



# THE STAND



AUGUST 2012

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

ISSUE TWENTY

## Sometimes Quickly, Sometimes Slowly Grapevine Article - Issue August 2012

In June 1978, I attended my first AA meeting. I had been to many an open meeting with my parents. They had both sobered up in the early 70s. I felt like maybe, if I were an alcoholic too, I might be able to find some comfort in AA as well. I didn't really believe I was an alcoholic, considering I only drank once in a while, as I was only 15 at this time. To my relief, the folks in AA accepted me as one of their own. And so, off I went to become the premier speaker in all of AA history. Well, that's what my ego wanted for me. Instead, I was just another liar trying to find acceptance.

Over the next 25 years, I found myself in hot water several times and I always ran to AA for a fast break from life and a bit of confidence. Not once did they ever ask me to leave. Not once did they not say, "Just keep coming Steve. You don't want to miss the miracle."

In June 2009, I had my last drink. I burnt through yet another marriage and family. My mental health was broken. I had decided on death and no one was going to change my mind. And then the miracle happened. AA folks had been trying to tell me about this day for 32 years, and all I ever thought was, "They just don't know the truth. I know the truth. I am a liar and a thief. A coward to beat all cowards. A friend to no one and loved by none. How can I ever expect a miracle?"

The message was clear. They all, to a man, told me that they got better only after they did the work the way the Big Book described. I certainly didn't think I had what it takes, but I also was a bit scared about my choice in suicide. If I missed the mark on my attempt, I would probably be crippled for life and drinking wouldn't fix that!

I had so very little fear left in me and I suddenly realized that God was running the show, and, I was able to be ok with that. Serenity through acceptance was mine. Suddenly, all the years of AA became clear. My mind was filled with information that I had heard in the halls, but never even knew I had. I had 100 original thoughts a day for weeks. And every time I had a new one, in a short amount of time I would hear it in a meeting or read it in a book.

The ideas weren't mine, they were things I had heard for years but never really listened to. The seeds had sprouted and I was a garden of spiritual knowledge. I had in 5 months the same feeling I believe Bill W. had in his hospital bed the night he had his experience.

But wait, my moment was not so short, was it? It took from June 1978 until November 2009. I guess that's what they mean when they say, "sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly."

Stephen B., Westborough, Mass.

### TEN THINGS TO DO IF YOU DON'T WANT SERENITY

1. Go to as few meetings as possible
2. Talk about everybody behind his or her back
3. 13 step a hot newcomer
4. Procrastinate...about anything
5. Spend your days and nights in yesterday
6. Spend your days and nights in tomorrow
7. Complain about the content of a meeting instead of adding something positive.
8. Question everything those who are happy, sober, and serene tell you
9. Hang around a bar and try not to drink
10. Move out of the sunlight of the spirit and into the shade

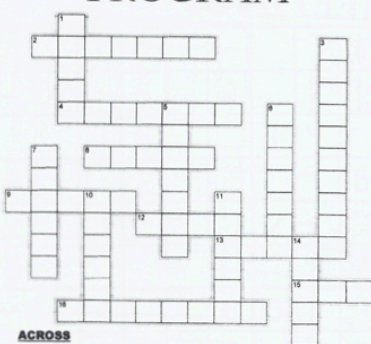
### Concept of the Month Concept VIII

The trustees are the principal planners and administrators of overall policy and finance. They have custodial oversight of the separately incorporated and constantly active services, exercising this through their ability to elect all the directors of these entities.

Do we understand the relationship between the two corporate service entities (A.A. World Services, Inc., the A.A. Grapevine) and the General Service Board?

Does my home group subscribe to G.S.O.'s bimonthly newsletter Box 4-5-9? The A.A.Grapevine? Do I?

## PROGRAM



### ACROSS

2. Prove to be just, right or reasonable
4. Container for tools
8. To form an opinion of someone or something
9. Anxiety
12. Opposite of Hate
13. Opposite of dirty
15. He has all power
16. Feeling sorry for oneself

### DOWN

1. Anger turned inward
3. We seek God through prayer and this
5. The AA book
6. Avoid people
7. Irrational, persistent fear
10. To take away
11. Hidden or kept from general knowledge
14. Disagree with words



## DCM CORNER

Do yourself a favor; look up: <http://www.loc.gov/bookfest/books-that-shaped-america>. The Library of Congress News Release "Books that shaped America" exhibition to open June 26. Books are listed, beginning from 1751, from the Library of Congress--the world's largest repository of knowledge--designating our nation's unique and extraordinary literary heritage. "Four score and"---eight titles are listed. The authors are as an Who's Who in American literature---titles flow trippingly off the tongue: Moby-Dick; Little Women; The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn; Gone With the Wind; To Kill a Mockingbird. Authors fly fittingly through the mind: Jack London; F. Scott Fitzgerald; William Faulkner; Ernest Hemingway; Tennessee Williams--and just before the listing of John Steinbeck there is Alcoholics Anonymous, 1939.

"Books that shaped America"--acknowledged and celebrated in national exhibition.

Jerry B., servant

# AAGRAPEVINE - Submit Your Story

The International Journal of Alcoholics Anonymous

We are looking for 400- to 1800-word articles. Share your experience with us!

## December 2012: Serenity and the Holidays

With all the parties and family gatherings, how have you kept your cool and stayed sober during the holidays?

## January 2013: Young & Sober

Did you get sober in AA at an early age? Let us hear from you.

**We also need your experience on Steps 4-12 and stories on every Tradition!**

For the complete editorial calendar, visit [www.AAGrapevine.org/contribute](http://www.AAGrapevine.org/contribute).

## Medications and My Sobriety

Sitting across from my sponsor, he told me how he'd been diagnosed with so many mental conditions. How he'd taken different pills for this and for that. He further explained that since he worked the 12 Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous and had a spiritual awakening, he hasn't had to take any of "those pills" again. Still having some "fight" in me, I told him that "my doctor said..." Today, having over a year of sobriety, I can say my experience was the same. My diagnosis ranged from borderline personality disorder, depression, anxiety, and bipolar, which "required" medication, frequent visits to therapists and psychiatrists, and an oversized wallet to pay for all this care. Every time a new medication would hit the market, either for some alcohol craving med or my new psychiatric disorder, I would quickly get put on that new medication, often with equally bad side effects.

What was true for me, is I was suffering from untreated alcoholism. Nothing more, nothing less. When I look at the symptoms on page 52, this idea of depression which was caused by my untreated alcoholism. It explains why ten years of SSRI medication didn't work for me. Or how me not being able to control my emotional natures might look being bipolar. When I saw on page 84 and 85, that I could be put in this position of neutrality, that I wouldn't need any new med for alcohol cravings. Not that any of those craving medications worked for me anyway. When I looked at my life and how it was run on self will (which had run riot), it explains how a professional would see that as borderline personality disorder or any other litany of DSM, "come lay on my couch and tell me about it," mental illness. When I was done blaming my parents, the molestation, the physical abuse and got a connection with a God of my understanding through step work, service and fellowship, I was able to see my truth. That my problem was (and is) that I'm an alcoholic and need a spiritual awakening to be sane and sober.

I am not saying anyone should stop taking medications. This decision should not be taken lightly and certainly needs to be discussed with one's doctor, sponsor and spiritual advisors. Direction from one's higher power being the most important factor. What I am saying is for me, my experience shows I didn't need them and never did. Today, I am pill free aside from a multi-vitamin. I've had a spiritual experience that has me free from what might appear as a mental illness which requires medication. There are some of us that need those medications for legitimate medical reasons. I was just not that person.

Anonymous



# Life is weird,

isn't it? Full of twists and turns, ups and downs...and in the final analysis we are left with the fact that there are always more questions than answers. When confronted with the fact that I could not drink successfully, nor could I stay sober successfully, I began to ask a series of questions and demand a set of answers that would fit my personal program of recovery while I "got ready" to work the steps. I soon learned that the unique program that I was developing did not require the approval of my sponsor or the fellowship, just my own approval that I was all too happy to provide.

Solitary self-appraisal was a key component of this course of action, but I found myself consistently going back to my sponsor and asking those questions for which I could find no answers. He would frustrate me with comments like, "You are on a need to know basis and you don't need to know."

All the while I continued to drink, of course, and one day he informed me that he, like myself, had spent many years "getting ready" to work the steps. In fact, he said, he had done it for 20 years from a bar stool and looking back he wished he had just followed a few simple suggestions.

Grudgingly I informed him that I would take under consideration his suggestions and determine if they were appropriate for me and get back with him. If the plan met my approval I would let him know when I was ready to

proceed. He just smiled at me and said, "Let me know how all this works out for you."

Meanwhile, I drank. So after a thorough thrashing, which included entirely new experiences with hopelessness and demoralization, crisis and chaos, (none of which were my fault of course), I returned to my sponsor who expressed to me in the most subtle, kind, and tolerant way, "Son, those steps don't require your approval, they require your participation." He also enlightened me to the fact that the action involved in the steps would produce the results and that the program of action had already been written. I did not need to re-write it. He asked me if I was willing to go to any lengths to get sober even if it meant that I would have to work a program other than my own.

Looking back, I now see the incredible gift AA was offering and it turned out to be freedom. The paradox of freedom is that it is never free. I had to pay for my freedom with the very things I hid from God and tried to hang on to that were killing me: namely my selfishness, dishonesty, resentments, and fears.

I began thinking it would be what I "got" from AA that would save me. It ended up that what I was willing to let go of saved me; the attachments that I clung to and depended on so desperately.

Scott B.  
Kerrville, TX AA

## 37th Annual Hill County Roundup *"Life Will Take On New Meaning"*

August 24-26, 2012 @ Inn of the Hills

Contact : Alan A. (713) 828 - 4222 / aammen08@yahoo.com

# Announcements

October 2012

TXSCYP

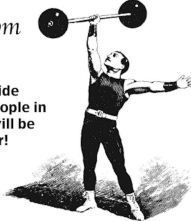
32

Kerrville

"On a mission from God..."

The 32nd annual state wide Conference for Young People in Alcoholics Anonymous will be held in Kerrville this year!

To PRE-REGISTER or to GET INVOLVED please contact:  
Alen Joblinske 719. 321. 1887  
Erin Gammon 214. 717. 0705



## AA Service Opportunities

### HELP WANTED!!

**Awesome service opportunity! Reach out to fellow AA's in treatment facilities.**

**"GIVE BACK WHAT YOU HAVE BEEN GIVEN!"**

**H&I sign-ups will be held at the 720 Club, Kerrville, TX**

**Sunday, Aug 19<sup>th</sup> at 3pm**

**DON'T MISS IT!**

### THE GRAPEVINE

**Get your subscription TODAY!!**

**For more information**

**contact**

**Shirley B.**

Please submit all AA Service Opportunities to:

newsletter@aa12.org

## Wanna Get Involved?

The Newsletter Committee is currently seeking volunteers for upcoming Newsletters. Please contact Mike S. if you would like to join the team.  
newsletter@aa12.org

### SPANISH SPEAKING MEETING EVERY SATURDAY

@ 2PM

2211 located at 2210 Bandera Hwy, Kerrville, TX 78028

## July's Birthday Celebrants

### Ingram Solution

Perry 26 yrs.	Jaime V. 3 yrs.
Martha 23 yrs.	Stephan M. 2 yrs.
Christine 11 yrs.	Kevin K. 2 yrs.
Joe H. 8 yrs.	Mindy 18 ms.
Rhonda 7 yrs.	Tom N. 1 yr.
Billy K. 6 yrs.	Liz 1 yr.
John S. 6 yrs.	Emily V. 1 yr.
Stephanie S. 5 yrs.	

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

Send Birthdays to newsletter@aa12.com

Please submit questions or comments to  
newsletter@aa12.org

## District 12 Trusted Servants

**DCM** Jerry B.

**Alternate DCM** Linda H.

**Secretary** Leslie C.

**Alt. Secretary** William A.

**Treasurer** Edie T.

**Archives** Kevin J.

**Correctional Facilities** David F.

**Grapevine** Shirley B.

**Help Line** Perry C.

**Newsletter** Mike S.

**Public Information** Karen K.

**Cooperation with Professional Community** Sandy T.

**Spanish Meeting Coordinator** Jose B.

**Treatment Facilities** Andrew B.

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

## UPCOMING AA EVENTS

### AREA 68

### WHERE

### WHEN

SWTA 68 PI/CPC Conference

New Braunfels

Sept 14-16

SWTA 68 Fall Conference

Kerrville

Nov 2-4

### DISTRICT 12

### WHERE

### WHEN

District 12 Monthly Meeting

Bandera - Community Church

Aug 8  
2 pm

H & I Signup

Kerrville - 720

Aug 19  
3 pm

*New Freedom - New Happiness - New Life*

# SWT Area 68

## Fall Conference & Business Meeting

### November 2-4, 2012

### Kerrville, TX

"The Heart of the Hill Country"

### District 12 Newsletter Focus

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