



6th Annual Celebration of Recovery, April 21st

The Celebration of Recovery gets better every year. This year we had more attendees, 226, a more profitable silent auction, a great response to our 50/50 raffle, a new basket raffle, 8 Sponsored Tables, and a larger net profit, almost \$22,000.

But beyond the bottom line profit, the Celebration of Recovery is as much about the men and the program as it is about the dollars. Three men told their addiction stories from the dais:

Joe, 37, started using marijuana and alcohol at age 12 in Milwaukee and until recently was hooked on heroin. Soon to have his Rite of Passage and move into his own apartment, he is celebrating 5 months clean, a milestone for Joe, and enjoying a job where he is being recognized for his diligence and work ethic.



Joe



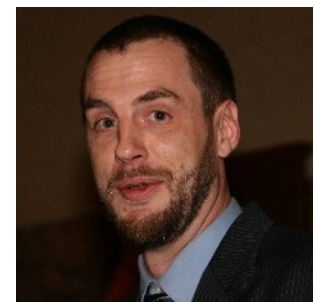
Romell Brown graduated from the program 7 months ago after many years of addiction and relapses along the way. While at the Inn he found a job he loves helping young disabled men to become productive and has reunited with his family.



Romell Brown



Doug McFaul, age 36 and the Alumnus of the Year, has 14+ months clean, the longest he has lived without drugs since he was 19. He feels HOPE for the first time that he can remember.



Doug McFaul



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The men each spoke about their faith, about realizing they had missed a relationship with God. Each is now coming to feel that God has a purpose for him.

The men's stories were validated by the Honorable Carl Ashley who spoke briefly about the heroin epidemic in our city and about the good work that Serenity Inn is doing to help men become productive members of society.

Two "firsts" at this year's Celebration were the MC and the Alumni Gift. The role of Master of Ceremonies was performed most capably by Serenity Inns graduate, Clarence McGowan, and the Alumni Association—all SI graduates-- presented a check for \$500 to Ellen Blathers, the Executive Director.

The Community Partner Award went to the Siebert Lutheran Foundation. David Romoser, a Director on the SI Board, presented the Award to the Siebert Foundation; the foundation has partnered with SI since the Inn opened its doors in 2004.



Jim Stingl

Photo from Facebook

Jim Stingl Comes to Dinner Fellowship & What Followed...

Journal Sentinel Reporter Jim Stingl joined dinner fellowship volunteers at the Inn on April 6 and wrote about his experience in the Sunday, April 10 edition. Titled, "A helping hand on new path," he began with the byline, "At Serenity Inns, heroin addicts learn to survive" and began the story with "Let's break from the headlines and talk about people *not* dying of heroin and other dangerous drugs."

The staff, board of directors, residents, and volunteers were very pleased with the press coverage (finally) and with the positive spin Stingl put on the heroin crisis because of the help available from programs like the one at Serenity Inn.

The article elicited phone calls to the Executive Director from family members with addicted relatives, a donation or two on the SI website and a call from a physical education/health teacher at Riverside High School asking if someone from the Inn might be available to speak with his classes about drug use/abuse.

As a result, Jason Dobson, SI graduate and now a part-time addictions counselor at the Inn and working on a BS degree in counseling, and SI graduate and 2016 Alumnus of the Year, Doug McFaul, spent a day talking to 8 health classes, sharing their stories of recovery. They did 20-minute sessions and tag-teamed in their presentations.

The two health teachers involved were extremely impressed with Jason and Doug's handling of the sessions and have offered to move forward with a recommendation that programs like this one be repeated in other MPS schools as part of a drug education program.

The staff and board of directors are excited about this possibility since it would give SI graduates the opportunity to tell their stories and to spread the word about the merits of the SI program—all as part of an effort to educate young people about the perils of drug addiction.



**Join us at the Inn for the Annual Cookout/Picnic
on Saturday, September 10, 2016 from 3-5 p.m.**

Memorial to Robert Love



Robert Love, age 67, passed away on February 24, 2016 of complications related to COPD. He was known to staff, volunteers, and many residents of Serenity Inn as the first graduate of the program to be hired as a part-time innkeeper.

Before illness made it impossible, Robert was employed at Step Industries as a supervisor, having been hired there in April 2010 when he was a resident of Serenity Inn. Robert is remembered by his many Serenity Inn friends and by his friends at Hephatha Lutheran Church where he was a member. Hephatha remembers Robert as a quiet, friendly man who was part of the volunteer welcoming team at the morning worship many Sundays and part of the cleanup crew after the service.

A service was held for Robert at Hephatha on Sunday, March 6, 2016 with Pr. Mary Martha Kannass officiating.

Lorraine and Jim Bahr presented a \$500 gift in memory of Robert Love at the Celebration of Recovery on April 21, 2016—given as a match of the \$500 given by the Alumni Association to Serenity Inns earlier at the same event.



Robert Love

Celebration of Recovery Donors April 21, 2016

We thank all those who helped with their donations to make the 6th Annual Celebration of Recovery another resounding success.

Table Sponsors (HOPE, \$1,000)

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Mission statement

To provide structured housing and rehabilitative services in an environment of support and accountability that will give addicted men the opportunity to rebuild their lives.

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Check our new website for past issues

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