



Sara-Mana Intergroup

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

On the web at 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.

May 2013

Central Office (941-351-4818)

Sara-Mana District 4, Area 15

The Bill W. movie now available

If you have heard of *Bill W.* the documentary of the co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous, but haven't seen it, the good news is that the Sarasota Public Library now has a DVD of the documentary available for circulation.

Interviews, recreations, and rare archival material that reveal how Bill

Wilson, a hopeless drunk near death from his alcoholism, found a way out of his own addiction and then forged a path

for countless others to follow.

With Bill W. as its driving force, A.A. grew from a handful of men to a worldwide fellowship of over two million men and women – a success that made him an icon within A.A., but also an alcoholic unable to be a member of the very society he had created. A reluctant hero, Bill Wilson lived a life of sacrifice and service, and left a legacy that continues every day, all around the world.

The DVD is also available at <http://www.page124.com/>.

Thanks to Janet B. for this information.



Central Office fund drive exceeds goal

A last-minute surge in giving pushed this year's Central Office fund drive to \$29,022, exceeding its goal by \$2,022 and establishing a record for the

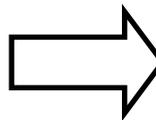
annual campaign to fund operations of the Sara-Mana District office.

Joe D., substituting for Inter-Group chair Dana at the InterGroup April board meeting, praised A.A.ers of the district for their generosity and gave special recognition to Raphael and Carol, who coordinated the 2013 effort.

The Central Office, located in Building B-2 at 1748 Independence Blvd. in Sarasota, serves A.A.ers in both Sarasota and Manatee counties.



**FOUNDERS DAY
COMING JUNE 14**



A new location, new buffet and a much-praised speaker are in store when the **2013 Founders Day Dinner** is held on Friday, June 14.

The new location is the Bradenton Municipal Auditorium, located in the Bradenton City Centre. The new menu includes carved roast beef, smoked chicken, vegetarian pasta primavera, roasted potatoes and seasonal vegetables. There will also be homemade bread, Greek salad and dessert.

Tom M. of St. Petersburg will be the featured 8 p.m. speaker, following a 5 p.m. fellowship time and 6:30 p.m. dinner. Tickets at \$15 are available at the Central Office, 1748 Independence Blvd., Ste. B-2 in Sarasota or by calling 941.351.4818.

Have a story to share?

There's a life-saving story in nearly every member of Alcoholics Anonymous. What's yours? Put your story in about 300 words and send it to newsletter@aasrq.org. It's cool to see your story in print, and you just might strengthen the sobriety of a fellow A.A.er.

Grapevine Quote of the Month

"The phrase 'God as we understand him' is perhaps the most important expression to be found in our whole AA vocabulary. Within the compass of these five significant words there can be included every kind and degree of faith, together with the positive assurance that each of us may choose his own."

Bill W., April 1961, From "God as We Understand Him: The Dilemma of No Faith"

Maintaining your peace of mind

In addition to the ever-available Serenity Prayer, here are some of our loyal A.A. friends' favorite tips for regaining or maintaining their peace of mind:

- ◆ "When I am juggling too much at once and need to settle down, I simply find a quiet moment and breathe deeply. I can even do this in the middle of a crowd or discussion."
- ◆ "Helping others calms me instantly."
- ◆ "I marvel at nature, the gift of my sobriety and the miracle of life."
- ◆ "By doing a constant gratitude list in my head."
- ◆ "When the ISMs enter my head, I reread the piece on Acceptance from page 417 of the Big Book. (For me, ISM stands for I Sabotage Myself.)"
- ◆ "That's simple! I pick up the phone or get myself to a meeting."
- ◆ "I remind myself that sobriety has transformed my life. Settles me down every time!"
- ◆ "Just smiling can change the channel in my head."
- ◆ "My sponsor suggested that I live an all-day-prayer."
- ◆ "I remind myself that H.O.P.E. equals Hang On, Peace Exists."
- ◆ "After I say the Serenity Prayer, I say it again and again and again!"
- ◆ "The only way I can settle down is by remembering First Things First. My program is more effective this way."
- ◆ "Keeping to my routine and prioritizing the Program soothes me."

We want to hear YOUR favorite tips for regaining or maintaining Serenity. Please e-mail us today at newsletter@aasrq.org.

An extra Dear Alkie

Dear Alkie: What is "recovery"?
Alkie: Recovery is a process, and the key is letting go of our expectations of how the process is supposed to work and its eventual outcome.

YOU need to know this



The **Third Legacy**, a new men's closed literature group, meets at 7 p.m. on Tuesdays at Trinity Church, 7225 Lockwood Ridge Road.

The **SATURDAY NIGHT SPEAKERS GROUP** was inadvertently left out of the new Where and When. The group continues to meet at 7:30 p.m. at Faith Church, 1201 North Beneva @ 12th Street.

The 10 a.m. **DONUT HOUR** and 12 noon **LUNCH BUNCH** meetings have moved to Church of the Cross, 3005 South Tuttle.

SRQ YOUNG PEOPLE now meets at Concordia Lutheran Church, 2185 Wood Street.

The 7 p.m. Friday **WOMEN'S DISCUSSION GROUP** has moved its meeting location to Bobby Jones Golf Course at 1000 Circus Blvd. in Sarasota.

GRATITUDE SPEAKER is a new meeting at 8 p.m. on Wednesday at the Gratitude Club.

DRUNK SQUAD is a new meeting at 8:30 p.m. on Saturday at Siesta Key Chapel.

NEW BIG BOOK is a new meeting at 8 a.m. on Tuesday at Pine Shores Presbyterian Church, 6116 Crestwood in Sarasota.

MOTHERS & INFANTS program needs women with one year of sobriety to take meetings to them once a month. Contact ldross@comcast.net or call 941-320-8389.

WOMEN, MORE WOMEN, STILL MORE WOMEN AND EARLY RISING WOMEN NEEDED!! H & I committee's current pressing needs are: (1) women for 7:30 a.m. recovery pod meetings in Sarasota jail, (2) women for 2 p.m. Saturday/Sunday meetings in Manatee jail, (3) women for meetings in the Mothers & Infants unit at First Step, (4) women for evening meetings at The Bradenton Bridge Work Release Center. If you are a woman interested in carrying the message of A.A. to women who cannot freely get out to meetings, please consider the above. Contact: hni@aasrq.org or 444-9698.

For up-to-date changes please check the website Where & When at aasrq.org. Click on the meeting tab at the top of the page.

3 for May

Step 5

Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

Tradition 5

Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.

Concept 5

Throughout our world services structure, a traditional "Right of Appeal" ought to prevail, thus assuring us that minority opinion will be heard and that petitions for the redress of personal grievances will be carefully considered.

Get the benefit of our traditions

Every Sunday morning at 11 a.m., the only meeting in District 4 that focuses exclusively on the 12 Traditions is held in the Youth Building at the Crossroads Church, 4726 N. Tamiami Trail in Sarasota.

A Tradition is read from the 12 & 12, followed by a reading on that tradition from the Language of the Heart. Discussion follows and references are made to the material in the Traditions Checklist and the Illustrated Traditions pamphlet everyone receives.

This is an excellent way to learn about the traditions, not only by reading them, but by the personal experiences each one has to share. Although the Traditions are often thought of as guidelines for the group, it's amazing how much insight there is on how we can use them in our personal lives. Take, for instance, the 7th Tradition: "We are self supporting through our own contributions." Perhaps invaluable when dealing with family members!

The knowledge gathered at this meeting is incalculable for someone in service work, whether at the group level or at general service, intergroup meetings or committee meetings.

It's been a long-held theory that no one outside Alcoholics Anonymous can destroy us, but we can be destroyed from within. A good, everyday working knowledge of the traditions will prevent that from happening.

Come visit the Traditions meeting any Sunday morning; bring your sponsor or a sponsee. There are seats at the table waiting just for you.

Grapevine Quote

"An old-timer once told me that he believed that AA was a great leveler: When you're up high, your friends help bring you down a little bit. When you're down low, they help bring you up a little bit."

*From: "The Real Thing"
Voices of Long-Term Sobriety*

The mystery of Tradition Two

Why is the long form of Tradition Two shorter than the short form?" This is a question that G.S.O.'s Archives receives nearly every week; it also comes up at Regional Forums.

Answer: A.A.'s Twelve Traditions were originally published in a series of articles starting with the May 1946 issue of the Grapevine.

For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.

These are what we consider the Long Form of the Traditions. For the next several years, Bill W. traveled around the country explaining the Traditions and trying to get members to become more familiar with them. In 1949, A.A. member Earl T. of Chicago initially suggested to Bill that he rewrite the A.A. Traditions, stating that they were too long. Bill worked on shortening the Traditions with the idea of producing a concise statement for information and instructional purposes that could be printed along with the Twelve Steps.

In a letter dated June 17, 1949, Bill explained the following about the "short form" of the Traditions. He wrote, "Accordingly, I have worked over the material once more, coming up with what I hope is a quieter and clearer job — something which would be a more fitting companion to the Twelve Steps themselves and of just about the same wording."

After many searches through the years, the Archives staff has been unable to find any documentation by Bill as to why he chose to include the additional line in Tradition Two, "Our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern." In their search they turned up a letter written by former G.S.O. Archivist Frank M.:

"As you'll recall historically, the climate was not fully positive for 'organizing' Alcoholics Anonymous in the late '40s and early '50s. Folks thought things might get too complicated if Traditions were to come on line and a General Service Conference started. They worried about 'control issues.' Thus the line about 'our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern' was added to allay these fears." *From box 4-5-9*

Dear Alkie

Dear Alkie: I feel like I'm a lot different than others. Will the Steps work for me?

Alkie: The Twelve Steps are like adjustable wrenches that fit any nut that walks through the doors of A.A.

Dear Alkie: Do I have to do the Steps?

Alkie: The good news is that the Steps are only a suggestion. The bad news is that the 12 Steps are the *only* suggestion we have.

Dear Alkie: These Steps you guys suggest are an interesting theory, but what happens if I do them the wrong way?

Alkie: The Steps are only a theory until we put them into practice. The only way to do them wrong is not to do them at all.

Dear Alkie: I just want to go to meetings, I don't want to do your stupid Steps. Will the program still work?

Alkie: The Steps are the Program! The shortest and most important sentence in the Big Book is "It [the Program] works'.

Dear Alkie: Did the Steps help you?

Alkie: The Steps brought me from a place of cocksure ignorance to wise uncertainty.

Dear Alkie: I always feel horrible. I try to feel better with booze, but it makes me feel worse. Can you offer any hope? Help?

Alkie: In order to change the way we feel, we need to change the way we think, which changes the way we act, which changes the way we feel! That's what happens when we work the Steps.

Dear Alkie: Do the Steps really work for you?

Alkie: I am like a bumper car powered by God and kept on track by the Steps so, although I occasionally collide with others, I'm not involved in any fatal crashes.

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. April anniversaries appear in May.

63RD AVENUE

APRIL

Debra 38 years
Jo B. 27 years
Frankie 19 years

AIRPORT BIG BOOK

April

Shelley W. 17 years

BAY

March

Bill W. 39 years
Jean W. 32 years
Paul N. 6 years
Linda R. 4 years
Marty H. 1 year

April

Dick L. 38 years
Rosemary D. 30 years
Charlie W. 19 years
Steven F. 11 years
Don N. 9 years

BEE RIDGE EAST

April

Debra 38 years
Jo B. 27 years
Frankie 19 years

EARLY BIG BOOK

April

Sheila 27 years
Marla H. 26 years

EARLY BIRD

April

Jack C. 19 years

FRESH START

April

Paul T. 31 years
Bill K. 28 years
Cynthia K. 21 years
Wayne D. 14 years
Jackie K. 5 years

FRIENDS OF THE PELICAN

April

Kelly K. 6 years
Simonne C. 46 years

FROM THE HEART

April

Judy K. 29 years
Marjorie B. 17 years

HAPPY COOKIE HOUR

April

Mike O. 31 years
Linda P. 30 years
Raphael 17 years
Gordon G. 17 years
Charley M. 14 years
Adrian 6 years
Tom S. 4 years
Simon 3 years
Sarah 2 years
Cheryl 2 years
Larry B. 2 years
Tiffany 1 year

GULF GATE NOON

April

Jack G. 50 years
Pamela 35 years
Kathy 31 years
Sheila M. 27 years
Judy K. 19 years
Cheryl M. 2 years

LAKWOOD RANCH

12&12

April

Anne M. 13 years

LUNCH BUNCH

April

Maureen 9 years
Rebecca 2 years

OAK STREET STEP

April

Simone C. 46 years
Bruce D. 40 years
Jim G. 38 years
Tom M. 26 years
Lynn B. 17 years
Pat N. 15 years
Paula M. 13 years
Rafael G. 17 years
Janice H. 3 years

UNDER THE RAINBOW

April

Jayne H. 3 years

HELPLINE TOTALS

APRIL 2013

Call count298

BREAKDOWN:

Meeting time/location.221

In lieu of 12 step call.....4

Actual 12 step calls.....10

Al-Anon Calls.....16

Special Needs.....3

Miscellaneous.....44

Members who are willing to take 12-step calls are need to assist the Helpline volunteers talk to the sick and suffering alcoholic about the program of ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS. Please contact Robert Q. at the Central office (941) 351-4818 or at asrq.org.

There's that God thing again.

I gave up hope of ever becoming sober. I decided to drink myself to death. It didn't work.

After destroying my kids' lives and losing our home, car and my job, I became temporarily sober for periods of six months or so -- never lasting more than a year on the wagon.

I gave up. There was no reason left to drink -- nothing left to lose -- everything was already gone. After 12 years of off-and-on-again drinking (mostly on again), I entered treatment for the third time.

This time, I had insurance so the facility was a

bit up-scale.

Figuring I had a free three-week stay in a place with good food, air conditioning, and friendly counselors, I settled in for a vacation from the hell I'd been living.

At the end of week one, the counselor told me my insurance wouldn't pay for more time there. I figured, 'okay, it's been fun, now they're kicking me out.' I'm familiar with being thrown out. Then, the counselor told me "we're keeping you, anyway."

Shocked, I decided to enjoy the ride. But, some-

thing happened inside me. These people cared. I was more than an insurance payment to them. They kept me three more weeks -- then insisted I continue in out-patient therapy with them, for the entire year.

It has been 10 years since I've had a drink. Someone actually cared enough to help when I could no longer care about myself.

Today, if I even think of alcohol, I remember, with gratitude, the people who stuck their necks out and stayed with me when all hope was gone from my heart.

The main purpose of this newsletter is to inform, connect and entertain. 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 will 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.