

Delegate Report Area Committee Meeting May 9, 2020

Good Morning Area 86

I am an Alcoholic and I belong to the Fellowship Group in District 19. I thank you for the honour to serve as your Panel 70 Delegate and my name is Sandi W.

As I am writing this report, I am already thinking about you all and can not wait to see you. I know it will be on my computer screen through Zoom but I am looking forward to seeing us all together again. January 11th seems so long ago now and so much has changed.

I would like to begin with thanking both Bob T. that began the Panel as our Area 86 Treasurer and Pam S. that served as our Area Secretary/Registrar. Both these members served us in a very stressful time and had to deal with many unusual circumstances and for personal reasons decided to resign. Thank you for your service and dedication on behalf of Area 86 and we look forward to seeing you on our shared journey's.

For those of you that read my March "Spring" Report some of this will be repetitive but I would like the opportunity to share it with you all.

So here we go I will begin January 1st...

January 1st arrived and many of us stepped into our new positions with eagerness and excitement. We were heading for new experiences and challenges with lots of opportunities to learn and grow. We were continuing to serve our Fellowship and how blessed were we to have been given this privilege.

The emails began arriving from GSO and I was granted access to the Dashboard on January 2nd. So much information and dates to be aware of. I was assigned to The Conference Trustees' Committee.

We had the Pre-Conference Agenda Items to read through but I was eagerly waiting for the final agenda items and the background information that would be posted to the dashboard in February.

Our January Area Committee Meeting took place. What a great day seeing everyone in their new positions. I felt so grateful to be a part of Area 86 and looked forward to serving you all and of course seeing everyone at the Spring Assembly.

January 27th. we had our CERAASA Steering Committee call, this is with the Delegates, Alternate Delegates from the 10 Eastern Canadian Areas, our Eastern Canada Regional Trustee, Jan L. and our Chair Dale S. We, Area 86, are hosting the event, when you ask? February 26,27,28, 2021. This was our first call since the start of the new Panel.

February 2 the final Agenda Items were posted on the Dashboard and I did send this out to the Area. On February 14th the background information (all 1,072 pages) was posted and I sent the information that pertained to each Area Sub Committee Chair so they could use it in their Assembly workshops as this was to be a Pre-Conference Assembly.

With the back ground now posted we had a week to get our presentations done and sent in for the Ontario Delegates Committee (ODC). The ODC was held in Toronto, Area 83, February 28th-March 1st. I also had sent this information out along with the Agenda to the Area. Everyone was welcome and I want to thank the members that were able to attend. Your support meant the world to us.

The Delegates (from the 4 Ontario Areas) present on the Conference Committee that they have been assigned to. The Alternate Delegates are assigned a Conference Workshop topic and asked to do a presentation. The Trustee gives a report and the Past Delegates share their

experience at the Conference and give us tips and suggestions, like wear your tighter fitting clothing at the start of the week, take time to get outside, sit somewhere different during each session and meal, journal every night and beware of Banana Splits.

In my humble opinion everyone did a fabulous job including our own Alternate Delegate, Jeff. I found the weekend to be invaluable as it helps the Delegates and the Alternate Delegates get to know one another and prepare for the General Service Conference. All the presentations were very helpful and informative. There was also lots of time given for all members to ask questions and give feedback.

I would like to thank and congratulate Area 83 on doing a fabulous job hosting us all. The minutes were sent and I forwarded them out to the Area on April 14th.

I felt a calmness come over me after the weekend as the preparation for the Conference is yes very exciting but also intimidating at the same time.

And then March arrived...things began to change quickly. I remember being at my home group on Friday March 6th and deciding to no longer hold hands or hug members. Some of the members thought I was overreacting but I could not get sick with the Conference just 6 weeks away. The following Thursday I received an email from Jan, our Trustee, to the Delegates notifying us that the 70th General Service Conference would no longer be an on-site Conference. GSO had to make the decision to change it to a Virtual Conference with what was happening in New York.

I think we all knew it was coming but it did not soften the blow and yes, I shed a few tears. It only took a couple of minutes and I returned to a place of Gratitude. This will be a whole new experience for us all and it is such an honour to be a part of it. Thank you to everyone that reached out to me with their thoughts and kind words but as we now know this was not the end...

Janice had to reach out to you Area 86 with the sad news that we had to cancel our Spring Assembly. To all the new GSR's, DCM's and Sub Committee Chairs I am so sorry. It is definitely not the way we thought we would begin Panel 70. This didn't put a damper on our Spirits though. We continued on then the meetings began to close.

GSO was sending notices every other day it seemed with updates. The emails getting sent and being received were numerous but it proved that we were all trying to grasp what was happening and trying to find a way to move forward. The members in our Area and around the world were banding together and figuring things out. Things were moving quickly, probably a lot faster than a lot of us would like but we were still going to be connecting.

On March 19th I participated in a Zoom call with the Conference Trustees' Committee as scheduled. Rick W., a GSO Staff member and our Secretary, was on the call and we spoke about how the Virtual Conference was going to look. The Panel 69 Delegates shared a bit of information on how they were preparing that I found very helpful.

March 20th, we received another email from Greg T. stating that due to everything happening in New York the General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous had to close indefinitely. The Staff were working from home and the planning for the Virtual Conference had to be put on hold.

The truth was they were now having to deal with the big question of the International Convention in Detroit and what should be done. Well this is old news now, the Detroit Convention had to be cancelled.

March 23rd, we had our bimonthly Zoom call with the CERAASA Steering Committee. Tim M., Past Delegate from Area 82, Panel 67 was chairing the Eastern Canadian Hospitality Suite and he was asked to join us and give an update. I would like to thank Tim on behalf of us all in Area

86 for his hard work and service.

On March 26th Greg T. sent out an update in regards to the Conference. The planning for a Virtual Conference began again on Monday March 30th.

Through all this I spoke with our Chair and expressed the need for an Area Zoom account. The Area purchased one at a cost of \$200.00 for the year. The Officers have used it to meet, we have met with the DCM's, the Sub Committee Chairs, the Past Delegates, it has been made available to the CERAASA Host Committee, we have used it to work on the Financials and of course now here today.

I reported in my "Spring Report" that it was my hope that we could arrange some sessions using zoom to discuss the Conference Agenda Items like we would have done at the Assembly in our Workshops. Both Jeff and myself sat in on Area 83's pre conference calls (which were being planned back in September 2019) and were really impressed. Because of the time frame and our lack of experience with Zoom I reached out to the Area 83 Delegate, Rob M., and Alternate Delegate, Kimberley M., for some help. They were wonderful and shared a lot of their material that we could tweak a bit and make it our own.

With the support of both Jeff and Janice we began reaching out to the Sub Committee Chairs. I am so thrilled to tell you it has been a wonderful experience. The Chairs were all willing and to do what they could to help gather the Area's thoughts and conscience. Some of our Chairs are essential workers and were unable to host but they all supported the Area and one another and I am so very grateful and proud of the work they did. Thank you and Congratulations!

Now we could not have had the calls if it weren't for our members. We sent the Zoom Invitations out to the whole Area asking the DCM's to share with and encourage the GSR's and District Chairs to share the information. I am so grateful to ALL the members that took time to log in to one or more of the calls.

The Sub Committee Chairs had a member take notes and pass them along to me. Some supplied their own Zoom techs and some of us studied and did tutorials to learn how to become a Zoom tech. What a learning curve. Thank you to all the members that helped to make the Sharing Sessions possible.

The Zoom account was made available to Dale to use for the CERAASA Host Committee and we had a meeting on April 20th. More under New Business.

So bringing us up to current times...after touching base with all the Delegates and taking into consideration peoples work schedules, time zones etc....it was decided to hold the first ever Virtual General Service Conference May 16th-19th, 2020. I have completed all the required training sessions and attended the Zoom Meetings thus far in preparation for this exciting experience. Saying that, we have our "Joint Meeting and Agenda Review Meeting" tomorrow, Sunday May 10th. We will meet with the trustees' Nominating Committee in the first hour then we will continue meeting in regards to reducing our Agenda Items where and if at all possible. The Conference Schedule was sent out this past week and it is full. We are focused on getting the urgent work done and some of the items will have to be pushed to the 71st Conference. I do not know how it will all play out but I am trusting the process. I know the Staff and Trustees have been working so very hard to pull this together. I am excited to represent you all and I can not wait to be able to fill you in on how it goes.

I am including a service piece of material that can be found on aa.org about practising the 7th Tradition at Virtual Meetings https://www.aa.org/assets/en_US/SMF-223-FAQonVirtualBasket_en.pdf. A lot of our Home Groups have been told they do not have to pay the rent during the closure of our meeting places but there are still other expenses and commitments to be met. Is your home group financially sound? Are you able to collect the 7th?

Are you able to send some money to where it may be needed? Check with your Districts and Central Offices or Intergroups. Are they covering all their expenses? Please think about GSO if you are able to help.

As you can imagine the Contributions have dropped drastically as well as the Literature sales at GSO. More information will be released after the A.A.W.S. Board Meeting in June but I do have some rough figures to share with you now.

If we take the Gross Sales for Literature from January to March and divide this by three, we get an idea of our normal sales volumes per month. We see our sales are down by a third.

If we do the same with Contributions to GSO we find they are down by 75%.

We are into the Prudent Reserve which is based on 9 months of operating costs. I do not have exact figures as I stated but I did not want to wait to get this information out. Our General Manager, Greg T. is working on re-organizing the Office. There has been a claim put in to our Insurance Company in regards to the cancellation of the International but this will take time.

Is your Group, District or you as an individual able to contribute at this time? Do you support the "Birthday Plan?"

You can go right to aa.org and contribute through the website using a credit card or Pay Pal account and this has all been updated and is easy to navigate. GSO is so grateful to receive our contributions any way possible but with the Office closed it is appreciated if we can use credit cards. Through these times I can not imagine where I or my family would be without A.A. There could be many people that will need to find us when life returns to normal. It is our responsibility to make sure our Services continue and that we will be there to answer that call or email or letter. That person could be one of our family members or a friend. Please help get the word out and contribute what and where you can, every bit will help.

I want to finish with thanking our Past Delegates that have made themselves available to answer any questions and have continued to support us all in Area 86 and Alcoholics Anonymous.

Thank you to all of you that are here today or are reading this report later. Your service is so very much needed and appreciated.

Thank you for keeping our meetings open though different Virtual Platforms. Please continue reaching out to one another and remember not everyone is comfortable or able to join these meetings. Pick up the phone and check in with each other.

To both Jeff and Janice, thank you for stepping up and filling in. Both these people never batted an eye, they just accepted what had to be done and off they went to get it done. Thank you for all your help and support as we find our way through these challenging times. I am blessed and grateful to serve alongside of you both.

Back in January I mentioned that one of my goals was to receive minutes from ALL 23 Districts well I have not forgotten. So far, I have received minutes from 14 Districts so thank you and please continue sending them. This is the best way for us all to learn and share experiences and they help us stay connected. To the other 9 Districts, we are hoping you will join in and start sending out your minutes.

It has been a tradition that the Delegate does their first report back after the Conference in their home District. Well that is District 19 and I would like to thank the DCM, Jim A., Alternate DCM Sheryl N. and the members of D 19 for all their hard work planning the May ACM with the hopes to host us all here today. It takes a lot of work and I am so grateful that you were willing to do it. If I can be of any help please email or call me. Area86delegatep70@gmail.com, 905-466-8408.

I am hoping that you and your loved ones are all staying healthy and finding some joy and serenity in a slower paced time. Remember we are all in this together and we will all come through it together.

Gratefully yours in love and service,

Sandi W.

Panel 70 Delegate

Area 86 Western Ontario

Conference Trustees' Committee