

Society Pages

The Newsletter of
Unity Intergroup November 2006
Minnesota OA Convention

Carrying the Message

Rocketed Into the Fourth Dimension
Rocketed Into the Fourth Dimension

THERE IS A SOLUTION!

**Minnesota State Overeaters
Anonymous Convention
November 3-5, 2006**

WELCOME!



The convention planning committee welcomes you to the 33rd Minnesota Convention of Overeaters Anonymous.

It is overwhelming to believe that after eleven months of planning, much negotiation, monthly meetings, hundreds of telephone calls and emails, the time has finally arrived and you are here celebrating recovery with us where we will all be "*Rocketed into the Fourth Dimension*". The convention planning committee is comprised of thirteen distinct sub-committees of which over 25 abstinent OA members dedicate

their time and commitment to the service of coordinating this event. In addition to the committee members, it takes over 150 on-site volunteers to run this convention smoothly. There are many forms of service performed such as, greeting, room managers, speakers, hospitality room managers, registration desk, literature sales and many more. All service positions are equally important to the mission of the convention...spreading the message to those who still suffer.

For over 33 years OA members have traveled from near and far to celebrate recovery and share their experience, strength and hope. This year we welcome OA members from fellowships in Arizona, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, Washington, and Wisconsin.

Under the guidance of our Higher Power, we have taken great care in planning every single detail of this convention with you in mind. There will be two dynamic keynote speakers, over twenty abstinent OA speakers, meetings, entertainment and abstinent meals. We know that you will have a great time as we celebrate recovery and fellowship with one another!

Registration funds in excess of the convention costs support the Unity Intergroup to carry the message of recovery a little further.

We look forward to enjoying your fellowship at the convention as we experience together the reminder of hope that "***There is a Solution***".
~2006 OA Convention Committee



Receiving the Newsletter at Home

Society Pages is available via the Internet or e-mail. Go to www overeaters.org to download a copy of current or past newsletters. A hard copy of Society Pages is available by subscription for individuals outside the Unity Intergroup region. Please see enclosed subscription form for details.



Links

List of Local Meetings www overeaters.org
 Region 4 Web Site www.oaregion4.org
 World Service Web Site www.oa.org



December Society Pages

The December Society Pages will feature **Step Eleven**, "Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, praying only for knowledge of his will for us and the power to carry that out." And **Step Twelve**, "Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to compulsive overeaters and practice these principals in all our affairs." The Saturday 8:00a.m. Eden Prairie group has volunteered to write for that issue. Articles on the Steps or a personal story are still accepted from other OA members, however. Please send your contributions to knitleslieknit@aol.com for publication in Society Pages.

The deadline for submission of articles is 12:00 noon on Saturday, December 2, 2006.



News from Unity Intergroup

Who Are We?

Unity Intergroup comprises representatives from 56 OA groups in the Twin Cities and surrounding areas. We meet on the second Saturday of each month to work together to build a stronger OA recovery community and to find ways to reach the still suffering compulsive overeater.

Unity was formed 6 years ago through the merger of Northstar and City of Lakes Intergroups. OA members being committed to tradition one: "Our common welfare comes first personal recovery depends upon OA unity"; believed there was no need for two separate Intergroups. They were convinced that our growth and strength depended on our unity as well as following OA and AA traditions. Through a lot of challenges, hard work, discussions, debates, some tears, some concessions, and eventually much relief Unity Intergroup was formed.

For the last 5 years we have continued to build on this foundation of unity. Our efforts have shown that "together we can do what we could never do alone". Over the last year we have had outreaches to dieticians, diabetics, weight loss surgery patients, veterans, clergy, high school students, and others. And we want to do more of this and with your involvement we can. We want to run booths at expos, fairs including the MN State Fair, community events, wherever possible we want to be there to carry the message that there is a solution.

We'll also continue our traditional Buffalo retreat and Frontenac retreat (formerly the summer retreat). In addition, we've added a Big Book study weekend, which was a resounding success (we hope to run this annually), and a sponsorship workshop (we plan to run this quarterly) this was also hugely successful. Unity Intergroup also successfully hosted the

Region IV convention. It was one of the most well attended conventions Region IV has had.

Increasing our participation in Region IV as well as OA World Services is one of our goals for this upcoming year. Currently, we send only two reps to Region IV and only one delegate to World Services when we could be sending five to each. As an Intergroup we have a strong Tradition One message as well as a strong recovery message that we'd like to share with the greater OA community. By sending our full complement of representatives and delegates we can both share with and receive from OA around the world.

We can't do it alone. We need your involvement. Each group is allowed 2 reps. Does your group have Intergroup reps? Do they attend regularly or send a sub when they can't? Even if you're not a rep you are welcome to attend Intergroup meetings and volunteer to do service. Please come join us and together we can continue to reach the still suffering compulsive overeater and to build a vibrant, productive, and growing OA community.

Finally, I'd like to thank all of those who have given service to both build and sustain this thriving and unified OA community. To you we credit our recovery.

~Sharon R.S.



Make the Most of OA - Send Two Reps to Intergroup!

“The Twin Cities OA has as strong recovery as any major metro area in the country”—so says a knowledgeable Intergroup rep. Something powerful is going on right here, right now. When your group is represented at OA Unity Intergroup meetings, your group's attendees get the opportunity to share in it all. If your group isn't sending two voting representatives, here's what you're missing:

Chances to have your group participate in making Unity Intergroup policy. Your group

has unique knowledge about what its attendees are experiencing in their recovery journeys. Unity Intergroup wants that reflected in its policies. Your group's representation can make that happen.

Society Pages newsletter hot off the press—be sure your group doesn't miss out on time-limited opportunities covered in many issues.

Special handouts about upcoming OA conventions, workshops, and retreats. These handouts encourage newcomers in particular to get in on the action.

The OA meeting list—updated monthly with info on meeting dates, times, locations, and contact phone numbers. Pick up a list and take it back to your group to keep members up to date.

Word-of-mouth news shared only at Intergroup meetings. What meeting makes guys feel comfortable because 80% of attendees are men? What new OA groups are forming and where? What's being planned for the OA website? The answers are only at Intergroup meetings, so send a couple of reps to find out!

Put the Twelfth Step into action—send two reps to carry the message at the group level. OA Unity Intergroup meets from 12:30 PM to 2:30 PM the second Saturday of every month at the 1660 Parkdale Plaza Building in St. Louis Park.

~Dale T.



Fall Assembly Experience

This year, I had the privilege of representing our Unity Intergroup and attended the Region IV Fall Assembly in St. Louis, MO. Region IV is one of 10 regions organized to serve communication between groups and Intergroups within and between each region and OA worldwide.

Region IV is an amazing and dedicated group of fellow sufferers. I quickly realized just how fortunate we are to have such a large and thriving IG. Some Intergroups have only 2 members. 13 out of 23 Intergroups of our region were represented.

The weekend began with a casual gathering Friday night to share with each other what our Intergroups were doing. I heard about conventions, silent retreats, newsletters, a speaker list, and templates for fliers that other groups are willing to share, and many other outreach strategies.

Saturday was a full day in session. We took care of business with reports from the officers and coordinators. We then broke up into committees: Convention, Outreach, Finance, and Communication. The committees work throughout the year and during assembly with the single purpose of spreading the message of recovery. I am on the Outreach committee and one of our projects is to work with unaffiliated OA groups to link them with an Intergroup.

After lunch we reconvened and heard committee reports. Next we had a presentation and discussion on overcoming the shame and stigma of OA membership and anonymity. Many of us discussed that we felt it was important to be open about our recovery. Not only does that strengthen our recovery but it also helps us to carry the message.

The rest of the day was filled with bylaw amendments, electing of the region board and committee chairs. That evening we shared a dinner and ended the day with 2 great speakers.

I am so deeply honored to have had the opportunity to serve in this capacity. Service in OA has been the foundation stone of my recovery. I encourage you to deepen your own recovery by giving service. Any service, large or small helps to contribute to our OA community. We help each other.

~Julie B-H



World Service Office and Region IV

Many of our members have become familiar with the Unity Intergroup, but are less familiar with two other important service bodies of Overeaters Anonymous—the World Service Office of OA and OA's regional structure.

Some of the money that we donate to OA at our weekly meetings goes to these two service bodies and to pay the cost of sending delegates to their meetings.

The World Service Office (WSO):

- Is located in Rio Rancho, New Mexico, a suburb of Albuquerque. The office supports individual members and more than 6,500 OA groups in more than 65 countries. Just like our own meetings, the purpose of the World Service is to carry OA's message of recovery to compulsive overeaters who are still suffering.

- Produces more than 100 pieces of literature and recovery-related items that can be ordered from its catalog. It also publishes a monthly magazine, "Lifeline," and "A Step Ahead," which is a quarterly newsletter that keeps members up to date on OA news. It also produces the Courier, an annual newsletter for hospitals, institutions, professionals and the military.

- Provides a critical function by providing a list of OA meetings throughout the world, including, of course, Minnesota. To find out about the times and places of meetings, and other materials available from WSO, go on-line to www.oa.org

- Conducts an annual World Service Business Conference in Albuquerque that draws delegates from across the United States and around the world. The next conference will be held April 30 to May 5. The World Service conference provides a wealth of information through workshops and programs. It also sets OA's policies. Sometimes there are major controversies. The Dignity of Choice pamphlet, which so many of us like and give to

newcomers, was published several years ago after years of debate.

Region IV:

- OA across the world is broken up into 10 regions. Minnesota is in Region IV, along with Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, parts of Illinois and the Canadian provinces of Manitoba, Nunavut and NW Ontario.

- Sponsored last June's terrific region convention held locally in Bloomington. The next region IV convention will be held June 27-29, 2008 in St. Louis. Hopefully, a lot of folks from here will attend.

- Our Intergroup sends delegates to the Region IV assembly, which is held twice a year in some city within the region. The assembly is a great place to learn in detail about what other areas are doing to spread the message of recovery. Our representatives have learned many practical ideas from attending these meetings. We have much to share with other Intergroups about what we have been able to accomplish here. The valuable interchange that occurs is an important reason why we should send a good complement of delegates to the region assemblies.

Unity Intergroup usually sends one or two delegates to the conference although we are entitled to more. If we can afford it, I would encourage us to send as many delegates as possible. Having attended two World Service conferences, I can attest to its value. I believe that we have one of the most vibrant, recovery-oriented OA cultures in the country. Being a delegate is a way for us to share that recovery. To become a delegate to the World Service Business Conference, one must be elected by our Intergroup. Be a delegate! Consider becoming one of the two representatives to the Unity Intergroup from your OA meeting.

~Randy F.



Outreach

The Outreach Committee has had a number of great opportunities to participate in events over the past few months reaching health care professionals, teenagers, and the clergy along with others suffering from addiction. All thanks to our OA member's connections and suggestions. If you know of places where OA can be shared, let us know. Or better yet, consider being part of the OA Outreach/PI committee. Over the past few months we have participated in:

American Dieticians Association Annual meeting:

reached over 300 Dieticians and Health Care Professionals in Minnesota. We had an opportunity to have three OA members share their recovery from the devastation of food addiction.

Gay Pride: the OA booth reached out to hundreds of people in the GLBT community, along with friends and family.

GuestHouse: an annual convention to improve the health and wellbeing of the ordained or consecrated to serve the church that are in recovery. First time OA was included with other addictions and 12 step programs at this convention.

The Governor's Military and Veterans Support Cabinet's Summit for Returning Troops:

OA was part of 70 resources made available to families.

American Diabetes Expo: our booth was swamped with interest in OA and learning ways to deal with food addiction. We were able to have diabetic OA members present to share their experience with recovery. There was great interest in learning more about OA and attending an OA meeting as well as Newcomer's meetings.

High School/Middle School health education class-

reached over 100 high school and middle school students in the Twin Cities.

~Robin H.



Personal Stories

Structure Was My Key to Freedom

In November of 2004 my sponsor in Traditional OA invited me to attend the Minnesota convention with her, and right up until we left I had a thousand excuses as to why I could not attend. I was preoccupied with how I would manage the food, because at that point I had no abstinence, and I would be with others who knew my story.

That night at the convention, I was amazed by the number of people I knew, which was scary and yet a welcomed surprise. Hearing stories that reflected my own was overwhelming yet freeing. I was putting on a show with my food there, to be eating limited amounts while wanting to consume the entire buffet. I couldn't wait for the next break to find food.

The following morning I went to my first HOW meeting and was shocked by the structure. I remember thinking that weighing and measuring would make me crazier than I already felt; that I would be always preoccupied with food thoughts. I felt that I could, perhaps loose weight but I did not believe I would ever live free of the compulsion to overeat. The sponsor line blew me away. I'll never forget being surrounded by men and women who were loosing weight and maintaining a healthy body weight for years.

When they passed out medallions I found myself walking to the front of that room to get a chip of desire and as I sat back down in my

chair shaking, I felt terror along with a sense of hope and safety at the same time. I was hopeful that I could find help in HOW but fearful of not being capable to do what was necessary to achieve the freedom from the bondage of food. That night I released my sponsor. I feel forever indebted to her for bringing me to the convention. I asked a person to be my temporary HOW sponsor; she held my hand, protected my abstinence and guided me into recovery.

Today, I'm 34 pounds lighter, down 60 from my top weight, weighing and measuring since November 2004, living free of sugar and flour since February 2005, and maintaining a healthy body weight for over a year. I know that during the convention I believed I could loose weight but I never believed I could stop obsessing about food or stop resenting others for eating the foods I recognized as my binge foods. As the promises tell us, God is doing for me what I could never do for myself.

~Mags, WI



Intergroup Board

Sharon R.S., Chair 763-544-5955

ssund@skypoint.com

Randy F., Vice-Chair 612-201-5522

randyfurst@msn.com

Kathleen C., Treasurer 612-729-6435

Catherine W., Secretary 612-205-0930

catherine_oa@hotmail.com