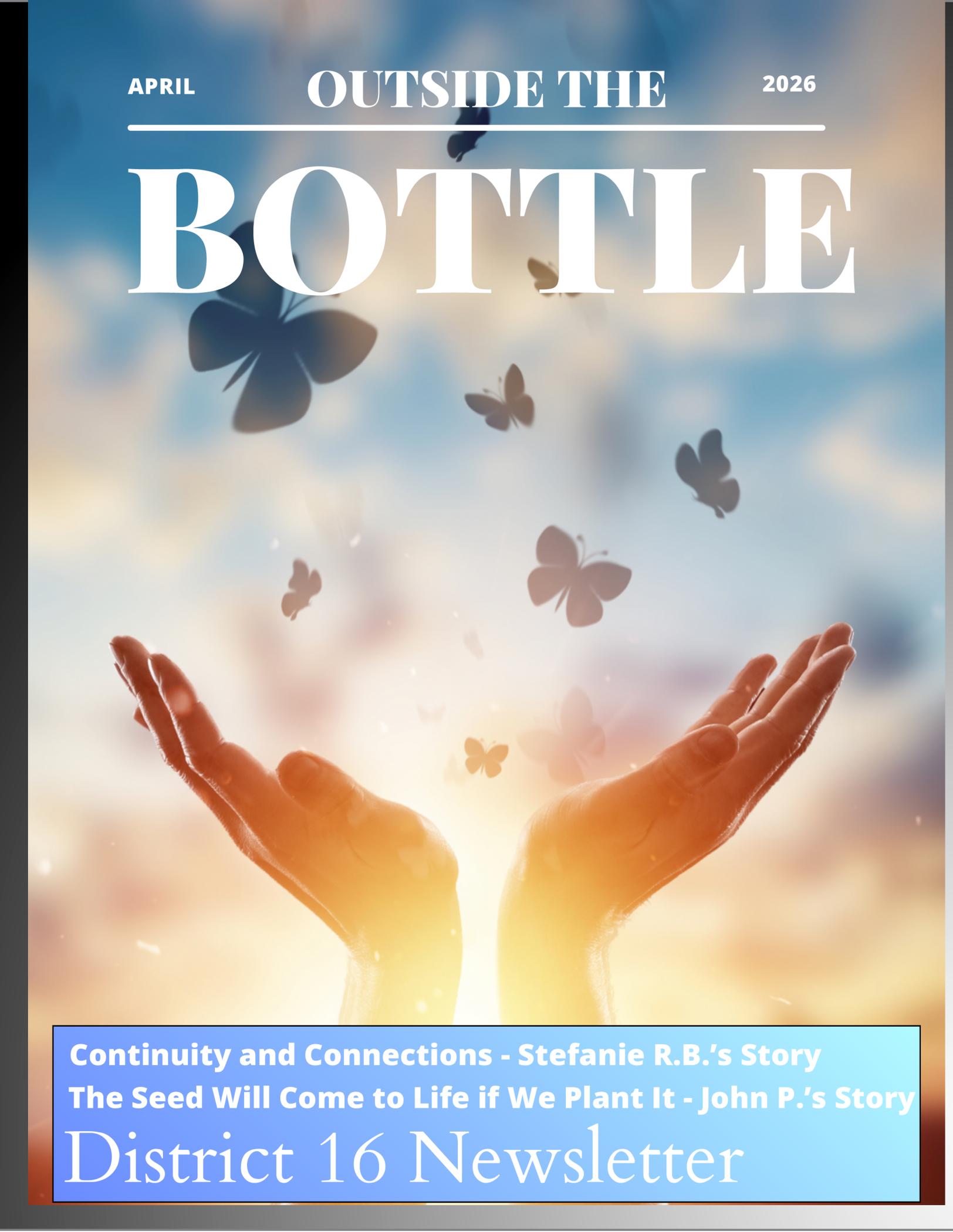


APRIL

OUTSIDE THE

2026

BOTTLE

A pair of hands is shown from the bottom, palms up, holding several butterflies. The background is a soft, warm sunset or sunrise sky with a gradient from blue at the top to orange and yellow at the bottom. The butterflies are silhouetted against the bright light, creating a sense of release and hope. The overall mood is uplifting and hopeful.

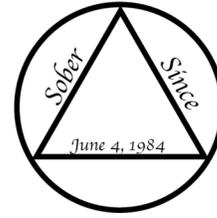
Continuity and Connections - Stefanie R.B.'s Story

The Seed Will Come to Life if We Plant It - John P.'s Story

District 16 Newsletter

STEFANIE R.B.

CONTINUITY AND CONNECTIONS



My drinking began at a young age, I think at about 13. I had that awful feeling of not fitting in, not being as good as others from a really young age. I can recall having a lot of anxiety even in kindergarten. I am from a large family, the oldest of 8 kids. I believe when I was young, my mom suffered from depression and later as I got into my early teens she began drinking heavily and was very unpredictable in her behavior. I left home as soon as I turned 18. Drinking in my younger years was sporadic but every time I drank, it was for the effect, that feeling of finally feeling ok and comfortable. I entered nursing school at a local community college at 18 and was able to manage my drinking-party years I called them. Once out of school though I found the company of other heavy drinkers and I quickly progressed into blackout drinking. About 3 years later, I found a way to steal narcotics while working in an ER. Overnight I began using these drugs intravenously. If I thought alcohol was the answer to life's uncomfotability, narcotics topped everything. I progressed quickly with that addiction while continuing to drink and found myself without a job or nursing license. I recall after a deep desire to stop using the drugs, overwhelmed with sadness at the death of my dog. I took some morphine and ended up overdosing in the nurses restroom. I came to as CPR was being done. By the time I made it to AA after I was threatened with losing my kids to the state, I was so full of shame and guilt it is hard to put into words. I was not aware of treatment centers (I got sober June 4, 1984) nor would I have likely gone to one. I would have thought it was a trick to lock me up. Because by that time, I had been committed once for homicidal/suicidal ideations and I had gone to jail several times because I had become a thief. My early sobriety was in the AA group of northwest Detroit. I felt the love, care and compassion I had never felt before, but equally important I felt some firm direction and guidance.

I never doubted the existence of God but was afraid that I was in so much trouble, I had better lay low. People in my groups corrected that idea very simply by telling me in so many words that I had it wrong, God loved me and that I should pray and ask for help staying sober, pray through the day and say thanks at night. I did so, on my knees and it is still my practice. The last three years have been a challenge and a gift. My husband and brother died within a few months of each other between late 2023 and early 2024. In the early fall of 2023 I found my now home group Sobriety First. They meet five days a week at 7 am and I could slip out early as my husband became sicker. I became enfolded into a group and truly a part of in a way I had not been in years. With so much continuity my connections with people and God expanded beyond my expectations. With a health challenge of my own, which limits the physical activity I had become used to, I have the gift of time to really dive into the steps in a way that time perhaps did not allow before. So even being sober and committed to AA with regular meeting attendance, over many years my recovery, my healing from the effects of alcoholism has taken on deeper dimensions as has my relationship with God. I often make two and occasionally three meetings a day and have a conscious contact with God that is deeper than ever. I practice meditation and I am careful to keep an awareness of my thoughts. Certain practices, principles in Buddhism have enriched my journey as well. Life has challenges, there have been challenges with two of my 3 adult children, but I have learned over time to accept what I can't change and simply love and be supportive. I am so grateful to AA and God (I think they are intertwined). Stefanie R.B.

JOHN P.

THE SEED WILL COME TO LIFE IF WE PLANT IT



At 12 years old I was a safety boy for the grade school I attended. While standing on the corner doing my duty, my dad out of no where showed up, waived with a big smile on his face. A memory I remember as if it were yesterday.

The following morning my Mom came into our bedroom to let us know. We could stay home from school if we wished because our father passed away. At the wake, there were more people at that church than on Sunday morning mass. After the service, a friend of mine called to check on me and asked if I wanted to meet up. I met him halfway. When we met he reached in his pocket, pulled out a couple of beers and said, "would you like one of these? It will make you feel better." I would have never known that I would never feel again.

Since that day, as I progressed in my disease, I realize alcohol has taken me everywhere I had hoped never to go. It kept me from going to where I hoped I could. I don't remember much. Although I do remember every time I got drunk the same words would play in my head. I'm never going to do that again. Only to find myself drunk the next dy. My life was as if I was living inside a tornado. Seems like everything I owned, married or raised was being destroyed or blown away by my destructive behavior. My 2nd wife made me an offer. Either go to Louisiana to stay with my brother and try to get sober or she was leaving. I took the offer and she gave me a round trip airfare and a few hundred dollars. She said, "I bet you will come back broke." I said, "no I won't."

I went for a week or so. When I came back she asked how it went. I said, "It went great." A few weeks later I was asked again. How my trip had went. Again I said great. Then she told me to sit down, she put in a dvd and showed me that my brother taped me while I was there and showed me one of my drunken escapades. During my visit, it was Mardi Gras. Bars, gambling and lots of women. I learned that day that I could no longer lie.

The tornado grew larger every time. I would tell someone I was going to quit drinking and ended up drinking again. In the midst of fighting and yelling. A wallet appeared in the middle of the foot. All that was in it was a card with the serenity prayer and a penny. Not sure whose it was or where it came from. I continued to read that prayer on and off for quite awhile. Again, I was caught drunk and ask what I should do. I was told to call my uncle who was in AA. It took awhile, but I finally picked up the phone and called. I was at work at the time and it seemed like seconds later he was there to check on me and make sure I was ok.

It was a Monday and he invited me to a meeting. Although I couldn't find the time until Sunday. He said great with a smile. We will meet you at the top of the hill. Sunday came along and I showed up. There he was standing on the stair waiting to welcome me in.

We sat at a table when they started the meeting with the serenity prayer. I broke into tears and everyone shared a piece of my story. That was the day that I admitted I was an alcoholic. As I become a member and met so many people. I found out all those people that parked at the church for my Dads funeral were a fellowship.

May God bless all of you and thank you for planting the seed.

FUN & FELLOWSHIP! **District 16's** **MEETINGS EVERY HOUR!**

Pre-Memorial Day Alcathon

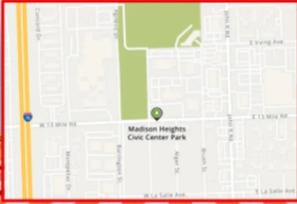
Sunday, May 24, 2026
10 AM - 6 PM

COOKING FROM NOON TIL 4PM

Meeting tables all day, volleyball, cornhole, horseshoes, frisbee, cards and much, much more!

BRING A DISH OR DESSERT TO PASS!

District 16 will provide hamburgers, hot dogs, brats, beans, potato salad and cole slaw.



Friends, Family & Kids Welcome!
Madison Heights Civic Center Park
360 West 13 Mile Rd
Madison Heights, MI 48071

Serenity in the Park! *Sober Under the Sun!*

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

DAVE S.-- ALTERNATIVE DISTRICT COMMITTEE MEMBER

PETER S-- TREASURER

TANA M --SECRETARY

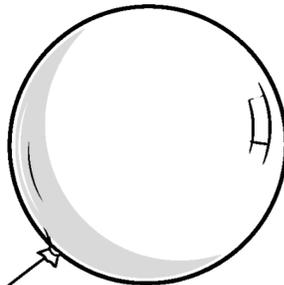
DISTRICT 16 IS LOOKING FOR AN EVENTS CHAIRPERSON

Fun Position, 2 events per year!

2 year commitment.

Contact:

district16news@gmail.com



Area Assembly: April 12

10am - Various Committee Meetings

10am - Service Manual Study

10:45am - New GSR Orientation

11:30am - LUNCH PROVIDED

12pm - Assembly Start Time

915 E Eleven Mile Rd, Madison Heights, MI 48071

The Tri-County Conference
needs
YOU
for the
2026 Conference!

Consider joining a TCC committee or volunteering for:

Committee member and volunteers needed:

Al Anon	Alcathon	Entertainment
Flyer Distribution	Graphics	Program co-chair
Registration	Secretary co-chair	Signage
Technology	Treasurer co-chair	

We look forward to seeing you at our next meeting!

Sunday, April 12, 2026, 12:00 p.m. at the
Clawson United Methodist Church
205 N. Main Street, Clawson
[enter on the Broadacre Avenue under blue awning]

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