Message From Executive Director

Looking forward to seeing you at the conference and gala on October 10th in Houston, TX!

Sincerely,
Linda Stalters, MSN
Executive Director

Join us for our Annual Conference on October 10, 2015.
Beat the Price Increase! Ticket prices increase on September 17th.

Ismael Cala, CNN en Espanol celebrity anchor, is the evening’s Key Note speaker. NewsWithAttitude’s, Nakia Cooper, of Click2News and Guy Michaels, of KPVU 91.3 FM Guy Michaels Morning Show, are our emcees.
Experts address challenges faced daily by individuals, families, professionals, the criminal justice system and policy makers, when psychiatric illness is involved.

“Jazz On My Mind,” features a dinner, an incredible auction and Contemporary Jazz artists Tom Braxton, Larry Braggs and Vel Lewis. Buddy Bolden, innovator of contemporary jazz, lived with and died due to the illness of schizophrenia, as do many great jazz artists and millions of others. Proceeds go to education, support and resources for people affected by schizophrenia - related brain disorders.

Tickets can be purchased by clicking here:

Purchase Tickets Here

Hotel Rooms at the JW Marriott Houston can be reserved with a special conference rate of $119+tax per night if booked by September 18, 2015
Message From SA Coordinator  
by Margery Wakefield

Dear Friends,

SA is busy as always. This month we welcome three new groups and one “new” re-located group. The new groups are: Lansing SA in Lansing, Michigan, led by Larry Ackerman; SOMI Club SA in Mobile, Alabama, led by Amy Kay and David Vealey; Cedar Rapids SA in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, led by Fred Julich; and the new Marquette SA in Marquette, Michigan, led by Annette Grenier, who led an SA group in the “old days,” 25 years ago! We welcome them all and wish them the best of luck!

A reminder for everyone: please continue to send me your entries for the newsletter! I need short writings on What SA Means to Me, Recovery Stories, poems, art work in black and white, articles of interest, basically anything that you want to share with other SA members around the country. I need your help!

You can send them to me at: PO Box 562, Haslett, MI 48840. I look forward to hearing from you.
Have a great autumn!
Margery Wakefield, for SA
SA Coordinator

We are now accepting messages from SA Members to include in the newsletter. Please submit your message to: info@sardaa.org for consideration for next month’s newsletter

Every September, SAMHSA sponsors Recovery Month to increase awareness and understanding of mental and substance use issues and celebrate the people who recover. The Recovery Month provides tips and resources for planning Recovery Month events and distributing information in communities across the nation.

http://www.recoverymonth.gov/

*** HOW TO START AND GROW A SA GROUP ***
By Margery Wakefield

Welcome to SA (Schizophrenics Anonymous)! I understand that you want to start an SA group, and that is great! READ MORE

*** WHAT SA MEANS TO ME ***
(From the Torrington, CT SA Group)

In SA, I try to make friends. Most people are not friendly. Sometimes you have to ignore them if they are not nice to you.
SA helps me cope with the stigma of schizophrenia. That’s why I like to look forward to the weekly SA groups.

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I like talking to people or keeping busy mentally and physically. If I can explain things to myself or others it helps me tremendously. I enjoy the SA group because I enjoy talking to people. It is not something I do at home alone.

*** Personal Story ***

“I surrender. I admit I need help. I can’t do it alone.” Those words form Step 1 of the six-step program from the SA group at our clubhouse. Over the last several years, I avoided Step 1 in SA – until now.
READ MORE
A STORY OF RECOVERY
by Brian D.

On May 15, 1980, I graduated from The University of Connecticut School of Law. I had no worries, except my studies, as my parents paid virtually all my bills until I was 25 years old. In college at Miami University, in Oxford, Ohio, I had a work study job, and for one year of law school, I worked at the West Hartford Public Library. The second year of law school I did title searches for a real estate attorney. After graduating from law school, I spent that summer studying for the Connecticut Bar exam.

Back on April 14TH of 1980, I was involved in a head on car crash, which happened while I was in an alcohol induced blackout. I tell you this now because it might have contributed to my suspicious thinking, which eventually led to full-blown paranoia. I quit that job in February of 1981 without having another job. Eventually I went to live with my parents who suggested that I see a psychiatrist. I met with the doctor for no more than one-half hour, and he prescribed 10 milligrams of Stelazine. This was a shock to my body and in February of 1984, I signed myself into the John Dempsey hospital in Farmington, Connecticut. For the first week there I was not well. The doctor recommended Thorazine. This med worked well enough to have me discharged from the hospital to a transitional living facility in Hartford, Connecticut.

For the next 8-9 years. I repeated what would become a pattern. I would do well on a new med, then decompensate and have to be hospitalized. Throughout this time I was also drinking beer, off and on. I had a total of 19 admissions, with stays lasting 2 months to 2 years. In 1992, while at the Norwich State Hospital, a doctor suggested that I try a new med called Clozaril. With an adjustment to take it all at bedtime, that turn out to be my last hospitalization until a 4-day stay for anxiety in 2013.

During that same hospital stay at Norwich State, I stopped drinking beer. I continue to be a recovering alcoholic with 23 years of sobriety. In March of 1995 I secured a full time position with the Western Connecticut Mental Health Network (WCMHN) in Torrington, Connecticut. I continued to work there until my disability retirement in December of 2014.

I was introduced to Schizophrenics Anonymous by Jim Cronin. I refer to Jim as my SA mentor as he helped me to start the Torrington area SA meeting in 2004. Today it is a closed meeting. It is a class within the Recovery & Wellness program at WCMHN. I have been involved as the paid staff person from 2004 until December 2014, when I retired. Along with Jim Cronin, I was one of the first moderators of the SA group calls. In 2014 I was elected to the SARDAA Board of Directors. SA has been a very important part of my life and recovery.

I'M SO GRATEFUL
By Andrea Willard

I am valuable enough to realize that my healing began with my Higher Power and me. I’m bouncing back with better insight, resilience, new coping skills, a new medication regimen and a life giving hope that has saturated all my days and nights with more effort than I have ever experienced. I was finished with illicit drugs in 1974. I stopped gambling in 1979. I stopped drinking alcohol in 1991 and smoking cigarettes in 2006. Believe me risky behavior went hand in hand with a refusal to face the facts. So intent was I to do well in business that I stopped the medicine in January of ‘89 and became completely psychotic and spent 12 weeks in a mental health facility. Oh did I learn? People diagnosed with schizoaffective disorder, a disorder characterized by a separation between thought and emotions, mood swings and by delusions and yes
odd behavior, we often delude ourselves into thinking we are not ill. 1995 saw me in an asylum in a northern state because I stopped the meds again. That time it took me five years to recover. Haldol stopped working. The hospitalizations reached a crisis point. I desperately wanted to die and on the other hand I desperately wanted to live. That time I became catatonic. I was frozen emotionally and unable or perhaps unwilling to communicate. Finally (thank you God) a therapist said, “What happened to you?” “Were you abused sexually?” O my goodness I gushed and gushed and totally spoke the truth about my crazy childhood. In 2012 I stopped my meds again. This time I faced arrest and jail time. I was incarcerated with felons who screamed their painful circumstances heavenward. I did too. I spent many weeks in a behavioral center after I was released from jail. The night of my discharge, I connected with a dear friend who called upon more friends who convinced me to seek help with mental health court. Thankfully in May of 2013 my court case was dismissed. I had quite a few hospitalizations in ’13 and ’14 as doctors desperately tried all kinds of medicines to help with the paralyzing delusions. Three days before I was to be permanently committed to an Asylum, they tried one more med called Clozapine. It has worked so beautifully. My days are spent rethinking every negative thought. I can now recognize delusions and am able with help to put them to rest. I started a SARDAA Schizophrenic's Anonymous meeting in a drop in center. The participants realize they can identify that their own challenges can be overcome. I am a leader in Celebrate Recovery. I speak for them as do others. I’ve spoken five times for Crisis Intervention Trained Police Officer’s graduations. I’ve regained my sanity again to share again and lead again and comfort again. THE END

In Memory of Joanne Verbanic
Founder of Schizophrenics Anonymous
By Nora Baylerian

Joanne was a very special person. After getting out of the hospital in October of 1987, my sister-in-law, Debbie, saw Joanne Verbanic on a cable show regarding Schizophrenics Anonymous (SA) and persuaded me to attend SA in Southfield, MI. I did not want to go, but Debbie insisted that I go. There I met Joanne and it was the start of a very special relationship with her. Joanne and SA are the best things that have ever happened to me; I am totally grateful for SA.

Joanne started her first SA meeting in Southfield in July of 1985. SA is a self-help group for persons diagnosed with schizophrenia and related disorders. It is a 6-Step Program with these basic principles:

I Surrender, I Choose, I Believe, I Forgive, I Understand, I Decide

In 1995, I started getting involved with SA on a volunteer basis; then I started to lead SA meetings. After getting involved with SA, my self-esteem sky-rocketed. Joanne helped me in so many ways. We talked every day and I saw her 2-3 times a month, going over to her house and going out to eat. She always said that “everyone is doing the Lord’s work through what we do for SA and mental illness”. She touched the lives of
so many people, including myself.

Upon seeing her, she always had a smile and encouraging words for everyone she met. She used to tell me, “Nora, you’ve come a long way, baby!”

SA is so important for me. Joanne used to always say that God has a plan for her and all the others who devote themselves to the mental health field. She also said that SA was her life and that she would be devoted to everyone until the day she died — and she was. I used to call her “Hokis”, which means “my soul” in Armenian. Once, I called her Joanne and she said, “Nora, why didn’t you call me Hokis?!”

Joanne passed away due to serious health issues on May 7th. She will be missed by all; she left a legacy for us all and we must continue to strive to help the mentally ill.

Message From Family & Friends Coordinator

I learned from the book 'A Celebration of Caregiving...Portraits & Stories', by Independence First, a nonprofit organization in Milwaukee which serves persons with disabilities both physical and mental, that much of care giving is provided by seniors, 75 and older, “1 in 5” it says. That reveals something about the value of life experience and, very importantly, having a purpose in life that both gives and receives. There are increasing support resources for family members and friends of those diagnosed with Schizophrenia compared to the 1980s when I learned about mental illness through my family member's diagnosis. There are challenges in being there for our loved ones, but also untold benefits. A theme which speaks to me as time passes says that “there's treasure in trouble” (unknown) and as quoted in Shakespeare “the sweetness of adversity”. I have to believe.

With Heart,
Mary Ross, FFS Coordinator

Phone Support Groups
Family and Friends Support Group
Every Tuesday - 7 pm Eastern Time
Frequent Guest Speakers

SA Conference Call Groups
For Individuals Diagnosed
Every Sunday, Thursday and Friday 7 pm Eastern Time

Spirit of SA Conference Call
For SA Leaders and potential Leaders
First Wednesday of Each Month 7 pm Eastern Time

Adult Children of Parents with Psychosis
Every Monday 7pm Eastern Time

Toll-free calls
The call in information: (855) 640-8271; Pass code: 88286491#
International Number: (720) 362-6499

Articles of Interest

OMEGA-3 TREATMENT SHOWS LONG-TERM PSYCHOSIS PREVENTION A group of adolescents and young adults that were considered to be at high risk for psychosis showed a significant reduction in progression to psychotic disorder 7 years after being exposed to 12 weeks of intervention of omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFAs). READ MORE

ADVOCATES SAY MENTAL HEALTH "PARITY" LAW NOT FULFILLING IT'S PROMISE READ MORE

AUTISM BEYOND DIAGNOSTIC CATEGORIES: CHARACTERIZATION OF AUTISTIC PHENOTYPES IN SCHIZOPHRENIA READ MORE

BRAIN CONNECTIONS GO AWRY BEFORE PSYCHOSIS ONSET Young people at clinical high risk (CHR) for psychosis show a particular pattern of neural disruption in communication involving the thalamus and the rest of the brain, new research shows. READ MORE
ETHICAL CHALLENGES IN THE PRIMARY PREVENTION OF SCHIZOPHRENIA When a debilitating and often progressive disorder frustrates efforts at effective treatment, prevention maybe the only hope of avoiding its consequences. The determination of how to offer that prevention will require a great deal of care to help minimize the chances of harming those very people that we are seeking to help. READ MORE

FUCTIONAL GENOMICS SUGGEST VASCULAR-ISCHEMIC ORIGIN FOR SCHIZOPHRENIA The Vascular-ischemia theory, if confirmed by evidence, could lead towards the diagnosis of unaffected individuals and the ability to prevent the development of psychosis in the future. READ MORE

SUSTAINED ANTIPSYCHOTIC EFFECT AND DELAYED SELF-ESTEEM IMPROVEMENT OF METACOGNITIVE TRAINING FOR SCHIZOPHRENIA A recent study proved that the use of Metacognitive training in patients with schizophrenia spectrum disorders with delusional symptoms is effective in improving delusion, cognitive biases and insight. READ MORE

WHAT CAN SONGBIRDS TEACH US ABOUT AUDITORY PROCESSING? READ MORE

GLOBAL BURDEN OF DISEASE STUDY This study describes the top ten causes of YLDs (years lived with disability) in every country. READ MORE

BRAIN CONNECTIVITY MAP MAY REVEAL RESPONSE TO ANTIPSYCHOTIC DRUG TREATMENT Measuring the pattern of activity in the brain region known as the striatum may be able predict how well a patient with acute psychosis responds to antipsychotics, according to a study published Friday in AJP in Advance. READ MORE

PSYCHOSIS TREATMENT PROGRAM EXPANDS IN NEW YORK

NIH RESEARCHERS FIND KEY REGULATOR OF INTERACTIONS BETWEEN BRAIN NETWORKS: FINDINGS MAY HELP IMPROVE UNDERSTANDING OF SCHIZOPHRENIA, DEPRESSION, AND EPILEPSY

HOW TO TALK TO A CHILD ABOUT A SUICIDE ATTEMPT IN YOUR FAMILY

NIH RESEARCH MATTERS: BIOMARKERS AND QUESTIONNAIRES PREDICT SUICIDE RISK

SAMHSA NEWS: ENDING CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS

SAMHSA NEWS: SOCIAL MEDIA AS A TOOL FOR ADDRESSING BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

IOM RECOMMENDATIONS REFLECT IMPORTANCE OF IMPROVING QUALITY OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES
SEPTEMBER 11TH AND HURRICAN KATRINA ANNIVERSARIES: RESOURCES

HEALTHY TRANSITIONS: A PATHWAY TO EMPLOYMENT FOR YOUTH WITH CHRONIC HEALTH CONDITIONS AND OTHER DISABILITIES

NEW SPANISH-LANGUAGE TIP SHEET: CLINICAL TRIALS AND OLDER PEOPLE

Donate to SARDAA

Click here for research opportunities

Please take a moment to find out how you can help support SARDAA, not only today but every day - at no extra cost to you!!
When you do your at AmazonSmile, Amazon donates 0.5% of the purchase price to Schizophrenia And Related Disorders Alliance Of America.

IT'S SO SIMPLE: just bookmark this link http://smile.amazon.com/ch/33-1213657, start shopping and support us every time you shop.

Texas and Louisiana Friends:
Re-Enroll Your Kroger Plus Cards Beginning August 1st

You can support SARDAA without spending a penny! Register Schizophrenia and Related Disorders on your Kroger Plus Card and they will donate a percentage to SARDAA each time you use your card.

2014 Re-Enrollment Info in English and Spanish (PDF)
Please register online at www.krogercommunityrewards.com
Link to: Schizophrenia and Related Disorders–Kroger Plus Card 90425
Help Change Lives -- Donate Now

Thank you to those who already made a donation - Every contribution makes a difference.

Sincerely,
Linda Stalters, SARDAA Executive Director