



ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS EASTRAND CONVENTION 2025 **NEWSLETTER – FEBRUARY 2025**

East Rand Convention 2025



Greetings AA Fellowship Nationwide,

Only TWO month's to go! We are excited to host you!

This is our sixth update, one of many, designed to keep you, the member, informed about preparations for April.

FUN FACT

Across the globe it is recorder that there approximately I23,000 000 AA groups over a I80 countries with an estimation of over two million members.

What is the purpose of a convention?

The purpose of an Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) convention is to share experiences, strength, and hope, and to spread the message of recovery:

- Share experiences

AA members share their experiences of recovery, and how they are living their lives today.

- Spread the message

AA conventions spread the message of recovery to current and potential members.

- Renew and make friendships

AA conventions provide an opportunity for members to renew old friendships and make new ones.

- Raise funds

AA conventions can be a source of funding for the General Service Office (GSO).

AA conventions often have a theme and may include meetings, panels, and workshops. Some conventions also invite interested friends of AA, as well as members of the clergy, doctors, lawyers, social workers, and public health officials.

Current News

- Pre Registration Forms have been made available contact our East Rand Office or Convention Chair Retha (083 795 2159)
- Speaker Nomination Forms are available contact our East Rand Office or Convention Chair Retha (083 795 2159) (CUT OFF DATE FOR NOMIMATIONS 15TH MARCH 2025)
- Fund raising events have commenced with great success thanks to those who have supported. Fundraising Team are working on upcoming events.
- Donation Booklets are available to help raise fund and can be collected from our East Rand Office. Contact Larry (011 425 1748)
- Pledge Letters are available should you wish to make a pledge monthly or once off to assist with fundraising.
- Program to follow within due course.
- Monthly Newsletter will be circulated after committee meeting



NEWSLETTER – MARCH 2025

A member shares...

SOME FACTS ABOUT THE AA SOUTH AFRICA NATIONAL CONVENTION

The national convention was originally hosted to connect the members of AA within the country for fellowshiping. We get to know members from other provinces and experience shows that no matter where one comes from, we have one common problem. We get to meet people from all walks of life – people who we may not have normally associated with and yet we find a common bond. I have made friends for life at AA Conventions. Speakers at the national convention are nominated from a wide spectrum of members from around the country and there is a rainbow of great shares. I have heard it said that when you attend a meeting you recharge your batteries.

When you go to a convention, it is like receiving a brand new recovery battery. It is a spiritual experience.

Back in the day (and even today), members from around the country travel by car, taxi or bus to attend the convention which means many hours on the road. In light of this it was practical to host this event over a long weekend and it is now tradition that the national convention is hosted over the Easter Weekend to accommodate the majority of those who can to attend. Some friends who I have met at convention accommodate me in their homes when I attend a convention in their region and equally, I host members in my home when a convention is held in my region. Friends have become family.

The first meeting of convention generally starts on the morning of Easter Friday with the official opening of convention being the last meeting on Friday evening. This is an open meeting as Al-Anon's and non-alcoholics attend. This is the first spiritual moment for me. Hundreds of members, family and friends in one room. A meeting with 500 to 1000 people in attendance. Think about joining hands with over 500 people at the end of the meeting to say the Serenity Prayer. It has to be very special moment. Some cry, some pray some smile and everybody has immense gratitude for that special moment.

It gets even better. On Saturday those who have travelled long distances on Friday rest overnight and are there early in the morning long before the meeting starts. They meet, greet, hug, lift each other up or just shake hands when they see the people who they met last year or previous years. As such, the number of people at convention on Saturday swell from Friday. It is just positive energy all around.

Smiles, laughs, hugs and tears of joy. Great fellowshiping you will not get anywhere else.

There are a variety of meetings over the long weekend in different languages and meetings to cater for different needs hosted in different rooms. Then on Saturday after the last meeting, activities are planned for visitors from other parts of the country so that they can be entertained. I know I was a great dancer when I drank and had the most beautiful Bob Dylan voice when I sang. However, when I got sober and did not drink a bottle of courage, my alcohol induced talents seemed to have left me. Yet, at convention, I was most comfortable to start dancing with some encouragement. I whistle today because the Bob Dylan voice as not come back. I am sure you should be able to identify.

After a night of partying with a bunch of sober people, family and friends, I remember the fun and all the things I did the night before. I am not ashamed because today I am happy with who I am. I have no remorse, shame, guilt, fear or blackout. Yep, no blackout. I am up early on Sunday to meet the new and old friends I have made and get to the meeting early for a chat. This is the meeting before the meeting. Oh yes, Sunday is also the Spiritual Meeting. This is another highlight of the weekend. It is an extended meeting and generally has the most number of members attending. You have to get there early if you want to get a seat or if you wish, you can stand for another spiritual moment. I must also be there when we join hands and with the God in me say the Serenity Prayer with all my heart. Shakespeare's words: "Parting is such sweet sorrow" comes to life when we say goodbye. In the early days, there were no mobile phones to take pictures. Today each time convention comes around those memories come back and I want to wear my old tee shirt. That fire in me starts glowing in me. I know I want to be at the national convention in person to feel my kith and kin.

At convention, the host region buys or makes special souvenirs for the event which can be purchased for yourself, friends and those who cannot afford them in order to remember the occasion. I still have my first tee shirt which I bought at the Pretoria Convention in 1999 and fondly remember the bus trip from Chatsworth in Durban to Pretoria in Gauteng. Experience is something you get when you are not expecting it. That was a wonderful trip on the bus. An experience to remember for life.

Ideally, the GSO should be able to survive from stocking and selling literature at a profit to cover their expenses and importantly, also member contributions. However, we do not live in an ideal world and member contributions has proved not to be enough to cover all expenses for the survival of AA as a whole and GSO in South Africa. A decision was therefore taken that each region which hosts the convention should give 70% of their surplus after expenses have been paid to GSO and retain the 30% for the area to carry the message to the still suffering alcoholic. This is a wonderful boost for the area coffers and a great contribution by the region for AA as a whole. Why this decision and the split? Largely because the sale of literature and member contributions is not sufficient for the GSO to run as a going concern. This is also compounded by members sharing pdf copies of literature which has resulted in the drop in sales of literature for GSO. This is an honest program and sharing of pdf books is illegal, theft from the coffers of AA and creates disunity.

The crux of my message, is that the National Convention is not only the responsibility of the host region but also the responsibility of every member to ensure the survival of AA. It is a responsibility to expose newcomers to different people and importantly to show them how much fun one could have without picking up a drink. It raises funds and ensures the unity and continuity of AA. If it is possible every member should attend the national convention in person for a spiritual experience and a sense of responsibility for the health of our beloved fellowship.

Attending a convention is a win, win and win.

·It lets me have a spiritual experience.

·Convention will generate a surplus, and most importantly,

·AA South Africa will survive for us and those to come.



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East Rand Convention
2025



UPCOMING EVENTS

East Rand Convention
2025



East Rand Convention
2025



18 - 20 April 2025

- Fellowshiping
- Shares from all over the country
- Meetings Friday whole day
- Afrikaans & German meeting on Saturday
- Saturday evening entertainment
- Sunday closing meeting
 - Donation draw
 - Auction
- Tea/coffee/sandwiches during breaks on tap
- Food vendors on premises
- Memorabilia for sale
- Literature for sale
- Archive display

Registration opens at
07h00 Friday 18 April 2025
Registration fee
R130pp

Wordsworth High School
4 Wordsworth Road, Farrarmere, Benoni

1st Meeting on Friday starts at 09h00
Convention will conclude around midday on Sunday 20 April 2025

Pre-registration available AA Office 011 421 1748 | aaeastrand@gmail.com

Mugs & Shirts for Sale

Mugs for Sale

SPECIAL OFFER



6 Mugs @ R 120.00
or
R 30.00 each
24 in Stock

Contact :
Darren 074 867 4587



- Toned Mugs R 50.00
(5 in stock)
- Plain Mugs R 30.00
(9 in stock)

Mugs for Sale

SPECIAL OFFER



Contact :
Darren 074 867 4587

Shirts for Sale

SPECIAL OFFER



Both Golf & T-Shirt
R 50.00 each

Contact :
Darren 074 867 4587

Should you require any further information
regarding the Convention please feel free to
contact the Chair
Retha B 083 795 2159

Peace & Blessings until
next time..