

FEBRUARY

OUTSIDE THE

2026

BOTTLE



What I Did - Patti Z.'s Story

It Gets Better - Sarah T.'s Story

District 16 Newsletter

PATTI Z.

WHAT I DID

Instead of telling you how many times alcoholism beat me down out there from age 13-25;

Instead of telling you how I cried out to the universe and two months later I was struck sober, with a spiritual awakening sufficient enough to keep me sober for the next 40 years!!

Instead of telling you the first 25 years were rough for me and I did everything right!! Except apply the knowledge and get outside help. Once assistance was obtained from the medical community I was on my way to Real Sober Living.

Instead of telling you of all the incredible places I've been fortunate to visit in the past 40 years around our magnificent world.

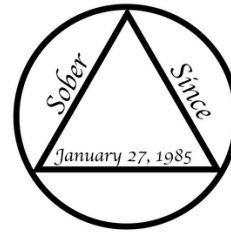
Instead of telling you of all the phenomenal souls (both human & animal) that I've been graced to meet & greet on this extraordinary planet.

Instead of telling you that I returned to education and became an RN and served the community for 35 years until retirement at 63.

Instead of telling you of all the beautiful people in my life today that honor me, love me unconditionally & cherish the space I occupy.

Instead of telling you all this, I'm going to tell you what I did!

First things first, I got a sponsor. I always had a sponsor No Matter What! Then I got to work on the steps WITH my sponsor. I worked the steps for decades until they couldn't be worked anymore.



Then I went beyond AA. Always searching for God. I was missing that vital connection. I got deep into meditation and finally connected at the deepest level with the Creator. It took about 5-6 years.....but I did it and now I am connected permanently.

No more praying. No more meditating. No more asking. No more begging. No more tears!! I have total freedom from the bondage of doing and have the total freedom to just BE. Me. I never had that "grounding", I was always being chased by the energy of the "Dragon". The drag on my life force energy was always the dominant force showing up in my life,

Today because of intense work with the 6th & 7th steps I am free to navigate from a free slate.

Today I spend 7 months in magnificent Michigan and 5 months in fantastic Florida every year. I am a completely satisfied member of Alcoholics Anonymous and know that I have worked well for it. I have no regrets. When I said I went beyond AA I meant to say that I have been fortunate to see all my past lives.....piece them together so that I KNOW Who I am; I know where I've been; Where I'm going; and what I'm doing!! For Eternity. I finally know the true understanding and nature of existence. This is an incredible gift for a garden variety drunk like me don't you think??



National Alcoholics Anonymous Technology Workshop
NAATW Online Members Meeting Registration
Saturday, February 28, 2026
1 PM Eastern / 10 AM Pacific / 8 AM Hawaii
Hosted via Zoom

SARAH T.

IT GETS BETTER



"My name is Sarah, and I'm an alcoholic. My sobriety date is December 2, 2022. I was a late bloomer when it came to drinking. Growing up, I was too much of a "good girl" to try drugs or alcohol. I remember my first drink clearly—my family took me to Windsor to go to the casino when I was 19, and I had a Long Island Iced Tea. I didn't have that "aha" moment that some people describe; I wasn't hooked right away.

My drinking didn't really take off until I was about 23. At that time, I had a good job, was going to school part-time, and was in a relationship. At first, I only drank two or three nights a week, and never alone. That changed in 2007 when my relationship ended, and a few months later I lost my job. My drinking increased. In 2008, I found a new job and tried to move on with my life, and my drinking slowed down a bit while I was working again. I lost that job in 2013 because I couldn't keep up with the quota requirements.

In 2014, I reached out to a friend's father who was in the program and told him I thought I might need help. He was supportive, and I believe I went to my first AA meeting in 2015. Unfortunately, I had a bad experience at that first meeting and didn't want to attend another one. Between 2013 and 2021, I couldn't hold a job for more than six months. One employer even told me when I was let go that people had reported I smelled like alcohol—I was thoroughly embarrassed.

I went to Maplegrove in 2016 but continued to drink afterward. Eventually, at my family's insistence, I started attending meetings irregularly, but I was still drinking and even went to meetings intoxicated. By 2016, I had already totaled my car, and a few months later I got my first DUI. My BAC was .39, which is lethal. I was placed on probation, violated it by continuing to drink, and spent 30 days in the Oakland County Jail.

In the years that followed, I went to rehab several times, including a 90-day stay in Southern California in 2020, but nothing seemed to stick. By that point, multiple doctors—including a neurologist I was seeing because I had seizures from withdrawal—told me I needed to stop drinking. I didn't care. I used alcohol to mask reality and avoid my feelings. In the fall of 2022, I received my second DUI and was fortunate enough to be accepted into sobriety court. I was 39 years old and had a thought that finally landed: I could still have a lot of time left and live a meaningful life if I change. Once again, I was court-ordered to attend AA, but this time I immersed myself in the program. It took time to get comfortable—to talk, to hug people, to let go of my anger—but things slowly started to improve mentally, physically, and spiritually as I worked the program and stayed sober.

Today, I've mended relationships with family members, I have a good job that I've been at for almost five years, and I'm genuinely happy. I used to be afraid of the word "happy"—it felt too big—but over time, I've grown into it. I can't imagine my life without AA and the fellowship, without the love and support of my friends, family, and employer. I am truly grateful.



March Roundup Registration

March 6-8, 2026

Motor City Hotel, 2901 Grand River Ave., Detroit, MI 48201



PANELS - SPEAKERS - ENTERTAINMENT - BANQUET - DANCING - YOGA - FELLOWSHIP

Archives Display - Alkathon - Sobriety Countdown -
AA Service Information Tables - Speaker Tapes -
Literature and Recovery Merchandise - Dancing
and other Entertainment - ASL Interpretation
Al-Anon Panels, Workshops, and Main Speaker

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS:

Fri 8:00 pm Jennifer H. / Plano, TX
Sat 8:00 pm Christina G. / Akron, OH
Sun 11:00 am Martin A. / Canada
Al-Anon Speaker:
Sat 2:30 pm Elvia A. / Austin, TX

CONVENTION CONTACTS:

Steve C. area33mruchair@aa-semi.org
James G. area33mrucocchair@aa-semi.org
Parrish T. area33mruregistrationchair@aa-semi.org
Liz N. mru.alanon.chair@gmail.com

DOORS OPEN AT 3PM, MARCH 6TH

Registration at the door is \$45

Scan this QR code for
online registration at:
aa-semi.org/MRU2026



HOTEL RESERVATION INFORMATION:

Room Rate of \$179 before February 20th

Book when you register for the convention

A link will be included in confirmation email

Call the hotel directly at (313) 237-7711

Reference March Round Up

Go to the website

www.MotorCityCasino.com

Click on "Book a Room" and
use Group Code: 030726MARC



Groups/members can contribute to the convention on aa-semi.org/MRU2026 or mail a check to the address below-Thank you!

EDITOR: MAUREEN H.

AA OF GREATER DETROIT:

248-541-6565

AA OF OAKLAND COUNTY:

248-332-3521

AA OF DETROIT WAYNE COUNTY:

313-831-5550

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

BOB P--DISTRICT COMMITTEE MEMBER

CHRISTINA N-- ALTERNATIVE DISTRICT COMMITTEE MEMBER

PETER S-- TREASURER

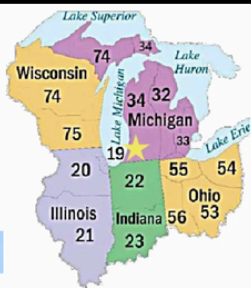
TANA M --SECRETARY

52nd Annual East Central Region

CONFERENCE of DELEGATE'S PAST & PRESENT

Hosted by: Western Michigan Area 34

FEBRUARY 13-15, 2026



Hotel Reservation:

Hilton Garden Inn
1300 Cinema Way
Benton Harbor, MI 49022
Group Code: CDP

Hilton Hotel Phone: 269-926-5000

Event online

Registration:

Deadline 01/31/26

area34aa.org/52cdpp/



DISTRICT 16 IS LOOKING FOR AN EVENTS CHAIRPERSON

Fun Position, 2 events per year!

2 year commitment.

Contact:

district16news@gmail.com



BACK TO BASICS INTRODUCTION TO THE 12 STEPS

An Open Workshop

Take all 12 steps in four weeks!

WHEN

Beginning first Tuesday of every month,
four consecutive Tuesdays,
6:30pm-8:00pm
January - May, September - November

WHERE

St. David's Episcopal Church
16200 West 12 Mile Rd. Southfield, MI 48076
(Enter behind building)

DISTRICT 16 MEETS AT 7:00PM 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 CONTRIBUTE 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