

December 2007



LA HACIENDA TREATMENT CENTER

Happy Holidays
From Serenity Hill

Chris R..... Merry Christmas!!!!

Nov. 13th was the day. 20 years sober. Freaks me out! Never thought it would happen. It was the only birthday that was as emotional as my first one. So many of you sent emails and called I wasn't able to get anything done at work! Thanks for all the kind words. I thought with 20 years folks would treat me with a little more respect.....Not! ☺

Birthday night at the ol' Outpost was pretty special. Patty introduced me and had me crying before I ever got up! The room was packed to the rafters with some folks I hadn't seen in years. My first sponsor, Don, surprised me with a visit! It was pretty overwhelming.

I am finished with most of my travel for this year, besides holiday trips to some of the alumni groups. We love seeing the buddies. I know this time of year is a bear for most of us but it sure would be nice seeing some of you old geezers at these gatherings. It's a great way for us to reconnect with some of you. Just stop by a "wing place", pick up a BIG order, and show up. You don't have to get dressed up for us (just don't forget the wings)!

The Big Book on page 145 says "The greatest enemies of us alcoholics are resentment, jealousy, envy, frustration, and fear." I get phone calls everyday that verify these thoughts. Lots of folks are hurting out there! I spent so many years in those places....alone in my house....thinking. Isolation and lack of gratitude are the food that feeds that misery. Every year about this time I seem to talk about this. Bill W. wrote LOTS about it and my 14 years at La Ha confirm it. We can't stay sober by ourselves...not if we are the real deal. That's why I always make such a big deal about staying in touch. It was so hard for this loner to do that. It is not an option today. Check out the schedules for the Alumni Christmas parties and our upcoming speaking stuff and make plans to come. I promise you will get some new perspective and a sense of gratitude that will sustain you through the tough times you may be experiencing.

Maybe it's the 20 years ... maybe it's the upcoming holidays....but I am so grateful for those of you who have allowed me in your life a bit! 2008 is going to be good!

cmr

PS Patty and I still not smoking! Amazing. c

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Alicia N...

Happy Holidays Alumni,

I can't believe it is Christmas time again...we put up our tree this weekend and hung beautiful lights outside (and in Ethan's room!) and I love the feelings that it brings. Ethan got on the Toys-R-Us website and wrote down exactly what he would like Santa to bring him this year – all the way down to “Season 4 Volume 2” of one of his favorite shows...I laughed so hard...ah, to be young again.

For so many years in my disease, I dreaded the holidays because I knew I would have to try and hold it together around my family and “act” so happy when I was dying inside. I would have no money to spend on gifts and that only added to my

self-loathing. I would usually be loaded when I showed up to my family's house so that I would feel comfortable enough and have enough courage to show my face...ahhh, yes, Christmas time...”tidings of comfort and joy” – that was me...hahaha!

Wow, how things have changed. To be free from all of that internal conflict, to hold my head up high when I am with my loved ones, to sing silly Christmas songs with my son and laugh as we decorate the tree, to get MY picture taken with Santa, to fully understand about giving rather than receiving...these are all miracles for me and signs that I know that God has indeed “recreated my life” and I am forever grateful. I will celebrate 9 years in January...still don't under-

stand it...all I wanted to do was to quit drinking and doing dope – I had no idea that these steps would do so much more than that.

I know the holidays can be rough so I pray that you seek the Light even more, find someone in need, push yourself to fight and be free!! I look forward to see-



ing a lot of you at the different Christmas parties. Lets laugh a lot this holiday – it is good for the soul...hey, go get YOUR picture taken with Santa...dare you!

Love – Alicia

Spirituality

Spirituality is an awakening—or is it all the loose ends woven together into a mellow fabric? It's patience in the face of stupidity. It's feeling that you want to knock somebody's head off—and walking away instead... It's wearing dungarees that feel like a tuxedo. It's wanting to go home, yet being there.... It's an awareness that survival is a savage fight between you and yourself. It's a magnetic pull toward those who are down and out. It's knowing that even the bad times are good... The singular thing that is spirituality cannot be given to a fellowman by word of mouth. If every man is to have it, then every man must earn it, in his own way by his own hand stamped by the seal of himself, in his own individual right.

C. 1973 AAWS, Came to Believe p. 5 — 6

Louis R.

Greetings to Our Alumni and Their Families,

I hope this year's end finds you well and sober, seeking God and learning to have an ongoing experience with living on a spiritual path, based on the truth of Step One. I wish you guidance and the ability to ask for help and to seek assistance of people who have experience with the direction of recovery in the Big Book and the willingness to go to any lengths for an ongoing spiritual experience.



We have a new co-worker in the Alumni Department since October –

Courtney Bernhard, who has been a delight to be with and is very effective and natural working with the finest people in the world – our patients. I am extremely pleased that she has joined us.

Additionally, I am grateful this past year to become a part of the Alumni Department and have the opportunity to do the special and rewarding work that we do. I am thankful to Chris and Alicia for opportunity and guidance. It has been a gas.

Stay in touch, take care, and let us know how we can help you. Plan to make the Reunion in 2008 – Earl H. will definitely be here with us for that celebration. May the New Year be a search for truth and a time of peace and well-being – recovered as a result of reliance upon God.

Come on up to the house,
Louis Romano

lromano@lahacienda.com

800-749-6160, ext 515

Recharging

The simplicity of the AA program teaches me that happiness isn't something I can "demand." It comes upon me quietly, while I serve others. In offering my hand to the newcomer or to someone who has relapsed, I find that my own sobriety has been recharged with indescribable gratitude and happiness.

C. 1990 AAWS, Daily Reflections, p. 25

"Happiness is often the result of being too busy to be miserable"

Judy T.....

Many of you will remember the house of pain (the telephone room) from days gone by. Well nowadays it has become the happy place. The La Hacienda Store took over the dreary space and filled it full of great books and recovery aids. We keep a fresh supply of Chris Raymer and Alicia New CD's and our very own Dr. Dan Boone has a CD on the effects of drugs and alcohol on the brain that sells like hot cakes! Of course we have more than that but too many to name.

If you have a friend or loved one (including yourself) who has a sobriety birthday coming

up, I have some beautiful enamel colored medallions and in gold and silver also. How about you guys doing sponsor work? Need any workbooks or



reading material to work through the Steps? Don't forget your sponsor this Christmas. Say thanks in a fun way with one of these great tee's from Recovery Threads, that reads "4 out of 5 voices in my head agree recovery is a good thing". There are lots of fun sayings to pick from. Be-

lieve it or not the best seller is a pink hoodie that say's "Sober Princess" on the front!

Give me a call and get some of those Christmas gifts checked off the list. If I don't have it, I'll find where you can get it. I'd love to here from you. Call me at 1.800.749.6160 ext 513.

May your Higher Power keep you in the path of becoming every good thing you can dream of this Holiday season.

Judy T., Your Friend in the Store!

Ext. 513

Courtney....

Hi everyone! I'm the newest member of the Alumni Department. Let's start with saying that I am absolutely honored to have the opportunity to work out here. In just the short time that I've been here, it's been the coolest, most rewarding deal to watch people come in broken and make a start at a new life. I am so grateful to get to be a part of this thing. Believe me; I never thought my life would be as it is today. Back in March of '03 when I came through here myself, working at a rehabilitation center for drugs and alcohol was not in *my* plan. *My* plan continued to get me in and out of quite a few more centers. It wasn't until I became willing to give this deal my all did the promises start materializing in my life. I never dreamed that my external difficulties would work out, much less my internal discomfort. The Big Book promises me that I / we can get well. All that was/is required of me is that I "trust in God and clean house." (pg 98) As a result of this and working with others, just like the women before me have done, I am free. Today I can be a part of my family; I can be an honest friend, and a good employee. Today, I can goof off and belly laugh with the girls. Today I am aware of the miracles happening not only in my life but in the lives of those around me. Today I can be of "maximum helpfulness to others." (pg 102) I absolutely owe my life to God, this program, and people like you guys. I can't wait to see what lies ahead. A Merry Christmas to all of you! Please don't hesitate to call me at ext. 511.

God Bless, Courtney

Upcoming Events

December 6	Permian Basin Alumni Christmas Party	Midland, TX
	Chris	
December 6	College Station Christmas Party	College Station, TX
	Louis	
December 10	Dallas Alumni Christmas Party	Dallas, TX
	Chris	
December 11	Houston Alumni Christmas Party	Houston, TX
	Chris	
December 11	Temple Alumni Christmas Party	Temple, TX
	Alicia	
December 15	Austin Alumni Christmas Party	Austin, TX
	Alumni staff visit	
December 18	Kerrville Alumni Christmas Party	Kerrville, TX
	Alumni staff visit	
December 18	The Woodlands Christmas Party	The Woodlands, TX
December 19	Rio Grande Valley Christmas	McAllen, TX
	Louis	
December 22	San Antonio Christmas Party	San Antonio, TX
	Alumni staff visit	
January 7	Lubbock AA	Lubbock, TX
	Chris	
January 11, 12	AA Conference	Myrtle Beach, CA
	Alicia	
January 15	New Jersey Conference	Location posted soon!
	Chris	
January 18, 19	Coastal Bend Jamboree	Corpus Christie, TX
	Chris	
February 9	AA Young Peoples Cook Out	Freemont, NE
	Chris	
February 16	PPG 20th Anniversary AA	Dallas, TX
	Chris	
February 23	Tampa AA	Tampa, FL
	Chris	
March 1	Sponsorship Workshop	Lafayette, LA
	Chris	
May 2—4	36th Alumni Reunion	Hunt, TX



LA HACIENDA TREATMENT CENTER

P.O. Box 1
145 La Hacienda Way
Hunt, TX 78024

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

Simply the Best

CALL THE

ALUMNI DEPARTMENT

1-800-749-6160

CHRIS, EXT. 510

ALICIA, EXT. 512

JUDY, EXT. 513

LOUIS, EXT. 515

COURTNEY, EXT. 511

Websites of Interest

- www.ppgaadallas.org
- www.powerfullyrecovered.com
- www.aaintegrity.com
- www.houston.lahacienda.com
- www.dallas.lahacienda.com
- www.midland.lahacienda.com
- www.sanantonio.lahacienda.com
- www.recoveryzone.org
- www.aa.org
- www.ca.org
- www.na.org

Humility

Perpetual quietness of heart. It is to have no trouble. It is never to be fretted or vexed, irritable or sore; to wonder at nothing that is done to me, to feel nothing done against me. It is to be at rest when nobody praises me, and when I am blamed or despised, it is to have a blessed home in myself where I can go in and shut the door and kneel to my Father in secret and be at peace, as in a deep sea of calmness, when all around and about is seeming trouble.

- from a plaque on Dr. Bob's desk

C. 1980 AAWS, *Dr. Bob and the Good Oldtimers*, p.222

