

# Society Pages

The Newsletter of  
**Unity Intergroup** August 2008

## Carrying the Message

### News from Unity Intergroup

#### New Vice-Chairperson

New Unity IG Board Member! Jane S was elected to serve as Vice Chair through the rest of the current term. She can be reached at 612-483-6335 or at [janiebanes@yahoo.com](mailto:janiebanes@yahoo.com). Welcome Jane!

#### Meeting Support Requested!

The Forest Lake Sunday night Open Arms meeting at 6:00pm is in need of members. Please consider visiting or making this your home group

### Service Opportunities

#### Society Pages

*We Need You! The Society Pages needs a Group to Sponsor the December 2008 issue and beyond. Volunteer your group to share through short personal stories, and members' experience, strength and hope. Contact Amanda A. at 763-639-7224 or [corter\\_0506@hotmail.com](mailto:corter_0506@hotmail.com) for details. Steps match the months (i.e. January = Step 1, etc.). We truly cannot do this without you!*

### Newcomers Meeting

We need volunteer speakers who have at least 90-days of abstinence and are working regularly with a sponsor, to help lead the monthly Newcomer Meeting. Please contact Aida 651-489-8264, Sonja H. 952-484-1481, Sarah D. 612-747-6753 or go to: [www overeaters.org](http://www overeaters.org) for more information or to volunteer for this great service opportunity.

### Abstinent 60 Days or More?

If so, you qualify for Unity Outreach Chair (term ends Jan. 2009)!

We need you to:

- Get us a booth at the Diabetes Convention.
- Gather volunteers to "man" the booth.
- Call Unity Literature Coordinator to request pamphlets needed.
- Attend Intergroup meetings to report on how things are going.

Not quite at 60 days yet? No worries! Volunteer on the Outreach Committee to assist with the items above. Call/email Becky T. to volunteer: 952-423-1527, [beckytio@frontiernet.net](mailto:beckytio@frontiernet.net).

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**Step Eight: “Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.”**

Free and Happy

In looking through “As Bill Sees It”, I recently came across an excerpt from one of Bill W’s 1946 letters: “We recovered alcoholics are not so much brothers in virtue as we are brothers in our defects, and in our common striving to overcome them.” I believe this to be especially true of OAs – our disease manifests itself in many different ways, but the nature of the disease itself is the same. As a binger and overeater, my physical allergy may be different than that of an anorexic, but there is some type of response that the anorexic gets out of not eating that they enjoyed, or at least enjoyed at some point. Just like my body used to feel really good at the beginning of a binge. And the reason why that, without the steps, an anorexic will go back to starving herself is the same reason that I will go back to bingeing is that at some point something in her mind will tell her that this one time it will be ok. Somehow this time things will be different, and she will be able to go back to normal eating when she wants to. Our defects lead us to think that one of these crazy things – over or under eating – will fix whatever is bothering us. The good news is that the steps work for all of us, and this is really what binds us together. The thing that I have most in common with any person sitting next to me in a meeting is that we have found a solution – working the 12 steps and following the 12 traditions have created changes in us that allow us to live in a much freer and happier way. ~Anonymous

What It Was Like Then

Today I am able to be grateful for summer smells, summer walks, a place to relax, good friends. None of this was possible when I was “in the food,” thinking only of my next fix. Recalling those times: In my disease, I was allowed near my drug of choice all the time. Like a kid in the candy store, literally. I was, for about three years, at my place of work sitting right next to the “honor system” candy and treat rack, within arms’ reach. It called to me the entire time I was working my four hour shifts there. My work was solitary. Hardly anyone disturbed me. I did my own disturbing borrowing from the honor system. One summer, I took candy delivered to me

in box loads so my students could sell it during summer school: big, one pound chocolate logs. I “assisted” them in their fundraising, never repaying the money until it was time to reconcile the books. No one, in either case, recognized I might have a problem or at least no one called me on it. When I became an independent contractor with a large firm downtown, I got my fix (wasting so many beautiful summer days) wandering the skyways for my “fix” so I could get through the rest of the days’ work. I like my life today a whole lot better. I hope to live to 120 so at least half my life would be in the blessed recovery I have today. ~K. in Minneapolis

The right thing

I remember calling my sponsor and saying, “You’re not going to believe this but I’m not only willing to make amends to my boss...I WANT TO.” For me this was a miracle. This was a promise come true: I did not regret the past nor wished to shut the door on it. It says in *Alcoholics Anonymous* that we will be amazed before we are half way through. They were talking about the step 4-9 process and they weren’t kidding.

Step 8 asks us to make a list of all persons we had harmed and become willing to make amends to them all. When I was just beginning to work on my fourth step and looked down that seemingly long road of steps at step 8, it made me nauseous. At the time, I doubted the process of working the steps, that well worn path that had brought so many people to freedom for so many years. But as a speaker at my meeting once said “Faith is doing things we don’t believe in and getting results we can’t deny.”

The last thing I wanted to do was give *certain people* the satisfaction of watching me eat humble pie and make amends to them. But that was my pride and steps 4-7 changed me. My sponsor said, stop worrying about the steps you aren’t on yet and so I worked with her on 4-7 and then moved right on in to step 8. We didn’t wait for me to *want* to work step 8 or *feel like* doing it. The action of making the list and praying about it brought me to a greater faith in my Higher Power. I didn’t need to cling to the myth that anger gave me power or protection. I found a love from that Source that made it possible to admit the harms for which I was responsible and become willing to do the right thing. ~Anonymous

**Links**

List of Local Meetings [www.overeaters.org](http://www.overeaters.org)  
Region 4 Web Site [www.oaregion4.org](http://www.oaregion4.org)  
World Service Web Site [www.oa.org](http://www.oa.org)

Convention Corner

2008 Minnesota OA State Convention  
November 14, 15, & 16,  
(see registration form in this issue)

Sign up today! **GIVE YOUR RECOVERY A BOOST** at the Minnesota State Overeaters Anonymous Convention on November 14, 15 & 16 at the Holiday Inn Select, 3 Appletree Square (I-494 & 34<sup>th</sup> Ave. Exit 1), Bloomington, MN. Phone 952-854-9000. This is an excellent opportunity to give and receive experience, strength and hope. The convention will feature two keynote speakers and a number of workshop speakers on the Steps, Traditions and Personal Recovery Stories. There will be OA meetings, a great Hospitality Room and information for the newcomers. The Convention is one of the highlights of the year for our fellowship. So, take advantage of this recovery event to fortify your recovery for the soon to follow holiday season. **Come and see how recovery is possible!**

**Volunteers Needed**

**Be Part of the State OA Convention  
"Service is Slimming"**

**We will need approximately 150 volunteers to run the MN State OA Convention. If you are able to help us out please contact:**

**Gwen S. at 612-915-1302**

**[pgstevens@msn.com](mailto:pgstevens@msn.com)**

**or Julie C. at [jc762@comcast.net](mailto:jc762@comcast.net)**

**We need help in these areas:**

**Greeters**

**Registration Desk**

**Literature Sales**

**Timekeepers**

**Room Managers**

**Lunch & Dinner Hosts**

**Hospitality Room**

**Entertainment**

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**"When I am at convention I am around other people who let go of their will and I hear what I need to do. Hearing this helps me get abstinent, and it will help me stay abstinent."**

**"Win a Free Night's Lodging  
at the Holiday Inn Select"**

The first 100 registrations received for the MN State OA convention will be entered into a drawing for a **free night's lodging** at the Holiday Inn Select. Note: Free night is not applicable to the OA convention nights.

OA Member Finds Recovery at OA Convention

**"We Have a Solution-Convention Revisited:  
Keep Coming Back"**

In the decades of my attending the Minnesota state OA convention, beginning in 1980, I have mostly come hoping for a solution for ME. For most of those years, I instead came away with the knowledge we all had a common problem. I felt I should have picked up something that would give me "the answer." For those years, I was not ready to see how I would be free of the results of this terrible, cunning illness we suffer as compulsive overeaters. I left more discouraged than when I came. In fall, 2001, Minnesota State Convention for OA, that changed. I attended a session that shook my complacency. I wanted to leave that breakout. I did, and grumbled about it to someone I saw in the hall. What the speakers in that session were saying unsettled me at the deepest level. They shouted that a solution was possible, and THEY were living proof. Over the years, I had seen friends go back into the food and never return to OA. I had seen our Monday night group diminish in size, and the main topic of the day "Will OA survive?" In fall, 2001, I must have been ready to let in a different answer. "Sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly" it says in the Promises. I am a bit slow. In January, 2002, I made a new commitment to recovery and to this program. Each year, this convention has been an integral part of my continuing recovery. For the Fall, 2007 State Convention, I was able to experience what the commitment meant to my program: Joy at seeing a larger than ever gathering (500-600 attendees,) involvement with the planning of the convention in an important way, willingness to watch for how I could be of service to not only the keynote speaker but to every attendee when the opportunity presented itself. It's as though my ears have been cleaned out, able to hear and see for the first time in memory (or ever?) I am grateful for all who persisted, for all the planning and behind the scenes work done and have a new appreciation of just how being involved helps me in my recovery. ~Anonymous.



**[Looking for a service opportunity?] Strengthen another OA Member's program - be a part of the Convention Slideshow**

Did you know that last year's Convention drew more than 500 attendees from fifteen states and Canadian Provinces? Some were people with decades of recovery and some were Newcomers. Some were from major metropolitan areas where OA meetings abound, and others said they traveled hours to get to a meeting. It's always a unique challenge for the Convention Committee to create a program that will support and strengthen the recovery of such a diverse group.

This year, the Convention Committee is adding something special to enhance the convention: a slideshow that presents OA members sharing an aspect of their recovery—physical, emotional, or spiritual. The slideshow will be composed of videos, photos, captions, and sound. It will run continuously between scheduled events in the Hospitality Room. We hope that those who stop to watch and listen will take away some of the experience, strength, and hope the slideshow portrays. The Committee evaluated whether a slideshow project might compromise OA's Traditions of Anonymity. Our reading of Traditions 11 and 12 leads to the opinion that those who take part in the slideshow will uphold the Traditions of Anonymity. Tradition 12 in the Twelve and Twelve states: "When opportunities to be helpful came along, [the O.A. member] found he could talk easily about O.A. to almost anyone. . . . Many a new man and new woman came to O.A. because of such conversations. Though not in the strict letter of anonymity, such communications are well within its spirit."

Slideshow material will be shared only at the Convention. It will be shown only to OA members and other attendees, not to health professionals or others outside the OA community. The messages depicted in the slideshow are the same messages any OA member or prospective member might hear at a meeting or during phone calls with people who identify themselves by first name and last initial.

The committee believes that the accounts on the slideshow will not only help the "new man and new woman" find their way, but also help OA members at all levels of recovery find something to help them stay on the path to recovery.

We need more stories for the slideshow. Participation is EASY—just contact Jim C. at Jimmie L. Coulthard, 201 West Roosevelt, River Falls, WI 54022 or telephone him at 612-735-7276. You may also email Jim C. at tigerbasellc@comcast.net. And submit photos and captions.

Please take time to do it now. Your pictures may be just what a Newcomer needs to see to help an OA member stay in recovery!

Respectfully Submitted by  
Linda N. & 2008 OA Convention Committee



**Convention Corner**

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**Language of Unity.** In January 2007, a motion was considered and passed by Unity Intergroup supporting our belief while meeting formats may differ, there is but one Overeaters Anonymous. We have included the original published explanation and language that first appeared in the February 2007 Society Pages with these Talking Points. Please take a moment to review this commitment with members at your meetings.



### **The Language of Unity (originally published in Society Pages, February, 2007)**

Over the last few months, Unity Intergroup has been discussing “The Language of Unity”. We agreed that what we call ourselves and each other can serve to unite or divide us.

One of OA’s strongest assets is that there is not just one way or one right way to work the program. What works for one person may not work for another. As a result, there is a need for (and room for) many different meeting formats under the OA umbrella. We are all part of OA, joined by the desires to stop eating compulsively and to carry the message of recovery to the still-suffering compulsive overeater. Meeting formats and the ways people work their programs may change. The steps, tool, traditions, and concepts of OA, however, do not change.

Unity Intergroup wants to make sure that it sends the message clearly – **we are all part of Overeaters Anonymous, and none of us is modifying OA.** Sending this message is especially important in our publications and communications. We may attend meetings with different formats, agreed upon by the individual groups’ conscience. We do not, however, belong to different types of OA, nor do we wish to or need to. The framework of OA is broad enough for us all. Therefore, in our language we do not want to directly or inadvertently give the impression that any of us are modifying OA.

It is with this intent that the following motion was considered and passed at the January 2007 Unity Intergroup meeting:

**“There are not different kinds of OA. There are, however, different meeting formats such as HOW meetings, Step meetings, BB Study meetings, Traditions meetings and Literature Discussion meetings. In Unity Intergroup publications and communications, OA will always be referred to as OA. If distinctions are wanted or needed they should refer to meeting descriptors or meeting formats. Meetings descriptors would be the day, time, location or group name. For example, a meeting could be referred to as the Tuesday morning HOW format meeting, or the Tuesday Minneapolis Meeting.”**

This motion was passed in order to provide guidelines for OA’s to differentiate groups within our fellowship, should the need or want arise. The template is very simple – day of week, time of day, location, meeting format. (For example, the Thursday 7:30pm Minnetonka Big Book Study meeting or the Tuesday 9:30am Minneapolis HOW meeting (using the word format is not essential).) This motion’s goal is to provide a framework so that we do not end up implying, by using terms such as Traditional OA, OA-HOW, and the Regular OA in Unity Intergroup publications and communications, that we modify OA. After all, “our...personal recovery depends upon OA unity.” (Tradition One, OA 1 Steps and 12 Traditions.)

## September Society Pages

The September Society Pages will focus on Step 9: "Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others" and will be sponsored by the Apple Valley Saturday morning group. 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 [Amanda](mailto:Amanda) at [corter\\_0506@hotmail.com](mailto:corter_0506@hotmail.com) with the subject "Society Pages" by noon on Friday, August 15th.

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Saturday, August 9	Intergroup Meeting
Saturday, August 16	Newcomer Meeting
Saturday, September 13	Intergroup Meeting
Saturday, September 20	Newcomer Meeting
Friday – Sunday, September 19 - 21	Frontenac Retreat
Saturday, October 11	Intergroup Meeting
Saturday, October 18	Newcomer Meeting
Friday-Sunday November 14-16	OA Convention



### Intergroup Board

Becky T., Chair 952-423-1527  
 Jane S., Vice-Chair 612-482-6335  
 Amy D., Treasurer 952-270-0098  
 Janelle N., Secretary 763-780-2794

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