

# The Echo

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## Letter From the President

I recently visited one of the large discount stores that carry everything from food to furniture. The variety and quantities of products for sale was overwhelming. It occurred to me several times how strange it is to have such abundance available while at the same time there are people in the Cedar Rapids area who regularly cope with hunger and who struggle to pay housing or utility bills. It also struck me that perhaps the only thing worse than being hungry or homeless was to be either of these in a country that enjoys such abundance.

The Helping Hands Ministry program is receiving over 1,300 requests for assistance each month. Helping Hands works closely with local agencies and organizations to meet the needs of those seeking help. The Helping Hands Ministry provides direct financial assistance to those for whom no other help can be found. Each month the program pays out an average of \$4,800. The funds go to pay rent, utilities and bus transportation. The number of people helped is limited only by the funds available. Last month, while 115 people received assistance, over 900 households had to be turned down due to a lack of funds. Each month the number of requests seems to grow.



**Mark Your Calendar**

**TOUR de HOPE**

progressive open

house for ECC and 5

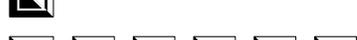
other agencies on

**Saturday,**

**10/13/12 from**

**9 a.m. to 1 p.m.**

**See Page 5**



The Ecumenical Community Center is committed to providing help to the people of the Cedar Rapids area. Specialized hardware and software enables the CompuPlace program to provide computer access to clients with disabilities. The software and assistive hardware provides computer access to many people who could not otherwise enjoy it.

The Ecumenical Center also continues to provide low cost office space to many programs and organizations serving the Cedar Rapids area. The lower cost space helps programs, including the Green Square Meals program and the Witwer Senior Center, to dedicate more of their resources to direct assistance.

I encourage you to become part of the Ecumenical Community Center's efforts to help those in need. The Ecumenical Community Center must expand its programs to meet these greatly increased needs. We need your financial support and your donations of time more than ever. On behalf of the Ecumenical Center, thank you for your support as we all share God's abundant love.

*Jim Kennedy, ECC President*

# Helping Hands Ministry

## Helping Hands Ministry

601 Second Avenue SE #2  
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52401  
Phone: (319)-366-2651

**Lois Ann Rude, HHM Director**  
**Kristin Moore, HHM Staff Associate**



### **During the first six months of 2012, Helping Hands Ministry has provided:**

Rent to <u>147</u> households (\$15,469.44)	Rent deposit to <u>10</u> households (\$1,155.00)
Electric to <u>74</u> households (\$8,738.54)	Electric deposit to <u>1</u> household (\$125.00)
Gas to <u>12</u> households (\$1,142.78)	Identification/Birth Cert for <u>8</u> HH (\$82.00)
Water to <u>16</u> households (\$1,510.59)	Water deposit to <u>2</u> households (\$175.00)
Shelter Rent to <u>15</u> households (\$315.00)	Local Bus Tickets for <u>282</u> persons (\$800.00)

For a total of **\$ 29,513.35 to 567 households** (16 households received both service & bus tickets)

The past three months have been full of activities to promote HHM. On June 3rd HHM participated in a panel presentation on services supported by Hus Presbyterian Church. A display board was used in their fellowship hall and we enjoyed a potluck together.

We were pleased to be the recipient of a free will offering (\$500) from the June 24 Freedom Fest Ecumenical Concert hosted by the Third Avenue Churches. The event was held at Immaculate Conception and enjoyed by all. I was asked to give a “Minute for Mission” as well. Thanks, again, for choosing HHM to support.

The next page shares information on parades for outreach and public relations. We will be at the Cedar Rapids Downtown Farmer’s Market on September 15th. Please stop by and say “hello”. Depending on the weather, we may have the soy candles there for sale (\$14).

A new fundraiser has been identified that will benefit ECC and its programs! A Peoples Church Unitarian member contacted HHM about a vehicle donation program offered through CARS , Inc ([www.donatingiseasy.org](http://www.donatingiseasy.org)) that will provide 70% of the net proceeds of vehicles donated to them with ECC as the receiving charity. A vehicle is being donated by this individual to benefit HHM!

A grant application to the Linn County Fund of The Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation in the amount of \$10,000 was submitted June 12th. If funded, this would provide first month’s rent for 20-30 non-metro Linn County residents.

If you are aware of any businesses or foundations that may support Helping Hands Ministry, please provide the contact information to me. We are only limited by the amount of donations received. Working together we can provide help and encouragement to those experiencing temporary financial difficulty. Thank you for your continued support!

***Lois Ann Rude, Director***

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



Robins RoundUp Parade 06/09/12 was an excellent way to share the Helping Hands story. Jessica Stamper, Lois Rude and Kristin Moore marched and distributed fliers (200+) on HHM along with tootsie rolls (1,440) to an eager crowd. The new t-shirts grab people's attention and many questions were asked.

Hiawatha Hog Wild Days Parade 06/23/12 was also a huge success! Over 1,000 fliers and 1,540 pieces of candy were distributed.

T-shirts are available to purchase at \$17.50 each. Help spread the news!

Look for us at the Mission of Hope's "Hopefest" at Redmond Park (corner of 3rd Ave & 16th St SE) on Saturday, August 25, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

## **Non-profit Agency Highlight: Inter-Religious Council**

### **What is the Inter-Religious Council of Linn County?**

The Inter-Religious Council of Linn County was founded in Cedar Rapids in 1993. Our purpose is to promote understanding and respect among persons of different faith traditions, and to work for the spiritual, moral, civic, and social welfare of this community. We believe that God's love, grace, and forgiveness are bestowed on persons of all faiths. Our organization includes persons from ten religious traditions, including Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Islam, and Jewish.

Through our weekly television program "Ethical Perspectives on the News," which is broadcast on KCRG-TV Channel 9 every Sunday morning at 11, we provide a public forum for discussing controversial subjects in a civil manner. Through our series "Know Your Neighbor's Faith" and "The University of Religion," we strive to educate ourselves and the community in the beliefs, practices, and consequences of particular faiths. Through our regular "Children of Abraham" series, we closely examine the similarities and differences between the Christian, Jewish, and Muslim faiths. Through our annual Thanksgiving week interfaith service, we worship together in gratitude.

Our Web site is [www.irclc.org](http://www.irclc.org), and it provides specific information about these events, and about both group and individual membership in the IRLC. We welcome your interest and participation in our work. For further information, please contact Al Fisher, President, by e-mail at [AFisher@Coe.Edu], or by phone at 363-0879.



## CompuPlace

601 Second Avenue SE #3

Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52401

**Phone:** (319)-362-4284

**Email:** [compuplace@ecc-cr.net](mailto: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**

Applause! Applause! Look what our clients are doing! Several new HTML-based games have been developed and are in use at CompuPlace. Thanks to REACT Center volunteer Bryon Wiscons, our Spelling Game now sports an on-screen SpaceBar. Since these games can be played using mouse, keyboard or Touch Screen, many individuals can benefit from the same games. Thank you again, Bryon!

Clues about which letter is needed next can now be set to appear in red, or only upon a mouse hover, or could be bolder red if needed. A “just right” level of hints can make a learning game more enjoyable for clients, and encourage them to work even harder.

We also aim for the “Goldilocks Zone” with the number of words presented in one learning session. We usually start with about a dozen words, and grow from there. The time to code the game is down to about 30 minutes for a dozen words, if the images are already sized for the web and named with the target word.

Currently, there are three individuals who brought in pictures of their own family members or special treasures. Favorite words are important and motivation to spell them is great. Our very first spelling game, made for an individual who does not talk, is a list of activities he loves. He does not use on-screen hints. Even so, he is spelling the words faster, with fewer mistaken keystrokes. We have recently added several words, and he is learning these even faster than he has learned the original set.

Another client spells his most often needed grocery items. We took pictures of the items at his grocery and now others enjoy his game too. Images were captured at Options of Linn County. Thank you Emily! Clients enjoy spelling “local” words.

## **COMPUPLACE (cont.)**

There are currently 16 sets of questions in our Question and Answer game, good for trivia fans, and reading & logical skills. We have developed three different matching games and two letter identification games so far. Volunteers have promised to take photos of words included on the Dolsh list of beginning spelling words. This is a large list. Thank you ShutterBugs! Some words will require more creativity to depict than others, and more volunteer photographers would be helpful. These images will serve well for all games.

**From July 2011 through June 2012, 133 clients benefitted from CompuPlace learning services — more than ever before! Call or e-mail to make an appointment or to find out how to help.**

## **Have a vehicle you would like to donate to support the Ecumenical Community Center or one of its programs?**

Take part in our Vehicle Donation Program and support the programs of ECC and receive a tax deduction when you itemize your return. Go to [www.ecc-cr.net](http://www.ecc-cr.net) for details or call us at 366-2651.

# **TOUR DE HOPE**

**Come see God's hand at work through ministries in the downtown area:** Equipping Youth, Medical Lending Closet, Metro Catholic Outreach, Ecumenical Community Center's Helping Hands Ministry and CompuPlace & His Hands Free Medical Clinic

**Saturday, October 13, 2012**

**9 a.m. to 1 p.m.**

**A progressive open house featuring moving stories, delicious food and fun door prizes.**

***Begin Anywhere, Be Inspired Everywhere!***

**[www.ecc-cr.net](http://www.ecc-cr.net)**

**319-366-2651**

## Margaret Bock Housing Update

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

The tenants plus board members organized a picnic at Margaret Bock Housing (MBH) on July 1. This was to commemorate the passing of Hank Hernandez (president from 2005 through March 2012). We were also honoring Ed & Margaret Bock, major donors when MBH began providing low income housing. Hank’s son and daughter attended and provided a handsome picture of Hank. Ed and Margaret’s daughter, Pam Bock, attended and provided brats, burgers and side dishes. The men of MBH did a great job of firing up the grills and spreading charcoal fragrance across the city, plus providing wonderful desserts.

Our property manager Mike Williams maintains near capacity occupancy, and also helps tenants find new housing as they grow out of their room at MBH. After four years, monthly rent will increase starting September 1, but still remain below or near \$300 per month. All utilities plus cable TV are included in the monthly rent.

The land NE of our building is now ready for PCI parking. We are immensely thankful that PCI has left a grassy area between MBH and the parking lot.

Margaret Bock Housing continues to provide housing for individuals who are struggling or at risk in our community. Margaret Bock Housing lives ON.

Jim Federer, President

Did you know you can designate the Ecumenical Community Center as your charity of choice through your local United Way campaign? Check with your employer to see if your donation can be matched!

**Thanks for thinking of us!**

## ECCF Board of Directors

### Executive Committee

Jim Kennedy, President, First Lutheran

David Jiruska, Vice-President, Westminster Presbyterian

J.D. Combellick, Secretary, Peoples Unitarian Universalist

Conrad Baumler, Treasurer, At-Large

Scott Olson, At-Large

### Board Members

Peter Riley, At-Large

Vacancy, Mound View Neighborhood Association

Gary Novak, Salem United Methodist

Dale Crosier, At-Large

Jim Federer, At-Large

Don Boland, At-Large

Vacancy, Immaculate Conception Catholic

Ed Holstrom, St. Paul’s United Methodist

Vacancy, Wellington Heights Neighborhood Association

Jean Oxley, First Congregational

Darlene Schrimper, Echo Hill Presbyterian

Donna Fernandes Jiruska, At-Large

John vonLackum, First Presbyterian, Cedar Rapids

Mary Evans, First Christian

Don Leonhart, St. Pius X Parish

Mary Ann Stewart, Lovely Lane United Methodist

Vacancy, Christ Episcopal Church

Vacancy, At-Large

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

# ECC News:

## **Contributions received between January 1 & July 31, 2012 (not including private donations and agency rent)**

**St Pius X Catholic**  
**Immaculate Conception Catholic**  
**Echo Hill Presbyterian Deacons**  
**Our Savior Lutheran**  
**St. Andrew Lutheran**  
**Living Water U/Methodist**  
**St. Stephen's Lutheran**  
**Peace Christian Reformed**  
**St. Paul's U/Methodist**  
**Lovely Lane U/Methodist**  
**Prairie Chapel U/Methodist**

**St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic**  
**Oakland Church of the Nazarene**  
**First Lutheran**  
**Salem U/Methodist**  
**Westminster Presbyterian**  
**Buffalo U/Methodist**  
**Mission of Hope**  
**St. Paul U/Methodist Women**  
**Gloria Dei Lutheran**  
**Ascension Lutheran**  
**Echo Hill Presbyterian**

**A big thanks goes out to all of you! We could not do it without you!!! Thank you for partnering with ECC!**

**If your church or organization has donated and is not listed here, please call the office at 366-2651. We do not want to miss recognizing anyone!**

**Order your White Lights Soy Candles from Helping Hands today! Choose from 15 scents in a 16 ounce glass jar for just \$14 each...what a great gift idea (for yourself or others). Send a check to Helping Hands along with how many/what scent (Almond Butter, Buttercream Frosting, Caramel Rum Swirl, Cinnamon Bunds, Fresh Laundry, Honey Pear Cider, Hot Apple Pie, Iced Cinnamon, Old Fashioned Christmas, Pomegranate, Pumpkin Spice, Raspberry Almond, Tangerine & Lemongrass, Toasted Hazelnut, and White Tea). Stop by the office to see the candles and make your selection!**

### **The Ecumenical Community Center provides low-cost office space to nearly a dozen other non-profit agencies.**

These agencies in turn provide a variety of services to the Cedar Rapids community. The reduced rent offered by the ECC allows these agencies to focus more of their precious dollars on direct help to the groups they serve. If your agency / business is interested in renting space at the Ecumenical Community Center, please contact us. All spaces for rent have full access to our break room, conference rooms (as available) and bathrooms.



## The Ecumenical Community Center

601 Second Avenue SE #1  
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52401

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage PAID  
Cedar Rapids, IA  
Permit No. 1017

To receive **The Echo** electronically, go to  
[www.ecc-cr.net](http://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
- Razors and shaving cream
- Hy-Vee gift cards (special dietary needs)
- Quarters for laundry needs
- \$ 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 Card or Cover stock (for clients to make nice greeting cards); White copy paper (any weight)
- Apple Pro Mouse
- Photos of animals, vehicles, farm equipment for game development
- A-2 (invitation sized) envelopes for quarter-fold greeting cards
- Internet hubs (maybe 4 port?)
- Volunteers 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)

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