

## For the Weekly Calendar:



### AA Meetings – Rogers Hospital – Oconomowoc

Monday – 7:00 Evening

Wednesday – 7:00 Evening

Thursday – 6:00 Evening

Saturday – 7:04 Morning (Nobody makes it by 7:00!)

Sunday – 8:30 Morning

### NA Meeting - Rogers Hospital – Oconomowoc

Saturday – 7:00 Evening

Rogers Hospital – West Allis

Sunday – 6:00 Evening

Wednesday - 7:30 Evening (NA Meeting)

Saturday – 9:00 Morning

### Al-Anon Meeting-Rogers Hospital Oconomowoc

Tuesday – 7:00 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 Rob at: [clean@wi.rr.com](mailto:clean@wi.rr.com) for information on how to proceed.



# Herrington McBride

The Herrington McBride Alumni Association  
Autumn Edition, 2016

# The Herrington Recovery

## Alumni Association Quarterly



### From the Desk of our President

By: Rob McCreddie

Hello Members and Friends of the Herrington McBride Alumni Association, I hope everyone had a safe and enjoyable summer! For those that attended the 31st Annual Herrington McBride Alumni Association Alumni Picnic, we had a beautiful day with terrific speakers, wonderful food, meaningful fellowship and the entire day, by all reports, was an overwhelming success! At our annual board meeting Glen Taylor and Cindy Wadd were elected to the board as our newest members. We had a great turnout and the reunion committee did an outstanding job of planning and executing a memorable event!

The HMAA puts on events for residents of Herrington Recovery Center while in treatment and encourages continued connection, support and participation in recovery-based events throughout the year.

At our most recent regular board meeting, all of the current officers were reelected for another year. We have a great team who contribute so much to the mission and vision of the alumni association.

RAP speakers continue to receive positive responses from residents and staff alike. We have had such a strong interest from Herrington and Rogers alums interested in sharing their experience, strength and hope that sign up for RAP speakers for the rest of 2016 filled up in about a day and a half. While the RAP sign up is full through the rest of 2016, response to the weekly Friends and Family program has also been great! I have been sharing names of interested speakers with Herrington Recovery Center staff who also appreciate the willingness of qualified AA/NA and Al-Anon/Families Anonymous

speakers to share their Saturday mornings with residents in treatment, their family members and friends.

The Herrington McBride Alumni Association is supported through donations from members of the recovering community, family and friends. Please consider supporting us in our mission as “The Association provides each of us as individuals and as a collective community the opportunity to be in contact with each other and provide a supportive environment for recovery.” If you received this newsletter in the mail, you’ll find an enclosed envelope that you can use to support our continued work. Our address is also on the back page of the newsletter. The Herrington McBride Alumni Association is a not for profit 501(c)(3) organization and any and all contributions are fully tax deductible.

Save the dates of January 6th – 8th, 2017 for the 30th Annual Herrington McBride Retreat held each year at the Redemptorist Retreat Center in Oconomowoc, WI. Jim Dropik and Marsha H. continue to raise the bar each year, insuring you’ll want to secure your spot early for next year’s retreat. There are a limited number of scholarship slots available for those who cannot afford to pay or can only afford partial payment. This event is open to all those who are recovering from addiction.

I welcome your feedback and suggestions as to how we can improve our alumni association in order to continue our mission and to support residents in treatment and throughout their transitions into the recovering community. Thanks to all for your continued kindness and support!

# Herrington McBride

The Herrington Recovery is published by The Herrington McBride Association – a not-for-profit organization, with the generous help of Roger’s Memorial Hospital

Layout and Printing - Village Graphics Printing, Hartland, WI

Please send feedback and Newsletter ideas to:

Phil Grabski, Editor  
[pgrabski1@gmail.com](mailto:pgrabski1@gmail.com)

Send name, telephone, address & email changes to:

HMAA Box 13581  
Wauwatosa, Wisconsin 53213  
or by email to [Wemart@aol.com](mailto:Wemart@aol.com)

## Herrington McBride Board Members

Serving our Recovering Alumni & Their Friends:

Rob McCreddie – President

Phil Grabski – Vice President

Secretary – Mary Lee Grady

Treasurer – Johnny King

Jennifer Evancy

Jamie Walker

Scott Elston

Michael Ingrilli

Jeff Radtke

Kristin Simons

Laurie Schamel

Glen Taylor

Cindy Wadd

John Hopkins – Past President

Bill Martens, M. D. – Past President & Archivist

Bob Olson – Past President

Advisors:

William Aspley

James Dropik

Matthias Scheuth – Director of the Rogers Foundation

David B. Bohl, MA - Director of Addiction Services

## Why I Drank

I drank to be witty--  
and I became a boor.  
I drank to relax--  
and I couldn't stop my hands from shaking.  
I drank to feel good--  
and I suffered through sickening hangovers.  
I drank to be happy--  
and it made me depressed.  
I drank to be a good dancer--  
and it made me stagger.  
I drank to be a good conversationalist--  
and I couldn't pronounce my words.  
I drank to be sociable--  
and I became angry and resentful.  
I drank to help my appetite--  
and cheated my body of nutrition by not eating right.  
I drank to be a good lover--  
and I couldn't perform.  
I drank to show I was a man--  
and became a slobbering, bawling baby.  
I drank to be popular--  
and lost my friends.  
I drank to enjoy life--  
and contemplated suicide.  
I drank for camaraderie--  
and drove everyone away from me.  
I drank to escape--  
and built a prison for myself.  
I drank to find peace--  
and I found hell.

## A Tradition Born of Our Anonymity by Bill W.

In the years that lie ahead the principle of anonymity will undoubtedly become a part of our vital tradition. Even today we sense its practical value. But more important still, we are beginning to feel that the word "anonymous" has for us an immense spiritual significance. Subtly but powerfully it reminds us that we are always to place principles before personalities; that we have renounced personal glorification



in public; that our movement not only preaches but actually practices a true humility. That the practice of anonymity in our public relations has already had a profound effect upon us, and upon our millions of friends in the outside world, there can hardly be doubt. Anonymity is already a cornerstone of our public relations policy.

How this idea first originated and subsequently took hold of us is an interesting bit of AA history. In the years before the publication of the book "Alcoholics Anonymous," we had no name. Nameless, formless, our essential principles of recovery still under debate and test, we were just a group of drinkers groping our way along that we hoped would be the road to freedom. Once we became sure that our feet were set on the right track we decided upon a hook in which we could tell other alcoholics the good news. As the book took form we inscribed in it the essence of our experience. It was the product of thousands of hours of discussion. It truly represented the collective voice, heart and conscience of those of us who had pioneered the first four years of AA

As the day of publication approached we racked our brains to find a suitable name for the volume. We must have considered at least two hundred titles. Thinking up titles and voting upon them at meetings became one of our main activities. A great welter of discussion and argument finally narrowed our choice to a single pair of names. Should we call our new book "The Way Out" or should we call it "Alcoholics Anonymous"? That was the final question. A last-minute vote was taken by the Akron and New York Groups. By a narrow majority the verdict was for naming our book "The Way Out." Just before we went to print somebody suggested there might be other books having the same title. One of our early lone members (dear old Fitz M., who then lived in Washington) went over to the Library of Congress to investigate. He found exactly twelve books already titled "The Way Out." When this information was passed around, we shivered at the possibility of being the "Thirteenth Way Out." So "Alcoholics Anonymous" became first choice. That's how we got a name for our book of experience, a name for our movement and, as we are now beginning to see, a tradition of the greatest spiritual import. God does move in mysterious ways His wonders to perform!

In the hook "Alcoholics Anonymous" there are only three references to the principle of anonymity. The foreword of our first edition states: "Being mostly business or professional folk some of us could not carry on our occupations if known" and "When writing or speaking publicly about alcoholism, we urge each of our Fellowship to omit his personal name, designating himself instead as 'a member of Alcoholics Anonymous,'" and then, very earnestly we ask the press also to observe this request for otherwise we shall be greatly handicapped."

Since the publication of "Alcoholics Anonymous" in 1939 hundreds of AA groups have been formed. Every one

## Step Seven: Trusting my Higher Power to take the lead

Steps 6 and 7 scared me a bit. I was scared for God to remove my defects of character. What would He choose to replace them with?



Something unknown to me?  
Something worse than what I knew my character defects to be? Well, if that would be the case, then I'd rather keep my unhealthy character defects because at least I knew what they were.

I was not entirely ready for another change in my life just yet. The active alcoholism in my life made me leery of surprises. Living with active alcoholism made me always aware, always on my toes, anticipating or preparing for the next bit of drama. Most of the time, I was surprised at what drama would occur.

When I progressed into working Step Six in my recovery program, I associated these anxious feelings with the changes that Step Six would bring. My Higher Power and I were just starting to get along again. Would He use this opportunity as a way to get back at me for the wrongs I had done?

One of my character defects is gossiping. Gossiping made me feel better. To run someone else down, made my view of my life seem better. I knew I wasn't being kind, but for the time that I was talking, it made me feel good to be the judge and not the one being judged.

I liked that heightened status. And I liked it when others listened to me. I was scared that God would take away my gossiping. I depended on my gossiping. What would I talk about that would be interesting if it wasn't gossip?

I talked through my fears with my Sponsor, and put the words of the Al-Anon closing into action. I let the peace of the program grow in me "One Day at a Time." My trust in my Higher Power grew, and I became willing to venture into whatever life changes my Higher Power had in mind for me. Our relationship deepened when I humbly asked Him to remove my defects of character. I let my guard down, opened up, and whenever I felt anxious or disconnected, I would pray.

As time passed, I realized I was getting quieter. I wasn't making a concerted effort. It was simply happening. I didn't know to sit quietly before, and now I found myself peacefully sitting. I wasn't alone, I was simply quiet. It's because I had the company of my Higher Power. I didn't need the comfort that I got from gossiping anymore. My Higher Power gave me a deeper level of comfort that lasts much longer than the comfort and relief I got from gossiping.

The quiet serenity that replaced my need for noise is so much greater than any replacement I thought of for my gossiping. Thank goodness my Higher Power had the lead on this and not me!

~ Lisa R

## Dr. Bob's Last Message

Presented at  
The First International Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous  
July 28 - 30, 1950 at Cleveland, Ohio

In Memoriam  
Dr. Robert Holbrook Smith  
August 8, 1879 - November 16, 1950  
Co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous



"My good friends in AA and of AA. I feel I would be very remiss if I didn't take this opportunity to welcome you here to Cleveland not only to this meeting but those that have already transpired. I hope very much that the presence of so many people and the words that you have heard will prove an inspiration to you - not only to you, but may you be able to impart that inspiration to the boys and girls back home who were not fortunate enough to be able to come. In other words, we hope that your visit here has been both enjoyable and profitable."

"I get a big thrill out of looking over a vast sea of faces like this with a feeling that possibly some small thing that I did a number of years ago, played an infinitely small part in making this meeting possible. I also get quite a thrill when I think that we all had the same problem. We all did the same things. We all get the same results in proportion to our zeal and enthusiasm and stick-to-itiveness. If you will pardon the injection of a personal note at this time, let me say that I have been in bed five of the last seven months and my strength hasn't returned as I would like, so my remarks of necessity will be very brief.

"But there are two or three things that flashed into my mind on which it would be fitting to lay a little emphasis; one is the simplicity of our Program. Let's not louse it all up with Freudian complexes and things that are interesting to the scientific mind, but have very little to do with our actual AA work. Our 12 Steps, when simmered down to the last, resolve themselves into the words love and service. We understand what love is and we understand what service is. So let's bear those two things in mind.

"Let us also remember to guard that erring member - the tongue, and if we must use it, let's use it with kindness and consideration and tolerance."

"And one more thing; none of us would be here today if somebody hadn't taken time to explain things to us, to give us a little pat on the back, to take us to a meeting or two, to have done numerous little kind and thoughtful acts in our behalf. So let us never get the degree of smug complacency so that we're not willing to extend or attempt to, that help which has been so beneficial to us, to our less fortunate brothers. Thank you very much."

of them asks these questions: “Just how anonymous are we supposed to be?” and “After all, what good is this principle of anonymity anyway?” To a great extent each group has settled upon its own interpretation. Naturally enough wide differences of opinion remain among us. Just what our anonymity means and just how far it ought to go are unsettled questions.

Though we no longer fear the stigma of alcoholism as we once did, we still find individuals who are extremely sensitive about their connection with us. A few come in under assumed names. Others swear us to the deepest secrecy. They fear their connection with Alcoholics Anonymous may ruin their business or social position. At the other end of the scale of opinion we have the individual who declares that anonymity is a lot of childish nonsense. He feels it his bounden duty to cry his membership in Alcoholics Anonymous from the housetops. He points out that our AA Fellowship contains people of renown, some of national importance. Why, he asks, shouldn't we capitalize on their personal prestige just as any other organization would?

In between these extremes the shades of opinion are legion. Some groups, especially newer ones, conduct themselves like secret societies. They do not wish their activities known even to friends. Nor do they propose to have preachers, doctors, or even their wives at any of their meetings. As for inviting in newspaper reporters - perish the thought!

Other groups feel that their communities should know all about Alcoholics Anonymous. Though they print no names, they do seize every opportunity to advertise the activities of their group. They occasionally hold public or semipublic meetings where AAs appear on the platform by name. Doctors, clergymen and public officials are frequently invited to speak at such gatherings. Here and there a few AAs have dropped their anonymity completely. Their names, pictures and personal activities have appeared in the public print. As AAs they have sometimes signed their names to articles telling of their membership. So while it is quite evident that most of us believe in anonymity, our practice of the principle does vary a great deal. And, indeed, we must realize that the future safety and effectiveness of Alcoholics Anonymous may depend upon its preservation.

The vital question is. Just where shall we fix this point where personalities fade out and anonymity begins? As a matter of fact, few of us are anonymous so far as our daily contacts go. We have dropped anonymity at this level because we think our friends and associates ought to know about Alcoholics Anonymous and what it has done for us. We also wish to lose the fear of admitting that we are alcoholics. Though we earnestly request reporters not to disclose our identities, we frequently speak before semipublic gatherings under our right names. We wish to

impress audiences that our alcoholism is a sickness we no longer fear to discuss before anyone. So far, so good. If, however, we venture beyond this limit we shall surely lose the principle of anonymity forever. If every AA felt free to publish his own name, picture and story we would soon be launched upon a vast orgy of personal publicity which obviously could have no limit whatever. Isn't this where, by the strongest kind of tradition, we must draw the line?

1. Therefore, it should be the privilege of each AA to cloak himself with as much personal anonymity as he desires. His fellow AAs should respect his wishes and help guard whatever status he wants to assume.
2. Conversely, the individual AA ought to respect the feeling of his local group about anonymity. If members of his group wish to be less conspicuous in their locality than he does, he ought to go along with them unless they change their views.
3. It ought to be a worldwide policy that no member of Alcoholics Anonymous shall ever feel free to publish, in connection with any AA activity, his name or picture in mediums of public circulation. This would not, however, restrict the use of his name in other public activities provided, of course, he does not disclose his AA membership.

If these suggestions, or variations of them, are to be adopted as a general policy, every AA will want to know more about our experience so far. He will surely wish to know how most of our older members are thinking on the subject of anonymity at the present time. It will be the purpose of this piece to bring everybody up-to-date on our collective experience.

Firstly, I believe most of us would agree that the general idea of anonymity is sound, because it encourages alcoholics and the families of alcoholics to approach us for help. Still fearful of being stigmatized, they regard our anonymity as an assurance their problems will be kept confidential; that the alcoholic skeleton in the family closet will not wander in the streets.

Secondly, the policy of anonymity is a protection to our cause. It prevents our founders or leaders, so-called, from becoming household names who might at any time get drunk and give AA a black eye. No one need say that couldn't happen here. It could.

Thirdly, almost every newspaper reporter who covers us complains, at first, of the difficulty of writing his story without names. But he quickly forgets this difficulty when he realizes that here is a group of people who care nothing for personal gain. Probably it is the first time in his life he has ever reported an organization which wants no personal publicity. Cynic though he may be, this obvious sincerity instantly transforms him into a friend of AA. Therefore his piece is a friendly piece, never a routine job. It is enthusiastic writing because the reporter feels that way himself.

People often ask how Alcoholics Anonymous has been able to secure such an incredible amount of excellent publicity. The answer seems to be that practically everyone who writes about us becomes an AA convert, sometimes a zealot. Is not our policy of anonymity mainly responsible for this phenomenon?

Fourthly, why does the general public regard us so favorably? Is it simply because we are bringing recovery to lots of alcoholics? No, this can hardly be the whole story. However impressed he may be by our recoveries, John Q. Public is even more interested in our way of life. Weary of pressure selling, spectacular promotion and shouting public characters, he is refreshed by our quietness. Modesty and anonymity. It well may be that he feels a great spiritual power is being generated on this account-that something new has come into his own life.

If anonymity has already done these things for us, we surely ought to continue it as a general policy. So very valuable to us now, it may become an incalculable asset for the future. In a spiritual sense, anonymity amounts to the renunciation of personal prestige as an instrument of general policy. I am confident that we shall do well to preserve this powerful principle; that we should resolve never to let go of it.

Now what about its application? Since we advertise anonymity to every newcomer, we ought, of course, to preserve a new member's anonymity so long as he wishes it preserved-because, when he read our publicity and came to us, we contracted to do exactly that. And even if he wants to come in under an assumed name, we should assure him he can. If he wishes us to refrain from discussing his case with anyone, even other AA members, we ought to respect that wish too. While most newcomers do not care a rap who knows about their alcoholism, there are others who care very much. Let us guard them in every way until they get over that feeling.

Then comes the problem of the newcomer who wishes to drop his anonymity too fast. He rushes to all his friends with the glad news of AA. If his group does not caution him he may rush to a newspaper office or a microphone to tell the wide world all about himself. He is also likely to tell everyone the innermost details of his personal life, soon to find that, in this respect, he has altogether too much publicity! We ought to suggest to him that he take things easy; that he first get on his own feet before talking about AA to all and sundry; that no one thinks of publicizing AA without being sure of the approval of his own group.

Then there is the problem of group anonymity. Like the individual, it is probable that the group ought to feel its way along cautiously until it gains strength and experience. There should not be too much haste to bring in outsiders or to set up public meetings. Yet this early conservatism can be overdone. Some groups go on, year after year, shunning all publicity or any meetings except those for

alcoholics only. Such groups are apt to grow slowly. They become stale because they are not taking in fresh blood fast enough. In their anxiety to maintain secrecy they forget their obligation to other alcoholics in their communities who have not heard that AA has come to town. But this unreasonable caution eventually breaks down. Little by little some meetings are opened to families and close friends. Clergymen and doctors may now and then be invited. Finally the group enlists the aid of the local newspaper.

In most places, but not all, it is customary for AAs to use their own names when speaking before public or semipublic gatherings. This is done to impress audiences that we no longer fear the stigma of alcoholism. If, however, newspaper reporters are present they are earnestly requested not to use the names of any of the alcoholic speakers on the program. This preserves the principle of anonymity so far as the general public is concerned and at the same time represents us as a group of alcoholics who no longer fear to let our friends know that we have been very sick people.

In practice then, the principle of anonymity seems to come down to this: with one very important exception, the question of how far each individual or group shall go in dropping anonymity is left strictly to the individual or group concerned. The exception is: that all groups or individuals, when writing or speaking for publication as members of Alcoholics Anonymous, feel bound never to disclose their true names. It is at this point of publication that we feel we should draw the line on anonymity. We ought not disclose ourselves to the general public through the media of the press, in pictures or on the radio. Any who would drop their anonymity must reflect that they may set a precedent which could eventually destroy a valuable principle. We must never let any immediate advantage shake us in our determination to keep intact such a really vital tradition.

Great modesty and humility are needed by every AA for his own permanent recovery. If these virtues are such vital needs to the individual, so must they be to AA as a whole. This principle of anonymity before the general public can, if we take it seriously enough, guarantee the Alcoholics Anonymous movement these sterling attributes forever. Our public relations policy should mainly rest upon the principle of attraction and seldom, if ever, upon promotion.

