

Hill Country A.A.®

Intergroup Connection

Manager

Gary H-Northland
Group (Austin)

HCIA Board

Reed McL.-
Georgetown Group
(Georgetown)

Larry D.-North Austin
24 Group (Austin)

Debi G.-Georgetown
Group (Georgetown)

Rosi S.-Single Purpose
Group (Austin)

Lake W.-Allandale
Group (Austin)

Murdo M.-Keep First
Things First
Group(Austin)

Herb E.-Into Action
(Elgin)

Jason I.-Hope Group
(Cedar Park)

Norma A.-Single
Purpose Group(Austin)

Rebecca W.-Hope Group
(Cedar Park)

From the Editor-Who are Special Needs Alcoholics ?

Bill W. said, “ While there are no special alcoholics, there are some with special needs.” Who would that be? Well, the obvious answer is those we used to call” disabled “ or “impaired”-the Deaf, blind, or crippled. But things have changed, thankfully, in the world of AA, because we have learned to focus on the similarities, not the differences among our fellowship. So, the truth is, we are all alcoholics, but some of us access the AA message in different ways. My husband, Blind Dave, has the Big Book and the 12 and 12 and the Service Manual in Braille or on mp3. All he needs is a ride to the meeting, which his sponsees provide. I have Deaf sponsees, so for the newest one, I have offered a Big Book on video in American Sign Language. Interpreters, provided through the Deaf Access Committee, make sure our Deaf AA members have access to their home group’s experience strength and hope. Intergroup lists all the wheelchair accessible meetings available in Austin for those with perambulatory needs . These are but a few examples of how to provide accessibility.

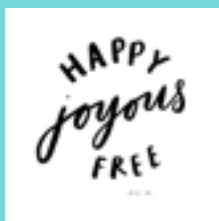
Why is any of this important ? It’s important so that we all understand who, in our home groups, may have a barrier, preventing them from receiving the AA message, and how AA members can help-not just help an individual, but help your home group by serving the needs of all alcoholics and recognize their contributions to the fellowship as well. So, again, which alcoholics, may have barriers that prevent

The Last Laugh

A few ex-drunks are telling war stories after a meeting

"There was this bar in Japan where they bring you warm Saki and massage your shoulders while you drink as much as you want," said the first. "Oh, that's nothing. I was at a Hotel in Mumbai where you'd buy one whiskey and they'd refill the glass twice more - all while pretty girls danced for you." "Heck," said the third, "There's this bar in Dublin where as soon as they find out you're a foreigner, they pay for all your drinks and then, after you're tipsy, invite you into the back room where you get naked and have sex all night with the staff." "No way! Did that actually happen to you?"

"Well... not to me personally! . But it happens to me sister all the time!!""



A.A.History-Who are Special Needs Alcoholics ? (cont.

accessibility to our shared experience, strength, and hope??

What can the home group do to remove the obstacles present?? One easy answer is to look at what literature is available, and order it, and let your home group members know it exists. There is a plethora of material available that is large print, illustrated, comic book form, and on various kinds of media-tapes, cd, or video. This will make accessible our AA experience for those that are dyslexic, elderly, or have learning disorders. Find out what information is available and where to find it for interpreted meetings for Deaf AA members, Spanish -speaking meetings, Young people's meetings, wheelchair accessible meetings, meetings with babysitting. What about the oldtimer's at your home group? Are they coming to meetings? Some older alcoholics can no longer see to drive, or are not able to get to meetings for some other reason. Can anyone bring a meeting to them? It only takes two or three people to do that. Another way to help is to invite your District or Area Chairperson to come share about Accessibility (usually your Treatment Chair) or to do a workshop. Have you read the AA Guidelines-made for local fellowships to have an understanding of how to best meet the accessibility needs of members in their home group ? Did you know there are on-line registered AA meetings? There are nearly 300 Special Needs/ Accessibility Committees in AA today, at all levels: District, Intergroup, or Area. Milton Maxwell, past chairman of the General Service Board in 1980, "said,"AA unity is not based upon authority but upon accepting differences, allowing freedom, and keeping our focus on the primary purpose of helping one another achieve and maintain sobriety." May it ever be so!!

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As Blind Dave Sees it.....

Perhaps, and I'm just saying perhaps, the time has come for AA to reconsider its position on sobriety chips. When I learned that our members spend thousands of dollars on sobriety chips, I wondered why AA doesn't design and sell its own. I was told, they are not conference approved. So the question is, should the conference approve them? I called about 100 Central Offices across America, and found that even though they are not conference approved about 7 out of 10 Central Offices sell them anyway. Someone questioned if it might open the door to "drunk junk?" I find it offensive to call my treasured medallion drunk junk!! When you can trace its roots all the way back to Sister Ignatia, I feel it is part of AA history. At our last

International Convention is Atlanta, one of the high points of the convention was when the presentation of the 35th million copy of the Big Book was presented to the Sisters of Charity, Sister Ignatia's order, in recognition of her contributions to AA.



Another might say, but shouldn't AA confine its spending to things that carry the message? Come to birthday night at my home group, and listen as person after person comes forward to receive their chip and at an open meeting, before family and friends- and many newcomers- then tell how AA has changed their lives?! Some remark, well, isn't getting up to get a chip a show of ego? Then why do they end their share with, "Thank you, God! and thank you, Alcoholics Anonymous.?! "

Blind Dave, Single Purpose Group, Austin, Texas

.Dear Alkie,

I just got out of “All About Me” treatment center , and they want me to be in charge of their Aftercare program and chair the meeting every week!! They want to video-tape a story and they will put it on their website so everyone can see how successful their program is!! I am so excited about this, but my sponsor said to wait, and think about it!! What’s to think about!! I never knew something like this would happen to me!! I only have three months sobriety, and already I have a service position!! What do you think??

Loud and Proud Marty

Dear Loud and Proud,

Congratulations on achieving three months sobriety!! I think it is wonderful that you have an opportunity to volunteer with an organization you believe in, but your sponsor is right to be cautious. He probably wants to talk to you about the difference between outside organizations like treatment centers, churches, and communities and AA. AA is not an organization, but is a spiritual fellowship. We do not tie ourselves to anything or anyone else. If you were to go on camera and tell everyone you are an alcoholic, then get drunk later, people would decide, Oh, AA doesn't work because Marty got drunk!! .Also, it’s fine for you to help out in your church, with a treatment center or within your community, but that is not service work. Service work is face to face work with another alcoholic, like chairing meetings, sponsoring, working on AA committees at District or Area, or volunteering to do the phone lines at Intergroup. Lots of outside agencies are eager to give you titles and positions- and it makes us feel important. but we have to really watch that alcoholic ego- because selfishness and self centeredness is the root of our problems!!



Signed,

Alkiie

Thank you, AA Groups!!

April 2017

Contributions to Intergroup

1313 Group - 3C	399.01
1825 Group - 22	165.00
620 Peace Group - 3B	141.00
7th Street Sisters - 3C	390.92
A New Beginning - 22	100.00
A Vision For Us - 3C	180.00
Allandale Group - 3B	247.44
Allandale Group - 3B	132.95
Anonymous.	10.00
Anonymous.	34.79
Being Convinced - 22	125.00
Bridge to Shore Group - 3C	836.75
Buda Big Book Group - 2	98.75
Children of Chaos - 3B	164.31
Desire To Stop - 3C	950.00
Elgin AA - 29	25.00
Firemakers - 3C	150.00
Georgetown Group - 22	222.06
Good News Group - 22	70.00

Krause Springs Group - 13	100.00
Lake Travis Serenity - 3C	450.00
Lakeway Keystone Group - 3C	540.00
Lost Pines Group - 29	25.00
NADA Glum Lot - 2	480.00
North Shore Serenity - 22	103.60
Primary Purpose Group - 3C	160.00
Promises, Promises - 3B	50.00
Reading Rainbow - 3B	25.20
River Group - 2	25.00
Round Rock Big Book Step Study - 22	149.02
Saturday Morning Serenity - 3B	137.91
Saturday Morning Serenity - 3B	63.45
Single Purpose Group - 3C	25.00
Sisters In Sobriety (S.I.S.) - 13	41.73
Solutions In Sobriety - 3B	219.20
Sunshine Group - 22	65.00
Westlake AA - 3C	300.00

Thank you, Volunteers!!

Office Volunteers

Dan H
Charles Mc
John B
Marty C
Annika Z
Nancy W
James B
Jack W
Anthony C
Pat F
John A
Murdo M
David C
Jill F
Jeff K

Hotline Volunteers:

Jeremy F
Mary T
Pablo H
Reggy T
Tom K
Fred J
Christin C
Mark R
John F
David S

Thank You, for your Deaf Access Contributions! April 2017

Name	Amount
DAC Contributions	
A New Beginning - 22	100.00
Allandale Group - 3B	50.00
Anonymous.	1.00
Bridge to Shore Group - 3C	150.00
Desire To Stop - 3C	25.00
Georgetown Group - 22	111.03
Lake Travis Serenity - 3C	50.00
Lakeway Keystone Group - 3C	60.00
Lighthouse Group - 3C	20.00
Reading Rainbow - 3B	10.80
Westlake AA - 3C	50.00
Total DAC Contributions	627.83
TOTAL	627.83

71st AA State Convention

June 9-11, 2017 in San Antonio

Omni at the Colonnade

9821 Colonnade Blvd., San Antonio, TX 78230 For Reservations Call
1-800-THE-OMNI Cut off date for discount – May 9, 2017

“Fit Ourselves to be of Maximum Service!”



LIGHTING THE DARK PAST

Cling to the thought that, in God's hands, the dark past is the greatest possession you have - the key to life and happiness for others. With it you can avert death and misery for them.

– ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, p. 124

No longer is my past an autobiography; it is a reference book to be taken down, opened and shared. Today as I report for duty, the most wonderful picture comes through. For, though this day be dark - as some days must be - the stars will shine even brighter later. My witness that they do shine will be called for in the very near future. All my past will this day be a part of me, because it is the key, not the lock.

From the book Daily Reflections

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Intergroup News and Updates



Oldtimer's Banquet!!

May 13th, 2017

Covenant Presbyterian Church,
3003 Northland Drive, Austin, Texas 78757

Doors open at 5:00, Dinner at -6:00

Speaker-Deb H., from Akron, Ohio)

\$25.00 for people with less than 25 years of sobriety

Tickets available at the Intergroup Office (Cash, Check or Credit Card)

Where to find it: A.A. News!!

Intergroup : austinaa.org

For news, conferences, workshops about local groups, meeting information, and more!

Deaf Access Committee: austindac.org

For the current calendar of interpreted AA meetings, and info on the Deaf Access Committee, and contact info.

District 3b/3c <http://www.district3b3c.org/>

For information on District meetings, District Committees, and other things going on and

SouthWest Texas Area aa-swta.org

For news about Southwest Texas Area Assemblies, Area sponsored events, and what SWTA is all about!!

Can't Find what you're looking for?

For even more links to A.A. websites, go to the Resources tab on the HCIA website!!

OUR 7TH TRADITION OF SELF SUPPORT

by Clint R., Past Intergroup Manager

What exactly does it mean that all AA groups should be self supporting? Why does it matter where an AA group gets its money, or how much they accumulate? How much of a “basket” donation is called for? Are AA members required to tithe? Or give according to a set of rules set up by their group or some other AA entity? How much is a group suppose to donate to AA's service structure? What are prudent reserves and how much of a group's expense budget should they represent?

Many of these questions are answered by AA's Tradition 7, the short form of which states, “Every AA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.” The long form of this AA Tradition goes on to suggest that contributions should be from group attendees only and are to be strictly voluntary. This promotes a sense of group loyalty and responsibility, and insures that no outside individual or entity can buy influence in an AA group.

Solicitation of funds, accepting large gifts, accumulating wealth over and above prudent reserves, and hoarding \$\$ for no stated AA purpose are strongly discouraged, to avoid the problems that come along with excesses of money, property and prestige. Simply put, AA's philosophy of dealing with financial assets could be summed up like this: 1) be responsible - meet our obligations; 2) put something aside for a rainy day – prudent reserves; and 3) utilize/donate any excess to promote our primary purpose of helping suffering alcoholics - through service.

As to the question of how much? For groups, questions regarding prudent reserves and group donations to AA's service structure are addressed in AA pamphlet F-3, *Self Support: Where Money and Spirituality Mix*. However, the details of a group's

donation policy should be decided by the group conscience.

For AA members, donations to an AA group are a matter for each individual's conscience. Many factors, not the least of which is personal finances, come into play. And remember, responsibility, prudence and a sense of purpose are difficult, if not impossible, to quantify.

AA Traditions were developed, for the most part, to provide guidance in our group life, and to promote unity without requiring uniformity. AA's Tradition 7 is a powerful example of how the principles contained in the Traditions often prove to be invaluable when analogously applied to our personal lives.....Clint R.



Meet the Board

This is a special section of the Intergroup Connection giving us information about the Hill Country Board Members. In Interview style, we will get to know who our trusted servants are and why they choose to serve at HCIA!!

Larry D., HCIA Treasurer

What is your name and your service position?

Larry D., HCIA Board Member and Treasurer

How long have you been in AA?

My sobriety date is Aug. 24th, 2004. I've been an active member of AA since then.

What is your home group?

North Austin 24 Hour AA Group

Who is your sponsor and why did you pick him? **Glenn R., Because he lives the program in his everyday life. He believes in the Big Book and the direction found within. I have a service sponsor as well.**

What other types of service- past or present- have you been involved in??

All positions at the group level: Chairperson, Treasurer, Secretary, alternate GSR, GSR, Literature Rep, PI/CPC Rep, Treatment Facilities rep, at the District level, alternate DCM for District 3-B/3C, and DCM for District 3B/3C. Currently serving on the HCIA board as Treasurer.

Do you think sponsoring makes a difference in your program?

Absolutely! I'm responsible to help anyone who reaches out for help. It's what keeps me sober. Sponsorship is the most rewarding privilege of the program of AA.

Was there a turning point in your sobriety that you think was significant?

When I realize the concept of "we" I wasn't alone any longer. Thank God for the similarities not the differences, and the fellowship of AA.

Do you think there have been any changes in AA since you've been sober?

Yes! The understanding that there are many forms of addiction, and that we accept that AA is not the answer for all people. Tolerance and acceptance are two important aspects that I have learned since being in AA, and are, in my opinion, imperative to AA as a whole.

What do you hope would be the best thing to come out of your service to the fellowship as an HCIA Board member?

Keeping in mind that I am but a trusted servant, and must follow the guidelines and direction, to the best of liability, as stated in the 12 Concepts Service Manual. I hope to leave an attitude of transparency to enhance communication and interaction within all aspects of AA.

2020 International Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous!!!

July 2-5, 2020 Detroit, Michigan

The 2020 International Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous will be held July 2–5, 2020 in Detroit, Michigan with the theme “Love and Tolerance is our Code.” A.A. members and guests from around the world will celebrate A.A.’s 85th year at this event with big meetings held Friday night, Saturday night and Sunday morning in the Ford Field Stadium. Other meetings, scheduled or informal, will take place throughout the weekend in the COBO Center in downtown Detroit.

We know many are excited about the International Convention and eager for detailed information. As the time gets closer, additional information about the Convention and Detroit, will be provided. The AA website will be updated as more information becomes available. Also watch for articles mailed to the general service representative of every group in the U.S. and Canada listed with G.S.O. and is also posted on the website.



Information about Convention registration and housing reservations will be available in fall 2019. All necessary information will be included in the registration packet which will also be available in the fall of 2019. This packet will list numbers to call for answers to specific questions about housing, the program, etc. The information will be mailed to A.A. groups, offices and contacts around the world and posted on the website.

We look forward to seeing you in Detroit!

