



SAIL



FALL 2007

SYRACUSE AREA INTERGROUP NEWSLETTER

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Nancy and Kelly, the marathon co-chairs of 2007 want to extend to everyone who participated in the (May) marathon, a heartfelt "Thank You"! So many people who played a part in bringing the marathon to fruition and making it a success, we fear leaving someone out if we extend individual notes of appreciation. So to all of those who helped, led workshops, and attended, Thank You!

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The Monday Big Book meeting in Liverpool no longer meets due to lack of attendance. Literature was donated and the prudent reserve was 60/30/10.

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The Region 6 Assembly, a business meeting with Intergroup (IG) reps attending from all of region 6, is Sept. 29, 2007. Ruth W. (457-6261) would like a female willing to learn about service above the group level to join her. Please call.

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Our three Region 6 reps, who've done two two-year terms, will need to turn service over to other members in our fellowship this Fall. They. Interested? Contact Pam E.

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SEE "LETTERS FROM WITHIN" FOR MORE OA INFO



IMPORTANT REGION 6 PHONE NUMBERS

| NAME/POSITION | PHONE # |
|--|--------------|
| Pam E: Chair and Webmaster | 452-6326 |
| Vice- Chair: <i>service is needed</i> | |
| Rose I: Corresponding Secretary | 451-0438 |
| Janice C: Telephone | 635-1172 |
| Janet R: Treasurer | 469-3578 |
| Louise Y: Region 6 rep/Utica Area Rep | 735-0358 |
| Margaret Ann B: Region 6 trustee | 617-868-9355 |
| Ruth W: Region 6 and World Service Rep | 457-6261 |
| Monday Big Book meeting | |
| Intergroup rep | |
| Public information and professional outreach Chair | |
| Elaine: Phone Service | 472-3484 |
| Sylvia: Phone List | 472-6544 |
| Carol A: Meeting list | 468-1588 |
| Helen M: Intergroup Secretary | 218-5048 |
| Liz M-P: Thursday Miracles group in Liverpool. Intergroup Rep | 445-0378 |
| Sandy B: Sat. Jamar Drive Intergroup Rep | 598-4063 |
| KAREN S: SAIL EDITOR EMAIL: KARENSCHWARZ@TWCNY.RR.COM | 637-1834 |

PLEASE CONTACT KAREN S WITH ANY CORRECTIONS!

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READER'S CORNER

QUESTIONS FROM LAST ISSUE, AND RESPONSES:

Q: "WE ALL PASS THROUGH DIFFERENT PHASES IN RECOVERY AND I THINK THAT I'M AT THE PHASE OF PERSISTENCE FOR THE DURATION. I HAVE A YEAR AND A HALF OF ABSTINENCE. I'M NOT NEW ANY LONGER SO I KNOW I DO IT OVER THE LONG HAUL ONE DAY AT A TIME. BUT SOMETIMES I GET BORED WITH MY FOOD AND I HAVE TROUBLE ENDURING. HOW DO YOU ENDURE?"

R: How do you endure? Coming to OA at 50+ years into my eating career, I was both desperate and hopeful. Desperate because I had regained 50 pounds in just a few months after going off my latest diet, and hopeful as I read the stats that said 3% of people who stayed with 12 step work recovered. At the very beginning I pledged to myself that I would be part of that 3% - I'd stick with the winners and win with the stickers. One day at a time I've come to the rooms for 22+ years and have been maintaining a 70# weight loss for many years.

Food is boring? No! Food is energy; food is health; food is a gift that I have in abundance. My kitchen has 24 cupboard doors and 11 drawers that contain an abundance of items. That doesn't include the fridge, freezer and over flow back hall storage area. I *plan* to have healthful things at hand and keep my hands *busy* till it is my scheduled mealtime.

I'm working on developing some changes in my life. I am learning about *fun* and *pretty*.

I now have time to be with friends and do activities I enjoy. I'm also enjoying choosing clothing and things for my home that are pretty (I hope).

Food is boring? When I am bored I need an attitude adjustment. Boredom means I am focused on *my self*, *my feelings*. The Tools of Recovery, especially Sponsor, Service, Meetings, Anonymity and Telephone take me out of self and self-centeredness. The pamphlet, Before You Take That First Compulsive Bite, suggests gratitude that I have found this inspired program and more gratitude that, although I have an illness, I can recover from it simply by not taking that first compulsive bite. Louise Y

Q: "TO WHAT WALKING AREAS DO MEMBERS GO TO FIND SERENITY?"

R: A good walking Place to catch some peaceful serenity is Onondaga Lake Parkway. Pj

Do you have a question or concern you'd like addressed? email it to karenschwarz@twcny.rr.com. We'll print it in the next SAIL.

FUN... AND ADMINISTRATION

WORD FIND! UP, DOWN, DIAGONAL,
BACKWARD, FORWARD

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|-----------|---------|---------|
| Admitted | came | restore |
| Powerless | believe | sanity |
| food | greater | |



EDITORIAL POLICY

Publication of any contributions or editorial opinions expressed herein does not imply endorsement by OA as a whole, but only the individuals that wrote them. Anything that is not the original work, a copy of any item or recording, should be sent, with credit, to the source. We reserve the right to edit, and it is understood that other OA groups may reprint any and all copy without permission.



LETTERS FROM WITHIN

These are open comments from OA members that address a wide range of OA topics.
The SAIL, and OA members, welcome your comments!

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The force field of the fellowship could be felt, entering the hotel. Friends that had not seen each other in 6 months or more embraced and exchanged greetings. I was new and felt a bit timid and unsure. The eager smiles and hugs relieved me of my fears.

Though Saturday would be a full day of meetings, Friday night was mine to enjoy. I was eager to spend some concentrated effort on my step-four work, something I had been dreading for some time. I went running with a new-found friend, had my metabolic and went into a sound sleep.

Having completed registration and other necessary tasks, Assembly needed prayer Saturday morning. It saddens me to share that one of the IG's in suffered a terrible harm. One of their trusted servants was untrustworthy.



began with much our region has However, the honor

and respect to which our service board treated this issue leaves me in awe. This difficult situation could have brought us all to our base nature of blaming and anger and loathing. Oh, that did not happen for some, but we otherwise united in our common goal. As this is a program of action we separated into groups to discuss the issue of Responsibility and trust of those that serve in OA. My group was made up of representatives from six different IG's. The theme was consistent. It is extremely difficult for us as a serving body to keep serving bodies or to entice others to serve. More often than not, the "guidelines" had to be maneuvered around to continue to have an effective working IG. It somehow is shocking to me to see the dedication and commitment of those few who serve so diligently and then see the scarcity of service from others. I fear to offend some, for that is not my goal. My bigger fear is that somehow OA wouldn't be there when someone needed it. For me that is what service is about. There was someone who preceded me and kept me informed about our OA Fellowship. This includes but is not limited to Marathons, Retreats, meetings that are offered, phone lists etc. I would not be here today Happy, Joyous, and free unless someone had served to get me the message.

Please consider being a trusted servant. What we give we get back ten fold. *Anonymous*

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REFLECTIONS ON A YEAR OF ABSTINENCE

Today is my one-year anniversary of abstinence and I thought what better way to honor it than by writing.

I came into my first meeting emotionally and spiritually lacking and knew that there was something missing. I believe to this day that God brought me to that meeting and has been with me throughout the journey. I came to believe that the more I was willing to accept God's Will the easier it was to let go. Each day I say the third step prayer asking Him to relieve me of the bondage of self and then try to remain in God's presence for the day.

I went through so many emotions the first year, anger, resentment, fear, sadness, happiness, joy and peace. I questioned each and every emotion, searching for the source and sometimes finding it and then acting. At times I just had to sit with the emotion and wait, knowing that I didn't have to have an answer that day and that God would (or maybe not) reveal to me what I needed to know.

I came to know that there was no way I could do this on my own. I needed all of you in this program, I needed to hear your experience, strength and hope, and I wanted to be part of you and to watch the growth within all of you as well as in myself. I began to learn that it wasn't all about me!



Early on I learned that it would be hard to stay out of the compulsions unless I filled that empty space with God's will. That meant that I worked the tools calling people to keep from isolating, writing when emotions came forth that were hard to handle, calling my sponsor to talk over a problem or to share a joy, going to meetings when I didn't "feel" like it.

Not letting my "feelings" dictate my actions, instead listening for God's will and then sometimes waiting before I acted.

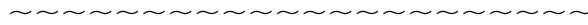
With abstinence I became clear headed and began having clarity of thought. I stopped obsessing about food and began noticing life around me. I began to live. There were days when I felt such gratitude

(Continued on page 4)

LETTERS FROM WITHIN (continued from page 3)

and joy in my life and a calm that I never knew. Don't get me wrong, I have lots of days when I feel like the first day I walked into these rooms but I know that this too shall pass and I don't have to eat over it - this is the miracle.

I am so grateful for abstinence both physical and emotional. I look forward to growing in the program. I look forward to each day when I will comprehend the word serenity and know peace. Linda K



The OA Board of Trustees met this past November and changed the suggested meeting format to allow more people to feel welcome at meetings and identify with group members.

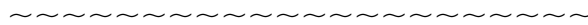
Old Format: Are there any compulsive overeaters here besides me?

New Format: Whatever problem you may have with food, you are welcome at this meeting. Are there any compulsive eaters here beside myself?

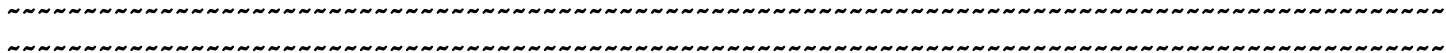
The suggested meeting format document is available and can be downloaded and printed from www.oa.org



Please help IG reps carry the OA news to newcomers. Reps aren't at every meeting, nor is every group member. When an announcement is made please announce it again at other meetings you attend. Thanks!



IG hopes all meetings receive OA information (i.e., current meeting lists, event flyers, phone list, WSO convention forms [for Philadelphia over Labor Day weekend], and the SAIL.). Please let us know if you are not. Each meeting's literature person or secretary needs to make extra copies for your group. Please make sure each of your newcomer packets has a current meeting list.



SEASON TOPIC: "THE MOST IMPORTANT LESSON I LEARNED FROM OA."

The most important what! I've been grieving birthdays, etc. - came bittersweet memories,



lesson I learned in OA is I don't have to break my abstinence no matter the death of my father this past year. The "firsts" - holidays, other family's around, and I was grieving fresh again - the sadness, the tears, the and the gratitude that he didn't have to suffer with his illness any longer than he did. For this compulsive overeater I ate whatever to numb, for comfort ever since I discovered "my friend the food". I forgot what I learned when I broke my abstinence on what would have been my father's birthday. I numbed for a minute as I began a binge. I had been to an OA meeting just before my planned binge and, like I've heard many times in 12 step meetings, the only thing that stands in the way of my addiction is my Higher Power; that no human power can relieve me. This is so true! I'm an addict. Period. I numbed for a minute, then the feelings I had been suppressing came at me full force. I had no way of stopping them, so I bawled my eyes out in front of my Creator and cat. I learned that day that I am no longer where I had been when I started in OA, nor DO I WANT TO BE. OA has gifted me with that. I have been abstinent from that point, a day at a time. What I'm told in the "rooms" is, if I don't put that first compulsive bite of food in my mouth, I don't have to experience the torture of my food addiction. Besides, the grief will return two-fold in intensity, so I may as well feel what I feel and go through it. I'm still not perfect at grieving; I'm a "work-in-progress" today. Today I choose abstinence, a choice for a very long time I believed I didn't have. Today I know it's a choice which is truly a miracle, my life as I know it is a miracle because I chose to let go and trust my Higher Power enough to see what could possibly unfold, a day at a time, moments at a time if it comes down to it. I believe my Higher Power, whom I continue to thank daily, is taking care of me. I ask for help and, to the best of my ability, walk along the path my Creator wants. Anonymus



THE NEXT SAIL WILL ARRIVE DURING THE HOLIDAYS, SO THE SEASON TOPIC WILL BE "STAYING ABSTINENT DURING THE HOLIDAYS" (THIS MIGHT BE A REPEAT TOPIC EVERY YEAR, BASED ON INTEREST. STAY TUNED!) SOME IDEAS: GIVING/GETTING FOOD AS GIFTS; DEALING WITH THE EMOTIONAL ASPECTS; GOING TO/GIVING PARTIES, DEALING WITH FAMILY, OR ANYTHING ELSE HOLIDAY RELATED...

PLEASE SEND SUBMISSIONS TO KAREN S (CONTACT INFO ON PAGE 1.) DEADLINE 11/15/07.