



Upcoming Events:
Region 3 Fall 2006 Convention

October 6-8, 2006
Holiday Inn @ Intercontinental Airport

Experience, Strength, and Hope
from Fellow OA Members:

Rubber Duckie

“Rubber duckie, you’re the one, rubber duckie, so much fun...” We all know the little song from Sesame Street. Can’t you just hear Ernie’s strange, mellow voice singing it, as he clutches his duckie tightly to him?

Recently I read a book called “Holy Hunger,” by Margaret Bullitt-Jonas. The author gives an honest, entertaining and sometimes heart-breaking story of her journey through the valley of food addiction to the other side – with OA as her saving grace, the source of a great deal of her healing. One of the chapters is called “Putting Down the Duck.”

In the book, the author tells how Ernie in one episode of Sesame Street desperately wanted to join in the jazz band he was listening to. He yearned to play the saxophone, making beautiful, energizing music and having fun with the band. He wanted what they had. He wanted to be swept up in the music they made. But to pick up and play the saxophone, he would need to lay down his rubber duckie. He struggled and contemplated with this tough choice. Rubber duckie had always been there, a source of comfort.

Finally, after the encouragement of a host of characters, Ernie reluctantly, gingerly laid down the duckie. He picked up the saxo-

phone and made something beautiful with his hands.

Food has been my rubber duckie for so long. We’ve been through it all together, so many phases of life. Yet, the yearning for a more authentic, genuine, real kind of life – one that didn’t feel like I was putting on a puppet show – nagged and nagged, just below the surface. When I continued to stuff down my feelings and my needs with food, I felt like I was always waking up in someone else’s life.

I’m just beginning my journey through food addiction and compulsive overeating. For those of you who have made it through to the other side, I want what you have. I want to join in with your band, play your music, to hear the music of my life. I have longed to join in with the “natural” eaters for so long, to enjoy food in its proper place while also enjoying the rest of my life. To be separate from its hold.

So here I go, time to lay down the duckie. I do it carefully, slowly, with some fear and anxiety. I do it with a measure of grief. In its place, I hope to pick up something better and
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OA is a fellowship of individuals who, through shared experience, strength, hope, and the 12 steps of this program are recovering from compulsive overeating. We welcome everyone who wants to stop eating compulsively. There are no dues or fees for members; we are self-supporting through our own contributions, neither soliciting nor accepting outside donations. OA is not affiliated with any public or private organization, political movement, ideology or religious doctrine; we take no position on outside issues. Our primary purpose is to abstain from compulsive overeating and to carry this message of recovery to those who still suffer.

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grasp it firmly with both hands – my life. My life that's always been there, waiting for me to see it, taste it, touch it, feel it, use it. All of it.

My Higher Power is reminding me that this is the intended path for me, a gift, if I'm willing to take a few steps. Just a few days after reading the "duckie" chapter, I reached into my car trunk and found a small bag of toys given to me by my grandmother some time ago for my nieces, which I had forgotten about. I opened the bag, and right on top, smiling up at me in crazy yellow glory, was a rubber duckie. The next day at work, a friend called me over to her computer to see the bargains a cosmetics company was advertising. What was plastered all over the homepage? Huge yellow rubber duckies. Coincidence? No way. When we reach out just a little for help, God comes running. I keep a few rubber duckies in the kitchen as cheerful little reminders of God's grace.

As I embark on this new journey toward freedom from food addiction, I suppose I will still be waking up in someone else's life. This time it will be *mine* - as I get to know my genuine self and honor my needs.

Do I worry about my old friend rubber duckie being lonely, dejected? No. After I laid him down, God picked him up. And He's giving me something far more wonderful to clutch in return.

- OA member from Missouri

Serenity Times is a publication of the Galveston Bay Area Intergroup of Overeaters Anonymous. The editor reserves the right to edit for space and style. Reprinting of this material is permitted provided proper credit is given the source. Please send submissions to overeatersanonymousgbai@hotmail.com.

Surprising Gifts

As some of you know, this past month my cat of 8 years died. She became ill, was treated for an infection, got better, relapsed, and finally we had to put her to sleep. The vet could not identify what went so wrong. My husband and I do not have children; instead, for now, we have cats. So, when my cat passed on, I was very, very sad. She was my baby.

However, in the wake of the sadness, God left behind many gifts, and I would not have experienced these gifts had it not been for Overeaters Anonymous. One incredible gift was that I was truly able to feel my emotions. They were not covered up by mounds of food and feelings of guilt. I was able to fully experience my grief, and despite its surprising rawness at times, I'm thankful for that.

Experiencing the grief has helped me to move to the next stage of the process, which for me has been a quiet missing. I imagine the quiet missing will be replaced by something else even more divinely subtle. I'm grateful for each stage.

I was also given the gift of overwhelming support. My husband was out of town during my grief, but my need for emotional comfort did not go unmet. My Higher Power provided friends both near and far who allowed me to share my feelings, who prayed for me and offered kind, loving words.

I didn't want my cat to die, and I didn't want my husband to go out of town. But they did, and I was STILL provided for. That's one of the biggest gifts I received—I learned that despite the fact that things don't turn out the way I want them to sometimes, my Higher Power always provides for my needs. They simply do not go unmet.

Thank God for OA for helping me with my sadness. OA is each one of you, and you are all a part of an amazing Higher Power.

- Editor, *Serenity Times*

MONDAY

Galveston (12615)
Discussion 6:30 pm
Westminster Presbyterian Church
5127 Avenue U
Contact: Alma 409-938-0069

TUESDAY

Alvin (45605)
Literature 6:30 pm
Diagnostic & Urgent Care Facility
301 Medic Lane (at Business Hwy. 35)
meeting in cafeteria
Contact: Betty B. 281-482-1234 or
Nancy R. 281-224-4084

**Clear Lake LUNCH MEETING
Literature (Step Study) 12-1:00 pm
Clear Lake United Methodist
Meets in Youth Cafe
16335 El Camino Real
(Between El Dorado and Bay Area)
Contact: Cindy 281-450-9308

Clear Lake
OA/HOW Discussion 6:45 pm (46923)
House of Prayer Lutheran Church
14045 Space Center Blvd.
Contact: Ramona 281-614-1981

WEDNESDAY

Clear Lake (13244)
Literature (Big Book/12&12) 10 am
Clear Lake United Methodist Church
16335 El Camino Real Rm. 220
Contact: Jean 281-488-2402 or Kay 281-557-3881

Baytown (49349)
7:00 PM
Westminster Presbyterian Church
7600 Bayway Drive
Contact: Diane at 281-466-7355

**Santa Fe
OA/HOW 8:00 pm
Thelma Webber Community Center
14304 Beriton (East Meeting Rm.)
Contact: Teresa 281-554-283

THURSDAY

League City (49391)
11:30 AM
Bay Area Club
2111 Webster Street
Contact: Gina at 409-939-6383

Angleton (47802)
Frank Stevens Center for Health & Wellness
140 Hospital Dr. (6:30 pm)
Contact: Claire 979-297-9726 or Margie
979-848-1030

Webster (30093)
6:30 pm
Up the Street Club
Suite 105, Big Book Study
Contact: Chuck B. 281-332-3238

FRIDAY

Webster (07234)
Literature 6:30 pm (Step Study/12&12)
Up the Street Club
508 Nasa Road 1
Contact: Doris 281-486-7080

League City (48893)
HOW 7:30 Friday
Bay Area Club, Room F
2111 Webster Ave @ FM 270
Contact: Dinah 281-339-2727

SATURDAY

Clear Lake (12635)
For Today/Discussion 10:30 am
House of Prayer Lutheran
14045 Space Center Blvd.
Contact: Marcia 281-488-7684

SUNDAY

Webster (34237)
WOMEN'S MEETING
For Today/Discussion 6:00pm
Bay Area Community of Christ Church
Travis at Austin Streets
Contact: Kay H. 281-557-3881

**This meeting is not affiliated with GBAI
and is included on our list as a courtesy. If
you have any questions about the meeting
listed, please call the contact.

