

# *A View from Serenity Hill*



La Hacienda Alumni Newsletter

October 2015

## *Alumni Meeting Speaker Swap October 2015*

In October we will be doing Speaker Swap in our Alumni meetings. Someone from one city will travel to another city to share their experience, strength, and hope! Please join the meeting in your area this month!

**Austin - Vince W** - Wednesday, Oct 14, 7:30 pm  
2100 Kramer Ln., Suite 300

**Beaumont - Robert W** - Monday, Oct 19, 6:30 pm  
1350 N. 23rd St.

**Dallas - Merlissa A** - Monday, Oct 19, 7:00 pm  
12700 Preston Rd., Suite 260

**San Antonio - Tany J** - Monday, Oct 26, 7:00 pm  
7400 Blanco, Suite 129

**Ft. Worth - Eddie H** - Tuesday, Oct 27, 7:00 pm  
6150 Pershing Ave.

**College Station - Josh C** - Thursday, October 22, 6:00 pm  
702 University Dr. East, Suite 100-D

## Alumni Services Newest Staff Member

Hello, my name is Clay Eaton and I am an Alcoholic. Being born and raised in San Angelo, Texas was a great childhood experience; it was a great place to grow up. Normal life for me - living with an alcoholic father, being uncomfortable in social settings, having a fear of people, feeling inferior to others, changing how I presented myself so people would accept me, being rebellious, and always looking for something different - prepared me well for the wonderful discovery of alcohol. Like many of us, I managed and maintained inside the parameters of a socially acceptable lifestyle, for a while. I worked as a professional firefighter/paramedic for 23 years before I began to pull the structure of my life down.

On November 20, 2006, my brother scooped me up and dropped me off at La Hacienda. My life changed. Working the Steps, as taught the way they are here, I had a sudden and profound upheaval in the way I looked at life, others, and God's Universe. Instead of doing what I wanted to do, which was go back to San Angelo and start living my life the way I wanted to, I actually did something strange and bizarre - I listened to what

others told me and followed their direction. I committed to ninety days in a sober house in Kerrville. I found a home group, got a sponsor, worked the rest of the Steps, and did service work. Eight years later, I am still in Kerrville, working at La Hacienda in the Alumni Dept., and living life to the fullest. This is not the life I would have designed for myself; I would have sold myself short. I get to work with the most beautiful people in the world, and my colleagues are nice people too! Kidding aside, I am doing what I love to do with very skilled and talented professionals around me that are dedicated to those we serve. Sherri, Pam, Anne, Michelle, Linda, and Jonathan inspire me and make me so proud to be a part of Alumni Services/Continuing Care.

I have had the pleasure of meeting many of you at alumni meetings and functions around the state. I am excited for the opportunity to meet many more of you in my travels or here on the campus in Hunt when you visit, as we trudge the road of happy destiny together.

Clay Eaton



### 44<sup>th</sup> Annual Alumni Reunion May 6 - 8, 2016

Friday night - Ashley L - San Antonio  
Saturday morning - Audrey C - Dallas  
Saturday afternoon - TBA

**Make Plans Now to Attend!**

[Kerrville Area Accommodations](#)



## Brain Food for the Recovered Soul

### Focus Group

#### Step Eight

by Charlotte Safir, LCDC

***“Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.”***

The culling process of Steps 1 -7 have created an internal space that once was overgrown with everything that was blocking “The Sunlight of the Spirit.” Having faced the lies and the truth through the inventory process, with the discovery of character defects and initiating help from a Higher Power to remove them, it is now time to start the process of cleaning up the wreckage of the past. It is clear to us how this step would not be possible without the preceding seven steps. We had to get right internally and connect to a Power that will sustain us as we prepare to clean up the past.

Step 8 is a list of people taken from our 4<sup>th</sup> Step whom we have harmed, as well as all those who were innocent victims of our disease. There needs to be no hesitation to include anyone. As with all the Steps, it is imperative we seek guidance from our sponsor. No amends are done here; this is only a list of who was harmed and what the amends are to be. Like in Step 4, there may be a tendency to look ahead to Step 9. Resist getting into future thinking. As with all the Steps, a greater willingness is being created as a result of the action we take. Trust the process. Look at how far we have been brought as a result of working the first 7 Steps.

If there is an unwillingness to make amends to some on the list, we ask our Higher Power to assist us in creating and sustaining the willingness to go to any lengths, not just our lengths. With list in hand, we can move forward with confidence that this awesome Power will take us even further as we move into Step Nine.

THE 35<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL  
TEXAS STATE CONFERENCE  
OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN A.A.  
AUSTIN, TEXAS // HALLOWEEN WEEKEND

CONFERENCE SPEAKERS  
STACEY S. // SAN ANTONIO, TX  
PATT O. // MISSION VEJO, CA  
BEN R. // SHREVEPORT, LA  
CINDY P. // AL-ANON // AUSTIN, TX

“WALK FREELY  
AMONG THE  
LIVING.”



at THE DOUBLETREE OCT. 30<sup>TH</sup> - NOV. 1<sup>ST</sup> 6505 N INTERSTATE 35

### Everyone's Got One...

I come across so many excuses—so many explanations—for addict behavior, for continued drinking and drug use. We consistently believe that our continued drinking is a result of the divorce, the money problems, the wife/husband, the kids, the job, the stress, the anxiety, the trauma, and on and on. Someone in my office says, “I’m a chronic relapser.” Maybe we can get something straight: alcoholism and addiction are a chronic illness; there is nothing special about that. It is this mentality of being a “chronic relapser”, as if that were a different form of alcoholism, which will keep us separate from the other drunks and keep us sick. The moment we stop thinking we are special, or different, or worse off than everyone else, the moment we realize our Step One experience and go through the recovery process, we recover. It’s that simple.

The “chronic” excuse is no different from the divorce, money, or stress excuses. They are simply the alcoholic mind’s attempts at shifting the blame, an unwillingness to see the truth. Externalities do not make someone alcoholic; an abnormal physical reaction to mind-altering substances and a mental inability to leave the substance alone are what make someone alcoholic. Understanding this information and considering whether it is true for us is what Step One asks of us. Obviously, there is more nuance to Step One than this, but recognizing our illness - not the spouse, the money, or the relapses - as the source of the problem, is essential to admitting, or conceding, the reality of our alcoholism.

No one looks for the external causes of a nut or soy allergy, yet we spend countless hours trying to do exactly that for the uncontrolled drinker, when oftentimes the only commonalities two alcoholics may have is their inability to control their drinking. The recovery process teaches us personal responsibility. It teaches us that we have been sick and can get well, if we wish to. Often this has to happen repeatedly, even without a relapse into drinking. I know this has been the case for me. The answer, then, is continued work through the Steps. We tend to see the Steps as linear, but perhaps they are actually circular, just like all other natural processes. If we drop our excuses we will see the truth. The truth is that alcoholics drink, irrespective of circumstance. The truth is alcoholics will continue to drink if the previous truth is not recognized. When we drop our excuses we begin to take ownership of ourselves and the path to recovery will be in sight.

Jonathon Hinojosa

## ALUMNI MEETINGS

AREA	DAY / TIME	LOCATION	MORE INFO
<b>AUSTIN</b>	Wednesday 7:30 pm	La Hacienda's Solutions 2100 Kramer Ln., Suite 300 Austin, TX	<b>512-835-1994</b>
<b>BEAUMONT</b>	Monday 6:30 pm	St. Andrews Presbyterian 1350 N. 23rd St. Beaumont, TX	<b>409-617-1941</b>
<b>COLLEGE STATION</b>	Thursday 6:00 pm	La Hacienda-College Station 702 University Dr. East, Suite 100-D College Station, TX	<b>979-846-9500</b>
<b>DALLAS</b>	Monday 7:00 pm	La Hacienda Community Outreach 1320 Greenway Dr., Suite 135 Irving, TX	<b>469-773-1374</b>
<b>FT. WORTH</b>	Tuesday 7:00 pm	Holy Family Catholic Church Education Room 6150 Pershing Ave., Ft. Worth, TX	<b>361-290-6580</b>
<b>HOUSTON</b>	Tuesday 6:30 pm	La Hacienda Community Outreach 3000 Wesleyan, Suite 200 Houston, TX	<b>713-823-3807</b>
<b>HUNT</b>	Sunday 11:00 am	La Hacienda Treatment Center 145 La Hacienda Way Hunt, TX	<b>830-238-4222</b>
<b>MIDLAND</b>	Thursday 7:00 pm	La Hacienda Community Outreach 206 N. Midkiff, Suite 1-D Midland, TX	<b>432-697-0272</b>
<b>SAN ANTONIO</b>	Monday 7:00 pm	La Hacienda Community Outreach 7400 Blanco Rd., Suite 129 San Antonio, TX	<b>210-692-0001</b>
<b>BATON ROUGE, LA</b>	<b>Call Sherri to inquire</b>		<b>830-238-4222 ext. 103</b>

## FAMILY MEETINGS

AREA	DAY / TIME	LOCATION	MORE INFO
<b>AUSTIN</b>	Monday 8:00 pm	La Hacienda's Solutions 2100 Kramer Ln, Suite 300 Austin, TX	<b>512-835-1994</b>
<b>BEAUMONT</b>	Monday 6:30 pm	St. Andrews Presbyterian 1350 N. 23rd St. Beaumont, TX	<b>409-926-4948</b>
<b>COLLEGE STATION</b>	Thursday 6:00 pm	La Hacienda-College Station 702 University Dr. East, Suite 100-D College Station, TX	<b>979-846-9500</b>
<b>HOUSTON</b>	Tuesday 6:30 pm	La Hacienda Community Outreach 3000 Wesleyan, Suite 200 Houston, TX	<b>713-545-9788</b>
<b>MIDLAND</b>	Thursday 7:00 pm	La Hacienda Community Outreach 206 N. Midkiff, Suite 1-C Midland, TX	<b>432-697-0272</b>
<b>SAN ANTONIO</b>	Monday 7:00 pm	La Hacienda Community Outreach 7400 Blanco Rd., Suite 129 San Antonio, TX	<b>210-692-0001</b>