



## 22nd Annual Reunion/Picnic

Saturday, June 28th, 2008

*"We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us, what we could not do for ourselves!"*

- 9:30 Continental Coffee & Rolls**
- 10:00 Opening Welcome** – John Aschenbrenner
- 10:15 Keynote Address: Paul Sager** – *"Spirituality in Recovery"*
- 11:30 Annual Meeting** – Bob Olson - HMAA President  
\*\*\*Election of Board of Directors\*\*\*
- 12:00 Reunion Picnic**  
(Rogers Hospital provides the gourmet picnic—head chef is Mickey Gabbert)
- 1:00 AA & Alanon Speakers** – Sandy & Dick  
*"Spirituality in our Recovering Relationships"*
  
- Afternoon Games & Activities For Kids with a Rec. Therapist**
  
- 2:30 Bob O's Scavenger Hunt** (And you thought last year was great!)  
As in years past, the scavenger hunt list is kept under lock & key until just before the scavengers are sent out in their groups.
  
- Dinner will be "On Your Own" in the surrounding Oconomowoc Area.**  
If you'd like suggestions, please see one of the locals among us.
  
- 6:30 Scavengers are due back with their "LOOT"** for judging and the awarding of prizes.  
(Prizes are donated by Bob Olson and T-Lon Products.)
  
- 7:30 - ? Our Gratitude AA Fire. "Celebrating our Gratitude."**  
(Our "Open" AA Meeting Campfire Meeting welcomes not only our recovering members, but also family and friends of Herrington/McBride.) Our Gratitude Fire affords us a very spiritual culmination to our day's activities – affirming the goodness of our recoveries, and not forgetting those struggles that leave us feeling so grateful for the present.

*Remembering how difficult it was during our first days, weeks and months of early recovery, we ask that our focus on enjoyment also includes the current residents of Herrington House, making certain to include them in the day's activities.*

**PLEASE CALL HERRINGTON HOUSE WITH NUMBER ATTENDING.  
1-800-767-4111 EXT. 516 WE WANT TO HAVE SUFFICIENT FOOD!!!**

# The Moving Finger

The Herrington McBride Alumni Association

Spring 2008

## Message From the President

So where's all of this global warming I keep reading about? We sure could use it about now to help melt all of this snow we have here in southeastern Wisconsin.

It has been one of those winters though, hasn't it? One significant snow storm after another.....

But we know that if we live Wisconsin this is the type of weather we should expect to see. It's very obvious really. To bad it was not so obvious for us to see that getting into recovery sooner rather than later would so greatly benefit our lives as well as that of our families.

This statement leads me to say that we should all be very grateful that we have made it this far. There are so many others that suffer from the addictions who are still out there or are dead.

The keynote speaker's son at the Rogers Memorial Hospital 100th Year Anniversary luncheon was one of those that I speak of.....The latter that is. Legendary Green Bay Packer Bart Starr had a son who lost his life to addiction.

As you may know, the HMAA sponsored a table at the Roger's 100th Anniversary Luncheon. Many HMAA Board members attended and were able to hear, first hand, Bart Starr tell his story on how addiction has impacted his life.

His story was very moving and heart felt. More importantly, Bart was speaking to many people who have never heard somebody speak to addiction in such an open way. The more people talk about addiction the less invisible the issue becomes.

As we know these issues are so very real and need to get into society's mainstream so we can begin to fight these diseases without the stigma that is still so evident today.

All human injury or disease needs to be dealt with on an even playing field. As soon as this happens we will all live in a much better place.

So to summarize this event, and I think I speak for the entire board, it was money well spent. As an association, we can all be proud that we're involved with recovery events like this.

As usual, if any of you have questions or concerns regarding the HMAA please feel welcome to contact me personally.

*With warmest regards,  
Bob Olson  
President-HMAA*

## "Celebrating Recovery" Theme of Alumni Reunion"

*"We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us  
What we could not do for ourselves!"*

*By: John Aschenbrenner*

As the last of *The Promises of Our Recovery* so eloquently states, **"We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves."** Who among us would disagree that we all need a certain level of Spirituality in our recovery, no matter how we define it in our daily lives? Who among us would disagree that Spirituality deepens the longer we maintain, deepen and enrich our recovery? In my way of thinking, this promise is the continuing fulfillment of our Third Step, *"we made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understand him."* What better reason do we have to celebrate, than to recognize the continuing fruition of our Third Step in the fulfillment of the promises we've been given? And so.....get ready for the best reunion ever!

Sooooo.....it's time again to start digging out those shorts and T-Shirts - whatever's comfortable, and make our travel plans; packing the van for our families, filling your Harley tanks, booking those airline tickets, finding coverage for that weekend away – and circling the date on our calendars. It's a time to remember, time to reflect, time to share the events of the year past, and time to share in the enjoyment of an entire day in our continuing recovery with others. It's a time to talk about our hopes and dreams, our disappointments, our strides forward. A time to shed a tear or two, and to laugh until we can no longer contain ourselves. It's time for our annual reunion! And what a reunion we have planned!

Our keynote speaker, Paul Sager, is a young English Professor from Marian College in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. He received his Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing from Columbia College in Chicago. He is an alumnus of Herrington Recovery Center, and I was honored to be his temporary sponsor when he was in treatment. Since that time, Paul has continued to be an inspiration to me in my own recovery. He has a remarkable story of struggle and recovery to tell that

spans his young years and the globe – to Japan and back. This year's theme has been set, based on Paul's favorite Recovery area, "**Spirituality in Recovery**," – something we all struggle with and that area in our lives that continues to overwhelm us with its miracles.

After Paul's remarks and following our picnic lunch, there will be three additional speakers. At 1:00, Dan Benaviedes, LCSW, from Summit Coaching & Consulting will share his thoughts on strengthening our relationships in recovery.

At 1:30, our dear friends, Sandy and Dick – a husband and wife team in AA and Al-Anon will share their thoughts with us on "Spirituality in our Recovering Relationships." Many of us know Sandy and Dick from "around the tables" in the area – dear friends of our local recovering community.

As in years past, we'll be graced by current Herrington residents at the reunion, who perhaps continue to have difficulty imagining how we could be enjoying ourselves on a day to day basis – coming together to celebrate on an annual basis. But by the time they've listened to our speakers, shared in (the best/most creative to date) our Scavenger Hunt, been included in the Trivial Pursuit or Catch Phrase playoffs, and finally collapse with their families and friends around the very spiritual Gratitude Campfire AA Meeting as we close the days events – they'll be certain Recovery is not merely viable – but ever that much closer to their grasp.

I'll be looking forward to welcoming you on June 28th. Spend some time considering how much we need great weather when in communion with your Higher Power. We've never been disappointed.

## **SPONSORSHIP**

by Becky H.

My name is Becky and I'm an addict and alcoholic. On December 7th and 8th myself and many others attended the "Sponsorship Workshop" at the Redemptorist Retreat Center in Oconomowoc, organized by Ron Ragotzy. The content was based on becoming a better sponsor or what traits to find in a sponsor for yourself. Of course, our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety.

The Herrington/McBride Alumni Association met most of the cost for this fast-paced workshop and it paid off for me and I'm sure for others. As a sponsor for some of the woman who came through the doors at Herrington, it proved to be a valuable asset as to how we worked together and when I had to stop doing the work and let them decide if they were going to "sink or swim". I began to remember the tools I heard at the workshop and utilized them without missing a beat, and it prevailed....

The workshop had a panel of six speakers with nearly a combined century of working the twelve steps.

The workshop started off with dinner and then the festivities began with the EXPERIENCE, STRENGTH

Spring 2008 • 2

and HOPE from our fellow speakers. Immediately following each speaker was an opportunity for questions for the speaker, as well answers from experienced sponsors'.

The first night we had the "History of Peer Support" given by Tom W. This was enlightening to some of us newbie's or for those of us who enjoy learning something new and fascinating.

Ron's "Recovery Catch Phrase" didn't stump some, but had the rest of us guessing. Saturday morning after some of the attendees got back from the "Early Bird" 7:04 a.m. meeting at Rogers, we all gathered to eat breakfast and join again for our next speaker.

Marv W. a man with a gigantic heart and a flair for speaking gave the statistics of drunk driving and AA related stats with such passion. (Exp: After 5PM on Friday and Saturday, 50% of all drivers are under the influence.)

Connie O. shared some wonderful insight on spirituality and her road to discovery of spiritual conditioning. I heard introspective experience, strength and hope from Connie and for me to want what she has, makes me strive even harder for the spiritual conditioning that will balance my life.

Jim A. was up for the task of keeping us focused on his "precontemplative" experiences on his step work not to mention the visual aid pamphlet that we received. His narrative form of the steps gave an inspiring new twist on each step he covered.

Laura began her speech with some light hearted fun and an energetic view of her life in recovery thus far. I was impressed at her wit and sincerity of the family life after her new journey in recovery.

Closing speaker was Lynn W. giving her no nonsense experience with sponsoring and her own program experience. I heard the non-arrogant words from her that sponsorship is not a contest but rather a gift from our "higher power" that is a privilege for us to be able to do the next right thing.

I have reflected with others many times since the workshop and found that everyone was impressed by the broad aspects of sponsoring knowledge. We had such concerning questions that had endless viewpoints from all who shared. I can say that this was an experience that I would take part in again as well as encourage others to take part in hearing these variations first hand. To share what was taught to us at Herrington House and what we learn after that can only strengthen the success rate odds for our fellow alcoholics and addicts just walking through those doors. I have never had my own sense of belonging to anything or place. My value in this world was lost in everyone else's needs in my family, children, and friends. Alcohol so suffocated these feelings that I couldn't even begin to express and now I have the "Harvard" of treatment to live up to and for that I am willing to extend my hand for the next "Becky" just as someone did for me. I don't

## **Upcoming/Ongoing Activities & Events**

### **ANNUAL REUNION/PICNIC**

June 28, 2008  
(Information in this issue)

### **WINTER RETREAT**

January 2-4, 2009  
Redemptorist Retreat Center

### **RAP WITH PERSONS JUST ENTERING RECOVERY**

Oconomowoc campus on Tuesdays at 5:45PM  
West Allis campus at various days/times  
Contact us at address in this newsletter or call  
1-800-767-4411 ext. 516  
(Individuals must be pre-approved for doing rap session)

### **12 STEP MEETINGS**

AA  
Oconomowoc campus  
Monday-7PM  
Wednesday-7PM  
Friday-3PM  
(Separate meetings for men and women)  
Saturday-7:04AM  
Check at registration desk for location  
  
West Allis campus  
Sunday-6PM  
Tuesday-7:30PM  
Saturday-9AM  
  
NA  
West Allis campus  
Thursday-7PM

### **2008 RETREAT REVIEW**

Another spiritually uplifting retreat (the 21st annual) was held at the Redemptorist Retreat Center with 53 in attendance. Residents of the Herrington House were guests on Saturday morning.

The Friday night keynote speaker, Barry Spiegel, got the retreat off to a great start with his straight-forward, honest, and humorous sharing of how progress not perfection was, and continues to be, a part of his journey.

Make plans now to attend the 22nd annual winter retreat January 2-4, 2009. Look for information and registration form in the Winter issue of this newsletter.

have my life back...I have a better one. I am choosing to be a part of this fellowship and to help support people just beginning their journey. Once again I am encouraging the people in this community to give back and begin to do service work to continue the cause. It all counts and it is desperately needed.

*Editor's note: Women are needed for temporary sponsorship for female Herrington House residents. Come to 12 Step meetings and make yourself available.*

## **RECOMMENDED RECOVERY LITERATURE**

Some books have come to our attention and we thought you might be interested in them so we decided to give you our thoughts. The book "Broken" a story of addiction and recovery was written by William Cope Moyers with Katherine Ketcham. Anyone who has traveled the path of addiction and recovery will be able to relate to the contents. Our stories may be a bit different but we end up with the same result and have a choice of getting and staying in recovery or----- . The book is available at your local library or bookstore.

At the recent workshop sponsored by HMAA, participants were given the book, "Twelve Step Sponsorship" as part of the workshop package. It is written by Hamilton B. It covers all aspects of sponsorship and is highly recommended not only for those who assume the role of sponsor but also for those working with a sponsor. It is a Hazelden publication.

John Ashenbrenner, vice president of HMAA, has published two novels on the struggles of alcoholism and drug addiction and the promises of recovery. "Reflections in Erik's Gym" and "Reclaiming Buck" is followed by the latest novel, "The Fallen Gods of Mt. Olympus." His new effort takes a bittersweet look at aging, mortality, spirituality and the meaning of life. It promises to be his most controversial work. It is not presently available but you can consider his earlier works at <http://webpages.charter.net/johnaschen/books>.

The Moving Finger is published by and for the Herrington McBride Alumni Association. Please send story ideas and feedback to: HMAA Box 13581, Wauwatosa, WI 53213  
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3 • Spring 2008