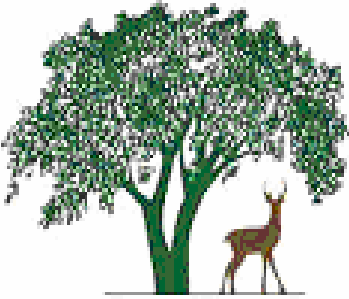


April 2006



LA HACIENDA TREATMENT CENTER

A View From Serenity Hill

Another Great Reunion In The Books

In spite of scarce hotel rooms and potentially bad weather, almost 800 people returned to La Hacienda at the beginning of May to renew their commitment to sobriety at our annual



Alumni Reunion.

La Hacienda Alumnists attended the customary bonfire, birthday and AA meetings. Several made their presence known at the Ropes Course, on the river and some reignited their spiritu-

ality at Serenity Hill. Everyone enjoyed the camaraderie, food and stories of recovery and hope that were told by Ralph W, Mickey B. and Cait R.

Next year's reunion is already shaping up to be an event to remember. Be sure to mark your calendars now for next year's reunion: May 4, 5, and 6, 2007. Get your hotel reservations now.

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Websites of Interest

- <http://ppgaadallas.org>
- <http://bigbook.got.net>
- <http://www.thejaywalker.com>
- <http://www.sobercity.com>
- <http://Houston.lahacienda.com>
- <http://dallas.lahacienda.com>
- <http://midland.lahacienda.com>
- <http://sanantonio.lahacienda.com>
- <http://www.lahacienda.com>
- <http://www.twelvesteps.com>

Chris R...

Well...another Reunion come and gone. So good seeing so many of you again! Looks like we had about 800 show up. Not bad considering there were no hotel rooms to be had and EVERY weather station warned of Flash floods in Hunt! (no flood guys). Our 35th Reunion will be May 4,5,6 2007-not too early to make those reservations!

I read something this week that I wanted to share with you. It's a paragraph out of "Language of the Heart" published by the AA Grapevine. (P271) I know I've read it before but this time it really hit home....probably because I had just "gotten into it"

with one of my sponces who, in a state of SELF PITY, was gonna go drink.

"Therefore our very first problem is to accept our present circumstances as they are, ourselves as we are, and

the people about us as they are.

This is to adopt a realistic humility without which no genuine advance can even begin. Again and again, we shall need to return to that unflattering point of departure. This is an exercise in acceptance that we can profitably practice every day of our lives. Provided we strenuously avoid turn-

"I never saw anyone relapse in a state of gratitude. Never."

ing these realistic surveys of the facts of life into unrealistic alibis for apathy or defeatism, they can be the sure foundation upon which increased emotional health and therefore spiritual progress can be built."

I agree. If I can humbly look at my situation and find some gratitude for it...I'm gonna come out the other side in one piece. At least that's how its gone so far! Tough to do when things aren't going at all like I want them. As I've said here before, I never saw anyone relapse in a state of gratitude. Never.

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Surrender...

If there is truly nothing that you can do to change you're here and now, and you can't remove yourself from the situation, then accept you're here and now totally by dropping all inner resistance. The falsie, unhappy self that loves feeling miserable, resentful, or sorry for itself can no longer survive. This is called surrender. Surrender is not weakness. There is great strength in it. Only a surrendered person has the spiritual power. Through surrender, you will free internally the situation. You may then find that the situation changes without any effort on your part. In any case, you are free.

~Eckhart Tolle

Alicia N...

Hey Alumni...

I hope this newsletter finds you all doing well. Things are settling down now that Reunion is over and we are so grateful to all of you who came out to see us. Because of you, it was another great success and we are already planning for next year.

I had an interesting experience at Reunion that I wanted to share with you that reminded me of some of "Bill's Story".

On pg. 9 it says "The door opened and he stood there, fresh-skinned and glowing. There was something about his eyes. He was inexplicably different. What had happened?" These same thoughts went through my mind as I was walking around at Reunion and I was stopped by an Alumni. This woman smiled with big bright eyes and said "Alicia, it's me -----(and told me her name)" I knew the name very well because she had been here a few times and each time in treatment she was the same...entitled, complained about everything, boy crazy, huge victim, and engulfed with trying to make the external world ok, while her

"...it was such a gift to me to be able to see once again what God can do IF we will seek Him."

internal world was crumbling... basically – she was like my twin sister, just like me in every way!! I remember that we used to spend hours talking about recovery and what God had in store for her and she would always have a reason that it wouldn't work or an excuse as to why she wasn't willing to really give herself to the program.

Ok, back to Reunion...she tells me her name and I just about fell over...there is nothing about her that resembles the woman that I used to know. She looked amazing and I don't just mean externally... you could see in her eyes that that her spirit has been awakened. Of course the words come out of my mouth, "Oh my gosh, look at you, what happened?" As she began to tell me of her journey, I almost cried because here before me was an absolute miracle and it all started with her finally deciding to get honest and do something different. She had become willing to make some changes and do some things that were uncomfortable. She took action and more action and because of that she got the results. She sponsors women today and uses all her experiences, good and bad, to help give life to others. She is free, recovered, and following her dreams and has been this way for a few years.

I share this story because it was such a gift to me to be able to

see once again what God can do IF we will seek Him. And I'm not just talking about Him removing the obsession to drink or do drugs... there is so much more. In my own life, I put so many limits on God because of fears or whatever it may be and yet I know if I seek him through action and helping others, that more freedom is around the corner. That simple line we hear all the time from pg. 60 "God could and would IF He were sought". For me, the key word in that sentence is IF...I know if I do my part God will do His. My sweet friend at Reunion decided to finally put that promise to the test and she is blown away at how true it is. Let's all seek more and see what happens!! Thanks again to all of you who came to Reunion to bear witness to the power of God!

PS...We are SO grateful to welcome our new player on the Alumni team, Joe Hartwell. He is a dear friend from our local AA community who has such a caring heart and carries the message of Truth in an incredible way. We look forward to you all getting to know him.

Peace and Love – Alicia
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BOLDNESS AND NO EXCUSES

WHEN I STAND BEFORE GOD AT THE END OF MY LIFE, I WOULD HOPE THAT I WOULD NOT HAVE A SINGLE BIT OF TALENT LEFT, AND COULD SAY, "I USED EVERYTHING YOU GAVE ME".

~ERMA BOMBECK

Joe H...

Hey Alumni, Family, and Friends,

Reunion was a blast and I want to thank everyone who came and participated. You know, we hear a lot about those low percentages of alcoholics and drug addicts who stay sober – 10% to 18% depending on what part of the country you are living in. I'm sorry, but are we sending a message of hope or a message that this program doesn't work? What I saw and experienced at Reunion was 100% of recovery for those of us who do 100% of the work! (The 12 steps) I feel truly blessed to witness the miracles here at La Hacienda and in our fellowship on a daily basis. I am so honored to

"I owe my life to God, this program, and all of you!"

be a part of La Hacienda, the Alumni department, and all of the staff. The feeling of usefulness and sense of purpose are amazing!

I am the newest edition of the Alumni department. I am from Houston, TX, and was introduced to what I thought was Alcoholics Anonymous in 1998. For 6 years I "attended" treatment centers, meetings, half-way houses, jails, psych wards, and ICU's and in 2004 I landed in Kerrville, TX and met a man we all know and love. I met Chris R. at the Outpost in Ingram, TX and asked him to be my sponsor. Chris approached me in a way I had never been approached before and he guaranteed me that if I did exactly what the book said, I could recover. He helped me see my truth and showed me what an alcoholic and drug addict really looked like. For the first time in my life, I knew what

it meant and I knew in my soul that I was an alcoholic and drug addict, which, by the way, is the first step in recovery. We went through the work rapidly and after 2 months sober, the problem had been removed. At 3 months sober (recovered), I was chairing meetings, doing H&I's, making coffee, cleaning up the club, picking up cigarette butts, and sponsoring 5 men!! I could go on and on about the promises that are taking place in my life today, but there simply isn't enough room in this newsletter. I owe my life to God, this program, and all of you! Please don't hesitate to call if I can be of service.

Peace, Love, and Recovery
Joe
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Spirituality Is Not A "Thing"

It's not an object that can be identified as something one possesses.

It is a PROCESS, a growth experience.

If someone thinks he has achieved spirituality, he has probably lost it.

One has it only as long as one is striving for it.

We can never quite achieve perfection.

We are always capable of improving ourselves.

As long as we continue to improve ourselves, we are SPIRITUAL.

If we lose the momentum for growth and become stagnant, baser human inclinations toward gratification and comfort are certain to arise and work against the spiritual life. In spirituality, the searching is the finding, the pursuit is the achievement.

~Dr. Abraham Twerski

Upcoming Events

July 29	CA Fundraiser		San Antonio, TX
	Chris R. Speaks		
August 5	FOTSNY		Queens, NY
	Chris R. Speaks		
August 4 - 6	Sister to Sister AA Conference		Waco, TX
	Alicia N. Speaks	Contact Donna V. 245-715-4608	
August 12	Workshop at AA		Sumter, SC
	Chris R. Speaks	Contact Chazz J. 803-972-0719	
August 13	Santa Fe Group Anniversary		Santa Fe, TX
	Alicia N. Speaks	Contact Bob W. 409-925-3543	
August 19	Sherrwood Group AA		
	Chris R. Speaks		
August 25 - 26	Hill Country Round-up	La Hacienda Hospitality Room	Kerrville, TX
	Chris R. Speaks	Contact David R. 917-613-6050	
September 8	Atlantic Highlands Group AA		Atlantic Highlands, NJ
	Chris R. Speaks		
September 16	By the Boom Group AA		Fort Worth, TX
	Chris R. Speaks	Contact Mike G. 972-375-6518	
September 30	Recovery in the Park		Kerrville, TX
	Free Speakers and Ray Willie Hubbard		
October 7	AA Workshop		Flint, MI
	Chris R. Speaks	Contact Rick T. 810-813-0248	
October 21	Sponsorship Workshop		Tacoma, WA
	Chris R. Speaks	Contact Robert H. 253-752-5454	

Excerpts from Choosing To Drink

...It's like driving, CHOOSING to make a left hand turn, and then spinning the wheel to the right anyway.

...the heartbreaking reality was that no matter how much I wanted to, no matter how much I NEEDED to keep those promises, the choice was not mine. It was as if I had no love in my heart, no conscience, no soul, and certainly no worthwhile future.

By: Danny S.

Read the entire article: <http://recoveredalcoholic.blogspot.com>



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Simply the Best

Contact Us...

BE SURE THAT WE HAVE CURRENT CONTACT INFORMATION SO THAT WE CAN KEEP YOU CURRENT ON ALL UPCOMING EVENTS AS WELL AS STAY CURRENT ON WHAT'S GOING ON IN YOUR RECOVERY...AS WE STROVE TO CONTINUE BEING A SOURCE OF ASSISTANCE, ENCOURAGEMENT AND HELP.

ALUMNI

Chris R. - Ext. 510
Alicia N. - Ext. 512
Joe H. - Ext. 511
Judy A. - Ext. 513
David O. (Austin) - 512-835-1994

OPERATIONS

Ext. 550