



# Sara-Mana Intergroup



## PO BOX 3075

AUGUST 2010

1748 Independence Blvd., #B2, Sarasota, FL 34234.

SARA-MANA DISTRICT. 4, AREA 15



Part of the AA crowd attending ceremonies at the 75th anniversary convention in San Antonio. Official registration counts said the crowd topped 53,000. Bartenders all over San Antonio must have wept.

### Our Far-Flung Correspondents: Report from San Antonio

## AA Meeting for 53,000: Here's What it Was Like

By Gerry O

With more 4,000 volunteers to greet and to serve us, the host committee was fully visible in extending a warm welcome to the 53,000 plus AA and Alanon members who registered at the world wide convention in San Antonio, Texas July 1-4. The convention center in downtown San Antonio surrounded by the large hotels (the Grand Hyatt, two Marriotts, the Hilton, etc.) was a beehive of activity on Thursday and Friday, with long lines for on-site registration. Those who pre-registered could

pick up badge-holders and anniversary literature in much shorter lines.

The opening event was a "block party" on Thursday evening. Because of a drizzling rain, the party was held inside the convention center, with music at opposite ends of the building. The full band at one end played 50 - 60's music, while a disc jockey at the other end kept a livelier beat with more contemporary tunes. The feeling at either end resembled what one might experience in Time Square on New Year's eve. The exuberance and joy of so many in one concentrated area celebrated an overwhelming gratitude for sobriety.

Friday and Saturday were busy with meetings, meetings, meetings. The schedule, which was part of the registration pack-

age, listed meetings on innumerable topics, participated in by hundreds of members from all around the globe. For all foreigners, simultaneous translations were available. Many meetings also had signers for the hearing impaired. All who attended with special needs could visit and register their special needs at the main hall in the convention cen

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## Special Needs: Going to Many Lengths

By Patty F

Most of us recovering from alcoholism never question our ability to get to a meeting, read our literature, call our sponsors, or listen to a speaker at a meeting. Yet there are current members of our fellowship and persons who need AA whose access to our message requires extra effort and the assistance of others.

It is for these individuals that the special needs committee exists. General Service defines those with special needs as persons who are blind or visually impaired, deaf or hearing impaired, chronically ill or homebound, learning or developmentally disabled and those who have had a stroke or brain injury. A special need can be a long term or chronic condition or short term such as being homebound following a hospital stay.

Our AA guidelines on serving alcoholics with special needs states "respect for the dignity of others has to be the foundation for all our efforts to

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## 3 For AUGUST

### STEP 8

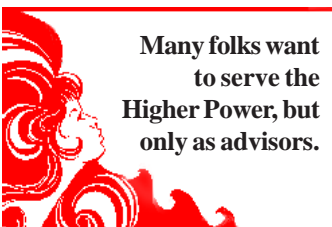
Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.

### TRADITION 8

Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers.

### CONCEPT 8

The trustees are the principal planners and administrators of over-all policy and finance. They have custodial oversight of the separately incorporated and constantly active services, exercising this through their ability to elect all the directors of these entities.



Legacy of Recovery with Bill Wilson

## The Young and Addicted

Excerpted from *The Grapevine* (c) March, 1971

Bill Wilson's application of Alcoholics Anonymous principles to ever-changing circumstances was another of his remarkable talents. Day in and day out, letters would arrive at his desk asking for his "last word" on a matter of AA policy. And Bill would fall back upon the basic principles of AA's three Legacies, tempered by wisdom, humor, perspective, and regard for the feelings of others.

One warm example occurred in 1968 when a well-meaning AA wrote to Bill about an influx of youthful flower children to local AA groups, along with their distinctive manner of dress, sexual mores, and other unorthodox behavior, including the use of drugs. The writer feared that this particular invasion might be "a very real threat to our wonderful, God-given program."

Bill's reply was typical of his use of AA principles to meet new challenges.

"Your letter about the hippie problem, so-called, was mighty interesting to me. I doubt that we need to be alarmed about this situation, because there have been precedents out of the past. All sorts of outfits have tried to move in on us, including communists and heroin addicts, prohibitionists and do-gooders of other persuasions.

"Nearly all of these people, who happened to have an individual problem with alcohol, not only failed to change AA, but, in the long run, AA changed them. I number them among my closest friends and they are among the best AA's I know.

"You also have some people who are not alcoholics, but are addicts of other kinds. A great many AAs have taken pity on these people, and have actually tried to make them full-fledged AA's. Of course, their identification with alcoholics is no good at all, and the groups themselves easily stop this practice in the normal course of AA affairs.

"We know that we cannot do everything for everybody with an addiction problem. There has also occurred lately a new development centering upon hippies who have LSD or marijuana troubles. Many of these kids appear to be alcoholics also, and are flocking into AA, often with excellent results.

"Perhaps, as younger people come into AA, we shall have to put up with some unconventional nonsense — with patience and good humor, let's hope. But it should be well worth the attempt. And also, if various hippie addicts want to form their own sort of fellowship along AA lines, by all means let us encourage them. We need deny them only the AA name, and assure them that the rest of our program is theirs for the taking and using.

"This is a highly interesting and significant development. I certainly do not think it ought to be fought. Instead, it ought to be encouraged in what we already know to be workable channels. —Bill"

## 25 Years

By Shirley B

On April 29 in Nineteen Eighty Five  
I surrendered to AA — down and out, but alive!

When I appeared on the scene, my head was still reeling,  
but I was promised a path that was somehow appealing.  
My family and friends were well-meaning and kind,  
But these people were the ones I had needed to find!

They were not perfect, as no one can be,  
But they were approaching a state called "serenity."

I had nothing to lose but chaos and despair.  
The atmosphere in meetings was, by God, fresh air!

Each day a new beginning, new heaven, new earth;  
Each day more growth, each day a new birth.

AA — what a gift, what a blessing, what grace,  
a fortress where each of us finds our own place.

Thanks Bill, thanks Bob,  
For flags you unfurled.  
You sure started something  
that changed the whole world!

## Report from San Antonio

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ter. Old timers with 40 plus years were also asked to register at a separate desk in the convention main hall.

Friday night brought the crowd to the Alamodome, a canopied 10-minute walk from the convention center, for opening ceremonies. Ward Ewing, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees, welcomed the members and their guests. The flags of 90 countries were paraded on the stage, each carried by an AA member of that country. The emotionally moving flag ceremony was followed by speakers from different countries.

Again at the Alamodome on Saturday evening, the 53,000 registered AAs and Alanons, with their guests, were treated to an Old Timers AA Meeting chaired by Phyllis H., the General Manager of

G.S.O. in New York. First, a countdown was conducted resulting in the longest old timer left standing with 63 years of continuous sobriety. Then 12 of the old timers in the audience, with 40 plus years, were picked and each was asked to share for 5 minutes their experience, strength, and hope.

The closing meeting was held Sunday morning, again at the Alamodome. This AA meeting was preceded by a presentation of the 30 millionth copy of our Big Book to the American Medical Association for their cooperation over the 75 years of the existence of Alcoholics Anonymous. It was noted that 30 percent of new AA members are referred to our fellowship by licensed health providers. Three AA speakers completed the meeting, and all were invited to meet again in Atlanta, Georgia in 2015.

## Calls to the Help Line

### June 2010

Total Calls	305
Meeting Time/Location	155
In Lieu of 12 Step Call	3
Actual 12 Step Call	12
Al-Anon Call	23
Miscellaneous	112
Calls to Spanish Line	0



To make a long story  
short, don't tell it.

## How to Break the Hold Secrets Have On Us

*So live that you wouldn't be ashamed to sell the family parrot to the town gossip.*

— Will Rogers

Secrets help keep us sick. In our drinking and using days, we did things we weren't proud of. We lived in a secret world we were ashamed of. This is part of the power of addiction. Our behavior and our secrets kept us trapped.

Recovery offers us a way out of this secret world. In our groups, we share our secrets, and they lose their power over us. There may be things we're too ashamed to talk about in our groups. When we share these things in our Fifth Step, they lose their power over us.

We have a new life that we're not ashamed to talk about. When shame leaves, pride enters our hearts. We know we're good people! —Anon



Reprinted from an Alabama AA web site.

## Special Needs: Going to Many Lengths

(Continued from page 1)

carry the message to alcoholics with special needs, with emphasis on identification rather than on how we are different.”

This effort includes using our catalog of AA materials. For the vision impaired, we have books in braille, large print, illustrated, or on audio tape. For the deaf member, we have the big book and the 12&12 in American Sign Language. For those persons with transportation difficulties, special needs include helping members arrange rides to meetings or help with accessing the public transportation systems. For those with disabilities or the homebound, taking a meeting to them, providing literature or readers to some is a simple way groups can assist group members who must go to any length to work their programs.

What can be done at the group level to assist those with special needs? First, be sensitive and aware that special needs exist more often than we realize in the fellowship. Then select a special needs rep in your group who can be available to help if a need arises and who can be active on our district committee. Know the many resources that

## Upcoming AA Events

Major AA events remaining for 2010 provide the fellowship necessary for all of us, and opportunities to be of service They are:

**Area 15 Quarterly meeting.** Oct. 8-10. Sarasota Hyatt.

**Gratitude Dinner.** Nov. 18. Auditorium.

**Open House.** Dec. 4. Central Office.

**New Year's Eve Dance.** Location to be announced.

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**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.**

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already exist and connect the special needs member with these support tools. Make sure notices of group events indicate that assistance is available for those with special needs. Have large print or illustrated literature on your literature table.

A cornerstone of step 12 is to carry our message to other alcoholics including those with special needs. The sense of personal gratitude for one's own freedom is experienced once you assist someone in AA who **must go to many lengths** to work a program and recover. Serving those with special needs is one of the many ways we can do "God's bidding." Our District 4 committee chair is available to come to your group's business meeting and discuss the work of the committee at the group level and the simple ways your group can raise awareness, provide literature and make our "responsibility statement" a miracle waiting to happen for those with special needs.

Contact [special\\_needs@aa.org](mailto:special_needs@aa.org).

## AA Blast from the Past

Dr. Carl Jung explained the nature and necessity of a *vital spiritual experience* to Rowland Hazard in 1926 [page 27 of the Big Book]. This message has traveled through 84 years to us today, remaining as the only known solution for chronic alcoholism.

## Dear Alkie

"Alkie" is one of our long-time members who believes as the Big Book says that we are not a glum lot. Email your questions regarding our fellowship and/or recovery to [newsletter@aa.org](mailto:newsletter@aa.org)

**Dear Alkie: I've been going to meetings for a few months, and keep hearing about "spirituality". How much of this program of yours is "spiritual"?**

Alkie: How much of the ocean is wet?

**Dear Alkie: You've been through these Steps. Have you noticed any changes in yourself?**

Alkie: Absolutely! Today I say what I do and do what I say—for example.

**Dear Alkie: A lot of your "principles" sound pretty Pollyannish. Why do you follow them?**

Alkie: Courtesy and kindness regularly practiced help me live in emotional balance and at peace with myself.

**Dear Alkie: Give me one good reason why I should do these Steps?**

Alkie: Instead of loving things and using people, we begin loving people and using things.

**Dear Alkie: You seem so happy. How did you do it?**

Alkie: Long-term happiness is not the by-product of short term gratification. It is the by-product of right living each day.

**Dear Alkie: My sponsor keeps bugging me to do the Steps. I'd like to, but I don't have the time.**

Alkie: The "yeah, buts" get drunk while the "you bets" stay sober.

**Dear Alkie: I keep hearing that I've got to give it away to keep it. Why?**

Alkie: From what we get we make a living; from what we give, we make a life.



## HAPPY A.A. BIRTHDAYS!!

(Groups: Put ANNIVERSARIES in the email subject line and send birthday announcements for the most recent month to newsletter@aaqrq.org no later than the last day of the month.)

### 7:45am EARLY BIRD

**July**  
Sher K. 11 years

### ANYBODYS GROUP

**August**  
Arthur 1 year

### ATTITUDE ADJUSTMENT

**August**  
David B. 18 years  
Jaime C. 9 years  
Ken H. 5 years

### BACK ON MAIN

**August**  
Frank G. 33 years  
John Y. 10 years  
Jim B. 8 years

### BEE RIDGE EAST

**July**  
Ed K. 34 years  
Bob M. 33 years  
Jack W. 30 years  
Robert S. 17 years  
Joyce P. 5 years  
**August**  
Mark S. 20 years

### DONUT HOUR

**July**  
Ed K. 34 years  
Linda B. 24 years  
Tracy R. 6 years  
Kelly 3 years  
Marie W. 1 year  
Tim F. 1 year

### FRESH START

**June**  
Mychale S. 12 years  
Al 1 year  
**July**  
Dean 35 years  
Rick C. 26 years  
Pat 21 years  
Mitch C. 11 years

Bodie 5 years  
Barbara 4 years  
Beth L. 1 year

**August**  
Thomas 10 years  
Richard A. 3 years  
Dustin 1 year

### GULF GATE NOON

**July**  
Tom T. 24 years  
Mark P. 12 years

### FRIDAY NITE LIT

**July**  
Gino S. 20 years  
Shirley P. 16 years

### HAPPY COOKIE HOUR

**June**  
Bob G. 23 years  
John W. 21 years  
Gino S. 20 years  
Dawn S. 17 years  
Lorri C. 11 years  
Gene M. 9 years  
Rob M. 8 years  
Sam J. 1 year  
Kevin 1 year

### HERE AND NOW

**June**  
Barry S. 30 years  
Werner H. 23 years  
Ron H. 2 years  
Michael P. 2 years  
Brian H. 1 year  
Cody C. 1 year

**July**  
Dolores S. 22 years  
Jo G. 14 years  
Bob S. 13 years  
Mike A. 12 years  
Jon W. 3 years  
Tony B. 3 years  
Valerie 1 year  
Arnie 1 year

### KEEP IT SIMPLE

**August**  
Melissa G. 5 years  
Jeff W. 1 year  
Dawn T. 1 year  
Christian 1 year

### KENSINGTON PARK

**July**  
Allan L. 20 years  
**August**  
Lawrence C. 4 years  
Geri V. 4 years  
Ann W. 1 year

### LUNCH BUNCH

**July**  
Lloyd H. 37 years  
Dawn D. 20 years  
Keith H. 20 years  
Mac M. 5 years  
Carol W. 4 years  
John H. 6 years  
Michael C. 2 years  
Kelly D. 2 years  
Jack S. 1 year

### NEW WOMEN

**July**  
Barbara B. 24 years  
Andy S. 8 years  
Angela B. 2 years

### OAK STREET STEP

**August**  
Bob R. 30 years  
Frank G. 27 years  
Pem W. 9 years  
Joan H. 7 years  
Mike P. 7 years  
Lillian A. 3 years

### OPEN DOOR

**July**  
Carolyn N. 34 years  
Linda E. 17 years  
Art P. 14 years  
Mike M. 10 years

Chris A. 6 years  
**August**  
Ted C. 34 years  
George H. 26 years

### PRIMARY PORPOISE

**July**  
Victoria G. 22 years

### SINGLENESS OF PURPOSE

**July**  
Althea N. 17 years  
Dianne N. 7 years

### SUNRISE GROUP

**July**  
Ron W. 24 years  
John W. 21 years  
Susie W. 11 years  
Ray L. 9 years  
Skip M. 7 years  
Mike T. 6 years  
Michael P. 5 years  
Fred A. 4 years  
Barry G. 4 years  
Tracy M. 1 year

### UNDER THE RAINBOW

**June**  
Katherine C. 26 years

### WAAGS

**July**  
Mary R. 21 years  
Wendy L. 14 years  
Judy M. 8 years  
Tracy R. 3 years  
Galina 3 years

#### @HOME Meeting

Are you homebound & need an AA meeting? Join us at 7:30 pm every Tuesday by phone. Call in at 641-715-3300, enter 694733#. You will be responsible for any long distance charges.

**How to Submit Items to the newsletter** Submissions may be edited for length or content. Anniversaries may be dropped off at Central Office or sent to [newsletter@aaqrq.org](mailto:newsletter@aaqrq.org). **Email all other items and especially articles directly to the editor at [edgarc@aol.com](mailto:edgarc@aol.com).** Submit articles as attachments in MS Word or placed directly into the email. Include your first name, group, and type of item being sent. **Deadlines: The last day of the month is the absolute deadline for all materials submitted for consideration.** The opinions expressed herein are those of the writers and not necessarily those of AA, Sara-Mana Intergroup, or the Central Office, which is located at 1798 Independence Blvd, #B2, Sarasota, FL

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