

Society Pages

The
Newsletter of
Unity Intergroup June 2005

Carrying the Message

News from Unity Intergroup

At the May 14th meeting of the Unity Intergroup, a budget for 2005-2006 was proposed and passed. Anyone wishing to see the budget can talk to treasurer, Maggie Rose whose phone number is printed elsewhere in this newsletter.

Sheila thanked all groups who donated funds to send delegates to WSO this year.

The Buffalo retreat was a great success. 122 people attended. Thanks to all who donated raffle items. Next years retreat will be held March 31-April 2, and once again be at the Christ the King retreat house in Buffalo

OA World Service Business Conference in New Mexico is a hotbed of ideas

(This is the continuation of an article that was printed in part last month. It is a report on the annual World Service Business Conference which was attended by Randy and Sheila.)

Reaching newcomers

A workshop on reaching out to newcomers was filled with ideas. One speaker said that when anyone calls him to ask about OA, he always takes 15 to 20 minutes to explain what OA is about. At another meeting, when newcomers are present, a workshop participant says the meeting leader asks who will be willing to stay after the meeting to talk to newcomers. "That keeps the newcomer there," the workshop participant explained. Another workshop participant said that if there are newcomers present, he will always start his talk at a meeting by saying, I

want to say something especially for newcomers." He said he talks about how, when he came to his first OA meeting it was very confusing. Some OA members have made up business cards directly aimed at newcomers with their phone number and email address.

Another participant advised people to bring their photos to the meeting that show how they used to look. Those photos may have a bigger impact on the newcomer than anything else, the speaker said.

The conference voted to update the OA handbook to suggest that OA groups add a new service position to their OA meetings—a designated downloader. There is a lot of quality material at OA.org, the official OA website and a downloader can get the material printed out and available at OA meetings. The new handbook will also have a new section about group conscience meetings.

The conference also adopted a proposal to register telephone groups as authentic OA meetings. There are already some on-line OA meetings on the Internet, but some people are unable to use computers, don't have meetings in their area, are housebound, or may have problems with fringes. The telephone meeting is a way to stay in contact. As a result of the vote you will soon be able to look up such meetings at OA.org. A speaker who supported the phone meetings said some phone meetings have grown quite large and in the format of one meeting it states that the phone meeting is not a substitute for a live meeting.

Trustees elected

The conference also elected—and in some cases re-elected—two general service board of trustee members and four trustee members representing. In two instances there were contested elections. The trustee for Region 4, which covers OA members in Minnesota and other Midwestern states and part of central Canada, was re-elected unopposed. Prior to the elections, each candidate made a presentation and answered questions.

There is a lot left to do. Registered OA groups dropped by 2 percent in 2004, from 6,606 to 6,584, OA's managing director reported. There was no explanation for the drop. The new Dignity of Choice pamphlet, approved last year by OA, has become our biggest seller. From June to December, an average of 7,400 pamphlets were sold per month. The website, www.oa.org has been reorganized and become printer friendly, and one can easily print out a table of meetings for each area. A mention of OA in the Dear Abby column on June 22, 2004, drew 700 inquiries to the World Service office, and thousands of visitors to the website.

Philadelphia convention

OA members were encouraged to make plans to attend the OA Convention August 29 to Sept. 1, 2007 at the Loew's Hotel in Philadelphia where the theme will be, "Ring in Recovery—Declare Your Freedom from Compulsive Overeating." Unlike the Albuquerque conference, which focuses on business, the convention is not a delegated conference, but rather, a non-stop recovery event.

The World Service conference voted unanimously to reaffirm the OA policy that "no OA member should be prevented from attending, sharing, leading, and or serving as a speaker at an OA meeting due to choice of food plan. Groups sharing food plan information

must adhere to OA's policies on outside literature as well as copyright law." A proposal to investigate the economic implications of updating OA literature to make it gender neutral was defeated by what appeared to be at least a 2 to 1 margin.

There were many people attending the conference for the first time. As is the tradition they put a green dot on the nametag that they wore at the conference and most of them had a mentor assigned to them. On the last day of the conference they stood in front of the room and removed their green dot, to much applause. The conference wound up Saturday night with a banquet, entertainment and a dance.

The conference was extremely worthwhile and some of the best parts of it for us were the informal discussions we had with delegates from around the world where we learned how other people were doing the program, the successes they had and the obstacles they faced. Both authors of this report were elected to attend the conference by the Unity Intergroup. We are very grateful to the OA groups in the Twin Cities who answered our Intergroup's special appeal for funds that made it possible for us to attend.

We hope more OA members will be able to attend the World Service Business Conference in the future. If this type of service appeals to you, we urge you to get involved in the Intergroup, too. Each OA meeting in the Twin Cities is entitled to two representatives to the Unity Intergroup.
--Randy F. and Sheila H.

(Both Sheila and Randy are available to speak to OA meetings in Minnesota. Sheila is available for daytime meetings, only. To reach her, call 952-758-2962. Randy's phone number is 612-822-0317.

Unity Sponsored Events

A New Beginning Summer Retreat

Join us on June 24, 25 and 26 at Villa Maria Retreat Center in Frontenac, MN. The cost is \$117 for a shared room or \$142.50 for a private room if you reserve by May 24. Call Judy M with any questions about the retreat, at 763-473-4920. Come and join us!

Gay Pride Festival

Unity will again have an informational booth at the Gay Pride Festival which is held on June 25-26. If you would like to volunteer to help at the booth please call Kristie 612-822-1443 or Jason 952-942-2903.

Group Contributions March 2005

Meeting Day, Time & Location	Contribution Amount
Wednesday 7pm -St Louis Park/ OA/HOW	120.00
Friday 10am-Woodbury	60.00
Monday 7pm-LaCrosse	25.00
Saturday 7:30am-St Paul/St Clements	360.00
Wednesday pm-LaCrosse	25.00
Saturday am-Roseville/Courage to Change	90.00
Saturday 11:30 am Mpls/Spirit of God	12.00
Monday 7pm-Rochester OA/HOW	61.42
Tuesday 7pm-Shoreview	72.24
Wednesday&Saturday am-Rochester	114.00

Thank you to all groups for your support.

Meeting Announcements

The Saturday morning Eden Prairie meeting has scheduled informational open sessions for anyone who would like to learn more about OA.

They take place at the regular meeting times, 9:00-10:30, at Pax Christi Church. The upcoming dates are August 13th and December 10th.

A new OA/HOW meeting has started. It meets at St Andrews church, 13600 Technology Dr, Eden Prairie, Saturdays 8:00-10:00. Come check it out!

Coming in the fall of 2005, a Teen OA group in Coon Rapids MN! We need speakers willing to share their experience, strength & hope who have had the disease in their teens. Check next month's issue for more details. Contact person: Bernie R @ 763-712-8051

Subscriptions

Society Pages is available by subscription for individuals outside the Unity Intergroup region. The cost is \$6.00 for one year. It is also available at no cost on the website www overeaters.org.

For a subscription, please send your name, address and zip code, along with a check made payable to Unity Intergroup (with Society Pages in the memo section) to: Sheila Hyde, 311 First Street NE, New Prague, MN 56071-1821

Intergroup Board

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The next Intergroup meeting will be on July 9, 2005 at 12:30, at 1660 Parkdale Dr., St Louis Park, MN. Every group can send two voting

representatives to the meeting, but all are welcome to attend. Please join us!

Step Six

Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

Freedom from character defects

When I came into OA I was at the end of my rope. I no longer had any hope that I could beat this thing on my own. My attempts at controlling my weight were futile. I had been trying for years to lose weight, or at the very least stop obsessing about food and my weight. I tried every diet, every new age philosophy from reading auras to learning about zinc. Nothing I did relieved me of the agony of living in a 200 plus body and the mind games that went along with it. And then I came to OA/HOW where just the act of surrendering and the willingness to do whatever it takes, removed the obsession and allowed me to follow a food plan that brought me to a healthy weight, a weight that I have now

maintained, because of the steps, tools and support for 2 ½ years.

This to me is a miracle and definitely not my doing. What I believe now is that if God can relieve me of this paralyzing obsession – then he must have the ability to take away my pesky character defects. The ones that keep me enmeshed in selfishness, like people pleasing, fear of other peoples opinions of me, perfectionism (which is really just grandiosity for me) and competitiveness. Now that I know what it means to be free of my obsession with food, I want the same freedom from character defects. Anything is possible for my Higher Power.

Anonymous

The July Society Pages will feature Step Seven, “Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.” If you would like to contribute to the newsletter, please send your reflections on the step, or a personal story to rboe@mn.rr.com. Deadline for submission of articles is Monday, June 27.

“As they are humbled by the terrific beating administered by alcohol (food), the grace of God can enter them and expel their obsession.” *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions page 64*