

NOTES

Upcoming Events

Weiser Memorial Day Barbecue

May 26, 2018
Memorial Park, Weiser, ID

Founder's Day Picnic

June 2, 2018
Mel Erikson Sunnyside Park,
1905 E. Sunnyside, Idaho Falls, ID

TV TSNAC Barbecue

June 2, 2018
Kleiner Park, Meridian, ID

Treasure Valley Intergroup Founder's Day Picnic

June 9, 2018
Veteran's Memorial Park, Boise, ID

Pacific Northwest Conference

June 22-24, 2018
Wyndham Garden Boise Airport,
3300 S Vista Ave, Boise, ID

District 10 Campout

July 26 - 29, 2018
Elks Flat Campground, Boise National Forest,
Forest 61, Mountain Home, ID

Gem State Round Up

August 3-5, 2018
Boise, ID

17th Annual Teton Canyon Campout

August 24-26, 2018
Reunion Flats Campground #C, Alta, WY

Idaho Falls Intergroup Campout

August 31 - September 3, 2018
Green Canyon Hot Springs Campground, Newdale, ID

Pacific Regional Forum

September 7-9, 2018
San Jose, CA



Idaho Area 18 Newsletter

Editor, Angela D.

Chapter 11: A Vision For You

“Our hope is that when this chip of a book is launched on the world tide of alcoholism, defeated drinkers will seize upon it, to follow its

suggestions. Many, we are sure, will rise to their feet and march on. They will

approach still other sick ones and fellowships of Alcoholics

Anonymous may spring up in each city and hamlet, havens for those who must find a way out.”

The Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous Pg. 153



2018 PRAASA Report

Neil W. Area 18 Alternate Delegate

Bright neon lights, bells, whistles, clings and clangs, surrounded by fortune seekers scurrying from one table or slot machine to the next with only artificial surroundings and lights. I felt a tap on my shoulder, when I turned around I saw open arms and familiar faces from Idaho Area 18. I had arrived at PRAASA.

I remember hearing early in sobriety at assemblies that “You do not want to miss the PRAASA experience.” This is so true. It is not about the bright neon lights or the surroundings, but the open arms and familiar faces. Not only from Area 18, but from Alaska, California, Utah, Hawaii, Oregon, Washington, Nevada, and Arizona that keep me coming back. Being surrounded by individuals who have miraculously recovered from the bondage of alcohol and self. Joined to ensure the future of the fellowship which saved our lives and discuss effective ways to carry the message to the still suffering Alcoholic.

At the opening Orientation Meeting, humility was the first principle served, as I was only 1 amongst hundreds and hundreds of other fellowship members all seated in a large room together. For those of you who have never attended a PRAASA, it's 3 days of presenter panels where individuals, just like you and I, have been selected a few weeks prior to the event to give a 7-minute presentation on a specified topic. After which there is an open mic/question/comment period. There are scheduled roundtables for each of the different service positions, such as GSR's, DCM's, Delegates, etc. There is a Past Delegate panel which you can ask questions of, and reports given by Trustees.

There are moments of roaring laughter and silence filled with tears, passionate debate and discussion, all done in the true spirit of love and unity. All which move me out of myself and into the strength of the whole.

It is somewhat ironic that PRAASA was held at the Nugget in Reno, when my service sponsor has always suggested that I look for the “nuggets.” Here are some of the nuggets I gleaned from this year's PRAASA Panel presentations, roundtable conversations, at dinner, waiting in line for coffee, and even in the restroom.

* Am I inclusive and not exclusive of generations?

- Young people and Seniors in AA
- Cultural: Race, Gender, Occupation, Economical
- FEAR is what makes the prejudice real

* We are all responsible to Carry the Message - not only those in General Service

- We are all uniquely qualified with both the affliction and the solution
- Are we hampered by the title or responsibility?
- The work is not done by Service Committee Chairs - they facilitate it.

* Alcoholics are driven by 2 basic emotions: LOVE and FEAR

- We are quick to recognize and embrace LOVE
- We justify, rationalize, and ignore the rest which is FEAR

* Have we become too rigid in how we carry the message?

* We create UNITY when we do things together - plan things together

CONT'D

AA Word Scramble

VERYORCE _____

YNITU _____

HOCCOSILLA _____

LINSGEIWNLS _____

ITNNAOYYM _____

VIREECS _____

SLAMBYSE _____

HYSNTEO _____

ITTSRINADO _____

VEYNORTIN _____

OPSNSIRPSHO _____

GUAREOC _____

ANONYOMSU _____

IMSDWO _____

EPNO NMSESDDENI _____

LWRSOEEPS _____

SEIRYTEN _____

HEHRIG PWERO _____

TNAAPCCEEC _____

METDOTIANI _____

Filling the Void

Angela D.

When I was drinking, I always needed more... of everything. More attention, more approval, more “fun”, more love, more money, more things, more me time, more activities, and surely more alcohol. I never had enough of anything. At least that’s how I felt. The love I got from a significant other was never enough, so I would look for more somewhere else. The approval I got from my family was never enough, the fun I was having away from my children was never enough. I was on a constant loop of searching for more of everything to fill a void that I didn’t understand I had, and once I found more of what I was looking for, that too was suddenly not enough.

I had always had a sense of knowing that there was *something* out there. Some energy or being or grandmaster of everything, but I was completely unwilling to acknowledge that whatever that *something* was, was something I needed. I was a living example of “self will run riot.” I was constantly seeking things and people and substances to fill the void in my life and my soul that could only be filled with that *something* that I didn’t want anything to do with.

When I went to rehab in Gooding, ID in the summer of 2014, I remember throwing quite the temper tantrum in my counselor’s office about this “God” thing and how I didn’t need it and that it was all just made up anyway. She kindly smiled at me (I was obviously not the first drunk with an attitude she’d counseled) and suggested that maybe I should just go outside and start reading my Big Book. I stomped outside with my Big Book and cigarettes in hand and decided that I was going to just start reading the book on whatever page I opened up to. You see, even though I was miserable and hurting and desperately wanting nothing more than to have the obsession with alcohol removed from me, I was still going to do things *my* way. I wouldn’t even read a book from page one if I was being *told* to do that. It just had to be done *my* way. So I sat down, lit a cigarette, and opened the book to a random page to begin reading. When I looked down at my book, I had opened it up to the very first page of *We Agnostics*.

Today, I can honestly say that I do believe the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous was divinely inspired. I believe this because if they had titled that chapter anything other than *WE Agnostics*, I don’t think it would have had the impact on me that it did that day. If they had titled it “*THE Agnostics*” or “*YOU Agnostics*” or “*THOSE Agnostics*” I probably would have closed the book and thrown another self will fueled tantrum. But, they didn’t. They called that part of the book “*WE Agnostics*” and I knew then that I wasn’t alone. I was not the first drunk who didn’t know what a higher power looked like or felt like. I wasn’t the first alcoholic who desperately needed to turn my life over to something bigger than me, but had no clue where to even start. That chapter changed my life. It changed my core beliefs and it helped me fill that void in my spirit that I was constantly seeking to fill with always devastating results. I didn’t have to do that anymore.

My life is by no means perfect. How boring it would be if it were! But, I can say that I have everything that I need today. All of that attention and approval and love and comfort that I was always needing more of is given to me every single day by a power much greater than myself. And that void I once had is completely satisfied just knowing that there is a Higher Power that will take care of me no matter what. Even when things suck. When life hurts. When I find myself restless or irritable, discontent or lacking acceptance, I have the ability to stop and recognize that I have everything that I need today, because I have the gift of sobriety. When I don’t have enough money, I still have my health. When I don’t have my health, I still have an abundance of love. When my kids are *being tiny terrorists*, I still have a clear head and no hangover. When things are great or when things are crap, I still have my sponsor, my Book, and an open seat waiting for me in a room of Alcoholics Anonymous somewhere. No matter what kind of day it is, it is ALWAYS a beautiful day to be sober.

Our Regional Trustee at large, Joel, reported the audio translation of the Big Book into Navajo is now complete. There were no dry eyes in the room when he played for us the 12 Steps in Navajo, only to be followed by a Navajo native at the floor mic, thanking the fellowship for the tools needed to help her nation, ravaged by alcohol. Please share this and thank your Districts, Groups, and Members for their 7th Tradition donations which made this and countless other efforts possible around the U.S., Canada, and the world.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve you as your Alternate Delegate and participate in a spiritual banquet such as the 2018 PRAASA in Reno, Nevada.

LOVE & SERVICE
Neil W.



Photos from Neil W.

Are We Getting the A.A. Message Out and How? Shannon C. Area 18 Delegate

Hello everyone! My name is Shannon C. and it is my honor and pleasure to serve Idaho Area 18 as Panel 68 Delegate. I’d like to thank the PRAASA Committee and Marita for allowing me the opportunity to share on the topic *Getting the A.A. Message Out*. I’d like to put a spin on that topic and ask, *Are We Getting the A.A. Message Out and How?*

As of January 2018, an A.A. presence is in approximately 180 countries worldwide with an estimated membership of over two million, and more than 118,000 groups. Literature has been translated into languages as from Afrikaans to Vietnamese. The Big Book alone has been translated to 69 different languages and most recently in production, the Navajo Big Book. There are eBooks, the Grapevine and La Viña, accessibility medias and pamphlets for every need. There are Video and Audio Public Service Announcements, Videos for Professionals and for Young People and Full-Length Videos. I’m sure I’m missing some, but you get the point.

So, with all of the members around the world and all of the available literature and information, are we getting the A.A. message out? Are we conduits or waiting for someone else to reach out the hand of A.A.? How and where do we begin?

We can begin by addressing the importance of this literature within our home-groups and educating our own members within A.A. It can start with an awareness of the abundance of literature offered and the versatility of media types. It can start with one alcoholic sitting with another. It starts with me and you. It can be just that simple.

Two years ago, the General Service Board released a memo to introduce “Serving the Fellowship” - The GSB Strategic Plan which is a long-term action plan. There were eight goals defined under Section 1: Reaching Out the Hand of A.A. Many of these goals have already been completed and the others are still in the works. I’m sure Joel will give us an update on the most recent results from the ongoing communications inventory which was produced from The GSB Strategic Plan. But, the ultimate goal was to continue improving our communications both inside and outside the fellowship. To me, that begs the question, Are We Getting the A.A. Message Out and How?

At our 2016 Idaho Area 18 Fall Assembly, we set aside a couple of hours to discuss the External and Internal Communications brainstorming questions provided by the General Service Board. The full body assembly was very excited about the use of technology and social media to accomplish many of the goals found in both Cooperation with the Professional Community and the Public Information activities of the fellowship. Many of the technology and social media ideas discussed at our assembly are either being developed by the General Service Board and their subcommittees or are being discussed for future development.

It was also discussed that internally within the fellowship, there is little knowledge at the group level of the great supply of literature that Alcoholics Anonymous already possesses. It was suggested that leaders inside the fellowship need to be aware of the vast amount of literature and where to find the information.

In Idaho Area 18, our Cooperation with Professional Community committees conduct the outreach necessary to the professionals who come in contact with people seeking help on a daily basis in the medical, educational, corrections and treatment centers. But, are we engaging our younger members to speak in high schools, reaching out to corporation’s safety or HR departments, retirement communities and making sure that the message is available to those who have vision, hearing, mobility or other situations that might have difficulties receiving the message. There is always so much outreach to be done and we need to educate the membership about the importance of this vital twelfth step work. I know when I was involved with the Cooperation with the Professional Communities/ Public Information committee, I was afraid of breaking my anonymity. But, our Tradition Eleven states that we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and films. It’s my choice if I want to conduct a presentation to an outside entity about what Alcoholics Anonymous does or does not do. Once I overcame the fear of breaking my anonymity, it became one my fondest service positions. The difference between personal anonymity and fellowship anonymity are clearly different and should not be confused.

Our Public Information committees are communicating with the media, radio and TV and submitting the easily accessible PSAs. We need to educate our fellowship on the newer communication methods which include Skype, online meetings, A.A. websites, meeting-finder applications and social media such as Facebook, WhatsApp and YouTube. Are you aware that A.A. now has a YouTube channel?

We are the conduits that the newcomers look to for information and literature. We need to keep the conversations going within the fellowship. Good healthy discussions always attract good results and with that, we are creating an informed and ever growing future for Alcoholics Anonymous.

Thank you!
Shannon C.
Idaho Area 18
Panel 68 Delegate

OUR 12TH TRADITION



ANONYMITY IS THE SPIRITUAL

FOUNDATION OF ALL OUR TRADITIONS,

EVER REMINDING US TO PLACE

PRINCIPLES BEFORE PERSONALITIES.

Photo from Neil W.