

AWARE!

Philadelphia Area Intergroup's Monthly Newsletter | Overeaters Anonymous®



Step 12

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.

Spiritual Principle

Service



Tradition 12

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

Spiritual Principle

Spirituality



FREEDOM AND FELLOWSHIP IN SPONSORSHIP

*"There never were, since the creation of the world, two cases exactly parallel." – Lord Chesterfield**

When I first began sponsoring in Overeaters Anonymous, I thought my main job was to show people what worked for me. I had found peace in abstinence, a plan of eating that fit my life, and a daily rhythm of meetings, writing, and prayer. I wanted to pass that along, like a roadmap to recovery. But as I gained experience, I realized that sponsorship is not about giving directions—it's about walking beside someone while they find their own way.

As compulsive eaters, we often recognize our own struggles in our sponsees. We can see the familiar patterns—the food obsession, the perfectionism, the shame, the "I'll start tomorrow" thinking. It's tempting to rush in with advice or to fix what we think is broken. But the program's wisdom reminds me that recovery is not one-size-fits-all. Just as no two compulsive eaters have the same story, no two recovery journeys unfold in exactly the same way.



Today's reading says, "There is only one hard and fast rule in sponsoring: to let those I sponsor know that in OA they have freedom of choice in what they will eat, how much they will weigh, and how they will work the program." That freedom is what keeps OA from becoming another diet plan or system of control. It is also what makes sponsorship an act of humility. I share what has worked for me—my experience, strength, and hope—but I cannot tell another person what will work for them. My role is not to lead or to manage, but to witness and to encourage.

Ready? Set? Shovel!



Wouldja look at that!

Meeting



Roundup!

If you've wondered about attracting new members, try throwing an anniversary party, say, or a celebration of an OA milestone. Or celebrate the 3rd Tuesday in the month. Tuesdays are good things to celebrate.

As well, you could plan a workshop. Has something occurred to you that may need attention? Does your meeting need sponsors? Are you hoping to encourage service beyond the group level? Itching to know more? How about a close look at the OA principles?

For more ideas, check out OA's Document Library at oa.org by clicking [here](#). In the Filter field, a drop-down menu will appear. Choose a category, and explore. For instance, a cursory examination of the Twelfth Step Within category revealed: Project Ideas and Resources; OA Bingo with Slogans; Sponsorship Day Workshop; OA Trivia; Still-struggling Member Tips to Carry the Message, and more. Scads more!

Reach out to your PAIG rep for guidance and to find out what sorts of help the intergroup can provide. Remember to put a flyer in the AWARE!

Not sure? Terry S.'s meeting did it! Check out her story on page 4!

A reminder: OA is worldwide!



One way to see for your self is to use the *Find a Meeting* button at OA.org. There, you can search for in-person, online, and phone meetings. There's also a non-real-time meetings tab that can take you to "email or bulletin loops, social media pages, bulletin boards or forums, and mobile applications."

Many of us have discovered that while each meeting is unique, all are familiar, because the essential OA meeting structure is pretty universal. We never know who we'll meet, what we'll hear, or who our shares might help.

Happy trails! Let us know how you make out! Contact Chris N. at northword99@gmail.com to share your experience with AWARE readers.

Have you discovered *Inside OA* podcasts yet?



You can find them by clicking [here](#), or you can listen on your favorite podcast platform.

This month's subject is *Inside OA Groups*, which encourages us to assess the quality of our home meetings.

What a great year-end activity!

Can't get to a meeting? No one's answering their phone?



Check out PAIG's recordings of members' shares [here](#). Spanning a decade and arranged by year, most are meeting shares at just about twenty minutes long. Others, recorded at a retreat or special event, are thirty or forty. All are gems.

Go ahead. Click on one at random. Then sit back and enjoy. Ahhh. Recovery at your fingertips!

Sponsorship is, at its best, a living demonstration of the Twelve Steps. When I listen with openness, I practice Step Two by acknowledging that a Power greater than myself can restore us both to sanity. When I refrain from giving advice and instead share from my own experience, I practice Step Twelve, carrying the message but not controlling the outcome. I learn again and again that my Higher Power is in charge of the results.



Each person I sponsor teaches me something new about trust, surrender, and compassion. Some have strict food plans; others work best with flexibility. Some dive into the Steps quickly; others take time to simply believe recovery is possible. My sponsorship adapts to each person's needs. The only constants are honesty, willingness, and love.

When I focus on sharing rather than advising, something shifts. My hope is that my sponsee feels respected and empowered, and I stay grounded in my own recovery rather than drifting into control or ego. Together, we grow. Together, we stay abstinent – one day, one meal, one conversation at a time.

In OA, we are united not by identical plans or identical progress, but by a shared desire to stop eating compulsively and to live free. Sponsorship is the bridge that connects our differences through love, patience, and faith. And that bridge, built on freedom of choice, is strong enough to carry us all toward healing.

- Dani R.

Remember Storytime?



Let's cast our mind back to our earliest years, when we'd snuggle down in our jammies to hear a story. Oh, joy! It was sublime. Even minus the jammies, it still is.

Storytelling is an art form, a way to preserve history, a tool of learning. It's a way to get out of our own heads and into somebody else's for a little while so that we can see the world through another's eyes. Without our even being aware, our brains crack open and soak up lessons like a sponge. Lessons stick. They inform our behavior. The simple act of reading or listening to a story changes us fundamentally.

In OA, we read - to ourselves, to each other, to our sponsees and our fellows. How many times has someone said to you, "Did you see today's For Today reading? It's one of my favorites," or "When we read Step 12 today, I heard a passage I'd swear I'd never heard before -- even though I've probably read it a dozen times. Isn't that weird?" Yep. But it's also nearly universal. Seems we hear it when we're ready.

Our stories can give voice to another's shame that needs a good airing-out, or garner a laugh in the midst of a fellow's crummy day, or help a member feel safe. They might spur a member to feel hope even in the mire of relapse; or less alone, knowing they aren't the only one who is uncomfortable in the gray area between absolutes. They might posit a solution to another's thorny issue that they'd hadn't considered.

So, tell us a story. Pick a topic. A step? A principle? That time you said a hurtful thing to a friend and made amends? Yes, please! Let's spread stories of good cheer and overcoming fear. Let's share uncertainty and the joy of discovery and how we keep putting one foot in front of the other. Send your stories to Chris N., Aware Editor at northword99@gmail.com. Questions? Call me. 720-934-0985. Thanks, all.

HAVING HAD A SPIRITUAL AWAKENING...

To my dear OA Family and Fellows,

I wanted to send you all a quick note to tell you about a very exciting meeting our group had this past November. It all started with my having a thought that I wanted to have a speaker at our meeting. A particular person in our Fellowship popped into my head. I'd spoken with her on the phone several times but had never met her in person. I had always admired the amount of service that she does and it occurred to me to just call her and ask her if she would be willing to come and speak at our meeting. If nothing else, I wanted to hear her story and get to know her a little better. So, I called her.

Not only was she willing to be a speaker but she suggested that the meeting, which was planned for the week before Thanksgiving, expand into a workshop on gratitude!

The hardest part was just picking up the phone and calling her. After that things seem to take off on their own. (Thank you, HP!)



Our Monday night group is a long-standing meeting. Many of us who attend regularly have gotten to know each other very well over the years. We hadn't hosted a workshop in a long time. I am here to tell you that it was a wonderful experience!! It was like a breath of fresh air to have people from other meetings join us. Hosting a workshop gave us a reason to reach out and invite new people.

Once we secured the speaker and set a date, we just needed to spread the word. Because it was a special meeting, two members who normally join by phone arranged to be there in person. One even offered to drive the other who doesn't drive at night! Everything was falling into place. Other members helped to spread the word by sending out reminder emails and inviting people who we hadn't seen recently. Everyone helped out and what seemed at first to be a difficult thing to pull off was actually easy and just a lot of fun.

I have to confess that I was fretting about things like how to thank the speaker appropriately. (She did an AMAZING job by the way). Should we get her flowers? What should we do to make her feel appreciated? My sponsor reminded me that there are no VIPs in OA! Service is its own reward; people volunteer to do service to enhance and expand their own recoveries. It was a great reminder.

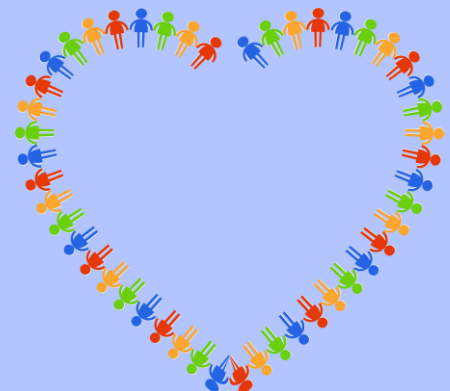
Inviting a speaker was a way to bring a fresh perspective to our meeting. It meant so much to all of us to hear the story of someone new. The positive energy and love in the room was palpable.

Our program teaches us in Step 12 that once we experience the blessings of this program, our primary PURPOSE is to carry that message to compulsive overeaters. Hosting a speaker or a workshop is an easy way to do that!

I am sending my most heartfelt wishes to everyone for all GOOD things in the coming year.

In fellowship,

Terry S. (Monday night Elkins Park Moss Rehab meeting)

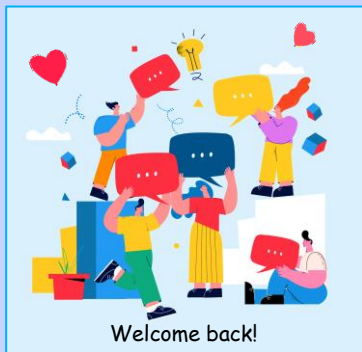


Step 12: Don't Leave After the Miracle Happens, No Matter What!

For five years, I was a happy member of OA. I was blessed with seemingly effortless abstinence thanks to all the members of OA who came before me and remained in OA after their miracles happened. Like those members, I had every intention of practicing the principles of the OA program in all my daily affairs to the best of my ability for the rest of my life. I had no idea that a betrayal of trust in my family of origin would lead me astray from recovery.

I started to attend a spiritual community whose teachings attracted a lot of Twelve Step Recovery members. There, two OA members that I knew well gave me a false sense of security: I believed this spiritual community would take the place of five recovery programs -- including OA -- and prevent my being disowned.

But stepping away from my recovery programs meant I wasn't giving away the experience, strength and hope that I'd shared with my sponsees. It meant that I wasn't initiating outreach phone calls to OA members who still suffered, and that I wasn't receiving calls from others. As well, I wasn't practicing my 10th step or turning it over. Thus, I stopped receiving the sort of guidance and support that had helped me to discern truth from the delusions I was prone to. Those delusions led me to unsafe characters, exploitation, and major financial mistakes to the tune of \$50,000. I strongly considered divorce after twenty years of marriage.



After swearing off sweets New Years Day 2006 at the stroke of midnight, by the next morning I was hiding in the attic, eating sweets I'd stolen from my teenaged sons. That afternoon, I called an OA member for help. He told me in a matter-of-fact way, "It sounds like you're depressed and medicating yourself with food." At that, the veil of denial was whisked off my eyes. I stopped running from shame and ran right to an OA meeting. I was met with unconditional love, compassion, kindness and joy! No condemnation for leaving; just a reminder to keep coming back.

My misguided beliefs that I'd somehow "graduated" from OA and that God wanted to use me for bigger, more important things was a delusion and a distraction. It took years of 12 Step Work to realize that this was a solution I'd unconsciously fabricated in the hope it might prevent my being disowned by my family of origin.

When I returned to OA beaten, bruised and defeated by self-betrayal and self-will I realized that I was blessed because others who had recovered from their hopeless state of mind and body had kept coming back. If they'd stopped as I had, I would either be living in hell or dead.

I hope my story can help others appreciate Step 12 in a whole new way. I want to help other OA members avoid the needless devastation and suffering caused by forgetting to use Step 12 to pay it forward. I am grateful for every OA member who practices Step 12.

I've heard many times in OA, "Don't leave before the miracle happens." This journey taught me not to leave *after* the miracle either. I learned I have a responsibility to do my part to liberate and bless the still suffering compulsive overeaters for the rest of my life. What a small price to pay!

- Judy P., New Jersey

Call for Stories for OA's New Secular Daily Reader

BIG NEWS!

LOOK!!

Are you part of the secular, atheist, agnostic, freethinker, and/or nontraditional belief community of Overeaters Anonymous? We are working on a daily reader for you, similar to *For Today*, and we need your help: Specifically, we request submissions from you.

To contribute, select a few lines from a piece of OA-approved literature that have special meaning to you. (*Remember to cite the source of the quote, including page number.*) Then write your thoughts on the quoted passage. How does it strengthen your recovery? Please also offer a related thought and/or action for the day. Your submission should not include any references to God, Higher Power, Supreme Being, or a deity of any type. In total, writing should not exceed 800 words.

The purpose of this secular daily reader is to help readers establish and maintain recovery, regardless of their beliefs or nonbeliefs. The content will be carefully selected from contributions by OA members like you, and selections will be free from specific religious references. This daily reader is designed to motivate and inspire OA recovery using a wide range of OA-approved literature and the experience, strength, and hope of OA members.

If any of this speaks to you, or is part of your lived experience, please consider sharing your story.

Please note:

- Submissions are assumed intended for publication, are edited for length and clarity, become the property of OA, Inc., and will not be returned.
- Please include your name and contact information with your submission. You may request anonymity with publication. Your state, province, or country may also remain anonymous upon specific request.
- Submissions should be submitted via **Jotform**.
- Please keep stories to 800 words or less.
- All languages welcome!

Submit via Jotform by
January 15, 2026:



<https://form.jotform.com/220035565825050>



NEW
MEETING!!!

Overeaters Anonymous

Together we recover

A Design for Living

Join us for an Open Meeting to support one another on the journey of recovery from compulsive eating.

Weekly on Wednesdays

Starting Wed Nov 12th, 2025
at 6:30 pm

Free street parking



Weavers Way Germantown
Community Space,
326 Cheltenham Ave,
Philadelphia PA 19144



Nicole C - 401-651-2202



www.oa.org

OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS®



FELLOWSHIP OF HOPE

Virtual Workshop on

“ONE DAY AT A TIME”

Thursday, JANUARY 1, 2026 9:15 – 11:30 AM EST

9:15 – 9:30 AM EST– Fellowship

9:30 – 11:30 AM EST – Meeting

3 Speakers - Sharing - 7th Tradition

Sponsored by: Fellowship of Hope, from Philadelphia Area Intergroup (PAIG)

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85939659369?pwd=BPxsWYXa8eJ5CJ7NmzrV5ZMxgACLR.1>

Meeting ID: 859 3965 9369

Dial In: 1 929 205 6099 Int'l Dial In #s: <https://zoom.us/zoomconference>

Request Password/Passcode call or text: Judy M. 215-870-6013

From the minds that brought you
"Self-Will Run Riot" & "Why Am I Crying in a Parking Lot Again?"
conference
... a ~~comedy~~ about physical, emotional, & spiritual recovery.

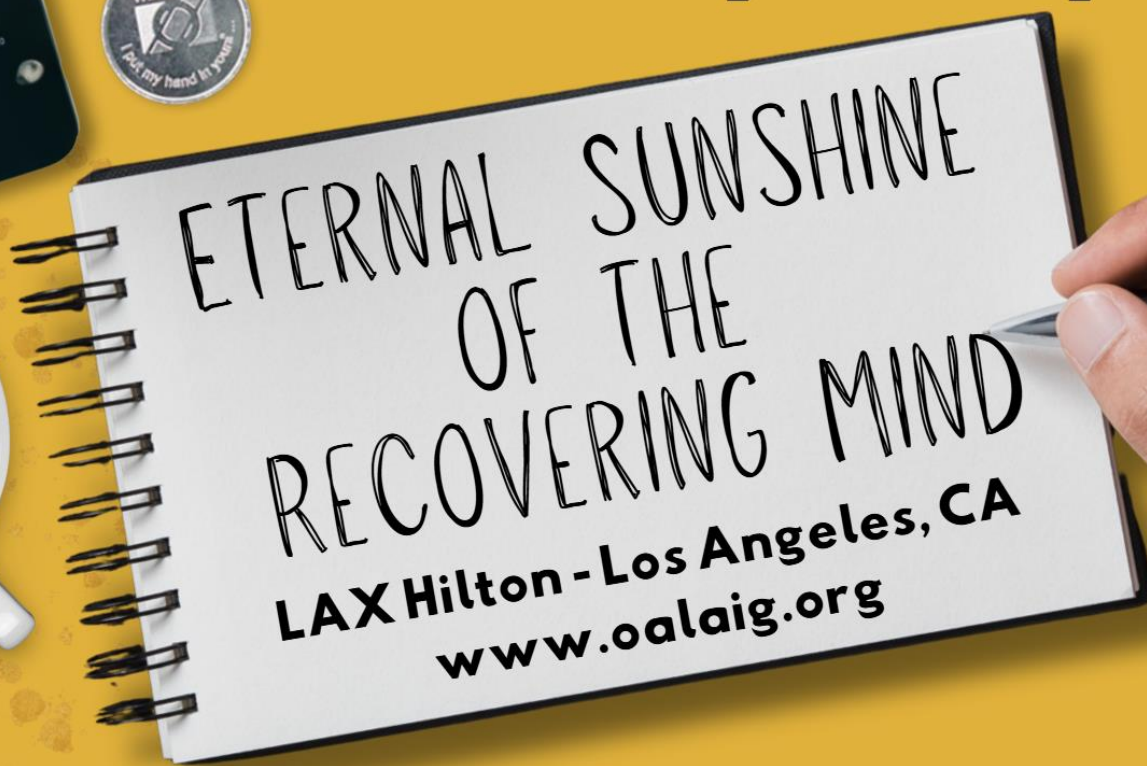
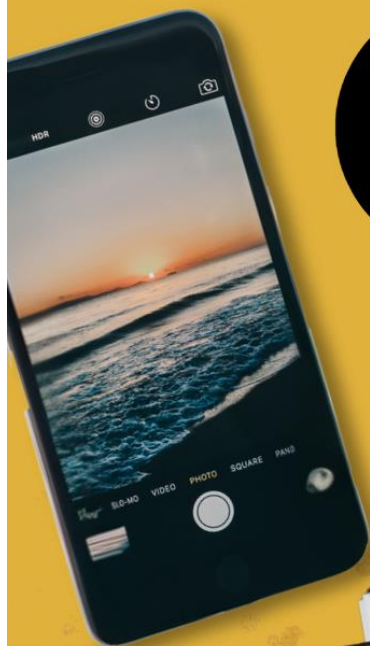
The 66th

OA

Birthday Party

SAVE
THE
DATE!

January
16th-18th,
2026



LOS ANGELES INTERGROUP PRESENTS A HIGHER POWERED Production in association with ANONYMITY
Directed by PRAYER & MEDITATION Written by THE TOOL OF WRITING Starring MEETINGS, TELEPHONE &
SERVICE Produced by ACTION PLAN Script Supervision by YOUR SPONSOR Casting by YOUR HIGHER POWER
Costume Design by HONESTY & WILLINGNESS Props by THE BIG BOOK Sound by THE VOICE IN YOUR HEAD
THAT SAYS "CALL SOMEONE" Lighting by THE SUNLIGHT OF THE SPIRIT Music by THE LANGUAGE OF THE HEART
special Thanks to THE FELLOWSHIP CARRYING THE MESSAGE © OA BIRTHDAY 2026. ALL FEELINGS RESERVED.

Overheard Recovery

Denial: Don't Even Notice
I Am Lying.

Time to make

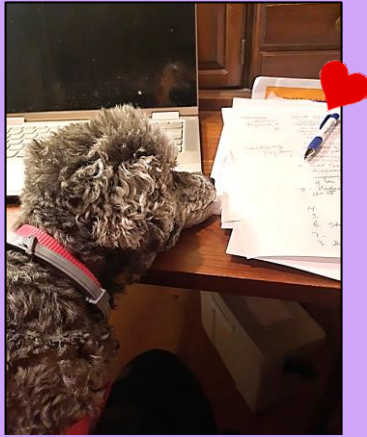
an outreach call!



The Philadelphia Area Intergroup needs service. Region 7 (the next level up from PAIG) needs service, too.

Am I willing to step up? Am I willing to ask my PAIG rep or a friend in the intergroup for the lowdown? Am I willing to really work Step 12?

December's Pet of the Month!



Meet Oreo, erstwhile foster dog of Judy M.

During her stay with her doting foster mom, Oreo was very fond of attending the Fellowship of Hope zoom meetings on Thursday mornings to keep Judy company. Sometimes Oreo grew weary and took a well-deserved dognap. Here she is snoozing on Judy's keyboard during a quiet moment.

Aw, Oreo! We feel you! Good girl!

Some time after this photo was taken, Oreo found her forever home, and she is now happily ensconced there with her mommy, Judy says.

Fostering an animal is love in action, isn't it? I'd say Oreo isn't the only good one in this story.

We wish you well, Oreo! And we're awfully glad you're December's Pet of the Month.

Step 12: Service

T H Y W G C J U O D U W P L S P N N Y G
H Y F J U G A W J C G A L P B X X S A N
D K V X U A O P R O G R A M D W L V Z G
T N U F P R U H Y I L I X U U J U F M Z
R G X T Z D T X B Q D N A W Z Q X S Y A
D W B G I V I N G G Z O S N H S T T E T
T E A C H A B L E F Q U N P J P Y Y G A
Y C M Z E P G C R H L W A W E O S D D N
F R T V F T T E A I W F T B G N E Z W X
Y D E E U C E F O R O X L I Z S R H R I
B A T Y E T E O W Z R K M J J O V C H L
T V A N N G C Y Z D D Y V E K R E B I S
M N N U A C Y O Z Y D D T U T H S C A T
H O L S G D W G T X O S H H W Y E D E R
C O S F G D R I P E U H D O Q B Q E V E
V E V K T Q L J G R A T E F U L R A J N
M V C O W I C S L O X T G X K W D D V G
U L G H M J K W P T E H M S L U Y S Q T
M H M U U Q L A I L I F E S A V I N G H
A K H D I F O R T X Z Y X T O B M T P X

Can you find these words?


Carry
Message
Connect
Serve
Lifesaving
Program
Humility
Teachable
Sponsor
Volunteer
Giving
Grateful
Strength

To play this puzzle online, click [here](#).



— Stairway of Success

CALLING ALL TREASURERS!

Does your meeting have 7th-tradition funds over and above your prudent reserve and immediate-future costs? Here are the suggested disbursement guidelines from OA's World Service Office as of January, 2025. 

1. 50% to Philadelphia Area Intergroup via PayPal to treasurer@oa-phila.org, or send a check payable to PAIG-OA at PAIG, P O Box 23, Southampton, PA 18966.

2. 10% to Region 7:
<https://oaregion7.org/> 

3. 40% to OA's World Service Office online or by check. Go to <https://oa.org/contribute/> for details.

Please be sure to include either the group # or the meeting name, location, day & time on all checks and correspondence.

EDITORIAL POLICY:

This is *your* newsletter! Please share your stories, poems, snippets or artwork related to your OA experience. Publication of any contributions or editorial options does not imply endorsement by OA as a whole, but by the individuals who wrote them. Material submitted cannot be returned. We reserve the right to edit, and it is understood that other OA groups, without permission, may reprint all copy.

Send submissions to
northword99@gmail.com.

PAIG Service Positions

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Pat S.	Vice Chair 217-821-1170
Phil S.	Treasurer 267-397-0977
Laura L.	Speaker List 215-803-1805
Chris N.	AWARE! Editor & 2025 Retreat Chair 720-934-0985
Jean M.	Program Chair 215-528-7610
Natasha M.	Region 7 Rep C & Secretary 407-461-9753
Trish M.	WSBC Delegate A 215-370-7640
Ed Mc	Communications 215-337-1873
Alice P.	PI/PO 215-407-1612

PAIG:

Call or text (215) 385-3076, or
<https://oa-phila.org>

•OA's Region 7:
<https://oaregion7.org>

•OA headquarters, aka World Service Office: <https://oa.org>

•Brandywine Intergroup:
<https://brandywineintergroup.org>

•OA Virtual Region: <https://oavirtualregion.org>

•OA Men's Group: <https://www.oamen.org>

•OA Young People's Facebook Page:
<https://m.facebook.com/OAinfo>

PAIG meetings are held on the 1st Wednesday of each month. This month's PAIG meeting will be held on Wed., December 3rd. Next month's will be on Wed., January 7th. The meeting starts promptly at 7:15 pm via Zoom. Contact chair@oa-phila.org for login information. PAIG reps, check your emails from the PAIG Google Group to be alerted to any changes. To subscribe to the Google Group (and the AWARE!), please go to oa-phila.org and enter your email address in the box labeled "Join PAIG's Google Group."