



## An Old Cherokee Teaches His Grandson

An Old Cherokee is teaching his grandson about life. "A fight is going on inside me," he said to the boy. "It is a terrible fight between

two wolves. One is evil - he is anger, envy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, lies, false pride, superiority, and ego. The other is good - he is joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion, and faith. This same fight is going on inside you, and inside of every other person, too." The grandson thought about it for a moment and then thoughtfully asked his grandfather, "Which wolf will win?" The old Cherokee simply replied, "The one you feed."



### Mark your calendars:

Our June Reunion & Picnic: Saturday, June 25, 2011  
Pizza Night: Tuesday, September 6, 2011  
Winter Retreat, January 6-9, 2012

#### For the Weekly Calendar:

**AA Meetings – Rogers Hospital – Oconomowoc**

Monday – 7:00 Evening

Wednesday – 7:00 Evening

Saturday – 7:04 Morning

Sunday 8:30 Morning

**Rogers Hospital – West Allis**

Sunday – 6:00 Evening

Tuesday – 7:30 Evening

Saturday – 9:00 Morning

**NA Meeting – Rogers Hospital – West Allis**

Thursday 7:15 Evening

Alumni interested in doing Tuesday Evening RAPs with current Herrington Residents or if you're interested in having Pizza with Residents every first Tuesday of March & September, contact John at 920-988-2044 for information on how to proceed



The Herrington McBride Alumni Association  
Spring 2011 Issue

# The Herrington Recovery

Our Alumni Association Quarterly

## The Moving Finger

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



### Desiderata

Go placidly amid the noise and haste, and remember what peace there may be in silence. As far as possible, without surrender, be on good terms with all persons. Speak your truth quietly and clearly; and listen to others, even to the dull and ignorant; they too have their story. Avoid loud and aggressive persons; they are vexations to the spirit. If you compare yourself with others, you may become vain or bitter, for always there will be greater and lesser persons than yourself. Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans. Keep interested in your own career, however humble, it's a real possession in the changing fortunes of time. Exercise caution in your business affairs, for the world is full of trickery. But let this not blind you to what virtue there is; many persons strive for high ideals, and everywhere life is full of heroism. Be yourself. Especially do not feign affection. Neither be cynical about love; for in the face of all aridity and disenchantment, it is as perennial as the grass. Take kindly the counsel of the years, gracefully surrendering the things of youth. Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in sudden misfortune. But do not distress yourself with dark imaginings. Many fears are born of fatigue and loneliness. Beyond a wholesome discipline, be gentle with yourself. You are a child of the universe no less than the trees and the stars; you have a right to be here. And whether or not it is clear to you, no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should. Therefore be at peace with God, whatever you conceive him to be. And whatever your labors and aspirations, in the noisy confusion of life, keep peace in your soul. With all its sham, drudgery and broken dreams, it is still a beautiful world. Be cheerful. Strive to be happy.  
~ Max Ehrmann

### President's Message

By: John Aschenbrenner

Spring is a special time in the hearts of recovering alcoholics and addicts – it's the season that most reflects "The Greening," that we all so well remember and must not forget, in the early struggles of our rebirth into Recovery. Our sun gradually became stronger, and the core of our souls began to warm to a new spirituality as the cold darkness subsided. On behalf of all alumni and friends of the alumni, I wish you a true renewal in your continuing recovery, not forgetting those of us who continue to struggle to leave our darkness behind and enter into the light.



Recovery –  
The Springtime in our Souls

In this issue we try to reflect on the hope in our hearts, and feel the depth of sorrow that has come to others of us. We lost Brian, a young man who had become an inspiration to so many of us and grieve deeply with his family. We remember Walter, who helped so many, and in our memory of him continues to be an inspiration. We reflect on the struggles of our alumni, in their own writings, and find inspiration in the words of authors who have become icons in both literature and recovery – words that have become the scriptures of so many. Be well, and I look forward to seeing so many of you at this year's reunion on June 25th.



**Walt Whitman on The Springtime of Renewal**  
What do you think has become of the young and old men? And what do you think has become of the women and children? They are alive and well somewhere; The smallest sprout shows there is really no death; And if ever there was, it led forward life, and does not wait at the end to arrest it, and ceas'd the moment life appear'd. All goes onward and outward—nothing collapses; And to die is different from what any one supposed, and luckier



## Here's the June date you've been looking for! 26th Annual Herrington-McBride Reunion/Picnic!

Saturday, June 25th

On the grounds at Roger's Memorial Hospital

- Beginning with a Continental Welcome Breakfast at 9:00 AM and ending with an "Open" Campfire AA Meeting at dusk.
- Keynote Speaker, AA/Al-Anon Speakers
- 30 mile radius Scavenger Hunt
- A Family Affair – a rec. therapist on site for the kids
- Make reservations at Oconomowoc area hotels now:
  - Hilton Garden Inn
  - Olympia Resort
  - Staybridge Suites
- Registration info, agenda of events, and speakers in the next, Our Summer Issue of "The Herrington Recovery (Moving Finger)" in early June!

This year's event promises to be the best ever!

There is no cost – the hospital graciously provides the food and space for us to gather and meet new Alumni, friends of the alumni and rekindle old friendships!



## Remembering Brian

It's with very deep sadness that we learned about the death of a very recent new Alumnus to our group. Brian Kenevan was 24 years old. He was a marathon runner, and the sort of guy you'd want as a son and/or a friend. Brian was an inspiration to my own recovery during those days I knew him. Brian's father, Dan, wishing to help other young people facing early recovery, has recommended memorial donations to us. In the end, Brian became one of our finest teachers, reminding us how "cunning, baffling & powerful" our disease is.

I've used Brian's full name here, with the family's permission. To learn more about Brian, please go to: [http://memorials.drugfree.org/Memorials/Brian\\_Kenevan](http://memorials.drugfree.org/Memorials/Brian_Kenevan)



Here is letter Dan wrote remembering and to his son:

*My son Brian died of a heroin overdose on February 2, 2011. Not only was he my son, he was my best friend. We both played major roles in one another's lives. His death has been devastating to me. I loved him more than anyone could ever imagine.*

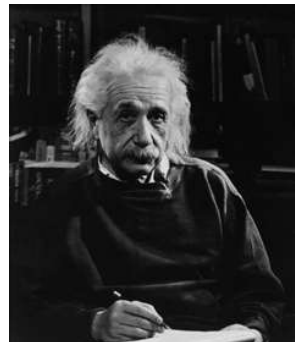
*He was such a wonderful, kind and caring person. He loved people and animals. People and animals loved him. If someone was in need or in pain, he would do whatever it took to help them. I could not believe how many people helped us to celebrate and pay tribute to Brian's life. He helped countless others with their sobriety. The people and the lives he touched are truly amazing. He was such a good person.*

*If you meet Brian for the first time you would never suspect him of using or abusing drugs. He always had a huge bright smile on his face. His physical condition was second to none. He loved to run marathons and do long bike races. He constantly lifted weights and worked out at the gym. If only his mind had been as healthy as his body. He had his ups and down with substance abuse for the past 8 years. He could do very well for periods of time, but the demons always called him back. I have no doubt he was sincere about achieving sobriety, but, for whatever reason he*

*was not able to maintain it.*

*The world has a little less light without him; however, heaven has gained a new angel. He now watches over us all. He will always be with us and live on in our hearts and our minds. When I think of him I smile most of the time, sometimes I cry. I miss you!*

*Love, Dad*



## Inspirations from the Mind of Albert Einstein - The Scientist who had no quarrel with Spirituality

"A human being is part of a whole called by us the "Universe." A part limited in time and space. We experience ourselves, our thoughts and feelings, as something separate from the rest - a kind of optical delusion of our consciousness. This delusion is a prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires, and to affection for a few persons nearest to us. Our task must be to free ourselves for this prison by widening our circle of understanding and compassion, to embrace all living creatures in the whole of nature and beauty"

"Our journey as Human Beings is not about following a pre-ordained path, but about creating that path. Life rarely makes any more sense when things are done 'in order.' Life makes sense when we are centered in our hearts and we let go of resisting how our unique journey needs to unfold in its own beautifully unruly way."

"There are only two ways to live: you can live as if nothing is a miracle, or you can live it as though everything is a miracle."

"Imagination is more important than knowledge. For knowledge is limited to all we know and understand, while imagination embraces the entire world, and all there ever will be to know and understand.

The definition of insanity is "doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results."



"We addicts and alcoholics remember those dates." But he kept using cocaine, which caused him to have trouble sleeping. Now that he wasn't using alcohol, he figured he needed a new depressant. So, on Jan. 10, 2008, his 43rd birthday, Compton used heroin for the first time. "That began a real downward spiral," he says. "Things started to go bad in a big way really fast."

Six weeks later, he overdosed and landed in the intensive care unit at Mercy Hospital in Janesville. Despite several people urging him to get help, "I went back to doing the same thing I'd been doing," he says.

A year later, Compton got arrested for possession of heroin and cocaine. Then, because of a ridiculous scheme to attempt to get a girlfriend and fellow addict out on bail, he got hit with a bail-jumping charge and ended up in jail on a \$100,000 cash bond in March 2009. After he'd spent 45 days in jail, his parents agreed to bail him out on one condition: His lawyer had to pick up Compton from jail and deliver him directly to the Herrington Recovery Center at Rogers Memorial Hospital in Oconomowoc. There, at last, Compton began to break free from the downward spiral.

"I'd suffered enough consequences and public humiliation by this time so that I'd finally hit rock bottom," Compton says. "I knew I was losing my wife of almost 20 years [she filed for divorce in February 2009]. I knew I was going to lose my license to practice law and my relationship with my two sons. It was enough for me to finally get serious, dig deep, and work hard at getting clean."

## Herrington McBride Board Members

*Serving our Recovering Alumni & Their Friends:*

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He completed his recovery program at Herrington, and a few months later, in October 2009, he voluntarily entered into a five-year monitoring contract with WisLAP. The contract requires that he stay clean and sober; attend at least two recovery meetings each week; check in weekly with his monitoring counselor, WisLAP coordinator Linda Albert, and meet in person with Albert once a month. He's subject to random drug screens at any time. Compton also continues to see a drug counselor on his own volition, and he has a probation officer, both of whom also monitor his progress.

Compton has been abstinent from alcohol for three years and he hasn't used drugs for nearly two years. "I recognize that I'm a drug addict and alcoholic," he says. "I need to stay in a recovery program for the rest of my life. That's not a burden; it's a blessing. I've never been happier in my life. I'm more physically fit than I've been in 25 years. I have a good relationship with my boys. My friends see me as a much better person and a good father. I'm so thankful."

There's another part of my life Compton hopes to recover; practicing law. He'll be eligible to apply for reinstatement in 2012. "I loved being a lawyer," he says. "I feel I took away my own license. No one took it from me. I want to prove to myself that I can also be the person to get it back."



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## ***Pride Does Still Matter***

Remembering Dr. Walter Baranowski

Excerpts from his tribute to a friend

By: Dr. Tom D.



I find myself using a quote from the book, “When Pride Still Mattered,” by Vince Lombardi, when considering the life of my friend, Walter, who died in August of last year. His was a remarkable life, supported by a passionate self-proclaimed mission to help those of us who have endured our problems with alcoholism in particular, but the overall addiction process in general – those aspects in our lives that only we can understand. Walter was not a sports guy, and would seem a contradiction to Vince’s courageous work. Yet, Water had incredible interests, numerous hobbies, but most importantly a mission to help those of us suffering and dealing with our addictions. My friend, Walter, did so with pride.

I am a physician, as was Walter. I knew I was a dead ringer, because of my family history, in becoming an alcoholic, or as Walter would call me, “Just a regular Irish drunk! And, I did quite well in controlling my compulsion, until my mid-fifties when alcohol allowed me to better deal with the stressors in my career. Bad choice! With time my addiction deepened exponentially. I was never a social drinker, avoided bard and never drank at social events. But I certainly did my pre-party imbibing, and sought out my post-party relief in the bottle. In 2004, after reading my 30th book on addiction, and attending numerous AA meetings, I realized that I, the Doc, could not cure myself, and finally sought treatment. It was then that I joined a group named the Caduceus Group – a group for health professionals discussing those difficulties specific to those of us in health care – credentialing, licensing, patient, return to work, and specific legal issues. It’s there I met Walter, a gritty soft-spoken man, with a remarkable story of own. He was a Canadian entering the field of orthopedic surgery, and after moving to Wisconsin, he became “the orthopedic-go-to-guy for the Dean Clinic in Madison. He was a master of his art, and continues, even in death, to be regarded as having been one of the best in the State in his field.

Just as you and I, Walter had an illness with which he struggled for years. After a long period of recovery, he relapsed in the early 90s, which led to a remarkable

sequence of circumstances which any of us could reduplicate. These included a severe detox process followed by two liver transplants and a great many medical encounters along the way. With all of this, Walter turned his life around, dedicating his life to assisting others like us. His technique with people was that of a loving father counseling his children. His remarkable sense of humor and extraordinary quick wit were tools he used to both convey ease and his message.

Walter was one of my best friends. We were in touch daily. We shared a multiplicity of jokes, ranging from... well, you know the range! I needn’t say more! Walter contracted metastatic prostate cancer in 2010. He asked me to assume his role as the moderator of the Caduceus group. I did so with pride. Until the day of his death in August, he contacted me to be sure I was all right, given my recent relapse. I personally feared his death was imminent. Until the very near end, so long as he was able, he drove current residents in health care from Herrington House to the weekly meeting, though he was suffering severe pain. His wife, Diana was by his side throughout and until the very day of his death.

To paraphrase and modify the words of Josh Hamilton (The major leaguer, who kept coming back,) “I pray nightly that I can continue to be the unique messenger that Walter helped teach me to be.” And in the words of those who long preceded me in my specialty, I leave you with this quote:

*“At the close of a man’s life and to estimate his worth, it is wise to see him in his life’s surroundings, to know not only the part he played as an individual, but also as a component part of the great events in the betterment of mankind.”*

This, my friends, was Walter Baranowski. And, whatever monument arises at Herrington House to commend his life, it will be this quote by which I will remember him.

## ***My Letter to the Judge***

By: Christopher U.

Dear Judge.

As I write this letter, I am reminded that life is full of choices and that no matter how much I would like to change the wind, I cannot. But today, through my program of recovery I have the ability to change my sail. I have to live in the moment, hard as it is, and focus on one day at a time. Even as I write this I’m aware of my character defects, such as my procrastination, waiting until the last moment to write this letter. Today, I can honestly say I’m living a program of recovery.

I will admit that at first I wasn’t doing it for myself. I was doing it for my family, my mom, the job, and finally the courts. I have been using drugs and alcohol for over 20 of my 36 years on this earth. That being said, it was extremely hard to admit defeat. When I first went to Detox and the Intensive Outpatient Program in 2009, I thought my life was still manageable, and I fought the realization that I have a disease that is primary, progressive, chronic, and fatal. In October 2010, by the grace of God, I was able to enter a residential treatment program at Rogers Memorial Hospital. For 29 days I lived at the Herrington Recovery Center and my life would be forever changed. The single most important difference between rehab this time and the other times, was that this time I had my first spiritual experience. In working and finishing the first three steps, one on ones with my therapist and sponsor, I was able to fully gain acceptance. The first step – admitting powerlessness over alcohol and other drugs, and that my life had become unmanageable. Step two – coming to believe a Power greater than myself could restore me to sanity. Step three – making a decision to turn my will and life over to the care of God as I understood him. I now accept that life is full of consequences and rewards. Because I am active in my program of recovery and have a God of my understanding, I can now see the situation that happened on the eve of my 35th birthday is a blessing from my creator who I choose to call God. Had that not occurred, I probably would have overdosed that night – leaving behind a loving wife of almost ten years, and three beautiful children. But that wasn’t enough for this addict. I had to continue one and a half more months of pain, misery and more unmanageability.

I would like to greatly thank everyone who has been involved in this journey with me, from the judges, DAs, police officers, EMTs, my lawyer and everyone else involved in my case. I need to thank my wife and family for their continuing support...especially my wife, who has been there for me throughout the flames of my addiction. With the help of Al-anon, she understands my illness and that I must have to want to work my recovery for myself. I well remember a speaker when I was in my second week of my 29 day residential treatment. He said there are only three things you can do with this disease – get locked up, zipped up, or sober up. The first two will never be an option again, so long as I continue to work my program.

There is a quote in the front lobby of Herrington Recovery Center that I read every day and still say at meetings, “It’s never too late to be who you might have been.” Through daily meeting at Alcoholics Anonymous,

continued outpatient treatment, working with two sponsors, actually working the steps and finally having a God of my understanding in my life, I am finally beginning to heal. I would like to think of myself as a Phoenix being born from and rising above the ashes.

Thank You, Christopher U.

## ***Back from the Brink***

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[www.wisbar.org/wislawmag](http://www.wisbar.org/wislawmag)

republished here, with Steve Compton’s permission

“Steve Compton became an alcoholic, was arrested for drug possession, and lost his law license. He’s now in a monitoring contract with WisLAP and an intensive recovery program.”

“I feel I took away my own license...I want to prove to myself that I can also be the person to get it back.” – S.C.

“The first five years of Steve Compton’s law career unfolded like a map to sure success. After graduating in 1992 from Marquette University Law School, where he’d been editor of the Marquette Law Review, he got a clerkship with Wisconsin Court of Appeals Judge Ted Wedemeyer, followed by another clerkship with Wisconsin Supreme Court Justice Jon Wilcox. He spent two years at a Milwaukee firm before going to work for a firm in Janesville. Then began a 12-year string of terrible decisions that would be Compton’s undoing. First, he started drinking too much in 1997. He also got a public reprimand from the OLR after he padded his hours in the state’s tobacco litigation. “I didn’t see anything wrong with that back then,” he says, “because it was pie-in-the-sky time for me.” The stain on his reputation pushed him out of the Janesville firm, and he set up a solo practice in Delavan. Life was better. He felt less stress and stopped drinking. But after five years, “the grandiosity came back,” Compton says. He wanted to build his firm, so he merged with two other attorneys, and they added seven associates. Compton had a number of outside business and financial interests.

“I was stressed out and felt I needed to work more,” he says. “There weren’t enough hours in the day. That’s when I resorted to cocaine.” He viewed cocaine as an energy booster, and he convinced himself it wasn’t physically addictive.

Using cocaine allowed Compton to drink more, he says. By the summer of 2007, he realized he was an alcoholic. He stopped practicing law and went into intensive outpatient treatment for alcohol abuse. “I stopped drinking on December 17, 2007,” Compton says.