

Dude Ranch Group History

Group # 711,862

11/13/16

Dude Ranch started out as an idea between three AAs to start a men's meeting. Jonathan M., Riley K., and Forrest L. saw a need for one in Athens, as there wasn't one at the time. These dudes decided in fall of 2012 to look for a space and get started. They wanted to find a space that wasn't a church to hold the meeting and found that Nuçi's Space in Athens was an ideal place. One Day At A Time met there at that time as well. Nuçi's Space is also dedicated to helping musicians and others in the community with mental illness, addiction, and suicide. The founding dudes were all musicians and felt comfortable there.

On November 2nd 2012 Jonathan M. and Forrest L. submitted a request to Jim T. to be listed on the AA District 16-B as "The Good Gentleman Meeting." They were to meet every Tuesday and Saturday at 12:10 pm. This name didn't fly so on November 13th 2012 the name was changed to "The Athens Men's Meeting." The Dude Ranch was a contender but was decided against.

The first year was an experiment to see if the community would show up, so this meeting was not an official group yet. There were a lot of meetings where only one person showed up but every meeting was very important to the initial Dudes' sobriety (one founding dude was only 9 months sober when it started). There were several old timers that began to come around who really helped a lot. During that first year, the dudes had to contend with closings at Nuçi's Space on football game days. Meetings had to be canceled during each Saturday home game as the venue opened its parking lot to tailgaters. Not good for a newcomer to show up to! So the Saturday meetings became difficult to maintain in the fall.

The meeting finally decided to change its status and become an official group of Alcoholics Anonymous in December of 2013. At this Group Conscience, the name was officially changed to the Dude Ranch. Forrest L. became the first GSR, Jonathan M. became the first Treasurer, George M. became the first Grapevine rep, Jon C. became the first Archives rep, and David H. became the first PI/CPC rep. The group was still pretty small so there was no Secretary yet. The group continued to grow very slowly. Saturdays were inconsistent still and game days were a problem.

In summer of 2014, Nuçi's Space was holding a summer camp that forced the Dudes to find an alternate location for 6 meetings in June and July. Starting Tuesday, June 10th 2014, Dude Ranch held meetings at the Parsonage House at the Oconee Street Methodist Church. Dude Ranch member George M. lined this up with the church. By the end of June, the group fell in love with the space and voted to permanently move to the parsonage of the Oconee Street Methodist Church at 717 Oconee St. Athens, GA 30601 (current location). The impending UGA football schedule made the group question holding the meeting at Nuçi's Space going forward. The group had difficulty deciding to leave Nuçi's Space. Several members did not like the idea of moving to a church facility and felt loyal to the location. Several Dudes came in to the group as newcomers because of Nuçi's Space role as a space that helped musicians with mental health treatment.

June 30th 2014, George M. sent a proposal to the church for the Dude Ranch group to permanently move to the 717 Oconee St. location. On July 15th 2014, Dude Ranch voted to change the Saturday meeting to be held on Thursdays once it moved to the new location. The church, as it turned out, also gave their parking lot to tailgaters on football Saturdays. Tuesday, August 5th 2014, the Dude Ranch permanently moved to its current location at 717 Oconee St.

Charlie D. became the Dude Ranch's first Secretary and George M. became the Dude Ranch's second Treasurer in January of 2015.

Ever since moving, the group has grown from 4-6 dudes to roughly 20 meeting attendees each week and 6 regular home group dudes. There are always pots of hot coffee and pastries to keep the hunger at bay for lunchtime noon meetings. All birthday meetings are open to all dudes and dudettes with delicious cake provided. The chip system is very colorful with one chip for each month of the first year. They also got you 18 month crybabies a chip too ;). Collect them all! Dudes seeking recovery from alcohol addiction are most welcome and heartily encouraged to **keep coming back, ya'll!!**

DUDE RANCH GROUP
The Parsonage (opposite Oconee Methodist)
717 Oconee St.
Athens 30605

