

# Society Pages

The Newsletter of  
Unity Intergroup December 2011

[www.overeaters.org](http://www.overeaters.org)

## Carrying the Message

Now you can read the Society Pages online every month at [www.overeaters.org](http://www.overeaters.org).

**Step Twelve:** Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to compulsive overeaters and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

“Having had a Spiritual Awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message and practice these principles in all our affairs.” What does that mean?

My experience with Step 12 has changed greatly over the years. At first it was about carrying the message I heard in the meeting rooms of Overeater Anonymous. Often this meant a message that was about slogans or a message that came from someone high on sugar or still binging. I didn't know any different. I was not abstinent or even close to being recovered. But, over time it started to change for me.

What started to change—was me. God separated me from compulsive overeating. I started to seek God and began to use the original way to recover outlined in the Big Book-Alcoholics Anonymous. I started to work all the steps 1-11 and then, and only then, was I truly ready and able to put Step 12 into practice.

Putting Step 12 into a daily practice is doing the work. I can't expect to give a

message of recovery and help guide someone through this recovery process to a recovered point *unless I have recovered myself*. I also need to remember that I am carrying *this* message, not my message or my mess. And I also need to remember that any message I have is a result of these steps, the 11 steps before. This is when the miracle begins to happen.

The miracle I am talking about is this. When I am fortunate enough to be working with another compulsive overeater that is both willing enough and, has the desperation of a drowning man (someone that is beaten like I was), then I can help guide them to the God of their understanding—and that is the only power that will keep them abstinent.

I cannot keep them abstinent, only God can and will.

Anonymous

Elk River, MN

## The TOP 10 REASONS Why Being a Unity Intergroup Representative ROCKS...

1. Get to hear all of the exciting information first hand – for all levels of OA
2. Fun to meet and see your OA friends – especially those you met at Convention
3. Insurance against a possible slip
4. Can carry the message in a BIG way to those who still suffer
5. Get tons of hugs, smiles and good words
6. Good practice of “Principles before Personalities”
7. Be ambassador to your OA meeting by offering opportunities for hope, recovery and service
8. Can fulfill at least 4 tools in one sitting: Action Plan, Meetings, Service, Telephone
9. Get to be/remain abstinent for 2 hours
10. You can eat your lunch during the meeting

## Unity Intergroup Elections



Consider an exciting Unity Intergroup opportunity. Go to [www.overeaters.org](http://www.overeaters.org), click on the 'Business' link on the lower right side of the Home Page, then select 'Unity Intergroup Service Position Guidelines'. This document lists the requirements, time commitment and a list of responsibilities. Share your talents and skills with us!

### December (7 positions)

2 Region 4 Reps	3 World Delegates
1 Region 4 Alternate	1 World Alternate

### January (25 positions)

Chair	Anoka Treatment Outreach Chair	Bylaws Coordinator
Vice Chair	Big Book Study Chair	Email and Event Coordinator
Secretary	Fall Retreat Chair	Hot Line Volunteer Coordinator
Treasurer	Newsletter Editor	Email and Event Coordinator
Convention Chair	Professional Community Chair	Literature Coordinator
	Public Outreach Chair	Mail Coordinator
	Registrar	Newcomer Meeting Coordinator
	Twelve Step Within Chair	Print Coordinator
		Sponsorship Workshop Coordinator
		Teleconference Coordinator
		Virtual Speaker Coordinator
		Web Coordinator

# OA Taught Me to Pass it On

I recall that the very first time I ever heard of OA was in a book. You know, one of those self-help books I would read to try to understand myself, and my outrageous relationship with food. I don't remember much else about that book, but I remembered that bit of OA information and tucked it way, way, back in my brain. Even then I had a sense I would never investigate OA unless it was the last option.

Much later, food desperately holding me by the throat, I looked for OA in the phone book (it was pre-internet). There were two listings, one for each of the two local intergroups at that time. Still much more time later, I made a phone call to inquire. Someone called me back. I remember distinctly my suspicion that this was a religious program. She said it wasn't – that it was spiritual.

At least another year later, I finally attended my first OA meeting. I was astonished to recognize a voice - the very same person who had called me back and patiently explained OA was at that very meeting. That made an impression on me (hmmm, spiritual awakening?) and I figured out later why it did. It told me something about a commitment to a program that even a year had gone by and this person was still very much in the program. (That didn't happen in the diet clubs I attended.) And it told me something about giving service. One day when the topic was about gratitude, I openly (but anonymously) gave thanks to that person for being the voice on the other end of the phone.

Along my journey I came to realize what it takes to keep the lights on for OA. What if the two intergroups weren't listed in the phone book? What if the 7th tradition money hadn't been donated to keep that service going? What about the bank of volunteers who took those calls to the OA answering machine and returned them? What if there wasn't a meeting to go to? It was all a string of events that occurred that brought me to a meeting. I believe without the service that was there for me then, I may not be alive now.

I later became one of those volunteers who returned the calls. It became a favorite service for me. You can probably understand why. It was a pleasure to present OA; to help someone locate a meeting, to mail out a meeting list, and tell some of my story. Each time I talked to someone, I humbly knew that it could possibly help save a life. Because someone shared OA with me, I could share it with someone else.

~Barb B



## Step 12

I haven't reached Step 12 in my program, but I'm grateful for all those that came before me that have. Without people who are willing to reach out and carry the message; without people that present me with examples of how to live; without others who share their experiences and their strength and hope; without them, I would have nowhere to turn. I would be living a life of total despair. I would have nothing.

Instead, I have hope. I have role models to follow. I have examples of joy and happiness and people free from bondage. I have a reason to keep coming back. And I have gratitude.

~Anonymous

## The Message

Many of us can recount the pain and misery we were experiencing before we arrived at our first meeting. I am not different. The food had won; I was defeated and quite hopeless.

The 12 Steps worked for my other addictions and now this defeat and hopelessness felt the same. I was a “food-aholic.” But how do I quit eating? I had a thought that there was a 12 step meeting for food called Overeaters Anonymous but they were probably rare meetings and hard to find. So I Googled OA and much to my dismay there was a meeting within walking distance from my home!

Some time passed and the meeting idea surfaced again and my thoughts were, ‘I bet they no longer meet and that the web information is wrong’. Checking the website again there was a contact number. So I called and much to my dismay someone answered! Yes the meeting met weekly on Mondays at 7:00 pm. As the Monday drew near I decided to go and thought, ‘it will be me and that one man, and he will be miserably unhappy and obese’. Much to my surprise the room was filled with kind, warm, loving, welcoming people who were happy to see me.

That night changed my life and my thoughts about OA. I was given a packet of information, we went around the table and introduced ourselves and for the first time in my life I heard “My name is Jane and I am a sugar addict.” That got my attention – that’s what I am! Never had I experienced another person describing my behaviors and thoughts about food.

I heard many good things that first night and was delighted to my incredulity it was an amazing match! Now, 15 months later, when I meet a new person I try to recall the hesitation and doubt I felt that first night. “No way is the answer at this meeting.” However, their message to me that first night and my message to others is the solution is here; welcome to Overeaters Anonymous, welcome home.

~Chris C



## Service, Meetings and Recovery

The importance of giving service and the importance of attending meetings are crucial to my recovery. Those in the fellowship with more experience with dealing with their disease, has helped me immensely in my recovery. For me to grow spiritually and to stay on my road to recovery the 12<sup>th</sup> step is just as important as the first 11 in my continued recovery. God has given me a strong love for my friends in OA and also to all the newcomers.

Because others have been there during and through my recovery, I have a strong desire to help others in their recovery. I can share my personal experience and give them hope that there is away to recover from the dreaded disease of compulsive overeating. Giving back to others is a two-way street. When we give of ourselves to others in need, we in turn are strengthened in our continued recovery. We are blessed beyond measure when we see others with whom we have shared start to recover themselves. There is no greater reward than that.

Meetings of the fellowship of OA are extremely crucial to my recovery. The bond that we share with each other is absolutely necessary. I have said it before, it is impossible to completely recover and to stay abstinent without the power that comes from attending meetings and the growing in our relationship with each other. I cannot recover in isolation. I desperately need to be with others who have suffered with me in this dreaded disease. Without them I would be like a lost puppy wandering the streets of life. As you can see without service and going to meetings is totally and completely necessary for my continued recovery.

~Lance R.

# Unity Intergroup was busy in 2011 And this all happened because YOU helped!

## Financial Contribution

- 2011 Jan – Oct \$13,351 - \$3410 away from our goal
- Up from 2010 – which was \$13,048

## Big Book Study - Apr – 6<sup>th</sup> annual BB study

Buffalo Retreat - Apr – 90+ attendees, raised money for scholarships

Bylaws - Revisited entire bylaws, worked to amend and approve grammatical and material changes

## Email & Events Coordination (new position)

- Secured contract with Constant Contact - Virtual newsletter
- Virtual event marketing

## Frontenac Retreat

- Sep – 40 attendees, highest attendance
- Positive evaluations

## Hotline

- Manage 2 phone lines through our answering service (local/toll free). Volunteers return calls 7 days a week.

## MN State Convention

- Nov – ‘Connect to Recovery’
- Attendance: about 400! From 14 states!
- Highlights: Connections were made and maintained.
- Speakers, abstinent meals, and fellowship

Outreach and Public Information Committees – we sat at our table, answered questions and handed out OA literature

- Second Annual All Addictions Conference - Spring Fever May: Two members shared their stories.
- Gay Pride Festival, June: A great success! A much better location, many thousand attended.
- Healthy Life Expo, 3 individual events, Aug, Oct and will in Jan 12. Participated in a Radio interview describing OA.
- Diabetes Expo, Oct: Over 8,000 attended.
- North Hennepin Community College Health and Wellness Fair, sponsored by the Minnesota Dietetic Association. Nov
- Minnesota State web site up and running with our own section for Unity Intergroup. General information about OA. Our web site listed and phone numbers as well as every meeting in the entire state with time, location and a contact – check it out! [www.minnesotainfo.org](http://www.minnesotainfo.org)
- Entire Anoka County digital signage with OA Unity Intergroup information. In the future, this will appear on monitors in every public building, hospital and clinic office in Anoka County. (see upper right)



### **Primary Purpose:**

To abstain from compulsive eating & to carry this message of recovery to those who still suffer.

### **Info Line:**

(612) 377-1600 or  
(888) 540-1212

[www.overeaters.org](http://www.overeaters.org)

- A fellowship of individuals who, through shared experience, strength and hope, are recovering from compulsive overeating.
- We welcome everyone who wants to stop eating compulsively.
- There are no dues or fees for members.

Printing – Continued in-house printing, low cost copying for newsletters, retreats and events

Registrar - Continual update of Unity Intergroup meetings

- 1 new, 3 disbanded – Total meetings: 67.
- Continual update of volunteer database

## Society Pages

- Virtual – email notification – more than 300 signed up for automatic notification
- Monthly publication

Sponsorship Committee - 2 workshops: May and Oct – 50+ participants

## Treasury

- Completed Yearly taxes
- 2 Finance Committee meetings
- Present 2011-2012 budget

## Twelve Step Within (new position)

- First workshop Jun: ‘Renew, Recommit, Recover’
- 30+ attendees. Had clothing drive

## Virtual Speakers

- Taped speakers and provided CDs of their talks

## Beyond Intergroup Level Service

### Region 4

- Sent 6 reps to 2 Region Assemblies – Apr and Oct
- Specialized Involvement: Ways & Means, Convention and Outreach committees

### WSO (World Service Office)

- Sent 2 delegates to the World Service Business Conference (WSBC) – Apr
- Specialized Involvement: Finance and Outreach committees

## **I found my way through the 12 steps**

I have just returned from another awesome Minnesota OA convention. I am grateful to those who were on the committees who worked many hours of service to bring it to us. It was a "12 step" opportunity for them and we were the recipient. In the spirit of giving back what was freely given to me I am writing to you to answer the question, "What brought you to OA?"

My story actually begins in December 1998 when the pastor of my church suggested I go to a "family related 12 step group" and had even told me the name of a person to contact to find a meeting. I was too embarrassed so I didn't ask her. A few weeks later a family crisis happened at work and a co-worker who knew my "situation" shared that she doesn't normally "break her anonymity at work", but, she goes to a meeting that she thought would help me. When I asked her what it was and she responded, I asked her when and where that particular meeting was and attended the next day! I am forever grateful that she had the heart and courage because it **SAVED MY LIFE!** Literally!

When I heard the steps at that first meeting, particularly the part in step 12, "and to practice these principles in all our affairs", I knew the 12 steps would be the solution to my "emotional eating" as I called it back then. More 12 step work by others helped me have courage to seek sobriety because I was using alcohol (and food) to self-medicate depression and loneliness. I realize today that was my HP's way of preparing me for the next phase of my recovery, putting the food down with OA because I couldn't have done both at once.

I was on a spiritual retreat when someone shared how she had lost and maintained over a 100 pound weight loss with the 12 steps of Overeaters Anonymous. I had lost weight for

my son's wedding the year before and could see I was gaining it back again. I was powerless over food! Six weeks later I was on the web-site for Overeaters Anonymous and found the meeting I attend today.

I am grateful to those who shared their recovery and do service as simple as creating a website ,because they saved my life!

~Rene

## **LOCAL SPEAKERS WOW CONVENTION ATTENDEES**

Comments heard at the 2011 OA Annual convention were very complimentary concerning the outstanding quality of our local speakers. I wonder how many of us are aware that there is a Speakers Registry maintained by Region IV. If you are willing to speak at groups anywhere in the area, you can volunteer to be put on the registry by going to the website, [www.oaregion4.org](http://www.oaregion4.org). On the home page there is a black task bar. 'Click' on the 'Speakers' Sign-Up'.

You can designate the distance you are willing to travel, and the topics and size of group you are willing to address. Region 4 covers North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, part of Illinois (not the Chicago area), parts of Manitoba, Ontario and Nunavit Territory. Groups requesting speakers can also request funding from Region 4 to help defray the costs of speaker travel.

Groups throughout our Region 4 need to know how to find good speakers who are willing to be of service. Please consider listing yourself on the registry. For more information, check out [www.oaregion4.org](http://www.oaregion4.org).

**...to practice these principles in all our affairs.**

The last phrase of Step 12 asks us to practice these principles in all our affairs. Looking at the list below, I'm assured continuous growth in both breadth and depth of my recovery. I don't have to wait for the corresponding month to focus on a particular principle, but being aware of what they are helps me determine if I'm living a principled life.

In relation to my on-going practice of recovery, this year has offered me ample opportunities to incorporate several principles, sometimes each day on an ongoing basis. In my journey for 2011, I continued to turn over control of the helm to my Higher Power. My love for others in the program continues to grow as I meet new people who share in the quest for being our best selves through this program of recovery. I'm continually offered courage when I think I can't go on and hope when I think I blew it. I can try again and with willingness, allow my Higher Power to help me with far better results than I can muster on my own. With a spiritual awareness for which I'm blessed, I am granted gifts of a fine life away from the adulation of and over indulgence in binge foods. I can hold my head high with integrity and keep my heart level with humility as I am reminded that I am powerless over food and other people.

My persistent daily reprieve is granted on an

honest daily reflection of my thoughts and actions. Through self-discipline, I have faith that each day will bring a new journey and by working the steps I am granted permanent recovery. To step out of my isolation, I show my ability to be self-supporting by practicing a continuous service contribution to this phenomenal program. My commitment has reached out beyond the group level, which has allowed me the privilege to be active in Unity Intergroup, attend Region 4 assemblies and attend my first World Service Business Conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico. I keep close to my roots in my home group by helping set-up and take down chairs, lead meetings and lead on a step.

My life today, compared to over seven years ago is radically different. I'm happier, healthier and more serene, for this I am grateful.

- Step One: Honesty
- Step Two: Hope
- Step Three: Faith
- Step Four: Courage
- Step Five: Integrity
- Step Six: Willingness
- Step Seven: Humility
- Step Eight: Self-discipline
- Step Nine: Love for others
- Step Ten: Perseverance
- Step Eleven: Spiritual Awareness
- Step Twelve: Service

Meg M

**New Phone Meeting for Men!!!!**

There is a new phone meeting for men struggling with issues of anorexia, bulimia and exercise.

When: Sundays

Time: 9:30 EST

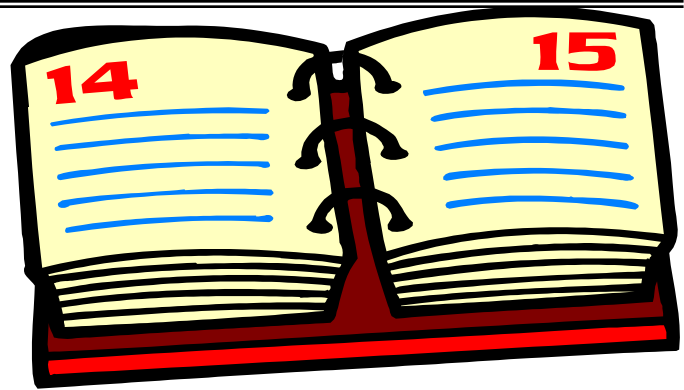
661-673-8600

Pin: 833625#



## January Society Pages

The January Society Pages will focus on Step I, "We admitted we were powerless over food-that our lives had become unmanageable." and will be sponsored by the Thu night Burnsville meeting. Although one meeting generally sponsors each newsletter, we welcome articles from anyone. Please indicate if it is okay to print your name with your article and email your contributions to Sherry M at [smccrank@hotmail.com](mailto:smccrank@hotmail.com) by Saturday, December 17. Thanks!.



## Mark Your Calendar

Saturday December 10	Unity intergroup Meeting
Saturday December 17	Newcomer Meeting St. Louis Park host Society Pages deadline
Saturday January 7	Website Deadline
Saturday January 10	Unity Intergroup Meeting
Saturday January 17	Newcomer Meeting Society Pages deadline
Saturday February 4	Website Deadline

More information available at [www.overeaters.org](http://www.overeaters.org)

### Conference Dial-in Number: (218) 339-4600

Participant Access Code: 468702#

Details of the telephone system and keypad options;  
<http://www.overeaters.org/conferencing.html>

## Intergroup Board

Meg M., Chair	763-244-6098	<a href="mailto:megunitychair@gmail.com">megunitychair@gmail.com</a>
Brenda T., Vice-Chair	651-408-5681	<a href="mailto:brenda.uig.vicechair@gmail.com">brenda.uig.vicechair@gmail.com</a>
Amanda A., Treasurer	763-639-7224	<a href="mailto:corter_0506@hotmail.com">corter_0506@hotmail.com</a>
Julie C., Secretary	612-558-3687	<a href="mailto:danejulie@hotmail.com">danejulie@hotmail.com</a>