



# Save The Date!

## Thursday, April 21, 2016

### Serenity Inns, Inc.

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Ellen Blathers  
Executive Director

Watch your mailbox in early March for your invitation to the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Celebration of Recovery Dinner and Silent Auction at the Italian Community Center in Milwaukee's Third Ward. For a second year, we have chosen a Thursday evening that need not interfere with your weekend plans.

### Board of Directors

*President*  
Aaron Pressie, Interim

*Treasurer*  
Carla Stensberg

*Secretary*  
Lorraine Buehler

### Directors:

Joe Ellwanger

Bill Martens

Ralph McClure

Rick Deines

William Krugler

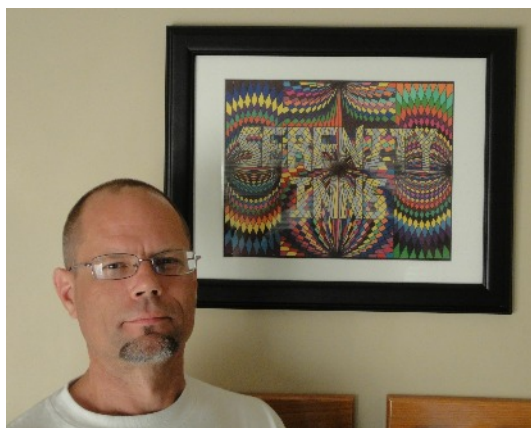
JoAnn Weishan

Ellen Luby

Craig Watson

W David Romoser

## New Artwork



A recent graduate, **Steve Fendley**, created this artwork while a Serenity Inn resident. He wanted to do something for the house and is honored to have it hung in the entryway. Steve enjoys the close work with ink and marker, a form of zen meditation for him in the 80 hours it took him to complete.



## WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

(The 22nd in a series of Interviews with Alumni)

by Lorraine Buehler

Phil Johnson found Serenity Inn on September 5, 2014 after hitting rock bottom; he was homeless, bouncing around because of drinking and unable to keep a job. A friend who found him sleeping in a garage told him he needed to stop, and he took Phil to detox. At age thirty-seven, this was Phil's 7<sup>th</sup> time in detox, having been introduced to drugs at age 15 when he started to smoke weed. Marijuana soon led to alcohol which became Phil's drug of choice.

Serenity Inn was Phil's third time in treatment. He says of his 7 months at the Inn, "I was able to make a 180 turn in my life." In Phase two of the program, he found a decent job at Harley Davidson and took advantage of what the Serenity Inn programming offered him. Money Management taught him that just because he had money in his pocket, he didn't have to spend it, and from dinner fellowship he (an introvert) learned to interact more and to get out of himself. Looking back, he realizes in his addiction he had focused way too much on himself.

Phil left the program after 7 months and went back to his former job as a barber. He is building up his business again but with a new career goal in mind. He is attending MATC to earn a Network Specialist Certification, on his way to getting an Associates Degree and, when he finishes in three years, to work in Information Technology.



Phil Johnson

Phil is more secure in his recovery than in the past, having acquired more tools to stay that way. When his car was stolen on June 1, it would have been a trigger in the past for him to drink, but instead of that "easy answer" to adversity, he resolved to stay sober this time. He walked to work, took the bus to MATC and when the police found his car, he paid the bills to retrieve it from the city "pound" and to fix the broken windows. The future looks brighter as Phil continues to move forward in his recovery.

# THANK YOU

## MOVING ON...

At its July meeting, Tim McMurtry II announced his resignation from the Serenity Inns Board of Directors. Tim has been an advocate for Serenity Inns from the very beginning (2001) when a group began to explore the feasibility of a residence for men in recovery in the central city and to look for a suitable building. For the last 3½ years, Tim has served as Board President.



Tim McMurtry

Tim summed up his time on the Board as “rewarding,” especially in his interactions with the residents at the Inn. This new “season” in his life has seen him launch a new business, and he will continue to give back to the community with his involvement in two organizations: BASICS (Brother and Sisters in Christ Serving), and an offshoot of BASICS, GENESIS.

Clearly, Tim will continue to give back to the community. As part of the new trajectory in his life, he will also explore his role in the ministry of his church.

Tim feels this is a good time to move on because Serenity Inns has a strong Board and is in a very good place, poised for the Next Chapter that involves expansion. There is seed money for the expansion, a solid staff in place, a strong reputation in the community, and an increasing need to support SI graduates.

Aaron Pressie will step in as interim Board President to finish the year until he can be officially appointed in 2016.

**Thanks, Tim,** for all you have done to support and promote the mission of Serenity Inns in your years with the organization! We wish you well!

Best  
Wishes

Tim’s vacancy on the Board leaves a spot for another Friend of Serenity Inns. We are always looking for seasoned professionals who are willing to put their amazing gifts to use for Serenity Inns. Contact Ellen Blathers or any member of the Board to declare your interest.

# THANK YOU

## Join us for the Annual Picnic/Cookout

**When: Saturday, September 12, 3-6 p.m.**

**Where: Serenity Inn, 2825 W. Brown St.**



2014 picnic

The Alumni Group is in charge, and they and the residents will be cooking the hamburgers and the brats as a thank you to volunteers.

Please come and meet your favorite residents and graduates.

RSVP to Ellen Blathers by Thursday, Sept. 3 if you can attend: 414-873-5474, **siellen@att.net**.

## 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.

### Newsletter Staff

Editor: Lorraine Buehler, [lcbuehler@cs.com](mailto:lcbuehler@cs.com)  
Webmaster: David Hearn  
Publisher: Susie Hansen

Check our website for past issues

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