

The Echo

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Please consider becoming a **sustaining partner of the ECC** by **pledging a monthly donation.**

Let us know if and how you would like a reminder.

Go to ecc-cr.net and click on our contact form to send us your information.

As I write this in early January, I hope everyone had a joyous holiday season and will enjoy a happy new year. The month of December is always a time when charitable organizations, like the Ecumenical Community Center (ECC), see increased giving as people evaluate the prior year and make year-end giving decisions. This is particularly true of the churches and individuals who are our base support. The ECC Board of Directors wants to thank all of you for your financial gifts. With these gifts, dedicated staff and volunteers, we were able to have a great 2014 and look forward to 2015.

I think it would be appropriate to highlight the ECC's programs. The Helping Hands Ministry provides basic needs services such as rent, utilities, photo identification and limited transportation to qualified low-income Linn County residents through referrals, counseling and emergency financial assistance. CompuPlace provides computer-related activities which enhance reading, math, communications, social, problem-solving and computer skills to improve the quality of life for people with disabilities. The ECC provides the space for the Green Square Meals program at a nominal \$1.00 per year rent, and also provides office and storage space at below-market rates for other faith-based and secular non-profit organizations.

Your generosity has touched with kindness the lives of people you may never meet. I want to thank all of you who have supported the Ecumenical Community Center with your time and donations and I ask your help. The growing needs and numbers of people seeking help has no calendar, and the ECC staff has to meet the same challenges every month. We need your continued and increased support and look forward to partnering with you in 2015.

Peter C. Riley

Helping Hands Ministry

Helping Hands Ministry

601 Second Avenue SE #2

Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52401

Phone: (319)-366-2651

Email: helpinghands@ecc-cr.net

Lois Ann Rude, HM Director



2014 has been a productive and rewarding year for HHM. The following services were approved:

Rent	\$22,564.41(199HH)	Rent Deposit	\$1,821.00(13 HH)
Electric	\$10,753.70(99HH)	Electric Deposit	\$ 828.00 (6 HH)
Gas	\$ 1,923.21 (17 HH)	Gas Deposit—None	
Water	\$ 3,130.31 (28HH)	Water Deposit	\$ 963.12 (10 HH)
Identification/Birth Certificate	\$ 447.00 (34)		
Shelter Rent	\$ 1,651.00(53)	Auto Gas	\$2,500.00 (125)
Local bus tickets	\$3,500.00(577)		

“A total of 531 HH/ 1,161 persons were assisted finically at the cost of 49,777.13 in 2014.”

The following grants were received and services provided:

Tokheim Family Trust Fund through the Greater Cedar Rapids Community .

Linn County Fund through the GCRCF was approved in the amount of \$10,000 to be utilized to provide first month’s rent to rural Linn County residents meeting specific guidelines. This can be authorized through December 2015.

Volunteers are an integral part of providing services through Helping Hands Ministry. During 2014, a total of **11** volunteers contributed **328** hours of office support.

The HHM Steering Committee meets monthly to provide guidance and support to the program. Ten volunteer members and two agency representatives contributed a total of **228**hours of volunteer time.

A volunteer recognition dinner was held on December 4, 2014 at Westminster Presbyterian. The HHM Marketing and Recognition Committee did an excellent job! Lois Rude was honored as “Volunteer of the Year”.

Helping Hands Ministry = providing assistance & support to persons in Linn County through collaboration with the faith community and local agencies.

Helping Hands Ministry (HHM) is much more than numbers/statistics. It is about people in our community experiencing difficulty in meeting their basic needs. This may be due to being laid off work and being denied unemployment, just starting a new job where the first paycheck is three weeks down the road, or a car repair necessary to keep the current job and needing to choose between repairing the car or paying a utility bill. Whatever the circumstances, HHM staff review their financial situation, make referrals to other sources when appropriate and serve as an advocate for them. Often HHM receives thank you notes or comments on our customer satisfaction surveys done quarterly. Here are but a few

Thanks so much! Our water would have been shut off!

I would have been evicted from my apartment. How can I ever thank you?

We have never asked for help before. The staff were so nice to work with and I had peace of mind afterwards.

HHM Director, Lois Ann Rude, is retiring!

My husband, Ronald, and I are retiring to Broken Arrow, OK to be closer to family and enjoying warmer weather. I am so grateful for the opportunity to serve Helping Hands Ministry, first as a volunteer and then as Director since October 2005. My passion has been and continues to be serving the poor and needy in my community. Helping Hands Ministry is a wonderful program with dedicated staff and committed Steering Committee and volunteers. This program makes significant differences in the lives of people in Linn County.

I have learned so much and been able to develop and maintain relationships with the faith community and other supporters of HHM. I am confident that this direct service of the Ecumenical Community Center will continue to thrive under new leadership. My prayers and continued support of Helping Hands Ministry will continue as we live in Oklahoma. God Bless! *Lois*



CompuPlace

601 Second Avenue SE #3

Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52401

Phone: (319)-362-4284

Email: compuplace@ecc-cr.net



Robin Switzer Brunner,
Director

COMPUPLACE: A Specialized Computer Learning Lab for People with Intellectual Disabilities and / or Needs for Assistive Technology

CompuPlace again set new records for service in 2014! We served 146 individuals! These individuals enjoyed just over 1950 client-hours of service. We are grateful for past and present support from your donations to ECC's general funds, other client and community contributions, and for the Program Grant Fund of the Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation for 2013, 2014, and 2015.

We are honored to receive these funds to move forward and to continue to provide services to individuals who are working hard to improve themselves. Through seek and find games, **Doug** improves his communication and problem solving skills. He also enjoys videos of farm machinery and chores. Could you donate a Tractorcade CD to encourage him to speak and for Doug and others to enjoy?

Van is a veteran transitioning to a career different than the heavy work which resulted in his disability. He searches the internet for health information, is learning to live well, and is gaining skills in Word and Excel that even include making charts and graphs. Like Van, **Bernita** is learning to copy and paste, for instance, from the internet or email to Word. Bernita also searches for recipes and crafting ideas on the web, and often makes greeting cards for family members.

Tammy also makes cards, and is learning to treat others with respect and dignity, to spell more confidently, and to offer kind help to others. This is a big step for her, and she carries herself much more gracefully as she continues her work.

Jerry made a card recently, proudly congratulating someone on an important promotion. He usually enjoys memory matching games. He also recently discovered how much he likes our spelling games, with their clues to guide his success.

Reuben loves math games, especially math facts and money. **Miranda** likes these too, and also loves word searches and seek and find games like Doug. They work diligently to develop and maintain brain power that applies to their lives. Miranda especially wants to track her spending and balance her bank account more easily.

In addition to using computers, the internet and games for specialized cognitive skills training, CompuPlace is seeking individuals and small and large groups that can partner with us for workplace learning, information sessions, and group study. Funds from those that could pay for use of the lab could help sustain our program and allow us to serve the community more robustly. Would your group benefit from gathering in a computer lab?

We can provide training using Windows XP, Vista, 7 and 8. CompuPlace can also help with many Android devices. We could tailor a session to your group's needs. Did you recently become the owner of a device about which you're feeling timid? Would you like to be better at saving files and moving them around? Please consider partnering with CompuPlace. By paying for our training or for the use of the lab, you could help us continue to provide services to our clients.

Likewise, please consider becoming a sustaining partner, and pledging regular tax-deductible donations to CompuPlace. You could help us continue to grow, while playing a part in including more individuals with disabilities into the Information Age, allowing them to continue lifelong learning with joy and dignity.

Please consider volunteering for us too. If you would enjoy

- ◆ working directly with our clients as a volunteer teacher,
- ◆ supplying or editing photographs for games,
- ◆ developing math, money, word search, trivia and other games, or
- ◆ helping with fundraising events,

please contact Robin at 319-362-4284 or compuplace@ecc-cr.net.

Margaret Bock Housing Update

**“A Home on Third” = Margaret Bock Housing
1021 Third Avenue SE, Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52403**

Our mission is to provide humanitarian care and service with the surrounding neighborhood by providing low income, affordable housing with independent living for single adults, men or women, and to seek local, state and federal funding.

A six member volunteer Board of Directors meets monthly and is active between meetings as well. This is our 15th year as a 501(C)3 non-profit organization.

Our facility has 35 rooms typically fully occupied for single adults with low incomes. Tenants pay only \$280—\$300 on a month-to-month lease that includes utilities. A deposit of one month’s rent is required and applicants are screened for any criminal record.

Contributions for day-to-day operations to help cover mortgage payments, property insurance, utilities, property manager’s salary and other expenses are always welcome and needed since no grants provide this help. Our wish list includes single beds, sheets , pillows, lamps and end tables.

Please consider supporting Margaret Bock Housing and join us as we strive to continue operating and improving MBH. Call 319-361-6871 (Mike Williams) or 362-6936 (Jim Federer) with any questions or request a brochure.

*To make a pledge donation prior to the end of 2015, go on-line to ecc-cr.net/mbh.php website for a link to MBH via the ECC e-mail contact form. **Jim Federer, MBH President***



ECCF Board of Directors

Executive Committee

Peter Riley, President, At-Large

David Jiruska, Vice-President,
Westminster Presbyterian

Conrad Baumler, Treasurer, At-Large

Jim Kennedy, Secretary, 1st Lutheran

Don Leonhart, Past President, St. Pius X
Parish

Scott Olson, Development & At-Large

Board Members

Dale Crosier, At -Large

Don Boland, At -Large

Donna Fernandes Jirski, At- Large

Darlene Schrimper, Echo Hill Presbyterian

Ed Holstrom, St. Paul's United Methodist

J.D Combellick, Peoples Unitarian Univer-
salist

Jim Federer, At-Large

John Vonlackum, First Presbyterian

Marica Whiteford, First Congregational

Mark Minger, Salem United Methodist

MaryAnn Stewart, Lovely Lane

Vacancy, First Christian

Vacancy, At-Large

Vacancy, Christ Episcopal Church

Vacancy, Immaculate Conception Catholic

Vacancy, Wellington Heights
Neighborhood Association

Vacancy, Mound View
Neighborhood Association

Meet: 4th Thursday/mo @ 7:00 pm at
Ecumenical Community Center
Conference Room

ECC News:

FAITH COMMUNITY SUPPORT JANUARY THROUGH DECEMBER 2014

Echo Hill Presbyterian	Echo Hill Presbyterian Deacons
First Lutheran	Immaculate Conception Catholic
Living Water United Methodist	Lovely Lane United Methodist (UMC)
Lovely Lane UMC Women	Marion Christian
Oakland Church of the Nazarene	Our Savior's Lutheran
St. Andrew Lutheran	St. Mark Lutheran
St. Paul's United Methodist	St. Paul's UMC Women
St. Pius X	Salem United Methodist
Unity Center	Veronica's House
Westminster Presbyterian	Buffalo United Methodist
First Presbyterian	Gloria Dei Lutheran
Hus Memorial Presbyterian	Peace Christian
Peoples Unitarian Universalists	St. Joseph Catholic—Marion
St. Paul's Lutheran—Marion	St. James United Methodist Women
Urbana United Methodist	Grace Episcopal
Bethany Lutheran	Christ Episcopal
First Congregational	King of Kings Lutheran

Thanks for your support!

If you have supported the Ecumenical Community Center and/or one of its programs and are not listed above, please contact the office at 366-2651 so we may update our records. We would not be able to achieve our mission without your help.



The Ecumenical Community Center

601 Second Avenue SE #1
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52401

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To receive **The Echo** electronically, go to
www.ecc-cr.net or call (319) 366-2651

Return Service Requested

HHM Wish List

For distribution to clients:

- Shampoo/Conditioner
- 4-roll packages toilet paper
- Feminine hygiene products
- Deodorant
- Hy-Vee gift cards (special dietary needs)
- Laundry soap & quarters
- \$ for local bus tickets

For office:

- Postage Stamps
- Colored 8-1/2 x 11 copier paper
- White 8-1/2 x 11 copier paper

CompuPlace Wish List

- White copy paper (any weight)
- A-2 (invitation sized) envelopes for quarter-fold greeting cards
- Photos of animals, vehicles, produce, farm equipment, and more— for our games
- Internet hubs (maybe 4 port?)
- Volunteers to help teach clients, or for PowerPoint and/or Photo projects making learning games for clients
- \$ for software specially designed for adults with disabilities
- Postage Stamps (just a few each month)
- Financial donations for general support

Printing of the quarterly publication of *The Echo* is graciously provided by First Lutheran Church; Cedar Rapids, IA. Articles may be submitted to Jessica Stamper, Editor.