



From the Heart

I have attended Regional Forums before but the East Central Regional Forum in Houghton, Michigan was special. We began making plans to attend months ago. Midnight on Nov 3rd I drove 175 miles to Toledo, to meet up with 16 other AA's from around the state. Three vehicles ventured out at 4 AM in search of the "Upper Peninsula." I shared a van with people from Columbus, Cleveland, Dayton and Toledo. The scenery was spectacular and the discussions lively. Twelve hours later we arrived at our hotel. After freshening up, we were energized by the opening remarks at 7 PM followed by brief presentations on many topics.

The General Service Board puts on forums to foster communication and inform the fellowship about AA around the world. Anyone may attend these meetings but be careful; you may catch our enthusiasm about General Service work. Representatives from around the country were there to share their experience, strength and hope with us. We were able to exchange ideas, share knowledge, ask questions and get specific help from our trusted servants. Forums are scattered around the country in order to make them available to the entire fellowship. The East Central Region encompasses five states; Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio and Wisconsin. There were many reports given by representatives from these areas. Small workshops were staged and sharing sessions occurred where any question, concern or comment may be addressed.

Personally, I found this forum warm and cozy, fun and friendly, informative and enlightening. I was able to meet new friends, visit with old colleagues, and enjoy the company of fellow alcoholics.

Geographically, I learned plenty too. Traveling north into Michigan we crossed the five-mile long Mackinac Bridge, where we spied Lake Michigan and Lake Huron. Then we drove west along Lake Superior until reaching the "Upper Peninsula." When we departed on Sunday, we headed south to Green Bay and Milwaukee, Wisconsin. While negotiating through Chicago, Illinois, one passenger pointed out where he attended his first AA meeting. We were all winding down when we turned east to cross Indiana. Arriving back in Toledo, we were treated to coffee and delicious pecan pudding pie. We split up again to return to our respective homes. I for one was greatly enriched by this experience.

Hammering Hank S.