

Area Assembly Delegate Report September 15, 2018

There still is so much to be done in Alcoholics Anonymous. As I round my 9th month as your Delegate, I am already worried about my ability to finish what has started. Remember the Feasibility Study in 2016? That resulted in a "Strategic Plan" which drove us to look at how poor our communication has been. This propelled an upward trend in contributions and we now find ourselves reshaping the way we support our services, the way we communicate, and the way we work with each other. AA has been through changes before. Our Conference process is about extending AA's promise to reach the still suffering alcoholic--and our Fellowship is more vibrant than ever. This change did not come **from** the Conference--it came **to** the Conference, via the groups. We are all responsible for the growth and health of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Our Local Forum--An Outreach to Remote Communities--was an undeniable success from the first share to the last. Sincere thanks go to Past Delegate, Jane and a marvelous crew of dedicated workers. We truly experienced unity and love while learning about cultures and people who are different from one another. Friday night hosted a trio of gourd singers who performed several native songs endemic to this area, followed by an invocation and prayer. We heard five speakers from the Native American community share their experience strength and hope with such passion and courage. Later that night we sat around a "talking circle" led by a member who asked that we share who our grandmothers were and through her we would know more about each other. Day 2 at the Forum began with an opening speaker from the General Service Office, Clement, who is the Communications Service Coordinator. He gave us insight into the many jobs for which each staff member is responsible. Of course he also oversees Remote Communities and was excited by the topic of our Forum. Later, our new regional trustee, Kathi F, related the story of the newest translation of the Big Book, the Navajo CD. The history of this idea started in 1981 and has been carried on by a handful of people, mostly outside of the General Service Board, since that time. Past Trustee, Rod B, was also involved in this work. YPAA's, Katharine and Riley, had their own panel where several Young People's PSAs and Videos were viewed and discussed which may lead to more video production in our area. Rodrigo spoke on Racial and Cultural Barriers and how much our emotions play into our response to diversity in our midsts. He explained that diversity of experience and idea is more apparent than gender or race and that inclusion should be driven by the individual, not the group. Of course a local forum would not be complete without talking about what it means to be a GSR and the relationships we build between the groups and the Conference. Who better to share this than Jerry S, our alternate Delegate. Jeremy spoke on YPAAs and the quest for a standing committee and how young people are finding their way into general service. We ended the panel with Past Regional Trustee, Rod B. who took us through the plight of veterans and the mentally ill alcoholics. Statistics tell us that there is much work to be done in this area of recovery. We were pleased to hear Rod share his personal story on Saturday night.

The final morning of the Forum featured a young woman speaker who shared her experience as a Native American female in the rooms of AA. She reminded us about our need to be inclusive and welcoming so that the doors are always open for whoever needs AA.

We know more today than we did yesterday, yet we still know only a little. Join us as we gather in conversations around the work that still needs doing.

Last weekend's Regional Forum was well attended and there was information for everyone. The invited GSO staff and trustees as well as AAWS and Grapevine were an eclectic collection of AA trusted servants who delivered riveting messages about the future of our Fellowship. The huge number of first time attendees at the Forum was encouraging. The Workshops on Saturday Night were well attended including the 2 on Safety in AA. It was my intention to get the shares to focus on the "solution" and that was not the result but the passion and need to share was certainly there. It was apparent that the work we have done in San Diego around making AA safe is more pronounced than that of other areas so we must continue to carry that message of safety as it seems to be working. Remember, safety is all of our responsibilities. I am curious about the Data Mapping that our new World Services Trustee, Pritchard, presented. I will continue to seek information on this idea. David Morris' presentation on finances was excellent as usual as was Grapevine report. The final report on the Forum will be in the next Box 459.

The Communications Audit was received about a week ago and I've had a few conversations around this 27 page abridged version. We should get the full audit in a few months but I think this audit speaks volumes. If you read page 18 only you will see where our fellowship falls short in cooperation and communication and this is the crux of our issues in the Fellowship. Do find time to talk to me about your take on the audit. If you are a GSR and you want a copy of the audit you can email me directly or ask your DCM to forward it to you.

Next weekend is the SoCal Convention in Rancho Mirage. It is San Diego's turn to host the general service panel on Saturday and we will be there. Historically the So Cal Convention used to be the venue where we elected the Delegate each year. General Service is now relegated to 1½ hours out of the weekend but the good news is that the "Old Timer's" meeting is directly after the General Service Panel.

Our participation in AA isn't separate from our recovery or secondary to our unity--it is integral to supporting and achieving our primary purpose. It is how we will meet the next challenges. We have what we need already--our three legacies--recovery, unity and service.

Today we are going to take care of business which will allow you to participate in the Conference process. This can be thrilling, boring, ridiculous or frightening to some. This "right of participation" should be a privilege to most of you. You are representing your group and AA as a whole. I hope you take it serious. Each group conscience that is brought before you has been vetted and sweated by a fellow group member. Listen carefully to what is presented and what is discussed. Be a part of the history of AA in San Diego/Imperial Area 08.

One last thing: The District 2 and 23 Labor Picnic was fantastic and I wanted to thank all the districts for making general service accessible and approachable to everyone. I saw the daughter of a woman who is in her first year of sobriety at the picnic. The daughter is a past student of mine. It still takes my breath away that I am a sober mother whose children have never seen her drink. I try to remember this when I see other moms who are striving to do this deal.

Thank you for allowing me to be of service.

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