

meaningful as well. But help is needed. We need comments and suggestions, volunteers and, importantly, financial support. Our membership is nearing 250, for example, and simply maintaining a mailing list and alumni roster becomes cumbersome. And even with help from the hospital, the cost of printing and postage for The Moving Finger is becoming quite hefty.

GRATITUDE CAN BE EXPRESSED...in many ways, but the checkbook has always been right up front in terms of effectiveness. Just as November is traditionally Gratitude Month for AA central offices, how about making December serve that purpose for the McBride Alumni Foundation. It's a convenient, not-too-painless gesture and it comes at an appropriate time...holiday spirits put added warmth and good feelings into the act of giving. The concept of assessing dues to cover association expenses has been raised on several occasions but your Board has repeatedly decided against it, preferring instead to simply remind members that financial support is necessary to keep the group going. Consider this another of those gentle reminders. Your donation will also help make sure that the 1987 "Gratitude Gift" to the unit is a memorable one.

KEEPING CURRENT...is an ongoing chore. Your friendly editor/keeper-of-the-archives thinks we're in pretty good shape with our computer listing but, while you're mailing in your contribution check, why not enclose the "coupon" printed below. We're always open for suggestions but this gives an added impetus to give some constructive thought to the structure of the association. You will also note the optional space for occupation and work phone number. This information can be helpful when looking for someone to call upon for serving as a temporary sponsor, or even to simply drop in for a visit, with an inpatient who may be seeking someone with a common interest. Send the coupon and/or your check (made out to McBride Alumni Foundation) to:

McBride Alumni Foundation, C/O Ken Zimmerman, 17935 Country Lane, Brookfield, WI 53005.
Phone numbers for McBride Alumni board members may be obtained by calling Dr. Benzer's office at 258-2600.

--KZ.

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

-- Omar Khayyam

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Name.....
Address.....Phone (.....)
City.....State.....ZIP.....
Optional:

Occupation:.....Work Phone.....

Comments/Suggestions:.....
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(Use extra sheets if you're especially profound.)

The Moving Finger

McBRIDE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION & FOUNDATION

Vol. II, No. 3

Milwaukee, Wisconsin

WINTER, 1986

NOTHIN' COULDA BEEN FINER...From the morning's first coffee 'til the evening's last chigger, ALUMNI DAY at McBRIDE was a real winner! With nearly 75 "grads" and staff on hand, the Renewal Program August 17 proved a fitting opener for a day of fellowship, gratitude and plain old good times. The combination of lumps for the throat and laughter for the lips was full of memories, meaning and merriment. Bolstered by family members and "significant others," the count for the delightful picnic at Kletsch Park, complete with fun in the sun, was about 130. A big round of applause for the committee, the staff participation, the folks who provided assistance at the hospital and, of course, volunteers from the alumni. And a special tip of the hat to the weatherman who, after teasing the Zimmermans (whose offer of an alternative site in case of rain was a true demonstration of faith in a higher power) with a few clouds in the morning, came through with a beautiful, balmy afternoon.

THERE WAS REASON TO REFLECT...throughout the morning program. As Dr. Herrington pointed out during his keynote remarks, treatment and recovery are both ongoing processes with a definite need for renewal. Like a battery, sobriety must be recharged to maintain its energy. He said that the close ties maintained through alumni activities are clearly an advantage for McBride people and that it is unmatched in strength and sincerity at other treatment centers. Looking over the auditorium, "as I see all of this sobriety and love, I am overwhelmed," he said, "literally overwhelmed."

SPEAKING FOR THE "GRADS"...were three alumni members who shared their thoughts regarding recovery. Sandy D., Sheila S. and Hale A. each offered a bit of insight that typified much of what was represented by those in attendance. Their moving statements added yet another dimension to the significance of the occasion. And Hale's appearance in costume as "King Baby" brought down the house -- and carried a real message at the same time. For many, the highlight of the morning was the awarding of McBride medallions to all those who have completed either inpatient or recovery house treatment. (Any eligible alum who has not received his or her medallion should contact Dr. Benzer.)

AND, OF COURSE, THE PICNIC...was a rousing success as great weather and great friends combined for a great occasion. The charcoal was kept busy throughout the afternoon and, thanks to a couple of refueling runs, the ice and soda came pretty close to holding up. And yes, all you weight-watchers, next year there will be a greater representation of "lite" in the soda selection. There were games for young and old alike but, most of all, there were plenty of benches and chairs where

memories of significant experiences could be relived with those who helped make them. It was a good day.

THE FIRST ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING...was also part of Renewal Sunday and some important housekeeping was completed. First, the old Steering Committee is now officially the Board of Directors and it has been expanded to nine members. By unanimous vote of those attending, the six original members -- Ken Z., Michael K., Chris Z., Natalie Z., Marleen S. and Dennis D. -- plus John C., Mary Lee G. and Len W. were named to your first McBride Alumni Association and Foundation Board of Directors. Chris (filling in for Chairman Ken, whose recent surgery prevented him from taking a very vocal role) gave a brief report on the year's alum activities plus a treasurer's report showing receipts of \$1,358.50 and expenses of \$1,173.42. That left a balance of \$185.08 in the alumni treasury (more about that later). More "official business" appears in another section of this newsletter.

A REAL BRIGHT SPOT...in the busy morning was the first in what we are looking forward to as an annual event. On behalf of the alumni, Natalie presented the McBride Unit with a video cassette recorder for use by staff and patients for both educational and recreational purposes. This was purchased entirely with funds contributed to the McBride Alumni Foundation by graduates. Next, we hope to buy some appropriate tapes for use in audio/visual therapy. Through gifts such as this, we hope to provide inpatients with visible reminders of our gratitude for the recovery that began there on Dewey Avenue.

GUESS WHO GOT MARRIED!...Michael Johnson, that insightful and even compassionate PA shoulder many of us leaned upon between 3 and 11 p.m., was joined in holy matrimony with Cindy Glover on Saturday, October 18, at St. Augustine's Church. There were quite a few alums and staff members on hand to wish the newlyweds well at the reception and the dance that followed. Mike has recently changed hats at Milwaukee Psych, as well. He is now primarily assisting the staff at Dewey Center, though he still serves, along with Deacon Claude, as a Fifth Step advisor for McBride patients.

OTHER CHANGES AT DEWEY...include some new modalities in addiction treatment, new programs and plans to open a recovery house for patients there. Dr. Hauser remains as medical director. And the "grads" at Dewey have formed an alumni group much like ours; perhaps we can challenge them to a football game one of these days (The Sobriety Bowl?).

HOLIDAY VISITS...are always refreshing and a good time to lift spirits. How about doing so at the old stomping grounds? On both Christmas and New Year's, at both the Unit and at the Recovery House, the welcome mat will be out and the coffee will be hot throughout the day for all alums and friends. There will be plenty of sweets and munchies, as well, so help spread the cheer. This is another first, so far as alum activities are concerned, and it's hoped that it will become an annual tradition. Especially for out-of-town patients, the holidays can easily become "low-days," and the more we alums can do to brighten things up, the better for all. Why not include both spots on your holiday greeting card list, too?

A GREAT OPEN MEETING...marked the second anniversary of the Tuesday night Milwaukee Professionals in AA group. Dr. Garrett O'C., a professor of psychiatry at UCLA, spoke to an overflow crowd of nearly 400 on November 18. The meeting was moved to the Medical College of Wisconsin Alumni Center to accommodate the crowd, and it appeared that everyone found just the right combination of entertaining anecdotes and thought-provoking reflection.

CASINO II IS COMING...so mark your calendars. It's another "second annual event" for the alumni, and again we're looking to improve on last year. Those of you who attended the "Casino Night" of good fun, good food, good fellowship and (for some) good luck, last February know what we're talking about. It looks like either February 21 or March 14 for the 1987 version, and you can bet it will be a rousing good time. There will probably be a call for volunteer help in making this another winning event; contact a Board of Directors member if you want to chip in. We'll keep you posted as planning progresses, and an announcement will be mailed in plenty of time to get you to the tables on time.

RAP SESSIONS...with the inpatients are going over so well, another opportunity is being added. Since Tuesday evenings are already devoted to support group sessions and/or the AA meeting for so many alums, and Saturdays are understandably less than popular for others, the 6 p.m. Thursday sessions are being opened, beginning the first of the year, for alumni participation. This activity has proven to be helpful and rewarding for all concerned; everyone is a winner. To sign up, or for further information, contact either John C. or Mary Lee G., Alumni Board members who are coordinating the project. They're usually at the Tuesday night AA meetings.

RENEWAL RETREATS...have been discussed and requested by several alums and the idea is gaining support. The Board, at its November meeting, decided to investigate facility availability and also to check with other treatment centers regarding format and programs. Most talk has centered on a two or three-day weekend event, probably late next Spring. Anyone with thoughts in this regard should contact John C.

NEWS MEDIA ATTENTION...continues to focus on McBride as the primary source in Milwaukee for reliable information and opinions in the field of alcohol and chemical addiction and its treatment. The frequency with which we see McBride physicians sought out for authoritative comment on television and in the newspapers is a real tribute to the community respect accorded our "alma mater."

OFFICIAL ALUMNI BUSINESS...gains weight the bigger we get. As most of you know, the donation of a VCR to the Unit was the first of what is intended to be annual expressions of alumni gratitude, hopefully growing in significance as the association/foundation grows in size. Likewise, the scope of our volunteer activity is expected to increase as more participants join our ranks. At the same time, we want to maintain a dynamic social relationship through events like the picnics and casino nights. This sort of thing does not happen by itself; it requires a lot of planning and coordination and it must be fueled by broad interest and support. The Board of Directors meets monthly to discuss ways to keep the organization not only intact but alive and