



Semi-frequent

OO Newsletter

January 2007 V2A



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A bridge between traditional 12 step groups and the church.

Please make copies of this newsletter for your group members.

**Do not be overcome by evil
But, overcome evil with good.**

Romans 12:21

Greetings fellow Overcomers.

In this newsletter you will find; exiting conference news, articles from:
members of the OO Board of Directors , and a little business.

Please read this and inform your groups.

This newsletter must begin on what might seem a sad note. On December 26, 2006, Bob Bartosch our beloved co-founder, was called home to be with the Lord. Certainly, he is now a member of the greatest choir ever assembled, so in that environment he is happy. Bob will be missed, but Overcomers Outreach will continue on, as certainly Bob would want us to. A memorial page at the OO website (under 'newsletters') is available for remembrances to Bob's honor. The funeral can be listened to in part or in its entirety from a link at this site. Pauline Bartosch (Bob's wife and OO Co-founder) has asked OO to establish a memorial fund in Bob's honor, which will be used to further the spread and strengthening of the Overcomers Outreach ministry around the world. Donations can be sent to Overcomers Outreach PO Box 922950 Sylmar Ca 91392-2950. Please do not interrupt your OO donations of 7th tradition, but supplement to the Memorial Fund, if possible.

Overcomers Outreach survived the first year in the new office with a new board of directors, **PRAISE GOD!** In that time OO has trudged the way out of some of the debt, defined the OO mission field and had the first Overcome-a-thon at the OO office. Last year Overcomers heard from people starting or at least attempting to start OO groups in parts of *Mexico, Peru, Pakistan, Ukraine, The Czech Republic, Uganda, Nepal, Russia, England, Belgium, the UK, an Indian reservation and of course across the US*

2007 THEME: The theme for Overcomers Outreach this year is: **CARRYING THE MESSAGE.** What can I or what can you, or what can we do to *attract* (Tradition 11) more people to OO? The conferences and newsletters this year will be geared in that direction. Please stay tuned and try to be open to the Lord's prodding even if somewhat uncomfortable or unfamiliar. The Bible is full of stories of people that did amazing things for the Lord that took incredible amounts of courage, humility and determination.

CONFERENCES: At this time, OO is actively planning two conferences and is interested in finding an East Coast location to plan for. The specific details and registration forms are available @ www.overcomersoutreach.org If you do not have internet access and would like a registration form mailed to you, please leave a message with your name and address (877) 9overcome.

May 18-19th in Joplin Missouri.

June 15-16th in Buena Park CA.

Each OO conference will include: Messages from: Bette K. the current Chairperson of OO, and Bill D. the Executive Director, Group Leader meetings, Overcomers Outreach meetings, traditional 12 step meetings, Worship, Fellowship, Meetings on topics such as: sponsorship, working the

steps, recovery and the aging, institutional groups, and Group Communication Network. Limited Seating is available, so register early to reserve a seat. Both conferences will clearly have some similarities and differences. Details are still being worked out and will be updated on the OO website as they become clear.

WEBSITE:

As some of you know the OO website somehow mysteriously stopped processing orders in the middle of November. It should be up and running with a revised shopping cart by the time you receive this newsletter. There will be some additions to our available titles in the near future, so be sure to give it a look.

OFFICE:

As a reminder: The OO office is "staffed" part time by primarily volunteers. With this in mind consider that **the best way to communicate with the OO office is via e-mail.** Phone tag still works, but may not be as reliable as email.

LITERATURE: Some of you have been looking for the "Bridge to Recovery" by Bob & Pauline Bartosch. This book is currently out of print and out of stock. There may be a revised edition in the near future (pray for it, please).

COMMUNICATION: If you would like to be added to our e-news list, please send a request to overcomersoutreach@verizon.net

GROUPS: Group leaders—Please be aware that your listing in the directory implies your group is open to recovery from all compulsive behaviors. There are situations that clearly justify segregating groups by gender or type of addiction, and occasionally such a group is endorsed. Overcomers Outreach groups which allow all sorts of qualifying people to attend, have greater growth potential and life expectancy. Please refer to the OO Preamble for OO's purpose and who is welcome. (p7 Freed booklet) Unless your group specifies to be listed for specific problems in the OO website online meeting directory-- please welcome all and anyone who would desire Christ centered recovery. Be advised- if your group is currently listed as addiction or gender specific meeting, take a group conscience regarding specifics of your group to see if what made sense at one time, still does. If your group desires to make a specification, please be sure to notify the OO office, so we can accurately represent your group in the meeting directory. In at least one situation a woman cast aside her pride and did what it took to get to a meeting, just to hear, "you don't belong here" from the group that she visited. If you are thinking maybe she should have called first, she tried and got an old phone number. Please help keep the OO meeting directory accurate. "We believe that as we look to a loving God for help and practice the suggested 12 step recovery program along with the daily reading of scripture that we

can experience total serenity in Christ, no matter what our outward circumstances might be." (Freed Booklet p7) Consider, also, the other events described in this newsletter. **Refer your FREED books-information for supporting your meeting and *carrying the message!!***

NEW YEAR'S MARATHON:

On January 1, 2007 the Overcomers Outreach office held its first "Overcome-A-thon." It was a great day of fellowship, food, fun, praise, worship, laughter and heart felt sharing. Attendees came from LA, Kern, Ventura, and Fresno counties and in some cases drove 3 hours each way. OO has hopes that this is the first of an annual event. New Years 2006 had started with a dedication of this new office location for God's purpose with Overcomers and a year later brings gratitude in the work God is doing. The day included a 10am Simi Valley Group meeting led by Bette on Steps 1, 2, & 3 with the emphasis on Step 3. Noon provided a potluck of delicious foods contributed by all. Worship followed, led by Tony playing the guitar and providing song sheets of "Breathe", "How Great Thou Art" (Bob B's Favorite). Memorial to Bob Bartosch followed for many expressions of gratitude for him and his devotion for OO. Reference to Revelation 2-3..... "He who overcomes..." was made with celebration for this OO Founder's life. Peggy led the San Gabriel Valley Groups meeting at 3:30 on the topic of "Honesty." Chris Tomlin's "How Great Is Our God" was sung along with the CD.

San Fernando Valley Groups hosted a 5:30 meeting, led by their secretary, Patty, on the topic of "Children of God". 1 Jn. 5:1-4 reminds us that as we believe that Jesus is the Son of God we have His strength to win the battle against the world and Ps. 139 tells of the details of His knowing and loving His children. This meeting concluded the event with candlelight sharing until 7:30. Those in attendance were truly blessed ranging from OO members with 75 days to 33 years of continuous sober mindedness. One person in attendance was on her first day without cigarettes and was really grateful that the event was there for her.

Thanksgiving 2006: A few OO Groups in New Jersey got together and had a Marathon Meeting opening the event to others in need and had a blessed time. This is clearly an event that can be arranged regionally. If two different sets of OO groups in California and New Jersey can do this completely independent of each other, besides OO, then maybe you can, too.

FINANCES: where does the money go? Last year OO sent out more than 100 requested shipments at no charge to inmates, and people with need or interest and no money. OO donated money to a church in New Orleans that ministers to the "voodoo afflicted" and also to a church in Mississippi that feeds the workers donating their time rebuilding the neighborhood. Expenses at the Sylmar office are carefully providing for the OO central place of business. The Director is accountable to the OO Treasurer and to the OO Board.

CHAIR: Greetings Overcomers—
Hope all is well in your meetings and as you continue to seek the knowledge of God for your continued recovery. My travels ‘connecting the dots’, became ‘bridging the groups’ and has increased my love for OO as I visited more than twenty groups in states from AZ to NH. I look forward to visiting OO groups closer to home in California in 2007. As I met with different groups I found the Freed booklet’s meeting format continues to be sufficient for the function of an OO meeting. Revisions or additions are needed for some updates, but most groups are doing well with the basics. Christians in recovery welcome the Christ centered approach as an addition to their outside meeting routine. The same response has not been as understood from church, as OO is the bridge between 12 step groups and the church. On occasion when speaking with church leadership of OO it may be difficult for them to accept the purpose and function of OO. This may be because of the differences between OO and church ministries. OO functions from the OO Traditions, rather than church elders. When the elders understand better how the Traditions do not undermine church leadership or teaching, the acceptance comes. When elders understand better why the traditions are necessary for a recovery program—because it is principals OO must be based on, not personalities, the

acceptance comes from church leaders. OO has existed for over twenty years because of the Traditions as the foundation to the vast groups that meet. There are no ‘Overcomers police’. Our meetings are open to “anyone not opposed to our general method of recovery” (Freed p.7) and “Jesus Christ is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.” (Tradition 12, Freed p12). These principles allow for consistency of the OO group meetings and it is the groups’ responsibility to remain informed and accountable as the OO name is used to adhere to the traditions. Be looking for new literature to add to your meeting information regarding the traditions. It will be established this year. For more information on this please be in touch at overcomersoutreach@verizon.net re: traditions. God bless you as you continue to seek Him and share His hope with others.

Bette Kackert, OO Board Chair.

OO BOARD MEMBER:
GREETINGS FELLOW
OVERCOMERS: Thank you for allowing me to serve you again as a board member of Overcomers

Outreach. As I sat at the last board meeting I knew that this present board had one common purpose: YOU. We are coming up with some innovative ideas, and I would like to share one with you.

We are putting together a service structure with various committees. These committees will include: **Hospital and Institution, Cooperation with the Professional Community (CPC) Public information, Language Services and Policy and Procedures** just to name a few. As we start these committees we are going to need district, state and regional chairs for each. Please pray as to what gift or burden that God has given you, and what committee He would want you be on.

Thank You again for allowing me to serve you!

Jim B. 1-800-747-6912

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OO IN PRISONS:

When Bill asked me to write an article on the rewards of taking an OO group into our local jail, I said sure, why not. I started thinking about it and I couldn’t think of anything, so I called my sponsee, Mike S, who also takes OO meetings to this facility and he was able to jump start my thinking process.

We have a crew of 4 men and women who take meetings to this facility twice a

week, men on Thursday evenings and the women on Monday evenings. We've been holding these meetings with the inmates there for over ten years or more. On occasion, it seems like the "evil one" tries to keep us out but we get in anyway. We meet with anywhere from 1-12 inmates at a time, 1 pod at a time, 2-4 pods each night. We pick a topic from the Freed Book and dig into the Bible. It's amazing to see how many people know the Bible but unfortunately how many people don't. We have had some pretty steamy discussions about God and recovery. We have had grown men and women come to tears publicly and we've had many folks come to the Lord.

while in jail. We have had many find true recovery, while behind bars, through "Overcomers Outreach." We have had the opportunity to work on the 12 steps including the 4th and 5th steps . Unfortunately we've also had large percentage of 'repeat business', **but they always know they are welcomed back just as Jesus welcomed me back** when I was lost. One of the greatest rewards for me is to meet with someone who has been released from jail and talk with them about their new lives. Some have gone back to their old lives, but a few have continued on with their life and become a productive member of society and walk with the Lord. This has to be the greatest reward. Do you want a bigger reward? How about that same 'freed' person coming back and taking an OO Meeting into the same institution!! That has happened several times!

Nearly every time I leave that jail, after inhaling large amounts of fresh Tahoe air, my 15 minute drive home is filled with tears of joy and gratitude-grateful to God that I too have been set free, inside and out.

Dan B.

"THOSE OTHER MEETINGS"

My name is Bill, I am an alcoholic. The first time I mumbled those words was in an AA meeting in August of 1988. In the first few months of recovery I went to as many meetings as I could get to in the course of a day. The "God Talk" was really bothering me, but I could not avoid the fact that the people using the "God Talk" seemed to have great calm even through difficult times. I started taking little chances with some trivial prayers just to see what happened, not having any idea to who or what I was praying to. I began to see that God did pretty well with that little stuff, so I started trying bigger stuff. At some point I started to notice that in many cases, the people in the group that had the most sanity were Christians. This troubled me because I did not want to become someone that had a really large rule book to follow.

I must admit that quite a bit of my "recovery upbringing" was influenced by non Christians. In some cases these people taught me how to live a much better way of life than I had been living. With time and determination it became clearer to me, whom I should pay attention to. About the same time I started to believe

there had to be more to this "God stuff" than I was getting at meetings. The only positive thing about God that I believed to be true was that the God that started AA knew what he was doing. I started praying that the God that created Alcoholics Anonymous would reveal himself to me, and He gradually did. I started studying AA literature in great depth and kept running into the same roadblocks; the Bible and Jesus. They were both there in a very significant way in the beginning of AA.

I eventually started to think that I had to get my hands on a Bible. The short version of the story is that AA members played a big part in leading me to the Lord and a Christian Church. I developed a hunger for more, went back on Sunday, the following Wednesday and so on. This new information combined with my belief that the God that created AA knew what he was doing and the human creators of AA were Bible reading Christians led me to the realization that if this God was my creator than I had to stop fighting Him. I also understood that to believe any part of the Bible meant I had to believe all of it, even the part where I was to confess my need for forgiveness and a Savior. I made the decision and committed my life to Jesus. What a relief! Not only had I gained free fire insurance, but I now have a direct connection with the creator of everything. Now I had to let others in on what I had found! It did not take long for my family to reject my new found faith, so onward. I proceeded to share my great news with my AA friends and at meetings. I must say there was more than a little resistance.

Rapidly *I found that my recovery and my Christianity seemed to clash*. This was bad news since individually they were the two greatest and most important parts of my life. The pastor at church thought it would be wise to spend less time at “those other meetings” and more time at church and in the Word. It seemed that he was the person that God was using to direct me, so who was I to argue. A little at a time I started drifting away from AA, my sponsor, friends, meetings the 12 steps. My life started becoming unmanageable. Through circumstances that developed I found myself going to an Alanon meeting.

One night at this small group a man showed up. His name was Paul, and when sharing he quoted the Apostle Paul. This certainly did catch my attention. We talked after the meeting and he told me about an Overcomers Outreach meeting nearby. I had been to an OO meeting before. Once before I was saved, I thought their version of a higher power was far too specific for me. After turning my life over to Jesus I gave the meeting a try for three consecutive weeks and found it seemed a little funky. As Paul told me about this other group I realized that every recovery meeting has its own style and decided to give this one a try.

The first night at that group I was blown away. I could tell that my higher power Jesus, was a part of this group and I was thrilled! I made a commitment to be at that meeting every week. One of the first things I realized was that I had to get back into AA. I went to other OO and Alanon groups as well. I found myself in love with recovery

again. Life was still a challenge but now I had hope. I had many friends and acquaintances in traditional 12 step groups that did not know my higher power and I was finding the desire to reach out in some way constantly growing. I also knew that preaching hellfire and brimstone at these groups would have no positive effect.

The Lord began to show me ways to share pieces of my story and how Jesus led me to Him through the 12 steps, meetings and literature. *Something I frequently share is that I spent a large portion of my life convinced I was going to hell and at a little over a year sober it seemed pointless to spend the rest of my life sober and doing the steps just to go to hell. I prayed that the God who started AA would reveal Himself to me and He did. I will gladly share Him with you. Today hell no longer has a seat with my name on it.* There have been several times that people would come up after the meeting and ask questions that led to more interesting conversations. One night at an AA meeting that I was the secretary of, a man whom seemed rather displeased about having to attend those meetings asked me about the “Overcomers Outreach” logo on my shirt. As I told him a little, he lit up and proceeded to tell me that he was a Christian and felt out of place in AA. Larry started coming to the local OO meeting and we became good friends and walked each other through some difficult times.

I have found many times in talking with Christians seeking recovery that they do not want to go to “those other meetings.” I find this sad and frustrating because I know they

are missing out on fellowship, growth, sharing, recovery and possibly their calling. This type of comment reminds me that scripture tells me that I need to be willing to be persecuted for my faith. In other parts of the world persecution has a different context. If Christians do not go to the other groups, then what will the seekers in those groups find? Where did Jesus hang out? I suspect if Jesus was here today, he might spend time in rehabs, jails, psych wards and maybe even “those other meetings,” **Where will you hang out?**

**Overcomers Outreach Mission
Field**

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**Anywhere people affected by
addictions need recovery.**



**Anywhere people in recovery need
Jesus.**

....and Jesus said to them GO!.....