

My name is Richard Charles Jones. I have a graduate education in education. I am a retired concert tenor having performed for a Pope, the Queen of England and most notably at the 2nd inauguration of a former president of the United States. I am a Episcopalian and have served as a salaried church musician and composer faithfully for the last 18 years of my career, most notably at the National Cathedral in Washington. I am a citizen of this country, this Commonwealth, and Lehigh County. I am a tax-payer and a registered voter. I am also a recovering alcoholic, and I have AIDS-Related-Complex.

In the course of forging a public career against the tide of public opinion it has been my privilege and blessing to bear the rewards of acceptance from an enlightened public, but also to endure the burdens and pain of discrimination and open abuse from an unenlightened public.

In 1986, I was diagnosed as being HIV positive infected with the AIDS virus. My thoughts immediately were death-mortality-suffering, the setting in order of one with so much to offer and not yet to years of age. If you or one you love have ever been diagnosed with cancer, leukemia, heart attack, stroke or diabetes then you know that the thoughts of those people, and the thoughts of people infected with AIDS are the same. Since 1986, I have declined in health. My t-4/t-8 ratio is below normal parameters, my white cell count has dropped and I have been hospitalized 3 times with opportunistic infections. I am now classified as having ARC.

In November of last year I entered Eagleville Hospital in order to seek rehabilitation for alcohol and drug dependency. Eagleville was the only facility out of 13 contacted over 2 days and \$81.78 worth of long distance calls that would take me. The reasons for refusal of the remaining 17 facilities was consistent, inadequate number of welfare beds, and inadequate facilities to deal with an AIDS patient. What is ironic to me is that in 28 days of inpatient quality care at Eagleville, I was not treated AIDS, I was treated for alcoholism and drug dependency. My disease of addiction-as addiction is no different than any other addict/alcoholic. What is different about the chemically dependent AIDS patient is that when left without rehabilitative resource an already impaired immune system becomes further debilitated, breakdown progresses more rapidly and mortality figures are much, much higher.

After 28 days in rehab, it was recommended that I enter a half-way facility for 3-6 months of re-inforced living. (Without follow-up after rehab., statistically 1 in 3 people will relapse over 2 yr. period). Nine facilities in 3 states were contacted and none would take me because of being infected with AIDS. Hence, after 28 days, I was sent back into society with the best wishes of all. I am clean and sober today. With AIDS, as with alcoholism, today is all I have.

I live on \$97.50 twice a month and foodstamps through the State Dept. of Public Assistance. My child support payments total \$80 per month. The Lehigh Valley AIDS Center has been helping me pay utilities before they have been shut-off. I am past due on my rent. I have been told twice by SS Disability that I am not disabled even though my physicians have certified my condition, and my welfare application supports my susceptibility to repeated infections and chronic almost daily fatigue. I am currently in appeal. (The bet); seems now to be that I will die before I will collect.