

# 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

## FROM THE DIRECTOR

Many thanks to the groups that made our donations more than double for July! We kept getting extra donations from groups until we received more in group donations than I have seen in years. I have always heard and believed that the members of A.A. will always step up when they know of a need and again, it has proven to be true. Thank you all so very much. We were able to catch up on literature and pay all bills before they were due! While we cannot replace the funds to our Prudent Reserve just yet, if our individual support and group support continues we just might see that grow once more.

We have a lot going on for the rest of the year. First we will be the 69th Annual Texas State AA Convention in Midland, TX, Aug. 14th-16th, at the Midland Center. After the State Convention we have the North Texas Roundup, August 21st-23rd at the Double Tree Hotel, 4099 Valley View. Maybe we should just call it the A.A. Conference place. They have a great line up of speakers and we have been invited to have our literature table right outside the big speaker room so you can't miss us. We will be there Friday and Saturday, but closed during speaker meetings.

September is the month for several Texas based occasions that can be found on the event page of our website (www.aadallas.org) including the 32nd Annual Singles in Sobriety, Conference Sept. 10th-13th and the 30th Annual Straight from the Heart Women's Conference in Salado, Sept. 18th – 20th.

The 30th Annual Central Office/Intergroup/AAWS/AAGV Seminar will be held Sept. 18th-20th in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. We will make it interesting I promise! With that many 8th Tradition workers in one place there is bound to be fireworks.

October 3rd is The Joy of Living Benefit. Mark C. and Company will entertain with a musical venue you will not soon forget. Ticket proceeds go to support the Dallas Intergroup Association/Central Office. Tickets are \$20. See flyer in this issue.

Also in October we will celebrate our 68th Anniversary a month late but worth the wait, with AA Speaker Clancy I, from Los Angeles, CA. This flyer is also included in this issue. There will be cake and coffee and a lot of fellowship. For more information on either of these two October events please contact the office.

Again, thank you all for supporting the Dallas Intergroup Office. See you soon.

*Janis R.*

## LOSS AND FELLOWSHIP IN ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

This year seems to be a particularly difficult one for the Dallas A.A. community. We have lost many of our tireless workers and long-time members. It is different to lose one of our A. A. family and hard to explain to anyone outside of our community. We notice the member that is not coming to meetings anymore but we do not always know why. Sometimes the obituaries let us know what has become of our missing members, and sometimes we never know.

Usually when someone dies, we know their last names certainly, what they did, something about their family, loved ones, where they came from and who they were in general. In Alcoholics Anonymous we may not know a last name until we see that obituary, yet we may know that person better than those we have known all our lives.

We have had the priceless privilege of seeing the light in their eyes, the love and principles they lived by, and on occasion the dignity of their passing. The person we loved because of their flaws and past blunders not in spite of them will not be sharing their story with us again.

There is nothing quite like an A.A. memorial. The joy we take in each other and the sadness that one of us has left our rooms forever is an experience we all paid a heavy price to be a small part of and should not be missed. We join hands and it is a like big hug for the one gone ahead.

Such was the celebration of Andrea H.'s life last month. Andrea was a DIA Board Member in her second year, from the Friendship Group. Her death was sudden and unexpected. That is always a shock and I found myself asking "who died?" more than once hoping I had misunderstood. Andrea was the tenacious editor of our newsletter, DIALOG. Once she had you cornered, you would write something for the next edition! Her last email to us was a detailed editing comment which now has a fitting finality to it.

If you did not have the opportunity of knowing Andrea, I can tell you this: she had two sons she adored; a gorgeous cat named Pyewacket and she could not stop taking pictures of him to show; a quirky, intelligent sense of humor and, most of all, she was good A. A.

The largest living organism in the world is supposed to be a honey fungus growing in the Blue Mountains of Oregon. I think they are wrong. I think it is Alcoholics Anonymous. And this enormous organism will miss your presence Andrea.

Godspeed.

**The August issue of the DIALOG is dedicated to the memory of Andrea H., our newsletter editor, who died suddenly last month. We had talked about having an issue emphasizing the contributions of early women in Alcoholics Anonymous since a woman is largely responsible for Dallas A.A. and women still only account for 38% of our fellowship (2014 survey). It is in that spirit that we tried to pull together something she would have appreciated.**



## I LOVE ME SO I CAN LOVE YOU

*Liz B. Shares Her Experience, Strength and Hope (as told to Malini M.)*

As I dialed the number to interview Liz B., I also prepared a quick mental message to leave on her voicemail. I was sure that she wouldn't answer as she is one of us, has a very busy service schedule and was probably in preparation for her anniversary on Jones Beach that weekend. You can imagine my surprise when she actually picked up the phone. We scheduled a time to chat as she had a caller on the other line. Liz was more than happy to talk about her "beautiful sobriety." Her 62 years of sobriety.

We chatted the next day. What unfolded was the true story of one woman who received the gift of desperation during the teenage years of Alcoholics Anonymous. Our interview was actually a meeting. I listened as she gave her qualification. What it was like, what happened and what is it like now.

Liz may be a true blooded New Yorker (born in Brooklyn, raised in The Bronx, and living in Queens for the last four decades), but she is also a true blooded alcoholic who grew up in our program. Liz had her first drink at the age of 12 and that's all it took. Her 19 year drinking career was messy, chaotic and volatile. Though her father was an alcoholic, her mother wasn't. Liz married her husband, Mr. B. as she affectionately calls him, while she was still quite active. Mr. B. often said that he had the nicest wife when she was sober. When she drank, she became Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. He didn't know who he would be dealing with and begged her to go to AA. She said "no way!" She didn't go. He didn't hassle her. Liz' drinking drove her to despair. She remembers feeling so low that when her son was about 8 months old, she planned to jump in front of a train. She screamed out for help. It was in that moment that the God of her understanding told her she better try AA. On July 11, 1952, at the age of 31, this suicidal young mother walked through the doors of AA.

Actually, Liz says she had no other choice as there weren't rehabs. Rehabs in those days were more social houses. If you wanted a bed at either Towns Hospital or Knickerbocker Hospital, you needed a lot of money. There were also very few women as they weren't welcomed at that time. AA was 17 years old with approximately 150,000 members (we have approximately 2 million today). Liz wanted to stop drinking so she gave in and started taking suggestions. A woman at NY Intergroup told her that she had to get sober for herself and not her mother or Mr. B. So began her journey in AA. It included meetings, sponsorship, and service. At that time, Liz says, "you had to do service". That mean going to a person's job, going to the bar, the courthouse, their house...because there were no rehabs." She was taught not to say no.

I asked Liz if she ever wanted to leave AA. She said never because she didn't know if she would make it back or if she would be worse off. Though she has made some great achievements including becoming a nurse with the Visiting Nurses of America at the age of 44 with high grades, rebuilding broken bonds and being a very active member of our program, Liz has also had her share of pitfalls. I'll share with you the way she shared them with me. She experienced the losses of many family members including the death of her daughter and son, the suicides of her sister and her father, twelve operations and a cancer diagnosis. The doctor gave her a year but her response was, "I'll deal with this one day at a time." As a result, she's been cancer free for many years. She and Mr. B. even split up for 27 years. After speaking in front of a crowd of 2700 for "Billy's 28th Anniversary [Bill W.] at the Hotel Commodore, Mr. B. and Liz got into a huge fight. The man that told her to get sober couldn't stand her or her sobriety. She asked God for help and she chose to put her sobriety first.

Liz Doesn't call herself recovered because the compulsion is still there. Once an alcoholic, Always an alcoholic. She "Knows to stay in her space". She will go to any length to stay sober. She goes to meetings 7 days a week and three on Sunday. She follows the 7th Tradition and gives what

she can to the program. She goes on speaking engagements and is booked months in advance. She has had the pleasure of speaking in all the states of the Union as well as Canada. Through all this, she maintains that it is about the newcomer. Her suggestions are simple: Remember that "They can't do service without accepting themselves and God is the key." "Give them time." "Never leave a newcomer alone."

Liz B. is a miracle of this program. She stands tall with dignity. She practices this program one day at a time.

## SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT

*Box 459, April/May 1991*

Some months ago, Angel S. of Los Angeles, California opened a magazine for substance abuse counselors and was unhappy with what she saw. She sat down and wrote a letter, signed "Anonymous," which the editors printed in its entirety. Excerpts follow:

"As a recovering alcoholic with 11 years of sobriety, I must express a deep disappointment in three of the articles you ran on cocaine addiction. Each article suggested sending addicts to A.A. meetings rather than encouraging them to embrace recovery in Narcotics Anonymous and/or Cocaine Anonymous, where they would have other addicts to identify with and a common recovery solution.

"The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking. As the A.A. pamphlet, 'Problems Other Than Alcohol,' states: 'Sobriety - freedom from alcohol - through the teaching and practice of the Twelve Steps, is the sole purpose of an A.A. group.'

"When I was three years sober, I tried to carry the A.A. message to a free-base addict. He was not an alcoholic, but I thought A.A. had the answers for him. I never gave him the phone number for N.A. or C.A. When he died of an overdose, my signature was on the death certificate. I carried the wrong message to another human being and I carry the guilt today.

"Now when I share my experience strength and hope with someone, I try to make certain that person is an alcoholic who wants to recover from alcoholism. I encourage people with problems other than alcohol to seek out twelve-step programs that specifically address their afflictions."

## TRADITIONS CHECKLIST

***Tradition Eight: Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.***

1. Is my own behavior accurately described by the Traditions? If not, what needs changing?
2. When I chafe about any particular Tradition, do I realize how it affects others?
3. Do I sometimes try to get some reward—even if not money—for my personal AA efforts?
4. Do I try to sound in AA like an expert on alcoholism? On recovery? On medicine? On sociology? On AA itself? On psychology? On spiritual matters? Or, heaven help me, even on humility?
5. Do I make an effort to understand what AA employees do? What workers in other alcoholism agencies do? Can I distinguish clearly among them?
6. In my own AA life, have I any experiences which illustrate the wisdom of this Tradition?
7. Have I paid enough attention to the book Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions? To the pamphlet AA Tradition—How It Developed?



# GENERAL SERVICE OFFICE NEEDS AA MEMBERS TO SHARE EXPERIENCES ON THREE TOPICS LISTED BELOW

**To: Intergroups & Central Offices**  
**From: Mary Clare Lynch, secretary to the trustees' Literature Committee**  
**cc: Joe Downey, chair of the trustees' Literature Committee**  
**Date: June 10, 2015**  
**Re: Call for stories to update "A.A. for the Woman"**

In response to the 2015 General Service Conference recommendation that "the pamphlet 'A.A. for the Woman' be revise by gathering current sharing from women in A.A.," including "stories from women in the military, singles mothers, and women of diverse backgrounds," the trustee's Literature Committee is seeking stories from women in A.A.

In 2014, the trustees' Literature Committee requested that, whenever gathering sharing, consideration be given to stories from disabled veterans and from non-believers.

Manuscripts should be 500-800 words, double spaced, in a 12-point font. Please include your complete name, address and email/phone information. The anonymity of all authors will be observed, whether or not their story is selected for publication. Please email your sharing to Literature@aa.org and put "A.A. for the Woman" in the subject line of the message. Or, you may mail it to Literature Coordinator, General Service Office, Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163. The deadline for submission is October 15, 2015.

**To: Intergroup & Central Offices**  
**From: Mary Clare Lynch, secretary to the trustees' Literature Committee**  
**cc: Joe Downey, chair of the trustees' Literature Committee**  
**Date: June 10, 2015**  
**Re: Call for stories to update "A.A. and the Gay/Lesbian Alcoholic"**

The trustee's Literature Committee is seeking stores from A.A. members who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered or gender nonconforming, especially regarding being a newcomer and sponsorship. This request is in response to the 2015 General Service Conference recommendation that the pamphlet "A.A. and the Gay/Lesbian Alcoholic" be revised to include a wider range of A.A. recovery experience. The title of the pamphlet will also be revised to reflect this broader scope.

In 2014, the trustees' Literature Committee requested that, whenever gathering sharing, consideration be given to stories from disabled veterans and non-believers.

Manuscripts should be 500-800 words, double spaced, in a 12-point font. Please include your complete name, address and email/phone information. The anonymity of all authors will be observed, whether or not their story is selected for publication. Please email your sharing to

Literature@aa.org and put "A.A. and the Gay/Lesbian Alcoholic" in the subject line of the message. Or, you may mail it to Literature Coordinator, General Service Office, Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163. The deadline for submission is October 15, 2015.

**To: Intergroup & Central Offices**  
**From: Mary Clare Lynch, secretary to the trustees' Literature Committee**  
**cc: Joe Downey, chair of the trustees' Literature Committee**  
**Date: June 10, 2015**  
**Re: Call for A.A. recovery experience from members with mental health issues and from those who sponsor such members**

The trustee's Literature Committee is requesting a wide range of A.A. recovery experience from members with mental health issues, and from those who sponsor such members, for inclusion in literature on this topic. This request is in response to the 2015 General Service Conference recommendation that the trustees' Literature Committee develop literature for the alcoholic with mental health issues.

In 2014, the trustees' Literature Committee requested that, whenever gathering sharing, consideration be given to stories from disabled veterans and from non-believers.

Manuscripts should be 500-800 words, double spaced, in a 12-point font. Please include your complete name, address and email/phone information. The anonymity of all authors will be observed, whether or not their story is selected for publication. Please email your sharing to Literature@aa.org and put "the alcoholic with mental health issues" in the subject line of the message. Or, you may mail it to Literature Coordinator, General Service Office, Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163. The deadline for submission is October 15, 2015.

**Dallas Central Office's  
68th Anniversary Celebration**

---

**Saturday October 17th 4:30-7PM**

For more information, call 214-887-6699 or visit [www.aadallas.org](http://www.aadallas.org)

**AA Speaker: Clancy I.  
Los Angeles, CA**

\$10  
at the door

4:30 ~ Coffee, Cake & Fellowship

5:30 ~ AA Speaker

**Fellowship Church Dallas**  
Large Ballroom  
9330 North Central Expressway  
Dallas, TX 75231



**THE**

**JOY**

**OF**

**LIVING**

*A Benefit Concert for Dallas Intergroup Association*

**SATURDAY  
OCTOBER 3, 2015  
@ 2PM**  
Fellowship Dallas  
Second Floor  
9330 North Central Expy  
Dallas, TX 75231

*FEATURING*  
**Mark C  
& COMPANY**

**TICKETS \$20 ADMIT 1**

To purchase tickets, please visit  
[JoyOfLivingBenefit.org](http://JoyOfLivingBenefit.org)

*Dallas Intergroup needs your help in order to continue offering vital services to the Greater Dallas AA community.  
 Please consider making a monthly or one-time contribution at [www.aadallas.org](http://www.aadallas.org)*



## FOR MEN ONLY?

*June 1960 Grapevine*

One of AA's first woman members describes her pioneering struggle to gain acceptance of her sex in what was exclusively a man's world of sobriety

WHEN I attended my first AA meeting on April 11, 1939 I was the only woman alcoholic there. And I might not have been there had there not been one before me whose story I had read in the manuscript of a book called "Alcoholics Anonymous." Some weeks before, my psychiatrist had handed me a red cardboard-covered document, saying flatly that he had about given up hope of being able to help me after nearly a year of intensive treatment in the sanitarium he headed. But, he added, he had just read something that might help, and he wanted me to read it. He said little more, except to remark that this group of men (the emphasis is mine) seemed to have discovered a way out of the same trouble I had--drinking.

I took the book in trembling hands and went back to my room with a wild surge of hope lifting me up the stairs three steps at a time. As I read, the hope swelled and sank again and again. My trouble had a name: alcoholism. It was music to my ears. Alcoholism was a disease. Shame, guilt and self-condemnation rolled away like heavy fog, letting light and air into my heart again. I could breathe; I could bear to live. Alcoholism was "an 'allergy' of the body coupled with an obsession of the mind"; there was no known way of reversing the sensitivity of the body to alcohol, therefore an alcoholic could never safely drink again. This was the first reason I had ever heard that made sense to me. I could accept it. I could face a life without drinking, because I had to; there was no choice--my body wouldn't let me. It wasn't just a question of mental aberration after all; I wasn't insane, or hopelessly neurotic; I had a disease. And thousands of other people had it, too. I wasn't the only one; I wasn't so peculiar, so different, so alone beyond the pale. I had a disease! My mind made a song of hope out of those words. Then came the let-down.

This handful of men had found an answer to the "obsession of the mind" that drove them to drink against their own will, against their own desire, against not only their better judgment but against their own good. That answer was God. My hope sank. This was not for me. I couldn't use this answer. I had lost God in my teens. I had outgrown this primitive notion. I was an intellectual, a worldly, widely-travelled, well-educated once-successful woman. A woman. My hope completely disappeared. This was a man's book, entirely about men, obviously written by and for men, and a particular kind of men at that--religious men. Well, that was that. I wasn't religious, and I wasn't a man. I'd have to find my own way out after all. I was still alone.

And so I argued with the doctor, day after day and week after week, about the God business. Patiently he let me get my arrogant, infantile arguments off my chest. Firmly he would send me back to "read some more," for I was creeping through the book, dragging my feet over each arguable phrase. He had quickly answered my complaint that this was a book for men only by saying simply, "What's so different about women suffering the same illness?" But this had seemed no more satisfactory an answer to me than his careful parrying of my arguments against God. I had consigned myself to outer darkness and there I would stay, alone with my ego and my pride.

Until the day came; the day the crisis in my personal life did exactly what the book had said it would. It raised the bottom to where I precariously hung, and I fell right into God's hands. Gloriously, joyously, ecstatically surrendered to complete faith in a Power greater than myself. I was free. So free that I knew I could walk out my third-story window and keep right on walking. God supported me at a level I had never dreamed was possible, and there was no prison--neither of my own making, nor of the wood and stone that made the sanitarium, nor of gravity itself--that could contain me. I was free!

A vestige of my old suspicions sent me running to the doctor. Was I now completely mad? If so, I liked it. Sanity was never like this; I felt wonderful, happy, radiant, bursting with love and delight. The grass had never been so green, the sky so blue, people so nice and so good. The world was a divinely beautiful place. . . . I was free. "Perhaps you are," the doctor said, "for I believe you have had an authentic spiritual experience. Hold on to it, and go back and read that book!"

I did, and it seemed a different book. True, it was still obviously by and for men, but it held truth for me and I gobbled it up. For the first time, I read it through to the end. And there I found, among the personal stories, one entitled "A Woman's Story." Thank You, my newly found God. I might have known You would supply everything I needed.

## Group Contributions July 2015

	<u>TOTAL</u>
Allen Group	50.00
Aquarius Group	25.00
Belmont	50.00
Carrollton	200.00
Carry the Message	29.50
Casa Group	10.00
Chicago	90.00
Clean Air Group	172.50
Clean Air North	1,968.44
Cornerstone	2,750.00
Dallas North	562.50
District 55	100.00
Forney Group	70.00
Frisco Group	646.21
Irving	20.00
Keep It Simple	55.77
Lake Highlands	749.41
Legacy	1,050.00
Lewisville	118.00
McKinney Fellowship	20.00
McKinney Men's Group	500.00
McKinney Miracle Group	184.32
Mexia Group	300.00
New Freedom	280.56
Prosper Country Grp	58.00
Ray of Hope - Seven Points	10.00
Returned and Recovered	72.12
Shalom Today	30.00
Simply AA	587.50
Sober Mustangs	24.14
Southwest Clean Air	62.13
Step Up	200.00
Sunday Morning Live	165.00
The Colony Group	20.00
The Gift of Sobriety	30.00
Town North	100.00
Traditional	55.00
White House	50.00
Wylie Group	10.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>11,476.10</u></b>



### VISIT US ONLINE!

At [www.aadallas.org](http://www.aadallas.org) you'll find group announcements, an events calendar, a searchable group directory, online bookstore & more.



For a while it seemed the book held everything I needed. I was reluctant to meet the people. I was too busy reveling in a state of mind I had never known: a beatific state of pure delight in living. Yet I was really a little afraid--of what these men would be like, of how they would accept me, a woman. Would one other woman be enough? Would she like me and accept me? Would she be there if I went to meet them? Would the reality of flesh and blood spoil my ecstatic dream? Was it a dream?

Weeks passed and the good doctor took matters into his own hands; he made a date for me to meet one of these men and his wife, and to go with them to a meeting in Brooklyn. I was warmly received; first names were the rule, they told me, and Mrs. M.--Sandy--made me feel more than welcome. We had dinner and set off for Brooklyn, to Bill and Lois's brownstone house. The first floor seemed crowded as we entered. I saw many women among the crowd, but no one looked as if they had ever had a drink. It looked like any friendly gathering in any home, with far too many strangers for my taste. I flew upstairs to leave my coat and lingered there. Lois came up and put her arm around my shoulder. "We want you down with us," she said. "You are very welcome." And she looked as if she meant it. I think I have never seen such sheer lovingness shining out of a person--it warmed and comforted me. Lois, a non-alcoholic wife, taught me about love. But that's another story.

I was made welcome, and yet--did I notice just a flicker of uncertainty? Just a slight wariness, a kind of disbelief on the part of these men that I could really be one of them? I did, for some of their questions revealed it. I was the youngest person there, by far. And I was a woman. I was fairly well-dressed, was currently an inmate of a rather expensive private sanitarium (they didn't know I was stony broke, was there on a "scholarship" for free), and was obviously from a "good" background--well-brought-up, well-educated, and apparently meeting the specifications for that old-fashioned label "a lady." These things are not usually associated with drunken women, even in the minds of drunken men. This I knew from my own experience.

So I identified myself, and found myself telling the naked truth about my drinking as I had never been able to do even with my doctor. And I noted the small intake of breath, the widening of eyes, the retreating but still dormant suspicion in some of my questioners. But for enough of them, I made the grade. I was accepted as an authentic alcoholic, and therefore a qualified participant in the meeting. There were a number of non-wives and friends present, for this night was an occasion: the first printed and bound copy of the book "Alcoholics Anonymous" was on display. I knew I was in when I was asked to sign the copy, along with the rest. And I further knew I was in when I found myself talking almost exclusively to the men who were alcoholics. They so surrounded me, and asked so many questions, that I knew I was indeed a rarity--something of an occasion myself.

As soon as I decently could, I asked about the woman whose story was in the book. She was much older than I, with grown children. Her name was Florence. No one seemed to know her except Bill and Lois, for she was in Washington where one of the earliest members of the group, a man named Fitz, was trying to get something started. He was having a very rough time, for all the prospects, including Florence, kept getting drunk. I breathed a prayer of thanks that she had stayed sober long enough to write her story--for me. Bill said that she and Fitz would be coming to New York soon, and I could meet her. There were hopes, Bill said, that the one other group, in Akron, might have a woman member soon--they were working on one. But here in New York I had to face the fact that I was, indeed, alone. Unique. I didn't like it. I had been feeling alone and unique for far too long. At least the men here were like me. Or were they?

I began to understand the faint uncertainty, the wariness, the disbelief. I began to wonder myself if this program would work for women. I could deal with their questions about my rights to the title of alcoholic--I had qualifications to match anyone's--but only time could deal with their unexpressed doubts as to the ability of a woman to live their program successfully. And only time did the job.

The first year was the hardest. I had plenty of prospects but few results. All that long hot summer I went into New York once a week to the meeting, hoping a woman might appear, find me, know that she was not alone and

unique, and stay. Florence came, and left, without any real contact being established between us--she did not seem to want to talk. I saw her only once again, sober, and then she died on a drunk.

I found it difficult to convince the older members that I wasn't a freak, the only one of my kind, and to convince the newer men that there was such a thing as a woman alcoholic and that I was one. The newer men often found it difficult to conceal their disgust at the idea, and more than once I heard, "If there's one thing I can't stand, it's to see a woman drunk!" They just couldn't believe that women couldn't help it any more than they could. Most of the men were wonderful, and fully accepted me as one of themselves, but there remained a curious loneliness, nonetheless.

Finally, in October, came Nona, whom I had met when I entered the sanitarium nearly two years before. She came in wholeheartedly, a quiet girl not wanting to be noticed, but she was there. In November I went with Bill and Lois to Akron and called on the woman (drunk in bed) for whom they had had hopes, but I was no more successful than the men had been. I went on to Chicago where Sylvia lived--Sylvia who in October had gone to Cleveland to find AA in the home of an early member, and who had returned to Chicago full of sobriety and zeal to help others. Now there were three of us the country over--but three is a crowd. Three can be neither alone nor unique, and we were all three too different to be the same kind of a freak!

We used to hold long discussions as to why it was so difficult to help women, why they couldn't stay sober, couldn't make this program work. Some of the men thought it was because women were more dishonest than men, less direct. "Sneakier" was a word they used. I had to agree that this fitted most cases and that it made my self-appointed task of getting women into AA almost impossible. But I thought I understood the reasons for this--and I still think they are the reasons that keep many women from success in AA.

We have a double standard in our society. Many things that are acceptable, or at least forgivable, in men are not in women. Although the high pedestal on which women used to be enthroned is slowly descending to a more realistic level (and most women are duly grateful for this entry into more comfortable realms), it is doing so only in fits and starts, like a balky elevator. There are still areas of behavior that are forbidden to "nice" women, and excessive drinking is one of these. Many men who are themselves alcoholic and because of this have committed every sin the book, are inclined to look down their noses at women who have suffered the same mishaps, and for the same reason. They can't be "nice." Many non-alcoholic wives are inclined to be even more sure of this last statement, and not to want their husbands to associate with such questionable types.

Women know this, of course, and the moment their drinking shows signs of being different, even slightly out of control, they instinctively go for cover, and bend all their effort to concealment. They become past masters at deception, at hiding their condition and the cause of it--their bottles. Their opportunities are great if they are housewives, as many of them are. They are alone and in command of their environment for most of their waking hours. By the time their control is completely gone and they are discovered, they have built a pattern of deception that is nothing short of superb. Such a fantastic construction, built so painstakingly for so long, does not fall to pieces easily, and they have trained themselves so well to safeguard and protect it under all circumstances, even helpless drunkenness, that they often cannot relinquish this "protective coloration" even when they finally want to and know that they must if they are to live.

The double standard has created another hazard for the woman seeking help in AA. Men are not supposed to care too much about "what the neighbors say" or "what will Joe think of you," but women most definitely are. Girls are brought up to consider other peoples' opinions of them, first and foremost. When a woman starts drinking too much, and then uncontrolledly, this becomes a prime bugaboo that haunts her sober moments. Unfortunately, the name Alcoholics Anonymous is frequently all mixed up in her already mixed-up thoughts with the total unacceptability of alcoholism, alcoholics, and everything to do with both, to most of the people she knows and whose opinions of her she has been taught to value



above all else. How can she fly in the face of all she holds most dear, and pin this taboo label on herself? Better to hide in the bowels of the earth, or the bottom of a bottle.

Finally, there are the misconceptions of an earlier more prudish day, when only "loose women" were supposed to drink; ergo, women who drank were "loose women," and if they drank badly, they were "lost women." The scarlet letter has hung like a terrible barrier in front of many women who desperately needed what AA had to offer them. And I may add that the scarlet letter has been pinned on many innocent alcoholics--whose only sins (?) were those of alcoholism--by self-righteous or fearful nonalcoholic women--and men, too. Man's inhumanity to man might better read "women's inhumanity to women" particularly in the smaller communities of our enlightened country.

These, I think, are some of the valid reasons why the growth of the number of women in AA was painfully slow at first, and even now is amazingly greater in the big cities than in even their own suburbs, let alone smaller towns. Yet growth there has been, and a commensurate change in attitude both within and outside of AA. For women have recovered and gone back to their own close little societies to talk about it, to teach them to know better, to let their own stories be known in the hope that they might reach into some other room, secluded and well-hidden as their own once was. Women who have embraced AA have found the God-given courage to face their whispering accusers, and to face them down; to hold on to their sobriety and to build from it a good life, open to the most critical inspection; to accept new values that do not give weight to "what the neighbors think-or say"; and to rely on their own conscience in communion with their own God as they understand Him, for judgment of their worth.

All this is not easy. I think it must be said that because of cultural and environmental patterns which are beyond her control, it is not yet the same for a woman to have alcoholism as it is for a man. It is much, much more difficult, and the chances of finding help and achieving recovery are undeniably less. Yet there has been improvement over the past twenty years, and I believe that the situation will become progressively better as alcoholism is more widely accepted for the disease that it is, and the unfair stigma gradually disappears. Public acceptance will one day bring about the cultural and environmental changes that are beginning to be evident. The double standard has no place in the realm of illness, and never did have. Once alcoholism is firmly esconced in that realm, much of the old prejudice against women alcoholics will die a natural death.

But it is a long, slow process. Five years after I came into AA, in the spring of 1944, the several large AA groups in Pittsburgh asked me down to speak at a public meeting. They told me outright that they wanted to show Pittsburgh that there was such a thing as a woman alcoholic, and that she could recover. Still, it was many months after that before they got their first woman member. Groups have written me from all over the country to say that after four and five years of intense activity and growth, they had yet to have a woman member; I have made countless trips and many speeches to show myself and give evidence of the possibility. This was a major reason why I temporarily gave up my doubly precious anonymity (being a woman and therefore vulnerable to scarlet letters and a host of other unpleasant things) when I entered public work in this field. No one was ever happier to resume that protective cloak after two years of both veiled and crass remarks and looks. It takes great faith and plenty of sheer strength to be an avowed woman alcoholic. I am both humbled and proud of my sex as I see the growing numbers who dare--for the sake of all those others still undeclared, still suffering the tortures of the damned, alone.

Things move. During the late 1940s I had many letters from lone woman members, seeking comfort, company, and advice on how to find and bring in others. Then in the 1950s I--began to be asked to come and speak at luncheons and dinners of just AA women. I thought the corner had been turned, that no one could ever again imagine AA was "for men only." Imagine my shock and horror when in December 1959, twenty years and eight months after my solo landing in AA, a woman member in a great midwestern city I was visiting told me of several AA groups in the city who would not receive women as members--stated flatly that they did not want women in their groups. Several men with us corroborated her story, adding, before I could catch my breath, that it didn't matter so much in a

big city like theirs where there were plenty of other groups a woman could go to, but what bothered them was the fact that this was true in many small cities and towns where there was only one group, so that in effect this meant denying AA to women alcoholics.

I could hardly believe my ears, but the people who told me this were not erratic, newly sober alcoholics, but longtime members who know their area well and traverse it frequently. If this is so, in the midwest, it may very well be so in many parts of our vast country, especially in sparsely settled areas with only small towns.

There obviously remains much to be done. After twenty years, women coming into AA are still pioneers. Those who make statistical studies claim that there is only one woman alcoholic for every five-and-a-half men. The records of public outpatient clinics seem to bear out this figure. But there are many physicians in private practice, where a confidence is considered as sacred as in the confessional, who state categorically the women alcoholics outnumber the men in their practice. Certainly in the big cities, one often finds the women outnumbering the men at closed meetings. Is it just that women alcoholics more readily find their way to the anonymity of the big cities? Or are there more of us than even we think?

Once again, only time will tell us. But I hope and pray it won't have to be another twenty years for all those out there alone.

### Faithful Fivers: Would you like to be one?

Faithful Fivers are AA members who in gratitude pledge to contribute at least five dollars each month toward the support of Dallas Intergroup Association, DIA.

This contribution gives AA members the opportunity to practice the Seventh Tradition regularly and painlessly by pledging \$5 or more a month to the DIA. We can set up an automatic credit card deduction, or you can send in a check once a month or whenever you choose. Call, 214-887-6699, to set up monthly contributions.

DIA is totally supported by AA groups and individuals. Contributions are limited to \$3,000 per member per year and are tax deductible.

#### Yes! Please enroll me as a Faithful Fiver.

Please complete the form below and mail in with your contribution to DIA, 6162 E. Mockinbird Ln., Suite 213, Dallas, TX 75214

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_  
Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

## 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.



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

## August 2015

### DALLAS INTERGROUP REP MEETING

**August 13 @ 8:00 pm - 9:00 pm**

*First United Lutheran Church, 6202 E. Mockingbird Lane, Dallas TX 75214*  
Intergroup Reps will be meeting August 13th at 8pm, First United Lutheran Church, 6202 E Mockingbird Lane. The office will be open for 30 minutes after the close of the meeting. Please let us know about any group order before the meeting. We can not fill group orders during the 30 minutes we are open. We do not have the staff and the time was for group pick-ups and individual shopping. You can fax us, email or call ahead your order.

### 69TH ANNUAL TEXAS STATE CONVENTION

**August 14 @ 8:00 am - August 16 @ 5:00 pm**

*The Midland Center, 105 N. Main, Midland, TX 79701 United State*  
The Texas State Convention will be held in Midland, Texas, August 14-16, 2015. For 80 Years "Here are the Steps We Took". Speakers include: Karl M, CA Debra B, WI Stacy B, TX Amy T, OK (YPAA) Clay R, NY Kelly P, MT (AI-Anon) Jerry T, TX (Spanish)79701 The Midland Center, 105 N Main, 79701 corner of Wall St. and Main) For more information: info@txaaconvention.org.

### NORTH TEXAS ROUNDUP-2015.

**August 21 @ 2:00 pm - August 23 @ 12:00 pm**

*Doubletree Hotel (Dallas), 4099 Valley View Lane, Dallas, TX 75244*  
"A Spiritual Program of Action", August 21-23, 2015. Doubletree Hotel, 4099 Valley View Lane, Dallas, TX 75244. (Use NTR when making reservations) Friday: 2pm registration, 6pm Old-timers, 8pm AA Speaker, Mike S. Saturday: 8am Discussion, Speakers: Corrine E, Libba M, Jan P, and Butch M. Sunday: 8am Discussion, 10:30am AA Speaker, Bobby M. www.northtexasroundup.org \$20 Registration Fee.

### 40th ANNUAL HILL COUNTRY ROUND UP

**August 21 @ 4:00 pm - August 23 @ 1:00 pm**

*Inn of the Hills, 1001 Junction Hwy, Kerrville, TX 78028 United States*  
The Hill Country Round-up will be held August 21-23, 2015 at the Inn of the Hills, Kerrville, TX. Speakers include: Gary K, Sulphur Springs, TX Lilly H, Portland, ME Don L, Bellingham, WA Beth H, Cary, NC Donna D, Seguin, TX (AI-Anon) Events include raffles, Old Timers Meeting, fajita Dinner, Breakfast Tacos, Pizza Dinner and plenty of fellowship. For full information go to the website: www.hillcountryroundup.org.

## September 2015

### SUMMER SERENITY AT THE BEACH

**September 4 @ 3:00 pm - September 7 @ 12:00 pm**

*Hilton Sandestin Beach, Miramar Beach, Florida*  
Friday Speakers: Corrie L, AFG; Kent L, AA Saturday Speakers: Don L, AA; Lyle P, AA Sunday Speakers: Rick J, AFG, Brian P, AA Monday Speaker: Erika M, AA for information: summerserenityatthebeach.com

### SINGLES IN SOBRIETY 32ND ANNUAL CONFERENCE

**September 10 @ 3:00 pm - September 13 @ 1:00 pm**

*Tanglewood Resort, 290 Tanglewood Circle, Pottsboro, 75076*  
"This is H.O.W. We Do It", Honesty, Open-Mindedness and Willingness" is the theme of the 32nd Singles in the Sobriety Conference to be held September 10th-13th at the Tanglewood Resort at Lake Texoma. Discussions, workshops, meetings, speakers, lots of fun and fellowship. Speakers include: Tina H., Austin, TX Misoon W., Jacksonville, FL Craig C., Las Vegas, NV Jacob B., Baton Rouge, LA website: www.SinglesinSobriety.org. For hotel reservations: www.tanglewood.com August 15th deadline for early registration of \$20. On site will be \$25.

### NETA 65 2015 FALL ASSEMBLY AND CONVENTION

**September 18 @ 8:00 am - September 20 @ 5:00 pm**

*Doubletree Hotel, 1973 Craigshire Rd, St Louis, MO 63146*

The Fall Assembly, celebrating 80 years of Recovery, Unity and Service-The Foundation of Our Future. September 18-20, 2015. Doubletree Hotel, 4099 Valley View Ln, Dallas, TX 75244. NETA65 Fall Assembly For more information: email NETA65Convention@gmail.com. Website: www.NETA65Convention.com. Hotel reservations must be made by Sept. 8th for special rates of \$99. 800-222-8733. Pre-registration on website until Sept. 16th with credit card. No credit cards at the event for registration. Cash or check only.

### 6TH ANNUAL MEN'S STEPWORK RETREAT

**September 18 @ 12:00 pm - September 20 @ 1:00 pm**

*HEB Foundation Free Camp, 11756 N. US Highway 83, Leakey, TX 78873*  
"An intensive weekend of recovery, step work and fellowship", September 18-20th, 2015. Registration \$65 covers all expenses including, lodging, meals, snacks, ball cap, unlimited coffee!. You can register online: www.nextfunction.org. Event is hosted by Next Function Group. At the HEB Foundation Free Camp 11756 N. US Highway 83, Leakey, TX 78873 (830) 258-5628 Contact: Dan R: 512-202-9091 or Dave O.: 512-351-2919

### 30TH ANNUAL STRAIGHT FROM THE HEART CONFERENCE 2015

**September 18 @ 3:00 pm - September 20 @ 2:00 pm**

*The Inn on the Creek, Venue Conference Center, Salado, TX 76571*  
The annual AA and AI Anon Woman to Woman Conference will take place September 18-20, 2015. The Stagecoach Inn has closed and the conference has relocated to the Venue Conference Center at The Inn on the Registration fee is \$30 on a first come first served basis. For rooms register with the Stagecoach Inn directly. Refer to the flyer for details. Refer to the new postings below for hotel information. Contact Delane @ 817-889-2390 for information.

### 20TH ANNUAL SOUTHEAST WOMAN TO WOMAN CONFERENCE

**September 18 @ 4:00 pm - September 20 @ 1:00 pm**

*Best Western Plus, 2601 Severn Drive, Metairie, LA 70002*  
"Secrets Women Don't Share" This convention is hosted by and for sober Alcoholic and AI-Anon Women. TAKING OFF THE MASK, September 18-20, 2015. Best Western Plus Landmark Hotel, Metairie, LA 70002 www.southestwomantowomanue.org Registration \$20 (by April 30th) \$35 at the door. Deadline for Hotel Reservation: August 17th. For more information go to website or call 1-800-277-7575

### THE GALLUP GATHERING CONFERENCE!

**September 25 @ 4:00 pm - September 27 @ 1:00 pm**

*Sacred Heart Catholic School, 515 Park Ave. Gallup, NM 87301*  
The Gallup Gathering will be held in Gallup, New Mexico on September 25-27, 2015. Friday, Sept. 25th: speaker, Teddy H., Milpitas, CA Saturday, Sept. 26th: Speakers: Robi S., Sunnysvale, CA; Paco S., Sunnysvale, CA; Brian Z., Sanders, AZ Sunday, Sept. 27th: Johnny B, Zuni, NM Registration \$20, scholarships available. After expenses are met, extra money goes to the Albuquerque Central Office. For more information see flyer or call Seth: 408-836-4592.

### LAKESIDE CONFERENCE 2015

**September 25 @ 5:00 pm - September 27 @ 12:00 pm**

*Lake Brownwood Christian Retreat, 9030 Retreat Rd, Brownwood, TX*  
The Lakeside Conference is an annual adult event for men and women and friends in recovery, and is conducted in an atmosphere of serenity and spirituality. Please, No Children. It is a gathering of the fellowship and sharing of spiritual values. We believe this to be the heart and core of our program. Our speakers will talk along those lines. The conference aims to provide you with a week-end of relaxed fellowship. Dress is to be casual. We are privileged to use the facilities of the Christian Church Camp at Lake Brownwood. In keeping with the setting, we assume that all those attending will conduct themselves in a manner which will reflect only the best upon our fellowship.