

Overcomers Outreach

*“Bridging the Gap Between 12 Step Recovery and Churches”
March 2010 Newsletter*

From the Director ...

With the New Year come new blessings. We welcome new members to our Board of Directors. Overcomers is truly fortunate to have such talented volunteers giving of their valuable time as they help guide the ministry forward with new insight as we move through the challenging times at hand. New fund raising and outreach efforts are being developed as the ministry grows, and we are growing!



Most of our current Directors

The week of May 9th through the 16th will be the time for a nation-wide 25 year “Birthday Party” where local groups can get together to celebrate with one another. It is hoped that on the regular night of each meeting that week some time will be spent in praise to God and to ask for unity in the group and all of Overcomers worldwide. Mailings with suggestions for events are going out to group leaders across the country. Please be sure to go to a meeting that week to join in the prayer.

Events

New Literature

Al-Anon in Australia

Mailbox

OO Africa

Office News

How They Do it in NJ ...



Some Elizabeth NJ members at a recent retreat

The second half of our name is outreach for a definite reason. Our events allow us to share God’s love. Ralph M. reports from Elizabeth, NJ: “This was our 13th year putting on our Thanksgiving Day marathon Meeting, and we had a total of 312 people; prayed with 35 for various needs or request; 8 salvations; 2 referred to Detox and rehab; 1 placed in a homeless shelter; 3 referred to food pantry.

We put out 30 pans of food of what was left over at the end of the day (around 8pm), and many of the homeless and poor came back to take them. Many in recovery spent the whole day with us, allowing us to fulfill the purpose of this meeting, to provide a place of refuge and help others stay clean yet another day.

We had 10 speakers sharing back to back, every hour on the hour, and they all did a great job sharing the hope and their experiences. God was glorified in this effort. On a personal note, Nov. 23 was my clean date and I celebrated 20 years by the Grace of God. Blessings”

The groups in this area of the country get together regularly and network within the community with terrific results and a lot of fun along the way. Summer retreats, concerts and “day in the Park” are some ways this fellowship offers the message of Christian recovery to the community.

Recent Events ...

The same New Jersey O.O. group just celebrated 13 years of meeting together, with an attendance of 85 at the party.

Cedar Hill, TX group had a “Speaker Jam” Dec. 12th with food, games (volleyball, basketball) and eight speakers. The event was held in the gymnasium behind the church. A good turnout enjoyed the message of over 200 years of experience, strength and hope.

The South Lake Tahoe group at Sierra Community Church had a 20 year anniversary party with a “chili bar” pot luck and a chance to share a “scripture of the year” (instead of a New Year resolution). The event was well attended (about 50 people) and a good time was had by all.



“Great chili ... now, where’s the cake?”

On March 1st the Skelley Drive Baptist Church group in Tulsa, OK, celebrated 22 years with a pot luck and speaker meeting. About 50 people attended.

Upcoming Events

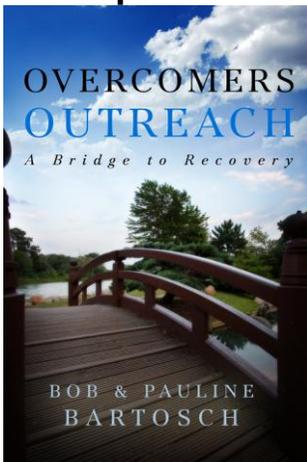
May 22 in Whittier, CA we are having an Overcomers Birthday Brunch. The event will take place at Whittier Hills Baptist Church on Saturday afternoon. We are going to eat, sing, praise and worship with as many friends as we can get in the room! For details, visit the website Events page or call Central office, then come and join us.

Campout time again! It’s been a long winter, but summer is coming

soon. We will be camping August 27th-29th at Morro Bay State Park in Morro Bay, CA this year. Last year was a blast and we “upgraded” the camp site this year, so it will be great. Space is limited so register early.

Is Morro Bay too far for you? Maybe your group and others would like to put on a campout or day event in your area. The Central Office will be happy to help out with planning tips and publicity if you like. Some “Event Planning Guidelines” are being developed for the website and will be posted in the near future.

Literature Update



Just in time to celebrate 25 years of Overcomers, the 3rd edition of our “Big Book” *A Bridge to Recovery* is at the printers and will be ready in April 2010. We are accepting orders for presales on our website, or you may phone or write the office to reserve your copy of the first printing. We ran into a delay and hoped to have them sooner but don’t worry, they are almost here after 2 years out of print!

Our newest pamphlets group the 12 steps into 4 sets of three each. *Surrender* looks at steps 1-3, *Cleaning House* is about steps 4-6, *Restoration* is about steps 7-9 and *Progress* looks at steps 10-12. The material is presented to correspond to the 4 “absolute” principles that the early Oxford Group developed for their program of evangelism, namely honesty, purity, unselfishness and love. These pamphlets may help to introduce the steps to congregations.

Al-Anon in Australia

By Amen C.

Anyone looking at my life would have thought it was “pretty perfect” – a seemingly happy marriage, 3 mostly lovely teenagers, a comfortable lifestyle, a nice new home, loads of friends and an active church life. But 3 ½ yrs ago that outward image was shattered when my husband had a major accident with a high range blood alcohol level, followed by another DUI offense 2 years later (and most people were not aware that he had been caught 12 years prior to that with a high-range reading). My world was turned upside down as I came to grips with my new reality – that my life was out of control and I was powerless to make things right again. I had been living in denial of a huge problem for a long time. For years I had put on a happy face, pretended that all was well, covered up problems we were having, laughed off his drunken-ness in front of friends, ignored worrying signs, kept quiet (when inside I was screaming), put up with erratic, irrational behavior and often cried when I was on my own. Hardest of all was trying to be a godly, loving wife and mother and putting on a “mask” every day. My cover-up was exposed with my husband’s very public court cases and subsequent loss of license and other consequences. With the help of loving advice I found myself at Al-Anon and OO.

In both these groups I have been able to accept the things I cannot change with some degree of serenity (sometimes it is with more frustration than serenity!) and have been able to change a lot of things in my own life that I wasn’t even aware of that needed changing. Knowing that my Higher Power is the God who created the universe enables me to really give my will over to Him and trust Him to help me through the messiness of this life. Jesus said that the wise man should build his house on the Rock (God) so that when the storms in life come, even

though we may be beaten about, we will not crumble and fall apart. I know that has been true of my own experiences.

I often still shake my head in disbelief and think “this can’t be happening to me!”- my husband has not found sobriety. I watch the disease progress daily and depend on God. This is happening to me, and I know with the one and only true God as my Higher Power I will be able to take one day at a time and get through whatever lies ahead.

The Mailbox ...

Australia Writes:

Pray for me this Wednesday as I present Overcomers to a bunch of ministers in Sydney. We’ve now been running our group in Sydney for four years and have established a core group and some miraculous stories of recovery in desperate places and in some very secret places. God has been very gracious. I’m speaking for 3 hours and then giving an OO demo with a team of helpers - it’s the first time something like this has been done in the very conservative evangelical Sydney diocese. Many blessings to all my friends in OO there-Coming up to my 7th birthday on 19 March! Time flies. Penny W
Sydney Australia

Uganda Writes:

Thank you for writing to me Brother. I apologize for having not sent to you our report, I have been having problems since Nov 2009 up to Feb 2010. My wife has been not good. In Jan 2010 was operated on and the child died. She has just started getting better.

I am ready to network with the Group you are connecting me to. I have already talked on phone with Pastor Tumuhairwe who works with the University in Uganda. I know we shall talk again soon.

Stephen Ssali

Our prayers for your family – Ed.

Malawi Writes:

We are happy to hear that another OO is going to be introduced in Uganda. I have been looking forward for this great development. I am promising to work together with the Uganda Team and if necessary meet the guy and discuss how he should be doing it as I did with the Tanzania Team. Jeff, I think it is high time for OO to grow its wings here in Africa. God bless you sirs.
Yours in Christ - Henry C.

Pakistan Writes:

Greetings in the gracious name of our Lord Jesus Christ. I am really thankful for your kind response. We would love to start a group here, and yes your prayers are wonderful tools and Jesus Christ can heal all our diseases. I will send you the story of how I was convinced to fight against pornography and to provide help to them who are fighting with their addictions. Here is another question:

- * Can we affiliate our group with your Ministry?
- * What name we should give to the group?
- * What is attending AA?

Kindly guide me in this direction too. Right now we are trying to stop porn on the internet and working with the porn addict. It is quite difficult to identify the porn addict because no one accepts that he is an addict. I am looking forward to hearing from you soon.

Pastor Azher Kaleem

We are currently in correspondence with Pastor Azher – Ed.

Canada Writes:

The Overcomers Outreach ministry is on fire for the Lord in Quebec, and our leaders there are predicting up to 10 new groups forming. There is also interest in France and down the road French-speaking nations in Africa. Our Canadian board recently appointed a representative to oversee the ministry in Quebec. The French translation of the FREED book is complete and presently being proofread in Winnipeg. Be blessed!
Bev T

West Covina, CA Writes:

Overcomers was my introduction to the 12 Steps over ten years ago at the Thursday night San Dimas meeting, where I met the man who referred me to Sexaholics Anonymous. This past Monday I celebrated six years sober in the SA program. God ultimately gets all the credit and glory for my sobriety, but OO allowed me to open up about my addiction in a safe, Christ-centered environment where an SA member shared his experience, strength and hope with me.
Richard R

In answer to our last Newsletter:

Thank you for sending this. In March I will have 30 yrs of sobriety and April my husband will have 29 yrs of sobriety. With Gods Help, AA and Church works, without Him there would be no reason to live.

Thanks Donna

“Perseverance is endurance combined with absolute assurance and certainty that what we are looking for is going to happen.”

Oswald Chambers

OO Africa

After reading through the Mailbox, is there any doubt that Africa is the next area of the world for OO to expand to? Henry Chikafa has been coordinating OO meetings in Malawi for a few years now. There has been much interest expressed in several countries within a few weeks of one another. After some initial calls and emails, we are building a group resource and contact list, followed by some literature files, translations where most needed, and developing a meeting directory and map of the meeting locations. Uganda, Malawi, Kenya and Liberia are interested in networking so far, and we may be hearing from the French speaking countries soon as well. Won't you pray with us that these men and women will boldly preach the gospel of Christ to those suffering in Africa?

News from the Office ...

It sure is busy around here! Our effort to bring groups together is starting to pay off. We are putting rough local schedules together to let others know where meetings are available, and asking the group leaders to contact the other groups to verify meeting information. This will help us update our national meeting directory and we thank you for your help so far. It has been invaluable. The form for these local schedules is available on the Group Coordinator Network website and can be downloaded, edited and printed as needed. If you get a chance, please visit our website and click on “groups”, then check the information for your listing. If there are any changes needed, just drop us an e-mail (you can do that right from the website under “contact us”).

Our nationwide celebration of 25 years of Overcomers Outreach is yet another way to get groups together. We would also be happy to post your upcoming event on the website, just email it to us a few days in advance.

Look for the new “Quick Links” feature on the upper left corner of the website, where a few handy “shortcuts” are now available. Our website has had almost 20,000 visitors over the last year, which I find very encouraging. People are led to us for so many reasons and in many ways. But there is really only one reason and only one way. God bless you for your interest and continued support.

Your servant, Jeff MacLeod



Volunteers Elaine, Pauline, Eileen, and Walda helping out at the “Office”

Bridge of Believers ...

We seek the Lord's strength and guidance to conquer division. Overcomers Outreach groups provide a bridge to bring people together from 12 step groups, church congregations, and other recovery groups. Just as we are to "put on the full armor of God" individually and stand firm, we gather in groups to unify people at the foot of the Cross, where we worship and thank our Lord for our freedom from past bondage, and to serve Him by serving others. And now, we are called to serve in Africa and Asia (Pakistan). We have new opportunities to advance the Kingdom at home as well as abroad. The "front lines" of our battle are right across the street or even in the next room. We do not stand alone. United and clothed in His armor, we make up the bridge to freedom in Christ that so many seek. Let's thank God!

Father God, we come to your Throne of Grace to thank you for our freedom in you through your Son, Jesus Christ. Open our hearts and arms to receive those you send us in the same love you have shown to us, so that we may walk together in your glorious kingdom, forever and ever. 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

Overcomers Outreach
12828 Acheson Dr.
Whittier, CA 90601