judicial system has a hard time sending people to AA (a religious program).
- Speaking at an AA function is a privilege.
- Leaders are made, not necessarily born.
- DCMs have a unique position to get groups to get GSRs.
- Never say "no" to an AA request unless you have a compelling reason not to.
- If nobody is doing it, you should.
- Am I being the best possible trusted servant?
- Individuals in our home groups are the bosses of AA.
- Am I a giver or a taker?

On a personal note, I get annoyed when people in meetings say, "All I need to start another meeting is a resentment and a coffee pot." It was good to hear a long-time member share the same thought and remind us of the long form of Tradition 4, which states: *But when its plans concern the welfare of neighboring groups also, those groups ought to be consulted.* She added, "It seems our landlords are the only people getting healthy by this attitude." Many of us agreed with her, including Sean F., our area Registrar, who stated in his presentation. "It seems a lot of coffee pots went walking out..." I always heard, "Too many meetings, not enough groups." This topic is something to consider.

After the PRAASA event ended, I attended a wrap-up meeting to hear reports from the committees that organized the event. I listened carefully and took notes because, in case you missed it, we will be hosting PRAASA 2026 in Hawaii! As I heard the reports, it became apparent that it takes a collective effort from all members of all our islands to put on an event like PRAASA, but the good news is that we have done it before! Our higher power will put our members in place and equip them to do the job! Hosting PRAASA 2026 will provide an excellent opportunity to foster unity among our islands. I eagerly look forward to it and hope you are, too.

Next year, Area 2 will host PRAASA 2025 from March 7th to 9th in sunny Anchorage, Alaska. I said "sunny" because we will have nearly 12 hours of daily sunlight! That is $3\frac{3}{4}$ hours longer than March in Hawaii. Also, during March, the average temperature in Anchorage reaches into the 30s; therefore, if you plan to attend the event, shop for a long winter coat, as it is hard to come by in Hawaii.

Anyway, I always tell my husband that I blame AA for causing my life to fly by way too fast. I live and prepare for one AA event after the other, nearly four to six months ahead, but I wouldn't have it any other way. I am grateful to be living a life with a great purpose.

I heard a gem at PRAASA 2024, and I'm stealing it: "Service has been the backbone of my sobriety!"

It has been an honor and privilege to serve by your side throughout this panel, Panel 73!

Thank you for allowing me to serve.

In love and service,
Jeannie G
Hawaii Area 17 Chair