



Hand in Hand

Newsletter Date
Summer Issue 2007

Recovering couples Anonymous, P.O. Box 11029, Oakland, CA 94611
<http://www.recovering-couples.org> phone: (510) 663-2312
<mailto:wso-rca@recovering-couples.org>

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 Letter from the Chair
- 2 Important Dates
- 3 Delegate Voting
- 4 RCACC Silent Auction
- 5 Bed and Breakfast Club
- 6 Montreal Beginnings (an article)
- 7 How we can help the newcomers

Board Members

Carl and JoAnn, from California

Newly elected to the Board are:

Andy and Steve from Hawaii

Bob and Keren from Boston

Jade and Gladys, from Oregon

Kate and Dan, from Maryland

Randy and Gerrie, from Winnipeg

Wayne and Linda, from New York

Letter from the Chair

By Dan IRW Kate, Chair RCA WSO Board, 2006-2007

It is hard to believe that it is just a month to the 2007 convention in St. Louis! Kate and I have experienced important healing and growth in our coupleship as a result of our participation in the workshops at the last four conventions and from the encouragement we have received from meeting so many other RCA couples and seeing each couple working so diligently on their relationship. In addition to the continued healing and recovery, there remains much work to be done for the benefit of the fellowship as we all strive to meet our obligations under the Twelfth Step, whether or not we will be able to attend this year's convention.

The Seven Business-Meeting Topics for Which By-Mail Voting is Available: Each group should have received detailed information on these topics, and a by-mail ballot has been distributed for those groups unable to attend the business meeting on Friday, 3 August 2007. To review or to get a copy of the information and the ballot, go the WSO website and click on "2007 Annual Meeting" under "Current News." All groups unable to have a delegate couple attend the convention are asked to consider submitting a by-mail ballot.

Please see *Letter from the Chair cont'd* on Page 10

Delegate Couple Voting

Hi RCA Groups! About 35 groups have let WSO know that they will attend St. Louis RCACC and will be at the business meeting on Friday. Another 15 groups will be mailing in their ballot. There is still time to have a group conscience and identify your delegate couple!!!

Please complete form (see separate attachment) and send to WSO office:

by e-mail: wso-rca@pacbell.net

by letter to WSO, P.O. Box 11029, Oakland, CA 94611.

Identifying our DELEGATE COUPLE to represent our RCA group whether or not we attend RCACC in St. Louis.

Please see *Delegate Couple Voting Form* (attached in email)

*“Committee Service
Workers”*

Dan as Chair
Gerrie as Vice-Chair
Andrea as Treasurer
Steve S. as Co-treasurer
Bob as Secretary
Jade as Egalitarian
Gladys as Timekeeper

Thanks

to

those

RCA members

servicing

on the

***Outreach
Committee!***

*They email and/or
phone the 100 plus
RCA groups!*

***“We are trying to keep
the RCA groups
informed”***

*Please go to
the RCA website and
check that your group
contact information is
correct.*

*If it is incorrect,
you can fix it!*

YOUR RCA GROUP AND NEWCOMERS

How does your meeting welcome first-time attendees to RCA? When newcomers feel they belong in a meeting, there's a better chance they'll come back -- helping groups grow and prosper, and helping members be of service to one another.

Here's what they do in New Orleans, Santa Cruz, and Sweden. In RCA New Orleans, when there's a newcomer couple the meeting shares are focused on Step One. Also the group uses a special "Newcomers Welcome" reading as part of the meeting format. During the week immediately following this "newcomer meeting," a group-member couple calls the newcomers to check in and answer questions.

When a new couple first attends the Santa Cruz, California meeting, the RCA pamphlet, "Welcome To RCA," is passed around and all members present put their names and phone numbers on the pamphlet. The filled-out pamphlet and two "Wooden Nickel" welcome chips are presented to the new couple. Also members point out where the literature is; all literature is free except for the blue book. When there are about ten minutes left, newcomers are invited to share; it's made clear that they do not have to speak unless they want to. Also, newcomers are encouraged to stay after the meeting and ask questions.

"After the meeting we talk with the new couple, if they wish to talk with us. Generally, when the new couple shares, they spark some commonality with people in the meeting. For example, they may mention they are struggling over their kids, etc., and a regular couple in the meeting who is facing the same issue makes it a point to talk with the new folks. That seems to happen quite naturally. After our meeting we often go to brunch, and we invite the new couple to join the group if they would like."

RCA Sweden also presents the "Wooden Nickel" welcome chips to newcomers. The Swedish custom is to write onto the chips the actual date of the particular meeting, so that the new couple will have a record of their first attendance at RCA.

Please tell us what you do to help newcomers feel welcome, so we can share it with our RCA Fellowship.

E-mail your group's experience (it can be brief), and ideas will be included in a future Hand in Hand article.

You can send items to the editor:
Elise - davidandelise@earthlink.net
or to rca_couple@yahoo.com

RCA MONTREAL BEGINNINGS

(This article was originally submitted for the Spring issue and was inadvertently left out. Our apologies to the authors -- Ed.)

RCA Montreal had its beginnings with the reconciliation of my partner and me in January, 2006. After nearly 3 years separation we decided to try again and just knew we would need all the help we could get to make it work.

We agreed to work the 12 steps of AI-Anon until we received the RCA starter kit. By April we were having weekly RCA meetings in our separate apartments, and asked WSO for a long distance, same-sex sponsor couple.

Imagine our surprise to be sent two sponsoring couples. We chose the first couple to reply to our email request; that was in mid-May. Our sponsor couple encouraged us to work the RCA steps weekly for 30 minutes. It took us a month to do Step 1, two months for Step 2, and three months for Step 3. We wanted to start an RCA meeting in Montreal by September and shared as much as we could at our individual 12 step meetings.

We also wanted to attend the Boston RCA Annual Conference in August, only a 5-hour drive from Montreal. At the Annual conference we received another gift. We attended a workshop on Steps 1, 2, and 3, which focused on doing the Step 2 collage. That was exactly where we were in our step work. Of course we were resisting, but the presenters just made it seem so easy and necessary as a couple.

Upon our return from the Boston conference we had two couples asking when were we starting the RCA meeting because they were ready. That did it. August 14th, 2006, was our first meeting with one and a half couples in my apartment. We also volunteered to sponsor a younger couple; this allowed us to give away what we so freely received from our first sponsors.

For the first 4 months (Aug-Nov) we rotated couple homes as meeting places. Once our monies were in order and we had 3 couples as active members, we were able to commit to a permanent location. That was in December, and we registered our group with WSO, put our group name and contact information on the website, started public service announcements in local English papers, and even set up an email address. We have already heard from couples who want to come to our meetings, held the 2nd and 4th Mondays of the month. Our group's latest endeavor to help newcomers is a step study meeting on the 3rd Monday of the month.

Our first sponsor couple had to 'let us go,' so we searched for another. We had read in the Fall 2006 issue of the HAND IN HAND that the Toronto RCA group was celebrating its FIRST anniversary on November 10th. We drove the 5 hours from Montreal to Toronto and met couples from other Ontario RCA groups (Hamilton, London and a 2nd Toronto group). We met our current sponsor couple there, and have been calling every other week as we work on our fourth Step.

In December we started couple therapy and between this and RCA I am experiencing a whole new level of commitment and communication that I had not thought possible. I am so grateful for this program, and how we work the steps and go to meetings as a couple. One of my greatest gifts in sobriety was to receive permission to develop a relationship with a God of my understanding. What I find amazing now is how our coupleship is finding a Higher Power of our understanding, and trusting the RCA process in all aspects of our lives, our relationship, and our families. -- Rita

In a former life I was in a religious community as a nun for 36 years. I was familiar with community meetings and sharing, but it was like an incestuous, titanic ship. My individual sponsor says that the hardest thing for a couple to do is to "really, really tell the truth to one another." I'm a follower of the Floe-Flame-Fleur principle (from Marion Woodman's "The Pregnant Virgin"), in which couples are mirror-shadows of one another, and sometimes they are mimetic rivals: projecting, blaming,

and shaming ourselves and the other, unless and until we hit bottom and begin recovery. "The truth sets us free."

What I have come to realize in practicing the 36 principles of this spiritual program of RCA is that in a coupleship, as well as in individual recovery, acceptance is the key. When I assume that Rita sees things as I do, instead of "as she is," I fall flat on my face at the bottom of a chasm. When I accept and glimpse that everything is just the way it is supposed to be, and that this coupleship is an opportunity to bring light out of the darkness of our individual and mutual blindness, through sharing what we see today and forgiving, then I can turn all over to HP (mine and ours), get on with my day, and grow up a little.
-- Beth

Respectfully submitted,
Beth and Rita, a recovering couple
18 January 2007

Meet Us in St. Louis Step Up to Intimacy

St. Louis is excitedly getting ready to welcome you, the Recovering Couples Anonymous Fellowship, August 3, 4, 5, 2007. Our theme this year is Tap in Romance: The Journey to Intimacy and Healthy Sexuality.

Our Banquet Speakers this year are Diane and Glenn A from St. Petersburg, Florida. The title of their sharing is "Step Up to Intimacy". They were present at the first Recovering Couples Anonymous Convention August 9, 1991, and thus have much to share with you regarding their experience, strength, and hope. Diane served as the editor of Hand in Hand for over 10 years, and Glenn initiated Vision 2000 as a guidepost to help RCA grow in its early years. They served as trusted servants on RCA World Service Board from 1995 to 1997. From an earlier talk given by Glenn and Diane, they shared their belief in how the 12 Steps have transformed their individual lives, and their relationship. "You will need courage because some of things you discover will be painful. Some will be eye-opening. Some will bring you great joy. For us and our relationship, it was all worth it." They are a continuing living guide for the meaning of the 3 Legged Stool: the symbol of RCA. The Blue Book states "RCA is a tool for recovery and not an end in itself. It exists to promote caring, communication and intimacy. Our individual recovery, our partner's recovery and our relationship recovery are all important "legs" to the serenity, stability and intimacy we each seek." (Preface II Third Edition)

In reflecting on our chosen theme, your RCAC 2007 convention committee chose the word "Journey" to reflect that each of us are on a path with each other and Our Higher Power. Intimacy is about connectedness. Looking at the Reflections in the RCA Blue Book, many are about Intimacy: finding, building, discovering, exploring, and healing. In previous conventions, the feedback received has indicated that sessions on Sexuality have been strongly attended, and a desire to hear more on the link between intimacy and sexuality. Our program will feature Panels of 3 couples speaking on each of the 12 Steps, small breakout sessions on topics of intimacy and sexuality, and 2 Guest speakers addressing the topic. Here are a few titles: "Dance of Intimacy: The Tango, The Rumba, The Blues"; "Communicating Our Sexual Needs: Life is Not like the Movies, It Just Doesn't Magically Happen"; "Sexual Life Cycle: From Pretzels to Hammocks"; "Deepening Intimacy through Integrity". Fun is also an integral element! Have your coupleship drawn by a caricature artist at the Saturday Evening dance. Meet new friends and renew old ones in the Serenity Café. This year marks the first year of the Delegate RCA Conference.

To register, please see the registration flyer in Hand in Hand. For more information, visit the RCA website or call (636) 970-1762 or email stlouisrca@recovering-couples.org

Reservations are made directly with the Renaissance Hotel toll-free 888-340-2594. The deadline for the preferred rate is July 10 on a space available basis.

We look forward to sharing and growing with you - RCAC 2007 Convention Committee



Recovering Couples Anonymous
International Convention
Saint Louis, Missouri
August 3,4,5 2007

Tapping into Romance The Journey to Intimacy and Healthy Sexuality August 3, 4, 5 2007 RENAISSANCE ST LOUIS HOTEL AIRPORT

9801 Natural Bridge Road
St. Louis, Missouri 63134 USA

Phone: 314-429-1100

Fax: 314-429-3625

stlouisrca@recovering-couples.org

Hotel Directions from the Airport; (314-426-8000) Interstate I-70 one half mile east to the Natural Bridge Road exit. The hotel is after the first stop light on the left. **Note:** Airport shuttle service, on request, is

RCA - Who We Are

We are understanding couples with three aims;

- Improve our communications
- Expand our self-caring
- Strengthen our commitment and watch our relationships grow to fulfill our Hopes and Dreams.

We suffer from many addictions, co-addictions, some identified, some not, some treated, and some not. Many of us have been separated or near divorce. Some of us are new in our relationships and seek to build intimacy as we grow together as committed couples.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

RCA is a tool for recovery and not an end in itself. It exists to promote caring, communication and intimacy. A quite successful formula of RCA is my individual recovery plus your individual recovery plus our couple recovery equals a healthy recovering relationship.

The convention is open to couples & singles wanting to improve their relationships. We want everyone to feel comfortable and safe. Please be considerate of others in your choice of clothing and no perfumes.

Please join us and see what you can have! You deserve it!!!!

Hotel Reservation Info:

- Reservations Toll-free: 888-340-2594
- To receive the discounted rate when registering by phone, you must mention **RCA 2007**. The St. Louis Renaissance is Smoke-Free.
- Outdoor smoking area available.
- The special convention rate is \$99.00 per night per room (up to 4 people). Available on a space available basis two days before and after the convention.
- Rate not guaranteed after July 10th, please make reservations early.
- Make any special needs room arrangements directly with the hotel

Please see *Convention Schedule* (attached in email)



Recovering Couples Anonymous
International Convention
Saint Louis, Missouri
August 3, 4, 5 2007

Tapping into Romance The Journey to Intimacy and Healthy Sexuality August 3, 4, 5 2007

RENAISSANCE ST LOUIS HOTEL AIRPORT

9801 Natural Bridge Road St. Louis, Missouri 63134

Phone: 314-429-1100 Fax: 314-429-3625 Reservations Toll-free: 1-888-340-2594 \$99/night

CONVENTION REGISTRATION:

Registration for the conference does not include hotel rooms. Please contact the hotel directly to reserve a room.

All registration information is strictly confidential.

PLEASE PRINT:

Name: _____
Address: _____ City _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Phone: _____ Email: _____

How long in RCA? _____

Do you want you email(s) & Phone(s) on attendee list? ___ Yes ___ No

CONVENTION REGISTRATION FEES:

Early Bird Discounted Registration: Only \$39.00 per person, available until May 15, 2007

	Before June 1	On or after June 1
Registration only:	_____ \$45	_____ \$60
Meal Package:	_____ \$120	_____ \$130
Sat. Banquet only:	_____ \$55	_____ \$60

Banquet Meal: Chicken___ Fish___ Vegetarian___ Pork Chop___

Special Meal Considerations: OA, gluten free, salt free. Please send email

Fri. WSO RCA Lunch Buffet _____ \$18.00 _____ \$20.00

If you are only sending in your registration at this time, do you plan on purchasing the Meal Package? ___ Yes ___ No

Note: Convention meals offer a special time of fellowship and include Speaker Panels focusing on 'Working the Steps as a Couple'

Deadline for ordering meal packages is July 31, 2007.

SORRY NO REFUNDS!!

SERVICE:

I/We are interested in providing service _____

As a leader Couple Topic we are interested in a break out meeting
titled _____

PLEASE RETURN THIS PORTION WITH YOUR CHECK OR MONEY ORDER

MAILING INFORMATION FOR REGISTRATION: Registration confirmation will be e-mailed.

Program packets will be available at the registration table at time of check in.

For additional information, contact RCA WSO (510) 663-2312 or

Email stlouisrca@recovering-couples.org

Please mail your check or money order in US funds made payable to: **RCA 2007**

C/O Scott Lemmons 27 Debbie Drive St. Peters, Missouri 63376-2109



TAPPING INTO ROMANCE
 The Journey to Intimacy and Healthy Sexuality
 Saint Louis August 3-4-5

HELP SUPPORT
RCA'S WS0 CENTRAL OFFICE

For voting on approved Conference literature, RCA's Central Office is in need of funding to print and mail one copy of the new 4th edition blue book to each RCA group. Our goal for the Silent Auction is \$2,000 to help make this possible.

RCA needs your Auction items and your Auction bids!

Will you be attending the Convention? Lots of splendid items will be up for bid!

Featured, and unique, is a full-size three-legged stool with an exotic, cushioned, Indian silk seat top --a real collectible! Other possible contributions include: a vacation condo for one week in Northern California, gift baskets from several RCA groups, arts and crafts, books, memorabilia, and more.

Can't attend? You can still contribute an item or service. Or submit an absentee bid!

Contact - Bob and Betsy at:
rca_couple@yahoo.com & (925) 274-1186

Find out how easily you can help RCA be self supporting through your efforts.

**TOGETHER WE CAN ALL MAKE OUR AUCTION
 ANOTHER SERVICE SUCCESS FOR RCA!**

**S
I
L
E
N
T

A
U
C
T
I
O
N
!**

"Important Dates to Remember"

- Jul 4, 2007** - 30 Days prior to RCA Business Meeting of 3 August 2007: This is the Latest date under Missouri law that the matters to be addressed at the annual business meeting may be sent to the fellowship. (This is the final date if notice is not provided by first-class mail: the use of first class mail is not considered to be practical for RCA)
- Jul 10, 2007** - Last date to book your hotel room 888-340-2594 at St. Louis Renaissance. Mention " RCA 2007 " for convention rate, \$99.00 per night (up to 4 people). **Rate not guaranteed after July 10th**
- Aug 3, 2007** - Friday Business Meeting 9 to 5 at RCA Convention 2007, St. Louis
- Aug. 3, 4, 5** - RCACC in St. Louis
 *Register today to attend
 *Bring Silent Auction items
 *Book your hotel 1-888-340-2594 at St. Louis Renaissance.
 Mention " RCA 2007 " for convention rate, \$99.00 per night (up to 4 people). **Rate not guaranteed after July 10th**
- Aug 5, 2007** - Elections and Close of the RCA 2007 convention
- Aug 5, 2007** - Final day for submitting comments on the draft fourth edition of the RCA Blue Book.

"We are self supporting through our own contributions" 7th tradition

A special thanks to the 27 RCA groups for their third quarter donations for Fiscal Year 2006 - 2007 (01/01/07 through 03/31/07).

A total of \$2,278 in generous support was sent to RCA World Service Organization.

You will find quarterly financial reports for RCA WSO on the RCA webpage

Here is the list of those 27 RCA groups and their 7th Tradition donations

43005 Ahwatukee, AZ Circle of Love	\$30.00
43020 Tucson, AZ	\$50.00
45015 Jamestown, CA Joint Venture Group	\$120.00
45020 Sherman Oaks, CA	\$100.00
45040 LA, Saturday Date Nite	\$50.00
45043 LA, Monthly Step Group	\$25.00
45045 Culver City, CA Sunday Night CLARE Group	\$31.80
45050 Oakland, CA Sunday Candlelight Group	\$150.00
45100 Santa Cruz, CA	\$100.00
45105 Walnut Creek, CA Friday Night Group	\$500.00
46007 Denver, CO	\$15.95
51010 Hawaii Wet 'n Wild	\$200.00
53010 Rockford, Ill	\$19.84
53040 Chicago, IL	\$100.00
61020 Norwell, MA	\$100.00
63010 Minneapolis, MN Uptown	\$40.00
63015 Minneapolis, MN Lake Nokomis	\$59.96
66002 Bozeman, MT	\$40.00
72010 Riverhead, NY	\$50.00
Salem, OR	\$37.00
78030 Leesport, PA Miracle Mountain Group	\$50.00
78025 Pittsburgh, PA	\$5.00
82020 Chattanooga, TN	\$7.50
83060 Austin, TX Riverbend	\$87.00
83020 Ft. Worth, TX	\$200.00
83035 San Antonio, TX	\$100.00
88005 Morgantown, W.VA	\$9.10

OTHER 7th Tradition DONATIONS

RCA Bed & Breakfast Fund Raiser	\$200.00
N.Ca. Asilomar 2007 Retreat	\$369.00

Individual Donations \$1,448.60

SEVENTH TRADITION

WE ARE SELF SUPPORTING THROUGH OUR OWN CONTRIBUTIONS

There are TEN beautiful journals that will be sold through World Service Office at the St. Louis Convention. Included with each one will be a special journal sticker and, hopefully, a "memento" convention sticker.

"\$3 TO SURVIVE AND \$5 TO THRIVE" tent cards have been printed and will be enclosed with literature orders. These cards can be placed in meeting donation baskets for the 7th tradition. It is meant to remind and encourage each RCA couple to contribute generously so that our World Service Office and our local RCA groups will "Survive and better yet Thrive".

Seventh Tradition Committee members donated the journals, stickers, and tent cards as fund-raisers for WSO.

Sadly, we had to abandon the Teleconference by Donation Project, using previous convention CD's, as the quality of transmission via phone was not acceptable and there was a possible problem with anonymity.

Happily, the RCA BED & BREAKFAST CLUB, inspired by Betsy & Bob F., has been successful in providing some RCA travelers with rooms in RCA member homes. The donations received in exchange for member hospitality are given to support the WSO. The 7th tradition Bed and Breakfast Club gives RCA couples an opportunity to connect with other RCA couples. Instead of spending money on a hotel, traveling couples stay with members of the RCA fellowship, and a recommended donation of \$20 to \$30 per night would go to WSO. This is a way to support RCA through our own contributions!

"...hot tub with a view of the Cascade Mountains, dog-friendly"
(541) 343-4920 - Gladys IRW Jade, Eugene, Oregon"

"...condominium with private bedroom and bath suite on San Francisco Bay"
(510) 235-6111 - Elise and David near San Francisco"

"...own room in their home... surrounded by great books, experience, strength, and hope"
(925) 274-1186 - Bob and Betsy from San Francisco"

"...their Rockville home or their Delaware condo (a mile from Bethany Beach)"
(301) 424-4594 - Kate and Dan Rockville, Maryland (near Washington, DC)"

"...Winnipeg...ice fishing in the winter to hot summers"
(204) 668-1515 - Gerrie committed to Randy, Randy committed to Gerrie"

If you want to add your name to the RCA Bed & Breakfast Club send a finished description to the editor Elise - davidandelise@earthlink.net

To serve on the 7th Tradition Committee please email JoAnn - jsutherland@mac.com

Letter from the Chair Cont'd

Standing Rules and Agenda for the Business Meeting: The first duty of the delegates attending the business meeting will be to approve standing rules for this, the first RCA convention of delegates as well as the agenda for the business meeting. The Structure Committee is working on proposed drafts for each of these items and intends to distribute the drafts so that the delegates will have an opportunity to review them prior to the start of the business meeting. The proposed rules will encourage the maximum participation at the business meeting of all RCA couples in attendance whether or not they are delegate couples.

The Sunday Morning Elections: At this point there are openings for two couples on the Board of Trustees and for two couples to serve as alternate board couples. Moreover, if the fellowship votes to establish an independent Ethics Committee, there will be an election for the three openings on this committee. All RCA members are asked to consider these opportunities for service, whether or not you are able to attend this year's convention. In this regard, it is also important for each member group unable to have a delegate couple in attendance at the convention to remember the opportunity to **give their proxy to a delegate couple that will be in attendance**, both for the Sunday elections as well as for the Friday business meeting for any matters not covered by the by-mail ballot. Remember a delegate couple may hold only one proxy. You may contact the Outreach Committee if you need any additional information on designating a proxy for your member group.

The Fourth Edition of the Blue Book: Please remember that the comment period has been extended through 5 August 2007, the close of the convention. At the last board meeting, the board voting to post the comments received to date on the RCA website. We hope to begin posting the comments by 1 July. It is hoped that making the comments available on the website will assist the fellowship in reaching a consensus on any final edits that may be required to the 2006 draft of the Fourth Edition. Please review the posted comments and let the WSO office know of those with which you agree or disagree.

Kate and I are hoping to see many of you in St. Louis.
Regards to all, Dan irw Kate

Final Thoughts

Contact RCACC St.Louis at mlemmons@charter.net or phone (636) 970-1762 and serve as a speaker couple!

Feedback for the Blue Book Draft has been extended to August 5th. See side-by-side presentation of the changes to the 12 steps on the RCA website.

The 2008 RCACC will be in San Francisco.

In 2009 RCACC will be in the East. The 2010 RCACC will be in the mid continent. Maybe your RCA group wants to bid on 2009 or 2010!

Do you want to be a sponsor couple to a struggling RCA group and phone into their meeting and serve as speaker couple? Email Betsy betsyf2720@earthlink.net or preferably phone (925) 274-1186

Hope every RCA group sends a couple to RCACC ST. LOUIS Convention. Last year 70 couples attended Boston. Meet us in St. Louis.

Recovering Couples Anonymous

P.O. Box 11029
Oakland, CA 94611

Phone:
(510) 663-2312

E-mail:
wso-rca@pacbell.net

Web Site
<http://www.recovering-couples.org>