

Hello Friends!

This time I found preparing this my quarterly report quite difficult – so much has happened and I find it challenging to articulate! Here goes.

January-February, Pre-COVID-19

I left our quarterly feeling energized! I felt we had a productive Area Inventory and during the quarterly there was great participation and a robust discussion. Do you realize there were over 100 people at our Area Inventory on Friday night? Amazing!

A few of the highlights from January and February:

- Participated in a GSR Roundtable in Mount Vernon
- Attended Pierce County's Grad School for GSRs aka GSR School 102
- Facilitated district inventories for Districts 8 & 15
- Visited District 14 twice to talk about how the Area can support them and hosting an Area Quarterly.
- Attended the first every Area 72 YP Committee Quarterly
- Facilitated several group inventories – even one for a men's meeting!
- Attended the January Web Committee Meeting
- Attended the first ever Language Steering Committee Meeting

March, COVID-19

I early March, with only an inkling of concern over COVID-19, I went to PRAASA in Tucson. As always – it was an amazing experience. I attended great panels on “hot topics” in AA and I even facilitated a panel. I attend the Chairperson and Remote Communities Roundtables. I especially enjoyed the remote communities roundtable and have been discussing with Karen, Area Accessibility Committee Chairperson, some ways the ideas we heard might work well in our Area and how to best incorporate them within her committee. One of the best aspects and what I now believe is the most valuable part of my attending PRAASA this year was the networking. I spent time getting to know the Chairs and Alternate Chairs of the Pacific Region. What at first seemed like casual sharing of tips and ideas of our roles as Area Chairs/Alt Chairs, in just a matter of days after returning to our respective homes has turned into a support network I am eternally grateful for.

Then...I returned from PRAASA and I felt like my entire world was turned upside down. I won't rehash what happened as we all were there for it. What I will say is I have never been more grateful to be part of the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous in my entire life. Just by the nature of my current service role as your Chairperson, I am able to have visibility to alcoholics all over going to any lengths to stay sober and help other alcoholics. Can't meet in person? No problem! We'll go virtual! Don't know how to use Zoom? Don't worry! We'll show you! Don't know where to find meetings anymore and need to know the latest info on COVID-19 and how it relates to AA? Chill – we've got you covered! We'll build a website for that! Quarterlies need to go virtual? Don't fret! We can do that! These are just a few of the “big” actions I have seen these past three weeks. Some of the “smaller” and more personal actions I have seen is the reaching out. Those Area Chairs and Alt Chairs I mentioned meeting at PRAASA – we have been emailing and texting all the time sharing ideas and helping each other navigate this unprecedented situation. People are CALLING each other again – checking on each other. My phone actually died last night because I had been using it so much. That hasn't happened in years. I know that because of this experience, your current electeds & appointeds are closer than ever – this is an all hands

on deck situation and I am so impressed by how resilient and adaptable sober alcoholics can be. A “perk” of staying home is I’ve been to Zoom meetings in other states and in meetings with sponsees and AA friends who’ve moved away. The silver lining I am finding through all of this is the genuine connections I feel to my fellows.

This is not an easy situation – for anyone! On a personal note 2020 has been tough – with things that have nothing to do with the pandemic - my two remaining grandparents passed, I didn’t get the promotion I was hoping for and my heart was broken... This is the closest I’ve felt to being a newcomer, since I was a newcomer. There is so much change, at times, I admit I feel overwhelmed and can’t keep up. But then, I remember what you have taught me. In PG language – Snap out of it. Hold your head up. Help others. Do the next indicated thing. Breathe. Pray. Listen – no really, stop and listen for that still small voice. Ask for help. Accept help with grace. Be kind to others.

So thank you. Thank you for all that you are doing to help alcoholics – including me. You have helped save me from myself and for that I am truly grateful.

Cheers

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