



The Trusted Servant

Summer 2006

YOU MAY HAVE NOTICED ...

that "The Trusted Servant" has changed a little bit. It is the result of the hand-off of responsibilities for editing our newsletter from Jane P. of Brookline, who did great service in this capacity for several years, to Michael P. of Arlington.

What's new:

◆ A new feature, "**My Home Meeting**," which appears just to the right. The idea is not only to help each other get to know about other meetings available to us all, but also perhaps to spread the word on meeting features that are making a difference.

◆ **The meeting list**, which used to be inserted inside the Servant, is now its back page. Please note that we now have an e-mail address to report alterations for the meeting list. It is meetings@metrowest.org.

◆ A **new address** for feedback to the editor of this newsletter, no matter who's doing the service at the time you write. You can use this address to seek corrections, suggest story ideas, or better yet, to offer to write a story for the next issue. The address: servant@metrowestoa.org.

THINGS WE LOVE: My home meeting

Commitment and inclusion

By Elizabeth G.
Brookline

The Sunday night meeting in Brookline (6 p.m., First Presbyterian Church, 32 Harvard St., Brookline Village) has been my home OA meeting since 1986. What keeps me going to this meeting are:

- ◆ I hear human experience, strength, and hope.
- ◆ A commitment to recovery.
- ◆ An emphasis on traditions keeps the meeting safe.
- ◆ It reflects the "broad highway" approach, respecting the variety of individual needs.

Back at the beginning, when I was in desperate isolation, the meeting was a place where I saw and heard people who did what I did with food. It did not matter to me that they talked about these crazy Steps and all this spiritual stuff; they looked great!

Later, as the pink cloud evaporated and life on life's terms set in, the experience I heard taught me how to live abstinently through all situations. I was able to ask for help with work, dating, moving, paying taxes, having babies, and other frightening things.

Because so many of us have been attending the meeting for many years, I can see how some newcomers might feel like "outsiders." We have talked about this in business meetings and I think we've improved our efforts to reach out. But I would still ask newcomers: Please, for your own sake, speak out and ask for help. Higher Power is there, extending the heart and hand of OA to you.

"My Home Meeting" is a regular feature of "The Trusted Servant." If you like your home meeting, please consider sharing about it in a future issue. Write to servant@metrowestoa.org.

WORLD SERVICE BUSINESS CONFERENCE

Read all about it, here or online

Steve M. of Ashland recently returned from the World Service Business Conference in Albuquerque as one of MWI's two representatives. It is traditional for our representatives to report back to Intergroup on the proceedings, and, at least for meetings with Intergroup reps, for word to filter down to meetings.

But nowadays, it's possible to share more broadly. Steve is facile with the Internet (he pushed for creation of our website — and then created it) and this year, he put his skills to use on a blog from the convention. To read his posts, go to metrowestoa.org/wsbc2006 and click on the link on the right under Pages that reads "WSBC 2006 — All Posts In Order!"

Or, you can turn to **Page 2** to read a shorter summary.

Service, *n fr. L. servitium* **1 a** : Contribution to the welfare of others; **1 b** : Contribution to one's own recovery; **2 a** : Endorsed method for weight loss in Overeaters Anonymous, as in, "Service is slimming."

Every word of this newsletter was written, edited, composed, printed, and distributed by peers in OA who believe that when they do service, they get as good as they give. Are you doing enough service to support your recovery?

THINGS WE LOVE: The Traditions

Do 'OA-like' groups have a place in meetings?

By Diane S.

Brookline

Q: Why can't we announce special focus groups, like AWOLs or Big Book Step Study groups, at OA meetings?

A: The Fifth Tradition states, "Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the compulsive overeater who still suffers." We come together as OA members to share the recovery we've been given through working the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions. The message of Overeaters Anonymous is unique. For that reason, we want to avoid diluting it by discussing outside groups during our meetings. Such discussions may confuse newcomers, who might believe that attendance at such groups is required for recovery in OA. We focus our discussions in meetings on our common principles, including honesty, hope, faith, courage, integrity, willingness, and humility.

The focus of AWOLs ("A Way of Life" committed step-study groups) and

non-OA Big Book Step Study (BBSS) groups is also the 12 Steps. However, because these groups are not registered with OA's World Service Office, they are not bound by OA's Twelve Traditions.

AWOLs and non-OA BBSS groups can impose requirements for attendance, such as having a sponsor or missing no more than two sessions in a row. These are inconsistent with OA's Tradition Three, "The only requirement for OA membership is a desire to stop eating compulsively."

Because they are not registered OA meetings, these groups are considered outside enterprises and outside issues. Therefore, discussing them during meetings is inconsistent with Tradition 6, which advises against endorsing outside enterprises, and Tradition 10, which says OA has no opinion on outside issues.

The fellowship has not given an opinion on making non-OA announcements at meetings.

Therefore, each group is free to follow its group conscience; Tradition 4 says, "Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or OA as a whole."

Some groups have decided that permitting non-OA announcements after the closing prayer meets the spirit of the Traditions. Others feel it doesn't, since the only reason members are gathered is for the OA meeting.

When in doubt, the principle of keeping things simple suggests that non-OA events be shared with individuals on a one-to-one basis between meetings.

Sources: *Overeaters Anonymous. The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous. Rio Rancho, NM: Overeaters Anonymous, Inc.; 2002.*

Overeaters Anonymous. OA Handbook for Members, Groups, and Intergroups: Recovery Opportunities. Rio Rancho, NM: Overeaters Anonymous, Inc.; 1999.

REPORT FROM ALBUQUERQUE

Surprising outcomes at WSBC

By Steve M.

Ashland

The results were a little surprising to me but hey, I'm new at this. Here is a summary:

Proposal A: Change the name of the HIPM (Hospital, Institutions, Professional and the Military) Committee to "Professional Outreach" Committee. This passed easily, to great applause and delight.

I voted yes.

Proposal B: Let the Board of Trustees entertain requests from regions eager to co-host the OA World Service Convention. This failed.

I voted yes on this. I think.

Proposal C: Combine the celebrations of Unity Day and OA's Birthday, which I believe is the third Saturday in January. This also didn't pass. It was seen as having limited appeal outside the few US states that have time off from school following the third weekend in February.

I voted yes.

Proposal D: Add exercise as a tool. This also did not pass. Short summary of the debate:

Cons: Yes, physical activity promotes health but doesn't address our primary purpose of refraining from compulsive overeating and working the 12 Steps.

Pros: Yes it does.

I voted no.

Bylaws Proposal 1: Require new intergroups to adopt and submit conforming bylaws within one year of registration with WSO. This was perhaps the most passionately debated item and it failed to pass. Opponents pointed out how hard it would be for IGs in non-English speaking regions. One year is no where near enough time to do this. I was persuaded by this and voted no, despite amendments to try to take the sting out of this.

Bylaws Proposal 2-3: These were

withdrawn because they had the same language as Item 1 but applied to new Regions and new National Language Service boards.

Election of Trustees: All ran unopposed and were elected easily:

Region 3 - Debbie W. (2nd term)

Region 6 - Margaret Ann B. (1st term) Note: Margaret Ann is from Cambridge.

Region 9 - Dominique B. (1st term)

General Service Trustee - Michael B. (2nd term)

An opening remains for a General Service Trustee and applications are being accepted for this. It will be filled by appointment as no applications were received in time for WSBC.

There was a great deal of useful information for our members and member meetings coming from the WSBC workshops, and I'll write more about that in coming months.

Write to chair@metrowestoa.org with questions or comments.

WEEKEND AT GROTONWOOD

Couple leads with experience

By Margaret Ann B.
Cambridge

MetroWest Intergroup's seventh retreat at the Grotonwood Retreat Center was a daffodil-icious weekend, April 20-22. I've been lucky enough to be at all but the last two.

I've come to look forward to rushing out of the city on Friday and pointing toward that don't-blink-or-you'll-miss-it turn off Route 119 in Groton, where I know, at the end end of the rolling, bumpy road, I'll find familiar faces inside the "adult living center," checking us in.

I'll be given a name tag and a room number. I'll drag my stuff into my room, which I may share with one or two other people. The rooms are comfy if slightly shabby, fitting for a summer camp though far nicer than a bunkroom. Bathroom's down the hall.

I'll go back out to the main room, maybe stashing any food I've brought with me in the common refrigerator; maybe make a cup of coffee or tea, and catch up with my pals.

These are the familiar rituals of starting a retreat weekend, and I can already feel myself "retreating" from my everyday life: no phones ringing, no food to be prepared or dishes washed. I know whatever happens over the weekend, I will be refreshed and recommitted to recovery.

This year's retreat featured a first for me: not one, but two leaders — an OA couple! They led us in a study of the steps with sharing and writing, and many other activities.

Having the benefit of two long-term recovering members' experience was wonderful — one has longer continuous abstinence, the other was able to share about what led in and out of relapse. They have different physical needs, food plans, and approaches to exercise, though both consider it vital to their program.

Since we were such a diverse group — age, time in program, the form of our food problems — hearing different approaches for abstinence helped us feel comfortable with our differences, to know that anyone can find a way.

Our leaders also demonstrated what it means to practice these principles in all our affairs. They were very open about the challenges and rewards of walking a spiritual path hand in hand, with humor, affection, and acceptance of each other's differences.

In the sessions, they walked us through the principles of the first three steps with examples from their experience.

A highlight was an activity where we constructed a paper chain, identifying on each link something that has kept us in bondage. On Sunday morning, we took the chain into a circle and broke through the bonds! As I looked around the circle, I recalled stories we had told about overcoming the bondage of self via the 12 Steps.

Breaking the links might have been symbolic, but when we join together in the rooms of OA, we find the power to break through our own chains in a very real way.

GOODBYE 'MOM'

New approach to supporting meetings

By Steve M.

Ashland

At a recent MetroWest Intergroup meeting, it was decided to end the "Meeting of the Month" in favor of a Meeting Support Program. The idea is to make IG resources and experience available to support meetings' activities and needs.

How could IG help? Some discussion produced this list:

Help facilitate a group inventory.

Provide guidance on putting a meeting notice in the newspaper.

Answer or help get answers to Traditions questions.

Provide seed money or literature to a new group.

Help with public-information or newcomer events.

What else could MWI do to help your meeting? That is not a rhetorical question. We really would like to know what MWI can do to help.

The best way to let us know is to send a representative to Intergroup on the 3rd Tuesday of every month in Room 100 of the Allen-Riddle building on the grounds of the Newton-Wellesley Hospital. Meetings start promptly at 7 p.m. and end almost as promptly at 8:30.

If you'd like to speak to one of the MWI meeting regulars, please drop us an e-mail or call. E-mail can be sent to igrep@metrowest.org. Or, call me at 508-277-1662.

MEETING CONTRIBUTIONS

January through April, submitted by treasurer **Julie C.** of Medway

Group	Total	Group	Total
Ashland Sat 10AM	\$266.91	Framingham Sat 4PM	\$129.00
Boston Mon 5:30PM	\$25.00	Framingham Sun 7PM	\$125.00
Boston Sat 9am	\$80.00	Holliston Mon 7PM	\$25.00
Boston Sun 10:00Am	\$150.00	JP Tues 7:15am	\$84.00
Brighton Sat 9:30AM	\$50.00	JP Sun 9AM	\$200.00
Brookline Sun 6pm	\$100.00	Needham Wed PM	\$150.00
Brookline Thurs PM	\$303.00	Needham Wed PM	\$150.00
Brookline Mon PM	\$160.30	Newton Fri Noon	\$100.00
Framingham Wed 7Pm	\$325.00	Southboro Fri 10AM	\$50.00
Framingham Sun 10AM	\$113.10	Sudbury Tues 7:30pm	\$70.00
Framingham Thurs noon	\$46.43	W. Rox bury Tues 7:30PM	\$100.00

On the Web

Sites that might be of interest to compulsive eaters:

◇ metrowestoa.org: Minutes of the most recent Intergroup meeting; the agenda for the next one (see "About OA"); meeting and event information; links to meeting information in places you might be traveling to; and more.

◇ oaregion6.org

◇ oa.org

THE MEETINGS OF METROWEST

BY TOWN

Ashland Sat
Boston Sun, Mon
Brighton Sat
Brookline Sun, Mon, Thurs
Cambridge Fri, Sat
Framingham Sun, Wed, Sat
Holliston Mon
Hudson Wed
Jamaica Plain Sun, Tue
Marlboro Mon
Natick Mon, Tue, Thurs, Fri
Newton Fri
Needham Wed
Somerville Tue
Southboro Thurs, Fri
Sudbury Tue
West Roxbury Tue
Ⓣ Accessible by public transportation
♻ Accessible for special needs

SUNDAY

Boston 10 am, Speaker/Discussion, Our Lady of Victories Rectory, 27 Isabella St., Woody: 781-393-2518
Brookline 6 pm, Speaker/Discussion, First Presbyterian Church, 32 Harvard St., basement Michael: 781-777-9772
Framingham 10 am, Big Book, MetroWest Medical Center, 115 Lincoln St., 1st floor, Amy: 978-443-3690 ♻
Framingham 7 pm, Speaker/Newcomer MetroWest Medical Center 1st Floor, 115 Lincoln St., Susan: 508-405-4544 ♻
Jamaica Plain 9-10:15 am, Speaker/discussion Ⓣ Farnsworth House, 90 South St. Marthajoy: 617-277-9838 ♻

MONDAY

Boston 5:30, Step, Paulist Center, 5 Park St., 3rd floor library Barbara: 617-523-7285 Ⓣ ♻
No meetings on holidays
Brookline 7:30 pm, Women's, First Presbyterian Church, 32 Harvard St., basement. Ⓣ Emily: 617-512-2150
Holliston 7 pm, Step/Tradition, 1st Congregational Church, Route 16/ Washington Street, 1st floor Donna: 508-429-9565
Marlboro Noon, Step, Marlboro Library, West Main Street, Prue: 508-485-7227
No meetings on holidays
Natick 6 pm, Step AA12/12 Morse Institute Library, Route 135. Wendy: 774-217-1972 ♻ Ⓣ

TUESDAY

Natick 10 am, Speaker Temple Israel, 145 Hartford St., Donna: 508-429-9565
Jamaica Plain, 7:15 am, Big Book ♻ Municipal Building, 20 South St., Vivienne: 617-522-3090
Somerville 7:30 pm, Speaker (Step on 2nd Tuesday), United Methodist Church, 14 Chapel St. at College Avenue Elaine: 617-335-7173
Sudbury 7:30-8:45 pm, Speaker/Meditation/Newcomer, St. John's Lutheran Church, 16 Great Rd. (corner of North Road and Route 117) Susan: 978-897-7652
West Roxbury 7:30 pm. Step, VA Hospital, 1400 VFW Pkwy, Room A217, 2nd floor Mary: 617-323-1420 ♻

WEDNESDAY

Framingham 7 pm, Speaker, Metrowest Medical Center, 115 Lincoln St., 2nd floor Lisa M: 508-881-2996 ♻
Hudson 7 pm, Step, 1st United Methodist Church, Felton and Pleasant streets Suzanne A.: 978-562-1366 ♻
Needham 6:45 pm, Literature/steps/traditions Stephen Palmer Center, May and Pickering streets, basement. Judy: 617-527-1705
Park on street ♻
Needham 8 pm, Speaker/newcomer, Stephen Palmer Center, May and Pickering streets, basement. Judy: 617-527-1705
Park on street ♻

THURSDAY

Brookline 7 pm, 100-pounders, First Presbyterian Church, 32 Harvard St., main floor. Rachel: 617-323-2770
Natick 10 am Step, Temple Israel, Hartford Street, 1st floor Fran: 508-653-4840
Southboro 7 pm, H.O.W. St. Matthew Parish, 105 Southville Rd. Virginia: 508-881-8922

Thanks to **Todd C.** of Franklin, who has maintained and published the meeting list for several years.

FRIDAY

Cambridge 7 am, Big Book, Youville Hospital, 1575 Cambridge St., center 1 conference room, Sharon: 617-970-8187 ♻
Natick 7 pm, Step, Metrowest Medical Center, Leonard Morse Campus, Union Street, 2nd floor conference room, Victoria: 508-647-4732 ♻
Newton Noon, Discussion, Elliot Church, 474 Centre St. Constantine: 617-562-8642
Park on street ♻
Southboro 10 am, Big Book, Southboro Library, Routes 30 and 85, Bruna: 508-481-9417 ♻

SATURDAY

Ashland 10-11:30 am, Speaker, St. Cecelia's Family Center, 54 Esty St., Mary: 508-429-2813 ♻
Brighton 9:30 am, Step Study, St. Elizabeth's Hospital, Cambridge Street, 4th floor hospitality room. Joanne: 617-787-5548
Suggested fragrance-free Ⓣ ♻
Cambridge 5:30 pm, Big Book, First Congregational Church, 11 Garden St., Roni: 617-413-7154 ♻
Framingham 4 pm, Discussion, Metro West Medical Center, 115 Lincoln St., 1st floor auditorium Judy: 508-842-2409 ♻

Most meetings last an hour. Exceptions are noted.

To update or correct your meeting's listing, drop a line to meetings@metrowest.org.