

# Outside the Bottle

## District 16 Newsletter

February 2020

**“Write it on  
your heart  
that every day is  
the best day in the year.”**

-Ralph Waldo Emerson

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# Your Central Office in Ferndale

News from AA of Greater Detroit by Bob S.

Last year, we launched a website ([www.aaferndale.org](http://www.aaferndale.org)) to provide information to AA members and anyone looking for help with a drinking problem. It also has the 1500+ meetings from our printed directory. Group additions and changes are done right away so you can rely on these listings to be very accurate. Any errors brought to our attention are corrected very quickly. New web pages will be added soon for contributions, easier group changes and an online store.

The bookstore itself has seen a lot of updates with more to come. John takes pride in the appearance and he keeps it fresh by rearranging items, especially those on sale. Bonnie has a good eye for gifts that people like. Every time she orders new pieces of jewelry, they sell out quickly. A local AA member, Ronnie B., designs amazing tokens and we are always the first to have them. "Rule 62" is a big seller. Come see for yourself!

New directories are in and they look fantastic. For a while now, "Where to Find AA" meeting guides have only been printed once a year. Beginning with the February 2020 edition, we will be printing them at least twice a year. So many changes occur that doing it annually doesn't make sense.

Sometimes people ask how they can help the office. One way is to attend bi-monthly Group Representative meetings. This intergroup office is overseen by the groups it serves, which means every group has a voice when it comes to the operation of the office. Unfortunately, very few representatives attend. From more than 900 groups in southeast Michigan, only about 20 send a representative. These meetings are held on the second Monday of even numbered months at 7:00 pm. Here is the location and 2020 calendar:

**United Methodist Church, 246 E Eleven Mile Rd, Madison Heights, MI 48071**

**February 10, April 13, June 8, August 10, October 12, December 14.**

*We hope you will attend or send a member from your group. Thank you!*

Another great way to get involved is the AA hotline. It takes over 50 volunteers to fill the schedule and, right now, that schedule is full. But you are welcome to join the waiting list by calling our hotline coordinator Kevin H.: 248-837-9406. Weekend or evening shifts are each 3-4 hours and bi-weekly. Daily shifts are 9:00 am – 1:00 pm or 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm. When you get a spot, it will be one of the most rewarding service opportunities in AA.

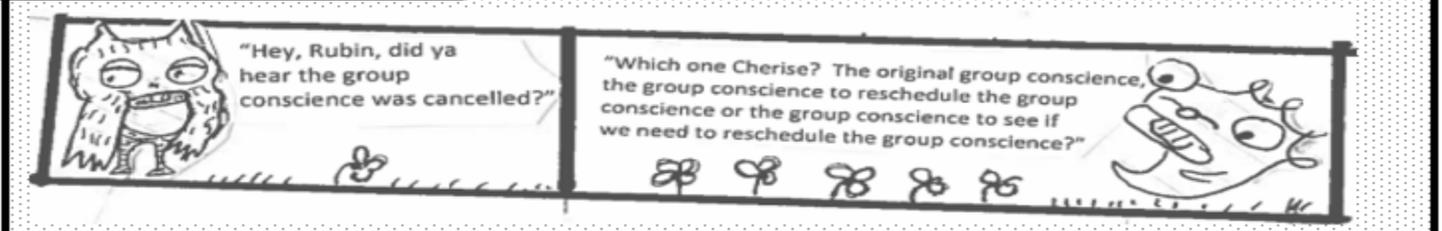
Lastly, as you may know 2019 was a very challenging year for this office. With the help of many AA members, we managed to get things back on track and 2020 is already looking great!

*If you have any questions, you are welcome to visit or give us a call. Bonnie, John or Bob will be happy to talk with you.*

*We are located at 380 Hilton Rd., Ferndale MI 48220. Phone: (248) 541-6565 Web: [www.aaferndale.org](http://www.aaferndale.org)*

**Keep on Trudgin'**

By: Phil S.



# Accept. Believe. Trust. By KM

I was lucky, I knew about AA long before I hit bottom. This disease has affected others in my family. I knew that the program worked if someone wanted to quit drinking...what I didn't know was a darn thing about a Higher Power. I had grown up in a family that not only believed in "God," but also absolutely loved "Him." The *God* I grew up with was loving, benevolent and forgiving. But I still had my doubts... Despite the positive ideas about *God* that I had grown up with, I just couldn't believe in it. I'd hear some of the stories from the bible and think about how ludicrous they sounded. So, I thought that if I were to go to AA meetings, I'd be accosted by Jesus freaks that would bludgeon me with their beliefs. No thanks. I considered myself a fairly intelligent person and believed my independent thought and an evolved conception of the universe would serve me well in life, and that if I applied those things to my drinking problem, I could quit or at least get it under control.

I would start each day steeped in shame and remorse from my previous day's drinking and bad behavior. I would swear off the bottle and vow to make good. But each evening would find me much the same as the night before. And thus over time the grip of my disease tightened. My intellect and determination were of no avail.

After my inevitable arrest from drunk driving, I knew I needed the program to quit drinking. I had tried on my own dozens of times over the course of years. I knew I needed help. But my expectation was that I would take what I needed and leave the rest behind. I assumed the excess would be all of the *God* crap.

But, the first time I read Step Two in the 12 & 12 I was blown away. It told me that I don't need to swallow all of it right away and that all I needed was an open mind. Perfect! I can have an open mind. I already felt that the support of others in the program might really help me make it through another 24 hours. I quickly realized that I was part of something bigger than myself. And when I read that Alcoholics Anonymous itself could be my Higher Power, I knew I could buy into the program. So I strung together a few days of sobriety; then weeks, months and even a few years.

I sat at tables and listened to others talking about their struggle and surrendering, I was reminded about advice I heard once about surviving in quicksand: the more you struggle the quicker and deeper you will sink. You must relax. Move slowly and deliberately and reach out for help.

I was at a table discussing the 2<sup>nd</sup> Step when I realized I had actually "come to believe." It led me to understand my part in everything. I am merely one person and a small part of a vast universe. I am just a dot in an interconnected web. I am a speck in a moment in time and space traveling around this moving, changing cosmos. My understanding came when I finally accepted my inability to define my higher power. How would I, a finite being in an infinite universe, be able to define something so complex? Finally, I accepted that I didn't need to *define*. I could merely **accept, believe, and trust**. This newfound acceptance of my limitations, my inability to fully comprehend... that's when I got it, that's when my Higher Power truly revealed itself to me. The heavens didn't open up. But my consciousness, my heart, and my mind did. Seeking was enough. Growing, listening, learning was enough. Accepting was the answer. I didn't need to understand. My Higher Power is there and I trust it. So now I pray in a way I didn't before. I send love into the universe and accept it in return. I still grapple with control but I have found guidance from the program.



## THE BROAD DISTRICT 16 HIGHWAY:

A Monthly Update from the GSRs of District 16

For those of you paying attention... yes, a new name to this feature. And why? It's a simple answer... CHANGE.

Our January Monthly Meeting took place on the 4th Thursday of the month as is customary. And how amazing it was see the participation from the groups of District 16. 23 Groups were represented last meeting, a strong start to the new year.

Upon hearing the latest information on the local AA committees, the 2020 International Conference, March Roundup Conference and our very own District Inventory, we all engrossed ourselves in spirited discussion over the fine details of the upcoming Archives Bus Tour. After constructive discussion, with a few points of contention, some details were decided and some tabled for further discussion at next month's meeting.

## Announcements

**Design for Living** step taking group: February  
20<sup>th</sup>-May 21<sup>st</sup>  
14 Thursday mornings 6:30-8:00am  
Royal Oak Church of Christ  
115 South Campbell Rd. Royal Oak  
Register by 2/7: call or text Paul B. at 419-410-0576

Women Volunteers Needed  
Sunday Morning Open Talk  
Sundays at 11 am  
Samaritas House  
8201 Sylvester, Detroit  
Contact Jean C: 586-883-1023

The Madison Heights Group  
59th Anniversary Celebration  
Feb 25th: Food at 7pm, Speaker at 8pm

United Methodist Church  
246 East 11 Mile Rd, Madison  
Heights

Royal Oak Noontimers  
19<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration  
Feb 28<sup>th</sup>: Lunch and Speaker at 12pm  
Heritage Church  
600 N. Campbell Road, Royal Oak

March Roundup  
March 13-14 at Crown Plaza Detroit  
2 Washington Blvd, Detroit  
Registration \$20, Banquet \$50,  
Room rate \$135 thru 2/20  
For more info visit:  
<https://tinyurl.com/y47f2mpq>

**Happy Anniversary to these groups:**  
Park Street Group (Clawson)  
Keep it Simple Southfield Group  
Royal Oak Unity Group  
Thank God it's Monday Group (Royal Oak)  
Clawson AM Group  
Southfield Group  
Madison Heights Group  
Royal Oak Noontimers

**Outside the Bottle** is the newsletter of District 16. The newsletter contains announcements, meeting changes, events, news and information around the district, short articles on sobriety and recovery, and even some humor.

Any AA member is invited to submit material to the newsletter. Please send questions/comments/contributions to [district16news@gmail.com](mailto:district16news@gmail.com)



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