
ESSAY

July 1987

Post Office Box 300
Simi Valley, California 93062

A Time For Change. That seems to be the theme in this issue of Essay. Change can be unsettling, but it can also be healthy. Growth involves change, and without healthy growth the organism dies. Growing pains are really an opportunity; that's what life is all about--the adventure of going where we've never gone before, within ourselves first, then, as we grow in recovery and unity, the odyssey of the fellowship itself. What a marvelous thing to behold. It is truly unfortunate everyone cannot have been with us from those infant and perilous beginnings and can now, looking back, say, See what God hath wrought! But we all can look forward. And ask and expect great things of God--and of one another.

Central Office Moves. As of June 3rd, the SA Central Office has moved from the "garage shop operation" of Roy's study to commercial quarters in Simi Valley.

Roy Withdraws from Central Office Manager. As of June 6th, at the Bozeman convention, Roy has withdrawn from his position of being directly involved with management of the Central Office. He has turned that over to the fellowship and is appointing a Central Office oversight committee to report directly to the fellowship in December.

Committee To Suggest an SA National Group Conscience Procedure. We need a better procedure for discerning fellowship-wide group conscience. The Committee reports directly to the fellowship in December, a very crucial convention. There'll be a lot of soul-searching, teamwork, problems, pain, and hard work this committee will be encountering. Their task is an historic one. (Details enclosed.) Let's support them in every way we can and above all, be with them in prayer for "the knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out."

CALENDAR

Events listed here are presented solely as a service to readers, not as an endorsement by Essay.

August 1, 1987 -- Rochester, NY. First combined SA/S-Anon All-Day Meeting. See enclosed flyer.

September 11-13, 1987 -- Vancouver Island SA/S-Anon Retreat, Easter Seal Camp Shawnigan, Victoria, B.C. Write P O Box 332, Victoria, B.C., V8W 2N2. See flyer in March ESSAY with following changes: Deadline to register: August 25; no cancellations after August 31. Total cost, including registration, meals, and accommodations, \$80 Canadian. No children. Contacts: Murray at 604/526-6778, Bill at 604/669-1353, Alan at 604/477-5168.

October 16,17,18, 1987 -- "The German Service Committee invites you to our next SA Convention, which will be held October 16, 17 & 18, 1987 near Stuttgart.... Perhaps knowing the date can help you start planning to come. We would be very glad if some of you could make it." Starts 5 PM Friday. Book flights to Stuttgart. Advise of your intent to attend and need for lodging by writing to the following address; you will be individually notified of particulars:

AS Deutschland
Postlagerkarte 050075 C
7500 Karlsruhe 1
West Germany

or

Phone Joachim 011-49-89-691-3095

Phone Ruth 011-49-228-356-713

Those interested in going to the German convention in a group, contact Simi Central Office. One enthused German writes: "Such a joy to hear that some of you are thinking of coming; that would be wonderful!"

December 4,5,6, 1987 -- SA International Convention, Los Angeles, California. Theme: Sobriety. See enclosed flyer.

July 8,9,10, 1988 -- SA International Convention, Rochester, NY. Contact Dave G. 716/377-7096. See future issues of Essay.

December 9,10,11, 1988 -- SA International Convention. City undetermined; open for bids in Los Angeles in December.

Oct '87 --Wash. D.C.-Baltimore Marathon. Call John A 301/685-4375.

WORD FROM OUR GET-TOGETHERS

Bozeman, MT June 5,6,7 -- "It was a great conference. the oldtimers meeting was inspiring. It was also comforting to me to see how much solid sobriety we have...It was relaxing to be in such a group." (J.L.)

Greetings to our German members. A large card was made available for sending greetings to Germany. The following note from R.G. of Richmond, CA accompanied the card:

"To Our Brothers and Sisters in West Germany: It is a must that we get this card to you. We are honored and touched to have received yours, which was shown to us at our USA conference in Bozeman, Montana. As you will read on the card, many of us are proud to know our family is larger than what we have actually seen. Our conference went very well. We are definitely growing in sobriety. God willing--for it is certainly ours--we will be together as 'One' some day; and as one body, one fellowship, we can give thanks together. West Germany, we need you and we love you. May the grace of God bring us together in our struggles, our confusion, our pain, and most of all--through our unconditional surrender to Him. He will love us, He will set us free! Just for today...."

CLEVELAND MARATHON -- J.M. reports: "...Our Marathon this past May 9th was and is a spiritual success. Sobriety was spoken and was given an open forum for all to hear and see that is a gift freely given by a loving Higher Power to those who seek it with all their being...We are getting a tremendous response, many newcomers in the past four months--both meetings average over ten men and women--the newcomers are coming back, and some are starting the difficult process of becoming honest to the point of being willing to be willing and working the Steps."

WEST GERMAN CONVENTION -- U.L. reports: "...We had a very nice German Convention, and the last paper you sent us: "Lust, Sex, and the Marriage Mis-Connection" was the theme of one meeting, including the translation-lecture. I am very thankful that these points are more and more discussed now in our community, especially as I am married...."

NEED FOR CONVENTION REPORTING

SA needs persons to report on our international conventions to the Essay so the rest of the fellowship gets an in-depth account of what goes on. Volunteers please write (do not call) Central Office at P O Box 300, Simi Valley, CA 93062. Include a written statement of why you want the job, your qualifications, length of sobriety, previous convention attendance, and a brief sketch of your personal recovery story and goals.

GIFT FROM WEST GERMAN MEMBERS

The Central Office was dumbfounded recently when it received 1500 deutsche marks donated from SA members in Germany during their last convention. This amounts to \$817.66 in U.S. dollars! This gift to our world services work represents more than money; it represents the love and common bond we have one for another as we become one in sobriety, fellowship, and carrying the message of our recovery to those who still suffer. We look forward to the day when we can meet together face to face. (Does anyone have an "in" with the airlines where it might be possible to get special low-fare group rates sometime, that would be comparable to fares within the U.S.?)

GROUP NEWS

O.B., Reykjavik, Iceland -- We send this check with our best wishes and gratitude from SA in Reykjavik. Our group here is 5-7 members and is very strong....I am very grateful for SA and what it has done for me. I did not know what my problem was until I met an SA member. One thing I know, without God I can't stay sober. As a matter of fact, I can't do anything if I don't turn my life to God and trust him for my life." [We all send our thanks and love to our brothers and sisters in the fellowship in Iceland and look forward to the day when we can meet together.]

B.C., Wichita, KS -- "Our group is still small, but we have a group now.... We have birthdays once a month and our families--wives and children--join us in the last half of the meeting for the medallion ceremony and cake. I think we're almost ready for S-Anon!...."

M.F., Detroit, MI -- "I am happy Dave [H.] has started an SA meeting on Sunday in Warren, Michigan."

R.M., Washington, D.C. -- Here is a contribution from the Monday 7 PM meeting Wash D.C. We are running around 35-48 attendance and had to move to larger quarters.... We have celebrated a number of year anniversaries now--three in March--so there is a growing solidity about the sobriety--much more substance. I celebrated a year in November, had a slip in February. So am back to the program with more intensity, less obsession."

S.H., Portland, ME -- "...Have been holding fairly regular SA meetings on Monday nights. We have also formed a very close bond as friends. We spend a great deal of time together and talk a great deal about the SA program and our addiction; we have lots of 'mini-meetings' throughout the week.... I am desiring to be with other recovering sexaholics. I am in need of new ideas and thoughts. Can you put...us in touch with the SA groups in Maine, New Hampshire, or the Boston areas? I know I would be willing to travel a reasonable distance to attend other meetings...."

B.T., Salt Lake City, UT -- "It's moving along here. Ogden is trying to start a meeting again. Provo keeps going. We're still meeting every day but Sunday. S-Anon (which I attend) is doing well.... Saturday we make a step meeting. Joint meeting the first Saturday each month for joint speakers, potluck, chips, etc."

J.M., Cleveland Hts, OH -- "We here in Cleveland seem to be richly blessed by our higher power. Right around Sept. 1987 will be our third anniversary of our founding.... I would like to commend you and the staff and most especially the contributors for remarkable examples of thoughtful recovery by the experiences put down on paper in Essay, and special thanks from myself to J.P. of Nashville for an extremely well-articulated article!.... Hope to make the enclosed 2nd collection taken specifically for GSO a regular practice.... Sobriety, not just one day at a time, but many days of one moment at a time...."

F.U., Washington, D.C. -- "...Your money problems there in the central office are the subject of discussion and concern here. I'll let you know if we come up with anything innovative. We have asked each meeting to increase its monthly contribution, and so far all of the meetings have been glad to do so. We've had a spate of one-year anniversaries. I think we have about 6-7 people with more than a year...."

H.H., Appleton, WI -- "We've started a new group in Neenah, WI with 6 to 8 regular members each week! (A group is also going to start in Green Bay soon. Along with Appleton, that makes three for this area.) Also, how would our new group formally register with the Central Office?" [Just write to SA, P O Box 300, Simi Valley, CA 93062, giving preferably two names and phone numbers of those who may be contacted by inquirers.--Ed.]

W.P., Castanea, PA -- "We are now holding a regular Thursday night meeting in Central Pennsylvania...in Williamsport....Please keep up your wonderful and also hard and long hours of work for us and you....Please accept half of my gift for this year now, and I will send the other half later. We will send a second basket around our meeting table soon...."

B.L., Manly, IA -- "Our chapter is growing in North Iowa. We have a total of eight--up two in just the last month. Also, we are mailing brochures and a letter to every pastor and therapist in the area...."

R.S., Boulder, CO -- "Our Boulder group made the decision to pass the collection a second time each week for the GSO, starting April 20th....Thanks so much for rerunning your Aug 1985 letter. It states the case so well, and several responded eagerly....We got your note about the big book going up to \$10. We have no objection if it is an effective way to help...Just let us know...."

R.G., Berkeley, CA -- "Here is a...donation to be used in the best way you see fit. We are very proud to be able to send this. Though our group has experienced growing pains, we are indeed growing in unity and strength...sound familiar?...."

D.H., Henryetta, OK -- "...We [Tulsa] now have three weekly meetings...8-10 attend each meeting. Good, steady members. Not very many drifting in and out this time...."

A.B., Fort Valley, GA -- Our Middle Georgia Essay Group continues to struggle for membership, but I'm convinced there are a lot of folks in the Macon area who need the program...."

F.P., Camarillo, CA -- "...One of our members has been blessed with 4 to 5 months sobriety. We hope he continues because we sure need some success...looking forward to Bozeman....May God bless us all."

N.G., Ottawa, Ontario, Canada -- "Thank you for your friendship and the service you render. Here in Ottawa [new group - ed.], the group is staying the same. Working the program. We are not growing at this point, at least not in size. We have some members with good sobriety, and we know God is active within our group...."

G.G., Riverside, CA -- "Last Wednesday night [4-8-87] was the first meeting of SA in Riverside....The sharing was strong on sobriety and gratitude. T.E. shared how he couldn't imagine how other people struggled through life without the regular support and intimacy of an SA group. It is the only place we can freely disclose our true selves (if we could only have this kind of intimacy with our wives and family, that would be heaven on earth!) We closed the meeting and then joined hands in prayer--thanking God for a local fellowship and asking Him to make it a blessing to our area. There was such a loving feeling between us that it carried on out into the parking lot."

And, from a more recent letter: "[Riverside] is growing by leaps and bounds. However, we lack depth of sobriety and recovery. The sharing is consistently honest and searching and God is there. There are many friends of SA who are not among us who are praying for our recovery and continued growth. They affirm with us that Our Lord 'can and will' if he is sought."

MEMBER NEWS

R.P., Bonn, West Germany -- "These last couple of weeks I feel I have begun to understand what surrender really means. I thank God that I never stopped going to the meetings. And I thank God and SA that when I was finally hurting enough to really give up, He and the Fellowship were there for me, and the love and support carried me through withdrawal. I'm very grateful for the time and work you and other SA members put into Essay and the pieces. They really help me a lot. Thank you all ever so much."

E.W., Wichita, KS --I am a relatively new member...I would like to thank you for the great blessing that your efforts have been in my life so far. I have been looking for this kind of a program for at least the past twenty years. When a good friend told me about this program, I was so excited that I took the day off from work (I work second shift) and attended my first meeting. I haven't missed a meeting since. It hasn't been easy, but I've managed to convince my boss that I needed to have time off to go to the meetings....For the first time, I know that it is really possible to live without masturbation...."

J.H., Munich, West Germany --In my personal life many things have changed and are changing through SA, working the principles of the SA program. Last August...my partner and I decided to separate because we realized that there would be no further growth possible in our lives if we stayed in the dependency of our relationship. This was a very hard step for me, another step of surrender, giving the relationship up to God. After the separation, I had times when I felt my inner Void, which, I suppose, I had tried to fill up with this relationship or dependency. But accepting this inner void (the void that only God can fill) and turning my life over to God, God was there. What a wonderful experience, that in the darkest moments God's help is there. The SA program and the SA fellowship work in my life. Thanks to God for that gift."

B.A., Aycok, AL -- "...I am so grateful and thankful for the hope and help that Nan gave to me when I called in. I want this organization to continue to grow and be there for other needy people like me who call seeking help...."

J.S., Chicago, IL -- "....We are up to about eleven members who show up at a meeting....We have deep sharing and some good programs going....I am extremely happy today. Started a new job one month ago and was having great difficulty with a female co-worker. Nothing sexual. Took several 10th Steps with her, but in general, relationship was not improving much. Today I was going to go in and quit--the pain was that intense. In morning meditation got real powerless, threw myself on H.P. and said, 'Put the words in my mouth.' In short, we are working things out and getting to be friends. A new departure in my relationships with women."

R., Erie, PA -- "Have joined an SA group in Buffalo. It's a two-hour drive one way, but necessary for me to go."

M.W., Kansas City, Mo --"...One of my missions in life is to be a strength in those very areas in which I have had the most weakness. Since being in SA, I have gained much more insight into just what my weaknesses are. Some things which I never considered weaknesses but just considered that it was the way I was, I now realize are weaknesses that need to be overcome through [Him]. And, more than that, I have gained hope and testimony that...humility and faith before God do bring His strength to overcome our weaknesses. Then we have nothing to glory in of ourselves, but must only give glory to God. I have lost countless "arm-to-arm combats" with the adversary. Now...I have made a covenant with God. I turn away from each trigger to lust. He does all the rest. So simple, yet it has taken me so many years to begin to do that. I know that as I continue to completely rely on [Him] while at the same time doing everything for myself that I can do, that He will make "weak things become strong." I am really grateful for the change that has taken place in my life. Before the SA program, there was no way that I could share my feelings either face-to-face or in a letter. Now I look forward to sharing. Especially in letter writing...."

BEHIND THE WALL

From The Eleventh Hour SA Group, Arkansas Dept. of Corrections, Pine Bluff, AR --"...Thank you for the support that you and SA have given to us in getting a group started within the Arkansas Department of Correction. We have just completed our second meeting and elected our officers, plus we have started our study program of the "White Book" and have found that this program is what we have been searching for. This information gives us the tools that we need to help ourselves toward sexual sobriety and recovery. Our group is small at this time, with only seven members, but we are confident that as we grow toward sexual sobriety our numbers will also grow."

H.C., Lansing, KS "...I attended my second ever SA meeting tonight. One at GKCSA with Matt W. in 1985, and my second tonight here at Kansas State Prison....There were 22 men in attendance. We had a real good meeting. Matt W. got a little wet getting in, but after that all went real well. We have fought long and hard to start an SA group here. It has paid off....Keep up the good work on your end....We here at MSF thank you both for all this help that you have given us over the past in helping us get our group started."

SA MEMBERS GO TO JAIL.

As announced at Bozeman, Matt W. of Kansas City is SA's prison coordinator. He is the communication switchboard between SAs behind the wall and members on the outside who wish to correspond with or sponsor those in prison. At present, this involves coordinating well over a hundred SAs inside with those on the outside. This amounts to running a Central Office all its own! Matt needs not only sober SAs who take to sharing their experience, strength, and hope with others in writing, but also those who can attend SA meetings inside prisons. Often, before an SA meeting can be started in prison, there must be one or more SA members on the outside who are willing to "sponsor" a prison group. Those SA members who have done this testify to the great gift it is to them. More than one has said those are some of the best SA meetings they've ever been in.

Contact Matt at the following address/phone for more information:

Matt W.
P O Box 20412
Kansas City, MO 64195
816/464-2084

When you write Matt, please give him a thumbnail sketch of "What it was like, what happened, and what it's like now" in your sobriety. In other words, provide a brief summary of your story and length and condition of sobriety and also, why you'd like to be on the prison team. Also, tell him whether you're interested in just corresponding, or also helping sponsor a prison group that may be in your area. Matt already has a goodly group on his team, but could use an increasing number; our prison population wanting and having sexual sobriety is increasing by leaps and bounds! We thank God that we can, through His grace and our fellowship, get and stay sober anywhere.

J.E., Minneapolis, MN -- "The letters from our brothers in prison so moved me. How can I (we) communicate to them the powerful, integral part they are to our fellowship? Their strength and courage are like a wave moving out to touch us all. I am convinced that the experience strength and hope we hear coming from the prison groups is going to empower us all even more."

NOTES FROM NAN

Nan, our Central Office secretary for the last couple of years, has agreed to be office manager as well as secretary, if she limits her work to less than full time. This new situation has come about since the last three secretaries haven't worked out, since the Central Office has moved to commercial office space, and since Roy has withdrawn from being CO mgr. She reports on the following items:

1. "Thanks to those groups responding to CO's need for support. Donations have been increasing and are listed by group in this Essay. I'm sure the percentage of groups contributing to Central Office will increase as the word goes out.
2. "When you send in contributions, please note on the checks or letters specifically whether the check is a group donation, an individual donation, or for literature. This is important now that we are asked to list group contributions in Essay. Also, when paying for literature orders, please jot down the invoice number received with your order. This will be a big help in keeping the books.
3. "All groups, please give us your current contact persons and let us know when this changes. For example, S.S. in Kaneohe, HI... Where are you? Inquirers tell us the number given leads to a dead end. We've also had people trying to contact a couple of other groups without success. [Tradition 5: "Each group has but one primary purpose--to carry its message to the sexaholic who still suffers." - Ed.]
4. "All members without groups: Are you willing to be contacted by inquirers from your area who want a group? If so, please write in and give us your permission to use your first name and phone number. This could be the founding of a new group; remember, it takes only two.
5. "Thanks to the Milwaukee and Rochester groups; we've heard good reports from inquirers trying to make contact!
6. "We need more people willing to correspond with prisoners and loners. You'll have to give full name and address for writing prisoners. See the note elsewhere in this Essay about being part of Matt W's team for prisoner correspondence and sponsoring of prison groups.

7. "Request for a typewriter comes from one of our sober members in prison who is setting up an in-prison network of SA members behind and outside the walls. He does a lot of letter writing and says he could sure use a typewriter.
8. "Can we please settle on the price of the SA manual? Should we charge \$7 or \$10? Right now, we're doing both. [This is one of the first items we could use our upcoming group conscience procedure on.]
9. "A few members have paid for subscription to Essay, as was suggested at the St Louis convention. This has really been appreciated. We don't feel we can make this a binding policy yet because 1) Essay doesn't have a set publication schedule, 2) there's a great need for it to go out to the whole membership, and 3) a firm nationwide policy on subscribing has not yet been established.
10. "The S-Anon central office function has a new change of address:
S-Anon
P O Box 5117
Sherman Oaks, CA 91493
Phone 818/990-6910 (machine)"
11. Nan currently works Mon, Wed, & Fri. Best time to call her at CO and not get the answering machine is 10-12 AM West Coast time.
12. Nan says that due to vacations, the Central Office will be understaffed during the month of August. **Get your literature orders** and other needs into the office as early in July as you can, since services will be very limited in August.
13. **IF YOU HAVE MOVED**, please send Central Office your new address! Returned Essays are a pain--and added expense! Call 818/704-9854 or write Box 300, Simi Valley, CA, 93062.

MISCELLANY

Loner Member Coordinator. Any sober SA members interested in being a coordinator for corresponding with loner members without groups, much as Matt is doing with those in prison, please write Central Office. Please provide a brief summary of your story and length and condition of sobriety, why you're interested in the job, and any other pertinent information for qualification.

Computer sharing? Any SA members who want to exchange letters via the Compuserve computer network, contact Matt W. at the above address. Someone has suggested this as a means for SA to network together across long distances without paying hefty phone bills.

German Newsletter. Excerpts from the last two German SA newsletters are enclosed with this edition of Essay. They have been translated for us by R.P. in West Germany. Interesting reading! Thank you, R.P. for all your work; it brings us closer together.

Three New Pieces. Enclosed with this Essay are the following new pieces: "Covetousness--the Idolatry Connection," "Walk, Don't Run," and "Lust, Sex, and the Marriage Mis-Connection." Roy shares these pieces from his own personal experience for any possible help they might be to others, as he has done in the past. Your feedback is requested, as usual. Also included is a new literature list.

What Makes A Good SA Meeting? Members have written a paragraph on this topic in a previous Essay (March '87). If you want to share what your feelings are on this topic, write a paragraph on it and submit it to Central Office for consideration.

Eleventh-Stepping Other Members? Several members have talked or written about how they have felt led to pray for other members and how this seems to bring very positive results in lives and meetings. Perhaps in our conventions (LA perhaps?) we can share some of these concerns and experiences and learn from each other.

FINANCIAL REPORT FROM CENTRAL OFFICE

Listed below is the Central Office financial report, prepared by our secretary, Nan, and Terry M. Note that for the first time, Essay is listing groups that have donated as groups to our world services Central Office work. Nan tells us it isn't always clear whether donations are from groups or individuals, so there may be some glitches here. But it's an eye-opener for all of us. This is in response to the vote taken at the Bozeman convention in June. If you have any comments on this practice, please notify the Central Office in writing. Nan says that the \$5871.72 bank balance at the end of June looks better than it is; most of that money will go to printing another batch of SA manuals. But how grateful we are to have it to spend without going in the red! Keep up the good work, and pass the word along.

Financial Report

	1st Quar. 1987	2nd Quar. 1987	1987 To Date	1986 Same Period
REVENUE				
Literature sales			14,002	8336
Individ. donations			4,303	
Group donations			6,309	6214 (tot ind. & group)
Total Receipts	11,638	12,976	24,614	14,550
EXPENDITURES				
Salaries	2,543	3,296	5,840	
Rent		180	180	
Printing	5,342	653	5,995	
Phone	242	781	1,022	
Postage	483	649	1,132	
Supplies	1,848	1,004	2,851	
Misc.	776	946	1,722	
Tot. Expenditures	11,234	7,509	18,742	14,489
SURPLUS/DEFICIT	404	5,468	5,872	62

Notes To Financial Report

1. Because this report is new, not all figures from this year or last year were available. Some amounts are approximate, other were not obtainable, but will be available in the future.
 2. If we missed your group or individual donation, we are sorry. Sometimes we can't tell if donations are from an individual or a group. It would help greatly if you would indicate on your checks exactly which group or individual they are from and what they are for.
 3. The donations are very encouraging and they were only from about ten percent of the groups. Think of what we could do if every group contributed.
 4. At first glance, it looks like 1987 will show a large surplus. However, expenses for the first half are not an indication of the rest of the year. Salaries were lower because for several weeks we were without an office manager. The SA Central Office moved out of Roy's garage in June. This will increase several expenses (phone, xerox, supplies, etc.), and will create several new ones (such as rent and insurance). Also, there will be a \$5000 printing expenditure in July.
 5. Raising the price of the SA manual to \$10 has been an important source of the much-needed revenue.
 6. The new practice of passing a second basket for SA Central Office has also been an important source of revenue. (Terry M.)
- K.B. of Winnipeg, Canada** offers an idea he is using to help support SA expenses at Central Office. He borrowed a piggy bank from his daughter and puts a quarter into it each day for the next three months.

BOZEMAN BUSINESS MEETING

The following are minutes of the business meeting held June 6, 1987 at the Bozeman convention. The minutes were taken and prepared by Jean P. of Nashville.

"The meeting opened at about 4:30 PM. Dave B., Los Angeles, acted as chairman. Eight items were brought before the meeting. It had already been announced that this was to be a closed SA meeting and that only SA members with 30 days or more sobriety could vote.

At the lunch meeting earlier that day, Roy K., Simi Valley, announced that he is withdrawing as manager of the Central Office, although he is willing to continue as trusted servant if that is the fellowship's will. He suggested that two committees be formed. One, composed mostly perhaps of So. Calif members, would oversee the Central Office operations; the other would draw on the national fellowship and would be responsible for suggesting a procedure for discerning our national group conscience. These committees would report to the international convention in Los Angeles in December. The convention would then specifically vote on whether to adopt the recommended national group conscience procedure for a trial period. The first two business meeting items followed up on these suggestions.

1. Sylvia J. of Oklahoma City moved that Roy nominate the committee to work out a procedure for discerning national group conscience, with the provision that the committee draw on all regions of SA and that all members have at least a year of sobriety. Jim E., Minneapolis, added that the committee should be answerable to the fellowship as a whole and should report to the convention in December. John A. of Baltimore proposed that the committee should elect its own chairperson, once it (the committee as a whole) has been nominated by Roy. Both suggestions were accepted as friendly amendments. After some discussion, the motion carried unanimously.
2. Bob K. of Marquette, MI moved that Roy also appoint a committee to oversee operations of the Central Office in Simi Valley and report to the convention in December. This motion also carried unanimously.
3. Rochester, NY, presented its bid for the July, 1988 international convention and also asked for guidance as to which of two hotels

should be selected. After some discussion, it was suggested that the decision should be up to the host group. The bid itself was enthusiastically accepted.

4. Dave B. asked for a confirming vote on our decision at the last convention to move the dates of the conventions to the second weekends in July and December, respectively. The dates were voted on separately, and both carried. Thus, starting with July 1988, international conventions will be held the second weekends in July and December.

5. Terry M., Los Angeles, reported on SA's financial status and presented the report appended to these minutes. He pointed out that whereas, if our expenses had stayed where they were, we could have expected to break even for at least a year, the new expenses that will follow on moving the Central Office from Roy's garage to commercial office quarters in Simi Valley, plus changes in the secretarial situation will put us back into the red, if income is as projected. He added that the most effective and consistent source of funds for SA world services so far has been the passing of the second basket, which an increasing number of groups have been doing. Terry encouraged us to keep it up.

Jesse L., Bozeman, moved that in each issue of the Essay, or quarterly, we be given a report on SA's financial status, including a report of what each group has contributed and a breakdown of income and expenditures. This motion passed unanimously.

6. Terry also reported that the December convention is coming along nicely (Los Angeles, December 4,5,6). At this point, it appears that registration and rooms (per night) will each run about \$45.

7. John H., NYC, raised a question for our group conscience. SA in NYC has been given the opportunity to advertise for free in the New York Almanac, which contains information on a number of self-help groups. However, some members of the NYC Intergroup were uncomfortable with doing so, and the Intergroup decided to seek guidance from the larger fellowship represented at the Bozeman convention. John therefore asked us to consider this question: "Is advertising of this sort in accord with the traditions as they are understood in this fellowship?"

After some discussion, it was decided that we were not comfortable with trying to decide the question as formulated. Accordingly, it was reformulated as follows: "What is our group conscience with respect to the NYC SA group advertising in the NY Almanac?" One member suggested that the SA policy that appears to be emerging is that passive listing is in accord with the traditions, while aggressive advertising is more questionable. This seemed to be the consensus of most of us, although we did not vote on it in particular. John H. then said that what he gathered was that our sense was that passive listing in the NYC Almanac was okay. This statement of the group conscience was then confirmed by vote.

8. Harvey A. of Nashville suggested that in future conventions we begin meetings by reading from SA literature, including the sobriety imperative, and generally that we bring these meetings more into accord with the SA Meeting Guide that most of the groups around the country are using. His suggestions were noted, but no vote was taken.

We adjourned at about 5:30.

Baltimore Open Meeting. Word in from John A. of Baltimore: "Recently a Sexual Behaviors Consultation Unit has been opened at the Johns Hopkins Hospital here in Baltimore....Our group conscience decided it would be more suitable to carry a meeting to the [hospital] Staff....Members from both Baltimore and Wash. held an institutional meeting at the hospital using the regular meeting format and sharing. Particularly helpful was the arrangement of chairs in a circle in which both Staff and SA members sat together....[the doctor] wrote us: 'On behalf of the faculty and students at the Sexual Behaviors Consultation Unit, I would like to thank the members of Sexaholics Anonymous for sharing a meeting with us. It was a memorable event for us and I am sure it will benefit each of us both professionally and personally as we wrestle with the "isms" of our lives.' Thank God for His Amazing Grace."

FROM ROY'S DESK

For those who didn't hear my luncheon talk Saturday at Bozeman, I'd like to share in summary what I said then to bring you all up to date on what's happening with Central Office and with me. As of April 21st, I am no longer employed at View Engineering. For a long time, I've felt the need for a sabbatical, but things came to a head at work, and I resigned. Carrying the double load had been telling on me for a long time. My wife Iris is planning to retire early from her job in July. To tide us over, we've put a piece of property we own up for sale. We both feel we're at a new beginning. We're looking to God for guidance and courage. We feel good about this, even though we can't project how this will all work out.

Wednesday, June 3rd was moving day for Central Office. SA is now the proud occupant of an office in a commercial office building in downtown Simi Valley, California! Historic move! And Mike and Curt didn't spill paint on the carpet. And what would we have done without Bob's red truck and healthy back and Lee's support? And of course Nan was there supervising what went where. She's the one who found the place! After the used furniture was all moved in and the Central Office transplanted from my garage, we all stood in a circle, holding hands, and dedicated the place to God's work and the fellowship and said the Lord's prayer together. There were not many dry eyes in that circle. Furniture and rental expense came to \$1000. In the very midst of the move, SA got a \$1000 check from an individual member who, or course, knew nothing about the move! Just another indication, it seemed, that we were doing the right thing under God's guidance and blessing.

SA's phone number remains 818/704-9854, which moved with the office. This means that I can no longer be reached directly at that number; my new private line at home is 805/583-3579.

From February 21st to June 6th I was in process of seeking discernment in the matter of my relation to the work of the Central Office. I put myself under the direction of a man who helps others in practicing a method for obtaining direction in crucial decisions. The process is one where the individual avails himself of all possible means at his disposal: the rational (including advice from others), the intuitive, and finally, direct personal guidance. This process goes on

over months, so it takes place in a broad sampling of one's life-conditions and moods over time. The task was to spend an hour in prayer every third day on each of these three approaches, marking down at the end of the hour whether the answer was Absolutely Yes, Maybe Yes, Don't Know, Maybe No, or Absolutely No. The question I put to this process, (once I discovered I had been asking the wrong question), was "Shall I dissociate from my role as Central Office manager but remain SA trusted servant?"

Interestingly, the last of the assigned prayer periods fell on the morning of June 6th, during the Bozeman Convention, the very day I knew I would have to give my report. The answer was very clear to me; all of the fourteen X's had fallen in the "Absolutely Yes" column. I thus told the fellowship I was dissociating from my previous role as manager of the SA Central Office, but would remain trusted servant if the fellowship wanted that. As life would have it, this coincided with the week of moving the office out of my garage, a process that began when the last secretary we hired to take Nan's place didn't work out. At the same time, Nan agreed to become office manager. All things just seemed to work together.

As it stands now, Nan is both office manager and secretary, getting other part-time help as needed. She is responsible to the fellowship, as she really always has been, only now directly so, without me in the loop. This is why I suggested that a committee be formed to oversee the work of the Central Office to take my place. At present, Nan works Monday, Wednesday, and Friday and is able to keep up with the volume of work. The work is going more efficiently, now that she does it all in one place. Phone calls that come in when she is not there are recorded on the office answering machine, and she takes them from there. It will be up to the committee and the fellowship to say whether this and other practices are acceptable.

I still take the letters and calls that Nan can't handle or pass on to other members. Instead of working in the Central Office, however, I handle these and other SA tasks at home, in what is once again my study.

Regarding my request that SA have a committee to suggest a new procedure for determining national group conscience, let me give some background. When there was a small number of groups in the country,

the way we got national group conscience decisions from the whole fellowship was by newsletter or phone calls. We could get a large percentage of groups to vote in this manner, sometimes 100 percent. This procedure no longer works; we don't get enough response back from the groups. The procedure started falling apart when we asked for feedback on the First Step Inventory; those results are still inconclusive. (A compromise was reached when we agreed to put the three pages in the Meeting Guide and make them available via the Loose Literature List.) What really got my attention was concerning the decision on whether to raise the price of the SA manual from seven to ten dollars, as suggested in St. Louis. Only a handful of groups/individuals have responded; the results do not represent a true national group conscience. A better procedure is needed.

In my talk at Bozeman I cautioned against the If-some's-good-more's-better temptation, suggesting the "least possible organization" approach.

What encourages me is the way the fellowship is becoming responsible concerning Seventh Tradition self-support and Twelfth Step world services. At the St. Louis convention I asked Terry M. to analyze this need and present it to the fellowship, and he did that. The result was a committee that advised him of suggestions, which were then passed on to the fellowship. The procedure of passing a second basket at meetings exclusively for our world service Twelfth Step work (Central Office) is beginning to have an impact! Groups seem to be taking to it naturally. It was this demonstration of responsibility that encouraged me to share more responsibility with the fellowship, now specifically in the matter of the Central Office and finding a better national group conscience procedure.

As I said in Bozeman, we are now proceeding at a more measured pace in these matters, as need and leadership arise from within.

At the First National Conference on Sexual Compulsivity/Addiction held in Minneapolis last May, in which I participated, a few of us SA members were able to reopen dialogue with Sex Addicts Anonymous. I am pursuing this, and as I mentioned in Bozeman, will report again at our December convention in Los Angeles. At that time I also plan to have ready another look at our national policy on our relations with the media and publicity. I'll see to it that a copy of my letter to the committee is included with this Essay. I urge you all to read it.