

The DIALog



A PUBLICATION OF THE DALLAS INTERGROUP ASSOCIATION (est. 1947)

Dallas Central Office | 6162 E Mockingbird Ln, Ste 213, Dallas TX 75214 | 214.887.6699 | www.aadallas.org | help@aadallas.org

LETTER TO THE FELLOWSHIP

Dear Fellow A. A. Members:

The Dallas Central Office will be 68 years old in September of 2015. Hopefully this office will continue our work for years to come. Unfortunately, this is not a given. The office is experiencing a concerning financial short fall due to decreased sales, and donations from only 37% of the groups listed on our website. The groups and individuals that do support us, we can't thank enough. The hard truth is the monthly group donations we generally receive covers rent, and one order from AAWS. When we get quarterly donations we do a bit better, but we basically depend on six groups for over 50% of our monthly group donations.

We sincerely hope that individual donations can make the difference in the Central Office remaining a vibrant, progressive intergroup or one that is barely surviving. We have online donations to make it simple to set up a monthly donation. If half of Dallas area members gave us the equivalent of a cup of specialty coffee a month, we wouldn't need to worry about whether or not we can cover our monthly expenses.

We receive 1000+ calls a month, (not including Nightwatch). I personally receive a minimum of 50 to 100 emails every day from members asking for information or 12th Step emails and all of them are answered. Since late October, 2014 when the 12th Step Initiative was launched, we have completed over 1000 face to face 12 Step calls. Because we felt the Central Office could do more to help newcomers, we returned to our beginnings and began "sponsoring"

newcomers into Alcoholics Anonymous like our founders. It is a rare day that we do not get a call or email from the newcomer and/or the member who experienced the magic that happens when one alcoholic talks to another.

The only donations we receive are from alcoholics. New York and GSO does not give us money despite the ongoing myth that they do. We do not make money on our events but we sometimes break even.

The Central Office is on the front lines of Alcoholics Anonymous and very often the first contact a new member has with our program. We send them to you to take care of, but we have to be here in order to continue having an office and programs such as Nightwatch, our Speaker Bureau, the 12th Step Initiative, the DIA Website (with up to date group schedules), AA Literature, CPC/PI events at Southwest Medical School and Health Fairs, ASL signers, books for Lew Sterrett and much more. We are a friendly, welcoming office known literally around the world for our service. We have sent books via yaks to Bhutan, and AA Literature page by page to Afghanistan and other forbidden areas for A.A. Please help us continue to grow and thrive in the years to come. You will not believe what we can do with your support!

Janis R.
Executive Director
Dallas Central Office/Dallas
Intergroup Association

TO SUBSCRIBE

Support your Dallas Intergroup Association, and get your DIALog hot off the presses! For individuals and groups, a yearly subscription is \$12; two years, \$18. Please contact andreaahig@aol.com, carrie@aadallas.org or call the Dallas Intergroup Association at (214) 887-6699.

SUBMISSIONS

We want to hear from you!

The DIALog is for us, by us. So let us know how your recovery is going. The peaks, and the pits.

Please send original articles of 250 to 300 words to andreaahig@aol.com or janis@aadallas.org; the subject line should read: The DIALog.

80 years ago in May, Bill and Bob met. One month later, on June 10th, Alcoholics Anonymous was born.
Happy 80th Birthday, A.A.!

SAVE THE DATE

Dallas Intergroup Association's
68th Anniversary Celebration
and Fundraiser

Speaker:

CLANCY I.

OCTOBER 17 2015



STEP THREE AS GOD AS IT GETS

By Paul P.
Friendship, Lewisville

Step Three was one of the hardest steps for me to take.

To contemplate turning my will and my life over to the care of God as I understood him was contrary to the way I was brought up, and my need for control.

I didn't grow up in the church. I was told, by my mother, that if I ever had a problem I needed to figure it out myself or work harder at it.

That is, to be smarter or to exert more willpower. Or, usually, both.

Without thinking about it (I was busy enough as it was, being smarter and applying more willpower), I was working up a big resentment toward God.

I thought that God, if there was a God, was to blame for making my life as unmanageable as it was. How could I turn my will and my life to such a being?

All that meant to me when I came into the program three decades ago was that I was moving on to take a Step Four Inventory.

It was there, in Step Four, that I wrote about my resentment toward God.

With Step Five, I admitted to another person where I was with my resentment toward God.

My sponsor encouraged me to be open to looking at my higher power, at life, differently. He suggested that I could think of God as having been there with me, and for me, all along.

That God could be an even greater source of power in my recovery, if I let him.

That alcoholism as well as life are too big to be managed on our own, and are not meant to be managed on our own.

My initial work with Step Three was to take it with my sponsor to move forward to Step Four and all the other steps, which is where I had my spiritual awakening.

I'm grateful that I took the action to take Step Three in spite of myself.

And my resentment toward God? Gone. That's made all the difference.



"Who's God?"

The New Yorker

STEPS FOUR & FIVE TRADITIONS THREE, FOUR & FIVE FREE AT LAST, FREE AT LAST

By Frank W.
Preston Group, Dallas

Over the 31 years I've been sober, I have heard many people share their dread of doing the Fourth and Fifth Steps.

That, however, has not been my experience.

Because I was misinformed, lazy and overly self-reliant, it took me a long time to fully admit Step One. But when I finally understood my alcoholic dilemma I became very open-minded about God and Step Two, and made the decision in Step Three.

My Fourth Step ("Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves") efforts consisted of simply following the directions in the Big Book.

As I wrote the three-column inventory, a pattern was made clear. My thinking was dominated by trying to get my needs met through other people, and I was constantly disappointed.

My way wasn't working because my mind was unreasonably focused on others much of the time. Eventually I came to understand that they were doing the best they could even if my resentments seemed justified.

That led me to what some call the fourth column. I looked at my own mistakes, "where was I to blame." I was to disregard "them" entirely, and look at where I had been selfish, dishonest, self-seeking and afraid.

My pride and prejudice began to diminish from my view as I wrote. For the first time, I saw how self-centered fear had been driving me.

The insight gained from the first part of the process was humbling and valuable, but learning the depth of my fear through the fear inventory was the key.

As I completed the fears inventory it became obvious that I had my fears because my self-reliance failed me. Lack of power was my dilemma in just about every area of my life, including my sex life.

The last part of the Fourth Step covered that in the sex inventory. It was revealed that I misunderstood much about my sex powers. My sponsor pointed out that the main and probably only thing I should focus on was keeping it simple and not being selfish.

It was after writing most of my Fourth Step, before the Fifth, that I had a life-changing spiritual experience that revolutionized everything.

I discovered that God was inside me all along, and IT is best described as love. The consciousness of my belief came to me!

I am grateful that Tradition Four suggests that "Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole."

As a recovered alcoholic, this tradition bolsters my sobriety because it reinforces the fact that while we operate individually we are all connected by the same God of love through service.

It also allows me the flexibility in carrying out all the steps and traditions, most notably Tradition Three ("The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking") and Tradition Five ("Each



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

The perspective I gained by writing a Fourth Step inventory enabled me to do the Fifth Step ("Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs").

Sharing my life story honestly and completely with another human being was how I shared it with God because God is in each and every one of us.

Because I chose an appropriate person --- my sponsor --- who had gone through the process himself, he was able to hear my Fifth Step, offer feedback, share some of his experiences and say to me afterward: "You're not so different from me or anyone else. I love and accept you."

The moment I fully admitted and accepted the truth about myself, I understood that the truth had set me free, indeed. I felt connected by the process, and I realized that we are in this together, with common problems and a common solution trudging the road of happy destiny.

SELF-SUPPORT: WHERE MONEY AND SPIRITUALITY MIX

An Excerpt from the pamphlet published by AA World Services

"Self-support begins with me, because I am part of us — the group. We pay our rent and utility bills, buy coffee, snacks and A.A. literature. We support our central office, our area committee, and our General Service Office. If it were not for those entities, many new people would never discover the miracles of A.A."

Twelfth Step work is the lifeblood of Alcoholics Anonymous — carrying the message to the next suffering alcoholic. Without it, the Fellowship would wither and die. Yet, even at its simplest level this vital contact between one alcoholic and another involves an investment of time and money.

"Let's begin with my own sponsor, Ebby," writes Bill W., in the book *Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age*. "When Ebby heard how serious my drinking was, he resolved to visit me. He was in New York; I was in Brooklyn. His resolve was not enough; he had to take action and he had to spend money.

"He called me on the phone and then got into the subway; total cost, ten cents. At the level

of the telephone booth and subway turnstile, spirituality and money began to mix. One without the other would have amounted to nothing at all.

"Right then and there, Ebby established the principle that A.A. in action calls for the sacrifice of much time and a little money."

Footing the bill

"Now, where do A.A.'s services — worldwide, area, local — fit into our scheme of things?" asked Bill W. in an October 1967 article in the A.A. Grapevine. "Why should we provide these functions with money?"

According to Bill, "The answer is simple enough. Every single A.A. service is designed to make more and better Twelfth Step work possible, whether it be a group meeting place, a central or intergroup office . . . or the world service Headquarters

"Though not costly, these service agencies are absolutely essential to our continued expansion — to our survival as a Fellowship. Their costs are a collective obligation that rests squarely upon all of us. Our support of services actually amounts to a recognition on our part that A.A. must every-where function in full strength — and that, under our Tradition of self-support, we are all going to foot the bill."

How can groups participate?

To help support A.A.'s essential services, the General Service Conference suggests that individual groups, through an informed group con-science, adopt a specific contribution plan tailored to meet the group's financial situation.

Once the basic group expenses have been taken care of, for example: (rent, refreshments, A.A. literature, Grapevine literature, local meeting lists, G.S.R. travel expenses to attend service functions), and a "prudent reserve" has been set aside to cover any emergency contingencies that might arise, the group may decide to further carry the message by sending money to the following A.A. service entities.

The local district, which communicates directly with the groups, providing the district group conscience for the area assemblies, and serving as a link between the area delegates and the G.S.R.s.

The area committee, which coordinates vital A.A. activities over a broad geographic area; sends a delegate to the annual General Service Conference; holds area assemblies to determine the needs of the Fellowship; and provides information at all levels of service.

The local intergroup or central office, which may provide phone service for Twelfth Step calls and other inquiries; coordination of group activities; A.A. literature sales; institutions

work; public information and cooperation with the professional community activities.

A.A.'s General Service Office, which functions as a storehouse of A.A. information, communicating with members and groups around the world; publishes A.A.'s literature; and supplies information and experience to professionals and others interested in A.A.

The Bottom Line

"Now that we are sober in A.A., the word 'support' has to do with sharing, people, self-respect, gratitude, and what we are privileged to give — not take — in material terms."

While the Fellowship has always faced problems of money, property, and prestige in one form or another, through the wisdom of the Seventh Tradition we have never been diverted from our primary purpose of carrying the message to the alcoholic who still suffers — wherever he or she may be. This is the fundamental work of Alcoholics Anonymous, and to ensure that the hand of A.A. will always remain outstretched, money and spirituality must continue to mix. And for that, we are all responsible.

Dallas AA Central Office
Dallas Intergroup Association
6162 E. Mockingbird Ln, Suite 213
Dallas, TX 75214
214-887-6699 office
214-887-0443 fax
www.aadallas.org

Director

Janis R. - janis@aadallas.org
Assistant to Director
Carrie L. - carrie@aadallas.org

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DIARIES OF THE CHILI COOK-OFF

WINNERS

By *Andrea H.*
Editor

Braving a cool morning and construction-clogged roads, chili lovers went to many lengths to get themselves and their pots of chili and dishes of cornbread out to the Ninth Annual Dallas Intergroup Chili Cook-Off.

And the fifth time at this event proved the charm for Tamara A., who took first place representing the Cornerstone Group.

There are a couple of ingredients, she said, that made her chili so successful at the March event.

"I mixed two different recipes," Tamara said. "One called for chopped steak."

And the rest?

"The sauces that I put together."

And they were?

She preferred not to cook and tell, and after winning first place for her Dallas group, who could blame her?

Did she think she would win?

"You always hope you do," Tamara said. "I've gotten second place before."

(We did promise you recipes on the Dallas Intergroup Association website, www.aadallas.org, and a recipe you shall have, of this year's second-place winner; please see the box.)

Next chili up was an adaptation of a New York Times "Texas-Style Chili" recipe, cooked up by Shannon P. and me, representing our home group, Friendship in Lewisville.

The introduction to the recipe opens, "Calling a dish 'Texas Chili,' especially if you're not a native of that state, is clearly asking for trouble."

We didn't get trouble. We got a trophy!

And the Friendship Group, on its first try in the Dallas Intergroup Association Chili Cook-Off, took home the second-place trophy and ribbon.

While neither Shannon nor I are natives of Texas, she born in Columbia, S.C., and I in New York City, we did what the bumper sticker says, and got here as fast as we could.



AND THE CHILI WINNERS ARE Tamara A., left, first place, Cornerstone Group; Andrea H. and Shannon P., second place, Friendship; and Michael L., We Agnostics.



Margaret M., representing the Clean Air Group, won for her cornbread.

Photos by Carrie L.

So, in honor of our fine adopted state and its erratic weather systems, we named our entry "Thunder Sleet Chili."

The modifications to our winning recipe were, first, that I did not toast whole cumin and coriander seeds, and then grind them with a pestle or in a coffee grinder. (I am not insane.)

Instead, I bought them freshly ground.

I decided against cutting up four pounds of raw beef chuck roast and steak (two pounds each) and then browning the pieces in oil.

I first grilled the meat over high heat to quickly sear a crust, with a rare middle, then let it rest to enhance the juices before slicing the bite-size pieces.

We did not use beer, which was listed in the original recipe. We did add just a bit more unsweetened baking chocolate to round out the chili's flavor, and deepen it. We did not use masa harina. We did buy a big bag of Fritos.

Word of warning: Stemming, seeding and chopping the jalapeño peppers was unexpectedly terrible.

The fumes slid down our throats, sending us into fits of uncontrollable coughing.

"It was like an invisible fist going down our throats," Shannon said. "The hardest part was keeping the vapors from killing us."

Luckily, I had a few masks from the 2002 SARS epidemic in China.

And then we were cooking!

Just as there are no atheists in foxholes, there are few at Chili Cook-Offs. But there are agnostics.

We Agnostics, represented by Michael L., won third place, and while he did not pray, neither did he scoff.

"I wasn't going for the glory," Michael said. "I was just nervous about not screwing up, and having something good to show."

His secret ingredient? "Mrs. Renfro's Ghost Pepper Salsa."

Michael, who was raised on meatloaf, chicken and roasts in Lake Highlands in Dallas, developed his chili-making expertise living in a co-op at the University of Texas at Austin.

For his Dallas home group's entry, he did his own longtime take on a Food Network recipe, using strong coffee instead of beer.

"I hadn't cooked chili in a while," Michael said, adding, "I put some love into it."

That worked. Along with the salsa and that A.A. staple, coffee.

What worked for Margaret M., representing the Clean Air Group in Dallas, was turning her sights to cornbread.

And for that she won her group's trophy.

Growing up on gumbo in Baton Rouge, La., Margaret said she had



Photo by Carrie L.



entered the annual Chili Cook-Off three times before, with chili.

"This was my first time with cornbread," she said.

And her first win.

"I wasn't expecting to win," Margaret said. "I was stunned!"

Her secrets?

"I made my cornbread from scratch," Margaret said.

Go on.

"I used cornmeal, buttermilk, jalapeños and bacon."

And then?

"I don't want to give my recipe away!"

THUNDER SLEET CHILI THE FRIENDSHIP GROUP

3 Hours, 12 Servings

INGREDIENTS

- 1 tablespoon whole cumin seeds
- 1 ½ teaspoons whole coriander seeds
- 4 pounds beef chuck roast or steak
- 1 teaspoon salt, more to taste
- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil, plus extra as needed
- 1 large yellow or white onion, chopped, plus extra chopped onion for serving
- 6 large garlic cloves, minced
- 4 to 7 large fresh green jalapeños (depending on how much heat you like), stemmed, seeded and chopped
- 3 tablespoons masa harina or 1 corn tortilla, torn into pieces (optional)
- 2 tablespoons ground pure chile powder, such as pasilla, Chimayo or ancho
- 1 tablespoon dried oregano
- 1 (12-ounce) bottle Negra Modelo beer
- 1 28-ounce can diced tomatoes, or 3 10-ounce cans Ro-Tel canned tomatoes with green chiles
- 1 ounce unsweetened chocolate
- 3 whole dried large red chiles, such as New Mexico or guajillo
- Chopped fresh cilantro, for serving
- Fritos or warmed flour tortillas, for serving

PREPARATION

1. In a small heavy skillet, toast cumin and coriander seeds until fragrant. In a mortar and pestle, or in a coffee grinder, grind to a powder and set aside.
2. Meanwhile, roughly cut beef into 2-inch cubes, or slice it against the grain into pieces about 1/4-inch thick by 1 1/2 inches square. Sprinkle with salt.
3. In a large, heavy pot over high heat, heat oil until shimmering. Working in batches to avoid crowding the pan, brown the meat, turning occasionally until crusty.
4. Adjust heat to prevent scorching. As it is cooked, remove the meat to drain on paper towels. Add more oil as needed for browning, but do not clean out the pot.
5. To the empty but crusty pot, add onion, garlic, jalapeños, masa harina or tortilla (if using), chile powder, cumin-coriander powder and oregano. Cook, stirring, until onion has softened, 5 to 10 minutes.
6. Add meat, beer, tomatoes, chocolate, whole dried chiles and 1 quart water. Bring to a gentle simmer and simmer about 1 1/2 hours, or until meat is fork-tender. Remove the dried chiles. Taste and add salt if necessary.
7. Serve immediately or let cool and refrigerate. The chili tastes best one or two days after it is made.
8. Reheat over low heat if necessary and serve in bowls, sprinkled with chopped onion and cilantro. Add Fritos for crunch, or dip tortillas into the spicy gravy.

Group Contributions April 2015

	<u>Apr 15</u>
A Daily Reprieve	369.08
Addison Group	10.00
Allen Group	50.00
Aquarius Group	25.00
Belmont	50.00
Carrollton	200.00
Casa Group	10.00
Chicago	90.00
Clean Air Group	187.50
Clean Air North	224.25
Coppell	20.00
Cornerstone	250.00
Dallas North	562.50
Downtown Nooners	0.00
Forney Group	80.00
Friendship Group	50.00
Frisco Group	1,145.49
Garland Clean Air	0.00
Georgetown	720.00
Highland Park Women's Group	0.00
Kessler Park Group	557.69
Lake Highlands	302.78
Lakeside Group	330.00
Lambda	0.00
Legacy	50.00
Lewisville	133.00
Little Elm Group	70.00
McKinney Fellowship	10.00
McKinney Miracle Group	539.05
New Freedom	276.70
ODAAAT	0.00
Prosper Country Grp	0.00
Ray of Hope - Seven Points	20.00
Red Oak Group	0.00
Richardson	0.00
Ross Avenue Group	0.00
Rowlett	40.00
Serenity Circle	25.00
Shalom Today	30.00
Southwest Clean Air	92.55
Step Up	200.00
The Colony Group	20.00
The Gift of Sobriety	30.00
Town North	100.00
White House	50.00
WHITE ROCK	25.00
Wylie Group	10.00
TOTAL	<u>6,955.59</u>



News, Updates & Events... more on aadallas.org

MAY 2015

DALLAS INTERGROUP REP MEETING FOR MAY

May 14 @ 8 - 9 pm

First United Lutheran Church, 6202 E. Mockingbird Lane, Dallas TX 75214

We meet on the second Thursday night of every month, at 8, in the building behind the First United Lutheran Church. The office will be open from 9 to 9:30 pm for group-order pickup and individual orders. Please call ahead for all group orders so that we can fill them before Thursday night. We do not have extra volunteers to handle high volume or large orders.

32nd ANNUAL MAN TO MAN CONFERENCE

May 15 @ 2 pm - May 17 @ noon

Lake Brownwood TX

Speakers include: David B, Broken Arrow, OK Bob McK, Greenville, SC David M, Dallas, TX Al-Anon Arthur S, Arlington, TX \$145 Registration. Early information for planning. More information as the event gets closer. For more information go to: <http://.man-to-man.org>

WYLIE: 24 YEARS OF A.A.

May 16 @ 4:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Wylie Group, 3990 Lakeview, St. Paul TX

Celebrating, and all are welcome, on May 16, with dinner will be served at 4:30 pm Feel free to bring a dish and a guest or both! Raffle Al-Anon Speaker, Beverly B., Friendship Group at 6:30pm A.A. Speaker, Orville D., Town North Group, at 8pm Fun, Food, Fellowship and wonderful speakers!

GATHERING OF EAGLES

May 21 @ 4 pm - May 24 @ 1 pm

Doubletree Hotel (Dallas), 4099 Valley View Lane, Dallas TX 75244

The dates for the 29th annual convention 2015 are set! Plan ahead! Information: www.dallasgatheringofeagles.org Registration: \$25 in advance or \$30 at the door. Speakers include: Sterling H, Omaha, NE Larcine G, Hawthorne, CA Al-Anon Howard P, Gilbert, AZ Larry J, Inman, SC Gail LaC, The Villages, FL

BIG D ROUNDUP

May 22 @ 10 am - May 25 @ 2 pm

Hilton Anatole, 2201 Stemmons Freeway, Dallas TX 75207

This four-day convention is held every year over Memorial Day weekend, featuring A.A. speakers, Al-Anon speakers, workshops and more. The convention will be held at the Hilton Anatole. Registration is \$45, with access to all workshops. All-Access Pass is \$145, and includes all workshops, lunch, banquet, brunch and hotel parking for four days. Speaker meetings are open to all! A.A. speakers include Loretta M., Austin, and Anil P., LA.

June 2015

47TH ANNUAL BIG DEEP SOUTH CONVENTION

June 5 @ 3 pm - June 7 @ 1 pm

Best Western Landmark, 2301 Severn Ave., Metairie, LA 70002

Celebrating 72 years of A.A. in New Orleans, with the theme "Surrender to Win." Speakers, workshops, marathon meetings and more. Meetings, Auction, Raffle, 50/50, Bingo, Buffet, Hospitality Room and more. Speakers include: Melvin G, Monroe, LA Don M, Metairie, LA Cliff R., Metairie, LA Micki B, Bryan, TX Tami P, Chatsworth, CA Nancy M, Minneapolis, MN \$20 Registration. See flyer for details: 47Annual Big Deep South

DALLAS INTERGROUP REP MEETING FOR MAY

June 11 @ 8 - 9 pm

First United Lutheran Church, 6202 E. Mockingbird Lane, Dallas TX 75214

We meet at the First United Lutheran Church in the detached building behind the church. The Dallas Central Office will be open for 30 minutes after the meeting closes, and we will not be able to fill group orders unless they have been called ahead. We do not have the staff to handle groups and individuals. The idea of this was convenience for groups to pick up orders.

CITYWIDE DALLAS

June 13 @ 5 - 9 pm

Lovers Lane United Methodist Church, 9200 Inwood Road, Dallas

Potluck dinner, at 5 p.m.; speaker at 7 p.m. Free childcare from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m.

80TH ANNIVERSARY OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS IN AKRON, OHIO

June 12 @ 8 am - June 14 @ 5 pm

Akron, OH

The Founders' Day Celebration has more events going on than can be listed! The Akron Area Intergroup Council of A.A. is the host Register online: www.akronaa.org. Registration will be \$20, plus any of the package plans. For more information get in touch with the Akron Intergroup. email: treasurerfd@akronaa.org

FRIENDSHIP GROUP 27TH ANNIVERSARY

June 20 @ 5 - 9 pm

359 Lake Park Road, Suite 129, Lewisville 75057

Potluck dinner at 5 p.m. A.A. speaker at 8 p.m. is John D, No Hassle Group; Al-Anon speaker is Sandra S., Omega. www.friendshipaa.net

July 2015

CRESTED BUTTE MOUNTAIN CONFERENCE

July 26 @ 8:00 am - July 31 @ 5:00 pm

Save the date! The only week long AA & Al-Anon family oriented conference! July 26-31, 2015. On-line registration opens April 1st. Go to: www.cbconference.org for more information. Crested Butte 1 More information as it becomes available.



Visit Us Online!

At www.aadallas.org you'll find group announcements, an events calendar, a searchable group directory, online bookstore & more.