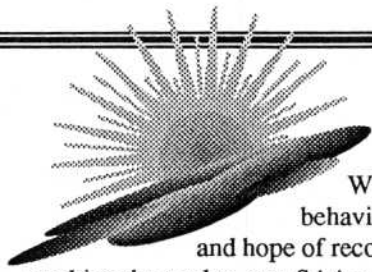


THE *Plain Brown Rapper* The SAA Newsletter



June, 1989 Edition

The purpose of the Newsletter is to be a voice of the SAA membership. Written by and for brothers and sisters recovering from compulsive sexual behaviors; to be informative, sensitive and expressing the experiences, strength, and hope of recovering members. It is intended as an additional tool of recovery for those working the twelve-step SAA program.

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“Taking care of business” means many things to many people. In an office setting, it may mean writing letters. On a shop floor it may mean updating inventory or maintenance of equipment. For a surgeon part of it is meticulous scrubbing of arms, hands, and nails. And for a bricklayer it’s cleaning tools. Unfortunately, most of these things are tedious and boring. As an addict, I also have to “take care of business.” I have to write letters to myself (journal) to keep track of where I’ve been and where I’m at; I’m always updating my inventory, and maintaining my equipment (me); I need to meticulously scrub away at the layers of my denial (even under the fingernails!); and, of course, my 12-step tools need to be periodically dusted off. These are all things I find tedious, boring, and even painful. But as an addict “taking care of business” means serenity, health and life, and those are special to me.

This month’s issue of *The Plain Brown Rapper* is a special one dedicated to SAA’s “taking care of business.” Our focus is on the business aspect of last month’s National Convention, *BEGINNING ANEW! Recovering the Joy of Life!* A special “thank you” to Susa and Carl for the articles herein. Their time and concern is reflected in the thoroughness of the articles. Thank you both.

BEGINNING ANEW! RECOVERING THE JOY OF LIFE

Three hundred and fifteen people formally registered for the Beginning Anew! Convention at the Marriott Greenspoint in Houston, Texas over Memorial Day weekend, May 26–29, 1989. There were also a few who attended unofficially. All areas of the United States were represented, and two foreign countries, Germany and Mexico, had attendees as well.

The overall response of participants is expressed in the words of one person overheard at the barbeque buffet, “I came here expecting to find healing and help in my recovery...but this is more than I bargained for. I’m really glad I’m here!” For most, it was a weekend filled with feelings, new information, support, inspiration, healing, and hope.

The schedule allowed time for both the “business” of organizing the National Service Organization, and for workshops and seminars where participants could learn more about themselves and the recovery process. The most difficult part for some was making a decision on which workshop to attend, since so many topics were offered. Some of the titles included: Parenting the Inner Child, Parenting as a Recovering Addict, Covert Incest and Love Triangles, Discovery and Recovery as Couples, Looking For Love in All the Right Places, The Impact of Aids on All of Us, Writing as Twelve-Step Work, Shame — the Spiritual Dimension, and a host of others. I would like to extend a special thank you to all the presenters and discussion leaders.

SAA and COSA meetings were frequently held throughout the weekend, with topic discussions and check-in. The first SAA meeting on Friday had about 100 people, and was really meaningful as we shared our common feelings of fear and apprehension, and excitement and anticipation for the events of the next few days. One thing was clear, however: the “Hope” for recovery that was embodied and spawned by the group. With so many others in the recovery process joined together this weekend, it was comforting to realize we are not alone, and that our personal journeys, while unique to each of us, are at the same time what bonds us to the fellowship.

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Beginning Anew! continued...

The Spirituality Task Force provided a meditation room with soft lights, candles, and the sweet scent of potpourri as a place to renew our connection and contact with Higher Power. We were also led in prayer at various times throughout the weekend, again reminding us that our recovery is dependent on our healthy spirituality, and our relationship with God, as we understand God.

In general, the response to the Evaluation which was distributed at the end of the convention was favorable and appreciative. The accommodations were excellent and meeting facilities quite nice, though several mentioned the food/beverages provided might have been better. The most common suggestion for next year's convention is to repeat the workshops so that everyone has a chance to attend each one. Also suggested is to expand the time allowed for workshopping so that the topics can be more fully explored.

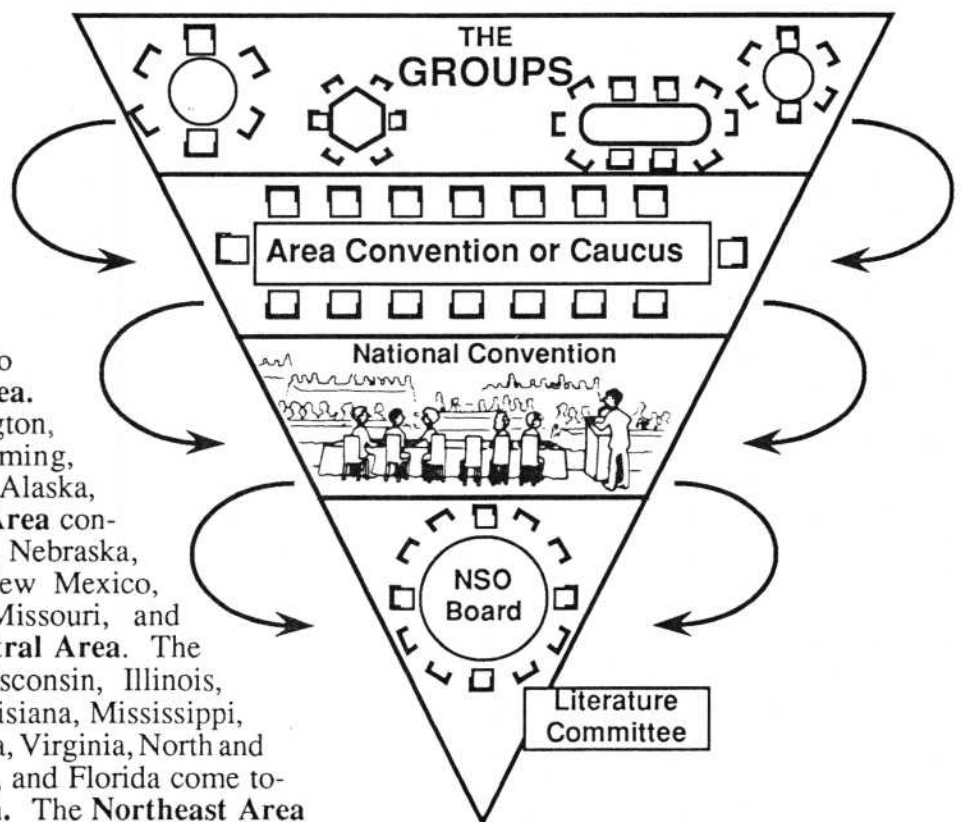
A number of persons suggested limiting the "business" sessions to a single day, or to less time overall. For this year the time spent in business sessions was crucial to achieving the National Service Organization. And, as everyone who was involved in this year's business knows, we needed every minute we had, and we probably could have used more. Perhaps in the future, less time will be needed for the General Assembly to act on recommendations and business in general.

A word of appreciation to those people on the Convention Committee, and to the Presenters of workshops and seminars, and to the Speakers, and to the Interim Executive Committee of NSO, and to everyone who made the weekend a success. The time and effort required to plan and provide such an experience is immeasurable, and only those persons involved really know the commitment and personal investment given. We were all deeply affected by our experiences this weekend, and we owe it to these special people who helped make it a reality. It is the consciousness of the fellowship, and the strength and love of Higher Power showing through each of us, which truly allows us to recover. We are grateful.

CONVENTION ADOPTS STRUCTURE FOR NATIONAL SERVICE ORGANIZATION

The Houston Convention adopted a structure and plan for the National Service Organization. The plan was developed by the Interim Executive Committee and the Committee on Structure, chaired by Ron A. of Tucson. John B. of the Twin Cities had come up with major guidelines after a study of AA's structure. The plan is described as an upside down plan because the SAA groups — the first level — are at the top of the organization.

The second level — Areas composed of several states — is and will be in transition for several years. The plan calls for starting with seven Areas. However, this year there will be six since neither the Pacific Northwest or Pacific Southwest had sufficient representation at the Convention to caucus by themselves. So for this year they form the **Pacific Area**. It includes the states of Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, California, Nevada, Utah, Arizona, Alaska, and Hawaii. The **North Central Area** consists of North and South Dakota, Nebraska, Iowa, and Minnesota. Texas, New Mexico, Colorado, Kansas, Oklahoma, Missouri, and Arkansas make up the **South Central Area**. The **Great Lakes Area** includes Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, and Michigan. Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee, Kentucky, West Virginia, Virginia, North and South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, and Florida come together to form the **Southeast Area**. The **Northeast Area**

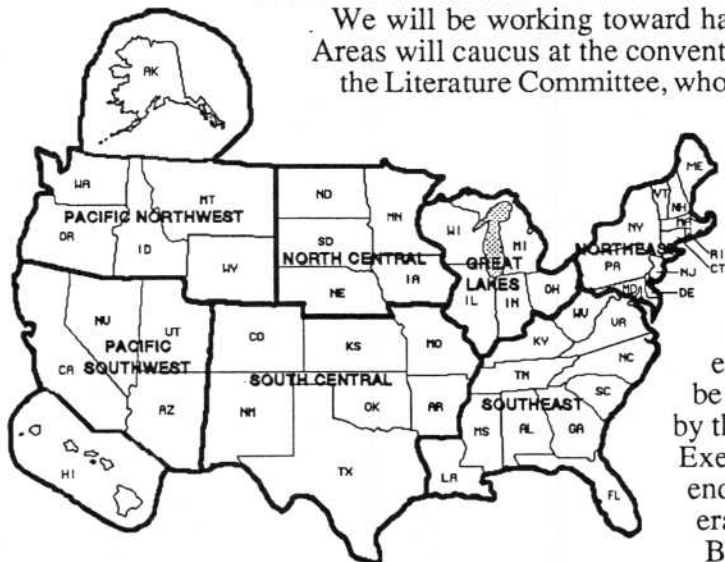


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Convention Adopts Structure continued...

includes the remaining states of Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine. Canadian groups are encouraged to affiliate with the nearest Area until their numbers warrant further organization.

We will be working toward having Area conventions by 1992. In the meantime, Areas will caucus at the conventions and elect their representatives to the Board and the Literature Committee, who will nominate a Literature Chairperson to be elected by the National Convention.



The National Convention Assembly will be made up of delegates selected by their groups. Each SAA group will be entitled to one voting delegate. The NSO Board and Literature Committee will also be voting members of the Assembly.

The NSO Board is the third — and last — level of the NSO. These trusted servants are elected by each of the Areas. For this year of transition, there will be six Area representatives and three members elected by the Assembly as transition members from the Interim Executive Committee. Those positions will expire at the end of the 1990 Convention. The Chairperson of the Literature Committee also serves on the NSO Board. The Board is responsible for organizing itself and appointing any needed officers among the membership.

The Literature Committee is directly responsible to the membership for the creation, approval, and distribution of literature. The Committee appoints the editor of *The Plain Brown Rapper*, which was voted to become the National Service Organization newsletter later this year, when the transition could be arranged. The Chairperson of the Literature Committee is elected by the National Convention, and the Committee members by each area caucus or convention.

The NSO Board was instructed to develop bylaws to be adopted at the 1990 Convention.

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY SUGGESTIONS FOR SAA GROUPS

The National Assembly adopted the following definition for an SAA group — an SAA group is two or more addicts meeting together regularly for the purpose of recovery from their sexual addiction, and to reach out to others still suffering from sexual addiction. The group should be self-supporting and have no other common affiliation.

With a number of major decisions made and with the formation of the NSO, groups will need to do a few things if they choose to be a part of the National Service Organization.

1. Groups will need to decide if they want to affiliate with the NSO. Some groups may need to decide between SAA and other 12-step programs dealing with sexually compulsive behavior.
2. Notify the national office, P.O. Box 3038, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55403, that you want to affiliate and how your group can be contacted and when it meets. A formal registration card will be sent soon, but you need not wait.
3. Decide on a plan to support NSO, identifying what your needs are to operate your group. Here are some suggestions for support:
 - a. Pledge and send a monetary donation to NSO each month.
 - b. Of that income over your own group expenses and needs:
 - if you have no intergroup send it to NSO
 - if you have an intergroup split it between your intergroup and NSO — 50/50 or 30/70.
 - c. Begin planning to send a delegate to the National Assembly in New Orleans next
- d. Send news and ideas about your group or your recovery to *The Plain Brown Rapper*.

**To contact or contribute
to the National Service
Organization, please write:
NSO
P.O. Box 3038
Minneapolis, MN 55403
(612) 339-0217**

year. Dates will be announced in the next couple of months. Each group that affiliates by February 1, 1990 will receive one vote in the National Assembly.

CONVENTION ADOPTS GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR 1989-1990

Upon recommendation of the Interim Executive Committee elected in 1988 to prepare for the Houston Convention, the newly organized National Convention Assembly adopted the following goals and objectives to guide the organization to its next assembly in New Orleans.

Goal #1 — Implement National Activity

Objective 1: Establish a National Office. It was agreed to accept the Twin Cities SAA offer to share office space in its present quarters.

Objective 2: Establish a National Hotline for information and referral. This system will be built on the existing information system operated by the Twin Cities intergroup. Cooperative plans with COSA are being made to include that organization in the system and to share expenses.

Objective 3: Hire new staff. It was agreed that staff support to organize and facilitate the voluntary effort is needed now. The board was authorized to hire a part-time National Coordinator as soon as funds are available.

Objective 4: Hold a mid-year Board meeting. The Interim Executive Committee spoke strongly to this need. It was felt by them that in order to expand the funds necessary for this that it needed discussion and sanction at the Assembly level. The Assembly endorsed the plan with the recommendation of using conference calls as well.

Objective 5: Establish a committee and implement a process to approve literature. This committee began its work prior to leaving Houston.

Objective 6: Clarify and maintain a relationship between SAA and COSA. A plan for joint activity at the World Service Office in jointly operating a hotline, conducting conventions, and distributing literature, which each group would approve separately, was agreed to. Details of this agreement remain to be worked out.

Objective 7: To incorporate and adopt bylaws by the 1990 Convention.

Goal #2 — Develop Membership

Objective 1: Encourage groups to affiliate with NSO by registration before February 1, 1990.

Objective 2: Encourage each registered group to have a delegate at the next Convention.

Objective 3: Support efforts to reach out and respond to sex addicts in institutions.

Objective 4: Support development of groups and intergroups.

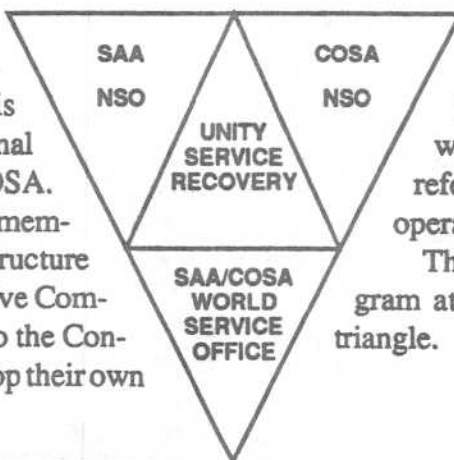
Goal #3 — Develop Funding Base

The objectives of Goal #3 have all been delegated to subcommittees of the new NSO Board and will be the focus of ongoing activity.

Objective 1: Encourage financial support of NSO by intergroups and groups. Suggested guidelines for groups were discussed based on AA tradition and practice. Groups are autonomous in these matters and no dues and fees are assessed. However, contributions from groups and intergroups is our sole source of support. Without substantial financial support of membership our collective goals in getting the message out cannot be realized. Due to the Convention running a deficit, NSO is beginning the year without funds. The Board feels that as membership catches the vision, they will support the work.

CONVENTION ADOPTS OUTLINE FOR RELATIONSHIP OF SAA-COSA

The Houston Convention began in the spirit of implementing the recommendation of the Minneapolis Convention to explore a joint National Service Organization for SAA and COSA. Early in the Convention the COSA members caused and accepted the NSO structure recommended by the Interim Executive Committee for their NSO and suggested to the Convention that both organizations develop their own



NSO and approve their own literature, but that the two NSO's cooperate in a World Service Office which would operate a hotline/information and referral service, distribute literature, and operate the conventions.

The plan was conceptualized by the diagram at left as an extension of the inverted triangle.
