

Chairs Message

Warm greetings to all my fellow OA members in Region IV! I have been thinking a lot about unity lately – not surprising, since OA worldwide just celebrated Unity Day on February 28th. A press release from the World Service Office states “Since 1986, on the last Saturday of every February at exactly 11:30am Pacific Standard Time, members of Overeaters Anonymous worldwide have observed a moment of silence to express solidarity with one another. “Unity Day” was created by the OA Fellowship to help members from all walks of life focus together on their common goal — recovery from compulsive overeating.” When I look around the room at my local meetings, I see a wide variety of people – men and women, young and more “seasoned”, newcomers and long-timers. Some of us have a strong relationship with a God of our understanding, and others struggle with the very idea of a power greater than. People identify themselves as anorexics, bulimics, food addicts, compulsive eaters, and compulsive overeaters. Many of us identify with more than one aspect of the disease. Some of us came in quite overweight. Others come in at or below a normal weight, but the obsession with food and weight is making their lives unmanageable. The temptation is to look around the room and focus on what makes us different.

Unity Day brings the focus back to what draws us together. First, we all suffer from the disease of compulsive eating in one or several of its many manifestations, and our lives are unmanageable. By ourselves, we lack the power to change. But at my Big Book meeting last Thursday, we read from the beginning of Chapter 2, “there is a Solution”. It reminded me that though we share a common peril, that is not what really joins us together. What we have in common is our solution – a spiritual awakening, gained through working the 12 Steps of this program, which gives us the power to do what we cannot do alone – recover from compulsive eating. All too often we focus on other aspects of our programs – our food plans, or how we use the tools to support our program. That is certainly a very important part of my program, although I doubt that mine looks exactly like yours. But everyone I know who has recovered from a “seemingly hopeless state of mind and body” has done so in exactly the same way – by abstaining from compulsive eating (which relieves us of the physical compulsion to eat) and working the 12 steps (which relieves the mental obsession that keeps sending us back to the foods and behaviors that trigger the compulsion). Notice that I didn’t try to say which one should come first, but I believe both are essential.

Another important part of our program is the 12 Traditions. Our Traditions focus on the practices that enable us, individually or as groups, to work together effectively, to maintain unity, and to relate to the world outside OA in such a way that our essential message is protected and conveyed to those seeking a solution.

The final thing that keeps us together is service. Compulsive eating is a disease of isolation. My disease makes me selfish and self-centered, focused solely on what I want.

But service takes me out of myself and helps me to focus on God's will and how I can be of service to my fellow compulsive eaters. Doing service above the group level helps me learn to compromise . The reason most people give for not doing service above the group level is all of the conflict between warring factions. I am happy to say that I have never experienced that. At the World Service Business Conference, where passions sometimes ran high, it was always evident that even when members disagreed strongly, they did so not out of a sense of selfishness, but because they sincerely believed that their way would be best for the fellowship as a whole and help more people to find the recovery that they had found.

The Region IV Spring Assembly is just around the corner, followed in less than 2 weeks by the World Service Business Conference. Once again, compulsive eaters form around the Region and world will come together to try to get OA's message of recovery to all those who still suffer, both in and outside of OA. Isn't that what Unity is really all about?

In love and fellowship, your trusted servant,
Teresa K, Region IV Chair

Trustee Message

While preparing for Unity Day, I started thinking of how grateful I am to find a place for people like me who have trouble with food. I never felt this way in any other diet club. I only felt competition there and always was the loser (in the competition, not the weight). OA is the first and only place where I felt the unity and support. The problem (of not being able to handle food on my own) brought us together, and the solution (HP through working the 12 steps) keeps us together. This is the miracle that I have been looking for all my life, and really did not know what I was looking for or that I would ever find it. I am grateful to have the support of all of us in this program that keeps my life worth living.

I am looking forward to seeing many of our intergroups represented in Rock Island, Illinois for the spring assembly in April. Besides contacting unaffiliated and affiliated groups, our outreach committee have worked diligently to present a very clear pamphlet of "What is Region IV?" and highlighting what Region IV can do for each intergroup of group. Ways and means are continuing to have the rainbow shirts and magnets (one with a fun saying, and one with information) available, and our region representatives are using the funding available to be able to have more intergroups join us for the assemblies and for the World Service Business Conference. It is great to see our region having more representation at Conference. Please discuss in your intergroup the possibility of sending someone to region and world assemblies.

April will also be a first assembly for our new board, and I hope everyone will join together to make it an easy and successful assembly. I am sure everyone will join me in thanking our two former board members, Jan B and Ann H. for all the work they have given (and hope to continue to give in a different way) to our region.

I also hope that intergroups bring their information to put on the region web site. The media is a wonderful way for intergroups without web sites, to get the information of their events available for the whole region to be aware. Also bring ideas of what your region may benefit from the region web pages.

WSBC will be April 27 through May 1, 2004 in Albuquerque, NM. The Dignity of Choice will be presented for discussion and vote. The WSO BOT has approved the proposal for a convention to be held in 2007. There is hope that information of the where and when of this may be presented at the WSBC.

Once again, the topic of downloader for your group is recommended. Find a member in your group or intergroup that is willing to download materials or information from the web site. There is so much available to the groups by taking advantage of this.

I have always tried to save the best for last, so I am ending this by talking about our convention in Omaha, Nebraska on July 9 – 11, 2004. I have been hearing more and more talk of recovery in the last few years, and look forward to the sharing that we can all be part of there. Omaha knows how to put on a good time, so we will have great sharing and fun. It will be at the DoubleTree Guest Suites, so look for the information in this newsletter.

Thank you for sharing the journey,

Connie H

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Region IV Mission

~To make OA known throughout the Region so that anyone with the desire to stop eating compulsively may find an OA group, and provide support so that any OA member can have recovery from compulsive eating through the Twelve Steps of Overaters Anonymous~

From the Editor:

Spring Assembly is upon us. I am sure everyone will find happiness, joy and freedom in the group conscience of our region.

This is a “convention year” for region IV. I hope to see many of you at the convention.

To build and strengthen the unity of Region IV is part of our statement of purpose. I am grateful for this publication and all the people that contribute to this effort.

In Service, *Angie C.*

Region IV Spring Assembly April 16-17, 2004

AGENDA

Friday, April 16, 3:00 PM Meeting of the Region IV Board

7:30 to 9 PM Intergroup Sharing Meeting

Saturday, April 17

8:00 AM Orientation for New RR (everyone welcome):

[You can bring your breakfast]

8:00 AM RR Registration (sign the sign-in sheet)

8:30 AM Assembly Opening

Serenity Prayer, Preamble, Steps, Traditions, Concepts

Roll Call by Intergroup, new RR's, Visitors, Board & Trustee

Appoint Parliamentarian

Appoint Minutes Approval Committee

Appoint Treasurer's Audit Committee

Credentials Report - Genny C.

Officers' Reports:

Secretary's Report - Genny C.

Treasurer's Report - Cyndy L.

Vice-Chairs' Report – Sheila H.

Trustee's Report - Connie H.

Chair's Report - Teresa K.

Standing Coordinators Reports:

Office - Jana G.

Region IV Manual – Sharon S.

Delegate Funding - Carol S.

Assembly Planning - Bev C.

Committee Meetings:

Convention

Outreach

Ways and Means

Communications

12:00 PM BREAK FOR LUNCH

1:30 PM Reconvene with the Serenity Prayer

Credentials Update - Genny C.

Committee Reports:

Convention

Outreach

Ways and Means

Communications

Presentation/Discussion: WSO Website and Group Handbook

New Business

Election of Secretary

Bylaw amendments

Future Assemblies

* Emergency New Business

Announcements

Adjournment

Responsibility Pledge

Closing

* Contact Chair by Thursday Noon to add Emergency New Business items.
We will break at 5:30 PM and reconvene immediately following the guest speaker, if necessary.

Basket Cases Needed

Region IV Convention is accepting donations for the basket auction.

Intergroups or individual groups are encouraged to make small baskets to be auctioned at the Region IV Convention in Omaha Nebraska this July.

Small and affordable basket ideas may include:

Gift bags with

- Voices of Recovery, For Today and a bookmark
- Big Book and a Just for Today pamphlet
- Candles and a serenity tape
- Disposable camera and scrapbooking pages

If your group is interested in donating a basket, email the Convention Coordinator, Laura M at

lmonen@cox.net

Region IV Convention Update

Entertainment

Minnesota can not do entertainment as they originally planned. They offered their script to anyone else that wants to do it. Kansas City, which had expressed in doing entertainment before has agreed to do it now. They will take Minnesota up on offer of their script. This creates a need for a co-chair for Hospitality since KC was slated to do that.

The requirements for entertainment are in the region iv manual. You should be able to get a copy from your region rep. or you may have one yourself. I will e-mail minn and ask if they are willing to send their script. The entertainment is scheduled for sat night. We can determine what time that will be at assembly.

Publicity

Convention info has been provided to Lifeline, Region IV website, and registration forms to intergroups. Have gotten on call already from someone that will be vacationing in Omaha this summer.

Registration

Have received 3 registrations as of February 22nd.

Copy of email: *Our updated program flyers were mailed out to all intergroups mailboxes on Jan. 20th. Also, you should have received new forms for speakers in the mail also, from Nancy. Please verify that your intergroups have received these forms and get copies out to your members. Remind members that these are revised forms and to discard the old ones.*

Nancy would like the speaker forms returned by April 1st.

We have not received any registrations yet, so encourage your members to send theirs in for the earlybird discount.

Have you sent yours?

Hospitality

This committee needs an intergroup to co-chair since Kansas City is now doing entertainment. An email has been sent requesting one.

Program

Revised speaker forms were mailed out to all groups. Nancy would like them back by April 1st (no foolin).

Hotel Liaison

Verified room cost. The cost of the rooms are \$99.00 for three people. Includes breakfast. Additional people are \$10.00 per person including breakfast.

Taping Nothing to report.

Dance Nothing to report.

Basket Auction Nothing to report.

Misc Suggestions

In St Louis they have had some smaller baskets/ smaller nice items that would work better as the silent auction part and that way we could do the drawing like around 4-5 o'clock for those who don't stay for the whole thing or are hesitant to do the oral auction. Is there going to be a ways and means room with gently used items for sale and or clothing etc? What kind of room space are you going to have for setting up the baskets ahead of time for viewing the items ahead of time. Is there someone there that could buy gift certificates of things or places in Omaha? Did that work at the assembly last year if it was done? Are we doing a drawing for giving away free registration and or banquet ticket? I wasn't in on the convention committee so sorry if I am asking questions that you all have already discussed? Sometimes some groups do a quilt and raffle it off all through the convention that usually goes over pretty good it is sometimes hard to find someone to make the quilt but I was thinking about that for one of St. Louis's items. Also another

way of making money is if each IG that has an event in the year gives a free registration it could help get more people to their event and it could help region raise money.

These will be discussed at the Spring Assembly.