

SOBRIETY VARIETY

MARCH 2012

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FEBRUARY 2012 VOLUNTEERS

Office :

Dan H., Claire C., Frank D., Kimberly W., Stephanie F., Billy C., Norma A., Pat, Michael N., Michael F-O, Wendy F., Charles M., Pat F., Eileen B., John B., Donna B., Marty C., Donna Jean E., Kenny K., Matt B., Valerie A., Leslie Ann D., Mike S.,

Hotline :

Gordon K., Sheliah C., James B., Northland (Group), Mary Jo B., Mary T., Karin S., John B., Higher Power Hour (Group), Garrett S., Lee A., Harlan O., Lambda L&LL(Group), Tommy B., Laney H., Eileen B., Brad C., Meredith H., Dennis "Pete" P., Tom K., Nancy K., Marty C., Scott C., Chris F.,



March 1, 1941

Jack Alexander's Saturday Evening Post article published and membership jumped from 2,000 to 8,000 by years end.

Extra! Extra!

Read All About It!

Old Timers Banquet
Saturday
May 5, 2012

[\(Flyer Enclosed\)](#)

"Our membership ought to include all who suffer alcoholism. Hence we may refuse none who wish to recover. Nor ought A.A. membership ever depend upon money or conformity. Any two or three alcoholics gathered together for sobriety may call themselves an A.A. group, provided that, as a group, they have no other affiliation."

This is a sweeping statement indeed; it takes in a lot of territory. Some people might think it too idealistic to be practical. It tells every alcoholic in the world that he may become, and remain, a member of Alcoholics Anonymous so long as he says so. In short, Alcoholics Anonymous has no membership rule.

Why is this so? Our answer is simple and practical. Even in self protection, we do not wish to erect the slightest barrier between ourselves and the brother alcoholic who still suffers. We know that society has been demanding that he conform to its laws and conventions. But the essence of his alcoholic malady is the fact that he has been unable or unwilling to conform

Concept 3: To insure effective leadership, we should endow each element of A.A.—the Conference, the General Service Board and it’s service corporations, staffs, committees and executives — with a traditional “Right of Decision”.

Do we understand what is meant by the “Right of Decision”? Do we grant it at all levels of service or do we “instruct”?

Do we trust our trusted servants—G.S.R., D.C.M., area Delegate, the Conference itself?

Concepts Checklist www.aa.org

If you answered “no” to either of these questions, or that we tend to “instruct” then perhaps we need to look at the way we vote people into these positions. During the election — were you tired and just wanting to get it over with, did you vote someone in while they were in the bathroom because no one wanted the job, were you unfamiliar with the candidates so you voted for the most popular one? What about after the vote — are we standing beside them through the journey or did we throw them out there to do the job alone, do we constantly criticize them to others or do we offer suggestions based on experience, strength and hope?

If you answered “yes” to any of these questions — write to hcnewslettereditor@gmail.com and teach the rest of us how you came to that point in your sobriety.

“Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.”

Early on I didn’t know the difference between making a decision and taking action. Just as when I was drinking I was still under the pretense that my intentions were good so everything must be going to turn out alright. I had the intentions of making that decision to turn my will and my life over to the care of God. I even had the intentions of turning my will and life over to the God of my understanding. I had intentions of not drinking.

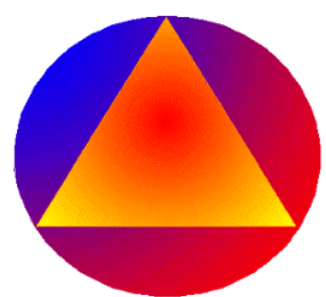
After months of telling you I had turned my will and my life over to the care of God and that I had no desire to drink again, that insanity of the first drink returned. Not knowing it at the time, I filled that void with men, spiritual readings and various other superficial things. Because I was reading spiritual things, somehow in my mind that made me spiritual and I had no clue that I was using these things to change the way I felt. There came a time when that wasn’t enough. I went to a bar with my mate; I was to be the designated driver. I had a few cokes and upon time to refill the owner asked if I was ready for my usual and I said “Yeah, three”. At that very moment I remember the thought crossing my mind that only an alcoholic would order three drinks at a time. I arrogantly threw my desire chip in the first drink and slammed it, damn near choking on it when it didn’t dissolve. The next thing I know I’m coming to in an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting several days later; after the posse was sent out after me. I often say they came looking for me because I had the foundation checkbook.

HCIA Birthday Club

February 2012

New Members

None



Continued from page 1

either to the laws of man or God. If he is anything, the sick alcoholic is a rebellious nonconformist. How well we understand that; every member of Alcoholics Anonymous was once a rebel himself. Hence we cannot offer to meet him at any half-way mark. We must enter the dark cave where he is and show him that we understand. We realize that he is altogether too weak and confused to jump hurdles. If we raise obstacles, he might stay away and perish. He might be denied his priceless opportunity.

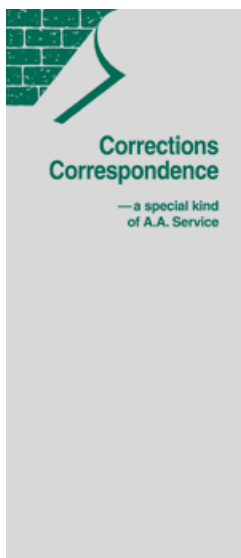
So when he asks, "Are there any conditions?" we joyfully reply, "No, not a one." When skeptically he comes back saying, "But certainly there must be things that I have to do and believe," we quickly answer, "In Alcoholics Anonymous there are no *musts*." Cynically, perhaps, he then inquires, "What is this all going to cost me?" We are able to laugh and say, "Nothing at all, there are no fees and dues." Thus, in a brief hour, is our friend disarmed of his suspicion and rebellion. His eyes begin to open on a new world of friendship and understanding. Bankrupt idealist that he has been, his ideal is no longer a dream. After years of lonely search it now stands revealed. The reality of Alcoholics Anonymous bursts upon him. For Alcoholics Anonymous is saying, "We have something priceless to give, if only you will receive." That is all. But to our new friend, it is everything. Without more ado, he becomes one of us.

Our membership tradition does contain, however, one vitally important qualification. That qualification relates to the use of our name, Alcoholics Anonymous. We believe that any two or three alcoholics gathered together for sobriety may call themselves an A.A. group provided that, as a group, they have no other affiliation. Here our purpose is clear and unequivocal. For obvious reasons we wish the name Alcoholics Anonymous to be used only in connection with straight A.A. activities. One can think of no A.A. member who would like, for example, to see the formation of "dry" A.A. groups, "wet" A.A. groups, Republican A.A. groups, Communist A.A. groups. Few, if any, would wish our groups to be designated by religious denominations. We cannot lend the A.A. name, even indirectly to other activities, however worthy. If we do so we shall become hopelessly compromised and divided. We think that A.A. should offer its experience to the whole world for whatever use can be made of it. But not its name. Nothing could be more certain.

Let us of A.A. therefore resolve that we shall always be inclusive, and never exclusive, offering all we have to all men save our title. May all barriers be thus leveled, may our unity thus be preserved. And may God grant us a long life --and a useful one!

Bill W.

The A.A. Grapevine February 1948



SPOTLIGHT ON SERVICE!!!

Looking to do something different in your sobriety?

District 3 b/c — Lisa B. — 3b.3c.corrections@gmail.com

District 22 — John F. — cfc@district22swta68aa.org

District 29 — Mike M. — cfc@district29aa.org

District 2 — Rick H. — ricoraccoon65@yahoo.com

District 13 — Unknown



February, 2012	\$25	Western Trails - \$107
Donations From	Northland - \$225	7 th Street Sisters - \$211
Area AA Groups:	Promises (Austin) - \$45	Sunday South - \$21
On the Colorado - \$10	Mallard Lane (Taylor) - \$450	Austin Citywide - \$150
Keep 1 st Things 1 st - \$363	Being Convinced - \$200	Firemakers - \$300
Hope (Cedar Park) - \$285	Freedom From Bondage - \$111	Desire to Stop - \$508
Miracles - \$313	Allandale - \$564	Into Action (Lockhart) - \$120
Friday Nite Alive - \$51	Bridge to Shore - \$911	Georgetown AA - \$233
The Promises (Kyle) - \$122	Any Lengths - \$193	Total : \$5597
Brushy Creek Serenity - \$50	Started in Service - \$29	
	Westwood Wellness - \$50	

Thank You!

Amazing Response for Groups

We started utilizing AA groups to monitor the AA Hotline late in 2011, and the program has been a roaring success. Our 2012 weekends are currently booked solid through the end of the 1st quarter (March), with four or five weekends left unbooked thru the 2nd quarter (June).

As they say, "Willingness is the key". If your group conscience would like to volunteer your group for a weekend on the AA hotline, just contact me at Intergroup and we'll schedule a weekend. Weekend coverage is defined as from 6pm Friday (close of business) to 8am Monday. You will need to designate one group member as the Lead Person, who will be responsible for setting up the shifts, procuring group members to man the shifts, make sure that phone transfers are completed at the designated times, and be the "go to" person if any problems arise.

Intergroup will provide a number of resources, to include our excellent website, our 12 Step Call List (confidential) w/instructions for use, an instructional mini-procedure aptly named FYI for volunteers, and a step by step instruction on phone transfers. My contact information, email and phone numbers, will also be available to all participants. I have attached these documents for your information, along with a page which shows an example of how shifts may be set up.

Thanks again for your interest in this very important phase of AA service. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at any time.....CR

Clint Ritter, Manager
 Hill Country Intergroup
 1825 Fortview Rd. #104
 Austin, TX 78704

512.448.9017
 512.636.8614 (cell)
 mailaustinaa@gmail.com



Got a question about the 3 legacies that has you stumped? Write in to the Hill Country Intergroup Ask It Basket!
 hciaskitbasket@gmail.com

Share Your Experience, Strength & Hope

Submit an Article or News For Publication

hcnewslettereditor@gmail.com

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What happened next was profound. I knew to the very core of my being that I was an Alcoholic and there was absolutely no way that I could stop and stay stopped without God's presence in my life. Unfortunately, I had no clue how that was going to happen. After all I thought I had been living a spiritual life for the last eighteen months, only able to string seven of those together continuously. I was doomed to live an alcoholic life; I made the decision to leave that meeting and never coming back. At that very thought, I broke. I knew that I had found the solution that worked for so many but my last resort hadn't worked for me. During the closing of the meeting a tear ran down the side of my face; knots formed in my chest and in my throat. All I could do was stand there, hand in hand with other alcoholics and listen to them recite the Lord's Prayer. Afterwards, some were chanting "keep coming back..." someone yelled "don't leave and you don't have to worry about making it back", someone else had said "don't quit before the miracle happens". If I close my eyes I can still hear those two people today. As I was scuttling to the door to leave, Bob called out to me that he wanted to talk to me. He told me seven words that still echo to me today..."Cheryl, I am going to sponsor you". He told me to come with him and for some reason I followed him. He went to Bill and Ray, he said Bill is my sponsor and Ray is his sponsor and this is our sponsorship line. The three of us are going to teach you to get and stay sober. When I asked them why, they told me they were tired of watching me screw things up and they didn't want to watch me die. That night they taught me the difference between having intentions on not drinking and starting the process of never having to drink again.

They asked me if I knew I was an alcoholic and my life was unmanageable. Absolutely... who else would order three drinks and damn near choke on a desire chip. Did I believe that a Higher Power could restore me to sanity? I said well yeah He can but I'm not so sure He will. Look what has happened these last eighteen months. And besides to be restored to something you had to have it at some point and I don't ever remember being sane. They asked if I thought God was insane. I told them no. They asked if I believed that I was born in the image of my Creator. I told them yes. They told me that if that was the case then at some point I had to have been sane. They also told me that just because things around me growing up were insane didn't mean I was... didn't mean I wasn't either but that the things around us don't define who we are. Then they told me that it wasn't for me to believe that He would restore me to sanity only that He could. WOW! How simple was that? Then they started talking to me about making this decision to turn my will and my life over to the care of God as I understood God. They dispelled the thought that I had to thoroughly understand this Higher Power, explaining that my understanding of my Higher Power will be ever changing as I travel this road to what they hoped to be many spiritual experiences. They then explained that to make this decision I had to actually understand what my will and my life was. I thought that my will was my wants and that my life was my kids. Simple enough, right? Wrong again. They told me that my will was the things that motivated me to do things or the thoughts in my head and that my life was made up of every action I had ever taken and any I would take from here on out. That to turn my thinking and actions over to my Higher Power was a big ordeal and that I surely couldn't do it over night or alone. So what they were telling me is that I was making a conscience decision to let God guide my thoughts and actions and that they would be there to help me through the journey. That I could understand, believe and accept. That night I made the decision and started the process of turning my will and my life over to this God that I did not understand but knew that it had to be better than my slave driven life to the master King Alcohol. We got down on our knees together and prayed a prayer very similar to "God, I offer myself to Thee- To build with me and to do with me as Thou wilt. Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do Thy will. Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of Thy Power, Thy Love, and Thy Way of life. May I do Thy will always!"

It's that time Again. . .



10th Annual **Old Timer's Banquet**



Honoring All AA Old Timers (25 years or more) In the Greater Austin Area

Saturday May 5, 2012

Speaker: Patti O.

Laguna Niguel, CA



5:30 pm - Doors Open

6:15 - Dinner

- Sobriety Countdown
- Open Mic

8:00 pm - Speaker & Door Prizes

Where:

**Riverbend Church (Fellowship Hall)
4214 N. Capital of Texas Hwy
Loop 360 at Cedar Street
Just south of the Pennybacker Bridge
Austin, TX 78746**

**It's not just for Old Timers!
Everyone is Welcome!**

**Admission \$20 per person
Old Timers (25 yrs or more) FREE!
(Must Sign in at the door)**

Tickets Available Now At.....



Hill Country Intergroup
Serving Austin and the Texas Hill Country

**1825 Fortview Road Suite #104
Austin, TX 78704 (512)-444-0071**

or

See Your Intergroup Rep!

Why do I have to pay?

In AA, conferences, conventions, banquets, anniversaries and/or other special events are important opportunities to share the AA experience in a broad way. There are many such events held around the world. One of the most common misconceptions of these gatherings is that they are AA meetings, and since "There are no dues or fees for AA membership..." there should be no fees to attend.

These are special events, not regular meetings, and often require months of planning and preparation, with all the attendant costs of these activities. Since most events, such as the OTB, are held in venues which charge for the use of their facilities, it is important that as responsible AA members, "we pay our own way." Other expenses include travel and lodging for conference speakers, printing of flyers and schedules, postage and supplies. This event is self-supporting; no AA group monies are used to pay for this event. The cost of the event is paid through your ticket/ registration fee. Our financial goal is to simply break even. We hope you agree that the overall cost is nominal for the fellowship, fun, entertainment and recovery you will experience.

HCIA Board of Trustees