

March 2021



# MYNAH BIRD

## HAWAII AREA #17 NEWSLETTER



Area Website: [www.area17aa.org](http://www.area17aa.org)

Articles to: [mynahbird@area17aa.org](mailto:mynahbird@area17aa.org)

Upcoming	Send Seventh Tradition Contributions
<p><b>May 2021 Committee Meeting (Virtual)</b>  <b>Co-hosted by: District 3 Leeward</b></p>	<p><b>Hawaii Area Committee</b>  <b>P.O. Box 1413</b>  <b>Honolulu, HI 96806</b></p>
<p><b>August 2021 Budget Assembly (Virtual)</b>  <b>Co-hosted by: District 4 Windward</b></p>	<p><b>General Service Board</b>  <b>P.O. Box 459</b>  <b>Grand Central Station</b>  <b>New York, NY 10163</b></p>

Who should attend:

Committee meeting – Officers, Standing Committee Chairs, District Committee Members. Any AA member may attend.

Budget Assembly – Officers, Standing Committee Chairs, District Committee Members, General Service Representatives, Intergroup Chairs and anyone who is interested. All are welcome.

In this issue – Step 3 experience, being of service at PRAASA, PRAASA experiences, upcoming events – Anonymity Workshop – April 10 – see flyer in this issue, Treatment Workshop – April 24 – see flyer in this issue.

*I am responsible, when anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA always to be there, and for that. I am responsible.*

## Step 3 - Made a decision .....

I am attending my first A.A. meeting in the basement of the hospital at which I am in a 28-day alcohol treatment program. Everything is foreign to me - my surroundings, all of these strangers, my life without drinking. I eye the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions hanging on the wall; I scan them. My head immediately tells me I'm going to flunk this class when I read the word "God". My church experiences were weddings and funerals. I had no knowledge of God except for believing those who turned their will and lives over to Him were weak. They had no strength, no will power, no knowing that they could do whatever they wanted if they put their minds to it. Thus, this college-educated mind finds itself in rehab. I tried all the methods stated in More About Alcoholism in the Big Book, and more, but my mind and will power just weren't strong enough to prove my theory that that I could do whatever I put my mind to. Just like with everything else in my life, I'm a loser, a failure; I'll never be good enough. My exact feelings when I read these steps on the wall. My new life in recovery starts with eating three square meals a day. We have a strict time to go to bed, arise, and be at breakfast, lunch and dinner. We go outside for fresh air and exercise each day. We have prayer and meditation and group therapy. My life has become very regimented. I start to learn about the disease of alcoholism and begin reading The

Big Book, all while taking care of my body, mind and spirit. There's that Step 3 again, "Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood him." I learn I can make up my own Higher Power. It can be a door knob, a rock, the group, nature, the universe; it just can't be me. Living at Lake Tahoe at the time, I want to go to a treatment program that is not an outpatient program. I don't trust myself having the opportunity to go home each day, that place where I was a closet drinker, black out drinker, pass out drinker. I want to go far enough away that I wouldn't know anyone but, more importantly, no one would know me. What would they think? I find myself looking out my rehab window overlooking all the casinos in Reno. I spot it - my Higher Power. He's warm, happy, and colorful. It is the neon clown head on the Circus Circus Casino. I turn my will and my life over to it. What do I have to lose? I'm going to fake it 'til I make it; I'm going to put my mind to it until I get it. I did not hear bells or see rays of light shining down on me or the clown head. He just got to be in control of my life and I trusted him to do so. The first indication that something was different, that this might be working, was when I was allowed to return home for a few hours a couple weeks into my treatment. It was uncomfortable as my husband drove me home. He was the same; I was transitioning. I was sober and had some clarity and knowledge of my new-found disease. My ah-

ha moment happened as we drove through the Washoe Valley, a road I've driven many times before. But on this day everything looked different. It looked brighter, warmer, more colorful. Look, this always reminded me of tumble-weed country, desert-like, beautiful in its own way but never beautiful to me. This day it was beautiful. Is that odd or is that God? One day at a time I transition, my life transitions, and my higher power transitions. The me who got out of bed this morning won't be the me who goes to bed tonight. I find this now to be quite wonderful and exciting...exciting to see how the day will unfold in God's perfect way. Yes, today I choose to call my Higher Power God as it is just easier that way. The Circus Circus clown head is still a dear part of my Higher Power. The photo of Jesus that my grandmother had hanging on her bedroom wall puts an image in my mind of my god. My favorite place in the world, Yosemite Valley, is a huge and majestic part of my higher power and constantly reminds me that I am not in control. But the hugest and most important part of my higher power is my dad. I was always afraid of my dad and had recurring nightmares about him. He was quiet, seldom smiled, and showed no emotion. When he and Mom divorced when I was thirteen, I don't remember saying good bye or being sad or anything. I had heard he had a drinking problem. I never saw him drunk. I heard Mom and him fighting sometimes in their room; I heard Mom crying sometimes. Mom would put me and my brother in the back of the station wagon. We would sleep in our pajamas with the feet as she looked for my dad when he didn't come home. When she found him in a bar and he wouldn't come home with her, she would send me in in my

PJ's to plead with him to come home. My dad moved as far away as he could get from us in California and died in the gutters of Rhode Island, or so we were told. We kept in contact a couple times a year; I even met with him a few times. It was awkward, but felt we were getting a bit closer. Fast forward to 1998. I am finding that I can no longer control my drinking; my drinking is controlling me. I am exhausted from lying, hiding and cheating, never getting good sleep and not eating properly. As I drink in the bathroom (just like everyone else, right?) I look up to the ceiling and ask my dad for help. Soon thereafter I am in rehab. Fast forward again thirteen years. I am still sober. I got a strong foundation, did everything that was suggested, and got my life together. So well that I spent less time in the rooms of A.A. Unless we're in the rooms we no longer hear what happens when we stop going to meetings. We forget what happens when we forget what it's like to be a newcomer. We forget to give back what was so freely given us when we needed it most. The last thing I thought I'd do that day was pick up that first drink. Notice how I used the word "thought" as I was living from my head once again and no longer from my heart. I even politely refused the drink that was offered me (rote words from my head but not felt in my once again cold heart); that drink was left for me just in case I changed my mind. Is that odd or is that God? As I had no defense, no insurance from being in the program any longer, that small vessel of tequila yelled at me, ever so quietly...cunning, baffling, and powerful. I didn't think it through; I didn't even remember that I am an alcoholic. Until immediately the disease did a victory dance and chanted "MORE". My friend noticed I

drank the first round and brought me another, just in case I changed my mind. Mind. That is the word that separates the men from the boys. Recovery for me is only cherished when it comes from the heart; the disease cherishes the mind. Lying. Hiding. Cheating. Immediately. Didn't matter that I kept drink-free for thirteen and a half years. Could have been thirteen-hundred years. The disease will wait that long for that pinhole of weakness. The pinhole of weakness comes quicker when we stop going to meetings being around genuine like-minded fellows who will call us on our shit. I sneak around for about a week. It becomes a lot of work again. I'm not using my energy on a purposeful and positive life. Until...guess who shows up? In Puerto Vallarta of all places. This is where the Dad-part of my Higher Power was solidified. A young woman who I had never met before came up to me at the reception of my son's wedding. She sought me out with a calling to tell me that

my Dad's presence was so strong here. Odd or God? Why would my Dad's presence be here? He died before my son was even born. And for a live, tangible human being to present me with this message, this gift, really cemented my foundation that my Higher Power is here, is real, is protecting and guiding me, looking after my well-being and presenting opportunities to me on a daily basis that will lead me to my highest good...God's purpose for me here on this earth. I am sober today. I am grateful. I am humble. My Higher Power is key to this life that allows me to be happy, joyous and free. The icing on the cake is that my Dad and I have a relationship that is beyond my wildest dreams. He is always with me and that gives me so much comfort. I am no longer scared of this man. We laugh throughout the day together as we trudge the road of happy destiny.

Dee H. Seniors in Sobriety

## **The Third Step Prayer**

**"God, I offer myself to Thee – To build with me and to do with me as Thou wilt.**

**Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do Thy will.**

**Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of Thy Power, Thy Love, and Thy Way of Life.**

**May I do Thy will always!"**

# Area 17 PRAASA Participation

## **Leadership in AA how do we select our leaders by Kerwin A17D8 DCM**

Aloha, my name is Kerwin and I'm an alcoholic. My home group is KKAA in Kailua Kona on the west side of the Big Island of Hawaii. I am honored to currently serve as DCM for District 8, Area 17. I'd also like to thank the PRAASA committee for allowing me to present on "Leadership in AA" how do we select our leaders.

My sobriety date is June 25, 2018. However, this isn't my first go around in Alcoholics Anonymous. My original sobriety date was July 25, 1986.

After close to 20 years of sobriety I was consumed with self-pity and depression. I began to slowly withdraw from Alcoholics Anonymous. A short time later, in 2005, I drank again. I spent the next several years reaching new depths of incomprehensible demoralization. In 2018, I made the decision to take the final solution, but God had other plans. After 11 days in the Kona Hospital ICU, I reached out for help from the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. Once again, A.A. was there for me.

Like years past, I once again began to set up chairs, make coffee, became a secretary, a chairperson, a GSR, and now I'm currently serving as my district's DCM. A.A has varying levels of service positions which may require different leadership qualities. From the sponsor to the trustee and everything in between, the group or individual is looking for qualities that will best serve the role.

Concept IX reads: Good service leaders, together with sound and appropriate methods of choosing them, are at all levels indispensable for our future functioning and safety. The primary world service leadership once exercised by the founders of A.A. must necessarily be assumed by the Trustees of the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous. The reading further states: No matter how carefully we design our service structure of principles and relationships, no matter how well we apportion authority and responsibility, the operating results of our structure can be no better than the personal performance of those who must man it and make it work.

In the A.A. service manual, some of the qualities that are described as important for effective leadership are: The ability to make and take suggestions – and criticism, to compromise cheerfully, be open minded. Be familiar with the twelve steps, twelve traditions and the twelve concepts. Have good communication skills, a desire and energy to serve, and the time available. Have the confidence of the group and family.

The ability to listen to all points of view. Possess the quality of good judgement, objectivity, and the willingness to stand up and express themselves. Finally, have the ability to make good estimates for the immediate and more distant future. A.A.'s Third Legacy is Service, the sum total of all A.A. services, from a Twelfth Step call to worldwide service activities. The first two Legacies are Recovery

and Unity. When A.A. chooses leaders, we often follow the “Third Legacy Procedure” A.A.’s Third Legacy Procedure is a special type of electoral procedure.

It is considered to be unique to A.A., and at first glance, appears to introduce a strong element of chance into a matter that should depend solely on the judgment of the majority. In practice, however, it has proved highly successful in eliminating the influence of factions or parties that seem to thrive on most political scenes. The railroading of a candidate for election is made difficult, if not impossible, since voters have a wide selection of candidates to choose from. More importantly, a second-place candidate who may be extremely well qualified but without early popular support is encouraged to stay in the balloting rather than withdraw. Third Legacy Procedure is as follows:

The names of eligible candidates are announced. All voting members cast their votes, one choice to a vote. The first candidate to receive two-thirds of the total vote is elected. If no candidate has two-thirds of the total vote after the fourth or fifth ballot the top two candidates’ names are put in a hat and the one drawn from the hat is elected.

It should be reported that some members still doubt whether choice by lot is ever a good idea. They say that the best candidate does not always win. In answer it must be pointed out that each time we have abandoned the “two-thirds vote or lot” in naming certain leaders, there has been a sense of defeat and disturbance in the minority camp which is nowhere nearly offset by the advantage of naming the supposedly best person. Indeed, the second-best person can often be as good a leader as the group, District or Assembly’s first choice; he may even be a better leader.

In closing, I would like to read an excerpt from Bill W’s article in the 1959 Grapevine. Leadership in A.A.: Ever a Vital Need

“Somewhere in our literature there is a statement to this effect: “Our leaders do not drive by mandate: they lead by example.” In effect, we are saying to them, “Act for us, but don’t boss us.” Therefore, a leader in A.A. service is a man (or woman) who can personally put principles, plans, and policies into such dedicated and effective action that the rest of us want to back him up and help him with his job. When a leader power-drives us badly, we rebel; but when he too meekly becomes an order-taker and he exercises no judgment of his own — well, he really isn’t a leader at all.... Good leadership originates plans, policies, and ideas for the improvement of our Fellowship and its service. But in new and important matters, it will nevertheless consult widely before taking decisions and actions. Good leadership will also remember that a fine plan or idea can come from anybody, anywhere. Consequently, good leadership will often discard its own cherished plans for others that are better, and it will give credit to the source....

Good leadership never passes the buck. Once assured that it has, or can obtain, sufficient general backing, it freely takes decisions and puts them into action forthwith, provided, of course, that such action be within the framework of its defined authority and responsibility....

Another qualification for leadership is give-and-take, the ability to compromise cheerfully whenever a proper compromise can cause a situation to progress in what appears to be the right direction. Compromise comes hard to us all-or nothing drunks. Nevertheless, we must never lose sight of the fact that progress is nearly always characterized by a series of improving compromises. We cannot, however, compromise always. Now and then, it is truly necessary to stick flatfooted to one’s

conviction about an issue until it is settled. These are situations for keen timing and careful discrimination as to which course to take....

Leadership is often called upon to face heavy and sometimes long-continued criticism. This is an acid test. There are always the constructive critics, our friends indeed. We ought never fail to give them a careful hearing. We should be willing to let them modify our opinions or change them completely. Often, too, we shall have to disagree and then stand fast without losing their friendship.

Mahalo nui loa, Mahalo palena 'ole my gratitude is beyond measure to you and Alcoholics Anonymous for my life today that's filled with light, love, and laughter.

#### **From Keleka – DCM District 4**

I attended PRAASA for the first time and it was an amazing experience that I will never forget. I was able to serve as a moderator for Panel 6 which was titled Practicing AA spiritual principles in a changing world. They gave me a format to follow and even when things fall out of format we are able to get through and finish on time. With the support from Tech 12, my sponsor and my friend Gina T encouraged me and supported me so that I was able to moderate this panel. I enjoyed the different panels especially the DCM round tables where I was able to discuss with other DCM the concerns of our areas. This was a memorable experience and I can only imagine what in person must feel like. Stay tuned cause I'm going back to PRAASA next year.

Mahalo Ke Akua,

Kelekla

## PRASSA Impressions

### Virtual PRAASA March 5<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> 2021

Aloha, my name is Ernest and I'm an alcoholic, this PRAASA was my second PRAASA that I've attended. My first PRAASA was back in 2011 some 10 years ago when it came to Hawaii and I was a GSR in Panel 61. It was held at the Ala Moana hotel and I was just as lost as I am today.....lol....It was a fun and exciting time, this PRAASA I can say, despite the challenges with going virtual it went really well. I sat in on the Archives round table and saw a familiar face. It was Mathea the archives chair for Kauai. Any how I enjoyed listening in on how other areas were dealing with digitizing their archives and other topics they shared about. The business meeting on Saturday was conducted in a very appropriate manner. No yelling, cross talking, or tempers flaring. Kerwin did a great job in giving a presentation, Kaleka was awesome on moderating and Kunane our delegate was calm, cool and collective like always. I really liked this year's PRAASA and I'm thinking of going to next year's PRAASA in Portland Oregon. If you haven't been to PRAASA, I highly recommend it. That's all I got, thanks!

Ernest S.

Aloha, my name is Lea and I am an alcoholic. I had the pleasure of attending the first ever virtual Pacific Region Alcoholics Anonymous Service Assembly (PRAASA) on behalf of my district, No Ka Oi District 5, Area 17. It was hosted by Central California Area 93 and they did a fantastic job! The theme this year was "AA in a Time of Change" and it was so fitting with changing to a virtual event due to Covid.

I believe they said over 2000 people registered and they believe at one point over 1100 people were in attendance. The majority of the event was help in a Webinar style, where you only see the person speaking and an ASL interpreter. They also had members translating the speakers in Japanese and Spanish.

I greatly enjoyed the panel discussions and found I was able to pay more attention to what they had to share as I was less distracted than in a room full of people because I was alone in my office. Some tough topics were discussed like: revising the 12 and 12, the plain language translation of the Big Book (or changing the Big Book at all), safety in AA both in person and virtually, and are we being inclusive in our home groups or exclusive, just to name a few.

The couple of statements that made an impact on me were: how do we become more diverse and more inclusive. Can a translation of the Big Book carry the message – the answer was YES, and most of all we do all of this with unconditional love and service.

It was an honor and privilege to be able to attend PRAASA on behalf of No Ka Oi District 5, Area 17.

In Love and Service, Lea,

DCM No Ka Oi District 5, Area 17

From Dee H.

I was fortunate to be able to attend my first PRAASA. From attending other A.A. conventions in person, pre-Covid, I could only imagine how much better this would have been in person. However, I have attended meetings and conventions this last year only on Zoom with my number of meetings way more than if in person. Because of this, I feel more grounded, right-sized, humble and grateful than I ever have in my years of sobriety. Blessings abound.

PRAASA inspired me; the fellowship inspired me. What a massive amount of time and work it convention. I had many chicken-skin moments. As a Chinese-American woman I was touched most by the presentation made by the woman from China and her interpreter and that we now have meetings we can Zoom into that are in Chinese and English.

I was also quite touched by the presentation made in Spanish with the interpreter. Knowing that fellows like us around the world have been transformed by A.A. brings me so much gratitude. Borders and skin color does not matter; similarities, not differences, do matter. As a GSR I have been assigned to the Corrections Committee. The Corrections Round Table, although scarcely attended during the second session, fired me up to be part of a group inspired to carry the message into jails, prisons, and hospitals.

With humility,

Dee H



# News of Committees

2/21/2021

Anonymity Workshop.jpg

## **Public Information Area 17 presents**



## **"Understanding Anonymity"**

### **In The Digital Age**

**April 10, 2021 from 10am to Noon (HST)**

**ZOOM Meeting ID: 96101819726**

**Password: anonymity**

**Literature Presentation**

**Panel Speakers**

**Ask It Basket**

**Email: [pi@area17aa.org](mailto:pi@area17aa.org) for more information**

*Area 17 Treatment Committee*  
**Workshop**  
**Bridging the Gap**  
**Navigating the Slippery Slope**  
*Presents*

**ID: 940 7483 5877 P.W: Treatment**

***April 24, 2021 @ 9:00am to 12:00pm***

<b>Dial by your location</b>	+1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)
+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)	+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)
+1 408 638 0968 US (San Jose)	+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)
+1 646 876 9923 US (New York)	+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)
Meeting ID: 940 7483 5877	Passcode: 336058771

***We build too many walls and  
Not enough bridges***





## **Wanted: Alternate Webmaster**

I am looking for an Alternate Webmaster who would serve on the Area Website Committee and be able to administer website and related functions in my absence.

They can be a member of the area body and would be approved by the Area Chair & Committee.

I am also looking for a least two A.A. members who would like to serve on the Website Committee.

For more information, contact Sean C. Hawaii Area 17 Web Committee Chair  
[webmaster@area17aa.org](mailto:webmaster@area17aa.org)

**WANT TO HELP ANOTHER ALCOHOLIC?**

2021  
**CARRY THE MESSAGE PROJECT**

**GRAPEVINE & LA VIÑA are Great Twelfth Step Tools!**

Give a gift subscription to an alcoholic who needs it. Great for:

- Sponsees • Newcomers • Prisons • Detoxes • Doctor's Offices
- Group Celebrations • District and Area Events • Giveaways

Get your group, district, area or AA friends to join in.  
Carry the Message, it's easy!

Go to [aagrapevine.org/carry-the-message](http://aagrapevine.org/carry-the-message) to get started and see our new Carry the Message video at [www.youtube.com/c/AAGrapevine](http://www.youtube.com/c/AAGrapevine)

Treasurer's Report  
Inform the Delegate Assembly, March 27-28, 2021

Hawai'i Area  
7<sup>th</sup> Tradition Contributions  
Make check payable to and mail to

*Hawaii Area Committee*  
*PO Box 1413*  
*Honolulu, HI 96806*

*Please include your Group Name  
and District Name or Number.  
Receipts available by request.*

For General Service Office  
Contributions:  
<https://contribution.aa.org>  
or  
Make check payable to the  
General Service Board and mail to  
General Service Office  
Box 459  
Grand Central Station  
New York, NY 10163  
*(Please write your group number  
on the check.)*

As of March 21, 2021, the Hawai'i Area Committee Finances are as follows:

Operating Funds	\$ 44,377.37
Reserve for Computer Equipment	\$ 916.45
Reserve for International Convention	\$ 2,329.89
Prudent Reserve	\$ 5,000.95
<b>Total Cash in Bank</b>	<b>\$ 52,624.66</b>
Contributions	\$ 4,692.65
<u>- Expenditures</u>	<u>\$ 3,924.41</u>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>\$ 768.24</b>
Hawaiian Miles available	146,102

Hawai'i Area 17 is in good shape financially. Contributions received so far this year are \$4,693 compared to \$11,666 at this time last year, but expenses are also way down due to meeting online instead of in-person: \$3,924 compared to \$14,551 at the Inform the Delegate Assembly in 2020. Historically, we spend a lot of our money early in the year because there are two assemblies, a committee meeting, PRAASA, and the General Service Conference in the first 4 months. After that, our contributions keep coming in while our expenses are much lower later in the year.

I want to thank all of the Groups that continue to contribute to Hawaii Area 17 and let you know how your contributions are helping to carry the AA message of recovery. I want to let all of the Area's Standing Service Committees know that funds are available, and I would love to see the committees spend ALL of the money budgeted, and even more if there is a need!

So far this year, **your Seventh Tradition contributions** to the Hawai'i Area allowed us to make the minimum required contribution to the General Service Office for our Delegate's attendance at the General Service Conference. It will be held on a virtual platform, saving our area the additional expenses for airfare, hotel and meals. **Your Seventh Tradition contributions** paid for the Area Orientation Assembly and this Committee meeting expenses like printing and mailing the Panel 71 version of the *Structures and Guidelines* handbook. **Your Seventh Tradition contributions** paid for literature and postage for the Treatment Facilities service committee to get literature to four locations, including two fairly new treatment facilities on Maui. **Your Seventh Tradition contributions** paid for the storage of the area archives and allowed us to put aside money for replacing area computers and towards sending our Delegate to the International Convention in 2025. Please see the [Budget Vs Actual Report](#) for the exact amounts.

In addition to the monetary contributions, your person-to-person contact helps make sure that A.A. will continue to be available to those who need and want help to stop drinking. I really liked the little notes and thank you cards that I received with group contributions, thanking Hawai'i Area for the service work we do. So I am passing on that "Thank you" to all of you.

Some of the things that contributions to the General Service Office make possible: coordination of translations of the Big Book – now in 70 languages, and other A.A. literature has been translated into over 90 languages. Each year General Service Office staff responds to over 90,000 emails, letters, and phone calls, providing accurate and consistent information about A.A. So, your contributions to the General Service Office really help to make sure Alcoholics Anonymous continues to be there to help the next alcoholic. Thank you for supporting Hawai'i Area and the General Service Office.

Thank you for letting me be of service.

- Mike L., Treasurer Area 17 Panel 71