

PRAASA 2020 REPORT - TUCSON, AZ

Pacific Region Alcoholics Anonymous Service Assembly

"A Clear Vision For You"

PRAASA: What It Was Like

PRAASA was held at The Westin La Palma Resort and Spa and it was beautiful! My one regret was no time for the spa! But I was there on a mission sent by my district to gather information, share ideas and participate in discussions. For those who have never attended PRAASA I have to say it was a very busy schedule.

Friday, Saturday and Sunday were packed full of fellowshiping, listening, discussing, eating, and very little sleeping.

We had panels with members who did presentations on specific topics, followed by "open mic" for our members to ask questions or share their thoughts on what was presented. Here are just a few of the panel/discussion topics:

- Carrying The Message Outside Of AA
- We Have Entered The World Of The Spirit
- Carrying The Message Inside AA - Unity
- Evolution Of Our Literature To Serve Future Generations
- Trustees Report
- YPAA - Preserving AA's Future
- 70Th General Service Conference Agenda Items
- Past Trustees Sharing Session

THE PURPOSE OF PRAASA



- Develop greater unity among the members, groups, and areas of the Pacific Region.
- Encourage the exchange of ideas and experiences.
- Provide an opportunity for members to discuss pertinent aspects of Alcoholics Anonymous.
- The Assembly and the PRAASA Committee should always foster the Recovery, Unity and Service legacies of Alcoholics Anonymous.

What I Saw: Many members working together to make decisions and solve problems for the good of AA as a whole.

What I Heard: The voice of those who are passionate about having the message of Alcoholics Anonymous accessible to all and work to guarantee we are here for generations to come.

What I Felt: I felt blessed and sometimes overwhelmed with gratitude to be a part of this amazing movement that strives to continue the work that our founding fathers started.

A Few Things I Did To Get Out Of My Comfort Zone: Prior to coming to Alcoholics Anonymous I was extremely shy. What I love about serving at the General Service level is that it forces me to go way beyond my comfort zone. A few ways I was able to do so at PRAASA was by sharing my experience at the DCM Round Table Discussions and sitting with people I did not know at the luncheon, which was a spiritual experience too long to describe, but ask me about it next time you see me. I also spent a couple hours early Sunday morning passing out cards and letting them know if they are ever in the neighborhood come for our 59th Annual Hawaii Convention, that was a great icebreaker!



Round Table Discussions

There were two hour round table discussions sessions on both Friday and Saturday.

We had roundtable discussions for Delegates, Alternate Delegates, Area Officers and their Alternates, Past Trustees and Past Delegates, DCMs, GSRs, All Standing Committees, Hispanic Women and Central Office/Intergroups.

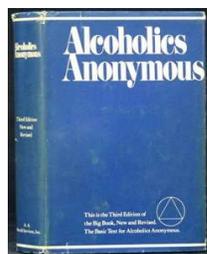
I attended the DCM Round Table discussions on both days because we had so many topics to cover. We shared ideas for workshops such as a mock conference, traditions workshop, service workshop, what does anonymity mean, history of AA, technology in AA, AA and mental health issues, and standing committee workshops, all great ideas.

We discussed how to introduce DCMs to the groups and convey the importance of GSRs.

Importance of having district structures and guidelines: It's important!

On how to get more attendance at district meetings one suggested telling members we were going to change the Big Book. That got some laughs!

Finally...pay attention to the GSRs we do have!



HOT TOPICS

2020 Panel 70 General Service Conference Agenda Items and Panel Discussion Highlights

Prior to arriving at PRAASA, I read the background information for the first two agenda items listed below with the thought that they would be heartfelt topics and they were!

Of course I had my own opinion prior to coming to PRASSA, don't we all? After hearing the panel presentations and my fellow members share their thoughts on these important topics, with great passion, I found myself being swayed back and forth. I am grateful that I have a strong desire to preserve our message, that my ears are open to hear the needs of others, and most of all to listen to that still, quiet voice deep down inside that helps guide my decisions. Tradition One tells me "our common welfare comes first," AA as a whole must come first, my personal recovery depends on our unity.

Agenda Item: Request for a Big Book in Plain Language Translation:

To help those who struggle with reading comprehension and also provide greater accessibility and improve relatability.

What I heard relating to why we may want and need this translation:

- Provide a clearer understanding of the message presented in the Big Book.
- To help those with learning disabilities.
- To help those with English as a second language.
- The prison population was instrumental in getting this agenda item into action.
- We don't need a new Big Book, we need a new translation.
- Help those who do not have access to a sponsor such as in remote communities.
- Pamphlets have already been developed with graphics and easy to read material because there was a need.

What I heard relating to why we may not want or need this translation:

- Where does the sponsor fit in?
- Plain language verbiage will be quoted at group meetings.
- When I was new I was told to get the big book, meeting schedule, and a dictionary.
- I couldn't read at all and now I can through the help of a sponsor who took me through the book.
- If we do this, it will open the door to many more changes.
- By changing the book: Are we going the way of the Washingtonians, are we creating more separation and are we discouraging the movement of Alcoholics Anonymous?

Voice of our Spanish Speaking Members

There was much discussion and concern from our Spanish community on the importance of having quality technical equipment used for interpreting, having qualified translators and the need for translators at the round table discussions.

A passionate appeal for a 4th edition of the Spanish translation of the Big Book. They expressed that the 3rd edition translation has lost the real meaning and/or concept of many of the words from the original English language Big Book.

Quotes

CPC is our action of gratitude. We alcoholics owe the medical profession.

Is my AA sobriety attraction enough that a sick drunk would want it?

Where is God in all this?

Judiciously make an informed decision after reading the background information.

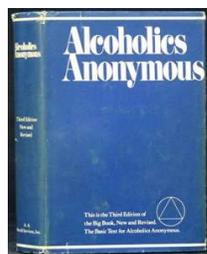
Does your home group know where the money goes?

Put a box in central office for donations of old Grapevines.

Consider those who cannot or do not have access to technology.

Without commitment, it is just good wishes.

Social media - never need to praise ourselves.



HOT TOPICS - Continued...

2020 Panel 70 General Service Conference Agenda Items and Panel Discussion Highlights

Agenda Item: Requesting A Fifth Edition Of The Big Book Of Alcoholics Anonymous: To have a more gender neutral edition.

What I heard relating to why we want and need a 5th edition:

- Change the pronouns. Ex., replace the words “he” and “she” to “they” and “them” and “wife” to “spouse”
- The gender neutral 5th edition would be relatable to a greater number of suffering alcoholics.
- Where do I fit? I can’t identify with the Big Book the way it is now written.
- How many suffering alcoholics leave because they can’t identify with the Big Book?

What I heard relating to why we may not want or need a 5th edition:

- Do we want to eliminate the side by side relationship in reading and understanding the Big Book with a sponsor?
- Political correctness pulls us away from our primary purpose.
- An alcoholic is an alcoholic is an alcoholic.
- By trying to be more inclusive, are we actually becoming more exclusive?

Agenda Item: Requesting the words in the Preamble “We are a fellowship of men and women...” be changed to “We are a fellowship of people...”: To have a more gender neutral Preamble.

What I heard relating to why we want and need the change to the preamble:

- The same reasons listed under the above agenda item for wanting the 5th edition gender neutral Big book.
- To be more relatable.
- We control the purse to Grapevine so it is our responsibility to let the delegates know our group’s consensus.

What I heard relating to why we may not want or need the change to the preamble:

- Copyright belongs to Grapevine, does not belong to Alcoholics Anonymous.
- The Preamble is in nearly all our literature. It would be very costly to make that change.
- Could we put our 7th tradition money to better use?
- Grapevine board can do what they want.

Quotes - continued

Slow and careful consideration prior to reaching a solution.

If I take action in the three areas of the triangle, I will be whole.

Twelve step work is everyone's business.

AA must continue to live or most of us will surely die. I am in service for survival.

General service is not for everyone but someone has to do it.

We are to be colorblind.

We need to use our AA website to bring it higher up in ranking when searching on the web.

The "we" of AA is not just "me". The "we" is the whole of the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Unity in action is seeing the traditions in action.

Four years to get a pamphlet because they are trying to put out the best product to reach the most who need it.

Participating in a group conscience is expanding our AA world.

Meditation is the ultimate act of surrender. A tool to bring calm.

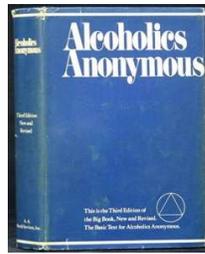
PRAASA 2021

Mark you Calendars

PRAASA 2021

Burbank, California
at the Burbank Marriott

March 5-7, 2021



HOT TOPICS - Continued...

2020 Panel 70 General Service Conference Agenda Items and Panel Discussion Highlights

Agenda Item: Where Spirituality And Money Mix: Changes to the Pamphlet "Self-Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix". (Pie Chart with or without percentage suggestions?)

- "Much of our time and a little bit of money is needed to serve" —Bill W.
- 7th Tradition - a spiritual act of giving.
- Do home groups know where the money goes?
- Get a better idea of what the service entities offer and that will give us a better informed decision on how to distribute our contributions. Groups can adjust the percentages according to our local needs.
- Once my contribution is in the basket, it is in God's hand.

These are just a few of the many panel discussions relating to our 2020 agenda items. We all have a voice so talk with your GSR, your link from your home group to the General Service Conference, and share your ideas with them. Coleen, our Hawaii Area 17 Delegate, will carry your groups voice to the General Service Conference in New York on April 19th - 25th. (well not **in** New York, darn Coronavirus)

This was my third PRAASA and all three have given me chicken skin, put tears in my eyes, made me laugh and given me an opportunity to share thoughts and concerns with the fellowship beyond our district. After all was said and done, I realize how truly blessed I am to be a part of a greater whole, a member of Alcoholics Anonymous. Thank you West Hawaii District 8 for trusting me to be your representative.

In love and service,
Jeannie G., DCM

A Declaration of Unity

This we owe to A.A.'s future;
To place our common welfare first;
To keep our fellowship united.
For on **A.A. unity** depend our lives,
And the lives of those to come.