



Carry The Message



The Bi - Monthly Newsletter of the Live & Let Live Alano Club

July - August 1998

The Long Way Back

By Michael N.

Once I came to the decision that I was powerless over drugs and alcohol I was then able to see that my life was very unmanageable in all forms and it was really totally out of control. I was unable to control anyone or anything around me due to my using and that brought about my bad actions which lead me into the places such as jails and prisons where I am currently right now. I myself hate not being in control but I let drugs control my life since my youth and I am now twenty-eight and have been in and out of jails, prison and rehabilitation centers and I know the next step is death. A while back, that would have been real cool to me but now that I am once again clean and sober I have a wanting desire to live and finally enjoy life as it is and be able to see what I am seeing with clear eyes. That means seeing a sunset for the beauty that it holds. Right now I have almost seven months clean and have been able to really start getting honest with myself and deep down making a choice to not pick up again at least not for today. I have been around drugs since the age of three when my real Dad held a gun to my head and forced me to do the stuff and then later on around the age of seven I really thought it was the thing to do. I

(Continued on page 3)



Coffee Booth News

By Jack S.

In the afterglow of the 1998 PRIDE/LLAC Coffee booth, I have only one thing to say: YOU WERE GREAT! This year's volunteer staff was the best I've seen to date. We were well staffed and the staff worked their jobs enthusiastically. Of course there were high points and low points. Pride got power for us (that's a high point), but one of our refrigerators decided to die (that's definitely a low, especially when discovered by the health inspectors...). And then Pride left us off of the bottled water list so we had no water to sell (a low), BUT, we had blended cappuccinos and blended latte's to sell this year and that is a definite high!

And the blended drinks sold very well. This year we instituted an order form to record the sales and we are preparing a report to the board which will be posted on the bulletin board.

We also did ok in bagels, pastries & fruit (apples & bananas that is...). Carla & Ester, Chris, Ed, and Carleen each contributed to the sales stock and these items sold at a consistent and steady rate.

Also, I want to take this opportunity to thank each and every volunteer

(Continued on page 5)

**WE ARE UPDATING
OUR BIRTHDAY
DATABASE.
PLEASE STAY
TUNED! MORE WILL
BE REVEALED!**

Carry The Message

The Monthly Newsletter of
The Live & Let Live Alano Club
A decade and a half of of Service
to the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Recovering Community

Located at 1730 Monroe Avenue, San Diego, CA 92116
Telephone: (619) 298-8008
Internet Address: theproud.net/community/sd-llac.org/

The Board of Directors:

Amy G., Carleen H., Chris V., Colleen S., Jack S., Jimm C., Jo S.L., John W.S., Scott J.

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The Newsletter Committee:

Jere H.; Jim L.; Tim G.; Helen S.

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Publication Deadline:

Advertisements and other submissions must be received no later than the **21st of the month** for inclusion in the next month's issue (but call Jere if you'll be late and we can work something out).

Advertisements - Submissions Information:

Please contact Jere H. by telephone at (619) 291-7118 or by email at jkhalligan@aol.com. Material may also be left in the Newsletter Box at the Live & Let Live Alano Club. For information in general, about the Club or the newsletter, you may also call the Club at (619) 298-8008.

WE REALLY DO NEED YOUR HELP!

Please support the Club and the newsletter by writing something (a 12 step story, some poetry, thoughts about recovery or anything which you feel is fit for print. As this is YOUR club, this is also YOUR newsletter. Help us to be sure to meet YOUR newsletter needs. Know of a business or a friend in business who can use some cost-effective advertising? Give them a copy of the newsletter and suggest that you'd love to see them advertised here, where recovery is our way of life!



thank you!

from Club Manager Kris F.

THANKS TO:

Patty C., Mike M., Chris V.,
Kathy m., Rob N., Bob T.,
Kori S., Kathy P. and
Helen S.

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Robert B., Steve A. and the
LLLAC Contingent in the 98
Pride Parade. Thanks also to
Parade monitors Griff O. &
Tommy D.

EXTRA SPECIAL THANKS:

The volunteers, staff and
board members who
contributed to the success of
the Pride Coffee Exchange!
Great Service!

NOTE:

Water that has been donated to
the Live and Live Alano Club is
in memory of Ron Lewis.

The Long Way Home

(Continued from page 1)

In and out of jails, prison, and rehab centers, I know now that when I get out I will have about 17 months clean, and feel really good about my life, and want to continue that sobriety day to day.

started out with weed and then moved up to the bigger stuff as I got older and managed to stay in and out of trouble and it was mainly due to the use of drugs. I created my own insanity with forms of denial and constantly lying to myself that I was not an addict and could quit at any time I felt good and ready. After that, I continued to hit bottom after bottom like a yo-yo and each time it got worse. Once I made my mind up that I was going to get clean and stay clean, it was easy, or should I say it got easier then it was at the start of the insanity. I never wanted to stop, but I also do not want to lose someone I love dearly because of my disease or theirs. In the program, I have learned that there are many suggestions but there is only one requirement and that is to have fun.

I never thought that would be possible without getting high, but I was wrong and I was able to admit it to myself and that was important to me. Upon my release, I will have about 17 months clean and feel really good about my life now and can only continue to do so on a day-to-day basis. There are still temptations to use and they will always be there since my mind will always remember the feeling of slamming some speed in the veins and how great it felt. But I must also remember where I came from and that all the other feelings such as shame, lies, loss of respect and many others were there and I want to be able to hold my head up to see where I walk and who I will be

walking hand and hand with so we both can be proud of each other and enjoy the rest of our lives together and make them better than the 7 years where there was mostly destruction and plenty of pain and hurt. I know I hurt this person during my addiction and all I can do is try to make up for it over the years to keep this person and myself happy. For those of you reading this: if you are a newcomer, just remember it will not happen overnight - it will take time. You will feel so sad at times and feel like giving up, but once you start building a tool kit and putting new tools in it that you have learned to use, it really gets easier in time. I like to think of the NA program and all the other rooms of recovery as a multi-level marketing company. One person brings another and someone else brings another and then there is that favorite person our own dearly loved sponsors who at times we really feel like they are crazy but we all are to a certain degree and that can be fun too. On a closing note just keep in mind just because you are clean everything will be all right we (I) still have problems, but it is something called life. So just remember to live on life's terms or if you prefer just go slow and easy you have a lifetime to complete your dreams.



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So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation; everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! 2 Corinthians 5:17

Reverend Donna Eubanks
Pastor

<http://www.cncoc.org/cocci>

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There is a Solution

By Gretchen A.

I am privileged to participate in a meeting with several friends called the Broad Highway Big Book Study, where we read a chapter from the Big Book each week and share with each other our experience, strength and hope as it relates to the text. Recently, we read Chapter 2, "There is a Solution," and I would like to pass on a few thoughts to the LLLAC membership.

I often hear people in meetings say that they "choose not to drink today". That's one way to really get the hair on some oldtimer's necks to stand up! The Big Book, at page 24, tells us that "most alcoholics ... have lost the power of choice in drink." I have a friend in Long Beach with over twenty-five years of sobriety who says that if she could choose not to drink then she would not need AA and would not have to spend three nights a week sitting on hard chairs in musty church basements. (I suspect my friend is prone to exaggeration, since I've been in many churches, basements, and church basements, none of which were particularly musty... But I digress...)

The book goes on to say that we, as alcoholics, are "unable, at certain times, to bring into our consciousness with sufficient force the memory of the suffering and humiliation of even a week or a month ago." In my case, I could barely remember the suffering of a past night's spree. My mind would trick me into thinking it was not the alcohol that caused my humiliation, but other things; for example, I would blame the sushi I'd eaten for making me sick the next day rather than the alcohol I'd drunk.

Chapter 2 is also where the book, for the first time, indicates that, by accepting spiritual help, we will be "rocketed into a fourth dimension of existence of which we had not even dreamed." I have long been puzzled by the idea of a fourth dimension. What is it? In fact, what are the first three dimensions? I took these questions to my friends at the Broad Highway group and, as usual, eight alcoholics turned up eight different answers. The consensus seemed to be, however, that the first three dimensions refer to three-dimensional space and objects, things you can feel and touch. The fourth dimension refers to the spiritual experience.

(Continued on page 6)

**My mind would
trick me into
thinking it was
not the alcohol
that caused my
humiliation, but
other things...**

HUMILITY

"Perpetual quietness of heart. It is to have no trouble. It is never to be fretted or vexed, irritable or sore; to wonder at nothing that is done to me, to feel nothing done against me. It is to be at rest when nobody praises me, and when I am blamed or despised, it is to have a blessed home in myself where I can go in and shut the door and kneel to my Father in secret and be at peace, as in a deep sea of calmness when all around and about is seeming trouble."

From a plaque on Dr. Bob's desk.

Submitted by Bob H.

Coffee Booth News

(Continued from page 1)

who contributed to the volunteer ticket fund. As always, we had to provide Festival tickets for our volunteer staff. We asked you to contribute a portion of your ticket cost to the fund and your response was outstanding. We had very few no-shows, we had just enough tickets to go around and the fund covered the cost of the tickets we did have. It is this type of dedication and self-sacrifice, which makes these fundraising events into significant moneymakers for the club.

Since I worked the booth on Saturday morning, I missed the Parade for the second year in a row. However, everyone I talked to had nothing but good to say for our parade contingent. Thanks to Steve A and Robert B we had all of the State and Territory flags available and a truck for our non-walking participants.

And having all of the flags was a Friday afternoon mini-drama in itself. It turned out that one of the flags we thought we were getting from our usual source was in fact not available. It took a bit of calling but after an hour or so on the phone Robert located one and raced downtown to get it.

And let me not forget those people who helped with Setup and Tear-down. Thanks particularly to Vicky, Bev and Chris whose trucks carted most of our supplies back and forth between the Festival site and the Club.

Thank you from each of us on the Board to Each and Every one of you who worked the Booth and the Parade. Without you it could not happen. Thanks to you it can and does happen and that makes our jobs worthwhile.

*A fine pride festival
was our experience this
year! All the
volunteers did
outstanding work, with
lots of fun thrown in
for good measure!*

Gays of Our Lives

Director Wayne T. has done it yet again! He is currently directing the show Gays of our Lives at The Diversionary Theatre, who will host a performance benefitting the Live and Let Live Alano Club on August 16, 1998 at 7:00 PM. Tickets can be purchased from Club coffee bar.

Sound System

A committee is working to upgrade the sound system in the main meeting room of the LLLAC. If you have "sound" experience or would like to participate, please contact Gretchen A. Donations gladly accepted!

Members Businesses
Families
Friends

We can help each other by advertising in Carry the Message. Please call Jim L. at 295-4781 for rates.

Ten Commandments of Getting Ahead in Life

Speak to People. Even if you do not know their names; nothing is as nice as a cheerful word of greeting.

Smile at People. It takes 72 muscles to frown and only 14 to smile. Your smile is one of your finest assets. Use it!

Call People by Name. The sweetest music to anyone's ears is the sound of his or her own name.

Be Friendly and Helpful. If you want to have friends, be one.

Be Genuinely Interested in People. If you try you can like everybody, and everybody will like you.

Seek Out the Little People. Do not limit yourself to a few friends when there are so many likable people around you.

Be Generous with Praise. And cautious with criticism. Who among us does not need the understanding and tolerance of all our friends.

Be Considerate of the Feelings of Others. Usually there are three sides to a controversy - yours, the other person's, and the right one.

Be Alert to give Service. What we do for others counts most in life.

Add to this a Good Sense of Humor. A generous dose of patience, a dash of humility and you will receive many-fold blessings.

submitted by Bobby Z.

Correspondence may be submitted for publication in the LLAC Newsletter. Place letters in the box near the coffee bar. Please include a phone number with your letter. Letters will be printed if space permits, and may be edited for length and/or clarity.

There is a Solution

(Continued from page 4)

According to the dictionary, the fourth dimension is something outside the range of ordinary experience and meaning that transcends the issue of clarity versus obscurity. The ordinary experiences of alcoholics are made up of suffering, humiliation, jails, institutions and death. We may not like our situations, yet we do not know how to escape them.

The fourth dimension, for me, is being able to walk with my head up and look people in the eye, to look to a higher source to help with my problems, to "serve usefully and walk humbly under the grace of God". This is the fourth dimension for me because that useful humble person did not exist while I was drinking and using.

Finally, another friend suggests that when people say they "choose not to drink today" they mean that instead they chose recovery today. To me, that makes more sense, because it seems it is this very willingness to recover that provides the rocket fuel to the fourth dimension. It never hurts to have an open mind.

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Reflections ...

The following anonymous submission is part of a series of written daily shares produced by a Club member and offered here for reflection by the membership.

Hi world,

Today I started out the day with a meeting. I have been keeping myself quiet lately because this is a time for me to sit and listen. However my little mind was just racing with the best shares and insights known to mankind. I wanted to dazzle the meeting with some witty quips and thought provoking quotes...I am sure the reader can fully understand my situation. The subject today was "Ego versus Spirituality". Imagine that...

Being the self willed self taught self ish ish ish person that I tend to be , it is most definitely important for me to learn humility and self control. After all I know that publicly proving my intelligence, or lack of, will not be the thing that keeps me sober. H.P. keeps me soberHaving a practical spiritual way of living keeps me sober. Not drinking or using keeps me sober. Proving my worth? Nope!

Today I am compelled to talk about working Step One in my life. " We admitted we were powerless over alcohol--that our lives had become unmanageable."

As the flower unfolds and the memories return acceptance soothes the pain of the absolute humiliation. The realization that I have made a mess of things slaps me in the face, and I know now that it was I who chose to do the dirty deed.

There has never been a time more difficult for me than the last few months before my final battle with drugs. The days felt like years and the nights brought fear and paranoia. I fled the night's silence. Voices echoing in my head like specters in a bad dream. Only this was no dream. The harsh reality of it all would eventually result in overdose.

I remember calling my friend days before begging him to drive me down to County Mental Health. He refused. I remember being so angry with him calling him every name in the book, and pleading for help. No help was given. My manipulations had even worn out the only true friends that I had left. I was too

ashamed to ask for help from my family. Too proud to let them know my pain. I had to prove to them that I was nothing like my brother and sister, also drug abusers.

I remember spending endless hours picking at my face in the bathroom mirror reciting this fortuitous mantra: "Obsession is aberration of character , and aberration leads to deformity of the mind , body and soul." This pathetic cry for help was never heard . Only the evidence of my self-destruction could be seen on my face. The scars eventually healed but the disease remains. Soon enough the bottom would draw me closer.

The memories are getting clearer now almost four years into the future. I am finally able to handle the emotions of the last few days before my overdose. This process is not easy as I realize that it was absolutely necessary for me to hit total bottom and almost die.

I had returned from Manhattan almost a week before I had been dry for almost two months. My disease was ready and waiting for me to slip into its grasp once again. Only this was to be the final stand , and the final battle with Crystal Meth. for me.

I began the party in a bath house the day I got back. Five days later I was still UP and beginning to come down big time. The loneliness and paranoia began to set in. The party was coming to a drastic HALT. I remember saying to myself and God that I was tired of living like this. I was tired of the insanity and the fear. I was tired of being so tired that I couldn't walk two blocks to the liquor store. Being awake for six days has a way of distorting reality. For that brief moment of agony I saw reality clearer than I had seen it since I was 24.

I did what I had to do to relieve myself of the pain. I bought more drugs than ever. I didn't want to run out this time. I locked myself up in my little cracker box of a studio apartment and began the cycle all over again, but this time my consumption had taken a drastic twist . I began doing more and more until finally I had used it all. Feverishly I searched my place for a hidden stash. Drug addicts do that. We hide every thing. But this time there was nothing to be found, and instead of staying awake and being happy, I began to become delusional. My hallucinations took form and my life was coming to

(Continued on page 8)

Meeting List The Live and Let Live Alano Club 1730 Monroe Avenue San Diego, CA 92116 619/298-8008

MONDAY

- 11:45 AM Sober Nooners **AA** Discussion
- 5:45 PM Free to Be **AA** Discussion
- 7:00 PM **Alanon** Discussion
- 8:00 PM Narcotics Anonymous **NA** Discussion

TUESDAY

- 11:45 AM Sober Nooners **AA** Discussion
- 5:45 PM Free to Be **AA** Discussion
- 8:00 PM Sex and Sobriety **AA** Discussion
- 8:00 PM Sober Sisters (Women only) **AA** Discussion

WEDNESDAY

- 11:45 AM Sober Nooners **AA** Discussion
- 5:45 PM Free to Be **AA** Discussion
- 5:45 PM Overeaters Anonymous **OA** Discussion
- 8:00 PM Hope Without Dope **NA** Discussion
- 8:00 PM There Are Those Too Sanctuary **NA/AA/Psych.**

THURSDAY

- 11:45 AM Sober Nooners **AA** Discussion
- 5:45 PM Free to Be **AA** Discussion
- 5:45 PM Nicotine Anonymous **NA** Discussion
- 8:00 PM Butts Out **AA** Discussion
- 8:00 PM Crystal Meth Anonymous **CMA** Discussion

FRIDAY

- 11:45 AM Sober Nooners **AA** Discussion
- 5:45 PM Free to Be **AA** Discussion
- 8:00 PM Sobriety and Miracles(Leather/Fetish Meeting) **AA** Discussion

SATURDAY

- 9:00 AM Nicotine Anonymous **NA** Discussion
- 10:00 AM Women's Meeting **AA** Discussion
- 11:45 AM Sober Nooners **AA** Discussion
- 2:00 PM How and Why **NA** Discussion
- 2:00 PM Crystal Meth Anonymous **CMA** Discussion
- 6:00 PM As Bill Sees It **AA** Discussion
- 8:00 PM Two Bit Speakers **AA** Speaker
- 8:15 PM Intimacy and Sobriety (Men) **AA** Discussion

SUNDAY

- 9:00 AM Women's Meeting **AA** Discussion
- 11:00 AM Straight Shooters **AA** Discussion
- 5:00 PM We Agnostics **AA** Discussion
- 6:00 PM Beautiful Beginnings **AA** Speaker & Discussion
- 8:00 PM Principles Before Personalities **NA** Speaker & Discussion

Reflections ...

(Continued from page 7)
a very fast end.

This is where the memories are still sketchy so I am choosing to omit that which I can not grasp yet.

The road to recovery began soon after. I relapsed twice within a short period of time, but never to the extent of before. My desire to use slowly left me and the idea of formal recovery began to sound like my only alternative. These days the reality of the First Step and the memory of hitting bottom are more of a helpmate than a bad memory. I know that I am powerless over that first drink and I know all too well the unmanageability that inevitably will follow. In fact I am learning that overindulgence has consequences that can affect all areas of my life. The proof is in my Daily Inventory.

Today I am glad to be alive. Four years ago October I wanted to die. Today I am looking forward to a future that includes friends and family. Today I have a family in A.A. that understands and accepts me unconditionally. Recovery takes time, but now I have more time than I ever thought possible.

Take care.

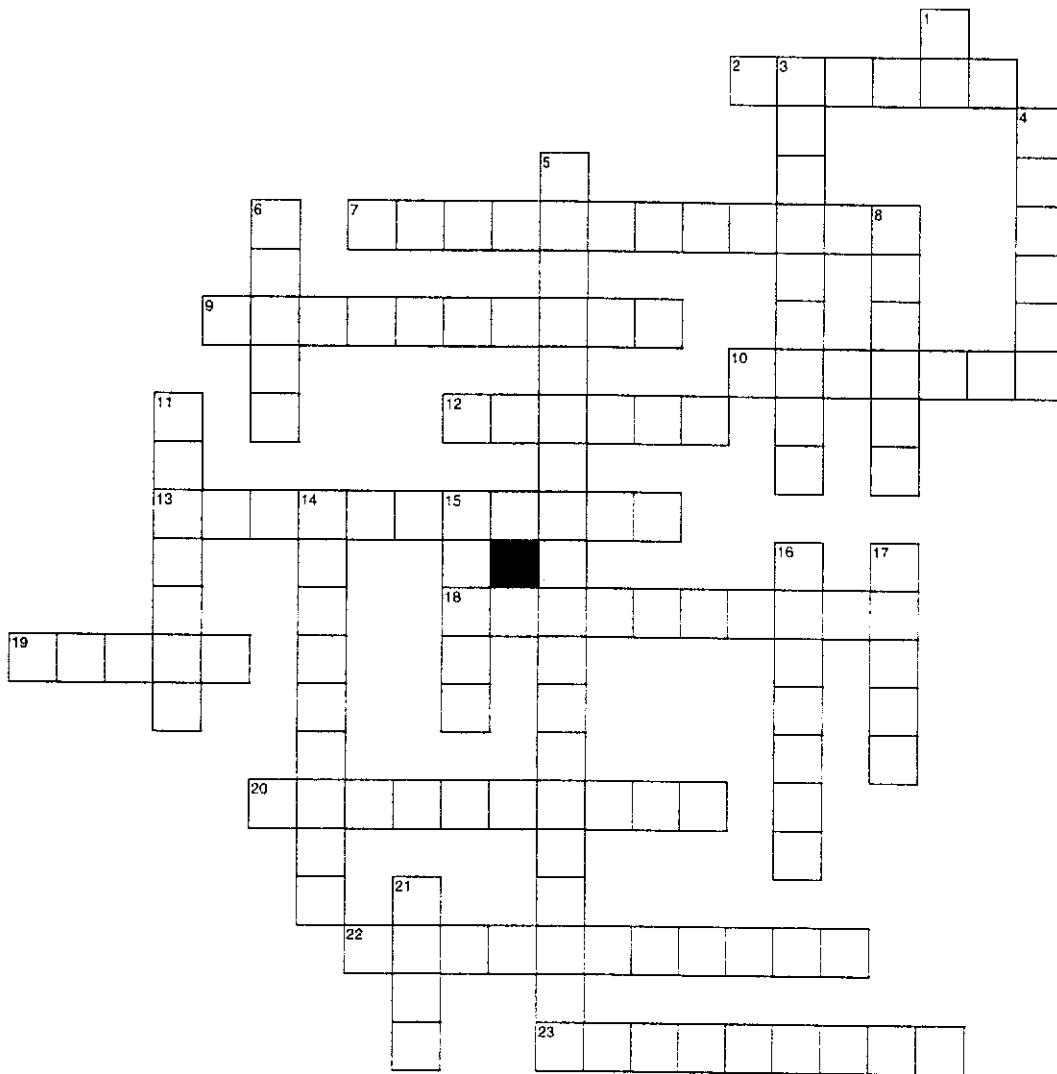
"LIBERATION"

"Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness, which most frightens us. We ask ourselves, "Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented and fabulous?" Actually, who are we not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small doesn't serve the world. There's nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It's not just in some of us; it's in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others."

A quotation by Marianne Williamson used by Nelson Mandela in his 1984 inaugural speech.

Submitted by Gretchen A.

LLLAC August 1998



Constructed by Jere

ACROSS

- 2 A --- for you
- 7 One of the "four horsemen" with 13 Across
- 9 the grouch and the --- may be the dubious luxury of normal men
- 10 The --- to change the things I can
- 12 --- emotional appeal seldom suffices
- 13 Another of the "four horsemen" with 8 Down
- 18 The "number one" offender
- 19 It's the --- drink that gets you drunk
- 20 crushed by the --- of self-will

- 22 I want the hand of AA to always be there. For that I am ---.
- 23 who wrote the doctor's opinion

DOWN

- 1 Let -- and let God
- 3 searching and fearless moral ---
- 4 We have lost the power of -- in drink
- 5 The real title of the Big Book
- 6 Bill met Bob in ---
- 8 One of the "four horsemen" with 16 Down
- 11 without spirituality, we have no effective mental --- against the first drink
- 14 A sponsor is sometimes called a --- advisor
- 15 Bill met Bob in ---
- 16 The last of the "four horsemen" with 7 Across
- 17 The twelve --- of AA
- 21 Faith without works is ---

**GOOD LUCK!
FOR SOLUTION,
SEE NEXT ISSUE
OR KRIS AT
COFFEE BAR!**

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Stanley K. Fevens, Ph.D.

Psychologist

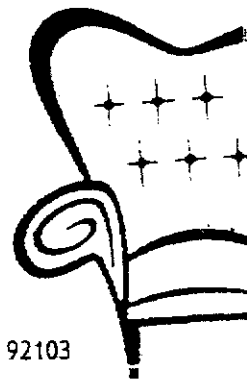
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