

NEPAIG MESSENGER

AUGUST 2024



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Website <https://aaintergroupnepa.org/>

Office Address:

422 N. Main St., Pittston, PA 18640

Office Hours:

Saturdays 10 AM—2 PM

2nd Tues./month 5—6:30 PM

Email:

nepaintergroup@gmail.com

Monthly IGR Meeting:

Meeting held at 7PM the 2nd Tuesday of the month at

Queen of the Apostles School Building

715 Hawthorne St, Avoca, PA 18641

Our IGR's — The Heartbeat of NEPAIG

Does the title seem true to you? If not, why? It was good to see our IGR's come to vote as a majority at our last IGR meeting on the motion about Website Content. It's been some time since I've seen so many stand for something. The motion and vote were important, but the work now has to be done to make our message what we feel it should be.

It's also good practice for us to get back into an orderly way of conducting business. We drifted from the process of motions, votes and order. Following "Roberts Rules" to conduct a business meeting, is used in AA service. It shows that the structure works. We can make it work, but it'll take all of us.

Our IGR's are the "Heartbeat of NEPAIG," but hearts beat at different rates. A strong heart beats steadily and constantly, healthy and full of life. That's the heartbeat NEPAIG needs of our IGR's . We need this to survive as an Intergroup as the frontline service function of our groups. We do this through service to others, a practice tried and true.

Two of our committees don't have Chairpersons. One is Public Information, maybe the most important committee we have to reach those who don't know there is a way out. The majority of committees do not have committee members. While we may sometimes feel we are carrying the message of hope AA has to offer, are we really carrying that message to our best ability? If you look into your heart will the answer be the right one?

Ask yourself, what can I do to help those who need it! Step up and join a committee today.

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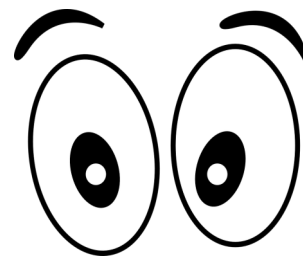
DISTRICT 40 "Area Day" - Don't miss it

WHERE: Misericordia University

WHEN: OCTOBER 12, 2024 — 10 AM to 2 PM

A **NEW LOOK**, comes to your NEPAIG Messenger. We hope you'll enjoy it! A running section previews in this issue called **"Ashley & Allie"**. We hope it becomes a forum for all members of our intergroup. Email to: nepaigmessenger@gmail.com

ALSO the newsletter will be published **Bi-monthly**. We'd love to have articles from outside the immediate area on service experience, Traditions, NEPAIG, you decide!



SOBERSTOCK 2024



" The Return "

WHEN: August 24th
11 AM until 7 PM

WHERE: Pennbrook Picnic Grove
2029 North Overbrook Road
Factoryville, PA 18419

\$25.00 per carload Softball Tournament
Free Face Painting 12-1 PM Food Music Tie Dye T-Shirts
Bake Sale Raffle Baskets Swimming

Call to register a team @ 570-239-3657

Log onto our website for upcoming events, NEPAIG info and more at:

<https://aaintergrouppnepa.org/nepaigaaevents>

These events and information change as needed, so visit often.



District Workshops ahead:

District 53, Aug. 17th— 10 AM to 2 PM, Doors open at 8:30 AM, "The Gift of Forgiveness"

Meshoppen Methodist Church, 128 Church St. Meshoppen, PA 18630

District 39, Sept. 8th—11:00 AM to 2:30 PM, Coffee & Doughnuts at 10:30 AM, "Design for Living",

Nay Aug Park, Schimilfenig Pavilion, 500 Arthur Ave, Scranton, PA 18510

We give because.....

Allie D. Peace & Serenity Group

Have you ever taken a real look at our Traditions? Yes, they're read at meetings, but do I understand the 12 traditions as I have come to understand the 12 steps? I've stuck around AA© getting actively involved. I have seen that the statement my father would say as I was growing up is highly applicable, "opinions are like a—s, everybody has one and they all stink." I must leave my opinion at the door and focus on the literature of AA. The Traditions are *guidance* for our groups as the steps are *guidance* for every member of AA who have "*recovered from a hopeless condition of mind and body*" (*Alcoholics Anonymous p.21*). Tradition 7 states, "*Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.*" This Tradition as well as the other eleven traditions were created based on the experience of our founders. The General Service Board (GSO) in its infancy co-mingled with John D. Rockefeller. They tried to get Mr. Rockefeller and a handful of his associates to serve on the board. This decision was made based on the interest that Mr. Rockefeller and his associates showed in Alcoholics Anonymous in addition to the keenness that it would be a gateway to funding. In the Spring of 1940, 2 years following this newly found relationship, Mr. Rockefeller introduced the idea of hosting a dinner in which his finance associates would be invited to be privy to the upbringing of Alcoholics Anonymous. Following this rendezvous, Mr. Rockefeller wrote a letter to all of those who were in attendance in which it was stated that Alcoholics Anonymous needed no outside capital. When the topic of financial contributions was brought up it was avowed that "*money will spoil this thing and it ought to stand on its own feet.*" Bill W. credits Mr. Rockefeller with gifting this perspective to Alcoholics Anonymous.



As a stereotypical alcoholic I can recall many instances in which I thought the grass would be greener *over there*. If only I had more money surely my problems would be solved. I was baffled when the money came and the satisfaction ceased to follow. Over the years, I've heard many alcoholics get fired up over the topic of finances, especially concerning our intergroup. Why is there so much money in our reserves? How can we "raise" money through events if we are self-supporting? For a time, I listened, nodding and always awaiting the answers but they never seemed to come from the conversation at hand. Well, as the curious alcoholic that I am I sought the answers through our literature and who would've thought, they were there! The answers I found were never hidden from me, I just never looked! I read through our A.A. Guidelines for Central or Intergroup Offices. There was even an entire section focused on finances entitled, "Facing Financial Responsibility." As I read, I found myself having a similar experience to the one I had while I read our Big Book for the first time. I chuckled to myself at the accuracy of each line that was written years prior to the current experience I was having. I learned that our reserves are kept to cover expenses like rent, utilities, etc. like a savings account would be kept to support your family if you lost your job suddenly. No one anticipated COVID, that sure was a good time to have a prudent reserve, huh? At the basis of this Tradition is my own personal inventory, where am I being selfish, self-centered, fearful? Where am I holding contempt prior to investigation? Where am I bringing up my personal beliefs and not the beliefs of the fellowship?

A & A



ASHLEY & ALLIE

Welcome to our column. We're 2 young, sober women sharing our experience, strength and hope.

We hope you'll join us and share yours!

Join in at: nepaigmessenger@gmail.com

Practice these Principles in All Our Affairs....

How do we practice the principles in all our affairs? This phrase is said so often, how many people truly knows what it means? Ashley and I discussed

Ashley: "I never really understood what it meant, until I start having problems. Like, in the third step, I say "I'm going to turn my will and my life over to God as I understand Him and I do it. Then, I experience something I haven't turned over and then I do and it's like HOLY crap! What was that? I think practicing the principles in all our affairs is a lot like that. Where it's not until something crops up that I think, "I should probably practice the principles."

Allie: What are the principles? If we were to ask anyone in Alcoholics Anonymous, can they name them without Google? Can we name all the principles?

Allie & Ashley: Honesty, Hope, Surrender, Courage, Integrity, Willingness, Humility, Love, Responsibility, Discipline, Awareness, and Service

Allie: There's a principle for each step, so honesty aligns with step one. It says in "*How It Works*, rigorously honest with ourselves©". I harp on honesty. I was the worst offender when it came to being honest. I had no idea how deep my dishonesty went, it went down to my core. Step two being hope, I remember *doing* step two with my sponsor. She asked me if I believe that there is something bigger than myself out there and without knowing the principles at the time, I said, "I hope so."

Ashley: Step three is surrender; I don't like that one sometimes.

Allie: No, I get this delusion, and it is a delusion, because it's not true by any means. Sometimes I think that certain things like, I can handle this and I'm going to be okay. I forget about God and I don't see how I'm being self-sufficient.

Ashley: Yea, I'll do that and won't even realize I'm doing it. I do it more with other people, where I tell them, "I've done this and I feel better so if you just do this thing, whatever it is, you'll feel better too. Then, I'll feel better now that you feel better, and everything is good again.

Allie: Right, and it brings us right back into being the director, when I'm not! When the facts of the situation are that when I was playing director, my life was chaos.

Ashley: My life is so amazing when I'm not the director. When I play my role, that's the one God wants me to have.

Allie: And don't think that whatever I say or do is going to change someone's perspective or actions or a situation or anything, period. I must remember, like when I'm working with a newcomer, that I'm not powerful enough to change the way they think. They must do that through the steps to find a Higher Power.

Ashley: Their Higher Power is going to give them their perspective change, not one of us.

Allie: So why do I think, and I do this and see it, that once I've gone through these steps or been around for X amount of time that any of that has changed somehow? All of a sudden, it's been well I've had these experiences, so I know x, y, and z. Yea, maybe but who did you have those experiences with God the whole time?

Ashley: I heard something, and it was something along the lines of, the only reason I have anything is God and I forget about that. Every single day, everything that happens, everything I have is because of God. None of it is because of me. I can get stuck in that where that day and I'll say, oh, I did good today or I did this or that. I didn't do crap, the entire day. Everything is God.

Allie: “It must be. As soon as I say, I did this, or my big thing is saying I have to do something. I have to go to the grocery store, I have to go to work, I have to go to a meeting, etc. I have to stop and think, no, what does God want? Usually if there’s a situation happening like something with my partner or my daughter, God wants me to be there acting sanely, not thinking about how I have something to do. If someone is reaching out saying I need something, I need help, I’m not supposed to be like, ‘sorry, have to go. I have to think about where God wants me and He wants me to be useful not thinking about my to do list.

Ashley: You know what I love about that too? The book says, “what does God want me to be” not what does God want me to get done. I’m always thinking I need to *do this*. What does God want me to be today? What role does He want me to play? Whether it’s to sit back and watch or help someone.

Allie: And 99% of the time, God does not want me to be the know it all.

Ashley: God doesn’t even want me involved in half of the things I involve myself in.

Allie: 99.9% of the time, He’s like, no, sit down.

Ashley: Get out of there. It’s none of my business.

Allie: It’s not my role. He’ll put people in my life who will be like, Allie, shut up or don’t say this and I’m like, I just really think I should say it. I think it’s the right thing to do. In reality, I don’t actually most of the time know what is the *right* thing to do. Sometimes, it’s very clear, should I cut this guy off in traffic or not.

Ashley: When it’s obvious what I should do, that’s my conscious, my God conscious. I know when certain things aren’t really right, societally, morally, all of that stuff but before I got sober, I never had that feeling, that gut feeling that I should or shouldn’t do something.

Allie: “I remember having the gut feeling, when I was like twelve or thirteen, where I was going to do something and I wasn’t supposed to be doing it, it would make my parents upset, and I remember feeling fearful, anxious and second-guessing what I was about to do. Then, I remember powering through that gut feeling and doing it anyway.”

Ashley: Just deleting that gut feeling and after so many times of doing that it just stopped happening.

Allie: After so many times, you’re like, ‘what gut feeling? I have no conscience.

Ashley: That’s what I felt when I first came in and it was really unsettling for me because I didn’t feel like I was doing a lot of ‘bad things, but I didn’t have that gut feeling anymore.

Allie: No, I stifled it. I do this program, I do these steps, I practice these principles in all my affairs enough times, and the gut feeling, or God consciousness, begins to get dug out. I acted like a hell for years and my favorite thing, which I say that sarcastically, is when I hear people say that they just stopped using and they were a better person instantly. I thought the same thing until I did my inventory and a saw that lot of my actions were not poor because of using.

Ashley: We alcoholics don’t get better when we put it down, if we do then we aren’t alcoholic. It tells us in our literature, we will pick up whether it is five-years or twenty-years.

Allie: Our Big Book©, tells the story of the man who put down alcohol during his career, but once he retired, he picked it back up and was dead within four years and the stories aren’t fairytales, they’re real people and their lives. It’s in our book to show us the variety of possibilities if we do not have a spiritual awakening.

Ashley: I heard this morning, on a podcast someone say, everyone is welcome to the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous© and not everyone gets the fellowship of the spirit. The true alcoholic who does the Twelve Steps will have a spiritual awakening as a result and will enter the fellowship of the spirit. That was such a good explanation of the difference between the two. Everyone who has a desire to quit drinking is welcome but not everyone is going to get the spiritual aspect without doing the spiritual steps.

Allie: People also, distort what the fellowship is.

Ashley: Yes, coming to meetings and drinking coffee.

Allie: That is the definition of fellowshipping. Working a program and fellowshipping are not synonymous.

Ashley: ***That deserves a separate article.***



No Dues or fees!



Ron S Peace & Serenity

Our seventh tradition states, “every group ought to be self-supporting declining outside contributions”. In other words groups cannot accept contributions or gifts from outside enterprises, no matter how well they may be intended. I can only imagine how painstaking this tradition must have been in the early days of AA. I’m sure that even by today’s standards and lessons learned, the program has gone through there are still temptations that groups wrestle with in terms of well-intended benefactors that what to donate money to a group that saved someone’s marriage, sanity, job, or life. Sadly or maybe gladly, this Tradition keeps us in check. Self-supporting is the name of the game and it’s best that we keep it this way.

That being said it behooves each of us to support our Home Group whenever we can. I know there are times when some of are not capable of contributing. It’s called being broke. How many us came into the fellowship broken and broke? I know I was broken but I wasn’t broke. The words that struck me when hearing them for the first time, were “There are no dues or fees for AA membership”. What a blessing for the newcomer that has lost it all. What I’m getting at is this. If you belong to a group then support it. If you’ve got it, then contribute. If not, support it in other ways.

Groups still need people to set up and clean up. That’s called support. My sobriety took on a whole new meaning when I really got involved with doing just those kinds of things in the beginning. Showing up early and leaving late gave me the opportunity to not only meet people, but really get to know them. During these times of service work my denial of being an alcoholic began to diminish because I could see that that I was not alone anymore.

Bridging the Gap



Bridging the Gap is a program creating a temporary partnership between a treatment program and A.A. members. Bridging the Gap is designed to help an alcoholic in a treatment program make that transition.

One of the more “slippery” places in the journey to sobriety is between the door of the facility and the nearest A.A. group. A.A. members have volunteered to be temporary contacts and introduce newcomers to Alcoholics Anonymous



Request Services: <https://aaintergroupnepa.org/bridging-the-gap-member-signup>

Become A Volunteer: <https://aaintergroupnepa.org/bridging-the-gap-volunteer-sign-up>

Comments or Questions: NepaBTG@gmail.com

PENNSCYPAA, A First Experience

Austin S.– Ticket to the 4th Dimension Group



I was part of a group of seven alcoholics from the NEPA area who went to St. David's for the Pennsylvania State Conference of Young People in Alcoholics Anonymous, or PENNSCYPAA. Our sobriety ranged from 34 days to 5 years. We had a weekend filled with joy, laughter, and the promises of the program. PENNSCYPAA is a convention filled with meetings, workshops, fun, games, and fellowship. Being at a PENNSCYPAA convention for the first time is like seeing "Rocky Horror Picture Show" live! There are shout-outs and slogans being yelled all around you! Getting through "How It Works" is a five minute ordeal filled with wisecracking comments from the audience that give voice to alcoholism in a humorous and insightful manner.

For a half hour before the main meetings on Friday and Saturday night there is pre-hype, which is a giant dance party complete with a DJ, flashing lights, beach balls being tossed all around the auditorium, alcoholics in costumes, confetti guns, bubble guns, crowd surfing, and chanting. Following several readers (who, after introducing themselves, were all greeted by the entire auditorium shouting "HI, _____, WE LOVE YOU, _____, LOTS AND LOTS AND LOTS. HOW MUCH? A WHOOOLE BUNCHES! WOOO, OOOW!").

The speaker took the podium and offered his experience, strength and hope. What I took away from his message most was what he shared his sponsor had told him about working on his defects of character. "Don't ask God to remove them, ask to find God within them." The next morning we attended a workshop on Steps 6 and 7, which was an opportunity to have all different kinds of alcoholics share their perspective on the patience and the perseverance required to continually work our program. In the afternoon we all attended a Hug Workshop, which is impossible to explain in words, but essentially used nonverbal communication and eye contact to show us how difficult it can be to both give and receive intimacy. There wasn't a dry eye among us. I could look into strangers' eyes, into their souls, and feel their years of shame and suffering, and it absolutely tore me up inside, because I know those feelings. It pains me to see someone in front of me think of themselves as deserving anything less than unconditional love.

This was a beautiful experience and something I was grateful to share with my friends. The last speaker we heard passed on wisdom that we needed to hear. She told us the importance of acting better than she feels and cocreating with her Higher Power. The morning we were scheduled to checkout and go home, the hotel lost power. We all separately went into the bathroom and flicked the light switch on and off several times, trying to get it to work. We packed our bags up and deflated our air mattresses and drove home reflecting on the weekend that we had together. The newest among us were inspired by a small preview of the joy that could be had in sobriety. Those of us with a little more time were enlivened and refreshed and were grateful to have strengthened our friendships through such an outing. We look forward to future AA conventions and getting more of us involved.

AA GROUP CELEBRATIONS:

KISS GROUP, Mt. Bethel Baptist Church, 1341 Layton Road, Clarks Summit, PA 18411 40 Year Celebration

Saturday Sept. 28th at Noon, pizza, soda and cake, joint celebration with monthly celebrants. All welcome!

DRY DOCK—Slogans & Humor

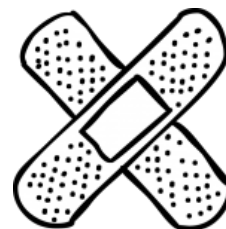
In the spirit of
“Ham on Wry” ©



I try to surrender my will, but God never does what I want!



I never make the same mistake twice, I usually make it 5 or 6 times, just to be sure!



Sobriety isn't like Burger King©, you can't have it your way.

Why is a pizza different from an alcoholic?



A pizza can feed a family of 4.

Christopher Columbus must've been an alcoholic. He set sail and then landed not knowing where he was going. He spent months there without know where exactly where he was. Then he left not knowing where he'd been and somehow found his way back. The whole trip was paid for by a woman he hardly knew!



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