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encouraging a life of recovery

2006 summer newsletter

12

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Message from the President

This past year has been one of tremendous opportunity for The Retreat. We have seen an increased demand for our services, and again we find ourselves on the eve of expansion. Construction will soon be under way on the new McIver Family Center and Center for Spiritual Development. This new building will replace the old farmhouse on the east side of the property. Upon completion this



winter, we will transform our current 20-bed Family Center into The Retreat's Center for Women's Recovery and begin providing autonomous gender-specific programs for both men and women.

By the end of the year, The Retreat will have 60 beds in our 30-day retreat program, 40 for men and 20 for women, and an 18-bed Family Center and Center for Spiritual development. We have also added to

our long-term sober-living residences. We now have four duplexes in the historic Crocus Hill area of St. Paul, totaling 56 beds (12 women and 44 men).

We are excited about the opportunity to serve more people and humbled by the grace that has been bestowed on us these past eight years. A question on all of our minds as we move forward is how do we grow, yet remain small?

We believe it is vital that we maintain the intimacy and personal relationships that have made The Retreat experience so special. A common challenge many organizations face as they prepare to meet the needs of their expanding business is creating layers of leadership, administrative and program staff, all operating within structured and sometimes quite rigid silos. These structures often distance the staff from each other, and

most importantly, from those seeking their guidance and support. One of the great joys of The Retreat is that the entire staff participates in the "love & service" culture of the organization, each dedicated to carrying the message of hope and recovery.

The heart and soul of The Retreat is found in the "Caring Community". This community is the result of people, at all levels of the organization, caring

for and supporting one another in recovery and spiritual growth. Everyone from our program and administrative staff, to our Board of Directors and volunteers, are living examples of the power

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the language of the heart."**

of recovery. Wherever you look, you see and experience the language of the heart. Each member of this community serves to enrich the experience of the guests, families and friends of The Retreat. We do this best by living these values ourselves. The Caring Community begins from within. It is the embodiment of all that is so special about The Retreat experience.

It is my hope and commitment, as we continue to grow, that we will be forever mindful of practicing the principles and values that are at the core of what makes recovery possible in all our lives.

In gratitude,

John Curtiss

A Champion's Perspective

Women's Spiritual Retreat: Getting Real with God, Self and Others



More than anything, the disease of alcoholism is one of isolation, and it is a sense of lasting connectedness and community that often signifies true recovery. However, as any recovering person will tell you, relationships don't always come easily, nor do they work out as planned or as hoped for.

Knowing the importance of relationships with God, self and others, Alex S., a longtime volunteer and advocate of The Retreat, decided to plan and coordinate a women's weekend retreat that focused on this topic. "I wanted to provide women with the opportunity to explore an issue of vital importance to long-term, healthy sobriety and have it in the safe environment of The Retreat," said Alex.

The weekend was based on the Twelve Steps and utilized other spiritual resources available through The Retreat. Participants explored their relationships with God, self and others through discussion, prayer, meditation, fellowship and speaker presentations. "We really could have used another day, but we

were so exhausted," Alex said with a laugh. "The whole thing ended up being so much more than I anticipated. It was fun!"

Men's Spiritual Retreat: Unfolding Spirituality

Rod B. attended his first men's retreat this past winter. On the advice of his sponsor Bob B., he and 15 friends and sponsees, with sobriety ranging from three to 38 years, drove from Des Moines for a weekend at The Retreat to deepen their commitment to spirituality. "We decided not to limit ourselves to any one topic," said Rod. "We wanted to leave it open, but we were



Pictured from left to right: Dick Rice, Bob B. and Rod B.

able to get all the direction we needed from the staff on how to structure the weekend. There was a free flowing of spirit, openness and honesty that I'd never experienced before."



If you are interested in putting a retreat together or attending a weekend at The Retreat's Center for Spiritual Development, please contact John Leonard or Dick Rice at 952-476-0566.

Women's Recovery Taking Center Stage

This summer, as everything in nature signifies growth and new beginnings, The Retreat begins its own journey toward new things. Plans to replace the old farmhouse on the property with a newly constructed building are well underway. This beautiful new facility will house our 18-bed Family Program and Center for Spiritual Development. The new construction will make way for The Retreat's new Center for Women's Recovery. Come winter, The Retreat will operate autonomous programs for men and women, with a 40-bed men's unit and a 20-bed women's unit.

Born out of Demand and Necessity

The need for a separate women's program became apparent as we placed more and more women on the waiting list for our 30-day program. Although the increasing numbers of women seeking recovery through The Retreat presents an air of optimism and hope, it also presents some of the challenges that accompany growth. One such challenge for The Retreat is creating a community of support for the new program. The Retreat is unique in that we rely heavily on the recovering community to carry the message of change to our guests. The Retreat has been blessed by the help of many women having long-term recovery and we are confident they will take ownership of the new program.

Spiritual Transformation

Women face many challenges in early recovery. Our goal is to provide an immersion in the spirituality of change and the support women need. With these elements in place, spiritual transformation occurs, a change that happens when God works

through community in people's lives. Recovery is not the absence of problems; it is about having a community of support and a program of living so that when life hits you in the face, you have the tools to persevere.



Connection is Key

Our friends consistently tell us that their recovery really came alive when they began to connect with other women. Having people in their lives to teach them how to live the principles embodied in the Twelve Steps is a key ingredient to early recovery. For example, Meredith, a young woman who lived in The Retreat's sober living residence for 11 months says, "For me it's about community. I wouldn't be here if it weren't for that experience. I would've died. I went from total isolation to having a huge support group. It's that feeling of being a 'part of' — that connection to people — that's what saved me."

Meredith also said the core of her sobriety is built on spirituality and her relationship with her Higher Power. When asked how she got there, she responded, "By hanging out with women and by following the people who have gone before me. I heard Diane and my sponsor both say 'surround yourself with women,' so that's what I did." Andrea, another friend and a longtime member of the sober community, described her recovery in similar terms. When asked why she still regularly attends meetings of Alcoholics

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Anonymous after all these years, she replied, "Because it pulls me into community. My disease is one of isolation, which for me is a living death."

The common message we hear from the women in our community is that recovery embodies a connection with others and a Higher Power made possible through the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous. These elements are at the core of the women's program. We are excited and grateful to be opening a new Women's Center, and we are confident that the women of the Twin Cities will embrace the new program as their own. Please call us if you would like to get involved and help carry the message of recovery.

Lineup of Events



Golf Extravaganza

The Fourth Annual Golf Extravaganza teed off this year at Oak Glen Golf Course in Stillwater. The golf committee planned a great event under the leadership of Christopher McIver, and it was another sellout year. The committee anticipates raising \$70,000 net to support The Retreat Guest Scholarship Fund, more than twice the amount raised in 2005.

"This year's event is sponsored by nearly 40 businesses and individuals that are attracted to The Retreat's

mission," McIver points out, "and nearly half of them are local and national businesses that are supporting The Retreat for the first time." McIver adds, "The committee wants the Golf Extravaganza to be fun and memorable, but more importantly, we want contributors and golfers to derive personal satisfaction from knowing that through their support, chemically dependent men and women who lack the financial resources can get the life-saving help they need."



Imagine

Imagine 2006 will be held on November 4 at the Metropolitan. Connie Hilliard and Mary Wozniak, co-chairs of this year's gala, are recruiting a committee to spearhead the effort. Connie and Mary expressed their commitment to keeping the mission of The Retreat at the forefront of the event this year as well as educating newcomers about the organization and creating an atmosphere of good conversation and celebration. "We want this event to reflect The Retreat's values and culture," states Mary, "while raising money to support the Making Room for Recovery Capital Campaign and The Retreat's Guest Scholarship Fund."

And the Award Goes To...

The Retreat is pleased to announce that Wheelock Whitney will be the 2006 recipient of the George Mann Spirit of Community Award. A leader, visionary and philanthropist in the field of addiction care, Whitney helped

guide The Retreat from concept to reality by serving as a supporter, mentor and advocate each step of the way. "We owe Wheelock a great debt of gratitude for his invaluable council and generous support over the years," comments Retreat President, John Curtiss. "His years of dedication to the recovery field and to The Retreat have made recovery possible for thousands of individuals and their families."

Special Guest

Paul Williams, gifted and prolific lyricist, composer, singer, actor and recovering addict will perform and tell his story. He has won Grammy, Golden Globe and Oscar Awards, and in 2001 was inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame. Paul has been active for a number of years as a speaker on addiction and recovery, sharing his story and talking to audiences about the devastating effects of drugs and alcohol. Paul is looking forward to participating in the Imagine event and connecting with his numerous friends in the Twin Cities.



Partnership Forged with Recovery Circles Foundation

Recovery Circles Foundation Approves \$20,000 Matching Grant for The Retreat's Scholarship Fund



Earlier this year The Retreat contacted Recovery Circles Foundation (RCF) board member and Vice President Sean Ford to discuss how the two organizations might work together. It was quickly realized that both organizations shared a common mission and commitment: to provide affordable and easy-to-access services for men and women who are hungry for recovery but unable to pay for the level of care they require.

Within two weeks a partnership was formed and The Retreat applied to RCF for a grant and received its first scholarship of \$1,800. RCF has provided \$12,000 in scholarships over the past five months, helping six people participate in The Retreat's month-long residential program. In recognition of The Retreat's commitment to keeping its services accessible and affordable, RCF recently approved a \$20,000 matching grant to support the Scholarship Fund.

Ford expressed his commitment to affordable care and the new partnership with The Retreat. "We are delighted to be working with an organization like The Retreat that shares similar values and a passion for helping individuals to recover. We hope that this matching gift will inspire others to give to The Retreat in support of its lifesaving work. For those who want to learn more about the Recovery

Circles Foundation, I encourage them to go to www.recoverycirclesfoundation.org."

"This is a tremendous opportunity for The Retreat to enlist the financial support of its alumni, potential contributors and existing donors," says Vice President of Development, Bruce Binger. Contributors welcome collaborations among not-for-profits, especially when they know it leverages their own giving. In this case, 50% of the value of each scholarship gift will be matched through The Retreat/Recovery Circles Foundation Partnership. The Retreat provides \$100,000 a year in scholarships to help nearly a third of its guests receive the help they need. "Next year scholarships will be increased by 30%," states Binger.

Those who wish to support this program can simply complete the response envelope by checking the box in front of Guest Scholarship Matching Gift, provide the method of payment and return the envelope to The Retreat. People wanting more information can call The Retreat or go to www.theretreat.org and click on *donations*, then *online donations form*, and follow the instructions to the secure site. Binger adds, "If we can raise \$40,000 by December 31, we will receive the entire \$20,000 matching gift from the Recovery Circles Foundation."

"This partnership could not have come at a better time," said Retreat President, John Curtiss. "We've seen the requests for financial assistance double over the past year and we are hard pressed to keep pace with the need."



Making Room for Recovery Campaign Surpasses \$4.2 Million

"We are delighted to report that we have gone over the \$4 million mark and are more than two-thirds of the way to our \$6.25 million goal," remarked campaign chair Peter Vogt. "We deeply appreciate the support received from the many individuals, foundations and businesses who believe in The Retreat's mission and recognize the lifesaving work we do. I also wish to thank the members of the campaign committee for their hard work and dedication to this project."

ahead to help engage the broader community in the capital project. Construction of the new McIver Family Center will begin in July and services are scheduled to begin in 2007. This lovely 7,200 square foot facility represents Phase III of the project and makes a full complement of services possible. The Retreat will be able to serve more than 1,200 men and women annually at its new location and an additional 60 men and women yearly at its five sober residences located in St. Paul.

Real people making real progress

I have been a member of Al-Anon for seven years and had been through a number of family programs. My wife had been through treatment a number of times. We both feel that The Retreat's Family Program was the best experience, and it left us both with hope for ourselves as individuals and as a couple. The Retreat has a non-confrontational approach where the focus is on me and the steps. I discovered a renewed closeness to God, to myself, to my wife and my Al-Anon program.

I still am scared, I still don't always do or say the right thing, life is still hard at times, but I have found more calm, quiet times that feed my soul. I know that my life will be good. I now see many wonderful things to be grateful for and have a more complete set of tools to deal with this disease.

Ted A.

Making Room for Recovery Campaign

\$4.2
MILLION

\$6,250,000

"The campaign is at an important juncture," observes Vice President of Development, Bruce Binger. "As we begin to tell the story and introduce our organization to the broader community and to prospective contributors who may be learning about our mission for the first time, it is important that we demonstrate how we are a valuable and unique resource that is effectively addressing alcohol and drug dependency, undisputedly a serious and pervasive community problem."

Additional members will be recruited to the campaign committee in the weeks

Breaking New Ground For Families in Recovery



Left to right: Wayzata Mayor Andrew Humphrey; Bob Harvey; Congressman Jim Ramstad; Christopher McIver; John Curtiss; Charlie Sweatt, Jr.; Terry Troy; Kevin Hart; John Brown, Jr.; Larry Koll; John Beal; George Mann and Larry Hendrickson at the ground-breaking ceremony for the McIver Family Center.

Calendar of Events

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| June 23 | Open — Alumni & Friends Retreat |
| June 30 | Open — Steps for spiritual directors, therapists and counselors |
| July 14 | Closed — Private Retreat |
| July 28 | Retreat Weekend — open for bookings |
| Aug 11 | Retreat Weekend — open for bookings |
| Aug 25 | Retreat Weekend — open for bookings |
| Sept 1 | Retreat Weekend — open for bookings |
| Sept 15 | Open — Ellie Hyatt Al-Anon Women's Retreat |
| Sept 28 | Closed — Corporate T-Group Training Retreat |
| Oct 13 | Open — Twelve Steps with Andrew Z. and Aaron M. |
| Oct 27 | Closed — Corporate T-Group Training Retreat |
| Nov 10 | Closed — Private Retreat |
| Nov 24 | Open — Men's Retreat |
| Dec 1 | Open — Women's Retreat |
| Dec 15 | Retreat Weekend — open for bookings |

Imagine:

November 4 – IMAGINE 2006

The Retreat's annual fundraising event.

More information coming soon.

Holiday Call-Up Meeting:

December 14 – Annual Holiday Call-Up Meeting

5:30-7 pm Social Hour ~ 7-9 pm Meeting

Join us for holiday fun and cheer followed by our annual Holiday Call-Up Meeting. Many say this is the best meeting of the year!

Regular Monthly Events

First Wednesday of the Month

Alumni sponsored spiritual group – 7:00 pm at The Retreat

Come join other Retreat alum in discussing various spiritual topics led by our Spiritual Director, Dick Rice.

Second Monday & Fourth Tuesday of the Month

Alumni meeting – 7:30 pm at The Retreat

Alumni share their experience of leaving The Retreat and answer questions from current guests. They need to hear from you!

Al-Anon Meetings at The Retreat:

Tuesday 7 pm & Sunday 1 pm

The Retreat Family Program

Attend one of our Family Weekends

Program runs Thursday evening through Sunday, every first & third Thursday of the month.

Visit theretreat.org for more information.

