

Outside the Bottle

District 16 Newsletter
SEPTEMBER 2023



I Didn't Expect This!!

Debbie M.



My first day sober was 2-17-2019 and my last drink (lol drunk) was the day before. I was a wine drinker, but I didn't even drink wine on my last drunk. Nope. I was trying to beat the system you see. Wine made me black out, so as smart as I was, I thought gin and tonic would be much better, that wouldn't make me black out. See how smart I was! I had it all planned out to go to some awful aquarium with my sister and both our kids, hurry through that and get home, have some drinks, make dinner, and have a nice visit. Ya right, that didn't happen. The awful aquarium happened, the drinking happened, and the nice visit turned into a screaming match of me bringing up all my hurt and pain (which I now know as resentments) and taking it all out on my sister and yes - the kids got a front row seat! And of course, I had to finish off with the kids watching me swear and yell and kick them out of my house!!! I know I talked to my kids after they left because they told me I did, but I was in a black out, go figure. I mean I did everything I was supposed to do. I didn't drink wine and yet I still blacked out. What was wrong with me?! Well, I am an alcoholic, that is what was wrong with me. I white knuckled it for two days and went and saw an addiction counselor (so I knew on some level what was wrong). I walked into my first A.A. meeting the next day. I was broken, alone, depressed, hopeless, suicidal, the list goes on. I had no joy, no purpose in my life, and I didn't see the point with all my pain and anger. I was desperate for help!

At my first meeting the ladies were very nice and laughing. I remember thinking "WHY?" I didn't have any other option than to do this A.A. thing. So, I kept going. 90 in 90, read the Big Book, got a sponsor, and for the first time in my life I was listening to what people were telling me to do. (And that was really something, because when I was drinking, I knew everything!) And I kept listening. Mike M. at one of my first meetings looked me in the eye and said, "I think your one of the ones that are going to make it!" That was the first time in my life I felt like someone really believed in me. He is still a huge part of my recovery, and I still listen to him. I couldn't imagine being sober for one year let alone for 5, 10 or 40 years!

But I did what was suggested (told lol) and kept going. I had ups and downs and was hit during my first year of sobriety with some pretty big things; my father dying at 2 months sober, my aunt followed, dying two weeks later, a neck fusion at 9 months, and covid hitting a month after I made it to one year sober! Through all of this I kept going - meetings, service work, reading, fellowship, reaching out and asking for help! I volunteered at the Hotline, worked at Central Office, started a women's meeting, and gained more sponsees! But that wasn't even the best part! I gained my life back! I gained friends - true friends. I am truly happy for the first time in my life. My relationships with my husband and kids are better than I could have imagined. I'm able to be there for them day and night. I have a purpose in my life now. I have more self-worth than I ever have before. I feel alive and like I truly belong!!! A.A. gave me my life back. For that I will be forever grateful. Happy in sobriety!

Traditions Workshop!

Hosted By: Districts 21/22

Saturday, October 21st / Doors Open: 9:30 a.m.

COFFEE & DONUTS + LUNCH @ 12:00!

Speakers: 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Location: Grace Episcopal Church

115 S. Main Street, Mt. Clemens 48043

RSVP: Text (586) 556-7764

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!



Pain Was The Price

Ben B.



Before I got sober and became a member of Alcoholics Anonymous, my life can be best described as miserable. I had a flourishing career, a wife, 2 beautiful kids, and 3 homes in affluent areas. From the outside looking in, I was “winning.”

The truth, however, is that I resented all of it. What I know today is that I was an Egomaniac with no self-esteem or self-worth, driven by countless self-centered fears. I exhausted myself trying to fill the bucket of life with things, prestige, and success. I was never satisfied. I had no peace. My bucket, however, had a hole in the bottom that could not reach a filling satisfaction with external status. The harder I tried, the worse I felt.

Alcohol was my solution. The great mind-numbing squasher of all my fears! Its effects were electric, and immediate. It transformed me from a frail, weak, terrified boy into a powerful, confident giant. It worked for a long time until it stopped working. My drinking ultimately progressed beyond my control, and by the end, the only joy I knew was the anticipation of my next drink.

I remember little of my second trip to the hospital (against my will – thank you Dave, Dan, & Phil for saving my life!!) in a 3-month span. I do, however, vividly remember waking on a stretcher in the hallway of a Psychiatric Emergency Department around 4am between 2 other arguing patients. How in God’s name did I get here again?!?! My reflection in the mirror resembled a beaten, homeless vagrant. That was my pitiful, incomprehensible moment that changed my life. I knew then that I was a hopeless alcoholic that needed help. A long road of ego-shredding PAIN finally provided the psychic change needed to convince me I was sick and dying from alcoholism.

Prior to this I spent years trying to master the art of controlled drinking with countless attempts and failures. The truth is that when I stopped drinking, I couldn’t “stay stopped.” When I wasn’t drinking, I was filled with anger, irritability, frustrations, and fears that seemed to only be temporarily silenced with a few drinks. An insatiable craving, as described in “The Doctors Opinion” of the Big Book would take over, and well.... you know the rest.

Now what?? I was overwhelmed, disgusted, and almost paralyzed by guilt, shame, and fear. I knew I would be dead soon if I continued to drink, but I couldn’t imagine living without alcohol. So.... I called a friend in the program and spilled my guts. He simply asked me “how willing had I become to change my life?” That was it. I was desperately willing! I jumped into the solution provided by Alcoholics Anonymous with tenacity. I worked the 12 Steps honestly and quickly with a Sponsor. The compulsion to drink was removed by my Higher Power. MIRACULOUS!! Every aspect of my life continues to improve as I continue to live in this Spiritual Program of Action with my Higher Power as my Director. God and Alcoholics Anonymous gave me the gift of sobriety. In return, I live a sober life today, and try to help others who want it to achieve what was so freely given to me.



District 16 HALLOWEEN HOOTENANNY

Saturday, October 21st from 6pm - 11pm
Costume Contest, 50/50 Raffle, A.A. Prizes
Best Howling Contest, Sobriety Countdown
Location: United Methodist Church
246 E. 11 Mile Rd, Madison Heights, MI 48071
Speaker to be announced soon!!

10th Anniversary Brunch!!

Clawson A.M. Group
Saturday, September 30th

Doors open @ 9:00 / Food @ 9:30

Speaker: Tom B. at 10:00

205 N. Main Street in Clawson

**BRING A DISH
IF YOU WISH!**



CONVENTIONS & CONFERENCES

March Roundup 2024 Planning Committee Meeting Will Be In-Person This Month!

Saturday, September 16th from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. / area33mruchair@aa-semi.org

United Methodist Church, 246 E. Eleven Mile Road, Madison Heights, MI 48071

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36th Annual Tri-County Conference: The Road to Recovery - September 8th - 10th, 2023

Auburn Hills Marriott Pontiac, 3600 Centerpoint Parkway, Pontiac, 48341

Registration Fee - \$25.00 / Saturday Night Banquet - \$47.00 / Register at: tricountyconference.org

◆◆◆FALL FESTIVITIES◆◆◆

Sweeten Your Sobriety!!



2023 AREA 33 SERVICE FAIR – SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 23RD

Experience Panel, Lunch, Committee Candy Land, Impact Panel & Plenty of Sweet Treats

First United Methodist Church, 22331 Woodward Ave. in Ferndale

A.A. MICHIGAN STATEWIDE CORRECTIONS WORKSHOP

Save The Date: Saturday, October 21st, 2023 / Hosted by Area 33

Location: St. James Catholic Church, 46325 10 Mile Road, Novi, MI 48374

To get involved, please contact: area33correctionschair@aa-semi.org

BACK TO BASICS - Introduction to the 12 Steps

BEGINNING – SEPTEMBER 5TH, 12TH, 19TH & 26TH

Tuesdays 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. / Sponsored by The Southfield Group

Location: St. David's Episcopal Church, 16200 W. 12 Mile Rd., Southfield, MI 48076

Michigan Women's Conference/October 6th - 8th, 2023

Location: Garland Resort in Lewiston Michigan

Register info available at: www.miwcaa.com

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 A.A., 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 A.A. 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!

Cover Art: Melissa A.

AA of Greater Detroit:
248-541-6565

AA of Oakland County:
248-332-3521

AA of Detroit
Wayne County:
313-831-5550

“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