



# The Gateway

Summer 2020

*Volunteer Spotlight*

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## Meet the Voice

### *Introducing Emily Fannin*

Meet Emily Fannin, former Fellowship Hall guest and this year's Voice for Fellowship Hall's upcoming Conference on July 31, 2020. Today, Emily conducts breast cancer research at Wake Forest School of Medicine. The focus of her work is looking for new ways to determine the most effective treatment for patients, working toward reduced treatment times and costs.

Just four years ago, Emily found herself, as many do, at the end of her rope: "I knew I needed help when I realized I was drinking myself to death." Luckily, the end of that rope led her to Fellowship Hall where she found sobriety and a new lease on life. Today, she has discovered a sense of purpose by serving as a volunteer to help others struggling with substance use disorder.

During her recovery, Emily was able to be honest for the first time in her life. She felt safe and protected -- the same feelings that have kept her involved with Fellowship Hall. Thinking back about her time in the program, she remembers the personal relationships she developed and the care from all of the staff, not just the counselors and therapy assistants. "I

remember Mike Yow looking me dead in the eye, and saying, 'How's that working out for you, Emily?'" She knew then the folks at Fellowship Hall had her best interest in mind.

Extended Treatment was where Emily realized just how much of her life had been driven by shame, guilt, and fear. Before Fellowship Hall, she had low self-esteem. Treatment and recovery gave her confidence and helped her understand that she wasn't only worthy, but priceless. For the first time in Emily's adult life, she was certain that she had value. "I know that Fellowship Hall saved my life," she said.

When Emily is not busy researching and revolutionizing costs and procedures of breast cancer treatment for patients, she's diligently giving back to Fellowship Hall. "In general, the attitude of helping other people is the



focus of my life now," Emily said. Since her recovery, she no longer thinks about herself all of the time, but about sharing the hope she has found with others.

Each Wednesday night, she takes the women in the program to the local AA meeting. Most Sundays, you can find her in the women's lodge assisting with visitation. But her most exciting role is her position with the Fellowship Hall Council -- a group that puts together the Fellowship Hall Conference each year. She has served as a member of the Council since 2017, working as both a Host and on the Speaker Selection Committee. This year Emily has been named the Voice.

# Message from Mike

So here we are going into the 5<sup>th</sup> month of COVID-19. In addition to the stress, push-back and uncertainty it has created, we've had the added reality and tension around racial injustices, police reform, protests, riots and a general divisiveness in our country.

The last five months at Fellowship Hall have been challenging. We have seen significant shortfalls in our revenues since Spring, due to the fact that many people who are seeking treatment are out of work and without health insurance or exhibit significant symptoms and/or exposure to COVID-19 – all of which creates a barrier to treatment.

These are certainly unprecedented times, but we also know that adversity and teamwork make us stronger. We have been leaning in to lessons of the past and reaching for a new future. We have been making changes in our operations and procedures to keep our staff and guests safe and our campus COVID free. I am happy to report, so far so good. We have remained open and intend to remain open, fulfilling our mission of helping the suffering alcoholic and addict.

I am confident that Fellowship Hall will stabilize and people will find their way back to treatment. I believe we are on the cusp of some big and new changes happening in our culture. There is so much to do!

In case you haven't visited our website lately, here are some of the significant changes we've made at Fellowship Hall as we work to keep our doors open and the magic of recovery alive:

- Staff are required to complete COVID screening each day when they report to work
- Staff and guests are required to wear facemasks at all times, except when they are able to maintain 6' of social distance between themselves and another person



- Sunday visitation has been suspended; guests may participate in video calls to loved ones during their counseling sessions.
- The Family Program has been relaunched to include educational videos online, in-person group sessions, and one individual counseling session.
- All 12-Step meetings are being held on-site or virtually.
- IOP has moved to a virtual platform.
- Outpatient services are offered via telehealth.
- Early Recovery Groups are required to complete COVID screening, wear face coverings, and are limited to 9 participants.
- New admissions are carefully screened for COVID. By early August, new admissions will be tested for COVID-19 before full admission into the program.

We are moving forward. You'll also see that we're taking our annual conference virtual this year and it will be free to everyone – but you have to register in order to get the Zoom link. You can find details at [www.FellowshipHall.com/conference](http://www.FellowshipHall.com/conference). There is a ton of work going on to get this set up. Our annual E. Raymond Alexander Jr. Memorial Golf Tournament is already sold out! It will look different this year, but it is happening. We keep rising to the occasion. We will continue to offer the best care we can to the guest who keep showing up.

As we move through the weeks and months ahead, support one another as best you can and stay in today.

In loving service,

Continued from page 1

As the Voice, Emily oversees Conference planning and works with Council volunteers who chair the Ice Cream Social, Picnic, Hospitality, and more. Her top priority -- and sometimes most intimidating job -- is to lead the Council's Speaker Selection Committee and recruit speakers to share their stories at Conference. "Cold calling terrifies me!" Emily said. However, she found herself uplifted while reaching out to individuals about speaking, even the ones that ended up being unable to participate in the Conference. The Speaker Committee secures at least five different speakers from across the United States each year. In regard to those speaking this year, Emily said that attendees will find the lineup to be, "super-diverse and exciting!"

Of all the roles and tasks she is responsible for, her favorite part about being the Voice is Emceeding the Conference – "I love a microphone!" She recommends service on the Council to anyone interested in volunteering with Fellowship Hall, "it's a great opportunity to put together an event that really draws people back to the Hall year after year. I look forward to it every year!" she said.

When asked where she might see herself in five years, Emily said she'll be continuing to help people in her personal and professional life. She is currently applying to social work school and redirecting her career to make this a reality. She hopes to continue to grow in recovery and help others.

Fellowship Hall's  
2020 Conference  
**IS GOING  
VIRTUAL!**

FRIDAY JULY 31 & SATURDAY AUGUST 1

moment of clarity 2020



Order Your  
Conference  
T-shirt online!



### *We can social distance and have our Conference, too!*

You're invited to Fellowship Hall's Conference, bringing together our recovery community for inspiration, encouragement, and fellowship – online via Zoom. We've put together a great line-up of speakers, breakout rooms for small group discussions, a panel discussion – and even a Recovery Countdown & Gratitude Meeting! There's no registration fee this year and you can join on your phone or computer, but you must register to receive the zoom link!

**TO REGISTER, GO TO: [www.FellowshipHall.com/conference](http://www.FellowshipHall.com/conference)**

#### FRIDAY, JULY 31

- 7:00 pm ..... Welcoming Remarks, 2020 Spirit of Ray Award, State of the Hall
- 7:30 pm ..... NA Speaker
- 8:30pm ..... Recovery Countdown

#### SATURDAY, AUGUST 1

- 10:00 am..... Welcome and AA Speaker: Victor V from Arkansas
- 10:30 am..... Breakout Rooms: Newcomers 0-1 year; Newcomers 1 yr +; Women's Meeting; Men's Meeting; and Relapse Prevention
- 12:30 pm ..... Panel Discussion: Recovery in 2020
- 2:00 pm ..... Al-Anon Speaker: Vannoy S from Texas
- 3:30 pm ..... Breakout Rooms (same as above)
- 4:30 pm ..... Gratitude Meeting, SECU Lecture Hall, Alumni Out-patient Center
- 6:00 pm ..... AA Speaker: Steve L from Tennessee
- 7:00 pm ..... Closing Remarks

#### Concerned About Privacy on Zoom? Here Are Some Best Practices Security Tips

- DON'T share the conference zoom link on your social media pages.
- Once you join the meeting, change your screen name to your first name, last initial – just like our name badges would have been, if we were holding our conference in person. You can do this by opening the Participant window in Zoom, then click on your name. Select "More" then Rename.
- When you're not talking, MUTE your mic.
- Be mindful that attendees can SEE and HEAR you if your camera and mic are turned on. NOTE: Hosts WILL mute you or turn off your camera if you disrupt the meeting.

**NO REGISTRATION FEE • • • DONATIONS APPRECIATED**

# THE *Spirit* OF RAY

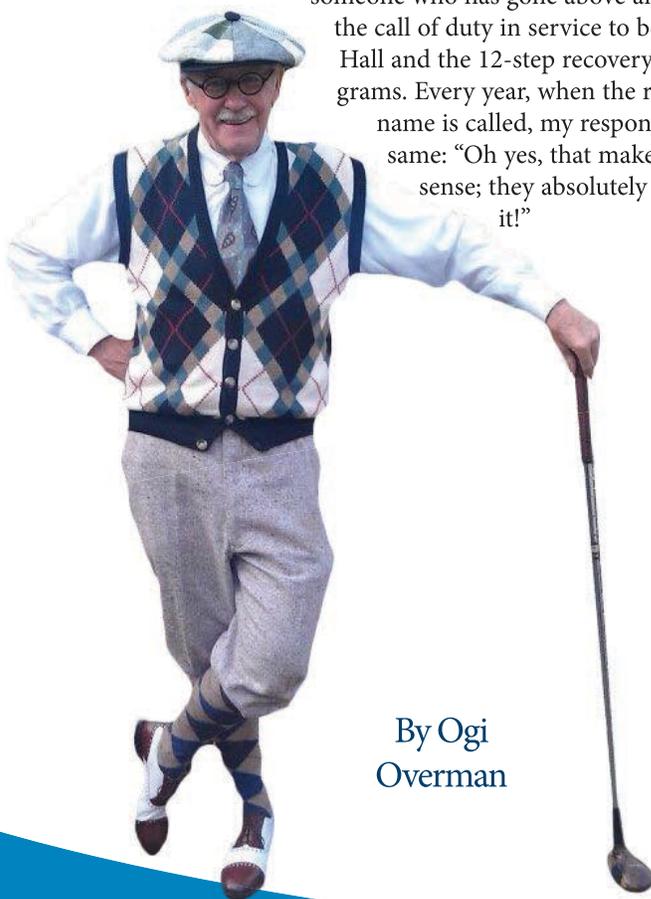


Mike G., Ogi O., Jake W.

A few weeks after E. Raymond Alexander, Jr. passed away on New Year's Eve, 2000, yours truly wrote a column titled "Everybody Loved Raymond." That column ultimately led to my being asked to edit *The Gateway* and videotape the annual conference after the passing of another legend, Lou Houston. While I relinquished those duties a few years ago, I've continued to write a column for the newsletter. But other than that and taking Fifth Steps whenever called upon, my association with Fellowship Hall is more that of a cheerleader than active participant.

Oh, I do break out my 1930s-era golfing attire and volunteer at the Hall's annual tournament, appropriately named after Ray, that raises funds to help family members of guests in treatment participate in the Family Program. But dressing up funny and hanging out at a beautiful golf course with my buddies in recovery can hardly be considered work.

A decade or so ago, the Hall established the *Spirit of Ray Award*, given out at the opening session of the annual conference, to honor someone who has gone above and beyond the call of duty in service to both the Hall and the 12-step recovery programs. Every year, when the recipient's name is called, my response is the same: "Oh yes, that makes perfect sense; they absolutely deserve it!"



By Ogi Overman

Until last year.

I was sitting there minding my own business, when the 2019 Golf Committee Chair Mike G., announced, "This year's Spirit of Ray award goes to ... Ogi Overman."

Now, those of you who know me know that I am rarely at a loss for words. Yet, I was so blindsided that the strange combination of shock, ecstasy and total unworthiness left me speechless. I blathered — truthfully, if incoherently — for a moment about not deserving this honor, before composing myself enough to utter something that made a little sense, roughly, "If there is one thing that might make me remotely worthy

of this award, it's that I truly loved Ray Alexander. I really did."

Then as soon as I said it, I glimpsed all the nodding heads in the audience and realized that there were thousands of folks who loved Ray Alexander, and therefore equally deserving. I recalled that column from 18 years ago and realized its veracity — that everybody really did love Raymond.

So, what was it about this guy that made him such a revered icon? Sure, he was an accomplished man; a lawyer and district attorney who, at the time, had just won reelection as a district court judge. He had some notoriety for establishing the state's first drug court, a process for getting help for first offenders rather than sending them to jail. He had a deep, rich voice that could be authoritative and compassionate at the same time. He laughed heartily, dined with friends regularly, danced like no one was watching, loved wife Carol passionately, and lived life with gusto.

And, despite his rigorous schedule, he managed to "suit up and show up" for at least five or six meetings a week. Afterward, people would flock to him seeking advice, guidance, or a simple smile, handshake and pat on the back. He had that magical quality of making you feel good about yourself just by being around him.

Although he was an avid golfer, a round meant more to him than a relaxing after-work pastime. He used it as a way to steer newcomers or relapsers or even active drunks in the right direction. In fact, there are a couple of past recipients of the Spirit of Ray award who trace their continued sobriety directly to his fairway chats.

The true source of this adoration for Ray, though, lay not in his charisma or zest for life or humility or even his love of AA and Fellowship Hall. It was his love of people — all people. He treated the millionaire and the pauper, the congressman and the convict, the Christian and the atheist exactly the same way. He gave them dignity and respect and hope. The love that was universally bestowed on him was the result of the love he radiated toward his fellow man.

And that's why I walk in his shadow.

# E. RAYMOND ALEXANDER JR.

## Memorial GOLF TOURNAMENT

FRIDAY • JULY 31 2020  
@ THE CARDINAL BY PETE DYE

Ray Alexander, Jr., understood well that recovery is a process of change and that managing the disease of addiction requires making healthy choices, having a stable and safe place to live, and having relationships and social networks to provide support, friendship, love, and hope.

For Ray, the best way to build a support system was spending quality time with friends on the golf course. It wasn't unusual for him to ask someone new to recovery to hit the links with him. Ray understood that building a strong support system is the foundation for establishing long-term recovery.

In 2001, after his untimely passing, Ray's friends came together to celebrate his loving spirit with the E. Raymond Alexander, Jr. Memorial Golf Tournament. For 19 years, the tournament has celebrated Ray's legacy of love and hope while providing financial support to Fellowship Hall. Proceeds from the tournament are used to support Fellowship Hall's Family Program with free tuition for one family member for each guest in treatment. Hundreds of families have been impacted with the tools the Family Program provides.



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When  
someone you know  
becomes a  
**MEMORY**  
...that memory  
becomes a  
*treasure*

AUTHOR UNKNOWN

Fellowship Hall is just a name, but the people behind the name are what makes our organization great. Over our nearly 50 years of operations, we've lost many beloved staff and board members due to illness, tragedy, and natural causes. It's never easy to say goodbye to those we cherished and admired. In honor of those individuals we have lost, we're starting a new *Fellowship Hall Memorial Fund* to remember them by planting a tree or shrub on our campus.

Employees, board members, and friends may make a donation to the fund by contacting our Director of Development, Altina Layman. Our first tree will be planted, thanks to the generosity of our staff, in memory of Scott Ciallella, one of our TAs who passed just last week. Below is a list of those we have lost in the last few years. We remember their contributions to helping the suffering alcoholic and addict with gratitude and thanksgiving that we had the opportunity to know them.

#### *Staff Members*

Scott Ciallella 6/20  
Donnie Gardner 6/20  
Craig Hilemn 9/19  
Wayne Stanfield 12/18  
Scott Forester 9/18

#### *Board Members*

James Key – 4/20  
Jerry Shelton – 12/19  
Mose Kiser – 12/18  
Dale Benschhoff – 10/18  
Merrill Norris – 11/17



## *Board News*

### **FH Welcomes New Board Members**

Welcome **Jack Register**, a licensed clinical social worker and addiction specialist. Jack has years of experience working with adolescents and adults struggling with addiction.

Welcome **Tod Collett**, owner of Tod Collett Builder, Inc. Tod brings a wealth of business experience and a passion for helping others build a life in long-term recovery.

Welcome **John Wood**, a retired MD who specialized in radiology. He moved to Greensboro from Winchester, VA. He is a big fan of Fellowship Hall.

### **Grateful for Faithful Service**

We are thankful for the those who commit and faithfully serve on our Board of Directors. This year, we give thanks for Ronnie Yeatts and Robert Lazorik, both of which resigned from service due to growing demands in their careers. We'd also like to extend our deepest sympathies to Athena (Tina) Harris who lost her husband Cliff in January and to the many friends and family of Jerry Shelton, who served as Board Chair and passed in December.

### **Fellowship Hall Foundation**

In January, the Fellowship Hall Board of Directors activated the Fellowship Hall Foundation whose mission is to maintain the financial security of the Hall through effective financial decision making. The Foundation is lead by a separate Board of Directors. We are grateful to these individuals for the gifts of their time and talents to support our organization.

# WALK *for* RECOVERY



## SUNDAY, October 18 2020 ~ 2pm-4pm

CENTER CITY PARK, DOWNTOWN GREENSBORO | 200 N ELM ST

Join us for a **FREE** community event to **CELEBRATE RECOVERY** and spread the news that treatment can work. We'll come together to show living proof that recovery from alcohol or drugs is possible!

**EVERYONE IS WELCOME!** Whether you're in recovery, know someone in recovery, or want to support your family, friends, and neighbors - everyone is invited to help us build a healthier community.

BRING  
A FRIEND!

BRING  
YOUR  
FAMILY!

- POSTER CRAFTS
- 1-MILE WALK
- SPEAKERS
- RECOVERY RESOURCES
- AWARDS
- T-SHIRTS

REGISTER  
TODAY!

[FellowshipHall.com/walk](http://FellowshipHall.com/walk)

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Drug + Alcohol  
Recovery Center **HALL**

# The Gateway

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*“It always seems  
impossible until it’s done.”*

*Nelson Mandela*

