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# AREA 69 NEWSLETTER

Special PRAASA Edition, April 2, 2010

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This Pre-Conference Assembly 2010 issue of our Area 69 Newsletter is dedicated to the 43RD ANNUAL PACIFIC REGION ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS SERVICE ASSEMBLY held March 5 - 7, 2010 in Los Angeles, California.

**Utah Area Highlights 2010:** Area 69 has 12 districts, and 281 active groups listed in the Fellowship New Vision, serving about 5,000 members who live in metropolitan, rural and remote communities, including Native American Reservations. General Service meetings are bid and hosted by districts throughout Utah, which covers 84,000 square miles. We meet eight times per year—three area assemblies, two area committee meetings, and three area workshops. November of 2010 our Spanish speaking linguistic district will make history by hosting their first area service meeting. Every other December we conduct an area inventory chaired by a past delegate. Our recently

restructured Communications Committee manages our Web site, oversees publication of our newsletter and Spanish translation of area service material. Our C.P.C. committee participates annually at The University of Utah School on Alcoholism and other Drug Dependencies. Clyde G., our Panel 1 delegate, was a pioneer of this C.P.C. opportunity that began in 1952. We continue to search for additional funding to meet our translation and interpretation needs, and for our ever expanding archives. The Utah area is a hive of A.A. service activity and I am grateful to be a part of it.—  
**Monte S., Delegate Panel 59 Area 69 Utah**

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## From our Delegate:

Many of you know that after leaving the Area Committee Meeting in Richfield, members of my family gathered in St. George and Las Vegas for a family vacation and PRAASA. Fourteen members of our family drove 4 cars to Newport Beach Calif. We arrived within 30 minutes of each other. It was the first vacation I have been on with my 40 year old son in 25 years. It is the first ever vacation with two of my teen-age grand-children. I took my family to Disneyland and to PRAASA. Words cannot express my gratitude to you and to Alcoholics Anonymous.

In March of 1991 Charlie G. and I attended PRAASA in Tucson, Arizona for the first time. We were CPC and PI Chairs for District 1. Since then PRAASA has been part of my life. PRAASA 2010 was my 18<sup>th</sup>. Area 69 had 27 members at the Radisson Hotel LAX, site of this year's PRAASA. Our area was well represented by those selected as presenters, moderators and roundtable chairs. The focus of presentations this year came from General Service Conference Agenda Items. No items were voted on nor was any sense of the Region taken as that is not the purpose of PRAASA. Presentations given illustrated the pros and cons of Conference Agenda Items.

Leslie J., Arizona 03 Grapevine Chair gave an excellent presentation on the proposed Pioneering Women of AA History Book Project. Leslie began by saying at first she was inclined to say yes to the proposal. When she asked herself the question would it help other women to recover she answered "YES". As Leslie began to ask

specific questions such as: what is the purpose of the book and would it serve A.A.'s primary purpose? What about common welfare? Does a gender specific book violate the spirit of Tradition One Our Common welfare?" what about books on ethnicity, religion and political perspective? Could the proposed book be divisive? Leslie gave history of the struggle for women to be accepted into A.A. and recognized the courage it took to break the stereotype of who is and who is not an alcoholic. Alcoholism, she said, is not specific to gender, education, or race. She raised the question whether the book would heal the prior exclusion of women early in A.A.'s history or will it open the door to exclusion of other minority groups.

As to the practicality of the book she reported that it will cost \$150,000-\$200,000 for research of information in our archives. She wonders how much it will cost to produce & distribute. She compared the book, Experience, Strength and Hope, a compilation of stories deleted from Big Book. Due to dismal sales the price was dropped. In 2003 it sold 65,500 copies in 2009 10,300 and 84% decline in sales. She questioned, can we afford to produce another book? Can we afford not to? We cannot give something away that we cannot afford, she said.

Leslie asked us, are there other resources to accomplish the same job? Would an in-house production be more cost effective such as using Grapevine to consolidate historical women pioneering stories for a special issue? Another question Leslie raised is who is a pioneering woman? What about non-alcoholic women such as Henrietta Sieberling (introduced Bill to Bob), Nell Wing (A.A.'s 1<sup>st</sup> Archivist), Ruth Hock (Bill's loyal secretary who made Big Book publishing possible), and Sister Ignatia who alongside Dr. Bob treated over 5,000 alcoholics. Leaving non-alcoholic women out leaves out basic roots of when A.A. began.

Leslie wrapped up her presentation with the questions:

- Does such a book project glorify people over principles?
- Does it benefit A.A. as a whole?
- Does it carry A.A.'s message?

If this type of presentation interests you I hope to see you at next year's PRAASA in Area 17, Hawaii. Thank you for my sober life and for this extraordinary opportunity to serve. -Monte S., Delegate Panel 59 Area 69 Utah

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**A first time PRAASA attendee reports:** Let me just start out by saying, WOW! PRAASA 2010 is the largest Service Assembly I have ever been to. I knew on some level that there were thousands of alcoholics out there, alcoholics like me who owe a life time of gratitude and service to A.A. I had just never seen so many of us. There was something like 1,600 plus recovering alcoholics in one place: all with a common purpose: the inner workings of Alcoholics Anonymous. PRAASA has reaffirmed how important service is to me.

The first evening I got to sit in on the Literature round table because I am the current Literature Standing Chair for District 7. It was very cool to hear how different places handled literature. I got to hear different thoughts, opinion and interpretations of our guidelines. It really drove home for me the idea that we are all doing the best we can. Opening a discussion and asking a room full of alcoholics to share their opinions is a very noisy and sometimes contentious thing. No matter what though, weather I was at the literature round

table, the CPC round table or in the big room where we had the Agenda items for discussion, we still all held hands and prayed together in the end. I witnessed Principles before Personalities a lot that weekend. We all loved Alcoholics Anonymous and the rest didn't really matter.

I have immense love, respect and gratitude for those Alcoholics who have come before me. All the way back from Bill and Bob to my current service Sponsor, Julie S. and our Area Delegate, Monte. I have to confess that being among so many people who have the spirit of service as a way of life is rather overwhelming and wonderful. There were many times when the love for Alcoholics Anonymous that was pulsing through the room was enough to bring me to tears. I truly do not know how to put down on paper, what that weekend meant to or did for me. There were so many Delegates, Alternate Delegates, Trustees, Former Delegates, employees of GSO, Area Standing Chairs, District Chairs, GSRs and Interested A.A.s there that it was almost incomprehensible. I have five and a half years sober and I felt like a newbie. There were people who got up to the mike to share their thoughts, who had been to 19 or more PRAASAs. I got to meet our current General Manager for GSO, . I have Charlie to thank for that. The feeling that exudes from people who are that dedicated to keeping Alcoholics Anonymous going for the still suffering drunk just blows my mind. The speaker on Saturday night, is an employee of GSO. His story was awesome and I enjoyed it very much. The thing I liked about it the most was the way he described how GSO works. I had no idea that they

rotated out of each position every two years. It's like one big home group. Our upside down triangle of service was brought up over and over again by the people who had been in service for a long time. It really helped to reinforce it for me. I came home with a renewed love for service in A.A. on every level.

On the last morning I ate breakfast with four of our Area 69 officers. What a great group of guys. I got to listen to them talk about PRAASAs they had attended nearly 20 years prior. We had so much fun talking and laughing. It is a memory I will cherish and hold very special to my heart. I have to tell you and others will confirm this, if you don't know Monte, find and meet him. Our current Area 69 Delegate is the epitome of who I want to be when I grow up. He has the kind of love and gratitude that I hope I will have when I have been here as long as he has. His spirit is so sweet and loving, all you have to do is be in the room with him and you can feel it. He, and all of the hundreds of others like him that I met that weekend, have left an indelible mark on my soul. I cannot wait to go to the next PRAASA. Oh, and it's in Hawaii!!

I Hope that I have been able to share the feeling of this event for me. I hope even ore, that more people get involved and experience it for themselves. Being involved with General Service is one of the most rewarding and fulfilling things I have EVER done with my time.. I am here by the Grace of God and service is how I repay that debt. See you in Hawaii! May God Bless you and Keep you til then. **Deanna O., District 7 Literature Chair**

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#### **Our Treasurer is guilt-loaded into this contribution:**

PRAASA this year seemed bigger but I could have been mistaken by the shorter and wider room in which it was held. Arriving at noon on Friday, I quickly discovered that I could bring even the best of the GPS units to tears with my driving in LA traffic. Guess I still have difficulty following directions.

The theme for PRAASA "Practicing AA's Principles - the Pathway to Unity", was practiced to the fullest this year. I felt like there was more participation from the Spanish-speaking members, including Carlos G. from

Utah. There was a lot of translation at the microphone and from the podium. There were multiple American Sign language translators providing continuous coverage of the event. The attempt to allow all members to trudge the 'Pathway to Unity' was very well done and should be noted as an example for future reference.

Utah was well represented, as always, at PRAASA. I believe we counted 29 sober members there from Utah. This included two past delegates, our current delegate and alternate delegate along with most of the Area Officers. District 12 was very well represented, as was District 7, 9, 10, 1 and 2.

Madeline P., our Pacific Region Trustee got the ball rolling and the first Panel was the Delegate Introduction. I already knew that Monte was our Delegate so that part was fairly easy for me. Seriously, Monte gave a great overview of Area 69 and especially highlighted the ever-increasing unity in Utah with the Spanish-speaking sub-district and their hosting of an Area event.

Service, oddly enough, was a big part of the program. It was particularly stressed that making service attractive to newer members is the best way to insure that everyone receives the blessings of service. Area 69's very own Carlos G. from District 12 gave a great 'after inventory' presentation.

Panel 3 provided some popular topics which elicited much discussion from the floor. Anonymity in a Digital Age was a particularly hot item. The recent anonymity breaches on a popular social networking site were brought up and discussed. I wonder if everyone realizes that www stands for World Wide Web?

An agenda topic - Anonymity in Memorial Announcements (Obituaries) was part of this Panel also. It was pointed out that although AA does not wish to dictate to the families of the members what they should and should not say, it was easy to see that a pre-written obituary would stave off many problems that arise as a result of these types of things.

Signing of Corrections Agreements was also a topic of this Panel and there was much valued sharing from members who have encountered this problem in their Areas.

The final topic of this Panel was the questions regarding full-face shots of actors playing AA members being shown on the video. My personal opinion is 'Why are we paying for actors to portray AA members? Are we running out of alcoholics to use in our own videos? Is this a prudent use of 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition Money? How does this practice fulfill our Primary Purpose? If we used AA members in our own videos, we wouldn't have this problem - would we?

Panel 4 was the Finance Panel discussing Contributions, Literature Prices, Pie Charts, Stories and Communicating the needs to our Fellowship. I will try to bring more information to light during our Pre-Conference Finance topics. Overall, it was understood that by keeping the focus on contributions we are keeping the lime light on the need to contribute and the downward trend in contributions. Certainly the final Panel of the first day was easily the feistiest.

Friday night took me to the Treasurers roundtable for the second year. Last year, as moderator of this roundtable, I really didn't participate as much as I wanted. This year the new Treasurers had many of the same questions as the new ones from last year and I realized the value of returning both years to the roundtable pertaining to your service position. I also realize that Area 69 is well-guided by the wisdom from those who have come before us and blazed the trail. Many Areas have multiple Treasurers. There was much

interest in Area contributions to GSO and the discussion that followed was centered on Areas contributing to GSO in addition to the contribution for the General Service Conference.

Saturday topics included frequency of publication for the AA Service Manual, the possibility of a General Service Conference inventory and minority appeals.

Frank B. chaired a Panel on Literature. Some of the lively discussion in this Panel centered around the Atheists and a book about Early Women AA Pioneers.

The afternoon kicked off with the Trustees Report. I was surprised to find that the Directories actually produce a profit versus their publications cost. Much of the theme from GSO this year seems to be centered around contributions and how to continue to fund our future.

The PRAASA Business meeting went well until the question of defrayment for Past PRAASA Treasurers to come and do the report. I thought it seemed odd that saving the cost of defrayment seemed to be more important than supporting our trusted servants. With cell phones and email now so readily in use, the thought was to save 800 or so dollars but still expect the servant to be available for questions by phone or email if needed. Odd indeed.

More roundtables ensued during the afternoon. I attended the remote roundtable again. The Alaska folks have us defeated hands down when it comes to distance on 12-step calls. Our own problems are unique and pertinent to Utah and we can best solve our own challenges rather than look to other smaller Areas to solve our problems.

Monte took the opportunity to offer a bid to host an upcoming PRAASA - probably 2015. The evening speaker, Doug R., is a very dedicated member. His energy and love for AA is apparent. **Pete G., Area 69 Treasurer**

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**One of our Area Standing Chairs checks in:**

**M**y first PRAASA was way back in 1995 in Tacoma Washington, as a newly elected GSR. My service buddies Monte, Charlie, Mark, Milt, and I rented a Cadillac and painted the town red, well not really. However, this trip did allow me my first in-person amends with my mother, who happened to live in Tacoma. I was hooked on both PRAASA and the amends process. The panel presentations this year were over the top, probably the best ever. Area 69 was represented by Carlos from District 12, he did a tremendous job. It was my privilege to serve as the moderator for the Archive Roundtable Saturday afternoon. It was very well attended with over 40 participants including a few from Area

69. One of the highlights was learning the way other Areas are creating enthusiasm for our Archives. Area 05 Southern California has been having bi-monthly work parties at the archive storage facility. These work parties sort donations and catalog items. You never know what's in the next box. Area 06 has been following a similar course mixing in presentations during their work sessions. Our new Archive storage area in Cedar City, although small could easily accommodate work parties of three or four members. We could help Janet organize our collections and all become more familiar with our past. **Keith M., Area 69 Agenda and Assembly Chair**

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**I'm going to let our current Alternate Delegate wrap up this special PRAASA edition of the Area 69 Newsletter with her in-depth report:**

THIS YEAR'S PRAASA HOSTED BY THE SO. CALIFORNIA AREA 05 IN LOS ANGELES, CA WAS VERY WELL ATTENDED BY 1500+ REGISTERED PARTICIPANTS FROM ALL OVER THE PACIFIC REGION WHICH IS COMPRISED OF 15 AREAS FROM THE STATES OF ARIZONA, UTAH, IDAHO, WASHINGTON STATE, OREGON, NEVADA, CALIFORNIA, HAWAII, AND ALASKA.

THE WEEKEND INCLUDED 6 CONFERENCE DISCUSSION ITEM PANELS---EACH CONSISTING OF 4 (WITH THE EXCEPTION OF PANEL 2 WHICH HAD ONLY 3) OF THIS YEAR'S GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE (GSC) AGENDA ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED. THE PRESENTERS DID A GREAT JOB IN RESEARCHING THE BACKGROUND MATERIAL PROVIDED AND DELIVERED INFORMATIVE AND WONDERFUL REPRESENTATION OF THESE TOPICS, WHICH THEN SET THE STAGE FOR INSIGHTFUL, THOUGHTFUL, AND MOST DEFINITELY, *INTERESTING* DISCUSSION SHARING FROM THE MICROPHONE!

TWO ADDITIONAL PANELS "BOOKENDED" THIS PRAASA WEEKEND, THE FIRST BEING THE "DELEGATE INTRODUCTIONS AND AREA HIGHLIGHTS" ON FRIDAY'S OPENING SESSION, AND THE LAST BEING THE PANEL OF "PAST TRUSTEES' EXPERIENCE, STRENGTH & HOPE" DURING THE CLOSING SESSION ON SUNDAY MORNING. MONTE DID A GREAT JOB IN HIS PRESENTATION AND HE DID IT ALL BEFORE HIS 2 MINUTE TIMING LIGHT WENT OFF! WAY TO GO MONTE---YOU MAKE US PROUD TO BE A PART OF GENERAL SERVICE AND THE FELLOWSHIP HERE IN AREA 69, STATE OF UTAH.

15 ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION MEETINGS WERE CONDUCTED (EACH HELD IN DIFFERENT CONFERENCE ROOMS) FRIDAY EVENING FROM 8:00PM UNTIL 10:00PM AND AGAIN ON SATURDAY AFTERNOON, IN WHICH ALL A.A. AND AL-ANON MEMBERS ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE DELEGATES AND PAST DELEGATES/TRUSTEES AND THE ALTERNATE DELEGATES ROUNDTABLES WHICH ARE CLOSED MEETINGS FOR A.A. MEMBERS WITH THOSE SERVICE POSITIONS ONLY. THE ROSTER INCLUDED: ACCESS/SPECIAL NEEDS, ARCHIVES, AREA CHAIRS, CONTACT SERVICE: BRIDGING THE GAP, GENERAL SERVICE REPRESENTATIVES (GSRs), COOPERATION WITH THE PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY (CPC), CORRECTIONS, DCM AND DCMCS, GRAPEVINE, INTERGROUP AND CENTRAL OFFICES, LA VINA, LITERATURE, NEWSLETTER, OUTREACH TO SENIORS, PUBLIC INFORMATION, REGISTRARS, REMOTE COMMUNITIES/NATIVE AMERICANS, SECRETARIES, TREASURERS, TREATMENT FACILITIES, AND THE WEBSITE---WHOOH---OFFERING A SMORGASBORD OF 21 DIFFERENT SERVICE FUNCTIONS FOR THE PRAASA JUNKY TO CHOOSE FROM!

IN ADDITION TO THE PANEL PRESENTATIONS HELD SATURDAY MORNING, THE AFTERNOON SESSION BEGAN WITH A PACKED LINEUP OF ACTIVITY STARTING OFF WITH THE TRUSTEE'S REPORT, PRESENTED BY OUR EVER-DELIGHTFUL PACIFIC REGION TRUSTEE, MADELEINE P., FOLLOWED BY THE PRAASA BUSINESS MEETING CHAIRED BY JIM C., PAST PACIFIC REGION TRUSTEE, IN WHICH THERE WAS A GREAT DEAL OF MOTION DISCUSSION FROM THE FLOOR AT THE MICROPHONE--- WHICH IS ALMOST ALWAYS PASSIONATE AND ENLIGHTENING. I AM ALWAYS FASCINATED BY THE PROCESS IN WHICH ALCOHOLICS

ANONYMOUS CARRIES OUT ITS BUSINESS AND THE MANNER IN WHICH A COLLECTIVE GROUP CONSCIOUSNESS IS REACHED. THIS SESSION WAS FOLLOWED BY MULTIPLE ROUNDTABLE MEETINGS, WRAPPING UP THE DAY'S BUSINESS AT 5:45 PM.

THAT EVENING BEGAN WITH AN OPEN. A.A. SPEAKER MEETING WHERE WE HAD THE PLEASURE OF LISTENING TO DOUG R., G.S.O. SHARE HIS INSPIRING STORY, EXPERIENCE, STRENGTH AND HOPE. HE TALKED ABOUT THE MIND-BOGGLING THOUGHT OF HOW ONCE A HOPELESS ALCOHOLIC, COULD YOU GET FROM THERE TO HERE? I THINK THAT ALL OF US CAN RELATE, AT LEAST I KNOW FOR MYSELF, THAT COMING FROM SUCH A DARK, HOPELESS AND LONELY PLACE OF BELIEVING THAT THERE WAS NO MEANINGFUL FUTURE AHEAD FOR ME AND DESPERATELY WANTING TO DIE ANY TIME SOON, TO HAVING A LIFE FILLED WITH SUCH GRACE AND BLESSINGS, FRIENDS AND RELATIONSHIPS, LOVE AND COMPASSION, HOPE AND PURPOSE...HOW DO ANY OF US GET FROM THERE TO HERE? WHAT A MIRACLE.

THEN CAME THE LATE NIGHT DISCUSSIONS FROM 10:00PM UNTIL...? THERE WERE FOUR MEETING TOPICS: MEET THE LA VINA EDITOR, YOUNG PEOPLE IN A.A., PREDATORS IN A.A., AND PRACTICING THESE PRINCIPLES IN ALL OUR "SERVICE AFFAIRS".

SUNDAY MORNING OPENED WITH A "WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND" SHARING SESSION WHERE THE MICROPHONES ARE OPEN TO MEMBERS WISHING TO SHARE THEIR COMMENTS. THIS IS A TIMED SESSION ALLOWING EACH INDIVIDUAL AT THE MIC, TWO MINUTES TO SHARE. MANY SHARE ABOUT THEIR PRAASA EXPERIENCE, AND OTHERS SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCE AND/OR PERSPECTIVES ON A NUMBER OF THE CURRENT AGENDA ITEMS THAT WILL BE DISCUSSED AT THIS YEAR'S 60<sup>TH</sup> GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE.

THE FINAL PANEL WAS THE "PAST TRUSTEES' EXPERIENCE, STRENGTH AND HOPE". I HAVE TO SAY THAT, FOR MYSELF AT EACH PRAASA THAT I HAVE HAD THE PRIVILEGE TO ATTEND, THIS PANEL'S SHARING IS THE MOST MOVING AND INSPIRING EXPERIENCE. THIS YEAR'S PANEL OF TRUSTED SERVANTS HAS MANY, MANY YEARS OF COMBINED EXPERIENCE AND LOVE FOR THE CONTINUED GROWTH AND AVAILABILITY OF THIS FELLOWSHIP TO ALL WHO WISH TO OVERCOME THEIR SUFFERING FROM ALCOHOLISM. A BROAD NUMBER OF RELEVANT AND ONGOING ISSUES CONCERNING THE WELFARE OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS WERE TOUCHED UPON BY EACH PAST TRUSTEE. SHARING INCLUDED INSIGHT UPON TOPICS SUCH AS LOVE AND TOLERANCE, DIVERSITY WITHIN THE FELLOWSHIP, TRANSLATIONS AND COMMUNICATION, CHANGES IN A.A.(TRIAL AND ERROR, ETC.), TRUSTING OUR TRUSTED SERVANTS, PREDATORS IN A.A., ARE WE WELCOMING THE NEWCOMER---GIVING HIM/HER THE OPPORTUNITY TO GAIN AN UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT THEIR CONDITION IS, THE PERCEPTION OF A.A. BEING A CULT OR A RELIGIOUS BASED PROGRAM AND HOW THAT PERCEPTION, EVIDENCED THROUGH JUDICIAL COURT RULINGS, HAS AFFECTED SOME AREAS IN THEIR ABILITY TO CARRY THE A.A. MESSAGE INTO CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES, ETC.

I WANT TO ELABORATE IN PARTICULAR TO WHAT WAS SHARED BY A PAST TRUSTEE CONCERNING HOW THESE PERCEPTIONS MAY BE CONCEIVED, CONTRARY TO WHAT OUR TRADITIONS AND LITERATURE CLEARLY STATE ABOUT A.A. BEING A "SPIRITUAL" PROGRAM. THE PRESENTER TALKED ABOUT HOW EACH GROUP, IN ITS AUTONOMY AND WITH THE GUIDANCE OF THE TWELVE TRADITIONS, CONDUCTS ITS SELF IN ACCORDANCE TO THE GROUP CONSCIENCE, I.E.: THE GROUP

FORMAT, READINGS AND/OR PRAYER(S), OPEN/CLOSED, MEETING TYPE (SPEAKER/SHARING/BOOK STUDY), THE DURATION OF THE MEETING, ETC MANY THINGS HAVE EVOLVED OVER THE YEARS THAT MAY OR MAY NOT BE A PART OF A.A SINCE THE PROGRAM'S ORIGINAL CONCEPTION IN 1935. EXAMPLES MIGHT BE THINGS SUCH AS "HELPING" THE READER "READ" PORTIONS OF THE BIG BOOK, CHANTING AFTER READINGS OR PRAYERS, RECITING "CHRISTIAN BASED" PRAYERS AT THE BEGINNING OR AT THE END OF OUR MEETINGS, ETC. I FELT THAT THIS WAS A VERY MOVING AND POWERFUL MESSAGE FOR OUR FELLOWSHIP TO HEAR AND TO TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION.

I CLEARLY RECALL THE INTENSE SKEPTICISM I HAD IN APPROACHING MY FIRST A.A. MEETING. I WAS LOOKING AND LISTENING FOR REASONS WHY I DIDN'T BELONG AND WHY "IT"---THE PROGRAM---WAS NOT GOING TO BE FOR ME, BASED UPON MANY, MANY PRECONCEIVED NOTIONS AND BELIEF SYSTEMS THAT I HAD COCOONED MYSELF IN FOR SO LONG. WHEN I HEARD THE MENTION OF "GOD", THE REST OF MY LISTENING WAS INSTANTLY SHUT DOWN, NO LONGER GIVING ME A CHANCE TO HEAR ABOUT THE HIGHER POWER STUFF AND THE SPIRITUAL ASPECT OF THE PROGRAM BECAUSE I RELATED THAT "WORD" TO A RELIGIOUS UP BRINGING IN WHICH I HAD NO DESIRE TO HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH.

TODAY, WHEN I LOOK BACK UPON THAT EXPERIENCE, THE NEWCOMER COMES TO MIND AND I THINK ABOUT THE HUGE RESPONSIBILITY WE ALL CARRY AS RECOVERING MEMBERS OF ALCOHOLIC'S ANONYMOUS, TO HELP THAT STILL SICK AND SUFFERING INDIVIDUAL FIND THE COURAGE AND WILLINGNESS TO WANT TO KEEP COMING BACK. THIS IS THE VERY PURPOSE OF THE GROUP AS DESCRIBED IN TRADITION 3 AND TRADITION 5...TO CARRY IT'S MESSAGE---THAT ALL MAY FIND FOR THEMSELVES IN THESE ROOMS, WHAT HAS SO FREELY BEEN GIVEN TO US. OUR ACTIONS AND HOW THE GROUP CONDUCTS ITS SELF ARE FACTORS IN THIS WHOLE PROCESS. ARE WE SENDING CLEAR OR CONFUSING MESSAGES ABOUT WHAT A.A. IS AND WHAT A.A. IS NOT? ARE WE WELCOMING OR CLIQUISH IN WHOM WE VISIT WITH BEFORE OR AFTER THE MEETING? ARE WE CONCERNED ABOUT THE WELFARE OF A.A. AS A WHOLE OR JUST SIMPLY ABOUT OUR OWN GROUP'S AUTONOMY AND OUR "RIGHT" TO CONDUCT OUR SELVES AND OUR BUSINESS, AS SUCH?

WHENEVER I HAVE THE PRIVILEGE TO ATTEND ANY KIND OF GENERAL SERVICE FUNCTION, I COME AWAY WITH THE SAME EXPERIENCE...THAT OF BEING JUST ONE SMALL FISH IN AN ENTIRE OCEAN OF FISH, ALL HAVING A COMMON DESIRE TO CONTINUE THE GROWTH AND SURVIVAL OF THE "SPECIES" (AS A-LIKENED TO THE PROGRAM OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS) FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS YET TO COME.

THE FINAL SESSION ON SUNDAY CONCLUDED WITH A "DELEGATE ASK IT BASKET" FEATURING THE PANEL 59 AND PANEL 60 PACIFIC REGION DELEGATES. I AM ALWAYS IN AWE OF OUR ELECTED DELEGATE, MONTE, AND THE MANY, MANY HOURS THAT HE VOLUNTEERS AND DEDICATES TO SERVING EACH OF US AND THIS WONDERFUL FELLOWSHIP. YOUR EXAMPLE AND COMMITMENT IS NEVER OVERLOOKED, BUT THE APPRECIATION AND THANK YOU S MAY NOT BE STATED OFTEN ENOUGH! THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE TO AREA 69, AND YOUR REPRESENTATION OF UTAH AT THIS APRIL'S 60<sup>TH</sup> GENERAL SERVICE CONFERENCE WHERE I KNOW THAT OUR AREA'S COLLECTIVE CONSCIENCE AND VOICE WILL BE WELL REPRESENTED AND HEARD.

I AM SO GRATEFUL FOR THE GRACE OF THIS PROGRAM IN SAVING NOT ONLY MY LIFE, BUT THE MILLIONS OF PRECIOUS LIVES YET TO COME---RENAE H., ALTERNATE DELEGATE, PANEL 59 AREA 69

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**From the editor:** Well, my friends, we come to the end of my first attempt at the creation of an Area 69 Newsletter. I would like to thank from the bottom of my heart those who sent contributions. There were a couple of non-PRAASA submissions (thank you Jodi and Treesa!) which I originally intended to include here. However, I made the editorial decision to devote this issue totally to PRAASA and to keep those articles to include in the Post-Conference edition. I hope and pray that I will be inundated by submissions from many more of you!!! And know that all of you, from the GSRs to the District Standing Chairs, District Officers, DCMs, DCMCs, Area Servants, Past Delegates, and anyone ever involved in general service any old where are included in that thought! Or even if you're just considering general service!

In addition to calling for submissions in general, I would **REALLY REALLY** like input from you into exactly what you would like to see in or addressed by this newsletter. In the recent past, the newsletter has included a lot of our Officer and Standing Chair reports. Since these are being printed in their entirety now in the Minutes, I don't feel very enthusiastic about having them duplicated in the newsletter and question that being a wise use of 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition money, so I didn't send out a call for them for this issue. On the other hand, it was suggested to me that perhaps someone who wouldn't read something as formal as "Minutes" might be willing to pick up something called a "Newsletter" and read it. What do **YOU** think?

If you have questions that you would like addressed by your Officers or Standing Chairs, please feel free to send them to me, and I'll see what I can do about getting them addressed and printed in the next newsletter. Remember that if you have a question, more than likely someone else has the same question, so you won't be just helping yourself!!!

What have your experiences in General Service been like? Why did you get involved? What have been your challenges and your solutions? Have you had any experiences that make you **ROFL** (roll on the floor laughing)? What have they been?

This is **YOUR** Newsletter!!! I hope that you will let me know what you would like to see in it as well as contributing to that end. If I should happen to do anything you particularly like or dislike, let me know! This is not a position I ever considered having, and believe me, I need **ALL THE HELP I CAN GET!!!** So, please send many e-mails for and about the Newsletter to me at: [Area69immediatepastdelegate@utahaa.org](mailto:Area69immediatepastdelegate@utahaa.org). **THANKS**☺

Thank you for this opportunity to be of service to you and to Utah Area 69!!

In love and service,

Julie S., Past Delegate, Panel 57 Area 69