



SARA-MANA INTERGROUP NEWSLETTER

March 2020

Central Office 941.351.4818

AA HELPLINE 941.951.6810

aasrq.org



The Roller Rink & Recovery



I recently attended a children’s skating party, and I made a startling discovery. Kids can't skate anymore!

Clearly, gross motor skills have fallen victim to neglect and indifference. Perhaps our youth spend way too much time bent over their phones strengthening their thumbs while their quadriceps lie prone on the sofa. It seems that most of the gliding, leaping, and twirling now take place on video screens.

As I reflect upon the scene described above, I can't help but draw a parallel to recovery. As active alcoholics, we relied upon an altered version of reality. We weren't really skating at the rink.

We were playing the video-game version in our heads while our normal friends were learning to balance and glide, taking their knocks. As they learned, we stayed on the sidelines, often allowing others to support us.

We were like those kids who had never learned to skate.

No wonder it's so hard when we first get out there!

Sometimes we need a sponsor to make sure we strap on those skates, someone to hold our hand when we take those tentative first steps.

Sometimes we fall—a lot.

At times, our skates are knocked out beneath us. Like an out of control skater colliding recklessly with others, our life circumstances challenge us. That is when we reach for two hands to hold us—our sponsor on one side and God on the other.

We can be like the cling-ons along the wall, hanging onto the bottle. Or we can get out there and collect a few bruises. The kids who are willing to do that learn to skate much faster. The same is true for us.

-- Maribeth D.

Central Office Fund Drive Help Is Needed to Meet the Goal by April 15

The Central Office Fund Drive is in the home stretch. Each New Year we begin our fund drive, and it lasts until Tax Day, which is April 15 this year.

Our goal this year is to raise \$28,000. As of March 3, we've received individual donations of approximately \$16,000. That leaves us six weeks to raise \$12,000. And you can help!

A.A. (supported by Central Office) was there for you and me when we wanted to get sober. It is our solemn responsibility to ensure that it continues to be a vital source of support for that next suffering alcoholic who wants to get sober. One common suggestion is to contribute a dollar for each year of sobriety. Another fun way is to contribute \$3.65 (365 days a year) for every year of sobriety. You can even make it a part of your charitable financial planning. Central Office is incorporated as a 501(c)(3) charitable organization and can provide you with a receipt in the event that you're able to use your contribution as a tax deduction.

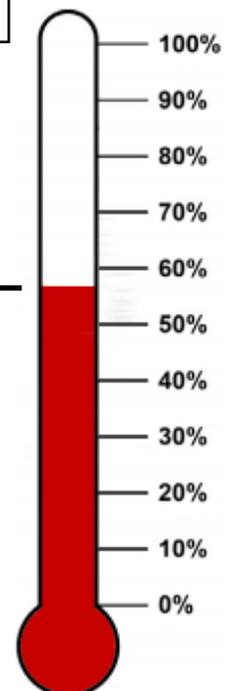
GOAL
\$28,000
April 15

\$16,000
as of
March 3

If you would like to know more about how the Central Office supports A.A. in our area you can read about it in the January 2020 edition of our Newsletter.

For even more information you can browse our web site at aasrq.org. The Central Office is open Monday through Thursday from 9 am to 4 pm. Stop in and browse the books and publications that we have there. Our staff, Chris and Doug, are happy to help you.

-- Ross J.



From My Journal

-- by Nancy B.

There have been small, or slight, harms that I've done that didn't make it onto my first Eighth Step list but that kept coming back to haunt me. So, I have been making apologies and amends as I become aware of these memories, and it has been a great relief.



I love this AA program—it directs me, giving me a clear road map to lead a good, decent life without guilt and shame. It helps me to distinguish what is my side of the street that I need (and want) to keep clean and what is someone else's craziness, fear or mean spiritedness. It guides me to not take myself so seriously. It keeps reassuring me that most of my character defects and the behaviors that emanate from them are based on fear, and my fears, when I take a close look, would rarely, if ever, come to pass. And it has taught me to turn things over to my Higher Power for solutions to worries. This approach has never failed me.

AA's way of directing me to right the harms that I commit has been a major foundational practice for all the rest of my program. I am so grateful.

GROUP OF THE MONTH

Unfortunately, we received no Group of the Month feature submissions this month.

We intend the Group of the Month piece to be a fun way to build an even greater sense of AA community in our area.

If you've enjoyed reading about the groups that make up Sara-Mana AA, please consider submitting 200-300 words to tell us about your group - its history, special events, meeting size, funny stories, how you got your name, etc. Consider it an invitation to AAs everywhere to check out your meeting.

Send the info our way at newsletter@aaqrq.org and we'll make your group the Group of the Month!

Extending the Hand of AA to All

In the October issue of the *Grapevine*, the question was asked, "Is AA accessible to all?" Well, is it? Remember how anxious you were to go to your first meeting? Now imagine that you wanted to go to a meeting but could not access the meeting room. What if you couldn't hear the speaker? Couldn't drive to a meeting because your sight was impaired? Think about it.

If you would like to help make AA accessible to all, please think about joining the Accessibilities Committee. We meet the first Thursday of each month at the Central Office. If you can't join us, please feel free to share your thoughts and comments via email at accessibilities@aaqrq.org. We would LOVE to hear from you.

ASL Anyone?

The topic of American Sign Language (ASL) and the use of interpreters came up at our February Intergroup meeting. And we'd like to take an informal poll.

Does your meeting or group currently offer an interpreter for the deaf or hearing impaired? Do you have need for one? If the answer is yes to either of those questions, or you'd like to add to the discussion, please let us know by contacting the District IV Accessibilities Committee at accessibilities@aaqrq.org, and they'll spread the word.

Committee Forming for Gratitude Dinner

The annual Sara-Mana Gratitude Dinner has enjoyed so much success recently that we're interested in exploring options for a larger venue to ensure that anyone with an inclination is able to attend the event.

At February's Intergroup meeting, an exploratory committee was formed, and Mike R. graciously agreed to serve as chair. Requirements include capacity for 500; a kitchen, tables and chairs; and full access the day of the event. The budget is \$2,000. If you'd like to join the committee or have suggestions, contact Mike at Ltmriley@sbcglobalnet.



To All Who Have Contributed to Date to the Central Office Fund Drive!

Voices from the Past

The following is an excerpt from *Dr. Bob and the Good Oldtimers*, pages 150-151 on the importance of quiet time and spiritual reading as a means to recovery. Thanks to Jim C. for suggesting it.

Morning quiet time continued to be an important part of the recovery program in 1938-39, as did the spiritual reading from which the early members derived a good deal of their inspiration.

"Here in Los Angeles, they now emphasize meetings," said Duke P., who used to live in Toledo and was one of the pioneering members there. "I guess that's because there are so many of them. When I started, they stressed morning quiet time, daily reading, and daily contact. They also told me I had to do something about my alcoholism every day." Duke remembered taking a poll of "slippers" in the early 1940's and finding that they had all stopped having their morning quiet time. "Now, after 38 years, Katie and I still have our quiet time and morning reading," he said.

The Bible was stressed as reading material, of course. Many remember that "The Sermon on the Mount," by Emmet Fox, was also very popular. "That was required reading for everybody," said Dorothy S. M. "As soon as men in the hospital could begin to focus their eyes, they got a copy of 'Sermon on the Mount.'

*"Then there was that little nickel book *The Upper Room*," she recalled. "They figured we could afford a nickel for spiritual reading. They impressed on us that we had to read that absolutely every morning. There wasn't any well equipped bathroom in A.A. that didn't have a copy. And if you didn't see it opened to the right day, you immediately began to suspect them."*

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: Why did you come to A.A.?

Alkie: I came to A.A. not because I saw the light, but because I felt the heat.

Q. Dear Alkie: What led you to seek recovery?

Alkie: I sought recovery when the unknown became more attractive than the known.

Q. Dear Alkie: I'm not sure I'm an alcoholic. What's the difference between a problem drinker and an alcoholic?

Alkie: The difference between a problem drinker and an alcoholic is that when alcohol is taken away from a problem drinker, the problem goes away. When alcohol is taken from an alcoholic, the problems just begin!

Q. Dear Alkie: I don't believe in God. Can I still recover in Alcoholics Anonymous?

Alkie: I've heard it said that it doesn't matter if you believe in God or don't believe in God--as long as you know that you are not God!

Q. Dear Alkie: You seem to have a wonderful life. Is that what you prayed for when you joined A.A.?

Alkie: I never knew peace, nor where to find it; I never knew happiness regardless of where I looked; I never knew love because I was incapable of receiving it. Before I took the Steps and embraced this Fellowship, I never knew that life could be this good--- I could not possibly have asked for what I have today.

Q. Dear Alkie: Is there a difference between isolation and solitude?

Alkie: Solitude is a peaceful state of being, during which I often contact God. Isolation is a negative state of mind during which I think only of myself.

"Today's disappointment, viewed six months hence, may turn out to be one of the best breaks we ever got"

Grapevine Daily Email, Dec. 11, 2016

INTERGROUP REPORT

Each month, the Intergroup Board publishes this attendance and contribution report, as well as year-to-date contribution totals for each group. All forms of support are greatly appreciated! Any groups interested in being represented, please send a home group member to our meeting on the third Tuesday of every month at 7p.m. at Central Office. If you have questions or correction requests, please email them to IG Chair Jim C. at sarasotajim.flg@gmail.com.

Group Name	Feb IG	Feb \$	YTD \$	Group Name	Feb IG	Feb \$	YTD \$	Group Name	Feb IG	Feb \$	YTD \$	Group Name	Feb IG	Feb \$	YTD \$
11th Step				G Hisp Companeros		23	23	No Rainy Days			60	Sun Beginner's			
63rd Ave	X			G Hisp Fortaleza				N River Mon Night				Suncoast Bid			
A Lit Meeting	X			G Hisp de Mayo				Oak Street Step				Sunrise			
AMI Womens				Gulf Gate Noon	X		163	Open Door				Sure Bet			
As Bill Sees It				Happy Cookie Hour	X			Palmetto			40	Surfside Serenity			116
As The First 100	X			Holmes Beach BB		139	139	PMS				The Islander			
Attitude Adjust	X		60	Holmes B Men's BB				Primary Porpoise	X			The Oasis		12	24
Bay	X	150	150	Humble Beginnings				Primary Purpose				Third Legacy		25	25
Bee Ridge East	X			Keep It Simple				Promises				Together We Can			
Beneva Discussion				Kensington Park	X		54	Rose	X			Traditions	X		
Bradenton DT				Lighthouse			200	Sarasota Men's				Turning Point			80
Bradenton YPG				LBK Tuesday				Sarasota YPG				Twilight Hour			
Brown Bag	X			Lost & Found		45	45	Sat Night Speakers	X			Under the Rainbow			
Donut Hour	X			LWR Mid-day		18	18	Serenity Room	X			WAAGS		90	90
Early Big Book	X			LWR Happy Hour	X			Serenity Seekers				Wed Morn Men			
11th Step Meeting				Main Street Men's				Siesta Key Men's			300	Wed Morn Women			
Enjoying Journey				Make Today Count				Siesta Key Women				West Bradenton		100	100
Fresh Start				M & W of Serenity				Singleness Purpose	X		75	Women of Hope			
Fri Night in Wind			15	Mid Morning				Sober Living				Women Lit Parrish			10
Friends				MWTh Harvest UM				Sobriety Group				Women in Solution	X		
Friends of Pelican	X			Mon Night Men's			60	St Armands Noon		210	210	Women's Grp LWR			
Growing Together				New Day			450	Steps in the Sand			60	Down Home	X		
Anonymous Men	X	20	20	From the Heart		75	75	Here & Now		120	120	Meat & Potatoes		50	50

ANNIVERSARIES

Please email birthdays to newsletter@AAsrq.org, put **ANNIVERSARIES** in the subject line, and submit them typed in the body of an email or a Word file. Anniversaries appear the month after they occur (ie., March anniversaries will appear in the April edition). Deadline for submission of anniversaries is the 7th of each month. Unless otherwise noted, the anniversaries appearing here are for February.

Bay Group

Andy B. 1 year
Carole P. 41 years

Down Home Group

John E. 39 years
Sandy C. 9 years
Trish 6 years

Early Big Book

January

Anne G. 19 years
Lisa W. 1 year

February

Diana E. 34 years
John T. 57 years
Sue Anne C. 20 years
Marcus E. 6 years

Friends of the Pelican

Chrissy R. 5 years
Gary S. 30 years
Mindy S. 2 years
Norris E. 31 years
Viola W. 14 years

Gulf Gate Noon

Bob K. 44 years
Brian C. 30 years
Jack L. 46 years
John H. 47 years
Rai 11 years
Rick S. 35 years
Ross 40 years

Happy Cookie Hour

Bart M. 8 years
Charles S. 5 years
Jerry D. 12 years
Karen B. 12 years
Scotty T. 9 years

Monday Nite Men's

January

Sean R. 1 year

February

Joe E. 36 years
Jose R. 26 years
Stuart K. 1 year

Oasis

Helen Y. 12 years

St. Armand's Noon

Barb V. 35 years
Cyd P. 17 years
Janet W. 32 years

Saturday Night Speakers

January

April Q. 1 year
Jeff K. 12 years
Joe R. 18 years
Misoon W. 25 years
Sally W. 1 year

February

Joe A. 36 years

Singleness of Purpose

January

Brenda H. 37 years
Cynthia T. 5 years
Dustin L. 1 year
George S. 10 years
Jim D. 37 years
Jon B. 1 year
Kevin R. 19 years

February

Addie M. 1 year
Joyce F. 39 years
Rick C. 3 years

63rd Avenue

David B. 16 years
Larry S. 37 years
Lillie B. 18 years
Megan F. 1 years
Mike C. 38 years
Paul O. 3 years
Peggy F. 44 years
Vickie C. 38 years



SAVE THE DATE!

**FOUNDER'S
DAY
DINNER**

**EARLY AA: BUILDING A
STRONG FOUNDATION**

**SATURDAY
JUNE 6, 2020**

Sarasota Community Church

Any person or group wishing to do service for this event, please contact Mick G. at 941-587-0881.

**Check out the online version of the newsletter
at aasrq.org to view the event flyer**



Meeting Guide



TO SUBMIT ITEMS TO THE NEWSLETTER: Anniversaries, articles and meeting notices should be sent to 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.