



THE MESSENGER

News & Messages of Recovery from the Northeast Region

Region 6 Assembly - Albany, NY - April 5, 2003
Region Website: www.oaregion6.org World Service: www.OA.org

Message from the Chair



Hello, my name is Dexter and I am a recovered compulsive overeater, joyfully celebrating almost 11 years of abstinence in OA. In past articles for the Messenger, I have shared where I am in my recovery and will do so following this brief introduction. This issue is being mailed to each group in Region 6 (R6). In the past, the newsletter has been distributed at Assembly and has been dependent upon Region Representatives delivering them to their intergroups for distribution to their member groups. Since all groups are seldom fully represented at intergroup meetings, there was a weak link in the chain of distribution. Mailing the newsletter directly to the groups bypasses that weak link. Please bring this newsletter to your group and make it available for circulation to your group members. The R6 Board wanted to insure that all groups had access to news of R6 Assembly activities and that Region Representatives had their committee reports prior to the next assembly to help them prepare for assembly.

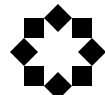
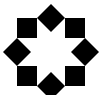
At my last medical checkup, my weight was 95 pounds less than when I entered the OA rooms, but I didn't enter for weight loss. I came to OA in despair because I could not stop eating every waking minute. After discovering that I was the victim of a disease and that there were people who could show me the way to recover from my food obsession, I began working the Steps as they did and connected to my Higher Power (HP) which does for me what I can't do for myself. My HP continues to show me what needs to be done to maintain my freedom from compulsive overeating. Most recently, a retreat I attended led me to change my daily prayer and meditation. This change led directly to the awareness of yet another hidden character defect.

I had long been praying and meditating on a daily basis because I found that when I missed a few days in succession, I was much more likely to be prone to stinking thinking such as judgmentalism and resentments. However, the retreat leader discussed his daily prayer and meditation and mentioned that he did a half hour a day. I had been doing about 15 to 20 minutes most days. When the retreat leader asked each of us to make a commitment for one change that will help our program at the end of the retreat, it was a 'no-brainer' for me. Since all I have has come from my Higher Power, my connection to my HP is the most important element of my life, especially since I recognize that my abstinence is a gift from my HP and is maintained by my HP. I committed to myself that I would now pray and meditate for at least one half hour each day to strengthen my connection to my HP. The results were immediate and dramatic.

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From Bob F., Region 6 Trustee...



It seems strange that this is my last article as Region 6 Trustee. The last six years have gone by very quickly. I don't intend to be maudlin. I am looking forward to being able to read the thirty books I have stacked beside my bed. There is also a certain relief in not having to write dozens of reports. I don't want to mislead you. I have a thriving life in politics and in social causes. A lack of things to occupy my time is not an issue.

Now to OA issues. Over the last few months I have seen an increasing number of complaints about dominant personalities at meetings. The problems range from requirements being set by individuals to overt rudeness. I would draw your attention to the last paragraph of Tradition 5. "For OA groups and OA individuals alike, the fifth tradition helps us keep it simple. We find that when we focus on our primary objective of service, we can begin to eliminate a host of unnecessary concerns. As we concentrate on carrying a message of hope to others, we are empowered to use our unique talents in ways that are truly useful to others. The result is better than any outcome we could have planned for ourselves, for we find a deep satisfaction in service as join forces to share recovery in OA."

If there is a problem in your group I would suggest a business meeting to discuss the problem. Keep it simple and deal with the principles, not whether you like the person. Use the questions at the end of each of the Traditions in the OA 12&12 to keep the issues on track. If that doesn't work, take the problem to your intergroup. If that doesn't work, contact the Region Chair and the Region Trustee. In the interim please talk to your sponsor. It may mean going to a different meeting if you are unable to accept the group conscience.

Lately there have been complaints about meetings espousing a particular food plan and basing participation on being on that food plan. Flyers advertise that the meetings follow that food plan.

Reviewing Tradition Three, we see that "The only requirement for OA membership is a desire to stop eating compulsively", and World Service Business Conference policy 2000a states that "No OA members shall 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." Tradition Four is not a shield or a way around the other Traditions or OA bylaws and policies. What happens between a sponsor and a sponsoree regarding choice of food plans is private. What happens at the meeting level is not. Whether or not there is a pamphlet of suggested food plans does not change policy 2000a or Article V of subpart B of the OA bylaws. "3) No member is required to practice any actions in order to remain a member or have a voice (share at a meeting)."

So ends my preaching. In a few weeks I will take off my Region Trustee robes and retire from the middle of the food plan/group autonomy debate. What a loss!!!!

In service,

Bob F. – Region 6 Trustee

Tributes to Service

In the past year, I have become involved in service above the group level by the grace of God. It has been a lot of fun. I have met people from as far away as Israel and England, listened intently to debates and discussions about food plans, literature, and reaching out to the still suffering overeater. This service has, I'm sure, benefited me more than I can say. It has given my program a boost. I have a sense of how OA works. Thank you for this opportunity t, and I want for each of us to experience what I have. Arla, Mid-Hudson IG

Steps to Recovery From Relapse

I have suffered two relapses in my 19 years in program. The first came after 7 months of initial abstinence. A key factor in the relapse was my refusal to become a sponsor. Another factor was my willingness to attend more than one meeting a week. Seven years later, I finally regained my abstinence only to lose it again when I moved to New York and discontinued attending meetings while I was staying temporarily with friends. Three years later, I regained my abstinence and have maintained it one day at a time for seven years. There were four key factors in my becoming abstinent again:

- 1) I became willing to listen to people who had long-term abstinence, even if I didn't like them. They always said that no matter what happened, they didn't pick up.
- 2) I started doing service. I became willing to sponsor, to chair meetings, be treasurer, go to intergroup and more, as I was able. This helps keep my program on track and helps carry the message.
- 3) I became willing to work the steps in a more formal way with my sponsor. This is a lifetime project, but it has helped me in all areas of my life, not just with the food.

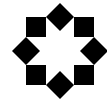
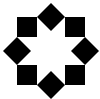
As a result, I am a much happier person.

Dorothy B – Metro NYC.

Send Donations to Region 6, care of:

**Sid B. (Treasurer) - 175 Marlborough St
Salem, MA 01970**

Please include your group number on your donation check.



Seeking articles & anecdotes for upcoming Messengers!!

If you have a recovery-related story, pass it along to our readers.

Submit a poem?? Create a trivia or crossword puzzle!!

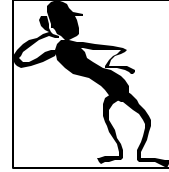
Submit items via email (npr@attbi.com) or call 978-312-1301

Public Information Committee
(15 members)

- * Distributed agenda
- * Group shared on PI initiatives since last meeting
 - PI for R6 convention
 - Mailing to healthcare professionals
 - OA card and lucite holders with IG stickers
 - Press releases to newspapers
 - New website
 - Participated in a county-sponsored Recovery Day with healthcare professionals and community leaders
 - University outreach with literature and meetings
 - Distributed OA pamphlets to hospitals
 - Public Service Announcements by cable TV
 - Distributed OA pamphlets to their doctors
 - Outreach to diabetic clinics at hospitals
 - Post meeting lists in public areas
 - Travel with newcomer's packet
 - Participated in health fair with literature
 - Open marathon with ads in newspapers and cable TV
 - Outreach to K-8 for overweight kids
 - Hotline
 - Dietician's fair participation
 - Radio contact for PSA spots
 - Interview for article in hospital newsletter about OA
- * Reviewed articles distributed in packet
- * Distributed motion for "Policy & Procedure for the PI Blitzes" - Voted on at Spring Assembly Mark G (PI Chair) asked for feedback & suggestions by January 1, 12003.
- * Next PI Blitz Proposal deadline is 1/1/03—Will be considered at Spring '03 Assembly
 - All proposals will be mailed along with the regular Region Six material to each IG
 - All proposals are to be mailed to the Region Six Coordinator.
- * Considered specific PI proposal from seven intergroups
 - Amended motion to include Westchester United IG and Suffolk County IG.
 - Question about unused budget balance for this assembly.
 - Amended motion adopted for a total expense of \$1,575.00.
- * Motion passed to use \$230 of the PI budget for TV/VCR at Tarrytown convention.
- * Volunteers wanted to staff PI booth at Region Six convention in Tarrytown.
- * Motion passed to purchase \$70 worth of PI material and literature.
- * Discussed WSO mailing regarding IDEA day on November 16, 2002.

PI election results: Mark G. (Chair), Alyssa H. (Vice Chair), Georgia W. (Sec'y.)
(877) 317-2111

Twelfth Step Within Committee (11 Members)



Bill P. (Mass Bay IG) read policy and procedures.
Members shared on their group efforts regarding 12-Step Within work.

Established short term goals:

- (1) Susan will call Lorie (volunteer to do call-a-thon flyer -- for 12th of month) to ensure that flier is prepared by April 2003 Assembly.
- (2) Ginger will provide contact list to committee members.
- (3) Ginger will send copies of meeting formats to committee members to review.
- (4) Ginger will contact person who compiled last Assembly's findings re: which Region Six IGs have Twelfth Step Within committees.
- (5) We will compile suggestions from attendees and circulate info to all intergroups.
- (6) Will send handbook to groups that request info, and follow up with call, e-mail.
- (7) Members keep in contact and share events with each other.

Long term goals:

- (1) Compile sponsor list
- (2) Speak with website committee about getting link for Region Six site.

Chairperson: Ginger P. (Connecticut IG)

Secretary: Lisa

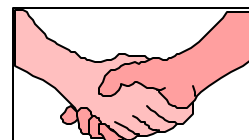


Intergroup Committee **(4 members present)**

Bill (NY), Kevin (Canada), Zazu (CT & MA), Bonny (VT/NH/ME/RI)

E-mail address list was passed.

- (1) Dexter will e-mail Bonny current list that she will forward to committee members for follow up in their given areas.
- (2) Mention the "Together We Can" campaign & ask that IGs respond with hard copy they received. Zazu will sort list by state & pass on to each of the members.
- (3) Zazu will create flyer to inform groups where & how donations are made above group level. IGs will receive & pass to groups.
- (4) Bill will research the info on Region One's quilt.
It is online – he will e-mail the committee with his results.



Respectfully submitted, Bonny B., Chair

Convention Committee (12 members)



Anne S., Chair - Karen (S. Central Mass IG) - Secretary

(1) April minutes read & accepted

(2) Nov. 1-3, 2002 report: Karen S-A (Westchester). By Dec. 4 2002, 352 were registered. Keynotes were chosen. Taping company has been sent final program. Bottled water may be sold. Have asked hotel to have more diet soda available. Raffle ticket sales have exceeded minimum costs. Sweatshirts & measuring spoons will also be sold. Have set up 2 promotion times for 2003 convention.

(3) Oct.31-Nov.2 2003 Convention Report (Anne S.) We will have the same hotel/contacts as 1998 convention. Prizes: free weekend, 1 full set of tapes, 1 free convention registration.

Prices:		US	Canada
Registration:	Until August 15, 2003	\$25	\$30
	After August 15, 2003	\$35	\$40
Rooms:	Falls View pp/do	\$95	\$139
	City View pp/do	\$82	\$119
Meals package:		\$75	\$120

\$20/night per additional guest.

Long sleeve shirts are available for sale (sample was shown).

Keynote Speaker tapes for 2003 must be handed in by the Spring Assembly.

(4) 2004 Proposals: Albany withdraws. Cape Cod presented proposal for Oct 29-31, 2004 at the Hyannis Sheraton. Suggestions (a) change room guarantee to hotel from 149 to 129 rooms (b) talk with hotel about locking in rate for those who stay just before and after the weekend and include them in the total room count. Complimentary rooms: 1 room per 30 booked. Meal Plan: Friday PM, 3 meals Saturday, Sunday AM.

Draft for flyer was presented. Suggestions for flyer: 48-hour cancellation notice, state \$10 cost for fridge in room. Almost all committee chairs are in place.

Cape Cod presented Sheraton layout. Hilda B. (Brooklyn Unity) moved to have 2004 convention in Hyannis. Seconded (Karin R./Ottawa IG). Motion passed

(5) Marilyn (Montreal) was elected new Convention Committee chair.

To escape criticism—do nothing, say nothing, be nothing!
Elbert Hubbard

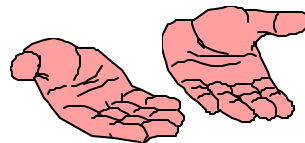
Newsletter Committee
4 members)

Roberta D. (Nassau County IG), Victor D. (Bronx IG), Cindyllen (Green Mt. North IG), and Neil R. (Mass Bay IG).



- * Discussion centered on new items for inclusion in the next Messenger.
- * Feedback on the new 14-page format was favorable.
- * Suggestions
 - (1) Include Region Six & World Service websites
 - (2) Suggestion Box -- Invite comments re: Messenger
 - (3) Helpful Hints -- On starting a new meeting, sponsorship, improve IG participation
- * Possible stories
 - (1) The View from Here -- reflections from OAer's with 1, 3, 5, 10 & 20 years in OA.
 - (2) What Is a Good Sponsor?
 - (3) It Only Hurts for a Minute -- giving up service jobs after a long time.
- * Requested from Assembly
 - (1) Submissions from newcomers and anyone with a contribution
 - (2) Bring newsletter to your groups
 - (3) Delegates & IG Reps—Tell them why they should be reading it

Respectfully Submitted—Neil R. (Mass Bay IG) - 978-312-1301



Outreach Committee (4 members)

Given a count for outgoing mailings by Margaret Ann, we made an assembly line for collating the materials and handing them off to the other people filling the envelopes. These mailings go to groups and intergroups who are not able to attend the assembly, keeping the lines of communication open.

Joan H., temporary chairperson for Beany K.

Finance Committee Report (4 Members Present)

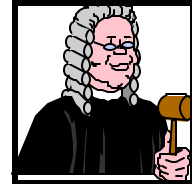


Spent time working on financial audit for Sept 2001 – Aug 2002.
Bank statements, financial report & check register were found to balance.
The remainder was spent discussing financial issues.
Ed S. (Metro West IG) was elected committee chair 2003.

Sid B., Outgoing Chair / (MBI)— 978-744-9873—Sid_Bass@gillette.com



Bylaws Committee (5 members)



- * Opened with the Serenity Prayer and sign-in sheet circulated.
- * Read Bylaws Committee statement of purpose.
- * Maralene F. Elected as Chairperson:
- * Topic: Creating an Appendix of the specific details in the R6 Policies & Procedures for Board Members / Committees. Agreed to ask Board Members & Committee Chairs to review the necessary policies and procedures and help determine what might be added to produce the best Appendix listings.
- * Appointed Martin M. to contact Board Members and Committee Chairs via email to request this information. Martin will disseminate this information to those on sign-in sheet, including Ann (R6 Parliamentarian and Board advisor for this committee). We hope to produce a first draft of this Appendix for discussion/modification at the 2003 Spring Assembly.
- * Committee Members began to review the Policies & Procedures Manual to determine what we might recommend to Board members and Committee Chairs.
- * Torrie (Sec'y) will email minutes and working notes to distribution list members. This is Torrie's last Region 6 meeting in this capacity.
- * The committee closed the meeting with the Serenity Prayer.

Maralene F. (chair) - maralene@earthlink.net
Martin M. - www.bearwolfXII@aol.com
Torrie K. (Secretary) - bknss@rit.edu

Region 6 Service Structure Report - Fall Assembly October 5, 2002

Produced by Margaret Ann Brady - Service Structure Committee Chairman

The Fall Assembly devoted its morning workshop session to the Service Structure Questionnaire.

The Questionnaire sent by the WSBC Committee was distributed and the R6 Service Structure Committee chair, Margaret Ann Brady, who also serves on the WSBC Committee, gave a brief overview of the Committee's history and goals.

The purpose of this workshop was threefold:

- 1) To inform the Assembly about the WSBC Service Structure Committee's goals, and the formation of the Region 6 ad hoc Service Structure Committee
- 2) To inform the Assembly about the Service Structure Questionnaire distributed by the WSBC Committee, and encourage intergroups to respond to the questionnaire by the Dec. 20 deadline
- 3) To ask delegates to reflect on issues concerning OA service structure, and share their responses

The delegates were asked to respond to two questions on behalf of their intergroups:

- 1) What are the strengths and weaknesses of your intergroup in serving member groups and carrying out OA's primary purpose?
- 2) What are the strengths/weaknesses of Region in serving member intergroups and groups and carrying out OA's primary purpose?

These responses are ranked by prevalence of each reply:

What are the strengths and weaknesses of your intergroup in serving member groups and carrying out OA's primary purpose?

STRENGTHS:

- (1) Hotline (2) One-day events (3) Newsletter (4) Act as conduit for information
 (5) Buy and stock literature (6) Provide new meeting startup kits (7) Website
 (8) Outreach to groups not attending IG (9) Public information (10) Retreats
 (11) Provides liability insurance (12) Fund speaker travel (13) Speaker/ride list
 (14) Phone lists (15) Networking (16) Encourage & funnel donations to R6 & WSO
 (17) Translate literature/notices into French (18) Send delegates to Region & WSBC
 (19) Provide meeting location to groups - buy literature/pay rent (20) Strong service committees
 (21) Update contact list for meetings frequently (22) Close contact with member meetings, whether or not they send reps
 (23) Strong abstinence causes strong participation

WEAKNESSES:

- (1) Lack of group participation (2) No outreach/public information
 (3) One member does everything/no rotation (4) Poor communication—Group mailings don't get there
 (5) Can't provide translation services (6) Little abstinence
 (7) Not enough service sponsorship/mentoring (8) No ongoing intergroup participation
 (9) Intergroup doesn't respond well to group needs (10) Little knowledge of Region or WSO/WSBC

Continued on next page

What are the strengths and weaknesses of Region 6 in serving member intergroups and groups and carrying out OA's primary purpose?

- (1) Messenger (2) Support for conventions (3) Networking
 (4) Conduit of information from WSO (5) Interaction with Trustee on tradition issues
 (6) Keep bylaws current (7) Workshops (8) Travel fund (9) Website
 (10) Outreach to unaffiliated groups (11) No VIPs - positive leadership

The Assembly then divided into four discussion groups, each including a Region 6 Board member and delegates with varying levels of experience with service beyond the group level.

The topics of discussion were:

Trustees - Should OA consider a new kind of Trustee, such as a non-OA member, such as AA's Class B trustees? What are some of the inducements and impediments to running for Trustee?

Literature/Lifeline - Can you envision a new model for Lifeline/literature production and distribution other than the existing centralized method?

WSBC - Should we change the way we do business by reducing the frequency of WSBC; eliminate the single, international Conference structure; or have Regions take on some of the business of WSBC?

R6 Committees - Are they effective?

Trustees

Ten representatives discussed the role of the trustee, their personal thoughts on what is required and why members do or don't consider running for trustee, and the idea of changing the current position's requirements. It was agreed that there wasn't enough information available to consider the idea of different types of trustees.

There was discussion of what the Trustee actually does. The member needs to be very secure in their own recovery on all three fronts. The inducement is the opportunity to do service and give back, but many members feel that they are not ready for that level of service, and are also wary of the time commitment.

Literature/Lifeline

Delegates talked about how literature and Lifeline are currently handled in their service bodies. The ability of a larger service body, like an intergroup office, to buy, sell and stock literature was felt to be very important, since it is impossible for most groups to store a sizable stock of literature; most meeting places can offer room for only a small box, though rollaway suitcases have been found to be very useful.

Marathons and other OA events are also important places for literature to be distributed.

Groups raffle Lifeline subscriptions at meetings and events, and give them to doctor's offices.

The books most usually ordered tend to be the OA 12 and 12 and 12 step Workbook.

Some felt that Newcomer Kits are very expensive; perhaps WSO should discontinue them.

Since ours is a bilingual Region, the lack of literature, especially new literature, available in French keeps French-speaking groups behind.

WSBC

There was agreement that WSBC should continue to meet annually, and that a second or parallel Conference structure should not be established.

It was also agreed that more can be done to streamline motions and amendments at WSBC by having greater discussion and consensus at the Regional level before a motion or amendment is considered at WSBC.

Continued on next page

Committees

The delegates present discussed the impact of WSBC & Regional committees on OA members and groups.

It was agreed that OA members who participate in those committees have an effect if in no other way than bringing enthusiasm and new ideas to the local level.


Unfortunately, committee action deadlines are sometimes too short, especially if requests for action are mailed to Canada, where members sometimes don't have enough time to participate.

Among local groups, most members aren't familiar with Region, WSBC, or the committees and their activities. However, among the delegates present, it was felt that the works of the Convention, Public Information, and 12th Step Within are among the most visible. It was pointed out that 12th Step Within started in Region 6, and IDEA Day is a Public Information Committee innovation.

The Region 6 committees, for the most part, parallel the WSBC committees. The discussion considered if the disconnect between the groups, intergroup and Region might have to do with the fact that the Committee structure flows from Conference rather than up from the group level. Do intergroups tell Region what they want.... or does Region tell intergroups what's available? There was further discussion on effective ways to sponsor more OA members into service, and educate OA members about the committees and their actions. Prizes like a 12th Step Within Handbook can be offered to members attending IG for the first time.


Conclusion

The Region 6 Assembly is probably one of the best-informed service bodies in OA, and we can be grateful for our strong participation in OA service. As the WSBC and Region 6 Service Structure Committees continue in their study of how we work, the informed group conscience of Region 6 can be counted on to supply sage and creative suggestions for carrying our primary purpose into the 21st century.



**Humility is perpetual quietness of heart.
It is to have no trouble.
It is never to be fretted or vexed, or irritable,
to wonder at nothing that is done to me,
to feel nothing that is done against me.
It is to be at rest when nobody praises me,
and when I am blamed or despised,
it is to have a blessed home in myself
where I can go in and shut the door
and kneel to my Father in secret and be at peace,
as in a deep sea of calmness,
when all around and about is seeming trouble.**

**For years, AA's Dr. Bob had this prayer on his desk.
(Author unknown)**



Our Trusted Servants.....



Pam G. is the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Overeaters Anonymous.

"As of January 24, 2003, I have been in OA for 23 years. I'm maintaining a 75 lb. weight loss and have been abstinent by the grace of God and the help of this fellowship since April 1983, 19 years and 9 months, one day at a time.

Before I got abstinent, I was an intolerant, controlling, judgmental, selfish, egomaniac with an inferiority complex. Hmm, didn't I read that in the AA Big Book somewhere?

As a World Service Delegate, I served on the Ways & Means and Bylaws committees, including the Reference Subcommittee. At my very first WSBC, I was a presenter at a Presentation/Discussion session. (I couldn't tell you what the topic was or who the other speakers were.)

As Region 5 Trustee I co-chaired the 12th Step Within, Bylaws, and other board committees, and served as Second Vice-Chairman. My term as Region 5 Trustee will expire in May 2004."

Recently, Pam agreed to be interviewed by The Messenger.

Q. Pam, did you ever think you'd become the chairman of the board of trustees of OA?

A. Ever since I attended my first Region assembly, I wanted to be a region trustee. But I never thought I would be the chairman of the Board! Only GSTs were elected to that position, or so I thought. When asked if I was willing to run for the position, I felt privileged and honored to serve. Apparently, others saw in me what I couldn't see in myself.

Q. What characteristics are most important to your doing a good job as chairman?

A. You have to listen well, exhibit lots of patience, be willing to put your opinions aside, and display compassion and commitment.

Q. How do you manage to work, have a personal life, and be the chairman of the board?

A. Time management. I am very well organized. I'm also grateful that program taught me to live one day at a time!

Q. How has your OA service influenced your recovery?

A. I wouldn't be here today without service. I realized that the people who were involved in OA had what I wanted— serenity & peace and a healthy body weight. So I did what they did and it worked!

Q. What do you feel are OA's biggest challenges in the coming years?

A. Unity! The first tradition states our personal recovery depends upon unity. We must learn to accept others and how they work the program. The Big Book says love and tolerance are the keys.

(Continued on Page 13)

Interview with Pam G.— Continued

Q. What do you most like about the OA organization, and what area do you think we'd benefit most from changing?

A. The singleness of purpose is what I like most. It's so simple, to carry the message to those who still suffer. The area that I think we would benefit most from changing is 12th step work. We don't do enough to help each other or those who are struggling; there is still such a stigma with relapse. Compulsive overeating is a disease; some of us will relapse. We are powerless over it. Let's be more compassionate to those who are struggling or who have gone back to compulsive overeating. It could be me!

Q. What's your approach to using the tools?

A. I can't live without them; I use them daily. I read literature, go to meetings, have a sponsor & sponsees. I follow a food plan & make phone calls. I do what I can, when I can.

Q. How has being the chair affected your daily life as an OA member?

A. Besides spending a few more hours away from home, my daily life is not affected. I still read and write daily, attend OA meetings and sponsor. The tool of anonymity does not allow me to put myself above the rest of the fellowship. Being chairman is just another hat I wear on certain days.

Q. Has your relationship changed with your sponsor since you began serving on the board of trustees?

A. No. I continue to call my sponsor regularly or when I'm disturbed and I still talk about my feelings, defects, and what steps I've been working on lately.

Q. How would you like to be remembered when your service as chair is completed?

A. I would like to be remembered as the chairman who brought calmness and serenity to board meetings and WSBC; the chairman who facilitated at the most serene conference ever attended. Is that a possibility? Maybe! By the grace of God it could happen.

Q. How do you feel about physical recovery and our personal OA responsibility?

A. Originally, I came to OA to lose weight. I saw thin people at meetings and asked them what they did to lose weight and keep it off. I believe that's why most people initially come to OA. It is my responsibility to recover physically and to keep it off. Who would want to go to OA if everyone was fat? I remember not wanting to listen to fat speakers, until I heard one who had already lost over 100 pounds. Being thin was important to me and it still is. In order to keep what I have, I have to give it away. If I don't have physical recovery, I believe I lack credibility. It just didn't make sense to me that anyone can be fat and be happy.

Today I see that just losing a few pounds does make me feel better. But it was achieving and maintaining a healthy body weight that really made me happy. That's the attraction. Of course, emotionally and spiritually I changed, but as part of a process. How do you measure that?

Unless you know me, you might find it difficult to see the progress I have made. But it's easy to tell that I've lost weight. We are a program of attraction! Physical recovery is an attraction.

Thanks, Pam, for your honesty and for your service.

Chair's Message (Continued)

The second day of my new prayer routine found me searching desperately for a report I needed to take with me on a trip which was to start the next day. After more than an hour of repeatedly searching unsuccessfully through the many piles of paper in my office, I began to say, "My life is unmanageable, God help me.", over and over. Very shortly thereafter, it came to me that what I needed to do is start throwing out these piles of paper I had been saving. I got a trash bag and began filling it. In the process, I discovered an old intergroup board meeting agenda which I had created in my first year as intergroup chair in 1994. It had 26 separate times assigned for a two hour meeting dividing the meeting time into slices as short as two minutes. The agenda shouted to me, "Control Freak!!!" And that was after two years of abstinent recovery in program.

I showed it to my wife and asked her how she could stand me (It was our first year of marriage.). She replied, "Well, things are better now." Thank God that they are better. I realized that all those piles of paper were attempts to keep records which would allow me to control future events by having references to past decisions. It was silly, because I couldn't find any records in the chaos that had developed from my hoarding of old records. I am happy to say that I made a resolution to discard a bag a week and by the Christmas holiday, I had dumped nine trash bags from my office. (I did find the report I had been seeking and was able to bring it with me on my trip.)

My new prayer and meditation routine has helped me with other problems. Most importantly, I have a deeper sense of the power of applying the principles of the Steps in all my affairs, the power of change and transformation. The sense of life, of newness, and growth which has come to me is a true blessing.

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Suggestions!!

**How can we improve the Messenger? Write us at npr@attbi.com.
Come up with a contest or a feature, and we'll be happy to use it.**

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