



# SARA-MANA INTERGROUP NEWSLETTER

July 2018

Central Office 941.351.4818

AA HELPLINE 941.951.6810

aasrq.org

## Preparation Underway for Gratitude Dinner

### Volunteers Welcomed!

Last month's Intergroup meeting (Tuesday, June 19) marked a kick-off of sorts for planning this year's Gratitude Dinner, and no doubt by the time you read this newsletter, your Intergroup rep will have additional details to share from July's meeting like cost, menu, and the agenda.

Although November feels like a long way away, hosting the dinner is one of the primary responsibilities of the Intergroup, and it takes a lot of work on the part of a lot of members of our fellowship to make it a success. "Sarasota Jim" C. will serve as the event's chairman, and he was able to introduce a number of folks last month who have volunteered to take on some of the heavy lifting this year.

Ron K. has stepped forward to oversee ticket sales. Tickets will again be available for purchase from Central Office in the coming months. But in an effort to streamline ticket sales and record-keeping while making it easier this year for everyone to purchase a ticket, Ron has volunteered to attend a meeting of any group in the area that asks him to deliver tickets for purchase by group members. More details will follow, but we can certainly thank Ron for the offer. At this year's event, there will also be an opportunity to reserve a table for groups wishing to do so. Tables seat 9 attendees.

Other volunteers include Suzi L. who will chair the greeters, ticket takers and book signers committee; John B. who will ensure that all 10,000 gallons of coffee are ready on the night of the dinner; Kathy W. who will ensure the 7th Tradition basket successfully makes its way around the room; and Cynthia T. who will once again work her centerpiece-making magic as she heads the decorating committee. Thanks to all for their service!

Still needed are many more volunteers. If you would like to help out and be a part of this amazing event we would love to have you join us. If you'd like to get involved, please contact Jim K. (our Volunteer Coordinator) at (941) 539-8425.

## *From My Journal*

by Nancy B.



Before sobriety and AA, I had never experienced a full and thankful heart. And even in the program, as I tried to live the 12 Steps, the layers of self-centered thoughts and actions only gradually peeled away to reveal a such a heart.

When I first came into AA and heard others introduce themselves as grateful alcoholics, my reaction was very negative. I didn't get it, and I thought they were just show offs.

Then I began to feel grateful for the changes I was making that made life easier. I began to realize that *fully* living the Steps of AA, both inside and outside of the rooms, gave me great peace and contentment.

It dawned on me that if I had not been a drunk and hit my bottom I never would have come into AA and most likely would have lived my life as the self-centered angry person I was. I think that is when I really experienced gratitude and understood the phrase "grateful alcoholic."

In the beginning I had to consciously shift a thought to gratitude from one of resentment or entitlement. The jump to gratitude is more automatic now and a deeper experience as it forms the foundation of my living the happiest life ever.

### Sara-Mana Intergroup ANNUAL GRATITUDE DINNER

Save the Date!  
Saturday November 10, 2018

Sarasota Community Church

Questions or to volunteer  
Contact Sarasota Jim  
sarasotajim.flg@gmail.com

# Service to Others

-- Ross J.

Recently, I wrote a piece focused on the decision to sponsor others. In that piece, I referred to the statement that opens Chapter 7 of the Big Book, "Working with Others." On page 89, it states, "Practical experience shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics. It works when other activities fail. This is our *twelfth suggestion*: Carry this message to other alcoholics!"

This is great if you have decided that you are ready to sponsor someone, but what if you have decided that you are not ready to be a sponsor? Does that mean that you don't get to benefit from carrying the message to others? Not at all!

If you arrive a little early and help to set up the room for the meeting, you are providing service. But, to get the full benefit of service to others, you can do still more. If you stand at the door and warmly greet each new arrival, you are helping to set the tone for the meeting as a safe place to come and deal with life's problems. If you introduce yourself to a new person and then introduce them to others in the group, you are doing even more to establish our safe place.

Calling other alcoholics between the meetings and making yourself available to be called is also a service – and our safety net. It helps to make our individual alcoholism a shared problem, and a problem shared is a problem halved.

I can become overly fixated on my own issues and problems. Sometimes those issues and problems can seem overwhelming, and my focus desperately spirals inward, which seldom solves anything. I become more *unfocused* as I increase the focus on my issues.

What helps me to break out of that spiral is to focus on *someone else*. How and why does this work? For me, the answer is threefold. First, if I am focused on someone else, I get out of my own head and have less time to worry about my problems. My difficulties tend to fall away as I share my experience in the hope of helping another alcoholic conquer his challenge.

Second, as I focus my attention on a challenge faced by another, I find that my problems get smaller and smaller in comparison. And if I also share *my* problem with another, I often find that my problems aren't as big as I thought they were as I spun my wheels by keeping them to myself.

Finally, I become happier when I am able to help someone else. That gives me a much better perspective. As I become happier and healthier, I am able to be of greater service to others, which makes me feel even better about myself, and that brings us full circle to the beginning of the concept of service to others. Helping others feels good and helps us to feel better about ourselves. Everyone wins!

## Heard Around the Rooms

The three most dangerous words for an alcoholic?  
"I've been thinking"

## Best of

### *Dear Alkie,*

*"Alkie" is a long-time member of A.A. His comments are based on his own strength, hope, and experience and are not reflections of any official A.A. position or practice.*

**Q.** Dear Alkie: I've heard you talk about the "grace of God." What do you mean?

**Alkie:** The grace of God is showered on everyone. Those of us who choose to accept it have stopped hiding under our umbrellas!

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**Q.** Dear Alkie: When I drink, I've been told that I act insane. Can you help me with my insanity?

**Alkie:** My insanity and ego were curiously linked. To give up the former, I had to give up the latter.

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**Q.** Dear Alkie: I can't stop drinking! Why do I have to ask for help? Why doesn't God just stop me?

**Alkie:** God is a gentleman who never goes where He's not invited!

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**Q.** Dear Alkie: How do you tell when you're really working a solid program?

**Alkie:** On good days, things go my way and I stay sober; on great days, things don't go my way and I stay sober.

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**Q.** Dear Alkie: I only seek God's help when I'm in trouble. I get in a lot of trouble.

**Alkie:** It's better to use God as your steering wheel rather than your spare tire.

## Heard Around the Rooms

Before you open your mouth to speak, make sure it is an improvement on the silence.

## July AA Milestones

**Traditionally, July is the month in which the AA International Convention is held, so this month, we highlight some of milestones tied to these gatherings. Interested in attending the next convention? Book your tickets for Detroit in 2020.**

### 1950

The first International Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous is held in Cleveland to mark the 15th anniversary of the fellowship. At the convention, the **Twelve Traditions** are formally adopted.

### 1955

At the second International Convention (St. Louis) celebrating AA's 20th Anniversary, Bill W., on behalf of the old-timers, turns the care and custody of the movement over to the General Service Conference and its trustees. It's said that, at this point in its history, "AA comes of age."

### 1960

Time magazine publishes an article, "Passionately Anonymous" on the occasion of AA's 25th Anniversary Convention in California.

### 1960

Father Ed Dowling passes away. Fr. Ed was Bill W.'s spiritual advisor and a friend of AA. He's quoted in "The Religious View on A.A." as found in the Appendix of the Big Book.

### 1970

Bill W. addresses his fellow AAs for the last time at the 35th Anniversary Convention in Miami. His last words to the fellowship: "God bless you and Alcoholics Anonymous forever."

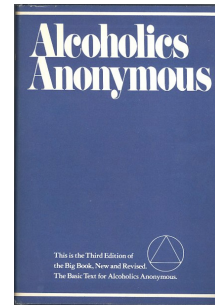
### 1985

During the eight International Convention in Montreal, the House of Seagram lowered the flags at its corporate headquarters to half mast for the duration of the three day event in tribute to AA.



### Convention Tip

**FREE WI-FI!** To get access to free Wi-Fi while you're at the Florida State Convention next month, go online and join the Marriott's Reward Program. Joining is easy and free! Those that are not members of the reward's program will incur a fee for Internet access.



## Back of the Book

## Do What You Can

--Edgar C.

Bill Wilson felt that the personal stories in the back of the book are vital to recovery. Following is a sample of what he meant, from "Acceptance was the Answer," page 420, fourth edition:

"Acceptance is the key to my relationship with God today. I never just sit and do nothing while waiting for Him to tell me what to do. Rather, I do whatever is in front of me to be done, and I leave the results up to Him; however it turns out, that's God's will for me."

**Tough Day?  
Get to a Meeting!**

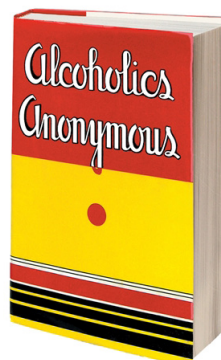


Online at [www.aasrq.org](http://www.aasrq.org)

## Central Office Book of the Month

**Alcoholics Anonymous, Facsimile First Edition \$9.99**

To commemorate the 75th anniversary of the historic publication of *Alcoholics Anonymous* in April 1939, the 2013 General Service Conference approved the creation of this facsimile edition of the first printing of the first edition. Like the original, this special edition features a red hardcover binding, the famous "circus cover" dust jacket and bulky paper (which was why it was initially called the Big Book).



## Central Office

### Summer Hours

<b>Sunday</b>	Closed
<b>Monday</b>	Closed
<b>Tuesday</b>	Closed
<i>Open for Intergroup Meeting (7pm-8pm)</i>	
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>9am-4pm</b>
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>9am-4pm</b>
<b>Friday</b>	<b>9am-4pm</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	Closed
<i>Open for General Service Meeting (9am-12pm)</i>	



# ANNIVERSARIES

Groups: Please email birthdays to [newsletter@AAsrq.org](mailto:newsletter@AAsrq.org) and put **ANNIVERSARIES** in the subject line. Anniversaries will appear in the month after they occur (ie., July anniversaries will appear in the August edition of the newsletter). Deadline for submission of anniversaries is the 7th of each month. So, please have July anniversaries for publication in the August edition submitted by August 7th. Please also submit anniversaries typed within the body of an email or a Word file. Unless otherwise noted, anniversaries listed below are for June.

## Bee Ridge East Group

Lou S. 20 years  
Roger G. 35 years  
Tom H. 46 years

## Donut Hour

Anne S. 4 years  
Elizabeth J. 12 years  
Patrick M. 29 years  
Tom B. 4 years

## Friends of the Pelican

Amy B. 3 years  
Dolly K. 4 years  
Terry K. 27 years

## Happy Cookie Hour

JD V. 28 years  
Jennifer M. 6 years  
Stephanie A. 2 years  
Tom M. 10 years

## Monday Night Men's Group

Bill L. 47 years  
Hal S. 32 years  
(cont.)

Lou S. 23 years  
Lee N. 25 years  
Nick M. 3 years

## North River Mon. Night

Dave H. 27 years  
Kathy G. 8 years

## The Palmetto Group of AA

*May*  
Daniel K. 1 year  
Jay V. 2 years  
Jim S. 16 years  
Lance W. 1 year  
Patrick M. 2 years  
Phil M. 1 year  
Robert W. 27 years  
Sara P. 13 years  
*June*  
Brian S. 2 years  
Chris P. 2 years  
Guy F. 7 years  
Kevin K. 13 years  
Roxie P. 2 years  
Tim F. 9 years

## ROSE Group

*May*  
Eileen M. 29 years  
Maureen S. 16 years

## *June*

Alex M. 19 years  
Amy D. 5 years  
Donna D. 42 years  
Edna R. 38 years  
Heather L. 2 years  
Sue V. 4 years

## Serenity Room

Bobby K. 28 years  
Bonnie A. 4 years  
Don H. 33 years  
John V. 2 years

## Sat Night Speakers Group

Beth P. 7 years

## Singleness of Purpose

Bruce K. 2 years  
Don P. 4 years  
Jim M. 11 years

## Sunrise Group

Angelo S. 1 year  
Chuck E. 7 years  
Elizabeth L. 6 years  
Ernie D. 30 years  
Jan S. 15 years  
Karl K. 2 years  
Melissa L. 1 year  
Robert M. 24 years  
Terry M. 24 years  
Tony N. 9 years

## The Helpline Needs Your Help!

Our **Sara-Mana AA Helpline** has been on autopilot for too long. And thanks to the efforts of some dedicated AAers that's about to change. But we need your help.

We're looking for members to volunteer an hour a week to extend the hand of AA and answer the call from those in need. We also need a number of stout volunteers willing to be on the 12th-Step call list.

Please contact the Helpline via our website or speak to your Intergroup rep about filling out one of those blue (phone volunteer) or yellow (12th-Step volunteer) cards.

**Carry the Message**

Saturday August 25th  
10:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church  
7461 Prospect Rd. Sarasota 34243

Literature H&I General Service  
P/C/Ps Archives

Service Oriented - Guest Speaker

Volunteers needed. To join in on the fun contact Mick G. (941) 587-0881 paisley06@gmail.com

**TO SUBMIT ITEMS TO THE NEWSLETTER:** Anniversaries, articles and meeting notices should be sent to [newsletter@AAsrq.org](mailto:newsletter@AAsrq.org). Submit material as attachments or placed directly into an email. Include your first name, group and type of item being sent. Deadline is the 7th day of the month. Submissions may be edited for length or content. The opinions expressed herein are those of the writers and not necessarily those of A.A., Sara-Mana Intergroup or the Central Office.