

Hello everyone, I am an Alcoholic, a member of the Paradise Group on Hamilton Mountain, I have the honour and privilege to be your Panel 64 Area 86 Western Ontario Delegate and my name is Jim W.

This will be my final report to you the Assembly, I have reflected over the last few months and many issues have surfaced in my term. Some good and some bad. I was having dinner with a past Delegate at a roundup and he mentioned to me and said that I had really grown and for that I thank you all. I really believe that you all have been a constant source of growth for me and maybe I have been for you. We have grown together as an Area and have recovered from missing funds, we have had many discussions on safety and I pray that the discussions have reached all the home groups in Western Ontario. I know that this was a sensitive issue as I heard personal accounts of members being taken advantage of, I also heard from members via email that were threatening to me personally for bringing this subject up. I have had letters sent to the General Service Office on me for sending out non-conference approved material on safety to groups in our Area and my emails on safety have been censored by some who made their own decision to not pass the info to their groups in their Districts. On a more positive note I was contacted by a transgender member who shared their story with me about the fear of acceptance by you at a meeting. I was able to pass that info on which was included in the background material for updating literature to include Trans genders. Since then I have met many transgender members who had the courage to introduce themselves to me and now the courage to attend meetings without fear of you.

Around 6 weeks ago a Local Forum was held in the city of Timmins, in Area 84 North East Ontario. There were members representing 27 Districts in Eastern Canada in attendance. Fellow Delegate Dave A made the 24 hour driving trip from Moncton New Brunswick to help out. Alt. Delegate Fredy, Area 86 Chair Dale, Secretary/Registrar Pat, past Delegate Percy, Area Corrections Chair Rob MacD., all made presentations, Ken G. DCM District 10 and other members from our Area were also present to give support to a dark district. Ken was my co-pilot on the 8 hour trip and got me into the HOV lanes. What is a dark District you ask?

District 4 had no DCM and when the position was filled it was sporadic and there was very little communication between the District and the Area. Some members said they never knew when the District meetings were being held or where. The most recent DCM resigned in February after six months due to health reasons; the DCM prior to that had just over 2 years sobriety and stepped down to Alternate in 2014, then went drinking and now has moved; the DCM prior to that held the position for three or four years, mentoring the member with 2 years but didn't attend Area meetings for the last two years. So, the DCM was not attending Area meetings, submitting reports nor informing us that they would not be in attendance.

It was during this period we discussed ways to get them reconnected within the District and with the Area. The opportunity for a local forum presented itself so we applied.

Besides the local members in the city directly and towns surrounding the city, Timmins plays a key role geographically in our area for several reasons;

It is a major access point for remote communities. There is a treatment centre for alcohol and AA meetings/members are required to carry the message and be available after their discharge.

There is a provincial penitentiary outside of Timmins that has above average number of native members who need meetings brought into the institution and connections to an AA community are necessary on release.

District 4 had 23 groups but now only has 3 who still put on meetings regularly. I had a chance to talk with a member who had only three months in Alcoholics Anonymous. Young Gerry was eager and had desire for the program. I asked if he had a sponsor and his reply was no, us seven newcomers sponsor ourselves. We have asked the long timers but they are few and not interested. I handed Gerry my card and asked him to text me and I would call him.

If you think that we are safe from this happening in Area 86, you're wrong because District 4 is already here. We are currently living in what I call the "Selfie Generation". I was recently at a football game where a young adult girl took pictures of herself all during the game. She never even cared who scored, who won, only caring on how she looked in the 50 + photos. The cost of the seats was \$93.00 which her dad paid for, we also see members who constantly text, message others, check their Facebook page all during the meeting while a speaker is talking.

Our responsibility pledge I believe has just become a chant at meetings. We say that we are responsible, but are we really? The hand of Alcoholics Anonymous has been reaching out for a long time, yet we do nothing, we look at it with a "what's in it for me attitude."

When we pass the basket at meetings we still throw a toonie in it. The dollar in the basket in 1945 has the value of \$13.00 today. Your toonie today has the value of 16 cents then and I ask you who you are going to help with your 16 cent contribution? When you go to a meeting and you have your lg timmies, Second Cup or Starbucks coffee and your \$10.00 pack of smokes and the basket comes around and you toss your tunie in it are you really being responsible and grateful to a program that has saved your life, I think not. Groups, Districts, Areas and Alcoholics Anonymous all need your support financially and through service if we are to survive. 70% of the services that are being provided by Alcoholics Anonymous are covered by contributions. I ask you what 30% you would like us to stop, Group Services, translating Big Books; we have 68 translations currently with another 20 on hold. Maybe we should stop answering the 93 thousand emails, letters, and phone calls every year. We have 160,000 Anniversary Big Books that you asked to be printed still sitting in a warehouse waiting to be purchased. I have asked the Trustees to think about reducing the price to recoup some of the cost. I will let you know the outcome.

Now the topic of Service and being of Service. Remember the dark District in Area 84. In Area 86 District 11 is now the District 4; the DCM will tell you the election results for her District, no one stood for the position of DCM or Alternate. Many Districts have had Committee positions vacant all year, or no Alternate DCM and have gone without District services because we forgot about being responsible; whenever the hand of AA reaches out we chant and don't step up to the plate through action and contributions. We leave it for someone else to do. There is so much work to be done to help the still suffering Alcoholic by so few. How can we help? Committees of

just one member aren't successful. Join a Committee, don't wait to be asked, take notes for a District, help the Grapevine by being a supporter and get a subscription. Step up to the plate and become a Committee Chair or GSR, this program runs so much better we all take an active role, the rewards are so worth it.

At this year's General Service Conference I received a loving invitation to present before the Conference an article titled "Safeguarding our Traditions Thru the Evolution of Technology" I learned from our founders that of course much work would always have to be done; much responsibility would have to be taken by many. To AA as a whole, every member would need to give a little. This will only work if we are united.

Unity is the new question of today. . I have noticed in our area unfortunately that at most of the Delegate's reports I have given it is people in their 50's plus that are showing up. In our area it seems that a lot of the people between 5 and 15 years of sobriety have disappeared. Either AA no longer interests them or carrying this message to newcomers has lost its importance. If this is not our primary purpose it will change the face of AA in the future. While certainly we have managed to offer a form of sobriety to many what has happened to encourage our 12th step? Our traditions were founded to help keep our groups unified, yet we have allowed them to be changed to allow individuals the freedoms to change our unity. Removing God, diversity has changed our singleness of purpose. We forget that tradition 3 is about membership in the AA group not just to go to AA. Yet many groups are removing all reference to God from their recovery. We currently have two Agnostic Groups in Area 83 who have launched legal action against the Toronto Intergroup and Alcoholics Anonymous for being removed from the Toronto Meeting Lists. These groups have removed the word God from their 12 Steps and Traditions.

We also have case in California where the family of a murdered member is suing everyone including Alcoholics Anonymous because the guy she was living with was an AA member.

The future of AA will be determined by how far we stray from our singleness of purpose. Groups are struggling today with the arrival the Drug Addict. Treatment Centers send them to our meetings. They want to belong but can't identify. They want to participate but qualify as an "Addict or Alcoholic Addict" and say well its part of my story. It's still an outside issue that wants to be included.

Does our future look bleak? I am not sure. We just celebrated 80 years, but will we be around to celebrate 100? Without Unity and Service we will surely crumble. It's every member's responsibility to be the Guardians of our Traditions. I pray that this program is around for years to come. I pray that Miss Ella Daisy, and Miss Chloe Marie, my granddaughters will have a safe place to come to should they need us and I am asking you to please make it possible. Please stay united, step up and be willing to serve Alcoholics Anonymous. "Our lives and the lives of those yet to come depend upon it".

In closing I wish to thank my wife who supported me and the time to pursue this journey; my Sponsor, Service Sponsor and friend; you have been my rock; you're the one who told me to just raise my hand and become willing, you believed in me when I didn't. My fellow officers

Fredy, Dale, Paul and Pat who have been unified during this Panel but it has not always been the case with other Panels. I am the lucky one here; you have been my family away from home.

To all the past Delegates, some are here this weekend; some are not, thank you all for your support, your guidance, friendship and your answers to my many questions.

To all the Area 86 Sub-Committee Chairs and please stand. Sandi, Marc, Chris, Rob, Janice, Jean, Ken, Jeff and John, you are the real reason that Area 86 Rocks. Your displays, reports, your literature and information have set a standard; not only for this Area but also for Eastern Canada. Our Eastern Canada Regional Trustee Richard B was very impressed with what he saw and heard that he passed on the news to the General Service Office.

Lastly I wish to thank you, the DCM's, their Alternates, GSR's, their Alternates, District Committee members, visitors and guests for supporting our Assemblies, attending our workshops, attending the banquet and for your contributions for allowing great work at the Area level to continue now and I hope in the future.

It was told to me a long time ago "To hold on to the seat of your pants because you're in for the ride of your life." So I thank you for the ticket; this ride is one that I will never forget.

Yours in Love & Service

Jim W. Delegate, Area 86, Panel 64