

the SCA nner

SCA NEWSLETTER

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2nd NATIONAL SCA CONFERENCE HELD IN NEW YORK

ISO MEETS DURING CONFERENCE

*By Bill Y, SCA New
York*

On June 8, 9 and 10, concurrent with the annual New York SCA Conference, the second ISO Conference took place. ISO stands for International Service Organization and its founding, kicked off with meetings in February in Los Angeles, is an important milestone in the history of SCA as we reach toward becoming a national and, as the name suggests, international organization carrying the message of recovery to sexually compulsive people everywhere.

Voting delegates representing the Intergroups of New York and Southern California, respectively, were: Bob M, Frank H, and Brian K (replacing Robert K from the first conference); and Marshall L, Maciek K, and Hunt B. In addition, Leigh H represented the Atlanta Meetings. Richard R, also attending the SCA

WORKSHOPS, FUN & PEOPLE MAKE IT A GREAT SUCCESS!

By Bob R, SCA New York

SCA's Second National Conference took place the weekend of June 8-10 at the Gay and Lesbian Community Center in New York's Greenwich Village. Delegates from Atlanta, Chicago, Minneapolis and Los Angeles provided a constant reminder of SCA's continuing growth.

The Center is a pre-Civil War redstone edifice that was once the city's Food Trades Vocational High School. Of all the gay organizations using the Center, SCA is the most active, and its yearly anniversary and Christmas celebrations occupy important places on the Center's calendar of events.

FOCUS ON RECOVERY: TAKING STEPS was the theme of the Conference, and registration Friday evening was followed by a mammoth three-speaker kickoff meeting. It combined elements of SCA's regular Friday evening Beginners' and Topic meetings, with the extra attraction that the speakers hailed from opposite ends of the continent.

Saturday morning began with a "getting-to-know-you" meeting, which led into the day's crammed schedule of workshops (among many choices: Abstinence Makes the Heart Grow Fonder; HIV and Sexual Compulsion; an Incest Workshop; Couples in Recovery; The Shame Game; Breaking Isolation). Concurrent was an all-day meeting of the International Service Organization, a kind of SCA continental congress in miniature.

This second National Conference also marked the eighth anniversary of SCA's very first meeting, and a few old-timers took the opportunity to reminisce about the first anniversary gala, a picnic in Central Park. In those days the Program had barely taken shape, and eight stalwart members nervously munched

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SANTA BARBARA MEMORIAL DAY RETREAT

Picture this: A large, Spanish-style building, built in the 20's, perched high on a shelf in the mountains in back of Santa Barbara, with a view to everywhere. A huge living room; a couple of comfortable libraries; a large rectory -- all with fireplaces -- a magnificent central hallway which could take one's imagination back to the days of the Spanish dons (and doñas, of course); 30 spartan but clean and comfortable rooms; a "talking and smoking" room for the hours of GREAT SILENCE -- an experience in itself -- and for those who just gotta have a smoke. A central courtyard and nooks and crannies and verandas here and there, with chairs and benches, and more views.

This is a loose description of the Mount Calvary Episcopal Monastery Retreat House, scene of the Southern California SCA Memorial Day Weekend Retreat, May 25-27.

At first, the thought of 29 sex addicts (28 men and 1 woman) being together in this rather secluded environment was a little unnerving. But the weekend went beautifully: new friendships were made and others renewed; there were tears and laughter; and a lot of serious soul-searching. The event, chaired by Hunt B., with the invaluable assistance of Peter C., included a sharing round robin meeting the first evening with the theme, "What do you need to remember so you won't have to repeat it?". We found that there were a lot of things we all remembered that we needed to remember; and were able to talk about openly, then let go of -- for that is recovery!

Next day, there were four workshops working in small sub-groups -- one each on the 6th, 7th, 8th and 9th Steps of SCA: indicating our willingness to have God remove the defects of character we unearthed in our 4th Step; by discussing new actions we can take when tempted to repeat the old patterns of our addictive lives; and who we can call upon to help us sort all these out; listing and talking about our shortcomings -- what is good and bad about them; listing the persons we had harmed -- and how -- and were willing to make amends to; discussing just what is keeping us

from making these amends, and what we plan to do to overcome those "reasons".

That evening, after supper, we gathered again in the great Living Room for a workshop on "Sobriety vs. Recovery", with round robin sharing of our thoughts. The thoughts on recovery in the "FOOD FOR THOUGHT" section of this issue will give you an idea of our discussions that evening.

Sunday morning; a soft, pastel sunrise and a lively breakfast. We gathered once again in the Living Room for our final meeting in which we discussed the things which especially spoke to us over the weekend, and those steps we wanted to take next toward our recovery. Each committed to making a "reality check" call within the following month to see how things were going.

A final dinner in the Rectory, goodbyes, and the drive home to process the weekend.

Between the scheduled meetings and workshops, members held informal "mini-meetings" with others of the group, or went off by themselves for some contemplation and meditation, or walking, or snoozing, or traipsing off into the hills singing and dancing to the songs of "Sound of Music" -- at least SOME did; and we bless them for it! The Brothers at the Monastery were fantastic, and seemed to take great delight in our being there.

A retreat like this one does wonders for the mind and the spirit -- and for recovery. We highly recommend participating in one... or two. There are two more coming up this year at the same place. The first one -- August 31 - September 2, Labor Day Weekend -- is already filled, but there's a waiting list. Contact Doyle S at (213) 669-0163 to get on it. The second one is New Year's Eve, December 30 - January 1. Give Maciek K, (213) 301-1071, or Jane N, (213) 395-5834, a call to check it out.

These retreats are another way -- a very meaningful one -- to break out of our isolation and get on with this thing we call recovery.

SAA AND SCA CONVENTIONS LEAD TO COOPERATION

by John B. Board
Member, SAA National
Service Organization

Frank H., one of the founders of SCA, asked me if I would contribute a short piece to the *Scanner*, SCA's equivalent of SAA's *The Plain Brown Wrapper*. It is a great idea, but a tough assignment. This article is being submitted to both of these periodicals for reasons that I hope will become apparent.

Over Memorial Day weekend, *Sex Addicts Anonymous* (SAA) held its Third Annual Convention in the Twin Cities. Pat C, one of SAA's founders, gave the keynote address. The enthralled audience of over 200 listening to his talk about his life and struggles, the beginnings of SAA in 1977, and his reflections on the various 12-Step sexual recovery programs now in existence [SAA, SCA, SLAA and SA], gave him the standing ovation he deserved for his part in helping so many people get into recovery. It was a treasured time, and, happily, one that can now be enjoyed by others on audio tape. The SAA Convention ended on Sunday afternoon in about as powerful a way as possible; with Linda M's personal story -- also, thank Higher Power, on tape.

Far too much occurred at our convention to even sketch the highlights. Even before Pat C's urging of the need for greater appreciation of the gifts the other 12-Step sexual recovery programs offer, the *National Service Organization of SAA* had decided to recommend to the SAA Convention Delegates that the NSO be authorized to pursue, as a goal for the coming year, "dialogue" with the other three Programs. Our Delegates said, "Do it!"

It just so happened that SLAA had a convention in Philadelphia a week after SAA's, and SCA had a convention in New York two weeks after to celebrate its 8th anniversary and to establish its *International Service Organization* (ISO). Philadelphia was too soon to get to, but the NSO authorized me to go to NYC as a representative of the SAA to the SCA convention.

The genuineness and warmth of the reception accorded me by the SCA convention (to which I was

able to give the best wishes of SAA), and especially by the six members of their ISO Board, was incredible. Like SAA's convention, SCA had speakers and workshops and ISO meetings. And it was a great convention! How I wish I could have a tape of their entertainment night gala -- it was hilarious and would pick up the spirits of any addict.

As SAA is a couple of years ahead of SCA in the formation of its organized structure, I was invited to attend SCA's ISO Board meetings, and my participation was welcomed. One of the topics discussed was whether there was any reason for SCA to maintain a separate identity from the other 12-Step fellowships, especially as there are so few differences between SAA and SCA.

The SCA Board decided, at least for the present time, that they wanted SCA to be known as a 12-Step program for recovery from sexual addiction and compulsivity that was started by gay men and that is gay affirmative. SCA is open to both sexes and people of all orientations, though in most parts of the country its members are primarily gay men. It was eloquently argued that with sexual addiction having the history it does within the gay male community, it is important that there be a voice raised by gay men to say, "We have found something better." If the call was coming from outside the gay community, and if not sympathetic to gays, that call would be far less persuasive.

I had harbored in my heart the hope that SAA and SCA would "get married" as a result of my trip -- and why not, as SAA lets its members define their own sobriety and therefore one's sexuality is not an issue in SAA, many of whose members are gay and lesbian. After all, isn't recovery recovery, no matter what one's orientation is? No marriage occurred, and for reasons I can deeply respect. But if not marriage, we made steps towards being great friends. The NSO participated in a teleconference call that same weekend, and both Boards agreed that a liaison would be appointed by each to attend the meetings of the other Board, so both will know

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MORE COVERAGE ISO MEETING

MORE COVERAGE CONFERENCE

sandwiches on Dog Hill, all eyes lowering in unison whenever a toothsome male would emerge from the greenery.

Conference festivities resumed Sunday at five. A pitch Gratitude meeting worked up appetites for an opulent pot-luck dinner, followed by another in the ongoing series of SCA musical extravaganzas.

The first big number was an SCA fashion show, featuring costumes for beach, bar or barbecue guaranteed to keep even the most delectable sexual compulsive from arousing interest in anyone. An *LOVE LUCY* sketch ended with Lucy and Ethel abandoning their intimacy-fearing spouses to take a chance on love with each other. Among many brilliant solos by talented members were *Stand By Me*, *One Day At a Time*, and a stirring original work about the AIDS crisis called *At the Drugstore*.

The finale was an SCA version of *The Wizard of Oz*. The Wicked Witch of the West Village offers Dorothy all the sexual excesses of Oz on condition that she give up Toto. "I could never do that, I love Toto", cries Dorothy -- and tosses him over her shoulder into the wings. Dorothy treads the all-too-familiar yellow brick road of sexual compulsion until the Good Witch Glenda Lou gets her to a Beginners' meeting. The audience was numb from applauding, and so high it seemed the Center just might sail off over the rainbow.

[Editor's Note: Bob R has volunteered to do a regular SCA/New York column for upcoming issues of the *SCAnner*. A hearty WELCOME ABOARD, Bob! Bob made a stab at coming out with the first SCA newsletter several years ago, but the Program hadn't established itself enough to support it. Now it has, and it'll keep growing! And the *SCAnner* will be growing right along with it.]

Conference, brought a Chicago perspective to the sessions, and Robert K and Eric D, members in New York, participated as well. Particularly welcome was John B, from the **National Service Organization of SAA**, who brought encouragement, experience and ideas from a group that has trod a similar path. His candor and generosity made a substantial contribution to the proceedings. [See the story by John B in this issue] Michael R, chair of New York's Intergroup, served as facilitator and I was the faithful scribe.

The major focus of these sessions was getting the ball rolling on producing the first piece of ISO literature, a book based on New York's Little Book and Southern California's Blue Book -- conveniently termed the Little Blue Book. Much time was spent on the nitty-gritty of publishing: production schedules, costs, contents and contents order, design, and distribution. A 5000-copy print order is scheduled to be ready for printing by the end of the summer, and it is anticipated that this book will be available not only in Meetings around the country, but in selected bookstores as well.

Considerable time was spent in going over the literature to be included in the Little Blue Book. Although consensus had been reached in the February sessions, both Intergroups had suggested additions, corrections and improvements. Agreement was reached on these changes except that Southern California Intergroup had requested that the **Preamble** replace the word "sobriety" with "responsibility". After much heartfelt deliberation, the ISO determined that "sobriety" should remain, and, as a compromise, requested that Southern California accept that wording and write a piece on "sexual responsibility" for inclusion in the new literature. [See the article on this subject in this issue]

Perhaps the most passionate discussion at these meetings revolved around the gay aspect of SCA. Living in a homophobic society, the gay addict -- often dealing with his/her own negative feelings concerning his/her sexuality -- does not need to

MORE... SAA & SCA

what the other is doing and be able to share views. The members of both Boards will get the publications of the other. SAA will explore the possibility that the SAA Directory might, in the future, contain a list of all SCA meetings as well. [It is a matter of vital importance to many in recovery that when they travel they can find meetings to attend. Most of the meetings of the 12-Step fellowships do welcome travellers, even though they belong to different programs.] And SAA will also explore the sharing of materials at the literature level as well.

I think we are off to a great start. Pat C said he knows the members of the various fellowships across the country want us to be coming together. In NYC I found the trusted servants in one of those fellowships welcomed me with great warmth. And they were open, honest, flexible, and had the same goal: a life restored to sanity after the destruction of our addiction.

[Editor's Note: Our sincere thanks to John B for sharing his views with us. There has been minor editing of his submittal for -- in my mind, at least -- a little more clarity. I take full responsibility for any changes, and welcome John's rebuttal if I screwed anything up.]

Of all the people that you will ever know in a lifetime, you are the only one that you will never lose or leave. To the question of your life, you're the answer. And to the problems of your life, you're the solution.

- Jo Carviere "Advice From a Failure"

MORE... ISO MEETING

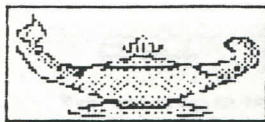
encounter it in his/her program of recovery. Having been founded by gay men, and being a "gay friendly" organization, SCA offers a unique environment to those who would recover from sexual compulsion. The word is out about our unique character and the delegates grappled with how specific to be, if at all, in the literature. In the end, a sentence was approved for the ISO Mission Statement which reads that we "affirm and support our gay and lesbian members as well as people of all sexual orientations." It was felt that more gay articles and histories were needed, and that the SCanner was an appropriate place to publish them. So get your pens out!

The important discussion of structure of the organization elicited many ideas but no concrete proposal that all could agree upon. It was decided to study the possibilities and deal with the issue at the next ISO meeting. Representation at that meeting will be as follows: Every SCA Meeting is entitled to one vote. Intergroups, or, in the absence of any intergroup affiliation, individual Meetings are to decide on the number of delegates to send to represent those votes. As with past meetings, every member of SCA is encouraged to participate in the process.

The sessions were long, the process complex, the work hard. Everyone pitched in with grace, intelligence and good humor. A true international organization may still be a dream, but with the efforts of these dedicated men and the aid of a Higher Power, that dream is several steps closer to realization.

[Editor's Note: Editors being what they are, I did some minor rearranging of some of the wording -- hopefully without altering the intent of Bill's very meaningful article. I accept full responsibility for these changes.]

If I don't have a relationship with me, how could I have a relationship with anyone else? - John Bradshaw



MY STORY

GARY S's Story

I recently ran across a copy of a local newspaper I had put away as a reminder of my earlier life. It was dated April 14, 1985. In it was an article which began:

It has cost him his marriage, thousands in lawyers' and psychologists' fees and thousands of hours of time.

He has tried behavior modification, hypnosis and electrical shock treatments.

He has suffered from physical disorders and nausea, and he has shaken with conflict whenever he thought about doing it again.

For eight years, he was addicted to anonymous homosexual encounters in public parks and restrooms. He was a compulsive cruiser, and he couldn't stop.

"I did it with people who I never thought I would want to touch or talk to," he said. "I was doing things I knew were dangerous and irrational and stupid."

That part of the article was about me. I was 38 then, and married. I was compulsively drawn to cruise and act out in public restrooms. I was arrested twice for suspicion of lewd conduct. My wife bailed me out. I didn't know why I kept going to those places. The fear and guilt made me physically sick, and sure didn't help my head any either. I came to realize that it was a coping mechanism -- my addictive way of dealing with my feelings about my sexuality, my low esteem, the everyday stresses of my life.

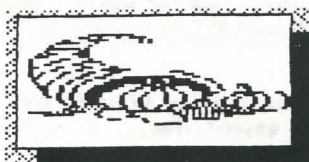
It was all a game -- Oh, I'll just drive by the park and see if anything's going on..... BUT I WON'T GO IN. But I did go in, time after time. It was as if some invisible thing grabbed hold of me; I wasn't even in control of myself. I didn't care what was happening. I didn't care if the cops were right there, or if there were any dangers that existed. All I wanted was to have a momentary escape and get it over with and get out of there until the next time.

I'd cruise any park which had a reputation for acting out and some which didn't, just in case. I'd cruise before work, during lunch hour, on breaks and after work. At the worst point of my addiction, I would go from park to park to park all day! I was addicted to sex just as much as an alcoholic is addicted to booze, or an overeater is addicted to food. I didn't drink, smoke or do drugs -- I did sex!

I hit "my bottom" after the second arrest, about the time my marriage broke up. I was scared as hell of getting arrested again, but I really decided to stop cruising when the time finally came in my life for an evaluation. I just knew I wasn't happy living in that mode; there was this uneasy feeling all the time. I found through SCA that I could choose. It was no longer like when someone -- man or woman -- looked at me that I HAD to go with them.

When that article was printed, I was unemployed and in the process of a divorce. But I was getting more control of my life than I had had in years. I hadn't gone to a park in months, but the temptation -- the addict -- was still there. I realize now that it will always be there, at least to some extent. My first recovery plan included going to gay bars and bathhouses instead of parks and tearooms -- that was the first time I was honest and accepting of my homosexuality.

I had started going to an SCA meeting -- a fledgling one in Southern California where I lived. I got very active in the Program; that is to say, I dove in head first! After a while, several of us started another meeting closer to my home; but I still attended the first one, too, as well as other meetings as the need arose. I found myself becoming a sponsor to one or two members, then more. I've seen a tremendous amount of growth in most of them -- an occasional dropout, too, but I know the seed has been planted with them, and it will eventually sprout and grow. I got involved with the Southern California SCA Intergroup and realized how the recovery of those who attended those meetings was rubbing off on me. And I was seeing some of mine rubbing off on



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Recovery Issues

Recovery takes on many forms; each of us experiences it differently. We voiced our feelings about recovery, and about the sobriety which is a part of it, at the recent Santa Barbara SCA Retreat. We'd like to gently present some of these feelings for your consideration:

Recovery is...

- ...building up trust -- sitting back and listening to others' stories at meetings, then letting out our feelings and stories and hurts a little at a time, experiencing the positive feedback and love of those around us...

- ...letting go of our shame by openly discussing our problems and our hidden history with those around us who understand...

- ...being gentle with ourselves -- we've beat ourselves up enough in our lives; we need to know we're OK where we are at the moment and just do the very best we can for today...

- ...picking up the phone rather than acting out -- beginning to break the isolation which feeds our disease...

- ...sharing our feelings and problems with others -- a shared problem is a solved problem...

- ...getting in touch with our "little guy" inside -- listening to him, nurturing him, loving him, letting him out of his cage...

- ...knowing we have a choice in each and every thing we do -- always -- and taking full responsibility for the outcome of each choice we make...

- ...living in today, this moment, rather than in the expectations of the future -- no expectations means no disappointments...

- ...seeing the spiritual in a person, rather than -- or in addition to -- the physical...

- ...knowing we are NEVER alone -- even when we are by ourselves...

- ...feeling comfortable about being by ourselves, not driven to get out there amongst them, especially when that fuels our compulsion...

- ...being honest -- with our Higher Power, with ourselves, with our significant others and with each and

every one we come in contact with...

- ...knowing there truly is a Higher Power who is with us all the way -- even when we might turn our backs on It...

- ...being willing to be willing -- willing to listen, to be there for someone, to come to meetings when we don't want to, to evaluate our choices, to postpone acting out until another time, to love ourselves...

- ...remaining sober and responsible because we know it is in our best interests; not just because losing our sobriety will violate our Recovery Plan and we'll have to fess up to it...

- ...forgiving ourselves when we get caught up in obsessions, or ogling a sharp number a little too long, a little too hungrily, or even for acting out...

- ...singing "Sound of Music" songs at the top of our voices while walking through the hills with a group of friends and not feeling ashamed...

- ...being of service to the Fellowship and to the community -- in small ways and in larger ways...

- ...being able to talk to a person about the obsessions or fantasies we have about them -- face to face, openly, honestly -- without acting on them, and experiencing the freeing "defusing" of a compulsion...

- ...sitting on the top of a hill when the sun is rising and feeling the tears well up in our eyes and thanking our Higher Power for all the beauty around us...

- ...being totally free to laugh and to cry and to laugh again -- in sequence or even at the same time -- openly, without fear or shame, at a meeting, over the phone, with a friend...

- ...sitting in a meeting, while across the courtyard men and women are rehearsing a musical in various stages of dress and undress, and continuing with the business at hand -- pretty well, anyway...

- ...getting in touch with our bodies -- not just our genitals, but our whole selves -- lovingly caressing ourselves all over, realizing just how beautiful our bodies are...

- ...letting go -- a little at a time -- of being in control, being critical and manipulative, being judgemental; allowing room in our consciousness for compassion, acceptance, respect and love -- for all those around us, and, so importantly, for

A WORD FROM YOUR SERVANT

The ISO delegates, meeting in June, decided that the **SCANNER** would better serve the Fellowship by coming under that organization, and that the content would be coordinated by me. I sincerely appreciate ISO's confidence in me, as I fully appreciate the very positive feedback we've had on the **SCANNER**. I think we all agree that its time had come; that there's a great need for it, especially now that **SCA** is unifying and growing in its mission of bringing our recovery program to sexual compulsives everywhere. I am very proud to be a member of **SCA** and to be involved in the **SCANNER**.

Several have asked if I will be continuing my involvement with the **SCANNER** once I move to my new home in Atascadero in late July. My answer is a most emphatic "YES!" This involvement is truly an example of where a compulsive personality is replacing a very negative, destructive compulsive behavior with a positive, loving, productive one. I've only been in the Program a little over a year, and have a lot to do yet, and this involvement is helping tremendously.

However, I fully realize that it is not healthy for me, or for the Fellowship, to provide the majority of the input for the newsletter. The coordination, yes; but not the input. **SCA's Traditions** say, "Our common welfare should come first", and, "Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern." I therefore look at myself, as I must, as your servant toward the common welfare of **SCA**.

And so, I sincerely request that you become involved in your newsletter as well. You don't have to be polished writers. As long as what you send in is from your heart, that's what's important. News items can be sketchy and I can fill in. Your stories and poems and the like, I'd just as soon leave as is -- your words and feelings, not mine. And don't worry about typing and all that. As long as I can read it, that's all that I ask. Send your submittals to: the **SCANNER**, **SCA**, PO Box 4470-107, Sunset Blvd., Suite 520, Los Angeles, CA 90027, or phone me in Atascadero at (805) 461-3866.

Jump in, it feels great! Thank you, Brothers and Sisters!

- Richard K., your servant

More... FOOD FOR THOUGHT

ourselves...

...loving ourselves, knowing that we are really so very worthwhile, worthy of the love of others, worthy of giving our love, without fueling our dis-ease, worthy of the absolute love of our Higher Power...

...**KNOWING THERE'S A ROSE GARDEN OUT THERE** -- out there past all the thistles and cactus and rattle snakes and poison oak and weeds; it may seem a lot like climbing Mount Everest to find it, but it's there.

More... MY STORY

others. As they say, in order to keep it you have to give it away.

I'm 43 now. Over three years ago, I entered into a positive relationship, while still working the Program. We did so many close things together, and shared our lives each day -- one day at a time. I recently lost him to AIDS. Had it not been for my recovery through the Program, I shudder to think what I might have done in the face of that tremendous loss.

A time like that -- the severe pain of the loss itself, the feeling of aloneness, and all the sudden changes -- can be horribly dangerous to an addict. I know that the growth I've undergone through participation in the Program -- working the Steps, gaining spirituality, working with fellow addicts to share our mutual shame and letting go of it, reaching out to others, being of service -- has resulted in a solid base which is helping me maintain my sanity, sobriety and serenity.

I have kept that article to help remind me of the extent of my recovery and not take it for granted. I do remember a time when my future held nothing. The only thing I wanted was a way out. Through **SCA** I found support and direction; through God I found insight and love, and through my Program I have strength, hope and a way out.

NEXT ISSUE: Bradley W's Story -- Co-sexual Compulsion and **SCA-Anon**

I AM ...
YOU ARE ...
WE ARE ONE

SCA MEETINGS



In the interests of more effective use of space in the *SCANNER*, we will discontinue the detailed listing of SCA meetings. A generalized list is provided below. For additional details -- locations and times and contacts -- or for listing a new meeting with SCA Outreach, please write to **SCA New York**, PO Box 1585 Old Chelsea Station, New York, NY 10011, or **SCA Southern California**, 4470-107 Sunset Blvd., Ste 520, Los Angeles, CA 90027. Or call Brian K (NYC) at (212) 873-8168, or Marshall L (LA) at (213) 656-3293.

SCA INFORMATION LINES: New York - (212) 439-1123; Los Angeles - (213) 859-5585; Orange County, CA - (714) 664-5105; San Diego, CA - (619) 528-9888; Chicago, IL - (312) 871-6474.

SCA New York will provide you with a listing of *S.A.A.* and *S.L.A.* meetings in countries you might be visiting which do not have SCA meetings. Just write them, or call the New York Information Line.

SCA Meetings are located as follows:

New York Metropolitan Area (36 meetings); Los Angeles - Orange County Metropolitan Area (18); Albany, NY (3); Atlanta, GA (2); Chicago, IL (5); Glen Ridge, NJ; Middletown, NY; Montclair, NJ; Provincetown, MA; Rochester, NY; San Diego, CA (3); San Luis Obispo, CA; Santa Fe, NM; and Santa Maria, CA
Manchester, England; Paris, France (3)

Meetings are our major tool of recovery; attending regularly will do wonders. And when you're traveling, don't leave home without knowing where one is!

SERENITY PRAYER

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.



DEAR GABBY

LEARNING A LITTLE MORE ABOUT THE SCA PROGRAM

For this issue, the **Dear Gabby** questions are taken from drafts of an SCA Outreach Project question and answer brochure for people considering joining SCA, and for new members. We do hope, though, that people needing more information about SCA will send in their questions, and we'll do our best to come up with meaningful answers. Please confine your questions to SCA issues.

Dear Gabby: How do I handle this "Higher Power" business if I'm an atheist or agnostic? Dean W.

Dear Dean: However you feel most comfortable. Many of us used our SCA group as a Higher Power at first -- some still do. Many "found" their spirituality as time in the Program progressed. Don't let it scare you off -- you'll work it out if you work it. Gabby

Gabby: Is there a time limit for me to get through all the 12 Steps? Irene L.

Dear Irene: Twelve-step Programs, SCA's included, are gentle ones. Each member sets her/his own pace. Many feel they get stuck in the first three steps for quite awhile. So they work them over and over, while becoming more aware of the remaining ones. Eventually, there's usually a break through and they go on with their progress. There's no "schedule" involved. Remember: One Day At A Time. Love, Gabby

Dear Gabby: What am I required to do at a meeting? Sam G.

Sam: Nothing at all. If things get uncomfortable for you, you're free to leave at any time -- no one will hog-tie you and make you stay! We hope you'll stay, but we understand; we've all been there. The hardest part is getting through that door the first time. Most feel very much at home after that. Give it a try! Gabby

What other people think of me is none of my business!

Sobriety and Responsibility

ANSWERING THE CALL FOR LITERATURE

A call went out to those individuals in the Southern California Meetings who expressed concern about the issue of using the word "*sobriety*" rather than "*responsibility*" in the SCA Statement of Purpose, in order to develop a compromise. The result was that SC SCA would submit its feelings about the matter as an inclusion in the new literature.

The following, which will be submitted to the Southern California Intergroup, is what was drafted:

SOBRIETY AND RESPONSIBILITY

In the SCA Statement of Purpose we indicate that our goal is sexual sobriety. This does not mean that we advocate celibacy, abstinence, or repression. Rather our goal is to integrate sexuality into our lives as a healthy element.

We use the term sobriety because of its deeper connotation of clarity of mind. In sobriety we are making sexual choices. In compulsion and addiction we are driven and compelled into sexual behavior.

Responsible sexuality is currently advocated, particularly in terms of "safe" or "safer" sex. In this usage, responsibility refers to behavior. SCA is not a behavior modification program. We change our behavior as a result of the freedom we experience in the spiritual path of this program. In working the Twelve Steps, and using the tools of the Program, we achieve the sober clarity of mind which frees us to make choices rather than be bound by our compulsion. In turning our will and our lives over to the care of our Higher Power, we receive the strength and courage to make choices which we were unable to previously exercise. The SCA program focuses our attention on the source of strength, wisdom, and acceptance, which empowers us with freedom to make choices, rather than on the unhealthy and often dangerous sexual behavior we want to stop.

In making sober choices, we become sexually responsible. We change our lives, and experience

Bits and Pieces Here and There

A renewed HIV+ Meeting in Los Angeles is about to be born, thanks to the efforts of Michael L. and Peter C. Vital for the emotional support of HIV+'s and ARC's, the Meeting deserves the heartfelt support of SCA members. For information, call Michael at (818) 990-0142. Michael L., Chicago Intergroup's Chair, states that that august body is going through its formative stages. They will soon have an SCA voice mailbox in addition to the present Alano phone, which is (312) 871-6474. The Philadelphia, Poughkeepsie and Rome Meetings have closed, but the CONTACTS remain. The Guanajuato, Mexico, Meeting has closed. There is a new Meeting in Provincetown, MA; Thursdays, 7PM, Community Center, 44 Bradford St. A hearty welcome to the Cape! The grapevine has it that a Meeting is about to hatch in Washington, DC. We'll keep you informed. SC SCA's 12th Step Committee meets at Marshall L's home on September 9 at 4PM. Marshall's phone is (213) 656-3293. The Committee needs some good help. That's all the *Bits and Pieces* for this issue. Send us your item and we'll include it in the next *SCAnner*.

MEDITATION SPACE

the "Promises" the Program has to offer.

A definition of sobriety, adopted by the Southern California SCA Fellowship, which respects an individual's obligation to assume responsibility for his or her life, reads as follows:

"**SEXUAL SOBRIETY** is defined in terms of an individual abiding by his or her sexual recovery plan. A sexual recovery plan is a written plan, shared with our Higher Power, and another member of the SCA program, preferably a sponsor, and is measurable one day at a time."