



# Sara-Mana Intergroup

P.O. BOX 3075

1748 Independence Blvd., #B2, Sarasota, FL 34234



**JUNE 2012**

**Central Office (941)351-4818**

**SARA-MANA DISTRICT 4, AREA 15**

## One Man Sums it Up *It Works if you Work It*

By Richard B

This past month has been very bittersweet in the 27 years that I've been blessed with the gift of sobriety. Two friends from the Fellowship made the final decision to take their own lives: a permanent solution to what appeared to be a temporary problem. No one will ever be certain, but I have always maintained that no matter what comes down the pike, solutions are available.

I believe that the most important line in The Big Book is the first sentence in Chapter Five, 'Rarely have we seen a person fail that has thoroughly followed our path'. What I observed, is some people follow the path, or on occasion follow the path or follow the path only when it's convenient. This doesn't work. I must follow the path at all times to the best of my ability or trouble will soon follow.

I've only taken one white chip since my first meeting in July 1985; this certainly does not make me better or smarter than others. It simply makes me more fortunate than some. I reached a thresh-hold of misery that was no longer acceptable to me and for some reason, God as I understand him, reached out and rescued me.

*Continued pg. 2*



*"Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities."*

### Tradition Twelve

## Tell Your Story in The Newsletter

### You Don't Have to Be a Writer to Tell Your Story

Everyone who walks through the doors of AA has a story to tell. It is hard to get here without one. Very few of us set out to become alcoholics.

We have all heard the blood and guts stories of jails, hospitals and other institutions that have motivated many of us to seek help. Others of us have received a "Nudge from the Judge." We know that lost jobs, broken families, and self-destruction and the total loss of self-respect are the back drop for most of us who enter our halls with lives filled with shattered dreams.

You do not have to be a writer to tell your story. If you can write 150 to 200 words about "what it was like, what happened, and what it is like today" then you could be in one of the coming issues of the **Sara-Mana Intergroup Newsletter**.

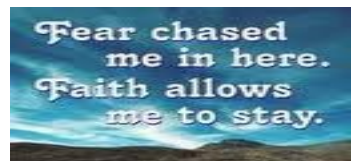
Don't worry. We will work with you to "polish up your story."

**E-Mail your story to [Newsletter@aastrq.org](mailto:Newsletter@aastrq.org)**

## The Benefits of AA

By Doug R.

Besides ending my "death by alcohol" life style, there are many improvements that have occurred in my life as I have started to live by the Steps. One that I have been noticing lately is how fewer "emergencies" seem to come my way. Prior to coming into the program, I was often "very concerned" about many "very important issues" and now? Well, there just doesn't seem to be that much to get worked up over. I think another way of saying that is that I no longer consider myself so special that I need to have an "important" opinion about so many things. Just the other day something was going on at work that I is exactly the type of thing that I used to get me excited and this time I just observed it and went quietly on my way. I feel grateful for the significant decrease in my importance and the parallel increase in my peace of mind.



*Continued from page*

*It works if you work it*

Although I didn't think the older members treated me very nicely early on, but they are the reason that I'm still in the fellowship today. They made me teachable, they gave me jobs to do, they encouraged me when I was down and above all, they loved me back to health and made me feel a part of the group.

I ask God to help me each day; I pray for others; attend meetings as often as I can; keep in touch with others in recovery, treat others as I want to be treated and above all, thank Him at night for another day of sobriety. This, my friends, is what works for me.

### **Why You Shouldn't Talk Too Much**

A friend of mine was recently released from Sarasota County Jail for a DUI.

The judge gave him 90 days in jail and asked him to explain why he was drunk.

After he explained to the judge that he was only out getting bread at 4 in the morning

The judge said, "If you were driving a bread truck I could understand. I think I will tack on another 30 days for a lousy excuse." Some things are often better left unsaid.

### **Heard in a Meeting**

The last time I got drunk it was purely by accident.

## **56<sup>th</sup> FLORIDA STATE CONVENTION**

### **"Always to Be There"**

**August 1-5, 2012**

**Innisbrook Golf & Spa Resort**

**(15 miles north of Tampa)**

**For Details Go To**

**[www.56.flstateconvention.com](http://www.56.flstateconvention.com)**

### **Oldest Woman in AA Passes**

Ruth O'Neil of Toms River NJ passed away on Sunday April 22, 2012. She was 97 years old & had just celebrated 68 years of sobriety on April 14. Sober since 1944, It is possible Ruth had the longest living sobriety of any woman or man at the time of her death. She also knew and helped Dr. William D. Silkworth, who wrote most of "The Doctor's Opinion" in the Big Book.

Ruth was a wonderful power of example in all that she did. She loved to laugh, to eat, to sing & dance, to speak at meetings & she loved her chocolate! She was a wonderful friend & a great sponsor. We will surely miss you, Ruthie ! In 1995 at the International in San Diego at the long-timers meeting, the crowds went wild begging for additional time allowance after she was "gonged" for her time being up. Her talks were a great wealth of history

Within a few months after she got sober, at a meeting in Brooklyn NY, she was given a business card by another AA member. On one side of the card was the Four Absolutes of the Oxford Group (Absolute Honesty, Absolute Unselfishness, Absolute Love, and Absolute Purity) and on the other side of the card was the following prayer. She recited it daily and shared it when she spoke. It has come to be known as "Ruth's Prayer":

*Thank You, dear God, for another day,  
The chance to live in a decent way,  
To feel again the joy of living  
and happiness that comes from giving.  
Thank You for friends who can understand  
and the peace that flows from Your loving hand.  
Help me to wake with the morning sun,  
With the prayer today, Thy will be done."  
For with Your help I will find the way.  
Thank You again, dear God, for AA.*

**Contributed by Leslie O, Eden Prairie, MN**

### **MEETING CHANGE**

**The Early Bird Group**  
at The Gratitude Club now  
meets 7 days a week.  
**Sat. & Sun. 7:45 am.**  
**Mon. thru Fri. 7am**

530 Payne Pkwy, Sarasota,  
I blk E. of 301, off Oak St.

**The Helpline Needs You**  
Current shifts available

**Sunday 9am-Noon**

**Sunday Noon-3pm**

Robert Q.  
[saramanhelpline@gmail.com](mailto:saramanhelpline@gmail.com)  
**(941) 351-4818**

### **HELP WANTED**

The Helpline is currently looking for those willing to be on our 12 step call list. The most basic and fundamental service we can offer an alcoholic in need. One alcoholic talking to another alcoholic sharing their experience, strength and hope. The requirement is one year's continuous sobriety. Please contact me through the website or Central Office. We don't ever have to be or feel alone again. Your Helpline Chairperson; Robert Q.

[saramanhelpline@gmail.com](mailto:saramanhelpline@gmail.com)  
**(941) 351-4818**

### ***Calls to the Helpline***

**May 2012**

<b>Total Calls</b>	<b>148</b>
Meeting/Time/Location	112
In Lieu of 12th Step Call	6
Actual 12 Step Call	4
Al-Anon Call	3
Special Needs	0
Miscellaneous	23
Spanish Line	0

## Opening a Time Capsule

By Sandy A

I came into the rooms on AA Labor Day weekend of 1997 but, I did some marijuana maintenance for a while. On Oct. 7, 1997, I realized that if I wanted what this program had to offer, I had to stop everything.

I went through my entire house and cleaned out all of my paraphernalia, favorite shot glasses, stashes, etc. and put them in a beer case and gave it to a friend to store in her garage just in case I might need them later...lol.

By the grace of my Higher Power, I have not needed that box's contents since. On my third AA birthday my sponsor and I opened the box. It was like a time capsule. My old life was in that box. I am so blessed that the program of AA and my Higher Power have released the woman who lived in that box.

Today I know I do not need to drink, no matter what! I know that as long as I do not use or drink I am a success, no matter what else I do or don't do, I go to meetings, stay in acceptance and gratitude, as much as possible, and I am of service both in and out of the rooms.

## Heard in a Meeting

"I brought a six pack to my first meeting to learn how to drink respectably. I learned at the meetings there is no such thing for an alcoholic of my type."

By Serenity Pat



## Thinking of Drinking?

"The unhappiest person in the world is the chronic Alcoholic who has an insistent yearning to enjoy life as he once knew it, but cannot picture life without alcohol. He has the Heart-Breaking Obsession that by some miracle of control he will be able to do so." *15 Points for an Alcoholic to Consider when Confronted with the Urge to Take a Drink*, available at Central Office.

## 3 for JUNE

### STEP 6

Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

### TRADITION 6

An A.A. group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.

### CONCEPT 6

The Conference recognizes that the chief initiative and active responsibility in most world service matters should be exercised by the trustee members of the Conference acting as the General Service Board.



## Dear Alkie

"Alkie" is one of our long time members who believes as the Big Book says, that we are not a glum lot. Email your questions regarding our fellowship and/or recover to [Newsletter@aaqrq.org](mailto:Newsletter@aaqrq.org)

**Dear Alkie:** I've been going to meetings for a few months and keep hearing about "spirituality." How much of this program is "spiritual?"

Alkie: How much of the ocean is wet?

**Dear Alkie:** You have been through the steps. What changes have you seen in your life.

Alkie: Everything

**Dear Alkie:** Give me one good reason why I should do the steps.

Alkie" So you can learn to love yourself and then love others.

**Dear Alkie:** You seem so happy. Have you always been happy?

Alkie: If I were happy before I came to AA I would still be drinking.

## Our Newsletter Depends Upon You!

Share your experience, strength, and hope with the Fellowship.

E-mail your article to:  
[Newsletter@aaqrq.org](mailto:Newsletter@aaqrq.org)

# ANNIVERSARIES

(Groups: Email your birthdays to [Newsletter@aaqrq.org](mailto:Newsletter@aaqrq.org) and put **ANNIVERSARIES** in the subject line. The cutoff for the Newsletter is the end of the month. Do not send announcements for future months. i.e. May birthdays appear in June.)

## Bee Ridge East Group

**May**  
Maureen S 10 years  
Bill M 50 years

## Early Bird Group

**May**  
Gaston S 36 years  
Mike H 14 years

## Friends of the Pelican

**May**  
Jeremiah V. 21 years  
Suzette S. 15 years  
Barbara S. 2 years

## Gulf Gate Noon

**May**  
Judy J. 8 years  
Susan M. 3 years  
Tove S. 3 years  
Marylou T. 10 years

## Happy Cookie Hour

**May**  
Chuck 4 years  
Mary McB 6 years  
Rene Q. 7 years  
Steve M. 11 years  
Nyla 20 years  
Mike McB 32 years

## Keep It Simple (Mens)

Hank R 1 year  
Kenny B. 2 years  
Larry B 3 years  
Mike B. 18 years

## Lunch Bunch

Raymond B. 26 years  
Rick R. 1 year

## North River Monday Nite

Gail T 28 years  
Lisa R 6 years

## Serenity Group.

Mel W. 33 years  
Charlotte H. 30 years  
Martha J. 9 years  
Sara B. 8 years  
Bill R. 1 year

## Singleness of Purpose

Gail T 28 years  
Bob W 21 years  
John B 9 years  
Sara K. 7 years  
David P 1 years

## Sober Living

Jane S. 23 years  
Fred N. 2 years  
Lew B. 6 years

## Sunrise Group.

**April**  
Brook J 10 years

## Sunrise Group.

**May**  
Christopher B 29 years  
Gaston S 36 years  
John E- 15 years  
Keith C. 31 years  
Rusty J. 29 years  
Shirley O. 16 years  
Vicki B. 2 years

## Under the Rainbow

**April**  
Jaynee H. 2 years  
Susie M 22 years

## May

Kym K 7 years  
Mel W 33 years

## 63rd Ave. Group

**May**  
Louis 18 years

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### Updating the Where and When

New groups come and some groups go away. Some change days and/or times. The **Where and When** is published approximately every 3- 4 months depending up the depletion of supply. All meeting changes should be coordinated through Central Office. The **Sara-Mana Intergroup Newsletter** is the perfect place to announce meeting changes. If you have a meeting change it is also helpful to prepare a flyer announcing your changes. Contact Tony at Central Office regarding all changes. Upon approval, drop off a couple of dozen announcements of your meeting information at Central Office. It is also a good time to visit other meetings to announce your meeting changes.

*"By local group conscience, all meetings/groups must be regular meetings of AA as defined by our 12 Traditions and the Preamble in order to be listed in the Where and When. Groups must have an official Registration Number from GSO in New York (or have applied for one), and have a designated Contact Person for administrative purposes. (See pg 15, The AA group, P#16 rev. 10/5)*

**HOW TO SUBMIT ITEMS TO THE NEWSLETTER:** Anniversaries, articles, and meeting notices may be sent to [newsletter@aaqrq.org](mailto:newsletter@aaqrq.org). Submit material as attachments or placed directly into an email. Include your first name, group, and type of item being sent. **Deadlines: The last day of the month is the absolute deadline for all materials submitted for consideration.** Submissions may be edited for length or content. The opinions expressed herein are those of the writers and not necessarily those of AA, Sara-Mana Intergroup, or the Central Office, which is located at 1748 Independence Blvd., #B2, Sarasota, FL 34234 Phone 941-351-4818.