

## 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 or if you're interested in having Pizza with Residents every first Tuesday of March & September, contact Rob at: [clean@wi.rr.com](mailto:clean@wi.rr.com) for information on how to proceed.

**I Am Responsible.  
When Anyone, Anywhere  
Reaches Out For Help,  
I want The Hand Of AA  
Always To Be There.**

**And For That,  
I Am Responsible**



## Herrington McBride Board Members

*Serving our Recovering Alumni & Their Friends:*

### **Elected Board Members:**

Kristin Simons – President

Jeff Radtke – Vice President

Secretary – Laurie Schammel

Treasurer – Phil Grabski

James Dropik

Jennifer Evancy

Scott Elston

Jerrett Fernandez

Mary Lee Grady

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Jeff Radtke

Glen Taylor

Cindy Wadd

John Hopkins – Past President

Rob McCreddie – Past President

Bill Martens, M. D. – Past President & Archivist

Bob Olson – Past President

### **Advisors:**

William Aspley

Jim Doyle

John Movroydis

Matthias Scheuth – Director of the Rogers Foundation

David B. Bohl, MA - Director of Addiction Services

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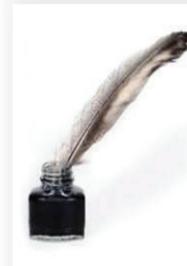
or by email to [Wemart@aol.com](mailto:Wemart@aol.com)



*The Herrington McBride Alumni Association  
Spring Edition, 2018*

# The Herrington Recovery

Alumni Association Quarterly



## From the Desk of our President

By: Kristin

Happy (almost) Spring to all our alumni!

Welcome to those members that are new graduates since our last publication, and a continued thanks to the alumni that reach out and serve in your recovery community. The mission of our alumni association is to support residents at the Herrington Recovery Center both while in treatment and as they transition into their hometown recovery community. The “support” extends to all of you in our extensive alumni network, our mission includes support and encouragement for each other.

We are developing a new opportunity for our alumni who are spread across the state and across the country. Please consider volunteering to be one of our “Alumni Partners” – see the info included inside this newsletter. The success of our association sponsored activities is a direct result of all of you who volunteer your time and commitment to the recovery community.

Our New Year's Eve Celebration with the Herrington residents was once again a great success! It was an opportunity to share great food and sober fun during

the holidays with the current residents. Next up is the quarterly Pizza Night on March 12. Contact Glenn Taylor (email on back page) or one of our board members if you are interested in attending.

Start planning now to attend our 33rd Annual Alumni & Friends Picnic on June 16, 2018. This is an all day event that draws 100's of your fellow alumni. It is a great opportunity to renew old friendships and make new connections within our recovery network. See specific info inside this newsletter.

As March arrives, I try to spend some time on Step 3, “Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.” Made a decision.... What exactly does that mean? If I make a decision to be more physically active, the decision itself doesn't go anywhere without the action follow through. Unless I put on my workout clothes, lace up my running shoes, and step out the door each day, my decision doesn't change anything. I need the action follow through. What decision am I making in step 3 today? What is the action follow through of that decision?

Stay connected with us, let us know how we can improve as an organization, get involved! I would love to hear from you.

Blessings in Recovery, Kristin

[Drkjsimons1@gmail.com](mailto:Drkjsimons1@gmail.com)

## 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](mailto: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

## ***Kate the Grateful Alcoholic***

I came to Rogers after a 3-year downhill spiral with alcohol. I was an exemplar alcoholic, with an unmanageable, chaotic, and unhealthy lifestyle. I was on a destructive path going 90 miles an hour, with blinders on and I wasn't stopping for anyone. That all came to a screeching halt the morning of March 18th, 2017 when my parents found me in my bedroom, facedown, fully dressed from the night before.

I'll never forget hearing my mom's voice shouting down to the kitchen to my dad, "Bill she's up here" following my father's footsteps pounding up the stairs. I immediately transported back to my childhood, when I was in trouble and dad was home; except this time, it wasn't a punishment, it was a gift from God (I just didn't know it yet). My parents had come with the intention to get me help, but without even knowing it, they had saved my life that morning.

Driving up to the Roger's Oconomowoc main entrance, my mind was racing, tears had flooded my eyes, and my face was flushed. I was still drunk from the night before and felt like I was going to get sick every other minute. My mom was a wreck and my dad was determined to get me in the doors and keep me there until I was back to being me again. When I was entering detox, it felt like a scene from a movie, I kept thinking "is this real life right now?". I asked my parents to leave before I met with the doctors so I could be humiliated alone.

After two days in detox, I heard of this place called Herrington from the other patients. It was right on campus and you had to request to go there. Over the last two days, although I was scared, ashamed, lost, and felt defeated I knew I needed to continue seeking help. I requested to meet with a doctor and on the third day I met Dr. Benson. Her presence alone was refreshing, reassuring, and kind. I knew I needed this treatment and I pled my case. When I received the call the following day that I was being moved from detox to Herrington, I was overjoyed and more than ready. I had surrendered and little did I know; my life would be forever changed from this moment on.

Pulling up to Herrington, I was overwhelmed with emotion. I felt like Sandra bullock in the movie 28 Days, minus the groups of people chanting outside the entrance. There was a very kind woman waiting to meet with me and show me my room. I quickly through all my belongings on my bed, laid my head on the pillow and burst into tears. I still remember the kind voice saying "Kate, take all the time you need, we are here if you need us." After about 30 minutes, I washed up and opened the door to what I would call home for the next month.

The level of care, intentional practices, meaningful group sessions, and individual programing that happens at Herrington is remarkable. Herrington's medical professionals, assistance, instructors, and teachers work as

a team to build a foundation for their patients. From sunrise yoga every morning, to the concept of 90 meetings in 90 days, and reflections every night I was right where I needed to be.

Although this is all provided for each person admitted into Herrington, you have to be willing and ready to accept what is offered and recommended. You need to be open minded to change, to be challenged, and to stay sober because your life depended on it. The most important thing is that your journey does not stop after your stay at Herrington. You have to continue to be committed, focused, and dedicated to you and your sobriety in the real world.

For me, that looked like attending some if not all the same meetings I attended while at Herrington, continuing my strong relationship and step work with sponsor, building a relationship with my higher power, reaching out to my peers in AA, and attending events and or functions offered by my sober community.

The first retreat I attended was the Herrington Winter Retreat this past January. I was so nervous to spend a weekend away with people that I did not know, but then being 9 months sober, I knew it would be a great opportunity to grow and strengthen my sobriety. The stories that were shared, friendships that were made, and reflective moments I had over that weekend were phenomenal. The bond I have with my AA fellowship is something I hold near and dear to my heart and each opportunity I have, like this retreat, it continues to get stronger.

I will forever be indebted to Herrington; not just for the opportunity at life again, but because I was gifted a scholarship for both my stay at the rehabilitation facility and my retreat. I want to take a moment to thank the selfless individuals who have given back to the foundation to provide these amazing opportunities for people like me. Today I am a proud healthy mother, daughter, friend, and sister. I am forever a survivor but also forever Herrington alumni. I am Kate the Grateful alcoholic.

## **The Other Side**

My name is Blake and I'm and addict and alcoholic. My story starts when I was around 14 years old. I was just like every kid who started experimenting with drugs and alcohol around this age. I had a good childhood and my parents tried to raise me right. I was always causing problems at home and school. The fist time I drank was in 7th Grade. I remember that night and how I was afraid to take a shot because I was saying how I didn't want to become an "alcoholic".

I think I had jinxed myself for the rest of my life for saying that. At first it was just a weekend thing with my buddies. We would break into our parent's liquor cabinets and take whatever we could, then replace it with water. This continued until my freshman year in high school when I tried smoking weed for the first time. I found out my dad had been diagnosed with cancer. This had a huge impact on my use. By this time, I was smoking weed every day all day and



## **33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Herrington McBride Alumni Association**

### **Summer Picnic**

**June 16, 2018**

- 9:30 Continental Breakfast
- 10:30 Welcome from Glen T, Board Member  
Opening thoughts and prayer from John A
- 10:45 Keynote address (TBA)
- 11:30 Annual Alumni Meeting chaired by HMAA President Kristin S
- 12:00 Gourmet Picnic Lunch (Provided by Rogers Memorial Hospital)
- 1:00 NA Speaker - Ian M  
Games and activities on the grounds with rec therapist till 2:30
- 1:45 Al-Anon Speaker - Marianne L
- 2:30 Recovery Olympics for present Herrington residents and any interested others till 4:30  
See Olympics Activity Coordinators Jenny V and Jimmy D  
Other activities available at this time:  
Trivial Pursuit (Team Johnny the German vs. Team Johnny the Greek)  
Corn Hole Giant Jenga Bocce ball Ping Pong
- 4:30 Bring your own grilling items (grill will be provided and grilling will be done for you)
- 6:00 Recovery Olympic participants return for results and awarding of prizes  
(Prizes provided by T-Lon Products Inc.)
- 6:30\* Fireside Open Gratitude Meeting hosted by Rob M  
\*approximate time

**We welcome not only recovering alums but family and friends of Herrington/McBride**

ALL EVENTS WILL BE HELD INSIDE THE MPC IF THE WEATHER IS INCLEMENT

**"The Best is Yet to Come"**

drinking every weekend. It stayed like this for a while until I starting experimenting with other drugs. Whether it was K2 (synthetic marijuana), hallucinogens, or even computer duster I was doing whatever I could get my hands on. My dad had surgery that removed the cancer but it resurfaced a year later which was the beginning of my junior year in high school. My drug and alcohol use had escalated quickly, especially when I found out what Xanax and opiates felt like. I was expelled halfway through the school year (because of drugs of course). Not only was I getting in trouble at school, but also had run-ins with the law. Since I wasn't in school, my days consisted of things I knew best. I would drink and use to help get myself to sleep every night for who knows how long. Luckily, I was able to complete the steps required to enroll back the following year, including completing and IOP class at Rosecrance in Pewaukee, WI. Everything they told me went in one ear and out the other.

After I returned to school for my senior year, but never took anything seriously. I was getting wasted or high everyday before or after school. Halfway through my senior year my "friend" had introduced me to heroin. Once I tried it my life quickly became a downward spiral. While my friends were getting accepted into colleges I was lying, stealing, and pawning my family's possessions to support my addiction. I floated around from job to job just barely scraping by so I could get my next fix. At this point I was using just about everything under the sun. One day I decided to go to Summerfest during the summer of my senior year. I ended up unconscious in the hospital with a .47 BAC and alcohol poisoning. I remember waking up with countless tubes going into me and my parents crying on either side of my bed. I thought this would be my rock bottom and wakeup call but I was far from it. I knew I had a problem with drugs and booze, but I didn't want to admit it. I also knew that this all would end in 2 ways; I'd either die or get better.

Thus, my use continued every day but by this time I had stopped snorting heroine and started shooting it intravenously. In July of 2016 I received my first OWI which I was driving blackout drunk to work at 8am. Sure enough of month later, I score my second one along with five other underage drinking tickets. I was a wreck. I had lost friends, jobs, trust, and burned too many bridges to remember all while my dad was still fighting cancer. On November 21st 2016 my life changed. I was in a car accident and broke my neck, pelvis, two ribs, and received a concussion. My best friend that was driving the vehicle died on impact right next to me. I was depressed, crippled and remain in shock to this day that this all happened to her and myself. Once again I thought this could be my wakeup call but I was wrong again. I had spent about a week in the ICU and had told myself I'd stay sober for her. I started abusing my pain pills which didn't help at all nor could anything truly numb the amount of pain I was feeling. I was a shell of a human, a soulless being. I had stripped myself of self-respect and lost my ability to feel love, hope, or joy. Finally, on January 1st of 2017 I knew



I had to get sober. I admitted myself to rosecrance inpatient in Rockford, IL. I was there for five days before my insurance cut out. I went home with the intention of staying straight but who was I kidding, I couldn't even make it a week let alone a day staying clean on my own. I went straight back to my old habits.

Around this time, I had received a call from some investigators asking me to give a statement regarding the car accident. Long story short, they were attempting to charge me and send me to prison for my best friend's death. I was at a loss for words as to what to do. My life was a joke, and the only coping skill I had mastered was substance abuse. I even found myself drinking hand sanitizer one night because I had nothing else. I was denigrating; there was no getting around it. My life narrowed to the pursuit and use of drugs and alcohol. Everything else was secondary. At this point I was back in another IOP at Rogers for the sake of only pleasing the court. After failing several drug tests and showing up under the influence I was given two options; get kicked out or move to a higher level of care. A day later after leaving IOP I broke down to my mom and told her I was a hopeless drug addict and needed help. I took the next step of recovery and admitted myself to Rogers detox in Oconomowoc, WI on May 10th.

After a week in detox I transferred to the Herrington Recovery Center. My life changed drastically while there from complete hopelessness to overwhelmingly hopeful when I found my higher power and asked for His help. I recognized my failing and most importantly my inability to heal myself. I stayed there for a month and learned the tools I'd been lacking my whole life. I was discharged June 13th and continued what I was coached up on at HRC. This lasted for about a month until I slowly stopped attending meetings and working the steps. I slipped back into my old ways for another few months and was arrested once again November 30th 2017 for my third OWI. So here I am, two and a half months later, with this story from an 8x12 cell in an orange jumpsuit. Yet, in this cell, I've made a decision; the decision to surrender. My problems are too big for myself and I've concluded I can no longer kid myself into believing I can get around to straightening up after just one more high. I can no

longer fight this fight alone. I'm not trying to cut a deal with God because he doesn't work along those lines. I'm admitting my weakness and telling him I'm ready to live for Him and what is right.

As terrible as my situation is I'm somewhat glad to be here. Not only am I sober, but I have all the time in the world to think about my actions and what I need to do to change. I have two choices when I get released; I can go back to using and go to prison indefinitely or maintain being clean and sober. I realize I can only achieve this by attending meetings and keeping in contact with my sponsor who has helped me through so much of this. I need to stay sober for the courts, my family, and above all myself. I have my higher power and a guardian angel watching over me along with members of AA and NA rooting me on. Its painful to recall these memories and I'm not proud of them. Yet, I have the utmost confidence that someone may be able to read this and learn from my mistakes. I'm also confident that there's a higher purpose, that everything happened so I can be here now, sharing my story. That is most story thus far but it is far from over. I've got another 50-60 years on this earth and I intended to be sober and enjoy every minute of it; one day at a time.



### **A Very Special Thank You To The Roger's Hospital Foundation!**

Our Alumni Association wishes to thank the Hospital Foundation for a very generous gift to help support this year's partial and full scholarships to individuals in need of funds to allow them the opportunity to attend the 31st Annual Alumni Retreat. The Annual Alumni Winter Retreat is always located at the Redemptorist Retreat Center, and meets Friday-Sunday on the first weekend following New Year's Day. The event this year was a deeply spiritual event for all attending, and many attendees would not have been able to attend except for the generosity of the Hospital Foundation.

*James Dropik – Retreat Chairman*



## **Johnny and The Germans Slaughter Johnny and The Greeks At The Winter Retreat**

The battle again was brewing, and another clash was imminent! The Germans had struggled over the Greeks for near fifteen years, as the Greeks again threatened that their intelligence would always far exceed German brawn. Little did they realize that innate German survival skills and hidden pockets of brilliant intelligence...that would later afford humanity with the likes of Beethoven, Verner von Braun, and Albert Einstein...to name but just a few.....would sublimate and far exceed the gastronomic works of the Gyro and Spanakopita (Always, spinach, beef, lamb and Feta Cheese – Oh, and don't forget the brilliance of throwing in a cucumber now and again???)

Nearing the battle's conclusion, and forging ahead over the bodies of toga-clad losers, the end came swiftly, and winning Trivial Pursuit was plunder enough as The Germans ventured back across the Danube.

Let the German Challenge go forward. We again will meet the Greeks across the Danube during the Alumni Reunion in June....and once again, the Germans will remain victorious.

So, allow the feasting to begin. Schweinebraten, Sauerkraut, and a Dumpling or two.....Long live The Germans.

- Johnny the German