

Outside the Bottle

District 16 Newsletter
AUGUST 2022



Born this Way

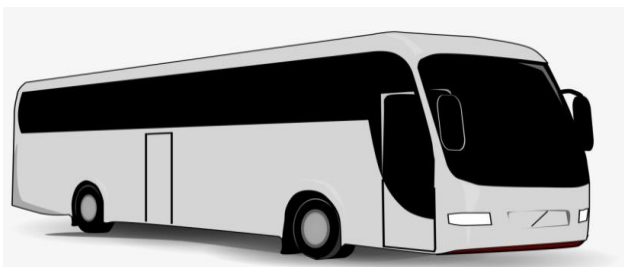
Lori G.

Hey sisters and brothers! I've earned my seat in these rooms and am grateful to share my ongoing recovery with you. My sobriety date is 4/24/2015; that was no means my first sobriety date and it's only my last sobriety date if I keep doing the deal one day at a time. Today is all I have.

I was born with the disease of alcoholism - whatever gene it is, whatever quirk of the brain - but I was alcoholic before I ever picked up a drink at a wedding at the age of 12. No one gave the champagne to me -- I just grabbed someone's champagne when they were out on the dance floor. And then it seems, I grabbed as much of everyone's champagne as I could. The next thing I know, my cousin has me outside feeding me bread to sober me up. For some, that would be enough to decide 'I'm not going to do that anymore...YUCK.' But for me, alcohol relieved my absolute discontentment with myself, my family, and the world even at that young age. That was only my first drunk; it was years until I got into recovery.

My first AA meeting was sometime in 1998 or '99. I had met a guy named Matthew who had about a year and a half sober. He took me to my first meeting after some drunken debacle on my part. I remember those few steps down to the yellow basement of the church, everyone chatting at tables, a layer of smoke floating above everyone's head. And I stayed in that room and the rooms of AA for just over a year. I sat, I shared, I owned a Big Book. I did not have a sponsor, I did not have friends in the rooms that I talked to outside of meetings, I did not work the steps. I was around the tables but not in the program. And then my guy and I were at a party, I looked over and he was lighting a joint and that was enough for me. Of course, I'll have that beer! A couple years down the road, we were no longer together but still close, and he hung himself in his sister's garage and his niece found him. His was only the first death to addiction I experienced, but it wouldn't be the last. I still think of him often and whisper thanks to him for introducing me to AA. I often wonder what would have happened to us if we had both gotten and stayed sober. We loved each other but as we all know from our own experiences and families, love does not conquer addiction.

I've also lost my best friends Monica and Mic. Monica, my best friend since I was 12, died from the ravages of the disease to her body a couple years ago in May. Mic, my best adulthood friend from our early 30s, partied like I did, we did good work in the same place. We had tons of fun. But for at least 5 years now, she has been cared for by family in Kentucky as she cannot care for herself because of what we call wet brain. I am the lucky one. I never say 'there but for the grace of God go I' when I think of these three people I loved because that sounds like I got sprinkled with some magic dust that they did not. I refuse to believe that. I know that the only difference is that I kept coming back. I just kept coming back to the tables, to the rooms, and finally stayed. Like so many of us, I have had so much to unwind, so much to address, so much to put on my 4th steps through the years. I have had sponsors who did their best to sponsor me even when I wasn't willing to do the work they were asking of me. And, sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly, the principles of this program began to take root and grow. And I've grown and stayed sober and happy to be. My message is stay, no matter what. And if not, keep coming back until you want to be here, to grow into the person you are happy to be with the help of these other sober alcoholics who show me how to live daily and with the help of my HP that I found in these rooms and is now with me everywhere and always.



BUS TOUR of Detroit's A.A. History

Saturday, September 17th

\$30.00 per seat

Registration Opens on August 1st at 9:00 a.m.

Register at: [Eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com)

Non-A.A. members are welcome!

Limited Seats – Reserve Early!

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The Comeback

Matt B.

I was always interested in drinking because my entire family drank. Drinking was a part of every occasion as I was growing up. My parents got divorced when I was around 8 and my mother remarried instantaneously. The man she married was also a drinker, but he was extremely religious as well, so church became a normal thing. We moved around a lot and my brother, sister and I attended public schools. I did a brief stint at Fraser High School; until we were sent to a Christian High school for the remainder of my 4 years. I hated my childhood and Michigan; I couldn't wait to leave.

I honestly didn't have my first drink until high school. I got drunk a few times and smoked a little weed here and there. I decided to go to college in Louisiana where my parents both went. The drinking age was 18 there and when my dad brought me to visit the school, I loved it. This is where I started drinking on a regular basis. I joined a fraternity, made a ton of friends, learned a lot, and had a great time! I drank just like most other college kids. I didn't drink every night, especially if I had an exam the next day, but I loved to party whenever I could. I bartended at an exclusive country club and majored in Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Management. I had a girlfriend and when I graduated, I took a job with a company that owned several restaurants in Destin, Florida. I asked my girlfriend to marry me, and she moved to Florida with me. This is when I started to drink quite a bit more. I was always around alcohol because it was a big part of my job and an even bigger part of my life outside work. I was eventually offered a sales job, which I accepted. Now I had much more time on my hands and my drinking really started to progress.

I was married, owned a nice home, had a good career and was drinking all the time. It was at this point I started drinking every day. I was drinking first thing in the morning and drank all day. My favorite thing to do was get drunk and drive backhoes and bulldozers around the neighborhood on the weekends and frighten my neighbors. I lived in a new neighborhood and the contractors left these around (bad idea!). I got to the point where I was polishing off a half gallon of vodka a day. I remember waking up every morning in paradise and hating being alive. I was a slave to a substance for sure and I didn't know who to tell or what to do about it. My wife knew but didn't know the extent, it was an extremely lonely and scary time. I eventually developed pancreatitis, was in the hospital for 10 days and the doctors told me if I didn't stop, I would die, and even though I wanted to, I couldn't stop. I was doomed for sure.

On November 27th, 2007, my wife checked me into rehab after I ran my neighbor's lamp post over with my truck. I went for 28 days at a place just outside of Birmingham Alabama. I learned a lot about myself and my disease there. My parents paid \$14,000.00 in cash for me to go. I checked out on Christmas Eve, went to my first meeting on Christmas Day and got a sponsor right away. His name is Chris G. from Santa Rosa Beach, FL and I keep in touch with him to this day. He was a saint in my opinion. Shortly after I got sober my wife asked me for a divorce and I lost my job because of the BP oil spill. I had a lot of challenges in sobriety, but I made the decision to stay in A.A. because I knew I belonged here. I fired myself as the manager of my life (due to poor performance) and I now have a board of directors running it, like GM. My sponsor, God and some close friends are on that board.

I made the decision to move back to Michigan (which I regret every winter). I got married to a beautiful Italian woman, have 2 amazing children, a great career and a Higher Power who I don't have to go to church to reach. I don't deserve it. I've been sober for almost 15 years now and it has been a crazy journey. I made a million friends in 2 different states (Shout out to Ben C. in Titusville, FL) who have helped me in unimaginable ways. I am grateful every day for all of it. My life is nothing like I thought it would be. I love A.A. and being sober. I've tried it both ways and definitely prefer sobriety.



Take Me Out to The Ball Game!

Sponsored By: Madison Heights Group of A.A.

Detroit Tigers Baseball Game

Saturday, August 6th at 6:10 p.m. (\$30 each -group rate)

Text Henry to reserve tickets: 248-505-5166

20 group tickets available - OR - buy your own & join us in Section #323!

Lou Whitaker Jersey for the first 10,000 fans!



STEPS, TRADITIONS & CONCEPTS

Step Eight: Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.

Tradition Eight: Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers.

Concept Eight: The trustees are the principal planners and administrators of over-all 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.

UPCOMING EVENTS

AA of Greater Detroit – 50 years in Ferndale celebration!

Saturday, August 13th at Noon at Harding Park Pavilion
Mapledale Street, Ferndale

District 16 Unity Picnic

Saturday, August 27th from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Location: Jaycee Park – Webster & Bacon Ave. in Berkley, MI 48072

Tri-County Conference – September 9th, 10th & 11th

Registration Fees: \$20 through 8/26 and \$25 after 8/27
Reserve your spot online at: tricityconference.org

AREA 33 SERVICE FAIR

“Service Beyond the Group – Are you ready?”
Date & Time: Sunday, September 18th from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm
Location: Clawson-Troy Elks Lodge – 2549 Elliot Ave., Troy, MI 48083

SAVE THE DATE!!

2022 Michigan State Convention – hosted by Area 33
Auburn Hills Marriott Pontiac - December 16th – 18th, 2022

District 16 meets at 7:00 p.m. on the 4th Thursday of every month at:

1st United Methodist Church of Madison Heights
246 E. 11 Mile Road, Madison Heights, MI 48071

We are self-supporting through our own contributions. The District, representing the overall conscience of 77 groups, is greatly appreciative for any and all donations. May we all be united together in spreading the message across this geographic area. If groups would like to donate funds to District 16, please mail a check or money order - *Payable to:* **District 16 of Area 33 AA, PO Box 725362, Berkley, MI 48072**

Outside the Bottle is the newsletter of District 16. The newsletter contains announcements, meeting changes, events, news & information around the district, and stories about sobriety and recovery.

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



Thank you to all newsletter contributors and to the many people that distribute the newsletter throughout our district. We are truly grateful for your service!

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“Abandon yourself to God as you understand God. Admit your faults to Him and to your fellows. Clear away the wreckage of your past. Give freely of what you find and join us. We shall be with you in the Fellowship of the Spirit, and you will surely meet some of us as you trudge the Road of Happy Destiny.”

-Alcoholics Anonymous, p. 164