



THE STAND



MARCH 2011

THE OFFICIAL DISTRICT 12 NEWSLETTER

ISSUE THREE

Group of The Month

STONE SOBER GROUP



by
Critter F.

I knew I had found the right place when I entered through the side door of the St. Thomas Hall in Stonewall, Texas, and found a huge biker making coffee in the church kitchen. What kind of biker makes coffee at six in the evening, in a church, on a Thursday? Answer: A happy, joyous, and free biker, one that has recovered from a hopeless state of mind and body.

Tucked into the back of St. Thomas Hall is a small room where big recovery happens. I sat and chatted with the folks of the Stone Sober Group as they filed in for the meeting, and learned that many of the regulars that attend are old timers, some having almost forty years of sobriety. John S., not the biker, whom I met at the district meeting in Fredericksburg, has been coming to the meeting since its inception in January of 2009, and told me that they get folks from Blanco, Johnson City, and Fredericksburg. They are a tight-knit little group, and everybody knows everybody else. But, they were very happy to see me, and they love newcomers.

The average attendance is eight to ten people, sometimes twelve. The setting is classic AA; folding metal chairs, stark white table full of Big Books and other "approved literature", coffee maker perking, and smiles, laughter, and hugs. The spirit of fellowship in this modest group is palpable, and the discussion was straight out of the Big Book and the Twelve and Twelve. Yes, here sat miracles next to me at the table. They were on fire alright. Miracles with solid recovery. Solid as a stone wall. They have built an archway to a new freedom.

If you get the bug and want to see what this humble, happy group is all about for yourself, by all means get yourself a car full of drunks and head on up to the Stone Sober Group and find out what small town Texas recovery is all about.

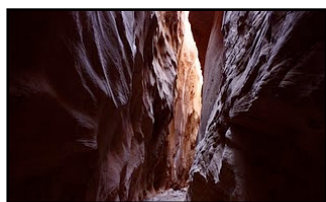
Stone Sober Group, 400 St. Francis St., Stonewall, Texas 78671.
7:00 p.m., Thursday nights, St. Thomas Hall (back room).

Grapevine Article from Issue June 1990

Falling Through the Cracks

"...Though Three Hundred Thousand did recover in the the last twenty five years, maybe half a million or more walked into our midst., and then out again. No doubt some were too sick to make even a start. Others couldn't or wouldn't admit their alcoholism. Still others couldn't face up to their underlying personality defects. Numbers departed for other reasons. Yet we can't well content ourselves with the view that all these recovery failures were entirely the fault of the newcomers themselves. Perhaps a great many didn't receive the kind and amount of sponsorship they so sorely needed. We didn't communicate when we might have done so. So we AA's failed them."

Bill W., The Language of the Heart



? Ask it Basket ?

What is the difference between an open & closed meeting?

Closed meetings are limited to members and prospective members only. It is up to individuals to determine if they are "qualified" for membership, based on the following criteria from Tradition 3:

"The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking."

Open meetings are for anyone who is interested in AA. If a meeting is "open" it will be so designated on the published schedule. Open meetings can be attended by students, professionals, and other non-members interested in learning more about the recovery programs. The designation of a meeting as "open" does not change the meetings primary purpose of the group. The Primary Purpose from Tradition 5:

"Each group has but one primary purpose - to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers."

If a meeting is not designated either open or closed on a published schedule, it should be considered closed.

Have a Question? Just Ask it!
Send all questions or comments to
mikeseef@gmail.com

Tradition of the Month

TRADITION 3

*The only requirement
for AA membership
is a desire to stop
drinking.*

Is there some kind of alcoholic whom I privately do not want in my AA group?

Do I set myself up as a judge of whether a newcomer is sincere or phony?

Do I let language, religion (or lack of it), race, education, age, or other such things interfere with my carrying the message?

Am I over impressed by a celebrity? By a doctor, a clergyman, and ex-convict? Or can I just treat this new member simply and naturally as one more sick human, like the rest of us?

In my mind, do I prejudice some new AA members as losers?

Announcements

February's

Birthday Celebrants

Ingram Solutions	720 Club
Patty R 19y	Jim J 13y
Susannah H 2y	Walter H 10y
Tommy D 3y	Dan C 34y
Rodney O 1y	CB Bob 26y
Darlynn C 18m	Don T 16y
Debbie H 3y	Tamara R 2y
Caroline P 2y	Brian H 6y
Stacey F 2Y	

2211

Danika P 1y

Spanish Meeting

Are you able to share your experience, strength and hope...in Spanish? Then you'll want attend the Spanish Speaking Meeting on Saturday at 2pm. It's located at 2210 Bandera Hwy (TX 173 and Loop 534), 78028. We need your support and everyone is welcome to attend, Spanish speaking or not.

SOUTHWEST TEXAS AREA 68 DISTRICT 12 WEBSITE

Check out the Alcoholics Anonymous District 12 website for events and general information: www.aa12.org You can find AA meeting times and locations in the area, covers Bandera, Gillespie, Kerr, Kendall and Kimble counties. Whether you're looking for AA Events or Service Meetings, the district site has up to date information. Need help finding AA resources such as the Big Book online or getting in touch with the General Service Office in San Antonio or New York? Try the "Resources" tab. Here you'll find links to AA as a whole. There's so much information at your fingertips, just click.



"It won't do any good if there's no one on the other end to answer the call...get involved, volunteer for the District 12 AA Helpline!" A newcomer might ask, "What does a Helpline volunteer do?" We answer phone calls that come from local folks wanting more information on Alcoholics Anonymous. As a volunteer, you'll be talking to a variety of people. Either AA's visiting from out of town and are looking for a meeting, a newcomer who needs information, or brand new person looking for help with their drinking problem. Time slots vary and can be adjusted to fit your schedule. If interested, go to the District 12 website: www.aa12.org and download the Helpline Volunteer Form. Fill it out and send it to your GSR or directly to David M. at 830-370-2895 or email at: dmckinnons@gmail.com.

AA Service Opportunities

The Public Information Committee Chair, Terry T., is looking for volunteers in Boerne, Fredericksburg, and surrounding areas to pass out meeting schedules to local hotels. You may contact Terry at crabtree49gstx.rr.com. He is also still working on radio public service announcement on local radio stations and would welcome any help in this area.

Volunteers are needed to carry the message into Treatment Facilities. Get involved in your own sobriety by contacting Greg B. or attend the monthly "H&I sign up" to sign up for a meeting. Next sign-up is March 20 @ 2211.

Volunteers are needed to carry the message into Correctional Institutions. One day training is highly suggested. The Annual CFC workshop is on March 19th at the Outpost, in Ingram at 10:30am. Volunteers are needed for the CFC Workshop event as well. If interest contact Josie at ciaocatania13@aol.com,

The local AA Helpline is in need of volunteers. Newcomers to AA in need of information, out of towners who need a meeting and alcoholics in need of a new way of life all call in for help. Be the helping hand on the other end of the phone! Download and fill out the Helpline Volunteer Form from the District 12 website: www.aa12.org Then contact David M. or your group GSR to have your name added to the list.

HEARD AT MEETINGS....

"Experience is not what happened to you.

Experience is what you did with what happened to you."

"Alcoholics are in a class by themselves. Everyone else has graduated."

THE BIRTH OF A.A. IN TEXAS

by Paul W.

The seeds of Texas A.A. were planted in the winter of 1940 when Larry J., a newly sober newspaperman from Cleveland, took a job with *The Houston Press*. Larry was sponsored by Dr. Bob & Clarence S. (Clarence's story, *Home Brewmeister*, appeared in the first three editions of the Big Book) Larry completed the steps while detoxing in the hospital, and did not attend a single meeting before coming to Houston. He boarded the train to Texas with nothing more than the first edition of our basic text and a spiritual experience.

During this train ride, Larry had another spiritual awakening while reading the Big Book. This led him to write a six part series on A.A. for *The Houston Press*, which was published in February of 1940. These articles were the catalysts for two major events. Not only were they eventually re-published as A.A.'s [first pamphlet](#), they also put Larry in touch with Roy Y., a native Houstonian. These two men would form the first Texas A.A. group in April of that year. The original Houston Group still meets today.

Larry J. is also believed to be the author of the "Texas Prayer", which was used to open A.A. meetings across the state for years. The prayer, which can also be found in Bill Pittman's book *Stepping Stones to Recovery*, is as follows;

*Our Father, we come to You as a friend.
You have said that, where two or three are
gathered in Your name, there You
will be in the midst. We believe You are
with us now.
We believe this is something You would
have us do, and that it has Your blessing.
We believe that You want us to be real
partners with You in this business of
living, accepting our full responsibility,
and certain that the rewards will be
freedom, and growth, and happiness.
For this, we are grateful.
We ask You, at all times, to guide us.
Help us daily to come closer to You, and
grant us new ways of living our
gratitude.*

Unfortunately, Larry's story ended on a sad note. He found himself at odds with the early Houston members and they formed a steering committee to replace him as the leader of the Houston group. He became resentful over the matter and was never able to fully reconcile with the other members. He returned to active addiction and he was unable to regain his sobriety, save for a few brief intervals. Larry J. passed away in May of 1944.

However, his struggles at the end not diminish the fact that Larry J. founded A.A. in Texas. And for that, we all owe him a debt of eternal gratitude.

CFC...A REWARD IS WAITING FOR YOU!

by Clay Eaton, District 12 CFC Chairman

District 12 supports service work, "Carrying the message of Alcoholics Anonymous to men and women inside our jails." We are the CFC; Corrections Facility Committee of District 12. We serve five counties: Kerr, Kendall, Kimble, Bandera, and Gillespie. We currently take meetings into Kerr, Bandera, and Kendall County jails. We hope to expand service to other jails in the near future. Meetings are open discussion based on a reading of the Big Book. Usually, Steps 1-2-3 are our focus; we see a lot of newcomers in our meetings. The meetings are chaired by volunteers on our committee; trusted servants of AA. These fine men and women do great service work. They make meetings available to our AA friends who find themselves locked up. Quite a few inmates find out for the first time they have a problem with alcohol, and are very interested in the message we carry. Those of us on the outside sometimes take for granted the privilege we have of being able to go to meetings anywhere, anytime

we want. Men and women inside depend on volunteers to bring meetings to treat their addiction. Untreated alcoholism is a horrible experience, as we know all too well, especially if one is locked up. Our committee members bring hope where there is no hope, freedom where there is no freedom, and knowledge where there is bewilderment and fear.

There are about twenty-five volunteers; we need twenty-five more. When possible, we send two men for men and two women for women. There is a meeting every week: Bandera on Tuesday, Kendall on Wednesday, and Kerr on Thursday. Recruiting new volunteers is an ongoing process. However, Kerr County Jail allows us one recruiting/orientation process each year. That process starts with a CFC workshop scheduled for March 19, 2011 at the Outpost Club in Ingram. We start at 10:30am, break for a bar-b-q lunch (courtesy of District 12), and wrap it up at 2pm. Soon, information flyers detailing speakers and agenda will be posted

around the District. Everyone is welcome, come and support our service work: Find out what we do, listen to the voices of those who go in, and hopefully find an area of service in this vital work we do. If you are not sure this is for you, we encourage you to come; we need people to step up, and get qualified by going to the orientation at Kerr County Jail later in April. We lose volunteers due to natural attrition (people in AA move a lot, in case you haven't noticed). It helps to have as many qualified volunteers as we can get, even if only for reserve when needed.

For questions or more information, call Clay E. @ 830.496.0003; or Josie E. @ 830.285.6416.



CARRYING THE MESSAGE INTO CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

by Josie Eaton

Am I responsible?

Some alcoholics don't have the freedom to go to meetings when they want to. They are in prison. They have limited contact with the shared experience that our Fellowship offers through its meetings.

You can help. Here are some ideas:

1. Volunteer to be a temporary contact upon their release and take them to their first outside AA meeting.
2. Correspond with an inmate through Corrections Correspondence Service.
3. Support your district/ area correctional facilities committees.
4. Participate in correctional facilities workshops.
5. Carry the message inside a correctional facility.

In carrying the message inside a correctional facility, we are sharing our experience, strength and hope with another alcoholic. We let our stories speak for themselves. Our audience is more interested how to stay sober than in hearing how we got drunk, so we talk about our program of recovery with the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous. The ultimate purpose of weekly "inside" AA meeting is to foster a sobriety that will carry through after inmate members return to society. Past experience has shown that attending an AA meeting as soon as possible after release is the key to making a sober transition to life outside prison.

By giving this program away we get to keep it.

Spiritual

MAINTENANCE AND MEDITATION

One definition of meditation is “thinking deeply or focusing one's mind for a period of time, in silence or with the aid of chanting, for religious or spiritual purposes or as a method of relaxation.” Meditation is generally an internal, personal practice and done without any external involvement. It can be described as a method to improve our conscious contact with God by exploring and experiencing our essence and true self, which is one of our key purposes in life as part of the universe.

There are many formal techniques of meditation. A trip to a good book store, library, or internet search can offer excellent resources. Many of the older techniques on mediation originated in ancient India.

The concept of meditation described in the 11th step of the Big Book is much like the ‘God of our understanding’ concept. The Big Book is specific enough to guide us yet it is left wide open to us, for personal interpretation and experience. I’ve heard it said that there the only wrong way to meditate is to not do it at all.

Practicing meditation is suggested as a daily discipline. I have learned over the years that the more I practice AA disciplines, the more connected to the Great Spirit I feel. I know that this feeling is real because I experience it. It has been an undeniable truth since I first experienced it. I think I’ll keep it up.

UPCOMING AA EVENTS

AREA 68

WHERE

WHEN

Texas ICYPAA Bid Committee
Statewide Meeting

Austin

Mar 12

SWTA Spring Conference

Corpus Christi

Apr 15-17

DISTRICT 12

WHERE

WHEN

District 12 Monthly Meeting @ 720 Club

Kerrville

Mar 13

CFC Workshop @The Outpost

Ingram

Mar 19

H & I Signup @ 2211

Kerrville

Mar 20

HAM ON WRY

EN ROUTE TO HIS NEXT PERFORMANCE, a juggler was stopped by a cop.

“What are these matches and lighter fluid doing in your car?” the officer asked.

“I juggle flaming torches” responded the juggler.

“Oh yeah?” said the cop. “Let me see.”

The man stepped out of his car and began to juggle flaming torches. A couple driving by slowed down to watch.

“Wow!” the driver said to his wife. “I’m glad I quit drinking — look at the test they’re giving now.”

The AA Grapevine, Inc.

Reprinted with Permission

Note from Tommy F. - District 12's Current DCM

Hello Friends,

A lot has been going on with District 12 in the last month. The Newsletter has really taken off and in only its third issue has expanded to more pages. There is a lot of people jumping on the bandwagon, writing and sending in articles and information, include something about the history of AA in Texas.. And the CFC workshop coming up, along with group of the month, events, traditions and grapevine article. Congrats to guys who has taken the bull by the horns and made this a successful activity of carrying the message to the entire District 12 area. The great enthusiasm showed at the last District Meeting as well, has we packed the house at the Fredericksburg United Methodist Church where the Cellar Group of Fredericksburg meets. Much was accomplished there as we introduced the "Rough Copy" of the District 12 Guideline Workbook that gives description qualifications, and responsibilities of all the District Officers and Committee Chairpersons. Once the Guidelines Workbook is approved it will be a great tool for guidance and direction for years to come. The District Committee also passed

a change in the rotation schedule for District 12s monthly business meetings across the Hill Country to include Stonewall, Medina, and the Boerne Noon Group. We also Discussed the District 12 Correctional Workshop this month, the workshop is to gain interest in taking meetings into local county jails. This committee is known to throw some AMAZING workshops with speakers from both AA and Professionals of Law Enforcement not to mention the awesome BBQ lunch they cook up!!!

There are many other events coming up in the next few months, Spring Time is right around the corner so you need to keep an eye on the newsletter and the District 12 website www.aa12.org.... Your not gonna want to miss a thing!!!!

District 12 Newsletter Focus

To inform the AA community of information pertaining to District 12, Area 68, and GSO and to enlarge group participation.

District 12 Trusted Servants

DCM Tommy F.

Alternate DCM Jim A.

Secretary Josie E.

Alt. Secretary Dee P.

Treasurer Debbie B.

Archives Linda B.

Correctional Facilities (Women) Josie E.

Correctional Facilities (Men) Clay E.

Grapevine Lester S.

Help Line David M.

Newsletter Mike S.

Public Information Terry T.

Cooperation with Professional Community B.J. K

Spanish Meeting Coordinator Joseph G.

Treatment Facilities Greg B.

Treatment Facilities, Alternate Teresa W.

For email and contact information please visit
www.aa12.org

March 19, 2011

**The Outpost Club
3449 Junction Hwy, Ingram, TX**

**District 12
Presents**

CORRECTIONS FACILITY COMMITTEE WORKSHOP



10:30 A.M.

**Professional Panel
with Special Guests**

11:30 A.M.

Q & A

12:00 P.M.

Lunch

1:00 P.M.

Volunteer Panel

*Major Jim Bernarduci - Kendall County Jail
Capt. Cary Berger - Bandera County Law Enforcement
Capt. Sylvia Foraker - Kerr County Jail
Madeline Ortiz, JD - TDCJ Rehab Director*



For Info Contact Clay E. @ 830.496.0003