

Overcomers Outreach

"Bridging the Gap Between 12 Step Recovery Groups and Churches"
June 2011 Newsletter

From the Director ...

May 9th we celebrated 26 years of ministry. Much has changed over the years, at least on the "surface", and much remains the same. New meetings, a new look to the literature, and renewed enthusiasm by group leaders around the world is all very encouraging. What has not changed is the fact that God still has much for us to do and many for us to help.



As we continue to increase our public presence, the interest in Overcomers Outreach groups grows as well. Our blog site, Face Book page, and user friendly website provide information to interested individuals, existing groups, churches, and recovery facilities. The opportunity to share with other groups or to share anonymously is also provided on these sites.

We have so very much to be thankful for, and "the best is yet to come." Thank you all!

Jeff

Board of Directors

Our Board of Directors currently includes: Eileen Anderson, Pauline Bartosch, John Hulin, Bette Kackert, Gerry Limpic, Louie Loy, Colleen Southern, Jene Wilson, and Tim Zickuhr. Thank you for giving your time to help others.

Mailbox

Literature

Office News

"What We Do"

Events ...

"A Night of Truth" June 18th, 6pm at the Pilgrim Lutheran Brethren Church, Mentor, OH, will have testimonies, music, and dramatic skit. For information, call David K - (440) 867-6265

Our 3rd annual OO Campout is August 12-14th at Morro Bay State Park, Morro Bay, CA

And on the East Coast, an annual Campout Retreat is set for Aug 26-28 at the Pine Cone Resort in Freehold, NJ. For more information on these and other events across the nation, visit the OO website, or call the Central Office. We will be happy to post your group event as well.

The Mailbox ...

Australia Writes:

We are getting ready for the Anglican Men's Katoomba Conference. It is running over three weekends, finishing up on Saturday 5th March. Penny will be giving a talk on alcoholism & addiction at this event, as you know. Please pray that God will bless her as she speaks to our brothers, who may be struggling in this area. I'm with the group at Engadine and will be helping out with the book sales at MKC. Happy you still had one of those t-shirts left in my size! I'm looking forward to serving God as OO grows in Aus. Shalom, Sue

Monroe, MI Writes:

Greetings in the Name of Jesus, We have started a meeting of Overcomers Outreach at our Church. We have welcomed several people into the path of recovery and a committed

relationship with Christ. Praise God. We look forward to working with the OO and the group, as we are overcoming all of life's challenges by God's grace, love, and redemption.
In Christ's Service, Pastor Mark

Coronado, CA Writes:

Hello!

I have had the honor and the privilege of beginning a meeting here in Coronado (San Diego) area. We meet every Thursday from 8-9pm at St. Paul's United Methodist Church in Coronado CA. I'm still getting things off their feet. But what a blessing this ministry has already been! Thank you so much! Adrienne B

Oregon Writes:

It is always so exciting to hear from people who were involved in our very first "Overcomers" group! We recently received a letter from Virginia G.: "Remember way back to 1984, Whittier CA, my 3rd child in my arms...you were all so loving and kind. My Overcomers booklet ("Freed") is now tattered and worn! There, (at OO) I was given life-long steps that I still use every day. I continued through life's journey in some pretty tough times. Later my daughter went to Agape House in Arkansas where she began to mend her life with the 12 step program I'd found so many years ago, Overcomers Outreach! What a joy it was for me to hear the news and confidence in the program because I work it each day in my life. I was so excited and told her "I know the founders!" Keep up the good work!"

Posted on Face Book:

Hello fellow servants of the most HIGH GOD greetings from O.O. of Turkey Creek Baptist Church Ware Shoals sc. We love you guys and are praying for this vital ministry. Robert M

Hello dear friends-it has been over 10 years since I last had contact with OO groups. I am currently in San Diego. I was involved in a couple of groups in Orange county, CA, for many years until I moved here-I was sharing with my roommate this week about my experiences with OO back in the 90's and so glad I took a chance to look you up on the internet...I will be looking to visit a group here in my area soon..is anybody here? I welcome some contact from you-God Bless! - Donna W

Please pray concerning the violence in Nigeria! Our dear friends there are in grave and mortal danger! Please lift up a young man named Bruno especially. Joe F

From our online meeting:

I found your website today and I feel very grateful. I am a compulsive overeater, and having small children, going to meetings is not easy for me. Our computer stands in the kitchen, and often I get sorely tempted to go to the fridge when surfing. Today I chose a couple of verses from the "topics" section of this website and looked them up on-line. This has helped me, and I am now going to leave the kitchen, when I have shared this with you - without eating. God bless you today. Asja

And our Blog site:

Hi - reviewing step one this morning was such a comfort and good reminder of how alone and

isolated I have become ... especially since I have been stuck in the insanity of my husband's addiction. I have been unable to share what has happened with anyone but God. He has shown me that I need others to help me through.

- "I surrender"

I just want to say that I hope there will be less and less judgment (it has felt this way for me) from both Christians and others. If it is a disease - disgust towards us is not helpful - neither is pity....like those struggling with other "bad habits" or diseases. We want - well, I can only speak for myself - I want acceptance and encouragement. I live in a small town and am afraid to admit my problem in my local Christian group - more men are the alcoholics and the women have other problems. I would love to share how many times God almighty has helped me but I don't want "the looks". I guess I'll just have to deal, oh, and then later stumble and fall; sometimes falling hard while wishing I could ask for prayer.

"Bente"

All of the posted comments are refreshingly honest, and most encouraging. Perhaps I will glean from these comments, and start to believe that there is actually life-long sobriety for me, too. I love God more than anything, but there is so much more to alcoholism than being self-absorbed. It runs much deeper than the issue of merely being selfish. It is a compulsion that, when we "cross the line" over to dependence, becomes a frightening, and confusing maze of insanity! We need to pray for one another; never judge!

Lori

Tribute to a Trooper

By Pauline Bartosch

The last thing Bob & I ever expected was that the Lord could somehow use our journey through alcoholism to eventually launch Overcomers Outreach!

Some of you faithful OO old-timers, who may have been receiving the OO Newsletter since the '80's, may recall pictures that we proudly posted of Bartosch family members. We were so grateful that God had not only preserved our marriage through the bizarre years of alcoholism, but that our family had somehow survived through the storm.

God gave us 3 wonderful sons, Bob, Mike and Steve. In time, 3 beautiful daughters-in-law joined the family, producing 9 terrific grandchildren! We were so blessed!

But today my heart aches as I report that our eldest daughter-in-law, Debbie, (Bob's wife of 36 years) went to be with the Lord on April 20, 2011. She waged a valiant battle with ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease) for 2 incredibly difficult years.



Bob and Debbie Bartosch

I have never seen anyone with more faith, courage, and tenacity than our Debbie. Even when she could no longer speak, her perpetual smile lit up a room. Thanks to the gift of an i-pad, she was able to communicate, not only her needs, but her faith, as well as her words of love.

Today, Debbie is with Jesus, and undoubtedly receiving crushing bear hugs from my husband, Bob! What an inspiration to all - a true OVERCOMER!



"The Office"

Office News

Our newest groups have started up in Overland, KS, Monroe, MI, Clermont, FL, Coronado, CA, and Mobile, AL. Also, a group that has been meeting for some time just listed with us in St. Augustine, FL. If your group is not listed online, but would like to be, just call the office or email the Information to us and we will post it as soon as we can. It is free, and we can direct people calling from your area to your group.

We would also be happy to post your upcoming event on the website, just email it to us a few days in advance.

Literature

By request, the booklets "12 Steps and Standards Guidebook" and "Group Traditions Study Guide" are available once again for group or individual study of the steps and traditions. These booklets are \$3 each. Both are incorporated in our "Steps and Traditions Guide" as well. We have revised and/or updated just about all of our 24 pamphlets, adding 11 new ones as well. Through our pamphlets, booklets, and other literature, we offer our method of recovery, namely faith in and the discovery of God's wisdom for us as shown in the Bible and the 12 Steps. Literature sales help support the office. Other items, such as our key tags for celebrating certain milestones in recovery, are available as well. To see all of our current literature please visit our online shop on our website overcomersoutreach.org

There you can "look over" our brochures and publications. We also carry Life Recovery Bibles, Christian devotionals, and our "big book" *A Bridge to Recovery*.

"What We Do"

A typical day at the Central Office usually starts pretty early, often before 8am (if someone is near the phone). Calls come all hours of the day, 7 days a week, usually asking for information about groups, placing orders for materials, or looking for help. We are not a 'hotline', nor are we trained counselors, but we can direct people to contacts that may be able to help, so we make many referrals. When a phone is in use, voicemail receives all messages, which are answered as soon as possible.

Between the calls (which seem to come in "clusters"), much of our email, surface mail, and faxes require timely responses. Most of the group literature and supplies are ordered online, as are most of the communications to and from the various groups around the globe.

During any given week, we may have several projects, such as literature development, event planning and coordination, fund raising, speaking engagements, or other outreach efforts that entail some research and face to face meetings. We also have reports to prepare for the Board of Directors and the filings with both state and federal agencies in order to maintain our non-profit status. Add to this our website maintenance and optimization, various payroll reports and filings, ordering and maintenance of inventory and office supplies, the filling, shipping and receiving of orders, bookkeeping, and, most importantly, prayer time – we think you get the idea. Our "staff of one" plus a weekly volunteer

(and others as needed) are kept pretty busy. All of this is done to serve the groups and individuals that represent Overcomers Outreach, to help them be a bridge to those who suffer as we once did.

Requests for information on starting new groups, improving attendance, and directory changes to group listings are being received more frequently both by phone and online.

The opportunity to talk with so many of our wonderful group leaders and members from all over the world is a great blessing. The uplift and encouragement I receive during many of these conversations is amazing, and they always come at "just the right time"! I am equally humbled when I get to talk to someone reaching out for help! Often a word of hope, a suggested contact, a moment of prayer, or a sympathetic ear is all that is needed to start someone on the path of recovery in Christ.

God uses us all to express His love among us, and both your personal gifts and the group's 7th tradition donation allow us to continue this ministry. One-time, monthly, and birthday donations can be made online via the website, mailed in, or phoned in, and are all tax deductible. Group 7th Tradition donations can also be made in the same manner. Thank you all, and all praise is to Him.



"Bridging the Gap Between 12 Step Groups and Churches of All Denominations"

A Prayer of Guidance

I often ask myself "Am I doing the right thing?" The answer is the same- no, but God is! He is sovereign, and will use me and others for His purpose. His "good and perfect will" is done by Him through us, as He created us to do. Our efforts, apart from God, are never "the right thing" to do – they are sin, because they are apart from God. Yet He will cause even our sinful acts to work for the good of those who love Him. Our calling, election, redemption, and salvation were by His Grace. *Therefore God has mercy on whom he wants to have mercy, and he hardens whom he wants to harden. – Romans 9:18.* We discover His truth and guidance through study of His Word and our prayers to Him. Let's pray now:

Father God, we come before your throne of grace to worship you and praise you to your Glory. We pray now that You would bless our hearts with the warmth of your love, our minds with the healing of your wisdom, and our lives with the guidance of your truth, as we share with others in Christ, and that You would be glorified in all the love that we may both give and receive. As you bless us may we share these blessings with those around us so that they will know that You are Lord of all. We ask this in Jesus name. Amen

If you would like to make a donation to Overcomers Outreach, Inc. to help defray the cost of this newsletter as well as other operating expenses, please visit our website or use the enclosed return envelope. All donations are tax deductible.

If you would like to be added to our mailing list, or removed from it, please so indicate, along with your donation, or call us at (800)310-3001, or email us at info@overcomersoutreach.org and we will be happy to accommodate your request.

We also welcome any news articles or testimonies you would care to submit for future newsletters.

God Bless

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