



22nd Annual Reunion/Picnic

Saturday, June 23rd, 2007

**GROUND OF ROGERS MEMORIAL HOSPITAL
OCONOMOWOC, WISCONSIN**

"We will comprehend the word serenity and we will know peace."

- 9:30 **Continental Coffee & Rolls**
- 10:00 **Opening Welcome – John Aschenbrenner**
- 10:15 **Keynote Address: Beau Stafford**
- 11:30 **Annual Meeting – Bob Olson - HMAA President**
- 12:00 **Reunion Picnic**
Rogers Hospital generously provides the gourmet picnic
- 1:00 **AA & Alanon Speakers – Jim & Mary H**
"Serenity Reflecting into our Relationships"

Afternoon Games & Activities For Kids with a Rec. Therapist

- 2:00 **Bob O's Scavenger Hunt** (And you thought last year's was something!)
(For present residents of Herrington House and any interested others, celebrating enjoyment in early recovery.) As in years past, the scavenger hunt list is kept under lock & key until just before the scavengers are sent out in their groups. (As in year's past, the generous prizes are again given by Bob and T-Lon Products of Hartland.)

Dinner will be "On Your Own" in the surrounding Oconomowoc Area.

If you'd like suggestions, please see one of the locals among us.

- 6:30 **Scavengers are due back with their "loot" for judging and the awarding of prizes.**

7:30 - ? Our Gratitude AA Fire. "Celebrating our Gratitude."

(Our "Open" AA Meeting Campfire Meeting welcomes not only our recovering members, but also family and friends of Herrington/McBride.) Our Gratitude Fire affords us a very spiritual culmination to our day's activities – affirming the goodness of our recoveries, and not forgetting those struggles that leave us feeling so grateful for the present.

Remembering how difficult it was during our first days, weeks and months of early recovery, we ask that our focus on enjoyment also includes the current residents of Herrington House, making certain to include them in the day's activities.

Come for all day or for an individual event
CALL 1-800-767-4411 EXT 240 TO MAKE YOUR RESERVATION.
WE WANT TO HAVE SUFFICIENT FOOD & BEVERAGES!!!!!!

The Moving Finger

The Herrington McBride Alumni Association

Spring 2007

Message From the President

Hello Everybody,

I hope this message finds everyone at a good time and good place. After all that is what we strive for as we work our respective programs.

I am very pleased to report that there is big news at the Rogers Memorial Hospital in Oconomowoc campus regarding Herrington House. We are going to get a new building!

That's right; a state of the art treatment facility is going to be built to house the Herrington residential program. As it stands at press time, the building is going to be built down at the water's edge on Lower Nashotah Lake.

A few ground breaking dates have been discussed but a specific date has not been assigned.

While this building will be state of the art, the intimacy of the Herrington program will not be compromised. The current resident census will remain the benchmark.

Wow, this is huge! It is truly a testament to the skill, commitment and success of the Drs., counselors and staff of the Herrington Recovery Center.

Following this big news is the report of the wildly successful winter retreat. Record numbers attended and from what I hear experienced a wonderfully meaningful weekend. I'd like to personally thank all that gave so unselfishly of their time to make this special event truly remarkable.

In conclusion, don't forget to reserve Saturday June 23rd to attend the highly anticipated Herrington / McBride alumni picnic/reunion. This event is sure to be a fun filled and emotional day for all alums attending.

With warmest regards,
Bob Olson
President-HMAA

Recovery is a Journey

by Jim Wohlitz

Recovery IS a journey. My journey began in May of 1992 at the old Milwaukee Psychiatric Hospital as an outpatient. What a trip it has been.

My drinking career lasted over 20 years. I was a binge drinker who was a functional alcoholic. However, I finally got to the point where alcohol didn't do what it used to do. It didn't make the pain go away. It didn't fill the hole in my gut anymore. I was sick and tired of being sick and tired. I was ready for change but didn't have a clue where to begin. That's when I sought help and began my journey of recovery. During and after primary treatment, I became convinced that AA was the path to change in my life.

I was introduced to the Tuesday night meeting at Milwaukee Psych and met a lot of people who have been important to my recovery. Many of them have become friends over the years. During my early recovery, it was suggested that I attend the Harrington-McBride Alumni Association Winter Retreat. What a revelation. Here was a group of people who worked the program of AA and lived happy productive lives. People who could talk about their battles with addiction and laugh about many of their past experiences. Folks who had real lives, hopes, and dreams. What a revelation! My vision of a retreat had been a couple days of silent meditation and study. What I experienced was camaraderie, walks in the woods, laughter, outrageous stories, games, ice cream, along with serious discussion and introspection. The winter retreat became an annual must do event for me.

During the first six years of recovery, the winter retreat was an important element of my program. A job transfer landed me in Utah and it's been 8 years since I have been able to attend. This year I was elated when I was able to attend.

As I drove down the driveway to the retreat house, a sense of peace and serenity came over me. I slowed down and let the feeling sink in. It was like coming home for a visit. I was pleasantly surprised when I parked the car. The retreat house looked great with the addition that had taken place since my last visit. I was a little early so I took a walk around the grounds and reflected on healing and growth that had taken place here in days gone by.

When I entered the reception area, I was greeted by Mary Krall and Bill Martens. I hadn't seen them in years. When I signed in, I was pleasantly surprised to receive a copy of the meditation book, "Keep it Simple." Many thanks to the anonymous donor. Keep it simple has been one of my personal themes in recovery. A great theory, not always easy in practice. I was really surprised when I heard that close to sixty people were expected for the weekend. The last retreat I attended had about twenty participants. As people arrived, it was great meeting up with the old timers.

Dinner Friday night was the customary cold cuts buffet. Very good. Good people and lively conversation. Finally it was time to begin. John Aschenbrenner and Mary Krall welcomed everyone and of course reviewed the rules of the house for the weekend.

Wendy Kohlhass was the keynote speaker. As nervous as she was she did a terrific job of relating her story of experience, strength, and hope. As she spoke with passion and emotion, many heads in the audience nodded in agreement as personal memories were recalled. Lively discussion groups followed.

Saturday began with a meditation and then breakfast. Speakers on Saturday represented a wide range of experiences and age. The speakers and the discussion sessions reminded everyone of how far we've traveled on our individual journeys and gave us hope for the future. Free time Saturday afternoon saw some people shopping, some walking, reading or napping. One group was drawn to the Harley shop down the road.

After dinner we had an ice cream social. John Aschenbrenner, the guru of games, organized the evening entertainment.

On Sunday, Lynn B. was our final speaker followed by a discussion session. Finally it was time for the closing. Everyone gathered in the main room, formed a circle and gave their impressions of the weekend. There were hugs and some tears as we said goodbye and headed out the door.

For me the weekend was a great success. I would like to thank everyone involved, especially Mary Krall, Natalie Zimmerman, Bill Martens, and John Aschenbrenner. Hopefully I will be able to make this event part of my journey in recovery once again.

God, grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change ~
Courage to change the things I can;
and wisdom to know the difference.

One Man's Findings On Our Recovery Journey

And of all the necessary lessons to be considered and learned, these I have held close:

Remain open to possibility; never closing one's perception to new reality.

Be inclusive rather than exclusive in one's beliefs and the paths one chooses.

Be accepting rather than rejecting of life's challenges and opportunity, and do not allow ones' self to hide in illusions of false security.

Maintain a sense of nurture, respectfully regarding all that was, is, and will be; and allow such nurturing to love respectfully and deeply in the present.

Take care to care for ones self, realizing that the body and its perceptions are dependent upon the care one allows it during ones' journey, and that it reflects the condition of ones' Spirit.

Learn to listen to and not fear the silence within, and the complete Truth is seeks to disclose and share through ones' intuition, which is but the Spirit's seeking to be heard and believed in.

Respect objects for what they are, and especially for what they are not, recognizing that one seeks to fill the void out of one's fear of dissolution rather than recognizing that one needs to gradually and eventually lose the self into total Communion with The Ultimate Oneness.

As one's truth becomes increasingly apparent, one transcends as one includes it, into the increasingly unfolding Understanding; recognizing that Transcending & Including is the eternal pulse of the universe and of The Spirit.

Take care to learn that sins of omission are greater than sins of commission, and never loose sight of the truth that the greatest sin of omission is despair; for unlike love which nurtures the universe and Spirit, despair seeks their destruction.

Take care to learn that within the unfolding of Understanding comes the increasingly viable vision that one is inclusive within The Great Oneness, and that one's love and regard for all who were, are, and will be is the clearest reflection of one's love of self and its' eventual absence, which is The Great Oneness toward which one increasingly finds oneself longing.

And the Greatest One Inclusive Teaching remains this: Love one another, for love seeks its' own from within its' longing, and its' Communion is but the reflection of The Highest Union into which The Pilgrim seeks Homecoming.

- An Anonymous Recovering Alcoholic

Upcoming/Ongoing Activities & Events

WINTER RETREAT

January 4-6 2008
Redemptorist Retreat Center
Oconomowoc, Wi

(Information & registration will be in Winter Newsletter)

RAP WITH PERSONS JUST ENTERING RECOVERY

Oconomowoc campus on Tuesdays at 6PM
West Allis campus at various times.

Contact us at address in this newsletter or call
1-800-767-4411 ext 516
(Individuals must be pre-approved)

PIZZA WITH HERRINGTON HOUSE RESIDENTS

September 2007
(If interested in attending, contact a board member)

12 STEP MEETINGS

AA
Oconomowoc campus
Monday-7PM
Wednesday-7PM
Friday-3PM

(Separate meetings for men and women)
Saturday-7:04AM
Sunday-8:30AM

(All meetings are in the HMAA meeting room)

West Allis campus
Sunday-6PM
Tuesday-7:30PM
Saturday-9AM

NA
West Allis campus
Thursday-7PM

ANNUAL REUNION/PICNIC

June 23, 2007
(Information in this issue)

The Moving Finger is published by and for the Herrington McBride Alumni Association. Please send story ideas and feedback to: HMAA Box 13581, Wauwatosa, WI 53213 Newsletter Editor: Natalie Zimmerman

THOUGHTS TO PONDER

by Natalie Zimmerman

Here are a few more "one liners" that reflect on our ongoing recovery. The following ones were shared by folks at the January retreat.

"I don't care who knows that I am an alcoholic as long as I never forget." I cannot afford to forget the unmanagability of my life and the power of the alcohol over every part of my life. Going to 1st Step meetings and working with folks new to the program helps to keep the memory fresh in our mind.

"Resentment is like taking poison and waiting for the other person to die." Resentment is poison for folks in recovery. It creates for us a slow deterioration of any serenity we may have attained.

I would appreciate you sharing any "one liners" you have found to be helpful to you in your recovery.

ALUM IN THE NEWS

John Aschenbrenner, Vice-President of our Alumni Association, who published his first novel, "Reflections in Erik's Gym" last year, has now published his second "Reclaiming Buck." If interested in learning more about either of these novels on alcoholism, addiction and the continuing miracle of recovery, you can find them at:

<http://webpages.charter.net/johnaschen/books>

If you or a fellow alum are involved in some activity that enhances recovery, please let us know about it so we can make others aware. As usual, the editorial board will determine appropriateness of inclusion in this newsletter.

PURCHASE OF VIDEOS

Monies given to HMAA by IBM was used to purchase videos to be used for the AODA programs. They include the topics of addiction, living sober and issues in recovery. The videos will be used for persons in the AODA programs as well as for family members as appropriate.

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