**Area 8 Chair Report**

**June 2014 Area Assembly**

In my short history of Area 8 service I have never known a committee meeting to be cancelled but last month we cancelled the meeting due to local fires and the road conditions associated with the fires. Thank you to our officers and other trusted servants who got the word out and even placed a sign on the meeting room door. Today we are reconvening as an assembly to hear what our Delegate learned at the General Service Conference. I hope you are as elated as I am as you follow his report from Area 8 to New York and back again.

Last week I attended several special occasions celebrating various traditional rites of passage many of us have become accustomed: My sister’s retirement from teaching party, my dad’s 80th Birthday Party and my daughter’s Wedding Shower. All of these joyous events were accompanied by copious amounts of alcohol as are most of my family functions. I come from a long line of heavy drinkers and most don’t make any apologies for their drinking habits. My father’s party started at 10 am and the Bloody Mary’s and Mimosas were served before coffee. In fact, I was hard pressed to find a cup of coffee that morning. My sister’s party featured 19 cases of foreign and domestic beer.

I do not regale you with these tales to make you thirsty—on the contrary—I wanted to share my gratitude. I am grateful not to be loaded this morning or any morning. I am grateful that I was able to participate with my full and functioning faculties. I am grateful that I have friends like you who remind me what it used to be like, lest I see the party drinking through rose-colored glasses and not remember that it was never like that for me.

Tomorrow I leave to take 7 student travelers on an action-packed tour of Costa Rica. The journey is another reminder of what I have been given in Alcoholics Anonymous: Freedom, friends and family. My commitments in AA will be taken care of by my friends, my sponsees and my fellow officers. My commitments at home will be handled by my family. And as for my commitments while I am on the trip--I will fulfill them to the best of my ability as I have been taught over the years by AAs like you.

Three days after I return from Costa Rica my daughter is getting married. This in itself is daunting but I have prepared as much as I can and left the rest to my God and a few trusted vendors. When your children married you showed me how it could be done. The wedding will happen with or without my worry. Being around so many non-AA members does have a way of tightening your screws a bit. I always try to have someone from program in my general vicinity whenever there are revelers. They tell me that I can pause and pray any time of the day and I do.

Let us do our life’s work in and out of Alcoholics Anonymous so that we can leave a new and brighter legacy for future AAs yet to arrive. “Do not think of what you will get out of the occasion—think of what you can bring to it,” Big Book, p. 102