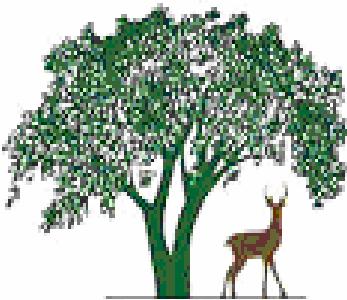


A View From Serenity Hill

January 2006

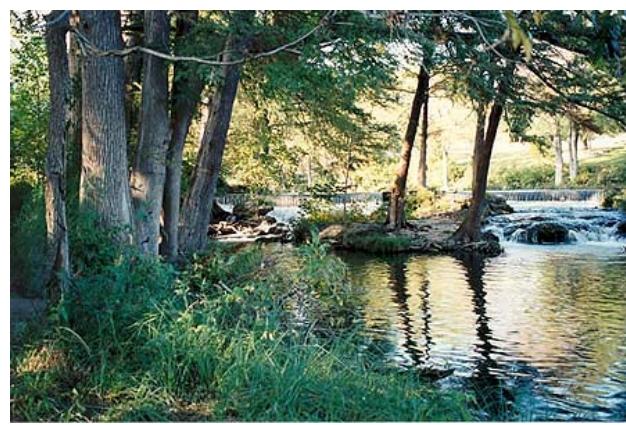


La Hacienda's 34th Annual Reunion Soon Approaching

That's right! We're gearing up for another spirit filled, three day reunion for all of our alumni, family and friends. We will be having another Motorcycle Run Through the Hills to kick things off. So dust off your helmets and mount up for a serine ride throughout the beautiful Texas Hill Country.

We will have a host of dynamic and powerful speakers to include Mickey B. from College Station, Ralph W. from Los Angeles, and our own Alumni Support Staff to encourage, motivate and lift up all in attendance.

Camping along our beautiful river-side is available during the reunion. Bring your tents and other camping gear and enjoy the finest mother nature has to offer.



The river property is a short walk to and from the La Hacienda campus and should prove to be a great getaway spot for the weekend.

If you're not up for camping, be certain to make lodging reservations right away as hotels are filling up fast due to the many events

underway at that time in the Hill Country. For lodging information you can call the Kerrville Chamber of Commerce at 830-896-1155 or the West Kerr County Chamber of Commerce at 830-367-4322.

For Important Lodging info., see page 4.

For the reunion schedule, see page 6.

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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

Just left the Wednesday BB meeting at the Outpost. Watched 10 people pick up monthly chips. It's the coolest to watch so many folks starting this Journey! Just celebrated 18 years of sobriety and I can still remember how it felt to pick up those chips!

Few days before Christmas. Man! Where did this year go? Seems like I spent my entire year running for airplanes. Grateful to be home for a few weeks!

I find myself in an uncomfortable spot.(here we go!) I realized this week, in yet another airport, that I'm not doing something I talk a lot about. "You can start today becoming the person you want to be, or continue to make excuses for why you can't be that person." Yall have heard me say it a hundred times. I have spent most of this past year making excuses for not doing some things I know I need to do! (EXERCISE) All legitimate excuses but excuses just the same. It all revolves around that old "discipline" word. Yuk!
(P88....)"We alcoholics are undisci-

plined"). I argued about this discipline word for ever...because I was never late to work or to pay a bill, I figured I was cool in that dept .It's becoming clear that in THIS dept. I am a MESS! (And some of you thought I was perfect!?)

It's that dang 10th step that did me in. Remember? We are supposed to be looking

for selfishness, dishonesty, resentment, and fear. Dishonesty? Me? Exercise has always been a huge part of my sobriety. I do better in all areas of my life when I exercise. I realized, in my nightly review, that I had just stopped. (6 and 7 character defects.....does laziness come to mind?) At 52 years old, I just found myself making excuses not to sweat .Too much travel, too much work...Nobody was pressuring me. Patty doesn't care if I ride the bike

*"You can start today
becoming the person you
want to be, or continue to
make excuses for why you
can't be that person."*

or not .It's been such a subtle thing, this slow slide onto the sofa! (Just like not making those meetings?)

Well I figure if I at least own it here, I will be motivated to change. Heaven forbid that I LOOK bad!

Gonna start now. No wimpy New Years Resolutions here! I'm too young for the front porch just yet. Right after this show is over, I'm gonna go pump up those tires.... and maybe wait for warmer weather!

Hope every one of you has a good New Year. Remember to call us if you're in a bad spot. We are here to help if we can. REMEMBER! LEAVE THE # AND YOUR NAME SLOWLY! We can't call ya back if we don't know who it is!

cmr1-800-749-6160 ext. 510
craymer@lahacienda.com

A Burden Shared...

No one can meet all the needs of another. Our separateness is our mutual strength. We should be supportive, however we should not do for another what they can do for themselves. Because when you do that, you make them dependant. Encourage them but, let them grow at their own pace. Our best relationship is the one where dependence is mutual, independence is equal and the obligation is reciprocal.

This means we're a partnership. We both depend upon one another from time to time, yet we're independent and we can stand alone and be okay. And, in time our obligation to one another is just a give and take basis. And, there's some balance. I don't love them because I need them, I need them because I love them.

~Unknown

Alicia N...

Dear Alumni...

Hopefully this newsletter finds you all resting peacefully now that the Christmas season has passed. Ethan and I had a wonderful Christmas together...he wrote his own list for Santa this year...it was priceless to watch. I pray that you all survived, as well and are off to a good start this New Year. I am excited to see what this next year will bring...this past year was quite interesting for me and brought with it a lot of growth...ouch! My hope for each of you is that this New Year is one of

freedom...freedom from the obsession to drink or use, freedom from the bondage of self, freedom to be who you really are

inside, freedom from fear, freedom to finally live...there are so many things in our lives that seem to hinder us from being truly free, but with this program we can find exactly what those things are and break loose of the chains.

Hundreds of new people came through this hospital this past year...all different stories, different backgrounds, different drama, different conceptions of God, etc. But, each of them shared in the internal void. ..the emptiness and darkness

"...with this program we can find exactly what those things are and break loose of the chains. "

inside that they had been using alcohol and drugs cover up. You know the rest of the story...they will either continue doing that or seek a Power to fill the void. The book talks about our two options..."alcoholic death or live on a spiritual basis"... "spiritual basis of life-or else". If you are an alcoholic/addict, these two options are the same no matter who we are or where you live. I had the honor this past month to travel to London, England and met many people who were dealing with this exact same thing. Some were very clear on this and you could see it in their eyes that they were seekers. Others, however, were sober, but not free and were hungry for the message of spiritual action. One of the women I got to spend some time with at the conference recently emailed me and the last sentence of the email really struck my heart. She wrote "I just want to feel like other people look. Like they are happy and whole on their own, sober and alone and just hanging out. At peace I suppose. I will give anything to feel like that." Thank God that there is an answer for her desire and it is something that is possible to attain...she is ready and willing to work these steps and allow God to come in and change her life. We have been given such a gift...the gift of freedom...let's make sure we are sharing our gift with others so that they can enjoy it as well.

Reunion is around the corner...please make a special effort to try and make it...we would love to see you all and make this the best one yet! We are grateful to have Todd McMann added to our department...he is an old friend and a Dallas alumni member and seems to fit right in out here. Keep in touch and keep seeking the Light!

Peace and Love –

Alicia

P.S. Real quick, there was a little old man in London who was not an alcoholic who heard me speak He stood about 5 feet tall with wiry white hair and he came up to me the day after my talk and said "I just have one question...why after marrying one drug addict man, did you go and marry another...what were you thinking?" I laughed so hard...couldn't give him a good answer, but I laughed hard!!

Alicia N.

1-800-749-6160 ext. 512
anew@lahacienda.com

BOLDNESS AND NO EXCUSES

Obstacles are those frightening things that become visible when we take our eyes off our goals.

~Henry Ford

Todd M...

Hello from the new member of the alumni staff,

Just thought I would tell you a little about me and how God got me to this point.

I am truly blessed by this program and God for the things he has given me by remaining to be of service to him and others.

I was a patient here in 1998 (and not a very good one) but I finally was given some truth about myself and my disease. I spent lots of time in meetings, treatment centers, and other state re-education programs dying of this disease and not once did anyone tell me the truth about my disease or how this program works. I heard lots "I love yous", "just keep coming back", "and put the plug in

"...with this program we can find exactly what those things are and break loose of the chains. "

the jugs". Well that didn't work for me; I tried all those things to no avail. Then with the help of a lot of people here and people being real honest with me, I saw the truth for the first time. And God has blessed me both through the good and the bad. I will celebrate and be grateful for 7 years of sobriety on January 4th 2006. It is because they told me to continue to work this program and make changes in the way I react to the world, and guess what? It worked through all of the days since. I have had bad times and great times in sobriety and God and the programs of A.A. and C.A. have carried me through it all. I have applied these steps in other areas of my life and it works there too. It's an awesome life that I have today, I am almost never bored and when that boredom shows up I know I ain't doing what I should be doing, working with others or being of service. I was blessed a month and half ago to have the opportunity to come back to the place my life started and be of services and work at a job that I love. God and the members of

this program have taught me so much, but I look forward to the lessons all of you will teach me in the years to come. Please call or write if I can ever help. PLEASE DON'T WAIT TIL IT'S TOO BAD. I look forward to talking and meeting all of you in the days and years to come. Thank you for helping me to get to this place.

Your Brother on the Bike, Todd.

Big Book of A.A. pg.164 Still you may say: "But I will not have the benefit of contact with you who write this book." We cannot be sure. God will determine that, so you must remember that your real reliance is always upon him. He will show you how to create the fellowship you crave.

Reunion Lodging

It's just around the corner. Kick off is on Friday afternoon, May 5th with registration and a motorcycle run through the Hill Country. As always, the festivities will include speakers, food and camaraderie. The event will close Sunday with meditation on Serenity Hill and an open 12 Step meeting.

You know the routine but now hear this!!

You need to make your hotel reservations now!!! Kerrville is hosting another major event and hotel rooms are booking up fast. The YO Ranch Resort and the Inn of the Hills are booked already. La Hacienda has blocked off about 40 rooms. They are first-come, first-served and the block will expire in April. **Call these places and make your reservations now!!! Make sure you mention you will be attending La Hacienda's Alumni Reunion.**

Hunter House Inn and Suites	830-367-2377	\$65.00/night plus tax
Days Inn	830-896-1000	\$79.99/night plus tax
Hampton Inn	830-257-0600	\$89.00/night plus tax
Holiday Inn Express	830-896-1313	\$129.00/night plus tax

Also, there are still rooms available, but not blocked for La Hacienda, at: Comfort Inn, 830-792-7700; Motel 6, 830-257-1500; Super 8, 830-896-1511.

Jaime L

Brothers and Sisters,

Happy Holidays to each and every one of you! What an incredible year of tumultuous change and personal growth it has been. I am grateful for all of it, although, if I am going to be rigorously honest, I can tell you it was far from comfortable. I am a firm believer that change is good and a certainty in our universe that we will all have to deal with at one point or another. Our individual recoveries are a testament to this. Our Big Book repeatedly talks to us about change – it speaks of (paraphrasing) “roots grasping new soil”; “maintaining the new order of things...”; “A new life has been given us...”; etc. etc. Change is immanent whether I want it to be or not. The priceless dividend that spiritual change rewards us with is a new level of understanding and a more effective repertoire of tools to use for the Creator’s purposes. I will be a much finer spearhead for God to use in 2006; of this I am confident. My experience is that He is already using my “stuff” to help His kids.

While taking one of my sponsees thor-

oughly through the work, I was moved to do some serious work in the 2nd Step. I know there is a Power greater than me out there because of the obvious fact that I am sober right now. What I was not aware of were the incredibly diverse and fascinating avenues that were right at my doorstep in regards to where and how to find

*“The priceless dividend
that spiritual change
rewards us with is a new
level of understanding ...”*

Power. Austin is just bursting with spiritual opportunities. I began to seek the Mystery every where I went, and was given spiritual experiences and mystical happenings at every turn of the corner. I was walking to class on the campus of UT and was drawn to a table that was inviting people to attend a Sahaj Marj, or Natural Path, meditation group. I went and found myself sitting at precept’s home at 6:00am for 1 hour of individual meditations, 3 days in a row. Far out! Next came a session with an Ayurvedic healer form Sedona. This one was intense and still resonat-

ing with me. I was blessed with the opportunity to hear the Dalai Lama speak on campus, which left Austin’s downtown lights imbued with a beauty I had never perceived before. My consciousness underwent a distinct shift that evening. One of the latest spiritualities placed in front of me has been Deeksha, or energy transfer. You have to lie down for half an hour after receiving an individual deeksha; they won’t let you drive. I’m going back for some more of that ju-ju! What are you doing to seek this Power that is all around you? Are you seeking at all? I should mention that I undertook all of these bonus activities in addition to working the steps, going to meetings, and helping others. None of these activities could replace that. My spirit has been expanded through all of these forms of seeking and they were exactly what I needed to help me make it through this year. I had a need inside me and the Universe responded in kind; again.

Love,

Jaime L
512-835-1994

Ego

Is there no hope for the very intelligent alcoholic who cannot see that it’s his ego, not his I.Q. that is the issue in his drinking?

Yes, there is indeed hope. By a paradox he will later rejoice in, but cannot recognize today, his progressive illness will save him.

If it doesn’t kill him first, alcoholism will beat him to his knees. Pain will be his educator, his mentor. He will topple from the throne from which he has looked down with condemnation upon “those alcoholics”.

He will echo the words at the end of chapter two of the Big Book:

“Yes, I am one of them; I must have this thing”.

c. 1998 The Grapevine, Inc., The Best of the Grapevine (Vol. 3), pp. 308-9

Upcoming Events

Feb. 11	Service Conference speaker Chris R. Speaks	Yuma, AZ
Feb. 16	AA Speak Chris R. Speaks	Lexington, TX
Feb 24 - 26	AA Spring Fling Chris R. Speaks	Sacramento, CA
March 3 - 5	Chisolm Trail Convention at the Old Settler's Park Pavilion Alicia N. Speaks For info.: Diane 512-659-7770 or Cheryl 512-914-2500	Round Rock, TX
March 10-11	Pockets of Enthusiasm Chris R. Speaks	Spokane, WA
March 23	Las Vegas AA Chris R. Speaks	Las Vegas, NV
April 1	Spring Branch Club Chris R. Speaks	Houston, TX

Green Beans

It has occurred to me that, even though I like green beans, I do not have a problem, nor am I powerless over them. I can say this for the following reasons:

I can't tell you the last time I ate green beans and how many I ate.
I am not planning the next time I will eat green beans or how many I will eat.
I don't know if we have any green beans in the house, and if so, where they are.
I have never hidden green beans around the house.
I have never lied about how many green beans I ate or what I did when I ate them.
I have never forgotten what I did after eating green beans.
I have never embarrassed or abused myself or my family after eating green beans.
I have never stolen money from my employer to pay for green beans.
I have never cheated on my wife after eating green beans.
I have never been stopped by the police for driving while eating green beans.
I have never been unable to stop eating green beans once I started.

None of these things has ever occurred as a result of eating green beans. And, I think I can safely say that if any of them had occurred, I would have serious reservations about ever eating another green bean.

And yet, all of these things happened when I drank alcohol and, I thought they were perfectly normal. Sure sounds like powerless to me.

Reunion Schedule



Friday, May 5th

2 nd Annual Motorcycle Run Through the Hills	2:00pm
Registration	4-7:00pm
Hamburgers	5-7:30pm
Collegiate Speaker(Bodega)	7-8:00pm
La Ha Bonfire Meeting	8-9:00pm

Saturday, May 6th

Registration	7:00am
Power Pole (Ropes Course)	9-12:00pm
SPEAKER	10:30am
Mickey B. College Station, TX	
Lunch (BBQ)	11:45am
Announcements/Raffle	1:00pm
SPEAKER	1:30pm
Ralph W., Los Angeles, CA	
Birthday Meeting	2:30-4:00pm

Sunday, May 7th

Meditation on Serenity Hill	9-10:00am
A.A. Meeting on the lawn	11:00am
(weather permitting)	

CALL THE ALUMNI DEPARTMENT FOR DETAILS

1-800-749-6160

CHRIS, EXT.510

ALICIA, EXT.512

JUDY, EXT.513

NO CAMERAS / NO PETS

ALL ARE WELCOME (ALUMNI, FAMILY AND FRIENDS)

CALL NOW FOR HOTEL RESERVATIONS (NOW)

RIVER CAMPING OPEN

LA HACIENDA

145 La Hacienda Way
Hunt, TX 78024

Phone: 830-238-4222
Toll Free: 800-749-6160
website: www.lahacienda.com

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