

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

The beginning of this year turned out to be a very rocky start for me as some of you know. I could not attend the Area Committee Meeting in January because of a cold. This cold was caught from my wife in early December and it did not end until the beginning of February. I have learned over the years that when you are married you tend to share everything, even colds and sometimes pass them back and forth. I ended up saying to her "Get away from me" out of frustration and this will put a strain on any marriage even a 40 year one. Also in January I sent out an email on Safety in AA wanting to create some discussions on this topic at District and home Groups. Attached to this email was a list of situations that have happened and do relate to the subject. I sent this email out from a conversation from a DCM who had a concern of what should I do when someone at District is being harassed or stalked. I have come to learn that not all predators are male and not all situations involve 13<sup>th</sup> stepping. I have received emails from members who have been victims and now have the courage to talk about this situation at their groups or districts and with help confront their predators or report these incidents to the proper authorities. I have also received emails that were very disturbing, all focusing only on the information sheet that was attached to my original email. They claim that it's in violation with the Traditions and Concepts and how dare I try to jam this document down their throats. One group in a District made their DCM submit my email to the General Service Office asking for direction on how to proceed against a Delegate who sends out non-Conference Approved Literature. One Group in a District brought forth a motion to have me step down as Delegate which was seconded and after much discussion was defeated. My wife commented "So you want to be in Service do you."

The answer to that question is yes I do because of an email from someone from this District has been stalked at the District Table and has asked for help. I'll move on after one more story, the best for last as they say.

I received an email from a member in this same District who is transgender and crying for help.

Jim, I am desperate, isolated and feel quite alone. Yes people respect the traditions. Yes there are a very small number of people that accept me just as I am. Unfortunately they get stigmatized by guilt through association. I am a voice of one. This is not about a pamphlet or information being sent around the district at this time. That is only adding to an emotional response from others that make it difficult for them to hear my one little voice Screaming out for help. I'm dying in the rooms of A A. One cut at a time. I, as a person am a visible minority. I am asking for help and guidance, no one seems to want to listen. I feel tolerated only. Even by members of my own group, I am perceived as an

outside issue, and I am marginalized thus be ostracized or not part of. I am hanging onto sobriety by a thread. If it were not for my own concept of a Higher Power, the 12 step program, and implementing the 12 traditions in my life I would already be dead. Drinking is not an option. I need the fellowship. Where can I be of service? I'm suffering!! I do understand that I am breaking all forms of protocol but I feel I have no other option at this time. The spring assembly is fast approaching and to observe proper protocol through an uncaring group is not going to be of service to me or other Trans Gender individuals that are "Very Different" in Alcoholics Anonymous. The information for and from the ad hoc committee in regards to Trans Gender Persons in A A is of vital importance. As a minority we are .03% of the population. As you mentioned in conversation you've never met a Trans Gender Person or are even aware of us. We cannot find or hold onto meaningful employment. In some cases we turn to the world of dealing drugs or prostitution to make money to just survive. The medical institutions can and do refuse us medical assistance, housing is an issue. We are shunned and scorned by our families. Most religious institutions do not welcome or provide spiritual guidance. The police departments and other institutions, treat us with extreme prejudice in some cases. Even within the lesbian and gay communities we are scrutinized and perceive to not fit into the (normal) spectrum of male female. We have a suicide, murder rate of 41%. That is genocide! Gender Dysphoria, was taken off the books as a mental illness as it should never have been there in the first place. We do know who and what we are. Alcohol and drug use is huge to manage our pain and loneliness. As a minority in these situations of the social structure or what is termed normal, where can we feel safe to get the help we need to deal with our alcoholism? Where is the hand of AA when one of us is reaching out for help?

Hello and thank you for your email. I have cc this reply to [literature@aa.org](mailto:literature@aa.org) so that they have more background material for Trans Genders. I can identify with your desperation, isolated and feelings of loneliness as I too have experienced them in my journey into Alcoholics Anonymous, maybe not to the extent that you have, but I still have had those feelings. You are certainly not the voice of one as I truly believe that you are not the only trans gender member of Alcoholics Anonymous. G.S.O. has noticed an increasing number of calls and emails in recent years about how groups and members are reaching out to transgender individuals. Much of the experience centers on the Third Tradition – as A.A. members, we identify first with the drinking problem and common feelings and experiences about our drinking stories and then about our recovery through the Twelve Steps of A.A. As to transgender members attending gender-specific meetings, doing service or finding an appropriate sponsor, we have found that focusing the conversation on the principles of A.A.'s Third Tradition, "The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking" or a person is a member if they say they are a member, helps groups and members frame their thinking.

I don't know if you have a sponsor, if you do great and if not I suggest that you do. After talking with your alternate DCM, I do know that they welcome anyone who wants to be of service. They need people for the Round-up committee and are also looking for a

District Public Information Chair which I think would be a great service for you. You can contact your alt DCM as has offered his help with getting you involved.

As a result of cc of the emails to the Literature desk at GSO they will be included in the background info for this year's General Service Conference for updating of the Gay and Lesbian Pamphlet to include Transgender.

Panel 64 Delegate, Area 86 Western Ontario

Dear Jim:

Warm greetings from your General Service Office!

This email is to follow up on your correspondence regarding a request from Area 86 Western Ontario as follows:

1. "To request A.A. World Services to add the words "Area Registrar, if applicable" to the distribution list on the bottom of the Alcoholics Anonymous Group Information Change Form (F-28) to make it "FOUR WAYS TO RETURN THIS FORM
2. "To request A.A. World Services to add the words "Area Registrar, if applicable" to the distribution list on the bottom of the Alcoholics Anonymous New Group Form (F-30) to make it "FOUR WAYS TO RETURN THIS FORM".
3. "To request A.A. World Services to add the words "Area Registrar, if applicable" to the distribution on the bottom of the A.A. English District Committee Member & District Committee Member Chair Change Form (F-43)."

As you may know, this correspondence was forwarded to the A.A. World Services, Inc. board since this request encompasses a policy related to the operations of G.S.O., with the suggestion that the item be placed on the A.A.W.S. Technology/Communication/Services (TCS) Committee agenda.

The TCS Committee met on January 29, 2015 and discussed your correspondence. The following is from their minutes:

The TCS Committee considered a request from Area 86 Western Ontario to add "Area Registrar, if applicable" to the distribution list on the bottom of G.S.O.'s New Group Form, A.A. Group Information Change Form, and D.C.M./D.C.M.C. Form to make it "Four Ways to Return This Form" and took no action. The TCS Committee noted that these are G.S.O. forms for the purpose of G.S.O. communication directly with A.A. groups. Because of this, it may be confusing and inappropriate to add area registrars to G.S.O.'s

group and district forms. On behalf of the A.A.W.S. TCS Committee, we thank you and Area 86 for your correspondence and participation.

Yours in fellowship,



On February 20-22 I attended CERAASA which was hosted by Area 83 in Mississauga. 313 members were in attendance with 180 seated at the banquet. There were many presenters over the weekend, some with topics related from the upcoming General Service Conference, some workshops on service and some presentations on La Vine and Grapevine Magazines. Past Area 86 Delegates Percy G. and Paul H. and I were amongst the presenters. All ten Delegates we in attendance from Eastern Canada, but not all Alternate Delegates could attend. We also heard messages from our Eastern Canada Regional Trustee Richard B. and Class B Trustee Joe D. The next CERAASA will be hosted in 2017 in Moncton N.B.

On February 27-March 1<sup>st</sup> Area hosted the Ontario Delegates Committee at the Crowne Plaza in Hamilton. The 4 Delegates and their Alternates participated in the weekend activities. The Alternate Delegates all presented on topics from this year's General Service Conference, all 4 did a great job but I am especially proud of the effort from my stunt double and Alternate Fredy M. Past Area 86 Delegate Paul H. took us through the Conference process and Past Area 83 Delegate Rob W. discussed the Conference Agenda with us and what happens during Conference Week. This was extremely important to all alternate and first time Delegates to learn about the Conference. The Past Delegates were also able to share their Conference experiences with us.

Class B Trustee Joe D. graciously filled in for our Eastern Canada Regional Trustee Richard B. who wanted to be with us but got wrong directions and ended up on some luscious beach somewhere south and was forced to stay there for 15 days.

There has been some talk of combining the ODC and CERAASA in the years that they are both held and are only one week apart. I feel that the ODC was instrumental in getting me prepared for the General Service Conference along with the help of past Delegates. CERAASA has not reached that level yet and I feel it still has to grow to achieve that level of the ODC and must include participation from all Delegates and their alternates.

I have asked Richard our Trustee to schedule a meeting during the Conference Week of the Eastern Canada Delegates while we are all together and I will report on it when I return.

On March 7<sup>th</sup> I facilitated the District 6 inventory and it turned out to be a great day despite Debra's nerves. There were 40 members that attended, all with a voice and I believe all participated. There was no PIC work currently being done, but at the end of the day we had a volunteer chair and committee in place.

Next weekend I will be giving a Service Talk at the Fort Erie Roundup. April 11<sup>th</sup> I will be in Orillia for the 4 District open forum which I believe will be the first of its kind in Canada and on the 12<sup>th</sup> I will be giving a report at the Kitchener Roundup in St Jacobs.

On April 17<sup>th</sup> I will be driving to Time Square in New York City to attend the 65<sup>th</sup> General Service Conference. I am truly excited and honored to attend. I did receive a loving invitation to present before the members of the Conference on "Safeguarding our Traditions through the Evolution of Technology" which was a real mouthful and kept me up for 2 nights. When I calmed down and remembered to keep it simple; then I started to do some research. I was reminded by our founders Bill and Dr. Bob in a Grapevine article from 1951 that it's only through Unity and Service that can safeguard our Traditions through any time, it's how we have survived so far.

On May 2<sup>nd</sup> I will be giving a Service talk at the Blossom Time Roundup in Niagara Falls and on May 3<sup>rd</sup> I will be attending the District 5 Roundup in Hanover. On the 9<sup>th</sup> of May I will see you at the Area Committee Meeting in St. Thomas.

In closing I am truly honored to be your Delegate and representative for Area 86 Western Ontario. I thank you for your demonstration of Unity and Service this weekend; your actions have assured me that our Traditions will be guarded now and in the future.

Area 86 **"You Rock"**

Yours in love and service  
Jim W.  
Delegate  
Area 86 Panel 64