

## Chair Preview: May 2019

“Have you a sufficient substitute?” “Yes, there is a substitute, and it is vastly more than that. It is a fellowship in Alcoholics Anonymous. There you will find release from care, boredom and worry. Your imagination will be fired. Life will mean something at last. The most satisfactory years of your existence lie ahead...”

That passage from *A Vision from You* in the *Big Book* kept coursing through my veins after the Pre-Conference Assembly. If you attended, I hope you experienced the joy I felt as we witnessed two days of loving discussion and impassioned sharing on dozens of items of business – discussion and sharing that might one day save someone’s life. One highlight for me was the nearly 90 minutes of sharing on the Agenda Topic regarding the Fifth Edition of the *Big Book* on Saturday afternoon.

But the mountaintop experience for me at the Pre-Conference Assembly was the Area’s response to the presentation of new business regarding the development of a pamphlet for transgender alcoholics. Regardless of whether you think that this pamphlet is needed or not, I felt the love in the room when a group of gender-queer, non-binary and transgender AA members came and shared their experience feeling marginalized in the rooms of AA, and the challenges that this remote community faces in accessing the AA message.

I heard later that some of these members were scared to come to the Assembly and stand in front of 500 people; they worried that they would not be welcomed. But after the Assembly, when checking in with them, I heard about how they felt so loved and so welcomed by everyone in the room. I am so grateful I get to be a part of this loving, welcoming fellowship that wants everyone – no matter their race, creed, sexual orientation, economic status, educational status, politics, or gender identity – to feel the love that AA has helped us to access.

We now get to discuss this motion, and the Fifth Edition motion, and the two motions regarding Technology and Accessibilities committees, for the foreseeable future. I look forward to seeing all of you again at the Post-Conference Assembly.

Meanwhile, at the Area Committee Meeting...

We approved a motion to create a form on the CNCA website to allow people to submit group consciences to the Delegate electronically; our Area’s Web committee will now start discussing how to make this feature available by next year.

A member of the Finance committee resigned, so Robert F., formerly a DCMC from District 12, was appointed in his place. And after many months of discussion, the Area asked the Area Officers to appoint an ad hoc committee to review our Area structure and come back with a proposal on what to do next.

We are now discussing two motions, regarding a new position on the Archives committee and for funding for two liaisons to the Hispanic Women’s Conference. And next month, we will hear a final report from our Newsletter ad hoc committee.

There is a lot going on – and that is a good thing. I worried so much when I got sober that I would never get to have fun again. But right now, today, my life is amazing. I hope you are experiencing this same joy too.

Thank you for letting me participate,

Eric L.

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