

Outside the Bottle

District 16 Newsletter
JUNE 2023



Acceptance

Erin C.



I can remember the first time I got drunk. I chugged two Labatt Blue beers that were in the back of my parent's fridge, and it gave me a feeling of invincibility. I felt more attractive, like I had more confidence, and my anxiety seemed to dissipate. I never thought I'd be a young/teen drinker, but ultimately hung with the kids who did, and found myself drinking to the point of black out from the very first time I consumed. I'll be 28 this August, so, from the age of 15 until 27, I can count on one hand the number of times I was *not* in a brown or black out state from drinking too much alcohol. Today I can see how powerless that statistic alone made me, but, at the time, it wasn't enough to convince me I had a problem.

I can explain A.A. as like taking a college course; if you don't show up to classes, don't work with other students, don't do your homework, and aren't willing to learn new ideas, then you're not going to do well in the course. THIS IS NOT SUPPOSED TO BE EASY! Learning the "how" of this program takes time. I don't think us alcoholics are supposed to comprehend the big book and all the other pieces of A.A. literature at first - I mean really, how would we be able to? My brain was mush. My ego and pride kept me from asking questions on my first try at A.A. God bless my first sponsor. I wasn't ready, though. Why? Well firstly, it was a conditional act of desperation from my parents: "Go to A.A., find a sponsor, or your shit is on the front lawn," said mom. I did not want to get kicked out, but I also was sick and tired of the vicious cycle I was putting myself through. So, I got my first sponsor and started working the steps. Ultimately though, after about 2 months, I drank again. I went in and out of that cycle until the gift of desperation was given to me. I got pulled over!!! And thank God. I didn't realize it then, but what took place in that jail cell was a true surrender. I also knew that I had a problem with accepting my alcoholism. I knew that I was powerless and that my life had become unmanageable, but accepting it was a separate issue. Comprehending and accepting are two wildly different things. There was never going to be a time in my life, no matter how successful my life had amounted to be, where I'd learn how to drink normally.

I think most of us who have found joy and serenity in our recovery can say that we do not regret the past, that we do not wish to shut the door on it, and we understand that living in resentment is the opposite of acceptance. At least for myself, I feel grateful to be a recovering alcoholic. I feel grateful that God chose this path for me; that I get to utilize this program and heal myself from the inside out; that I get to help others who are struggling. What a gift is that? I could die tomorrow and be at peace with that: sober and helping others. If, though, I got to go all the way back to the beginning of my existence, not knowing what I know today about this journey, and God said to me, "Hey Erin, do you want to be an alcoholic, lose jobs, family, friends, cars, almost your life countless times and spend a night in jail?" I can't say that I'd be leaping for joy about those odds. My point is, though, I can either wish things were different, or I can accept things for how they are. It can't be both. And I choose acceptance.

The other evening, I explained the program as like the bumpers in bowling; without them I am going to end up in the gutters. I need the fellowship, I need the service, I need the steps, I need God, and I need all of these people helping me think so that I can handle life on life's terms. Otherwise, I'm sure to mess that up.

◆◆WELCOME BACK HOME◆◆ 5TH Anniversary Pofluck & BBQ



Friday, June 23rd
Starts at 7:00 p.m.
First United Methodist
320 West 7th St. Royal Oak

RSVP: mike.honner@gmail.com

248-506-1020

BIG BOOK STUDY!!

Last Tuesday of the Month @ 6:30 pm

Hosted By: Nothing But The Book

Genesis Church

309 N. Main St., Royal Oak

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Zoom Accessible

Meeting ID: 457 505 2737

Passcode: 450844

Pizza, Drinks & Sweets Provided!



Never Alone

Steve N.



To summarize my story, experience, strength, and hope in a short article is no simple feat, however I have been challenged with many more difficult obstacles throughout my life to say the least, and I am humbled to share part of that with you.

At the very end I knew one thing for certain as a result of my love for drugs and alcohol: loneliness. I hit many lows over my 4 decades, but the end was when nothing seemed to have an effect anymore, the lives I had negatively affected, and the feeling of being alone was unbearable. All the attempts to put things back together had failed, I had failed, I was exhausted. My last resort and the only solution I believed I had left was suicide given the overwhelming feeling I had tried so desperately to numb, yet I failed at that too. Hindsight is a different perspective, and I was fortunate to have been arrested for possession of a stolen handgun which carries a 5-year prison sentence in PA. I served 2 years and, in my opinion, that was the only way I would ever have the chance to fight the thing trying to kill me the whole time; ME.

I spent the next two years fighting myself, learning how to love myself and heal while incarcerated. With the help of the fellowship, the text of the Big Book and The Twelve and Twelve, I started to slowly make the decision to fight again while putting effort into the one place I never did before: myself. With nothing but time on my hands, I studied my 'mindfield' of thoughts and came to the realization that in some way, even though I was the one locked up, we are in many ways all doing time, *time in a prison of thought*. The 12 Steps showed me a way of processing these thoughts and with time to reflect, I started to do the work. I began a journey and discipline of meditation I carry with me today. I find it imperative to spend time starting each day with prayer and meditation which leads me to amazing discoveries of all things beautiful in life; good and bad, and excited to tackle anything life throws at me with help from my higher power and more.

When the time had come to re-enter the world, I was greeted by my first sponsor and the fellowship and almost immediately discovered; I was not alone in this world. It was a rebirth, to the point I cannot explain, and one of the most beautiful things I have ever felt. I was exposed to the fact that all people suffer, and my need to run had ended. I was free, in more ways than one. To become vulnerable, open up and ask for help was paradoxical to me, but it worked. The life I live today is without a doubt not one I would have chosen or dreamt of. My life is full in all aspects, and in all the ways my life shines, it is a testimonial to A.A., my higher power and the fellowship. What I now know is; I will never be and never was alone, I have the fellowship as family. The feeling of being connected fills me from the inside that I yearn to share with all who will listen. My internal flame is lit from the international community of A.A., the service I share with others, and life's experiences I have the privilege of failing at to give away to those still suffering.

March Roundup 2024 Planning Committee



Saturday, June 3rd at 9:00 am

Zoom: Meeting ID: 848 6288 6959

Password: 33

Contact: area33mruchair@aa-semi.org

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!!

CANOE TRIP!!

Hosted by: The Madison Heights Group
Sunday, June 4th, 2023 - 12:00 to 6:00 p.m.

Location: Clinton River Kayak
37328 Utica Rd, Sterling Hts.

Potluck Picnic at @ 3:00 p.m.

CANOE RENTAL \$80/ KAYAK RENTAL \$50

Pay on arrival

Picnic @ Heritage Park
44500 Van Dyke Road

Reservations:

248-421-3445





36th Tri-County Conference - September 8th – 10th

2023 Sunday Full Conference Meeting Schedule

Eastside Alano Club, 11487 E. 9 Mile Road, Warren, MI / 12:00 p.m.

August 6th / August 27th & the Wrap-Up Meeting will be October 8th

Email for more information: info@tricityconference.org

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!! VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!! VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!!

CHECK OUT THE UPCOMING EVENTS!!

AREA 33 ASSEMBLY — SUNDAY, JUNE 11TH

12:00 to 3:00 p.m. with GSR Orientation & Service Manual Study at 11:00 a.m.

VFW Hall, 24222 W. Nine Mile in Southfield / Lunch will be provided at 11:30!

Founders' Day Summer Bus Trip 2023

Saturday, June 10th - Leaves 8:00 a.m. & Returns 12:00 a.m.

Depart from Detroit to Akron University – Only \$60.00!

DESIGN FOR LIVING - ONLINE STEP TAKING GROUP

NEXT SESSION — AUGUST 17TH TO NOVEMBER 16TH, 2023

Thursdays 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. / Contact Mary Beth K. at 248-336-0795

Register at: <https://designforlivingroyaloak.webnode.page>

70TH ANNUAL MICHIGAN STATE CONVENTION

Save the Date: August 11th – 13th, 2023

Pre-register at: aa-michigan-2023.square.site

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

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