

**CALIFORNIA NORTHERN COASTAL AREA
ASSEMBLY BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES FOR
2018 PRE-CONFERENCE ASSEMBLY**

The Pre-Conference Assembly Business meeting of CNCA was held April 7, 2018 at the Santa Clara County Fairgrounds in San Jose, California. Jennifer B. opened the meeting at 9:15, followed by the Serenity Prayer. The AA Preamble was read by Catherine J. (District 01). Matthew T. (District 06) read the 12 Traditions in English and José L. (District 17) read the 12 Traditions in Spanish. There were eight past Delegates present: Diane O. (Panel 35), Woody R. (Panel 50, Area 07), Doug G. (Panel 53), Sharon A. (Panel 57), David N. (Panel 59), Jim F. (Panel 59, Area 38), Ken M. (Panel 61), and Raymundo L. (Panel 65). David N. currently serves as a General Service Trustee, and Doug G. serves as an appointed committee member of the Trustee's Literature committee. There were also two past trustees present: Tom M. (past General Service Board Trustee) and Madeleine P. (past Pacific Regional Trustee). The minutes from the 2017 Fall Inventory Assembly were accepted as printed in the *CNCA Comments*.

Registered attendance: Voting (338) / Non-voting (113)

Officer Reports

DELEGATE – JOANN L.: I am still looking for sharing on how Districts or groups are carrying the message to veterans of the Armed Forces so I can share ideas at the Remote Communities Meeting prior to the Conference. I continue scheduling Delegate's reports, and I will also give my report at the NCCAA Conference on June 9 in Modesto. There are forms and folders for written group consciences available today. I have already received some group consciences by email and the work that our GSRs are doing with their groups really warms my heart.

ALTERNATE DELEGATE – TEDDY B.-W.: Your Delegate and I meet monthly to ensure that we work effectively on your behalf. I also pray for the health of the delegate, and I invite you to join me. The Alternate Delegate must be prepared to attend the Conference if necessary and so, in addition to becoming very familiar with not just the topics but also the set up and procedures of the conference, I am also looking forward to paying great attention to all that is said at this Assembly. Our bid to host the 2030 International Convention in San Jose was unsuccessful. Please thank your groups for their support and let them know that everyone is welcome at the Pacific Regional Forum this year.

CHAIR – JENNIFER B.: This morning, we will have loving discussion on our Area business matters. In the afternoon, our primary goal is to inform the Delegate before she goes to New York. But it is also important that each of you gets a chance to carry your group's conscience to the microphone. The ad hoc committee looking at the Area's technology needs is wrapping up after months of dedicated service. They will give us a report soon. And a new ad hoc committee has been formed to look at our Area newsletters, the *Comments* and *Comentarios*. They will be focusing on the content, the design, and issues surrounding the distribution and translation.

TREASURER – CHRIS H.: As of today, we have \$25,500 in our checking account (used for operating expenses) and \$11,140 in our savings account (representing our prudent reserve).

Year to date, we received \$36,000 in contributions and spent \$41,600. Please thank your groups for their continued contributions.

REGISTRAR – LAURA W.: I am grateful for all the GSRs, DCMs, DCMCs and others here today and for the service you do for Alcoholics Anonymous. Registering here today helps us know how many people attend our assemblies so that we can plan for our business meetings and events – and to make sure we have enough food for everyone. We transitioned to new software after the previous database software (that had been used for 20 years) crashed. I am excited about the potential of our new system to improve our communication.

RECORDING SECRETARY – ERIC L.: At the Area Committee Meeting, we have been discussing our Area's Motions Book. This 200-page document originated in 1990 (when members started researching in the Archives repository) and became a part of our record when the Area unanimously approved it in 1993. For the past 25 years, each Recording Secretary has added to the Motions Book, but outdated software has made continuing to use the current file no longer feasible. So I am asking for help – ideally between 10 and 20 volunteers – to take sections of the Motions Book to transcribe with me. I hope to complete this task by the summer.

ASSEMBLY COORDINATOR – ERICA G.: While I am called the Assembly Coordinator, the heavy lifting has been done by our host Districts, 02 (Salinas) and 40 (Santa Clara South). I am grateful for the diligent planning and love that went into putting this on for all of us. We will have Microphone Monitors stationed at each microphone today; they may step in to help you adjust the microphone or signal to you to slow down when speaking. Our Post-Conference Assembly is next, at the Solano County Fairgrounds on May 12. And there are still six assemblies available for bidding.

LITERATURE/GRAPEVINE/LA VIÑA – MIGUEL H.: Our literature has now been translated into 98 languages, including 71 translations of our *Big Book* (including the Navajo language translation). Twenty other translations are currently pending. I have a list of all current translations for anyone who would like a copy.

Area Standing Committees and Sub-Committees

ARCHIVES – RICHARD W.: Thank you for helping obtain group histories, and please keep sending them in. There are group history forms on the Archives table for anyone who would like to participate. Your Archives committee attended PRAASA and ACYPAA. All of the guests who visited the archives at ACYPAA signed a board which is on display today. At ACYPAA, newspapers documenting the Northern California fires (which destroyed the original ACYPAA host hotel) were on display and helped tell the story of how that host committee came together to put on the event.

BRIDGING THE GAP – KELLY H.: Your Area and District BTG committees have given 71 presentations and received 220 requests for help since our last Assembly. Our committee has conducted three orientations for new District Chairs and Co-Chairs. Based on discussion from our inventory, we are focusing on service literature we use to extend the hand of AA, including the literature we use for the Pre-Release Contact program.

FINANCE – CLAUDIA N.: The proposed 2018 budget passed in March, we met with the ad hoc committee to brainstorm how

the Finance committee could benefit from technology, and we adjusted our prudent reserve. We also discussed how we pass the Seventh Tradition baskets and reviewed how to make contributing to the Area electronically easier. I also want to inform the Area on what the actual cost of Assemblies is. If I took the total cost of today's assembly and divided it by expected attendance, to be fully self-supporting, it would cost \$20.45 per member.

PI/CPC – TEDDY B.-W.: CPC Chairs in California now have a system in place to ensure that AA will have a presence at conventions of statewide professional organizations for groups like psychologists, school counselors and probation officers. We also staff the AA presence at national conventions in our Area, and I would like to thank everyone who showed up and volunteered at the Aging in America Conference last week. One visitor to the booth informed us that he was an alcoholic, but not ready, and that he would see us in a few years.

WEBSITE – ROBERT E.: We presented the progress on the new Drupal website to Area Officers, demonstrated the new projector and screen, purchased Zoom training software, and recruited volunteers for our Drupal ad hoc committee. We will also be implementing our Hot Spot device.

INTERPRETATION AND TRANSLATION – MICHAEL Q.: Today, we are broadcasting interpretation (provided by Mateo and Molly) on FM radio frequency channel 93.1. We also provide Assisted Listening on channel 103.7. Please do not interrupt the interpreters; see me if there are problems with the FM signal. We have a limited supply of radios available to loan for those who need them, but remember to return them at the end of the day so that they are available tomorrow. Also remember to speak clearly and slowly so that our interpreters may hear correctly and keep pace with their interpretation.

2018 PACIFIC REGIONAL FORUM– DOUG G.: Regional Forums originated in 1975 and were designed to help the General Service Board, AAWS, the *Grapevine* board and staff and GSO staff stay in touch with AA members, trusted servants and newcomers. There is no registration fee, and all AA members are encouraged to attend. We will be hosting the next Pacific Regional Forum in San Jose. Online registration starts July 9.

Area Business

PRESENTATION OF NEW BUSINESS:

That the Trustees' Literature Committee add to its agenda to consider publishing a Fifth Edition of the Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, with updated stories to more broadly reflect our current fellowship, as well as updates or additions to Appendices III and V. – *presented by District 40*

Presentation: This motion was proposed by the We Have Arrived group in San Jose. The group concluded that the Fellowship is ready for a new edition of the *Big Book*. In the course of their discussion, they decided that they had no desire to change the first 164 pages of the book – but would like to see new stories added into the story section. They also decided that they wanted updates and/or additions to Appendix III (The Medical View on AA) and Appendix V (The Religious View on AA). This motion was discussed at group level for three months, and unanimously passed. After that, it spent two months in the Sub-district, and also unanimously passed. Throughout the course of our District discussion, there were several perspectives from our GSRs, and we had

four months worth of loving discussion. The final vote was 26 in favor, 0 opposed, and five abstentions.

Questions: Q: Have you given any thoughts to which stories would be dropped from a Fifth Edition? A: That would be up to the Trustees' Literature committee. Q: Are specific changes to the appendices a part of the motion? A: No, it is additional information. Q: When was the Fourth Edition published? A: It was published 2001. The average length of time between editions has been 16 years.

Motion moved to New Business at the 2018 Post-Conference Assembly.

OLD BUSINESS:

That the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous and the General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous approve the development of a new public service announcement in video format that utilizes full-face actors (not members of A.A.). – *presented by the CNCA PI/CPC Committee*

Discussion: Faces are more real to people. We should also be using more women and young people in videos to attract all who suffer from alcoholism. // There are many PSAs already available, and we do not need full faces in videos. // Another PSA has already been approved, and we should wait to see what that video is like before passing this particular motion. // There is no issue with actors portraying alcoholics. Our Eighth Tradition states we may employ special workers, which actors would be. Many future AAs are referred by medical professionals and counselors who are not members of AA. // The PSA in development will be animated. // PSAs currently being used are sufficient. But these videos could help with Public Information work. // It could become problematic if one of the actors we hired became famous and became the 'face of AA.' // Nothing can explain the pain and suffering of an alcoholic more than a facial expression. // It could worry alcoholic viewers if faces were shown in videos because it could suggest that anonymity could be broken. // The point of making these videos is to attract people who might be afraid or do not know much about being an alcoholic. // One thing that keeps people away from AA is the stigma of alcoholism. By not showing full faces, we add to that shame. // Many treatment centers already make advertisements with full faces. Not showing faces in PSAs makes us different. // I had originally been opposed to this motion. But we discussed this and I watched the PSAs made in Australia. They are so powerful. The Traditions were not violated, and it was compelling to see the impact that those videos had. // I do not see how showing full faces makes our message more compelling. We are not in competition with treatment centers. // Facial expressions help deaf people identify. // AA works because of identification. After watching the videos produced in Australia, I could identify with those actors. Those videos were not 'selling AA.' // It is important that professionals (and the general public) understand the spiritual significance of anonymity. // Our message is most effective when one alcoholic carries the message to another alcoholic, not when someone pretends to be an alcoholic.

The Assembly was asked if they were ready to vote, and members were ready to vote. Substantial unanimity (2/3) was required for the motion to pass.

Vote: Yes (190) / No (56) / Abstained (3). Motion passes.

Minority Opinion: My first thought was that I liked full faces in PSAs. When I saw the Australian videos, I was so impressed. But I watched our animated videos, and I thought we do not need any new videos. // For-profit groups (like treatment centers) make commercials with full faces, and we are not competing with them. // The process of identification, for me, came from coming to the Fellowship. // I do not want AA to make PSAs that manipulate emotions. When alcoholics are ready to recover, they will find the rooms. // There is a fine line between attraction and promotion, and full faces veers into promotion. People know about AA already, and they know how to find us. // Whatever the merits of full-faces, this proposal violates the Americans with Disabilities Act by preventing alcoholics from obtaining employment.

Motion to reconsider; seconded.

Motion to reconsider fails. // **Motion passes.**

NEW BUSINESS:

That literature be developed sharing experience, strength and hope on meditation. – *presented by District 90*

Discussion: There is too much literature in the first place, and there is a lot of literature already available about meditation from non-AA sources. // Some people want information about meditation and how it is linked to recovery. // We requested this literature because the Eleventh Step asks us to meditate. In the *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, it describes meditation as something that helps with emotional balance. But there is so little information available on something so important. // There is already a substantial amount of information about mediation in our literature. // Meditation is mentioned frequently in the *Big Book*, but there are many different interpretations of what meditation actually is. // There is extensive information about and even some suggested prayers in the *Big Book*, but there is little information and very few suggestions about meditation. // Many people worried as newcomers that they were not doing the Eleventh Step the 'right way,' though there probably is no actual right way. // If a *Grapevine* book about this topic is published, would this motion still be necessary? // Any literature that helps newcomers is necessary. Too much literature is always preferable to none. // I love meditation, but a pamphlet would not be helpful. There is no wrong way to meditate, though. // It may be more appropriate to share experience with meditation person to person, rather than through our literature. // I have always thought that our literature views meditation as contemplation. A pamphlet could make that clear. // A pamphlet that provides concrete examples could be helpful. // While I generally support giving information to people, I just do not see how literature regarding meditation could be concise. There are so many different ways to meditate that I just cannot imagine it being condensed into one piece of literature. // I do not want to be told how to meditate. I meditate while cleaning my chainsaw, and I do not want to be told that I should not do it that way. // People do not know how to meditate. This could help a great deal. // Why was prayer not included? // This motion is redundant. // Are we creating pamphlets just to create pamphlets? I have not seen a pamphlet on prayer, and I would be offended if someone told me how to pray. I believe meditation is similar. // I hope literature on meditation refers people to the pages in the *Big Book* that provide information on meditation. // Literature should counter the misguided belief that there are 'wrong ways' to meditate. // I have been trying to learn how to meditate, and any reading that brings

me closer to God has my support. // We need instructions. I had to learn how to meditate from YouTube. // I have seen this topic discussed in the *Grapevine* and a book compiling different experiences with meditation could be helpful. Our literature is not intended to tell people how to do things, but to share suggestions. // I am a product of the hippy-dippy 1970s, and I knew all about meditation. But perhaps a pamphlet – not telling people how to meditate, but rather describing how people form connections to their Higher Power – could demystify meditation, so that people do not feel the need to sit in the Lotus Position to meditate properly. // I have struggled with meditation. When I started meditating, I would just think about my grocery list. So I appreciate the possibility that I will be able to read the experience, strength and hope of people who have practiced meditation. // There is a meditation deficiency in AA. If literature were available, it could address this need. // Our *Big Book* tells us the main problem with the alcoholic centers in the mind. Once Bill learned to meditate more, he came out of his depression. What helped me learn to meditate was reading Bill's experience with meditation. This literature would do something similar for others, because it would share personal experiences so that people can quiet the mind. // I have been a seeker my entire life, and I have met many people who do not know how to quiet their minds or how to get centered. Our program is based on sharing our stories, and if this can help, if this can clarify that there are ways to seek and be centered, we are all the better for it. // Even though I came from a religious background, I was not sure I was praying properly. I wanted to do it right. *Came to Believe* was very helpful to me. A similar book focused on meditation could be helpful too. // I had a lot of shame that I did not know how to meditate, and I feared that I would not experience the presence of God. // I have not seen anyone walk on water yet, but I do know we are striving to do well. // Pamphlets are helpful because they are accessible. They are easier to get because they are free and books cost money. // I started attending a meditation meeting, and it got easier for me over time. No one told me how to do it, or how not to do it. I learned slowly. // This could be a special edition of the *Grapevine* or *La Viña*. // I heard that the 1939 dictionary definition of meditation was more about planning your day than the present-day understanding of 'reaching for enlightenment.' // I attend a Sunday morning meditation meeting, and there is something powerful about sitting in silence for half an hour with alcoholics. // There is a lot of literature about meditation, but none of it is AA literature. I want the hand of AA to be there.

Motion moved to Old Business at the 2018 Post-Conference Assembly.

The meeting was closed at 11:55 am with the Responsibility Statement.

WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND? (SATURDAY SESSION)

There is no need to remove people from the Board. The ownership of the manuscript will never come into question again. Action had to be taken, and the lawsuit was filed to establish a negotiation position. When we realized the negotiation would go nowhere, the lawsuit was withdrawn. // There is nothing wrong with having many pamphlets. // I request that we make a motion regarding changing the venue requirements for the International Convention. // The Area will be hosting a *Comentarios* workshop to introduce people

to this service opportunity. // Many atheists and agnostics do not feel included by our current literature. Waiting for someone to have such a terrible life that they are willing to forgo their spiritual beliefs is cruel. // This was my second year as a GSR. My group members were engaged with the process this year. It was rewarding. It does get better! // The Twelve Steps were written after people had started working the Steps. The Twelve Traditions were written after groups had already formed. The Concepts were written after the Conference had already begun. In Al-Anon, all three legacies are included in one book. // We implore the Delegate to please carry the voice of the Spanish-speaking women to the Conference. We want to be a part of AA. // I was happy to learn that there is a procedure in place if there ever were a need censure the Board. I love the structure of AA. // People in Al-Anon were not confused by a book combining the Steps, the Traditions and the Concepts. It would be interesting to have a layman's reflections on the Concepts. // The Hispanic Women's Workshop will be held in San Francisco on December 1. // Pamphlets are not just for the group described by the title. They are for everyone, so that we can carry the message to everyone. // AA has its own prayers; we do not need to use the Lord's Prayer.

more information on how to handle restraining orders between members of AA. // A-weema-weh, a-weema-weh, a-weema-weh, a-weema-weh...

Submitted with Gratitude and Enthusiasm,
Eric L.
CNCA Panel 67 Recording Secretary

WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND? (SUNDAY SESSION)

We need to consider when developing pamphlets if they help everyone – not just people in our groups or are communities. // Thank you to all who helped with the Pre-Conference Assembly. If you want to be of service, please help clean up. // At one time our Area considered splitting into two or three to make it more convenient. I am grateful that we didn't because I get to experience Monterey, Salinas, and Eureka, which gives me greater perspective on AA. I am especially looking forward to our Summer Assembly in District 15. // I want to thank the Officers for the Agenda Topics Summaries. // Being a GSR was a wonderful experience. I have never been to the General Service Office, and I am looking forward to the Forum in San Jose in September. // I have heard people talk about slippery slopes this weekend. And I want to tell you a story. Bill and Bob met, and the Fellowship slowly grew in Akron and New York. Three years in, there were 40 sober members, and Bill proposed the *Big Book*. The Akron Group was fearful. They worried it was a slippery slope. Who would pay for it? Was it necessary? Why not leave well-enough alone? Bill convinced them to take a chance. We have to take a chance also. // I need more information earlier. I am an active member of my group and I want to be a GSR. // Thank you for creating a safe space to share. // We are afraid of change. I worry about the people for whom what we have done does not work. 'Talk it over with your sponsor' is not always helpful advice if there is no one in your community who is sober or has worked the Steps. // I love Assemblies because I see old friends and make new ones. // When I came to AA, I did not have the gift of desperation. But I was welcomed. Anything that can be done to make everyone feel welcomed is our responsibility. Thank God I did not have to be miserable to get AA. // Our attendance today included 142 voting members and 76 non-voting members. // We invite you all to the Post-Conference Assembly in Vallejo on May 12. // English-speaking women are invited to the Hispanic Women's Workshop. I also want to note that Spanish-speaking men involved in General Service have been so supportive of the Spanish-speaking women in our Area. // I love rules. So I was surprised with my group and their relaxed thoughts about anonymity on social media. I was reminded not to give people lists of rules. // I am seeking