

# Society Pages

The Newsletter of  
**Unity Intergroup** February 2009

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

## Carrying the Message

### Buffalo Retreat

#### **Buffalo Retreat Testimonial**

I came to OA in March of 2006 a miserably overweight compulsive overeater. I found hope in the program and some success, as I lost about 45 pounds the first year and was discovering what it meant for me to be abstinent.

I attended my first Buffalo Retreat in 2007, and found it both inspiring and renewing. Each year I attended, I listened to speakers with wonderful stories of recovery and hope, as well as participated in small group discussions with loving, caring people who share my disease. I gained a better understanding of the disease and what it meant for me. I went to each retreat feeling that something was missing, and came away with hope and a plan.

I have been at my goal weight for several months now (a total loss of 95 pounds), and have been blessed with abstinence since the 2008 retreat. Along with God (my higher power), the retreats helped me achieve what I thought was impossible. They brought me down the road to success...and helped me attain abstinence from compulsive overeating!

I hope you'll consider going to this year's retreat in Buffalo and continue or start down your personal road to success.

~Anonymous

### **OA Buffalo Retreat**

Christ the King Retreat Center  
621 S. First Ave.  
Buffalo, MN 55313-1399  
[www.kingshouse.com](http://www.kingshouse.com)

**April 3-5, 2009**



**Road to Success**

~See inside this issue for Registration Form.~

#### **Can you help?**

Could you lead a meditation or Yoga class at the Buffalo Retreat on Friday, April 3? Your service would be appreciated! If interested, please contact Julie C. at (612)558-3687, or [juliecoig@earthlink.net](mailto:juliecoig@earthlink.net)



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## **Step Two: Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.**

### **See the Little Signs**

Every day there are signs of H.P. bringing me back to sanity. When I feel alone, a list of people await my call. They bring friendship, support, sympathy, and understanding, and even a good laugh. They help me ground myself and

remember the real place food has in my life for sustenance, not self-medication.

Wanting to grab an unhealthy snack, I call a friend. I sip my tea and listen. She brings me out of my loneliness and offers me a free ticket to a play. How fun is that?!

Time to rise out of my slump and decide what to wear to the play. Just then I recalled a morning prayer to get some more fun in my dreary winter Minnesota day. Plays are much more fun than a food fix.

As I write, the sun glistens on my plants I rescued from winter's harsh cold. My hibiscus has the hope of spring in its buds, which will soon bloom in the February cold reaching the southern sun's warmth in the safe cocoon of my studio. H.P. gave me a piece of spring to brighten my day and remind me of walks in the sun. Maybe it is time to get some exercise and enjoy the gift of the sunny day.

Every day life brings us little signs of sanity if we look toward our Higher Power. Open your eyes and heart and see the little signs.

~Bonnie Jo , St. Paul, MN

### **Abstinence—Again**

As I write this today, I'm celebrating 11 months of abstinence from sugar. In the past 24 years since I entered the program I've had eight years, three years, and one year of abstinence with all the physical recovery that suggests. I have been and am now so grateful for those years of abstinence, though I've relapsed in between.

How can I bear to start again? Because in fits and starts I continue to believe that a power greater than myself can restore me to ever more sanity. And this living, breathing step stays alive for me because I attend meetings regularly - usually two per week.

Having experienced long-term abstinence before, I want it again! And because my willingness to live in abstinence and recovery flags at times, I come back to a meeting and look for my higher power in your face - each and every one of you who attends meetings no matter how frequently. Your acceptance of me, your kindness, and your experience , strength and hope—no matter where you are on the recovery spectrum—keep me coming to believe that a power greater than myself—a power that looks an awful lot like you—can and will restore me to sanity.

Thanks for teaching me about Higher Power. Keep coming back, won't you?

~Anonymous

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## Came to OA

Came to, but that would mean that I was asleep, or unconscious, or maybe just sedated by food.

Came to believe, but that would mean that I maybe did not have a belief.

Believe that there was a power greater than myself? Was I acting as if there was no God?

A Power greater than myself would restore me to sanity? Was I insane?

So what in my life would show me I was asleep? Could it be that this sleep state was the reason I described my memories, as if a big eraser had periodically erased a big swath of information, that everyone around me seemed able to recall?

Higher power was that like God? God was in the heavens, was in the church. Did I have an active God in my life on a daily basis? I think not. The only one around taking responsibility for my management and behaviors was me. Did that mean I was trying to act like God? Wasn't how I was acting how I was taught to be? Could I imagine firing this God and having a personal Higher Power that cared for me every minute of the day?

Yes, I could do that.

So what was insane in my life? I was thinking that people could read my mind. I was thinking that since I knew how to behave, others around me would too. I thought that by simply thinking that others would treat me as I wished to be treated without me trying to communicate, except through conversations in my head.

Yes, expecting others to read my mind was beginning to sound insane.

I thought that by repeating weight loss strategies over again I would have a different outcome than before. How many times was I going to repeat yo-yo weight swings?

Yes, expecting a different result by repeating the same behavior was beginning to sound insane.

What happened as I came to, changed my belief and change my behaviors with a proven workable program as my guide?

I have a food plan and am not sedated, missing out on life.

I have a higher power that I believe cares for me and I talk to daily through prayer and meditation. I see evidence that my God takes active care of me every day and my life is now manageable. I still am attracted to being very busy but I know how to say no.

I remember stuff better; it is not perfect, but better. I remember to get to my two OA meetings every week.

My husband and I work on our marriage and are happily married. When I entered program we were talking divorce. My sponsor said no radical changes until I let the program work on me for awhile.

I did not kick any of the children out of the house or disown them, and they are fully self supporting, extremely capable adults.

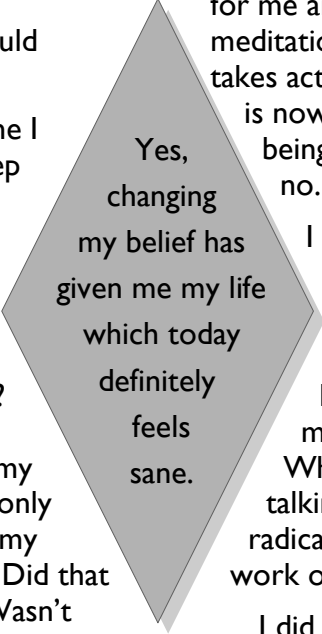
I am happy in my career, although I still have a few messes that I am working on.

I have dropped weight and it stays off. I seldom weigh myself anymore as I do not own a scale. I leave that to my doctor and the weight stays off without my daily monitoring.

Yes, changing my belief has given me my life which today definitely feels sane.

Today I have more of what I was longing for and much less of what made me full of fear and anxiety.

~Kathleen K.



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## Overeaters Anonymous 2009 Spring Retreat

### **Location**

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

**Dates:** *April 3-5, 2009*

### **Times**

**Check-in:** 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Friday

**Program:** 7:30 p.m. on Friday

**Check-out:** 2:00 p.m. on Sunday



**Cost:** \$140 by February 14; \$150 after February 14, 2009  
Includes: Two nights lodging, 3 meals on Saturday, 2 meals on Sunday  
Deadline for registration: March 21, 2009

**Due to our commitment to Christ the King Retreat Center, we cannot offer refunds.  
Please find your own replacement. Thanks!**

### **Questions / Special Needs call or email:**

Jenn K. at 651-366-7032; roxyheart914@hotmail.com

OR

Julie C. at 612-558-3687; danejulie@hotmail.com

### **Registration Form**

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Nametag to read: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Meeting: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Male  Female Roommate: \_\_\_\_\_

*If you do not sign up with a roommate, one will be assigned to you. Single rooms will be granted for \$180 for medical reasons, or a limited number may be granted on a first-come, first-serve basis, as space allows. Single rooms cannot be guaranteed.*

Your reservation can be confirmed via email or US mail. Please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope if you wish confirmation by US mail.

Make check or money order payable to:  
Mail registration form and check to:

Unity Intergroup  
Jenn K.  
530 Spring Hill Road  
St. Paul, MN 55127

**I would like to be included  
in the Buffalo Retreat  
Phone Directory.**

### **Service Opportunities**

Please indicate your choice(s) with an X:

\_\_\_ Be a speaker      \_\_\_ Lead a small group      \_\_\_ Hear a 5<sup>th</sup> Step

\_\_\_ I wish to donate an item for the raffle: \_\_\_\_\_  
(description of item)



UNITY INTERGROUP PRESENTS

# The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Official OA Big Book Study Weekend

March 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 2009

Augsburg College, Kennedy Center, Rooms 303/305

715 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue South (Hwy 94 & Riverside Exit)

Minneapolis, MN Free street parking/\$5 Riverside Hosp

Workshop Cost \$20 or \$25 (at door)

Books/Materials/Supplies available for sale

### Workshop Hours

Friday Registration starting at 6:00 p.m.

Friday Event 6:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.

Saturday Registration starting at 8:30 a.m.

Saturday Event 9 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Sunday 9 a.m.-12:00 noon

- ❖ Our Canadian host will lead this revealing and transforming study focusing on how the message in the Big Book applies and works as well for compulsive overeaters as it does for alcoholics.
- ❖ With fascinating insight into the history of the founders, the speaker offers his own unique perspective of how the Big Book powerfully supports OA recovery and abstinence.
- ❖ Our speaker also goes into detail on actively working all the 12 steps. The 4<sup>th</sup>-step inventory material (oabigbook.info) used by many in OA will also be presented.

\* Contact howardw@isd.net, 952-930-1212. Scholarships available, no one will be turned away.



To pre-register send payment and this form before February 23<sup>rd</sup>.

### Registration confirmation via email only

To register mail checks or money orders payable to Unity Intergroup and the form below to:

**Cay F., 11003 Fox Hollow Lane North, Champlin, Minnesota 55316 cayfitz37@yahoo.com**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City/State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

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## Working Step Two

In order to work the Second Step, I have to accept a hope-inspiring promise; that being restored to sanity can happen – with the help of a Power greater than myself. It does not tell me that I have to understand a Higher Power, pick a Higher Power, or develop a relationship with one or that my sick thinking needs to change now for me to have worked this step and move onto the next. It just asks me to be open to the idea that by some process, force, or energy my sick thinking will be turned around and made healthy.

The Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous tells me this will happen after working the TENTH step. See the bottom of page 84 and top of page 85: “And we have ceased fighting anything or anyone – even alcohol [food]. For by this time sanity will have returned.”

“The TENTH Step? But I want it NOW!”

If you are like me, you want all the benefits or rewards without having to do any of the work. This is an example of the sick thinking I am talking about – the need for immediate gratification. My old life of immediate gratification took me to “the gates of insanity.” I wanted an “easier softer way.” My insanity told me that if I used methamphetamine I would get skinny quick. With a few hits I had no appetite and limitless energy. I lost 130 effortless pounds in less than two years. However, my life spun out of control, I slipped into depression and succumbed to sugar cravings. I began bingeing on sugary pastries and the like but continued to use drugs. I even failed at being a skinny drug addict and quickly gained all the weight again. Then I found I couldn’t stop the drugs...

Thankfully I got clean and after a few months my sponsor in another program urged me to get to OA and fast! That was in 2005. It took me a while, but I’ve been working with an OA sponsor for the better part of one year. I’ve been working the steps and using a plan of eating. It takes work and that means daily action, meetings, the tools of the program and somehow, most days, I no longer feel the urge to eat excess or inappropriate food. That is a sure sign of hope. I still struggle.

I am not and never will be perfect. I just know that for now, if I stop going to meetings, stop contact with an OA sponsor, stop reading OA literature such as “*Before you take that first compulsive bite,*” stop writing down my plan of eating – I binge. Somehow staying open minded about my need to take these daily actions, opens the door just enough for a Power greater than myself to work in my life. I am so grateful.

~Bob F.



### **Sponsors Needed**

The New Ulm Tuesday 7pm Meeting is looking for people willing to be sponsors. Since we are a new group with only one longtime OA member, we are in need of sponsors willing to help newcomers work the steps, find a food plan that works for them, and achieve abstinence. If you are interested, please contact Ann I at [ann.nu.aa@gmail.com](mailto:ann.nu.aa@gmail.com) or (507) 276-3968.

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## Welcome From the New Unity Intergroup Chair

There are many exciting opportunities coming up for Unity Intergroup, and I am excited to serve the fellowship in a new capacity. We have been fortunate to have two great years with Becky as our chair, and I'm looking forward to doing what I can to keep building and growing recovery in our area.

We just participated in the Women's Expo at the Minneapolis Convention Center where we hosted an information table, our Rochester groups are working on a great outreach project, and an article on OA was published in the Rochester Post-Bulletin. In March, Unity Intergroup is very fortunate to host on OA from Winnipeg MB who will guide us through a Big Book Study from an OA perspective. We are also planning to put on a sponsorship workshop, regular newcomer meetings, the Buffalo Retreat in April, the Frontenac Retreat in summer, and participate in outreach opportunities and public information projects. There are many events & activities to participate in, and lots of opportunities to pitch in and help make sure that they happen.

Whatever your reason is for ramping up your service, please drop by an Intergroup meeting and consider helping out. Whether it is something that is already in progress or if you have a new and exciting idea – we welcome your time & effort! Whether you bring skills that you already have or take this as an opportunity to learn something new, no service is too small!

I am honored to take a turn serving as chair, and would love to hear any ideas that you have for OA in our area. Please feel free to get in touch with me at [oaforme@gmail.com](mailto:oaforme@gmail.com) or 612-205-0930.

Yours in fellowship & service,  
~Catherine W  
Unity Intergroup Chair

Unity Intergroup meetings are the second Saturday of every month, from 12:30p-2:30p in the Cargill Room of the Sumner Library in Minneapolis, 611 Van White Memorial Blvd.

## Women's Expo

The 2009 Women's Expo was a wonderful event and Overeaters Anonymous and Unity Intergroup was at this three-day event. A total of 25,000 women and men attended the event January 16-18. We were there to let them know that there is a different way of living life; there is a solution.

OA volunteers had great conversations with people who came up to talk with them at the booth. Teachers, educators, physicians and other health professionals asked us to come and spread the message of recovery to

others, including children and teens who are struggling with their eating. One meeting reported three newcomers the Monday after the event because they heard about OA at the Women's Expo. What an amazing result!

I would like to thank everyone who volunteered during this event. Each of you gave of your time and energy to spread the message of hope and recovery. We could not have done this without you.

~Outreach & Public Info. Committees

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## **March Society Pages**

The March Society Pages will focus on Step Three: “Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him” and will be sponsored by the Minneapolis Tuesday 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 email your contributions to Julie C. at [juliecoig@earthlink.net](mailto:juliecoig@earthlink.net) by Saturday, February 21.

## **Mark Your Calendar**

Saturday, February 21	Newcomer Meeting
Sunday, February 22	Web Updates Deadline
Friday-Sunday, March 6-8	Big Book Study
Saturday, March 14	Intergroup Meeting
Saturday, March 21	Newcomer Meeting
Friday-Sunday, April 3-5	Buffalo Retreat

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

## **Unity Intergroup Election Results**

New board members, Committee Chairs, and standing service positions were elected at the January Intergroup meeting. Unity’s Trusted Servants for 2009 are:

Chair – Catherine W  
Vice Chair - Amy D  
Treasurer – Rebecca P  
Secretary – Sheri O  
Region IV Representatives – Melanie,  
Maggie, Kasey, Gene, Jenn, & Tracy  
Registrar – Katy B  
Newsletter Editor – Julie C  
Newsletter Printer – Gene O

A big thank you to all who served in 2008!

Among those who rotated out of service positions in January are: Becky T (Chair), Jane S (Vice Chair), Amy D (Treasurer), Donna K (Registrar), Joan S (Region IV rep), Linda N (Convention Chair), Amanda A (Newsletter Editor), & Corine K (Newsletter Printer), and thanks to Sheri O who served as secretary last year too!

Thank you so much for all your hard work and many hours of service - we cannot do it alone! Thank you also to all of the Intergroup Representatives and Volunteers, for showing up & working to support Unity Intergroup.

### **Intergroup Board**

Catherine W., Chair	612-205-0930	oaforme@gmail.com
Amy D., Vice-Chair	952-270-0098	unityig@yahoo.com
Rebecca P., Treasurer	612-803-6060	rebecca.parrell@gmail.com
Sheri O., Secretary	651-437-2052	olese1@yahoo.com