



News from the Web...

By: Bob D.

If you've visited the SAA Website in the last month or so, you've noticed that it looks different! And there's some new information posted.

Over the past few years we've been adding more and more things to the Website and the original organization of a single "front" page with links to the individual pages was getting so crowded. The new organization breaks the site into major subjects: Newcomer information, Meetings, the SAA Store, Member info, and "Other Stuff." (Well what to you call the things that don't fit in a neat category?)

The big advantage of this approach is that it's expandable. We can easily add more to one of the major subjects without crowding the front page. In fact the Website now includes all the text of the SAA Group Guide and information on the Lifeline Partners program, which allows you to contribute to SAA on a regular or one-time basis even online.

Behind the scenes there's even more on the new Website. We have descriptions and keywords of each page set up for search engines to index and catalog the pages for easy retrieval by users.

As you might imagine with so many changes there are bound to be bugs. Several members have already sent me e-mail about problems they've had with the site. Most of these have been with browsers that work differently than the ones I used during testing. So far I've been able to fix all the reported problems.

Yet I'm sure there are more bugs lurking in the grass. If you have a problem accessing the site or a particular page, please let me know at: webmaster@saa-recovery.org.

Thanks.

Bob D. SAA Webmaster

COMING EVENTS PLAN TO ATTEND IN YOUR AREA!

Dear PBR,

Just one piece of quick news:

SAA UK is holding its

Annual Convention

Recovery Day

Saturday 17th March 2001

9am to 5pm.

at

Bloomsbury Baptist Church

235 Shaftesbury Avenue

London W1

Anyone travelling through will be welcome to attend. Fee for the day is likely to be £6 + £3 for lunch. Partners, relatives etc. will also be welcome.

All the best,
William

[Ed Note: Thanks William. We're happy to hear about it. Please send a report for April/May PBR!]

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PANORA, IA, ANNUAL RETREAT

SEPTEMBER 21-22-23, 2001

ST. THOMAS MORE CENTER

Dates have been set as above for the 2001 retreat. Mike W. of Davenport, Iowa is in charge and will be announcing program specifics and registration information in future issues of the PBR.

For those of you who want a terrific week-end, just as the one we all had just last month, mark your calendars now for next fall. Watch for future information.

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SAA SIXTH ANNUAL RETREAT **Holy Spirit Retreat Center** **Janesville, MN**

Feb 23rd, 24th and 25th

(Starts on Friday eve for fellowship)

Open to all SAA members

.Cost: \$35.00 (includes meals) or pay what you can afford.

Registrations required: **(Deadline Jan 31st)**

Call Ray O. (507) 835-8256

or Gary R. (507)387-7859

Marty F. (507)835-7256

Send check payable to:

Ray O.

608 9th Ave NW

Waseca, MN 56093

Drop-ins encouraged for only \$10.00 a day. Latecomers welcome!

What to bring? You're own bedding, towels, and washcloths.

Come and join us for fun, games, fellowship, and growth.

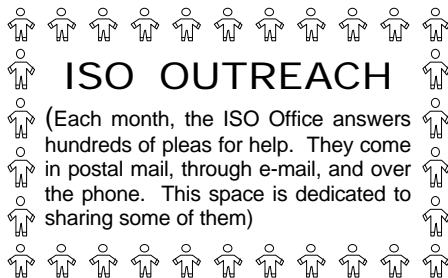
Directions: Go north on the east lake Elysian Road from Janesville about 5 miles, Retreat Center is on the left side by the Big White Cross. From Elysian take the East Lake Elysian Road about 2 to 3 miles and the Center will be on the right side.

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PBR NEEDS MATERIAL !!!!!

There are only a couple items in the files for future issues of the PBR. That can be "scary" but we know that the experience, strength, and hope of many of you will be showing up in our mail soon.

Regardless of your "time in grade", or any other measure of "sobriety", your words let others know where you are now, or where you HAVE been in the past. Let us know about all of it!!!



**No ISO Outreach
column this
issue
Jeff H. writes...**

BOTH/AND THINKING - THE POIGNANT ONE YEAR MEDALLION STORY

In future issues...

- Peter B.-"Stuck in NYC Snow"
- Jeff F.- Prison Outreach Work and needs in NC Area
- Mike L. on Prison Outreach update, Internationally...
- Jim H. -"Step Four..."
- Regular LitCom Minutes
- ISO Board Meeting and Updates on PSA's - "Large Book", 2nd draft work.
- Some Poetry, if we have some of quality.
- Your Story !!!!!

After a year of pain, struggle, and fear you have finally earned your one year medallion. One year of not violating your bottom line acting out boundaries. You find the courage to tell your home group that you would like to have a one year medallion presented to you by your sponsor. Your sponsor acknowledges your efforts, praises your work, and the medallion is passed around the room. Each member offers his or her congratulations and perhaps says a few special words of support and encouragement. Some people even thank you for the gifts they have received from being witness to your growth and sobriety. All that praise and respect are rich and good to hear but you probably have trouble letting it in through walls of shame and self doubt.

Then you go home to your wife or partner. "Honey I got my one year medallion tonight, it was great! Your partner says "Let me get this straight, this means you have been faithful to me for one year? That's all! Fidelity is the least that I expect from you! This only gets you up to zero in my book." And the drama continues to get worse after that. It's clearly not as simple as a one year medallion in AA is it? If alcohol is the drug of choice, you both can celebrate a year of sobriety because we both can be against alcohol. Alcohol is not a part of us and our commitment to each other the way sex is. Alcohol abuse does not feel to our partner like the same kind of very personal betrayal that infidelity or other acting out represents.

The question seems to be who is right here. Am I not justified in being proud to celebrate a year of sobriety? Is my partner wrong to be so judgmental and non-supportive? The bigger reality is you are both right even though your positions couldn't be more opposite.

site. Logically it seems to be an either/or situation. Either I am justified to be proud and happy about a year of sobriety or I should still be ashamed that it's not yet a whole lifetime. How well has your logical mind served you lately in your relationship or your spirituality? This is where the concept of the spiritual "both/and" reality comes in. In logical, physical world situations the either/or paradigm is helpful and necessary. The tire is either flat and unsafe to drive on, or it's sound and safe. Even when its in the gray area, an either or choice must be made. We either put a new set of tires on the car, or continue to drive on the old ones. In spiritual and emotional matters the either/or approach often does not serve us or our relationships. In the one year medallion situations it both true that you have a right to be proud of your accomplishment and it is ok that your partner may see it as a reminder of what was wrong for so long before recovery. You are both right and have a perfect right to your feelings even though your views contradict each other. This is a case of know your audience. Go to your friends in recovery for support here. Your partner can and will be grateful for the many gifts that recovery brings and may be supportive to your recovery in many ways, but the one year medallion celebration may not be one of them. You will have to just let go of that and get your support needs met elsewhere.

The addict often sees things in terms of stark black and white, good and bad. In that world any apparent self contradiction must be "resolved" often in a hurtful win/lose way. In spiritual and feelings situations we sometimes need to allow apparent contradictions to just be. To accept the apparent contradiction not as something to be resolved, but accepted and embraced as part of

the mystery of Divine order. Take the first step as an example. The step says "We admitted that we were powerless over our compulsive acting out and our lives had become unmanageable". Then almost in the next breath the program teaches us to take full responsibility for our actions and make amends wherever possible. Do you hear the apparent contradiction between being powerless and responsible at the same time? Yet we know that we are both powerless over our compulsion and responsible to change our behavior. If we can't accept the both/and way of thinking, even the first step becomes a serious problem. The program helps us to understand that at some point in our acting out ritual, we are powerless to stop. What we have to do is design a series of boundaries that keep us from getting into the powerless state. There is always some point on the way to a slip where we felt the old compulsion coming on but we choose to continue in a behavior or situation which always leads us to acting out. We always have some other choice to make, a phone call, say a prayer, take a walk, or whatever it takes to break the spell. We have to keep ourselves from going into our old rituals, and if we do slip, we have to take responsibility for whatever we did.

Take a moment now and meditate on these questions. Do you have areas of your life that could benefit from both/and thinking? Are you ready to let go of logic in some situations? Do you know someone in the program you would like to share these ideas with and talk them over?

Thanks for listening
Jeff H

SPONSORSHIP CORNER

Coping...

One of the great mysteries in the program is why hardworking newcomers continue acting out despite all their best efforts at abstinence. They go to as many meetings as they can, call program peers and sponsors daily, pray, read the literature and do everything they are told to do--they have completely committed themselves. They look like model SAA citizens, and yet they still act out.

These hardworking newcomers are to be respected for their commitment, and their frustration is understandable. They are used to getting results from their efforts, except of course in their efforts to fight addiction. When they find SAA, they find some hope that finally there is something that will work on the addiction; but they can't understand why they aren't building up clean time as others are. So they ask, "What can I do?" The answer we will explore in this article is, "start over." While the ideas presented below do not fit all my sponsees who have had difficulty establishing abstinence, they have helped some of them. Let's look at how these beginners first approached the program.

They came to a few meetings and started to look at the program; let's call this being at Step Zero. They read the First Step and said to themselves, "Oh yes, I'm powerless." Then they read about a Higher Power in Steps Two and Three and said, "Well, I believe in God; that is no problem." So they decided to use their lifelong Higher Power in recovery. This is where I believe my sponsees have set themselves up for failure because, while still being at Step Zero they have already worked Step Two. What's wrong with this? The problem is not with the HP, of course, but in the relationship with the Higher Power.

Experience shows that addicts "addictionize" all relationships, including spiritual ones. We do things like: use others to fix to our pains and problems, bargain to get what we want and rarely hold up our end of the deal, and lie to ourselves and others constantly. In short, we completely compromise our relationships, and help turn others in our lives into co-addicts. While we can't actually do these things to the Higher Power, **we do them to our side of the**

WITH PERSISTENT Acting Out

relationship with the HP. Truly the addiction defines the spiritual relationship.

This is the compromised spiritual relationship that these newcomers started with at Step Zero. Essentially, they were relying on the addiction to produce recovery. Is it any wonder they didn't stop acting out.

As a sponsor, I encourage new-

Power can begin to define the bond instead of the addiction doing so. A new, healthy spiritual relationship is beginning to grow, though it does not seem like it at the time.

In their unsuccessful approach my sponsees tried to go out and find a Higher Power; what happens when they are at their bottom is that the Higher Power finds them.

I tell them that "Came to believe..." in Step Two can be explained as "We started living a spiritual relationship on God's terms." That only seems to happen after we have been rendered powerless in the First Step. Newcomers can

"These hardworking newcomers are to be respected for their commitment, and their frustration is understandable..."

comers to start over by:

1. Working Step One as if there are no other Steps, including letting go of their old ideas about their Higher Power;

2. Staying with the truth about how the addiction has damaged their lives; and

3. Facing their powerlessness and unmanageability head on. This hurts. Then I encourage further self examination which produces more pain. If they have not already hit bottom, they soon will. At this low point, their defenses no longer work. They start to know and feel that nothing they do will stop the addiction. The resulting hopelessness and despair are exactly what they need to feel--and they need to stay in these feelings.

Within the pain of Step One, they are no longer capable of compromising the spiritual relationship. With them now truly powerless, the Higher

develop a new relationship if they work Step One without thinking ahead to Steps Two and Three. So sometimes starting over is necessary. There appears to be no "easier, softer way" no matter how hard the newcomer is working. For some of my sponsees, this has made the difference between continued acting out and fruitful abstinence. This is one way to help sponsees who are still acting out.

Are there sponsors who would be willing to tell what you do to help them? Will some of the people who have had this problem share what your sponsors suggested you do? Please send contributions, questions or any other feedback to:

Sponsorship Corner
PBR/ISO of SAA
P. O. Box 70949
Houston, TX 77270
or e-mail to: PBR@saa-recovery.org

The Cyber Issue

Greetings, my name is Clark and I am a recovering sex addict. Recently an issue was brought up at one of my recovery group meetings that reminded me of myself when I first began in the program 4 years ago. My life at that time and prior consisted of almost nothing but pornography.

I would frequently rent videos and view peepshows at local adult bookstores. When I got married, I found a new source of pornography, the internet. It wasn't hard to find. It didn't cost anything. I was totally out of control.

I spent hours looking at pictures, downloading video clips. I spent so much time in this, that my day work suffered. I was always too tired from my previous nights acting out to do any real work. I was constantly cranky, irritable and rather unpleasant to be around.

My wife was aware of my activities well before I knew that she was aware of them. We discussed possible ways to deal with my addiction to internet porn. The first thing we did, was take away my access to the internet. She changed the password for our dial up connection and account so I couldn't login anywhere. For the next 6 months, the only way I could access the internet was to have her log me in and watch me like a hawk as I checked my email, or did research for school,

The school of course had a strict policy. If you were caught, you were dismissed with no refund of your \$10,000 tuition charge. I was always very private in my addiction as well and all the terminals in school were in plain view. Throughout school I developed good responsible habits in using the internet in positive ways (email, getting directions, looking up events, shopping, and monitoring my personal finances etc.)

As school was nearing its end and I was to begin my job

search, my wife and realized that I was going to need regular access to the internet while she was at work and I was home all day and alone. We discussed using software that would filter the internet, (these are designed to protect kids from porn

"THE CYBER ISSUE"

"For myself, working the 12 Steps and praying to my Higher Power..." "...helped me to learn to use the internet appropriately."

Clark K.

sites). We found that these programs could easily be bypassed and rendered ineffective. Some were also more restrictive to her in some of the gaming sites that she visited regularly. We found the same to be true of the ISP provider filters.

We spent many days talking and debating on what to do. Our final decision is still in effect today. Currently I do not know our password for logging into the internet, but the password is saved so I can log when I want to. The many months of my supervised access developed in me the good habits of using the internet wisely, and not in a manner that is abusive to myself or others.

It took a lot to re-develop the trust that I had lost with my wife over the internet issue. I am still tempted on the occasion to just "see what's there", but my roots in the 12-steps, and understanding that I could permanently loose the internet as a tool, or hobby has helped me to deal with the urges.

For anyone interested in exploring filtering software, ask your local software vendor for such software. They will have recommenda-

tions on what software is right for you. For ISP filtering check with your local provider. If they do not offer this service, they may recommend services that do.

Please keep in mind, that any tool (like the above) will only work if used properly. For myself, working the 12-steps and praying to my higher power for guidance helped me to learn to use the internet appropriately.

by Clark K.

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HOUSTON AREA INTERGROUP SUBMITS PAMPHLET

The pamphlet submitted by the Houston Fellowships is called:
"Questions and Answers
About Sex Addiction"

By now, your group should have received a copy of the above pamphlet. It has been used, apparently since 1997, by the Houston Groups.

The PBR has written to the contact person for permission to reprint the whole document in one of the next PBRs. So far, we have not had a reply. We understand it is to be submitted for consideration as SAA Approved Literature.

If you haven't seen your group copy, find it. We WILL try to print it next issue if possible.

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POET'S PAGE

Your editor cannot write a poetic explanation of why there is no poetry at all this month. So with as much prosaic acumen as I can assemble, I merely report that there was no poetry on hand at the time of printing that met PBR standards, subjective as they are. Try again. Let it speak to recovery...

Mike C₇ says, "SHARE YOUR SUCCESSES"

If we are fortunate enough to have some sobriety, we might find ourselves without much to "get current" or check-in about in a meeting. After all, if we're not acting out, what is there to say or admit, right?

Perhaps we've also seen group members who seem to talk about anything but their addiction. Work, relationships, projects... "Ok, thanks for sharing, but how is your program going? Fine? Oh, good!"

I have a suggestion for those who have some serenity: share about your program successes. No slips to check in about this week? Great! So what helped to keep you clean and sane this week?

I believe every sober addict has a wealth of experience, strength and hope to share. If you're sober, I challenge you to elaborate on how you attained the sobriety you have. You did earn it. How?

Not sure what to say? Let me offer some ideas about how to share your successes. For starters, do you have a sponsor? Talk about how that helps, and how often you meet or talk. Be an advocate for sponsorship through your own actions.

What about your boundaries? Are they written down? Was that easy? Usually not. Discussing those struggles can be helpful to others. Perhaps you can offer to help someone else use The Three Circles or some other method to help them clarify their boundaries.

Taking a medallion? Fabulous! That's a great opportunity to share about how you got there.

Talk about the tools of the program that help you. What do you do each week to help you stay connected, avoid triggers, and stay sober? You might be surprised to see how many healthy things have become habits for you now. Talk about them, share them. Your strug-

Jeff W., PAST CHAIR OF LITCOM, AFFIRMS PRODUCTIVE RESULTS CONCERNING "LARGE BOOK" WORK RETREAT IN NEW ORLEANS

Dear fellow members of SAA:

I had the privilege of attending the Literature Committee's retreat in New Orleans from Wednesday, October 25 through Sunday, October 29. This was a special retreat convened for the purpose of reviewing the draft text of our proposed fellowship book.

On the first day, many members appeared to feel the pressure of the task before them. The fellowship was spending nearly seven percent of its annual budget on the retreat. The members of the committee had to agree upon specific recommendations on the form, content, and style of a three hundred page manuscript in four days. Tensions ran high and they didn't appear confident that they would complete the task.

The Committee chose wisely to make its decisions by consensus. It didn't appear to the members that voting on what changes to make to the text would reflect a group conscience very well. On each issue, members brainstormed changes that they wanted to see and recorded them on a flipchart. The members would then decide if they agreed with each of the recommendations. If someone couldn't live with a recommendation, they raised an objection. If a consensus couldn't be achieved on a recommendation, it was struck from the list. What remained was the list of recommendations for changes to the text.

By the end of the first day, the committee had generated and prioritized

a list of 39 points to discuss. That left three days to discuss these issues.

What happened over the next three days was nothing short of a miracle. Members of the Literature Committee worked its way through all of the important issues on the list. They came to consensus on extremely difficult issues that the fellowship has been struggling with for years. The Committee tackled such issues as: the role of therapy in the program, how much the book should discuss Alcoholics Anonymous, and the definition of abstinence. They didn't compromise; they represented their regions' viewpoints vigorously. They reached consensus because they listened to each other and found common ground. I have never witnessed a more productive meeting with so much at stake and with such difficult issues to resolve.

It may scare people to think that the Literature Committee is playing such a large role in revising the book. They may believe that committees cannot write books. I would like to reassure everyone that the recommendations that the Committee made were insightful and wise. The book that will result from their guidance will be far superior to what the authors wrote. Armed with a clearer understanding of what the book should be like, I look forward to working on the new draft.

Yours truly,
Jeff W.

gling brothers and sisters need to hear your success story

Not sure what tools you're using? Take a peek at page 4 of the Feb/Mar 1999 issue of the Plain Brown Wrapper. It's available on the SAA web site or perhaps in your group library.

If you don't have a lot of sober time, someone around you probably does. Listen, then ask what they do. "I hear you've been sober for a while; what tools of the program do you find most helpful?" Keep in mind that every person is unique. Your favorite tool may not work for someone else, and vice versa. It also may take some time for a given tool to work. If what you're doing isn't working, try something different.

Let's support each other in discovering the best ways to define our healthy, recovery-supporting behaviors. Share your successes! I believe it's one of the best ways to carry the message.

Thanks!

Mike C₇

LITERATURE COMMITTEE WRITES FROM THE NEW ORLEANS WORK RETREAT

Your Trusted Servants speak from the heart about working together on this very important Fellowship project. The BASIC TEXT [LARGE BOOK] of SAA moves closer to reality...

From Susan W., Co-Chair of the "Large Book" Subcommittee. Susan represents the Pacific South Region.

Well, I probably shouldn't start with the bad part, but what the heck.... Re-entry sucks! I loved spending so much time with the Lit. Comm., and I always love being surrounded by people in recovery. I wish my schedule fit more stuff of this sort into my life. So far, that is a yet. It takes me about a week to adjust to being back home, not surrounded by people in recovery all day, everyday. My 3 or so meetings a week and phone calls in between, is much different than my experience of being at the retreat.

It's amazing to me that I get to work on the Literature Committee. I've had friends who are not in program try to talk me out of service work a multitude of times, because of the effect it sometimes has on my schedule. Staying home on weekend nights to finish reading the manuscript for our basic text, wasn't my first choice of things to do, but I was happy to do it. I would not trade it for anything in the world. I have grown from a shy, scared introvert, to someone who is willing to put herself out there on a limb, possibly look foolish, definitely look opinionated, and feel comfortable and wonderful in the process of the service work I've done in this program. I bring my character defects with me to every meeting, and sometimes even every email communication. I get to work on those defects of character, and make amends when necessary. This service work has helped me work my program better than I would otherwise work it, and the rewards have been worth all the hard work. Today I feel more com-

fortable in my own body, more of the time than I have ever experienced in my life. I create less wreckage, and less often than ever before. I am able to accept - most of the time - that God is in charge, not me. When I forget that, somehow I am reminded as much as is necessary, usually by not having things go "my way". That can happen constantly, or not, but I've noticed it happens more when I need to be reminded of who is really in charge.

Spending 4 days working constantly on the manuscript was really wonderful. I watched myself go into my huge ego, my lack of consideration for others, and in the process, still do my best to represent my region. I have learned to allow others to have their own opinions, even when they don't agree with mine, and to compromise. One thing we talked about while we were working that applies so perfectly to me is that character flaws and all, we can do God's work. I think that is what we did in New Orleans. I hope that when we have a revision that is ready to give to the entire fellowship, that they feel that way about it too. We had arguments, breakdowns and miracles during that four days of work. I know that I grew in that process.

I am grateful to my region for asking me to be of service at this level, and to the Literature Committee for patience, acceptance and support in learning how to be of service at this new level, and in this new way. And for putting up with the fact that I have an opinion about everything and an ego the size of the Goodyear Blimp!

Thanks for keeping me abstinent, one day at a time.

Susan W.

Bonafide Sex Addict

From Joe T., LitCom Representative from the SouthEast Region.

I would first like to thank all of those who have worked so hard to advance the project of the "Large Book." Since the inception of SAA there has been talk of a book that would exhibit our experience and hope as it relates to our recovery, as well as a work that can stand as a framework to help others advance in their recovery. Through the work of many, including our authors, this goal will be accomplished. I would also like to thank the membership as a whole for the funding to carry on this retreat. We understand how much this effort cost in monetary terms and I would like everyone to know we took this responsibility very seriously.

I believe that all involved consider the retreat a success. In the beginning we all felt nervous; nervous about our ability and nervous about how we would interact on such an important project. There were rough spots, but the maturity and understanding of all involved won through. We accomplished our work, sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly, and were able to put into perspective issues that SAA has wrestled with for some time.

The task is far from over, but I believe we have created a framework that will allow for the production of a much needed work.

I would like to personally thank all the members of the committee and look forward to working with all of you.

Joe T.

SouthEast Region

**More personal comments from
LitCom Members-Pgs 8-9-10**

12 STEP SERVICE BRINGS IMMENSE REWARDS, LIT COM STORIES CONTINUE....

From Vic K. Vic is the Alternate Lit-Com Representative from the Great Lakes Region.

[Ed. Note: In taking his responsibilities on this Subcommittee quite seriously, Vic paid his own plane fare and other expenses to be a part of this work. The monetary grant from the ISO Board for this work retreat was sufficient to cover LitCom Members only.]

I attended the Lit Com meeting in New Orleans with some fear and nervousness because I am the member with the least experience on the committee and I am also an alternate. We started out meeting with a check-in and I had shame about explaining what acts got me into recovery. I really didn't know the people on the committee but again my insane thinking was inaccurate. I was where I belonged and made new recovery friends located all over the country. It was a personal gift that aided my recovery.

I had no experience with working with the process of consensus and my thoughts at the beginning of the process was that we were not going to accomplish anything. I was truly amazed with what we did accomplish and I feel privileged to be part of the process. I returned home with increased energy to renew my work on the 12 Step Guide that I am assigned to work on. I did review the Guide using the information about the consensus that the group had on many issues and attempted to incorporate that information into my comments on the guide.

I am aware of the need for balance between committee work, recovery, and my family, social, and personal life. I expect that my sponsors will help me attain some balance. I am very impressed with the quality of people that are involved with this large book process. We, as an organization, are truly blessed.

Vic K
Alternate Representative
Great Lakes Region

"Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to other sex addicts, and to practice these principles in all our affairs."

The above seems to be the very "zenith", perhaps the "apogee", of our recovery process. To paraphrase AA's Twelve and Twelve, "The joy of living" is the 12th step's theme, and "action" is its key word.

As we each improve our conscious contact with a Higher Power, the process of "spiritual awakening" begins to take place. It is a constantly growing process, and is manifested in everything we do, not only within the Fellowship of SAA, but in the totality of our lives. In fact, our lives, however lived, pay tribute to the status of our recovery, and do "carry the message", not only to other addicts, but to the world, that "it works."

For those of you who wonder why all these comments by the LitCom members [and alternate] appear here, it is that they reflect, not only the work of the 12th Step at the level of SAA International Service, but to the work of "living", and in finding all the joy contained therein.

Every emotion and feeling expressed in these messages are those that reflect life being lived. It meets the stress and conflict head on, comes to consensus with humble concern for the overall well-being of the whole, whether all society or of the Fellowship of SAA.

We did not see the heat of battle, the tears, the agony, defeat, humility, concern, or any of the specific give and take of the daily work. But we know that it really did take place. And it bore results! Twelfth Step work at its best!

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From Robert S., LitCom Member,
PBR Editor.

I have great difficulty with the word "miracle." In the context of outcomes, I have faith in the human spirit, and in recovery, with the support of an entire Fellowship I believe in accomplishments thought almost impossible. But also, in the light of that same recovery, if I can hold lightly the tendency to be so pejoratively rigid, I can believe that what was accomplished in New Orleans by 11 members of the SAA Fellowship was "nigh on" to a "miracle."

Growth over these last several years has been observed in the behavior of members serving on both the Board and the Literature Committee as they go about the duties to which they are called. The manner of conducting meetings, based on mutual respect for others, and the ability to make good use of Step 10 has risen to new heights. It could not have been more evident than at this gathering.

As a member of the LitCom only by virtue of my being PBR Editor, I make the observation that your elected representatives, in helping prepare this first draft of the Basic Text of SAA, have taken the most important step toward making it a reality. We will all be the beneficiaries of this important 12 step work.

And thanks so much to the Fellowship, and the Board, for having the confidence to move forward, and committing the funds, to bring us together to do this work. You will not be disappointed. Thank you for allowing me to be a part of this effort. I hope my growth in the program might allow me to continue to serve

Robert S.
PBR Editor, LitCom Member

**See pages nine and ten
for more personal
stories of service...**

Ten members of the Literature Committee, and one of the authors, met in New Orleans from Oct. 25-28, 2000. Our challenge was to coordinate all the input from our regions concerning proposed revisions to the first draft of the SAA basic text. Elizabeth S. provided us with a preliminary agenda which called for arranging our areas of concern in order of importance through the "Delphi" technique, whereby we each voted for our top 15 subjects, with the votes being tallied to produce a list of topics to be dealt with in order.

Chris D. was elected to facilitate the work sessions. There were about 40 areas of concern, and it seemed as if it would be impossible to cover enough of them.

After a brief period where we

Chris D., Meeting Facilitator, speaks to the process, the struggle, the success of the effort !!

struggled to find a process that would work, we improvised a technique whereby members would brainstorm ideas that would be written on flip charts. Then we would ask if anyone had problems with particular items on the charts. We would discuss the issues for a while, allowing enough time to reach closure if possible, but also limiting the time so that we could move on to other topics. We worked on the principle of consensus, which in this case meant that if even one member couldn't live with a particular proposal, we wouldn't agree to it as a committee. The author carefully took notes of all our ideas, especially those on which we reached consensus, and offered his own input as well. Susan W. kept a record of the brainstorming sessions, which is included in this message below. Our Higher Power had a surprise in store for us. For even though we spent over a day discussing each individual Step, and even though it seemed we wouldn't be able to get to everything by the

time the sessions ended on Saturday, we had discussed every major issue before us, and in fact almost every subject on our list. We experienced breakthroughs concerning key concepts of SAA recovery in our text. We achieved consensus on matters that have previously divided us. Through a Power greater than ourselves we took a great step forward towards creating a text for our fellowship. We can only look back on the week with a sense of wonder, and be grateful that we were able to be a part of it.

Chris D.

LitCom Chair

Meeting Facilitator

+++++

From Tony Z. NorthEast Region...

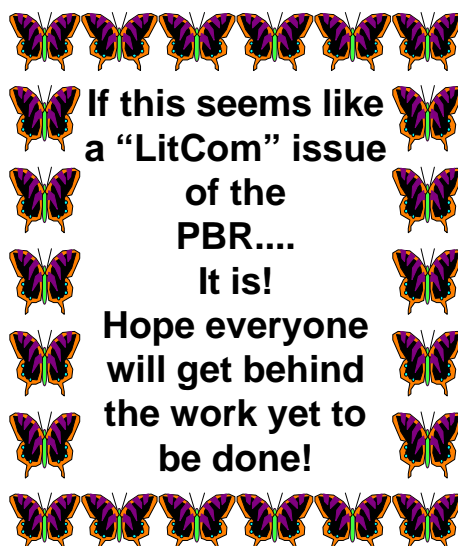
Participation in the SAA Basic Text retreat was a real shot in the arm for my recovery as well as my feeling of acceptance by the other members of the committee. I'm still feeling an enormous sense of pride that we were able to come to agreements on so many important issues relative to our fellowship and program. Our HP and group conscience was at work during the days we spent together and after the first day and a half I never thought we would get through a fraction of the items that were identified. I feel proud to be a part of the Literature Committee that is involved in this historical task. I know that by the time our book is complete it will certainly be a work we can all be proud of and those who come after can use as a foundation for their recovery.

Tony Z
NorthEast Region

From Elizabeth S., Great Lakes Region. Sub-Committee Co-Chair

I hardly know how to sum up this experience. The Literature Committee retreat in New Orleans on revising the draft of our basic text was one of the the most challenging and rewarding recovery experiences I have had since being involved in service work for SAA. Working with such intensity with the other regional reps and the author on refining "our message" was a humbling experience. If nothing else I feel my own understanding of recovery has been deepened and matured by discussing the essence of our program, at depth, with the other participants at the retreat. I hope and believe we will get a great book out of this process. But even if we don't, it was incredible for me on a personal level to be involved with this process. Love and gratitude to all of you who participated and all who made the retreat possible.

Peace
Elizabeth



From John H.
North Pacific Region

More Comments from LitCom Members...

Dear Fellow SAA Members,
First of all, thanks for the opportunity to work on this project. It has been a great experience so far.

The Literature Committee met for four days in New Orleans, drank lots of coffee, and worked on coordinating comments from the various regions. Our goal was to develop a detailed list of changes for the authors to incorporate into the second draft. Happily, we got a lot done, and the authors now have a more accurate sense of what the fellowship wants. In general, the regional representatives that make up the committee asked for some major changes in both the content and structure of the text.

One of the authors was also at

the retreat. He took detailed notes which he would read back to us after we covered each topic, thereby ensuring that he got the our input right. Everyone seemed to realize we were there for serious business and that it was a time to put principles above personalities.

It was a roomful of addicts and so it was never dull. Higher Power was definitely present. There was an amazing amount of consensus regarding what SAA is about. We talked a lot about the idea that SAA offers a spiritual solution to our problem. It will be exciting to see what the authors come up with the second time through. Presumably, the ISO Board will set some kind of deadline for them again. Our guess was that a sec-

ond draft would not be ready in time for the 2001 convention in [Deleted].

Apparently, ISO spent about 7% of its annual budget to send us there and put us up in a hotel. In all honesty, I think it was well spent. The initial draft we received was rough and needed much editing. I am happy to say that the present Literature Committee is focused and is dedicated to seeing SAA publish a quality book that will be useful to sex addicts for a long time to come.

In Love and Service,
John H.,
Northern Pacific Region



From Jerry A.
North Central Region...

How I Spent My Summer Vacation

It was a cold fall morning in Fargo on Tuesday October 24th. I prepared to board the plane for "Norlins Loosiana." I was all bundled up in my jacket and warm clothing. I work at night; I was not happy to be up at 5 a.m. for my flight! We took off in fog but were in Minneapolis 23 minutes later. With an hour and 17 minutes to kill before my connecting flight, I took advantage of the opportunity and read my Large Book again. After all, that was my purpose for making this trip.

In less than 3 hours I was on the ground in the Big Easy. I was the second to arrive and hungry. The only restaurant close by was on a floating gambling casino about a block away. What a place for addicts! The breakfast buffet was delicious but luckily for me, I was low on funds; no gambling. I met with Robert for a while, then bed.

Day 2 arrived and we all met in the lobby. The drive across town to reach the meeting place turned out to be very inconvenient but we made the best of it. We got to work after the mandatory coffee fix and brainstormed until we agreed on a plan of action. This was a long process. As I recall, we actually got through 2 issues by the end of day 2.

Day 3 was very productive; we accomplished a lot of work. I remember

how frightened I was and how inadequate I felt about being able to do the job I was there to do. This was my first real task as a Lit-Com member. I was overwhelmed. I voiced my fears and thoughts of inadequacy but was reassured and encouraged to "act as if" I knew what I was doing.

As it turned out, I actually had a lot to offer on many of the issues. I received much encouragement from other Lit-Com members who found my input most valuable. Several told me that they were so glad I was there. My confidence grew and I took part in the process with a renewed sense of purpose. I grew very close to and very fond of everyone there in the short time I was there.

A friend there promised to show me around New Orleans. I had never been to New Orleans so I was looking forward to the night out. I learned people there love to eat. I tried things I'd never heard of and loved it all. I toured the French Quarter, Bourbon Street and most of downtown. I bought souvenirs and acted every bit the tourist I was. My host was very gracious though and if he minded being a tour guide, he hid it very well. I finally got back to my hotel room after midnight.

We were driving two hours and more to and from our meeting place, and although adequate, was shortening our work day. Because of my work in the hotel business, I was able to convince our hotel to allow us use of a meeting room [at no charge] for the last two days, though I could be there for only a half day. I felt good about that!

Day 4 was my last day there. I had to leave at noon to be back to work that night. The Committee gave me time to present my views and share my feelings on controversy concerning the interpretation of certain words and how they were used in the text. I was personally concerned about the effect these might have on my participation with the Fellowship. I was able to lay my beliefs on the table. I heard other views in a way I had not heard them before. We came to consensus soon. My views did count.

This was very emotional for me. Before it was over I was weeping tears of joy and relief. Day 4 was my favorite day there though it was the shortest for me. A half hour prior to my leaving was spent exchanging good bye's and hugs. I was emotionally drained when I left. Editing sure turned out to be exhausting work. I'll stick to my manual labor jobs thank you.

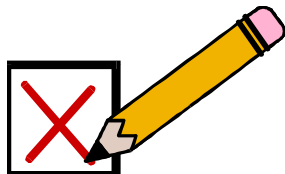
I landed in Fargo 35 minutes before I was scheduled to be at work. I got home, got ready for work and reported on time. I had to really struggle to stay awake that night.

I will never forget the people and the events of those 4 days. My Higher Power got me there and kept me involved. I will be forever grateful to the other members!

And that is how I spent my summer vacation!!

ACT AS IF,
Jerry A.

“SHARING THE PROMISES” SAA 14th Annual Convention May 25-26-27-28, 2001



Convention Highlights

The International Convention attracts SAA members from all over the world! Your SAA friends from [Area Deleted from Web copy] hope you will soon join us for a weekend of sharing, workshops, and entertainment!

Friday May 25

Convention Opening Celebration
Ice Breaker
Keynote Speaker

Saturday May 26

Workshops
Banquet with Speaker
Dance & other entertainment

Sunday May 27

Workshops
Talent Show
Buffet
Speaker and Closing Ceremony

Monday May 28

Brunch
Speaker and Closing Ceremony

Other Convention Amenities

24—hour meditation room
24—hour Marathon meetings
Hospitality Suite
ISO Bookstore

INFORMATION AT THE HEADING OF THIS COLUMN DELETED FOR REASONS OF ANONYMITY

Spacious accommodations featuring large work desk, executive chair, lamp, phones, voicemail, in room coffee, TV, iron and board, hair dryer, smoke detector.

TV channel—blocking available upon request at time of check—in.

Hotel restaurant offers breakfast buffet, lunch buffet, and dinner. Hotel facilities include indoor pool, outdoor sun deck, whirlpool, sauna, and fitness center.

Free hotel shuttle to locations within 1 mile of the hotel.

Make your hotel reservations by May 4

Rates: Single-Quadruple, \$79+tax per night. These rates increase after May 4. Be sure to mention “Sharing the Promises” conference for these special hotel rates.

Travel

Most major airlines service the airport at the Convention City. Fares for hotel shuttle service are typically [Deleted..]



Registration Plans

There are many ways to participate in the Convention! Each plan includes the meals and activities indicated in the Highlights for those days covered by the plan. The fee is per person and does NOT include hotel accommodations. There will be “open events” to which you can invite non-SAA members as shown below.

Register Early and Save!

	Postmarked by:		
	Mar	Apr	At the Door
	31	30	
<i>Plans for SAA Members Only</i>			
Four [4] Day	\$110	\$120	\$130
Two [2] Day	\$90	\$100	\$110
One [1] Day	\$75	\$85	\$95
<i>Meals included: Saturday Banquet, Sunday Buffet, Monday Brunch.</i>			
<i>Your Invited Guest</i>			
Saturday Banquet	\$35	\$40	\$45
Sunday Buffet	\$30	\$35	\$40
Monday Brunch	\$30	\$35	\$40

Registration Services

You can register by postal mail or by phone. If you register by mail, you must include payment by check. If you register by phone, you can pay by credit card.

When you register early you'll receive a registration confirmation packet with a personal phone contact and email address.

ISO INFORMATION

BOARD - LITERATURE COMMITTEE - OFFICE - STAFF - WEB - EMAIL

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South Pacific	Peter B[Sec]	International Development	Bill S.		Susan W.	Thom C.
At Large	Leo H.[Treas]	Oversight/Fund Raising	none		none	none
Inter-Mountain	Carolyn L.	Internet Serv/Internat. Dev.	Steve H.		Chris D	Kenton J.
North Central	Dave B.	Outreach	Lonnie S.		Jerry A	vacant
South East	Francie E.	Interfellowship Relations	Bruce B.	Fund Raising	Joseph T	David G.
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South Central	Judy N.	Literature	Claude E.		Greg G.	Mike L.
North East	Peter M.	Prison Outreach	vacant		Tony Z.	vacant
					Robert S	n/a
					PBR	

Staff

Jerry B. Office Manager
Klaus P. Asst Office Manager

Office Hours [Central time]

[Staffed-M-F] 10:00 AM - 6:00 PM

Phone answered at all times except when staff is on the phone. Leave Message; call will be returned, usually within the hour.

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PBR: PBR@saa-recovery.org

WILL YOU PLEASE? Remember the needs of the SAA Fellowship at the international level? This newsletter was provided for you by those doing their own Step Twelve and Tradition Five work. And by one full time/one half time, paid staff member. There are important programs of outreach, many of which are represented in this publication. Outreach of all kinds, prison and all other. Materials are provided free to those who cannot afford them; i.e., prisoners. It costs dollars to maintain the central facility through which our efforts are maintained. For you who downloaded this, or have received it via "snail mail", we hope you will strongly consider sending your periodic contributions to the ISO office. *YOU* are the answer to total Outreach! Thanks !!

"For the last several issues, the subcommittee working on "A Guide to the 12 Steps of SAA" has offered copies to groups who are willing to provide feedback. We received requests from several parts of the country and from Canada, and have already received extensive feedback from some persons. Thank you very much. We need to pull things together very quickly, so if you are planning to send us your criticisms and suggestions, please do so as soon as possible."

Love,
Harry

["Vic and I are planning a "mini-retreat" on Dec. 30,2000, to make decisions, planning a "final draft" in January for distribution in February [2001] to the LitCom.]

GET FEEDBACK TO HARRY ASAP !! Harry S., 25245 Maplebrooke Dr., Southfield MI 48034 or e-mail harry@eaglesolutions.com.

Now!!

You can order materials and make donations, using your VISA, MC, Discovery or AMEX !!!!