

## calendar of coming Events

**September 26, 2003, & last Friday of EVERY month.**

**Newcomer's Meeting, 7:30—8:00 p.m.**

**Contact: Vee (503)282-6935**

**Speakers' Meeting, 8:00—9:30 p.m.**

**Contact: Deanna (503)452-4090**

**Easter Seals Building (see map on page 2)  
5757 SW Macadam, Portland**

**Oregon Intergroup Meeting**

**Tuesday, October 14, 2003 & the 2nd Tuesday of EVERY month**

**Literature Sales from 6:30 to 7:00 p.m. & Meeting at 7:00 p.m.**

**Easter Seals Society Building, 5757 SW Macadam, Portland**

**2003 Region One Assembly and Convention**

**October 15-19, 2003**

**Heathman Lodge**

**7801 NE Greenwood Dr. , Vancouver, WA**

**Contact: Alice B (503) 647-0906**

**aliceb@teleport.com**

**Region One Convention needs**

**Volunteers**

**To sign up to volunteer call**

**Konnie (503)245-5999**

***Your event could be listed here! Contact Scoop Editor,  
MerleAnn. (see contact information on page 2).***

### MEET YOUR BOARD

**Chairperson:** Amy (503) 662-3075

**Co-Chairperson:** OPEN

**Secretary:** Karen (503) 233-9228

**Treasurer:** Deborah (503) 662-3075

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**Group Coordinator:**

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**Scoop Editor**

MerleAnn (503)281-8947

**Events Coordinator**

OPEN

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**Position 2:** Deborah (503) 662-3075

**Position 3:** Vee (503) 282-6935

**Positions 4:** Andy (503) 289-2175

**Positions 5:** Alice B (503) 647-0906

**Position 6:** OPEN

**Alternate Positions 1 – 6:**

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**Ways and Means:** Marie (503)981-8867

**Public Information & Professional:**

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**Literature**

Georgia (503) 625-7569

**12th Step Within:** OPEN

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**Young People:** Amy B. (360)281-4640

**Network:** Carol C. (360)737-9934

**Serenity Retreat:** Kathy (503) 640-2545

**Speaker's Meeting**

Deanna (503) 452-4090

**INTERGROUP SCOOP**

Monthly newsletter published by Oregon Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous  
PO Box 2429, Portland, OR 97208

**EDITORIAL POLICY**

Materials submitted cannot be returned nor payment made. We reserve the right to edit. Opinions expressed are those of the writer and not of OA or OIG as a whole. Articles may be reprinted by other anonymous groups without permission but with credit given to this newsletter.

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**12th Step Within Corner**  
**(To the still suffering compulsive overeater)**

Quote: THIS DISEASE IS CUNNING,  
BAFFLING, AND POWERFUL!

How has it played tricks on you:

1. I can't do sugar, but I can have some sugar-free \_\_\_\_\_, or can I?
2. Today's my birthday, holiday, whatever exception, right?
3. These feelings are just too hard, aren't they?
4. Nobody really cares about me, do they?
5. I don't have a disease, do I?
6. Why do I need a sponsor?
7. Do I really need God's help

Anonymous  
Portland

**NOTICE FOR THURSDAY MEETINGS**

I plan to publish a listing in the November Scoop of meetings that will be happening on Thanksgiving day. Would you let me know by Tuesday, October 14 if you will be holding your regular meeting or having a special "extra" meeting.

\*\*\*\*\*

**CROSSWORD PUZZLE CORRECTION**

Eighteen across should be 12 letters long, not 11.

\*\*\*\*\*

Much appreciation to those who contributed this month. The absolute deadline for items for the November issue is Tuesday, October 14. Earlier submissions are received gleefully.

MerleAnn, Editor

### Promises Do Come True

For years whenever someone asked me, "How are you?" my standard response was, "Fine, thanks." Whether the other person knew it or not, those two words were code for "Get away from me, leave me alone, and DON'T tell me anything about how you're doing!"

Six months in OA and 97 days of abstinence have changed all that.

Recently someone asked me, "How are you Miss Michelle?" Before I could stop myself out came, "I am well. Life is good. And I am blessed." The other person popped up straight, looked surprised, asked how could that be, and how could that happen.

Just how did this change occur for me? It has to do with the promises of the Twelve Steps. I would like to tell you about where I am with the promises as they are described on pages 83 and 84 of Alcoholics Anonymous:

*If we are painstaking about this phase of our development, we will be amazed before we are halfway through.*

I have barely begun my first journey through the Twelve Steps. If we were to talk fractions, I'm one quarter of the way. I have committed my life to the pursuit of abstinence and recovery. I am amazed that I see my life differently and that I recognize my part in the happenings around me.

*We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness.*

Freedom is an excellent word here. I am open and no longer shut down by the oppression of my addiction. In the past I have had good days, but never a happy life. Now I feel happy most of the time. No, I don't hear birds singing and live in a patch of sunshine, but I am happy to wake up and excited to see what the day will bring.

*We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it.*

I still have some regrets about my past. I do believe that as I work my way through my amends and my spiritual housecleaning, those regrets will go away. I have opened the door on my past and no longer try to push the memories and feelings away with food. This allows me to deal with each of these demons and as I turn these things over to Higher Power, I'm given more freedom to move and participate in life.

*We will comprehend the word serenity and we will know peace.*

I'm enjoying a taste and nibble of serenity and peace every day. As stressful situations arise, I am able to do my footwork and turn over the rest to Higher Power. This new ability to cope and surrender my will and circumstances allows me to be at peace with my life and the people and situations I encounter.

*No matter how far down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others.*

As I meet more OAs, I can see and appreciate how their circumstances are helping me. It's easy for me to retreat and think that nothing about my experience can be helpful. Despite my hesitation, I continue sharing my experiences so that someone might be helped by something I say.

*That feeling of uselessness and self pity will disappear.*

These are two components of my experience. I could never see my place or purpose in the world. I have never felt that I could be of much use to anyone because I'm weak, fat and move slow (among other things). I've always wanted to be acknowledged, but not noticed. When no one paid me mind, then I felt so sorry for myself. These feelings are gone many days. I still dread being called on at meetings, but I try to share whenever that happens. I don't feel sorry for myself as much and instead look for ways in which I might help someone else.

*We will lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows.*

I don't enjoy attending my pity parties anymore, I much prefer attending OA meetings, and helping out. I stay after meetings and talk to people. I still have difficulty approaching people, but I make myself do this at least once every meeting.

*Self seeking will slip away.*

I'm currently writing my fourth step and this process is helping me see my self-seeking component. I've always seen myself as a strictly generous, open, and loving person. Writing my inventory is showing me that I often have mixed motives.

*Our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change.*

This promise is the most dramatic in my life right now. I feel as if I'm looking out a new pair of eyes. My entire view is different than it was. For instance, I used to hate my job and dislike most of the people I work with. Now, the room appears brighter and I can clearly see the good things that everyone brings to the job. In addition, I am ready to meet the day every morning and the feeling of disappointment on finding myself still here is gone.

*Fear of people and of economic insecurity will leave us.*

This promise is about halfway true for me. I have always been so afraid of people and their judgment of me. I am encouraged to find that OAs come from all walks of life and careers. We all share this common bond of food addiction and we are all even on the field of life. Economic insecurity however, is another thing. I worry that there won't be enough and I am so afraid of all financial things. I try to avoid even simple things like paying bills because there may not be enough left over at the end to buy food or gas. This never happens. Yes, things are short once-in-a-while, but we always have enough to get us through. I am hopeful that Higher Power and working the steps will help me with this.

*We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us.*

Less frequently I am stymied by what to do at work. No, my job knowledge hasn't increased, but my anxiety and self doubt have decreased. I am so much better equipped to talk to angry and frustrated people, which is part of my job. I am able to see possible outcomes to decisions I make, without self doubt or morbid reflection.

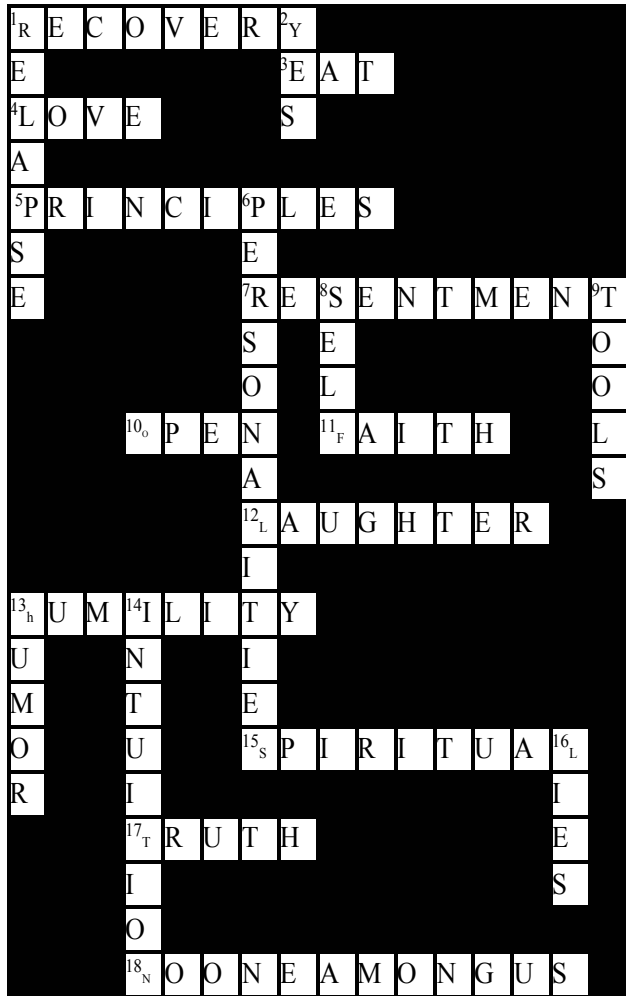
*We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.*

This one is so hard for me to agree with, but evidence to the contrary overwhelms me each day. I've lived most of my life without the guidance or need of a god. I never saw a benefit whenever I tried to believe. I never saw my dreams come true or my desires fulfilled.

Now I see that I no longer have to hang on to everything and drive the whole way to the end of the journey. What I am required to do is to let go and turn it over. If I can't let go, then I ask for the willingness to do so. The fact that I am even willing to ask is truly a



## Crossword Puzzle Answers



I am here to comfort you  
Sense your loneliness  
Feel your pain.

I am here to offer hope  
Dry your tears  
Share your secrets.

I am here  
Yet always unknown  
Because you never call.

R.D.S.

### OLD FRIENDS

Let me in  
My disease cried.  
It's lonely outside  
And I have nothing to fill  
The empty void  
That occupies my anguished soul.

Let me in  
My disease cried.  
I want to come back  
Rule your life  
Return to the land  
Made safe by dreams and fantasies

Let Me in  
My disease cried.  
I want to take inventory  
Savage your heart  
With thoughts of malevolence  
As I do the souls of others

Let me in  
My disease cried.  
Self-centeredness  
Longs for its home  
A familiar place  
Safe from the ravages of guilt.

Let me in  
My disease cried.  
I feel death's chill  
Yet your soul was so warm  
Stoked  
By fires of pain and anguish

Let me in  
My disease cried.  
I want the thrill  
Of reckless risk  
Give me pleasure now  
One last recovery starts tomorrow.

No.

R.D.S.

## **Step Ten: Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.**

### The Tenth Step: Practicing the Principle of Perseverance

Each October I am blessed with two traditions: leading a meeting on the 10<sup>th</sup> step and climbing South Sister Mountain. The more I climb peaks and work the steps I come to believe that step ten really is about “discovering the value of perseverance” (p. 105, *OA Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*). The tenth step requires us *to continue to take personal inventory and when we were wrong to promptly admit it*. It is a step that asks us to daily repeat the actions that have brought us to recovery up to this point: being honest, taking stock of our actions and reactions to life, and making amends for our wrongs. I have found this step to be no easy task. I constantly fumbled with this step in the beginning. I would forget to engage in this step daily, slack on the rigorous honesty, and avoid the process of admitting my faults to others. Along the way, I fell in love with mountain climbing and those mountain journeys served as my teacher for how to improve my practice of the 10<sup>th</sup> step. Here’s what I have learned so far:

- 1) **Clear directions are incredibly helpful in climbing and in step work.** Page 84 in *Alcoholics Anonymous* is crystal clear on how to practice the tenth step: a) watch for selfishness, dishonesty, resentment and fear, b) when these appear, ask God to remove them, c) discuss these incidents with someone immediately, and d) make amends quickly to anyone we have harmed.
- 2) **Being in community improves one’s chances of success tremendously.** I wouldn’t think of climbing a mountain solo, and I don’t try to work my steps in isolation either. I choose meetings that focus on the steps (at least one step per month). I form community with those working the steps. I show up, pay attention, listen to suggestions, and try what has worked for others.
- 3) **Get a 10<sup>th</sup> step buddy and work consistently with them.** I have a climbing buddy who gently pushes me to train for climbs, get prepared for new journeys, take reasonable risks, and to **LAUGH (usually at myself)!** I have a 10<sup>th</sup> step buddy who serves a similar role in my life: she causes me to take the tenth step daily, encourages me to call frequently, creates a safe space for me to admit wrongs, and helps me **LAUGH** at my foibles. *Her greatest gift to me is the gift of perspective.* She serves as a sounding board to determine if I am really in a crisis or simply viewing the world through the lens of fear.
- 4) **When in fear or doubt—pray!** There are many times before a climb that I think, “I can’t do it”. A deep breath and a genuine prayer for peace usually gets my feet in motion. Certainly there have been amends where I felt, “I really can’t do this”! Each time I have called my sponsor and put forth a prayer to do the next right thing, and each time it has worked out.

Each October I learn more as I climb once again and as I attend *meetings*. I listen to the experience, strength, and hope of others who are working the 10<sup>th</sup> step. I learn one more way to use the *tools* to help me: perhaps using *writing* in a new way for the 10<sup>th</sup> step, or a different piece of *literature* on it, or the role of *anonymity*, *sponsorship* and *service* in the process. I look forward to contact with the readers of this newsletter for I am sure you will teach my next 10<sup>th</sup> step lesson.

**Anonymous**

## An Interview with Denise D.

**Q:** What was your bottom?

**A:** One day when my son was 2 1/2, I was running upstairs tending to him and downstairs throwing up in the bathroom. He kept calling to me and I was resentful because I wanted to finish my purge. At one point he called me again and I remember leaning over the toilet, not even able to lift my head. My worry was that if I passed out someone would find me like this and know what I was doing. My bottom was realizing that I wasn't as concerned about my son as I was about what other people thought of me.

**Q:** How did you end up at OA?

**A:** At the same time my brother was going through a treatment program for alcoholism. So I went every weekend to a session for family members. I started going to Alanon because of my brother. OA was mentioned in some of those meetings. I was also looking at the library to see if I was anorexic, bulimic, crazy, or all three. I found a book by a woman with an eating disorder which had her picture on the cover. This seemed so brave to me. In the end, she goes to OA. I thought I didn't fit at OA because I wasn't overweight. But the sessions at my brother's treatment center allowed me to see that I had the same disorder as him, only his centered around alcohol and mine around food. I finally looked up OA in the phone book (nearly 14 years ago).

**Q:** How do you work your program, one day at a time?

**A:**

1. I talk with my HP and ask to know what his will is for me for the day. Some days I have to ask more than once.
2. I eat three meals/day with a snack in between. I have given up most trigger foods. Actually I haven't given them up—the craving for them has been removed. I don't purge, no matter what.
3. I exercise 3 times per week.
4. Usually I sit down when eating. I used to eat standing up because I thought I would lose weight that way.
5. I sponsor because there is a need for sponsors and I need to give it away to keep it. I am sometimes anxious about my ability to sponsor and then I call my sponsor.
6. I go to three meetings/week which seems to work well for me right now.
7. I call someone when I am having too strong an emotion. When I call people I get so much more perspective because I am getting it out of my head and the other person says things that give me another way of looking at the situation. A memorable example of this centered around my son playing in the ashtray in the van. I told an OA friend that he was going to grow up to be a scrounge. She said that maybe he was going to be a private eye. That changed my whole perspective.
8. I never weigh. Weighing dictated whether I ate more or less. It had too much power over me.
9. I go in and out of doing Tenth Steps with a buddy. I always find it is better to give it away than hold it in my head.
10. I try to call newcomers or welcome them at the meeting. If I hadn't been called after my first meeting, I probably wouldn't have returned.
11. I make phone calls. If I am traveling, I go to a phone booth. If there is no privacy at home, I go to a phone booth. This is part of my being "willing to go to any length" (page 58 of *Alcoholics Anonymous*). I didn't want to make phone calls. I was afraid of bothering people. Over time I have learned that my phone call could be just what the other person needs. Bothering people, especially strangers, you think it is so weird but that is why it works.

**Q:** What has changed in your life?

**A:** Probably everything. It is the way I look at things, it is working the steps, it is trying to live a better life, and it is giving me serenity like I have never known it. I try not to be judgmental of people. After having lived with my bulimia for 16 years, it was removed, which was a miracle. It has given me my sense of humor back. I like myself. It has taught me that I have a part in any problem. When I have a problem, it has given me something to do. I can call someone, talk with my HP, pause, or do a tenth step. Most important of all, I know that there is a solution.

**Q:** What changes does your family notice?

**A:** I had a big hang-up and it was birthdays. My poor family couldn't begin to do what I expected because I didn't tell them what I wanted—I expected them to just know. I wanted my birthday to come and when it came I wanted it to be over. Now I decide what I want to do for my birthday—I take responsibility for my birthday. Also, my family incurs much less rage from me. I had huge amounts of rage. If the vacuum didn't work I ripped the cord out of the wall. Someone in program shared that he previously had a horrible temper. I asked him how he got to be so nice and he said that he just worked the program. So much of my anger has been lifted. Now when I am angry, I can look at the situation and see that I am part of the problem. I no longer rip the cord out of the wall. So, when you find yourself doing things differently you know the program is working.

**Q:** What hints would you give a newcomer?

**A:** Keep coming back, try out new meetings, get a sponsor as soon as you can, and know that there is a solution.

## *Keep Coming Back*

*Although I have been coming to OA on and off for more than 15 years, my new-found abstinence is only a few weeks old. I am not sure of my exact date, but I know I was abstinent today.*

*It has taken me a long time to get to this point. I have dodged surrender in so many ways. I thought I could bypass the twelve steps of OA because I worked them in another 12 step program. I sat at OA meetings for years, wishing I could get more out of them, instead of asking myself what I could give. I remained aloof from the fellowship when I moved to Portland, scared and lonely and tired from my new responsibilities as a parent. I would go through a period of time when I could eat normally, or to be honest, less than a normal person, and tell myself I really didn't have a problem. I would compare my physique to others and think "I'm not that bad."*

*Yet, I continued to have physical problems because of my overeating. More importantly, I treated OA like a diet club, because I didn't want to address my spiritual sickness.*

*What changed? One day, about a month ago, I rearranged my schedule and decided to stay for an entire meeting. I volunteered to do some service work, and another member sat down with me. I had not been abstinent for months and wasn't sure I even had any willingness to get abstinent. The other member pointed out that I was abstinent then and that was all that counted. She suggested that I try to get through just one day eating abstinely and said I could call her the next morning.*

*I did that, and while it hasn't been 100%, the past few weeks have been a huge improvement. I am not eating sugar (a trigger food for me) and I am obsessed neither with eating nor not eating. I am calling and emailing people, aided by a phone list someone generously put together at my home group. I am reading the literature. I am doing a little service work. I am noticing when my self-centeredness creeps into my behavior. I am grateful to report my compulsion to eat almost continuously throughout the day has been lifted.*

*I am not on a deprivation high as I have been in the past. I am becoming a part of the fellowship, feeling incredibly human, and having my life re-created by a power greater than me one minute at a time. I know I have a long way to go. I still need to find a sponsor, work the steps in depth, and continue to reach out. But, just for today, my new-found abstinence is a quiet miracle. When I take the time to notice and show my gratitude for that miracle, I am abstinent.*

*Thank you for the opportunity to share this part of my story.*

*Anon.*

*Portland, OR.*

## A LETTER

DEAR OA'S,

LAST WEEK, I STARTED WONDERING WHAT PRINCIPLES (IF ANY) I HAVE LEARNED IN OA, THAT I NOW USE IN MY DAILY LIFE? HERE ARE A FEW I WOULD LIKE TO SHARE WITH YOU:

“RIGOROUS HONESTY” IS A PRINCIPLE THAT STANDS OUT. BEFORE I CAME INTO OA, I DID NOT KNOW HOW TO BE TRULY HONEST. HOW COULD I? I WAS SECRETLY PRACTICING A COMPULSION I WOULD NOT EVEN ADMIT TO MYSELF! ADMITTING ONE BASIC TRUTH TEACHES ME HOW TO ADMIT OTHERS.

“DENIAL” WAS A WORD I NEVER USED. I THOUGHT IT WAS A TERM USED BY OTHER PEOPLE. OA HAS TAUGHT ME HOW STRONG DENIAL REALLY IS. IS IT EVER! DENIAL IS A SILENT, DEADLY ENEMY THAT CAN STRIKE AT ANY TIME. I RECENTLY HAD TO CHANGE MY ABSTINENT DATE DUE TO THIS WEASEL. THANKS, DEAR SPONSOR, FOR STRAIGHTENING ME OUT.

“ONE DAY AT A TIME” WAS A PRINCIPLE COMPLETELY NEW TO ME. NOW LIFE IS A LOT MORE MANAGEABLE. I HAVE LEARNED I CAN FACE ANYTHING—ONE DAY AT A TIME.

“LET GO AND LET GOD” REMINDS ME ANYTHING GOOD IS POSSIBLE WITH HIS HELP. IT IS A PART OF STEP THREE WHICH TEACHES ME THE DECISION TO ASK FOR GOD'S HELP IS BEST MADE ON A DAILY BASIS. GOD HAS NEVER REFUSED MY REQUEST FOR HELP. ISN'T HE GREAT?

I NEVER KNEW HOW TO MAKE TRUE “AMENDS” UNTIL I CAME INTO OA. I NOW KNOW THAT WHATEVER THE OTHER PERSON HAS DONE OR HOW HE REACTS TO MY AMENDS HAS NO BEARING ON THE ISSUE. I AM SORRY FOR MY PART—PERIOD.

A “GRATITUDE LIST” WAS SOMETHING I HAD NEVER HEARD OF UNTIL COMING INTO OA. IT IS A GREAT TOOL TO USE, ESPECIALLY WHEN I AM HAVING “THE BLUES” OR FEELING A BIT LOW. TRY IT! IT WILL WORK WONDERS FOR YOUR MORALE.

ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT PRINCIPLES OA HAS TAUGHT ME IS THAT I NEVER HAVE TO FACE LIFE ALL BY MYSELF, EVER AGAIN. BE IT A FRIEND, OR OA'S IN A MEETING, PEOPLE NEED PEOPLE. THOSE WHO CHOOSE TO “GO IT ALONE” RARELY SUCCEED. I KNOW. I HAVE BEEN ONE OF THOSE “LONERS”. IT DON'T WORK, FOLKS.

OA HAS TAUGHT ME THE VALUE OF HUMOR IN LIFE. IT'S HEALTHY TO BE ABLE TO LAUGH AT MYSELF. REMEMBER: AT THE NEXT MEETING, WE ARE NOT LAUGHING AT YOU, WE ARE LAUGHING WITH YOU.

OH, THERE ARE LOTS OF OTHER OA PRINCIPLES THAT CARRY OVER INTO LIFE! I AM SURE YOU CAN ADD TO THIS LIST. PLEASE DO!

I'LL LEAVE YOU WITH ONE BIT OF WISDOM MY SPONSOR PASSED TO ME: ALL OF US HAVE TWO “DOGS” AT WAR INSIDE OF US—THE POSITIVE DOG AND THE NEGATIVE DOG. THE DOG THAT GETS FED THE MOST, WINS. THINK ABOUT IT.

SEE YOU AT A MEETING!

ONE DAY AT A TIME,  
BOB S.

**Attention OA Meeting Treasurers and Secretaries!**

To help support OA's vital services, the 60\30\10 contribution plan is suggested to meet basic needs.

Here's how: After regular group expenses are met (rent, literature, prudent reserve, etc.) the remaining amount could be distributed as follows:

- 60% to Oregon Intergroup of OA (OIG)
- 30% to World Service Office of OA (WSO)
- 10% to Region One of OA

These address labels are provided for your convenience.

 Oregon Intergroup PO Box 2429 Portland, OR 97208 	 Region One of OA, Treasurer 17720 N. Michael Rd. Colbert, WA 99005 	 World Service of OA PO Box 44020 Rio Rancho, NM 87174-4020 
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**OIG of OA Acknowledges the Following Income and Expenses from August 1, 2003 to August 31, 2003**

<i>Total Revenue</i>	1,619.64	<i>Total Expenses</i>	1,168.92
<i>Net Income</i>	\$450.72		

A big "Thank You" to the following groups who donated in August:

- 7 AM In the Solution
- Group #45670
- Wilsonville #46752
- Gresham

Let's keep those donations coming in.

**OA ON-LINE**

You can find OA on-line in many places!!

Oregon Intergroup

[www.oregon-oa.org](http://www.oregon-oa.org)

Region One

[www.oaregion1.org](http://www.oaregion1.org)

World Service email

[Ovreatr@technet.nm.org](mailto:Ovreatr@technet.nm.org)

World Service [www.oa.org](http://www.oa.org)

You can check our local area OA information, schedules, events, etc. and find helpful links by using the Oregon Intergroup Web Page.

**CHECK IT OUT!!**

**"Be not afraid of growing slowly,  
Be afraid only of standing still."**

**Chinese proverb**