



STONEHAVEN CENTER

On a crisp autumn day, November 10, friends and staff of the Franciscan Retreat Center gathered to celebrate the change of mission of the Stonehaven building. Originally, the building was designed to be a conference meeting room with high-tech equipment. Since there was not a great demand for its use, the Sisters of Saint Francis leased the building to the Alpine Autism Center as an educational facility. They leased the building for almost six years until the AAC found a bigger building to meet their growing demands.

After looking at several options, the decision was made to convert it to an event center for rental for weddings, anniversaries, family reunions and similar gatherings with a capacity for about 100 people. The day was marked with a blessing prayer, ribbon-cutting, good food and camaraderie.

WELCOME

Gail Hickert, CEO, announced the hiring of Skip Ford as Director of Facilities as of November 14. Skip's background includes 9 years at Companion Habitats as Operations Manager and General Manager; and 17 years at Current, Inc. as Engineer, Operations Manager, Printing Plant Manager, Director and Vice President of Manufacturing. Skip has a Bachelor's Degree in Engineering Operations and also in Outdoor Recreation Management. He worked as a park ranger in the early years of his career. Skip is married, and his wife and he enjoy their daughter. Welcome, Skip!

+ In Memoriam +

- +**Rosalie (Dahman) Werner**, first cousin of Sr. Elizabeth, died on August 26, 2011, in Lindsay, NE. May she rest in peace.
- +**Cecelia Mae (Fuchs) Pinger**, first cousin of Sr. Elizabeth, passed away in Lindsay, NE on September 20, 2011. May she rest in peace.
- +**Norbert Rother**, cousin of Sr. Elizabeth, died on September 24, 2011 in Oklahoma City, OK. May he rest in peace.
- +**Sylvester Smith**, first cousin of Sr. Elizabeth, passed away on November 14, 2011 in Oklahoma City, OK. May he rest in peace.
- +**Ronald Ternus**, nephew of Sister M. Ethel, passed away on November 4, 2011 in Columbus, NE. May he rest in peace.
- +**Dolores Bogus**, niece of Sister M. Ethel, passed away on November 6, 2011 in Columbus, NE. May she rest in peace.
- +**Celestine Chamberlain**, sister of Sister M. Jane Frances, passed away on November 25, 2011 in Lincoln, NE. May she rest in peace.

Thank you for your prayers and support during the time of illness and death of our loved ones. *Sister M. Elizabeth Fuchs, Sister M. Ethel Widhalm and Sister M. Jane Frances Weis.*

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Subscription: Free-will offering may be sent to Sister Stephanie McReynolds at above address.

**“HE
LEADS.
I
FOLLOW.”
(Mother Maria
Theresia Bonzel)**

THE PEACE PRAYER

LORD, make me an instrument of your Peace

Where there is hatred,
let me sow **Love**;
Where there is injury,
Pardon;
Where there is doubt,
Faith;
Where there is despair,
Hope;
Where there is darkness,
Light;
Where there is sadness,
Joy

CREATURE FEATURE

Common Winter Sight

The “BUCK” stops here!



OSF MINISTRY FOCUS JUSTICE, PEACE and INTEGRITY of CREATION COMMISSION (JPICC)

We work as hard as we can, sometimes by ourselves, sometimes with others—on local, national and international issues. We periodically ask ourselves if we have done as much as we could have, and often the answer is “No.” In the face of so much to do, we struggle with being stretched too thin on most issues.

Yet we resume writing, sending one more letter to a legislator who may or may not give our request any real consideration. We call Washington and ask the person who answers to give our message—once again—to our government official, being as polite as we can but aware of many other citizens making the opposite recommendation. We add our signatures to five more emails, hoping that one more person who clearly advocates for justice—for undocumented immigrants, for trafficked victims, for death row inmates, for multiple others bearing the burdens of injustice—will be the weight needed to turn the tide. Some form of comprehensive immigration reform will be given “birth” even as our signature is being typed or one of our members is finalizing a psychological assessment for an undocumented asylum seeker who—because of our advocacy—has at least a 70% chance of remaining in the US rather than being sent back to a country where he or she was tortured.

At the end of the day, we buoy up our spirits, for occasionally, some significant, though perhaps small, change occurs. The newspaper brings us the good news that a death row prisoner has been



Sisters Carmela, Dorothy, Mary Carol and Judith Ann

spared the death penalty or a state has passed anti-death penalty legislation! A corporation polluting the rivers has finally been fined! A few more senators or representatives have joined the ranks of speaking out against balancing the budget by cutting a federal program that assists unemployed parents! The Keystone XL Pipeline has been put on hold!

Who are we? We are the Sisters of St. Francis of Colorado Springs' Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Commission (JPICC), currently staffed by Sisters Carmela Trujillo, Dorothy Schlaeger, Mary Carol Zubrickas, and Judith Ann Schaeffer. The function of the commission is to focus our Sisters' and Companions' efforts on contemporary issues of social justice, to motivate them towards greater participation in these apostolic efforts, and to provide concrete opportunities for their involvement through prayer, education, legislative advocacy and collaboration with

JPICC (continued)

other JPICC organizations and efforts, especially Franciscan Action Network (FAN), Franciscans International, Franciscan Federation and Leadership Conference of Women Religious.

We work most closely with FAN: the united voice of all branches of the Franciscan Family in the U.S. together with "Franciscan-hearted" people concerned about social justice. FAN's founding document (March 9, 2007) declares: *"With great concern for dehumanizing issues in our society, we recognize trends contrary to our calling as followers of Christ. We see that we have the power to effectively advocate for the redistribution of resources, the responsible care of creation, and the healing of relationships within the Franciscan Family, the Church and society. To these ends, we commit ourselves and call all members of the Family to speak with one Franciscan Voice to effect the transformation of national social policy. By walking with our brothers and sisters who are poor and marginalized, we intend to advocate for peace and to reaffirm the dignity of all creation."*

The Sisters of Saint Francis not only became founding members of FAN in 2007 but also continue to work closely with it. Sister Carmela is our Province representa-

tive on the Board of Commissioners, which meets monthly via IMEET (Internet) to discern how best to focus our Franciscan advocacy efforts. Current focus is on care of creation and immigration issues, but in 2012, in preparation for national elections, FAN's agenda will include civility in political communication. (See <http://franciscanaction.org>)

Finally, JPICC recommended to the 2010 Provincial Chapter that our province address our planet's global environmental crisis. The recommendation eventually adopted, challenges us "to promote our individual and communal awareness of the environmental crisis and to take concrete steps towards the healing of Mother Earth." Thus, a campus-wide GREEN TEAM, formed in the fall of 2010 under the leadership of Gail Hickert, CEO of Mount Saint Francis Ministries, increases on-campus awareness of environmental issues and promotes the goal of **Reduce/Reuse/Recycle** through new on-campus initiatives. Sisters Carmela, Mary Carol and Dorothy, together with representatives from the Mount Saint Francis Nursing Center, Franciscan Retreat Center, Culinary Arts Department and Facilities work together to be the change so desired in our world. Please contact Sister Carmela, (carmela@stfrancis.org), if you feel called to become a member of the Sisters of St. Francis' JPICC.

EXCELLENCE IN ACTION AWARD

On October 12, 2011, an excited gathering of Nursing Center employees, sisters and support staff gathered in the guest dining room to celebrate the 2010-2011 **Excellence in Action Award** presented to Mount Saint Francis Nursing Center. **My InnerView** has awarded this customer service recognition to **MSFNC** for the past three years.

The **Excellence in Action** award highlights the top 10% of facilities that scored "excellent" when residents and families were asked about recommending a facility for care. This recognition reflects the daily excellence in care and service our employees consistently minister to the residents, family members and to one another. During the celebration, various department managers eagerly articulated the qualities and team work that go into qualifying for this

acknowledgement. Through a humorous "pop quiz", it was evident that quality care and service are goals to be achieved each day. Working together as a team, in a friendly and caring manner, warmly welcoming each person and a willingness to offer a helping hand when needed are also qualities that earned the staff this reward.

Sister Nadine Heimann, Provincial, expressed her delight by saying, "We are proud to sponsor such an exemplary ministry. Congratulations to all." She expressed her gratitude to Vivian Booker, Executive Director of Health Services, and Almaz Berhe, Administrator, for their outstanding leadership and guidance.

CONGRATULATIONS, ALL!

Sister Loretta Stefack and Sister Richardis Durant CALLED HOME

Our loving God called two of our dear sisters to their heavenly home within the same week. On October 17, 2011, **Sister M. Loretta** Stefack was embraced by our loving God as many of our sisters stood around her bed singing "How Great Thou Art". Sr. Loretta was born in Omaha, NE on June 11, 1920 and entered our Community on August 14, 1938. For over 40 years, Sister dedicated her life to teaching in several of our elementary schools in Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska and New Mexico. She retired from teaching in 1981 and came to Mount Saint Francis where she helped in chapel and served as a receptionist and switchboard operator. She delighted in giving tours to visitors. Due to declining health, Sister moved to the Sisters' Care Unit in 2006 and to Mount Saint Francis Nursing Center in 2008. She loved to sing her Polish hymns and held a special devotion to the Blessed Mother. Her love of friends and Nebraska football kept her young at heart.



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As the Community was celebrating the Liturgy of the Eucharist for Sister Loretta, our loving God quietly embraced **Sister M. Richardis Durant** and called her to her eternal home on October 20, 2011, at the wondrous age of 105, six days prior to her 106 birthday. Sr. Richardis was born in Bellwood, PA on October 26, 1905 and entered our Community on October 2, 1923. She ministered in various schools in Colorado, Indiana, Nebraska and New Mexico. She became Dean of the College of Saint Joseph in Albuquerque, NM; a position she held for 14 years. She later ministered in Religious Education at St. Joan of Arc in Arvada, CO for 15 years. She semi-retired at The Gardens at St. Elizabeth in Denver, CO where she edited a monthly newsletter and taught scripture and poetry to the residents. Sister retired to Mt. St. Francis in 1992 where she spent much of her time in prayer. Because of her weakened physical health, sister moved to Mount Saint Francis Nursing Center in 2010. She felt a special call to pray for the conversion of sinners. Her mental acuity until hours before her death, was awed by all who visited her. She often expressed her gratitude with the words, "The Lord has truly blessed me and I thank Him for the wonderful, full life I enjoy." How happy she

must have been to celebrate her 106th birthday in her heavenly home! + + + + +

WOMEN RELIGIOUS LEADERS GATHER

The 2011 Fall Gathering of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious, Region XIII, was hosted by the Sisters of Saint Francis at Mount Saint Francis. Twenty Sisters in leadership representing 11 congregations of women religious from Colorado, Kansas, Missouri and Wisconsin gathered on October 24 and 25 in support of each other, to share developments in their respective communities, and to discern important issues to address.

Representatives included the Adorers of the Blood of Christ (St. Louis, MO), Benedictine Sisters of Benet Hill Monastery (Colorado Springs, CO), Benedictine Sisters of Mount St. Scholastica (Atchison, KS), Dominican Sisters of Peace (Denver, CO), Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth (Leavenworth, KS), Sisters of Loretto (Littleton, CO), Sisters of Saint Agnes (Milwaukee, WI), Sisters of St. Francis of Penance and Christian Charity (Denver, CO), Sisters of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration (Colorado Springs, CO), and Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia (Concordia, KS). Emerging from their reflection together, the Sisters formulated the following joint statement representing their desired focus in addressing contemporary issues:

As ecclesial women, formed by the Gospel of Jesus, our lived experience as women religious and the call of Catholic social teaching, we as advocates of nonviolence are committed to our own conversion to this value while urging others to find nonviolent ways to confront the violence that permeates all levels of society—individual, political, social, ecclesial and environmental.

They agreed to foster this stance of nonviolence in their personal lives, in their communities and the local organizations with whom they partner, and will submit it to the LCWR Global Concerns Committee at the national level to be considered for the 2012 National Assembly resolution.



LEADERS: Sr. Nadine, Almaz, Vivian

