



MESSENGER

The Bi-Annual Newsletter of Region 6 of Overeaters Anonymous
Spring 2005

TOGETHER WE CAN

As I sit here in my frigid basement-office writing this, stopping occasionally to tuck my frozen hands under my arms or blow on them to keep them thawed enough to type, I thinking back just two short weeks ago, when I was in Rio de Janeiro, complaining about the heat. It's always something!

I had a wonderful two weeks in South America (Brazil and Argentina). I had hoped to attend an OA meeting in Rio, where OA meetings are plentiful, but when I showed up at the appointed time and place, unfortunately there was no meeting. By an amazing coincidence, I turned around, looked across the airshaft to the floor below, saw an open door beyond which were rows of chairs; an AA meeting was about to start. I found a wonderful welcome there. But I was sorry not to make contact with OA.

Still, I am always grateful for how easy it has become to find OA wherever I go due to the miracle of the Internet! The www.OA.ORG website just keeps getting better, and our own R6 website, www.OA REGION 6.ORG is being spotlessly maintained by our webmaster Steve M.

But the best technology in the world can not overcome bad data – has your intergroup returned the TOGETHER WE CAN reply card sent out quarterly by WSO, to make sure that WSO has the most up-to-date contact info for your meetings? It's a vital service! Newcomers, members coming back, travelers – we all depend on accurate listings so that when we need a meeting, we can find it. This is one way we can fulfill our Pledge: Always to extend the hand and heart of OA to all who share my disease, for this *I Am Responsible*.

SHOULD WE ELIMINATE REGION 6?

What are we, besides an annual convention? Do intergroups need to participate both at a yearly WSBC and at regional assemblies?

Well, these are the questions that need to be asked. The Spring Assembly is the place to ask them. Our focus at the April 9, 2005 Spring Region 6 Assembly will be: What are we doing? What do we, as a Region, want to do? We will be having a strategic planning focus: an informal and open discussion of our value as a region, what we will want to do as part of OA as a whole, and how, or if, we want to accomplish them. We can look at some of the things we have accomplished the Public Information Blitz fund, which was intended to allow intergroups to do outreach projects they could not have otherwise afforded; the direct mailing of the R6 Messenger, and translation into French, which was intended to improve the way we get the message out in our

region. Now it's time to assess if these actions are producing the desired results. I hope we will have a good and vigorous discussion on April 9! The R6 Board will meet the following morning to make its own plan as to how we can best support the Region in accomplishing its goals.

ACTIVITIES OF THE CHAIR

Since my last report to the Region, I've traveled to the Region One convention in Calgary, Alberta, where the Region Chairs Committee met and then took part (as observers, mainly) in the Region One Assembly and Convention. I was terrifically grateful for the opportunity for the fellowship and recovery. Region One was reporting on its own strategic planning, and I heard a lot of very positive and helpful things. There is a very active region and it was an inspiration. The Region Chairs Committee meets each year at one region assembly, and next year the chairs will be meeting here in Albany!

Last year I became Vice Chair of the Region Chairs Committee and as my good pal Charlene Lapierre's term was up last year, I will be serving as chair of that committee until we elect a new one in April.

I had a FANTASTIC time at the R6 convention in Hyannis – what a blast! I chaired a session on 4th Step writing, and had the usual anguish over picking which session to go to next. I was able to spend time soaking in the hot tub with old friends I haven't seen for ages, enjoy new friends at meals, have quality time with sponsees, and before you know it, it's time to go.

In terms of my own program: I have a sponsor in two different programs, I have two OA sponsees that I talk to every day and several others whom I am sponsoring through the Twelve Steps as laid out in the Big Book; am currently hearing a Fifth Step, and working Steps 10 through 12 daily; I am treasurer of my home group, the Needham Wednesday Night Beginners Meeting; am working on the upcoming MetroWest Intergroup retreat, and attend three meetings a week regularly, with others here and there. I follow a food plan that was given to me by a nutritionist, and am always asking God for help to keep my level of physical activity up, because it's harder in the cold weather, but it's so crucial to my threefold health! I try to do what I can, when I can, and I thank you for allowing me to do this service.

– Margaret Ann B., Region 6 Chair

REGION SIX CONTACTS

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Please mail R6 contributions to:

Sid B., R6 Treasurer
P.O. Box 869
Salem, Massachusetts 01970

Please make checks payable to: **REGION SIX OA**

The following information allows us to properly acknowledge your group's contribution.

WSO Group Number
Meeting Name
Meeting Day & Time

Your cancelled check is your receipt. Your intergroup will receive an acknowledgment at either the next R6 Assembly or mailed with the next issue of The Messenger to your intergroup. Please ask your groups to be as generous as possible. Thank you for your support, service and contributions.

**THE MESSENGER is the publication of
Region 6 Assembly of Overeaters Anonymous**

WHAT IS REGION SIX?

Region Six consists of Overeaters Anonymous meetings and intergroups from the following geographical locations: New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, Maine, Vermont, Central and Eastern Ontario, Quebec, Newfoundland, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island.

The purpose of Region 6 of Overeaters Anonymous is:

- To further the OA program in accordance with the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of OA;
- To maintain a communications center for Region Six. Specifically excluded is the endorsement of any outside enterprise as outlined in Tradition Six;
- To provide a forum for the selection of Regional and General Service Trustee nominees;
- To provide unity of groups and organization of Intergroups within Region Six;
- To host Region Six Marathons and Conventions as deemed necessary by Region Six;
- To work for OA as a whole within the Region or Committees appointed by World Service.

**The next Region 6 Assemblies are scheduled for:
April 9, 2005
September 24, 2005
at the Quality Inn, Albany, NY located Route 9W,
just south of Exit 23 on the NY State Thruway.**

Editorial Policy

The Messenger is the bi-annual newsletter of Region Six of Overeaters Anonymous. The deadline for copy is the July 1 for the Fall Edition and January 1 for the Spring Edition. Material cannot be returned nor can payment be made. All submissions to the editor must be signed and when published, will appear with first name and last initial unless otherwise requested. Names will be withheld upon request. The Messenger reserves the right to edit all submissions for length and clarity. Other OA groups may reprint without permission. We ask that you cite the writer and The Messenger as your source. Courtesy copies of reprinted articles are appreciated. The opinions expressed are those of the writer, not those of Region Six or OA as a whole. Please address all submissions and correspondence to The Messenger via e-mail to: Newsletter@OAregion6.org or via US Postal Service in care of the Region Six Coordinator at the address designated above.

THE MESSENGER STAFF

The Messenger is produced through the efforts of the members of the Region Six Newsletter Committee. We are:

- Steve M Chair
- Gil P. Editor
- Beth M. Proofreader
- Diana G Design & Layout
- Pat F. French Canadian Coordinator
- Raffaella Secretary
- Scott, Joyce, Paul, Gary, Howard, Benoit Committee Members

TRUSTEE'S MESSAGE

Dear Fellow Region 6 OA Members,

Hello, my name is Dexter and I am a compulsive overeater. At my recent visit to the doctor I was 97 pounds less than when my abstinence began 13 years ago on March 22, 1992, through the grace of my Higher Power (HP). I had no higher power other than food when I came into OA. I found my HP through working OA's Steps with the help of a sponsor. Learning to listen to my HP has been an evolving process. I have discovered that my HP often speaks to me through my character defects and my disease. The necessity for a detailed inventory or for writing is brought to my attention when I start thinking about foods which are not in my food plan. This past holiday season has been unusual for me in that I have been more conscious of those foods from which I abstain. It started the day before Thanksgiving when I found myself remembering the old days when I would be shopping madly for pastry, liqueur and candies to round out the holiday festivities. HP reminded me that this kind of thinking is 'eating' thinking. After surrendering these thoughts to HP, my inventory revealed that I had buried grief that I wasn't going to be able to call mom as I always did on Thanksgiving because she died this past Easter Sunday. The thoughts of shopping disappeared as I felt the pain. My HP helped me through the holidays by continuing to bring me back to know my grief and helped me come to a new place in my understanding of my relationship to my mother and to a new place in my life. Inappropriate food thoughts and inappropriate emotional responses such as resentment or anger were the signals for surrendering to my HP and doing an inventory.

I believe this is another facet of my 'spiritual awakening' which is promised to me and to all of us in the 12th Step, "Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to compulsive overeaters and practice these principles in all our affairs."

For me, this is the central miracle of the Steps, the "spiritual awakening". This spiritual awakening has given me my recovery, my freedom from the obsession with food, my 97-pound weight release. For me, it is also the central aspect of the First Tradition which tells us that, "Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on OA unity." It is inescapable to me that we can all unite in the reality of our spiritual awakening as a result of OA's 12 Steps. While we may be anorexic, bulimic, male, female, lesbian, gay, believer, non-believer, young, old, in between or may follow different food plans such as no meat or no sugar, I believe we can all unite in the common solution to our problems, namely our spiritual awakening as a result of the Steps.

For me, the 12th Step is also central to the Fifth Tradition which tells us our primary purpose is to carry the message. The 12th Step tells us what that message is, "...a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps...." I believe that when we depart from this simple message, we jeopardize OA unity and therefore our common welfare and ultimately our personal recovery.

The 12th Step also tells me why the 12th Tradition is so important. Since we have such a simple message, we have no need for stars or VIPs. We are all equal in the fellowship. Everything I state is my personal opinion and my opinion is no more or less important than anyone else's. If there are no stars or VIPs, we can be united as equals in our fellowship, united in our common goal of our own spiritual recovery, maintained through sharing it with others.

I welcome comments on my sharing here. Please feel free to contact me by phone or email on this or any other OA question.

- Dexter J., Region 6 Trustee
Tel: 845-657-6915
E-mail: OAR6Trustee@att.net

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Region Six Assembly - October 2, 2004

INTERGROUP

Eleven people were present: Zazu G. (chair, Fairfield/New Haven IG), Peter (Metro NYC IG), Denise (Connecticut IG), Chip (Western Mass IG), Beth (R6 secretary, Western Mass IG), Lisa (Mass Bay IG), Sherry (North Shore IG), Linda (NYS Capital District IG), Nancy B. (Mid-Hudson IG), Bill (Nassau County IG) and Nancy (Queens IG).

Chair — Zazu announces she is stepping down. Chip from Western Mass will be the new chair in 2005. Nancy from Queens Unity will be the secretary.

Minutes from Spring 2004 — We need to find someone who knows how to quilt. At WSBC, another region made a quilt to display; members of each Intergroup made pieces. Once we get the squares together, we can find a quilter. Region 1 raffled off a quilt at their convention. Need a quilt subcommittee to decide size of squares and type of squares. Nancy B. (Mid-Hudson IG) and Bill (Nassau County IG) will be on the quilt subcommittee. Chip (Western Mass IG) agreed to be on quilting subcommittee as chair of the general Intergroup committee.

Last Assembly people on the Intergroup committee e-mailed people from intergroups who have not attended in a while about coming to the Region 6 Assembly. The only response was from Suffolk County IG, which has a representative here today (Laura). Do we want to continue to contact the intergroups that don't show up to the Region 6 Assembly? Maybe we can compose a letter to be sent just to the intergroups that don't show up to the Region 6 Assembly. We can say that if they need financial assistance, Region 6 can provide for the financially strapped intergroups. Also, we can put contact names and phone numbers in the body of the letter. The letter we send to the struggling/absent intergroups should be on colored paper and have an OA graphic. Zazu offered to send out the mailing as soon as possible. She will send the members of

the Intergroup committee a spreadsheet as to which intergroups were present at the last three assemblies. Fifteen intergroups were not represented at the morning session of this Assembly:

- Apple Village (MA)
- Berkshire Intergroup
- Eastern Maine
- Green Mountain North
- French Canada
- Canada Island Intergroup (NF/NB)
- Jamestown Intergroup
- Long Island HOW
- New York HOW
- Nova Scotia Intergroup
- Southern Maine
- Southwestern Mass
- Southern Tier (Binghamton, Utica)
- Unity Intergroup of NY (Suffolk)

In ninety days (by early January 2005), these intergroups will have to contact Region 6 re: travel expenses or if they need a scholarship. Mark has addresses for these intergroups and they are also available on the World Service website.

Region 6 Flyer — The Board would like us to send out a flyer as to what Region 6 does; one sheet is sufficient (two-sided paper). Deadline to produce the Region 6 flyer is two years, although it might be done within a year. Region 6 flyer subcommittee: Beth, Peter, & Lisa.

Region 6 Intergroup Handbook is on the Region 6 website. We decided to break up into groups of two to evaluate the Region 6 Intergroup Handbook to make any changes that we see fit. Zazu will e-mail us the pages from the handbook that we should review. This process will be done as a follow-up to this Region 6 Assembly.

At the end of the time allotted for the Intergroup committee session, we went over the contents of the Region 6 flyer.

—Submitted by Nancy (Queens IG), Secretary

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Region Six Assembly - October 2, 2004

FINANCE

Five attendees: Sid B. (R6 treasurer), Karin R. (R6 vice chair), Ed S. (Metro West IG), Ray F. (Metro NYC IG), Louise Y. (Greater Syracuse IG)
Opened with Serenity Prayer and Introductions
Treasurer's report – Reviewed by Sid B., treasurer. Accepted by committee, unanimously.

Audit report – After a step-by-step review by Sid B. – illustrating the balance between the treasurer's report, the bank statements and the check register – the committee unanimously agreed to recommend acceptance of the audit to R6 Vice Chair Karin R.

Election – New chair is Louise Y. (Greater Syracuse IG)

An informal discussion followed regarding reinstatement of the R6 pin as a fund-raiser.

Closed with Serenity Prayer.

– Submitted by Ed S., Chair

Wow! What an energizing day! I am always amazed at how so many people, from such diverse backgrounds and places, can come together as volunteers to work on a common purpose. I remain grateful to OA for bringing you all into my life and enriching it. I can't wait to get home and share what I've learned at this assembly.

Your grateful servant,
Nickie, Ithaca NY Intergroup

INTERGROUP - QUILT SUBCOMMITTEE

A subcommittee was formed to produce an OA Unity quilt as a fund-raiser. The quilt will be raffled at an R6 convention. The subcommittee will develop a time line for the project.

The process will include contacting an experienced quilter to develop specifications, submission of a budget to ensure completion of the quilt, and development of a flyer to send out to the intergroups.

Subcommittee: Nancy B. and Bill R

NEWSLETTER

In attendance: Steve (Metro West IG), Scott (Metro NYC IG), Joyce (Brooklyn Unity IG), Paul (Bronx IG), Gary (Moravian IG), Howard (New Hampshire IG), Diana (Metro NYC IG), Pat (Quebec IG), Benoit (Montreal IG), Raffaella (Staten Island IG).

The Ad Hoc Communications committee met with the Newsletter committee because of broad common interests.

Elections were held for chair and secretary. Steve was elected chair and Raffaella was elected secretary.

A brief discussion of what went well and what we could learn from the production of the last newsletter was discussed. While most aspects of the editing, production and mailing went smoothly, there were important lessons learned and actions planned to improve the process for the next issue.

A large part of the meeting discussed production of a French language version of The Messenger. With Pat and Benoit on the team, we have two very capable people to take on the responsibility of getting The Messenger translated into French as well as handling the printing and distribution of The Messenger to the appropriate groups.

We discussed roles for the upcoming issue and found ready volunteers for all positions: Scott, pre-production coordinator; Diana, design and layout; Gil, editor; Raffaella, proofreading; Beth, proofreading; Steve, production and distribution; Pat, translation and production (French issue); Benoit – production and proofreading (French issue).

A draft production schedule was distributed including a proposed mailing date of February 25, 2005.

We spent a little time discussing what changes to The Messenger are needed before posting the newsletter on the R6 website (for anonymity reasons).

The newsletter team set two-year and five-year strategic goals and then closed with the Serenity Prayer.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Region Six Assembly - October 2, 2004

TWELFTH STEP WITHIN

Nineteen members attended the Twelfth Step Within (TSW) committee. We began with the Serenity Prayer. Judy C. (MetroWest IG) volunteered to be secretary. Four intergroups have requested more information about starting a TSW committee: Shirley B. from Ottawa area will contact Central Ontario; Cathy W. from NYS Capital District IG will contact Staten Island; and Kevin C. from Greater Rochester will contact Western NY.

Two-year goals:

1. Encourage intergroups to put on a sponsorship workshop.
2. Offer an R6 Assembly workshop on sponsorship at an Assembly.
3. Present "meeting of month" to intergroups.
4. Motivate someone at a meeting to begin a relapse recovery meeting.
5. Present an OA Care Package to give information to those in relapse.

Five-year goals:

1. Put on a TSW project at the 2010 (50th anniversary) World Service Convention.
 2. Encourage a TSW committee member to adopt an intergroup without a TSW committee
- Cathy W. of NYS Capital District IG volunteered to update the Speakers List.

Gloria H. volunteered to write an article for Lifeline.

No chair came forward. A request for co-chair was made. No decision has been made.

Sponsorship workshops at the intergroup and region level were a high priority and discussed quite a bit. We then had a round table discussion in which everyone either reflected upon TSW projects they had done, asked questions, or made suggestions.

Any questions? Contact pgstuhr@comcast.net
We closed with the Serenity Prayer.

- Submitted by Prue S., MetroWest IG

BY-LAWS

Present: Ysabel D. (chair, Nassau IG); Bob F. (Central Ontario); Margaret Ann B. (secretary, MetroWest IG); Ann Warner (parliamentarian).

A draft motion to amend Policy 10 (Committee Membership) to equalize representation was scrapped in favor of planning a workshop at the Spring 05 R6A to allow the body to consider and find solutions to problems of understaffed committees and lack of continuity.

We continued our two and five-year goals of streamlining the bylaws and policies and procedures to remove unnecessary and incorrect text; motions to amend a number of policies will be forthcoming at the Spring 05 Assembly.

- Submitted by Margaret Ann B.

YOUNG PEOPLE

Present: Stu, chair; Helen, secretary; Jerry, Gaynelle, Dorothy. Discussion focused on the special issues encountered when passing the message of recovery to young people, specifically:

The main problem with getting the message to young people is the lack of meetings and adult commitment.

Young people do not wish to be mothered; they want to be treated independently from adults.

Personal sharing talked about the need for flexibility of food plans and the need for sponsors to be flexible. It's important that those expressing the desire to work with young people buy into the theory of "love and tolerance is our code."

We want to get young people into OA and keep them here.

Young people have unique needs:

- Questions and answers can be permitted.
- Sitting still can be difficult.

(CONTINUED ON P. 8)

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Region Six Assembly - October 2, 2004

PUBLIC INFORMATION/HOSPITALS, PRISONS, INSTITUTIONS, MILITARY (PI/HIPM)

Tina, chair, opened meeting with Serenity Prayer at 12:40 p.m. Secretary was absent. Anne (Queens IG) volunteered to record the minutes. There were 23 persons in attendance representing 17 intergroups. This is the first meeting of the two committees combined.

Metro IG wanted to draft a motion to fund a PI newspaper blitz but was advised it was too late to propose at this Assembly. Reminder was made that any new proposals, particularly funding, must be submitted to committee, then passed on to the board for review and approval by February 1, 2005 to be presented at next Assembly in April 2005. Tina and Mark (Region coordinator) explained in detail the procedures followed when proposals are submitted: specifically, they must be presented to committee, discussed, voted on and then passed to the board for similar review and approval before they may be presented to the Assembly for a vote. Reminder was made that PI/HIPM's budget is \$3,000 per Assembly (\$6,000 annually).

Review of previous PI/HIPM blitzes — Mark reported on results of the latest newspaper blitz in the Massachusetts area with excellent response. Ruth, Syracuse IG, advised that a magazine article devoted to OA would soon be on the newsstands. Michael, Bronx IG, reported cable TV would run OA video in Dec. 2004 and Jan. 2005. Carol, Westchester IG, noted that "Stepping Out," a syndicated AM radio program (which focuses on all 12 Step fellowships), interviewed four OAers. A columnist was present at the interview and wrote an article about the program in a local newspaper. OA will be featured again sometime in October. Anne (Queens IG) is still getting calls on the intergroup hotline from previous free cable TV coverage. She reported that the cable company only gives free coverage for two months per year. Queens IG will need to purchase another video from WSO to imprint its new hotline telephone number in order to ask for

TV coverage again in 2005. Howard (NH IG) reported successful results of its HIPM blitz. Tina challenged all present to go back to their intergroups and get proposals for PI/HIPM ideas and bring them back to this committee for funding for next Assembly.

Review of strategic plans — two-year goals, results: Increase Region 6 Assembly attendances by 1 percent; current Region 6 Assembly seems to have an increase in attendance. Numbers are not available to substantiate. Fifteen intergroups have a PI committee or representative involved in PI work.

Motion made and passed unanimously to increase attendance at upcoming Assembly (with hope, by April 2005 and definitely by October 2005) by 10 percent. Members are asked to bring another intergroup member, particularly someone from the PI committee, to upcoming Assemblies as observers, thereby increasing attendance.

Review of strategic plans — five-year goals, results: At this committee meeting, there is one PI committee member from each of the 17 intergroups represented.

New goal is to reach out to other intergroups to offer guidance and support for PI/HIPM. A subcommittee was formed to write and present a motion, have it passed and then present it to R6 Assembly that would extend travel scholarship funds to cover expenses of PI representatives (not already funded delegates) to encourage them to attend R6 committee meetings. Nickie (Ithaca IG) will chair.

Election results — Tina, chair; Mary, co-chair. No secretary was elected; the post will be open to volunteers.

HIPM — David (MA) inquired about assistance needed with military outreach. All agreed that HIPM would be the first order of discussion at the April R6 Assembly.

Meeting closed with Serenity Prayer at 2:30 p.m.

— Submitted by Anne C.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Region Six Assembly - October 2, 2004

CONVENTION

Ten members were present. Opened with the Serenity Prayer. Donna volunteered to be the secretary for this meeting.

1. Report from Cape Cod:
 - a. 440 registered for convention.
 - b. 164 rooms registered at hotel for a total of 324 people.
 - c. Five free rooms to date – three speakers, R6 chair, raffle winner.
 - d. Program is on website.
 - e. Saturday tour – 74 signed up; have a waiting list.
 - f. Account balance of \$11,837.00.
 2. Report from New Hampshire:
 - a. Presented merchandise will be available on Sunday at Cape Cod and for pre-ordering.
 - b. Committee consists of approximately 70 volunteers with 12-15 chairs.
 - c. Previewed a motion for additional seed money for printing costs for raffles, flyers, etc. that will be distributed at Cape Cod Convention.
 - d. Motion – made by Don for \$650 advance, seconded by Barbara, unanimously approved – will be presented to Assembly out of committee.
 3. Proposal for future conventions – discussed how intergroups could think about hosting a convention. Marie from Saratoga Springs will discuss with her intergroup.
 4. Need to think about the timing of R6 Convention for 2007 as the World Service Convention will be August 29-31 in Philadelphia, near our region geographically but not part of our region. The suggestion was made to have the convention later than usual, perhaps mid-November.
 5. Reminder that tapes from keynote speakers for 2005 convention need to be in by R6 Spring Assembly to convention committee chair – need three years continuous abstinence; tapes need to be recent, made at an OA meeting to focus on OA experience and recovery, with the name, telephone number, and e-mail address on the tape.
 6. Reviewed goals from last Assembly – Pat S. and Don C. volunteered to work on R6 Convention Manual for fall of 2006. Discussed possible need for a budget line in the budget for Convention committee printing costs.
 7. Chair position election – Pat nominated Lee R. from Massachusetts as chair, which was seconded by Barbara. Lee accepted the nomination. Vote was unanimous.
 8. Secretary position election – Pat nominated Donna as secretary, which was seconded by Marilyn. Donna accepted the nomination. Vote was unanimous.
- Closed with the Serenity prayer.

—Submitted by Marilyn C., Outgoing Chair
(Montreal English IG)

YOUNG PEOPLE (continued from p. 6)

- Kids need rides to meetings.
- Parents purchase the food for young people; if the parents don't buy into the program, young people may not get what they need.
- Doctor's approval of food plan is a key component.
- It is important to refer to HP rather than God

There was some discussion about parents of the young compulsive eater:

- Parents should be discouraged from staying at the young person's OA meeting, so that young people will feel more comfortable to share openly.
- An open meeting could be held for parents so that members could explain OA to the parents.

Anonymity – this message should be communicated in simple language. Also, important stuff should be shared with sponsors. Help young people figure out what the important stuff is.

In order to start a young people's OA meeting, there should be a commitment from a responsible adult. Adult OA members will qualify at first, because young people will have nothing to qualify with for a while. Adult OA members would act as facilitators/teachers. Young people are used to the teaching environment.

The committee did not report its two-year or five-year goals.

I came to my first R6A back in 1985. At the committee meeting I attended, the two chairs were looking for a replacement, as they had chaired the Outreach committee for about four years. I asked the question, "Well, what is the purpose of this committee and what does the chair do?"

After receiving my answer, one of the co-chairs said, "So, will you do it?" I said yes only because I was told to do service when I am asked. It was very frightening, however.

Today I attended the Convention committee for the first time and was asked to serve as the next chair. I chuckled inside thinking back to 1985. But guess what? I am not so frightened this time.

Service has helped both my recovery and my growth as a person. I know that God helps me with everything, if I ask for that help. I am only too glad to do my little bit if it helps another compulsive overeater.

Lee R.

HIPM WORKSHOP NOTES

Region Six Assembly - October 2, 2004

What follows are the group notes composed during the course of the workshop hosted by the Hospitals, Institutions, Professionals & Military Committee. It consists of lists of the actions taken and suggestions made by R6's various intergroups, HIPM intergroup committees and individuals which they have implemented in doing outreach work throughout Region 6.

HEALTH FAIRS/PROFESSIONALS

General practitioners and dieticians — members contact their own GPs and dieticians and send out brochures to these professionals. There is no way of knowing if new comers are recommended by these professionals.

Sent out packets through the Yellow Pages — not much of a response.

Health fair run by a local TV station — heavily attended. No way of gauging success because there is no way of telling how many new comers came to meetings.

Professional outreach — sent OA video to local cable stations and then held a general information meeting for new comers.

Lifeline magazine in doctors' offices.

Health fairs/Hospital Events and a Women's Prison (Western Mass IG)

Public Service announcements on local cable station (Queens Unity IG)

Health care — nutritionist in Plainview works with OA members and suggests to new patients that they go to OA meetings.

Went to a waterfront festival (Staten Island IG) — local cable company wants to set up an infomercial paid for by the local cable company.

Local county fair (Mid-Hudson IG) for Social Workers — they bring OA pamphlets.

Doctor in Western Mass Hospital tells patients to go to OA.

Religious groups — put a blurb in church newsletter about OA and got huge response.

UNNUMBERED GROUP A

Brainstorm ideas regarding reaching out to hospitals and institutions — one member from New York talked about inviting staff members of hospitals, assisted living centers and nursing homes, and health fairs.

Brooks noted that the Courier can be sent on-line to professionals and doctors' offices. If mailing the Courier,

GROUP 5

postage is free as long as a moderate amount is mailed.

Obesity Centers — have open meetings.

Long Island Obesity Centers — not to be used as a quick fix program.

Marilyn talked about health fairs where no one was English-speaking. Three intergroups did outreach there.

Susan suggested sending or leaving small OA cards at doctors' and professionals' offices.

Eddie from Rockland/Long Island talked about putting cards up in supermarkets with a contact name and number on them.

Make face-to-face appointments with doctors, dentists, nurses — for not more than 20 minutes.

Leave pamphlets with an attractive holder at the nurses' station — with permission.

Howard talked about on the 12th of the month passing a basket with people's numbers so that they can be contacted.

– Jennifer, Group Secretary

GROUP THREE

Only one intergroup at our meeting has an official HIPM committee.

When they go to health fairs, they collect names of health care professionals who want further information and send out a mailing, which includes a letter, pamphlets, and a computer CD with OA info and OA members' stories.

Good ideas to introduce OA to the military — best points of contact are Army, Marines and Navy chaplains.

Correctional facilities — contact facility directly and ask who would be the best person to contact.

Great ideas — give literature to the local library to become part of the library collection.

UNNUMBERED GROUP B

Gear your attendance to age and type of population.

Addiction — held with different mediums — staff a table.

Speaking with own professionals

Health fair.

Leaving Lifeline — good icebreaker.

Physical placement inside a health fair.

Giveaways are good attraction.

Radio — 30-60 second scripts; TV — video from WSO; newspaper — phone number and OA website.

Gear info to audience.

Health fairs — we had a huge sign with the "15 questions"

HIPM WORKSHOP NOTES

Region Six Assembly - October 2, 2004

and phone number. People who didn't approach booth stood back and took down phone number.

Health fairs — Channel 10 News sponsored. Big sign (picture of a very large plate with phone number). Booth was free.

Meeting and intergroups pooled money to pay for pamphlets and handouts; whatever was left was redistributed to groups. When professionals came by we handed "professional pamphlets" to them.

One open meeting every year for spouses and family — hand out flyers advertising it.

Go to street fairs. Got \$1.5 million free ads on TV cable (donated by cable service providers). Did need money to make copies of tapes.

OA got phone call from church that wanted to start a meeting at the church — they can't do it but we did present a panel. The outcome was that a meeting was started. We helped church out but not the way it had planned.

Project — to reach out to troubled teenagers by purchasing beginner packets and giving them out.

Offer professional packets to personal health care providers.

Call from health fair — OA invited. Northeastern University called and asked for "packets."

Ask to leave OA business cards in establishments wherever you go.

Going to bariatric units and fitness facilities and leaving pamphlets; starting to go to institutions that work with anorexics and bulimics.

Freebies work!!! Waterfront festival — put up big banner with phone number and gave out magnets (purchased by several groups to diffuse cost). On list of referral center on college campus. Going to senior citizen centers. Going to open houses at colleges. Going to grade schools. Attending PTA meetings.

Bring before and after pictures wherever you go and wherever you present.

Fairs covered by media — make sure your face is not shown (take picture only of booth or with people with backs turned).

Most of the things that can be copied are on intergroup (or WSO) website.

Acceptance Is The Key

A cceptance will be the key. I have to look at this key and see what it looks like. It is not always easy to find but it is easier to handle than I imagine. Many times I take the key of judgment first and try to use it to open the way through a tough situation. But the door that key opens is a door to trouble. It is warm in that room of judgment. What starts off feeling like the warmth of correctness quickly turns into burning stress and upset.

W hile the key of judgment is bigger and easier to find, it opens to me a small, hot room. Instead, the key of acceptance opens a door to all of life. Through that door of acceptance I can begin to see life as it really is. And I can let it be what it is.

T hrough my upbringing in an organized religion, I was given judging keys for every pocket I had. The acceptance key came when I accepted God as someone who accepted me as I am. If I use this key often enough, I will become more familiar with it and will want to get rid of all those other keys and just keep the acceptance key in my heart where I can never misplace it.

T hat acceptance key is also the key through my past hurts. Where I find guilt, shame and remorse, I can with tender love open those doors and look in again and accept what happened as just what happened. I cannot change it. I cannot today go in and rearrange that room. That room is forever frozen in time and I can only see that room as a painting on a wall. Whether I like it or not, it no longer matters, because all these "paintings" make up the museum of my life. Acceptance is the key to the present, the past and the future. With that key I can face all situations with a serenity beyond anything I have ever imagined.

- Rich, Saugerties, NY

*In Albany we hustled
to make the program grow
and in the wonderful process
God got us in tow*

*The work was hard and joyous
Results are not soon known
Faith in God's will for us
makes sure we're not alone*

*In this and future efforts
we know we're on the track
when spreading our
important message
God gives us no flak*

Anonymous

I am a first time representative at the R6A. I have been an OA member for 15 years 8 months and abstinent for 14 years. As the Vice Chair Karin R is my friend and neighbor, I have heard about the Region 6 assembly for years. It is nice to finally be attending one. The best part of the day was the Twelfth Step Within committee meeting I attended. I heard a lot of valuable information about getting the people in relapse within the rooms to stay until the miracle happens. I want to thank all the people who work so hard to keep our region running smoothly.

Shirley B.

My name is Nancy B and I am from Queens Unity Intergroup. This was my first Region 6 Assembly as a new delegate. I was elected as the new secretary for the Intergroup committee, where we will devise a Region 6 flyer, as well evaluate the Region 6 Handbook for any necessary corrections. I am glad to be able to do service on a regional level.

*Nancy B.
Queens Unity Intergroup*

What an invigorating experience to attend Region 6 Assembly in Albany. With so much apathy for doing service in my area (my perception), I feel renewed and committed to the OA fellowship.

This fellowship, with my HP's love, has freed me from the bondage of self and 115 pounds. OA members have also loved me, supported me, and pulled me out of spiritual bankruptcy. My sponsor's support and OA tools/literature have given me emotional abstinence.

Viewing principles before personalities and traditions actively working effectively with a large group of OA members is encouraging. I hope the energy travels to my OA community. OA's service body is necessary for the rooms to be here. You may be surprised one day to go to an OA meeting and find it isn't there.

It is your/our responsibility to do service in order for OA to be there for people who have a desire to stop eating compulsively. As an addict, I found it very difficult in the beginning to make a committee (meeting). Surprise! Let go of being selfish is what my sponsor encouraged me to do. So I took the key to the church of my Big Book meeting home group. I need a home group so I can be given a daily reprieve from compulsive overeating.

I have many blessings in my OA program as a result of doing 12-Step work. If you want what I have, attend Region 6 Assembly. I believe continuous abstinence is a gift to cherish as a result of all the energy and work of OA as a whole. This is why I keep coming back and give freely of myself at group, intergroup, region and world service level. I need and want OA, so I can remain sane, serene and abstinent.

Ruth S.

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