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PRAASA 2010 Los Angeles, California

By: Lisa P.

Position: H&I West Area 18 Secretary

Sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly.....

I would like to start off by saying thank you to the Area 18 H & I West committee for voting that I should be part of this year's PRAASA down in Los Angeles, California. So far has been the biggest and most rewarding event that I have been fortunate to be apart of.

I was born and raised in California, and I never took the time to visit the south end of the state. The part of Los Angeles I did see was beautiful and exciting.

I met many wonderful and interesting A.A.'s at this year's assembly and was amazed at everyone's enthusiasm for service within the service structure of Alcoholic Anonymous. I have been involved with service since the beginning of my sobriety and still am just excited about each one of my service positions as I was in the beginning.

My first evening there I took part in two separate Round Tables; Secretary and Bridging the Gap. Both proved beneficial to me.

The Secretary Round Table, I learned how different areas kept their minutes, short cuts like: electric formatting/ templates, tape recorders (allot is missed by writing).

I learned that the minority vote is just as important to record as the majority is. I learned that minutes need to be approved by committee before they are aloud out for group to see.

Last I learned that all discussion should be absorbed.

The second half of the evening I indulged in the Bridging the Gap Round. No notes were taken.

Day two.....

WOW huge Spiritual Experience. This Assembly took me back to a time before I crossed the line. I was a Student Body officer in my freshmen year of school and was one out of four voted to go to Chico State University for a Leadership/Government Workshop to learn more about how better to serve my schools student body. How ironic twenty-five years later doing almost the exact same thing for this remarkable and miraculous Fellowship of the Spirit.

I learned about the General Service Office. I learned about the upside down triangle of the service structure (The Home Group is the most important). I learned about what a service sponsor was and made sure I had one before the day was over. I learned that when forming a group it should be registered with GSO and checked in on to see if it is properly representing Alcoholics Anonymous as a whole. I learned that minority can and do have valuable points and should be listened to because the minority could just change a whole vote around by its point of view. (World Concept 5) Never be afraid to have the minority opinion..... Alcoholics Anonymous was founded on it.

I learned about La Vina, Spanish print Grapevine. I learned that when delegating our responsibilities, we need to trust our Trusted Servants. World Concept 10.

I learned about Special needs (there was a sign language person there the whole time signing to those in need) "That all barriers may be overcome to assist in every way"

I heard stories from Atheists/agnostics and what beautiful sobriety they shared.

Tradition 3, the only requirement for membership is the desire to stop drinking, not to have a Higher Power.

There was an overwhelming vote to publish a book on "Pioneering Women of A.A."

However minority opinion stated, "Our common welfare should come first..." Where does the buck stop and would other minority groups want to glorify with their own book.

Attended the biggest business meeting ever....HUGE!!!!!! And minutes are posted on the web.

PRAASA 2011, Hawaii, PRAASA 2012 San Diego, PRAASA 2013, Boise, Idaho!

I believe I took time to eat somewhere.... Yes I did take care of me while scurrying to absorb all I could. I didn't want to miss a thing. I felt like a child in a candy store didn't know what I want to taste next.

Round Tables for the night.... Remote/Native American, GSR, Service Sponsors, Practice These Principles in all our affairs and Predators.

First up was the Remote/Native American RT; this one held the deepest to my heart. I practice the culture in my Spiritual ways I learned about a book called "Red Road Book". Would very much like to obtain one and read its wisdom. Alcoholics Anonymous on reservations are extremely rare, within their communities there is no A.A. service structure. When attending meeting member who is sharing will hold the eagle feather, this is a sign for truth telling and smudging of the sage to purify the individual and the surrounding of Spirit in the Circle. When reaching out to these reservations and remote places consistency of service is a must to build the bridge of trust. (As with any service commitment).

Second up was GSR, RT. Meeting forums-Agendas- Action to change. I used this as an opportunity to strengthen my service education. Highly recommended to experience an Area 18 business meeting (I did just that when I was voted to represent my Home Group at the Spring Assembly in Pocatello).

Third up was Service Sponsor RT. Suggested to attend and taste all General Service Level Meetings. I learned about boundaries, when am I taking on too much? Great for a service sponsor to help with. I brought back with me enthusiasm for General Service and Service Sponsorship and how important to our service work and trusted servants this is for our strong and continuous recovery.

Fourth up, Principles Before Personalities RT. There is always a principle that can back my issue if it remains the "Principle Before the Personality". Taking suggestions in all forms is "Highly SUGGESTED". Experience has proven to me so far that learning my traditions helped me out of that "Bleeding Deacon" phase. Must realize GOD is in charge and we all have our place at any particular time to learn by each other, to grow in and with each other. (Sometimes the best example is the quiet one). I learned that we can never go wrong if we practice "Service and Self Sacrifice" for another human being.

"Rarely have we seen a person fail who has thoroughly followed our path" Service is apart of that path. We discussed Big Book Comes of Age, and Doctor Bobs last letter "Love and Service".

Last but not least and very important to understand the “Principles before Personalities”, Predators RT. Must at all times display the 3rd Tradition with all. If old behavior of such said “predators” within the safety net of “The rooms” Female or male continue to prey on the vulnerable, we as a whole have a duty to help these individuals as with any character defect and guide them out of this type of sickness. By ignoring this type of behavior we are guilty and in some way staying sick ourselves.

Day 3

What on your mind, Open mike discussion, Ask it basket. Lords Prayer and what a breath taking weekend I got to be “APART OF”.

Some nuggets of wisdom I would like to share from my note taking:

“We can’t kick anyone out”, “Language of the Heart”, “You can’t make a good sailor without a few storms”, “Wait for another wave and another door opens”(I really like this one) “The highest you can get in A.A. is sober, if you get any higher your gonna have to start over”, “ There are no major emergencies in A.A.”, “There are no coincidences”.

Thanks Spirit for this life and for all my new and wonderful experiences.....SOBER!!!!!!

P.S. to the little gal I was waiting with at the elevator....thanks for the stand still and the “EXHALE”.....may we meet again as we “Trudge this road to happy destiny”