

'Tis The Season To Remember

Holidays are known for giving. For gratitude and for appreciation of things and thoughts received. It's a time for warmth and good feelings.

It's also a time for countless "annual appeals" for your financial assistance, so that charitable endeavors and other good works may be carried out throughout the year. You've probably been tapped a few times already.

The McBride Alumni Foundation, which not only underwrites the many Association activities but also provides a variety of programs and voluntary services for patients and those in the early days of recovery, has never been that aggressive in seeking contributions. There have been no telephone blitzes or heavy-handed fund-raising campaigns. Reminders are generally subtle or subdued, like the return envelopes enclosed with your quarterly *Moving Finger*, plus occasional requests — like this one — in the newsletter itself.

This quiet posture has been questioned at times, especially in light of our equally low-keyed policy of assessing no regular fees, relying instead on

"donations in lieu of dues." The questions arise when wishes to fill needs cannot be met with available resources; the association has often lamented its inability to do more.

Some of those goals have been set aside as overly ambitious or grandiose. But others, unfortunately, die from acute indifference. For most, it's not a case of being unable to afford the contributions suggested as an "in lieu of dues" gesture; it's simply, "I just forgot about it."

Many of us, while in the early days of recovery, were direct recipients of Alumni help in one form or another; material, emotional or spiritual. Many of us have enjoyed the satisfaction that comes from being a part of the collective hand of support that has been extended so often.

We're talking about meaningful help for fellow victims of addiction, efforts that deserve our moral and financial support.

Now, with the holiday spirit of thankfulness upon us, it's a good time to put things in perspective. And if gratitude comes to mind, it's also a good time to put something in the envelope — the one addressed to the McBride Foundation.

A Great Way To Celebrate

"What a great idea! What a great message! I'm just surprised no one has picked up on it before."

That was Board President David Franczyk's reaction when he saw the brief note that recently accompanied a check for the McBride Alumni Foundation. In beautiful brevity, the donor put it this way: "In celebration of my second sobriety birthday. Hope this helps someone else find that life is much better being clean and sober."

What a great way to feel good about yourself!

The Seventh Annual
McBride Alumni Winter Retreat
January 7-9, 1994
Perpetual Help Retreat Center
Oconomowoc, Wisconsin

McBride Retreats Defy Description ... But You Never Stop Talking About Them

Registration: \$85.00 Per Person

Name: _____
Address: _____
City/State/ZIP: _____
Phone: _____

Registration..... \$ _____
Donation To Foundation..... \$ _____
Amount Of Check..... \$ _____

Make Check Payable To:
The McBride Foundation
Mail To:
Marian Catania
1129 N. Jackson #1409-C
Milwaukee, WI 53202
(414) 291-0442

Deadline:
December 29, 1993

THE MOVING FINGER



The McBride Alumni Association and Foundation

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Program To Feature Bob's Arresting Story

"Prison Doctor" might sound like the name of a new TV series, but for Dr. Bob Easton, it's the story of life in recovery, of one of those dramatic turnarounds that McBride Alums like to talk about.

Bob's story is especially dramatic, and he'll be talking about it at the Ninth Annual McBride Alumni Awareness Night program **Tuesday November 16** at the Medical College of Wisconsin. It's free and open to the public.

Though most of us can look back at chaotic times of one kind or another, few can match the roller-coaster saga
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'New Beginning' Offered At Annual Winter Retreat

With cold, gusty winds already chilling our bones, thoughts are naturally turning to the annual warmth found only at McBride Alumni Winter Retreats.

It's that time again.

It's the great escape from post-holiday slumps, cabin fever, depressing doldrums and other natural phenomena that challenge the credibility of those who extoll "Wonderful Wisconsin Winters."

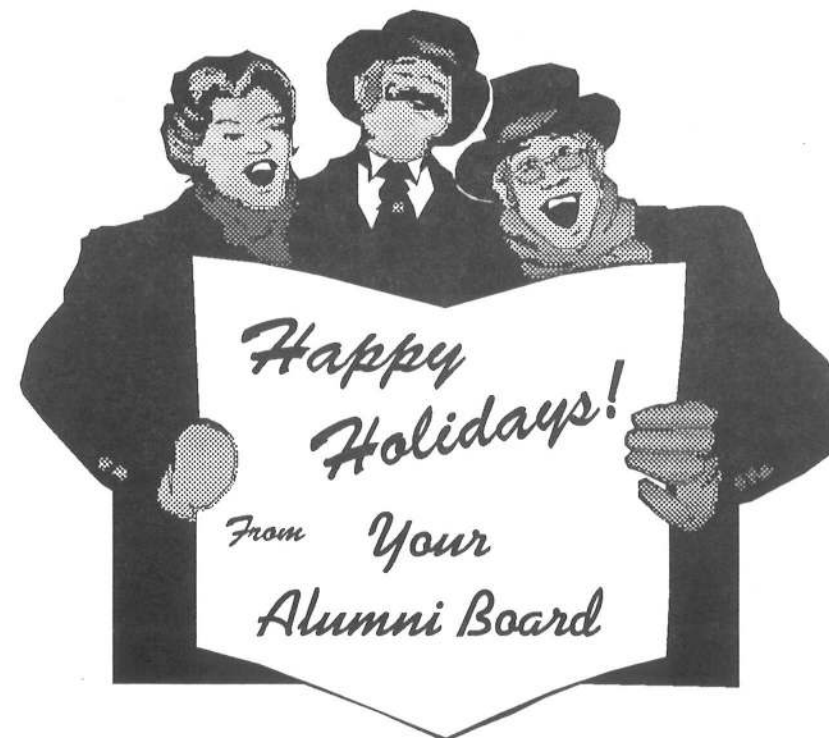
It's reflection, restoration and reminiscing jammed into one inspirational weekend in an idyllic wooded setting that must be experienced to appreciate. And it's fun!

It's the Seventh Annual McBride Alumni Winter Retreat, set for **January 7-9** at Perpetual Help Retreat Center.

"We've already got several reservations," said Marian Catania, chairperson for this first event on the 1994 Alumni calendar. "There's been a lot of talk about it. I think the inquiries start coming in earlier every year."

With a theme of "Each Day A New Beginning," the weekend program will be kicked off with a keynote speaker whose face and reassuring voice are familiar to literally hundreds of Alums — Michael Johnson, whose position and job description at Milwaukee Psych could never adequately describe the compassion and counsel he has provided since the center opened.

Nothing has been changed in the format that has been so successful for past McBride retreats but, unfortunately, for the first time since 1988, an increase in the registration fee is necessary — an added five dollars. The rate this year is \$85.00 per person; still a bargain for two nights' lodging (private rooms with showers), two evening meals, two breakfasts and lunch on Saturday, plus the traditional memento of the occasion. And, of
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Registration Form
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Deadline: December 29

Awareness Night

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that Bob Easton will be drawing upon — from graduating *cum laude* from Harvard University in 1968 and medical school at Tulane, to private practice as a family physician, to membership in a thriving clinic and then — in a collision with reality — conviction for possession of 100 pounds of marijuana and three months in the DeKalb County (Illinois) jail. He was a self-described “basket case” when, in late 1986, he arrived for what turned out to be a six-month stay at McBride.

“That arrest helped to save my life when I was dying from addictions to marijuana and alcohol,” Bob recalls. He finds it appropriate and rewarding, if not ironic, that he now serves as medical director of the Illinois River Correctional Center, where he oversees the healthcare needs of more than 1,200 inmates, and another 200 at the Hanna City Work Camp.

Along with gunshot wounds and other violence-related trauma cases, there are also rampant problems with dependency.

“I try to teach one thing,” he says. “That all of us are powerful enough within ourselves to accomplish whatever we want without hurting anyone else.

“What I try to do here, like the saying goes, is light candles where I can, and never waste time cursing the darkness” he said.

Bob’s brighter side was reflected in a recent newspaper feature story describing his fascinating career. “He sings off-key until the nurses beg him to stop. And he smiles a lot, the corners of his mouth stretching into a

genuine I’m-having-fun kind of grin,” the reporter wrote.

It’s that wry sense of humor and infectious smile that is remembered by so many fellow McBride alums. And there are many of them. “That’s the only reason I was there so long,” Bob laughed. “I kept meeting so many great people, I didn’t want to leave.”

Bob’s talk is set for 7:30 p.m. in the Auditorium of the Medical College, 87th Street and Watertown Plank Road (not far from McBride). Access to the adjacent parking structure will be free for those attending, and refreshments will be served following the program.

Awareness Night, a community outreach event marking the founding of the McBride Center in 1984, is co-sponsored by the McBride Alumni Association, Milwaukee Psychiatric Hospital and the Medical College.

(For several years, Awareness Nights were held as open meetings of the Tuesday night AA group that meets at McBride. The involvement of co-sponsors presented a conflict with AA traditions, however, and the present format was adopted in 1988. For those who prefer to attend one, a closed AA meeting will be available at the regular time and place.)

Expanded Activities Menu Eyed

Treatment has never been known as fun and games, but when it comes to recovery, “Let the games begin!”

Planning is already underway for a repeat of this year’s popular bowling party and golf outing — and there’s talk of expanding the Alumni activities schedule even more.

“We’re looking at some really ex-

Pushkash Elected To Alumni Board

Paul Pushkash, whose enthusiasm and dedication to the McBride way of recovery has been evident since his days as a patient, is the newest member of the Alumni Association Board of Directors.

His election, along with the re-election of Directors Peggy Haggerty, David Franczyk, Jeff Newburg and Marian Catania, came at the Association’s Annual Meeting September 12 at McBride. Paul fills the spot left by Beth Dancy, who did not seek re-election.

Board members serve staggered two-year terms, with those of Ann Gerlach, Phil Atinsky, John Hopkins and Bob Hanning expiring in 1994. Ken Zimmerman, as a past-president, continues as an ex-officio member.

At its first meeting September 14, the new Board re-named all of its 1993 officers to retain the same positions for the coming year; Franczyk as president, Hopkins as vice president, Newburg as secretary and Zimmerman as treasurer.

The Board meets the second Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m. at McBride.

citing things,” said Peggy Haggerty, the Board member with eyes that light up at the mere mention of a party. As chairperson of events like the annual Game Night in February, she’s been gathering ideas and exploring possibilities for things like ice skating at the Pettit Center and group attendance at Milwaukee’s many pro sports events and theater attractions.

The bowling gala is tentatively set for February 19, but a location and other details are still being worked out, she said, adding that further suggestions and planning assistance are always needed. Give Peggy a call at (414) 774-1824 if you’d like to give a hand.

Look for announcements and other information in future issues of *The Moving Finger*.

Don't Miss Out 'Retreats Keep Getting Better'

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course, you can’t put a price on the experience.

The absolute registration deadline is Wednesday, December 29. Since space is limited, an early mailing of your check, along with the form found on the back page of this newsletter, is highly recommended. The check should be made out to The McBride Foundation and sent to Marian Catania, 1129 North Jackson Street, # 1409-C, Milwaukee, WI. If you have any questions, give Marian a call at (414) 291-0442.

Attendance is open to all Alums and to friends who are recovering and are familiar with the McBride program.

For those who are new to McBride retreats, here’s an overview:

The weekend is strictly informal; casual dress and flexibility prevail. Drawing upon the basic theme, as well as Michael’s talk, there will be a schedule of lead speakers (selected in advance from among the registrants) to be followed by small breakout groups. Attendance or adherence to the schedule is never mandatory; if private meditation or reflection seems more appropriate to your mood or needs, so be it. And Saturday afternoon is always left open for recreation or quiet time.

(Weather permitting, the location is ideal for ice skating and cross-coun-

try skiing. Quiet walks in the woods or on the grounds are always popular and a few generally devote Saturday afternoon to visiting the rustic shops in nearby communities.)

The weekend begins Friday with coffee, snacks and sign-in between 5 p.m. and 6:30, when the buffet dinner is served. Michael’s talk follows at 7:30. The closing is at about noon Sunday, so you’re en route home by 1 p.m. at the latest. (A Catholic Mass is available in the chapel Sunday morning for those wishing to attend.)

It’s a weekend to recharge your recovery batteries, with ample time for introspection, talking, laughing and, perhaps, a few tears. On the lighter side, there’s group games (ask past participants for a vivid description) and several appropriate videotaped movies will be available. Snacks are generally abundant.

Arrangements to have someone on hand to hear Fifth Steps are still being made.

Overall, it’s inspirational, an opportunity for meaningful fellowship and a lot of fun, all in one package. It’s certain to give you a much deeper appreciation for what recovery is all about, and you’re bound to agree with our slogan, “McBride retreats defy description... But you can’t stop talking about them.”

Perpetual Help Center is located about a half hour west of Milwaukee; on the shores of scenic Crooked Lake, near Oconomoc. A map and directions, along with other details, will be mailed to all registrants.

Alumni Drop-In Visits Can Lift Holiday Spirits

Emotionally, the holidays present a time of extremes. They can be happy days, but for some, they can also be laden with depression.

For McBride inpatients, and Herrington House residents as well, it can be a time when these normal challenges to stability are compounded by fear, insecurity, loneliness and the countless other stressful distractions that make treatment such a trying experience.

Alumni, however, can help turn things around. We’ve been there — some at this same time of year — and a few minutes taken to share the experience, to inject some hope along with some much needed cheer, can be one of those gifts that benefit the giver as much as the recipient.

From an AA standpoint, it can be seen as Twelfth Step work. But as a McBride Alum, it’s what we’re all about. The Association was founded on helping each other through interaction; on drawing upon our common bond as a means of strengthening each other’s recovery.

Dropping in at the treatment center for a holiday visit has become a tradition for Alumni. The welcome is as warm as the coffee, and the benefits can be immeasurable. (Understandably, the staff asks that you first call to check on patient schedules, and to let them know you’re coming. And no one would complain if you added to the inventory of holiday cookies and treats.)

The gift of recovery was meant to be shared, and there’s no better place than where you found it.

Mark Your Calendars

Awareness Program	November 16
Board Meeting*	December 14
Winter Retreat	January 7-9, 1994
Board Meeting	January 11, 1994
Fun Night	February 19, 1994
Summer Retreat	May 27-29, 1994

* Second Tuesday Each Month; 6 p.m. at McBride

The Moving Finger is published quarterly by and for the McBride Alumni Association. Please send address and telephone corrections to:

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Ken Zimmerman
Editor

We've Got A Long Ways To Go

While reading the newsletter from a treatment center in Tennessee, it was noted that the alumni association there held its annual reunion the same September weekend as the McBride Renewal Program and picnic.

In Tennessee, there were 144 golfers at the outing, then 1,000 alums, family and friends attended the picnic. Gives us something to shoot for.