

A View from Serenity Hill



La Hacienda's Alumni Newsletter

August 2010

38th annual

Alumni Reunion

La Hacienda Treatment Center cordially invites you, your family members and other loved ones to come out to Hunt, Texas for our annual Alumni Reunion. As always, registration begins on Friday at 4:00 pm. Our speakers this year are Jacey L., Angie P., and Scott J. Last year in lieu of a bonfire, we had Ray Wylie Hubbard in concert. That was great fun so we decided to do it again this year except this time we will be jammin' to Leannasaurus Rex. They are a very good band and we are excited to have them here. Naturally, we will have all of the other usual activities to include the Power Pole, Birthday meeting, meditation on Serenity Hill and an alumni meeting on the lawn. Festivities will conclude on Sunday at noon.

If you are in need of lodging during your stay, you will need to make reservations as soon as possible. We are already aware of a large church convention in town that is filling up several hotels. If you need help finding a place to stay, get on our website and pull our list of local accommodations. You will find it on the Alumni/Continuing Care / Headlines page. The URL is:

<http://www.lahacienda.com/alumni/headlines/>

This is a great way to recharge your recovery batteries and get to see folks you haven't seen in a while. It's also a good opportunity to meet new friends. Come join us!

We're looking forward to seeing you all here!!

Save the Date

Hill Country Roundup

August 27 –29, 2010

Inn of the Hills, Kerrville, TX

Info: Debbie B

830-928-1500

La Ha Alumni Reunion

September 24-26, 2010

Hunt, TX

Info: Joe H

800-749-6160 ext. 510

The Sober Cruise

October 16-21, 2010

Cozumel and Progreso

Info: Joe M

210-861-4161



La Hacienda
Treatment Center

PO Box 1, 145 La Hacienda Way, Hunt, TX 78024
800-749-6160 • www.lahacienda.com

Third Step Prayer

"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!"

The Only Constant is Change

17 years...

July 26th I gave my last lecture to the patients and families—can't believe I didn't cry like a kid! After 17 years I am leaving La Hacienda. Freaks me out just to write it. No words will come close to explaining how grateful I am to have been a part of this beautiful place all these years.

My sponsor, Mark Houston, passed away this past February. He had started a different type of recovery center (long term) up in Manor, Texas and I was much impressed with the place. Always ready for a new challenge, I made the toughest decision I ever had to make. I am headed to Austin/Manor.

I can't believe the changes I have seen at this place since I started. Some of you "older" alumni would remember. The store was over in Amy's office. One of my first jobs was running that deal. It took me all of 30 minutes to do inventory. Look what Judy's done with it now! My first Reunion in 1993 had 200 show up—we had close to 1200 last year!

Hundreds of my co-workers gave everything they had to make this place "The Best". I think every patient that ever came through here felt that commitment. It's been an honor to have worked with every one of them, even the ones I didn't always agree with!

To the owners of La Hacienda and my boss, Rich Whitman, I couldn't begin to express my appreciation for all the support over the years. They always were the first to "get" the importance of our alumni. They treated me like family. (NOW I'm crying!)

Biggest thanks and regards to all the alumni who always went out of their way to stay in touch and support this treatment center. Thousands and thousands of you have allowed us to be a part of your recovery journey. It has been the most rewarding thing in my life to have been able to share in so many lives—the struggles AND the successes. If I have learned one thing here it's that we all need each other to stay on this path. Hope y'all all stay close!

Yes! I will be at La Ha Reunion 38 Sept. 24-26, 2010. Wouldn't miss it for the world!

cmr

Hello Alumni,

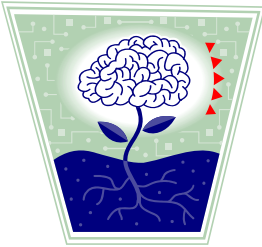
It's hard to put into words the gratitude and excitement I've experienced since returning to La Hacienda. Talk about a feeling of usefulness and a sense of purpose. The staff and upper management have been overwhelmingly supportive. I also want to thank all of you for your support through phone calls and emails. Now that the dust is starting to settle, I want you to know that I'm here to support you. You can reach me at 800-749-6160 ext. 510. My pledge to La Ha and to you is to carry the same passionate message that was carried to me. With your help, we can keep chipping away at those recovery percentages with the common solution found in the first 164 pages of the Big Book-- the 12 Steps.

I attended the San Antonio alumni meeting last night and, man, those guys are on fire. Keep up the good work Joe M! I'm heading to the Midland La Ha Outreach on Thursday with Chris to do a workshop. I will be at Solutions in Austin on September 8th and hopefully visiting Houston in October. My goal is to touch base with all of our alumni groups in the near future.

Heads up! We've got 2 major events coming up here in the Hill Country. First, we will have a hospitality suite at the 35th annual Hill Country Round Up convention at the Inn of The Hills on August 27-29. Come on out and have a hot-dog on us! We would love to see you! Second, the 38th annual La Hacienda Alumni Reunion is just around the corner on September 24-26th 2010. I'm already fired up about renewing friendships and making new friends. Don't wait any longer to make accommodations because hotels are filling up. If you have any questions that can't be answered on the website, please give me a call. We look forward to sharing some space with you!

Until then, God Bless,

Joe Hartwell
Alumni Support
800-749-6160 ext: 510



Brain Food for the Recovering Soul

Your body is a temple, but keep the spirits on the outside.
-- Author Unknown

Medical Rounds

Insomnia

by Katie McQueen, MD

Not being able to go to sleep or stay asleep is very common in recovery. Your outside doctor may want to prescribe medicine to help you sleep. Most of these medicines can lead to relapse and addiction. Alcohol or pills may have helped you fall asleep in the past, but substances change your body and brain's natural ability to regulate sleep.

Your recovery depends on learning new ways to take care of yourself. Follow these tips each night. It may take a week or two before you can tell a difference.

Change your lifestyle to promote good sleep.

- Avoid caffeine, especially in the afternoon or evening. Coffee, cola and tea are obvious sources of caffeine. Caffeine may also "hide" in chocolate, medicines, and soft drinks.
- Avoid tobacco and any other stimulating substances at bedtime.
- Exercise regularly, but avoid strenuous exercise within 3 hours before you go to bed.
- Don't eat a heavy meal close to bedtime.
- Consider drinking a warm beverage like herbal tea or warm milk.

Improve your sleep environment.

- Keep the temperature in your bedroom cool, but not cold. Keep the bedroom dark and quiet. Be sure your mattress is comfortable.

Slow down your mind at bedtime.

- Many people find it hard to "turn off their mind" at bedtime. If this happens to you, gently remind yourself about surrender and acceptance. Set your thoughts aside.
- Use an evening meeting to release negative thoughts or rumination.

Follow these steps for healthy sleep.

- Don't go to bed until you're sleepy. If you are not ready, you can't make yourself fall asleep.
- Don't use the bed for anything except sleeping or being intimate. Don't read, worry, eat, watch television or do anything else in bed. The bed is for sleeping.
- If you're not asleep after about 30 minutes, leave the bedroom. Do something relaxing and return to bed when you're sleepy.
- Repeat step 3 as many times as needed. Soon you will get into bed and fall asleep within 30 minutes.
- Get up at the same time every day, even on days you are not working or going to school.
- Don't take naps.
- Steps 5 and 6 will help make sure you're sleepy at bedtime. If you follow these tips and your insomnia doesn't get better, be sure to tell your health care provider.

Focus Group

Making the Transition

by Mike Shivers, LCDC

One of the most difficult tasks that our alumni have to achieve is to cross over that Bridge of Recovery when they leave La Hacienda and return to the community. The ones who have succeeded in that transition—remained sober and clean—tell us that they immediately began making meetings, obtained a sponsor, and worked the 12 Steps. So the essential question becomes: What enables the ones that succeed to succeed? For instance, why will some who leave treatment go to meetings consistently and others not at all? And finally, what makes some acquire a sponsor and begin working the 12 Steps out in the community and others not? One of the key elements that makes the difference is the interpersonal dynamic of learning to trust others as well as trusting that the 12 Step process will work for me—keep me sober and clean!

This dynamic of interpersonal trusting is illuminated most clearly in the original recovery relationship between Bill W. and Dr. Bob. Neither of them could stay sober without the other. In fact, Bill most likely would have drunk that night in Akron had he not been able to get ahold of Bob. This is the relational foundation of recovery—to be able to share our stories with one another, to learn to trust and make ourselves vulnerable in the presence of the other, and to learn to be rigorously honest with ourselves and others. It is the process of 'telling on myself' and experiencing the inner peace that eventually emerges from that self-confessing dynamic that keeps me coming back to the meetings and keeps me sharing with my sponsor and others in the recovery program. Thus the phrase: "It's a program of attraction."



Hello, my name is Krystle Lawrence...

and I am the new Alumni Follow-Up Coordinator for La Hacienda. I am very excited to be part of the La Hacienda team as well as part of your treatment and recovery.

I will be calling alumni who have been out of treatment about 90 days and then again at one year to touch base and see how everything is going. We will also call about one week after discharge to see how your first continuing care appointment went, to make sure you found a meeting to go to and find out how well you are settling into life and recovery after treatment. If I don't reach you I will leave a message. Please return my call!

It is important to us to know how you are doing and to offer any assistance you may need. We are not only here for you during your treatment stay but after you leave and begin recovery at home. I look forward to talking with you and meeting many of you at the Reunion!

Krystle Lawrence, ext. 516
Alumni Follow-Up Coordinator

Life will take on new meaning.

To watch people recover, to see them help others,

to watch loneliness vanish,

to see a fellowship grow up about you,

to have a host of friends—

this is an experience you will not want to miss.

- *Alcoholics Anonymous*, p. 89

Take Time

Books:

Slaying the Dragon: The History of Addiction Treatment and Recovery in America by William L. White

Movies:

When Love Is Not Enough: The Lois Wilson Story starring Winona Ryder and Barry Pepper —Hallmark Hall of Fame Productions

Links:

Is Alcoholics Anonymous Effective? A.A. Success Rates to Consider by Dick B.
<http://www.dickb.com/aaarticles/isalcoholicsanonymouseffective.shtml>



From Leonard's Kitchen to Yours

Chicken & Roasted Grapes

Ingredients	Amounts	Method
Chicken Breast	4 each	Grill or pan fry
Grapes	1 bunch	Pull from stem wash and place on sheet pan and bake for 30 minutes at 350 degrees. Take 1 cup and blend in blender. Set aside for later.
Margarine	1/2 stick	Melt margarine.
Flour	1 cup	Add flour to margarine. Make a roux.
Chicken Base	1 tbs	Add to roux.
Milk or Heavy Cream	1 cup	Add to sauce.
Blended Grapes	1 cup	Add to cream sauce.

Pour sauce over chicken. Bake at 325° for 30 minutes. Garnish with whole grapes.

Keep Comin' Back! It works, if you work it!

ALUMNI MEETINGS

AUSTIN	BEAUMONT	BRYAN/COLLEGE STATION	DALLAS/FORT WORTH	HOUSTON
Wednesday 7:30 pm La Hacienda's Solutions 2100 Kramer Ln. Suite 200 Austin, TX 512-835-1994	Monday 6:30 pm St. Andrews Presbyterian Church 1350 N. 23rd Beaumont, TX 409-296-3653	Thursday 6:00 pm La Hacienda- College Station 702 University Dr. Suite 100-D College Station, TX 979-846-9500	Monday 7:00 pm La Hacienda Community Outreach 1320 Greenway Dr Suite 135 Irving, TX 972-751-1500	Tuesday 6:30 pm La Hacienda Community Outreach 2650 Fountain View Suite 120 Houston, TX 713-977-5202
KERRVILLE	PERMIAN BASIN	SAN ANTONIO	THE WOODLANDS	<i>In addition to these meetings, there are other recovery meetings available at our Outreach Offices in Irving, Houston and San Antonio. For more information, contact staff at the numbers listed for each office.</i>
Sunday 11:00 am La Hacienda Treatment Center Hunt, TX 830-238-4222	Thursday 7:00 pm La Hacienda Community Outreach 206 N. Midkiff Suite 1-D Midland, TX 432-697-0272	Monday 7:00 pm La Hacienda Community Outreach 8600 Wurzbach Rd Suite 702 San Antonio, TX 210-692-0001	Monday 6:30 pm 8701 New Trails Dr Suite 150 The Woodlands, TX 281-367-1015 Ext. 106	

FAMILY MEETINGS

AUSTIN	BEAUMONT	BRYAN/COLLEGE STATION	DALLAS/FORT WORTH	HOUSTON
Monday 8:00 pm La Hacienda's Solutions 2100 Kramer Ln Suite 200 Austin, TX 512-835-1994	Tuesday 6:30 pm St. Andrews Presbyterian Church 1350 N. 23rd Beaumont, TX 409-296-3653	Thursday 6:00 pm La Hacienda- College Station 702 University Dr. Suite 100-D College Station, TX 979-846-9500	Monday 7:00 pm La Hacienda Community Outreach 1320 Greenway Dr Suite 135 Irving, TX 972-751-1500	Tuesday 6:30 pm La Hacienda Community Outreach 2650 Fountain View Suite 120 Houston, TX 713-977-5202
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Thursday 7:00 pm La Hacienda Community Outreach 604-B Junction Hwy Kerrville, TX 830-238-4222		Monday 7:00 pm La Hacienda Community Outreach 8600 Wurzbach Rd Suite 702 San Antonio, TX 210-692-0001	Tuesday 6:30 pm 2002 Timberloch Place Suite 200 The Woodlands, TX 281-296-5727	

Due to HIPAA laws and regulations, La Hacienda is in the process of tightening procedures for contacting alumni after discharge. If you want to allow La Hacienda to continue to contact you, please email us with your contact information at: newsletter@lahacienda.com or by mail at: Lisa Jackson, La Hacienda Treatment Center, PO Box 1, Hunt, TX 78024.