

The PLAIN BROWN RAPPER

THE SAA NEWSLETTER

Carrying the message of hope to the Sex Addict

VOLUME 9, ISSUE 5

JUNE/JULY, 1997

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Literature Committee Challenges, PBR.... And More.....

Well, it sure seems as if it's late again! If there's anything that never seems to change, it's the variation in the time and schedule of publishing, printing and mailing the PBR. And at this point, there is no contradicting much about that. It surely has caused many of us some consternation over the years.

And perhaps that's part of the reason that the Literature Committee this year at the Houston Convention, spent nearly twice the number of hours in meetings that it usually

does at the Annual Meeting. Discussion of, and action on, issues concerning the PBR took most of one whole day. Always there is some heat in such deliberations, but the actions taken, the recommendations to the ISO Board and SAA Fellowship, perhaps have not only produced some light, but some action which will serve to not only stabilize the publication process, but improve the content as well. And when the word "improve" is used, it is not to diminish any previous quality, but here

again to re-establish some continuity and to expand the regular sections expected to be produced.

If you will note the items on the left side of the cover page, it reflects what the Literature Committee expects will be in each issue, or at least as nearly as possible, depending on the availability of news and

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"Living in the Light"... Houston shines, convention another Recovery story!!

If "Living in the Light" wasn't a recovery success for everyone

that attended, then the other stories haven't yet been told. From the

Chair, Mike L., to every last trusted servant vol-

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Highlights....since your last visit to the PBR...!

BRITISH ISLES CHECK IN...LONDON HAS 1ST "RECOVERY DAY!"

'97 CONVENTION DELEGATES EXPEDITE BUSINESS! WOW!

PBR READER RESPONSE TERRIFIC!! KEEP IT UP...!!

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Literature Committee & More...

recovery information in those areas. It is of course hoped that each of you subscribers/readers will continue to provide stories of your own recovery which will be of benefit to others.

Another recommendation that came out of the Convention Meeting was that each issue of the PBR should be expanded, but published on a bi-monthly basis. Since the February issue was missed this year [and the ISO office will extend your subscription date by one month], the publication for the balance of 1997 will be: June/July, August/September, October/November, and December/January. In considering this schedule, the ISO Office Oversight Committee, making recommendations to the ISO Board, has indicated that by the time the Sept/Oct issue rolls around, the

editor must have the copy ready in time for the ISO Office to mail it by the last week of September. And further, that all subsequent issues be so prepared. Because the dates of important Fellowship activity over a given year, this may be a schedule that will be approved for the future. The Board meets in August about this and any other concerns for the PBR.

The Editor position has been temporary since March, and even during the production of this issue. If the Board acts favorably on the Literature Committee's recommendation, Robert S. would be the Editor for next year. The March, April and May issues were done by him as well. More about the PBR later; added subscriptions are encouraged, not only that you should have

your personal copies, but that the economics of this important facet of our recovery be sustained.

In other deliberations, the Lit Com received three [3] pamphlet pieces of literature into the "pipeline" on the road to "Fellowship Approved" documents. These were "A Special Welcome to the Female Newcomer Attending Mixed Meetings", "Sponsorship", and "Suggested Guidelines For Dealing With Minors Attending SAA Meetings".

The "Welcome to Female..." piece was mentioned in a previous issue of the PBR and came via Elizabeth S. of Indiana where her group, and others in Indiana, had given their "OK" to submit it. It was not only well received, but given to many oth-

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Living in the Light...Houston Shines.....

unteer, Houston produced their very best! But to stop at Houston would leave the rest of those from all over the Fellowship out of the recovery story. Perhaps that's why it "takes a whole community", not only to "raise a child", but to share in the spirit of life at every level. Without trying to add or detract from any gathering, whether as a

part of the program or a part of the audience, whether in deliberations about SAA issues or in informational sessions, whether on "one-to-ones" or "in the group", recovery shone brightly at every level, from every presenter, from every participant.

The only drawback at every convention is that there seems so little precious time to

take part in everything that's available. [And as an addict, still recovering, I want to take it all in, eh?]. But we made selections, to choose what we felt we needed at the time, took what we could use, and left the rest. Perhaps if we truly trust our Spiritual

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This letter came the week after Convention. "...Enclosed are three poems I have written. They are being forwarded to you for possible publication in the Plain Brown Rapper. I thoroughly enjoy my copy of PBR. It is a constant reminder that I am not alone. Keep up the good work."

So from Stan J:

POETRY BY STAN J..... RAIN

Wind blows in a darkening sky
Followed by loud thunder and lightning.
Spatterings of raindrops on the sidewalk
Are rapidly covered by the torrents
That follow so quickly.
Dust, leaves and grime are washed away
While plants are watered and cleansed.
Then the sun returns as quickly,
Showing brightly freshened earth
And blue sky wrapped in a colorful bow,
Much the way crying cleanses the soul....

more of Stan's poems beginning on page 5



This was a hand-penned note, apparently submitted at the Convention, perhaps enclosed with an Evaluation sheet. Unfolded, Jerry B. forwarded it to the PBR. There is no name on it, but it is worth sharing with you.

"What a gift to be in one place with so many recovering people. Not addicts, not co-addicts, just recovering human beings. It's eye opening to see that we are actually on the same side...it's not "us" vs. "them", it's "we". To have joint activities, as well as separate, helps to break down the walls we build between ourselves. The open, accepting, loving attitude I feel from so many can only bring unity. As a co-dependent, I for so long, only was aware of the pain I was in as a result of the addict in my life. I was never in a place to feel the pain he must have been in, or to understand how, or why, or how it wasn't directed at me. I'm grateful to everyone who shared their stories at this convention, those who were willing to let their vulnerabilities show, the people who spent immense amounts of time and energy organizing everything. It has been very worthwhile.

//
Anon... but known to God, for sure !![Ed]
Other comments from evaluation sheets....
Concerning "Benefits..."
"I'm not alone or unique."
"I feel safe..."
"Helped me to feel committed to recovery...a part of the Fellowship."
"Put me in touch with humanity."
"Got wonderful recovery tools to take back to my hometown..."
"How did I NOT???"

Concerning what was liked least:
"Not being able to attend all the workshops!!"
"Not long enough to know everyone."
"Lack of free time between workshops/speakers."
"Cost is a factor..."

Other:
"Best ever facilities and hotel services !!"

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Literature Committee & More...

ers at the Convention. If you want a copy, get in touch with the ISO Office.

The "Sponsorship" item came from the Fargo [ND] Thursday Night SAA group, through the Northern Tier Intergroup [North and South Dakota], with the latter's



approval.

Perhaps the item which drew some of the "heated" interest was the "Minors..." pamphlet. This came from Michigan where experience is well founded in this area, especially through their extensive "prison outreach" program. This item was presented to the ISO Board who sent it to the LitCom for refinement and subsequent submission to the

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Living in the Light...Houston Shines.....

selves, we know at the deep level that we were where we ought to have been, doing what we needed to do at the time, and taking what we had to have, whether conscious of it or not.

Since COSA was having their annual function at the same time, and at the same place, there was sharing and interweaving of

whole Fellowship.

The process of submitting literature is not so difficult; mostly it just requires a "Champion". This could be an individual, such as a Delegate to the Convention, a group, an intergroup, or a subcommittee of persons working on a specific issue. The process from the point of submission to "Fellowship Approved" can be lengthy, two years or more; since it must be presented at the Convention for two consecutive years. The first year to accept it, the second to ratify this acceptance. Changes must go through the same process. The Literature Committee appoints "subcommittees" to work on each item, or set of issues, during a given year. Sometimes it takes longer.

The new Chair

of the Literature Committee is Dave R. from the South Central Region. Vice Chair is Frank A. from the Pacific Region. Secretary is Louis D. from the Southeast Region. Jeff W. is from the Great Lakes Region and is again the "Large Book" Editor. Norman S. is the member from the new Intermountain Region. Peter S. is from the Northeast Region. Robert S. is the North Central member. Alternates are: Kim C.[NC], Tom S. [SC], Elizabeth S.[GL], Marie L.[IM], David B.[Pac], and John L.[SE]. [NE Alternate is vacant. At present there are no "at-Large" Literature Committee members.

Commended for their 12 step service, and who are outgoing were: Scott B., former chair, South Central Region; John R., former

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of energies that connect, and it is as apparent as an electrical storm. It is heard, and felt, and seen. Whatever our problems of the moment, our differences of direction, as individuals, or as group members, there is yet a bouyancy which seems

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Literature Committee & More...

Northeast Region member [now on the ISO Board].

SUB COMMITTEES

Each year at the Convention, various "sign-up" sheets are passed around at various meetings, caucuses, and other gatherings. This year was no exception and sign-ups were many. The "Sub-Committees" for the Literature Committee [where the real work of the year gets done!] are really ALL made up of volunteers. A "LitCom" member is [generally, but not always] the chair of the group. They are being listed here for two reasons. First, so that you can connect the work done [or to be done] with the names of the persons who do, or have done it. It also encourages new personal friendships and associations with other fellowship members. Some of your fellow-group members may be involved. The second reason is so that you

ALSO can see how easy it is to be a participant in 12 step service at a point beyond your home group or inter-group. All you have to do is pick your item of interest, let the ISO office know of your desire, give Jerry B. your contact information, and a Trusted Servant will contact you about the work. Believe it! It adds new dimensions to recovery! Try it!

The following list are the "new sign ups" with a few "oldies" mixed in. Where the "Chairs" are not identified, they are yet to be selected, appointed, or to volunteer:

PBR OVERSIGHT: Frank A., Elizabeth S., Tom S.; SPONSORSHIP PAMPHLET: Robert S.[chair], Eliza-

beth S.; EDITING THE LARGE BOOK: Jeff W. [chair], David B., Norman S., Elizabeth S., Tom S.; QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS [for professionals]: Norman S., Jeff W., Scott B.; WORKING WITH MINORS: Jeff W. [chair], Louis D., Mary R., Ellen F.; WOMEN'S PAMPHLET: Elizabeth S., David B., Louis D., Robert S., Ellen F.; GUIDE TO THE TWELVE STEPS: David B., Jeff W., Tom S., Bruce B., Francie E.; EDITING SPANISH LITERATURE: David B., Humberto V., Mike L.; INTERNET [RECOVERY: [Dave R. says there are too many names to list here but that for others who want to help, send your name, phone, e-mail or web address to the ISO office so it may be forwarded to "WEBMASTER". Or you may write to: SAA

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Living in the Light...HOUSTON SHINES !!

to bring us all to that higher level of companionship.

This is what the SAA Fellowship is all about, and this is what our senses gathered in at Houston, what we all had opportunity to share.

For those who

No man's head aches while he comforts another
Italian Proverb

have yet to attend such an event, put a few shekkels away each week, and enjoy in coming years, some recovery at the next level, in the company of others from far away places, with gifts to bring you, and accepting yours as well.

[See '97 Convention Program, Page 10] [440 words]

FROM THE DES MOINES TUESDAY NIGHT GROUP..

In calling Carol T. the other night about her feedback letter on Sponsorship, we talked a bit about many things.

Among them was conversation about the PBR in general and concern at the level of the Lit Committee about how valuable the PBR might be to the Fellowship.

Carol said, "You know, our group uses Topics at least once a month, and for these, we always use an item from the PBR."

Sometimes we take on worries that are best left to our Higher Power, eh?

Editor.....

Retreat Information

Just talked to Jim J. the other night to check on the Panora annual retreat to be held again [about the 8th year!] at the St. Thomas More Center just west of Panora, Iowa on Friday night, Saturday, and Sunday morning, the 26th, 27th, and 28th of September, 1997. Mike W. and Kenny H. seem to be at the helm for the Davenport, Iowa and "Quad Cities" groups who are this year's hosts.

This retreat brings persons from Iowa, Illinois, Minnesota, Nebraska, South Dakota, North Dakota, Missouri and Kansas. Each year the host team rotates. In addition to this year's host area, there have been hosts from the areas of Kansas City, Omaha/Lincoln, Sioux City, Sioux Falls and DesMoines. The more dispersed groups give assistance to their primary area.

All "S" fellowships participate and all are welcome. This includes all the "Co-" members as well since there are always programs/meetings for everyone. Recovering couples have found times for excellent meetings and programs too.

The setting is in the quiet lush Iowa hills and the time of year is invigorating. There are dormitories for men/women; a large central facility for eating and fellowship, with multiple rooms for meetings and programs. What you will need is a sleeping bag/pillow [beds/mattresses furnished], personal gear [including jacket, etc. for cool nights], snacks for sharing, and an enthusiasm for recovery.

It is expected the fee will again be \$50.00

cont. Page 5, Panora

MORE...POETRY

by.....Stan J....

RECOVERY

The frozen rock sits quietly alone
 Having died millions of years ago.
 I wanted to be like that rock,
 Cold, unfeeling, isolated and alone.
 I couldn't.
 Life kept pushing,
 Pushing into the core of my heart.
 Spreading warmth ever so slowly,
 My body ached as the warmth grew,
 Feeling all the buried pain of the past.
 Life had started to overtake the cold.
Please, just leave me alone.
I don't want to hurt.
Just let me die.
 Then I saw a flock of geese
 Winging their way across the sky
 And I was intrigued by their beauty.
Don't tease me, just let me go!
 I was handed a budding blossom.
 Holding the flower in my hands
 I nurtured it with flowing tears,
 Wanting to hold on to it forever.
 But the flower eventually wilted,
 And I wanted to die too.
See, a rock doesn't feel like this!
 I started to withdraw and turn colder
 When I saw a deer in a field,
 Reversing the hardening frost...//



**SAA Fellowship Delegates:
 ATTEND TO YOUR BUSINESS-WITH GREAT DISPATCH !**

Recovery is wonderfully apparent at many levels within the SAA Fellowship, at the "home group", Intergroup, retreats and gatherings, and yes, at the Annual Convention Delegate Meetings. There are many tales of days past, when the heat was higher and the sweat was over some of what now might be considered "small stuff". Perhaps it wasn't "small", but maybe it was about items not well attended to, or not organized or compartmentalized where specific persons were able, or authorized, to "handle" them. These tales reflect some of the pain many went through to bring the Fellowship to where it is today. It has been through the "agony of process" that life seems more well-placed, or perhaps it has to do with the "issues of life" being more well-placed.

So it is with little surprise that the delegate meeting this year closed with much time to spare, moving business well ahead of the planned agenda schedule. And was closed with feelings of accomplishment,

that there are no immense, over-riding issues left for future delegates to wrestle with at some future time. Not that "easy street" is where we live, or a place to stop and rest on our laurels. It's just that maybe next year's delegates can deal with next year's issues, and not have to re-hash any old ones.

Penny K. acted as Chair, first as temporary, then as elected, in guiding the issues through the channel. The pre-planned business procedures in the Convention Call were adopted, Harry S. was elected parliamentarian, and away it went.

Reports were received on: Procedures for submitting additional business, 12 Steppiing and Anonymity, the need for a Professional Statement, Fellowship Direc-

tory updates, Adaptation of the 12 Concepts of World Service. There were also reports on literature dealing with: Women's Issues and Addiction and the Internet. The Annual Report came in parts: Penny K. on the ISO Board, Alex P. on Fund Raising, and Mark N. on Interfellowship Relations. Bob R. reported on International Development, Jerry B. on the ISO Office. Scott B. reported for the Literature Committee and the work done, and in progress. Arnold D. continued with Prison Outreach, and Alex P. on Office Oversight Committee and Finances. Peter B. and Harry S. m/s to accept, and they were accepted.

Some years back the ISO Board felt the need for Annual Audits. Former Delegates brought it into the By-Laws and it is now a firmly implanted process in

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**cont. from Page 5.
 LIT COM.ANDMORE**

Webmaster@saa-recovery.org. Tell Bob D. you want to help.

The next Lit Com teleconference meeting will be August 17, 1997, 5:00 PM CDT. If you have any business to be noted, send it c/o the ISO Office. ###

SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE!
 Watch for it in the next PBR. Something new, something innovative, something attracting [not promoting]. Keep an eye out for this item from the NC Region.

Continued from Page 4, PANORA, IOWA RETREAT
 September 26-27-28, 1997

which will include everything except clean up, and that is done by all pitching in with a little elbow grease on Sunday morning. Seventh Tradition will be taken as well. It is wise to pre-register so that food services are sure to be adequate.

You can receive information or pre-register by writing to the DesMoines SAA, P.O. Box 5222, DesMoines, IA, 50307.

This writer has been there several times. It's a place and a time that produces deep

spiritual experiences, promote fellowship/friendship, and re-attach us to ourselves. Come; and you'll come again!

P.S. Just talked to Mike W. who said to remind you to bring your Teddy Bears or other stuffed animals, and bring hugs a bunch since they are like baseball cards, traded often, and collected by everyone. Program is being finished this week.

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DELEGATES ATTEND TO BUSINESS.... AND HOW!

maintaining control of fiduciary responsibilities of the SAA Foundation through the ISO Board and Office Oversight Committee. Alex P., the 1996-97 Chair of the Office Oversight Committee, presented it, Robert S. and Peter B. m/s to accept. It was accepted.

The "Delphi" technique of prioritizing business was brought to the Board at the Mid-winter meeting in Chicago in 1993, and was found to work so well, it has been integrated, with increasing success, into most areas of ISO business, including the Literature Committee, especially when there are large numbers of agenda items. This method was explained by Bob D.

Jerry A., Fargo [ND] delegate, on behalf of all others in the flooded Red River Val-

ley this Spring, requested permission to circulate an appropriate greeting card to the SAA group in Grand Forks, ND, all members of which, to our knowledge, were, at least for a time, driven from their homes. Artie G., now in Virginia, formerly of the Grand Forks Group, seconded the motion. Overwhelming affirmation was received!!

As per motion and second by Robert F. and Patty F., and carried, the AA pamphlet "12 Concepts of World Service illustrated" will be given to each future delegate at Convention Registration.

The issue of providing a "champion" for each proposed pamphlet at future delegate meetings was defeated by vote. A vote taken thereafter determined the defeat was by "substantial

consensus".

On the issues of ISO Board and Literature Committee term limitations, by clear majority By-Law changes were approved which will now limit terms to six [6] consecutive years.

The changes must be ratified next year to be in effect.

The 1998 Budget was passed by unanimous vote. Two "at-large" ISO Board members were unanimously elected to serve for one year each. These were Claude E. from Houston, and Mark N. from Michigan. Mark's work is to be primarily directed to Interfellowship Relations. Mark has held meetings with those from other fellowships this year. More will follow and be reported in the PBR.

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FROM BEHIND THE WALLS.....

A narrative by Bart Y., forwarded to us by Jim C, ISO volunteer

FROM BEHIND THE WALLS

FROM SHAME TO GRACE

That's what I have truly learned in SAA. You see a little over 4 years ago I found SAA from another 12-step program and even though next month I will be clean and sober for 8 years, I only have 18 months of being what my sponsor calls "emotionally sober".

That's where the insanity stops running around in my head. Two times in the

past 4 years I have taken the 3rd step and worked it backwards. "I turn my will and life over to the care and direction of Bart and not God" and for that I have been wearing white for almost 2 years now in [name of prison] Day Care.

But by the grace of a loving and caring God, I do not hurt today nor am I not hurting anybody else. I needed to come to prison so I could understand what others go through so I can be a better sponsor. I needed to know more about me and how to

accept responsibility for my actions. That's what Step 6 teaches me. And Step 7 helps me heal with God on the inside of my heart.

You see I am also a recovering sex offender who has not acted out over 21/2 years and for an addict like me one day is a miracle.

I love recovery. I love the 12 Steps. For the first time in my life I can say I

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The work of a "Trusted Servant in the SAA Fellowship at any level is heavy at best, and can be crushing when the stakes seem higher.

Mike L. had a challenge as Trusted Servant. Here's the story.....

Living Through "Living in the Light"

by Mike L., Convention Chair

Since first coming into SAA in May 1991, I have had several chances to stretch myself. I have not always looked forward to going through the challenges those opportunities have presented; still, I always found later that I was glad I took the risk.

When the "Living in the Light" convention planning committee first met, on July 15, 1995, the question came up, "Who wants to chair?" I gave the answer that has gotten me into trouble on more than one occasion: "I'll do it if nobody else wants to." Since nobody else did, I had the job.

We were the first organizing committee to have two whole years to plan our convention, and we met on a monthly basis. While the other committee members were learning their tasks, I was busy learning how to conduct planning meetings. I discovered I could focus the meetings by using a skeleton written agenda with room for insertions. This written agenda enabled us to get all our business done within the two-hour time frame I envisioned for each meeting.

Still at first I experienced a lot of fear around chairing those meetings, and I remember feeling some relief when I canceled an early meeting because of the threat of icy driving conditions. These conditions did not materialize, it turned out, and I used that time to confront my fears instead, which began to lesson after that point.

During the con-

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cont. from page 6, Mike L.

vention, I found I wanted to enjoy it and the people who were there while overseeing the goings-on. At first I thought I was asking too much of myself, but I discovered that by allowing myself the opportunities for fellow ship that arose, I could indeed participate fully in the convention while performing my role as chair.

Of course, sometimes this meant doing things at rather unusual hours, but Higher Power enabled me to do just that. After attending the Saturday night dance, and expending a lot of my extra energy from the weekend on the dance floor, I had a chance to visit with the DJ, a good recovering friend, while helping him pack his equipment. Just when I was about to call it a night, I stumbled onto another recovering sex addict, wanting to talk. We sat talking in the lobby for a long while. He and I developed a genuine closeness because of the situation and even the hour, especially in contrast to my old unsuccessful ways of looking for closeness at those same hours.

Another blessing I received was the chance to let go of three old resentments. In each case I had the chance to use my position as chair to help the person against whom I had been carrying the resentment, and that's when I let each one go. I felt Higher Power was trying to teach me something of value in those experiences, and I did pay attention.

I was grateful to receive a number of thank-yous that weekend. However, the most meaningful were the ones from the two men who thanked me for taking time from my duties to share with them, because I heard acknowledgment and appreciation of both the ways in which I was trying to participate in the convention.

I discovered that weekend that I actually saw the conference as a contin-

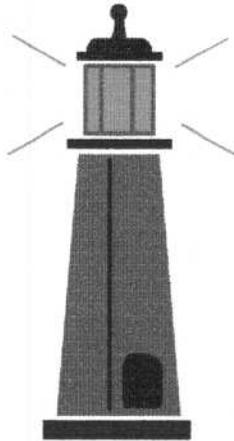
cont. on Page 8, Mike L.

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DELEGATES...

Claude E. was the first Chair of the Office Oversight Committee following the move of the ISO office to Houston. As a continuing member, he remains involved in weekly service to the ISO Office.

The vote to adjourn the Delegate Meeting was Unanimous!!

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Is your beacon turned on ???

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FROM BEHIND THE WALLS...Bart Y.

the 12 Steps one day at a time. Sometimes understanding my need is not enough, but at times when I feel sad, depressed, lonely, angry, lost confused and in pain, it only takes a few moments to realize that God wants me to feel those feelings. That he is with me all the way, because "guess what?" nobody has ever died feeling feelings. We might wish we could, but we don't because that is when God really carries us.

If you look at Step

**Letters from London...Friends from abroad send letters/tape, to tell of their first ever "RECOVERY DAY" ..
...WELCOME TO THE PBR !!!!!**

England writes.

Jerry B. at the ISO office forwarded to the PBR the following letter, with two others, a tape, and the "Newcomers Pamphlet" from our fellows abroad. For those of you who were at the "Circle of Hope" convention in Minneapolis in '96 will remember the inspiring talk given by Derek B. from Scotland, who is mentioned in this letter.

From the London SAA Intergroup, BM Box 1457, London WC1N 3XX [England], Telephone 0181-442-0026.

Dear Jerry B.,

We in the UK-specifically the London Intergroup- would like to share some of our experience, strength and hope with you all in the USA, as this year we do not have the resources-human or financial-to send someone to the annual conference.

Public recognition of sexual addiction is growing over here. The growth is slow, but it is encouraging. Most Press reporting is positive, but not all of it, alas.

We are still a small fellowship, but we continue to grow: last year saw the founding of two new meetings, and we hope to increase our attraction with an entry in the London telephone directory-a move that has led us to change the number of our an-

swerphone to [above].

It is great when visitors drop in on our meetings; you are always welcome. Apart from groups in Glasgow and Aberystwith, there are now six meetings in the London area: Monday evening, Wednesday evening, Thursday lunchtime, Thursday evening WOMEN, Thursday evening OXFORD, and Saturday evening.

Although the fellowship is small, in London at least we do have access to the meetings of other "S" fellowships, SLAA and SCA. And several of their regulars came to our first ever SAA Recovery Day on March 16 [1997].

"Living in the Present" was an all-day event that attracted 43 people. One of our earliest members gave a Chair, and we had workshops on Bottom Line Behaviours, Coming Out Of Denial, Step Groups and Sponsorship Solutions, and Enjoyment-as well as a Women's Group and a question and answer session for Necomers and partners. We enclose two personal accounts of the Day with this letter. Derek B. came down to the event from Glasgow, and stayed on to share his experience of last year's Con-

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dependent. Step 1: I Can't. Step 2: He Can. Step 3: I think I will let him.

So SAA thank you for being there and if nobody told you today they love you, let me be the first. Because guess what everybody; I found out that God loves us all.

Bart Y.
T.D.C.. Behind the Walls
Permission granted to print

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London speaks to the PBR..

vention with our Monday Meeting.

As you know, much of our twelve-stepping is done through the Newcomer's Meeting which precedes the Monday Meeting. We have just recently adopted a new "Welcome to Newcomers" pamphlet which we hope will serve as a tangible gift to Newcomers, to supplement the 21 questions and Three Circles, and also draw attention to the Tools of the Programme[which Monday has no time to share on] and encourage their use.

We are also interested in the new pamphlet for Women that has been produced in Indiana. Women are welcome at all our meetings, and many do come-but only one or two at a time. One of the great things about "Living in the Present" was that 10 or more women fellowship members attended. The new Women's Meeting is strong as well, and a second one may start soon.

We have discussed the proposed International Organisation of SAA and have agreed with Derek B. in Glasgow to hereby apply for OUTREACH STATUS on behalf of the BRITISH ISLES [UK and EIRE]. We would like to know more about what Sponsorship implies, and which region would sponsor us.

Thanks for the literature and tapes, Jerry. It is good to feel the sense of connection to others that the workshop tapes bring, and good to hear Pat C. and

Jean O. talk about the time that SAA was a fellowship of a few people in a small area: we can relate to that.

Our best wishes to everyone at the Houston Convention.

Yours in Recovery,

The London Intergroup

[We enclose a tape of this letter and two personal accounts of our Recovery Day, along with a copy of our WELCOME TO NEWCOMERS pamphlet.]//

E. note: The two letters mentioned above will be in the next PBR.

[Unfortunately, this mail arrived AFTER the Houston Convention, hence no one got to hear the tape as the London group had wished. We hope London, that you will send another for next year in Virginia. Better yet, send a few people !!! Ed.]

LATE BREAKING ITEM !!

Elsewhere in this publication, i.e.: on page 11, about the Literature Catalog, I [Ed] find that in talking to Jerry B. it is in the re-printing process and will not be available until the September issue when it may then be mailed with the PBR.

We hope this causes no problem at this time. The PBR will continue to highlight various literature pieces as the writings and submissions, stories, may indicate are more useful...Ed

COMING.....

We've had a lot of good letters recently. Some in response to other articles, some for other reasons, each their own. Just to assure you there is a "pipeline" and there are energies running through it, we'll note a couple items here which will be in future issues, as close to this one as we can place them.

PRISON RESPONSE.....

Larry T. wrote in April. It's rather long, but we'll get it all next month.

GENERAL.....

1. "Bo Peep" next month
2. "The Addiction-Irving N. next month
3. "...Letter to my Husband-Juliana next month
4. Poetry, "Home"-Stan J.
5. Complete list of all Convention programs now on tape-next month.

ISO BOARD REPORT FROM CONVENTION...

Next issue sure....

LIT COM AND SUB-COMMITTEE UPDATES, MEETING REPORT FROM AUGUST.

Next issue sure....

These are just a few of the items on hand and/or coming in which you can look forward to in coming issues.

We also want more items from the Fellowship...AND PLEASE....

Keep them at or about 600 to 750 words, OR..Write a "serial". We'll find ways to deal with all of it. This PBR is about YOU! Letters to the Editor, ABOUT ANYTHING, is welcome. As long as it carries some relevance to RECOVERY.

The PBR Oversight Sub-Committee would also like your feed-back about anything you'd have to offer to improve the content, and the circulation, of the PBR. Send everything to the ISO office, Jerry'll deliver it. Blessings!

cont from Page 7, Mike L.

uum of the process we had been going through since July of 1995, rather than as a big four-day event standing alone. I remember offhandedly saying to somebody on that Saturday, "It's almost over now"; his response was "What do you mean? It's just starting." Well, to me it was almost over, because I was thinking in terms of the two years, rather than the four days.

The entire process was actually a very emotional one for me. The main reason I asked to address everybody that last Monday morning was that I needed to tell that process good-bye. I had discovered that weekend that, after two years of planning for it, I really had become very attached to the conference. Addressing the group that morning was my way of thanking it for all that it had done for me.

The three SAA conventions I have attended are now history. In a way, though, none of them will ever be over for me, thanks to the many cherished memories I have gathered at each one. But my experience as chair of "Living in the Light" guarantees that it will remain in a special corner of my heart.

#####

The following article was sent to the PBR by Dave R. who got permission from Rick L. to submit it for publication.

Rick writes: I have become numb to what used to cause me pain. As the addiction grows stronger, my fear is over come by elation and expectation. Expectation in finding my "pot of gold at the end of the rainbow." Elation with each new picture revealing

cont. on Page 9, Rick

continued from page....10

FEEDBACK...on SPONSORSHIP.....

my HP for allowing me to see such a gift. I highly recommend getting a sponsor and then becoming one.

The Big Book says it well: "Life will take on new meaning. To watch people recover, to see them help others, to watch loneliness vanish,

to see a fellowship grow up about you, to have a host a friends-this is an experience you must not miss. We know you will not want to miss it. Frequent contact with newcomers and with each other is the bright spot of our lives."

I guess that is all I have to

offer in the way of my ES&H. I Hope this helps somebody.

Peace and Serenity,

Joel D.

more than the last-the perfect 10. But the perfect 10 never opens on the screen. Because "expectation" doesn't allow it to occur. For each unopened JPG brings the excitement, the rush that this will be the last one

What is that one? strange, I can't explain it in words but I'll know it when I see it. Strange, of the thousands of pornographic pictures I have seen over my lifetime, I still haven't seen the perfect 10. Do you know what's even more strange, I haven't been able to fantasize it either. Even in my minds' eye, the perfect 10 has never resurrected. The perfect 10 cannot be visualized because my addiction will not allow it.

I have repressed my feelings at the moment. I am numb to the guilt, shame, anxiety, depression that this addiction produces. Why? Because I have come as near to that "pot of gold" as I am going to get. At the moment I am related by my venturing into restricted territory. My dream come true. My long journey nearly completed. My life-long quest nearly accomplished. In seventh heaven, you bet. Enjoying life at the moment, you bet. No more substitutions. No more hunting for the perfect 10. I'm there. The sad but true part is like always, I only think I'm there. When the rush wears down, I will once again commence the journey, beginning the quest search for the perfect 10.

It always happens this way. When am I ever going to learn?

###

FEEDBACK...DON'T ALWAYS LIKE IT; IMPORTANT FOR SUSTAINED COMMUNICATIONS: SPONSORSHIP...

In the March issue of the PBR, we asked for some feed-back on issues of **SPONSORSHIP**. We received three responses, printed here.....

Editor PBR,

Ladies and, or gentlemen: I am writing in response to an article "Sponsorship Question" in the March, 1997, PBR.

I have been in 3 12 step groups and have never sponsored or been sponsored.

I did however, have a "mentor" in EA [Emotions Anonymous]. She helped me stay in the Steps and Traditions and taught me much about [EA].

I want to be sponsored in SAA along these lines:

Checking in: Am I learning new skills?

Am I taking time for myself? Am I able to love or at least care for myself and others?

Am I taking time for fun?

I would like to return the same type of checking. I hope this is helpful.

Joyce S. [Indiana]

Definition: "alexithymia"....

In GREEK

"a" for lack

"lexis" for word

"thymos" for emotion

"..lacking words for feelings. Perhaps unable to express emotion rather than absence of emotion"...

-Emotional Intelligence..p 50

May 14, 1997

To the Editor,

This letter is in response to your questions about sponsorship. Being a female in mostly male meetings left a void as far as sponsorship goes. I could not ask a man to sponsor me. At the 1996 International Convention I heard several women talk about having a gay male sponsor and how well it had worked for them. I came home and felt pitiful, worked my 5th Step with my therapist and kept sliding in and out of sobriety. I whined about no sponsor but never did ask God to take care of this for me.

This year I bottomed out on compulsive sexual behaviors I had successfully controlled even before I came into the program 2 years ago. I was scared and felt I had no where to turn. I kept going to meetings and I began to understand that I was working the program and it was not a we effort. No where was I turning to my Higher Power for help. I really needed help. Recently we had a brother from another state move into this area who was working a solid program. He firmly believed that by working the steps, recovery was

possible and shared at every opportunity what working the steps meant in his own life.

I asked him to be my sponsor. I had hoped that because he was sober and seemed to have found what I desperately was seeking but also that he was gay that this would work. He agreed to meet with me and at the first meeting he was totally unimpressed with my past step work and the first thing he told me to do was get up every morning and make my bed and get on my knees and pray for God's will and the strength to carry it out. So we began our sponsor/sponsee relationship. My best friends can not believe that I would actually do anything a man told me to do!

I also heard at the 1996 Convention that when the student is ready the teacher will come and that theory holds true for me. Every day since having a sponsor has been a sober day. I will have 90 days of sobriety soon, the most I have had in recovery. I was able to work a formal first step in group with his guidance. I was able to give an

continued on page

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DEAR GOD....A letter from Jim L...

Note to our readers: This article is going to be the first "serial" we're trying since many of our submitted pieces are longer than 400-500 words. How about your feedback??

Jim writes: I'm sending the enclosed article/letter to God I wrote for publication in the PBR. If you can use it, great. Let me know if you need me to modify it in any way...[No, we're gonna try it this way!!]

Dear God,

I'm the angriest I've been since I've been abstinent this time around. Here is what happened maybe you can help me sort it out. I've been recently placed on leave of absence due to charges of

of her children for her to call me. I think there was more than a hint of irritation and anger in my voice.

In truth, I am outraged and this "theme" seems to be coming up again and again recently. Somehow I feel putoff, abused, unimportant, unprestigious, unnecessary. I hate that feeling!!! Then, my wife, clearly upset by my reactin and attitude, decided she needed to convince me why I was wrong in how I felt. She says:

continued on page 10

continued from page...9

FEEDBACK...on SPONSORSHIP.....

anonymous television interview and help to prepare a three day television news report on sexual addictin with his support. As I prepare to work my third step I know that having a sponsor is a gift from my Higher Power. My trust level for men has been a 0[Zero]. My ability to admit to any man I need something from them has been a 0[Zero]. Working with my sponsor is helping me to change those long held attitudes.

Every day God continues to fill me as I continue to empty out the garbage and unwillingness I have had all of my life to follow His plan for my life. Each day is a gift and I now understand better how this program of recovery works.

I hope there will be a day when I can return all that my sponsor is doing to help and encourage me. Only when I give back will I continue to get well.

Thank you for this opportunity to express my thoughts about sponsors. Keep up the good work with the PBR. I look forward to every issue.

Sincerely,
Carol T.
[Iowa]

Dear PBR Editor,

Hello, my name is Joel D. and I'm a sex addict. I'm writing in response to your "Sponsorship Question" section of the P.B.R., volume 9, number 3. I entered SAA on May 2, 1996. I didn't get a sponsor until late August of that same year, after the realization that I couldn't stay sober on my own. I would have never picked this person as my sponsor because of my own fears: he was dressed in business suits, drove a sporty car, and had an air of self-assuredness. One night at group, he announced that he was available for sponsorship. I heard this, but I didn't get enough courage to ask him until two or three weeks later. I was such a newcomer!

To my surprise, he accepted me, because I thought he would think I was a waste of his time. We had our first sponsor/sponsee meeting on August 26th. What a ride!!!! And it's not over. I thank my Higher Power for my sponsor because this man saved my life. He said the same about his sponsor but I didn't get it until I saw it with me. If he had not worked with me with the Steps, I would be still be acting out and probably, eventually, would have contracted HIV. My sponsor calls me on a lot of my stuff. Sometimes I think he's a bit overwhelming but he seems to be correct on a lot of things...<dam>. I love this man...he's very much a father fig-

ure for me.

My sponsor gave me the green light to start sponsoring other people in the program last October. I was scared because I didn't want to screw up anyone's recovery, but my sponsor reassured me that I wouldn't so long as I stuck with what was suggested in the AA Big Book and the 12x12. Today I have 5 sponsees. This is very important to say to people who are sponsoring: it has helped me greatly to attend Al-Anon. After all, when I am sponsoring I am dealing directly with an addict. In fact, it was one of my sponsees "who drove me to" Al-Anon. Now, I realize that people's recoveries are going to be vastly different than my own experiences. I tell my sponsees to call me on a regular basis, but some of them don't. I can also tell which ones are having a difficult time and which ones are not.

Sponsoring, above all, has helped with my sobriety because I give of it freely. For me, if I don't give my sobriety away, it doesn't mean anything to me. It seems that when I give it away, I can see a reflection of myself in the sponsees that I work with. It's really quite an honor to watch a human being get better. I thank

continued on page
8

A letter from a good friend, a "Trusted Servant" associate. We never think of some "servants" as feeling "low".

His letter is here, his poem on page 12:

"Feeling low tonight...struggling with what and who I am and how to get healthier...reaching new heights...and discovering new depths as well. Depth of feeling...depths of shame and sadness...somewhat all the same.

Well...hope this captures some essence of the turmoil I feel as an addict and the issues of slipping back into the addiction....."

Turn to Page 12 for the "MADNESS REIGNS"...

Continued from Page 9...The first two part serial the PBR has tried—that we know of...

Jim's letter to GOD.....

"It's not personal. People are busy. Be patient".

It seemed to me she was trying to tell me not to feel how I'm feeling, that my feelings are wrong of somehow illegitimate.

Ouch! I just felt even worse: So unwanted, unneeded, unnoticeable, unworthy, like a nobody—no respect—a nothing

And so I rage against that feeling, only the target is my wife. But she doesn't want to hear me or my

"deep pain and so she just shuts down. This makes me even madder, and I rage along—hurling verbal insults—profanity—out in her general direction—while she curls up in a ball—on the couch, crying—she refuses to talk.

Out my tunnel vision one clear thought appears: IT'S TIME TO JOURNAL. So I follow the outline of the 4th step on resentments as outlined in the Big Book of AA.

I have a big, fat, persistent resentment against people who don't call me back

when they say they are going to. Specifically, I am mad at this woman because I feel she snubbed me. It affects my pride: doesn't she know who I am? She should call someone back as important as me immediately. It affects my self-esteem I'm a nothing because she hasn't called me back yet; my emotional security; I end up verbally abusing my wife and severing the lines of communication and warmth between us;...[And so we leave Jim until next month...Watch for "DEAR GOD..."

+++++



Steps and Traditions

It would indeed be short-sighted for a 12 step organization like SAA to print a missive of Recovery such as the PBR without referencing the very foundations of our own processes, and of our mentors before us, in AA or any other "A" group.

Since we try to highlight a Step and a Tradition for each month, it's now we must double up.

STEP SIX...[6]

"Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character."

STEP SEVEN...[7]

"Humbly asked God to remove our Shortcomings."

Last month we had a short discussion on the nature of the language in Steps 5-6-and 7. Referred to were:

Step 5—"wrongs"

Step 6—"defects of character"

Step 7—"Shortcomings"

Are they the same? Similar? Do they describe in any way the work we will have to do to

make changes in our lives, our behaviors, our attitudes? In what way is each drawing us closer to a Higher Power of our own? What are some key words which we must highlight in each step? Try a couple.....

Step 5—"isolation", removal from. "Willingness", to confide. "Admission", to others.

Step 6—"Preparedness", to overcome natural desires. "Fear", admission of, and planned "Faith" to overcome.

Step 7—"Humility", the overcoming of "self". "Discernment", of our vision for our future lives. "Grace", what we may expect, not by our own efforts, or by our own hand. But by the Higher Power within, and without, among our Fellows, our Groups, our Sponsors.

It is with firm belief that I am from birth, con-founded at times by language. That the spoken, written, is not the reality beneath the surface. That we

are driven by fear to addictive ends is not an idle theory anymore. Else why do we need to "play god", to protect ourselves, and our supplies of "whatever"?

"Brave". Is that a word that fits the battle-language of recovery?

TRADITION 6....

"An SAA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the SAA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose." Recovery is uncompromising, with or for, anyone.

TRADITION 7-

"Every SAA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions." Again, are we brave enough to walk alone. Are we compassionate enough to help our brethren with mutual aspirations, visions, hopes? God, help us all, yes. [Ed]

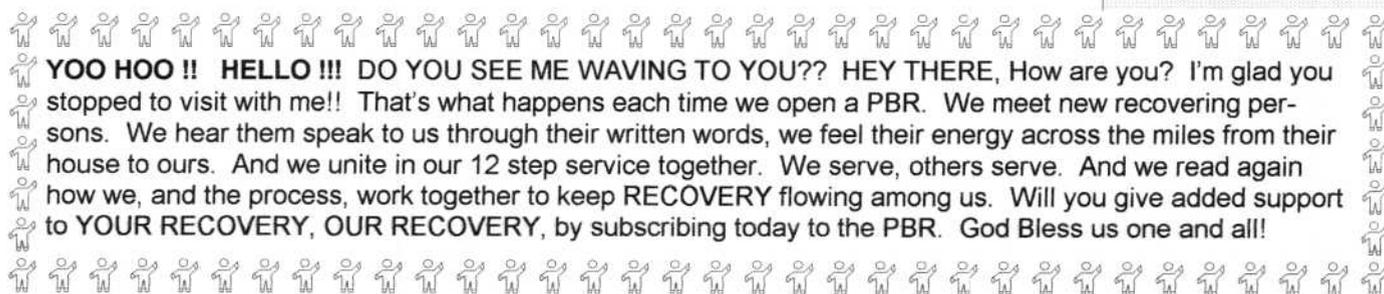
e-mail POEM of PAIN and RECOVERY.....

It rules with an iron fist- seduces with a velvet glove. It tastes bitter...all at once alien but hauntingly familiar and all around me people stumble and bodies fall. Prone on the altar of confusion and hormones and angst...

supplicants to the forces that swirl around us. A vortex which control all, draws in many, releases but a few...

I feel pulled by sheer proximity to the source-the drug. I peer in closely wondering if there are promises of joy and warmth to be discovered therein. Yet all I quickly becomes clouded and gray... and madness begins to rain... and I stumble.

Dave R. [see his letter of introduction to this poem: Page 10]



YOO HOO !! HELLO !!! DO YOU SEE ME WAVING TO YOU?? HEY THERE, How are you? I'm glad you stopped to visit with me!! That's what happens each time we open a PBR. We meet new recovering persons. We hear them speak to us through their written words, we feel their energy across the miles from their house to ours. And we unite in our 12 step service together. We serve, others serve. And we read again how we, and the process, work together to keep RECOVERY flowing among us. Will you give added support to YOUR RECOVERY, OUR RECOVERY, by subscribing today to the PBR. God Bless us one and all!

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