

CNMI NEWSLETTER

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Central New Mexico Intergroup

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It is the policy of Overeaters Anonymous and the Central New Mexico Intergroup that anyone is welcome at any open OA meeting. The third tradition states that the only requirement for OA membership is a desire to stop eating compulsively.

Step & Tradition of the Month

Step Five: Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

Tradition Five: Each group has but one primary purpose - to carry its message to the compulsive overeater who still suffers.

Intergroup Meeting

Your Intergroup usually meets the 1st Saturday of each month from 9:00-10:45 am at Central United Methodist Church, 201 University Blvd N.E., Albuquerque. The next Intergroup Meeting will be June 6, 2015. Everyone is welcome at all Intergroup and Committee meetings!

June Newsletter Deadline: Friday, May 29, 2015. Please e-mail news, announcements, and recovery stories to ocnmi@gmail.com. You can also snail mail them to CNMI Newsletter Editor P.O. Box 30273, Albuquerque, NM 87190-0273.

Email Newsletter Recipient Reminder

If you wish to receive the newsletter via e-mail, please e-mail the editor at ocnmi@gmail.com. **For those with Macintosh computers:** Please be sure that you have the CNMI OA Newsletter editor's e-mail address in your contacts list/address book to prevent the newsletter from being sent directly to your Spam folder (or not delivered at all).

Calendar

1. May 16 - Convention Planning Committee meeting 9:00am in Southwest "A" Room at Presbyterian Hospital (1100 Central S.E.). Contact Kathy M. at 505-450-6747 or picardysmom@yahoo.com.
2. May 16 - Young Person's Event 1:00 - 3:00pm at the Aquinas Newman Center at UNM, 1815 Las Lomas Rd. N.E., Albuquerque. Contact Anna S. at 505-573-9482 or Carol Sp. at 505-262-2839.
3. September 25 - 27 - "Recovery: Land of Enchantment" - CNMI hosts the Region III Convention & Assembly at Hotel Albuquerque at Old Town. (Also see the article in this newsletter.)

4. October 16, 17, & 18, 2015 - Northern NM OA Intergroup is sponsoring a silent retreat at the Benedictine Monastery in Pecos, NM. Brochures are available at meetings.

For more information on upcoming events in Region III, see the website at www.oaregion3.org.

Meeting Changes & Updates

Changes to **Southern New Mexico** meetings:

1. **Monday 7:00pm meeting in Las Cruces** is cancelled.
2. **New meeting in Las Cruces: Wednesday 6:30pm** at ABW Living Tree Wellness Center, 1210 N. Main, Las Cruces. Contact is Tricia at (575)479-7051.
3. **New meeting in Silver City: Friday 6:00pm** at Gila Regional Medical Center - Boardroom, 1313 E. 37th St., Silver City. Contact is Arturo at (575)538-8779.

Please remember to e-mail meeting changes to ocnmi@gmail.com, so they can be included in the next newsletter, as well as being updated on the meeting list and on CNMI's website. Thanks!

Thank You, WSBC Volunteers!

I'm writing this article as World Service Business Conference is getting started. The delegates are arriving, the trustees are holed up in a conference room, workshops and OA meetings have commenced. The conference - the voice and authority of Overeaters Anonymous - is in session.

And volunteers, from Albuquerque and points distant, are here. Volunteers support the representatives of OA from all over the world as they converge to do the business of guiding our fellowship. I know from feedback from delegates and trustees in years past that our efforts are much appreciated, so I want to personally thank everyone who gave their time, talents and enthusiasm to volunteer at WSBC. You all rock!

Kathy M.
Acting WSBC Volunteer Coordinator

Message from the Chair

The Miracle of Abstinence

"The Miracle of Abstinence" was the theme of this year's World Service Business Conference. Is abstinence a miracle, a wondrous thing that just happens, or is it the result of hard work? Maybe it's both.

I spent about 22 years of my life binge-eating sweets and purging so I wouldn't gain weight. My addiction got

worse over time, as this disease does. It got to the point where I rotated grocery and convenience stores because I was embarrassed for the employees to see me buying large quantities of my binge foods every single day. When I became aware that something was wrong with this, I tried to stop, but I couldn't. I was powerless. I kept failing day after day and I felt ashamed, demoralized.

I was led to OA in 1989, but it was 4 years more before I was given the willingness to let go of my sweet binge foods. It's rare now that I feel the desire for the foods that used to rule my life. Today I am "in a position of neutrality" with those items, "safe and protected" as it says in the Big Book. This is truly a gift, a miracle.

But I have to work to keep this gift. To the best of my ability today I have to work the steps, use the tools, apply the traditions and concepts, and practice the principles of the program in all my affairs. I ate to keep from feeling my feelings. The program is a guide to how to feel my feelings without turning to food. When I rest on my laurels, when I get complacent and forget what works, I slip.

Today I have an action plan that keeps me in recovery instead of in the food. I have a plan of eating, which I commit to a sponsor. I write down what I've eaten at the end of the day so I and HP are aware of what I've eaten. I pray each morning to my Higher Power, expressing my gratitude and asking blessings for those I know are facing difficulties. I turn my food and my weight over to HP every day, and I turn over what challenges me as often as I think of it, and as soon as I perceive an internal struggle. I attend meetings on a regular basis and I do a lot of service, which keeps me around others in recovery and puts me face to face with my character defects, challenging me to place principles before personalities. This is what works for me. And as they used to say in Missouri, "if it ain't broke, don't fix it."

These behaviors have become habits now and it feels like something is missing when I don't do them. My old way of life centered around not eating, bingeing and purging - hiding from life. I was given abstinence and that is a miracle, a gift not of my own making. Today I know I have a choice: stop doing what works and lose my life as I now know it, or work the program and keep the gift. Seems like a no-brainer. I choose the miracle of abstinence.

In OA love and service,
Kathy M.

From the Editor

It seems that lately I've been starting my article with the same phrase: "It's been a difficult month..." and April was no different. My mom passed away at the beginning of the month and, while her passing was not unexpected, it still has left me reeling.

I am finding it very hard to do even the normal things - I just want to be left alone to get my bearings and deal with the loss. Unfortunately, life doesn't work that way. I am still expected to show up for work and function in a somewhat normal fashion, despite a lot of chaos going on there, too.

I am still expected to meet my other commitments as well, at home and in OA, while having a lot of compassion for myself.

The blessing of being in recovery is that I did not respond to the news of her passing as I did 28+ years ago when my dad passed away - I did not walk to the refrigerator and start eating a sweet confection stored there. This time, I shed some tears, talked with my husband, and went to the 12th Step Within meeting scheduled for that evening. I ate an abstinent meal after the meeting, though I wasn't hungry, because I know that not eating is a set-up for me. I was able to feel my feelings throughout that evening and in the days that followed. I did not need to numb myself with food or any other substance. On the contrary, I wanted to feel my feelings, and be present to my family and the many friends who came to offer their support as we bade farewell to my mom.

Another gift of recovery is that many friends in OA reached out to me with love and support during this difficult time, to let me know that I was not alone in my journey.

Because of recovery, I was and am able to walk through the pain abstinely, while also dealing with the rest of my life, for which I am grateful.

Gloria B.

Please submit articles via e-mail at oacnmi@gmail.com or by mail to CNMI Newsletter Editor, P.O. Box 30273, Albuquerque, NM 87190-0273. I look forward to receiving your writing and sharing it with our fellow members.

CNMI Positions Filled & Available

The following positions, along with their terms and abstinence requirements, are still open:

Secretary (2 year term) - abstinence requirement is six months of current abstinence (this is a correction from the previously stated nine months);

Region III Representative (2 year term), and a second Region III Representative (remaining year of current 2 year term) - abstinence requirement is one year of current abstinence.

The **Outreach Committee Chair** position is also open. Thank you to Leonie W. for filling in temporarily on Outreach.

For more information about these open positions, please contact any of the members of the Nominating Committee - Dodie H. at ldoliahawkins@gmail.com or Irine F. at foxiern79@aol.com.

2015 Convention Planning Committee

I'm so excited! People are starting to register for the fall Region III Convention and Assembly. You know, the one being held here in Albuquerque, September 25-27.

Thanks to Pat O., our website manager, you can go online at oa-cnmi.org and register. It's so easy! Or if you prefer, complete the paper registration form that's circulating in meetings. Take advantage of the early registration price break!

No, you won't want to miss the excellent program with Land of Enchantment-themed workshops, or the fabulous entertainment. Haven't you always wanted to try contra dancing? Here's your chance! And see the inspiring slide show of scenery from our own Land of Enchantment.

Come and meet people in recovery from all over our region. See some new faces and hear how they are working their program. The convention and assembly will happen at Hotel Albuquerque in historic Old Town - make it a weekend getaway close to home. Don't wait 'til the last minute. Register today.

Kathy M.
Region III Convention and Assembly Chair

The next committee meeting will be on Saturday, May 16 at 9:00am in the Southwest "A" Room at Presbyterian Hospital, 1100 Central S.E. Please join us.

2015 Convention Ways & Means Committee

Hello Friends,

The craft workshops scheduled for May & June are cancelled, since no one has shown up for the last several meetings. We want to encourage members to make crafts at home for sale at the upcoming Convention. Please call if you still want to learn a craft to make at home or if you need craft supplies for these projects.

See the following article about creating God Boxes to be sold at the Convention.

There will be a silent auction for the raffle items and group baskets that are donated. We will also pick several items related to our theme to sell. There will be a raffle for a quilt and an afghan which are being made. We will also have a 50/50 raffle where half of the money will go to a member and half will go to CNMI.

It is a WE Program and together we can do this.

With love, Irine and Suzanne

Contact information: Irine F. at 505-831-1538 or foxiern79@aol.com and Suzanne at 505-492-2114 or kickingbird7@gmail.com.

Making God Boxes

I bought a God Box at the last Region III Convention held here in Albuquerque in 2009. It was made by a local OA member. I thought it looked like a work of art. It was a red wooden box with cool designs painted on. The cover had the words "GOD BOX" spelled with Scrabble tiles. It was adorned with program chips, shiny pennies, and many beautiful old-fashioned buttons. The back had the Serenity Prayer handwritten and on the inside there was a prayer from p. 251 of the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous. I not only love this box for how it looks, but for how it has been a blessing for my OA program.

In the beginning, I put small scraps of paper with "things to surrender" written on them. This evolved into a nightly ritual with me on my knees writing a Thank You note to HP and/or my 10th Step (or any other Step) for the day. One day at a time, taking this action has strengthened my "conscious contact" with HP. I would like to pass on this gift that was given to me.

For those interested in making a God Box for the Region III Convention, please save a wooden box or any other type of container that you like, along with anything you want to decorate the box with. Some other ideas for decorations are costume jewelry (i.e. old-fashioned earrings); stick-on art from craft stores or anything that strikes your fancy in your home.

The date, time and place for a gathering to make God Boxes will be posted in the June newsletter.

If you have any questions, please call Leonie W. (505)856-6845, Irine F. (505)831-1538, or Suzanne B. (505)492-2114. Please consider joining us, this will be fun!

In service,
Leonie

Bernalillo High School Health Fair

On March 27th, Anna S. (OA Young Persons' Committee Chair) and I attended the Bernalillo High School Health Fair, at the invitation of the Health Teacher. He had seen our booth at the KOB Health Fair in January and was very enthusiastic about our participation.

There were about 50 exhibitors lined up around their spacious gym, and we were impressed with how friendly and professional both the staff and student organizers were! Bernalillo High has almost 800 students of diverse backgrounds including a lot of Native kids from the neighboring Pueblos.

Anna and I had reminded ourselves on the way there that our role was just to offer this program “to all who share our disease”, as the OA responsibility pledge states. As at any Health Fair, there are many people who walk right by the OA table with eyes fixed determinedly forward! But Anna and I estimate we talked to about 150-200 people in a few hours – exhausting but rewarding! Most teens were quiet, just listening and took some literature. There were also the requisite self-effacing jokes about eating too much: “I love pigging out!” one boy told me. But some of the teens’ eyes got wider as I talked about how compulsive overeating was really a spiritual sickness. “That’s me” they almost whispered to themselves.

We told them about online and phone meetings as well as free podcasts from OA.org since there are currently no meetings in Bernalillo. We told them they are welcome at any open OA meeting in Albuquerque or Rio Rancho! We were unprepared for how many adults – school faculty and staff, as well as health-care professionals there as exhibitors – responded strongly to our message. “Yes, that is my problem; I need help, tell me more!”

Next time, we will bring more materials for them! The half-dozen “Introducing OA to the Health-Care Professional” packets disappeared early on! Anna and I had a great time and were well-matched to represent OA – one an overeater and one an anorexic! Coincidentally, we were both wearing hats and someone asked if this was the “Hats Anonymous” booth. I think the brief personal stories we told made more of an impact than “just the facts” about OA. We left feeling very excited and pumped up about our service. The Health Teacher had indicated that, if there was an interest by the students, he would work with us to help them start a Youth-focus OA meeting! And, some of the other exhibitors took our information to attend more Health Fairs in the future!

In service,
Carol Sp.

Lifeline Topics

Submission deadline: **May 15, 2015**

Changing Relationships: The “New Normal”: How have your relationships changed in recovery? What role did accepting your addiction for yourself play? What helped your family and friends accept it for themselves? What is your “new normal”?

Setting Healthy Boundaries: How do you set healthy boundaries in your relationships with loved ones and friends? How do you set healthy boundaries at work and at home? Share your experience, strength and hope for establishing healthy boundaries.

Submission deadline: **June 15, 2015**

Character Defects: An Examined Life: How did you break through your denial and fear to face and acknowledge your character defects? What character defect has been the most troublesome and caused the greatest threat to your recovery? What role has the tool of writing played in coming to terms with character defects?

Serenity in a Nonstop World: What is the role of serenity in your program? What are the benefits of serenity? When does the Serenity Prayer help you most?

Submission deadline: **July 15, 2015**

Great Big Gratitude List: It’s time to count our blessings together! Describe the gifts of the program you have received and share your gratitude for these gifts.

Give Thanks: What role does gratitude play in your recovery? How did gratitude open your eyes to the gifts of the program? What has been your experience with keeping a gratitude list?

IDEA Day: International Day Experiencing Abstinence is November 21, encouraging OA members worldwide to begin or reaffirm their abstinence from compulsive eating. Share your experience, strength and hope related to starting and maintaining abstinence.

Celebrate the Season: How do you maintain abstinence during holidays and celebrations? Share your strategies for shifting the focus away from food, dealing with triggers and joining the fun.

Holiday Magic: How are holidays in OA different? Share your stories, inspiration and reflections on living the Twelve Steps in times of celebration.

OA.org

Tune in monthly to hear virtual workshops on “*The Importance of Working All Twelve Steps.*”

Join live on the second Sunday of each month, 3-4 p.m. EST. For instructions, see Datebook Calendar on oa.org. Or, to listen anytime, go to the Podcast page on oa.org.

Available for free download now: Step Three. Learn more about Step Three’s critical importance in recovery and how, “Once we compulsive overeaters truly take the Third Step we cannot fail to recover” (OA Twelve and Twelve, p. 27).

Also available: podcasts on Step Zero, Step One, and Step Two.

Groups and service bodies are encouraged to use these podcasts in meetings.