



Sara-Mana Intergroup

P.O. Box 3075 1748 Independence Blvd., #B2, Sarasota, FL 34234
www.aasrq.org

God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can and the wisdom to know the difference.

November 2012 Central Office (941-351-4818) Sara-Mana District 4, Area 15

Open house at Central Office set for December 1

Did you realize that A.A. has its own sober "clubhouse?!" It's at Central Office, right off Route 301 in Sarasota, and we are having a "getting-to-know-you party" for A.A. friends! Our clubhouse is full of literature, laughter, our helpline, and recovery gifts for purchase as well as some of the best volunteers in Florida!

Be there Sat. Dec. 1st from 10 a.m.-2 p. m. We will provide refreshments, fellowship and even some service opportunities. Join the fun!

Central Office is at Oak Park Business Center, 1748 Independence Blvd., B-2, Sarasota., phone 351-4848.

Going on U.S. 301 SOUTH, drive ½ mile past DeSoto and right onto Northgate Blvd. then left onto Independence Blvd. Central Office is in an office complex on your left.

From Fruitville Road, take U.S. 301 NORTH 2 ½ miles. Turn left onto Northgate Blvd., and left on Independence Blvd. Central Office is in an office complex on the left.

Hope to see you on December 1st! The more the merrier!



H-A-L-T for the holidays



By Diane R.

The holidays are upon us; and with them come all the trimmings and trappings that can lead to a slippery slope. Relying on the A.A. fellowship will help even the newest among us get through them.

Greater Grapevine participation ideas for groups

By Carol D.

Here are two ideas to help your group have active Grapevine participation. The Sunrise meeting donates a free "Grapevine Give-Away" each month. A lucky person attending has a chance to win a subscription. Once we've read the GV, we can pass it on—to hospitals, meetings, jails and institutions, or the new person in A.A.

Other groups have a purple shoebox on display where members can throw in a dollar with their name and phone number. They then have a chance to win a subscription when \$29.00 is collected. Our "meeting in print" has been around since the early 1940's carrying the message of hope to members of A.A. around the world. Let's help keep it alive and well with your groups participation.

Please ask your group to consider supporting the Grapevine in some way that works for you, here locally, in OUR District.

The Grapevine Committee meets at Central Office on the 3rd Wed of each month at 5:15. All are welcome to attend.

The first step in avoiding temptation to take that first drink is to stay in the NOW. Do not drink today! The second step is to be alert and aware of your body's signals. A simple but incredible word and acronym sums it up: **HALT**.

- Hungry** - do I need to eat?
- Angry, Agitated or Aggravated** – is a person, place, thing, or situation upsetting me?
- Lonely** – am I isolating myself?
- Tired** – have I gotten enough sleep?

Any or all of these feelings can leave us open to discontent or "disease" which is the root of our problem and may lead to taking a drink. Using **HALT** will remind you of cravings and feelings that lead to trouble.

A newly sober person may say, "How will I ever get through the holidays without drinking?" The Book of A.A., 4th ed., pp. 549-550 shares a solution to our common problem ~ **HOW: Honesty; Open-mindedness; Willingness**. When applied to the holidays, if you strive to live all three, combined with **HALT**, you can overcome people, places, things and situations that may be very troublesome at holiday time.

Living Sober, Chapter 26: *Being Wary of Drinking Occasions* has very practical suggestions and actions to take for a newly sober individual. Most home groups have this book in their literature collections for sale. Members may be willing to lend

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Why I need a sponsor

By Pat P.

At my first A.A. meeting, I refused to admit that I was an alcoholic. I did however say, "I am Pat and I am misunderstood." I could not fathom why the room erupted into laughter. At the end of the meeting, I was approached by a number of women, but one in particular unnerved me by standing too close, by making eye contact and by saying "You will never be alone again." She terrified me! Now, in addition to my own personal hell, I had a stalker! Paranoia, along with my abject denial, was a constant for me at that time.

Her name was Nora F. and she infiltrated gently. When I mentioned panic attacks as being my biggest problem – not alcohol of course – she confided that she too had had panic attacks, had written a paper about them and wanted to send it to me. I still could not fathom why Nora would want to focus her time and effort on me and my depressed whining. Her answer was Sheila H., who had taken a similarly sad and sick woman named Nora under her wing some thirty years prior.

As we slowly connected about Nora's article, our lives and our similarities, my trust in her grew. Nora's steady kindness overwhelmed me when little else made sense. She explained the lingo that I heard in meetings, as well as the need for healthy structure via the Steps. Nora held my hand during my first "roller coaster" of a year in sobriety. She helped me to grow up, react appropriately and to treasure the second chance that God had given me. I began to crave our laughter, lunches and the program the way I once craved alcohol.

No one knows me better than Nora, who has become the big sister I never had. She steadily guided me through meetings, the Steps, my improving marriage and health, as well as the death of my mother. She tempered the boundless energy and en-

Meetings and service opportunities



- The Friday and Saturday "CANDELIGHT" midnight meeting at the Serenity Room in Bradenton has disbanded and the doors will NOT be open at those times.
- Young-minded A.A.s needed to inform **SARASOTA MIDDLE SCHOOL** staff and students about Alcoholics Anonymous. Requires one year of sobriety, full name, date of birth and age. Call 941.351.4818 or e-mail: picp@aaqrq.org
- Senior presenters needed by **ASSISTED LIVING and NURSING HOMES** to share our experience, strength and hope. Please e-mail: picp@aaqrq.org
- Energetic A.A.s needed to fill literature racks at **DOCTORS' OFFICES, COMMUNITY CENTERS and DEPT. OF HEALTH OFFICES**. Please e-mail: picp@aaqrq.org
- Contact **CLERGY and CHURCHES** to provide information and support from local A.A.s. Please e-mail: picp@aaqrq.org
- **MOTHERS & INFANTS** program needs women with one year of sobriety to take meetings to them once/month. Contact ldross@comcast.net or call 941.320.8389.
- **GO TO JAIL!** Men and women needed to take meetings into the recovery pods. One year of sobriety plus clearance from SCJ needed before orientation. E-mail: scjpod@aaqrq.org

thusiasm I regained. Nora helped to take the word "but" out of my vocabulary. She gently taught me to follow G.O.D. a.k.a "good orderly direction."

Thanks to our weekly phone calls, Nora -- along with the amazing Gayla F. -- now help me with my own sponsees. May they benefit from just a glimmer of the humor, strength and humanity that Nora and Gayla have shown me. This chain reaction of love is yet another miracle of the program.

Today, sponsorship is a daily rededication to my sobriety. Listening to my five wonderful sponsees is often like praying. It quiets my mind and opens my heart. I am surrounded by strong women who share my best interest. They have become part of my heart's family. We have all been so blessed to be given a second chance at life through the gift of sobriety. We never have to be alone again....

R.E.C.O.V.E.R.Y.

Realizing I am powerless over alcohol

Experience, strength and hope are what we go by

Controlling only myself, rather than others

One day at a time is all I can do

Voicing myself at meetings is how I grow

Easy Does It is one of our many slogans

Relying on my Higher Power gets me through hard times

Yearning to learn more keeps me coming back

Thanks to Michele C.

Bill W. on A.A. and other addictions

Bill W. wrote this letter dated Spring 1969 regarding A.A.'s openness to those with addictions such as drugs, gambling, overeating, etc.

My dear Katie, Sorry for this long delay in answering yours of March 20. My desk gets piled high sometimes.

You pose questions that have long troubled us in A.A. As to specific situations, I'm sure there can be no pat answers. As you know, an A.A. group has the "right" to be wrong.

Looking back on a lot of experiences, I can say that in general A.A., as such, really has to deal with alcoholics no matter what their other complications. You would be the first to agree that there is no such thing as an alcoholic who has no emotional "complications." What really troubles us in situations such as you describe is the kind and severity of such complications. So the question boils down to this: Shall A.A. really try to help those with severe mental and addictive problems, provided they are also alcoholics? The answer to this is "yes," we should try.

However, this amount of charity does not mean that we cannot exclude those who disturb meetings in progress or very seriously interfere with the functioning of the groups. Such people can be asked to quiet down or go elsewhere, or to come back when they are better able to participate.

However, we have never been of any use to drug addicts, schizophren-

ics, sex deviates and the like - who are not alcoholics. These unfortunate folks cannot identify with us, nor we with them. To try to treat them or include them in A.A. membership would be to depart from our primary purpose - sobriety. While individual A.A.'s often help such people, the A.A. groups can do little about them, excepting to admit them to open A.A. meetings, provided they are not disturbers.

So that's the sum of it, Katie. I think you patiently have to play things by ear. Don't be afraid of making mistakes. Trial and error, according to your circumstances, is probably your best choice.

One more thing. In A.A. there are many specialized groups, composed of A.A. members. These are purely private undertakings with which no one will interfere so long as they are not listed as "A.A. groups".

Meanwhile, all the best,
In affection,
Bill

Monthly Limerick

Have you met the new guy named Murray,
whom his friends thought they'd soon have to bury?
He couldn't stop drinking,
what on earth was he thinking?
Then he did, through God's grace;
no more worry.

3 for November

Step 11

Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.

Tradition 11

Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion;

we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.

Concept 11

The trustees should always have the best possible committees, corporate service directors, executives, staffs, and consultants. Composition, qualifications, induction procedures, and rights and duties will always be matters of serious concern.

Dear Alkie

"Alkie" is one of our long-time members who believes as the Big Book says, that we are not a glum lot.

⇒ Dear Alkie: I'm scared I'll get drunk again if I don't do this A.A. thing right. How can I tell if my program is going OK?

Alkie: If you're coasting, you're going downhill. If you are not moving forward, you're moving backwards

⇒ Dear Alkie: I really want you A.A. people to like me. Should I dress up for meetings?

Alkie: Meetings are a "come as you are" party, not a "come as you'd like to be seen" party.

⇒ Dear Alkie: My sponsor says I should work the Steps *and* go to meetings. Do I have to do both?

Alkie: The meetings are like a hospital where we go to get well, but the Steps are the surgery necessary for recovery.

⇒ Dear Alkie: I think I need to go to your A.A. meetings, but I'm scared. Are they places where I'll feel comfortable?

Alkie: Every time I go to a meeting, it's like crawling into the safety of God's lap.

⇒ Dear Alkie: You're sober a long time. Why still go to meetings?

Alkie: I go to meetings for the reason most people go to church --to get closer to God.

⇒ Dear Alkie: I've got lots of problems, so I drink. Does being in A.A. solve your problems?

Alkie: Being in A.A. doesn't solve my problems, but it keeps me sober so I can work on them.

⇒ Dear Alkie: I've gone to a few of your meetings--one or two a month--but I still keep drinking. A.A. doesn't work for me; I'm still horribly unhappy.

Alkie: We can't be happy living in the world and just visiting A.A. We must live A.A. and visit the world.

ANNIVERSARIES

Groups: email birthdays to newsletter@asrq.org and put ANNIVERSARIES in the subject line. Cutoff for the newsletter is the last day of the month. Do not send anniversaries for future months: i.e. October anniversaries appear in November.

63RD AVENUE

October

Sandi D. 9 years
Chuck A. 1 year

BEE RIDGE EAST

October

Dave T. 27 years

DONUT HOUR

October

Sheila C. 5 years
Gary S. 3 years
Leslye D. 2 years
Val F. 1 year
David P. 1 year
Valerie W. 1 year

EARLY BIG BOOK

October

Jean S. 27 years
Dave 27 years
Linda K. 19 years
John W. 6 years
Jacqueline O. 4 years

FRIENDS OF THE PELICAN

October

Barbara B. 38 years
Leslie R. 29 years
Clark W. 6 years
Christie J. 4 years

HAPPY COOKIE HOUR

October

Ron E. 32 years
Jerry C. 18 years
Pat K. 13 years
Tammie 1 year
Sean B. 1 year
Mike V. 1 year
Joe B. 1 year

LAKWOOD RANCH 12&12

October

Lester G. 2 years

LUNCH BUNCH

October

Sandy Z. 19 years
Helen G. 15 years

Wanda 11 years

Robyn Z. 8 years

Jim K. 1 year

NEW WOMEN

October

Diana E. 8 years
Sandy C. 1 year

NORTH RIVER MONDAY

NITE

October

Steve K. 26 years
Karen K. 26 years

OAK STREET

August

Bob R. 32 years
Frank G. 29 years
Linda W. 24 years
Pem W. 11 years
Joan H. 9 years
Mike P. 9 years
Lillian A. 5 years

September

Joan H. 33 years
MJ R 24 years
Paul W. 18 years
Rhonda G. 7 years
Michael S. 5 years
Wendy M. 5 years

October

Lucia T. 56 years
Doug K. 37 years
Welton K. 37 years
Pamela K. 36 years
Peter B. 34 years
Nancy W. 21 years
Susan W. 21 years
Barbara D. 20 years
Howard C. 20 years
Wanda L. 10 years
Susan S. 8 years
Mark D. 4 years
Christine S. 3 years

PRIMARY PORPOISE

October

Lucia T. 56 years

ST. ARMAND'S

October

Lucia B. 32 years
Leslie F. 29 years
Ken J. 23 years
Jean G. 15 years
Wanda 10 years
Martha C. 7 years
Mikal 6 years
Clark W. 6 years
Joe I. 2 years

SERENITY

October

Marci J. 28 years
John K. 16 years
Debbie C. 3 years

SOBER LIVING

August

Harry 20 years
Ron 9 years

September

Coretta F. 13 years
Lydia 2 years
Pauline T. 1 year
Steve 1 year

October

Kathy J. 26 years
Debra G. 1 year

SUNRISE

October

Cheryle W. 4 years
Amy A. 1 year
Bob W. 1 year
Joseph S. 1 year
Paul E. 1 year

TRADITIONS

June

Allen J. 17 years
Susan G. 2 years

July

Holly H. 15 years

August

Phoebe 30 years

October

Kathy 1 year

UNDER THE RAINBOW

October

Liz S. 13 years
Kathy S. 1 year

H-A-L-T for holidays from page 1
their copy to a newcomer. It is also sold at Central Office.

A beginner in recovery will need to make choices about who, where, when and what celebrations to attend or not. They may not be easy choices, but they are necessary to keeping personal sobriety first and foremost. Attending extra meetings and making set plans with fellow A.A.'ers are very important. Also, frequent contact with your sponsor may be necessary and is encouraged. Make sure to ask where and when special A.A. activities are taking place and choose to go to some. The goal is to get through the holidays sober, safely and cheerfully. Without drinking, we will make new happy memories during this festive time of year.

HELPLINE TOTALS OCTOBER 2012

Call count	208
BREAKDOWN:	

Meeting time/location	148
In lieu of 12 step call	4
Actual 12 step calls	7
Al-Anon Call	9
Special Needs	0
Miscellaneous	40

Please contact the Helpline through our website or Robert Q. at 351-4818 to serve on 12-step call list.

TO SUBMIT ITEMS TO THE NEWSLETTER: Anniversaries, articles and meeting notices should be sent to newsletter@asrq.org. Submit material as attachments or directly in an email. Include your first name, group and type of item being sent. Deadline is the last day of the month. Submissions may be edited for length or content. Opinions expressed herein are those of the writers and not necessarily those of A.A., Sara-Mana Intergroup or the Central Office, located at #B-2, 1748 Independence Blvd., Sarasota, FL 34234. Phone 941.351.4818.