

# The Lone Star



## CoDA Courier



August 2007 Volume 3 Issue 2

**CoDA Texas Officers:** Chair-Cindi S., Vice Chair-Karen G., Treasurer-Sharon M., Secretary-Janice S.

Experience Our Website: [www.texasco da.org](http://www.texasco da.org)

**Wanted:** Expressions of Experience, Strength and Hope in prose or poetry. The Lone Star Courier will publish selections authored by CoDA members. Maximum 20 lines as space may be short. Send to [kkg1456@yahoo.com](mailto:kkg1456@yahoo.com).

**Se Busca:** Expresiones de Experiencia, Fuerza y Esperanza en poesia. El Lone Star Courier publicará selecciones escritos por miembros de CoDA. Limite a 20 lineas-tenemos poco espacio. Envie a la editora [kkg1456@yahoo.com](mailto:kkg1456@yahoo.com).



## *Texas Voting Entity Issues and CoDA Service Conference (CSC)*

The Texas officers and delegates met at the Waco library in April to discuss the issues Texas would submit to the 2007 CoDA Service Conference (CSC). Anyone is welcome to attend the Spring Board meeting to participate in this process. Voting Entity issues are routed to the appropriate CSC committee or the CoDA Board for review, discussion, and response. Texas sends two delegates to CSC to participate in CoDA World business, which is how new literature, projects (e.g., Hospitals and Institutions book program), and budgets are started and approved. The CoDA World website change last year happened because volunteers formed a committee several years ago and brought ideas and a budget to CSC for approval. It was expensive to hire a web developer to change the site, but the CSC Delegates thought this was an important service to the Fellowship. Texas 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition donations fund Texas delegate travel costs, the CoDA Texas Web site, and seed money for the Texas Retreat and State Assembly. The Texas issues for 2007 are:

1. CoDA Texas requests that CoDA Texas 2006 Issue Number Four, which was tabled, be brought back to the floor for resolution.

2006 CoDA TEXAS ISSUE NUMBER FOUR (Restated below for informational purposes):

*"If a state submits a state issue to the Service Conference, and that issue is assigned to a committee, and the state disagrees with that committee's response, the state may submit the issue to the floor of that or subsequent service conference for a group conscience vote of all the delegates."*

**Intent for 2007 issue:** To insure that issues can be submitted to the group conscience of the entire Conference, allowing everyone's voice to be heard and thereby eliminating the possibility of a committee having too much power or control.

2. Coda Texas requests that the reports of committees be divided into three parts for approval:
  1. Report of activities and goals
  2. Budget
  3. Committee's response to any VE issues assigned to it to be voted on separately

**Intent:** Item numbers one and two could be voted on together or separately; but by voting on number three separately the financial concerns are separated from the spiritual and all voting delegates have a chance to participate in the group conscience of the submitted Voting Entity issues

3. CoDA Texas requests the Welcome be reviewed and streamlined to create an optional shortened version to read at meetings (i.e., the longer version would still be available). The Preamble was last revised in 1994, and while it is an excellent document, it may also benefit from the same process to increase sharing time at meetings.

**Intent:** Streamlining the language so there is more time for sharing.

**What is a voting entity?** Each State and Territory of the United States of America and each Country is a voting entity and is automatically entitled to send two Delegates to CSC. David Mc.(Ft. Worth) is completing his second year of a two-year term and Judi C. (Houston) is attending her first Conference as the Junior Delegate. **Thanks for your service!**

A new Junior delegate will be selected at State Assembly in November. If you're looking to grow in recovery, being a delegate provides many opportunities.

### **Delegate Function (from the Fellowship Service Manual)**

The primary function of the Voting Entity Delegate is to facilitate communication between the Voting Entity and CoDA, Inc. This includes attending CoDA's Service Conference to vote, on behalf of the Voting Entity, on Conference motions affecting CoDA as a whole. Ideally, a Voting Entity Delegate has worked the Twelve Steps with a CoDA sponsor or "Step study" group and has a practical and spiritual knowledge of the Twelve Traditions. The job is rewarding, gratifying, and spiritually uplifting, providing exposure to the enormous experience of the group conscience at the CoDA, Inc. level.

### **Delegate Characteristics (from the Fellowship Service Manual)**

While many characteristics define a Delegate, familiarity and practice of CoDA's Twelve Steps and Traditions are the most important part of acting on behalf of the Voting Entity Fellowship. These spiritual principles lay the foundation of the CoDA service role. In addition, an effective Delegate is able to build personal relationships and communicate effectively, understands organizational structure, and is familiar with service functions and the activities of CoDA. To learn more about Delegate service, participate as either an alternate Delegate or Observer at the CoDA Service Conference or speak with former Delegates.

A Delegate is not, politically speaking, a "senator" of a Voting Entity, but is a servant of CoDA as a whole. The Delegate's responsibility is to follow our Steps and Traditions and use these principles to carry our spiritual message to those who still suffer, in and out of CoDA.

For more information, see the Fellowship Service Manual at <http://www.coda.org/serviceman.php>.

## **May Camp Out**

East Texas held the first annual gathering for CODA Camp 2007. Several campers came from the Dallas area and two came from the Houston area. We had a marvelous time. Our camp site was at Hawkins, Texas RV park just north of Tyler. The white sandy beach was spectacular and refreshing. The water was clear and clean, and the camp site was spacious, under lots of pine trees overlooking the lake, and had a nice breeze. Several tents, Tiki lights, a huge bonfire, and lots of good eating made for a nice evening. Thanks to Bob M. for providing a delicious brisket. Thanks to everyone who helped make the weekend memorable. Between naps, fishing, and kids swimming throughout the day, Saturday was very relaxing. We hope to schedule another camp out later in the year. If interested in attending, contact Cole at [cole652002@yahoo.com](mailto:cole652002@yahoo.com).

Attendee feedback: "It was fun and relaxing to be at the camp site right by the lake." "Yara took Alexa and we watched her have a blast in the water." "I met some really nice people. The company was great." "The food was great. It was a really nice time."

If anyone else would like to share their experiences from the retreat, camp out, or other CoDA activity, send an article to Karen at [kkg1456@yahoo.com](mailto:kkg1456@yahoo.com).

## Texas Business

CoDA Texas officers filed for a DBA (doing business as) last year to facilitate banking changes. The bank account was moved to Compass a few months ago to save the Fellowship money on bank fees and to acquire a Visa debit card to reserve/pay the hotel bills for State Assembly each year.

Thanks to Diane for her service as our editor, but the *Lone Star Courier* needs a new editor. If you are willing to volunteer, contact Karen G. ([kkg1456@yahoo.com](mailto:kkg1456@yahoo.com)) or call 979-823-2482.

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

**THANK YOU** to all CoDA Meetings and Individuals for your 2007 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition contributions to CoDA Texas From the CoDA Texas Treasurer, Sharon M.

**Gracias** a todos las reuniones CoDA y los individuos por sus contribuciones de la 7<sup>a</sup> tradición del 2007. De la Tesorera CoDA, Sharon M.

TX009 – Houston \$10  
TX087 – Irving \$20  
TX089 – Richardson \$20  
TX149 – Dallas \$100  
TX150 – Dallas \$20  
TX207 – Richardson \$50

TX341, TX436, TX443 – Ft. Worth \$100  
TX367 – Katy \$10.29  
TX419 – Bryan \$24  
Spring Board Meeting (4-28-07) \$25  
Individual donations: Amy W, Judy C., & Jackie A.  
\$35 total

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**Total Contributions July 31                      \$414.29**

According to the 12 Traditions, CoDA is self supporting through our own contributions. Suggested donations above prudent reserves are 60% to the city community, 30% to CoDA Texas, and 10% to CoDA World. Send state donations to: **CoDA Texas, P.O. Box 300511, Austin, TX 78703-0009**

### SCHEDULED UPCOMING EVENTS, WORKSHOPS AND GATHERINGS. CALENDARIO DE EVENTOS, CURSOS Y CONGREGACIONES

<b>Month</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Where</b>	<b>Contact</b>
<b>Mes</b>	<b>Evento</b>	<b>Cuando</b>	<b>Donde</b>	<b>Contacto</b>
<b><u>September</u></b>	CoDA Service Conference	9/25/07 Tues-Sat 9:00 a.m.	Florida	TX Officers (see TX website)
<b><u>November</u></b>	State Assembly (see flyer)	11/2/07 Fri-Sun 6:00 p.m.	Austin Judith C., judiann104@yahoo.com, 713-854-2710	Della B. 512-243-0884
<b><u>December</u></b>	Community Service Group Holiday Party (potluck)	12/1/07 Sat. 6:30 p.m.	Dallas	Nate F. 972-623-7423
<b><u>March 2008</u></b>	Retreat	3/14/08 Fri-Sun 6:00 p.m.	LaGrange	Della B. 512-243-0884

(Submit your event to the editor in the same format as you see above and like magic you will see it listed)

## *Fear and Service Work* by Karen G.

Have you ever been asked to do service work and had this fear in the pit of your stomach? Afraid you might not do it "right?" I remember the first time I chaired a meeting, I was terrified I wouldn't do it "right." I had the directions, but was afraid I would make a mistake. I did it anyway. Each time I chaired, the fear subsided, the desire for perfection subsided, and change within me slowly occurred.

The first CoDA convention I went to was in Estes Park, Colorado. I had moved from Louisiana to Texas seven months before the Convention, and there was no meeting in my new city. I felt isolated and alone but excited about the possibility of seeing someone I knew. When I got to the convention, I saw all of these people excited to

see each other and hugging and laughing and talking. I didn't know anyone. There was no other person from Louisiana. No one was hugging me and happy to see me. Did that bring up some childhood issues? You bet. I experienced some great sharing and attended some wonderful workshops. I also experienced some very painful emotions for some of that weekend--especially during the sharing at the end. I felt so "outside." Did I share this with anyone there--no. I was too afraid to show my hurt and be vulnerable. Out of that pain came growth. I had joined a CoDA e-mail sharing group before the Convention and I got to meet people from the group. Back home and in a calmer place emotionally, I was able to share about my pain and acknowledge it. I grew. I made connections with some Texas members and learned about the Texas State Assembly. I met people I still am in contact with today.

The first time I went to the Texas State Assembly in Houston, I was very nervous. I didn't know what to expect. I didn't know if I would have a good time or not. I could have stayed home and stayed the same. Instead, I decided to stretch a bit and go outside of my comfort zone. I'm really glad I did as it has led to many wonderful experiences and friendships. Each new experience brings some fear to me--fear of change and fear of failure. The fear is about me. Will I be able to adapt? To cope? To accept the change? Will I like the change? I have an expanded perception--opportunities come with change.

The first time I was asked to chair a "National" Committee (this terminology has been replaced with the World organization, but it is the terminology we used then), I felt some of the same fear I felt when I chaired a meeting for the first time. What if I did it "wrong?" What if I totally messed up and failed? For some reason that I still don't understand today, I agreed to do it. I hadn't been a part of the committee for very long. I didn't have the connections of the previous chair and didn't understand how things worked so there were parts that were pretty frustrating. When it came time to go to Conference, I didn't want to go. I was a "failure." I hadn't accomplished near what my predecessor had accomplished. They were going to be disappointed in me. Why go only to be rejected? I finally decided going was the right thing to do, and I didn't know what was going to happen. I felt fear, but I recognized I was projecting. To my amazement, people clapped when I finished my report! They were happy I was there. Not one person told me what a horrible job I did. My experience at Conference was nothing like I had expected. I had been seeing myself through my childhood filters, and I realized I had more expectations and negative feelings for myself than anyone else did.

My old coping mechanisms are to isolate and withdraw. I realized at the CoDA Texas retreat 4 years ago, I have a real fear of people getting to know me because then I feel vulnerable. The messages I got as a child were that vulnerability was dangerous. The danger was real in my family of origin as there was a good chance of being judged and shamed. I took all the emotions they dumped and absorbed them as truth. I feel sad at that thought today. I spent a lot of my life in fear of people getting to know me and hiding who I was. CoDA and therapy have helped me gain awareness over time. Service work has given me opportunities to practice new healthier behaviors in a safe environment that doesn't affect my livelihood or relationships.

Through service opportunities, I have grown tremendously. I haven't always done it perfectly or without feeling fear and anger, and I didn't need to do it perfectly. I just needed to do something different. Nothing changes if nothing changes. Getting out and interacting with people I didn't know very well stretched me and I had some great benefits. I had to heal and get some recovery before I was in a place to do service work and yet doing service work took me outside of myself, brought me in contact with healthier people, and gave me opportunities to learn and practice new behaviors. These include setting boundaries for myself, learning to speak with honesty and diplomacy, gaining greater understanding of the negative filters I saw myself and others through, and feeling a part of something bigger than myself. This awareness and lessons would have taken me much longer, if ever, to learn if I only attended meetings. I have gained so much more than I ever would have imagined. I use the skills I've gained from service work in my everyday life. I've made friends around the country and even in other countries. If I had let my fears keep me from accepting the opportunities Higher Power brought my way, life would not be as full as it is today.

Service work is the life blood of a Twelve Step Program. It is also, in my opinion, the life blood of personal recovery. If Higher Power draws you to do service work or Higher Power speaks through someone else and an opportunity to do service work (as small as chairing a meeting, attending the State Assembly as your group representative, or as big as being a delegate at the World Service Conference) is brought to you, please remember, growth is in steps. Some codependents come to this program not able to say "no." Learning to say no, there is a tendency to say no to everything early on. The ability to evaluate available time, set boundaries, make and keep a commitment in a healthy way, ask for help if it's needed are good recovery skills as well as valuable life lessons. Asked to do service work? Feel some fear? Take baby steps, feel the fear, muddle through, and grow. Higher Power is with you all the way.