

SUMMER



NEPAIG MESSENGER

JUNE 2025

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

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

Website <https://aaintergrouppneps.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

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NEPAIG—too large to serve?

We often hear that NEPAIG is “the largest intergroup” in Area 59. Is that a good thing? Whenever a member of the Area committee speaks to us, it’s always addressed. It usually provokes a good feeling, being the largest. BUT, is that a good thing? I’m not so sure it is. I haven’t been able to attend all district meetings in the NEPAIG area, but I have gone to at least 5 of the 7. Two of the 7 districts don’t have panels. Lets think about this for a minute. The NEPAIG board members and committees are supposed to be the representatives of our entire NEPAIG area. All areas in the Intergroup should benefit with their 12th Step work equally. We should be connected to all our members. Are we? Are we truly connected to all within the intergroup?

I would have to say, “no we are not!” We have a “Central Office” that’s located in Pittston, PA. It’s supposed to be centrally located, but is it? It’s convenient to Districts 40 and 39. somewhat close to parts of District 52 or 53 but more than an hours drive from other parts of them. It’s even a further drive to most of the other 3 Districts 49, 59 and 62. Do you know where about each District is located? I’ll bet most NEPAIG members do not. That’s where the disparity starts and it grows. Do our monthly Institutional Commitments cover all of the 7 Districts equally? We have activities like H 2 H Dinner dance and Soberstock but are they held in a location central to all our districts? Our monthly IGR meeting is in Avoca, PA, but is it really centrally located? We’ve discussed a ZOOM format, but is that really the answer?

I’ve spoken to DCM’s and members from the outlying districts and some say they do not feel a “part of” NEPAIG. While we do seem to exist financially, do our 12th Step Service contributions really reach all our districts equally? Perhaps it’s time to rethink our intergroup. Do we work best being so large yet struggling to include all members equally? Would it be a better idea to split, perhaps into 3 different Intergroups, each more able to serve the members closer in proximity? Are we open-minded enough to discuss it?

bob p.



Area 59 EPGSA & NEPAIG Present *Area Share A Day*

October 11, 2025, to be held at the WAYMART CHURCH
located at 506 Honesdale Road, Waymart, PA 18472

Doors Open at 10am • Program from 11am-3pm • Lunch will be provided

Where do we differ?

Where does NEPAIG and General Service Intersect?



What is Share A Day?

Area Share A Day is designed to inform the fellowship of the 12 step opportunities available so that we may better do our common job of reaching the alcoholic who still suffers.



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Service positions need to be filled by NEPAIG members!

<<<<

Please Contact—Shawn A. (570) 878-5171

Coffee Service

Food service

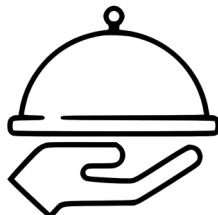
Registration

Presentations

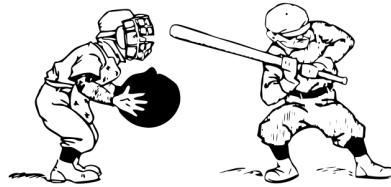
Setup

Cleanup

Be a part of a day of sharing our experience, strength and hope



SOBERSTOCK 2025



AUGUST 9th

11am—7pm

Pennbrook Picnic Grove—2029 N Overbrook Road, Factoryville, PA 18419

It's coming up soon! Make sure you're a part of this years event. The Activities Committee can use assistance in a lot of areas. People are needed to help with the food, parking, music, tie dye shirts and the meeting, plus a lot of other tasks. We need everyone to pitch in to make it a great event for all. Groups can also donate baskets for the raffle and bring them to the NE-PAIG Office or to the JULY IRG meeting.

Don't wait, your help is needed right now! Anyone interested can call:

Moe (570)-436-8432 or Brittany (570) 436-7516

Keystone Conference 2025



I attended the 7th annual Keystone Conference at St Nicholas Church in Wilkes-Barre. It was my second year attending, I was there last year for my first time at any conference. I had a great experience in 2024 and have been looking forward to it. I showed up Friday to a packed house. There was a good turn out this year. Saturday I was only able to attend the last portion, but heard the last few speakers and the sobriety countdown. Sobriety from 43 years to 6 days (and seated right next to each other ... imagine that)!

You know sometimes the scariest thing about getting sober are the people in the meeting. The very people I need to help me stay sober. So, the idea of a conference with more people than any meeting I have ever been to doesn't necessarily sound like a good time. Yet there I was, in my second year of sobriety at the Keystone Conference for the second time. I thought how grateful and lucky I am to be sober. I got to see some faces I haven't seen in a while and share the experience with some new friends I have made in the past year. They say when two or more alcoholics show up for the purpose of sobriety the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Hey, maybe there is something to this Fellowship thing, maybe I really can't stay sober on my own. Even though the speakers were great (I realized half-way through one of their talks that I have been listening to this guy for the last year on tape) and I didn't have to listen to anyone share ***"where they were at"***, the best part of the weekend was just being a part of it. A bunch of drunks, mostly sober I assume, gathered to further their experience on this ride called sobriety. Thanks to everyone who helped make it possible this year, I'm looking forward to next year.

Evan K. First Things First Group



Plain as can be.....or is it?

A.A.W.S. has recently published an awaited “Tool” in hopes it becomes useful in reading our “Big Book” called “Alcoholics Anonymous”. It was produced through years of effort so our 12 Step Program might be easily understood by anyone who has a desire to stop drinking. Have I read it? Not really, just sort of browsed through it, and TBH sort of got a headache seeing it for the first time! But that just the normal, “contempt prior to investigation” (used in our Big Book and taken from Herbert Spencer’s “An Artists Concept”) I’ll do a little investigation and try not to hold contempt, and see what I think.

Maybe you’ve tried looking at it already or maybe you’re using it, but it’s here now and a lot of time and effort went into its production, so we may as well make the best of it. The Winter 2025 edition of “box 459” © our quarterly newsletter from the G.S.O. had a nice history of the books inception, approvals and production. An example used in the article shows 2 different renditions of a familiar paragraph to us all. It reads:

“Our stories disclose in a general way what we used to be like, what happened, and what we are like now. If you have decided you want what we have and are willing to go to any length to get it – then you are ready to take certain steps.”

Alcoholics Anonymous Chapter 5

“We share stories about what we used to be like, what happened to us, and what our lives are like now. If you feel like we did and want to stop drinking, then you are ready to get started. You are ready to take these steps towards recovery

” Alcoholics Anonymous Chapter 5

If it were for this example only, I wouldn’t agree it was worth the effort. According to their article the first paragraph is written in a time used formal tone. This is just an example of the content. The book was finally published on November 1, 2024. The newly released copies sold out swiftly. I’m not so sure there was that much demand for them, I believe a lot of purchases were made to acquire and keep a First Printing - First Edition copy. I’m sure a few entrepreneurs plan to try and market this copy on eBay © as so many of our earlier versions are sold today. Does the reason for the sales really matter? I believe that the more our literature gets out into the world, the better there is a chance that one of us who doesn’t yet know there is a way out will have an opportunity to see what we have found. I may not yet be a true believer of this version, but a need or thought to change the writing stated back in 1993. In 2016 a need was discussed needing something to reach an influx of people whose primary language wasn’t English. When they tried to read and learn from it the original content might be a little to hard to understand. This “need” created General Service Conference Item. In 2018 the trustee’s literature committee began investigating things more. A subcommittee was formed called the Researching Issues, Possible Tools and Access to the Book (RIPTAB). It identified the material created by other groups and organizations and prepared guides to understand our literature. ***Oh, do I remember all those Non– AA guides and sheets well meaning AA’s supposedly made to help us, most of which only aggravated me! BUT many others used them!*** In 2020 the RIPTAB findings were presented and a new subcommittee was formed called RIPTAB – II. When I first saw this Acronym I thought it meant they were adding a “tear off” tab.....Oh well :-). We’ll pick this up in the next issue, after I finally take some time to read more of this “Plain Language”. **Bob P.**

JUNE	<p>90th Annual Founders' Day June 6 @ 8am thru June 8th to 5pm, Akron, Ohio, birthplace of A.A.</p> <p>Mini Assembly II—Delegate Conference Report, June 7th @ 9AM at the First United Church of Christ, 110 Route 61 South, Schuylkill Haven PA</p> <p>Area 59 EPGSA 3rd Quarterly meeting June 8th 9am-4pm, Bloomsburg Fire Hall, 911 Market St., Bloomsburg, PA</p> <p>Ice Cream & Shortcake Celebration honoring AA's 90 years of Service June 10th 6-9pm, Seven Loaves Soup Kitchen, 51 Warren St., Tunkhannock</p>
AUGUST	<p>Soberstock, August 9th 11am-7pm, Pennbrook Picnic Grove, 2029 North Overlook Road, Factoryville, PA</p> <p>District 53 Workshop, "A Design for Living", August 16th 10am-pm Meshoppen Methodist Church, 128 Church St., Meshoppen, PA</p>
OCTOBER	<p>Area 59 & NEPAIG "Share a Day", October 11, 11am-3pm, Lunch served Waymart Church, 596 Honesdale Road, Waymart, PA</p>

District 39 Workshop—"The Maintenance Our Spiritual Condition" May 31, 2025

The Marmi Pavilion at Nay Aug Park, Scranton was the setting for District 39's Spring Workshop. The theme was "The Maintenance of our Spiritual Condition". The attendance was surprisingly good in spite of the cold and rainy weather

The day started with coffee, doughnuts and fellowship. An icebreaker activity followed, giving everyone the opportunity to get to know each other a little better. Next up was Steve, the first speaker for the day, sharing his experience with spirituality. When Steve was finished, a few of our trusted servants gave presentations on the AA Service Structure, Public Service, Institutions/Commitments and Grapevine/La Vina Magazine.



Pizza and Hoagies were served for lunch. The afternoon held a panel of four women sharing their insights on different aspects of spirituality in recovery. Closing the workshop was a second speaker, Joe. A big thank you goes out to the workshop committee, all who participated, everyone that helped with set up/clean up and, of course, everyone who attended. All in all, the event proved to be a successful one. Hopefully, everyone who attended left the event with a better understanding of maintaining their spirituality. The next District 39 workshop is slated to occur in the fall.

Sarah S. Olyphant Women's Group

Bridging the Gap

Services and Info



Need to Send

A Text Blast



Need a Meeting

Changed or Corrected



Contact the Website Committee

nepaaaigwebsite@gmail.com



The Angel of Alcoholics Anonymous

Ron S.

Peace & Serenity



Writing for the intergroup newsletter can be tedious at times. Anyone who has ever experienced writers block can relate. With the wonders of today's technology and the resources of the internet at my finger tips it is very tempting to just cut and paste someone else's writings and claim them for my own. That's called the easier softer way. Something that I am very adept at. Since Bob P. has given me the task of researching AA's history, I'm finding it increasingly difficult to take the path of least resistance. Especially after reading about the hard scrappy lives some of our founders went through to get us to where we are today.

Up until last month I can't honestly say that I knew anything at all about Sister Ignatia. However, my research found me standing in awe of a woman who made it her life's journey to help alcoholics. She immigrated here from Ireland as a child. Her birth name was Mary. As a child she was encouraged to study music which she mastered and became a music teacher. Although music is the universal language and everybody loves it, not many people can read it. Around the age of twenty-five she decided on a religious vocation and joined the Sisters of Saint Augustine, working with sick and orphaned children.

The church took advantage of her musical abilities and tasked her with teaching music. Eventually it took its toll on her and she ended up with bleeding ulcers in what she described as a nervous breakdown. She was then reassigned to St. Thomas hospital in Cleveland Ohio as an intake registrar. It was here that she met Dr. Bob Smith the co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous. Together they started admitting alcoholics into the hospital under the guise of different illnesses because the hospital frowned upon treating alcoholics and didn't recognize it as a disease or illness that could or should be treated. Well so much for an HONEST program but together they did what they had to treat what they believed was a malady of the mind body and spirit.

The first alcoholic was admitted to St Thomas on 16 August 1939. This date goes down as one of major significance in the history of AA. It also saw the first growth spurt in the number of people looking to AA as a viable means of recovery. When Dr. Bob died Sister Ignatia continued the work although she was constantly in conflict with the hospital administration and the local community about her work. As a result, she was reassigned to St Vincent's Charity Hospital in Cleveland Ohio.

She contacted Bill Wilson and told him she was not sure if she would be able to continue her work with alcoholics at St Vincents. As fate would have it she was able to convince her superiors to let her open a special ward to treat alcoholism which she named Rosary Hall Solarium. No coincidence that Dr, Robert H. Smith's initials were a match to her new ward. Sister Ignatia was shunned publicity. That being said reminds me of how often it is said in today's meeting to do something nice for someone with out anyone knowing about it. From what I've learned in my research of her I'm sure there is a lot of her spirit that is still alive and well in the rooms. Maybe she really is an angel, still watching over us. I'd like to think so!

Have you,

"Heard it through the Grapevine?"

If you're not using the AA Grapevine you're missing contact with others in our fellowship. "Our Meeting in Print" offers the experience and views of regular A.A. member. Every month is focused on a topic, June is the annual "Prison Issue." US subscriptions come in 1, 2 or 3 year options. You can get a "delivered" version or a "digital / online" one, or both called a "complete subscription," all priced accordingly. The digital (online) version has a monthly option for only \$2.99

In addition to the Grapevine magazine there are other products offered at the online store such as Audiobooks, CD's, eBooks, even specialty items including planners, calendars and reproductions. You can also purchase Gift Certificates for US, Canadian and International use. There's even products available in Spanish and French! The Grapevine offers a number of ways to carry the message, stay in touch with AA and help others. A gift subscription can be a wonderful anniversary gift or a big help to our home bound or hospitalized members. You can purchase bulk quantities of "back issues" for use at institutions or groups.

This year there's a "Carry the Message" project. It's a way to give to others to help carry our message. You can view it on the YouTube Channel at <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL32cyZpp2liD4te4ctFKcG2Ddmq9xUuUb>

You can even try it out and read an article for FREE at: <https://www.aagrapevine.org/>

Our NEPAIG Bookstore/office stocks a number of GV books and more! Don't forget the Grapevine also produces "La Vina" the Spanish counterpart to the Grapevine.

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Our Concepts of AA Service 7,8,9



Concept 7— The charter and Bylaws of the General Service Board are legal instruments, empowering the trustees to manage and conduct world service affairs. The Conference Charter is not a legal document; it relies upon tradition and the A.A. purse for final effectiveness..

1. Do we act responsibly regarding the "power of the purse"? Are we responsible in collecting and utilizing the "purse"?
2. Do we realize that the practical and spiritual power of the Conference will nearly always be superior to the legal power of the GSB? How does this relate to NEPAIG our board and members?

Concept 8— The trustees are the principal planners and administrators of overall policy and finance. They have custodial oversight of the separately incorporated and constantly active services, exercising this through their ability to elect all the directors of these entities.

1. Do we understand and support our NEPAIG service entities, our board and committees?
2. Do we understand the term "custodial oversight" in respect to our committees and board?

CONCEPT 9— Good service leadership at all levels is indispensable for our future functioning and safety. Primary world service leadership, once exercised by the founders, must necessarily be assumed by the trustees.

1. Do we often discuss how to strengthen our composition and leadership of our board and committees?
2. Do I set a positive leadership example?

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MAINTAINING MY SPIRITUAL CONDITION

Ashley C. "Peace & Serenity"

I came into the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous and was thrown immediately into the big book and working the 12 steps. I was lucky to be surrounded by people who worked a program and offered that to others. I was taken through the steps in just a few short months, afterward thinking that's all I really needed to stay sober. I worked steps 1 & 12 really well, but failed to perfect and enlarge my spiritual life, which obviously resulted in suffering. I figured I could take the parts of the program I felt like doing and stay sober. I did a pretty thorough 4th step, but held onto some of my resentments for later 😊! I made some amends, but left the ones out I didn't feel like doing. I rarely worked Steps 10 or 11, and really hated Step 3. Like most stubborn alcoholics, I thought I was unique and that this program would work for me.



When I hit my first year of sobriety I was suffering physically, emotionally, and most importantly spiritually. I couldn't figure out why. I desperately needed change. I needed to learn how to maintain my spiritual condition in order to stay sober. My second year of sobriety was marked by lots of new **ACTION!** I started to go through the book again with a new sponsor, thoroughly working the program as outlined in the big book. I constantly tried to grow by practicing the spiritual principles daily. My service work shifted from something I had to do to stay sober to something I wanted to do. I began to realize the futility and fatality of the life I was trying to live. If I stay stagnant my mind convinces me I am doing okay when in reality I am going backwards. Without constant spiritual growth and a humble effort to work this program, I will suffer SOBER and eventually go back to the drink.



A look at Traditions 4, 5, 6



Tradition 7 — Every AA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

1. How can I help our intergroup be self-supporting?
2. Does my group contribute on a regular basis? Do I participate when I can?
3. Do I feel the monthly treasurer report is unimportant? Do I pass on the report to my group?

Tradition 8 — Alcoholics Anonymous shall remain forever non-professional, but our service boards may employ special workers.

1. Is my behavior accurately described by the Tradition? Do I act as a "know it all"?
2. Do I understand the roles of our committees, board, office manager and others?
3. Am I willing to be a part of our NEPAIG committees?

Tradition 9 - AA as such ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.

1. If I am part of an activity do I try to boss things or is humility my aim?
2. Do I complain or demand upon our committees, or do I join them?
3. When I take a job or task in NEPAIG do I understand the importance of following through?

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REMEMBERING OUR SPONSORS—HERE NO MORE

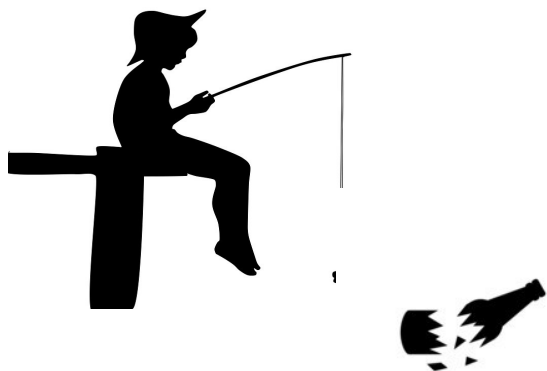
Matt Z.

When “Santa Bruce” came to town, he was the white-bearded man in Scranton who never shaved. He passed into the fourth dimension on May 9, 2018. For 47 of his 87 years, he dedicated himself to helping alcoholics who were open to his jolly spirit. He provided a sense of hope for those who were struggling, cheering them on to embrace a new way of life. This “Santa” was a great listener, aware of the needs of others. He had an incredible ability to remember the names of newcomers and their personal challenges. Bruce also kept lists, meticulously counting everything: attendance, shares, sayings, resentments, coffee cups, and more.

Bruce began his journey as Santa in Scranton. His role grew impressively and he was invited to play the part in Raleigh, Fort Lauderdale, Chicago, and Philadelphia. His reward was the wide-eyed adoration from those much like his estranged grandchildren. In a way he amended past mistakes and brought joy into a new way of life. His challenging family matters validated the incredible power he had discovered. He admitted that this understanding came to him only after he committed to faithfully following the recovery process step by step. He acted on inspiration without concern for the consequences. Bruce showed many of us how to confront our fears through the steps. He also supported others as they faced their own fears. Occasionally, he would share profound insights in his deep, sage tone, such as, *“We drink or use because of our fear.”* He valued an honest inventory and he made me redo steps 4 and 5 when I failed to admit my fears. *(I even added him to the list, and he laughed!)* He had found answers to his problems plus the insight and courage to reveal his spiritual beliefs. He described his faith as simple, almost childlike, which infused his entire being—from his boots to the tip of the hair on his chinny chin, chin. Instead of dictating what to believe, Bruce demonstrated his beliefs through his actions: praying, serving others, joining organized religious bodies, and participating in a home group where he made coffee—often funding it for about ten years.

A favorite maxim of his was, *“You gotta give it away to get it”*—which is different from *“give it away to keep it.”* He believed that every human action relied on the workings of a Higher Power. Perhaps because the word *“sponsor”* does not appear in the first 164 pages of the Big Book, he would emphatically repeat he was not a sponsor. However, he graciously offer to show a willing newcomer the steps as written and how he had applied them to the best of his ability. He began *“taking newcomers through the book”* because one of his first acquaintances in Scranton couldn’t read. He realized that weekly one-on-one meetings were an effective way to build trust and understanding. He was especially sensitive—almost psychic—to a newcomer’s perspective. For example, instead of calling them “pigeons,” he referred to them as “cherubs.” He viewed them as children of God. Bruce had a light-hearted, cheerful, and convivial character that attracted even the contrarians. He had an engaging personality that allowed him to connect with anyone and lift their spirits. His gentlemanly manners honored everyone he met, and he will be remembered fondly. Beyond his primary pursuit, Bruce excelled in many other endeavors, including as a landscape artist, avid arts historian, horticulturist, numismatist, philatelist, and amateur actor. By profession, he was an accomplished architect, having designed remarkable buildings like the NYU Law School library and Tisch Center, as well as a high-rise in Boulder, Colorado, ski chalets, and mountain mansions.

During the 24 years Bruce spent in Northeast Pennsylvania, one could say the jolly old man left us more than just shiny items. He sparked ones imagination to reach new heights. His thoughtful notes to strangers, his heart for the hopeless, and his generosity to a fault - all served as proof positive in the power of prayer and trust. His artistic paintings displayed a loving and powerful touch. To many, he resembled a real “St. Nicholas”—but Bruce would decline such accolades with a laugh, saying, “Nooo,” followed by his booming, “ho ho hee hee.” Unfortunately, now Christmas’, no longer have our Santa Bruce with us as we navigate our lives, but we can still find peace and goodwill toward one another by using the simple tools he placed before us. Rest in peace kind sir, as when faith follows fear.



DRY DOCK—Slogans & Humor

In the spirit of
"Ham on Wry" ©

Sober life is like a hotel:
There's always a room at the top
There's always a room for improvement.

Remember, a sober life
wrapped in "self" is really an
empty package!

A boy scout, a rabbi, and a priest walk into
a bar. The bartender looks at them and
says, "What is this, some kind of joke?"



A Math teacher was giving
lessons to her students. She
said, "I have 5 bottles in my
left hand and 6 bottles in my
right hand, what do I have?"
One student answered, "a
drinking problem!"

How come it only takes me 5 minutes to
walk to the bar and over 12 hours to
walk back!

Try that new Kangaroo beer, you can really
taste the hops!



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.



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