

**CALIFORNIA NORTHERN COASTAL AREA  
SUMMER ASSEMBLY MINUTES FOR  
August 8, 2020**

The Summer Assembly of CNCA was virtually held on August 8, 2020. Eric L. opened the business meeting at 9 am, followed by the Serenity Prayer. A Zoom Virtual Orientation was given by Jackie B.; the AA Preamble was read by Dylan R. (District 10). Karen M. (District 70) read the Twelve Traditions in English; the Twelve Traditions in Spanish were read by Salomon G. (from Mexico). Past Delegates and Trustees included: Diane O. (Panel 35), Bob D. (Panel 36, Maine), Barbara M. (Panel 41), Jim M. (Panel 45), Salomon G. (Panel 45, Colima Mexico), Woody R. (Panel 50, CNIA), Sharon A. (Panel 57), David N. (Panel 59, currently a General Service Trustee), Jim F. (Panel 59, Eastern Missouri), Ken M. (Panel 61), Joann L. (Panel 67), Tom M. (Past Trustee), and Jorge T. and Omar (currently trustees from the Mexican General Service Board). Past Area Officers included: Margrete V., Judy W., Michael Q., and Ray W. The minutes from the 2020 Post-Conference Assembly Business Meeting Minutes were accepted as published in the *CNCA Comments* and *Comentarios*.

**Officer Reports**

**DELEGATE – TEDDY B-W:** Please thank your groups for their continued support of their Central Offices, H&I, and the General Service Structure in these challenging times. Our Trustees met at the beginning of this month and started sifting through the 58 Committee Considerations that were made at the Conference this year and I will be sharing a lot more about that in the weeks to come, but here are some highlights: We will be reopening the call for stories to update the pamphlet “A.A. for the Older Alcoholic.” It looks like a presentation which the Literature Committee saw entitled, “The Big Book: Researching Issues, Possible Tools and Access” will be provided to the Fellowship, as soon as possible, probably after October, but possibly sooner. The stories for the new pamphlet, “A.A. for the Spanish Speaking Woman,” have been selected. Work has started to prepare for the update to the pamphlet, “A.A. for the Black and African-American Alcoholic.” The Public Information Committee is waiting for the Trustees’ Finance Committees to weigh in before proceeding (or not) with the Google Grant Application for Google AdWords. I continue to deliver my Conference Report around the area and am grateful for your warm welcome and great questions. Please contact me if you are interested in serving on the PRAASA 2024 host committee.

**ALTERNATE DELEGATE -JENNIFER B:** The Northern California Joint Committee Communication Meeting on August 23 will focus on how H&I, Bridging the Gap, PI, CPC, and Accessibilities can work together more effectively and make better use of technology to carry the message. While this pandemic is a new experience in AA, the importance of service is not new. I encourage all of you to look for ways to foster continued participation in your districts and your groups as we think about rotation and passing it on. It’s also important that we still have fun. You can tell from the photos in the General Service Conference Final Report that the conference members made the best of their virtual time together. And it has been good to see many of you include fun with the fellowship at your virtual service events. We are not a glum lot.

**CHAIR – ERIC L:** In this month’s issue of the Comments – and in the next few issues – you will be able to access written job descriptions from Area Officers; we will be rotating at the end of this year, and electing new officers at the Election Assembly, which will be held virtually on November 7.

**TREASURER – DENNIS H:** The CNCA treasury is in good condition, YTD contributions to budget are running at 80% while expenditures are only 38% of budget. We have a net income over expenditure of \$30,000. Our available balance is close to \$40,000. We have received the first seed money for PRAASA 2024 and will open a separate bank account. Website contributions to date have been close to \$3,000, in 157 separate transactions. If you wish to contribute online you may do so at [www.cnca06.org/contribute](http://www.cnca06.org/contribute).

**REGISTRAR – ERICA G:** GSO formed what they are calling a task force of some Area Registrars—not including me—to help them fix things and ultimately to serve Areas better. To me that is hopeful and could be a sign that things may be functioning perfectly in the near future, probably just in time for all of us to rotate out. I appreciate all of your patience this Panel as we have dealt with these challenges. Please keep in mind that you can always access everything digitally that comes from GSO, including new GSR and DCM kits, Box 459, and the Service Manual, just go to aa.org and type it in the search field.

**RECORDING SECRETARY – ERIC L. FOR MIGUEL H (Absent due to death in the family):** Love you all, thank you for your support. Jennifer B. will be taking minutes today.

**ASSEMBLY COORDINATOR – COREE H:** I’m excited to see our first (and maybe last) Summer Assembly hosted virtually. I always wondered if we had the capacity to pull off something like this, and it’s clear that alcoholics are hard-wired for survival and adaptation, so I’m glad everyone is here! For our virtual Fall Election Assembly, we have a team of people coordinating with our sister Area, California Northern Interior, to make

sure it goes as smoothly as possible. We are encouraging Districts to start bidding for the Panel 71 Assemblies. Dates are on the website calendar. Contact me for more information.

LITERATURE/GRAPEVINE/LA VIÑA – MAGDALENO O: The new Communication Services Department at GSO has taken on oversight of many of our digital efforts and will serve as an internal agency supporting G.S.O., A.A. World Services, AA Grapevine and the General Service Board. Working closely with the A.A.W.S. Technology/Communication/Services Committee, the department is involved in a number of projects that have focused on communications and the development of digital resources to reach the fellowship and the others interested in our program of recovery. The *Big Book* is available in 71 languages, with 23 languages pending and 16 new translations in progress, along with five revisions/retranslations.

### **Standing and Sub-Committee Reports**

ACCESSIBILITIES – ALAN W: We have elected officers, we are fine-tuning a draft of our committee guidelines, and we have a committee description up on the website. Coronavirus is making me think a lot about just how central accessibility is to who we are, both at the meeting level and here in General Service. Virtual assemblies make it even easier for a lot of us to participate, but that isn't true for everyone. We could share our cars, but sharing our computers and phones is a bit harder. We need to ask ourselves: What are we doing to make sure everyone can show up?

ARCHIVES – DENISE G: Our current projects include: digitization of 2019-2020 records for both Area and Districts; revising our CNCA Guidelines; defining our Scope of Collection; providing needed materials for the Archives link on the CNCA Website; and documenting how CNCA has been impacted and adjusted to the COVID-19 Pandemic. We are also discussing creating a new position of Alternate Digital Systems Administrator, and working on defining the responsibilities of that position.

BRIDGING THE GAP – LARRY B: COVID-19 continues to severely restrict our presentation activity and ability to offer the hand of AA to newcomers in the facilities we serve. We were recently able to make some presentations by Zoom, or physical meetings that included public health considerations of social distancing and presenting outside. Many facilities are not ready to work through the logistics of setting up and coordinating Zoom meetings, but that may change. We continue to develop a Zoom template and look at ways to simplify our ability to accept BTG "blue card" requests. The 2020 BTG Workshop Weekend in September in Rock Island, IL has been cancelled and the host committee will plan for 2021 instead.

FINANCE – DON L: The primary responsibility of the Finance Committee is the preparation of the yearly budget for the Area. Over the last three months, group contributions have increased from 53% to 70% of the (pre-COVID) budgeted amount. These new restrictions have also reduced the Area's normal expenses and we will continue to have significant variances from the 2020 budget. We have begun the process of preparing the 2021 Budget with the input of Area Officers, and Standing Committee and Subcommittee Chairs. We will be presenting updated Reimbursement Guidelines at the August ACM.

PI/CPC – JENNIFER B: Committees are placing PSAs with local media and some will be doing virtual high school presentations when school starts. One district is working directly with their county Health and Human Services Department to develop guidelines for in-person meetings (indoor and outdoor). We want to be responsible members of our community and not attract any negative publicity for Alcoholics Anonymous. We have also been talking about rotation and sustainability in our committee work, improving our online presence, the impact of racism on recovery both inside and outside the rooms, and educating the fellowship about anonymity.

WEBSITE – DREW B: An aesthetic upgrade to the website is coming—keep an eye on CNCA06.org. We have seen a huge surge in cyber-attacks and spam emails, but our defense systems are holding strong. Our committee meets monthly on Zoom and has started putting together our pass-it-ons for the next panel.

INTERPRETATION AND TRANSLATION – JAMES B: Interpretation is available at the globe/flag at the bottom of your screen (select your language). Thank you to our interpreters today Molly, Mateo, and Manuel. We will be looking at job descriptions and any changes needed because of the continued shelter-in-place.

### **Old Business:**

"That CNCA establish a standing committee on Technology." – *presented by Dennis H.*

Discussion:

Our District was not in favor. Not that there isn't a need, but the scope of the Web committee could be expanded. // It is needed. Groups have issues and could use an Area resource to reach more people and stay connected. // Was initially opposed because our various committees are responsible for their own needs and pandemic has not changed opinion—our committees are exploring on their own. // We don't know

what we don't know. Role of Tech committee could be to look at options to carry the message. Right now, we scramble to solve problems as they arise and people are working individually. // "Web Committee" name doesn't mean we aren't available to help. We could rename the committee so people know to ask for help. // In the 1.5 years we've been talking about this, I started off being in favor but changed mind. We are mostly non-tech people on Web, I don't know if we have people to fill another committee. Is the scope of this new Tech committee policy or hands-on? We could change the name and add members. // Virtual Ad Hoc Assembly committee will disband at the end of the panel. We can put another one in place if needed next panel. Absolutely a need to fill, but not sure if a dedicated committee is the way to do it. // Committees are formed based on needs. This panel we have people to solve our problems and it's important to make it permanent. // We need a lot of help. Our District thought we would be back to normal soon but the pandemic continued and we thought we might shut down. GSRs are scared and feeling inhibited. We need all the help we can get—standing or ad hoc. // I am opposed and I work in tech. We should make changes in structure and function of Web committee instead. It's unclear how this affects our budget. We have to ask if we would be served by adding or expanding. // What would have happened if our Area Officers had not had the skills? Would we have this assembly? In favor of adding Tech or expanding Web. Help needs to be permanent. // Was on Web and the ad hoc that looked at technology needs and have mixed feelings. Purpose of managing our technology—licenses, etc.—could offset costs of having committee. Web should have a singular purpose. Good structure would be for Tech committee to have Web as a subcommittee and to also add a Tech Officer. // I'm opposed. We can incorporate this into our existing committee. We need to keep the big picture in mind of how to serve and who we have available. // Our group was not in favor. The motion was not explicit enough. Minority opinion was that we need to keep up with technology. // The ambiguous nature of responsibilities may make for difficulty in getting people to join. No guarantee skills will be available. // As a Spanish-speaking woman, I feel it is important to have the committee and understand how we can be supported as a District. The pandemic taught us that. // Is a committee the right format? The Technology in AA forum exists—could something like that serve our Area? It doesn't seem like there is anything like the TIAA forum for the Spanish-speaking community. Is a committee the best way to solve that problem? // We just heard members of a remote community say they need this support. We can't wait to fine-tune when the need is now. // If I vote no on this, how can we create a combined Tech/Web committee instead? We agree on need but differ on how to create a solution. // Not in favor, but like idea of expanding Web to support. Infrastructure is there. // At the time the motion (which came out of an ad hoc) was made, that panel's Web committee didn't think they could add to their scope. This panel says they can. May not be right approach. // I am hearing the need but concern about volunteers. Maybe we can find a different solution. // At a Spanish-speaking event, it was hard to find volunteers in our Area and people from other states helped with technology. We need a committee to train more people. // We should redirect the resources we have rather than adding a committee. Will the Web committee continue next panel? // In AA, we do things with the least possible organization. // Important motion. We need an over-arching Tech committee, like in business, and roll Web into the bigger committee. Lack of people is not a reason not to form it. // We do have needs that are being pinpointed more. This is a solution, but not the best solution, and in AA we look for the best solution. // Hit in solar plexus by the need expressed by Spanish-speaking members. How can we better serve? Purpose of Web committee is on our website and not fully defined. Awesome if we could combine. // Too much organization. We have an active Web committee. Can they help us connect with tech people for immediate needs? // What is the cost to set up a committee? // Chair clarified that Standing committee members are appointed by Area Officers from a pool of volunteers and elect their own chair, etc. Cost is nothing to start, but expense reimbursement for chair travel can be nominal to hundreds of dollars, depending on where they live. Web is a standing committee that will continue next panel. The current Virtual Assembly Ad Hoc has members from Web and I&T committees and two Area Officers.

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. Tech explained Zoom voting protocols.

Vote: 79 in favor, 48 opposed, 9 abstentions. Motion fails.

#### Minority Opinion:

Need should be met with creative solution. // Tech is a different skill set from website management. // Accessibility issue. // Today's format is proof of need and we have needs in other areas. A standing "Tech" committee would attract more people. // We need help to do a hybrid meeting. // We have a national technology forum, but communication would be helped if we had more locally. We could disband later if we don't need it anymore. // AA will find a way to support this. // I served on the ad hoc that looked at Area technology needs and many of us were not tech people. Putting people in a room just to talk about technology creates answers. // Having fire extinguishers before the fire, retaining info and ongoing knowledge so we can respond more quickly. // We send people to NAATW each year. That costs money. Virtual Assembly Ad Hoc expires and we need that in place. // I used to think there were no emergencies in AA and then the world shut down. Business cycles mean we won't do business again until the Pre-

Conference next year. Web could take a while to restructure and make proposals at ACM. // We need to create the committee and it could try to get diversity in the fellowship. People are scrambling and this committee could focus. // We have no way forward without this. Tech committee could start by meeting with Web. // Try to live one day at a time, but today and tomorrow we have COVID and technology has forced AA into a new world. Hope we use more, not less, technology in the future. // We have a new Communications department at GSO that works closely with other committees. There is an example there. // Berkeley Fellowship has a lot of Zoombombing, so strategies to help support hosts would help people feel safe in meetings and feel comfortable on Zoom. // Older people and Spanish speakers need our help now and many who need our help aren't here today.

Motion to reconsider; seconded.

Vote on motion to reconsider: 100 in favor, 24 opposed.

Motion to reconsider passes.

Chair announced motion would remain Old Business at the Pre-Conference Assembly.

After the break, a motion was made and seconded from the floor to fast-track the motion (and not wait until the next Assembly).

Discussion:

Important to my Sub-district to have this help.

Vote on motion to fast-track: 69 in favor, 13 opposed

Discussion on original motion resumed:

Nothing to stop committee from forming now and then a motion to combine if desired. There is a need now. AA is self-correcting. We can disband later if not needed. // Grateful for opportunity to fast-track. I voted against because of my District conscience, but see the need. // Excited to reopen this and support it. // It's an accessibility issue; glad we are talking again. // Good is the enemy of the best. Virtual Ad Hoc could be reformed next panel and meet our needs. We owe it to take our time. // Discouraging to see us act in an urgent way. Faulty premise that we can't meet the need without a committee. No emergencies in AA. // It takes time to form a new committee. Let Web expand its scope. I am available to help. Let's not let a name/title stop us from doing the work. // I abstained the first round because I didn't understand what it would mean if it didn't pass. In favor now. Many don't have access to technology. // Still not in favor. More bureaucracy doesn't solve the problem. // It took 1.5 panels for Web to redo guidelines. It will take time to get running. // Disturbed that fear is being used to talk us into a new committee. Name of "Web" doesn't prevent people from helping. // Tech committee is also about helping people who are not here. Web is specialized. I think we have interested members here to serve. // New Accessibilities committee is dedicated to collecting and sharing info to decrease barriers. So maybe Accessibilities plus Web. I'm a hard no. // What can we do in our Districts. It's inspiring for groups to hop on platforms and share experience. Dedicated to solving a problem might not be scope of a new committee. // Motion made before pandemic. I was opposed but listening changed my vote. Fast-tracking and Chair's rules are there for a reason. // In favor because I don't understand and I need to help others as part of service. // I want someone to help me set up and train people on computers in my District. // If people aren't here, why aren't we reaching out at District level? Or group level? I don't see Area doing what we should do locally. // Concerns about committee structure. There is a need that would not be solved at Area level. They would not be going to individual groups. Tech committee would support Officers and Area needs. // Motion is to start committee without scope. All your expectations, fears and dreams—it can't meet everything, so you'll be disappointed. // Could be amazing. What else besides Zoom could help us? Why are people in my meeting opposed to digital basket? If it doesn't work out, disband it. // I do frontline work at local service center and 90% of calls are tech questions. Great need, but Area is not completely responsible. // Was afraid of technology and the Delegate report showed how Area was trying to give us info and that's why I am here today. Need more structure. // SF/Marin Central Office already has lots of information regarding questions and needs expressed here: 7<sup>th</sup> tradition, Zoom settings, safety, etc. // I would want more time to develop scope of an idea that sounds great on the surface, rather than fast-tracking. // Important to have permanent committee; tech advances daily. // Need to have a clear problem statement and we don't have that.

**Second Vote: 88 in favor, 41 opposed, 7 abstentions. Motion passes.**

Business meeting was closed at 11:54 am.

**Afternoon Workshop Session Reports:**

Every Summer Assembly holds workshops at which members of the Area are asked to present on specific topics and facilitate a sharing session. As in previous years, we include brief summaries of these workshops, as presented in the afternoon at the Summer Assembly, in the minutes.

**WORKSHOP: AA IN THE DIGITAL AGE: MOVING AHEAD WITHOUT LEAVING PEOPLE BEHIND**

General consensus was concern for newcomers. Anonymity online: what's the best way to do this, if at all? Some resistance as it could portray to the newcomer that it is somehow required to do that. Should AA give guidance or let it be a personal choice? There is resistance to technology because people don't like change. How to check in with them? Help them move to a digital space to help their sobriety. A lot of people have seen this happen. We need everyone. What about the people without the privilege of access to the digital space? Unhoused people can use the library, ask for a phone to get access via a phone, or may need help getting access to that service.

– presentation by *Shawna B. (District 04)*, summary by *Brian D. (District 04)*

**WORKSHOP: AA – OUR FINANCIAL FUTURE AND OUR OPTIONS**

7th tradition contributions have gone down during the pandemic since most groups are not meeting in person and a lot of people have lost their jobs. We can contribute online. There are tools and we need to learn how to use them. One idea is to have workshops to learn how to use these tools. You can connect to Paypal directly from your checking account. Venmo is neither for business nor for fundraising. The 7th tradition says we are self-supporting through our own contributions. This principle is solid proof of the profound transformation that AA has created in all of us. We can raise awareness in our groups. There are guidelines regarding our financial matters online at [aa.org](http://aa.org) in English and Spanish.

– presentation by *Fermin R. (District 16)*; summary by *Emma M. (District 16)*

**WORKSHOP: OUR TENTH TRADITION – WHEN ‘OUTSIDE ISSUES’ AFFECT OUR PRIMARY PURPOSE**

We need to focus on helping the newcomer and welcoming everyone, especially people of color. Members shared painful experiences of what has happened to them in the rooms. The 10th Tradition sometimes gets weaponized by being yelled out to interrupt another member's share about their own life experience. We should correct the member who makes the error of interrupting with love and respect. Opinions may well be outside issues, but people's experiences—especially those that affect their sobriety—are always inside issues. Feeling uncomfortable when hearing someone's experience is not a signal it is an outside issue. We can support each other and remember unity means safe for all.

– presentation by *Riaz A. (District 06)*; summary by *Kalia M. (District 12)*

**WORKSHOP: PASSING IT ON IN GENERAL SERVICE – VARIATIONS ON THE 12TH STEP**

Enthusiasm is so important in sharing about General Service. People are waiting for an invitation, they may not know about General Service, they may not think they are qualified, but all it takes is a desire and to know they are welcome. We share our personal experiences in General Service, just like Step 12. The “small-t” tradition of the pass-it-on from the outgoing trusted servant helps the next person. Even if that is not available, it's important for General Service members to be available to answer questions and offer service sponsorship. The 12<sup>th</sup> step put in perspective how important it is to carry the message of General Service.

– presentation by *Ali C. (District 05)*; summary by *Cassie R. (District 70)*

**WORKSHOP: I AM RESPONSIBLE – INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY**

Privilege, marginalized communities, various identifications—what does it all mean? Feeling different is a common bond for alcoholics. Ask yourself, how can I include everyone? Am I aware of all the AA resources? Responsibility can be acted upon by practicing the principles, including individual and group inventory. Participate in your own recovery first. Invite others to be in service. Be willing to have uncomfortable conversations about diversity and unity, and remember our code of love and tolerance. If someone does something in a meeting that affects an AA member's sobriety, it becomes an inside issue and needs to be addressed. We need to keep talking, asking questions, and looking for solutions in our groups.

– presentation by *Teresa J. (District 01)*; summary by *Teresa H. (District 01)*

**WORKSHOP: SUSTAINING AA AND OUR LEGACY FOR THE FUTURE**

AA is evolving rapidly during the pandemic to ensure that every suffering alcoholic can access our message. We do this because we only ensure our sobriety by passing it along to others. Our Traditions prevent our fellowship from disintegration, from anarchy, and from quests for power and prestige in times of crisis. And our Steps help us discover a spiritual recovery. To pass on the message of AA, we can set a good example, use our Traditions and literature, share our story, and connect with others all around the world using modern technology.

– presentation by *Alma G.-D. (District 20)*; summary by *Maria Luisa S. (District 20)*

**What's on your Mind?:**

I was excited that the Area spoke and we reconsidered, even though I was opposed to motion. // I want to thank everyone, including people who used to be in service to the Area. We do need to change as the world moves forward. // Participation is the key to harmony. Thanks for showing up. // This was my first assembly, to continue to talk about diversity and inclusion. I have had the n-word said to me in a meeting at the podium. // Someone who voted against interpretation years ago said to me he was glad a workshop was presented by a woman in Spanish. // We have a new international Mandarin-speaking group and one for Cantonese. Contact Vivian in District 07 if you do outreach for PI/CPC or know anyone who needs a meeting in Chinese. // Napa was supposed to put on this assembly, but great job, everyone! Napa feels like we had it here anyway. You are all in our hearts. We will bid again. // Sunny, radiant and profound assembly. I need to really hear and see people who are aching. Technology/Zoom meeting quality is getting better. I am inspired. // Orientation slide deck is available to anyone who needs it. // Some AA history: In 1937, a (white) gay man approached the Akron group and asked if he could join and Bob said, what would the Master do? Would he turn this man away? And the group conscience allowed him to join the group. In 1945, two black alcoholics were invited to the 24<sup>th</sup> St. Clubhouse group by Bill, and the group said they could observe only, and they were encouraged to start their own meeting elsewhere. The cities that have high participation by African-American alcoholics in AA are cities that had interracial groups or black groups in the 1940s that were supported by their Intergroups. Even in AA history, we can see that black lives did not matter as much as white lives did. We have to acknowledge that if we're going to move forward. // District 12 Unity Day is October 10 and the theme is Unity Through Service in Challenging Times. // The hospitality and community we have is amazing. As a hearing-impaired person, the interpretation is outstanding. Normally, it would be hard to switch headphones with a hearing aid. // Thanks to Chair and all for maintaining professionalism and handling voting challenges. The Virtual Ad Hoc has served us well. // Thanks to all in the Area. We may not see each other in person for a while. I'm grateful to every one of you. The new panel will be able to learn from this experience. // Love the idea of a "Diversity Liaison." I will try to wake up Access or PI/CPC in my District. White people need to go out, not just wait for people to come. Faith communities are a good way to reach out. // Thanks to all the Officers for this assembly. I've learned so much. // District 16's 34<sup>th</sup> Anniversary will be August 30 and you are all invited. // Thank you, Eric, for chairing all our Assemblies this panel. I want to invite everyone to our Election Assembly, which the Delegate chairs. Kathi F., our Pacific Regional Trustee, and Newton P., Our U.S. Trustee-at-large will both attend and give wonderful info. // I've been intimidated a lot since I joined General Service. I don't think that's part of sobriety at all. // Thank you, Mateo, Molly and Manuel for interpreting. // Thank you, Jennifer, for agreeing to take the notes today at the last minute.

The assembly closed at 4:44 pm with the Responsibility Statement.

With love and gratitude,

Jennifer B., Panel 69 Alternate Delegate, filling in for Miguel H.