



The

Flame

Congregation of the Humility of Mary

Summer 2009

Improving Quality of Life Through the Board Room



The boardroom table at the Humility of Mary Center—where volunteerism impacts the lives of many. From left: Srs. Regina Mary Cratty, Rosalia Riedel, Bea Snyder, Joan Gable, Michelle Schiffgens, Rachel Beeson and Margaret Maureen Carroll.

One of the most basic of all values is people helping people. Volunteerism is people working on behalf of others without being motivated by financial or material gain. The intention is to improve the quality of human life. For sisters who volunteer it is a part of living out their mission which states “...As pioneer people with diverse gifts, personalities and energies, we share the fullness of life with all we meet, especially the poor and those in need.” In addition to improving the lives of others, volunteering adds to the economic output of a country by reducing the cost of services and adding the social benefit of fostering trust.

Sisters, whether working full-time, part-time or retired, volunteer in many and varied ways as illustrated in the following stories. For example, the depth of knowledge that sisters provide through their faith, education and ministry experience is invaluable to a board of directors.



Sr. Maggie Bennett:

In Davenport, Iowa, I have been a

member for one year, of a three year term, of the Genesis Health Services Foundation. I serve on the public relations committee and bring a faith-based perspective to the discussions. The purpose of the board is to develop, manage and grant charitable support to meet the health-related needs of the communities we serve. We do this by pursuing the best practices in health care philanthropy—foundation and corporate grants, individual and deferred gifts. These monies funded the Free Flu Quad Cities project to vaccinate students K-12, specialized equipment for the hospital, and scholarships for nurses seeking BSN or MSN degrees.



Sr. Cathy Talarico:

Since its beginning in 2008, I have served as a permanent board member/secretary for the Flower Shop at Highland Park in Des Moines, Iowa. Besides being a full service floral business, the Flower Shop at Highland Park is a training program for people with mental illness. Trainees learn all aspects of the business including knowledge and care of the product, taking orders, designing the physical decor, arranging flowers, pricing and customer service.



Sr. JoAnne Talarico:

I sit on the board of the Iowa Coalition to Oppose Life Without the Possibility of Parole for Children. As the title suggests the purpose of the organization is to work for the fair sentencing of children and youth in our criminal courts, i.e., to treat children as children and not as adults. I am in my second year as secretary of the board.



The Flame

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The Flame is published three times a year for the Congregation of the Humility of Mary and their friends.

Our Mission: We, the members of the Congregation of the Humility of Mary call one another to live the Gospel with simplicity and joy following the example of Mary.

Like our founders, we strive to be attentive to the call of the Spirit in the signs of our times, especially the needs of the poor and the powerless.

We commit ourselves as individuals and as a congregation to work for justice within the human family and to care for the earth itself.

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Members of the HMHI/HMSI board of directors. Front from left: Sr. Micheline Curtis, Sandy Walters, Amanda Golden, Kelly Bell. Back row from left: Bill Pearson, Julie Williams, Sheryl Figley, Sr. Mary Ann Vogel, Eugene Weis, Sr. Johanna Rickl and Sr. Mary Rehmman.

It is truly impressive to read about all the activities in which our sisters are volunteers. Volunteerism has a long history in our churches and in society. I grew up in the time when mothers were homemakers and volunteered as Scout leaders or chaperones for social events. For dads, it was scouting or fund-raising for the parish. We weren't familiar with homeless people or families without food. Girls volunteered as "candy-strippers" delivering mail and flowers in hospitals or nursing homes. Boys cut grass or shoveled snow for elderly neighbors without pay.

How things have changed! Now many nonprofit organizations have paid or volunteer staff whose primary task is to coordinate volunteers. Whole families provide and serve a meal at the Café on Vine with children bussing tables or picking up trash. A certain number of hours of "community service" may be required for graduation from middle or high schools or for receiving the sacrament of confirmation. At the college or university level, students gain valuable experience as unpaid "interns," often in the area of their academic majors. Many go on volunteer "missions" during "breaks."

Many volunteers will say they are "changed" by these experiences, often because they are exposed to people whose lives are very different from theirs. Some even change careers or modify retirement plans once they learn of the great needs of people at home or abroad. As people of faith, we are always being called to live the "beatitudes." Now, more than ever, generous people of all ages are needed as many nonprofit organizations have reduced staff due to economic constraints. We thank all of you for the many ways you serve as volunteers, with a special thanks to those who have shared our ministries and supported the Sisters of Humility in any way.

*-Sister Mary Rehmman,
CHM President*

Save the Date!



Art UnCorked
Sept. 18, 2009
7:00 pm.
The Outing Club
Davenport, Iowa

A fundraiser for Humility of Mary Housing, Inc.

Art UnCorked is the first fund raiser of its kind in our community. On exhibit and for auction will be original works of art by local and national artists in addition to fine art donated by many families in the Quad City area.

For more information visit
www.art-uncorked-online.com



Sandy Walters, founding director of Humility of Mary Housing, Inc., receives a blessing during the CHM Peace and Justice Award ceremony on Friday, June 26. Sandy received the award for her tireless work for justice, especially in relation to housing services for families in need.



Sr. Donna Donovan:

For ten years I have served on the Salvation Army Advisory Board in Ottumwa, Iowa. I currently am on the program committee and have participated in projects such as back to school, Christmas distribution, senior food boxes, Thanksgiving dinner, and bell ringing/kettle count. The advisory board is required to vote on major expenditures. We recently renovated a building which serves as the new corps headquarters and chapel. We oversee a thrift store. The senior citizen meal site serves a noon meal Monday-Friday including home deliveries. This summer we run a feeding program for children 18 and under who rely on free school lunches during the academic year.

The depth of knowledge that sisters provide through their faith, education and ministry experience is invaluable to a board of directors.

Last fall, our HMHI board members and staff became very involved in responding to the crisis generated by the sudden closure of the John Lewis Shelter in Davenport. Working together we explored taking on the operation of the shelter as well as assuming its mortgage. There were meetings, negotiations, problem solving activities, prayers, discussions with attorneys, and finally a leap of faith saying “yes” to what seemed an urgent call of the Spirit. One of my major contributions was to encourage and support the initiatives of the HMHI administrative staff. I spent many hours working to resolve legal issues, get documents in order and help coordinate the various groups involved. At this time, the planning and fund-raising are taking center stage alongside the ongoing provision of emergency shelter and services. All in all, this is an exciting time to serve on these boards.



Sr. Johanna Rickl:

The CHM vice-president chairs the board of directors of Humility of Mary Housing, Inc. (HMHI). I assumed that position in July 2008 upon taking office. When Humility of Mary Shelter, Inc. (HMSI) was incorporated in September 2008, I became chair of that board as well since, at this time, the same board serves both organizations.

HMHI is a transitional and permanent supportive housing program that provides “single parent families experiencing homelessness with opportunities for growth and development that could result in self-sufficient living.” (HMHI mission statement)

“HMSI is an emergency shelter providing temporary housing and services which offer the opportunity for men and women experiencing homelessness to become emotionally, mentally and physically more stable.” (HMSI mission statement)

Ordinarily my contribution to HMHI is to meet with the co-directors, keeping abreast of activities and concerns and, with them, setting the agendas for the quarterly board meetings. I coordinate the meetings, maintain communications with board members, sign grant requests and other official documents, and make necessary decisions with the two other members of the executive committee. I am also involved as participant or supporter in some of the activities of HMHI. This year I organized the five-year strategic planning process in conjunction with staff and board members.



Sr. Elaine Hagedorn:

I am a member of the Catholic Peace Ministry Board in Des Moines, Iowa, which began in 1981. I have been a member for the past eight years. Our purpose is to be leaders in the peace movement. We do this by sponsoring speakers on war and peace, educating others on Catholic social teachings, informing others about such issues as militarism, torture, immigration, nuclear arms, human rights, poverty, etc. We network with other groups who likewise are working for peace and justice in our world. I assist in a variety of ways with the planning and carrying out of the prayer services and events we sponsor throughout the year.



Sr. Marcia Eckerman:

Since early 2009, I have been a member of the Scott County Regional Authority (SCRA) board of directors. The SCRA holds the gaming rights for the Isle of Capri Casinos in Bettendorf, Iowa. It provides funding through a grant process to not-for-profit organizations, educational institutions and government/civic organizations serving the needs of the residents of Scott County, Iowa. As a religious woman, I bring diversity both with my faith commitment and being female. I also bring the experience of working with nonprofits most of my life. As a member of the educational panel, I read and decide on grant recipients from educational sources.



Sr. Delphine Vasquez:

New Horizons of Faith is an organization created to serve the adult religious education needs of rural parishes in the Davenport Diocese. It oversees the operation of Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat which offers a quiet place of spiritual renewal for people of all faiths and those who minister with them. As a board member, I am a part of the public relations standing committee; its purpose is to increase awareness of The Prairie throughout the region—particularly for religious and nonprofit organizations. For two years I have contributed to this committee by speaking about The Prairie and its programs and updating the promotional materials. I also substitute when the co-directors are unavailable.



Sr. Caridad Inda:

For eight years I have been a board member of the Association for the Rights of Catholics in the Church (ARCC). ARCC is an international organization founded by members of the Canon Law Society of America, fellow theologians, professors of religious studies and others. Its purpose is to support efforts to bring about changes in the governance of the Church institution that would make it more responsive to the current needs and aspirations of the faithful, creating awareness of the need to act and network with like-minded institutions. Currently I am on a committee to create or adapt nonviolent responses to violence in the church. Fluent in Spanish, I also translate materials to be printed or put on the ARCC website. The publications committee reviews and/or prepares spots for bimonthly publication on a variety of issues.



Sr. Kathryn O'Meara:

As a resident of Chesterfield, Virginia, I have served on the board for C.A.R.E. (Cat Adoption and Rescue Efforts, Inc.) for five years. The organization rescues felines from local animal shelters, from individuals who have rescued stray cats/kittens, and from owner turn-in due to military duty, moving out of state, new baby, etc. We also do barn placements of cats that are not socialized as pets. I serve as recording secretary for meetings and respond to grants, sponsorships and donations received. In addition, for one year I have served as the recording secretary on the board of the St. Augustine Women's Guild which plans projects to support the parish. And as of June 2009 I am serving on the Richmond Irish American Society. The society plans and participates

in local charities and annual festivals. We promote information regarding the Irish contributions to the local area—history, genealogy, and cultural arts.



Sr. Bea Snyder:

I serve on the Vera French Housing board in Davenport, Iowa. The Vera French Mental Health Center provides several housing options for mental health clients. I am also on the Thomas Merton House, Inc. board of directors serving the Café on Vine which opened its doors on November 18, 2007. Since then it has served 79,197 meals to hungry and homeless persons in the Davenport area. July and August are usually the months that we serve the most meals at the Café. This June we hit a record high for one month of 4,989 meals. We'll see what happens with the continuing decline in the economy.



Sr. Micheline Curtis:

In 2007 I began serving on the board for Humility of Mary Housing, Inc. (HMHI) and since September 2008, on the board of Humility of Mary Shelter, Inc. (HMSI). For both the work consists of maintaining focus on the mission, as stated by Sr. Johanna Rickl above, establishing vision for the future of the organization, approving goals and policies, ensuring resources, communicating needs of the organization to the public and providing oversight and accountability. I contribute by attending all meetings of the whole, working on committees, preparing assigned work, attending long range planning meetings and contributing material and monetary resources when possible.



Sr. Rachel Beeson:

I have served for eight years as a member of the Sisters Consortium, Diocese of Davenport, formerly the Sisters Council, which brings concerns of sisters to the Bishop and welcomes new sisters in the Diocese. Also, for six years I have been on the board of directors for the Iowa Catholic Conference, representing the four dioceses of Iowa. The conference consists of the Bishop and priests, sisters, men and women from each Diocese. Meeting each spring and fall we hear reports from lobbyists and other committees on social concerns. Finally, for the past nine years I have served on the St. Vincent Scholarship Committee which approves scholarships for St. Ambrose University master of social work programs. †

CHMs Celebrate & Explore



Srs. Kayleen Heffron, Jude Fitzpatrick and Rae Elwood celebrated their 50th Jubilee on June 28 at St. John Vianney Church in Bettendorf, Iowa.

The Congregation of the Humility of Mary (CHM) held its annual general assembly from June 25-28, 2009, at the Steeplegate Inn in Davenport, Iowa. More than 100 CHM sisters and associates were in attendance coming from Iowa, California, Montana, Washington, Mississippi, Kentucky, Colorado, Illinois, Georgia, Pennsylvania, Minnesota, Kansas, Virginia, Texas, Wisconsin and Mexico.

The community gathering offers an opportunity for friendship, celebration and the continued exploration of the CHM priorities for 2008-2012 which are:

- To expand and extend our mission by inviting and welcoming new members.
- To promote non-violence as a way of life to bring about justice for all persons and creation.
- To foster understanding and appreciation to enable new cultures to evolve.

Major celebrations included a welcoming rite for nine new CHM associates; presentation of the CHM Peace and Justice Award to Sandy Walters, co-director of Humility of Mary Housing, Inc. and Humility of Mary Shelter, Inc.; and a Jubilee Mass honoring Sisters Jude Fitzpatrick, Rae Elwood and Kayleen Heffron for their 50 years of service. At a missioning service on Sunday, members renewed their commitment to the CHM mission of caring for the poor and powerless, and for the earth itself.

Visit www.chmiowa.org to find out more about the mission of the Congregation of the Humility of Mary and various forms of association open to all. †

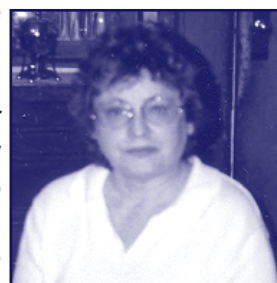
Life is About Choices and Giving to Others

by Karen Brooke, CHM Development Director

CHM Magnificat Society member Linda Frear-Eli was born and raised in Vancouver, Washington. In 1965 her father, an executive with ALCOA, was transferred to Davenport. "In looking back it was serendipitous. My parents were investigating two private colleges for me to attend. (In those days parents actually chose a college for their children!) The campus visit clinched the decision, we all fell in love with Marycrest.

"Although, my family were Presbyterians, without any real experience with nuns, my father knew he wouldn't have to worry about me. His concerns were well founded. I was an extremely shy "only child" and had struggled with fragile health most of my early life. Marycrest changed all that. The nurturing and warm environment allowed me to become a new person, to sort of 'reinvent' myself. As students we all benefited from a 'true' liberal arts education, from speech to biology, taking classes that stretched our minds and boosted our self esteem. Classes were small and the caliber of instruction was phenomenal. I blossomed—majoring in history, with a minor in English. Sr. Kathleen Ebert was my mentor; an extraordinary teacher and I believe the most intelligent woman I've ever known. There was a spirit and spirituality about Marycrest that was tangible. Even now, when I'm physically having a difficult day, I close my eyes and remember those wonderful friendships and experiences at Marycrest.

"In 1968, I moved back to the Northwest. The years have flown... I'm married to my husband, Tom, and I enjoyed a wonderful career with Nordstrom's. Due to my parents' failing health, I left my job to care for them. I still struggle with chronic health issues but, as the sisters taught me, life is about choices and giving to others. So



Magnificat Society member Linda Frear-Eli

I'm an active volunteer with Catholic Charities, a local historical museum and animal rights groups. And I still have sisters in my life. I became an oblate of the Benedictine Sisters at Mt. Angel.

"Recently someone asked me who I admire most. My answer came easily...the Marycrest sisters and my mother. I firmly believe that I would not have had the successes in my life had it not been for the Sisters of Humility, who taught me to believe in myself, that I could accomplish anything—in a career, a marriage, or as a volunteer." †

Continuing our Tradition of Giving

by Sr. Luz María Orozco

How Life Flows Through Our Community is the motto of the Mississippi Valley Regional Blood Center, the largest nonprofit organization in Iowa. It has always been a motivating force for Sr. Elizabeth Anne Schneider and Sr. Carla Takes. Every week for over 15 and 12 years respectively, they have offered their time and talents as canteen volunteers for this vital organization. For years, they both served the Blood Center as donors. It was a natural step from giving blood to becoming part of a team that insured blood flowed throughout the community bringing life.



Sr. Carla Takes and Sr. Elizabeth Anne Schneider volunteer at the Blood Center.

There must be a common gene in the makeup of Sr. Elizabeth Anne and Sr. Carla. A gene that compels them to volunteer, to reach out and help where there's a need. Earlier, Sr. Elizabeth Anne tutored children with learning challenges. Sr. Carla calls herself, "Jack-of-all-trades." I would say, "Jill." You need a driver? A receptionist? A registrar? A librarian? An archivist? A person to gather items for a garage sale? Just call Carla.

Previous to their so-called "retirement" the sisters engaged in a gamut of ministries from teaching to administration. With her studies in sociology, education and counseling, Sr. Carla was ready to undertake the position of residence hall director at Ottumwa Heights College. She had already mastered

the technique of making cottage cheese. Plus sweeping, washing and cleaning the barracks at the Ottumwa Naval Airforce Base for habitation after fire destroyed the entire Ottumwa Heights property in 1957.

Sr. Elizabeth Anne taught music at all levels before becoming academic dean at Marycrest College and vice-president of the Congregation of the Humility of Mary. She also served as a member of the board of trustees at Teikyo-Marycrest University and as the studies coordinator for two colleges in Minnesota.

Through their work at the Blood Center Sr. Elizabeth Anne and Sr. Carla touch the lives of countless people for a brief moment, and remain connected for eternity. As canteen volunteers they serve refreshments and chat. They carefully watch the donors for any adverse reaction from blood drawn.

Their knowledge of science has increased. But the learning goes beyond technical aspects of blood, plasma, platelets, qualifications to become a donor, or the amount of blood required for a specific surgery. They are directly responsible for good things happening. Their skills are recognized and appreciated.

It is safe and easy to give the life-saving gift of blood—learn how at www.bloodcenter.org. †

Seeds of Hope Experience

by CHM Associate Nancy Roberson

My sister and I spent a week in Davenport with the Seeds of Hope program the summer of 2008. Seeds of Hope offers volunteers an experience of the work and mission of the CHM community. We stayed with the sisters who live on Vine Street and enjoyed their hospitality.

We spent time each day at the various sites where the sisters work. We learned the specific work that was being done, the challenges that have to be faced and the changes that have taken place because of the presence of the CHM community working with other organizations to support those in need.

One day we prepared and served lunch at Café on Vine. The gratitude offered by the customers at the Café greatly impressed us. We helped Sr. Marilyn Schierbrock at the food pantry and we did some yard work with a youth group. We learned about the work of Humility of Mary Housing, Inc. and we helped organize donations for the annual yard sale.

As a CHM associate I'm a part of a community that works with the poor to improve their lives, that lives simply so others can live and that cares for the earth. I would invite you to take the time for a Seeds of Hope experience. It will make a lasting impression on your life. †

**Seeds of Hope Volunteer Program
Contact Barb @ 563-336-8414**


CHMs Welcome New Associates



During the 2009 CHM General Assembly weekend, nine new CHM associates were welcomed at a special ceremony in the Magnificat Chapel at the Humility of Mary Center in Davenport. Standing above from left to right are new associates Joan Marie Resnick, Alicia Owens, Dawna Clare Sutton, Anthony Luke, Jeanne Wells, Jean Ann Luke and Cathy Berta. Seated are Sr. Mary Rehmann and Sr. Joanna Rickl with the associate director, Pat Knopick, seated on floor. Not pictured are new associates Dee Ewing and Lilliana Barnes.

CHM associates extend the vision and ministry of the congregation beyond the vowed membership. Association is open to women and men wanting to participate in the spirit and work of the Congregation of the Humility of Mary. The degree to which associates participate in the congregation is based on individually developed agreements between the associates and the congregation.

Visit us at chmiowa.org to learn more. Or call Pat Knopick at 563-324-4594. †



Passages
CHM Associate
Adele Smith
January 26, 1920–February 21, 2009

Come Lord, into the advent of our lives. Come, open our eyes to see your hand in all things. Come, illuminate the paths we walk as we journey to your dwelling place.

Creating a New Parish Culture At Our Lady of The Prairie Retreat

Old customs, behavior patterns and convictions are disappearing, causing apprehension and uncertainty as well as liberation and freedom when different groups come together. These shifts redefine our culture that is always geographic and time specific.

Join Sr. Caridad Inda, CHM, on Thursday, September 3, from 9:30 am – 3:30 p.m. at Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat as she examines a small but significant aspect of these current shifts as they impact parish culture, especially parishes that are becoming more bicultural or multicultural. Sr. Caridad will address changes in behaviors and qualities, deeply-rooted attitudes as distinguished from “fads” of the moment, and the process of building a comfortable, sustaining faith community that embraces all significant elements of multicultural traditions in the parish.

Pastors, DREs, parish councils, school principals, teachers, youth ministers, lay leaders and active parishioners will find this program of great benefit. The cost is just \$15.00 which includes lunch.

Sr. Caridad is an international educator who co-founded CIRIMEX, a total immersion, one-on-one Spanish Language and Culture Center in Guadalajara, Mexico, where she has served as executive director for nearly 30 years.

Visit us at chmiowa.org to learn more. Or call Barb Gross at 563-336-8414. †



Sr. Mary Ann Aman and associate Jean Gossman were among the many who gathered together during the CHM Annual Assembly.



Srs. Miram Ehrhardt and Joann Kuebrich prepare delicious meals for retreat participants at Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat.

Experience a Peace Like no Other

In June the Sisters of the Humility of Mary offered a new retreat program entitled "Walking for Spirit." In attendance were 12 men and women of all ages and faiths, some on their own, some with friends or spouses, who arrived at The Prairie with open hearts ready to



walk the many trails. Abundant wildlife, a nature pond, the Wapsipinicon River and a labyrinth provided variety for the experience. A homecooked meal was a delicious break, and the lovely porch was perfect for resting, reflecting and bird watching before, between and after periods of walking.

Asked what he liked most about the day, one participant responded, "Meeting new people that are working toward the same spiritual feeling. I felt a healing power of the mind, a spiritual uplifting and feel better toward myself. The walks helped me to think of life differently."

There are many scheduled programs offered at The Prairie through October. The Prairie is also available for groups, couples or individuals to schedule private retreats. †

Fresh Start Garage Sale

Benefit for Humility of Mary Housing, Inc.

Mississippi Valley Fairgrounds August 18-21

For more information: 563-326-1330 or hmhiowa@netexpress.net

Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat 2009 Programs

- Aug. 1 Learn, Act for Earth's Sake
Reflection on climate change
- Aug. 11 Let not Your Heart be
Troubled - Being at Peace
- Aug. 18 Knit One, Pray Too! - A Day of
Knitting, Fellowship & Prayer
- Aug. 25 Spiritual Direction:
A Healing Balm
- Sept. 3 Creating a New Parish Culture
- Sept. 15 Using Work & Writings of
Jean Vanier & Henri Nouwen
- Sept. 23 Art, Prayer & Worship
- Sept. 28 The Recipe for Motherhood
- Oct. 6 Come to the Quiet -
Autumn Silent Retreat Day
- Oct. 9-11 Weekend Retreat for Women
- Oct. 20 Knit One, Pray Too!

Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat is a ministry of the The Congregation of the Humility of Mary and New Horizons of Faith.

Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat

Contact Barb Gross for rates and details
at 563/336-8414 or olpretreat@gmail.com

Connect with us at www.chmiowa.org



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