

What extraordinary gifts do you see?
See pages 10 & 11 for a special pull-out section to help you consider your gifts



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Welcome to the Neighborhood!

New effort can take off with Kansas native at the helm

The idea came first: A way to identify (and organize) all the multitude of projects undertaken by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia.

Then came a name, capturing both the idea of one hand reaching out to another and the energy required to do that over and over again: Neighborhood Initiatives.

The next step was incorporating as a nonprofit organization, which happened in early 2010.

And, finally, the last step — the end of the beginning, as it were — was to find the right person to head the new effort. The first-ever Neighborhood Initiatives coordinator needed to understand both “neighborhood” and “initiative,” plus have creativity, curiosity, energy, an ability to collaborate and demonstrated leadership — as well as a good dose of entrepreneurial spirit. It seemed like a daunting list of required characteristics.

That may explain the enthusiasm around Cheryl Lyn Higgins, a native Kansan and former



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Chamber of Commerce executive who has been hired to head Neighborhood Initiatives. She started her new job Jan. 6.

Higgins was most recently head of the Winfield (Kan.) Area Chamber of Commerce, and previously served as executive vice president and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce in McPherson and president and CEO of the Junction City Chamber. She also served as director of Project WIN/the Welcome Home to Heroes Foundation in Junction City.

In her new role, Higgins will coordinate works of service sponsored by the Sisters of St. Joseph of

Concordia, projects initiated and sustained by the congregation and activities the sisters undertake in partnership with others. She will be responsible for ensuring that all those projects complement each other and for seeking out opportunities for new projects and partnerships. Right now the projects under the Neighborhood Initiatives umbrella are Neighbor to Neighbor, the Concordia Year of Peace and the Concordia Community Garden of Hope.

“She brings a wealth of experience in initiative, in collaboration and in leadership,” said Sister Marcia Allen, president of the Concordia-based congregation, as

she introduced Higgins to sisters at the Nazareth Motherhouse on Jan. 6. “We believe she is exactly the person we need for this new idea.”

Higgins, who was born and raised in Winfield, Kan., and is a Catholic, said the coordinator’s position is a perfect fit for her.

“It’s part of a personal journey,” she told the gathered sisters. “I share your faith, and I share your vision of the good works we can achieve.”

See NEW COORDINATOR, page 18.

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Our 2011 Jubilarians

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