

Chair Preview: June 2020

So much has changed in the past three months. We have learned that the fellowship is adaptable and unafraid of change. We have learned a whole new tech-savvy language. And we have learned that there remain barriers to accessing AA (one of those most glaring barriers is the inability for some people to access the technology to currently find our rooms).

One thing that has not changed, however, is the life-affirming message of Alcoholics Anonymous. And that message remains a life-saving tool for some, even in this time of social distancing and online meetings. I have been thinking a lot recently about my experience as a newcomer. I was not a “good” newcomer who immediately felt welcomed into AA. I was angry and afraid that this program wouldn’t work for me or wouldn’t accept me, and I was terrified to try and fail at yet another thing in life.

But people in Alcoholics Anonymous treated me with warmth and compassion. No one forced me to do anything I didn’t want to do – and when I misbehaved, they gently guided me toward steps, traditions, and (eventually) concepts that would save my life.

At the Summer Assembly, on August 8, we will get to celebrate those three legacies and discuss a variety of different topics of interest to AA members. Those topics are suggested by you – the fellowship – and are intended to open up discussion about important topics of relevance in 21st century AA, like anonymity, accessibility, finances, history, humility, humor, attraction, public relations, social media, and organization structure. I expect that this year, we might have some suggestions regarding technology as well. Any suggested topics are due by June 27, at the end of the Area Committee meeting.

At the Summer Assembly, we will also resume discussing assembly business – including possible votes on motions to request a pamphlet for the transgender alcoholic and on whether to create an Area technology committee. We took a break from this business while we acclimated ourselves to this new virtual world.

At the Area Committee meeting, we have already been voting. We approved adding a line item to future budgets to reimburse travel expenses for two liaisons to the Hispanic Women’s Workshop each year, and we rejected a proposal to increase the rate we pay our interpreters at the Area Officer meeting. This month, we could vote on a proposal to lease storage space for use by Area officers, and other motions focus on annual financial support for the Hispanic Women’s Workshop and on a proposal to hire a lawyer to help CNCA incorporate as a California Non-Profit Public Benefit Corporation.

We also continue to discuss how to be financially prudent; though the Area is currently in good financial health, this has been a lively discussion, with a lot of exciting ideas starting to be proposed (but no motions have been made yet). I look forward to seeing what happens next.

In gratitude,

Eric L.
CNCA Chair Panel 69