

Upcoming/ Ongoing Activities & Events

WINTER RETREAT

January 8-10, 2010

Redemptorist Retreat Center

Info and registration in Winter newsletter

25TH REUNION/PICNIC

June 26, 2010

Information in the Spring issue

RAP WITH PERSONS JUST ENTERING RECOVERY

Oconomowoc campus on Tuesdays at 6:00PM

West Allis campus at various days/times

(Individuals must be pre-approved for doing rap session)

PIZZA WITH HERRINGTON RESIDENTS

September 1, 2009 and March 2010

If you are interested in attending, call a board member

12 STEP MEETINGS

AA

Oconomowoc Campus

Monday-7PM

Wednesday-7PM

Saturday-7:04AM

Sunday-8:30AM

West Allis Campus

Sunday-6PM

Tuesday-7:30PM

Saturday-9AM

NA

West Allis Campus

Thursday-7:15PM



The Moving Finger is published by and for the Herrington McBride Alumni Association.
Please send story ideas and feedback to:
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The Moving Finger

The Herrington McBride Alumni Association

Fall 2009

Important Messages...

- FORWARD ANY CHANGE OF POSTAL AND /OR E-MAIL ADDRESS AND PHONE # TO EITHER OUR MAILING ADDRESS OR BY E-MAIL TO BILL MARTENS AT WEMART@AOL.COM
- CONSIDER USING THE DONATION ENVELOPE ENCLOSED WITH THIS NEWSLETTER TO SUPPORT THE ONGOING COMMUNICATION TO YOU AS A MEMBER AND/OR A FRIEND OF HMAA AS WELL AS FOR SCHOLARSHIPS FOR PERSONS TO ATTEND OUR YEARLY RETREAT. MONIES ARE ALSO USED TO SUPPORT PROGRAMS RELATED TO CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY
- BEGIN PLANNING TO ATTEND THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF HMAA TO BE HELD JUNE 26TH 2010.
- THE NEXT ISSUE OF THIS NEWSLETTER WILL CONTAIN A RECAP OF PAST ISSUES OF THIS NEWSLETTER IN ORDER TO GIVE MEMBERS A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF WHERE/HOW HMAA BEGAN AND WHAT HAS HAPPENED SINCE ITS BEGINNING IN 1985.

HMAA Joins the Web

HMAA in partnership with Roger's Memorial Hospital has launched a new Alumni website. www.herringtonmcbride.org. In the upcoming weeks, content relevant to the HMAA will be loaded. You will be able to view upcoming events, review past events and download and view the "Moving Finger". Our goal is to have this website become a destination site for all HMAA members.

We will continue to publish updates on the site in the "Moving Finger". We expect to have the site loaded in the mid-September time frame. We'd love to hear your feedback as we develop the site, please direct your comments and thoughts to Bob Remme, dynawide05@gmail.com

Happenings at Herrington Recovery Center

At this writing, there are many activities planned at

the new building which is in the last stages of construction. An open house for Rogers Memorial Hospital employees will be held on September 12th. The official ribbon cutting and dedication ceremony will be held on September 15th at 3:30 p.m.

A "Sneak Peek" Retreat is planned for September 19th and 20th. Attendance is limited to the number of individuals that can be accommodated for overnight at the new facility. If you are interested in attending, call Rogers Memorial Hospital Foundation office at 1-262-646-1651 to determine if space is still available. A minimum donation of \$250.00 to the Herrington capital campaign is requested to attend. The format of the weekend will be activities/talks that will enhance one's journey of recovery.

2010 Winter Retreat

Mark your calendar now for the 23rd Annual Herrington/McBride Alumni Association Winter Retreat -- January 8-10, 2010.

The theme: "Living Life on Life's Terms." Tom Winslow will be the lead speaker.

Like most everything these days, the cost of the retreat has increased to \$205, so start saving now. Scholarships are available, given on a one-time basis only. Requests should be submitted to the Scholarship Committee in care of Mary Krall. Applicants are expected to contribute toward the total registration fee.

See the next issue of the Moving Finger for more information, registration form and process for requesting a scholarship.

President's Message

Hello Everybody,

By the time you read this message three of most influential people in our lives will have left their employ at the Herrington Recovery Center. They are of course, Wendy, Debbie and Charlie.

I asked if they would share what their time at Herrington has meant. Their responses are as follows: **Debbie:** "Deep breath..... let go and let God. As I reflect on my time at Herrington I am struck by how many feelings I have as I move to a new adventure. In the six years I have worked for Professional Recovery Network here at Herrington I have been privileged to work with many of you and your families. I feel honored to have been a part of your journey in finding a new life in sobriety. The miracles in recovery are abundant.

Charlie, Wendy and I have been referred to as the

"The Moving Finger writes, and having writ, moves on." - The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam

“Dream Team” from time to time, and other times we have struggled together to redefine ourselves as a team. But through it all we have joined forces together with Dr. Spiegel, Dr. Goldstone and Dr. Engel to provide a united front in working together to fight against a disease that has the power to destroy individuals and families alike. We have all brought to the table solid knowledge about this disease of addiction, and the recovery process. We have brought many years of experience, and most importantly we have been steadfast in our commitment, passion, hope and love in serving you. We have challenged you to challenge yourselves, we have stood firm with you in our belief that you can get well, we have cried with you, laughed with you, and today we rejoice in recovery with you.

I also wish to thank Dr. Engel and Dr. Goldstone as well as Elizabeth Gilbert (our boss) for always believing in us and trusting our ability to provide exceptional treatment to those we serve. With Love and God’s blessings."
Deb Adamus

Wendy: "Tormented by the disease of addiction, obsession and fear are our constant companions. Thirteen years at Herrington, what a blessing in my life, to live and ultimately bring to work a spirit of honor and integrity. To be given the Gift of “The Precious Present”, every day, to be of service, and to be used as a tool for healing in the lives of so many. To work with intention and to give with all of my heart the best of my abilities, to practice being in harmony with my higher power, the universe, you and myself, to learn to love...love the person and hate the disease.

These are but a handful of the gifts I have received from our time together. Thank you from the depths of my being for allowing me to share in the most precious creation of the new you! May you be happy, joyous and free."
Wendy

Charlie: "August 20th I hope to be celebrating my 30th year of sobriety, what a journey it has been. In September, I will be noting my 28th year in the field of chemical dependency and what a journey it has been.

I started working in the McBride program in 1991, and then was hired to work at The Herrington Recovery Center in 1996. I have had the privilege and honor to work with so many people through these years and be part of the experience of this incredible journey some of us choose to take, called 'Recovery,' and 'WHAT A JOURNEY IT HAS BEEN!'

With that, I will move on to my next station of this journey and continue to spread the message and live in the solution, One Day at A Time.

May some of our paths cross again and again.....we all need each other, that’s 'how it works'!!!"

Charlie

I know we all will miss the “Dream Team.” Good luck and thank you all for your dedication and

purpose. We live because of it.

Bob Olson

President - HMAA

A Great Success!

John Aschenbrenner

As I write this I’ve got a big smile on my face! Our Summer Reunion was a huge success. It began as a gorgeous day, and by the time Martin, our keynote speaker began his comments, we had 150 alumni and current Herrington Residents present. His message was “Staying Connected.” He was presented his 30 year sobriety token! Obviously he’s remained connected!

Dr. David Mouthrop, CEO of Rogers Memorial Hospital was given an honorarium and made a lifetime member of the Herrington/ McBride Alumni Association. Marion Heinz and the Honorable Judge Pat Snyder spoke to us about the new Herrington Recovery Center scheduled to open in early September.

While the alumni feasted on the great food, with Mickey and John flipping burgers and brats, they were afforded tours of the new Herrington Center which is under construction. They were in awe of the beautiful facility perched on the hillside overlooking the lake.

In the afternoon, Tom and his wife, Peg, gave a wonderful talk regarding Alcoholics Anonymous and Al-Anon.....they had as large an audience as did Martin in the morning.

As usual, the Scavenger Hunt List was presented to the scavengers “going out on the hunt.” The list had been guarded since its inception in early January though the entire group of alumni was appraised the theme was “Dysfunction in Oz.” Not until the groups opened their packets did they realize that each group was to return with one of its members as a lead character from “The Wizard of Oz” – The Witch, Dorothy, Scarecrow, Tin-Man, and Lion.....and a second member was to return as one of the winged monkeys. All groups would have to sing, “Over the Rainbow” and perform “The March of the Flying Monkeys.” Needless to say, when they returned, the remaining alumni went wild! The guy who returned as Dorothy really got into the act.....pigtails, freckles, blue dress, and on a bicycle with a basket holding Toto. He looked more like Dorothy than Dorothy! Scarecrow really got into the act as well.....as did Tin-Man, and Lion. Sorry to say, we ended having more dysfunction in Oz than when we first began! It was perfect – exactly what I had hoped for! The Great Wizard would be proud!

While the scavengers scavenged, we had a “cut-throat” game of Trivial Pursuit. It was an old vendetta that reignited its’ fury! My group challenged the notorious group, named after its’ leader, Johnny the Greek! Only recovering people know how to bluff at Trivial Pursuit...and they do it with perfection. The intensity burned with passion, and all players would have done well with a shower following the play. Johnny the Greek demanded I include in this issue, that he and his group won the game. This time,

Johnny.....and don’t forget that I challenged you to “2 out of 3” and you sheepishly backed down! Next time, Buddy!

Our Higher Power helped us practice a bit of humility, and afforded us a bit of rain on our parade.....or, rather, on our Campfire AA Meeting. As the thunder boomed and the rains hammered down on the roof, we gathered in a circle in the Community Center and shared our gratitude, remembering as we always do that “An Attitude of Gratitude is a Never Ending Prayer!"

If you think this was a fun day, you are right!!! So make plans now to attend next year's reunion/picnic which will include even more hilarity along with excellent messages of experience, strength and hope as we continue this journey of recovery.

The Journey

by Angie Bauer

Eight months into my glorious recovery, I experienced a debilitating setback. The months leading up to this occurrence had not been perfect but overall my life was better and I was getting well. I somehow managed to convince myself that perhaps I was different and sobriety would not prove terribly difficult. I could quickly go through the steps, begin sponsoring other alcoholics and addicts, and move into some unprecedented hall of recovery fame. Logically I knew I was not "cured" but felt as though I was no longer "sick." I was convinced I left the old me back at the treatment facility and walked out an amazingly transformed woman. I went to recovery meetings, imparted my profound program wisdom and began making plans for a new life. I was doing great and was not afraid to let everyone know it.

Then it hit me.... literally, a physical, emotional and spiritual relapse that knocked me off my high horse and into an all too familiar deep, dark depression. I was immobile and discouraged and certain I had hit my recovery peak and it was all downhill from that point forward. I began telling myself lies and engaged in behaviors that allowed me to indulge in my new revelation that recovery did not work. I felt like the jig was up. It was all a farce and I was the same rotten person I had always been. I did not call my sponsor, I did not go to meetings, and I did not reach out to the support network I had developed over the course of the past several months. Instead, I isolated myself, I cried, I slept, I contemplated fleeing my life by way of suicide or running away. Yet I pretended the best I could to be OK when my friends and family asked. I spent time being angry and resentful, feeding my character defects. I was miserable, living once again in the terror of my untreated illness, dismissing and under estimating the help available all around me.

My daughter stayed home from school one morning because she was not feeling well. I did not question her because I was relieved I did not have to get up in order to help her off to school. I laid on the couch with the blinds pulled and the covers over my head, unable to care for my daughter's fundamental needs. Then something

happened. A wave of insight of how my life would be if I continued to allow my disease to take over and convince me I could not do this after all. I looked around my living room and saw such emptiness and it frightened me deeply. I sat up, forced myself to go look in the mirror, and was shocked to see the image staring back at me. It had the face of a person I had not seen for some time. Someone I did not like, someone who had hurt and scared me, someone I really thought was gone. The image was me coming to the realization that the sick, manipulative, self-loathing individual still existed and was very prevalent in my life. She is a part of me and I cannot escape that fact. However, I knew at that moment God was providing me what I needed to face this situation. I sensed a slight notion that I had a choice at this moment. I prayed to my Higher Power for help, for strength, for courage, for willingness.

I called a dear friend in the program who has been on this journey with me from the first step. I said I was deeply sad and very scared and I did not know what to do. Then I stopped talking and started listening. My friend provided me with exactly the message I was supposed to hear and then suddenly the despair lifted and I saw just a tiny glimpse of light and I believed I could walk through this pain and make it through to the other side with hope. As the evening progressed and the following days unfolded, I was blessed with the ability to acknowledge what I had experienced, to talk about it with others afflicted by this disease, and to take the necessary action in continuing this recovery journey.

I know so little about this process and discovered how quickly I was able to fall back into what was sure to be a path of destruction, both for myself and those who love me. I think I experienced an emotional relapse that nearly stole the past 8 months of sobriety. I cannot explain why it happened, or if it will again, but I have faith that my Higher Power took care of what I was not able to do at the time and gave me the awareness to recognize and the strength to carry out the things I could do for myself. I was at the turning point, a stepping stone, of preparation for what is coming next.

I have an incredible sense of gratitude for the treatment and care I received through Rogers Memorial Hospital and Herrington Recovery Center and for the program of AA and those in it who have traveled where I have not yet gone. I am humbled that I have another day to become the woman I am meant to be and pray that you, too, are uncovering and discovering who you are meant to be. I find it an enormous relief that I do not have to walk this path alone and feel overwhelmed by the unconditional love bestowed upon me along this amazing journey.

Today I chose recovery. Today I choose to stay well. Today I choose to take a step forward rather than back. It is a gift to be navigating this journey with you; for this I am truly grateful.