

The Moving Finger

McBRIDE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION & FOUNDATION

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WINTER RETREAT SCHEDULED; PROMISES SPOTLIGHTED

For those who missed the first one, popular demand has prompted the scheduling of another ALUMNI RETREAT.

Set for December 11-13, at Cedar Valley Retreat Campus near West Bend, it will afford an opportunity to stock up on inspiration, inner strength and, of course, the warmth of fellowship as the cold winter doldrums approach.

Organized by your Alumni Association, the weekend gathering will have "The Gifts of Recovery" as a holiday season theme, with a focus on the Twelve Promises. And it promises to be a good one!

As with the Spring Retreat that was so well received last Memorial Day weekend, the format will include speakers to spark thought and discussion, but the emphasis will be on the individual; one's personal objectives or intentions will determine how time is spent. The schedule is flexible.

Opening with a Friday evening dinner and get-together, the retreat will feature small rap sessions as the mainstay, running through noon Sunday. At \$75.00 for the whole weekend package -- food, lodging, snacks, etc. -- it's a bargain that can't be beat.

All alums should have received the informational flyer. The deadline for registration (November 20) will have passed by the time this is received, but it would be worth a call to Bob Schober at (414) 873-1864 to see if there is still a spot open.

RENEWAL REKINDLES SPIRIT

Once again, McBride came home August 16, and the result was a rejuvenation of spirit and a rekindling of the fellowship that makes our "alma mater" relationship special.

The Second Annual Renewal Sunday in the Hospital Auditorium was a resounding success, with an air of reunion that served to remind everyone of his and her common bonds of friendship and recovery. Familiar faces stood out while many new ones demonstrated the growth and dynamic nature of our Alumni Association.

Perhaps most significant were the changes so evident in those we first met under somewhat trying circumstances. It was vivid testimony to the fact that sobriety is a constantly growing, maturing quality that is no more than sampled during treatment and aftercare. It is something that arrives slowly, often undetected until seen by, or in, others. And it grows stronger with age!

We had an opportunity to see it that Sunday. And we could hear it described in a variety of ways as Glenn C., Peggy H. and Peggy W.

shared their own thoughts and experiences in eloquent fashion. We had another taste of the inspiration that Dr. Herrington so well imparts when he speaks on a subject he knows so well.

And there was, of course, the expression of Alumni gratitude and caring; a visible payback in the form of help and assistance to those who follow our path. This year's donation to the unit -- an electronic typewriter with enough bells and whistles to meet the most demanding of challenges presented by Recovery House patients -- was presented by Association President Ken Z. and accepted by Dr. Herrington on behalf of the present and future patients and residents.

Since last year's gift of a video cassette recorder was designated for the inpatient unit, it was pointed out that something useful for those at the House would be appropriate for 1987. A typewriter is so often desired for tasks such as resume-preparation and a variety of letter-writing tasks, so this year's gratitude gift was considered a fitting and welcome addition to treatment facility amenities.

Rounding out the morning's activities, and reported elsewhere, was the Association's Annual Meeting and Board election.

PICNIC FORCED INSIDE

Rains came, but so did the alums! With spirits only slightly dampened, the Third Annual McBride Alumni Picnic was the first to be forced indoors, and luckily a spacious alternative site had been arranged!

After surrendering Kletzsch Park to the summer deluge, the nearly 100 grateful recovering "grads" found their way (some easier than others) to Divine Savior/Holy Angels School, where Mary Lee G. had set the stage for just such a turn of events.

The large charcoal grill was set up outside the sunroom doors and the delightful aroma of smoking brats and hot dogs filled the air. With plenty of seating, and voracious appetites, the only thing missing were the ants. By the time the afternoon was over, even the sun had made an appearance.

SPOUSES CATCH THE SPIRIT

With a sense of recovery of their own, spouses of McBride alumni are in the process of forming an auxiliary. Though it will be separate in every respect from our association, there is a similarity in purpose in the new group being organized -- unity and a desire to share all that goes with it. For membership information, contact Ann Curtis at (414) 782-1478.

McBRIDE EXPANDS; NEW UNIT ADDED

It's no secret, at least among those of us who have BEEN there, that McBride is unsurpassed in all aspects of treatment and, that being the case, success breeds success. More space was needed.

To solve that pleasant problem, Milwaukee Psychiatric Hospital has provided additional beds and "McBride II" has been launched. With patients assigned to the new unit housed in the Dewey Center building, the combined total capacity is now 25 inpatients.

"It's testimony to the quality of our program," said Dr. Roland Herrington, director of addiction services at MPH. "So long as a need exists out there, we'll do everything we can to meet it."

NEW DIRECTORS ELECTED; ANNUAL REPORT PRESENTED

In keeping with Association bylaws, five new members were elected to the Board of Directors at the annual meeting August 16. Named to serve two-year terms were: Cindy Love, John Hanson, Joe Piscione, Bill Anderson, and Janet Cobbett.

They replace Michael Kushnaryov, Dennis Deffenbaugh, Marleen Strachota, Natalie Zimmerman and Chris Zillig, who were given a warm round of applause in appreciation for their service during the busy start-up years of the Association and Foundation.

In recapping the year's activities, Natalie Z. described the variety of social events and voluntary assistance efforts that have been the focus of our organization. Treasurer Mary Lee G. presented the financial statement, one that reflected growth but, at the same time, room for considerable improvement in terms of financial support.

At its first meeting following the annual elections, the Board named Ken Z. to another term as president and Mary Lee Grady to again serve as treasurer. John Curtis was elected vice president and Janet Cobbett, secretary. Tom Winslow serves as staff liaison.

Officers are elected each year by the Board itself, while the nine directors serve two-year terms on a staggered basis. Four will be elected at next year's annual meeting.

OFFICIAL STATUS NEAR

After several organizational years, the McBride Alumni Association and Foundation will have official recognition by both the state and federal government before year's end.

This status has remained incomplete while a number of technical procedures were being ironed out but, thanks to the leadership of Peggy H., a committee of volunteers with legal savvy addressed the project in earnest. Paperwork is nearly complete and your association will soon be an official non-profit corporation registered with the Wisconsin Secretary of State and the federal Internal Revenue Service.

SURVEY SCHEDULED

With membership now approaching 400, the Association is again looking for input as to how we can best accomplish our goal of service to McBride patients, helping them on the road to recovery.

Set for soon after the first of the year, a survey of attitudes, wishes, complaints, suggestions and whatever else comes to mind will be conducted by your Board of Directors. This is your opportunity to sound off or simply express a thought or two, and it is hoped that some constructive direction will be obtained.

Watch for this questionnaire and, in the meantime, if you have some ideas as to what should be included, please pass them along to a Board member.

HOLIDAYS PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY FOR EXPRESSING GRATITUDE

Thanksgiving is past and the holiday season is upon us. It's a time for reflection as well as optimism; for generally feeling good about a variety of things that have taken place that bode well for things that lie ahead.

We can look further back, however, at things that could well have destroyed today. For many of us, that destruction was little more than

a drink, or a pill or a line of coke, away. For some, the threat was less dramatic than for others, but it was there.

Hopefully, that disaster has been averted. The fork in the road was met with decision and resolution; with fear, perhaps, but with hope that could be nurtured and strengthened. We found guidance and tools for recovery, encouragement and a helping hand.

Most of all, we found we were not alone. We discovered fellowship as way of survival and a system for living. We found that only through sharing, through spiritually holding hands with each other in a common circle of understanding, could we hang onto hope that had been beyond our grasp. We found each other.

Some shrug and look elsewhere, now that sobriety has been found and accepted. Some quickly forget where we were, where we made a decision and found help; how far we have come since finding our way.

Others have not forgotten. They continue to share as a part of their recovery, and they share in the rewards that gratitude has to offer.

It is the holiday season, 1987. Be grateful. Help make 1988 a year of promise for those who follow the path to McBride. Give them encouragement, give them strength through your support. Help them by letting them know how much that experience has meant to you.

Your holiday contribution to the Foundation is an expression linking former patients with those just finding their way. It may provide an amenity to ease the strain of difficult days; maybe a token of financial support for those in need. It may only be encouragement or a warm hug with a smile of confidence, empathy and compassion. The Foundation is a channel from you to them, from the recovering to the fearful yet hopeful. Take part. Extend yourself just a little, so that others may know there is something ahead for them, as well. Whatever your means, meet their needs. Send a check today to The McBride Foundation, 17935 Country Lane, Brookfield, WI 53005.

HOLIDAY VISITS ENCOURAGED

Holidays can be lonely, especially when they fall during the often anxious days of treatment. Again this year, the coffee pot will be on and refreshments will be on hand to welcome alums who have time to drop in for a visit Christmas or New Year's Day at either the inpatient unit or the Recovery House. (An advance call to check the schedule might be wise.) Spend a few minutes and give the gift of friendship and encouragement to those who may feel they have little to celebrate. Remember...You were there once, yourself.

ADDRESS OKAY?

Keep us current. Please check your mailing label and make sure it is correct in every respect. And don't forget the Alumni Association when moving or changing phone numbers. The listing is confidential and is used only for Alumni news and announcements.

-- KZ

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"The moving finger writes; and having writ...MOVES ON."

-- Omar Khayyam

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\$\$\$ ANOTHER BIG ALUMNI CASINO NIGHT IS COMING FEBRUARY 20. \$\$\$
\$\$\$ MARK THE DATE; WATCH FOR THE ANNOUNCEMENT!!! \$\$\$