

Spotlight On Sobriety September 2026



In this month's publication:

Click the link below to jump to that section:

- [My Experience in Alcoholics Anonymous \(Gary D.\)](#)
 - [Voices Of Sobriety](#)
 - [Bylaw Voting Reminder - check your email](#)
 - [Call for Candidates 9/11/2026](#)
 - [September Member AA Anniversaries](#)
-

My Experience in Alcoholics Anonymous



My sobriety date is August 7, 1983. I finally reached my “bottom” on a trip to Provincetown. When I returned from that trip, I went to a party the next day and had what I knew had to be my last drink. The next day, a Monday, I called the Help Line and was directed to a meeting. I said, “I’m Gary, and I have a problem.” On Tuesday, I attended a gay meeting at Central Methodist Church in Detroit. That was back when we advertised in the “gay rag” paper, having already scouted it out. Go figure. Then I said, “I’m Gary, and I am an alcoholic.” The sense of freedom that came over me upon making that statement is still with me today.



Finally, the blackouts, hangovers, and the need for a drink, etc., began to be made clear. I tried the “half measures,” such as “We’ll be good tonight!” only to end up with yet another blackout or hangover. Since I was living in the Palmer Park apartments at the time, a former gay “mecca” past its prime, the times were wild, the sex plentiful, as well as the blackouts and hangovers.

As the HIV/AIDS crisis was just beginning to wind its ugliness into Michigan, it is amazing that I was spared. With all the partying, etc., it is indeed a miracle and remains so to this day. As the years went on, the losses mounted and the sorrow increased. Those not around at that period will never comprehend what we endured. To stand at a friend’s bedside, knowing his time

was short, or to have the privilege of carrying Danny's casket are all seared into my memory. I was a longtime member of the NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt Detroit Chapter, as well as a co-chair of the Human Rights Campaign Dinner in Michigan, and am a proud, active member of the Detroit Alumni Chapter of the Sigma Chi Fraternity.

Some of the things I did as a sober person are mentioned above. Being able to teach children, go into school not smelling vile, or not having to wonder what happened the night before was a gift.

My opportunities to be of service to various A.A. groups in service positions has been rewarding. To have co-chaired the Oxley Spiritual Retreat in Canada three separate times was an honor. Even though I have been fortunate to travel to many places, the shores of Lake Erie remain one of the most beautiful spots on Earth. However, it is truly time "to pass the torch" on to another generation of people in recovery.

That brings me to the spiritual part of the Program. I was raised in the Methodist Church but stepped away from that when college started and consider myself to be non-Christian. My spiritual awakening was very strong indeed. Attending a roundup in Chicago, at four years sober, I reached out my hand in the closing circle and there was no one next to me. I felt a power that is hard to describe. This brought me to my Higher Power, my beloved Grandma. Speaking to her in morning and evening prayer is comforting.



Oh yes, I finally came out when I graduated from college. Seriously. A true journey of acceptance. The closet was a painful place to be. The underlying need for acceptance plays into that. I have never had a relationship, and the answer is, "Partly by chance and partly by choice." There is, of course, a core of loneliness that I live with. So be it. Attending meetings, both in person and on Zoom, is part of my weekly routine. Being of service has been an important part of those meetings. However, I must

admit to not being "into" reading the literature of the Program, nor practicing meditation. Sitting quietly in my lounge chair for silent times is a form of meditation. My circle of friends, near and far, includes long time people from high school, fraternity, teaching, and those through Alcoholics Anonymous - all remain treasures.

With all these thoughts shared, may I say that one can only wish for others "out there" that they can find the peace and serenity of our Program.

By Gary D.
Detroit, MI

Voices of Sobriety



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

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

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>

August 2026 Question was: **I live in a small town with no Gay AA, can I be honest in regular AA meetings?**

ANSWERS:

Randy E:

Being gay and living in a small town can present a whole set of issues. Being newly sober and discussing being gay in a small town AA meeting can be awkward and/or have its own set of challenges. I think it's important when discussing alcoholism to be rigorously honest, as the Big Book of AA suggests. However, until finding out who I can truly trust in an AA meeting is just as important. I would begin by finding a sponsor who I trust and while meeting with them, discuss my sexuality. As I gain confidence in the group, then, perhaps I would run it by my sponsor about opening up in a small town AA meeting. If I may suggest this: Always trust your instinct. Your instinct will never fail you. Also, pray and ask God (Higher Power) for guidance. The right answers will come if I persist and my own house is in order.

Steve N:

Honesty is important in recovery, but I don't believe we have to tell everyone everything before we feel safe. In a small town, I would first attend the meetings, listen, and get to know the members. I would look for people who demonstrate kindness, discretion, and an understanding that our primary purpose is to help alcoholics stay sober. Then I might begin by sharing privately with a trusted member or sponsor before discussing my sexual orientation or relationships openly in the room. Regular AA meetings can offer valuable local fellowship, service, and face-to-face support. At the same time, an LGBTQ+ alcoholic may need a place where no explanation is required and where they can speak freely about every part of their life. Online LGBTQ+ AA meetings can provide that additional connection when no local gay meeting exists. AA Online Intergroup has many meetings for LGBTQ+ members. I would not see this as hiding or being dishonest. I would see it as building a sober support system carefully: local meetings for nearby fellowship and online LGBTQ+ meetings for identification and complete openness. As trust grows, you may find that your local meeting is safer and more welcoming than you feared—but your sobriety and personal safety come first.

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

Do queer people really stay sober long term?

[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)

A (not so) Gentle Reminder

GaL-AA's bylaw vote closes **this Wednesday, September 10, 2026**. We hope you have received your ballot link and have voted.

If you have received your ballot and not voted as of yet, please do so — it takes about 5 minutes.

These amendments update our inclusion statement, election rules, officer terms, Treasurer reporting and more.

Already voted? Thank you — no further action needed.

Voting closes Wednesday, September 10, 2026 at 11:59PM ET. – Check your email for the Bylaw Voting Ballot.

To **VOTE** in upcoming **ELECTIONS** for members of the Executive Committee, you will need to have a working email address registered with GaL-AA. 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](#).

To attend the **ANNUAL MEETING on Saturday, November 7, 2026 at 12:30 PM, EDT** you will need to 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.

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.

Questions? elections@gal-aa.org

CALL FOR CANDIDATES

To ALL GaL-AA Members

We Need Leaders Like You — Run for GaL-AA's Executive Committee OPEN POSITIONS

Chair, Treasurer, and (5) Advisors

Nominations open on September 11, 2026

We need leaders to serve as Officers and Advisors to help our organization thrive.

Candidacy submissions open, September 11, 2026 and will be accepted until September 21, 2026.

What's Open:

Position	Term
Chair	2-year (Jan 2027 – Dec 2028)
Treasurer	2-year (Jan 2027 – Dec 2028)
Advisors — 3 seats	2-year (Jan 2027 – Dec 2028)
Advisors — 2 seats	1-year, filling mid-term vacancies (Jan 2027 – Dec 2027)

What You Need:

- 2 years continuous sobriety for Advisors
- 3 years continuous sobriety for Officer Positions
- Active AA membership
- GaL-AA membership
- Time and a willingness to serve

Executive Committee (EC) members and subcommittee members each meet one time per month for 1 hour. Generally, 2-4 hours per month are required. Time commitment varies by role and committee assignment.

Check your email on September 11th for the submission link and instructions.

Submissions close **Sunday, September 21**

Questions about the roles? elections@gal-aa.org



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 or First Initial	Last Initial	Sobriety Date	Years
Alan	H	September 29, 2013	13
Belinda	T	September 18, 2019	7
BLAKE	D	September 21, 2008	18
Bryan	C	September 5, 2016	10
buddy	S	September 27, 1991	35
C	H	September 26, 2016	10
Chris	B	September 3, 2015	11
Christian	J	September 25, 2024	2
Cierra	W	September 2, 2014	12
Daniel	B	September 1, 1986	40
Diane	L	September 11, 1989	37
Dick	G	September 23, 2013	13
E.	L	September 14, 1984	42
Echo	A	September 6, 2012	14
Ed	D	September 13, 2025	1
Edward	V	September 2, 2023	3
GERRY	M	September 29, 1997	29
Gertrude	S	September 7, 2019	7
Gina	S	September 29, 2023	3
Harry	R S	September 1, 1991	35
Helene	H	September 13, 1976	50
Jeni	S	September 14, 2011	15
Jessica	G	September 28, 2018	8
Jim	F	September 22, 1991	35
John	D	September 7, 2021	5
John	J	September 21, 1986	40
Julie	G	September 1, 2004	22
Justin	C	September 4, 2019	7
Kammy	M	September 20, 2011	15
Karen	I	September 16, 1990	36
Kat	B-R	September 4, 2022	4
L	C	September 5, 2025	1
L	P	September 14, 1987	39
Lorraine	H	September 29, 1997	29
Matthew	H	September 15, 2018	8
Natalie	M	September 3, 2018	8
Patrick	P	September 24, 2018	8
Philip	E	September 30, 2000	26
Phoenix	M	September 27, 2025	1
Rady	A	September 7, 1994	32
Rolf	S.	September 28, 1997	29
Sherry	L	September 10, 1982	44
Soterios	R	September 5, 2009	17
T.W.	C	September 22, 2017	9
Theresa	Q	September 24, 2024	2
Thomas	C	September 26, 2019	7
Tina	H	September 27, 2021	5

Spotlight On Sobriety September 2026

The Spotlight On Sobriety September 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>

Join our Social Media Channels

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

