



## IDEA DAY, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 15, JOIN US!

Mark your calendars now! IDEA Day, "International Day of Experiencing Abstinence" happens on Saturday, November 15, at 10:00 a.m. at the Stella Maris Hospice, 2300 Dulaney Valley Road, Timonium. This mini-marathon will feature a speaker and a host of meetings with your fellow compulsive overeaters, as well as the November Intergroup meeting. If abstinence has been elusive or fleeting, this day is especially for you. Look for the flyers about IDEA Day, spread the word, and bring your OA friends on this fun day! For information or to volunteer your time and energy, call IDEA Day chair Carol at 410-666-8930.

### THE POWER OF THE DISEASE SOON TO MEET ITS MATCH: THE POWER OF RECOVERY

"Moving beyond the food to a fuller living experience." That is precisely my goal in this wonderful program called OA. It has been my disease, coupled with the powerful obsession of my thoughts that have led me time and time again over the past decades to a position of powerlessness, a place where I binge night after night. I am only beginning to see the fatal nature of this malady and the futility of trying to "manage" my food consumption. Although still just a beginner in OA, I am starting to grasp the power and importance of working the steps and using the tools.

I am beginning to see how staying in my disease is so very self-defeating. God will not spare me from the consequences of overeating. He created my body to be a beautiful and healthy vessel but the addictive disease of compulsive overeating can transform that lovely creature into a body full of excessive fat and disfigurement.

Today I seek recovery and am on the path to putting my recovery first. I must be willing to go to any lengths to achieve victory over this disease. I must seek out the winners, find a hero and do what they did! -- L.J., Hagerstown

### CALL FOR STORIES FOR TWO NEW PAMPHLETS

Here's an opportunity to contribute your experience, strength, and hope and touch people all over the world! The World Service Conference Literature Committee is working on two new pamphlets:

- Stories from black/African-American compulsive eaters sharing their experience and the strength and hope they have found in OA,
- Stories sharing the experience, strength and hope of OA members who suffered anorexia or bulimia or were not overweight or obese when they came to OA and who have found recovery from their obsession with food through the OA program.

Tell us how you felt coming into OA thinking you did not "fit in" because of size, color or background. We want to let newcomers know they belong even if they don't look like most people attending their meetings. Please submit stories preferably typed with a maximum of 750 words. Submissions become the property of OA and may be edited for length, grammar and clarity. Mail stories to World Service Office, Attention: Naomi, P. O. Box 44020, Rio Rancho, NM 87174-4020 or e-mail [nlippel@oa.org](mailto:nlippel@oa.org). OA will notify authors selected for publication.



### QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS BEFORE AND AFTER

**Q: WHY AM I A COMPULSIVE OVEREATER?**

**A (pre-OA):** Before I found the program I was convinced that if you had my life growing up you would be a compulsive overeater, too! It's a wonder I didn't become a drug addict. I didn't get enough love from my mother, etc. etc. I really believed if I knew why I overate, then I wouldn't do it anymore.

**A (today):** I don't know, and even more important, I don't need to know. Self-knowledge avails us nothing (that's somewhere in the [AA Big Book](#)). If God came down to me and told me why, what would that change, I would still need to wake up and be abstinent and committed to the program.

**Q: WHY DO I HAVE TO COMMIT MY FOOD?**

**A (pre-OA):** Every good dieter knows how many calories and fat grams they eat. By the way, what's a commitment?

**A (today):** I am powerless over food. When I commit myself to abstinence I am free, relieving myself from two pests: hurry and indecision. It keeps me from wasting energy.

**Q: WHY ME?**

**A (Pre-OA):** If you had my life you would overeat too. Maybe I am just a weak willed glutton.

**A (today):** Why, I have been given the gift of abstinence!  
--Anonymous, *Bel Air*



## MEMBER SURVEY RESULTS

Here are the results of the member survey in the April 2003 Steppingstone. The Intergroup will use this information to plan future services for the meetings. 20 surveys were submitted. Some had multiple answers and may be counted in responses more than once. How can your meeting use this information to make your meeting better? Let the group conscience decide!

### 1. What works well in your OA meeting?

- 3 Great fellowship
- 2 Speakers once a month
- 3 Reading of OA 12 & 12 and tools / practicing steps
- 1 Meeting is good, more newcomers
- 1 Great level of sharing and trust
- 1 Use 10 minutes to answer newcomer questions
- 1 Small meeting, like intimate setting
- 1 The meeting flows
- 7 No answer

### 2. What needs improvement in your OA meeting?

- 3 Need larger space
- 2 Need more people to lead and open meeting
- 1 Need more focus on food plans and AA Big Book
- 1 Not much understanding or honoring of group conscience concept
- 1 All is well, no improvement needed
- 1 Need more meetings in Baltimore city
- 1 Need to telephone each other more
- 1 Share more about recovery and steps in meetings
- 2 Need to find a way to retain newcomers, especially those who attend only a few meetings and not return.
- 7 No answer

### 3. How can the Intergroup help your meeting?

- 6 Not sure
- 2 Need more sponsors, suggest a marathon or workshop on that?
- 1 Provide Steppingstones to the meeting
- 1 Advertise meetings and workshops
- 1 Increase frequency of meeting list updates
- 2 Need more speakers about service structure of OA
- 1 "Write articles and read Steppingstone"
- 1 Help members focus on recovery
- 1 Have marathons again
- 1 Pay for copies
- 3 No answer

### 4. Sponsorship: What is keeping you from getting a sponsor? What keeps you from having or keeping a sponsor? What keeps you from sponsoring? (Several surveys gave multiple answers.)

- 5 I have a sponsor and I do sponsor
- 2 I have a sponsor
- 2 I have a sponsor, will sponsor when I get more experience.
- 1 I have a sponsor but I don't sponsor, am too needy, tired, or busy
- 3 I don't sponsor, too little experience, strength, hope, and/or abstinence to sponsor
- 2 I don't have a sponsor, new, will get one
- 2 I don't sponsor, shyness and trust issues
- 1 I don't sponsor, fear of responsibility and time commitment
- 1 I don't sponsor, I don't know enough
- 1 I don't have a sponsor, not sure who's working the steps
- 1 Too few male sponsors
- 2 No answer

### 5. Do you know who your Intergroup rep is? Does your meeting have one? Would you hold a group conscience meeting to select one?

- 14 We have a rep
- 2 Don't have a rep, but have an e-mail contact that forwards Intergroup info to the meeting.
- 1 Don't have a rep, would hold group conscience to get one
- 1 Don't know our rep
- 1 Don't have a rep
- 1 No answer

### 6. Would you consider giving service on the Intergroup or Region level?

- 2 Yes, please contact me
- 1 Would like more information
- 2 Already giving service at Intergroup or in another form
- 4 No (written in)
- 10 No answer (there wasn't a "no" option to mark)

## THANK YOU FOR SERVICE!

Our gratitude goes to the following members for volunteering their time and talent to give service that strengthens our fellowship!



- Library Liaison – Carol N., 410-764-7336
- Telephone Clearinghouse – Pat C., 410-329-6244,
- Region Seven Reps – Carol S., 410-666-8930; Joe Y., 410-486-3664; and Mike B., 410-467-7472
- Hotline Coordinator – Tania S., 410-529-4620



Service is best when members rotate service positions, serving for a time then rotating out to allow another member to benefit from giving the same service. Are you in the rotation yet? If not, join in! Talk to your sponsor and other members about offering service at the meeting, Intergroup, Region, and World Service levels. Sponsors, encourage your sponsees to give service! Thank you for giving of yourself!

# Lifeline OA's

monthly magazine written by and for OA members like you and me! Just \$15 a year, even less online! Pay by check, money order, or credit card. Read it and enrich your serenity, abstinence, and recovery! Order online at [www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org), by fax to 1-505-891-4320, or by mail to Lifeline, Box 44020, Rio Rancho, New Mexico 87174-4020.

## A SPECIAL DAY...

A special day is a day to enjoy the people around me, the beauty of nature. I once found momentary pleasure in excess food, but the pleasure of abstinence will last far beyond this day and all its happenings. - For Today, page 151



## GIVING SERVICE TO ENCOURAGE OTHERS TO SERVE

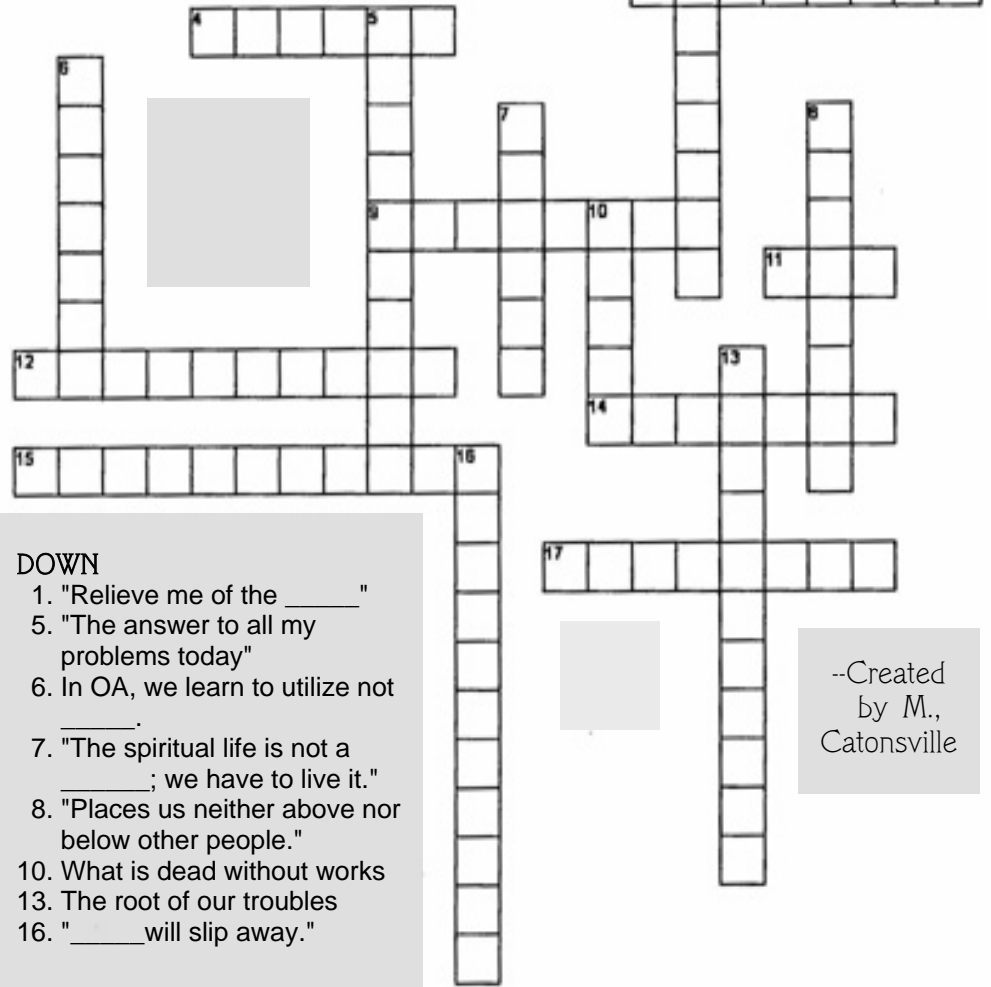
This summer, while on vacation I went to an OA meeting in Cincinnati, Ohio. During readings and announcements, the meeting did something unusual, something I have never seen in our meetings in the Baltimore area. A statement on the importance of service was read. Members were then asked to stand, state their name and the service they provide. I was impressed because it gave notice that people give service; that it's important, and that abstinence is achieved and maintained through the promise of being useful to our fellows. This encourages others to give service, too. Wouldn't it be neat if our meetings did this? Would you ask for a group conscience for your meeting to ask this? I sure will! --M.B., Baltimore

### ACROSS

2. We have to quit playing \_\_\_\_\_.
3. "We can't handle life through \_\_\_\_\_ alone."
4. "Our eating and our attitudes toward food are not \_\_\_\_\_."
9. Cunning, baffling, and \_\_\_\_\_.
11. "One of the most difficult of the 12 steps."
12. The number one offender
14. Change begins with \_\_\_\_\_.
15. The key to Step Two (and all the steps)
17. "We will be amazed before we are halfway through."

**SUBSCRIBE NOW**  
TIME FOR SOME FUN!

**CROSS WORD!**



### DOWN

1. "Relieve me of the \_\_\_\_\_"
5. "The answer to all my problems today"
6. In OA, we learn to utilize not \_\_\_\_\_.
7. "The spiritual life is not a \_\_\_\_\_; we have to live it."
8. "Places us neither above nor below other people."
10. What is dead without works
13. The root of our troubles
16. "\_\_\_\_\_ will slip away."

--Created by M., Catonsville

## SPECIAL THANKSGIVING GRATITUDE MEETING - NOVEMBER 27, 9:00 A.M.

The Thursday morning Hiss Memorial meeting has arranged for a special Thanksgiving Day gratitude meeting. The meeting will be held at St. John's Lutheran Church, 8808 Harford Road, Parkville. This is just off Exit 31 of the Beltway and before Putty Hill Road. The Hiss Memorial meeting will not be held that day in lieu of this special meeting. Mark your calendars! We in recovery have so much for which to be thankful! For information about this meeting, contact Irma C. at 410-663-2799.

## 2004 INTERGROUP OFFICER ELECTIONS AT DECEMBER INTERGROUP MEETING

The Baltimore Area Intergroup is accepting nominations of OA members for election as officers for 2004. All offices are up for nomination and election for a one-year term. Serving as an officer is an excellent way to give service, maintain abstinence, and deepen one's recovery. Here are brief descriptions of each office, as paraphrased from the Intergroup By-Laws:

The **CHAIR** prepares an agenda for and conducts Intergroup meetings, consults with Intergroup officers and committee chairs in decision-making processes, maintains or oversees maintenance of Intergroup files and record, holds periodic Executive Board meetings. Also, arranges for audit of the books every three years. Estimated time to perform these duties is five to nine hours a month.

The **VICE CHAIR** fills in for the Chair when necessary, participates in Intergroup and Executive Board meetings, regularly contacts all meetings in the Intergroup to offer assistance and determine validity of group for inclusion in the meeting directory. Also, maintains meeting directory and forwards information to the World Service Office, updates contact lists of meetings, maintains listing of Intergroup meeting attendees and services they perform. Estimated time to perform these duties is four to eight hours a month.

The **SECRETARY** attends Intergroup and Executive Board meetings, keeps meeting minutes including presenting minutes for review at next meeting and maintains a permanent record, takes roll at Intergroup meetings, keeping records of which meetings are and are not represented. Also maintains required correspondence and dispenses communication, mails Intergroup meeting records

and newsletters to the Region Trustee, exchanges newsletters and event announcements with other Intergroups, keeps a supply of By-Laws for distribution upon request. Estimated time to perform these duties is six to eight hours a month. Some years, office is split into two offices: **RECORDING SECRETARY** and **CORRESPONDING SECRETARY**.

The **TREASURER** attends Intergroup and Executive Board meetings, pays Intergroup bills, maintains and balances the financial accounts, accepts and acknowledges all donations, keeps financial records. Also, provides a monthly Treasurer's Report, keeps three years of financial records available for review at all Intergroup meetings, projects budget and advises Intergroup of feasibility of expenses, presents books for audit every three years. Estimated time to perform these duties is four to eight hours a month.

The maximum time to serve as an officer is three years by when service rotation is required by the Intergroup By-Laws. Our current Chair, Kathy; Secretary, Alan; AND Treasurer, Michael W. will be rotating out of their positions this December! Your time and talent will help the Intergroup to provide vital services to support Overeaters Anonymous in central Maryland. Think of the time commitment as "going to an extra meeting each week." Then do it! You will benefit with the joy of helping in a way that will impact many in and soon to be in recovery. To place your or another member's name in nomination, please contact the Nominating Committee: Carol S. at 410-666-8930, Caryn M. at 410-372-0074, or the current officers, whose contact information is on the back of this Steppingstone.

## SPONSORS, NIGHT OWLS, AND SPEAKERS

Service is an important tool to give and keep our recovery from compulsive overeating. Intergroup asks members to give service as Sponsors, those committed to abstinence and working the Steps and Traditions to the best of their ability that are willing to help others; Night Owls, those willing to take calls late at night. Speakers are those who speak at meetings about their experience, strength, and hope. Your name, telephone number, or e-mail will be listed in future editions of the Steppingstone. To be listed, contact your Intergroup rep or The Steppingstone. Thank you for your service!

### SPONSORS

Carol Anne 410-464-2193  
Kay 410-358-2119  
Lori (help get you started)  
410-358-1375  
Mike B. 410-467-7472  
Nancy T. 410-561-5038

### SPEAKERS

Alan H. 301-596-0663  
Anne M. 410-825-4123  
Carol Anne 410-464-2193  
Jane S.S. 410-337-8023  
Kathy M. 410-442-9838  
Ken G. 410-889-6555  
Mike B. 410-467-7472

Robin 410-415-6525  
Tania S. 410-526-4620

### NIGHT OWLS

Anne M. ('til 11:00 p.m.) 410-825-4123  
Hinda ('til 11:30 p.m., no calls on  
Friday night) 410-764-2279  
Robin ('til midnight) 410-415-6525

## LIBRARY LIAISON SERVICE OFF TO A GREAT START!

Carol N. is the new Library Liaison for the Intergroup. This service was inspired by a library liaison report in the Pittsburgh Intergroup's "The Voice of Recovery" Newsletter. She contacts libraries to offer donations of the Overeaters Anonymous Brown Book for regular circulation. A suffering compulsive eater may discover our program off the shelf of the library. Carol has already obtained requests from 13 Baltimore County libraries for copies of the OA Brown Book! You and your meetings can donate copies of this book to the project.

For more information about this program, call Carol at 410-764-7336.

## CHECKLIST FOR A HIGH QUALITY MEETING

- Does the meeting start and end on time?
- Are all attending, including newcomers, made to feel welcome and accepted?
- Does the meeting focus on OA recovery (OA Spoken Here) through the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions?
- Do we share the problem AND the solution?
- Do we offer our experience, strength, and hope, or is cross talk tolerated?
- Is the group practicing the 60-30-10 distribution through the Seventh Tradition?
- Are sponsors available, and are sponsors encouraging sponsees to become sponsors?
- Do members respect ALL twelve Traditions?
- Are the meeting rooms safe and comfortable, so members can share openly and honestly?
- Does the group practice anonymity by not repeating others' shares that were heard during the meeting, even to missing members who usually attend?
- Is a suggested meeting format followed?
- Is recovery seen and heard at the meeting?
- Is OA-approved literature on display and for sale?
- Are service positions filled, and is rotation of service practiced?
- Are business, group conscience, and steering committee meetings held regularly?
- Is a group inventory taken periodically?

-- From "A Step Ahead," the World Service Office quarterly newsletter



If your meeting answers "no" to any of these questions, get help by sending a member to the Intergroup meetings to discuss your needs. Reach out and help a fellow sufferer and each other by keeping your meeting safe, sane, and healthy!

## THE ELEVENTH TRADITION...SPREAD THE JOY OF RECOVERY!

The 11th Tradition states that our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion. This allows members and service bodies like the Intergroup to let the public know that OA exists without breaking a member's anonymity. One way to perform this service is by posting announcements like these below. Take these announcements to places with public bulletin boards and hang them in your neighborhood. Feel free to make as many copies of these as you wish. By hanging these cards, you could save someone's life today and give that person a life better beyond his or her wildest dreams!

### **EATING TOO MUCH? CAN'T STOP? STILL GAINING WEIGHT?**

Do you want to stop overeating but can't?  
Don't want to stop but must?

**WE CAN HELP**

### **OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS**

No Dues, No Fees, No Weigh-Ins  
Day and Evening Meetings

**For Info: 410-764-3136, [www.oa.org](http://www.oa.org)**

### **EATING TOO MUCH? CAN'T STOP? STILL GAINING WEIGHT?**

Do you want to stop overeating but can't?  
Don't want to stop but must?

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Day and Evening Meetings

**For Info: 410-764-3136, [www.oa.org](http://www.oa.org)**

### **BINGEING AND PURGING? CAN'T STOP?**

Do you want to stop bingeing and purging but can't?  
Don't want to stop but must?

**WE CAN HELP**

### **OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS**

No Dues, No Fees, No Weigh-Ins  
Day and Evening Meetings

**For Info: 410-764-3136, [www.oa.org](http://www.oa.org)**

### **ARE YOU OR A LOVED ONE ANOREXIC? STARVING YOURSELF?**

Do you want to stop starving yourself but can't?  
Don't want to eat regularly, but must to live?

**WE CAN HELP**

### **OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS**

No Dues, No Fees, No Weigh-Ins  
Day and Evening Meetings

**For Info: 410-764-3136, [www.oa.org](http://www.oa.org)**

## EIGHT THOUGHTS

1. Don't talk to your scale; talk to your sponsor.
2. The truth only hurts when you eat it.
3. You can't feel with your mouth full.
4. Stop and smell the flowers, not the food.
5. Hug people, especially those you would rather hit.
6. Smile for yourself, as well as for others.
7. Listening is easier when the mouth is closed.
8. *For Today* is the perfect-picker upper in the morning  
--from the *Brandywine (Pennsylvania) Intergroup "Recovery Newsletter"*

## WRITE THE 12 STEPS ON A PROBLEM

1. Powerless over \_\_\_\_\_. Life unmanageable. How?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Came to believe that God can restore me to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn over \_\_\_\_\_ to Him.
4. Inventory. What is my part in this? List two fears and two resentments:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Admit to God and to another human being my part in this., which is:  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. I am entirely ready to have God remove what character defect(s) in this?
7. Humbly ask God to remove the aforementioned character defect(s).
8. Make a list of those I have harmed because of this problem, including myself.
9. How can I make amends to those people, including myself? Make the amends.
10. Continue to take inventory on this issue.
11. Keep in conscious contact with my Higher Power/God on this issue.
12. What spiritual awakening, insight, or epiphany have I had as a result of working these steps on this specific problem? How can I help others with my story?  
--paraphrased from the *North Jersey Intergroup "Oasis" newsletter.*



## DATES OF NOTE

October 10-12 – Region 7 Assembly, Rehoboth Beach, Delaware, [www.oaregion7.org](http://www.oaregion7.org)  
October 18, 10:00 a.m. – Intergroup Meeting, Loch Raven Baptist Church, 8600 Loch Raven Blvd., Parkville, [www.oabaltimore.org](http://www.oabaltimore.org).  
November 15, 10:00 a.m. – IDEA Day marathon and Intergroup meeting, Stella Maris auditorium, 2300 Dulany Valley Road, Timonium  
November 21-23 – Region 7 Convention, Ocean City, Maryland, [www.oaregion7.org](http://www.oaregion7.org)  
December 20, 10:00 a.m. – Intergroup Meeting and Officer Elections, Loch Raven Baptist  
April 2-4, 2004 – Region 7 Assembly, Rehoboth Beach, Delaware, [www.oaregion7.org](http://www.oaregion7.org)  
May 28-30, 2004 – Spring Retreat at Kirkridge, South Central Pennsylvania Intergroup 610-370-9090

*The Baltimore Area Intergroup hopes your reading this newsletter will strengthen your recovery. Please share by writing about your experience, strength, and hope for the next issue. Contributions for the next issue are due January 1, 2004. Share and do a wonderful thing for your fellow recovering compulsive eaters!*

The art in this publication is courtesy of Overeaters Anonymous and Microsoft Office Clip Art and Media.

## THE BALTIMORE AREA INTERGROUP OF



P. O. Box 20013  
Baltimore, Maryland 21284  
Hotline 410-764-3136  
Website:  
<http://www.oabaltimore.org>

### YOUR TRUSTED SERVANTS:

- **Chair: Kathy M.**  
410-442-9838  
[kathymoriarty@comcast.net](mailto:kathymoriarty@comcast.net)
- **Vice Chair: Mike B.**  
410-467-7472  
[MikeBBear@aol.com](mailto:MikeBBear@aol.com)
- **Secretary: Alan H.**  
301-596-0663  
[ARHeck@comcast.net](mailto:ARHeck@comcast.net)
- **Treasurer: Michael W.**  
410-464-0932  
[themagiciansbirthday.whiteoak@verizon.net](mailto:themagiciansbirthday.whiteoak@verizon.net)

### 7th TRADITION CONTRIBUTIONS:

- 60% Baltimore Area Intergroup, Box 20013, Baltimore MD 21284
- 30% OA World Service Office, Box 44020, Rio Rancho NM 87174
- 10% OA Region Seven, 15 E. North St., Dover DE 19903

### OTHER INTERNET RESOURCES:

Region Seven:  
<http://www.oaregion7.org>  
World Service: <http://www.oa.org>

The Steppingstone is the quarterly newsletter of the Baltimore area Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous.

Editorial Policy: This is your newsletter. Your contributions, comments, and experience in the OA way of life are needed and appreciated. We also would like to print news about your area or meeting. Publication of any contributions or editorial opinions expressed herein does not imply endorsement by OA as a whole, but only by the individuals who wrote them. Material submitted cannot be returned. We reserve the right to edit, and it is understood that other OA groups may reprint all items without permission. Deadline for submitting contributions is two weeks before publication: January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1. Submit your contributions by mail to BAIG, P. O. Box 20013, Baltimore MD 21284, or by e-mail to the editor, or by fax to 410-467-5605.

Editor: Mike B., 410-467-7472  
E-mail [MikeBBear@aol.com](mailto:MikeBBear@aol.com)