

# NoVAations

Northern Virginia (NoVA) Intergroup (IG) of Overeaters Anonymous (OA)

## CALENDAR AT A GLANCE

### NOVA

**Next IG Meeting: December 21, 10 am - 12 pm. Elections for Intergroup Board, Region VII representatives and World Service Business Conference delegates (see article below). Hope Lutheran Church, 4604 Ravensworth Rd., Annandale, VA. Lunch to follow.**

### THANKSGIVING MEETING

**Mini-Marathon, November 28, 8 am - 2 pm, Slogans in Recovery. St. Charles Catholic Church, 3304 Washington Blvd, Arlington VA. Enter from church parking lot. Approximately 1 1/2 blocks from Clarendon Metro Station. Call: Alice @ 703-282-3757 or Martha @ 703-473-5122.**

### REG VII JOURNALS ARE BACK!

**A great resource for daily writing and personal inventory. Only \$10. Available through your Intergroup rep or [secretary@oanova.org](mailto:secretary@oanova.org)**

## Feeling and Spreading Gratitude

Dear Fellow OAs,

When I came to OA, I did not think that giving thanks or feeling grateful was important. I do now. There are many reasons I am a fan of gratitude. One is simply that it feels good!

I have been paying attention recently to how I express thanks or appreciation, and how others do. How do I let someone else know that I appreciate something they have done for me? How does someone else let me know that they are glad I am here, or glad I did something helpful to them?

It can be the words "Thank you," of course. It can be a warm smile and an enthusiastic hug. It can be "paying it forward" or "passing it on." It can be dedicating a book to someone, or carrying on the work that they have started.

So as you read this issue of NoVAations, I invite you to think about not only what you are grateful for, but how you express that appreciation and gratitude, how you share that warmth with the world.

Warmly, Rachel B., NoVA IG Chair

## True Holiday Joy

Living aware of the idea of gratitude may reflect what happens when I've worked Steps 6 and 7. I enlarge my consciousness to include beauty as well as victimhood. I can consider the beauty of a measuring cup taming the menace of a buffet; the easy access to my OA friends taming the noise and challenge of my holiday gathering. Nice.

I had two occasions this morning to be amazed at the way OA has rewired my brain. I stopped for coffee and had to stand close to the display-case of "edible enticements."

I neither looked at them and salivated nor had to avert my consciousness deliberately to avoid salivating and craving. I shopped for the weekly groceries. I didn't have to avoid certain aisles or pray in them. I simply pushed the cart down aisles that stocked the foods we consume.

During shopping, I am sometimes engulfed by sadness. I've determined that this is a shadow of awareness that I cannot find joy or relief in any substance or item in this store. I may buy and carry out items, but whether the items are consumable or not, they cannot bring me the joy my soul craves.

Anonymous

## All Hands on Deck: December IG Elections

IG will hold elections for board members in December, including chair, vice chair, secretary, treasurer, and representatives to Region VII and the World Service Business Conference. Please consider volunteering to serve in one of the open positions. And make sure your group has someone there to vote!

Here are the requirements for officers and representatives.

1. Six months' current abstinence.
2. At least one year of working the 12 Steps and 12 traditions to the best of your ability.
3. Three months' service above the group level (does not have to be continuous).
4. Regular attendance at an OA meeting in northern Virginia.

Representatives to Region 7 must meet all these requirements, plus attendance at IG meetings for at least six months (although not necessarily as a group representative). Region 7 representatives serve for two years.

WSBC delegates must have served as a regional representative and attended at least two Region 7 Assemblies as official representatives. Delegates must also have one year's current abstinence and at least two years' service beyond the group level.

In addition, we need a webmaster for our new website and chairs for committees such as events, outreach, retreat, abstinence, Twelfth Step, and fun/fellowship.

- Consider this a special plea for a volunteer as webmaster. A robust web presence is vital for reaching members and prospective members. No advanced computer skills are needed. The average time commitment is around four hours a month and duties include uploading NoVAations; updating local

## OA Steps and Traditions for November - December

### Steps 11 and 12

Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry it out. (Principle: spiritual awareness.)

Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to compulsive overeaters and to practice these principles in all our affairs. (Principle: Service.)

### Traditions 11 and 12

Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, films, television and other public media of communication.

Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all these Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

### Food for Thought from OA Literature

"How do we get through these times without overeating? We don't panic. Instead we quietly reaffirm our personal guidelines and ask our Higher Power to help us continue living within them. Then we turn our attention away from food and eating to focus our attention on our OA Fellowship and the Twelve Steps." *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous*, pp. 23 - 24.

## OA RESOURCES

### NoVAtions - NoVA's NEWSLETTER

Pick up a paper copy of *NoVAtions* at a NoVA OA Meeting or sign up at [oanova.org](http://oanova.org), for an electronic version and remember to confirm your address when you receive the first email.

Please share your experience, strength, and hope by writing for *NoVAtions*. January 2020 theme: Learning to Live with Rigorous Honesty.

Please send articles, event announcements, original poetry, art, and suggestions no later than 9 January to [k2lovesrabbits@gmail.com](mailto:k2lovesrabbits@gmail.com) or NoVA IG, PO Box 1992, Annandale, VA 22003.

I volunteered to be *NoVAtions* editor to fulfill a longstanding promise to make OA a bigger part of my life after retirement.

But it takes a village to produce *NoVAtions*, and I will need everyone's help as I try to fill Cecilia's shoes. Looking forward to hearing about your journey in recovery from as many of you as possible. Kristin L.

### Men's Corner

**Men of OA- You're not alone.**  
Are you the only man in your meeting?  
Do you have trouble freely sharing in meetings of most women? [OAMen.org](http://OAMen.org).

meeting information; and posting calendar and special event announcements. Interested in trying the webmaster position? Email Kate at [secretary@novaoa.org](mailto:secretary@novaoa.org).

Whether you're a group rep or not, we want your input. Please come and join us.

## Holiday Reboot

Holidays are tricky. To be honest, many of us have relapses then, whether lengthy or miniscule. It takes diligence, awareness and doing HP's will to climb back on the balance beam no matter how messy and imperfect your last moment—or month—may have been. Here are tools in my plan that help me feel good and in a safe zone, so feel free to adopt any of these ideas if something speaks to you.

**Start the day with three minutes' meditation on your knees.** For the first minute, focus on gratitude; for the second, pray for someone else; and third, ask for whatever it is you need today.

**Establish a food plan with fixed meal times.** For example, I eat breakfast between 7 am and 9 am; lunch between 12 and 2 pm; snack between 3 and 4 pm; dinner between 6 and 8 pm; and evening snack at 9 pm.

**Follow an eating framework for each meal.** My plan includes one protein, one carb, and one fruit/vegetable. Snacks are half a regular serving. Read the label for the serving size—who knew half a English muffin was a serving?

**Prepare good looking, healthy eats you can grab from the fridge.** It takes time to make this happen, but it will help you avoid eating randomly and guide you to the easy, well-considered items that are readily available.

**Purge the kitchen, twice.** You know what individual temptations to get rid of. If snacks for children are a problem, keep only a small portion and confine it to one particular area, or only buy enough for your family each day.

**Finally, focus on the most important thing—this one day.** My priority is getting my head on the pillow at night and “breathing in” abstinence. That's the goal—one day, then go to bed and wake up; one day, then go to bed and wake up; one day, then go to bed and wake up.

To repeat: holidays can be tricky. So even if you're in mid-bite or halfway through a bag of something bad for you, STOP. Part of recovery is not finishing the whole thing, and you can feel good about getting back on the balance beam. This is recovery in action and helps heal the “I'll start tomorrow” syndrome.

Elizabeth C.

**OA NOVA AND INTERGROUP**

OA NoVA is a vibrant fellowship with more than 45 weekly OA meetings that span Alexandria, Arlington, Annandale, Ashburn, Bristow, Burke, Falls Church, Fredericksburg, Leesburg, Manassas, McLean, Purcellville, Reston, Springfield, Vienna, and Warrenton, Virginia.

The OA NoVA Intergroup serves and represents the above member groups and carries the message of recovery to those with the problem of eating compulsively, by fostering the practice of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Overeaters Anonymous, guided by the Twelve Concepts of OA Service.

**INTERGROUP BOARD - 2019**

|                           |                  |
|---------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Chair:</b>             | <b>Rachel B.</b> |
| <b>Vice Chair:</b>        | <b>Juliet C.</b> |
| <b>Interim Treasurer:</b> | <b>John K.</b>   |
| <b>Secretary:</b>         | <b>Kate I.</b>   |

**Disclaimer**

The opinions expressed in *NoVAations* are those of the individual contributors and do not necessarily reflect OA as a whole.

## Hello and Goodbye from the Editors

Dear friends in recovery,

I am very grateful that I have had the opportunity to serve as NoVAations editor. I began in late Spring 2017. Time flies.

We learn that the nine tools of OA assist us in achieving and maintaining abstinence. Serving as editor and preparing the monthly newsletter has helped keep my OA program, as well as my engagement in the NoVA community, alive.

NoVAations is the work of many. My heartfelt thanks to Kate, co-editor through 2018. Thanks to Janet, proofreader/copy editor, for your rigor and responsiveness. Thanks to the many OA members who have shared their experience, strength and hope by writing for NoVAations. Thanks to NoVA IG board members past and present—Rachel, Kate, John, Julia, Maria, Peggy, Rhodessa, Jess, Mary Frances, Patrick and Kirsten for your input and guidance. Thanks to Deborah and Carrie, our webmasters, who ensured that NoVAations was always available on our website. And thanks to John at Welsh Printing, who faithfully prints each edition.

Finally, thanks to Juliet, Joan, and Karen, who pick NoVAations up at Welsh each month and deliver it to the IG meeting. I hope I haven't missed anyone. It does indeed take a village.

In closing, congratulations and best wishes to Kristin as she assumes the editor role.

In gratitude, Cecilia

Dear NOVA OAs,

I'm glad to take over as editor during the holiday season because I need to stay connected to the Fellowship at this challenging time of the year. Starting with Halloween, everyone—even so-called normal people—seems to lose their mind about food. My compulsive brain starts to whisper that overeating is no big deal, it's the holidays, people will be disappointed if I don't eat their homemade dessert, I can get back on the wagon tomorrow. You probably hear some of these thoughts, too!

In the past, such thinking led me to uncontrollable bingeing, nausea, weight gain and shame. I remember waking up after midnight to run to the bathroom, my stomach heaving. Not very happy holidays.

I am happiest when I focus on spiritual things and the people in my life during the holidays. At parties, I must choose between people and food. If I choose food, a tractor beam will inexorably pull me to the refreshment table and another round of compulsive eating. My holiday wish for all of us is serenity, fellowship with loved ones and recovery. Going to the Thanksgiving marathon at St. Charles will be part of my holiday. Hope to see some of you there.

Kristin