

Society Pages

The Newsletter of
Unity Intergroup November 2007

Carrying the Message

**MINNESOTA OA STATE
CONVENTION**
There is a Solution
NOVEMBER 2, 3, 4, 2007

WELCOME

The convention planning committee would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to the 34th Minnesota Convention of Overeaters Anonymous.

After months of planning, much negotiation, monthly meetings, and countless telephone calls and emails, the time has finally arrived—and we are now here to “Celebrate The Miracles Of Recovery...Happy, Joyous, and Free.”

The convention planning committee is comprised of fifteen distinct sub-committees led by more than 30 abstinent OA members who dedicate their time to coordinating this event. In addition to the committee members, it takes more than 250 on-site volunteers to run the convention successfully. On-site volunteers perform in a variety of positions—as greeters, room managers, time keepers, speakers, hospitality room managers, registration table and literature table staffers, recovery slideshow equipment managers, and many more. All service positions are equally important to the mission of the convention...spreading the message to those who still suffer.

For more than 34 years, OA members have traveled from near and far to celebrate recovery and share their experience, strength, and hope. This year, based on registrations as of 10/15/07, we welcome OA members from

fellowships in British Columbia, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, New York, North Dakota, Washington, and Wisconsin.*

Under the guidance of our Higher Power, we have taken great care in planning every single convention detail with you in mind. There will be a dynamic keynote speaker, more than twenty-five abstinent OA speakers, two OA meetings, entertainment, and abstinent meals. Take the time to enjoy special features: the Unity Wall, Recovery Slideshow, Virtual Meetings Reception, and Getting Started Workshop for the Newcomer. Enjoy the fellowship in the Hospitality Suite and be sure to visit the Gopher State Tape Library. We know that you will have a great time as we “Celebrate the Miracles of Recovery” and enjoy fellowship with one another!

Registration funds in excess of convention costs support the Unity Intergroup in carrying 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.”

Ann D.
2007 OA Convention Chair

HELP WANTED

**Unity Intergroup URGENTLY needs a
Newsletter Print Coordinator.
See page 7 for more information.**

Unity Intergroup is YOUR Intergroup...
(www.overeaters.org)

“Two or more groups can form an intergroup (IG). The intergroup provides services to existing groups within its geographical area and spreads the OA message of recovery to those who still suffer.” (http://www.oa.org/intergroup_region_support.html)

Unity Intergroup meetings are held on the second Saturday of every month at Sumner Library in Minneapolis from 12:30-2:30 PM. We have a web site (www.overeaters.org), a newsletter (Society Pages: www.overeaters.org/newsletter.html), a hotline, a newcomer’s meeting, a state convention, two retreats, a sponsorship workshop, a big book study, Region IV representatives, World Service delegates, a registrar to maintain our meeting list, and Outreach and Public Information committees. We are a healthy intergroup that puts energy into carrying the message to those in our area still suffering and is active at the Region and WSO (World Service Organization) level. My focus for this year as Intergroup Chair has been to keep it simple. And business meetings can be fun, too!

In order to support all that we do as an Intergroup, OA members step outside of their meetings in the role of Group Representative and attend our monthly intergroup meetings. One volunteer at a time, all these positions are filled and together we have the power to carry the message. “Together we can do what we could never do alone.”

As with all service in OA, the positions rotate. With rotation comes the opportunity for each of us to develop skills and a need for fresh people to bring their experience, strength, hope, and passion to the available roles. If you are a meeting that does not have a representative attending Intergroup meetings, please come. We want you to have a voice and to experience the program and recovery on a whole new level. If you are a group that only has one group rep, please send two. You can send two reps from each group and it is comforting to have a “service buddy”. For anyone interested, our next election will be held at the January 2008 meeting. Come visit and let your HP lead the way. Service (along with meetings and steps) is abstinence insurance, right?

...and Region IV is YOUR Region
(www.oaregion4.org)

“Region IV is one of the ten regions organized to serve communication between groups and intergroups within and between each region and OA worldwide. Region IV of Overeaters Anonymous is made up of all the groups and intergroups in Illinois [except the Chicagoland area], Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Manitoba, Northwest Ontario, and Nunavut Territory, Canada (www.oaregion4.org).”

This year, Unity Intergroup has six delegates that we send to a spring and fall conference! This fall, the assembly was held in Duluth, MN. Unity has been asked to do the planning for the Region IV convention in St. Louis next June. In addition, we have several people that will be speaking at that event. It is educational and beneficial to get together with Intergroups from our region and hear about projects, events, and processes others are doing. The service opportunities at this level are available for the willing, too! Each position is a bridge to the next. There is much we can do, one person at a time, to ensure OA is there for the next compulsive overeater that needs us.

~Becky T., Unity Intergroup Chair 2007

Links

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

Unity within OA



When I attended my first Unity Intergroup (IG) meeting just under a year ago, I did so with an internal nudge. I had a discomfort with the true “**unity**” of all of the OA formats. This discomfort caused me, after nearly 3 years of active meeting attendance and abstinence through a traditional program, to get outside of myself and my home group, and provide service at the IG level as a rep from my home meeting.

The recovery I find through OA is based on how I work the program, using the twelve steps, the tools and faith in my higher power. I wanted to know if my program was okay. Was it respected? Or not?

Imagine my amazement, when the first topic discussed at my first meeting was unity and acknowledgement of the value of all OA formats. I heard the belief that recovery from compulsive overeating may take different paths but with common threads that weave us together as OA. Wow!

That vision got me excited about service again, allowed me to renew my commitment to my program and the group, and take on the challenge of secretary of Unity IG this year. This past year has been a month by month pace of creative and steady work by selfless volunteers who carry the OA message. By walking similar, yet different, paths to the same goals (abstinence, faith in a Higher Power, and, by reaching outside ourselves, to help those who still suffer), we thrive.

This convention is the yearly embodiment of the passion and excitement that is OA, a multi-faceted program with formats that fit the diverse needs of compulsive overeaters who want recovery. Here, we celebrate together. We embrace our differences. And we express gratitude for what we hold in common.

~Janelle N, Unity IG Secretary

The Littlest Thing

I have found in this program that I don't have to move mountains to count. I can do the littlest thing and it is appreciated and accepted. Most surprisingly to me, is that the more service I do, the stronger my program gets. When I think about it, it makes sense; if my disease continues to get stronger and stronger even while I'm in recovery, the only way to counterbalance it is to make sure my program continues to grow in strength. The longer I'm abstinent the more service I must do to keep the disease at bay.

Just last night I called a struggling OA to see how she was doing. She reacted with such surprise that I had called her. Why not call her? When she proclaimed that she was not abstaining and was just praying for the willingness, I asked her what she would be willing to do, just for one day. Five days later she is still calling me with her food and daily inventory and has expressed a readiness to find a permanent sponsor. I will help her find a sponsor. The phone call was such a small effort on my part, but it can have such positive consequences. I am so grateful for what I have learned about service in this program.

I can easily say that I get back as much as I give when it comes to service. Admittedly, it sounds a bit selfish. However, I don't consciously say to myself, “I want a reward for myself, so I think I'll make a call to a fellow OA.” No, I make the call because I want to and I need to. The gifts I receive as a result are just a side effect of this effort.

~Deb M.

2007 OA World Service Business Conference

Attending the World Service Business Conference 2007 (WSBC) as a representative is a great opportunity to be of service and strengthen recovery. Just saying the Serenity Prayer and "I Put My Hand in Yours" with approximately 200 recovering compulsive overeaters was a humbling experience. The presence of a loving Higher Power that presides over us all permeated the business assembly. The Serenity Prayer was said in English, Italian, French, Danish and Spanish. There were delegates from England, Norway, New Zealand and Alaska. Being at World Service gives a sense that Overeater's Anonymous is a global community. Every delegate's, trustee's, service board member's, and officer's voice was heard as we voted on by-laws, new pamphlets, proposals and literature. We heard the following statements made many times during the conference: "What is good for OA as a whole?", "acceptance of diversity", "a program of attraction", "the importance of reaching out to the newcomer", "what can we do for outreach to the compulsive overeater that is still suffering?" and "the importance of each recovering overeater to live the 12th step."

Every minute of the World Service Conference was filled with service opportunities. Meetings started at 7 o'clock a.m. and continued through the day until 9 o'clock p.m. Unity Intergroup WSBC representatives signed up to participate on various committees for the 2007-2008 year. Linda N. is serving on the Unity with Diversity Committee. She is the chair of the subcommittee addressing Gender and Sexuality issues. This committee's goals are to create a policy statement to submit at World Service 2008, to promote an issue of Lifeline with the question: "How has our sexuality affected our disease and how has our disease affected our sexuality?" In April, 2008, we will also start the process of creating a pamphlet on Gender and Sexuality Issues.

Catherine W. is on the Bylaws Committee, and chair of the Conformity Subcommittee.

The Conformity Subcommittee is looking at the section of the OA Bylaws that define how Groups, Intergroups, Regions, and National/Language Service Boards register with the World Service Office. The Board of Trustees asked the Bylaws committee to consider these sections and recommend some changes.

Becky T. is on the 12th Step Within committee. Some of this committee's goals are to continue efforts to maintain and expand the Speaker's List, Promote the 12th Step Within Handbook (read more at www.oa.org/twelfth_step_within.html), and encourage increased communication within service bodies.

All three of us are on the Promoting Abstinence Committee. Our goal for the 2007-2008 year is to spread the "abstinence virus". Each member is encouraged to qualify their abstinence when sharing at OA meetings and to share our abstinent journey of recovery in our community. A general description of an abstinent member is someone who exhibits spiritual, emotional, and physical recovery and works all 12 steps.

The hot topic at the 2007 business meeting was virtual meetings. There were six proposals about virtual meetings. There are many virtual meetings registered at World Service but, as yet, they are not represented in our service structure. We want every compulsive overeater to have a voice. At the present time our by-laws define regions by geographical areas and cyber space doesn't fit neatly into the ten geographical regions. These six proposals are referred back to committee and will be on the 2008 World Service Business Meeting agenda.

Linda N. states, "Personally, service at WSBC strengthened my recovery, gave me an opportunity to enjoy the world-wide fellowship, opened my eyes to what long-term abstinence looks like, gave me an awareness of the unselfish dedication, passion and willingness that delegates, trustees, and service boards give to Overeaters Anonymous and nudged me towards wanting to do more service."

Catherine W. shares, "I am deeply grateful for the experience of being a WSBC

delegate, and receiving so much from attending WSBC 2007. Not only did I have an opportunity to meet other delegates from around the world, it was amazing to see how many people attended in order to volunteer at the event! It also made me appreciate how much recovery we have in the Twin Cities. OA here is growing, whereas general membership is on the decline. I am looking forward to WSBC 2008 and to Unity Intergroup taking advantage of the opportunity to submit new business proposals that will help to strengthen recovery for our membership as a whole – for newcomers and for those in the rooms who are still suffering.”

Becky reflects that, “Sending delegates to the WSBC benefits our region, intergroup, and local meetings by keeping us plugged into the bigger picture of OA and knowledgeable about new literature, programs, and financial matters that affect us. Delegates bring back ideas and information to share recovery with our local members, strengthening OA in our area. Doing service outside the group level is truly an experience beyond my wildest dreams! It’s not “them” at WSO (World Service Office) – it is you and me.”

Other delegates at World Service Business Conference commented on the large number of delegates Unity Intergroup sent to the World Business Conference in 2007. Unity Intergroup is recognized as a pocket of enthusiasm of OA recovery. Region 4 had a large body of delegates and we often heard that we are admired for our level of service, participation, recovery and dedication.

The theme for the 2008 conference is “The Road to Recovery—A Team Effort.” Some things on the agenda for World Business Conference are:

- Intergroups
- National/Language Service / Boards
- Voting for New Trustees for regions 1, 4 and 7
- By-law amendments
- Representation for Virtual Groups

We urge all of you to get involved with service outside your group level. It can enrich your abstinence and strengthen your

recovery. We are hoping many of you consider being a World Service Business Conference Representative for OA in the future. Unity Intergroup, Region 4 and OA as a whole need you.

~Catherine W., Becky T. and Linda N.



An Eye-Opening Experience

I’ve had the honor of serving OA in three positions with the past several years as Vice Chair of the Unity Intergroup (IG) board, as the Intergroup (IG) Rep for the Tuesday Woodbury meeting, and as a Region IV Representative from Unity Intergroup. These past few years have opened my eyes as to how far reaching OA is. I’ve been around the rooms of OA since 1988. At that time I never gave much thought to OA’s infrastructure, much less to who set up chairs at the meetings. In the past few years, I began to see that service in OA was essential and that I, too, could give back what was so generously given to me. I have found that continued service has profoundly strengthened my program.

Our Intergroup is one of the largest in our Region. We are fortunate to have 57 meetings here in the Twin Cities area. Unity Intergroup has a business meeting the 2nd Saturday of each month. I encourage your meeting to elect 2 IG Reps. Everyone is welcome at the meetings, but each group can only have 2 voting Reps. The primary responsibility of the IG Rep is to represent their meeting and act as liaison to IG. They take any communications, meeting lists, and Newsletters back to the meeting they represent. I invite you to join us for an IG meeting. Time and location are available at our website www.overeaters.org.

Service at the Intergroup level is a wonderful way to strengthen your recovery while supporting OA as a whole. We all do this together.

~Julie B-H

Service

It's funny how my loving Higher Power is always offering me opportunities for growth. I had been my group's Unity Intergroup Representative for a year and the new Rep was unable to attend her second meeting. I offered to go for her and a call was made to elect a Region IV Rep. I had no idea what the service involved, but I was told they met twice a year. I thought – I can do that. One meeting twice a year – I could do that. Much later I learned this was a two year position and Region IV extends from Omaha Nebraska to Saskatchewan Canada.

My first meeting was this spring. Here I learned that Region IV had a hard time finding a qualified person to meet the requirements for their Trustee. What this means to me, personally, is that Region IV would not be a part of OA World Services if no one stepped up to become our Trustee. I am a self-serving kind of compulsive overeater. If I did not have OA I would lose the way of life that I treasure. Because my Higher Power put me in that Unity Intergroup meeting, because I blindly accepted a service position, and because OA has given me a reprieve (today) from my eating compulsion, I am happy to serve in Region IV.

I know today my abstinence is dependent upon service; not only my service but the service of each OA member:

- The newcomer who completes that first hard day of abstinence
- The member with long term abstinence who represents me at World Service
- The members of my group that I see each week and form wonderful supportive relationships with.
- My Unity Intergroup Representative who does the work of carrying the message of hope for recovery from food addiction to my town.

All these services keep me in abstinence, today. I am grateful for this opportunity to serve and I invite everyone to enjoy the gifts of service.

~Joan S., Region IV Representative,
Monday Night Rochester Group

Proud to Be of Service

I'm Barb B, compulsive overeater and proud to be of service to my group and Intergroup. A long time ago, I observed that people who had strong recovery were active in service. Likewise, I observed that groups I considered strong were also involved in service above the group level.

Anyone can attend an Intergroup meeting, and two representatives from each group can be voting members. I'm grateful that we have a very vital Intergroup in this area, and that many group representatives do attend. It's such an opportunity to learn what is happening in the fellowship in our area, to avail myself and the group of the tool of service, and frankly to have a vote in determining the direction OA goes in our area. When I see the willing enthusiasm in others to give service, it's infectious. If you or your group needs a recovery boost, come and try Intergroup service. I hope to see you there!

~Barb B., Convention Literature chair &
Buffalo Retreat chair



December Society Pages

This convention issue focuses almost exclusively on service (Step 12.) The December Society Pages, therefore, will focus on step 11 "Sought through prayer & meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out." Although one meeting generally sponsors each newsletter, we welcome articles from anyone. Please indicate if it is OK to print your name with your article and e-mail your contributions to ellen_oa@hotmail.com with the subject "Society Pages" by noon on Friday, November 23rd.

Worth Every Minute

My name is Amy D. and I am the current Treasurer of Unity Intergroup. As Treasurer, my job is to deal with the money flowing in and out of Unity Intergroup. Each month I write checks, deposit donations, balance the checkbook, and give a monthly report to Unity Intergroup. I also prepare the annual budget and get the year-end information to the accountant who prepares our tax returns.

I won't try and tell you this position is not a lot of work. Sometimes it can be. However, the many ways it has strengthened my program is worth every moment! I communicate with many members of Overeaters Anonymous who have various financial questions regarding their individual meetings and this has given me bonus 'check in' calls and emails. I have, therefore, increased my circle of OA contacts and friends. I write reimbursement checks for members and instead of mailing them, I go visit their meeting so I have increased the number of meetings I attend. I visit various Intergroup committee meetings to help with budgets and, therefore, have a greater understanding of Unity's outreach works. And most of all, I have Unity Board and Finance committee meetings which have given me the understanding of the responsibilities of an Intergroup to our local members, and to members all over the nation and the world!

I cannot stress enough the importance that giving service has been to me and my program. As the Big Book says in the chapter "Working with Others," "Your job now is to be at the place where you may be of maximum helpfulness to others, so never hesitate to go anywhere if you can be helpful."

~Amy D.

URGENT: Help Wanted: Society Pages Print Coordinator

Keith C. has been the Society Pages Print Coordinator for the past year. Due to the normal service rotation within OA, Unity Intergroup needs a volunteer (or a team of volunteers) to do this service. Unity Intergroup wants to thank Keith for his service work in getting the Society Pages printed and distributed each month.

It is now time to give someone else the opportunity to undertake this service. The job responsibilities are

- Order Supplies (toner, paper, envelopes)
- Receive the newsletter copy (already edited and formatted) from the Society Pages Editor
- Print newsletter and labels each month
- Take the newsletter with envelopes to the sponsoring group's representative; they will collate and deliver to Intergroup.

The job requires about 6 to 10 hours a month. The volunteer must have a computer and Internet access. Unless someone steps up to do this service, this could be the last issue of Society Pages printed. Contact Keith (612-251-6690 or KJ_Connolly@hotmail.com) for more information.



UNITY INTERGROUP CALENDAR

November 2007		Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
4	Sun	5	6	7	8	9	10
	CONVENTION 8 am - noon						-Outreach/PI Mtg -Intergroup Mtg
11		12	13	14	15	16	17
							-Newcomer Mtg
18		19	20	21	22	23	24
					GIVE THANKS FOR OA RECOVERY!	DECEMBER SOCIETY PAGES	
25		26	27	28	29	30	1
						ARTICLES DUE	
December 2007							
2		3	4	5	6	7	8
							-Outreach/PI Mtg -Intergroup Mtg
9		10	11	12	13	14	15
							-Newcomer Mtg
16		17	18	19	20	21	22
23	JANUARY SOCIETY PAGES	24	25	26	27	28	29
	ARTICLES DUE						

Intergroup Board

Becky T., Chair
 Julie B.H., Vice-Chair
 Amy D., Treasurer
 Janelle N., Secretary

952-423-1527
 715-381-8470
 952-270-0098
 763-780-2794

beckytio@frontiernet.net
jbhgold@hotmail.com
amydunker@yahoo.com
janellenelson1@mac.com