

# Society Pages

The Newsletter of  
**Unity Intergroup** January 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 One: We admitted we were powerless over food — that our lives had become unmanageable.**

#### **Powerless Over Food**

As I look back on my thoughts regarding Step One, I believe that I had taken Step One before I got to my first OA meeting. I had spent 40 years of my life in a cycle of dieting and binging. I would lose weight, sometimes large amounts, only to gain it all back plus.

Shortly before I came to that first meeting I had been diagnosed as being pre-diabetic. That was not the first medical problem I encountered because of my eating, however, it is the one that scared me enough to know I needed to do something about my eating. All the programs and diets I had tried over the years hadn't worked and I simply wasn't going to waste any more money on something that didn't work.

I was attracted to OA by an acquaintance who had lost a large amount of weight, Because she was willing to share her experience, strength, and hope with me, I decided to try OA. Because I had surrendered to the fact that I was powerless over food, and because I liked what I saw at that first meeting, I continued to come



back and became willing to put my food in a cup and turn it over to my sponsor and my Higher Power. Then, with a clear mind, I moved on to work the remaining Steps of this program.

Today, because I was able to admit that I was powerless over food and my life was unmanageable, I have also been blessed to be able to turn my life over to my Higher Power. I have learned that just because I am now a normal weight, that doesn't mean my life is perfect. Life has thrown a few curve balls in my direction and without the ability to surrender and admit that I am powerless over these situations, I know that my life would most certainly be unmanageable right now.

Because I have this program and the ability to turn over my life to my Higher Power, I can live life on life's terms in peace and serenity without overeating, just as my sponsor told me.

I am grateful for this program and all of its Steps!

~Marian N.

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## **Not Alone Anymore**

My name is Karen and I've been in OA since 1983. When I attended my first meeting, I sat and cried after hearing "You are not alone anymore. Welcome to Overeaters Anonymous, Welcome Home." I felt the love and caring I had never experienced before and have been going to meetings ever since.

I started OA in Duluth and had to make a job transfer to Willmar by myself in 1987. I knew I would be okay because OA was available and I really wasn't alone. I went through some pretty emotional adjustments; leaving everyone I knew and moving so far away from family. It scared me and I thought of suicide. I got out my phone list instead and began calling one person after another until I felt stable again. Whew! I really didn't say anything about feeling suicidal, I just talked about feelings; that's what I needed and I didn't scare anyone else.

Now I'm retired and our group has dwindled to practically nothing so for awhile I didn't go either, feeling angry that no one else seemed to care. Then one day I got a phone call from a

new person and we met at my house for a few weeks. She didn't continue and I felt so much better having a meeting I decided to go back even if no one else came. Once in awhile someone shows up and even when they don't I set up the meeting room, read our thoughts for the day and listen to one of the many Retreat tapes we have, staying the first half of the meeting and listening to the rest on the way home.

I take care of our treasury and contribute weekly, another service. I feel being there in case someone shows is a service and keeps me connected. It's what I give that keeps me abstinent. I've been below what I thought was my goal weight for decades.

It works and I feel connected to other OA's. I also read the daily readers at home, Lifeline, and use the other tools, especially journaling and writing down my food to make sure I eat nutritiously. I'm almost 70 years old now and I contribute my good health to OA and what I've learned in the program.

~Karen

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## **On My Knees**

On my knees each day, I take Step One to be centered in the program. To do this I have a plan of eating that for today removes the obsession. I am grateful that I have a solution to stay out of the food and stop the eating behaviors that my doctor said were leading me to an early death.

This step has shown me that there are other issues that I needed to look at and work on, or will be back into to my eating disorder. I went to my very first meeting on Sept 5, 1991, to get my doctor and wife off my butt and lose 50

pounds. My top weight was at least 281 pounds, but now after a 106 pound weight loss, I am at 174 pounds and Step One is more important than ever. I do not take it for granted.

Before my first meeting, I was patting myself on my back, bragging that I had let go of two other behaviors (I would mention them, but they are outside issues). However, for today I tie them all together and need help in this area of my life for sure.

~John F Olympia WA

# Overeaters Anonymous

## 2011 Spring Retreat



**Location:** Christ the King Retreat Center  
621 First Avenue South  
Buffalo, MN 55302

**Dates:** April 1st - 3rd, 2011

**Times:** **Check-In:** 6 to 7pm on Friday  
**Program:** 7:30pm on Friday  
**Check-out:** 2pm Sunday

**Cost:** \$160 by March 11th; \$175 after  
Includes: Two nights lodging, 3 meals on Saturday,  
2 meals on Sunday  
**Scholarships are available.**  
**Deadline for Registration: March 18, 2011**

**Contact:** Rachel B.  
**Email:** 2011buffaloretreat@gmail.com  
**Phone:** 507-279-2994

### Registration Form

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Nametag to Read: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_  
State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Meeting: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Male Female Roommate: \_\_\_\_\_  
Special Needs?: \_\_\_\_\_

**If you do not sign up with a roommate, one will be assigned to you.** Single rooms will be granted for \$195 for medical reasons, and a limited number may be granted on a first-come, first-serve basis, as space allows. Single rooms cannot be guaranteed.

Your reservation will be confirmed via email, unless you enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope for confirmation by US mail.

**Mail check or money order payable to: Unity Intergroup**

**Mail registration form and check to: Rachel B.  
67982 260th Ave.  
Kasson, MN 55944**

**SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES:** Please circle your choice(s):

Be a speaker

Lead a small group

Hear a 5th step

Donate an item for the raffle

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## Amends To Mr. Food

Dear Mr. Food,

I am writing to you to tell you about this new decision and life style that I have chosen. I need to warn you that our relationship will change. I wish for it to change for the better.

We truly had some memories. You were there for me as a teen and young adult when I thought no one else was. I relied on you for security, comfort, and acceptance. You were there for me when I was lonely and thought no one loved me, not even myself. I relied on you when I was afraid. I thought you helped my fears disappear to find out later they were just masked by a sugar high. Mr. Food, why do you taste so good that I can't stop? I cursed you when I was on a diet. I have called you my friend and my enemy, sometimes even at the same time. I have judged you harshly and at times my resentment list been long. I blamed you for the times I did not feel safe or comfortable doing fun things like going to a dance or a carnival. I depended on you to make me feel calm and happy, rather than depending on myself, and ended up feeling lonelier than ever. I did not like sharing you with others, even though I knew that I could not have you all to myself,



so I would just stuff myself sick. I hated what you did to my body. I could not move freely. My weight was uncontrollable. My joints were not strong enough for my size. My ankles hurt, and my lower back and hip would hurt when I moved.

With OA, I have been examining my past and realizing that I have taken advantage of you. From this day forward, I plan to accept you for what you are by reading your ingredient list on your packages.

When I have a meal that doesn't make me feel good, that food gets place on the 'do not bother to eat again' list. Please do not take that personally. I wish to honor this road we are taking together and in order for me to do, that I will plan how much and what I choose to eat daily. In your honor Mr. Food, I promise to give the food on my plate at each meal a blessing and say thank you in advance for taking care of my body. Mr. Food, you are important in my life for you help me stay healthy. When I stay away from a processed food item called 'Sugar,' my body feels healthy and moves freely. So from this day forward I choose to be particular in what eat because I do not want to feel ill anymore. I want to be happy and healthy. To a new way of life.

~Roxanne - Rochester

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## Admitting Powerlessness

Admitting I am powerless over food allows me to stop struggling with my food and eating behaviors. No more 'should I or shouldn't I,' no more 'just this once,' no more 'I'll start following a food plan tomorrow.' This lack of struggle allows me to have a peaceful relationship with food for the first time in my life. I have been abstinent for one month, and already abstinence is making my life feel more manageable in so many ways:

I'm not spending time obsessing about food or eating all day long as I used to do.

I'm not shopping for clothes in larger sizes. The time I've spent shopping for pants that are just a little bigger was ridiculous and kept me from doing other things.

I have more energy, which allows me to accomplish more in my day.

I attended the 2010 OA convention and was filled with inspiration and acceptance of being able to follow my food plan one day at a time. If so many others can do it, so can I.

~Laurie R.

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## Volunteer Opportunities

**\*Writer's Needed:** Share your personal story of OA to reach out to the still suffering Compulsive Eater. Guidelines: 300 – 500 words of experience, strength and hope. For inspiration and ideas, check out <https://www.overeaters.org/ourstories.html>. Send your stories to Meg M at [rellingem@gmail.com](mailto:rellingem@gmail.com) or call 763-244-6098 for questions. Note: All stories are subject to editing.

**\*Newcomer Meeting Service Opportunity:** The coordinators of the monthly Newcomer Meeting are looking to rotate their service. This wonderful 12<sup>th</sup> step opportunity happens the third Saturday of the month at the Minnetonka Community Center at 1pm. If interested, please contact Kate D. at 262-744-1866 or [mkdallavalle@gmail.com](mailto:mkdallavalle@gmail.com), or Ellen W. at 952-925-3801.

**\*New Meeting:** New meeting to be held Thursdays at 6:00 pm in St. Paul at Peter J. King Family Health Center, Conference Room A, 1026 West 7th St in Saint Paul. (Corner of West 7th St and Randolph Ave.) The meeting is on the intersection of several bus lines, and is wheel chair accessible. The meeting topic is 12&12/Big Book study. All looking for freedom from compulsive eating are welcome. Contact Brenda at 651-227-5437 with any questions.

**\*New Minnetonka Meeting Location:** Beginning January 1, 2011, the Minnetonka noon meeting is moving to St. David's Episcopal Church, 13000 Saint Davids Road, Hopkins, MN 55305. This is 1 mile east of our current location on Minnetonka Blvd just off intersection of Minnetonka Blvd and Shady Oak Rd in Minnetonka. We invite OA members to join us at our new location. For more information, contact Cathy W 952-270-4248.

**\*The Saturday Golden Valley Meeting in turning 25!** Come join us to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Saturday 10am Golden Valley meeting. The celebration will be on January 29 from 10 am to 12 pm. This will be an open meeting, so friends and family are welcome. We will have a traditional meeting with three speakers and time for pitches on the importance of the tool of meetings. The meeting will be followed by some socializing time. We hope you can join us for this joyous event.

**\*The Rochester Monday night meeting** is looking for an OA group to work on the raffle for next spring's Buffalo Retreat. Please contact Allison H. at [allison.house@live.com](mailto:allison.house@live.com) if your group can help.

**\*A seven day OA cruise** is leaving from Galveston on March 20 and returning March 27. Imagine being able to attend OA meetings, being surrounded by fellow OA members and sightseeing at Montego Bay, Cozumel, and as well as other ports. The prices range from \$600 to \$950, excluding airfare. For more details go to the website OA Cruise Galveston. I would love to hear from any OA members who are planning on going. I am looking for a non-smoking roommate. Please call me (Paulette) at 218-828-8062 or email me at [paulettebuck60@gmail.com](mailto:paulettebuck60@gmail.com)

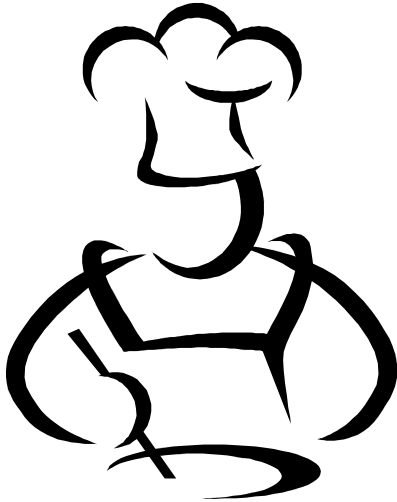
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## The Progressive Nature

Compulsive eating is an insidious, progressive disease. There was a time in my life that, though a food-lover, I was able to stop eating. I'm not sure my "full button" ever functioned "normally," but I still enjoyed moments of relative normalcy early in my food life, setting boundaries around how much food I would take in and actually being able to stop when I reached those boundaries. At one time, I liked food, enjoyed it, used it to fill my belly and not to fill my being.

On the other end of the spectrum I can recall some of my worst binges shortly before coming to OA HOW. I remember my feeble attempts to stop eating any given thing. A batch of cookies I made "for the kids" stands out as one of my most vivid of these attempts to control. I am still not sure if I ate more dough or more cooked cookies on that night, but even after my stomach was painfully upset, I went back to the cooling racks one cookie at a time to completely annihilate the batch. I'm not sure "the kids" ever knew I baked them.



In my recollection, I see myself moving in slow motion between each grabbed cookie. I begged God. I lied to myself. I tried to distract myself by doing the laundry. I bargained-with Satan-probably. There was no amount of misery or pontificating that could save me from my addict that night.

The fact that, at a much earlier time in my life, I didn't even care that much for sweets contrasted vividly with the power sugar had over me that night-in the heyday of my disease, and it is a testament to the progressive/destructive nature of this illness.

Because I am a grateful recovering addict, I have spent plenty of meetings in First Step groups—rooms with other addicts returning to their programs after "adding to their resumes." From their descriptions and my own terrifying experiences I know that if I took that first compulsive bite of food, I'd end up just as I was before. The addiction doesn't rest, it picks up right where it left off and only gets worse. For me, I would be back with that batch of cookies.

Today, I am grateful that I choose not to go there—God willing. And, with the fellowship of this program I pray I will be able to make the choice not to go there tomorrow as well. For now, I know I only have to focus on the meal that is in front of me. I don't have to go back, as long as I'm willing to surrender and to use the tools of the program. Thankfully, these promises allow me to live a new life; cookie-free, one day at a time.

~Theresa B.—Tuesday Night Woodbury

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## Serenity & Insight

The serenity and insight gained from the OA twelve step program makes us realize we don't HAVE to do anything. There is always choice.

Our lives are gifts from our Higher Power and the choice of what to do with them is ours. We can overeat. We can isolate from others and watch ourselves get progressively worse. We can console ourselves with food.

We do not have to follow



the program; we do not have to overeat; we do not have to turn our lives over to God; and we also do not have to continue to bear the burden of self and self-will.

The experience of countless people is that the most satisfying thing to do with the life given to each of us is to give it back to our Higher Power to use as he wills.

Thank you, HP, for the freedom of choice. I will seek to know the will of my HP and the will to carry it out, one day at a time.

~Anonymous

# Treasurer's Report

## Abridged Nov '10 Treasurer's Report

INCOME	
Meeting Contributions	Amount
Sat, St. Paul, 7:30AM	\$ 446.00
Sat, Circle Pines, 8:00 AM	\$ 230.00
Sat, Golden Valley, 10:00 AM	\$ 200.00
Fri, St. Paul, 6:30 PM	\$ 180.00
Mon, Brooklyn Park, 7:00 PM	\$ 100.00
Sat, Falcon Heights, 8:00 AM	\$ 93.00
Mon, Minneapolis, 7:00 PM	\$ 39.35
Sat, Apple Valley, 9:00 AM	\$ 25.00
Tue, Forest Lake, 6:30 PM	\$ 130.00
Thu, Burnsville, 7:00 PM	\$ 169.00
Tue, Shoreview, 7:00 PM	\$ 117.00
Thu, St. Cloud, 7:00 PM	\$ 90.00
<b>Other Income</b>	
	\$ -
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$ 1,819.35</b>

EXPENSES	
Committee Expenses	Amount
Buffalo (includes scholarship funds \$938.50)	\$ -
Donation - Region IV	\$ -
Donation - WSO	\$ -
Frontenac (includes scholarship funds \$300)	\$ -
Literature	\$ 639.75
Newsletter	\$ 150.13
Outreach: Big Book Study	\$ -
Outreach: General	\$ -
Outreach: New Meeting	\$ -
Outreach: Public Information	\$ -
Overhead Expenses	\$ 295.68
Rent	\$ -
Reps to Region IV	\$ -
Reps to WSO	\$ -
Taxes	\$ 25.00
Telephone	\$ 119.60
Unity Expenses	\$ 52.00
Website	\$ 203.72
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ 1,485.88</b>



## Questions?

Contact Meg M. at 763-244-6098  
or [megintergrouptreasurer@gmail.com](mailto:megintergrouptreasurer@gmail.com)

To see the full report, you can get it online at  
<http://overeaters.org/unityintergrouptreasuryrep.html>



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## February Society Pages

The February Society Pages will focus on Step Two: "Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity." and will be sponsored by the Monday night Owatonna 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 Julie C. at [juliecoaig@earthlink.net](mailto:juliecoaig@earthlink.net) by Saturday, January 15.

## Mark Your Calendar

Saturday, January 15	Newcomer Meeting & Society Pages Deadline
Saturday, February 5	Web Updates
Saturday, February 12	Intergroup Meeting
Saturday, February 19	Newcomer Meeting & Society Pages Deadline
Saturday, March 5	Web Updates
Saturday, March 12	Intergroup Meeting

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

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# Service Opportunities

**\*Board Positions Available:** All four Board positions on the Unity Intergroup Board (Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer) will be open for election in January. Interested? Contact a board member or check out the position descriptions on <http://www.overeaters.org>.



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**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

Lisa D., Chair	(651) 402-9262	<a href="mailto:lisad.unitychair@gmail.com">lisad.unitychair@gmail.com</a>
Allison R., Vice-Chair	(612) 499-0280	<a href="mailto:flycurvewhirl@yahoo.com">flycurvewhirl@yahoo.com</a>
Meg, Treasurer	(763) 244-6098	<a href="mailto:megintergrouptreasurer@gmail.com">megintergrouptreasurer@gmail.com</a>
Katy B., Secretary	(651) 470-3213	<a href="mailto:unityigsec2010@yahoo.com">unityigsec2010@yahoo.com</a>