

For the Weekly Calendar:



AA Meetings – Rogers Hospital – Oconomowoc

Monday – 7:00 Evening

Wednesday – 7:00 Evening

Thursday – 6:00 Evening

Saturday – 7:04 Morning (Nobody makes it by 7:00!)

Sunday - 8:30 Morning

NA Meeting - Rogers Hospital – Oconomowoc

Saturday – 7:00 Evening

Rogers Hospital – West Allis

Sunday – 6:00 Evening

Wednesday - 7:30 Evening (NA Meeting)

Saturday – 9:00 Morning

Al-Anon Meeting-Rogers Hospital Oconomowoc

Tuesday – 7:00 Evening

Alumni interested in doing Tuesday Evening RAPs with current Herrington Residents contact Rob McCreadie at: clean@wi.rr.com

If you're interested in having Pizza with current residents contact Glen Taylor at: fglentaylor@gmail.com

Pizza nights are every second Tuesday of March, June September and December

Herrington McBride Board Members

Serving our Recovering Alumni & Their Friends:

Elected Board Members:

Kriston Simons – President

Jeff Radtke – Vice President

Secretary – Laurie Schammel

Treasurer – Phil Grabski

Jennifer Evancy

Scott Elston

Michael Ingrilli

Mary Lee Grady

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Rob McCreadie-Past President

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John Aschenbrenner – Past President

Jim Doyle – Editor

Advisors:

Matthias Scheuth – Director of the Rogers Foundation

Dana Marlowe MD – Medical Director at Herrington Recovery Center

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Welcome to *Rogers of Oconomowoc!*

The Rogers Oconomowoc campus welcomes all forms of addiction to any of the support groups held at this location. Whatever form your addiction may take we are grateful to have you contribute to discussions around our tables!



The Herrington McBride Alumni Association
Fall Edition, 2018

The Herrington Recovery

Alumni Association Quarterly

From the Desk of our President

By: Kristin Simons

Hello to all our alumni and friends. It was a joy to see 100's of you at our annual reunion picnic in July! Thank you to all who came out to enjoy clean & sober fun and fellowship. A special thank you to all of the volunteers who helped make our 33rd reunion picnic a great success! I am already looking forward to July 2019.

Our upcoming events included the quarterly pizza night with the residents at Herrington on Sept 11. If you would like to attend as a guest, please contact Glenn Taylor (fglentaylor@gmail.com), myself (drkjsimons1@gmail.com) or any of our board members (listed on the back of the newsletter). The "Scared Straight" Halloween event is just around the corner. We put on a stellar clean & sober Halloween bash for the HRC residents. Again, if you would like to be involved, contact Laurie Schammel or anyone from our board.

Sponsorship Plea! We have an ongoing need for (temporary) sponsors for the residents in treatment. If you are interested in sponsoring or learning more about sponsorship please contact me (Kristin Simons: drkjsimons1@gmail.com) Minimum requirements for sponsorship include: 1 year of continuous sobriety, actively working your own recovery program, and you yourself have a sponsor. It is my firm belief that a major component of sustained long-term recovery is fellowship with others in "the program". When we stay connected to a community of recovery, we all help support, encourage, and strengthen each other. If you are looking for opportunities to get involved with our alumni association or in your hometown recovery community please reach out and let us know if you need help. Get connected, stay involved!

How are you engaging with your recovery community today? Are you engaged in a recovery community? If not, why not? Let us know how we can help. We want to hear from you!

Blessings in Recovery, Kristin Simons



A Significant and Substantial Opportunity to Give Back

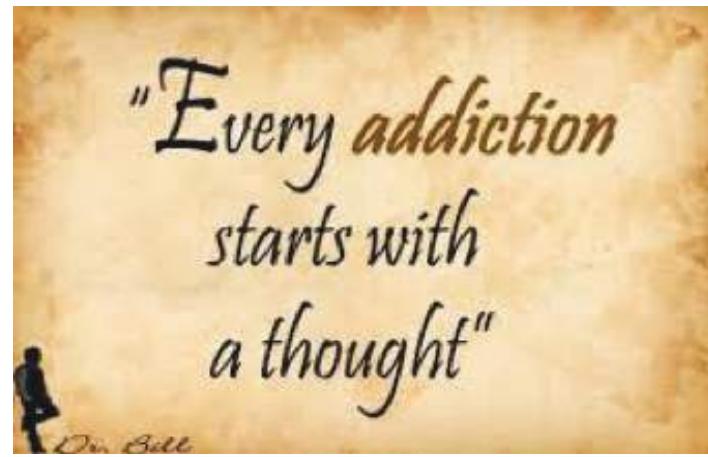
Hello Herrington Alumni,

I was very fortunate to live within a half hour of Oconomowoc when I left Herrington because I could return and attend meetings where I was comfortable and knew people. For people leaving Herrington and living not close enough to attend meetings at Rogers, we believe it would be very helpful if they could get in contact with a past resident in their area who can meet with them and direct them to some good meetings in their area. So, we are looking to create a list of "Alumni Partners", with at least a year clean and sober who are willing to partner with a new graduate and help them find and get to meetings in their area. If you are willing to help please email jeff.radtke@yahoo.com, and give me your name, and phone number. At any point in time you can e-mail me and I can remove you from the list. We will be sending e-mails to everyone on this list once a year to confirm you want to remain on the list.

Thank you very much for your help, your support is greatly appreciated.

Jeff Radtke HMAA Board Member

**TOGETHER
EVERYONE
ACHIEVES
MORE**



"Every addiction starts with a thought"

Jeff's Story

Born in 1981, I've been front and center to some historic changes; from the invention of the cell phone, to my 70+ year old father using social media. These incredible advancements and so many other major events I've experienced, seemed to come and go so fast. The most rewarding change I've experienced so far, was the day I decided to put down the bottle and start a new life of sobriety. In contrast, that was a change that took years of mistakes that seemly felt like an eternity. This is my story, and the path I travelled to January 17th, 2016, the day I discovered I was powerless over alcohol, and my life had become unmanageable.

Growing up, I had all the privileges a kid could hope for. I had a good school, close friends, and freedom to explore. For the most part, my mom stayed home and managed a household full of boys. My dad, a Salesman, was often on the road but provided a positive role model to look up to. We had a strong family bond. With 3 boys and my dad, my mom had a lot on her hands.

My brothers were always risk takers growing up, and me being the youngest, I seemed to follow suit. From a young age, I was a little different though. I was treated at the age of 12 for depression, and when I discovered that drugs could make you feel different. It was somewhat natural that I ultimately gravitated to experimenting with those I wasn't supposed to take.

As I got a little older, I was introduced to beer by one of my older brothers. I didn't get drunk, but I got close. The first time I really felt buzzed was a short while later. I was 13, stealing booze out of my parent's liquor cabinet. I was hooked. The act of stealing it, drinking it, and sneaking around hiding it. I was in love. At such a young age, some kids were experimenting, but I craved it. There was something about losing control that made me want more. I loved the risk. I loved how rebellious it felt. Little did I know, I was feeding a monster that would in time, grow out of control.

Like many addicts and alcoholics, my fast forward is somewhat predictable. I was a fairly bright kid, but I

applied myself in other ways. I had graduated to much harder drugs in my late teens. I started dealing in high school and was pushing all sorts of stuff. At one point, I was making fake IDs. I enjoyed the rush and being at the center of things more than the money and drugs.

I partied extremely hard for many years. Starting in 1993 and going strong. I had relatively no consequences during that time that put any kind of meaningful check on my addiction. At one point my parents intervened when I was 16, going on 17. I went through outpatient because I had to. This led to a 30 day residential treatment in Green Bay after I showed up drunk to my outpatient group.

I wasn't taking any of it seriously. By the time I graduated, it wasn't two weeks after I was selling drugs to others that had been in the program with me. In 2003, I had my first bite by the law though. I got an OWI after deciding it was safe to drive 1 hour 45 mins across the state after an all-day poker tournament. I got lost leaving Milwaukee on my way to Neenah and ended up being pulled over in the country headed towards Madison. I was a mess, but it was only a taste of things to come.

As I got a bit older, my drug use faded out like bad fashion. I used occasionally, you know, like something you put on for the right occasion, but certainly not something you'd wear all the time. My bottle was my blue jeans. I could drink every day (and I did). I wanted it all the time. I didn't care if I knew I was going to black out, I didn't care if I embarrassed myself. It didn't matter. My body just told me I needed it.

In 2011, I got bit again. This time just blocks from my own home. In Wisconsin, the state starts to take drinking and driving pretty seriously on your second offense. I was no exception. I was pretty scared this time. Second offence meant I was going to spend time in jail. I'd been to jail but never had to stay. This time it was serious. I was sentenced to 90 days in Huber, I only sat about 45 and was released on house arrest. I spent Christmas and New Years that year in jail. I nearly missed Thanksgiving too. To summarize concisely, It sucked.

It was a hard period of time. Despite the mandatory treatment, the thousands of dollars in fines/fees, the time in jail, and the hell I put my wife and family through, I didn't learn my lesson. In fact, I arranged for a party to be held immediately following my release from house arrest. I don't



Dear Addiction

What I would give to have never met you or crossed paths with. The amount of money, stress, anxiety, problems, relationships, trust, and future you robbed me of can never be taken back. You stole everything I had and stripped me down to nothing; a soulless human being. You took my best friend from me. You made me turn my back on God and never want to look back. You took away my conscience and self-respect to the point where I couldn't look at myself in the mirror. You took away my freedom and I was your slave. The list goes on and on but not anymore. Its time to put that list in the garbage and start fresh with a new one. But this time you won't be anywhere on it.

Since I've been incarcerated for the past three months I have had more than enough time to figure out my life without you. I've gotten back into recovery and continue to work the steps each and every day of my life. I have realized the wrongs you made me do and what I need to do to make amends to myself and the ones I hurt. I've found my higher power again and how He truly is in control. He's the architect with the blueprints and I'm his builder. With the help of Him, AA, NA, and a strong self will I can make sure I never become friends with you again 24 hours at a time. It amazes me how good life is without you. I now have back all the emotions you took from me. I know you aren't ever giving up though and will come at me with everything you got in many different forms. I need to do as James says in chapter 4 verse 7:

*"humble yourself before God, resist the devil and he will flee."
So long addiction, you will never control my life again. You had your chance to kill me multiple times, but I'm too strong to give up. Now it is my turn to run the show.*

Blake Martz



remember much from that party. I but I vividly remember paying the price for my disease the next day. The hang over, the embarrassment, and the shock of how much money I had pissed away on an experience I'm not even sure happened.

My drinking only got worse over the years. The extents to which I would go to get a drink were extreme. The lengths I would go to cover it up, were unimaginable. I was sick; physically and mentally. I was a broken person filled with broken promises to those I loved and should have cherished most. To the people who would have done anything to see me living life rather than wasting away. I was pissing away my life, my money, my future, and any hope I had of someday starting a family.

In 2015 I was in rapid decent, but it wasn't until 2016 that I crashed into rock bottom. Things started to get really bad when one day, my wife found me asleep in my car, with the vehicle in gear. I had my foot on the break but was totally unconscious. This wasn't the first time I fell asleep behind the wheel. Years back I blew a red light coming down an offramp after a heavy night of drinking.

After a lot of tears, I decided to go to detox. I spent 3 days at a Rogers facility and began the process of drying out. I started attending AA and I remember seeing guys like Bob, Phil, and Adam at the front of the tables during the meetings. I didn't understand what it was, but I wanted what they had.

However, this unfortunately only lasted a short while. I was about 45 days dry when a tough day at work led me to the bar. It was ok though... I was "that" functional alcoholic that could balance of booze and business now that I proved I could dry out. I was invincible, or so I thought.

One night about a month later, I was heading home from a work happy hour. For me, this was nothing more than a chance to guzzle as much drink in as short amount of time as possible. I vaguely remember having to shut one eye to keep from nodding off. I ended up making it the long drive from Champs Americana to Oconomowoc. I had done it many times before. I was rolling off the exit and I was home free. That was until I stopped at a red light and fell asleep behind the wheel before I could turn off and head home. A woman awoke me and I was drooling. I was disoriented but realized I was in trouble. I pulled the car over and took the keys out.

Next thing I knew, there were red and blue lights in my rear-view mirror. Despite a high blood alcohol, the memory of the flashing red and blue LEDs, nearly drowned out by the overwhelming display of the squad car spotlight, is vivid. I was about to be arrested on my 3rd OWI. I remember thinking to myself, thank God, it's over... On that night, Wednesday, February 17th. I sat in my car, knowing this was it, something had to change. I knew this night, that I was ready to give up and let help take over.

I woke up the next morning in a jail cell on the floor. I

was ready to plan and execute how I was going to get myself sober and straight. I was going to face my decisions like an adult, and accept the consequences. I knew there were serious repercussions coming from the night before, so I wanted to be prepared. I called Rogers that day and got on the waiting list for Herrington.

I ended up spending over 40 days in Herrington. I discovered things about myself that have allowed me to discover who I really am and what I care about. I have made amends with those I love and laid the foundation of my sobriety through new relationships I've built in my program.

From the start of my stay at Herrington, my temporary sponsor emphasized how important the first step is. He would stress that until you've mastered the first step, there is no way to begin work on the others. The more I went to AA, the more serious I became about this being my new lifestyle. I saw what others had and I wanted to know how I could have that. When I described my experiences with AA to my temporary sponsor, I remember he said, "people who do well in this program stick with the winners. Just stick with the winners. It's that easy."

The funny thing was, that was all it took for me. It was simple. I recall going to AA groups and looking to the front of the room at those leading the meetings. I saw people having a good time, talking like they'd known each other for years. That is exactly what my mentor was talking about. That is exactly what they were doing. There was accountability for each other in a group, and support for all who needed it.

All those people in front were sticking together, and collectively supporting themselves and each other in their commitment to life in recovery.

As I admitted and came to believe that I was powerless over alcohol, and that my life had become unmanageable something sparked inside of me. These people were all wishing the best for me as well. We were all struggling together with the same issues. We could talk to each other without fear of judgement. I came to believe their collective drive towards sobriety is more powerful than working alone. I came to believe that this power could help restore my life to sanity. This is how I continue to stay sober today.

Since I've gotten sober, I've grown significantly. I have rebuilt the relationship with my wife and family. I have a new job and brought my beautiful daughter into this world. I would be lying if I didn't say there were good days and bad days. Every 24 hours is different, but the one thing that I know I have control in keeping consistent, is that I won't pick up that drink today. I can only hope for the same tomorrow.



In Need of Facilitators for Closed Meetings at Rogers West Allis Adult Inpatient Unit

Greetings to some of my favorite people!

It has been about 7 weeks since I transitioned from Herrington Recovery Center to Rogers West Allis Adult Inpatient Unit as an Addictions Counselor.

Closed meetings began on the adult inpatient unit in West Allis on August 5, 2018. The goal was and is to have nightly 12 step meetings on the adult inpatient unit and the time to be from 7 PM to 8 PM. There has been much excitement to be able to offer our patients the hope that life can be different. Who better than our brothers and sisters who live the 12 steps and have experienced the promises to engage our patients and introduce them to the miracles of recovery and hope for long term sobriety. As we know, 12 step meeting attendance, working the steps, obtaining a sponsor, and full engagement in the fellowship is vital to long term sobriety and recovery. I refer to the fellowship as the medicine for the disease of addiction. I have discovered at Rogers West Allis, that patients have little knowledge and exposure to the fellowship, 12 step meetings, and what it means to work a program. I am grateful for the people who have come forward and have started to facilitate the meetings at West Allis. Recruiting people who are working a program and who will commit to facilitating a meeting has been an enormous undertaking. Talking with the patients about their meeting experience and desire for more information has been inspiring and rewarding. I am grateful for the continued learning experience. In order to keep it; it must be given back.

I am in the process of recruiting more speakers/ facilitators for our nightly meetings. I am looking for members in AA, NA, CA, HA, and ALANON fellowship who are working a program, to come and share your experience, strength, and hope to those still suffering. We are in need in West Allis. If you are interested in pairing up with another person in the fellowship, that is great as this will be of benefit in case one cannot make the meeting. The protocol involves arriving on time, bringing in no candy or items that may be looked at as contraband, coming to the reception desk and getting a visitor badge. You will be escorted by a staff member to the locked unit and a staff person will be outside the closed door in case there is need for some assistance. After the meeting, you will then be escorted back to the reception area. You are then free to thank HP for another hour. I thank you in advance for your willingness to share your experience, strength, and hope with those still suffering. I look forward to hearing from you. Let the scheduling begin! Peace and Blessings to All!

Contact information is:

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**"Alone we
can do so
little; together
we can do
so much"**