

A View from Serenity Hill



La Hacienda's Newsletter for Alumni

April 2014

Please join us for *La Hacienda's 42nd Annual* **Alumni Reunion**

Friday, May 2

4:30 pm Registration
5:30 pm Dinner
7:00 pm COLLEGIATE SPEAKER -
Krystle C., Houston, TX
8:30 pm Meeting on the River

Saturday, May 3

8:00 am Registration
9:00 am Counselor Open House
Power Pole on Ropes Course
10:30 am SPEAKER -
Amanda B., Montgomery, AL
11:45 am Lunch
1:00 pm Announcements/Raffle
1:30 pm Birthday Meeting/
Sobriety Countdown/
City Shout Out
2:30 pm SPEAKER -
John K., Dallas, TX

Sunday, May 4

9:30 am Meditation on Serenity Hill
11:00 am Alumni Meeting on the lawn

Alumni, Family, & Friends
are invited!

No cost to attend!

Places to Stay

[http://www.lahacienda.com/
wp-content/uploads/2014/02/
KerrvilleAreaAccommodations.pdf](http://www.lahacienda.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/KerrvilleAreaAccommodations.pdf)

Want to volunteer?

Call Nikki
(800)749-6160 ext. 516

Did you know...

**Waco Alumni has
changed its times!**

*See page 7
for details*

News from the Field

ALUMNI MEETING SPEAKER SWAP - APRIL

Austin	April 9	Louis R., La Hacienda
Beaumont	April 21	Cade S. Kerrville
Bryan/College Station	April 10	Bruce S., Dallas
Dallas	April 22	Matt D, Waco
Houston	April 29	Leanne S., College Station
Midland	April 24	Nikki S., La Hacienda
San Antonio	April 14	Erin G., Kerrville
Waco	April 23	Robert W., Austin

Thoughts from Our Alumni Leadership

When I left La Ha in 1996 one of the things I missed was the “community”. In treatment, as the community, we shared our setbacks, triumphs, and “ah ha moments” from our groups or Big Book study. We were a diverse bunch, from the guy just out of Primary, to the lady being discharged the following day. To me our San Antonio Alumni meeting is an extension of the La Ha community. We see ourselves as a diverse family with a common goal – genuine, happy sobriety. Many have described our alumni meeting as a pep rally for newcomers. One of our goals is to connect the newcomer with a qualified sponsor as soon as possible. If you come to our meeting without a sponsor, you will leave the meeting with at least a temporary sponsor and many phone numbers. Another unique aspect of our meeting is the fact that it is a “RECOVERY” meeting and not affiliated with AA, CA, or NA. That means we discuss solutions presented in the Big Book, no matter what mind-altering chemical we used.

Throughout the year, we regularly take meetings to several hospitals, homeless shelters, and detention facilities. These visits allow us to carry the great message La Ha has revealed to us from the Big Book and the vital psychic change we have as the result of doing what it suggests.

While service work is rewarding, we also enjoy the fellowship by getting together for social events. For instance, last July 4th we had a BBQ party in the back yard of one of our alumni. Of course, the Alumni Super Bowl party is always a big hit and the snacks and goodies keep many of us satisfied, no matter who wins. Our Christmas Party has become famous for the food, and infamous for the White Elephant gift exchange. Many of us enjoy an annual Sober Cruise to the Caribbean or Bahamas. What a treat it is to see folks who have been at the end of their rope, dress up in their fancy duds, and sit at the Captain’s table for dinner – that’s Recovery! Our alumni group has a lot of fun and we’re very anxious to help anyone else enjoy the happy, sober life with us. The aforementioned gives you a glimpse of how we keep our recovery balanced by working all sides of the triangle.

Of equal importance is the meeting which goes on next door - the Family Support Meeting. I highly recommend encouraging your significant other(s) to give it a try. I’ve attended the Family Meeting a couple of times and find these folks to be kind, compassionate, and tough-as-nails (in a good way). As a sponsor of many with family members in that meeting, I can tell you those family folks usually come away from it smiling. I was very disappointed when I found out they don’t talk about us; they talk about healing themselves! No matter what city you’re in, I highly recommend connecting with your alumni group as soon as possible.

We are not a glum lot!
Joe

Greetings from Alumni Services Staff

Welcome Nikki Saurage - our newest Alumni Services team member!

Hello!

I came to Kerrville to get sober on May 31, 2007 with a car and some clothes. Over the past 7 years recovery has allowed me to rekindle my marriage, open women's recovery homes, show my two precious children the real power in a relationship with God, and now blessed me to come work for La Hacienda. Through many great recovery-inspired relationships, I have been trained and mentored by strong women to learn the addiction treatment industry. Leaving my recovery home business is one of the most difficult things I have done but I look forward to the challenges ahead. I am currently in school pursuing a Business Administration degree, am a full-time mom to my 12 year old daughter and 9 year old son and a wife to a recovered husband. I am so grateful for what I have through both the 12 steps and my spiritual walk.

Recovery has also given me a great passion for Addiction Advocacy. I believe the stigma can change by us doing our part to advocate for those who don't have a voice. When I returned to Kerrville I was welcomed and loved into this program by women who fought for me. My role in my new job allows me, through introducing the 12 Steps and sharing the message of hope in recovery, to inspire our patients to consider the same journey that I hold so dear. Even my mother sees hope in recovery; she often says, "if Nikki and Cade can get sober, anyone can."

My favorite line from the Big Book is, "My old manner of life was by no means a bad one, but I would not trade my best memories of yesterday for my worst today. I would not go back even if I could."

I look forward to meeting many of our alumni at meetings in the next month or two, and also at reunion!

Nikki Saurage, PRS

**56th ICYPAA
International
Conference
of Young People
in AA
San Antonio
August 21-24, 2014
www.icypaa.org
for details**

Words of Wisdom from Louis

Dear Alumni and their Families,

I hope this finds you in good health and attitude this year, still learning the meaning of living sober. I further hope that you have followed through on your post-discharge recommendations and are receiving benefit there. If not, and you find yourself struggling, you may do well to consider how those recommendations could be helpful. It is not always apparent where we will go or what we will do and this is something only known by looking back and learning from our experience of what works and what does not. Were there things recommended but not followed up with and would taking action now be beneficial (step work, counseling, health care, hobbies or other interests for fun)?

There is practical benefit to long term sobriety that comes from willingness to discard options, attitudes and behaviors that are not working for ideas and actions that will bring improvement in attitude and outlook. The simple but not easy principles of recovery will always work if we work with them. The problem is in the unwillingness or lack of power to admit the need for change and make the effort (requires surrender to the unmanageability drunk or sober).

If you find yourself feeling stuck or not engaged with recovery consider taking a fresh look at the program of recovery outlined in the Big Book and see what the steps are about now that you have had some time and perspective. If you do this it will not be boring or dull because the meaning and experiences of the steps will change as you find new situations and possibilities to apply them to. It only requires the honesty, open mindedness and willingness to get a new Big Book, one that is not marked up by previous insights and well worn memorized lines, to see what else is in those timeless directions and principles that could not have been understood or experienced before. You might be surprised how they relate to your current condition sober and learn what it means to "grow in understanding and effectiveness." (BB pg. 84)

Long term growth in sobriety requires a "willingness to grow along spiritual lines" (BB pg. 60) and to continue to "perfect and enlarge your spiritual life." (BB pg. 14) There is not much change that comes about just by not drinking or using; contented sobriety is fairly elusive without guidance and direction from God. So, find another alcoholic or addict and go through the Big Book and make new the directions of this age-old recipe for recovery; you "will find yourself in a new and wonderful world, no matter what your present circumstances may be." (BB pg. 100)

I hope to see you at the reunion May 2 – 4. Come enjoy the speakers, BBQ, and fellowship. Please bring friends, family, and yourself for a chance to renew acquaintances, make new connections, and get encouragement for your sobriety. We look forward to your presence.

Come on up to the house,

Louis Romano, LCDC



Brain Food for the Recovered Soul

Nobody but God is big enough to tell the human ego to move over.
~Rev. Sam Shoemaker

Medical Rounds

by James Boone, MD

These have been merry days for marijuana advocates as more and more states look at legalization. There is no question about the addictive nature of alcohol and alcohol is a legal drug. We tried prohibition and it did not work very well. Alcohol for almost 85 % of the world is a chemical that can be used, enjoyed, or left alone and does not lead to damaged relationships, job loss, incarceration, or hepatic failure and death. Alcohol for the alcoholic or addict is not safe and can be catastrophic.

Marijuana stimulates the reward pathway via specific receptors in the brain, the cannabinoid receptors, and is an addictive chemical. It has been well documented to cause the same changes in the brain that other addictive chemicals produce and documented to be addictive in the lab as well, as in our patient population. Marijuana, like alcohol, is addictive, and that fact, based on scientific data, is not arguable. It is probably true that 85% of the population could use marijuana like they use alcohol and simply choose not to use and walk away from the chemical. The addict/alcoholic which represents 15 % of the population will not be able to safely use marijuana just as they are unable to safely use any addictive medication like the benzodiazepine sleeping pills or amphetamine like diet pills.

With the increasing prevalence and acceptability of marijuana, and its legal status in many states, it is critical for the recovered person to recognize marijuana use as an incredible risk and danger. The risk is primarily to the ability to maintain true sobriety and live an unaltered "happy and joyous and free" life. There are medical concerns. A recent large published study out of New Zealand followed over a thousand children up until age 38 and those that began using marijuana before age 18 had an 8 point drop in IQ by age 38. There is serious concern over the pulmonary risk factors and even sudden cardiac death in marijuana users. The incidence of death from an automobile accident in the person who is positive for marijuana and alcohol is 24 times higher than the drug and alcohol free person and almost double that with alcohol alone.

There are volumes of data surrounding the use of cannabis, but I can personally say that after taking care of over 7000 different patients over these past 9 ½ years that the risk benefit ratio for the chemically dependent patient to ever use marijuana is zero.

Be wise and be blessed.

James Boone, MD

Focus Group

by Charlotte Safir, LCDC

Step 6

Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

The key to this step springs from the work in the 4th and 5th steps. This is where we get an up close and personal look at how far down we have been the great chasm between how we see ourselves and our behavior when we have been active in our disease.

The sixth step is where we access the information of the last two steps and create a list of what we find objectionable. This takes self reflection to a deeper level as we sit with the 4th step for an hour and look at our part, the fear and the relationships. We write down what exactly we find is unacceptable to ourselves. Here we create the list of character defects.

As this is fruition of Steps Four and Five, we now have the crystallization of what has stood between ourselves and the Power we seek. We have come out of the dark into the clear light of the very actions that stand as barriers to our spiritual progress.

We have written it in Step Four, spoken it in Step Five, and now have a concrete list of our grosser nature so there can be no mistaking what we are going to ask this Power to remove in Step 7. There is a realization of not where we think we are emotionally, mentally, physically or spiritually, but where exactly we are in all these areas of our lives.

This is the action that creates willingness physically, emotionally, and spiritually to continue to clear away anything that blocks us from having Conscious Contact with the Power of God, the Presence of God.

SOBER CRUISE!!!

ABOARD THE CARNIVAL CRUISE SHIP "MAGIC"
7-DAY EASTERN CARIBBEAN CRUISE
DEPARTS SUNDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2014

FOR SOBER GROUP INFORMATION,

CONTACT: JOE M. AT: (210)861-4161 Email: jmayer3@satx.rr.com

(Please note this Sober Cruise is not affiliated with La Hacienda Treatment Center or Carnival Cruise Line)

Advocate for Recovery

*Save
the
Date*



JOIN  **TEXAS
RECOVER!** for the
**4TH Annual
BIG TEXAS RALLY
FOR RECOVERY**

*Sept.
13,
2014
Austin*

Advocating for Those in Recovery and Those Who Still Suffer

By Sherri Layton

“When we are silent we allow others to define us.”

How do others define those of us in recovery? Do they see the healing and restoration that happens in our lives? Do they know the hope for the future we have? Do they understand we have a disease that can be in remission and, with regular maintenance, not cause further harm? Or are they just waiting for the next crisis, handling us with kid gloves, afraid we are too fragile to deal with life on life's terms?

Whose responsibility is it to change the way society views addiction and those in recovery? Who would be a better advocate than those who have recovered? Perhaps you have seen or heard about the recovery movement gaining momentum across the country. Have you seen the movie “The Anonymous People”? Have you attended a Recovery Month event or spoken with a legislator about discrimination those in recovery sometimes experience?

La Hacienda has been actively involved in bringing attention to addiction prevention, treatment and recovery for many years. Our staff contacts their Congressmen on issues that impact the healthcare of those who need treatment, funding for those who seek services in publicly funded settings, and even legislation that impacts addiction counselors' requirements for doing their jobs. At times we have invited our alumni, through Facebook posts, to join the effort and contact their Congressmen. We believe our efforts have made a difference in expanding access to treatment, not only for those with health insurance but also those who are treated using public funds. In addition, we have supported the Big Texas Rally for Recovery in Austin and other Recovery Month events.

There is a national effort aimed at reducing the stigma of those who have the disease of addiction. This is well detailed in the movie “The Anonymous People”. The focus is not to challenge the spiritual principle of anonymity of our 12 Step recovery fellowships; that is and should forever be sacred so that those seeking help feel comfortable walking into the rooms of AA, NA, CA, etc. “The Anonymous People” asks those of us in recovery, especially long term recovery, to consider sharing, as is appropriate, the fullness of life we have in recovery. In the words of William White, “If this is a program of attraction, how is anyone attracted to it if we don't share our recovery?”

Find out more about “The Anonymous People” at www.manyfaces1voice.org. La Hacienda is proud to be able to host showings of this movie. If you would like to discuss hosting a showing in your community, please contact Sherri Layton, (830) 238-422 ext. 103 or slayton@lahacienda.com.

For the most up-to-date Alumni info



#laharecovery



**Frequently Dialed
La Hacienda
Phone Numbers**

800-749-6160

Billing/Collections

Insurance Accounts
Last name begins: A – K
Ext. 671

Last name begins: L - Z
Ext. 673

Self Pay Accounts
*(from admission or balance
after insurance payments)*
Ext. 674

All IOP Accounts
Ext. 670

Medical Records
Ext. 605

Alumni Support
Ext. 515, 516

Alumni Followup
Ext. 519

Inquiry Call Center
Ext. 550

Operator
Press 0

From Leonard's Kitchen to Yours

Stuffed Pork Tenderloin

One Pork tender loin
Stuffing Mix
Salt
Pepper
15 Bacon Slices



Slice open the pork loin like shown in the photo below. Season with salt and pepper. Follow the instructions on the stuffing mix, then place the stuffing down the middle of the loin lengthways. Then roll the pork around the stuffing.



Lay out the bacon overlapping each other to cover the full length of the loin. Then wrap it around the loin as shown in the picture below.



*Allow meat
to rest for
10 minutes,
slice,
and serve!!!*

MAKE NOTE OF WACO TIME CHANGE!

ALUMNI MEETINGS

AREA	DAY / TIME	LOCATION	MORE INFO
AUSTIN	Wednesday 7:30 pm	La Hacienda's Solutions 2100 Kramer Ln., Suite 300 Austin, TX	512 -835 - 1994
BEAUMONT	Monday 6:30 pm	St. Andrews Presbyterian 1350 N. 23rd St. Beaumont, TX	409 -296 - 3653
COLLEGE STATION	Thursday 6:00 pm	La Hacienda-College Station 702 University Dr. East, Suite 100-D College Station, TX	979 -846 - 9500
DALLAS/FT. WORTH	Tuesday 7:00 pm	La Hacienda Community Outreach 1320 Greenway Dr., Suite 135 Irving, TX	214 -968 - 9858
HOUSTON	Tuesday 6:30 pm	La Hacienda Community Outreach 2650 Fountain View Dr., Suite 120 Houston, TX	713 -805 - 5115
HUNT	Sunday 11:00 am	La Hacienda Treatment Center 145 La Hacienda Way Hunt, TX	830 -238 - 4222
WACO	Wednesday 7:00 pm	2508 Washington Ave. Waco, TX	254 -662 - 3439
MIDLAND	Thursday 7:00 pm	La Hacienda Community Outreach 206 N. Midkiff, Suite 1-D Midland, TX	432 -697 - 0272
SAN ANTONIO	Monday 7:00 pm	La Hacienda Community Outreach 7400 Blanco Rd., Suite 129 San Antonio, TX	210 -692 - 0001

FAMILY MEETINGS

AREA	DAY / TIME	LOCATION	MORE INFO
AUSTIN	Monday 8:00 pm	La Hacienda's Solutions 2100 Kramer Ln, Suite 300 Austin, TX	512 -835 - 1994
BEAUMONT	Tuesday 6:30 pm	St. Andrews Presbyterian 1350 N. 23rd St. Beaumont, TX	409 -296 - 3653
COLLEGE STATION	Thursday 6:00 pm	La Hacienda-College Station 702 University Dr. East, Suite 100-D College Station, TX	979 -846 - 9500
DALLAS/FT. WORTH	Tuesday 7:00 pm	La Hacienda Community Outreach 1320 Greenway Dr., Suite 135 Irving, TX	972 -637 - 6300
HOUSTON	Wednesday 6:30 pm	La Hacienda Community Outreach 2650 Fountain View Dr., Suite 120 Houston, TX	713 -545 - 9788
SAN ANTONIO	Monday 7:00 pm	La Hacienda Community Outreach 7400 Blanco Rd., Suite 129 San Antonio, TX	210 -692 - 0001