



# SARA-MANA INTERGROUP NEWSLETTER

October 2018

Central Office 941.351.4818

AA HELPLINE 941.951.6810

aasrq.org

## Intergroup to Elect New Officers in November

### New Terms Begin in January

After two years of giving their time to ensure that the hand of AA is there for anyone who reaches out for help, our Intergroup officers Doug (Chair), Jim (Co-Chair), Matt (Treasurer) and Brandon (Secretary) will soon transition out of their current positions as directed by Section 2 of the Sara-Mana Intergroup, "Bylaws of Current Practices," which states:

"Officers shall be elected by a majority of at the November business meeting and shall assume office at the January meeting. (No meeting is assembled in December.) The officers shall serve terms of two years from the date of their taking office. Each officer may be elected to succeed him or herself for not more than one term."

A nominating committee was formed at the September meeting to identify volunteers willing to stand for election, and the expectation is that we'll have a field of candidates to announce after the October meeting, which occurs after this newsletter goes to print. So, check in with your Intergroup rep for details from the October meeting and a list of candidates, or go online at [www.aasrq.org](http://www.aasrq.org) for an update on the process.

Remember that Intergroup business meetings occurs on the 3rd Tuesday of every month, and the meetings are open to all. So please join us at Central Office (1748 Independence Blvd., Suite B-2 Sarasota) on Tuesday, November 19, when the new officers will be elected. The November will be our last meeting of 2018.

## 2018 Gratitude Dinner It's Just Weeks Away!

**And we're sold out of tickets! Can you believe it?**

We're looking forward to an *amazing* event and want to thank everyone who purchased tickets and have volunteered their time and effort to make this event a success!

**We'll see you on**

Saturday  
November 19th  
at 5:30PM

Sarasota Community Church  
4041 Bahia Vista St  
Sarasota, FL 34232



## It's Not Odd . . .

-- Suzi L.

I had to walk through two unsuccessful efforts to stop drinking before my third attempt could begin in a hospital rehab. There, I stayed for three days. It's not odd that feeling powerless, guilty and ashamed of my behavior made it easy for me to turn over my will to my Higher Power before leaving the hospital.

It's not odd that right away I received Good Orderly Direction from a Group Of Drunks, and even in my fuzzy state of mind, I did what was suggested – to wake up with a grateful heart and remind myself that I can't, He can, so I think I will let Him (Steps 1, 2 & 3). It's not odd that the Serenity Prayer focuses on acceptance, courage and wisdom to see hope from the guiding principles of Alcoholics Anonymous . . . just for today.

As my first sponsor told me, "It's not odd, it's God." So, in the morning, I give thanks and praise to my Higher Power for waking me and ask for the desire to be willing to be willing to be patient, kind and tolerant to myself and everyone I see. At night, when I review my day, I say thank you for what was given to me and especially my sobriety.

## It's Not Odd...

continued from page 1

My life is more manageable when equal parts of unity, recovery and service are in play. That's why meetings and sharing with others are so important, because without realizing it, when I stay active, there's no time for me to live with "woulda, coulda, shoulda's." Every single thing that happens to me is important. It took time for me to realize how much I took for granted.

Once, a friend shared at a meeting that she would set her phone's alarm throughout the day to remind her to stop what she was doing, breathe and say "Thank you." So I tried it, and just like that, it helped me learn a good habit! And now I get to share with others too! 1 second, 1 minute, 1 hour, 1 day at a time. As each increment becomes a benchmark for the next, it is easier for me to live the new lifestyle that I have been given. One that will help me live my "dash" to the fullest!

We are born, live and die; traffic signals are red, yellow and green; three strikes and you're out; the Father, Son and Holy Ghost; three steps in a waltz; uncover, discover, discard; pause, pray and proceed. It's not odd that there is a rhythm of three's in and outside of my AA recovery. It's just a reminder that I am human, not as unique as I may think I am, and I have the ability to stay grounded, humble and kind.

Alcoholics Anonymous is the encouragement and reassurance that my life is good. So it's not odd that this has been written with help from my friends who have generously shared their experience, strength and hope with me during my journey. Thank you and be well.

**Acceptance does not mean submission to a degrading situation. Rather to accept the facts of a situation and then deciding what I can do about it.**

*Thanks to Kathleen H.*



## Holiday Plans?

If your group is planning a special meeting or event? Do you have plans for a potluck, speaker, cookout or Alcathon for Thanksgiving, Christmas or New Years? If so, and you want to let your fellow AAs know, pass along the details or submit a flyer to [newsletter@aasrq.org](mailto:newsletter@aasrq.org) and we'll help you get the word out in our **November newsletter. Please submit announcements by November 7.**

## Responsibility Statement

I am responsible,  
when anyone, anywhere,  
reaches out for help,  
I want the hand of AA  
always to be there,  
and for that  
I am responsible.



## No Newsletter in December

The newsletter will be taking a month off for the holidays. As there's no Intergroup meeting in December, we'll have less news to report. And as importantly, with no meeting, we lose our primary means of distribution, as we make the newly published newsletter available at the meeting for the representatives to take back to their groups.

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: How can I tell if I am really an alcoholic?

**Alkie:** **You can just step over to the nearest bar and have a couple of drinks and see if you can stop. Here are some of the symptoms we have heard in meetings:**

**In the final stages of my drinking I never got to where I wanted to be until I didn't know where I was.**

**One time I woke up in a house and I didn't know where I was. The people in the house didn't know me either.**

**I never had a problem that was as bad as my drinking solution.**

**Alcoholism is like being on fire and drinking to put it out.**

**Alcohol is a solvent that can remove everything from your life.**

**The only time I ever refused a drink was when I didn't hear the question.**

\*\*\*

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

**Alkie: Everything**

\*\*\*

**Q.** 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.**

\*\*\*

**Q.** 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.**

## AA Milestones in October

"We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it."

Here are a selection of events in AA history that occurred in October and continue to shape the fellowship we enjoy today.

### 1929

The stock market crashes, and as Bill puts it in the Big Book, "I was finished and so were many friends."

### 1935

Ebby T., Bill's childhood friend who "got religion" and introduced Bill to the Oxford Group, moves in with Bill and Lois.

### 1939

The *Journal of the American Medical Association* publishes a relatively unfavorable review of the Big Book.

### 1951

Sister Ignatia, who worked with Dr. Bob in the early days to admit alcoholics into St. Thomas Hospital in Akron, OH, published an article "Care of Alcoholics – St. Thomas Hospital & A.A. Started Movement Which Swept Country" in *Hospital Progress*, the journal of Catholic Hospital Association.

### 1957

*Alcoholics Anonymous Comes of Age* is published.

### 1969

1st World Service Meeting is held in New York with attendees from 14 countries.

### 1970

Lois reads "Bill's Last Message" at the annual dinner given by the New York Intergroup Association in honor of Bill's 36th anniversary.

### 1988

Lois W., co-founder of Al-Anon, dies. She is buried next to Bill in East Dorset, VT.

## From My Journal

by Nancy B.



Most of the time when I was drinking, I didn't consciously harm others. I see now, with some time practicing the principles of the AA Program, that I was a fear-based, self-centered, out-of-touch person who didn't see myself or anyone else as a person of worth. It was as though I was stuck in early adolescence.

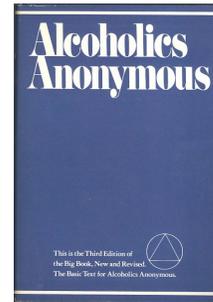
And even after I stopped drinking for 3 years (without the help of AA) and then went back to daily drinking (in retrospect, because I did not get the help of AA), albeit in lesser quantities and with less dangerous behavior, I continued to see myself as a victim and rarely as the perpetrator of harm or offense.

The gift of desperation opened my mind once I entered AA. One of the first aha! moments was when the brain fog cleared in relation to the Step 10 spiritual axiom about my part in every disturbance. This realization occurred months before I took Steps 4 and 8, and it made my work on those Steps and Steps 5 and 9 easier. Still, as with the entire AA Program, the process has been gradual, and I'm still maturing. I'm still learning more about how to live as a person of worth and to relate to everyone else as persons of equal worth.

Had a Good Day?  
Get to a Meeting!

**WHERE  
& WHEN**

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



## Back of the Book

### Do What You Can

--Edgar C.

One of the great gifts we gain from practicing the principles of AA is the ability to weather virtually any storm.

The story titled "Me an Alcoholic?" (page 382, 4th Edition) puts it succinctly in saying, "Here (in A.A.) was the power to live to the end of any given day, the power to have the courage to face the next day. . ."

### On Cell Phones

-- Richard B.

The last two years have brought changes to many meetings that I attend. One of these changes is the vast number of cell phones that many bring to the meetings.

These phones often go off during the meeting, thus disturbing many in the room. When one rings, especially at a speaker meeting, I just cringe.

Please consider leaving cell phones in the car. I guarantee that the world won't end! I discovered in 1985 that I just wasn't that important anymore.



### The Secret

Begin where you are.  
Do what you can, gracefully.  
Expect God to help.  
Step out in Faith.

Thanks to Kathleen H.!

# ANNIVERSARIES

Groups: Please email birthdays to newsletter@AAsrq.org and put **ANNIVERSARIES** in the subject line. Anniversaries will appear in the month after they occur (ie., October anniversaries will appear in the November edition of the newsletter). Deadline for submission of anniversaries is the 7th of each month. So, please have October anniversaries for publication in the November edition submitted by November 7th. Please also submit anniversaries typed within the body of an email or a Word file. We'll publish both November and December anniversaries in January, as there's no December newsletter.

## Bay Group

John L. 3 years  
Mary A. 2 years  
Ron T. 2 years  
Ronda 13 years

## Bee Ridge East Group

### August

Mark S. 28 years

### September

Joanne M. 25 years  
Mallory B. 29 years  
Neil A. 3 years  
Tom D. 30 years  
Tom L. 34 years

## Donut Hour

Cori 3 years  
Ken R. 1 year  
Maria T. 12 years  
Miriam S. 2 years  
Nancy G. 31 years

## Fresh Start Group

Jerry B. 29 years  
Roberta H. 11 years

## Kensington Park

Dan S. 1 year  
Joe D. 12 years  
Kristin H. 7 years  
Laurie M. 9 years  
Mike B. 2 years  
Ron K. 2 years  
Sarah C. 7 years  
Sharon K. 20 years  
Tom L. 34 years

## Monday Night Men's Group

John J. 1 year

## Palmetto Group

Kevin C. 34 years  
Sonny 1 year  
Yvonne J. 3 years

## ROSE Group

Janet F. 11 years  
Tracey D. 24 years

## Sat Night Speakers Group

Kate M. 4 years  
Shanna C. 10 years

## Serenity Room

Janet T. 28 years  
Frank N. 1 year  
Wendy M. 11 years

## The 63rd Ave Group

Leslie W. 34 years  
Marta W. 21 years  
Tom W. 10 years

## Singleness of Purpose

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

## Women in the Solution

Lorna 18 years  
Melissa 2 years

## Central Office

### Groups & Individuals Contributing this Month

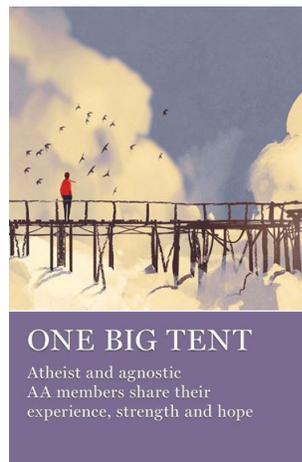
Downtown Bradenton  
FCYPAA  
Friday Night In The Wind  
Gulfgate Noon  
IF Group  
Main Street Men's  
Monday Night Men's  
North River Monday Night  
Oasis  
Palmetto Group  
Promises  
Siesta Key Men's  
Step Up  
Surfside Serenity  
Turning Point  
Under The Rainbow  
West Bradenton  
Woman In The Solution  
Brandon | J.D. | Arnold

*Thank you!*

## Central Office Book of the Month

***One Big Tent: Atheist and Agnostic AA Members  
Share Their Experience, Strength and Hope \$10.99***

Atheists, agnostics, nonbelievers and secular alcoholics have been members of the AA Fellowship since its earliest days, making significant contributions to the development of the program, helping to swing the doors of AA ever-wider. But finding their path has not always been easy. One Big Tent is a collection of stories, originally published in Grapevine, which represent the shared experience of secular AA members who have struggled with alcoholism, yet ultimately found a common solution in AA.



## Central Office

### Office Hours

**Sunday 9am-3pm**  
**Monday 9am-3pm**  
**Tuesday 9am-3pm**  
*Open for Intergroup Meeting  
3rd Tues. (7pm-8pm)*  
**Wednesday 9am-3pm**  
**Thursday 9am-3pm**  
**Friday 9am-3pm**  
**Saturday Closed**  
*Open for General Service  
Meeting 3rd Sat. (9am-12pm)*

**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.