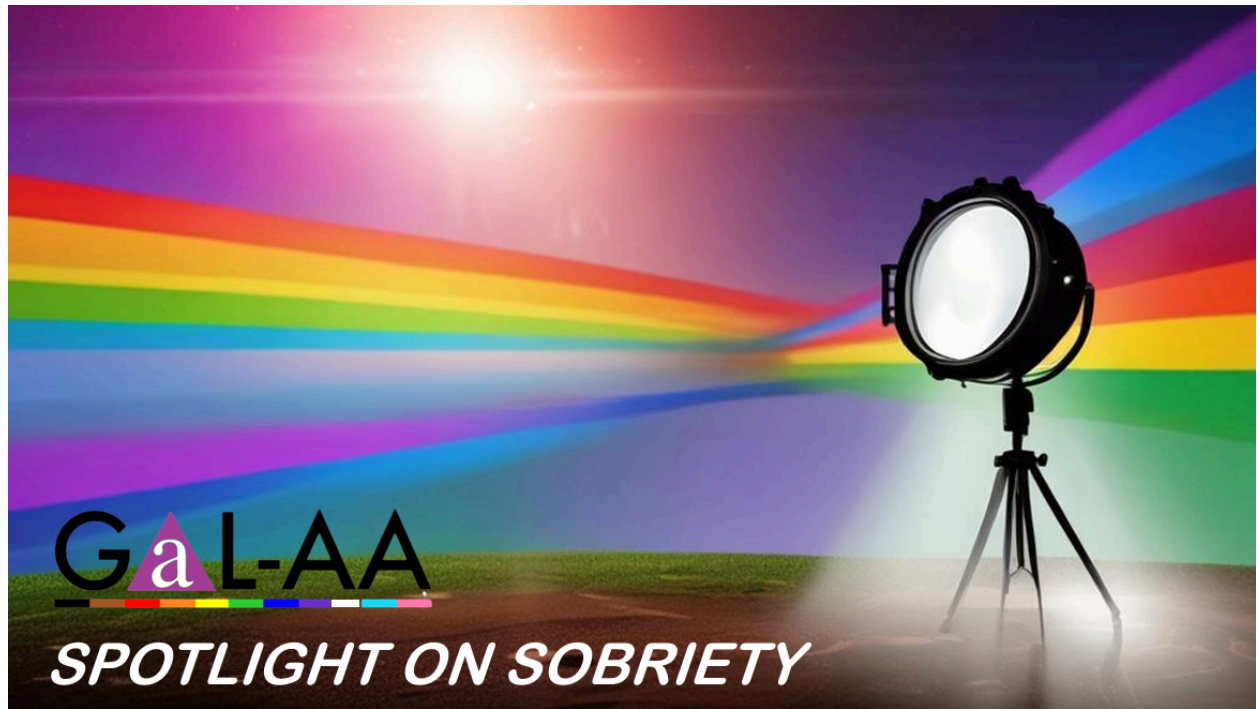


Spotlight On Sobriety August 2026



In this month's publication:

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My Journey Into Alcoholics Anonymous

((AI generated images, no real persons featured))



My name's Randy, and I sobered up on Sunday, Jan. 9, 2000. I was living in an apartment in San Antonio when an upstairs neighbor invited about 10 gay guys over for a typical Sunday noon get-together to watch a VHS rerun of a Miss USA pageant. Really, it was just another excuse to drink. When two of the guys

came back from the store with a 24-pack of beer and offered me a can, it was the first time in my adult life that I turned down a drink and responded, "No, thank you."

For a few moments, I sat and watched the pageant opening and listened to the comments about the contestants. But something was happening to me. At the time, I didn't know a miracle

was underway, but I felt disconnected from the gathering and excused myself to return to my apartment downstairs. It was cluttered with the remnants of the night before — ashtrays, empty cups, bottles, and cans. I was tired of being tired and just wanted to lie down on the mattress on my bedroom floor and fall asleep.



Drinking was no longer working. It wasn't fun anymore. I felt the pain it was causing my parents and heard the concern from my co-workers. When I woke up from a three-hour nap, I knew something different was happening outside my control. Thank God, my sobriety journey began that day, and ever since, I've never had a drink or a drug.

Several days later, I went to Lambda AA. I'll always be grateful for a small ad I found in a local gay publication that listed AA meetings. I started going regularly and met my sponsor,

Marlena, who had me read *"The Doctor's Opinion"* in the Big Book before our first meeting. The phrase "we who have suffered alcoholic torture" truly resonated with me. No explanation was needed.



A few months after I sobered up, I did a TV news story in my role as a reporter on a group of cloistered Carmelite nuns who were praying for the San Antonio Spurs. I formed a natural bond with one of them, Sister Rosemarie Cameron, and I

shared that I was newly sober. Her face lit up. She looked me in the eyes, placed her hands on my cheeks, and said, "I am the mother of all alcoholics and addicts, and I've been praying for you." That chance encounter deeply reinforced my journey and confirmed that I was on the right path.

Through AA, I also learned about Sister Ignatia Gavin, often called the "Angel of Alcoholics

Anonymous." She worked alongside AA co-founder Dr. Bob Smith and helped inspire the tradition of offering sobriety chips. I am deeply grateful for that practice. Each chip I pick up is a visible reminder that I stay sober one day at a time. I still remember my first desire chip. It was more than a piece of aluminum — it carried hope and comfort at the very beginning of this spiritual



journey.

Another nun would later play a profound role in my life. I met Sister Walter while interviewing for a communications position with her religious order in San Antonio. During the interview, a member of the finance committee asked if, beyond my professional and volunteer work, there was anything else they should know about me. I took a breath and said, "I am an alcoholic, and I work with other alcoholics on a daily basis to stay sober. Being a sober

member of Alcoholics Anonymous is the greatest achievement of my life.” The room fell silent. I thanked them and left.

I landed the job. Through that work, I was sent around the world and was able to attend AA meetings in multiple countries. Sister Walter even attended an AA meeting with me at Lambda AA when I picked up my six-year anniversary chip — a moment I will always cherish.



In the 26 years I have been sober, my life has taken on new meaning. I’ve accompanied both of my parents and my mother-in-law as they passed. I’ve experienced career uncertainty and periods of fear. When that fear creeps in, I’m reminded of a passage from the Big Book: “We have a new Employer. Being all-powerful, He provided what we needed, if we kept close to Him and performed His work well.”



Six years ago, at age 56, I met my partner. I had been convinced I would be single for life, but I asked God to let me meet someone who believed in a Higher Power. Today, my partner, Kirk, and I own a home in Las Vegas. He is not one of us, but early on I asked if he drank. He replied, “Sometimes I’ll have a glass of wine, but I took allergy medicine earlier and the directions said not to mix it with alcohol.” I liked him even more — he’s someone who follows the rules.

Around five years sober, I ran into Miss USA at a professional reception. She offered to buy me a drink. I thanked her and declined, thinking quietly to myself, *If you only knew how much you are a part of my AA story.*

I attend AA meetings regularly. I have a sponsor who has a sponsor. I sponsor others, and I have a service commitment at my home group. To see people heal, to watch loneliness fade, and to witness recovery in action is a miracle I never want to miss.

Thank you — and thank God — for AA.

Randy E.
Las Vegas, Nevada

A Message to the Fellowship about the Everything AA App

https://4ebb4a3e-f26e-4b51-83ad-513cc1cb52ff.usrfiles.com/ugd/4ebb4a_84fb14923abe48caaec333f010e138ad.pdf

Alcoholics
Anonymous®
www.aa.org

Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc.

475 Riverside Drive, 11th Floor, New York, NY 10115 / Telephone: (212) 870-3400

Please direct all
communications to:
P.O. Box 459
Grand Central Station
New York, NY 10163
Fax: (212) 870-3003

To: GSRs, DCMs, Trustees, Non-trustee Directors, Area Officers & Committee Chairs, Delegates,
Appointed Committee Members, Intergroups and Central Offices, Group Contacts, GSO and
Grapevine Employees

Date: June 18

A Message to the Fellowship about the Everything AA App

Dear A.A. Friends:

Alcoholics Anonymous World Services (AAWS) recently acquired the [Everything AA](#) app. This represents an exciting opportunity to make A.A. literature and other resources available in a format that reflects how people communicate and seek information today, particularly members and still-suffering alcoholics who increasingly engage with A.A. digitally.

We would like to express sincere gratitude to the app's creator, Ben S., for the vision, service, and loving care that helped grow the app over the years. We are especially grateful for his willingness to work collaboratively with AAWS during this transition in the spirit of service to the Fellowship.

As AAWS and the General Service Office continue to review and develop the app, members will notice phased changes to content and features, along with the addition of new resources. Material existing on the app at the time of purchase is being reviewed to ensure that the app serves as a trusted source for AAWS literature and resources published and distributed through AAWS and is consistent with A.A.'s Twelve Traditions and existing AAWS and GSO policies and practices.

Members will notice opportunities to subscribe to support the app and its ongoing development. Subscriber support may help fund app maintenance, accessibility, digital resources, Conference-approved content, and services provided through the General Service Office and General Service Board.

We appreciate the Fellowship's patience and understanding during this transition and are grateful for the many ways members support carrying the message into the future.

Alcoholics Anonymous World Services

A Message from Ben S.

For the past several years, building and maintaining Everything AA has been one of the most meaningful experiences of my life.

What started as a small project to make A.A. resources easier to access grew into something far larger than I ever expected. I have heard from members all over the world: newcomers trying to find their first meeting, people traveling, people in difficult moments, and people simply looking for a way to keep A.A. close throughout the day.

Those messages stayed with me. They are what kept me going.

As an A.A. member, I have always tried to keep the purpose of the app simple: to be useful, to stay out of the way, and to help make A.A. more accessible to anyone who needed it. I have done my best to serve that purpose with care and respect for the Fellowship.

The time has now come for me to step away from maintaining the app and to transfer stewardship of Everything A.A. to Alcoholics Anonymous World Services.

This is a meaningful transition. Everything A.A. has always been about service, and I believe AAWS is the right place for the app to continue forward. As an independent developer, there were limits to what I could do. AAWS will be able to support and develop the app in ways that I could not do on my own.

Some parts of the app may change over time. I know some familiar features may be missed, and I understand that. At the same time, those changes are part of bringing the app into alignment with AAWS, GSO, and our traditions. These changes will give it a stronger foundation for the future. I believe there is a lot to be hopeful about, including future improvements and additions that were not possible while I was maintaining the app independently.

My hope is that members give AAWS patience, support, and an open mind as they take this forward. The app exists because A.A. members used it, shared it, contributed to it, and trusted it. That same spirit can help guide its next chapter.

I am deeply grateful to everyone who used the app, sent kind words, reported issues, made suggestions, or supported the work along the way. You helped shape Everything AA into what it became.

This closes my chapter as the independent developer and maintainer of Everything AA. I'm grateful that the app will continue forward under AAWS, and I hope it continues to serve members for years to come.

Thank you for allowing me to be of service in this way.

With gratitude,
Ben S.

Houston Roundup Live Authentically, Recover Loudly, Love Unapologetically 11/26 - 11/29/2026

<https://houstonroundup.org>

As members of the LGBTQIA+ community, we are familiar with silence and hiding. Many of us spent significant amounts of our lives living in a closet, shackled by guilt, shame and fear that was instilled in us by the world at large. We lost our most valuable resource, time, afraid of being our authentic selves out of fear of what others would think about who we are and the hate we faced for being different.

Despite those obstacles, as a community, we found our voice in the face of the sweeping AIDS epidemic that ravaged our communities in the 1980's. We got loud and created the change our community needed. Houston Roundup exists because of countless individuals stolen far too soon by the disease but whose legacy lives on in our roundup that fosters a place for LGBTQIA+ people to come together in community.

We also faced the shackles of those bedevilments in our alcoholism and addiction. Once again the guilt, fear and shame kept us frozen, unable to find the path to recovery out of fear of what others would think of us, shame for how it impacted those around us and guilt for the disease that annihilated all that was good in our lives. But much as we did in the 80's, we must shed the fear, guilt and shame that far too often silences us. We can live loudly and unapologetically, survivors of the epidemic of addiction. We Recover Loudly, acting as beacons of hope for those who are still sick and suffering, pointing the way to a new and better life.

Live Authentically

Love Unapologetically

Recover Loudly



SAVE THE DATES- Bylaw Vote, Elections & Annual Meeting

OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

THE FOLLOWING ANNOUNCEMENT will serve as official notification of four important events in the GaL-AA calendar for August, September, October, and November, 2026.

1. **VOTE:** To approve necessary changes to GaL-AA Bylaws, September 1, 2026 – September 10, 2026.
2. **CALL FOR CANDIDATES:** September 11, 2026 -- September 21, 2026
3. **ELECTION:** Of Officers and Advisors for the 2027-2028 term, October 20, 2026 -- November 3, 2026
4. **ANNUAL MEETING:** Saturday, November 7, 2026, 12:30 PM EST via ZOOM.

Detailed articles in ***Spotlight on Sobriety***, email and social media blasts will precede each stage of this process. We will concentrate, for now, on the changes that are being proposed for GaL-AA's Bylaws.

Why does GaL-AA review Bylaws annually?

Reviewing our Bylaws each year may seem optional... until you see what happens to nonprofits that don't. For GaL-AA, with rotating leadership, evolving service needs, and a membership rooted in AA's Traditions, an annual review strengthens accountability, reinforces transparency, and ensures our language stays clear and current so members are protected, informed, and well-served.

What You Will Be Voting On. These amendments update GaL-AA's Bylaws across six

areas:

1. **Our Mission** — Modernizes our inclusion statement: *"GaL-AA exists to serve all LGBTQ+ people in Alcoholics Anonymous, regardless of how they self-identify."*
2. **How We Vote** — Officers: will be elected by a simple majority when 1–2 candidates are standing for a position. Ranked-choice voting will be used when 3 or more candidates are standing for a position. Advisors will always be elected using ranked-choice voting. No proxy voting will be allowed. Members must be subscribed with an active email address 20 days before any vote or election to be eligible to receive a ballot and vote.
3. **How We Lead** — Officers serve 2-year elected terms and may serve consecutive terms. Advisors are also elected for 2-year terms and are formally recognized as voting Executive Committee (EC) members who provide guidance and subject-matter expertise.
4. **Financial Accountability** — The Treasurer presents quarterly financial reports to the EC and an annual report to the membership. The Finance Committee prepares the annual budget for EC approval.
5. **Leadership Conduct** — Officers and Advisors are automatically removed for a felony conviction or loss of sobriety.
6. **Future Bylaw Changes** — Amendments will require a 2/3rds majority of voting members to pass,

You can view the complete changes and compare the current text to the proposed changes by following the link below.

<https://www.gal-aa.org/bylaw-changes-2026>

To **VOTE** on these changes in GaL-AA's Bylaws, in subsequent **ELECTIONS** for members of the Executive Committee, and attend the **ANNUAL MEETING**, you must be a member with an active email subscription with us. You must also have a Zoom account. If you do not have a Zoom account, please sign up for a free account. More information on this part of the process will be provided later. [Click here](#) for Zoom App information, available in your app store.

If you are seeing this notice on one of our social media platforms and do not have a working email address registered with GaL-AA and/or are not yet a member, use the QR code below or the link to join GaL-AA and be



a part of our exciting future. Join by [clicking here](#).

This promises to be an interesting, informative, and exciting meeting. We hope you will join us!

Watch for our monthly [**SPOTLIGHT ON SOBRIETY**](#) and additional notices sent via email and through

our social media accounts for future developments and opportunities for service.

Yours in Fellowship,

GaL-AA Executive Committee

After the Living Sober Roundup & GaL-AA's Face to Face Meeting

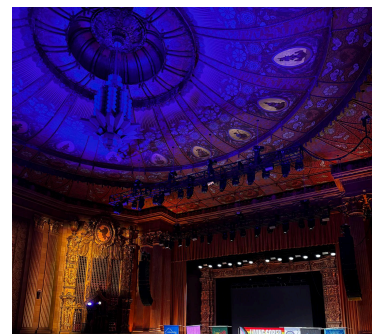


From July 9–12, GaL-AA's Executive Committee gathered in San Francisco for our annual face-to-face meeting while participating in the 50th Anniversary of Western Roundup Living Sober. The weekend brought together service, fellowship, history and celebration in a city with a special place in LGBTQ+ Alcoholics Anonymous history.

Because our Executive Committee members live across the United States and Canada, many of us had worked closely together through Zoom, email and committee meetings without ever meeting in person. Sharing meals, conversations and fellowship gave us an opportunity to strengthen the relationships that support our work throughout the year.

Our meeting allowed us to focus on long-range planning and subjects that are difficult to explore fully during monthly online meetings. We discussed the upcoming GaL-AA election and bylaw vote, policy and procedure work, future convention planning, as well as ways to strengthen GaL-AA's service to LGBTQ+ members and groups around the world.

The Living Sober weekend included meetings, workshops, fellowship, entertainment and opportunities to celebrate recovery. Events at the historic Castro Theatre featured a geographic sobriety countdown, an archives presentation, a



musical, social activities and recovery-focused meetings representing many parts of our diverse community.

On Saturday afternoon, GaL-AA presented “Jeopardy—Living Sober Edition,” an interactive workshop that combined learning, friendly competition and laughter. We also staffed an information table and met attendees from many locations, while sharing information about GaL-AA’s history, services and international fellowship.

The weekend carried a deeper historical meaning. San Francisco was one of the early centers of LGBTQ+ visibility in Alcoholics Anonymous, and Living Sober groups helped LGBTQ+ alcoholics find connection and recognition within AA. Gathering there for the Roundup’s 50th anniversary felt like returning to one of the places where this important work first took root.



By Sunday’s closing meeting, we were already beginning to say goodbye. The weekend reminded us that technology helps us remain connected, but face-to-face fellowship is irreplaceable. We left San Francisco with gratitude for those who came before us, stronger relationships among today’s trusted servants and a renewed commitment to carry this

legacy forward together.

GaL-AA Executive Committee

San Antonio Roundup 2026_”Much of Heaven”



This year’s San Antonio Roundup theme, “We have found much of heaven,” comes from the chapter, “There is a solution” in the AA Big Book. “Someone was there for me when I first walked in. Someone gave me my first chip. Someone organized my first conference, and to keep what I have, I have to give it back,” said San Antonio Roundup Chair Shem V.

The San Antonio Roundup is emerging as one of the most savvy LGBTQ+ group of recovering alcoholics that's putting on a first-class conference this Labor Day weekend. "We're just a scrappy group of misfits showing up in other cities and building relationships between those recovery communities," Shem V. said.

However humble, the San Antonio Roundup Committee, composed mostly of queens and lesbians, is a group of volunteers on fire in their recovery to remain sober while working towards producing a memorable event September 4th through 6th.

"The San Antonio Roundup is not operating on the margins of this community, but part of its broader fabric," said the roundup chair. The conference website encourages registrants to "Get ready to feel the magic of recovery-We are not a glum lot." It includes:

- Powerful speakers
- Hands-on workshops
- Show-stopping performances
- The "legendary" hospitality room with never-ending coffee and gourmet snacks.

The committee has spent an entire year marketing and fundraising and leaning into the city's Latino identity particularly with the community block party "Havana Nights" and the "Selena Jotora" drag bingo. "Queer recovery is broad, diverse, and interconnected," said Shem V. This year, the SARU partnered with Young People in Alcoholics Anonymous, the CMA community, and the non-profit San Antonio PRIDE, a first for the SARU. Its president Phillip Barcena said, "It's important for our community to know that there is a life beyond the bars-that nightlife is not the only avenue through which someone can experience belonging and connection."

Texas is more than just a state, it's a place where sobriety is strong and people are healing and recovering from deadly addictions, and through AA, "finding much of heaven." "I'm reminded that someone was there for me, and now I have to freely give back what was given to me as I trudge the road," said Shem V.



Voices of Sobriety



GaL-AA is delighted to have received so many responses to our inaugural question from the July edition:

"I want to celebrate PRIDE with friends. Any tips on having fun while maintaining my sobriety?"

These answers reflect a wide range of our members' experience, strength, and hope. They serve as a wonderful reminder that none of us are alone, and none of us have to navigate recovery in a vacuum. We hope you find this column to be a valuable asset to your journey, and we encourage more of you to share your thoughts, questions and real-life scenarios.

How to Participate

Sharing your voice is quick and easy!

- **Submit Your Response:** Readers are invited to share their experience, strength and hope using our simple online form. Submissions are capped at around 200 words, making it easy for anyone to participate—regardless of writing experience.
- **Suggest a Topic:** Have you faced a recovery challenge you think others would benefit from discussing? Is there a question you wish someone had answered when you were new? We want to hear your ideas for future topics.
- **Get Featured:** Selected entries will appear in future editions of *Spotlight On Sobriety*. As a small token of appreciation, members whose responses or suggested questions are selected for publication will receive a **GaL-AA bookmark**.

Your Voice Matters

The goal of *Voices of Sobriety* is simple: to create another meaningful way for our fellowship to connect, share and support one another. Whether you are celebrating decades of recovery or counting your first days, your voice matters—and your story might be exactly what someone else needs to hear today.

We look forward to reading your submissions!

Submit Questions: <https://www.gal-aa.org/voices-of-sobriety-questions>

ANSWERS:

James R:

This is a perennial question from newcomers, and sometimes from us older, sober members as well. I always find that the best experience, strength and hope comes from friends I have made in sobriety. When that does not prove possible, however, I generally turn to a little book published by AA World Services, [Living Sober](#), Which contains practical suggestions for these situations, such as: Go with friends from the program, make sure that everyone understands that when one member says "it is time to go", it IS TIME to go. etc.

Steve N:

I learned early from my sponsor that having an exit plan for all my outings is a good idea. I also think that if we have a reason to be somewhere and our program is strong enough, we should not avoid a place. Being at Pride is something that is important for many of us and especially for me when I first got sober to know that I can do something like this, have fun and stay sober. I felt it was an accomplishment for me but I went prepared with sober friends and ensured I knew my exit plan, that I could leave at any time should I feel triggered. I also looked up meeting schedules around the area, so I was ready. I have recently learned that some Pride events today even have sober areas, tents and even meetings. It might depend on the city size, but it is worth checking out ahead of time. All

of this is extra work that a normy wouldn't have to do, but this goes along with the territory. Spend the extra time, do the research, you probably won't need it but it will feel good to know you are covered.

This months question we would like to have our membership answer:

I live in a small town with no Gay AA, can I be honest in regular AA meetings?

[Link to Submit Answers https://www.gal-aa.org/voices-of-sobriety-answers](https://www.gal-aa.org/voices-of-sobriety-answers)

[Link to Submit Questions https://www.gal-aa.org/voices-of-sobriety-questions](https://www.gal-aa.org/voices-of-sobriety-questions)

The 66th ICYPAA Sept 3 – 6th 2026

We're excited to finally share the theme for

The 66th ICYPAA in Michigan:

"On Awakening"

Straight out of pages 86-87 of the Big Book: simple, practical, and something we try to live every day. This year, we're building the weekend around that idea... what it actually looks like whether you're starting fresh or continuing to stay grounded, living this one day at a time.

Our Programs team is putting together a lineup that's grounded in the book and real to how we live today. And outside the meetings, this is ICYPAA.

Thousands of young people in recovery, connecting, laughing, staying up too late, and actually enjoying sobriety together.

This is one of those weekends you will never forget.

Please copy the main flyer and send it to your friends.

Help us get it everywhere.

If you're planning to come, please register as soon as you can. Early registrations make a huge difference when planning. They help us plan responsibly and put on the best weekend possible for everyone. Please take a minute to register today.

Register Today - [Click Here](#)

Book your hotel room here - [Click Here](#)





Celebrating Our Sobriety Milestones



To add or edit your sobriety date, click on the link in the email you received from us. It is in the footer of the email where it says “update your preferences”. If you are not an email registered member yet, please [click here](#) to sign up.

First Name ▼	Last ▼	Sobriety Date ▼	Years ▼
Amy	S	August 15, 2011	15
Angie	A	August 20, 2011	15
Anthony	L	August 11, 2016	10
Ari	U	August 4, 2005	21
August	D	August 1, 2019	7
Beth	L	August 13, 1989	37
Bill	R	August 8, 2025	1
Bill	C	August 15, 1981	45
Bill	W	August 1, 2022	4
Brad	C	August 25, 1990	36
Brenda	B	August 5, 2011	15
Catherine	L	August 11, 1991	35
Crystal	R	August 7, 2015	11
Dea	J	August 13, 1990	36
Diana	H	August 3, 1992	34
Erin	M	August 10, 2025	1
James	W	August 13, 1952	74
James	P	August 7, 2024	2
Jeanine	L	August 1, 2025	1
Jenn	T	August 21, 2018	8
Jim	H	August 10, 1993	33
John	B	August 28, 2024	2
Joshua	S	August 31, 2025	1
Kevin	M	August 26, 2006	20
kim	M	August 8, 1996	30
Kira	B	August 15, 2025	1
Kris	D	August 15, 2023	3
Kristy	B	August 8, 2024	2
Marlene	M	August 14, 1989	37
MARTIN	S	August 13, 1996	30
Mary	L	August 8, 2003	23
Mike	L	August 21, 2021	5
Nina	M	August 27, 1983	43
Owen	D	August 29, 1992	34
Philip	Y	August 20, 2018	8
Phranc	G	August 16, 1985	41
Reilly	K	August 7, 1966	60
Robert	M	August 12, 2008	18
Robin	D	August 11, 2020	6
S	C	August 17, 2023	3
Shane	P	August 16, 2010	16
Stan	K	August 27, 1989	37
Stephen	B	August 26, 2022	4
Steve	K	August 28, 2005	21
Steve	N	August 21, 2021	5
Steven	S	August 12, 2022	4
Susan	H	August 20, 1983	43
Terry	S	August 20, 1988	38
Zachary	P	August 20, 2024	2
Zi	L	August 1, 2023	3

Spotlight On Sobriety August 2026

The Spotlight On Sobriety August 2026 features personal stories, articles, and reflections submitted by members and friends of the fellowship. The views expressed are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily represent those of [Alcoholics Anonymous](#) or [GaL-AA](#).

Statement of Inclusion

<https://www.gal-aa.org/statementofinclusion>

GaL-AA exists to serve lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgender people, queers and others in *Alcoholics Anonymous* regardless of how they self-identify. GaL-AA embraces all members of the AA Fellowship.

Your GaL-AA Newsletter Team

SpotlightOnSobriety@gal-aa.org

Become a GaL-AA Supporting Member

<https://www.gal-aa.org/members>

Become a GaL-AA Member

<https://www.gal-aa.org/members>

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