

# NEPAIG MESSENGER

MARCH 2025



Hotline.....570-654-0488 — 800-640-7545

Central Office.....570-654-1226

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

**Table of Contents**

NEPAIG	1
Share A Day	2
To What Length	3
New-Old IGR's	4—5
History—Ebby T..	6
Concepts 1,2,3	7
Nothing to Report	8-9
Dry Dock Humor	10

There's changes to our newsletter to make it fit your needs and suggestions. Join us. We're adding a reader input section which depends on your participation. We have got some fresh input from outside our Newsletter committee. We do appreciate all input, but reserve the right on what to publish. Much like our Grapevine, we will acknowledge and thank all contributors, regardless if we use any material or not. Please include your first name, last initial and home group so we can add that unless you request to be anonymous.

**Respond with your input:** [nepaigmessenger@gmail.com](mailto:nepaigmessenger@gmail.com)

Have you ever heard the term, "The Right of Decision" used in A.A.© service work? It comes from Concept III. It all developed from the principle of "mutual trust", between trusted servants and the A.A. members and groups. This principle assures "trusted leadership" at all levels of A.A. service. What is this "trust" we base this responsibility on? As trusted servants our members expect no less than honest and unbiased decisions. We expect our trusted servants to be trustworthy. Do we simply believe that they are? Asking the reasons on decisions is not a sign of mistrust. We ask because we have the "right" to know the "whys and hows" of the functioning of our service structure. We should understand the reasons and methods used in making these decisions. As A.A. members we are just as responsible for our trusted servants as they are for their work. We elect servants to serve, not us, but the spiritual principles of our program and a Higher Power. We should use care in nominating or electing them. None of us will ever be perfect in this life, but striving to meet that goal is what we base our recovery from alcoholism. As stated in our "Big Book", "we claim spiritual progress not spiritual perfection" or the role of a Higher Power in our lives.

**A.A.©., quotes reprinted with permission of A.A.W.S.**

# **What can you say.....about Share a Day?**

Alex N. Alternate Delegate Area59, Panel 75



What can you say about Share A Day? A day of food, fun, and fellowship? A meeting of the minds? Maybe it's a chance to see our Third Legacy of Service with unity in action and learn about being a servant among servants.

Share A Day is an incredible opportunity, not only to hear about the behind the scenes 12-step work that is done within General Service and Intergroup, but a chance to meet the people that are actually helping the people, that you and I may not always see. DCMs on Area 59's Treatment Subcommittee will get to meet the Director and Liaisons for Treatments at NEPA Intergroup. Same for Cooperation with the Professional Community, Public Information, Finance, Archives, and Corrections. There's 11 committees across Area 59 and NEPA Intergroup. All of which are fueled by our 12 Traditions, service-oriented alcoholics, and those that hope to enhance their sobriety with service beyond the home group. Share A Day presents the opportunity for the simple, yet much needed, communication across committees.

For too long, I have been a part of a home group that contributes to Intergroup, GSO, Area, and District, where it seems as though all legs of service are attempting to accomplish the same exact thing, yet doing it a bit differently, all of which cost money. Crying corporate poverty when hundreds of groups in Northeastern PA are kicking money down the triangle to District, Area, and Intergroup. Simple communication between service structures can prove much more efficient and effective in using your home group's 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition contributions to carry the message to the alcoholic that still suffers, or even more important, the alcoholic that doesn't know that we exist. Share A Day is the day where all 12-step committees get a chance to rub elbows and get to know one another. Who will their counterpart be for the next year or 2? Can they exchange emails or phone numbers? Can they set up a conference call or grab coffee to talk about what each committee is doing and how we can help each other? Are there accurate tools available? Are the tools and literature even being used? Where do we intersect and where do we differ?

By spending a day together, we have a chance to see our unity in action. By spending a day together, we have a chance to see all of our Three Legacies working in lock step. By spending a day together, we might hear something that we forever carry in our hearts. By spending a day together, we may be able to point people in the right direction instead of trying to reinvent the wheel. By spending a day together, we might inspire the next generation of Intergroup Reps and General Service Reps. By spending a day together, I might get to stay sober for that 24 hours.

## **Area 59 and NEPAIG present "Share A Day"**

*October 11, 2025, sponsored by Area 59 Eastern PA. The event is being held at the Waymart Church, 596 Honesdale, Rd., Waymart, PA 18472. 11 AM to 3 PM*

*More details to come soon.*

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

**<https://aaintergrouppnepa.org/nepaigevents>**

**Area 59 and NEPAIG present "Share A Day"**

## To What Lengths?

*Sarah S. Olyphant Women's Group*

I recently attended the 4th annual "Women's Victory Conference" held at St. Nicholas Church in Wilkes Barre. The flyer for the event included a quote from the Big Book, "Remember it was agreed at the beginning we would go to any lengths for victory over alcohol" (p76). If I am to be honest, I must tell you that I drove 40 minutes to attend this event. The church basement was cold. The chairs provided were hard and uncomfortable. There were loud noises coming from the floor above us. A children's basketball game was well underway with a very enthusiastic cheering section. The sound system for the members speaking was subpar, which made it difficult to for the audience sitting in the back to hear, specially with the rum- blings coming from the ceiling.

There were 3 speakers scheduled for the event. Cheryl T. from Staten Island spoke first and shared on her experience with Step 1. MaryBeth A. from Spring Lake, NJ followed next with Step 2. Bringing it full circle was Mari G. from Toronto, Canada sharing her humorous story, focusing on Step 3. There was an event fee in the amount of \$5.00 to enter. They held a 50/50 raffle, as well as a basket raffle. All proceeds earned from this event are to go towards the 7th annual "Keystone Conference" to be held in May of this year at the same location. All attendees were offered coffee, snacks and lunch at no additional fee

So, why do I bother to attend these events if I hold such a low opinion of them? The short answer? I don't hold a low opinion on any of it. Attending these events is just a small example of the lengths that I am willing to go to protect and preserve my own sobriety. I have a reliable (and legal!) mode of transportation to get me there safely. The venue was cold? So, what! My coat will keep me warm! The chairs were uncomfortable? So, what! I had a chair to sit on! I was happy for the families up- stairs engaging in a fun and healthy activity with their community. Although I may not have heard everything the speakers shared, I heard enough of what I needed to hear. It was enough to help me sustain my sobriety for another day and maybe even help me to carry the message on to others.

I saw a lot of new faces and a few familiar ones. I am grateful to and appreciative of the committee members that made this event possible. It's not an easy thing to do. It takes a lot of effort and commitment to make an event like this one successful. I am also grateful for the speakers who traveled much farther than I did to carry the message of hope. These are some of the examples of the lengths our members are willing to go to for victory over alcohol.

### ***To what lengths are you willing to go?***

---



**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://aaintergrouppnepa.org/bridging-the-gap-member-signup>

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

Comments or Questions: [NepaBTG@gmail.com](mailto:NepaBTG@gmail.com)



# *NEW (and old) IGR's*

## *OK I'm an IGR, now what?*



Don't know what to do? Have never heard of Intergroup? Have lots of questions?

### ***You are not alone!***

Most IGRs arrive at their first monthly IGR Meeting and think, ***oh wow, what's this all about?*** It sort of goes like this. As the elected (or appointed) IGR for your Home Group, you represent the group at the monthly IGR Meeting on NEPAIG (Northeast PA Intergroup). NEPAIG is made up of a large geographic area in Eastern PA. It's comprised of 13 counties consisting of 7 Districts, all which are part of Area 59, Eastern PA Alcoholics Anonymous. AA uses a service structure that is comprised of its members who belong to the AA Groups. Geographic areas have several Groups that make up a District. Then each AA Area is made up of several Districts. Within the Eastern PA Area 59 boundaries there are several Intergroups. While the Intergroups are not technically a part of the AA service structure, they do perform 12th Step services in their area, for the AA groups. NEPAIG is one of these Intergroups and as an IGR you are involved directly in the NEPAIG service structure.

But we're still where we started. Just what am I supposed to do as my home groups IGR? Here's a few things to think about. You don't need any special talents or skills. A desire to serve is all it takes. Becoming an IGR moves you into the active part of the NEPAIG. Being there, you become a more intimate part of the workings of your group and NEPAIG. Remember, we're here to carry the message of Hope AA offers to those out there on the streets.

You'll attend the IGR meeting, which is held the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of every month at the Queen of Apostles School Bldg. in Avoca, PA. at 7PM. ***That means you should be there well before then!*** 6:30 PM is a good time. The parking is very easy when the lot isn't full! The 2<sup>nd</sup> reason is there'll be others there and if you walk out and introduce yourself, you'll meet other IGR's or members of the NEPAIG Board of Directors and Committee Chairpersons. Then you can mingle. But before you take a seat, go to the back of the hall. There will be baskets with various handouts and flyers. Take each one to read and to bring back to your home group. There's always plenty of information and current flyers of events.

***Don't try to write everything down that happens at the meeting!*** Once you gather up all those papers, take a seat, with friends old and new! It's a good time to look at the meeting minutes from the previous IGR meeting. Get familiar with what happened last month. They will be open for discussion and questions during the meeting.

At 7PM the Chairperson will call the meeting to order. It'll open with a welcome introduction, some readings, (*you may even be asked to read one of them*) and then if any IGR's or Group or Board members are celebrating that month. The Chairperson will ask if anyone has questions about the past month's minutes. (*this is where you can question something from the past minutes you just read*) If nobody does, they'll will ask for a motion to accept them, a second to that motion and then a vote, either aye or nay. Then the Chairperson gives their report and asks for a motion to accept it like before. The Vice Chairperson does the same and is followed by the Treasurer and Secretary. The Chairperson asks the District Liaisons to give their reports on their district's activities. The they'll call each Committee Chairperson to give their committee's report. Questions are allowed about the content of their reports. When all the Committees are finished, the Chairperson will move to "Old Business" to cover actions from the previous meeting. Then they will move to "New Business" and if any is brought, discussions, questions etc. are allowed during these periods. After that, the meeting will end. Don't worry, after a few meetings it's easy! **BUT**



We'll move on to handing out the NEPAIG monthly *Institutional Commitments*. They're listed on one of the sheets you should have picked up from the back table. Here you can stand with the other IGRs and raise your hand to take them as announced. *Remember, if you take one, make sure your group can keep it!* Don't overstretch your group. Make sure you talk to other IGR's and if you're unsure of anything just ask. Remember our committees need help. Tell your home group members about the opportunities NEPAIG has for them to be of service and stay sober! Good luck!

**NEPA Intergroup Website Services**

[www.nepaintergroup.org](http://www.nepaintergroup.org)

Need to Send  
A Text Blast



Need a Meeting  
Changed or Corrected



To contact email the NEPAIG Website Committee at: [nepaaigwebsite@gmail.com](mailto:nepaaigwebsite@gmail.com)



# Ebby Thatcher and the Oxford Group

*Ron S.. Peace & Serenity*

When I came back to AA a couple of years ago, I joined the Peace and Serenity group in Scranton, PA. Once I got settled in, I started looking for a sponsor. Eventually I asked the man who is still my sponsor to this day. I chose him because I saw him every day and when he shared it usually involved something about his higher power or God as he understood him. He wasn't so uptight about being himself though. He knew he wasn't perfect and that he often had to remind himself that the program wasn't about perfection, it was about progress. Anyway, once he agreed to sponsor me the first words out of his mouth was "No Bullshit". Did he know that I was a bit of a bull shitter? Probably, but what I believe he meant was, if we're going to do this, I had better be serious about it.

One of the first things we started doing was getting together one day a week to read the Big Book together. Although I had read the book before this time it was different. Before we would start, he would invite God into the reading with us. At first, I was little uncomfortable but after a few sit downs I had grown to welcome his presence in the room with us. He made it clear to me that his concept of God did not have to be my concept. All that mattered was to keep an open mind to the possibility that there was a power greater than either one of us.

When we got to the part in the book about Bill W's struggles with the God idea his friend Ebby told him "Why don't you choose your own conception of God?" That struck a chord with me. I wanted to know more about this Ebby fellow, so I started doing some research. Here is some of what I found. The following is an excerpt from

*EBBY T. The Man Who Carried the Message to Bill W.©*

It was Ebby who found relief from his alcoholism in the simple spiritual practices of the Oxford Group which was an attempt to return to First Century Christianity – before it was complicated and distorted by religious doctrines, dogma and opinions. The program offered by Ebby to Bill involved taking a personal moral inventory, admitting to another person the wrongs we had done, making things right by amends and restitution, and a genuine effort to be of real service to



others. himself and obtain the power to overcome these problems, Ebby had been encouraged to call on God, as he understood God, for help.

Bill Wilson never took another drink and left Towns Hospital to dedicate the rest of his life to carrying the message to other alcoholics. Ebby, however, took a different path, one that caused him to have a series of relapses. The man whom Bill Wilson called his sponsor could not stay sober himself and became an embarrassment. There were periods of sobriety, some long, some short, but eventually Ebby would, "fall off the wagon," as he called it.

More revealingly, Ebby referred to his periods of sobriety as, "being on the wagon." For an AA to regularly use this sort of language is an indication that the commitment to sobriety is temporary in nature.

Ebby was born on April 29, 1896, into a prominent and well-to-do family in Albany, New York, with roots going back before the American Revolution. His grandfather started a railroad wheel manufacturing business in 1852 and became the main supplier of wheels for the New York Central Railroad, as well as Mayor of Albany Two other members of Ebby's family were also mayors of Albany, including his older brother, "Jack." One of New York State's most beautiful parks, located on the Helder Berg escarpment southwest of Albany, was donated by the widow of Ebby's uncle, John Boyd Thacher and is named after him.

Ebby's full name was Edwin Throckmorton , and he can be said to have arrived in the world with "a silver spoon in his mouth." It is possible that because of his upper-class origins, with servants waiting on him and the respect

brought by his family name, Ebby developed the attitude that life should always be easy for him. He was 'entitled', it seems. If there is an "on the wagon" then there is an "off the wagon" too. And that was the on/off cycle of Ebby's drinking. In 1960, at the Long Beach, California Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous, Bill Wilson wrote this dedication in an AA book that he gave to Ebby Thacher.

"Dear Ebby,

No day passes that I do not remember that you brought me the message that saved me – and only God knows how many more."

Portions of text reprinted with permission from: - "Alcoholics Anonymous", "A.A. Comes of Age", "Pass it On", A.A.W.S.— "Language of the Heart", A.A. Grapevine Inc. - "Lois Remembers" AI—Anon Family Group Headquarters

---

## *H to H Dinner Dance*

**2025**



*To be held on April 12th, at 6pm      Holiday Inn—Fast Mountain*

*600 Wildflower Drive, Wilkes Barre PA 18702*

*Tickets \$40 pp*

### Our Concepts of AA Service 1, 2, 3

***Concept I—Final responsibility and ultimate authority for A.A. World Services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.***

1. Does my home group have an IGR? Do we feel our group is a part of NEPAIG and A.A. as a whole?
2. Is the "Collective Conscience" of NEPAIG at work in my home group?
3. Does my home group hold regular business meetings and make the business of NEPAIG a part of the discussion?

***Concept II—The General Service Conference of A.A. has become, for nearly every practical purpose, the active voice and the effective conscience of our whole Society in its world affairs.***

1. Do we have an understanding of the General Service Conference?
2. Is our group meeting its 7th Tradition responsibilities in NEPAIG?

***CONCEPT III—To insure effective leadership, we should endow each element of A.A.—the Conference, the General Service Board and its service corporations, staffs, committees, and executives—with a traditional "Right of Decision".***

1. Do we understand what is mean by the "Right of Decision"?
2. Do we trust our trusted servants in NEPAIG?

Reprinted in part form the "Concepts Checklist" with permission of A,A,W,S.

# NOTHING TO REPORT

Shawn A. Down to Brass Tacs

AA is full of opportunities to serve other alcoholics. I embarked on my service journey doing speaking commitments at first, then sponsoring. While this was very fulfilling and continues to keep me sober, I found myself needing a bit more. I stood at my homegroup to be an IGR. Little did I know the vast expanse of service opportunities and AA fellowship I was going to come across. After a year or so as IGR, I noticed several committee chair positions sitting vacant. No one wanted to stand and help the larger need for AA in North Eastern PA Intergroup. As I listened to the list of services directly helping alcoholics go undone, I felt driven, almost obligated to stand for an open committee chair. I stood to be the committee chair for the Bridging the Gap program.

I attended my first Intergroup board meeting with much anticipation. I listened as I heard about how our Intergroup functioned. I asked several questions about how my committee was supposed to function. I was handed a white binder and sent on my way. I spent hours reading through the material only to find I had no clue what I was supposed to do. Scared to death, the next week I attended the Intergroup General Forum. I watched as each chair stood in front of the crowd of AA's and gave their report. I thought to myself *"What was I going to say?" Did I even have anything to say?"* My thoughts whirled about being entirely unprepared, unexperienced and unsure of myself.

The night continued and I saw some IGRS in the crowds asking very specific questions to the committee chairs. I watch as a few rabble rousers try to drum up support for their rantings until the chairperson called for order. That subtle fear crept over me and the thoughts started running faster, *"What if they ask me questions like that? What if someone starts some drama? What did I get myself into here? Can I just quit?"* Then finally, the Chairperson introduced me as the new committee and asked for my report. I stood there for a second, all eyes on me, waiting for my report to manifest, hoping for something to come to me that in my mind should be an earth-shattering report, a real grandstand performance. I stood up and said *"Shawn, Alcoholic, I have nothing to report"*. *Whew I thought, I'm glad that is over* I thought. I started to sit down, and the chairperson asked, *"Does anyone have any questions for Shawn?"*. Oh, boy I'm going to get it now. The thoughts raced again. However not a single question from the somewhat rowdy crowd of IGRS

I had gotten away unscathed, but what'll happen next month? I scrambled over the next month to do something anything, so I did not have to stand up there with absolutely nothing to report. Driven by my ego, with the need to appear important and useful, I read everything I could about the BTG program. I was running, empowered, by the "right of decision". I decided that this program needs a ton of changes. I had forms added to the website. I changed connection methods to email only. I re-wrote literature. I frenzied to be relevant, edgy and strived to be the best committee chair the world has ever seen.

The next month board meeting came up faster than I thought. I explained to board all the changes I had made, and my intentions. I was waiting for the attaboys and got nothing. The chairperson just told me, let the IGRs know your intentions. The following week I stood in front of the crowd, cocksure and confident I had a great report. I gave the report with all the changes to the crowd of my minions, waiting for the applause, but there was only silence! Then one by one hands go up. I start fielding question in what seems like an endless barrage of IGRs totally upset that I had flipped the table over on the program. I answered each question in full arrogance while thinking *"These people must be stupid!"* and embarked on proving it. As everyone realized they had hit the brick wall of my uncompromising intelligence, each conceded, and my report session was over. I had won!

I collected my things and just knew that everyone would come around. The following month I did the same report venture only adding that I noticed no one was using the new technology nor volunteered for the new program. I was met with the same rabble rousing this time being armed with my AA literature tack hammer, I refused to concede to any suggestion. This went on for a few months, but no volunteers.



I started to have concerns that the AAs did not care about helping other alcoholics and that they only attended IGR meetings for meeting lists and commitment cards. "Yeah, that's it!" I thought.

More months passed and I continued to chastise the IGRs about their lack of commitment. I asked them why they refused to volunteer. Finally, an answer, but not one I was expecting to hear. I was told that not everyone is on my technological level, that my ideas were not bad, but changing the program was not why I was elected. I was elected to carry out the functions of the program. It was the slap in the face I needed. I spent the next few nights thinking about that comment. Its not my program, Its their program kept ringing in my head. I dusted off the old binder and took a second look. In a perfect storm of God doing for me what I could not do for myself, I received an email that the BTG chair from Area 59 was meeting at a local district.

I met with Area chair and found I had a lot to learn about service and my committee. I asked a lot of questions over the next month. I explored how others were doing the program. As it turns out, most of the changes I made were not necessary, I revived much of the "old way" of running the program. I was humbled to see I was making mistakes that others already made. It reminded much of my journey in recovery. Too arrogant and too smart to see my way isn't always the right way. I made the changes necessary and added some stuff I had been doing right. I returned to the general forum the following month and presented the news. To my surprise, I was getting notifications of volunteers on my phone before the meeting ended. The IGRS were interested and asking me questions afterwards about how they could help. The next month there was an unprecedented amount of interest and volunteers. The following month, I reported the success, and ended my report with a humble, "Thanks to you for allowing me to be of service"

---

## Our Traditions 1, 2, 3

***Tradition 1 - Our common welfare should come first: personal recovery depends on A.A. unity***

1. *In NEPAIG am I helpful and integrating or am I divisive. What about gossip, inventory?*
2. *Am I supportive of NEPAIG as a whole or just the parts I like or understand or approve of?*
3. *Do I make competitive remarks pitting groups, members or committees against one another?*

***Tradition 2 - For our group Purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern.***

1. *Do I trust and support our chairpersons and IGR's? Am I trustworthy in my duties or tasks?*
2. *Do I add to the group conscience? Can I yield to it in the spirit of Unity?*
3. *Do I sound off in group discussions even when I have little or no experience on the item?*

***Tradition 3 - The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking***

1. *Do I judge others in intergroup as losers? Do I put down others if they think different than I do?*
2. *Do I insist there are only certain ways to do things? My Way?*
3. *Am I willing to help newcomers to the intergroup, working at their pace, not mine?*

Reprinted in part from the AA Grapevine "Traditions Checklist" © with permission of the AA Grapevine Inc.



# DRY DOCK—Slogans & Humor

In the spirit of

“Ham on Wry” ©



Sign over the local bar: All you can drink \$1.00  
Me thinking, “I get \$2.00 worth!

High bottoms have trap doors

His sponsor tells him he needs to be more involved in Service work.  
He stands for Treasurer at the local intergroup during their meeting.  
We he raises his hand he’s asked, “what is 9 X 4?” He replies “33”.  
Each candidate is asked the same question.  
After the vote he is elected! He asks, “why did you select me if I  
answered wrong?” Well they said, “your answer was the closest to  
being right!”

I met with my sponsor the other day and he pointed out 2  
of my character defects.

My friend asked, “What were they?”

Well I said one was I don’t listen, and I don’t remember  
the second one!

This too shall pass, although it might feel like a kidney stone!

Sponsor : Now you tell me your awareness has gotten  
better since becoming sober, right?

What is the color of the chair in the “Blue Chair” APP  
you’re always telling me about!

There’s a new reality show called “Naked and Afraid in  
AA”  
It’s all about what people will think of me!



We’re not reformed drunks but informed alcoholics!



Victor E. & “Ham on Wry” © reprinted with permission of the AA Grapevine Inc.

## Contribute to the A.A. Birthday Plan

The birthday plan is for groups or members who wish to contribute to the General Service Office on their A.A. birthday. \$1 per year is suggested, but many members may contribute as much as they wish up to \$7,500. Envelopes for use are available at our Central Office.



Reprinted with permission of A.A.W.S. ©

<https://www.aa.org/aa-contributions-self-support>