



# THE STAND



APRIL 2011

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTHWEST TEXAS AREA 68 DISTRICT 12 OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

ISSUE FOUR



GOTM

## JUNCTION GROUP



by  
**Critter F.**

Spread out before me in unassuming splendor, on the wild and windblown fringes of district twelve, lay the small hamlet of Junction, Texas. I crossed the bridge over the Llano River, and cruised down Main Street. The old cinema and bank were closed for the day, and the whole place had the feel of a forgotten era in Texas, something, perhaps, out of a Larry McMurtry novel. I found the church with no problem, although there are quite a few in town, and pulled my truck into the gravel parking lot. I waited for a bit, looking around for any sign of a meeting, and then saw on the curtain through a window what looked like a circle and triangle. I immediately felt at home.

Pretty soon, a big old pick-em up truck pulled up next to me, and a long, tall, good ole' boy stepped out. I got out and introduced myself. "Welcome friend, we're glad to have you," he said in a West Texas drawl. I followed him into the meeting room, and over home baked lemon cake, banana bread, and coffee, Caven W. and I talked recovery. He has been sober for six years, and he told me the Junction group has over one hundred years of sobriety between the members. Being so far out in district twelve, they get

people from several other districts that come on a regular basis, and often a couple folks traveling down I-10 who are just passing through and need a meeting.

On the particular Thursday night I attended, there were eight of us around a small table in the Sunday school room of the Episcopal Church, and we read "There is a Solution" out of the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous, and then discussed the solution. It is amazing how far removed Junction can feel from the rest of our district, but the spirit of the fellowship was among us, and as I gazed at the smiling men and women surrounding me, I marveled at the fact that there was no corner on earth, no matter how remote, that the message of Alcoholics Anonymous could not touch, and in touching, change the lives of countless suffering alcoholics.

The Junction Group meets on Monday nights at 7:00 pm in the Kimble County Library, 208 N. 10<sup>th</sup> Street, and on Thursday nights at 8:00 pm in the small building behind the Trinity Episcopal Church, 1119 Main Street, Junction, Texas, 76849.

### Grapevine Article from Issue March 2011

### ? Ask it Basket ?

### Tradition of the Month

#### Cut Loose

.... I got a sponsor because I had learned something about myself. I learned that I was vulnerable to pride. I can easily convince myself that I am "OK" because my family is happy, I have a job, I am not drinking, I go to AA and I sponsor a bunch of guys. But it's very easy for me to stop looking inward if I do that.

I learned I am a person who values sponsorship. I need help. I needed it when I came in and wanted to stop drinking. I needed it when I had to work the Steps in order to change. And I need it be protected from the "return of the full-fledged ego" that Dr. Tiebout talked about on page 249 of AA Comes of Age. He also goes on to talk about an early member who was also afraid he was "suffering from 'halotosis' a reference to the smugness and self-complacency which so easily can creep into the individual with years of sobriety behind him."

I don't want to go there again. It was hard enough surrendering the first time. Early on I was handed a spiritual toolkit, and one of those tools was sponsorship. It was offered to me for free if I cared to have it. My life is better for it.

Dave R.  
Manchester, N.H.

#### Why are there so many AA groups?

Each AA group has its own unique personality, tone, meeting philosophy, and rituals. AA's Fourth Tradition states that:

"Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole."

With respect to its own affairs, a group may make any decisions, adopt any attitudes and no overall or intergroup authority can challenge this primary privilege. A group and its member's experiences, AA opinion in surrounding groups, and God's prompting in the group conscience is relied upon to keep a group's efforts following the 12 Traditions. This tradition and the autonomy its guarantees is one of AA's "secrets of success" and promises that when there are enough groups to choose from, a newcomer will be able to find something that closely matches his needs if he willing to look.

Have a Question? Just Ask it!  
Send all questions or comments to  
[mikeseef@gmail.com](mailto:mikeseef@gmail.com)

#### TRADITION 4

*Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole.*

Do I insist that there are only a few right ways of doing things in AA?

Do I put down other members' behavior when it is different from mine, or do I learn from it?

Do I always bear in mind that, to those outsiders who know I am in AA, I may to some extent represent our entire beloved Fellowship?

Am I willing to help a newcomer go to any lengths – his lengths, not mine – to stay sober?

Do I share my knowledge of AA tools with other members who may not have heard of them?

# Announcements

## March's Birthday Celebrants

<b>Outpost Club</b>	<b>2211</b>
Bill H 2	Linda H 1
Shane N 1	Jack E 31
Josh L 3	Dan R 22
Jessica W 18mo	Mat G 2
Carl S 3	Mark B 23
	Mary Ann B 6
<b>720</b>	Johnny M 4
Gene T 18mo	Tember D 2
	Gary D 1

### Brown Bag

Ray B. 45  
Jim A. 27  
Dan R. 22  
Marvin W. 18  
Bitsy W. 15  
Beverly 14  
Brian W. 2

Got a sobriety Birthday coming up. We like to help you celebrate.

Send Birthdays to  
mikesseef@gmail.com

## 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](http://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.

## You got an H & I?

Bringing AA meetings into hospitals and institutions, H&I for short, is another way of getting into service work. Sharing experience, strength and hope is not only helpful and appreciated but a rewarding way to help the next man or woman with living a sober life. Women are especially encouraged to help bring meetings into treatment centers! The third Sunday of every month at 3 pm, the rotating location is always available on the District 12 website: [www.aa12.org](http://www.aa12.org).

# AA Service Opportunities

The **Corrections Facility Committee** is asking all current volunteers and potential volunteers for taking the message into all of District 12's Correction Facilities to be at the Outpost on Sunday April 3 at 2:00pm. You can contact Clay Eaton (830.496.0003) for more information.

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](mailto: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 to carry the message into Treatment Facilities. Get involved in your own sobriety by contacting **Treatment Facilities Committee** Chairperson or attend the monthly "H&I sign up" on the third Sunday of the month to sign up for the meeting.

The "H&I sign up" for May is 3 pm, Sunday April 17th at the Outpost.

The local **AA Helpline** is in need of volunteers. David M. has forms for volunteers to fill out for volunteers who are interested in taking call for the helpline. Please contact your group GSR or contact David M. directly and get involved.

## HEARD AT MEETINGS....

"It's not what God can do for you, it's what God can do through you..."

"Happiness is not a place you arrive at, it is a way you travel."

"I learned a long time ago in AA, my life is none of my business."

## "A certain American business man" by Paul W.

Alcoholics Anonymous was officially born on June 10, 1935 in Akron, Ohio. However, the chain of events which gave rise to A.A. was actually set in motion four years earlier in Zurich, Switzerland.

On page 26 of the Big Book, we are told of "a certain American business man" who traveled to Europe and placed himself under the care of the famed psychiatrist, Dr. Carl Jung. This man was Rowland Hazard III, and without his contributions, A.A. as we know it today might not exist.

Rowland was born into a wealthy Rhode Island family with roots dating back to before the Revolutionary War. One of his ancestors was Eli Whitney, the man who invented the cotton gin. Rowland was an accomplished man in his own right. He graduated from Yale and was elected to the Rhode Island Senate. During World War I, he served as an officer in the U.S. Army and then oversaw several of his family's businesses.

At some point, Rowland became an alcoholic. He sought treatment from every major psychiatrist in the United States. When nothing seemed to work, he sailed across the Atlantic to see the legendary Sigmund Freud. However, Freud was too busy to take Rowland's case, and he soon found himself under that care of the equally respected Jung.

Over the course of a year, Rowland received intense psychiatric treatment from Jung. Believing himself cured, he made his way back to America. However, by the time his ship pulled into the New York harbor, Rowland had relapsed. Thoroughly dejected and bewildered, he quickly returned to Zurich to discuss his failure with Jung. It was a meeting that would

ultimately change the lives of millions of suffering alcoholics.

In the doctor's opinion, Rowland was hopeless. There was absolutely nothing Jung could do for him. He faced two alternatives - spending the rest of his life in an asylum or dying an alcoholic death. Upon hearing this grim prognosis, Rowland asked if there was any way he could avoid such an ending. Jung's response would prove to be the foundation upon which the 12 steps were built.

Jung explained that occasionally chronic alcoholics have had "vital spiritual experiences" which dispel their obsession to drink. This news lifted Rowland's spirits, as he was a deeply religious man. However, Jung warned that a *mere belief* in God was not enough to produce the necessary physical change. Rowland would need to *experience* God. He then suggested that Rowland join a spiritual self-help group to help him have such a conversion.

Many believe it was an act of Divine Providence that Freud was unable to treat Rowland. As an avowed atheist, Freud would have scoffed at Jung's theory that a spiritual transformation could cure alcoholism.

It is unknown whether Jung referred Rowland to a specific group. We know that Rowland joined the Oxford Group in New York City sometime in 1931. In the summer of 1934, he heard his old friend Ebby Thatcher was facing a six-month prison sentence in Vermont for alcoholic insanity. Rowland petitioned the court to have Ebby released into his custody. A few months later, Ebby paid that fateful visit to Bill Wilson which eventually led to the birth of Alcoholics Anonymous.





# HELPLINE

*Is it calling you?*



AA Helpline is a service provided by volunteers to help when AA's call in for help. Whether they need help finding a meeting or learning about Alcoholics Anonymous, the service work provided by these individuals is so very important. And the Southwest Texas Area 68, District 12 Helpline is in need of volunteers available to do 12th step calls! Signing up is easy, download the CSO 12 Step Volunteer form from the AA District 12 Website: [www.aa12.org](http://www.aa12.org) and fax it in to the Central Service Office in San Antonio. Be sure to specify times you are available to take calls and if you're available for calls in the middle of the night or not. Special needs are also addressed so if you are able to assist blind or deaf persons, your help is needed. All sober members of Alcoholics Anonymous are qualified and encouraged to participate!



## REACHING OUT IS JUST A PHONE CALL AWAY

Back in San Diego, I was sitting in my home group and a clipboard headed towards me. New in town and in desperate need of finding acceptance in my new found peers, I signed up for whatever it was they were volunteering for, "phone banking." Handing the clipboard to the guy sitting next to me I asked, "How do you phone bank?" He replied, "Just show up at the time you signed up for and they'll show you." With that "message of hope," I started on what I would find to be a new level of gratitude for so much and so many.

Waking up at 2 am to "get ready" and man the Helpline at the local AA Central Office was not something I particularly wanted to do, but fitting in was so important to me back then I did it anyway. What I found when I got to

the AA Central Office was....nothing. No big production, no long training, no professional headsets with operators frantically jotting down worldly information...or even the well dressed men "needed" to staff such an important operation. What I found was a new friend who was doing what he needed to do that day to stay sober. What I found was a guy who rolled out of bed and suited up then showed up to do what he could to help another alcoholic. What I found was a realization that I was not only qualified but wanted, just the way I was. The training consisted of a few sentences along the line of the types of people that would call: some will need help finding a meeting, some will need more information on AA, or he continued with a beaming smile,

"Some are brand new and need help not drinking today."

Answering phones for the Helpline turned out to be a fun and rewarding experience for me. I found fellowship and fun but more importantly, I have a new gratitude for those men and women who answer the AA Helpline when I place a call. AA was there for me every time I reached out for help, in meeting form, on the other end of the phone...so many ways. I need to be there when the next man or woman reaches out. Answering calls from the local AA Helpline gives me an opportunity to repay my debt for the men and women that helped me find a new way of life.

Anonymous

## CORRECTIONS....GOTCHA! --- CFC WORKSHOP UPDATE

BY CLAY EATON

No, this is not a correction for a mistake in the last publication of this newsletter. This is the CFC Corner, an opportunity for the Corrections Facility Committee of District 12 to bring our readers up to speed on what's going on in our prisons and jails. We carry the message of AA into facilities in our district. There are many members of AA who are locked up and unable to get to a meeting so we take one to them. Meetings are held in Bandera Jail on Tuesday, Kendall Jail on Wednesday, and Kerr Jail on Thursday. Are you interested in some serious service work? We certainly are interested in you, and so are the men and women wanting to meet you on the inside. Some of those who attend our meetings are familiar with AA, some have little knowledge about the 12 Steps, and some have never been to a meeting before and are curious how we stay sober and happy. This is a vital area of service work; one requiring passion and commitment.

We recently held a CFC Workshop at the Outpost Club, March 19. If you were there thanks for coming out and supporting us; if you didn't make it out you missed a great time, great speakers, and great food. We do this once a year to build on the great relationships we have with the professionals who allow us into their facilities, inviting those professionals in facilities we are not yet in, and share information and techniques

we have found works inside the walls. Major Jim Bernarducci, Kendall County Jail Administrator, told us that the offenders in his jail start getting a little restless, irritable, and discontented (imagine that!) as the week progresses. They start really looking for those AA people. After the AA Meeting these same men and women go back to their cells and start sharing with the others what we talked about in the meeting. The Major said this has a calming effect on the whole jail, including the jailers.

There will be an AA volunteer recruiting session at Kerr County Jail in April; date not yet set. The Jail Staff want our CFC to bring some fresh faces into the jail. Please pray about this. Maybe this is where God wants you to serve, at least for a season. If we get enough volunteers, you would only have to go in once a month. You will be partnered up with a seasoned volunteer until you get comfortable with the process. Then, we will let you teach someone new how to conduct a meeting inside. If you are interested call me and I will put you on the list or answer any questions you might have. The number is 830. 496.0003 and the name is Clay.

Thanks for letting me experience this rewarding service. Till next month, don't get locked up or I might see you at a meeting on the inside!

## Have you recovered? by Bill H.

All too frequently, an argument is heard within our Fellowship as to whether a person is a recovered or a recovering alcoholic. There are countless references to the recovered alcoholic in the book "Alcoholics Anonymous" (the Big Book).

When Bill W. (and the first 100) introduced the Big Book to the world they wrote (page xiii):

"We of Alcoholics Anonymous are more than one hundred men and women who have recovered from a seemingly hopeless state of mind and body. To show other alcoholics precisely how we have recovered is the main purpose of this book."

The Big Book clearly identifies who the recovered alcoholic is. What about the recovering alcoholic? The recovering alcoholic is one who is somewhere between steps Three and Eleven. They are in the process of coming to believe but have yet to have a spiritual awakening/experience sufficient to bring about the necessary personality change to remove the mental obsession. Bill W. was a recovering alcoholic for 2-3 days in Townes Hospital. Most of the alcoholics who participated in the writing of the Big Book took the Steps during the first 7-10 days after their last drink. Many had recovered before they ever attended a meeting.

If a person coming to AA for help because they have been unable to find a way to stop starting to drink and are not taking or have not taken the Steps, they are neither recovering nor are they recovered. They have a case of untreated alcoholism and if they have developed an alcoholic mind, they will drink again.

Nowhere in AA literature does it suggest that if an alcoholic goes to enough meetings, they will recover. No, the recovered alcoholics who authored our Big Book said they recovered as the result of taking the Steps and getting connected to God, not going to meetings.

It seems to me that the most powerful statement regarding this discussion is on page 132. "We have recovered and have been given the Power to help others." What a miraculous deal! Don't miss it!

## UPCOMING AA EVENTS

AREA 68	WHERE	WHEN
SWTA Spring Conference	Corpus Christi	Apr 15-17
Spiritual Unity on the Frio	Concan - Garner	Apr 15-17
DISTRICT 12	WHERE	WHEN
Corrections Facility Committee Meeting	Ingram Outpost	Apr 3 2pm
District 12 Monthly Meeting @ UMC	Lake Hills	Apr 10
H & I Signup @ Outpost	Ingram	Apr 17
Public Information Committee Meeting	St. Peter's Ep. Church	April 20 6 pm

## HAM ON WRY



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

Hello Friends,

Spring is in the air in the Texas Hill Country. Wildflowers and trees are blooming and soon the area parks will be full, volleyball games played, and the local waterholes will be packed with swimmers. What a blessing we have to be living in the Texas Hill Country this time of year. District 12 and AA is a blessing here in the Hill Country as well. District 12 had their annual Corrections Facilities Workshop March 19th at the Outpost with a good turnout of not only local AA's but also AA's from the Brady Texas District as well as Austin and San Antonio Districts. There were great speakers from both the professionals and AA volunteers who go inside jails and prisons. Clay E and his CFC committee did a wonderful job planning and cooking up the Bar B Q lunch for the purpose of raising interest and getting volunteers to carry the message to the ones still suffering.

It should be nice and spring-like in Corpus Christi April 15-17 when they host the Southwest Texas Area 68 Pre-Service Conference. The Pre-Service Conference is

a voting conference held just before our Delegate goes to the World Service Conference in New York. Along with the Area's own business and voting proposals (check with your group's GSR on the two proposals to be voted on) our Area Delegate will hold a "mock" conference where we will visit the items that will be on the agenda at the World Conference. This will give us a feel for what it's like to attend a World Conference plus gather valuable feedback for our Delegate to consider when the time comes to have any action taken on the agenda items.

In closing let me take a minute and welcome back Joe S, past District 12 Treasurer, who will fill in the rest of the term for Debi B who resigned at the first of the month. I speak for the whole District Committee when I say welcome back Joe, and thank you for your ongoing service and support to District 12.

Don't forget keep up with all the latest information and events with both the new Newsletter "The Stand" and on the District Website: [www.aa12.org](http://www.aa12.org).

In the Spirit of Love and Service  
Tommy F

## District 12 Trusted Servants

**DCM** Tommy F.

**Alternate DCM** Jim A.

**Secretary** Josie E.

**Alt. Secretary** Dee P.

**Treasurer** Joe S.

**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](http://www.aa12.org)