

# Mission

Volume 18 Number 5

July 10, 2006

*A Publication of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Springfield*

## Weston recognizes three for extending mission

**Angela Deady, ssj**

Sister Mary Lou Lacey, Pearl Wilkinson and Laverne Lowery-Alleyne were recently honored at Weston Rehab Center for Women's annual meeting held at Mont Marie in Holyoke on Thursday, June 15<sup>th</sup>.

Weston Rehab, founded by Sisters of St. Joseph Shirley Campbell and Eleanor Spring, offers employment and a variety of services to women who have been incarcerated and/or have received treatment for substance abuse or psychiatric problems. The mission of Weston is to help women rebuild their lives and to become financially independent.

Sister Mary Lou received Weston's "Spirit in Mission" award for her five years of volunteer service to the Rehab Center. In her brief remarks, Sr. Mary Lou noted: "An old hymn presents Jesus saying, 'I will be the vine, and you will be the branches. I will be the sign; I will offer many chances.' This



*Pearl Wilkinson received the Weston Rehab Annual Award; Laverne Lowery-Alleyne received the Spirit of Weston Award; and Mary Lou Lacey, ssj, received the Spirit in Mission Award.*

**Photos by Ann Lynch, ssj**

offering of many chances," Sr. Mary Lou said, "is happening to the women at Weston every day, and I'm happy to be part of it."

Pearl Wilkinson, a 25 year probation officer in the Chicopee District Court, received "Weston Rehab Annual Award," not only for her work in the judicial system but also for the group "Power Breakfast" which she co-founded. Power Breakfast is a monthly meeting of women whose purpose is to contribute to the empowerment of women. Like Weston Rehab, it is designed to benefit all those whom it serves, with a particular focus on women in need.

The third awardee, Laverne Lowery-Alleyne, has been employed at Weston as a workshop manager since 2000. Prior to her work at Weston, Ms. Alleyne worked for 22 years in the Hampden County Sheriff's Department. Ms. Alleyne is presently active in the Pioneer Valley Girl Scouts and was a foster parent for ten years. Ms. Alleyne finds great satisfaction in her work at Weston as she assists women during a recovery stage of their lives.

The evening program also included personal testimony from several women who are presently employed at Weston Rehab. Their stories of recovery and determination to improve their lives clearly validates the goal and the mission of Weston Rehab Center.



## Team Talk

### East Coast groups sing 'Getting To Know You'

**Kathleen Imbruno, ssj**

As a follow-up to the Leadership Meeting of the CSSJ Congregations of the Atlantic Region, the Planning Committee (consisting of one person on the Leadership Team of each Congregation) met recently. Several outcomes resulted from this meeting. A major goal of the Atlantic Region is to foster relationships among the members of the seven congregations of our region (Boston, Brentwood, Philadelphia, St. Augustine, Springfield, West Hartford, and Winslow). In order to work toward that goal, three ideas surfaced that we are attempting to carry out.

First, at the National Event in Milwaukee that will take place from July 8-12, the members of the Atlantic Region have been invited to have lunch together on Sunday of the gathering. That may not sound like a big undertaking, but nearly 380 sisters and associates are expected from the Atlantic Region. Eighteen are attending from our community. We have worked out a plan so that members of the different congregations will be able to mingle and meet new people.

Secondly, the Atlantic Region is working on constructing a page on the Federation Website for our region exclusively. We will begin by updating it four times a year (using the four seasons as markers) to share information on retreats, vacation houses, gatherings, speakers, events, ministry openings and prayer resources, anything that will help us to visit our Atlantic neighborhood.

Finally, each Congregation of the region is

## In Memoriam

***Please remember the following in prayer:***

- Alice Morway, ssj
- Bartholomew Wildenhain, brother of Anne Marie Wildenhain, ssj
- Bernadette Laronda, sister of Juliette Marcotte, ssj
- Richard Cormier, nephew of Sr. Dominic Marie Cormier
- Theodore Pudlo, father of Elaine Lampron, Associate
- Rev. Daniel Edward Cernauskas, brother of Sr. Mary Benedicta Cernauskas
- Joseph Weymouth, brother-in-law of Catherine Zajac, ssj

planning to establish a Federation Home Committee that will be able to foster relationships by organizing gatherings and other ways of networking and sharing resources. You have probably read about the request for committee members in the June Leadership letter and we trust that there will be a good response from our community. The Planning Committee is scheduling a meeting of two members from each Home Committee to be held in the fall.

Truly there is a wonderful richness to be shared among the members of our congregations. We hope that these initiatives will enable us to take advantage of our diversity and our great wealth of resources.

## Letters -- Letters -- Letters

Dear Sisters and Associates,

My deepest gratitude to all of you for your kindness to me and my family on the death of my sister Bernadette Laronda. Thank you for the many cards, donations to the community and your attending my sister's wake and funeral.

God bless you all and thank you for your support,

Juliette Marcotte, ssj and the Laronda Family

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Your many prayers, cards, donations, and your presence at the Wake and Funeral Mass for my brother Bart were a great means of strength and consolation for myself and my family members.

Your concern and compassion enabled all of us to thank God for the gift of Bart. We are most grateful for his many friends and especially for the Sisters of St. Joseph. May God Bless You All.

Sister Anne Marie and the Wildenhain family

Mission is published monthly by the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Springfield as a source of communication within the Congregation. Readers are encouraged to submit articles which should be typed and sent to Mont Marie, Holyoke, MA 01040. E-mail [acl@ssjspringfield.com](mailto:acl@ssjspringfield.com)

**Ann Lynch, SSJ, editor**

**Communications Committee:** Sisters Angela Deady, Mary E. Harvey, Mary Lou Lacey, Ann Lynch, Elizabeth Matuszek, Paula Misitano, Patricia James Sweeney and Jeanne O'Shea.

## Golf Classic proceeds earmarked for elevator

**Paula Misitano, ssj**

As the summer weather comes upon us, there are many days that outdoor activities will engage us. For Mont Marie Health Care Center, one summer day stands out—Monday, August 28. On that day, our 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Sisters of Saint Joseph Golf Classic takes place at the Springfield Country Club.

Already, our afternoon golfing spots are almost filled and we have some new foursomes for the morning time. By all indications, the response continues to bode well for the Center's major fund raiser. This year, the proceeds are earmarked for the modernization of our existing elevator. With over forty years in service and frequent downtime, the elevator needs to be "retro-fitted" so that daily activities can continue and our residents, staff, and visitors continue to minister to one another in safety.

There are many ways to help in this fundraiser. There are levels of Corporate Sponsorship, Tee, Green, and Cart Sponsorship, as well as a raffle and Silent Auction. Gifts from area businesses and gift certificates from local restaurants help expand our raffle

prizes and monetary donations from supporters raise our net proceeds.

If you wish general information on the Golf Classic, have an interest in golfing, or wish to support us through a donation, call the Health Care Center (1.413.536.0853, ext. 225 or 205).

We promise a day of fun and enjoyment – rain or shine! Let's keep that elevator more "up" than "down."



*Golf Volunteers include Sisters Mary Lou Gillon, Maureen Griffin, Patty Murphy, Mary T. Shea and Kathy Imbruno.*

**Photo by Wendy Hammerle**

## Vermont SSJ receives justice award

**Patricia Kane, ssj**

A year ago Margaret McDevitt, ssj, who serves as the Pastoral Associate at Rutland Regional Medical Center, was invited to join the Rutland City Reparative Board. The Board, which is part of the Rutland United Neighborhoods Community Justice Center, receives referrals from the State Attorney's Office regarding adult criminal offenders. Their role is to study the history of the offender's violations against the community and attempt to provide both just punishment and proper restitution through alternative services to avoid court procedures. RUNCJC is connected to every social and community service in the Rutland region and also sponsors Victim Restitution and Offender Reentry programs.

About 150 volunteers and their guests attended a cook-out and awards celebration at

the Godnick Center in Rutland, on Memorial Day week end, sponsored by the Reparative Justice branch of the Vermont Correctional Services. People from all walks of life: educators, business leaders, farmers, lawyers, medical personnel, computer specialists, social workers etc. were thanked for the countless volunteer hours given to reparative and restorative justice work in their respective communities.

As Richard Wright, Community Resource Coordinator, presented Sr. Margaret McDevitt with a Certificate of Appreciation for her devoted service on the Reparative Board, he recalled her quiet demeanor in her first three months of service followed by a smiling comment that "She hasn't stopped talking since." Richard spoke of Sr. Margaret's concern for both offenders and victims plus the energy and joy she brings to Board Meetings.

## Homework House expands, welcomes neighbors

**Maureen Broughan, ssj  
and Jane Morrissey, ssj**

Since opening our Homework House doors in early February, many Sisters have not only walked through those doors, but also come regularly to assess, teach, and “unite neighbor with neighbor.”

We are now a full house. Twelve tutors have worked with 19 students; 20 is our capacity. In addition, the last few months we have been tutoring mothers, aunts, grandmothers, and one husband. How can we better thank our Sisters and friends for prayers, donations, and regular service than through *Mission*?

Special thanks are clearly due to those who come most regularly.

Every Tuesday and Thursday morning, Sisters Patricia James and Kathleen Keating arrive early for Zilma, Catalina, and Maria. Smiles abound and laughter regularly fills their classrooms. Monday and Wednesday afternoons, Sisters Maureen Martin and Mary Fallon tutor elementary school boys—Christian, Juan, Ryan, and Thomas. Tuesdays and Thursdays, Sister Jeanne Branchaud is teaching Elizabeth. The children’s eyes grow wide over math and reading. Last week, one of them took bright-eyed pride in the 100% he achieved on his book report.

In addition to our regular tutors, we are blessed by a cadre of substitutes. They come when called. For the first several weeks, Sister Fran White greeted children, filled in as tutor, and made sure snacks were ready for break time. When we have needed to assess a student’s learning needs, Sister Maria Bernadette has arrived. Sister Marilyn Logan taught Catalina and Zilma when Sister Patricia was enjoying Florida sunshine. Would you be interested in add-

ing your name to our list of substitutes or volunteers?

We are now actively planning for our first full school year of operations at Immaculate Conception and, in September, a second site in the Churchill neighborhood.

Sister Kathy Knowles’s advocacy on our behalf guarantees that we will be able to equip and staff the second site. When she heard from Nicole Horton that the after-school program she has run at St. Paul Episcopal Church would be closing after 36 years of operations, Kathy told Nicole about Homework House. Nicole is sorting through all her materials and giving us whatever is useful. She is also recommending to her tutors, the majority of whom come from Mount Holyoke College, that they continue their volunteer work at Homework House.

The Elms College has become a faithful ally in the creation of Homework House. As you may remember, they cleaned and set up the first site with furnishings they moved from Mont Marie Conference Center. Now Elms students—Jessie, Veronica, Ivelis, and Rachel—tutor faithfully. Cristina Canales translates our materials into Spanish. Elms Board Vice-Chair Peg Tourloukis serves as one of our most regular substitutes. From the Campus Ministry Office, Sister Maureen Kervick is directing more help our way for beginning this next school year at two sites. Momentum builds.

Know that we continue to be grateful for the confidence you have placed in us. You gave us the TAM Grant that funded this pilot phase of our program. A second TAM Grant was the first of many received for next year’s operations.

You support us by your prayers and donations. You volunteer, teach, and mentor our students and mentors. Thus we carry on work begun here in 1897 by the first Sisters of Saint Joseph. Into a third century, we are in Holyoke teaching immigrant children.

## American history shows both light, dark days

Mary E. Harvey, ssj

A technique in art developed in the making of 16<sup>th</sup> century woodcuts is chiaroscuro. The term is derived from the Italian “chiaro” meaning clear, light and “oscuro” or dark. This technique involved use of blocks to print different tones of the same color. It also refers to the arrangement of light and dark parts in a pictorial work of art. Merriam-Webster lists among other meanings the contrast of dissimilar qualities and the quality of being veiled or partly in shadow.

This July marks the 230<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of our country’s Declaration of Independence in 1776. From its early history to the present the nation embodies light and dark beginning with colonial light of the new, of freedom from persecution, of equality yet the existence of opposites. Dark is the history of oppression, disenfranchisement, and enslavement of native, African, and other persons. In modern times, the evil of human trafficking exists. The injustices and struggle continue.

The Emancipation Proclamation issued on January 1, 1863 freed slaves in all states in rebellion against the Union. The document and its author Abraham Lincoln were points of light. Thousands of slaves became free though largely unsupported for lives of independence.

About a century later the civil rights movement arose quietly yet strongly. The names of Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King, Jr., and others shine like stars in the sky. Rosa Parks later said of that December 1, 1955 day when she did not give up her seat on a bus in Montgomery, Alabama, “The only tired I was, was tired of giving in.” The struggle continues. “We shall overcome...We shall overcome some day.” (From an African-American Spiritual)

Women knew and still know disenfranchisement. Only in 1920 did they receive the right to vote. Susan Brownell Anthony and her friend Elizabeth Cady Stanton, also abolitionists, did not see the fruition of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment. Yet they lighted the way. And the struggle continues.

Wars cross America’s history with dark shades. The Civil War left its shadow and scars

on our land. World War I, World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, Kuwait, Iraq. “Where have all the flowers gone long time passing ...When will they ever learn?” (From song by Pete Seeger and Joe Hickerson based on a line from an Ukrainian folk song) There is the image of Pope Paul VI addressing the United Nations in French on October 4, 1965 urging that peace guide the destinies of all peoples. “Jamais plus la guerre...” “War never again.” The question reverberates, “When will they ever learn?”

We are a nation of descendants of immigrants. The Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor greeted millions. In the poem carved on its pedestal, the Jewish American poet Emma Lazarus wrote, “Give me your tired, your poor/ Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free.” What of today? “How many years can some people exist/ Before they’re allowed to be free?” (From “Blowin’ in the Wind” by Bob Dylan)

Ours is a nation of expanse, abundance, and natural beauty. These contrast with the many faces and voices of poverty. “How many ears must one man have/Before he can hear people cry?” (Bob Dylan) The struggle continues.

This July dark patterns in our country and beyond seek to destroy the light. Yet in personal and communal lives, the light glows. No ray is insignificant. The origins of the Sisters of St. Joseph are traced more than 356 years to a small light in France. “Guided by the star of our charism”.... we journey with others, especially the poor and the marginalized.

“We will join with others in prayer and in action to effect change in those ecclesial and civic systems that hinder the journey toward the day when all will be one.” (From Chapter Commitments 2005-2111 – Sisters of St. Joseph of Springfield.)



## Program explores Buddhist, Christian traditions of prayer

**Mary E. Harvey, ssj**

“Return to Silence,” an exploration of Buddhist Meditation and Christian Contemplation, took place with Rick Dunworth, MRO and Frances White, ssj, at the Clementwood Spiritual Life Center in Rutland, June 10. Over 20 persons attended.

Patricia Kane, ssj, co-director of the center, said, “Every religious institution has prayer rituals, but few as ancient, as rooted in the stillness and power of the cosmos as Buddhist Meditation and Christian Contemplation. Both are mystic journeys.”

Rick Dunworth is a medical social worker at the Rutland Regional Medical Center and a student of the Zen Mountains and Rivers Monastery in Mt. Tremper, N.Y. A longtime practitioner of Buddhist Meditation, he is often a workshop leader in local Vermont Healthcare organizations.

Fran White has degrees in Physical Education and Urban Pastoral Ministry. A pastoral minister for many years, she served on the Community’s Leadership Team (1999-2005). She shared that she just completed a course in “Mindfulness.”



**Sister Pat Kane**, co-director of Clementwood Spiritual Life Center and Rick Dunwood (seated) are joined by Sister Miriam Francis Predom, also co-director, and Sister Fran White.

**Photo by Mary E. Harvey, ssj**

Rick said he admired Sister Pat’s openness to different traditions. Once introduced to Buddhism, a turning point for him was being led to a Buddhist Center in Colorado where Buddhist Meditation was practiced. He said, “I found for myself just a tremendous resonance... like a chord had struck by touching me very deeply in my heart, and I could feel that this might make a big difference in my life.”

Buddhist Meditation is the spirituality of letting go and of entering deeply into the stillness to a connectedness to all that is. Zen Buddhism and meditation are particularly linked. Rick traced the process to the Buddha (c. 563-c. 483 B.C.) in what is now Nepal. Describing the Buddha’s time of transformation, Rick likened it to Jesus’ 40 days’ retreat in the desert.

Inviting the participants to a meditation time, he said, “Draw connections between your own meditation practices or contemplative prayer.”

Fran spoke of the tradition of Christian Contemplation. She said, “I very much marvel at some of the similarities to the Buddhist Tradition. Sitting meditation and centering prayer are closely related; walking meditation and walking the Labyrinth can be compatible as well. I look forward to our dialogue together...Already we see commonalities between the two Traditions that can serve as a means to a gentler, more peaceful world.”

She gave the etymology of the word contemplation, con/templa - “abiding with God in the temple.” Fran discussed the experience of some of the great models of contemplation as Mary, the mystics, and others. Prayer with or without words in the silence is a path to union with God. Thomas Merton, who dialogued with those of the Eastern Tradition, said, “Go to your center into the center of God.”

“Diversity should not separate us,” Fran said. “Rejoice in it. That is our charism as Sisters of St. Joseph, always to work toward unity, that all may be one... May this be the start of another wonder-filled dialogue among all spiritual persons.”

## Federation request challenges worldview

**Roberta Mulcahy, ssj**

A year ago *Mission* published an article on the fifth Millennium Goal, Maternal Health. Recently, I was asked to facilitate a “break out” session about this goal for the Federation event in Milwaukee. At first I felt disappointed that I would not be a part of an environmental sustainability discussion (7<sup>th</sup> MDG).

However, after a conversation with our associate Anne Souza Martens, I was inspired to remember the connectedness of life and to re-look at maternal health in the light of the health of our planet Earth. Approaching the Federation conversation about maternal health from the worldview that we are vital elements of an inseparable whole means talking about sustainability at its deepest level.

When we recognize that our planet Earth is a living system and we are part of a single interconnection with all of life, all

the Millennium Goals so vital to the well being of humans and the Earth, become very important to our vision for the future. *Whether it is poverty, hunger, education, equality, child or maternal health, disease, environmental sustainability or global partnership for development, it is all part of the whole.*

The results of these justice issues are not ours to control. Our challenge and response to these issues is to be conscious of an expanded worldview in prayer and action.

The Tao Te Ching of Lao Tzu says:

“Giving birth, nourishing life, shaping things without possessing them, serving without expectation of reward, leading without dominating: these are the profound virtues of nature, and of nature’s best beings.”

May our prayer and action on justice issues lead us to be “best beings”.

## What stocks do we hold for advocacy?

**Roberta Mulcahy, ssj**

The members of our Investment Committee met this past month with our consultant, Bob Moody. At Bob’s request we looked over the stocks we hold for Socially Responsible advocacy work. They are a very small percentage of our portfolio yet they do very well for us financially. That, of course, was not the purpose of purchasing them!

Many of the stocks listed below have been part of our investment portfolio for many years. A few were purchased more recently. The following list provides the names of the stocks and some of the reasons we continue to keep them for shareholder filing.

<i>BP (British Petroleum)</i>	<i>oil</i>
<i>Conoco Phillips</i>	<i>oil drilling in native lands</i>
<i>Petro Canada</i>	<i>oil</i>

<i>Disney</i>	<i>China labor standards</i>
<i>McDonald’s</i>	<i>GMO food issues</i>
<i>Merck</i>	<i>pharmaceuticals</i>
<i>Scherling Plough</i>	<i>pharmaceuticals</i>
<i>Perkin-Elmer</i>	<i>health sciences/ instruments</i>
<i>Wal-Mart</i>	<i>employee, environmental issues, human rights</i>
<i>Whole Foods</i>	<i>to support organic products</i>
<i>Textron</i>	<i>depleted uranium use</i>

Suggestions for holding other stocks not on this list are always welcomed. We are interested in research about alternative energy stocks as a positive stand for our ecology commitment and/or other stocks where we could express our concern for justice through co-filing on corporate responsibility issues.

Please send all suggestions to the Justice and Peace Office.

## Rare trip offers insight into Japanese

**Paula Misitano, ssj**

When Cathy Coyne, ssj, received an offer to travel with her brother, Stephen, there was no hesitation.

When Cathy realized the destination was Japan, the excitement intensified. She also realized this would be a wonderful opportunity to utilize her photography talent. Thus, Cathy, Stephen, and a Newport, RI delegation left for Shimoda, Japan, May 15.

Shimoda is considered a “sister city”



of Newport. In 1853, when trade with Japan was non-existent, Commodore Perry worked to open trade between the United States and Japan. With Newport and Shimoda both seaport cities, trade opened. Over sixty years ago, delegations from the two cities inaugurated exchange visits. The occasion is known as the *Black Ship Festival* and representatives from the cities exchange gifts, friendship and hospitality. This year, the delegation from Shimoda is expected in Newport in late July.

From the start of the journey, Cathy's camera was busy. Her flight traveled over the North Pole and Siberia, affording her unusual pictures. While of desolate areas, the photos showed a unique beauty. The first stop for the group was in Tokyo where they visited the Ginza shopping

area. An Imperial Palace visit afforded them only an outside look since there were dignitaries inside and, for security reasons, no one was allowed to enter.

Their brief time also allowed a visit to a Buddhist temple. As they were exiting the temple, a group of schoolchildren approached them with a request to interview the Americans. With interpreters from both cultures on hand, the interview was conducted and new friends were made. (See left)

After a brief stay in Tokyo, the group moved south to Shimoda. Prior to the trip, they had been briefed on proper protocol for visiting this tradition-conscious country. “When being greeted by the Japanese delegation,” stated Cathy, “we were told to wait to see how the host person greeted us. If they bowed, we bowed; if the person was older than us, we were to bow lower than they. If they extended their hand for a handshake, we shook their hand. The Japanese people are a very proud people, very conscious of proper etiquette.”

Presents are also exchanged. “I had brought a gift for Mayor Ishii's wife,” said



Cathy, “and when I mentioned that it contained five pieces, I was told that was fine. Evidently, a gift with “four” items, or a gift that is “red” in color is frowned upon.

## culture, people

“Our four-days stay in Shimoda was like a whirlwind, but wonderful,” she said.” There were formal and informal dinners, a visit to a delegate’s house where the women learned the art of flower decorating, and a traditional



tea ceremony. “We visited an elementary school,” continued Cathy, “where the children were so excited. They performed the *Fisherman Dance*. Though they did not speak English nor we Japanese, we were comfortable with one another.”

When asked about what discipline is imposed if children misbehave, the Japanese educator looked puzzled. The Americans were told there is not a word for “no” in the dictionary; the Japanese do not like the word “no.” It is not used.



There were formal ceremonies as well. A wreath laying ceremony was held honoring Commodore Perry’s visit to Shimoda. Formal greetings from each “sister city” were exchanged and a band from a nearby naval station entertained. The Newport group was extremely touched when, upon entering the auditorium, they were escorted to their seats while the American national anthem played. “Everything was done to accommodate us as Americans,” said Cathy. “We also participated in a parade through the streets and given small American flags to wave as we moved



along. It was humbling to have people clap and cheer as you rode past.” On the last evening, the group went to Mayor Ishii’s house for a meal. A sushi chef had closed his restaurant and offered to cook the dinner. There were a lot of stories, a lot of laughter, and an abundance of food served.

Right up to bidding farewell to the Americans, the Japanese honored their guests. The Mayor’s staff had assembled a book for each American covering the visit to Shimoda. “I was never so immersed in another culture as I was in Shimoda”, Cathy said, “we were treated with such dignity and respect.” Everyone was overwhelmed by their

generosity. We were honored and humbled to be in their country and to be such a part of their cultural traditions.” There are many memories that Cathy has to look back upon and savor. And, should she need any reminders, there are always her photographs!

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*Children along the parade route. (2)*

*Cathy and student lay a flower at Perry Landing. (3)*

*Japanese and American delegations at the welcoming ceremony.(4)*

*Students perform the Fisherman Dance for the visitors (5)*

# HOPE House celebrates 10 years of service

**Mary Lou Lacey, ssj**

The joyous gathering, June 21, at the Colonial Hotel by Clarion in Gardner was a celebration of ten years of the House of Peace & Education (HOPE) in Gardner. The last two words, in Gardner, are not merely indicators of location. They express what is not only part of HOPE's identity, but also elements that have enabled it to succeed.

Outgoing Board Chairperson Raymond LaFontaine, brother of our late Sister Joseph Michael, said, "The founders of HOPE were geniuses to come to Gardner." Executive Director Maxyne Schneider noted that Sisters of St. Joseph had been in Gardner previously, and that the founders of HOPE - Sisters Mary Frances Honnen, Maxyne Schneider, Helen C.



Shine, and Nancy Welsh - included two with a history of service there - Helen and Nancy. "We drew on their 30 years' experience and scores of friends who were our first volunteers, donors, and Board members," Maxyne said. The founders studied the city to discern unmet needs, and ultimately focused on helping women and children. The SSJ congregation bought a three-story building for HOPE, repurchased by the new organization as promised in two years. HOPE was established.

A list of HOPE's programs matches the unmet needs: HOPE for Women, for Families, for Kids: including afterschool, summer programs and lunch; Pals, Teen-hope, Counselors-in-Training, and, with Elms College, Step Forward/Step Ahead, and Quest.

Speaking of his introduction to HOPE, strongly urged on by his sister who ordered him to "Call HOPE," Ray LaFontaine said, "I had my eyes opened." He met graduates of a four-week program for women and found them feeling good about themselves, filled with the joy of knowing they were smart, not dumb. "How could I walk away?" he asked. "I never belonged to anything more kind, more generous. The civic community as a whole turned out for HOPE."

Ray was honored with a plaque and a commemorative chair for his years of service. After his closing words, "I will not be far away from HOPE," Ray received a standing ovation. Ronald Cormier, new Board Chairperson, conducted the remainder of the meeting. Gerald St. Hilaire, Mayor of Gardner, thanked all present and brought greetings of the city.

Two special awards recognized Mary R. Salerno and Raymond W. Leclerc. Mary is a member of the Lucia family who built and lived in the HOPE three-decker before the founders bought it. Ron Cormier noted that "HOPE didn't just buy a house, they acquired a family and the spirit of the family." The Lucia family raised five daughters there, and it is natural for Lucias to stop by, offer advice, make donations, volunteer time and energy.

The first Lucia Service Award was presented to ninety-three year old Mary Lucia Salerno by her niece Frances McFaul, a member of the HOPE Board of Directors.

Mary noted that she misses her sisters and considers the award a tribute to all of them. "I feel they are smiling down on us once again," she said. Living only two doors away, Mary Frances often visits her.

The second award, Wings of HOPE, was given to Raymond W. Leclerc by Kimberly Mailliet, a HOPE Board Member and a HOPE for Women graduate. Several other graduates surrounded Ray during the presentation to honor his support of that program. He explained how that came about. Ray was invited to visit HOPE with the wish that he would fund a scholarship for one woman. He recalls driving home and thinking about HOPE. He realized that it had good goals, but he saw "a lot of work, and few resources," and he thought the organization

## with joy, awards, sharing, congratulations

might last only a few years. "But," he noted, "you can't find anyone more enthusiastic than a Sister of St. Joseph." The confidence impressed him and he also liked the combination of women, jobs, and computers. A deciding factor came in the form of St. Joseph, whose school Ray had attended in Canada. By the time he drove back to his office he had decided. He funded all ten scholarships for women.

Gardner resident Eileen Joseph spoke for women graduates of the program. "A letter from HOPE about their programs was the first sign of hope I had seen in a long time," Eileen recalls. "I have a good job now and I use what I learned at HOPE. The peaceful environment there was also a help to me. Now I can offer support and help to children and parents," she said. The HOPE for Women job-training program was designed and initially directed by Mary Honnen.

Other participants shared what HOPE has meant to them. Four young people represented Hope for Kids. Mary Ann Ernst and Cassandra Cohen listed areas in which they have served: performing multiple tasks in the summer programs; helping in the parenting class, and after-school; learning so much about food service. These experiences have led Mary Ann to choose early childhood education for her future. Cassandra now feels confident and able to talk in front of people.

Devon Barsamian, 11, who has been coming to HOPE since he was two years old, serves as HOPE's ambassador to the United Way of North Central Massachusetts. He has assisted in HOPE's computer room, offering suggestions from a 'Kid's point of view.' He voiced a "plug for HOPE: I'm growing up at HOPE and I love it!"

James Postlethwaite recalled that nine years ago he met founders Mary Frances Honnen, SSJ and Maxyne Schneider and discussed the possibility of coming to HOPE along with his two brothers. When he learned that three kids could come for two weeks for \$1.00, his decision was "Go!" He now realizes the true costs of this program and his mother says it's the best dollar she ever spent.

With volunteer Jean Schneider, SSJ, James learned about science and weather; he became a Counselor-in-Training, worked on the computer, and became a junior counselor. The recipient of

an award for volunteering, James values the mission of HOPE. He is now a student at Elms College, Chicopee, and thanks Maxyne for taking him there. He is summer activities coordinator at HOPE.

Among those attending the celebration were members of the last two Leadership Teams as well as the present Team. Sister Mary Christopher, area director when HOPE began, said, "I am proud of HOPE and all its founders. You accomplished exactly what you planned."

Recalling the founding, Maxyne praised the support of Gardner whose businesses and residents contributed \$35,000 to an appeal just completed. She also noted that HOPE, separately incorporated, is an interfaith organization enabled by the ecumenical experience of founder Nancy Welsh who offered the invocation before lunch.

Throughout the program, the enthusiasm, applause, and friendliness of the 157 participants attested to Gardner's appreciation of HOPE.



**The four founders of HOPE** Sisters Mary Frances Honnen, Maxyne Schneider, Nancy Welsh and Helen Catherine Shine (seated, above).

**Outgoing and incoming officers** of HOPE Board at the Business Meeting. (p.10)

**Photos by Ann Lynch, ssj**

# 'Mission' to change format, schedule

**Ann Lynch, ssj**

Changes are happening after this issue of *Mission*. Beginning in the fall we will be publishing a printed version of *Mission* quarterly: October, January, April and July. These will also be placed on our website, [ssjspringfield.org](http://ssjspringfield.org).

The on-line version of *Mission* will continue to be published on First Class either weekly or bi-weekly depending on news.

For the past 18 years a printed version of *Mission* has been published each month except August. For a little more than a year we have been publishing the printed version of *Mission* both on line and a hard copy as well as a *Mission-on-line* that contains more timely news. We have received great support from readers about both versions and, hard as change is, many are saying they really enjoy the color that is possible in the on-line version and they have even learned how to print it out

for easier reading.

*Mission-on-line* will continue to be only two or three pages and will contain most of the material that readers have come to expect in the hard copy version.

It is contained in the *Mission* icon on First Class. All one has to do is click on the icon then click on the latest *Mission*. Previous *Missions* are also in the folder so marked as are the funeral reflections on our Sisters.

Sisters and Associates who wish to contribute material are asked to send it either by e-mail or hard copy just as they have done in the past. This will not change.

These changes are being made to communicate more with all Sisters and Associates. Again, we make the plea, if you know of something in your area, please let us know. You don't have to write an article for *Mission*, just tell us and we will do it for you.

## Community Missioning Day

Saturday, August 12, 2006

Summer "Lite": Rejoicing with Each Other

### Schedule

9:30	Coffee and...Dining Room
10:00	Prayer and Presentation...Chapel
10:45	Break and Gather Our Joyful Stories
11:30	Sharing Our Joys
12:30	Picnic Lunch
1:45	Missioning Service

