



NOVATION!

NOVA Outreach Intergroup MARCH! 2003

OA NOVA Special Events Wrap Up:

Looking Back, Looking Ahead

As OAs of the Northern Virginia and the Washington metropolitan area entered 2003 and as we coped with not only our disease but this snowy and blustery winter with lots of snow, ice and rain, NOVA IG sponsored two special events in the first two months of the year. The Promises Meeting on 18 January--co-sponsored by the Dunn Loring and Idylwood 10 am meetings--was attended by at least 80 OA members. In the candlelight, we had great speakers who shared on the Promises and time for fellowship.

NOVA IG and DC IG co-sponsored Unity Day. On a rainy 22 February, 24 brave OAs from Virginia, the District, and Maryland came through the deluge to hear experience, strength and hope from those who shared on the 3rd and 5th Traditions as well as the 12th Step.

Among the highlights were:

- Spiritual capsules distributed by one of the speakers, such as "To us the realm of Spirit is broad, roomy. all inclusive, never exclusive or forbidding to those who earnestly seek," from the Big Book Chapter "We Agnostics."
- Challenges to the audience by the speakers: what service would we do to help carry the message to other compulsive overeaters and perhaps add to the DC 16 Public Information

on "Carrying the Message'?

- Sharing from the speakers what they received from the meetings they attended. All of these words helped us to affirm that--as we live well and are well one day at a time--we are responsible to ensure that the hand of OA be here and available to anyone, anywhere who asks for help.

Thanks to all who spoke--Gwen, Barbara M, Nicole, Gail, Dick, Zanthia, Diana and Paige. And thanks to Kristin and Elizabeth who did registration and coffee. The relapse-recovery skit presented by Bret, Amy and Kristin reminded us recovery is one day at a time and to extend that hand to those who still suffer as we heard, "Keep coining back no matter what."

Hope to see you at a meeting soon. Our next event will be the Wellspring retreat with DC/MD IG in June 2003.

--Barbara

UNITY DAY SPEAKER ON THE BLESSINGS OF MEETINGS

At Unity Day, Gail spoke about a survey of NOVA meetings that showed the wide variety of meeting formats available to us in NOVA. Here is a transcript of her remarks:

As the Preamble says, OA is a fellowship of individuals but meetings are the vehicle that embody that fellowship. My name is Gail and I am a compulsive overeater. I cannot control my eating alone, and if I become careless about attending meetings I will be thrown back onto my own weakness.

At meetings, we share our experience, strength, and hope. Somehow when I am willing to share at a

meeting, the fellowship provides strength and encouragement. In the same way, when others share I learn and grow from their wisdom and their struggles.

When I was asked to facilitate this part of Unity Day, I consulted the "Where & When." As I tried to contact someone from every meeting. I was struck by two things:

- Not only are we blessed with a wealth of meetings--7 days a week, morning, noon, and night--we are also blessed with a breadth of meetings. We have meetings on virtually all the literature, Steps, and Traditions. We have meetings for men, youth, newcomers, 100 pounders, commuters, early risers, late-nighters, relapsers, and HOW supporters.

I have a core of three meetings which bless me when I attend them. One focuses on the OA Brown book, giving me a snapshot of my story as the writers describe their journeys to recovery. Another travels through all 12 Steps and celebrates anniversaries, which always humble me. My third meeting focuses on Step 11, in which we share how we are seeking to improve our conscious contact with the God of our understanding.

A good week for me is attending one of these meetings. A better week is attending two. And my best week will find me at all three. On the flip side, when I do not feel like going to a meeting, I had best be aware that my cunning, baffling, and powerful disease has resurfaced. Having survived a 12 year relapse, I know I am recovering only one day, one meal, and one meeting at a time. Today I also know I will never outgrow my need for the strength, fellowship, and love I receive at

meetings.

Thanks to everyone who serves as a "Where & When" contact and who took the time to share your thoughts.

A PORTRAIT OF SOME OF OUR MEETINGS

Here in their own words is what members told Gail about our meetings!

- SUNDAY 11AM 11TH STEP MEETING "is a long-time meeting that reads the 11th Step from the OA or AA 12 & 12 on the first Sunday of the month. The other Sundays we have a speaker. We always focus on the 11th Step, and there is a lot of recovery. Newcomers are welcomed and volunteers devote a special time to them after each meeting. The 11th Step prayer is read twice at each meeting."
- SUNDAY EVENING 7 PM CENTREVILLE MEETING "is a small, Intimate meeting. We focus on newcomers as a reminder of where we were."
- MONDAY 7 AM ARLINGTON SUNRISE FOR TODAY MEETING "is an open discussion meeting centering on the daily reading from OA's 'For Today.' We take turns sharing our thoughts on the meditation for the day."
- MONDAY 5PM WASHINGTON FARM MEETING "is in the Mt. Vernon area. It is a small, safe, friendly meeting where we read OA conference-approved and AA literature. Each week, the leader chooses from a wide selection of literature, so the readings vary, but we always focus on recovery."

We are strong on fellowship helping each other with transportation. and occasionally having an abstinent picnic or dinner together."

- MONDAY 7 PM MANASSAS FAITH, HOPE AND CHARITY HOW MEETING . "This meeting has met in Manassas for over 20 years. We meet for 1 1/2 hours to study the Steps. The third week of each month is devoted to the Tradition of the month and a group conscience meeting. Although the group follows the HOW format, we welcome all. We are grateful for the miracles in OA and are willing to share our experience, strength, and hope with other OA's."
- MONDAY 7:30 PM OAKTON HUNDRED POUNDERS MEETING. "At this meeting we focus on needing to lose or having lost 100 pounds. There is a lot of laughter and we are a good mix of OA veterans and newbies."
- MONDAY 8PM BURKE MEETING. "This is my home meeting. What I like most about it is that I know these women and they know me. They have seen me at my best and worst. We have shared details of our lives with each other. And we all keep coming back! It is a close-knit group--pretty much the same 8 women every week. The meeting revolves around literature--we read the Big Book and the OA and AA 12 & 12. Recovery is in the Steps; we stick close to them. These women are a wonderful support group. Not only do we

share the same affliction, but also we share the same life Issues.

That is why my home meeting is so important to me. I love my group and OA. Thank God I'm a compulsive eater. Thanks for asking me to write this."

- TUESDAY NOON RESTON BROWN BOOK MEETING "We read from the second edition of the book 'Overeaters Anonymous.' After the reading, one of us starts by sharing their story. There is usually plenty of time for sharing. There is a good mix of those who want to stop eating compulsively and those who are already abstinent. The first Tuesday of the month we read the corresponding Step from the OA '12 & 12.' This is a growing meeting of 8 to 10 people. Come check us out!
- TUESDAY 7:30 PM TYSON'S NEW GROWTH MEETING. "We are a Step meeting reading from the AA '12 & 12,' plus we have a speaker. Good mix of folks from Virginia and Maryland, lots of literature. We sit around a table, but there are some comfy couches available. There is a strong commitment to abstinence."
- WEDNESDAY 7 PM ANNANDALE HOW MEETING . "Come and see. Attend many meetings and form your own opinions!"
- WEDNESDAY 7 PM ALEXANDRIA HOW MEETING. "We focus on the OA 12 & 12 and the 7 HOW tools."
- WEDNESDAY 7 A SPRINGFIELD EARLY BIRD CATCHES THE

ABSTINENCE MEETING. "We read 'On Awakening' from the Big Book and read and discuss a story from the OA 'Abstinence'. book. This is a nice meeting, small and intimate. usually about 5 people."

- WEDNESDAY 7:30 PM LEESBURG WEDNESDAY NIGHT HOPEFULS. "This meeting follows a traditional format. The first Wednesday of the month we read the Step of the Month. The second Wednesday is the Tradition. This is one of the few meetings where people can hear the entire Traditions read and discussed. The remaining Wednesdays are open discussions, topic suggested by the leader."
- THURSDAY 6:15 PM ARLINGTON COMMUTERS' MEETING. "This is a small- to medium-sized meeting. It is in the early evening, which allows people to come straight from work. It is a discussion meeting, using AA and OA literature. There is a steady core of regulars. The format is simple--each person reads a paragraph or two and comments on it. The leader for the evening is chosen randomly and follows a simple written format. The group is warm and friendly and welcomes new faces."
- THURSDAY 7:30 PM A NEW BEGINNING RELAPSE RECOVERY MEETING. "I'm happy to say the meeting is going well and averages about 10 people. Contrary to what some might think, we focus not just on recovery from relapse but also on preventing it. On the

first Thursday we read a story from 'New Beginnings,' on the third Thursday we read from the 12 Step Within Handbook, 'Been Slippin' and Sliding?' and then journal. The remaining Thursdays we have speakers."

- FRIDAY 7 PM ARLINGTON HOW STEP MEETING. "I keep coming back because I want to abstain from compulsive eating!"
- SATURDAY 9 AM RESTON STEP MEETING "This meeting has been in existence a long time. It is a large meeting with a lot of recovery and available sponsors. Every week we read a Step and discuss it. The last Saturday of the month is reserved for anniversary celebrations or open discussion. We are discussing starting a beginners meeting. More information about this very soon!"
- SATURDAY 6 PM ARLINGTON SATURDAY NIGHT MEETING. "This is a long-time meeting that focuses on literature. For many years we've been the only Saturday night meeting and are happy to be able to continue this service. Sometimes we have a large group, sometimes small, but we always focus on the recovery to be found in the literature."

Makes you want to attend a meeting, doesn't it?

Announcing...

New Sunrise Meeting Being Contemplated. Several of us would like to start a sunrise meeting on Tuesday

and Thursday from 6:45 to 7:45 AM in the Beltway and Rt. 50/Gallows Rd. area, but we want to ensure enough interest exists. Please email Linda M. at lmcanulty@cox.net or call Amy or Jim at 703-204-0181 to let us know if you are interested in attending one or both meetings. Also, any location suggestions would be appreciated!

Sunday 11th Step Meeting has MOVED UP Gallows Road from Fairfax Hospital! As of 2 March, the meeting begins at 11 am--newcomer's meeting at noon--at Inova Conference Center at 2990 Telestar Court.

Sunday Afternoon Workbook Meeting now open! The meeting runs from 5 to 6 pm at Hope Lutheran Church, 4600 Ravensworth Rd in Annandale. Join anytime in March, then commit to meeting to work the steps for about 18 months. Call Diane @ (703) 813-6313 for more information.

Send your NOVATION sharing to kristinkristk@aol.com by April 15

UNKNOWN AUTHOR ON THE SERENITY PRAYER
 God, grant the the serenity to accept
 with open hands
 with unclenched fists
 with gentle waiting
 with lightness
 the things I cannot change
 the events beyond me
 the persons I want to control
 the friends I want to be different
 the river that is flowing,
 the courage to charge the things I can

my fear of letting go
 my reluctance to really believing
 my focus on listening
 my fear of silence
 and the wisdom to know the difference
 depending on the Power within
 believing in my connectedness
 convinced I am not alone
 aware of the energy within and without.



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Support NOVA IG

We meet the third Saturday of each month at 10 am at Immanuel Methodist in Annandale, Heritage Drive, near Route 236 & Beltway. Show up for service!