



# THE BENDER

CBIA, 3833 S. Staples Suite S-212, Corpus Christi, TX 78411 (361) 992- 8911 or Toll Free 1 (866) 672-7029 [www.cbiasa.org](http://www.cbiasa.org)

*"When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA always to be there. And for that I am responsible."\**

## Acceptance Was the Answer Interview With the Author of "Doctor, Alcoholic, Addict"

*Dr. Paul's story, "Doctor, Alcoholic, Addict" is published in the Third Edition of the Big Book; his remarks on acceptance, which appear on pages 449 and 450, have been helpful to many AA members over the years. This interview was conducted by telephone to Dr. Paul's home in California.*

### **How did you come to write the story that's in the Big Book?**

The editor of the Grapevine--a woman named Paula C.--was also the chairperson of the committee to review the stories. She wrote to tell me that the magazine was going to use an article I'd written on why doctors shouldn't prescribe pills for alcoholics. So she knew my writing a little bit and she asked me if I had a dual problem and would I be willing to write an article about it for consideration in the Big Book. My reaction to that was the same as my reaction when it was suggested I come to AA--I thought it was one of the dumbest ideas I'd ever heard and I ignored her letter. Later on she called and asked for the article, and I lied and said I hadn't had time to write it. She extended the deadline and called me a second time. I had a gal working in the office with me who was in the program, and she thought it would be nice to have typed a story that might end up in the Big Book, so she said to me, "You write it, I'll type it, and we'll send it in." So that's what we did. But by that time they had done another printing of the Second Edition, and I thought, Fine, that means they won't use it. But Paula said she liked it and the Grapevine published it with the title "Bronzed Mocassins" and an illustration of a pair of bronze mocassins. Eventually it was put in the Big Book, but the title was changed, and my guess is that they wanted to show that an alcoholic could be a professional and be an addict, but that wouldn't make him *not* an alcoholic. It worked well but maybe it overshot the mark, and now one of the most uncomfortable things for me is when people run up to me at a meeting and tell me how glad they are the story is in the book. They say they've been fighting with their home group because their home group won't let them talk about drugs. So they show their group the story and they say, "By God, now you'll have to let me talk about drugs." And I really hate to see the story as a divisive thing. I don't think we came to AA to fight each other.

### **Is there anything you regret having written in your story?**

Well, I must say I'm really surprised at the number of people who come up to me and ask me confidentially if what they've heard on the very best authority--usually from their sponsor--is true: that there are things in my story I want to change, or that I regret having written it, or that I want to take it out because it says so much about drugs, or that I've completely changed my mind that AA is the answer or even that acceptance is the answer. I've also heard--on the best authority!--that I've died or gotten drunk or on pills. The latest one was that my wife Max died and that I got so depressed I got drunk. So, is there anything I'd like to change? No. I believe what I said more now than when I wrote it.

**Do you think that your story might help those who are dually addicted?**

I think it does. I think the story makes clear the truth that an alcoholic can also be an addict, and indeed that an alcoholic has a constitutional right to have as many problems as he wants! But I also think that if you're not an alcoholic, being an addict doesn't make you one. The way I see it, an alcoholic is a person who can't drink and who can't use drugs, and an addict is a person who can't use drugs and can't drink. But that doesn't mean that every AA meeting has to be open to a discussion of drugs if it doesn't want to. Every meeting has the right to say it doesn't want drugs discussed. People who want to discuss drugs have other places where they can go to talk about that. And AA is very open to giving the Steps and Traditions to other groups who want to use them. I know this from my own experience, because I wrote to the General Service Office and got permission to start Pills Anonymous and Chemical Dependency Anonymous. I did that when I was working in the field of chemical dependency. We started groups but I didn't go to them because I get everything I need from AA. I don't have any trouble staying away from talking about drugs, and I never introduce myself as an alcoholic/addict.

I'm annoyed--or maybe irritated is a better word--by the people who keep insisting that AA should broaden to include drugs and addictions other than alcohol. In fact I hear it said that AA should change its name to Addicts Anonymous. I find that a very narrow-minded view based on people's personal opinions and not on good sense. History tells us that the Washingtonians spread themselves so thin they evaporated. Jim B. says the greatest thing that ever happened in AA was the publication of the Big Book, because it put in writing what the program was and made it available all over the world. So wherever you go it's the same program. I don't see how you could change the program unless you changed the book and I can't see that happening.

**It's a question of singleness of purpose?**

That singleness of purpose thing is so significant. It seems to be working; why would we change it? I can't think of any change that would be an improvement.

**Nowadays drunks seem to come to meetings already dried out, but that wasn't always the case.**

No, it wasn't. You don't get Twelfth Step calls as dramatic as they used to be. Now I find that if you're called upon to make a Twelfth Step call, it'll be on somebody who is in the hospital. You find out when they're available and not in some other kind of meeting, and make an appointment. But this might change as the number of treatment programs begins to fade out.

I used to make "cold turkey" calls, where the alcoholic hadn't asked for help. One time I went to see this guy who was described to me as a big husky fellow. He was holed up in a motel. I found out from the manager of the motel that he was on the second floor, and as I was walking up the outside stairs to get to his place, I thought to myself, if this guy comes charging out the door, he could easily throw me over the stair railing and I'd end up on the concrete. So I thought, well, the good news is I'd probably be one of AA's first martyrs. Then I thought, yeah, but I'd be an anonymous martyr. I made the call anyhow, and he got sober for a while.

**In your Big Book story, you say that acceptance is the key to everything. I wonder if you've ever had a problem accepting what life hands you.**

I think today that my job really is to enjoy life whether I like it or not. I don't like everything I have to accept. In fact, if everything was to my specifications and desires there would be no problem with acceptance. It's accepting things I don't like that is difficult. It's accepting when I'm not getting my own way. Yes, I find it very difficult at times.

**Anything specific?**

Nothing major, though it sometimes seems major that I have to accept living with my wife Max and her ways of doing things! She is an entirely different person than I am. She likes clutter, I like things orderly. She thinks randomly and I like structured thinking. We're very, very different. We never should have gotten married! Last December we were married fifty-five years.

**I guess she knows your thoughts on this matter.**

Ad nauseum.

**You're still going to meetings?**

I'd say five or six a week.

**Do you and Max go to meetings together?**

Max isn't in AA, she's in Al-Anon and she's still very active in it. But I go to Al-Anon too, and that helps a great deal, and Max comes to open AA meetings with me and that helps too. It's kind of like Elsa C. used to say: when two people have their individual programs, it's like railroad tracks, two separate and parallel rails, but with all those meetings holding them together.

**Do you think you'd still be married if you hadn't gone to meetings all these years?**

I'm sure we wouldn't. I initially thought that the Serenity Prayer said I'd have to change the things I couldn't accept. So I thought, well, we can't get along so it's time to change the marriage. I used to go around looking for old-timers who would agree with me and say that's what the Serenity Prayer meant. But Max and I finally made a commitment to the marriage and stopped talking about divorce and started working our programs. In fact we tend to sponsor each other, which is a dangerous thing to do, but we help each other see when we need more meetings, or need to work a certain Step or something like that.

**Do you have, or did you have, a sponsor?**

Early on I was talking to a friend of mine, Jack N., who was sober a couple of months longer than I was. Jack and his wife and Max and I used to go to AA speaker meetings together. I was telling him how my home group was nagging at me because I didn't have a sponsor, and on the spur of the moment I said, "Why don't you be my sponsor?" and on the spur of the moment he said to me, "I'll be your sponsor if you'll be my sponsor." And I said, "I don't know if they'll allow that." But we decided to try it and it worked out. He calls me 'cause I'm his sponsor and I call him 'cause he's my sponsor so I guess we call each other twice as often. We're still sponsoring each other. That's been going on for twenty-seven years. He moved to L. A. but we stay in touch, mostly by phone.

**Is there a tool or a slogan or a Step that is particularly useful to you right now?**

Pretty much every morning, before I get out of bed, I say the Serenity Prayer, the Third Step Prayer, and the Seventh Step Prayer. Then Max and I repeat those prayers along with other prayers and meditations at breakfast. And I say those three prayers repeatedly throughout the day.

I grew up thinking that I had to perfect my personality, then I got into AA, and AA said, no, that isn't the way we do it: only God can remove our defects. I was amazed to find that I couldn't be a better person simply by trying harder!

What I've done with a number of problems--like fear and depression and insomnia--is to treat them as defects of character, because they certainly affect my personality adversely. With depression, I've never taken any antidepressants. Instead, with any defect I want to get rid of, I become willing to have it removed, then I ask God to remove it, then I act like he has. Now, I know God has a loophole that says he'll remove it unless it's useful to you or to my fellows. So I tell him I'd like my defect removed completely, but he can sleep on it, and in the morning he can give me the amount he wants me to have, and I'll accept it as a gift from him. I'll take whatever he gives me. I've never done that when he hasn't removed a great deal of my defect, but I've never done it when he has permanently and totally removed any defect. But the result is that I no longer fight myself for having it.

**That's a helpful way of seeing things. It makes defects into a gift.**

That's right. And it's the Rule Sixty-two business [see *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, p. 149]. It's like Father Terry always says, "Be friendly with your defects." In fact some poet said, "Hug your demon, otherwise it'll bite you in the ass." Poets can talk like that.

**Has your sponsoring changed over the years?**

I do a lot more stuff by telephone. When I'm speaking at a meeting, if I think of it, I give out my home phone number. So I get a lot of phone calls from all over the country. People ask me if I'm willing to help them as a sponsor and I tell them, well, you call me every day for thirty days, or maybe sixty or ninety or whatever, and then they call me every day, and we get to know each other, and during that time we find out what it's like to be relating to each other. It's kind of a probationary period. Then if they still want me to be their sponsor, we'll go ahead and if they don't, we move on and there's no loss. And this gets them accustomed to calling, so when they have a problem, they don't have to analyze it at great depth and decide if it's bad enough that they should bother me with a phone call. I haven't personally been doing each Step individually with people as much, but I've redone all the Steps myself on an average of every five years. And every time I've done that, my sobriety has stepped up to a new plateau, just like the first time I did them.

Sometimes people call me 'cause they're feeling in a funk, their sponsor has moved away or died, or they've moved away from their sponsor, or the meetings don't mean much anymore. They aren't getting anything out of AA. And because of my relationship with pills, I've had a lot of people come to me and say they've got--what do you call it?--a "chemical imbalance." They're seeing a counselor who says, "Yeah, you're depressed," and the counselor wants to start them on an antidepressant. My suggestion is, if you want to do something like that and you haven't done the Steps in a number of years, do the Steps first. And repeatedly people will do that and decide they don't need the pills.

**When you speak at out-of-state AA meetings, does Max go with you?**

I don't go unless she goes.

**Why not?**

Because I decided I didn't come to AA to become a traveling salesman and be away from home. So we go where it's a big enough event that they can take us both. And what's really more fun is if it's a mixed event where Max can speak, especially if she gets to speak first. She likes that. She likes to say that I say that she tells a perverted version of my drinking story. Then she points out that I was the one who was drinking and she was the one who was sober.

**There are many more young people in the Fellowship now. Do you think young people have special problems because they're getting sober at such an early age?**

People always say they're so glad to see the young people come in, and I agree, but I'm glad to see the old people come in too. I like to see anybody get sober. It's hard to say whether your pain is greater than my pain or mine's greater than yours. I'm sure that young people have problems, but we all have problems--gays have problems, people who are addicted to other drugs have problems, single people have problems. I can't think of anything more of a problem than being a woman alcoholic trying to get sober, married to a practicing alcoholic male, and with a handful of kids. That must be as about as big a problem as you can get. Everybody has special problems.

I've said it often and I haven't had any reason to change my mind: the way I see it, I've never had a problem and nobody will ever come to me with a problem such that there won't be an answer in the Steps. That gives me a great deal of confidence. I think the program--the Steps--covers everything conceivable.

I'm getting way off from what you asked me. I can't give short answers. I often tell people that the more I know about something, the shorter the answer, but when I don't know, I just make up stuff.

**Did you find it helpful at some point to become familiar with the Traditions?**

I find the Steps easier to understand than the Traditions and the Traditions easier to understand than the Concepts. In fact, I find the long form of the Traditions considerably easier to understand than the short form, and I find that the long form is much more specific on the idea that AA is for alcoholics and not for just anybody who wants to come in. A lot of people like that phrase "The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking," and people interpret that to mean that if you're willing to not drink, you can call

yourself an alcoholic and a member of AA. That's not at all what it says. I think it means that if you're an alcoholic with a desire to stop drinking, that's the only requirement for membership.

**How many years have you been sober now?**

Twenty-seven.

**Twenty-seven years of meetings. Have you seen any changes in the way the meetings are conducted?**

All I see is that there are more meetings and bigger meetings and more variety of meetings. I just love to see AA grow. I enjoy meetings. I've been to meetings in Singapore and Hong Kong and Japan, but I think the most interesting was when Chuck C. and Al D. and I were vacationing in the Cayman Islands and we couldn't find any meetings. We were twelfth-stepping alcoholics there and decided we all needed a meeting, so we went to the local newspaper and got some publicity. Then we had a public information meeting, then we got a regular meeting started. As far as I know, that meeting is still going.

**So you haven't gotten bored by Alcoholics Anonymous.**

Well, I thought about that some years back. Why is it that so many people aren't around any more? Where do they go? It seems to me that most of the people who leave AA leave because of boredom. I made up my mind I wasn't going to get bored, and one of the things I do when I get bored, if I can't think of anything else to do, is to start a new meeting. I've probably started fifteen or twenty. The most recent one was last November. I got a couple of friends together and we started a "joy of sobriety" meeting--it's a one-hour topic discussion meeting and it has to be a topic out of the Big Book and it has to be on the program and how you enjoy living the program. It's fast-moving and we just have a lot of fun. It's a great antidote for depression.

**What's the most important thing you've gotten from AA?**

This whole thing is so much more than just sobriety. To be sober and continue the life I had before--that would have driven me back to drink. One of the things I really like about AA is that we all have a sense of direction, plus a roadmap telling us precisely how to get there. I like that. All I want out of AA is more and more and more until I'm gone.

~ Dr. Paul, California - July 1995

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*Editor's Note: In the Fourth Edition of the Big Book, this story was re-titled "Acceptance Was the Answer" and it was moved to Page 407.*

## Welcome Back

*This is an open letter to a friend who is returning to AA after going out drinking.*

Welcome back. You were missed. I believe you have earned a seat for life in our virtual lifeboat. I also believe you have the right to make any mistake you need to make, as many times as you need to make it, in order to learn what you need to learn.

But let us be clear: you made a mistake when you went back to drinking and/or using. The objective of our program is to stay sober and to help others to achieve sobriety and the treatment of alcoholism consists primarily of not drinking and working a spiritual program. If you want to stop drinking, you are going to have to stop drinking.

One of the old timers in my original home group in Connecticut used to say "To fall down is human, but to lie there feeling sorry for yourself is stupid." So get up and dust yourself off and get thee to a meeting. You might also want to take this opportunity to ask yourself what was missing from your recovery program the addition of which would give you a better chance of staying sober.

Most of us have found that we need to do five daily things to stay sober, just for today –

- Each morning, ask God to keep you sober today;
- Make a sober contact (*one on one, by phone or in person*);
- Go to a meeting;
- Read AA literature; and
- Each night, thank God for keeping you sober today.

We have also found that we need to do 12 things to be happy, joyous and free (*i.e., work the steps with a sponsor*). That and maintain a current gratitude list. (*Do you have a current gratitude list?*) Without gratitude for all that God and AA and others have done for me, I probably would not want to stay sober.

A speaker at the Coastal Bend Jamboree in 2006 said "Get in the middle of the boat. People who hang out on the edge of the boat fall in. So come all the way in. Sit all the way down."

How do you get in the middle of the boat?

- 90 meetings in 90 days would be a good start;
- going out for coffee or dinner (*the meeting before or after the meeting*);

- taking a service commitment (*like greeter or coffee maker*);
- getting a sponsor (*and calling or seeing him or her daily*);
- working the steps -- starting with Step One (*to eliminate any hope that you will ever be able to safely and sanely drink.*).

Now forgive us if we have not given you as warm a welcome as you wanted. Some of us are scared because you have reminded us how fragile our own recovery is. (*"There but for the Grace of God go I."*) Some of us are upset because a fellow survivor fell out of the life boat and only time and a lot of willingness and effort on your part will determine if you stay aboard for the long journey ahead.

And while you are at it, forgive yourself for making the mistake of drinking and causing yourself all this pain and grief. Forgiveness is a decision you make -- a decision to let it go and get on with your life. It is useful to speak this to another person (*Your sponsor would be a good choice*).

"I forgive *myself* for (*what you did*). I am letting it go and getting on with my life."

Do not waste time feeling bad about this or beating yourself up about it. You are human and you made a mistake. Learn from it and move on. One reason to get on with your recovery right away is you don't want to lose the desire to be sober. That desire is a precious gift and I do not know how you get it back if you lose it.

Finally, thank you for coming back and sharing what happened to you. You have done me and others a great service. You have let us see what a relapse looks like and feels like without having to pay the price of having a relapse ourselves. The best kept secret in AA is that it is easier to stick close to the program and let other people do the relapsing for you.

~ Rob M. (2.24.1985) Weber Road Nooners Group, Corpus Christi, TX

### **Local Stories Wanted for the BENDER**

Consider writing your recovery story or an article on an AA topic for publication in this newsletter. Submit your article to [cbia@grandecom.net](mailto:cbia@grandecom.net) in a Word document or similar format.

# MINUTES

## CBIA BOARD OF TRUSTEE MEETING

### December 14<sup>th</sup> 2015

#### I. OPENING:

- **Johnie** opened the meeting at 6:00 PM with a Moment of Silence followed by the Serenity Prayer.
- **Rob** read the CBIA Mission Statement.
- **Ginger** read the 12 Traditions.

#### II. ATTENDANCE:

- **Johnie S. (Chair), Tom K. (Treasurer), Ginger S. (Trustee), Phyllis H. (Trustee), and Rob M. (Office Manager)** were present.
- **Ed B. (Trustee), Joe R. (Vice Chair), Jimmy M. (Trustee) and Kelly J. (Asst Office Manager)** were not present.

#### III. MINUTES:

- Minutes of Board Meeting of November 9<sup>th</sup> were reviewed.
  - **Phyllis** moved to approve the minutes as read. **Tom** seconded. Motion carried.

#### IV. FINANCIAL REPORTS:

- **Tom** presented the November Financial Report.
- **Balance Sheet:** Total CBIA funds as of November 30<sup>th</sup> were \$18,472.98; \$50.00 in Petty Cash; \$3,406.54 in Checking; \$12,601.20 in Prudent Reserve and \$2,415.24 in the Jamboree Account.
- **Profit & Loss** for the month:
  - **Group & Individual Contributions** \$857.39
  - **NOTE:** Only 9 / 113 groups contributed this month; only 38 / 113 Groups contributed year-to-date.)
  - **Revenue from Halloween Dance** \$552.01 (*expenses were incurred previously*).
  - **Sales (Books, Chips & Medallions)** \$1,021.75 (*less Cost of Goods Sold \$695.40*).
  - **Gross gain** \$1,735.75
  - **Total Operating Expenses** for the month were \$2,270.49.
  - **Net Loss** for the Month was \$534.74
- **Phyllis** moved to approve the Financial Report as presented. **Ginger** seconded. Motion carried.

#### V. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- **12th Step:** **Phyllis** indicated she was still working on cleaning up the 12 Step list. She plans to be finished by the January board meeting.



- **Archives:** Johnie said she had nothing to report. She will set up our archives display at the Jamboree.
- **Bilingual:** Joe was not present.
- **Coastal Bender:** Ed was not present.
- **Corrections/Treatment Facilities:** Joe was not present.
- **Group Outreach:** Tom asked Trustees to bring their updated worksheets to the January meeting.
- **Jamboree:** Jimmy was not present. In Jimmy's absence, Rob attended the Jamboree Committee's December meeting. He asked the committee to raffle off only merchandise – not cash prizes.
- **Nominations:** Jimmy M. was not present.
- **Public Information/Cooperate with Professional Community:** Johnie had nothing to report.
- **Social:** Ginger said the New Year's Eve Dance will again be held at St. Bart's Episcopal Church on Airline near Alameda. The event is coming together nicely. Admission is \$7 with scholarships available. Gale S. (*from Austin; formerly from CC*) will speak at 8:00. Dancing will be from 9:00 to midnight.
- **Web Site:** Tom said Glenn plans to work on the project during the semester break. Rob indicated he gave Glenn the requested mapping of content from the old website to the new web site.

#### **VI. OFFICE REPORT:**

- **Office Update** – Rob said he had nothing to report.

#### **VII. OLD BUSINESS:**

- None

#### **VIII. NEW BUSINESS:**

- None.

#### **IX. NEXT BOARD MEETING:**

- Next CBIA Board of Trustees meeting Monday January 11<sup>th</sup> 2015 at 6:00 PM in the CBIA Office.

#### **X. NEXT QUARTERLY MEETING:**

- Next CBIA Quarterly Association meeting is scheduled for 6:00 PM on Monday January 25<sup>th</sup> at All Saints Episcopal Church (*3026 S Staples*).

#### **XI. CLOSING:**

- Tom moved to adjourn. Phyllis seconded. Motion carried.
- Johnie closed the meeting with prayer at 6:58 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

***Rob M.***

Office Manager



# *Bender Bits & Pieces*



## New CBIA Website

### Check Out the New / Improved [cbia.org](http://cbia.org)

Tom K (*Oso Group – our Web Site Trustee*), Glenn B. (*Oso Group – our Web Site Developer*), and Phyllis I (*Saratoga Group – our Web Site Host*) have developed a new web site which should be live tomorrow afternoon (2.2.2016).

Check it out and give us your feedback at [cbia@grandecom.net](mailto:cbia@grandecom.net). It has a more contemporary look and feel and is fully compatible with iPhones, Android phones, iPads and other tablets. For Apple iOS or Android phones and tablets, download a free app designed to use our online meeting schedules, including the map features.

[Follow this link](#) to download the app for your device.

The home page is designed to help people new to the program find the information and help they need. The meeting finder function is very intuitive and designed to help you find meetings nearest your location and allow search criteria like day of the week, type of meeting, etc. You can chose meetings from a map of the area or from a list. If you prefer the traditional table format, you can click on Printable Schedule. All of the content from the old web site has been included.



# *Bender Bits & Pieces*



## **Special Events**

### **Coastal Bend Jamboree**

#### **The Party's Over**

The 2016 Coastal Bend Jamboree was an amazing success by any criteria. The Committee and volunteers did an exemplary job. 797 people attended this weekend conference.

#### **Let's Do It Again (January 20<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> 2017)**

The 2017 Coastal Bend Jamboree will again be held at the Omni Bayfront Hotel in Corpus Christi on January 20<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2017.

#### **Unclaimed Silent Auction Merchandise \***

Attached is a list of unclaimed merchandise from the Silent Auction, showing the item, the winning bidder and the winning bid. We will hold these items until February 15th for the winning bidder. After that, they will be available to anybody for the winning bid. Items labeled "Winner does not want" are available now to anybody for the winning bid.

#### **2016 SW Texas Area 68 CFC Conference (February 19<sup>th</sup> -21<sup>st</sup> in South Padre Island) \***

The SWTA 68 Correctional Facilities Conference will be held February 19<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> in South Padre Island. (See attached flier for details.)

#### **2016 Texas State AA Convention (June 24<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> 2016 in Austin) \***

The Texas State AA Convention will be held June 24<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> in Austin. (See attached flier for details.)



# Bender Bits & Pieces



## Service Opportunities

### Volunteers Needed to Carry the Message in Corrections Facilities

Volunteers are needed to carry the message to alcoholics in corrections facilities. You must be at least 18 years old and not been in trouble with the law (*arrested, incarcerated, pending, etc.*) for at least 18 months. Men work with men and women work with women.

#### SATF – Corpus Christi

- **Attend Meetings** to support separate men's and women's meetings at 8:00 PM on alternate Fridays. (*NA provides meetings every other Friday.*) (*New development: prior clearance is now required to attend meetings at SATF.*)
- **Activity Sponsors** take people to meetings once a week or so. (*Minimum one year sober and prior clearance.*)
- **Step Sponsors** work the steps with people. (*Minimum two years sober and prior clearance.*)

#### Avalon (Formerly Reality Ranch) – Corpus Christi

- **Attend Meetings** to support a men's meeting at 8:00 PM every Sunday. (*Prior clearance is required.*)

#### Live Oak County Jail – George West

- **Attend Meetings** to support a men's meeting at 7:00 PM every Wednesdays. (*Prior clearance is required.*)

If you are interested in any of these service opportunities, call the CBIA Office (361) 992-8911 during business hours (*M-F 7:30 – 11:30 AM and 1:30 – 5:30 PM*)

Where clearance is required, provide us your full name, as it appears on your driver's license and your driver's license number and state at least a week prior to service.



## *Bender Bits & Pieces*



### Service Opportunities (Continued)

#### Local Stories Wanted for the BENDER

Consider writing your recovery story or an article on an AA topic for publication in this newsletter. Submit your article to [cbia@grandecom.net](mailto:cbia@grandecom.net) in a Word document or similar format.

#### Helpline / 12 Step List

The Helpline is staffed by volunteers who are making sure that the hand of AA is available 24 hours a day in the Coastal Bend area by answering the phones overnight (5 PM to 8 AM) and on weekends (8 AM Saturday to 8 AM Sunday; or 8 AM Sunday to 8 AM Monday). A minimum of six months sobriety is required to answer the phones. The helpline is pretty well staffed at present.

If someone needs help beyond meeting information, the helpline passes them to someone on the 12-Step List for a longer conversation and maybe a visit to discuss how to get sober and stay sober. A minimum of two years sobriety is required to be on the 12-Step List. We can always use more people on the 12-Step List. We especially need people (*particularly women*) in the surrounding area (*like Beeville and Alice*). If you would like to be on the 12-Step List or on the Helpline, call Rob or Kelly at the CBIA Office (361) 992-8911 or (866) 672-7029.



# *Bender Bits & Pieces*



## District Meetings

### District 7 (Saturday, February 20<sup>th</sup> in Victoria)

District 7's next meeting will be on Saturday, February 20<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 AM at 803 Pine Street in Victoria.

### District 8C Next Meeting (Saturday, February 20<sup>th</sup> in Kingsville)

District 8C's next meeting will be on Saturday, February 20<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 PM. The meeting will be held at the Serenity Club (819 N. Third Street in Kingsville).

### District 8D Next Meeting (Saturday February 20<sup>th</sup> in CC)

District 8D's next meeting will be at 2:00 PM on Saturday, February 20<sup>th</sup> at New Phoenix (5433 S. Staples, Suite F, in Corpus Christi).

### District 8E (Saturday, February 20<sup>th</sup> in CC)

District 8E will meet at 2:00 PM on Saturday, February 20<sup>th</sup> at the Anchor Club (320 Anchor St. in Corpus Christi).

### District 15 Next Meeting (Saturday, February 20<sup>th</sup> in Portland)

District 15's next meeting will be at 2:00 PM on Saturday, February 20<sup>th</sup> at 822 Denver St. in Portland.



# *Bender Bits & Pieces*



## **Save the Dates**

*(Future Events - Fliers included for events flagged with an \*.)*

**2016 SW Texas Area 68 CFC Conference** *(February 19<sup>th</sup> -21<sup>st</sup> in South Padre Island)*

**2016 SW Texas Area 68 Pre-GSC Assembly** *(April 8<sup>th</sup> -10<sup>th</sup> in Kerrville)*

**2016 Texas State AA Convention** *(June 24<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> 2016 in Austin) \**

**2016 SW Texas Area 68 Summer Workshop** *(July 8<sup>th</sup> -10<sup>th</sup> in Kerrville)*

**2016 SW Texas Area 68 Fall Voting Assembly** *(October in Corpus Christi)*

**2017 Coastal Bend Jamboree** *(January 20<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> 2017 in Corpus Christi)*

## **AA Meeting Schedules for Our Area**

Current AA meeting schedules for areas serviced by the Coastal Bend Intergroup are attached:

- **AA Meetings in Corpus Christi \***
- **AA Meetings in CC Surrounding Area \***
- **AA Meetings in Victoria & Surrounding Area \***

**Coastal BENDER Mission Statement**

Our primary purpose is to carry the AA message to the still suffering alcoholic. A secondary purpose of The Bender is to keep the CBIA Area of South Texas informed as to the events, meeting changes, Board of Trustee actions / decisions, and other news of interest to AA's in the area. Finally, as a newsletter we provide a forum for the broad spectrum of views held by our members. Publication of any article submitted will be at the discretion of the Bender Editor as advised by the CBIA Board. A controversial subject, as long as it does not concern an outside issue and involves principles and not personalities, will be considered for publication. As a general guideline, any letter or article that is of interest to members of AA and in good taste is worthy of publication. However, an article or letter that advocates ignoring or violating the Traditions, Concepts, or General Service Conference actions will not be considered for publication. All decisions will be made under the direction of God as expressed through our group conscience.



Adrian V.	Weber Nooners Group	02/01/2008	8 Years
Shirley B.	Hilltoppers Group	02/02/1994	22 Years
Susan N.	New Women's Group	02/10/1988	28 Years
Frank	District 15	02/05/1980	36 Years
Sam G.	District 15	02/06/2002	14 Years
Liz L.	Turning Point Group	02/07/1984	32 Years
Chip P.	Saratoga Group	02/08/1990	26 Years
Jim K	Oso Group	02/09/1986	30 Years
Jason Y.	District 15	02/10/2000	16 Years
Leo J.	Weber Road Nooners Group	02/12/1985	31 Years
Bob B.	Saratoga Group	02/15/1996	20 Years
Gerry K.	Bookmarks Group	02/16/1984	32 Years
Lane S.	Weber Road Nooners Group	02/16/1985	31 Years
Rob M.	Weber Road Nooners Group	02/24/1985	31 Years
Angela F.	Weber Road Nooners Group	02/24/2000	16 Years

Don't see your group's birthdays? For best results e-mail your birthday to CBIA at [cbia@grandecom.net](mailto:cbia@grandecom.net).

**February 2016**

	<b><u>OFFICE HOURS/Dist. 7</u></b>	<b><u>AFTER HOURS</u></b>	<b><u>YEAR TO DATE</u></b>
12 <sup>TH</sup> STEP CALLS	<b>3</b>	<b>0/0</b>	<b>3/0</b>
INFORMATIONAL CALLS	<b>156</b>		

*After Hours only tracks 12th Step calls.*



### Intergroup Meetings

**CBIA Board of Trustees Monthly Meeting** will be held Monday February 8<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 PM in the CBIA Office (3833 S. Staples, Suite S-212).

**CBIA Quarterly Association Meeting** will be held Monday April 25<sup>th</sup> 2016 at 6:00 PM at All Saints Episcopal Church (3026 S. Staples in CC). Each group gets a vote at this meeting.

### District Meetings

See Bits & Pieces section for information on district meetings in the Coastal Bend area:

- District 7** (Victoria Area)
- District 8C** (Kingsville - Alice Area)
- District 8D** (Corpus Christi Area)
- District 8E** (Corpus Christi Area)
- District 15** (Portland, Port A, AP, Rockport Area)

### Group Announcements

**New Phoenix Group Conscience** is held the last Sunday of the month at 2:00PM. **Birthday Night** is first Saturday of the month at 8:00PM. **Potluck Supper** is second Saturday of the month at 7:00 PM. (5433 S. Staples, Suite F in The Boardwalk.)

**Hilltoppers Group Conscience** is the 1st Tuesday of the month following the Noon meeting. (First United Methodist Church, 900 S. Shoreline Dr., Room 244)

**Weber Road Nooners Group Conscience** is held the 1st Saturday of each Quarter (Jan/Apr/Jul/Oct) following the 10:00AM meeting. **Birthdays** are celebrated the first Monday of each month at noon. (Travis Baptist Church, 5802 Weber Road at Schanen, park in rear, meeting upstairs.)

**Calallen Group Conscience** is held the 3rd Wednesday of each month following the 6:30PM meeting. **Birthday Night** is the 1st Saturday of the month. (Potluck at 6:30PM, Meeting at 8:00PM). (Pass it on Club, 11425 Leopard (Hilltop).

**Flour Bluff Unity Group Conscience** is held the 2nd Sunday of each month at noon. **Birthday Night** is the 1st Saturday of the month with **Potluck Supper** at 7:00 PM and **Birthday Meeting** at 8:00PM at The Anchor Club (320 Anchor St. in CC).

**Turning Point Group Conscience** is held the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of each month. **Birthday Meeting** is last Saturday of the month.

Group Contributions		
GROUP NAME	Jan. 2016	YTD 2016
Alice Group		
Anonymous/Individual Contribution	1.00	1.00
Aransas Pass Group		
Beeville-Freedom Group		
Beeville-Hope Group		
Beeville-Serenity Group		
Beeville-Shepherd's Group		
CC-Alanos		
CC-Bookmarks Group		
CC-Calallen Group		
CC-Clean & Serene Group		
CC-Crosstown Group		
CC-Cullen Mall Group		
CC-Daily Reprieve Group		
CC-Day of AA		
CC-Early Morning Fellowship		
CC-Fellowship Group at Charlie's Place		
CC-Fifth Tradition Group		
CC-Flour Bluff Unity Group		
CC-Friday Night Speaker Meeting		
CC-Hilltoppers Group		
CC-Humility Group		
CC-Just for Today Group		
CC-Mountain Toppers		
CC-Newcomers Meeting		
CC-New Life Group		
CC-New Phoenix Group	28.50	28.50
CC-New Women's Group	72.54	72.54
CC-Oso Group		
CC-Primary Purpose Group		
CC-Rodd Field Group		
CC-Sunset 7 Group (N Padre Island)	150.62	150.62
CC-Turning Point Group		
CC-Weber Road Nooners Group	490.97	490.97
CC-Wenholz Women's Group		
CC-Young & Restless (Final Distribution)	163.00	163.00
District7		
Falfurrias-2nd Chance Group	30.00	30.00
Goliad-Open Arms Group		
Ingleside-Living Sober Group		
Karnes City-Mayfield Group		
Kingsville-AL-K Group		
Mathis -Crossroads Group		
Port Aransas -Port A Day Tripper's Group		
Port Aransas Group		
Port Aransas-Serenity Sisters		
Port Lavaca Group		
Port O'Connor Group		
Portland -Jaywalkers Group		
Portland -Nueces Bay Group		
Riviera-SASTO Group		
Robstown Group		
Rockport-Anything Goes Group		
Rockport-Happy Hour Group	40.00	40.00
Rockport-Fellowship Group	300.44	300.44
Sandia Group		
Sinton-Grupo Secunda Chanza		
Skidmore Group		
Three Rivers-Choke Canyon Group	25.00	25.00
Victoria-Back to Basics Group		
Victoria-High Nooners Group		
Victoria-Main Stream Group		
Victoria-Men's Group		
Victoria-Unity Group		
Victoria-Women's Group		
Yorktown Group	20.00	20.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,322.07</b>	<b>1,322.07</b>

# Coastal Bend Intergroup Association

## Mission Statement

The mission of the Coastal Bend Intergroup Association is to provide the vital first contact to the alcoholic seeking help. The CBIA office must be maintained for the benefit of those still suffering. Of primary importance to this goal, the CBIA Office is to

- Establish a 24-hour help-line;
- Print meeting schedules; and
- Maintain a 12-Step list

whereby AA groups and individuals are enabled to conduct 12-Step calls which are essential to the growth of AA in the Coastal Bend area.

## Coastal Bend Intergroup Association

### Services Provided

1. Maintains an office which is open Monday through Friday from 07:30AM to 11:30AM & 1:30PM to 05:30PM.
2. Provides information and referrals for A.A. inquiries.
3. Maintains a 12 Step listing and calls individuals for 12 Step work.
4. Provides an A.A. listing in the Telephone directory.
5. Provides a 24 hour volunteer phone answering during hours when the office is closed.
6. Publishes meeting schedules of all groups in the Coastal Bend Area at no charge.
7. Publishes a monthly newsletter, the "Coastal Bender", to keep A.A. members informed of local A.A. affairs and special events.
8. Purchases and sales "CONFERENCE APPROVED" literature, and non-conference approved Anniversary Medallions, Sobriety Chips.
9. Conducts monthly Trustee meetings. All members of Alcoholics Anonymous are welcome at these meetings and Group Input is essential.
10. Conducts Quarterly Meetings to keep groups apprised of Intergroup activities, and to seek group participation in CBIA affairs.
11. Maintains service committees for service work in the Coastal Bend Area.