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Spring 2018

The Gateway

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Volunteer Spotlight

Volunteering for Life

Herman Dixon shares how volunteering at Fellowship Hall saved his life.

“My name is Herman and I just like to party too much.”

That is how Herman Dixon introduced himself in his first group meeting at Fellowship Hall more than 24 years ago. His pride would not allow him to say more, or even admit to the group, that his life was in shambles.

Just days before coming to Fellowship Hall for treatment, Herman tried to quit drinking on his own. “That Sunday, I had decided I was not going to drink anything at all, but by late evening, I just had to have a drink.” Herman drank until he blacked out. The next morning, it was evident he would not arrive at work on time, if he made it at all. He already had some issues with management and believed he would face some major consequences if he got there late. While in the shower, Herman took a hard look at his life. At 47, he had lost his wife, he was estranged from his children and was now on the verge of losing his job. His world as he knew it was crumbling around him.

“I started to think to myself, what if I were on the other side of the fence? What if I was the wife, the child and the mother [of an alcoholic]?” Herman recalled.

Herman recognized he was at a crossroads. He could either risk losing his life by continuing down the path of alcohol addiction or he could take a new road to recovery by seeking help.



“I cried out in the shower, ‘God help me.’”

Herman decided to call a friend and co-worker who tried to intervene years earlier.

“He had seen the beating alcohol was giving me and one day at work he called me into the conference room. He asked me, ‘Do you know why I don’t drink anymore?’ Then he told me his story.” Herman said.

At that time, he was not ready. But after two years, he was finally willing to work towards a life of sobriety. His co-worker told him about Fellowship Hall. Herman soon checked himself in for treatment.

“I remember when I got there, people

came right up to me and were friendly. There was an elderly guy sitting in the TV room. He asked if he could show me around. Turned out, he was a volunteer.”

That same volunteer eventually became Herman’s sponsor and still is today, 24 years later. This positive influence and role model led Herman to volunteer his time after he completed treatment. He remembers feeling like he would never make it in life after leaving the Hall and returning to the “real world,” but serving others has been a tool to help him stay on track with his recovery.

He admitted, “I would have drunk myself to death without volunteering.”

He has served at the Hall on nights, weekends and holidays as a greeter to new guests, a van driver and as a volunteer listener for guests working through their 5th Step of the 12 Step recovery process. Being a 5th step volunteer is still an important part of his life today.

“It’s amazing to learn the paths people take to get there [Fellowship Hall]. The stories are different but the same. You connect with them.”

Herman continues to reach out to help others living with substance use disorder the same way his co-worker did with him many years ago.

“All I have to offer is my experience. I look for opportunities to share my story.”

Happy Springtime!

It won't be long before the dogwoods and azaleas pop open with color at Fellowship Hall, a wonderful time of year on our campus. It is not lost on me that springtime is a time for rebirth and renewal, a fitting theme for us as we work our mission to help those suffering with substance use disorders. I hope that springtime will bring new growth to you, just as it has lots of activity in store for us here at the Hall.

We are busy and grateful to serve. After a sluggish start, January began to gain momentum and we haven't slowed down since – we are grateful! Thanks to our expanded facilities with the Kiser Women's Lodge and Extended Lodge, we have the capacity to help more people. Recently, we had 75 guests in our Primary Program; that means 75 families were experiencing a sense of relief and hope. We love to be busy doing what we do best... helping our guests and their families find a new way of life.

Once every three years, we also find ourselves busy preparing for a Joint Commission survey. We've been continuously accredited by the Joint Commission since 1974, affirming that we offer the highest level of care to each of our guests. In February, the Joint Commission conducted our accreditation survey, and though preparing for the survey causes some anxiety among staff, we were well-prepared. Thanks to our talented, committed, and professional employees, we did well. Being accredited by the Joint Commission demonstrates that we deliver a high quality of care and service to those who seek treatment at Fellowship Hall. It's a stamp of approval that we can all be proud of.

One of the things that I'm most proud of is our work to continuously improve the treatment, experience, and outcomes for our guests and their families. Right now, we have several items in the works that I'm super excited to share with you:

- Development of an Opiate Track to help those suffering from opiate addiction make it through and complete the treatment process.
- Creation of more transitional housing to better support our guest and provide longer lengths of stay, giving them a better chance of staying in recovery.
- Acceptance of TriCare Insurance which will open our services to active duty and retired members of our Armed Forces, their families, and those who work in support services on military installations.
- By the time you read this, installation of Phase I and II of the Gratitude Garden will be underway. The Garden will enhance our treatment programs, providing an outdoor space for guests, families, and staff to spend time with one another and reconnect to the larger world around us. I hope you'll consider supporting this project and help us bring it to completion. As Bill C. of Greensboro, NC told me many years ago, "a grateful alcoholic is a sober alcoholic!" I continue to believe that, as I'm sure you do, too.

Message from Mike



- Development of a Partner Scholarship Program to allow greater access to the services we provide within our larger community. We are excited about the prospect this holds for our community and the partnerships it will allow us to create with other local treatment providers. We'll be reaching out to you in the coming months to help us get this program off the ground and saving more lives.

The reality we are all familiar with is that people are dying at alarming rates. My heart hurts as there have been several losses in our local recovering community of folks I knew and loved. There were 100 deaths in Guilford County last year from heroin/fentanyl OD's and even more deaths related to prescription and other drugs. An ugly reality. But the reality we are pushing for is that recovery works. Thank you for your emails and phone calls bearing witness to sobriety celebrations! We'll keep fighting the fight!

Speaking of celebrations, I want to make sure you have two events marked on your calendars:

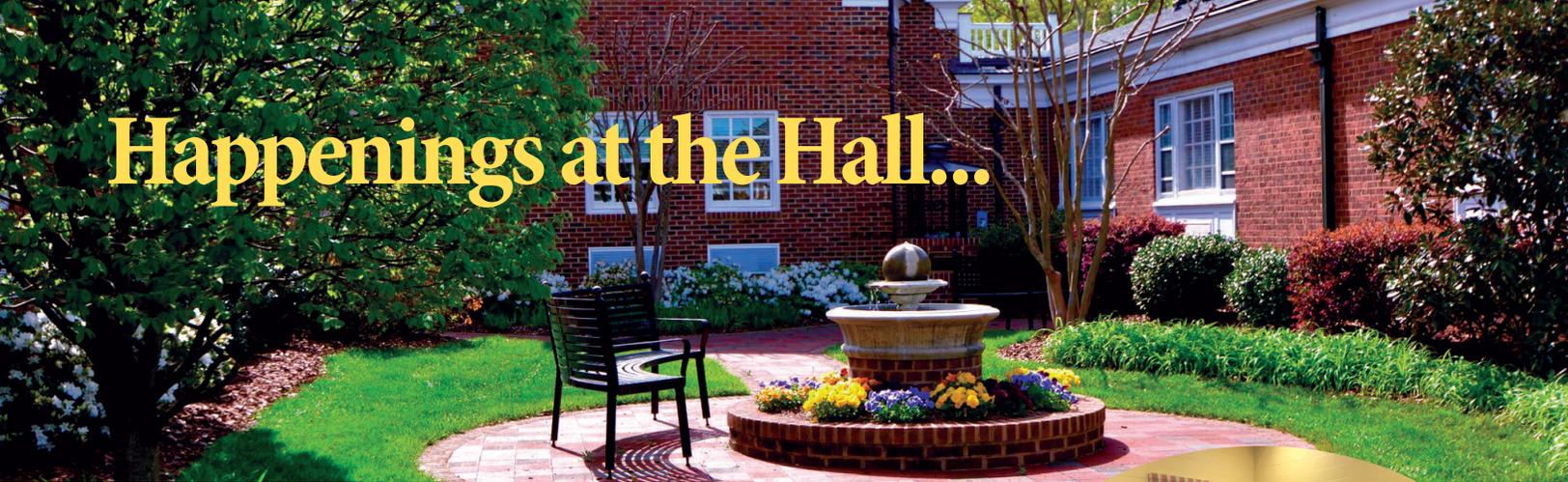
- 1) 2nd Annual Walk for Recovery, Downtown Greensboro – April 29, 2pm. We had more than 300 participants last year, letting themselves be seen and heard. Help us double that number this year – come out and walk with us – because Recovery Is Real. It's free to participate, but we do ask that you register so we can keep you in the loop with the latest developments. Just go to our website at FellowshipHall.com and look under "events."
- 2) Annual Conference – Trust the Process – August 3-5, 2018. Plans are happening behind the scenes for this year's Conference; "Trust the Process" is the theme. How many times have you heard that?! And needed to each time?! We hope you'll join us for a great weekend of encouragement and renewal.

It is my privilege to serve you and Fellowship Hall. Thank you for your ongoing support. Please know that I welcome your feedback and hope that you'll contact me or any of us here at the Hall if we can help you in any way!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "m y", located below the typed name.

In service,
Mike Yow, President & CEO

Happenings at the Hall...



-  **Congratulations to Tal Fish** for taking the top honor as the winner at the Hall's Joint Commission Talk and Kahoot Game in January.
-  Hall staff enjoyed a great time of fellowship on January 26th at **Fridays by the Fire**. Our theme was Frozen (yes, like the movie) which was very appropriate considering the extremely cold temperatures we were experiencing.
-  Fellowship Hall's Clinical Director, **Kelly Scaggs spoke at Dilworth Center** in Charlotte on February 2nd for their training on Ethic and Social Media.
-  Our own **Mike Yow served on Leadership Greensboro's Health Day panel discussion** on February 20th to increase self-awareness of healthcare in our community. Peers on the panel included Terry Akin, CEO of Cone Health; Jim Osborne, MD, Medical Director for Triad HealthCare Network; Kristen Yntema, President & CEO of Hospice & Palliative Care of Greensboro; and Joel Mills, President & CEO of Advanced Healthcare.
-  The **Joint Commissioned conducted their survey of Fellowship Hall** February 20-23... and we passed inspection with flying colors! Be sure to congratulate the Hall staff for the great work they do.



2018 Events Calendar ~ Save the Dates!

2018 Continuing Education Classes

Fellowship Hall hosts classes throughout the year for licensed counselors to keep their credentials up to date. Registration is available online on our Continuing Education (CE) page; classes are \$40 each.

CE March 15th: Ethics

Fellowship Hall will host a class on Ethics. Register for the class at FellowshipHall.com/Continuing Education.

CE April 19th: Motivational Interviewing

Fellowship Hall will host a class discussing Motivational Interviewing. Register at FellowshipHall.com/Continuing Education



Walk for Recovery Sunday, April 29th in Greensboro!

Register now and make plans to join us!
Go to FellowshipHall.com/Events

Annual Conference: Trust the Process Friday, August 3rd-Sunday, August 5th

Join us for a weekend full of inspiration and encouragement! Registration opens in June.



E. Raymond Alexander, Jr. Memorial Golf Tournament Friday, August 3rd

Join us to support Fellowship Hall's Family Program. Registration will open on June 1, 2018. Only 128 spots – so be sure to register early! \$110 per player

Get your walking shoes on!

Join us at WALK FOR RECOVERY!

When: Sunday, April 29, at 2pm at Center City Park in Downtown Greensboro

What: 2nd Annual Walk for Recovery to build awareness that RECOVERY WORKS!

Who: Anyone that knows Recovery works. Those in recovery, their family and friends, counselors – all of us!

How: Register online for this **FREE** event at FellowshipHall.com, then show up with your signs on how Recovery has worked for you or a loved one.

The weather is warming as we gear up for this year's Walk for Recovery and we hope you're making plans to join us! Last year, we had over 300 folks come out to show their support for the Recovery Movement.

The Recovery Movement is all about building awareness that resources and treatment are available to help – and end – the suffering. We want our community to understand that those suffering from Substance Use Disorder can get their lives back and live happy, healthy lives. What better way to show the world that recovery works, than to come together as living proof?!

This year's walk will begin at Center City Park in Downtown Greensboro. The 1-mile walk will take us through downtown and back to the Park for closing remarks and information on available resources for those not sure where to turn for help. And, this year's walk has the bonus of happening during the Food Truck Rodeo (from 3-8pm in downtown). So come early, stay late – and help us build awareness for Recovery. We can't wait to see you on Sunday, April 29.

PS: Interested in volunteering or having a table to share information about your organization and services?
Call Altina at 336-621-3381.



WALK *for* RECOVERY

a **FREE EVENT** bringing together those in recovery from alcohol or drugs, their families, counselors, treatment centers, friends, anyone committed to staying in recovery and helping others get on the path.

April 29, 2018 ~ 2pm
Downtown Greensboro

MOTIVATIONAL SPEAKERS & TREATMENT INFO

WHAT TO BRING

Make a poster or banner that speaks to your recovery or highlights your organization and bring it along.

REGISTER TODAY!

FellowshipHall.com then click on Events

Thank You To Our Sponsors!



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“There came a time
when the risk to remain
tight in the bud was
more painful than the
risk it took to blossom.”

-Anais Nin

