



Volume 8, Issue 1

Sobriety Variety Pages

January 2008

tradition one in long form

Our common welfare should come first: personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity.

Each member of Alcoholics Anonymous is but a small part of a great whole. A.A. must continue to live or most of us will surely die. Hence our common welfare comes first. But individual welfare follows close afterward.

concept I in short form

Final responsibility and ultimate authority for A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.

step one

We admitted we were powerless over alcohol - that our lives had become unmanageable.

Our description of the alcoholic, the chapter to the agnostic, and our personal adventures before and after make clear three pertinent ideas:

- (a) That we were alcoholic and could not manage our own lives.
- (b) That probably no human power could have relieved our alcoholism.
- (c) That God could and would if He were sought.

anniversary of A.A. in Austin

The 62nd Anniversary of A.A. in Austin was celebrated on December 12, 2007. Over 600 people gathered at the Doubletree Hotel to celebrate the event. This was, once again, a first class affair and it is always fun to see sober folks from all over the area get all dressed up for this occasion. The Doubletree was a fine host and all in attendance were well fed and cared for.

I have fond memories of this event from my early days in A.A. here in Austin. I still remember being a little intimidated by such a legitimate looking crowd of folks. My sponsor, Jim F., talked me through all that and told me just to "suit up and show up!" I'm glad he stressed the importance of these A.A. "Special Events" because these events as well as A.A. conferences have been a big part of making me feel "a part of rather than apart from..."

A lot of people may not know that this event nearly faded away a few years ago. One of our members, Mike N., found that to be a shame and almost single handedly revived the event to its current luster. He has had a lot of help from the committee but it goes to show you that the actions of a few can have a great positive effect for the many. Don't hesitate to get out there and do something. We have no leaders, just trusted servants, but one can take the lead on a lot of this kind of stuff. Committee members are Sue N., Charlie P., Michael S., Charles C., Obie J., and Mike N.

As for the evening, Bob D. did a fine job as Master of Ceremonies, Belinda B. presided over the Remembrance Ceremony honoring all those who past away during the preceding twelve months. I was deeply honored to get to do a short history of A.A. in Austin. This came about as a result of the humility and spirit of service exhibited when Ralph Y. and Pat O'C. declined doing the history this year and insisted that some newer folks be given the chance to get involved.

It is always a crowd pleaser when we bust out the first Big Book in Texas to read "How It Works" for this event every year. It is a very rare First Edition-First Printing of the Big Book published in 1939. This was Ed H.'s book and he was responsible for getting the first meeting together here in Austin. We believe that it was the book they used for the first meeting on December 13th 1945. This little piece of history is really moving for me. Valerie A. read "How It Works" this year and did a good job.

Courtney H. came up next to introduce the speaker. Sister Bea was the keynote speaker flown from Brea, California. This little Irish Nun really sparked the place up! She told a compelling story that merged nicely with a deep understanding of the Big Book and our Program of Recovery. There were laughs, tears and lots of head nodding as she shared her experience, strength and knowledge.

Afterward there was a dance with a terrific D.J. The dance floor was packed and at last report there were no serious injuries. As far as any budding romances, we can only speculate.

All in all it was a terrific celebration of our heritage and of the miracle of recovery that has taken place in our town in the past 62 years. If you missed it this year we hope you make every effort to come next year. God willing, I'll see you there

Charlie P.

group donations to HCI

Northland - \$460	Austin City-Wide Group - \$100
North Austin 24 - \$100	Four Points - \$20
Desire to Stop - \$222	South Austin Big Book - \$75
Back to Basics (Marble Falls) - \$50	Dry Creek - \$75
Mon. Rush Hr. (Pflugerville) - \$100	Driftwood - \$43
Wed. Rush Hr. (Pflugerville) - \$100	Lake Travis Serenity - \$250
Women in Conscious Contact - \$30	Giddings - \$80
Started in Service (Leander) - \$11	Westlake - \$1,466
New Beginnings - \$30	Into Action (Lockhart) - \$30
Bridge to Shore - \$370	
Allandale - \$105	Total = \$4,065
Hair of the Dog - \$26	
Sunday Steps - \$6	
Turning Point - \$201	
Keep 1st things 1st - \$115	

HCI birthday club

Give a birthday club membership
to a friend in sobriety.

Simply donate one dollar for every year
of the recipients sobriety to
Hill Country Intergroup.

The recipient will receive a membership card and
a mention here in Sobriety Variety Pages.

Get more information at the intergroup office.

**“We are fully
self-supporting,
declining
outside
contributions”**

volunteers at HCI

Office -

Marla K - Sharon B. - Kevin B. - John B. - Karen D. - “Pete” - Sandy R. - Pam R. - John G. - Gordon D. - Nicole C. - Marty C. - Billy C. - Mary L. - Jim H. - Shelton - Rachel Z. - Leslie Ann D. - Tom C. - Renee S.

Hotline -

Mary T. - Melissa F. - Ann T. - Dave K. - Craig W. - Stewart G. - Gunnar S. - Karin S. - Angela E. - Mike/Linda - Gordon K. - Paul B. - Paul W. - Carolyn P. - Tammy D. - Rob C. - Drew W. - Patrick C. - Ruben G. - Chris F. - Todd S. - NA24 - Scotty H. - Laney H. - Roland P. - Carol M. - “Pete” - Sharon T. - Rick L. - Tom K. - Rachel Z. - Paul J. - Chris S.

Newcomer blog

Hello my name is Greg and I am an alcoholic. I pray the New Year finds you full of hope, happiness and sobriety. I have been writing this column for a few months documenting my walk through the 12 steps of Alcoholics Anonymous. In my previous entries I have described steps 1 – 4 and so I am going to tackle step 5 today. I hope that something I write helps you on your journey to recovery. I know that by sharing my story with you it will help me.

“I also had a clear picture of what character defects had driven my behavior for so many years.”

The fifth step says “We admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs”. Well I was a catholic and this sounded like confession to me. That was great! I would simply go to a priest that didn’t know me and make an anonymous confession and be done with it. Well as I really thought about it and that really hadn’t worked for me in the past due to me not really taking it seriously. I only went to confession so that I wouldn’t go to hell, not because I wanted to evaluate my behavior or change it. No I would have to go to my sponsor and get actual feedback especially in evaluating what my part was in my resentments. Darn.

I finished up my inventory and contacted my sponsor to set up time to get together. We met at his place and sat out on a balcony (to prevent us from being overwhelmed by the cigarette smoke) that was overlooking some trees. I do remember it was a cloudy day with drizzly rain. Perfect mood setting for what I was about to embark on. I have to admit that I felt silly getting started. I wasn’t sure how to share what was on my inventory. After a few minutes I calmed down and began to get into detail. My sponsor kept prodding me about what I thought my part was in this situation or what did I think I was afraid of with that situation.

About 2 hours later we were finished. I felt that I had a good idea of where I need to make some amends. I already knew that I had some to make, but it became much clearer to me how to actually go about making them and what I needed to say. I also had a clear picture of what character defects had driven my behavior for so many years.

The most positive thing that I came with was a clear conscience. I realized that I had been holding on to some things for decades. Some of those things I didn’t need to make amends for, but I simply hadn’t forgiven myself even though nobody else in the world remembered or cared about it. It was liberating.

When I left that evening I was under clear instructions to go home and pray and meditate on steps 6 and 7. Next month I’ll fill you on how that went.

letter from the editor

This issue of the Sobriety Variety Pages is the first in volume 8. We will begin this volume with a focus on the first tradition, service concept and step of Alcoholics Anonymous. This trend will continue through the year with each issue correlating to the month of publication. I would like to express my gratitude to those who have provided content for this month's issue. Your experience, strength and hope is valuable. For information on becoming a contributor send an email to sobrietyvariety@austinaa.org. We have a need for articles, artwork and a crossword puzzle maker.

I wish you all a great New Year of sobriety and growth in Alcoholics Anonymous.

Yours in service,
the editor



It happened To Alice cartoon strip originally appeared in the late 60s and was attributed to "Alcoholics Anonymous World Services." This cartoon and others are available for purchase at Hill



A complete set of the 1968-1974 Alcoholics Anonymous comic strips - <http://www.ep.tc> - 001 of 095

... to be continued

Hill Country Intergroup

1825 Fortview Road

Suite 104

Austin, Texas 78704

512.444.0071

www.austinaa.org

Sobriety Variety Pages

found online at

www.austinaa.org

contact:

sobrietyvariety@austinaa.org

"If you want to drink, that's your business.

If you want to stop, but can't - that's our business."



VOLUNTEER AT HILL COUNTRY INTERGROUP

WORK THE PHONE DESK IN THE OFFICE

ANSWER THE PHONES FROM HOME

ADD YOUR NAME TO THE 12 STEP CALL LIST

**ASK CLINT RITTER HOW
YOU CAN BE OF SERVICE TODAY**

I am responsible. . .

When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help,

I want the hand of A.A. always to be there.

And for that:

I am responsible.