



A View From Serenity Hill

MARCH 2008

La Hacienda Alumni Newsletter

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Chris R..	2
Louis R..	2
Alicia N...	3
Judy T. and Courtney B.	4
Upcoming Events	5
Contact Information	6

36th Annual Alumni Reunion



It's reunion time once again! The 36th Annual! Make reservations now for a weekend full of fellowship and excitement. Earl H. is coming for round two and Chris S. from New Jersey will also be visiting us! Below is a list of local hotels and you can also contact Kristen for a more complete list, ksmith@lahacienda.com

Kerrville

Inn of the Hills*	830-895-5000
YO Ranch*	830-257-4440
Holiday Inn Express*	830-895-9500
Best Western*	830-896-1313

Ingram

Lazy Hills Guest Ranch*	830-367-5600
Hunter House Motor Inn*	800-655-2377

Hunt

River Oaks Lodge*	800-608-2596
River Road B & B*	877-895-4548
Roddy Tree Ranch	800-309-9868

Friday, May 2

Registration	4-7:00pm
Hamburgers	5-7:30pm
COLLEGIATE SPEAKER	7-8:00pm
La Ha Bonfire Meeting	8-9:00pm

Saturday, May 3

Registration	7:00am
Power Pole (Ropes Course)	9-12:00pm
SPEAKER	10:30am
Chris S., Bernardsville, NJ	
Lunch (BBQ)	11:45am
Announcements/Raffle	1:00pm
SPEAKER	1:30pm
Earl H., California	
Birthday Meeting	2:30-4:00pm

Sunday, May 4

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

No Cameras / No Pets
All are Welcome (Alumni, family and friends)
River Camping Open

* Ask for Special La Ha Rates

Chris R.

GIVE US OUR BREAD, OUR DAILY BREAD...

We can't live off the food we ate last year or even last month. I need daily nutrition to stay healthy. The early folks in AA used this comparison in describing our spiritual lives. We don't do well trying to live off a Spiritual Experience we had in the PAST. We need DAILY contact with God to stay sober and comfortable in our

own skins. Daily.

I talk to people every day that are struggling with this. After a while, they begin to question if they ever REALLY had a Spiritual Experience to begin with. Sad. I have watched thousands of y'all have Spiritual Experiences sitting up on this hill. I mean amazing experiences. But you know the old saying...you grow or you go.

Visiting with many of you that relapse, we have the same discussion. You are trying to make sense of the

relapse by always connecting it to something external. Logical but wrong. A frustrating dead end. Disconnection from our Higher Power is the cause of the relapse. Reconnection is the solution. I know some of you are grinding your teeth right now. I'm not making light of your struggles or the drama...that stuff is real! The BB on p. 45 says it best. (we talk about it all the time) "Lack of Power that was our dilemma". ...

When I work the steps I get the promised Spiritual Experience. That Experience gives me enough POWER to stay sober and take care of life's dramas with plenty left over. This needed power is what's missing in most of our lives. The desire to stay connected doesn't seem to be enough. It's important but some days, ya know, just aren't any fun! ACTION is the key. Always has been. Go to a meeting, work the steps, especially the 12th one! Folks, people who are sponsoring other

folks aren't the ones coming back to treatment.

After all these years, it still catches me off guard when one of my guys gets loaded. Same conversation always follows..."I thought my case was different". NONE OF US ARE DIFFERENT. When we take the action, we stay connected...and sober.

Reunion 36 is May 2,3,4 2008 Make those hotel reservations NOW. I hear the Inn is already full!? Feel free to bring anyone you want....they don't have to be an alumnus to be welcome. Come for all three days or just a few hours.....we want to see you! Don't forget to watch the weather. Sometimes it's still kind of chilly that time of year. Always fun to have that much POWER up on this hill! cmr

Louis R.....

Greetings to our Alumni and Their Families,

As I write this letter I am reflecting on as many of you as I can remember and wonder how you and the people that you care for and that care about you are doing. My opportunity to keep in touch with you post discharge by phone, Alumni meetings, and 12 step fellowship is limited considering how many of you have passed through here.

The Spirit of the Fellowship is alive and well and never ending, but my ability to perceive it is limited by time and space. However, the Fellowship of the Spirit is unlimited for those of us who commit to this way of life as we move and demonstrate ongoing growth in sobriety in our lives. By not having contact with you, I cannot see how you are but I know that if you are following the path of sobriety laid out by practicing 12 step principles, we are in contact in the world of the Spirit directed by God even though my vision is limited.

This becomes all the more apparent to me when I see you back here at the Sunday Alumni meeting or out there somewhere else and learn that you are alive and well and living with courage and dignity, instead of discouragement and despair.

Even from the limited perspective I have, I do see so many of you doing well and I can take comfort in the fact there are just that many more I will not know about but that are doing well all the same. I encourage you to demonstrate this strength and grace at La Hacienda's 36th year anniversary reunion this May, which is extended for you to celebrate and encourage those who still struggle and have no way out that they can see at this time except through your example. That applied to me until God guided me to people who showed me what sobriety can be and how to follow this spiritual path. The resulting good news is the certainty and unshakeable foundation for sobriety with God that comes out of that desperation and allows me the opportunity to grow along spiritual lines and rise above my problems. Thank goodness for ongoing work with the Steps and with others and the opportunity to develop this better way of living.

Best of all, I look forward to seeing all you at the Reunion.

Come on up to the House

Alicia N.....

Hey Alumni,

Well, here we are again – newsletter and Reunion time. Each year the crowd gets bigger and bigger which is always exciting for us. Reunion is the one time of the year that we really get to see what has grown from the small seed that was planted here at La Hacienda. Don't forget to make your reservations as soon as possible and bring as many people as you want to and share the miracle that happens that weekend with those closest to you. On a side note, Ethan and I are doing great – we are settled in to our new house, he is playing YMCA basketball, reading so well, and riding a bike for the first time now that we are in this great neighborhood...life is good...life is amazing, actually.

I have been really blown away by God's love and grace these past few months – I celebrated 9 years in January and that always amazes me. When I get taken

back to the time right before I got sober, it brings up so many dark memories of the past. That darkness, though, is quickly knocked out by the Light that is my life today...complete opposites. Not to say that my life today is always butterflies and roses, but my how things have changed! How did I get here? My friend and I were talking about just that the other day – "How did this happen...Why was that last desperate cry for help the ONE that would push me into this program?" Working out here, we see people every day crying out for help and then not changing the internal darkness, and therefore, not getting sober... it really does break your heart! I am so blessed that the day came for me that I said "that's it...I will do whatever it takes not to be this woman any more..." Don't really get it...freaks me out that 9 years later here I am!!!!

I spoke in San Antonio this past weekend and had the honor of having my beautiful mother in the

audience – wow – that was emotional. This sweet woman was there the night of my car accident, there when I "came to" in the hospital, there when I was soulless and so deep in my addiction, and now there to hear me talk about what the Power of God has done in my life...pretty cool stuff...thank God for Momma's!!

I have been working out here for almost 6 years now and I want to thank each of you for being a part of my sobriety and helping me grow. I continue to learn and grow – usually by painful experience, but I keep growing. Remember, happiness is a choice, and so is suffering...let's choose happiness!! Can't wait to see all of you at reunion – you better be there!

Peace and Love – Alicia

Courtney

Hey Everyone!

I can't believe it's almost time for Reunion! Having been in the Hill Country for a couple of years now, reunion always brings me back to a place of such gratitude. Ironic really, seeing as gratitude has been an amazing tool for me recently. As I mentioned last newsletter I was a patient here three times. Two of those times I was a patient during reunion. I distinctly remember the excitement of seeing folks I hadn't seen in a year or two, then the look on their face after realizing I was wearing a bracelet rather than a nametag. It was a look of gratitude; grateful that they had a nametag on and grateful that I was safe. Although I'll be the first to say that relapse is a result of not fully conceding

to the innermost self step 1, it takes courage to come back. It's the cowards that stop trying. So, for anyone out there who may be still suffering, don't give up.

On a personal note, working on the hill has been the coolest experience for me these past few months. What a gift to be in a position to help others see the light. Never in a million years did I think that what I thought was my greatest weakness would become my greatest strength. Lately it's been difficult for me to watch the people I care about struggle to get off the fence and get sober. People that I haven't seen or talked to in years are coming out of the woodworks and looking for an answer. What an honor to be able to

know the way out only because of the women before me who selflessly showed me the way. These same women are the ones who have remained in my life through the good times and the bad, who know the ugliest parts of me and love me regardless. I'm blown away on a daily basis at what a life God had in store for me and for everyone who seeks this Power on a daily basis.

I am so looking forward to Reunion and seeing some of you folks I haven't seen in a while. Not to mention the ones I have yet to meet!

Peace,
Courtney

Shoelaces

**Trusting God has transformed my life.
I used to think that God's will was about which shoelace to tie first,
or what job to apply for.
Today, I think God's will, simply put, is to love God
and all of his creation to the best of my ability.
To the extent that I honestly do this,
I discover that I am useful, happy, joyous, and free
-- and the jobs and the shoelaces work themselves out.
The AA Grapevine, February 2008, p. 43**

Judy T.....

Boys and girls, you wouldn't believe it's time to talk about the 2008 Reunion! Please don't wait to make reservations. They go so fast... I'm shopping far and wide for great stuff to fill the shelves. Did you know Big Book covers come in Pink and Purple? Sally from reception is escorting me to a trade show in March, and I will keep you all in mind when we go! Our Case Manager Amy M., (our own little Amy) invented the coolest toy for the big kids; it's a 12 step ball! Remember the cue ball toy from when you were a kid, you shake it and ask a question, and turn it over for the answer? Well, we now have one just for you! And the reunion tee shirt is still on the drawing board, but save your pennies for at least one... maybe the artist will sign it for you. Ok, see you soon and bring a nice long stick to roast the marshmallow down at the bonfire! Onward Big Book thumpers!

Judy T. "Store Buddy"

Upcoming Events

March 1	2211 Club	Kerrville, TX
6pm	Chris	
March 6	College Station Alumni	College Station, TX
6pm	Chris	
March 15	Sponsorship Workshop	Lafayette, LA
	Chris	
March 28	Houston Alumni	Houston, TX
	Chris	
March 29	San Antonio CA	San Antonio, TX
10pm	Alicia	
April 16	AA Group Amarillo	Amarillo, TX
	Chris	
April 18	Lake Charles AA Conference	Lake Charles, LA
	Chris	
May 2 - 4	La Hacienda Alumni Reunion	Hunt, TX
May 10	San Jose AA	San Jose, CA
	Chris	
May 30, 31	Toronto Canada CA Conference	Toronto, Canada
	Chris	
June 6 - 8	Calgary Gratitude Round Up AA	Calgary, Canada
	Chris	
June 28	Tell It Like It Is Group AA	Covington, LA
	Chris	
June 18, 19	AA Conference	Indianapolis, IN
	Alicia	
July.....	Sometime this month Chris will take his 1st vacation ever!	
August 1 – 3	AA Aggeland Convention	College Station, TX
	Alicia	
August 9	AA Dinner	Woodstock, IL
	Chris	



La Hacienda
PO Box 1
Hunt, Texas 78024
1-800-749-6160

Websites of Interest!

www.ppgaadallas.org

www.powerfullyrecovered.com

www.aaintegrity.com

www.recoveryzone.org

www.aa.org

www.ca.org

www.na.org

Call the Alumni Department

Chris, ext. 510

Alicia, ext. 512

Judy, ext. 513

Louis, Ext. 515

Courtney, Ext. 511



Something

To me, there is no "spiritual side" to the program of Alcoholics Anonymous;

the entire program is spiritual.

In my view, some of the evidences of a spiritual awakening are: maturity; an end to habitual hatred; the ability to love and to be loved in return;

the ability to believe, even without understanding, that Something lets the sun rise in the morning and set at night, makes the leaves come out in the spring and drop off in the fall, and gives the birds song.

Why not let this Something be God?

c. 1973 AAWS, *Came To Believe . . .*, p. 48

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