

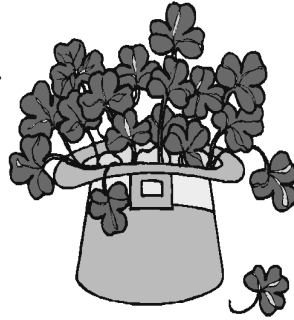
District 40 News

Volume 28.3

March 2015

SERENITY REPLACED DESPERATION

Upon exiting my very first meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous, I knew this whole “God” thing was going to be my biggest hurdle. As somewhat of an agnostic, the thought of anything that I deemed “religious” made the hair on the back of my neck stand up. The only driving force I had was an unprecedented willingness within, driven by pure desperation to be rid of that sense of impending doom; the one hanging over my head. Convinced that “my willing to try anything, even the concept of search for this higher power at a feverish to. Frustration began to set in until one day predicament with a gentleman that seemed to exclaimed to me, “Quit looking so hard for that gave me great pause! How counterintuitive-desperately seeking? That never seemed to desperation-fueled-willingness allowed me to take this suggestion to heart. Several days later while jogging along the bayou, I looked up to the sky and exclaimed “God... what do I do?” At that point it seemed as if I was in a vacuum. Everything around me disappeared and all fell silent, as if I was in the bottom of a bowl and the sky was all I could see. My higher power, whom I call God, spoke to me with one simple statement, “Keep doing what you are doing.” Tears streamed down my face as I continued with my jog. A sense of relief consumed me as my new path in life became crystal clear. I was home, in the center of Alcoholics Anonymous, with a higher power providing me with both relief and guidance. My life was no longer all about me. And with that realization, serenity replaced desperation.



that followed me everywhere like a dark cloud way” had been an utter failure, I was more than embracing a higher power. So I set about my pace. So frantic to find *Him*; I simply was unable after the conclusion of a meeting; I shared my have a whole bunch of what I wanted. He God and you will find him much quicker.” Well tive! Quit looking so hard for what you are work when I couldn’t find my car keys! But my

Anonymous

Step Three

Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.

Tradition Three

The only requirement for A. A. membership is a desire to stop drinking.

Concept Three

As a traditional means of creating and maintaining a clearly defined working relation between the groups, the Conference, the A.A. General Service Board and its several service corporations, staffs, committees and executives, and of thus insuring their effective leadership, it is here suggested that we endow each of these elements of world service with a traditional “Right of Decision.”

Inside This Issue

- 1 Higher Power Experience
- 1 Step, Tradition, Concept
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My Spiritual Bank Account

My Grand Sponsor was a very spiritual mentor. Not that my sponsor wasn't a great inspiration for me spiritually, either; but, his sponsor seemed to explain things to me in a way that would make me stop everything that I was doing and reflect for a moment on what he'd just said. In fact, they usually turned into being long moments. In other words, he made me think. Today, I know that was exactly what I needed to learn how to do, all over again- relearn how to think.

The third step is like my spiritual bank account -I can use it however I choose to. Just like a real bank account that lets me make deposits and take out withdrawals, a spiritual deposit is necessary if I ever want to make a withdrawal from it. That was the one of many concepts that Allen, my Grand Sponsor, would suggest for me to think about. Again, I was learning how to change my way of thinking. When led by my own way of thinking, doing, and acting my will alone produces destruction, alcoholism and with addiction as my only means of existing. My new found family in A.A. and the many mentors I have met here helped give me the perspective I needed in order for me to realize that it is not about me as much as it is about what I can do for you, and you... and you! When I can put myself last, others second, and God first, in return I am able to put some deposits into that "Spiritual Bank Account." That was what my Grand Sponsor had wanted me to see all along. But, I didn't know that at the time. He would be telling me these things and I was willing to try and listen.

Willingness is a vital beginning for me taking the third step. Also, continuing to apply so many unfamiliar principles like honesty, open mindedness, and willingness in my daily living was the only way for me to learn how to live those principles.

Making that decision early in my recovery to listen to people like Allen B., Mark B. (my sponsor), and others who had shown me love even if I didn't quite know how to love myself, gave me the hope that I needed in order to practice that having courage means having faith.

My decisions to want to try listening to the similarities and not to the differences, to taking others' suggestions, to getting a sponsor, to calling my sponsor, and to many more were made in my first thirty days of sobriety and would have a greater effect onto me than maybe the next twenty years of whatever I may decide to do. They were THAT POWERFUL!!!

Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to care of God, *as we understood Him* is our means of making a spiritual deposit into a priceless bank account. Yet, it was only a decision. If I wanted to experience true satisfaction that comes with recovery, I have to work the rest of the steps.

Finally, before concluding the topic with Step 3, I'm also much happier knowing that when I have to make a spiritual withdrawal, when all my options were up and it seemed the only thing left to do was to surrender to Him and pray, I'm grateful to know that there was a deposit left and that was made.

~Erik D.

Hiring God

What happened when I made a decision to turn my will and my life over to the care of God as I understand Him...I stay sober, I am reborn, I pray, I cut the cord to the drinking option, I became a member of AA instead of just being in AA, I grow, I change, I serve, I help others, I let others help me, I want to live, I want to be a wife, I learn to be a Momma, I start to experience all of the firsts, I become a small part of a big whole, I fall in love with God, I can breathe, I sleep without any nightmares, I fire me, I hire God, I learn to live the Third Step Prayer, I end up here because I made a decision to turn I into we.

Michelle H.

D40 DCM





“There seemed to be no way around this God thing...”

Sitting in my small car, finishing a cup of coffee, I had one foot on the asphalt pavement and the other foot on the floor, when a thought crossed my mind. I had driven there on that morning because my wife of 12+ years said, “If you don’t do something about your drinking, I’m taking the girls and leaving.” It scared me into going to a club where AA meetings were held. Maybe I could get a grip on my drinking and just enjoy a few drinks now and then and not get arrested or fired or asked to leave places or lose friends. Maybe these people in AA could teach me how to drink like a gentleman. But another thought arose: What if they tell me I can’t drink again? And then I began to remember all the times I had tried to manage my drinks, and it seemed like everytime I did, things and situations fell apart.

So I had to make a decision, and I said to myself, “Nothing else is working. Might as well give it a shot. And since drinking is not improving my marriage, I’m willing to do whatever they tell me in AA. Maybe that will save my marriage.” So I went into the club. Looking back, it was a the best choice I could have made.

But when a guy named Paul spotted me, and began working with me, right out of the Big Book, I began to shy away from this God thing. I’d had enough of that old-timed religion growing up, and I wasn’t to happy with this thing called God. In fact, I was angry at It. Very angry.

In a couple of weeks, I had found a sponsor and he put me to work on the Steps immediately. And I was like a kid in a candy store, I wanted all I could get, so I went to work on the Steps. One and Two were not too hard to swallow, but number Three set off an alarm inside of me. There seemed to be no way around this God thing, no by-passes or short-cuts or Cliff notes to steal from. So I went into my bedroom and closed the door. And I intended to have a talk with this God who had disappointed me and allowed so many things to go wrong in my life, especially my childhood. And I tore into God with all my anger and profanity, starting off with, “If you want to strike me dead, give it your best shot, because I am very angry with you!”

I ranted and raved and found myself still living, un-zapped by God. So I continued with a little less fervor. Then it dwindled down to a talk. God never responded with a reply. I obviously knew there was a Creator and now I knew It would not argue with me or strike me dead for cursing It. So I decided, what the heck? I surrendered, after four hours in my bedroom, got on my knees, and read the Third Step prayer out of the book. And something funny happened when I did that. I felt that urge to drink, which had been hounding me for two weeks, slip away. It took a while to figure that one out.

So I called my sponsor and he said I hadn’t followed instructions, that I had to do the prayer with someone with me. I considered it a mere formality, and did it with him later. But, looking back, that was in 1983, and I have only had one urge to drink since then. I think that little miracle that occurred while on my knees happened because in my anger I was being dead-level honest with the Creator, making what was probably the most sincere connection with It in my life. And I also learned that anger doesn’t bother God at all. That is a human problem. Nor does profanity.

Thanks,
Jim O.

Letting Go and Letting God

Making a decision to turn my will and life over to something other than myself, this was huge for an alcoholic like me. I remember fighting this one for some time. I understood the concept my sponsor talked about; however, having to depend on something I could not see was hard to swallow. My sponsor than finally stated, just try it, what do you have to lose? At this point in my life, I didn’t have much else to lose. So I just tried it. While sitting in self-pity one day, I was on my way to a conference *by myself*. I remember talking to a friend, and suddenly, I felt this calmness. I asked him what this feeling was. He, of course, was not much help in giving answers; he just stated that I should pray about it. Obviously, not the answer I liked; however, that’s exactly what I did. What I found was that on my trip to a conference where I knew no one, I was turning the outcome of this trip over to my Higher Power. I was letting something else guide me. I wasn’t letting fear deter me from going to the conference. I finally understood what the calmness was. It was serenity of finally “letting go and letting God”. There have been many instances like these in my sobriety. They have always come at times when I can’t see anything past the fear. I may not like going through this sometimes, but at the end of the journey, I grow closer to my Higher Power as long as I’m not fighting it. The one thing I do know now; is that a lot of times, my Higher Power makes these decisions for me. It is a matter of me choosing whether I want to follow through or not. Today, although it may take me awhile to accept it, I choose to follow.

Ana D.
D40 Secretary

District 40 GSR Official Meeting Minutes Southeast Area Alcoholics Anonymous

January 13, 2015

Call to Order: Serenity Prayer, Preamble and Unity Declaration

Tradition I/Concept I: reading and summation by Corrie H. and Brad H.

Volunteers for next month: Tradition II/Concept II will be Mark W. and Amanda S.

Introduction of Attendees: (31)

Amanda S. (GSR, Post Oak Group); **Ana D.** (D40 Secretary, Area 67 Newsletter Chair, Rule 62 Group); **Betsy G.** (*Past D40 DCM, Past Area 67 Delegate*, God Meeting Group); **Betsy K.** (Katy Big Book); **Brad H.** (*Past D40 DCM, Area Registrar*, Journey Group); **Cheryl B.** (D40 Treasurer, Katy Crossroads Group) **Cindy M.** (D40 Correctional Facilities Chair, Area 67 CFC Secretary, Katy Big Book); **Clark F.** (GSR, Houston Young People); **Corrie H.** (D40 Alt DCM, Katy Big Book Group); **Dan R.** (GSR, First Light Group); **Deborah G.** (D40 Newsletter Chair, Rule 62 Group); **Desiree B.** (GSR, God Meeting Group); **Elizabeth H.** (GSR, Another Chance); **Jackie S.** (GSR, Bear Creek Fellowship); **Kate E.** (Area 67 PI Committee Chair, Memorial Going Home); **Kaylee S.** (GSR, Broad Highway); **Mark W.** (GSR, Journey Group); **Mary Lou R.** (GSR, Memorial Going Home); **Michelle H.** (D40 DCM, Rule 62 Group); **Pam F.** (D40 Treatment Facilities Chair, Katy Big Book); **Patty D.** (GSR, Katy 164); **Richard B.** (GSR, First Light Group); **Rochelle B.** (GSR, Bear Creek Women's Group); **Wendy A.** (Katy Crossroads)

Normal Business:

1. **Secretary's Report** – Motion to Accept as corrected.
2. **Treasurer's Report** – Accepted as corrected. December report period January 13, 2015. Opening balance was \$7,550.90. Group Contributions received this month totaled \$744.49. The expenses this month totaled \$337.00. The closing balance is \$7,958.39. – Cheryl will remain as Treasurer until a replacement is found.

3. **Group News:**

Committee Reports:

- a. **Archives** – OPEN.
- b. **Public Information/Cooperation with Professional Community – PI/CPC** – Jennifer reported that at the December meeting we discussed contacting Emergency Clinics to obtain names of clinic managers

and correct addresses for future mail-out. A Spanish version of the large and small AA information cards will be produced to be given out to Emergency Clinics. Open position for treasurer has been filled. Our next District 40 PI/CPC committee meeting will be held on January 31st from 13PM at the Spring Branch Memorial Club.

- c. **Correctional Facilities Committee – CFC** – Cindy M. reported that the CFC meeting will be next Wednesday. There are also plenty of Blue Cans available if any group needs any, please ask. Volunteers are needed for the Jester III Trustee camp. Meeting is on Thursday at 7 pm
- d. **Grapevine** – OPEN
- e. **Intergroup** – There is a 4th step workshop being held on Saturday, February 21, 2015 from 9 – 12p.m. You must register for this workshop.
- f. **Information Technology – IT** – Padraig McD was welcomed as the District 40 IT rep and attended his first official meeting. He also volunteered and was accepted as being the Committee's Alternate Webmaster. The Committee thanked Jackie V for her service to the Committee and to AA as a whole. Minutes were amended and approved. New business: A laptop was purchased and turned over to the new Treasurer, and new software was also purchased for all existing laptops assigned to the Officers and Standing Committees servicing the Area. All IT business relating to electronic data for the Area is backed up to date December 2014. Area 67 IT Committee will be available and present at the SETA Galveston Convention weekend of Jan 16 2015 to assist any Area Officers or Standing Committees. Meeting was adjourned until the last Saturday in January 2015
- g. **Literature** – OPEN; Michelle H. reported on an AA Book Club will be meeting every **first Saturday of the month at 4:30 in the afternoon at Houston Intergroup**. The first book we will be reading and discussing will be - "Pass It On", which Houston Intergroup sells for \$12.75. The first pamphlet will be discussing is "Many Paths to Spirituality" priced at \$.35. *Kathleen T., Incoming Area 67 Literature Committee Chair*

District 40 GSR Official Meeting Minutes Southeast Area Alcoholics Anonymous

- h. Treatment Facilities Committee – TFC–** Pam F. reported that she will be attending the SETA Convention and is working on the display to have at the D40 GSR Workshop in January.
- i. Newsletter** – Deborah G. reported that she has received good articles for this month and looks forward to the following months.

Current Items:

1. District Hospitality Suite for SETA 2014 Convention – Wendy A
 - a. Still some time slots available for groups to volunteer
 - b. Food will consist of muffins, etc. in morning, sandwiches for lunch and possibly meatballs for dinner.
 - c. The hospitality suite room number is 919.
 - d. The budget for the Hospitality Suite is \$1800. And with room \$900 is available for what will be needed to provide to visitors.
2. January Area Assembly – The schedules have been posted and are available.
3. GSR Workshop – Betsy G.
 - a. Held at SBMC on 1-24-14 from 1-4 pm.
 - b. What to expect at the workshop:
 - i. Power Point Presentation
 - ii. Experience from a past GSR
 - iii. Materials handed out
 - iv. Snacks and Fellowship
4. Visitation Committee
 - a. Should we revive this committee and visit groups to provide information on our district?
 - b. Majority has agreed that this committee should move forward with a suggestion to put a sign-in in the Hospitality Suite at the SETA Convention.

Announcements:

- **District 40 PI/CPC Committee Meeting:** December 20, 2014, 1:00-3:00 pm, SBMC
- **53rd Annual SETA Convention:** January 16-18, 2015, Moody Gardens, Galveston
- **GSR Workshop:** January 24, 2015, 2:00 to 6:00 PM, SBMC



"This ability to laugh at yourselves to accept the puncturing of your own self importance is one of the basic steps in A.A. I believe — of course it makes every individual more livable and lovable whether alcoholic or not. What little I have been able to absorb made life much simpler for me, I know."

*Ruth Hock
Alcoholics Anonymous' 1st Secretary*

Treasurer's Report

District 40 Financial Report Period Ending 2/10/15	Current Month	Budget*	Year to Date	Current %	YTD %
INCOME					
Traditions Dinner Donations		\$250.00			
Service Workshop Donations					
State Conv - Hospitality Suite					
SETA -Hospitality Suite	\$50.00				
Fellow ship Fest					
Group Donations	\$340.63	\$9,644.00	\$0.00		0.0%
Rosewood Thursday Night	\$15.10				
Our Common Journey	\$60.83				
Katy 164 Women's Group	\$30.00				
Post Oak Group	\$100.00				
The God Meeting Group	\$64.70				
Bear Creek Fellowship Group	\$70.00				
Total Income	\$390.63	\$9,894.00	\$340.63	3.9%	3.4%
*** EXPENSES ***					
DCM	\$148.46	\$600.00	\$148.46	24.7%	24.7%
Alt. DCM		\$600.00		0.0%	0.0%
Secretary / Copying		\$100.00		0.0%	0.0%
Treasurer		\$75.00		0.0%	0.0%
New sletter		\$220.00		0.0%	0.0%
Rent/Coffee Donation		\$180.00		0.0%	0.0%
Coffee		\$25.00		0.0%	0.0%
PO Box		\$70.00		0.0%	0.0%
Literature Committee		\$100.00		0.0%	0.0%
PI/CPC	\$180.00	\$2,500.00	\$180.00	7.2%	7.2%
Grapevine		\$80.00		0.0%	0.0%
CFC		\$250.00		0.0%	0.0%
TFC		\$100.00		0.0%	0.0%
Archives Committee		\$100.00		0.0%	0.0%
Intergroup Liaison		\$0.00		0.0%	0.0%
IT Committee		\$100.00		0.0%	0.0%
Miscellaneous		\$100.00		0.0%	0.0%
***Gratitude Dinner		\$300.00		0.0%	0.0%
*** Fellow ship Fest		\$250.00		0.0%	0.0%
*** Traditions Dinner		\$800.00		0.0%	0.0%
*** Service Workshop	\$184.19	\$250.00	\$184.19	73.7%	73.7%
***SWRAASA (Even Years)		\$0.00			
*** The Forum (Odd Years)		\$1,500.00		0.0%	0.0%
*** State Convention Hospitality Ste		\$0.00			
***SETA Assembly Host District		\$0.00			
*** SETA - 2015 Hospitality Suite ***	\$58.62	\$1,800.00	\$58.62	3.3%	3.3%
Total Expenses	\$571.27	\$10,100.00	\$571.27	5.7%	5.7%
*Budget Approved as of 11/09/14					
<i>Beginning Bank Balance</i>	\$7,958.39				
<i>Total Expenses</i>	\$571.27				
<i>Total Income</i>	\$390.63				
<i>Prudent Reserve (0.25xBudget)</i>	\$2,525.00				
<i>Unrestricted Funds</i>	\$5,252.75				
Ending Balance / Total Funds	\$7,777.75				
<i>Unspent Portion of Budget</i>	\$9,528.73				

Deposit 2/2/15	
Check #	Amount
Cash	\$50.00
91217210	\$15.10
9815810946	\$60.83
24202023	\$30.00
13516	\$100.00
46	\$64.70
17-12665770	\$70.00
\$390.63	

Treasurer's Report -
 January's report period ending 2/10/15. Opening balance was \$7,958.39. Group Contributions received this month totaled \$390.63. The expenses this month totaled \$387.08. This was for PI/CPC committee's annual rent, plus printing and assembly expenses for the DCM for the month of January. Expenses for the GSR workshop totaled \$184.19. The closing balance is \$7,777.75.



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

A.A. Comes of Age, pp. 141



My Experience Was Enough

Before entering the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous; I knew very little about a personal relationship with God or the God that I was introduced to as a child in Bible Study. I believe that lack of knowledge was a gift when I began my journey in recovery. I did what I was told to do; I did not know any other way. I am grateful you all steered me in the right direction. I was so desperate that I would have done anything at the time, if it meant the pain would stop. Like many other experiences that I have heard in regards to the third step, I took mine while kneeling and holding hands with my sponsor because like I said, I did what I was told. I had no idea what it meant at the time; I now know *I didn't have to understand it to do it.* It wasn't until I had four years of sobriety, can I say I actually had what I recognized to be a spiritual experience with the 3rd step and now my most cherished relationship with God. During a step study with some of the most beautiful women I have crossed paths with in these rooms, we were reviewing the 3rd step and I was given a gift that has not left me to this day. My experience was enough. I got chills as I typed that and remembered the feeling of relief that washed over me that day. All I remember thinking is "my experience was enough." I wrote it down in my Big Book and still use it as a reminder today. The feeling behind that thought was freedom from alcohol. My experience with drinking was enough for this lifetime. God is in charge and the journey I am on is not one of running from alcohol; it is simply a journey to becoming closer to God. *God is Everything.* No exclusions or examples necessary. The freedom that comes with that belief allows me to be human today. Live life, as I am, on the rollercoaster, with an unlimited amount of Faith in God that can't be broken. This is a gift worth staying sober for, a step worth practicing, a prayer worth repeating and a principle worth living.

In Love & Service,
Corrie H.
District 40 Alternate DCM

DISTRICT SERVANTS

DCM

Michelle H.
dcm-40@aa-seta.org

PI/CPC Committee Chair

Jennifer C. – 832-599-9690
jlswl@yahoo.com

Alternate DCM

Corrie H.
dcm-40-alt@aa-seta.org

Correctional Facilities Chair

Cindy M.

Intergroup Liaison

Cole D.

Secretary

Ana D.

Grapevine Chair

OPEN

Alt. Secretary

OPEN

Newsletter Editor

Deborah G.

Treasurer

Cheryl B.

Coffee Chair

Scott S.

Alt. Treasurer

OPEN

Archives Chair

OPEN

Literature Chair

OPEN

IT Representative

Padraig Mc.

Treatment Facilities Chair

Pam F

Upcoming Events

D33 Unity Conference

March 6th—8th, 5:00 pm,
794 N. Harvey Mitchell Pkwy, Bryan, TX 77807

D52 Workshop

“How To Lead An Effective Meeting”

March 7th, 11:00 am, 5114 Ave. H, Rosenberg, TX 77471

D70 Recovery Sponsorship Workshop

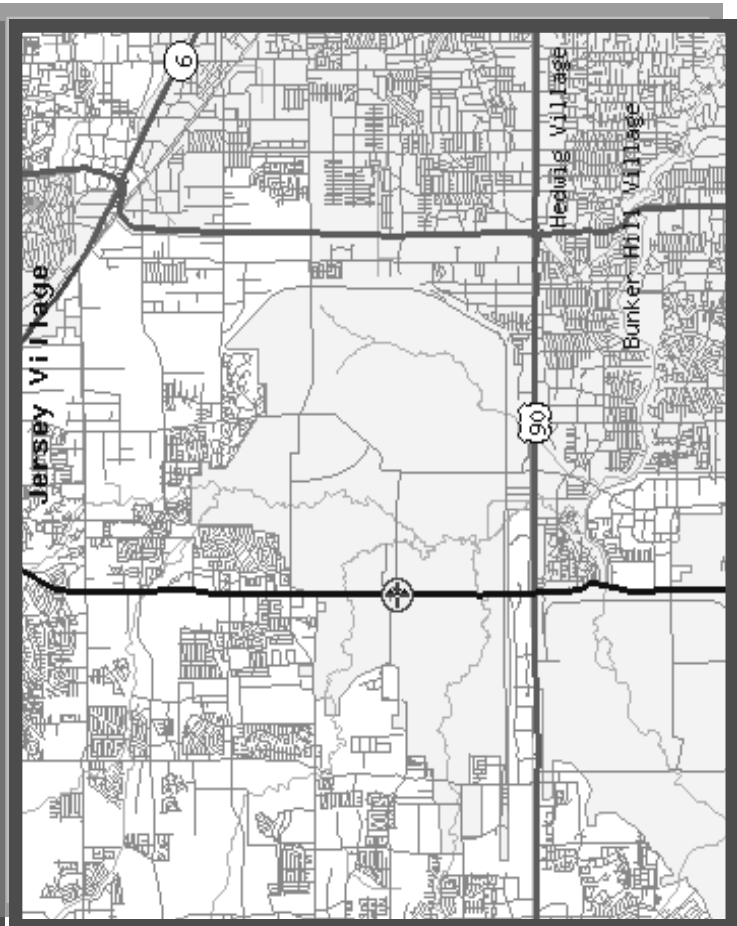
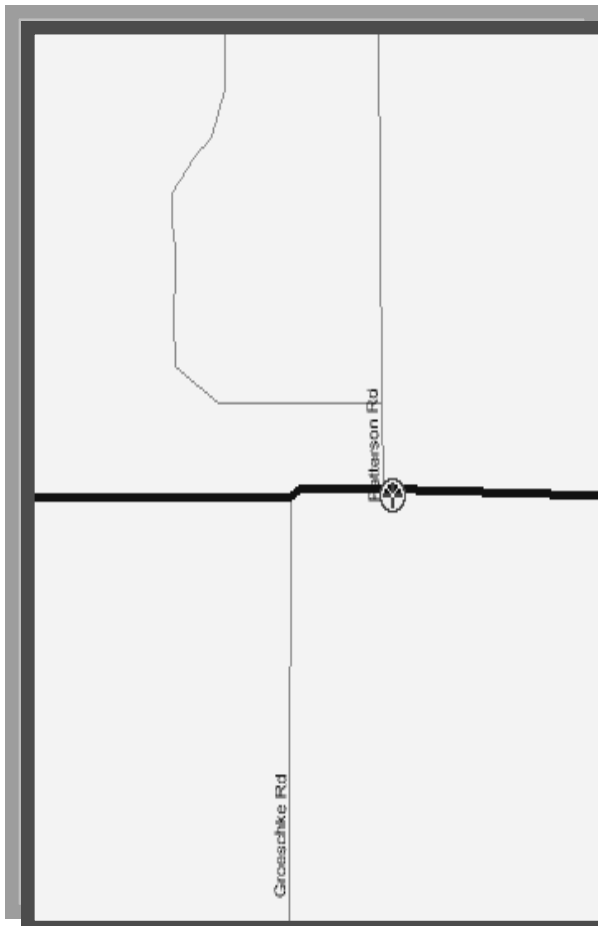
March 21st, Noon, 1300 E. 13th St., Deer Park, TX 77536

D40 PI/CPC Committee Meeting

March 28th, 1:00—3:00 pm, SBMC



'I really can't explain why your cancer has spread. Did you do a moral inventory and ask God to remove your shortcomings and moral failings, like I prescribed?'



If you have a story, quote, cartoon, or image you would like to see published in the District 40 News, please send it to dcm-40@aa-seta.org

Committee	Meeting Time	Location	Area Assembly*
Archives	2 nd Saturday of the month at 10:00 AM	521 N. Sam Houston Pkwy East, Suite 215 Houston, TX 77060	Saturday, 4:30 PM to 6:00 PM
Cooperation with the Professional Community (CPC)	1 st Monday of the month at 7:15 P.M.	Houston Council On Alcohol And Drugs 303 Jackson Hill Houston, TX 77007	Saturday, 4:30 PM to 6:00 PM
Correctional Facilities (CFC)	3 rd Wednesday of every month from 7:30-9:00 PM	The Delta Club 6400 Westpark Dr, Suite 355 Houston, TX 77057	Saturday, 4:30 PM to 6:00 PM
Grapevine	3 rd Thursday of the month at 7:30 PM	The Delta Club 6400 Westpark Dr, Suite 355 Houston, TX 77057	Saturday, 4:30 PM to 6:00 PM
Internet Technologies (IT)	4 th Saturday of the month from 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM	Spring Branch Memorial Club 1200 Blalock, Suite 378, Room C	Saturday, 4:45 PM to 6:00 PM
Literature	2 nd Saturday of the month at 12:00 PM	Bay Area Club 2111 Webster St., League City, TX	Saturday, 4:30 PM to 6:00 PM
Public Information (PI)	3 rd Monday of the month at 7:15 PM	The Delta Club 6400 Westpark Dr, Suite 355 Houston, TX 77057	Saturday, 4:30 PM to 6:00 PM
Treatment Facilities (TFC)	–	–	Saturday, 4:30 PM to 6:00 PM
District 40 PI/CPC Committee	Last Saturday of the month from 1:00-3:00 PM	Spring Branch Memorial Club 1200 Blalock, Suite 378, Room C	–

*Area Assembly meets in the months of April, July and October at Sheraton North Houston 15700 John F. Kennedy Blvd., Houston, TX 77032; January Assembly meets at the SETA

THE NEXT DISTRICT MEETING IS
APRIL 14, 2015 AT 7:00 PM

District 40 meets on the 2nd Tuesday
of every month from 7:00 PM—9:00 PM at the
Bear Creek Community Center

**Just Starting a group in
District 40 and wish to
add it to this newsletter?**



Send group information, location and meeting times to SETA-40@aa-seta.org and intergroup@aahouston.org. You may also contact Intergroup at 713-686-6300.