

# The Lone Star



## CoDA Courier



December 2010 Volume 6 Issue 4

**CoDA Texas Officers:** Chair-Bob M., Vice Chair-Terri S., Treasurer-Stephanie S., Secretary-Marilyn B.

### *Texas Business*

The State Assembly was held in Houston October 8-10. New officers were elected for the Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary. The term limit of each office is two years. Normally, the term limit for two officers expires each year so there are always two returning Board members. To get back to this rotation, the Secretary and Vice Chair terms will expire at the 2011 State Assembly. Martha R. presented a verbal report of the 2010 CSC activities Friday night. Brandi presented handouts of the motions and her report at the Sat. Morning business meeting. Brandi becomes the senior delegate and Robert G. was elected as the Junior delegate.



Thanks to all who did and do service. Without volunteers, we would not have the retreat, State Assembly, and newsletter.

### *Twenty-Fourth Birthday of CoDA Houston*

*By Marilyn B.*

Come celebrate with Houston to celebrate the 24<sup>th</sup> birthday of CoDA in Houston.

**Where:** PARC in Memorial Hermann Recovery Alumni Center  
3033 N. Gessner in Houston, TX 77080

**When:** January 22, 2011, 6-9 pm (Volunteers needed before at 5:30 & after)

**Bring:** A dish to share with your CoDA friends, meat will be provided by CoDA Houston

**Questions:** Call 713-688-4797 (New CoDA Number) David L. 713-460-8317 or Marilyn B. 713-854-7282

**Groups:** Please bring your box of Recovery Chips

### *Texas 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition Donations*

According to the 12 Traditions, CoDA is self-supporting through its own contributions. Seventh Tradition donations help CoDA Texas send Delegates to CoDA Service Conference, provide seed money for the annual retreat, pay for the CoDA Texas web site, state PO Box, provide seed money for State Assembly, and pay for postage to mail these newsletters! Suggested donations above prudent reserves are 60% to the city community, 30% to CoDA Texas, and 10% to CoDA World. Send Texas donations to: **CoDA Texas, P.O. Box 300511, Austin, TX 78703-0009. Please provide the meeting number with your donation.**

**THANK YOU** to all CoDA Meetings and Individuals for the 2010 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition contributions to CoDA Texas From the outgoing CoDA Texas Treasurer, Robert G. (thank you for your service!).

**Gracias** a todos las reuniones CoDA y los individuos por sus contribuciones de la 7<sup>a</sup> traducción del 2010. De la Tesorera CoDA, Robert G.

TX008 – Houston	\$77.30
TX046 – Houston	\$101.50
TX051 – Kingwood	\$10.00
TX074 – Tyler	\$70.00
TX089 – Richardson Sun.	\$40.00
TX149 – Oaklawn	\$120.00
TX150 – Oaklawn	\$100.00
TX207 – Richardson Wed.	\$100.00
TX208 – Richardson Fri. (IA)	\$176.77

IA = Inactive, one time donation

TX341 – Ft. Worth Unity	\$50.00
TX419 – Bryan	\$160.00
TX459 – Austin	\$40.00
TX471 – Tyler	\$60.00
TX472 – Domingo Central	\$30.00
TX475 – New Braunfels	\$50.00
2010 Spring Board Meeting	\$16.64
2010 Retreat	\$50.00
CoDA Campout	\$40.00
Houston, TX (State Assembly)*	\$250.00

<b>Total 2010 Contributions as of 9/31/10</b>	<b>\$1487.21</b> <i>Thanks everyone!</i>
<b>Total 2009 Contributions as of 12/13/09</b>	<b>\$683.00</b>
<b>Total 2008 Contributions as of 12/31/08</b>	<b>\$578.57</b>

\*Houston donated \$250.00 to Texas in lieu of holding a raffle at State Assembly.

## SCHEDULED UPCOMING EVENTS, WORKSHOPS, AND GATHERINGS FOR CODA TEXAS

### CALENDARIO DE EVENTOS, CURSOS, Y CONGREGACIONES PARA CODA TEXAS

<b>Month</b> <b>Mes</b>	<b>Event</b> <b>Evento</b>	<b>When</b> <b>Cuando</b>	<b>Where</b> <b>Donde</b>	<b>Contact</b> <b>Contacto</b>
<b><u>Dec 2010</u></b>	Holiday Party Camping	Dec. 4, 6:30 pm Dec. 10-12	Dallas, TX Lake Buchanan, TX	Sharon M. 972-661-9843 Bob M. 903-262-7446
<b><u>Jan 2011</u></b>	24 <sup>th</sup> CoDA Birthday	Jan. 22, 6-9 pm	Houston, TX	David L. 713-460-8317
<b><u>Mar 2011</u></b>	Retreat	Mar. 11-13	La Grange, TX	Kathi E. <a href="mailto:keslp@att.net">keslp@att.net</a>
<b><u>TBD</u></b>	Spring Board Mtg	TBD	Waco, TX	Bob M. 903-262-7446
<b><u>July, 2011</u></b>	World Conference World Convention	July 5-8 July 8-10	Denver, CO Denver, CO	<a href="http://www.coda.org">www.coda.org</a> <a href="http://www.coda.org">www.coda.org</a>
<b><u>TBD</u></b>	State Assembly	Oct or Nov.	Tyler, TX	Bob M. 903-262-7446

## CoDA Texas 2011 Retreat

**SAVE THE DATE:** March 11, 12, and 13<sup>th</sup>, 2011 at Camp Lonestar in LaGrange, TX. The theme is "Starting the Year out on the Right Step." **Contact** Kathi E at [keslp@att.net](mailto:keslp@att.net).

Volunteers needed:

- Someone to head up the raffle and auction
- Workshop Leaders
- Clean up
- Registration Desk
- Auction Items

Retreats are a time to get away from your normal life, relax, reflect, and work on your recovery while experiencing the fellowship of beautiful, loving, and accepting people who are striving to recover and heal through our spiritual program.

## *Higher Power's Guidance*

*By Karen G.*

Seeking Higher Power's guidance in a group conscience decision sounds easy enough, but what does that really mean? I don't have all of the answers to that question but I can share some of my experiences with the process. I believe that when people do not invite Higher Power into a group conscience decision then Higher Power will not be there. So the first step is the Serenity Prayer. I also believe it is very easy for participants to get into self-will and out of recovery in this process. Hard as it can be sometimes, I need to listen to what others share. Higher Power speaks to me in the voices of others.

I gave a workshop at the 2006 Convention on service work and the subject of Higher Power came up. At the workshop I expressed the thought that CoDA got off track from Higher Power's will when we split into World and CoDA, Inc. (a motion was made in 1990 and acted upon in 1995). From at least 1995 (if not longer) until 2002, CoDA and World fought with each other over money, property, and prestige. CoDA did not grow, World did not grow. An Ad Hoc committee of 7 people was set up to examine the issues between World and CoDA. The committee had a year to look at the issues and make a presentation at the next Conference. Seven thousand dollars (\$7000) was earmarked for the committee to have two face-to-face meetings to perform their work. It is my belief that Higher Power was with that committee from the time the people were voted in until the report was made. Higher Power was invited every step of the way, because the people on the committee knew they needed Higher Power's guidance to achieve resolution of the issues. After the Ad Hoc committee presented their report, there was clarity about what had happened. At the top of the list was the fact that no one active in service at CoDA Inc. was aware that a motion had been made in 1990 to split World off from CoDA. The information was available in the motions database, but people did not read the motions database (it's not the most exciting reading) and thus were unaware of the 1990 motion. Rumors abounded that the Chair of World had incorporated World by his own volition—turns out that was not true. The Ad Hoc committee pointed out that one of the weaknesses of rotating service positions is that we lose our history; the World motion was a prime example. CoDA needs to find a better way to capture our "corporate" knowledge and make it easily available. The information was captured in the motions database, but it was not easily accessible. To make a long story short, a motion was made and passed after much discussion and prayer to merge the two organizations back together. The atmosphere at the next Conference after this decision was full of excitement and light. It was awesome to see and feel. Communication with meetings and intergroups from other countries increased. It was an exciting and wonderful time of CoDA growth.

One of the attendees at the 2006 workshop was rather surprised at my viewpoint. He expressed the thought that all of the things that happened in CoDA's history were part of Higher Power's plan. Maybe so, but I find it hard to believe that a loving Higher Power wants us to argue over property, money, and prestige. I think members of the CoDA Fellowship got off track from Higher Power's will and after many years we finally got back on track and things improved dramatically. We were inclusive rather than exclusive and divisive and it changed the energy of CoDA. Of course, there is no way to determine which is accurate—maybe there is a kernel of truth in both—but ultimately, it is a matter of faith for each of us.

I've seen a lot of focus on the "business" side of CoDA at World the last couple of years. We are a nonprofit organization and as such there are legal obligations that have to be met. I've heard members of the Fellowship say they want CoDA to grow. I want CoDA to grow, but I know that I am powerless over others and that it violates our Traditions to promote or market CoDA. We are a program of attraction—not promotion. The business side of CoDA must be balanced with the recovery side. Without the recovery, without Higher Power's presence, we stagnate. Meetings attract people because of the recovery—not the business knowledge of the members. Without proper management of our funds and meeting our legal obligations, we will not do well. There must be a holistic healthy balance between these two parts.

So how do I know when Higher Power is in a Group Conscience decision? It's hard to explain but it's a certain energy that I've come to associate with my Higher Power through practice. I feel joyful, peaceful and excited like a pleasant current of energy is flowing through me. I feel open and peaceful and the process seems to work easily or at least more easily. I'm not struggling to find serenity; it flows through me. This year has been difficult for me—losing animals, moving, struggling with a supervisor I don't match, and some very negative outside energy in my service work. Through all of this I'm hanging on to the life raft

that is my Higher Power, bobbing along on the currents, working my program and praying for guidance and strength. I'm working to have faith and even though it feels hard, there is some core part of me that hangs on knowing this too shall pass because it has in the past. Life is unfolding everyday.

## *CoDA Texas 2010 Camping/Fishing Schedule*

***By Bob M. and Joe B.***

Mark your calendars! Take some time from your busy schedule to commune with nature, center yourself, and play.

- o *December 10-12 Lake Buchanan Canyon of the Eagles* – Best for Fishing and Boating. Side Activity: Lake Cruise to view the eagles. Contact Bob M. (Tyler) 903-262-7446.

## *Death and Recovery*

***By Anonymous***

A person I do service work with recently lost her mother. Let's call her Jan. Jan had a particularly difficult situation because of family strife and there was a legal battle. She fought hard for her mother but in the end she was out gunned and out done by her siblings--the tube that was allowing her mother to breath was removed and her mother died. Jan said her biggest mistake was that on the form (not sure if the form was the power of attorney or something else) she had her mother keep it simple and not go into details or give examples explaining what conditions she did not want to be kept alive (i.e., if I'm brain dead let me go vs. an example of a situation where she did want measures to be taken to keep her alive), thus the form basically said "I don't want to be kept alive." It turns out that if she had had a simple operation she could have lived without being intubated and other options could have been explored. Jan had been providing care to her mother and so she knew her mother's wishes; she would have wanted the surgery and yet the siblings in their emotions denied that knowledge and knew "better." Jan was a loving and kind daughter in an incredibly difficult situation and I believe that her mother knows that too. Jan worked her program, fought hard, and watched with a sense of powerlessness as the tube was removed and her mother died. I believe that their love will always connect them and that Jan can stand tall in that love.

On Nov. 15<sup>th</sup>, I heard that a former member of my CoDA meeting committed suicide (I'll call her Toni). Toni attended the meeting for about two years and moved to Austin in 2008. Toni maintained a strong friendship with another member here (let's call her Lesley) and on Monday I heard the growing concern and fear Lesley had as she processed what she knew. When the office where Toni worked called Lesley Monday afternoon and said Toni hadn't shown up for work, Lesley called the police. The police returned the call later Monday evening with the news that Toni was gone. I also heard the guilt in Lesley's voice as she did the "if onlys." Lesley has worked hard on her recovery, and I believe she will process her grief and realize she was powerless over Toni. I will do the same.

It's taken a day for my feelings to surface. I feel so sad. I've been in Toni's shoes and I remember how I thought no one would care if I died and what a logical solution death seemed. I remember asking my brother if he cared if I died. He told me that he wouldn't be surprised if he heard I killed myself one day. I thought "Wow, he doesn't mind." He was one of the reasons I had struggled to hang on because I did not want to inflict more loss on him so I felt released hearing him say that. The next morning he called me and said he wanted to talk to me during lunch. He came home and told me he had called several therapy professionals that morning and they told him I was suicidal or borderline and I should be committed. I was stunned and actually a little disappointed because the "release" was not there after all. He never told me he loved me or cared about me then (we did not grow up in an emotion based family) but his actions spoke loudly and I heard the message. I told him I wouldn't do it, and I kept my promise. Today I realize his actions that day were important as to why I survived those dark days, and I am grateful.

I have been in that black dark hole of despair, and I know how hopeless things appear. I did not believe it could get better and it didn't get better by itself. It got better because I was willing to fight for myself, go to meetings, and feel the pain and fear I was stuffing. I had to do the work. There is no magic pill to fix the feelings and make it all better, although lots of people try with many different addictions. Healing from the pain of codependency requires work. Work that Toni, for whatever reason, was not able to do. Codependency kills just like any other addiction. People seem to think it's not that dangerous because it

doesn't kill your liver or destroy your body so obviously as other addictions. It kills in more subtle ways like putting yourself in dangerous situations, not paying attention and having accidents, practicing other addictions that kill faster and, as in Toni's case, suicide—a permanent solution to a temporary problem. Today I look back on that time in my life and I realize I was sick. I am so glad I reached out and got help. I didn't believe the therapy would work but I gritted my teeth and took the steps and did the work. I slowly got better. My life many years later is so different, and I thank Higher Power for the gifts.

I will mourn Toni. I hope Toni has found peace in the arms of her loving Higher Power. I suggested to the meeting members we honor Toni at the next meeting and they graciously agreed even though several of them had not met Toni. It was a powerful experience for all of us. Lesley read a couple of e-mails Toni had sent her. I read a share from a member who had moved and this article and then we opened the meeting to sharing. It was a gift to us all as we honored our fallen comrade. I've written this article to process my feelings and to share the tragedy and the hope of recovery. This cycle is repeated far more than any of us know. The struggle of despair over hope is a constant, but this program gave me the tools to work through the despair—that's why I keep coming back. CoDA works if you work it.

### *CoDA World Outreach Committee*

For reasons unknown to the CoDA World Outreach Committee, the CoDA World Board decided that all e-mail sent to the Outreach Committee would go to the Fellowship Service Worker who is screening the e-mails. Some of the e-mail is being forwarded to a second alias for the Outreach Committee members ([outreach2@codas.org](mailto:outreach2@codas.org)) to answer. Members of the committee do not know why this was done, where the other e-mails are going, or what the criteria are for forwarding e-mails. Members were not informed about this action by any one other than the webmaster prior to it being initiated. After this action was taken, the Board Liaison to Outreach apologized for not contacting the committee prior to the event.

This additional step has created significant delays in the ability of the Outreach members to perform their volunteer service work. The Outreach members have found nothing in the CoDA Bylaws, Fellowship Service Manual, or Articles of Incorporation that indicate this action by the Board was appropriate. Outreach is working to rectify the situation, but no one knows how long it will take. [Your understanding and patience regarding delays in receiving answers to your e-mails or receiving a different type of answer than you may have received in the past are appreciated.](#)

### *CoDA World Announcement Message on Service*

This message was distributed September 30 through the CoDA World Announcement message list, which are archived (go to <http://codependents.org/cgi-bin/dada/mail.cgi/list/main/> and click on *CoDA Announcements Message Archive*). If you want to be added to the list go to the same URL and click on *CoDA Announcements – CoDependents* and fill out the form.

*Why do service work? How can service work advance my recovery?*

People get involved in service work for many different reasons. Some do it because they want to control what is going on in their sphere within CoDA. Others do it because they think that they are the only one who knows what is best for CoDA. Some do it because they feel guilty if they don't contribute. And some actually do it for selfless reasons - because they truly want to contribute to the Fellowship so that more and more codependents can find their way to their own recovery.

Some avoid service work because they are tired of doing so much and don't know how to set appropriate boundaries. Others avoid service work because they have given so much in their life without feeling appreciated or recognized for what they have given. Some say no because they are just learning how to say no and want to practice. There are probably lots of other reasons why people choose either to do or not to do service work.

Service work puts us in a space where, from the start, it is no longer easy to exert our own will because we are working with others. It gives us the opportunity to notice when we are exerting our own will, and to practice letting go and trusting in a Higher Power. It is a visible, tangible, undeniable declaration of our desire to put recovery on the fast track.

One of the things that make service work particularly challenging is that not all people who do service work are willing or able to confront and work through their own issues. As a result there are times that doing service work can be really trying. This gives us another truly valuable opportunity to work our program - it gives us the opportunity to learn to accept others as they are and to find serenity even when circumstances are frustrating.

Service work is NOT about being in control. It is actually about realizing that we are NOT in control and learning how to function without the need for control, while also learning to truly trust that our Higher Power knows and wants what is best for us and for CoDA. Service work IS about being open to new opportunities while also learning how to set and enforce boundaries in a healthy and loving way. It gives us a forum in which to determine what our boundaries really are in a safer environment than most of us are used to.

### *CoDA World Hospitals and Institutions News*

The H & I branch of CoDA specifically helps those Codependents who are in institutions and still suffering. This includes people in hospitals, jails, rehabilitation centers or treatment centers. We also include in our definition other institutions such as colleges and libraries to whom we will do outreach. What members may not know is that there are many resources available to those confined in institutions including free pamphlets and a limited number of CoDA Blue Books, for example. We need to spread the word of what CoDA H & I does...so that is why we are looking for your help!

If you would like to get on the H & I listserve to find out more about what H & I does and ways in which you can be of service, please send your contact information to [hosp@coda.org](mailto:hosp@coda.org). Thank you!

### *Online Store for CoDA Literature*

CoRe (the publishing entity for CoDA) has an E-store now! The URL is <http://www.coda.org/estore/>.

### *Next Newsletter*

The next newsletter will be sent out around Feb. 2011.

### *Texas E-Mail and Mailing Lists*

Anyone who wants to be added to or opt out of the Texas e-mail list may write to [codatexasemailmessenger@gmail.com](mailto:codatexasemailmessenger@gmail.com). To correct or change an address for the postal mailings or opt out of the mailing, send an e-mail to [danw1212@gmail.com](mailto:danw1212@gmail.com) or a letter to Dan W., 813 Rock Creek, Irving, TX 76039.



**2011 CoDA TEXAS RETREAT  
CAMP LONESTAR @ LAGRANGE, TX  
March 11-13, 2011**

**“Starting the year out on the right step.”**

Retreats are a time to get away from your normal life, relax, reflect, and work on your recovery while experiencing the fellowship of beautiful, loving, and accepting people who are striving to recover and heal through our spiritual program

- ❖ Serene camp setting (scenic lake, canoes, gazebo, walking trails).
- ❖ Facilities reserved and **limited to maximum of 60 people**. **To ensure space, please register early!**
- ❖ Pillows, blankets, towels, and linens are provided.
- ❖ 4 to 6 people per room; each room has a private bath.
- ❖ Camp-style hot meals provided: 3 meals on Saturday and 2 meals on Sunday.
- ❖ NOTE: Ample camp food. However, any Special Dietary Needs will be the individual's responsibility. Refrigerated storage will be available in the camp's kitchen for your use.

**Registration and Cost:**

**Early Registration at “Discounted Price”** (All Payments by Check Only)

- **\$140 MUST BE RECEIVED BY February 27, 2011.** Additional donations will be used for Scholarships, please specify amount of donation on check.
- **A \$50 non-refundable deposit** will reserve a spot if **received by February 27, 2011** with the **\$90** balance due at the Retreat. **Early registration also gets you 1 free raffle ticket.**

**All Other Payments received after February 27, 2011: \$150** (Payments By Check Only)

*An information packet will be mailed or emailed to you after receipt of payment in full or deposit.*

**For Additional information contact:**

Kathi E. 817 999-7039 [keslp@att.net](mailto:keslp@att.net)

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**Make Check Payable To: “CoDA Texas”** (Include this Registration Form) (Please Print)

**Mail To: CoDA Spring Retreat P. O. Box 300511 Austin, TX 78703-0009**

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CITY** \_\_\_\_\_ **ST** \_\_\_\_\_ **ZIP** \_\_\_\_\_

**PHONE (H)** \_\_\_\_\_ **Other Phone #** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-MAIL** \_\_\_\_\_