

Celebrating our 2011 Jubilarians

Pages 8 & 9



THE MESSENGER

of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia, Kansas

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THE NEWEST AGRÉGÉES

A Shared Voice

Two women who couldn't seem more different spoke with one voice when they became the newest Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia.

In a Mass June 2 at the sisters' Nazareth Motherhouse, Jan McCormick of Chapman, Kan., and Sharon Hayes of Kansas City, Mo., professed their vows as agrégées – a new form of membership in the 128-year-old congregation of Catholic women.

The 57-year-old McCormick graduated from Chapman High School and immediately went to work. But after nearly a decade, she enrolled at Cloud County Community College in Concordia and eventually graduated from Marymount College in Salina with a bachelor's degree in psychol-

Sharon Hayes, left, and Jan McCormick recite together June 2 at the Nazareth Motherhouse as they profess their vows as the newest Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia.

COME LEARN MORE

A special Agrégée Information Day is set for Saturday, Sept. 17, in Concordia.

Participants will meet and talk with agrégées and candidates and learn more about this new form of religious life.

For information about the day or other questions, contact Sister Bette Moslander at 785/243-4428 or bmoslander@mannahouse.org

ogy with an emphasis on chemical dependency. During her two years in school in Concordia, she met several Sisters of St. Joseph. But it was at Marymount — then operated by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia — where she really connected with them, she said. And when she went to work at St. John's Hospital in Salina — then also operated by the sisters — she came to

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Sisters see 'border issues' firsthand in El Paso

To many Americans, any mention of El Paso, Texas, and Juarez, Mexico, brings visions of escalating drug violence in a cross-border metropolitan area with a population nearing 2.5 million.

But to the multitude of religious communities that serve El Paso, the vision is always on the people they serve, many of whom have fled to the north to escape Juarez and the other border areas consumed by violence.

Four women from the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia traveled to El Paso in June to meet with representatives of 10 different religious congregations to learn

See EL PASO, Page 7.

THERE'S A TIME IN EACH YEAR THAT WE ALWAYS HOLD DEAR

Good old summertime

Dear Friends,

As I begin this letter, it is the first day of summer, my favorite season. I think to myself that I'd much rather be outdoors doing something to honor this first day of a whole new season than here in the office.

More than likely many of you are thinking the same thing — summer is for being and doing out of doors. Summer is for leisure; for enjoying family and friends at cookouts and reunions, camping and swimming, canoeing or rafting and hiking. Summer is for savoring the first fruits from the garden — those fresh sweet peas, the beets and spinach, the tender onions and the first yellow squash.

Well, once in awhile one has to mow the grass, but it's such a joy to admire that newly cut lawn from the hammock!

Summer is for the sheer enjoyment of sun and long days of leisure and not for taking life or its events too seriously. Unless, of course, you're a farmer watching the weather wreak havoc with your fields of grain, or the family that has just been evacuated from home because of flood or fire, or a soldier in Afghanistan, or a revolutionary in Libya, or a Sudanese child starving in Darfur, or those who survived the earthquake and tsunami but are now living downwind from the leaking Fukushima nuclear power plant, or a tornado survivor who has lost home or a family member, or any other one of the countless victims of natural or human-made disasters. Recent tragedies haunt the airwaves and sink into our minds, reminding us of the fragility of life that we would rather forget.



A special message from
Sister Marcia Allen,
president of the
Sisters of St. Joseph
of Concordia

There are too many in the world who suffer, even in summer.

At our Motherhouse, the Nazareth Convent, we have many sisters whose main work of service is prayer — continuous and steady prayer for those in need. They read and watch the news, and stay in touch with the world through letters, phone calls, the miracle of cyberspace and visits with family and friends.

Scientists today say that there is a mysterious power of mind and spirit that can reach across space and time and influence outcomes. This is the power that these sisters exercise. They make a difference in our world.

This summer, I encourage all of us to join

together in prayer. Let us be present to those who suffer in faroff places and in our own neighborhoods through mindful presence and powerful prayer.

By our mindful presence we will change ourselves and our world. It is in this way that we unite ourselves with our truest self, and others. As one Jesuit author has said, this is the way we unite most intimately with our "world-loving God."

In Romans 8:22 we read that all creation groans until it finds its fulfillment. This is what our world-loving God, the God who insistently labors in our world for its good, is laboring toward. Through our prayer and action for the world and planet we join in God's labor.

As technology continues to open up opportunities for relationships across the globe, we can increasingly erase boundaries and prejudices, equalize peoples and create concern for the care and preservation of the planet. And as we do that, we more and more realize that we and God form partnerships among ourselves and with all others in order to assure that all can live in peace. Living in peace means that all of us are caring for one another's sustenance and survival. We create a planetary commons in which all can live without human-made violence and befriend one another in the face of natural disasters.

For the Christian, this is the life of Christ. It is a saving work in which we and God work toward what God desires most — the integrity and fulfillment of creation. Through prayer we intensify our ability to act, and we become who we are meant to be: people whose lives are totally given to God through our gifts to God's creation — in the neighborhood and in the world.

Which brings me back to summer! In summer we experience the intensity of the extravagant sun, second by second lavishing its rays on this planet, enabling it to burgeon with life. The sun's extravagance is a good metaphor for our world-loving God. And the extravagance of our God is one good reason to cherish this season of summer.

Would you like the sisters at the Motherhouse to pray for someone special in your life? Our sisters always welcome prayer requests. Just send them to prayer@csjkansas.org

Questions, questions & more questions

Sister Jean works with donors to ensure your gifts are used wisely

We received a check a few days ago from someone who asked us to say hello to Sister Marcia Allen. Like many other donors, he also included a question: How do we make sure his donation goes where he wants it to go?

We always enjoy receiving notes from donors — and I appreciate the chance to answer your questions. Here are just a few:



SISTER JEAN
ROSEMARYNOSKI

Q. When I designate a fund for my donation, how do you keep track of where my gift is being used?

A. That is both a great question and an important question. Because we understand that contributions are your way of partnering with us for those things you are passionate about, we take donor's intentions very seriously.

We have a system of checks and balances to ensure we honor a donor's request. When we record a gift, our software requires that we specify a fund such as retirement, Neighbor to Neighbor, Manna House, ministry and so on. We print a daily transmittal sheet for our Finance Office. The Finance Office then deposits the gift into the designated fund and keeps a spreadsheet tracking those funds. At the end of each month, the Finance Office and Development Office reconcile with each other to ensure we are honoring the donor's request.

Q. How much of your financial support comes from the Church through the diocese or Sunday collections in parishes?

A. We do not receive any financial support from the Church through either the diocese or Sunday parish collections. Each December, parishes are invited to contribute to the retirement fund for women religious. The money from this collection is sent to the National Religious Retirement Office, which then distributes the funds to religious communities according to a formula based on number of members and financial need. We receive a grant from this fund annually; otherwise we are self-supporting, as is standard practice.

Q. What do I need to do to name the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia in my will?

A. We are always humbled and grateful when someone names us in his or her will or requests that memorial donations be made to us. We consider it a great honor to be remembered in this way.

Our legal name and contact information is: Nazareth Convent and Academy Corp., P.O. Box 279, Concordia KS 66901; our phone number is 785/243-2149. For most lawyers and other professionals working with people who are drawing up wills that's all the information they need. If you or your representative have other questions or need more information, I'm always here to help.



This spring a volunteer crew from the First United Methodist Church spent a Saturday painting as their gift toward the Neighbor to Neighbor expansion.

Q. How's the fundraising and renovation going for the second floor of Neighbor to Neighbor?

A. Many of you have been eager for an update on our project to double the size of our women's center in downtown Concordia. We are near completion and it is looking beautiful! Although there is no definite date yet, we anticipate it will be open by August. The October issue of The Messenger will bring you pictures and details. And our website — www.csjkansas.org — will feature the story as soon as it happens!

Our fundraising campaign offered donors an opportunity to sponsor the new space at \$24.33 per square foot. To date, we have 1,698 square feet covered, leaving only 359 to go! If

you'd like to help, you may use the envelope included in this newspaper and check the box for Neighbor to Neighbor.

The women and children who participate in programs there are excitedly watching the progress. They are amazed that so many people are willing to make this a reality through financial support. It gives them a sense that people care about them — a lot more people than they ever imagined.

The stories that come from Neighbor to Neighbor and all of our other ministries are truly your stories as well. Our hearts continue to grow in gratitude and humility for your belief in us.

Q. I'm interested in making a monthly donation. How can I do that conveniently?

A. There are three options for easy monthly giving.

We can send you 12 self-addressed remittance envelopes each year so that you have one for each month. The envelopes have options you can check designating where you wish your donation to be used.

The second option is through preauthorized payments (automatic bank withdrawal). We send you a bank form to fill out authorizing automatic payments, and our bank processes it. Then your donation is automatically withdrawn as you have specified.

The third is through an automatic payment you set up with your bank, much like you'd set up a monthly mortgage or other regular payment.

We're happy to visit with you about any of these.

Your generous help supports a wide array of projects and programs of the Sisters of St. Joseph. They include:

Projects/ Outreach/ Ministry:

- » Neighbor to Neighbor women's center
- » Young Adult Ministry
- » Silver City (N.M.) Spirituality Center
- » Concordia Community Needs Forums
- » Concordia Community Garden of Hope
- » Subsidies for sisters who minister without remuneration
- » Discover Camp for junior high girls
- » Spring Break Alternative for college students

Programs:

- » Vocation ministry
- » Agrégée movement
- » Associate program
- » Volunteer program
- » Scholarships for retreats at Manna House of Prayer
- » Expenses for retired sisters
- » General operations & maintenance

Capital expenses:

- » Boiler at Manna House of Prayer
- » Energy-efficient windows at Motherhouse

For information on any of these, please contact:

Sister Jean Rosemarynoski,
Development Director
785/243-2113, ext. 1225
jrose@csjkansas.org
P.O. Box 279
Concordia KS 66901

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BIG RESPONSIBILITY and one sister's dedication

Consider an area the size of New York, New Hampshire, Vermont, Maine, Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode



SISTER MARIA AUGUSTA MENDES BISPO

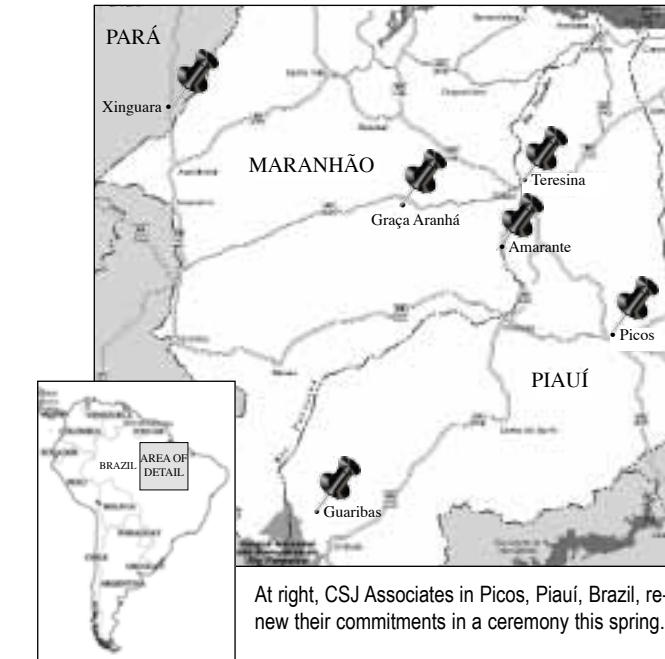
Island. Roughly 126,500 square miles.

Now think of one sole Brazilian Sister of St. Joseph.

Sister Maria Augusta Mendes Bispo has taken on the duties of coordinating CSJ Associates in an area of Brazil slightly larger than all the New England states plus New York combined.

Late this spring those duties took Sister Augusta from her home in Guaribas to three separate Brazilian states, traveling by bus on trips that stretched to 850 miles one-way.

But, she says, the work is very satisfying as she meets and encourages



At right, CSJ Associates in Picos, Piauí, Brazil, renew their commitments in a ceremony this spring.

these women and men in their special commitment to the Sisters of St. Joseph.

In the state of Piauí, Sister Augusta was in Teresina as nine associates renewed their commitments and another nine finished the initial stage of study and began the candidate stage.

In Amarante, 21 associates renewed their commitments, while in Picos there were 12 renewals and three people making

their first commitment.

In the state of Pará, 12 associates in Xinguara renewed their commitments.

There is no program yet in the state of Maranhão, but Sister Lúcia Lima gathered a small group in Graça Aranhá, and Sister Augusta traveled there to talk with them in late June.

Altogether, there are more than 50 CSJ Associates serving with Sisters of St. Joseph in Brazil.



Who are CSJ Associates?

A CSJ Associate is an adult who
» is committed to Gospel values,
» feels drawn by the charism, spirituality and mission of the Sisters of St. Joseph,
» desires to deepen his or her spiritual life,

» is willing to give oneself in service to the dear neighbor, and
» is committed to building community. CSJ Associates are men and women from all walks of life. They meet regularly for prayer and sharing either in groups or one-on-one.

In the United States, there are currently CSJ Associates in:
» Concordia, Kansas
» Abilene/Chapman, Kansas
» Ness City/Hays, Kansas

» Topeka/Manhattan, Kansas
» Augusta, Kansas
» Kansas City, Missouri
» Silver City, New Mexico
» El Paso, Texas

Want to learn more?

For more information on the CSJ Associates program, go to www.csjkansas.org/associates/ or contact Sister Janet Lander at 785/243-4428 or janetmarycsj@yahoo.com or Sister Jean Befort at 785/262-4215 or jeanbefort@sbcglobal.net

determine where the need was greatest.

In February 1963, Sister Margaret — who would change her name to Margarida — and three sisters from Concordia left to begin our first mission in Teresina, Piauí. One of the four was Sister Pat Neihouse, who today continues to serve her “dear neighbors” from the sisters’ Regional House in Teresina.

Congregation answered John XXIII's call to serve Brazilian 'dear neighbors'

It was 50 years ago this summer — August 1961 — when the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia heard the call of Pope John XXIII to go to Latin America to build a mission there.

A few months later, Mother Mary Helena Robben and Sister Margaret Therese Boucher were on their way to Brazil, to meet with missionaries already there and to



CINDY PONCE

A home away from home at Manna House

New program offers an alternative to dorm living at community college

Twenty-year-old Cindy Ponce has only one complaint after living among the Sisters of St. Joseph at Manna House of Prayer in Concordia for six months.

“There’s no one my age,” says the Belize native studying business at Cloud County Community College. “I would like to have friends here to hang out with.”

It’s a mild complaint, one very much overshadowed Ponce says by all the good things about living at the Sisters of St. Joseph’s retreat center, but still one the sisters there have taken to heart. And it explains, in part, the creation of a new program to begin late this summer.

The sisters and staff at Manna House are turning one wing of their landmark building at East Fifth and Olive streets into St. Joseph Scholar House, a residence hall for women students from the local college.

“Cindy was living with us, and we were thinking about ‘community’ for her,” explains Sister Julie Christensen, at 29 the youngest vowed member of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia and one of the eight women who live at Manna House. “This just felt like something we could do.”

Sister Julie’s “this” is a program that focuses on education, service, leadership and “being your best person,” she says. At the same time, it gives young women students of all faiths — many, like Ponce, away from home for the first time — a chance to grow and learn about themselves without many of the distractions prevalent in dorm life on campus.

When the opportunity to attend Cloud arose, Ponce was living with her parents and attending Sacred Heart Junior College in San Ignacio, Belize, a tiny country tucked below Mexico’s Yucatan Peninsula.

She had gotten to know Christa Schmidt, a young woman from Axtell, Kan., who was working in Belize, and then met Christa’s parents, Giles and Roxie Schmidt. The elder Schmidts sponsored Ponce to come to the United States to attend Cloud, where their younger daughter Abby is also a student.

But living in the dorm at Cloud was too expensive, so the Schmidts worked out an arrangement with Manna House: Ponce has been there since January, and helps with chores and other shared tasks.

The cultural adjustment was not that difficult, Ponce says. Belize is the only Central American country that has English as its official language, so that was not a barrier for her. And she comes from a big



Community college student Cindy Ponce pulls weeds in one of the flowerbeds in front of Manna House of Prayer in Concordia on a recent sunny morning. Weeding is one of her regular chores while living at Manna House and attending Cloud County Community College.

family — she’s one of seven children — so she was used to sharing her quarters.

She was also familiar with Catholic sisters. As a Catholic herself, she says, “I knew some sisters (in Belize) and I thought they’d be like that.”

But she recognizes that some people may still harbor stereotypes about women religious. She says some of the other young women she’s met while at

Cloud may be hesitant about even coming to visit her at Manna House, “but I tell them, ‘They are way more different than what you think!’”

Ponce says it took her just a couple of weeks to get over feeling like a “guest” of the sisters. “It didn’t take long for me to adapt to being here,” she recalls. “I just told myself this is home.”

And as she got more comfortable, she got to know the Manna House sisters and staff better. “I guess I didn’t expect them to be so funny, so caring and so loving,” she says now. “Yet, I always have my own space. Whenever I want to do something on my own, there’s always a place for it.”

That’s the kind of experience the sisters hope other young women will have as residents of St. Joseph Scholar House.

There are rules — maintaining a grade-point-average of 3.3 or higher, sharing some chores (including cooking and kitchen duty), making a commitment to community service, as examples — but there are also the benefits of always having a quiet place to study, of being a part of a small community of women who care deeply about each other and of sharing a college experience with fellow students who are equally interested in their education and their place in the world.

There is also a benefit of cost: The fee for St. Joseph Scholar House is \$1,800 a semester, compared to \$2,150 for the least expensive dorm package at Cloud.

“We have so often worked with people in mid-life and older,” says Sister Betty Suther, administrator of Manna House. “This shifts us to younger people and allows us to share what we have with them.”

For Cindy Ponce, it seems to be working. She decided to take a break from classes this summer and is staying on as a volunteer at Manna until school begins again in August. She helps with meals — including making her favorite Belizean dish, rice and beans with chicken — plus working in the garden at the Nazareth Motherhouse, weeding the flower beds that surround Manna House and doing whatever other tasks the sisters need.

She has another two semesters at Cloud before she decides whether she’ll continue at a four-year school or return to Belize to begin a career.

Until then, Manna House is home. “Sister Betty met me when I first got here and welcomed me; she told me to make myself comfortable,” Ponce recalls with a laugh. “I am still welcomed and still comfortable.”

Congregation gathers to welcome two newest sisters

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1.

know even more about them.

By 1999, McCormick had moved back to Chapman and there she met Sister Carolyn Juenemann who was starting a CSJ Associates program. "I joined it, and it was life-giving and there was a real connectedness," McCormick recalls.

She went to work in the Army's substance abuse program where she is now a risk reduction analyst, yet her real passion was her deepening commitment to her CSJ Associates group.

Meanwhile, Sharon Hayes had only a passing knowledge of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia.

Hayes, 65, had felt called to religious life very early. Born and raised in Denver, she joined the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet just out of high school. (The two congregations, along with nearly 20 others in the U.S. and Canada, share a history but are today separate and autonomous.)

Hayes then attended Fontbonne University in St. Louis and then Avila College in Kansas City. She went on to the University of Arizona to earn a master's in science in physiology and nursing.

Then, after seven years as a Carondelet Sister, she made the decision to leave the congregation.

"For Catholics, the 1970s were crazy," she says now. "The Church was modernizing but that meant tremendous upheaval in religious life. I left to search..."

It also meant a career in nursing, with ever increasing responsibilities, and a life in the Kansas City area.

And while no longer a member of the Carondelet sisters, "In some ways, I was always part of them, and they were always part of me," Hayes says. "I didn't know the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia, Kan., but the broader Sisters of St. Joseph connection went back to when I was about 6."

Unbeknownst to Hayes, the Concordia sisters had come up with something that would make that connection even stronger.

Over several decades, the Sisters of St. Joseph who shared roots in the original 17th-century French congregation — which includes both Concordia and Carondelet — had been studying their early history. In Concordia in about 2005, there was particular interest in a form of membership called "agrégées," a French word that means *attached to*.

An agrégée — pronounced *ah-greh-ZHEY* — was a woman who undertook the same work and mission as the original Sisters of St. Joseph in LePuy, France,



As the vow ceremony concludes, Sisters of St. Joseph surround Jan McCormick, left, and Sharon Hayes to sing them a blessing.

but for various circumstances could not take the traditional three vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. Instead, she made a single vow to be faithful to the congregation and to God.

After deep study, the Concordia sisters introduced agrégée membership and accepted the first candidate in 2006. Sister Rosabel Flax of Ness City, Kan., became the first professed agrégée in 2008, and three others soon followed.

McCormick was one of the first candidates, but she remained unsure — until the fall of 2010.

She had spent a couple of years as the driving force in organizing the St. Joseph Orphanage Reunion that was held last October in Abilene. At the end of that exhausting and exhilarating day, she finally knew the direction she needed to take. "That was the turning point," she says. "I knew then that these were the women I wanted to be part of."

About the same time McCormick had starting planning that orphans' reunion, Hayes was attending a retreat with the Carondelet sisters in St. Louis. It was December 2008 and Sister Marcia Allen, president of the Concordia sisters and one of the "pioneers" in creating the agrégée form of membership, was giving a presentation on two programs offered at Manna House of Prayer in Concordia. Both of those programs focus on the history and original mission of the Sisters of St. Joseph — and both

explain agrégée membership in depth.

Hayes signed up for the spring program on the spot. "I'd never heard of the word 'agrégée' before, but I loved what I heard. It was consistent with how I lived my life," says the retired nurse who now volunteers as a medical advocate.

On Jan. 1, 2010, Hayes became an agrégée candidate.

As candidates, each has a mentor for study and prayer. And they worked with Sisters Bette Moslander and Marcia Allen, who were principally responsible for designing the agrégée orientation program.

And McCormick and Hayes worked together to plan a vow ceremony that fit both of them.

"When Sharon and I first started talking about it, we knew we wanted it to be simple," McCormick said on the day before the ceremony.

"We've done what we've done our whole lives without 'credentials,'" Hayes added. "I'd rather walk the walk louder than I talk the talk."

That, says Moslander, reflects the true origins of the agrégées, as well as the potential for the newest members. "It's a different kind of religious life for 21st century Catholic women," she said. "We and the people they serve are truly blessed."

With Hayes' and McCormick's professions, there are now six agrégées and five candidates among the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia.

El Paso visit brings together sisters to talk about 'immediacy of issues'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1.

about the work they are doing there and to see firsthand what "border issues" they grapple with.

"The issue dominating the landscape is immigration," explains Cheryl Lyn Higgins, coordinator of Neighborhood Initiatives Inc., an office of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia and the organizer of the trip.

With her were Sisters Judy Stephens and Anna Marie Broxterman, both members of the congregation's Leadership Council, and Sister Esther Pineda, director of the Justice and Peace Center in Salina.

The Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia have served in El Paso since 1927, and today two sisters live in a small convent just two miles north of the Mexico border.

Higgins had visited El Paso earlier this year to meet those sisters and to talk with them about Neighborhood Initiatives, which is designed to support existing ministries of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia, search out areas for new ministries, help establish new ministries and assist with providing resources and ongoing support for them.

During that visit, Higgins met Sister Isabel Fierro, a Daughter of Charity who serves as the liaison for women religious with the El Paso Diocese. After Higgins explained the reason for her visit, Sister Isabel asked, "Why can't you do that for all (of the women religious serving in El Paso)?"

That was the question Higgins brought back to the Leadership Council in Concordia, and it led to the second extended "fact-finding" trip to El Paso.

The Concordia contingent met



Growing community along with vegetables

HAYS, Kan. — Don't mistake this unassuming patch of earth on Ash Street for so many other unloved neighborhood lots. This small patch — roughly the size of a small bedroom — has been tilled, composted, fenced, planted and now watered with tender loving care. And the fruits of its harvest will benefit the Food Pantry of St. Joseph's Catholic Church.

When Sister Janet LeDuc, a member of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia, moved into the Ash Street house last summer, she almost immediately realized that its yard would be the perfect place for a small community garden.

She was inspired by the success of the Concordia Community Garden of Hope, now in its second growing season on at the northeast corner of the Motherhouse grounds. There the Sisters of St. Joseph made 26 garden plots available to people from throughout Concordia.

So in early March she mailed a letter to parishioners asking for their help. Donations of time and materials came in from both individuals and groups: The St. Joseph Knights of Columbus put up the simple 4-foot fence, Northwestern Printers donated a waterproof sign and others showed up to till, then re-till and add compost and new soil. Just after Easter Father Gilmory Tallman and Sister Janet gathered with several of the volunteers for a blessing of Saint Joseph's Garden. And not long after that, Alton Ashmore arrived, tomato plants in hand.

Providing fresh produce to the Parish Food Pantry is just half the mission of the small garden, Sister Janet said. Her other hope is that the project builds a community of people interested in gardening as well as local self-sufficiency, sustainability and service to their neighbors.



SISTER JANET LEDUC

Upcoming Neighborhood Initiatives projects

» The first "community conversation" organized by Neighborhood Initiatives will be held in Ellis, Kan., Sept. 10. Ellis residents will have the opportunity to shape an agenda for their community. Invitations will be sent to key players in August, but all Ellis residents are welcome to attend.



» Efforts continue to schedule conversations in other Kansas communities served by the Sisters of St. Joseph.

» Our first Basic Employability Skills Training — or BEST — class in Concordia will be scheduled in late summer or early fall. Information will be sent to the businesses that took part in the BEST lunch held at Neighbor to Neighbor in May, but the training is open to any business whose workers could benefit from the free program.

» A committee of sisters is exploring the need for a halfway house or transitional shelter for women in the Concordia area. The committee has sought information from other programs in Kansas and elsewhere, and those talks continue.

For information about these projects or about the goals of Neighborhood Initiatives, contact Cheryl Lyn Higgins at clhiggins@csjkansas.org or 785/243-2113, ext. 1215.

with Catholic sisters from the Daughters of Charity, Sisters of Charity, Religious of the Assumption, Our Lady of Charity, Sisters of Loretto, School Sisters of St. Francis of Milwaukee, Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, Sisters of the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary, Dominican Sisters of Peace and the Sisters of Charity of the Good Shepherd, as well as two priests and several laywomen who are active as volunteers.

Organizations they have established in El Paso include Annunciation House, the diocesan Migrant and Refugee Services Office, Border Interfaith, Las American Advocacy Center and several medical clinics. Later the Concordia group visited a homeless shelter for older women, the Migrant Workers Center and the multi-service Opportunity Center.

But Ruben Garcia, who has been director of Annunciation House for 11 years, cautioned them against focusing too much

on El Paso.

"What the El Paso community has to offer is the immediacy of the issue," he said. "The solution to immigration is not El Paso. If I want to impact the policy of immigration, El Paso is not the place to be."

Instead, he said, "People need to become educated on the issue of border dynamics and politics, learn about the reality of immigrants and then return to your neighborhoods to advocate for comprehensive immigration reform."

The Concordia sisters returned home with a much broader understanding of "border issues," Higgins said, but the visit also had a benefit for the Catholic sisters who serve in El Paso.

"They had never really come together like this before," she said. "Our being there gave them the chance to talk to us — but also to talk to each other about the work they're doing."

RIGHT: The five "golden jubilarians" join in on "Moments to Remember," which was their "band song" when they were received into the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia in 1961. They are, from left, Sisters Judy Stephens, Carmella Thibault, Janis Wagner, Marilyn Wall and Jodi Creten. Photo courtesy of Dottie Moss



FAR RIGHT: Sister Regina Ann Brummel gets into the swing of the music as she leads a choir of sisters singing hit songs from each of the years the jubilarians were received into the congregation.



With a special Mass, music and memories, the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia brought Psalm 100 to life as they celebrated 15 women who have loved and served God for a combined 850 years as members of the congregation.

"Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands," Psalm 100 begins. "Serve the Lord with gladness; come before his presence with singing." And "Jubilee Day" — June 5 — featured a lot of singing.

It began with Ascension Sunday Mass, celebrated by Father Jack Schlaf, in the Sacred Heart Chapel at the Nazareth Motherhouse. But the focus was on the 15 women celebrating the anniversary of the date they were received into

the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia.

The annual jubilee celebration is timed to coincide with the congregation's June Assembly, so as many Sisters of St. Joseph as possible are in Concordia to take part.

The "matriarch" of the 2011 jubilarians is Sister Margaret Ann Buser, who celebrates her 75th anniversary, while Sister Pat Eichner was the youngest jubilarian as she celebrates her 25th anniversary.

After a gala dinner with family and friends at the Nazareth Motherhouse, the jubilarians were honored with a special program in the auditorium.

The theme of the 2011 Jubilee Day was "Celebrating Harvest," in recognition of the years of love and service the jubilarians have reaped and

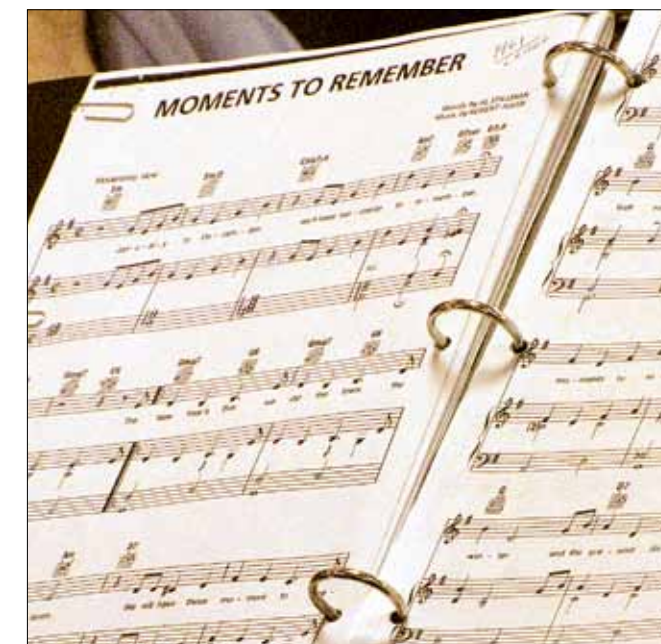
sown as members of the congregation.

But the theme could just as well have been "music and memories," as Sister Regina Ann Brummel, accompanied by Sister Philomene Reiland on piano and a choir of about a dozen sisters, led a sing-along for the audience and jubilarians.

The songs were selected from each of their reception dates and included "Pennies from Heaven" and "Smoke Gets In Your Eyes" from 1936, "Music, Music, Music" and "You Are My Sunshine" from 1941, "Tennessee Waltz" and "In the Cool, Cool, Cool of the Evening" from 1951, "Moon River" and "Moments to Remember" from 1961 and "That's What Friends Are For" and "We Are the World" from 1986.



Making a joyful noise unto the Lord



LEFT: Sister Margaret Ann Buser, honored on her 75th anniversary as a Sister of St. Joseph of Concordia, beams during the June 5 celebration.

Find more photos at www.csjkansas.org



FRONT ROW, from left: Sisters Cecilia Green, Marilyn Wall and Pat Eichner. **MIDDLE ROW**, from left: Sisters Marquita Murguia, Margaret Ann Buser, Rose Moos and Leah Smith. **BACK ROW**, from left: Sisters Francis Margaret Otter, Rosalyn Juenemann, Anne Martin Reinert, Jodi Creten, Janis Wagner, Judy Stephens, Geraldine "Gerry" Milke and Carmella Thibault.

Seventy-five Years

Sister Margaret Ann Buser

Born in Halstead, Kan.; now lives at the Nazareth Motherhouse

Seventy Years

Sister Rose Moos

Born in Hays; now lives at the Nazareth Motherhouse

Sister Marquita Murguia

Born in El Paso, Texas; now lives in El Paso, Texas.

Sixty Years

Sister Cecilia Green

Born in Herndon, Kan.; now lives at the Nazareth Motherhouse

Sister Rosalyn Juenemann,

Born in Leoville, Kan.; now lives in Plainville, Kan.

Sister Geraldine "Gerry" Milke

Born in Hays; now lives at the Nazareth Motherhouse

Sister Francis Margaret Otter

Born in Clayton, Kan.; now lives at the Nazareth Motherhouse

Sister Anne Martin Reinert

Born in Seguin, Kan.; now lives at the Nazareth Motherhouse

Sister Leah Smith

Born in Junction City, Kan.; now lives in Concordia

Fifty Years

Sister Carmella "Carm" Thibault

Born in Damar, Kan.; now lives in Salina, Kan.

Sister Janis Wagner

Born in Walker, Kan.; now lives at the Nazareth Motherhouse

Sister Jodi Creten

Born in Escanaba, Mich.; now lives in Atlanta, Ga.

Sister Judy Stephens

Born in Denver; now lives in Concordia

Sister Marilyn Wall

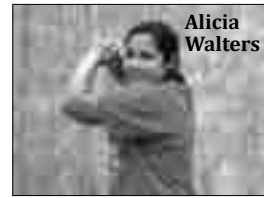
Born in Aurora, Ill.; now lives in Washington, Kan.

Twenty-five Years

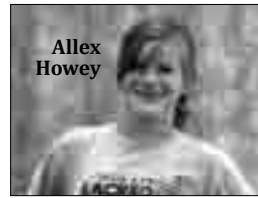
Sister Pat Eichner

Born in Ogallala, Neb.; lives in Greeley, Neb. (as of Aug. 1, 2011)

DISCOVER CAMP 2011



Alicia Walters



Alex Howey



Alison Wheeler



Sister Anna Marie Broxterman
staff



Autumn Denham



Autumn Kidwell
counselor



Tracie Thibault
counselor



Sister Rosemary Foreman
staff



Rebecca Price



Rayna Schmidt



Sister Polly Kukula
staff



Paula Rolph



Nina Zielke



Megan Sibley



Mary Moore
counselor



Marissa Wagner



Maria O'Halloran
co-director



Laura Krug



Kylie Holmes

Lights, camera, action for God!

Two dozen girls from across the Salina Diocese and beyond gathered at the Nazareth Motherhouse in mid-June for the ninth-annual Discover Camp.

The 11- to 14-year-old girls arrived the afternoon of June 16 and spent their time through the evening of June 18 with games, discussion, a movie, swimming, crafts and prayer. The action-packed three days even included an outdoor barbecue and a spirited water balloon standoff with all the campers and staff getting equally soaked.

The camp concluded with a special Mass celebrated by Father Jack Schlaf and featuring a choir of campers, followed by an ice cream social for the girls, their families and Sisters of St. Joseph.

The theme for the camp this year was "Lights, camera, action for God," with Jessica Thompson and Maria O'Halloran — both veteran Discover Campers and camp counselors — serving as co-directors. Sister Beverly Carlin, vocation director for the Sisters of St. Joseph, served as camp coordinator, with assistance from Sisters Janet Lander of Concordia, Rosemary Foreman of Topeka, Pauline "Polly" Kukula of Salina and Anna Marie Broxterman of Concordia. Donna Reynolds of Abilene volunteered as music director.

Other sisters who live at the Motherhouse and in Concordia assisted with activities throughout the three-day camp, and high school and college students volunteered as camp counselors.



Becca Greif
counselor



Sister Bev Carlin
coordinator



Catherine Marak



Cheyenne Trout



Christina Price



Ciara Malone
counselor



Cindy Ponce
counselor



Donna Reynolds
staff



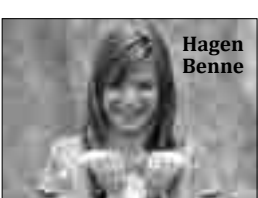
Emma Girton



Grace Rieke



Grace Walford



Hagen Benne



Hannah Michaud



Heather Befort

FAR LEFT: Sister Bette Moslander chats with Discover Campers during the Friday evening barbecue at the Nazareth Motherhouse.

LEFT: Sister Pauline Kukula of Salina gives campers some pointers before the group goes to supper with the Sisters of St. Joseph on their first evening at Discover Camp 2011.

ABOVE: Sister Rosemary Foreman of Topeka cheers on the Discover Campers as they launch water balloons as part of the evening games June 17. Sister Rosemary was one of the staff members for the ninth-annual Discover Camp.

Want to relive the experience?

The next Discover Camp event will be a first-ever reunion of former campers and counselors, planned for Aug. 5 and 6 at the Motherhouse. For information on the reunion, contact Sister Beverly Carlin at srbevcs@csjkansas.org or 785/220-7996.



Kinsey Levendofsky



Keira Wahlmeier



Katy Davis
counselor



Katie Husky



Jessica Thompson
co-director



Janet Peak
counselor



Sister Janet Lander
staff

Is it already time to be thinking about reunions?

Dear Marymount Alumni,
"Ah, summer, what power you have to make us suffer and like it."

— Russell Baker

Yes, summer has a way of making us suffer but with it comes so much joy and relaxation... time to spend with family and friends and to vacation. I trust each of you has taken the time to do just that.

THERE ARE STILL PHOTO CDs available from most of the Marymount College theater productions from 1968 to 1989. They are \$10 each, and you may get yours by contacting Barbara Evans Nichols at 9621 Meadow Lane, Leawood, Kan., 66206; or jbce@sbcglobal.net; or 913/341-3285. If you are interested in seeing the original photos, they are all filed in the alumni office.

AS WE LOOK FORWARD TO THE 2012 ALL SCHOOL Reunion, we look forward to special class reunions.

If your graduation date ends with a 2 or a 7, you will be in one of those "special" classes. Get your class together for a class gathering during the 2012 reunion. It is not too early to get started. If you want to take the initiative and need a class roster, let me know, and I will see that you get one.

Keeping you in prayer, I remain,
Sister Lucille Herman
 Marymount Alumni Director

Marymount Alumni Office • P.O. Box 2485 • Salina KS 67402
 Email: lherman@yahoo.com • Phone: 785/823-8803

Eternal rest grant unto them, O God!

Members of the Marymount family we've lost

Joan Loop Hood '54A March 28, 2011	Betty Jean Schenk Watters '56A May 3, 2011
Frances Berry Wolfe '41 April 6, 2011	Caroline Birzer Hoffman '53A May 24, 2011
Mary Louise Smith Peterson '71 April 30, 2011	Kathryn Healy Wright '56 May 27, 2011



Marie Dulzer, second from right, poses with fellow Marymount '58 classmates during their 50th reunion. From left, they are Dorothy Jo Murphy Spezze, Fran Wood Johnson, Jo Anne Curran Whitehair, Dulzer and Marilyn Jasper Hunt.

TEACHER, DIRECTOR, WRITER

A life full of theater

BY MARIE DULZER
 Marymount Class of '58

When my Marymount class of 1958 returned to Salina for our 50th reunion, there were hugs, laughter and many memories.

But it was the tour of our former Fine Arts building stage that proved the highlight for me. Standing on those familiar boards, they seemed to echo Sister Michael Ann McKenna voicing a definition of theater from Thornton Wilder: "Theater is a collective effort, in the perpetual present, to a group mind." That idea has been with me through the 35 years of my career: teaching, directing, writing and being a Broadway-theater critic.

In Phoenix and Tucson, I taught and directed high school plays and worked with

speech students in state competitions. While there I completed my master's degree at the University of Arizona, and then did additional course work at Case Western Reserve in Ohio.

At a Connecticut high school, I produced the musical "Peter Pan" with involvement of the entire school, from the English classes doing publicity to the business area staffing the box office. It was a total effort that many high schools did, and I hope, still do.

I spent the last 29 years of my career at SUNY Orange, a community college in Middletown, N.Y., that's part of the State University of New York. While there I taught, directed and worked with students in

Alumni UPDATE

plays for children. My belief has always been that theater for children should be an enjoyable event for the entire family. The Jelly Bean Playhouse was established so children would be introduced to theater and also have the chance to perform.

One of my theater productions, "Vanities," was presented with the permission of the playwright, Jack Heifner, while the off-Broadway production was still running. The show was chosen to be a part of the American College Theatre Festival IX.

College courses I initiated included debate, television, voice and articulation and with our choreographer, stage movement.

While at the college I wrote community theater reviews for our local newspaper and

See '58 ALUM, Page 14

A new kind of housewarming

Sisters open their historic home to groups & community events

Everybody who's ever been on a tour of the Nazareth Motherhouse in Concordia knows that construction began on the landmark building in 1902, and that it was originally designed as a convent the Sisters of St. Joseph and as an academy (or high school) for Catholic girls.

While the monolithic exterior of the five-story brick-and-stone structure hasn't changed much in the ensuing 109 years, the use of the interior space has evolved — and the pace of that evolution has definitely quickened over the past few years.

Yes, it is still a convent; nearly 40 Sisters of St. Joseph live here. It also remains the spiritual "home" for all 140-plus sisters in the congregation, and Mass is celebrated five days a week in its Sacred Heart Chapel. But there haven't been schoolgirls here since 1922, when the Academy moved to Salina as part of what would become Marymount College.

For decades after that, the Motherhouse became something of an "enclave" solely for the use of the Sisters of St. Joseph. But that began to change as the congregation celebrated its 125th anniversary in 2008 and invited all of Concordia to a summer lawn party.

Increasingly, explains Sister Marcia Allen, president of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia, the congregation views the Motherhouse and its grounds as "partners with us in mission" — meaning that it should be a place sisters can make available as a service to the community.

"It's not so much the size of the space we can offer," says Sister Marcia, "it's the kind of space. There are other gathering and meeting spaces available — the Moose and American Legion, and Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church has a nice space for large



When Concordia's National Orphan Train Complex and Museum hosted its ninth annual reunion in June, the Nazareth Motherhouse Auditorium was the site for the main musical program, a multimedia performance of "Riders on the Orphan Train" by Alison Moore and Phil Lancaster, both of Austin, Texas.

Mark your calendars: A few upcoming events

» **2011 CONCORDIA SPEAKERS SERIES.** The next presentation will be Monday, July 18, at 7 p.m. Susie Haver & Tammy Britt, co-directors of Cloud County Convention & Tourism, will discuss "Finding the 8!" There will be two more speakers in the series: Concordia City Manager Larry Uri on Sept 26 and Cameron Thurner of the Domestic Violence Association of Central Kansas on Oct. 24. Presentations begin at 7 p.m. and are free and open to the public.

» **MONDAY, AUG. 15, 11:45 AM-1:30 PM** — Concordia Community Needs Forum "working lunch." The 15th in a series for organizations, agencies and individuals to come together to identify challenges and seek solutions — and participants do not have to have attended earlier sessions to join the conversation now.

» **SATURDAY, SEPT. 10, 10 AM-3 PM** — Concordia Volunteer Fair, designed to allow local groups and organizations a chance to introduce themselves to people interested in volunteering. Reserve a space by Aug. 12 with Sister Jean Rosemarynoski at 785/243-2113, ext. 1225, or sisterjean@csjks.org

» **SUNDAY, SEPT. 18** — Observance of the International Day of Prayer, co-sponsored by the Concordia Year of Peace Committee and Pax Christi of Salina. See story on Page 14 for details.

» **Oct. 7-8** — KS150 Quilt Fest: 150 quilts exhibited at the Motherhouse and other Concordia locations. Exhibits open Friday 1-5 p.m. and Saturday 9 a.m.-4 p.m. For a full schedule and more information, go to kansasquiltfest.com

groups — but here you have the beauty and the history."

In fact, those were two of the factors mentioned most often in April 2010 when sisters invited representatives from a number of Concordia groups and organizations in to talk about uses for the Motherhouse and its surrounding grounds.

"They told us that the Motherhouse is inviting," Sister Marcia recalls. "And once one group came, then others wanted to."

So the Catholic Women of the Salina Diocese held their meeting here, as did a group of Kansas tourism officials. Then there have been the Community Needs Forum "working lunches" — more than a dozen of those so far — plus the 2011 Concordia Speakers Series, which has featured monthly presentations that began in February. A handful of musicians have even benefitted from the superb acoustics in the chapel as they performed recitals there.

On one Saturday in September, the Motherhouse will host the first-ever Concordia Volunteer Fair, with display space for groups and organizations that are always seeking volunteers. A week later, the Auditorium and other spaces will be transformed for the annual celebration of the International Day of Peace, which this year will be an afternoon-long "Peace Fair." Then October's big event — KS 150 QuiltFest — will turn the Auditorium into an exhibit hall for up to 150 quilts.

Scattered around those bigger events are other meetings, lunches and speakers.

To help accommodate the Motherhouse's increased public role, the sisters have approved a plan to create a new driveway and added parking on the east side of the building.

That will lead to a handicap-accessible doorway, to provide more convenient access to the first-floor Auditorium.

Work on that could begin as early as this fall. "The people of Concordia have been our neighbors for all these years," Sister Marcia explains. "This shouldn't be an enclave; it should be a place we share with them."

COMING EVENTS

» **MONDAY, JULY 18, 7 PM — 2011 Concordia Speakers Series** at the Nazareth Motherhouse, 13th & Washington streets, Concordia: Susie Haver & Tammy Britt, co-directors, Cloud County Convention & Tourism, "Finding the 8!" Free and open to the public.

» **TUESDAY, AUG. 2 — Concordia's National Night Out.** Neighborhoods around the city host evening block parties

to get to know the neighbors; sponsored by the Concordia Police Department and the Concordia Year of Peace Committee. To find out how you can take part, contact Sister Jean Rosemarynoski at 785/243-2113, ext. 1225, or sisterjean@csjkansas.org.



» **AUG. 5-6 — Discover Camp Reunion.** at the Nazareth Motherhouse. A first-ever reunion of former campers and counselors. For information, contact Sister Beverly Carlin at 785/220-7996 or srbevc@csjkansas.org.

» **AUG. 7-AUG. 14 — Making Lace, Making Peace.** Presenters: Sisters Janet Lander and Ramona Medina. A retreat for Sisters of St. Joseph, their associates and others interested in the healing contemplative practice of creating beautiful and intricate handmade bobbin lace; at Manna House of Prayer in Concordia. Begins at 5:30 p.m. Aug. 7 and concludes at noon Aug. 14. To register or for information, contact Susan LeDuc at 785/243-4428 or retreatcenter@mannahouse.org. Also check www.mannahouse.org

» **MONDAY, AUG. 15, 11:45 AM-1:30 PM — Concordia Community Needs Forum** "working lunch;" at the Nazareth Motherhouse. The 15th in a series for organizations, agencies and individuals to come together to identify challenges and seek solutions. You do not have to have attended earlier sessions to join the conversation now. Please RSVP to Sister Jean Rosemarynoski at 785/243-2113, ext. 1225, or sisterjean@csjkansas.org.

» **SUNDAY, AUG. 21, 2-4 PM — CSJ Associate Open House,** for those interested in finding out about becoming an Associate of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia; at Manna House of Prayer. Contact Sister Jean Befort (jeanbefort@sbcglobal.net or 785/275-1640) or Sister Janet Lander (janetmarycsj@yahoo.com or 785/243-4428) for information or questions.

» **SEPT. 9-10 — "Be-Friending God,"** a spiritual retreat for women in their 20s; at the Nazareth Motherhouse in Concordia. It is grounded in Ignatian spirituality and designed to provide nourishment for the spiritually hungry. Begins at 7 p.m. Friday and ends at 5 p.m. Saturday. Cost of \$25 includes lodging

and all meals. To register or for information, contact Sister Beverly Carlin at srbevc@csjkansas.org or 785/220-7996.

» **SATURDAY, SEPT. 10, 10 AM-3 PM —** Concordia Volunteer Fair, designed to allow local groups and organizations a chance to introduce themselves to people interested in volunteering. Reserve a space by Aug. 12 with Sister Jean Rosemarynoski at 785/243-2113, ext. 1225, or sisterjean@csjkansas.org

» **SATURDAY, SEPT. 17, 10 AM-3:30 PM — Agrégée Information Day** at the Nazareth Motherhouse. Participants will meet and talk with agrégées and candidates and learn more about this new form of religious life. For information or other questions, contact Sister Bette Moslander at 785/243-4428 or bmoslander@mannahouse.org

» **MONDAY, SEPT. 26, 7 PM — 2011 Concordia Speakers Series** at the Nazareth Motherhouse: Larry Uri, Concordia City Manager, "Building Community." Mr. Uri has been Concordia's city manager since September 2008 and an attorney here since 1976. Free and open to the public.

» **SATURDAY, OCT. 1 — "Dare Your Heart's Desire,"** a spiritual retreat for women in their 30s; in Tip-ton, Kan. It is grounded in Ignatian spirituality and designed to provide nourishment for the spiritually hungry. For details, contact Sister Beverly Carlin at 785/220-7996 or srbevc@csjkansas.org.

» **OCT. 7-8 — KS150 Quilt Fest:** 150 quilts for the 150th anniversary of Kansas statehood, exhibited at the Nazareth Motherhouse and other Concordia locations. Exhibits open Friday 1-5 p.m. and Saturday 9 a.m.-4 p.m. For a full schedule and more information, go to kansasquiltfest.com

» **OCT. 21-22 — "Beyond Blogs and BlackBerrys,"** a spiritual retreat for women in their 40s; in Concordia. It is grounded in Ignatian spirituality and designed to provide nourishment for the spiritually hungry; begins at 7 pm Friday and ends at 5 pm Saturday, Nov. 20. Cost is \$40, which includes lodging and all meals. To register or for more information, contact Sister Beverly Carlin at 785/220-7996 or srbevc@csjkansas.org.

» **MONDAY, OCT. 24, 7 PM — 2011 Concordia Speakers Series** at the Nazareth Motherhouse: Cameron Thurner, Outreach Specialist, Domestic Violence Association of Central Kansas, "Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault in Rural Communities." Free and open to the public.

» **SATURDAY, NOV. 26, 9 AM-2 PM — Annual Nazareth Motherhouse Craft Sale.** Mark your calendars now for the Saturday after Thanksgiving. (You know Sisters Cecilia Green, Leah Smith, Jackie Kircher and Susan Stoerber have it marked on their calendars so they'll have plenty of beautiful things ready for sale!)

Motherhouse 'Peace Fair' features family activities

Families are invited to a "Peace Fair" at the Nazareth Motherhouse in Concordia as part of the International Day of Peace commemoration Sunday, Sept. 18.

The event is planned from 1:30 to 4:30 p.m., and is presented by the Concordia Year of Peace Committee and Pax Christi of Salina.

The fair will offer separate events for children and for adults, with a variety of activities.

Planned events for children include a crafts workshop, a storytime and a sing-along with local musicians. Each session will be about half an hour long to keep children engaged.

For adults, organizers plan presentations on peace from a family perspective, the impact of the Concordia Year of Peace and video-game violence, as well as the showing of a documentary on nuclear proliferation.

The afternoon will conclude with a Peace Walk through Lourdes Park and the Grotto on the Motherhouse grounds and an ice cream social hosted by the Sisters of St. Joseph. There is no charge for any of the activities.

When a complete schedule of the day's events is finalized, it will be posted at www.csjkansas.org.

The Motherhouse has hosted Peace

"Peace Day should be devoted to commemorating and strengthening the ideals of peace both within and among all nations and peoples..."

— United Nations discussion, 1981

Go to www.internationaldayofpeace.org to learn more about Peace Day and celebrations planned around the world.

Day ceremonies for the past few years, but this is the first year for a "Peace Fair" involving the entire family, said Sister Esther Pineda, director of the sisters' Justice and Peace Center in Salina. "We want everyone to have fun, and at the same time understand something more about the meaning of peace," Sister Esther said. "This is an opportunity to really bring people together."

The United Nations established the International Day of Peace in 1981, and the first Peace Day was celebrated in September 1982. Since 2002, it has been observed on Sept. 21, which the U.N. has declared as a day of global ceasefire and non-violence.

'58 alum recounts long career

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12.

soon became a Broadway theater critic. For 10 years I wrote a weekly theater column in the Middletown paper that included Broadway reviews, stories about the arts and interviews with artists. Many of my students, after further study, have become professionals in various areas of the arts. Some have become teachers and staff schools across the country.

One student, who had the lead in

many college productions, went on to act professionally for 20 years and now teaches at SUNY Orange. Another past performer, currently a university English professor, founded a Shakespeare theater company in Tennessee.

How fortunate I have been to work with so many talented students and such creative colleagues.

I retired as chair of the Arts and Communications Department in 1996 and now joyfully spend my time between New York and Florida.



Sister Viatora Solbach: Dec. 6, 1921-May 26, 2011

VIGIL: May 29, 2011, at the Nazareth Motherhouse, Concordia
EULOGIST: Sister Mary Reiter

Mary Catherine Solbach was born on a farm near Clifton, Kan., on Dec. 6, 1921. She was the second oldest of 14 children. Surviving are four sisters — Edith, Carolyn, Mary and Marilyn — and three brothers — Charles, Vernon and Mark.

The Sisters of St. Joseph had been very good to her mother in childhood and Mary Catherine expressed the desire to become a sister early on. When she completed her sophomore year of high school at Marymount Academy, she entered the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia on Sept. 8, 1939, and received the habit and the name Sister Viatora on March 19, 1940. She made final vows March 19, 1944.

After finishing high school at the Motherhouse, Sister Vi went to Marymount College to prepare to teach. She taught in grade schools for 20 years mainly in Kansas, but also in Chicago.

After leaving the classroom, Sister Vi felt strongly that the Sisters of St. Joseph needed to establish a prayer house. It took a number of years, but eventually the sisters' convent in Clyde became the first Manna House of Prayer with Sisters Viatora, Faye Huelsmann and Pat Lewter accepting this ministry.

Sister Vi spent three years there, and then served on the congregation's Council for four years. She then served as Motherhouse Administrator.

She then went to St. Louis University to be trained in pastoral ministry. After much prayerful discernment, she went to St. Xavier's Church in Junction City, Kan., as pastoral visitor and eucharistic minister to the sick and homebound. For three years she served and really appreciated this ministry.

In her own words:

Also of importance during this time was my introduction to Kevin Wilmott, a black graduate from Marymount, who was teaching at St. Xavier High. He introduced me to Lemoine Davis who was a counselor at the public high school and noticed that black students who graduated could not get jobs and often got into trouble with the law. ... Kevin also had a group of men and women, black and white, who were interested in justice issues, the Kanza Life Community of which I became a mem-

ber. Later a St. Francis Shelter was established to house transients at night so they would not be on the streets.

The Kanza Life group picketed the Municipal Building and post office to make the city aware of the injustice that the city would not hire a black firefighter. After three months of picketing, the city hired a black firefighter.

Sometime later we did a sit-in at the Chamber of Commerce for a Human Rights Board. We were reported to the bishop, the pastor and finally to our



HOMEcomings

president, Sister Marcia Allen. She told them that she didn't know about it but added, "We support it 100 percent." Some weeks later a Human Rights Board was established.

Later Sister Vi said, "We need a place for homeless women and children." The Kanza Life community looked for a suitable place in the impoverished part of town, Kevin and Lemoine found property with three old houses. They said they could fix them up but needed money. Sister Vi wrote to the St. Joseph Foundation for a loan of \$20,000. They also asked for and received a grant of \$10,000 to renovate two houses. That became St. Clare House of Hospitality. In the meantime, Sister Vi visited 36 of 41 pastors in town and asked if their churches could help them. She was asked to speak to the ministerial alliance and the church circles and also various organizations such as the Rotary, Kiwanis and Sertoma clubs and wives of officers at Fort Riley. So money began to come in.

Sisters Mary Esther Otter and Anne Martin Reinert early on had accepted Sister Vi's invitation to come and work on this new venture. They completed the two-story house but ran out of money to complete remodeling on the little house close by. They opened to guests on March 17, 1986. They lived and worked in cramped quarters for two years until they received a grant to complete the project.

When the convent closed that spring, St. Clare House was not ready to be lived in, so Eleanor Nolan invited them to live with her. In the summer of 1987 Marrayne Schatter, a native of Los Angeles, came and worked with them for three years.

Due to Sister Viatora's declining health and the fact that the Crisis Center of Manhattan was so crowded and needed a facility in Junction City, St. Clare House of Hospitality became a "Crisis Center Facility." The transition took place July 1, 1994.

The St. Clare House, in its 8½ years of operation, served nearly 1,500 women and children as a place of shelter and safety. Many women were able to be directed to public housing, social services, job training and job services.

I would like to quote a passage from a letter to Sister Viatora written by Kevin Wilmott in May 1994:

I hope you know how much you have meant in my life. You joined our organization at a time when I was desperately needing support. Your support not only was very beneficial to the group ... it acknowledged that I was doing the right thing. You joined us when no one else in the community of your stature was willing to stand with us.

How we sacrificed against the will of the community to achieve our goals. ... To me, St. Clare House is a monument to our efforts. We achieved this totally outside the system, even against the opposition of our own church. You, Sister Mary Esther, Sister Ann and Marrayne are what gave St. Clare House its life.

St. Clare House was built with a belief in revolution and radical Christianity. It was a beacon of light in a community marked in darkness.

Sister Vi, it was an honor to work with you. You have enriched my life and helped me to become who I am today.

In 1990 the Junction City area ministerial alliance bought the former convent and in 1991, Open Door was established. Some of the sisters worked there for some time.

Sister Viatora moved to serve as parish visitor in Ellis and Plainville for a few years before retiring to the Motherhouse in 2003. She moved to Mount Joseph senior Village in 2007 and died May 26, 2011.

Again, in her own words:

There is so much to be grateful for; so many people to thank for their love, support and encouragement, all of which has been so important in calling me to grow in all that I needed to be, who I am and where I am now. Great is our God, who has been with me forever, providing me with good parents and wonderful brothers and sisters and calling me to be a Sister of St. Joseph — a congregation of which I am so blessed to be a part and my companions along the way.



Sisters of St. Joseph
PO Box 279
Concordia KS 66901

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All the news that didn't fit

Snapshots of events at the Motherhouse and Mamma House of Prayer



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FAR LEFT: Father Frank Coady, director of the Office of Liturgy and Worship for the Salina Diocese, discusses the new English translation of the Roman Missal with the Sisters of St. Joseph at the Nazareth Motherhouse May 13.

LEFT: Sister Dorothy Hoover, left, receives a pink carnation from Sister Anne Martin Reinert as part of the celebration of National Nursing Week at the Motherhouse May 12. Staff nurses and nursing aides were honored, as were sisters who served in nursing and caregiving professions.

ABOVE: As Arlys Hubert, left, retired as Motherhouse administrator on April 26, Sister Marcia Allen was first among the well-wishers at her going-away party.

*Keep track of all our events & projects at
<http://www.csjkansas.org>*