

The Echo

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Letter From the President

Holiday time is approaching. The newest 'holiday' (just passed) seems to be Halloween! Now we look forward to Thanksgiving and then Christmas. A significant commonality of each of those events is that a good deal of money is spent. We now decorate - sometimes elaborately - for Halloween. We spend freely for Thanksgiving, and if we are lucky, are able to spend time with family. We also spend *very* freely for Christmas - decorations, gifts, travel, etc. And - this is fine! If we can afford this, it is an exciting and happy time of the year.

But, there are others. While we happily make plans for the holidays, others struggle simply to buy food and pay utility bills. Accompanying that struggle come stresses that can make one dread the upcoming holidays - and coupled with uncertainty, negatively affect family life.

Helping Hands Ministry receives over 1,000 requests for help each month. But requests for help greatly exceed available funds. Each month we usually help about 65 households with financial aid, another 65 with transportation aid, and refer hundreds to other agencies for various types of assistance.

Another set of needs is characterized by those who have mental or physical limitations. In a world of computers and communications, not having knowledge and skill in this area is limiting in its own right. For those more severely limited, operating a computer and learning through well-designed exercises changes lives.

CompuPlace is expanding the computer hardware and software available to individuals with disabilities. The CompuPlace program provides computer services that are unique in Iowa. But once again, demand for the services is exceeding the resources to fund them.

In addition, the Ecumenical Center provides space for the meals programs of Green Square Meals and the Witwer Senior Center. Several non-profit agencies such as the Foman Infant Unit, Narcotics Anonymous and Cedar Rapids Aquatics receive reduced cost office space. As a result of the reduced cost space each of these programs is able to spend more of its funds on direct service.

Thank you for all you have done in the past, but the need continues and grows! The Ecumenical Center staff and board ask for your continuing generous support - please make a donation to the Center now, in anticipation of the holidays.

Don Leonhart - President

Helping Hands Ministry

Helping Hands Ministry

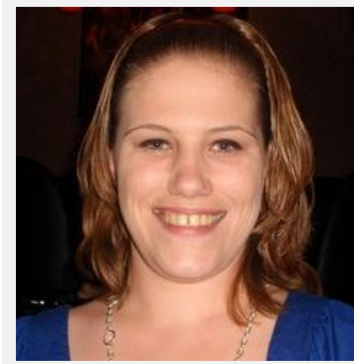
601 Second Avenue SE #2
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52401
Phone: (319)-366-2651
Email: helpinghands@ecc-cr.net

Lois Ann Rude, HHM Director
Jessica Stamper, HHM Staff Associate

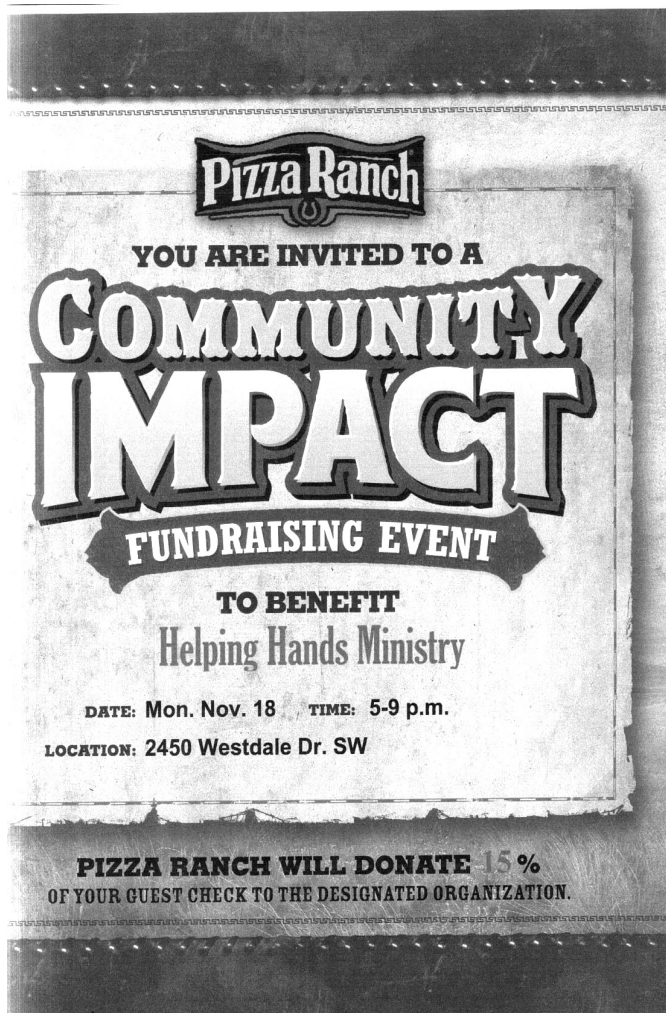


MEET HHM STAFF:

Sarah Mason joined the Volunteer ranks of HHM on March 1, 2010. to obtain office experience to gain the skills and experience necessary to obtain employment. She volunteered a total of 480 hours and then moved to Texas. Upon returning to Cedar Rapids, Sarah kept in touch with HHM and when offered the part-time position of ECC and HHM Receptionist for Wednesday thru Friday, she was pleased to accept.



Sarah joined the ranks of paid employee effective July 1. Sarah likes to help people and finds this position to be very rewarding. On a personal note, Sarah is the proud mother of a 10 year old son, Justin. She also enjoys reading and walking in the park. She likes to raise money for HHM. Watch her in action at the Pizza Ranch fundraiser!



Join us for the
Pizza Ranch Fundraiser
Monday, November 18, 2013

MARK YOUR CALENDAR & Copy the coupon to the left and present it that evening!

Yummy food for a good cause! Pizza Ranch will donate 15% of meals ordered with this coupon and tips will be given to Helping Hands Ministry.

BRING YOURSELF, FAMILY AND FRIENDS!

Thanks you for your participation!

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

During the first 10 months of 2013, Helping Hands Ministry has provided:

Rent to <u>175</u> households (\$20,526.50)	Rent deposit to <u>32</u> households (\$3,156)
Electric to <u>108</u> households (\$12,092.10)	Electric deposit to <u>5</u> household (\$645)
Gas to <u>15</u> households (\$1,693.74)	Identification/Birth Cert for <u>20</u> HH (\$215.75)
Water to <u>17</u> households (\$1,693.74)	Water deposit to <u>2</u> household (\$257.10)
Shelter Rent to <u>58</u> households (\$1,352)	4,300* Local Bus Tickets for <u>662</u> persons (\$1,950)
Mortgage Interest to <u>1</u> household (\$150)	Auto Gas to <u>45</u> households (\$900)

*Note: 400 bus tickets were donated to Helping Hands Ministry

For a total of **\$44,762.08 to 643 households** (36 households received both service and bus tickets) A total of 626 households received local bus tickets only.

Other activities have included:

Cedar Rapids Downtown Farmer's Markets were attended July 6, August 3, September 21 by HHM staff and HHM Steering Committee members. The HHM lip balms were distributed and merchandise was sold.

Administration of the First Lutheran Church Shepherd's Fund was transferred to HHM in August to provide auto gas vouchers to needy households. HHM had been doing part of the screening and then sending clients to First Lutheran. This transfer of \$300 for auto gas, \$100 for bus tickets and \$175 for shelter rent (\$575/month) will provide services to more households above and beyond the monthly budget for HHM.

Jessica & Sarah represented the ECC and HHM at the Mission of Hope's Hopefest held August 10th. Over 600 cookies were distributed and many questions answered. They also were representatives at the Veterans Stand Down on September 6.

The HHM Steering Committee has reviewed the draft of the HHM five year long range

strategic plan and will submit it to the December ECC Board for approval and implementation January 1, 2014.

Wishing you & your loved ones a very blessed Thanksgiving, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Lois Rude, Director
Jessica Stamper, Staff Associate
Sarah Mason, Receptionist

Join us for the

The 2013 Recognition Dinner

Thursday, December 5, 5 - 8:00 p.m. will be the Helping Hands Ministry 2nd Annual Recognition Dinner, at St. Paul's United Methodist Church Fellowship Hall.

All past and present Board Members, staff, supporters and volunteers are welcome. Highlights of 2013 and plans for the future will be shared. If you are interested in attending, reservations can be made by calling HHM at 366-2651 no later than November 29, 2013.



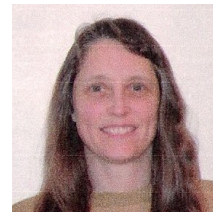
CompuPlace

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

Between January 1 and September 30 2013, 118 individuals received over 1374 hours of CompuPlace services.

Still, there are others who we did not reach. According to the most recent American Community Survey data for Iowa and Linn County, over 23,000 of us who live in Linn County have disabilities. Most CompuPlace clients have a cognitive disability. In Linn County, 9000 of us have a cognitive disability.

CompuPlace also serves people with a variety of other disabilities when they need specialized instruction and / or Assistive Technology like touch screens, switches and trackballs, speech, or magnification.

Help us to reach more learners! Volunteer your time teaching or preparing educational games and activities. Take photos and short

videos for us. Record some sounds for celebration of correct choices in our games. Help us gather and format information for Trivia games. Your monetary gifts help support our program and sponsor more learners. Our Saviors' Lutheran Church recently dedicated their Noisy Collection of loose change to CompuPlace. What a delightfully precious generosity! Thank you!

These gifts help clear paths to learning. Some recent triumphs we celebrate:

- A lady recognizing words using first letter clues for the first time in her life!
- A gentleman's growing ability to express his needs and thoughts through his work here
- The increasing independence of an individual who, because family members have provided attentive care, has never discovered how much you can do on your own — until now!

WINDOWS 7 HAS IMPROVED ACCESSIBILITY FEATURES!

CompuPlace will soon be installing Windows 7 and 8, and also Microsoft Office, on several computers in our lab. Updates will allow us to teach many new, exciting and useful office-related skills to our clients!

To turn on the Ease of Access Center in Windows 7 — Win + U :

Press and hold down the Windows key, the one with the Window on it in the lower row of your keyboard, near the spacebar. While you're holding down the Windows key, tap the letter U key.

From this Ease of Access Center, you can — ALT + N or ALT + G:

- Turn on the Windows Narrator: hold down the ALT key and tap the letter N key.
- Turn on the Windows Magnifier: hold down the ALT key and tap the letter G key.

Other features may be useful for you or for someone you know. Create a restore point before you make changes so that you can easily return the settings to the way they were.

**Order your White Lights Soy Candles from Helping Hands today!
Choose from many scents in a 16 ounce glass jar for just \$14.00 each.
We now have Christmas-scented candles. They will go fast!**

IRA GIFT TRANSFERS:

GOOD NEWS! There is still time to make Tax-Free Gifts from IRA accounts. The American Taxpayer Act of 2012 which extends the law that allows donors to make charitable gifts from their IRA accounts during tax years 2012 and 2013 without incurring income tax on the withdrawal is scheduled to expire December 31, 2013. So if you are age 70-1/2 or older, are required to take minimum withdrawals, and you do not need them for personal use, this may be a great way to make a gift to qualified charities for tax year 2013. While you cannot claim a charitable deduction for IRA gifts, you will not pay income tax on the amount.

Please consider this and designating the Ecumenical Community Center as the charity you support. Contact your broker for instructions. On behalf of those served, Thank you!

Join us at the

2013 Alternative Gift Market (AGM)

**Saturday December 7, 2013
9:00 AM – 2:00 PM at
Echo Hill Presbyterian Church
9000 C Avenue, Marion**

Real Gifts. Real Impact.

Alternative Gifts:

Give shares of local and international projects inspiring change in our world. See the AGM FaceBook Page at [facebook.com/agmcr](https://www.facebook.com/agmcr) for photos and other information from past AGM events.

Look for Helping Hands Ministry and CompuPlace staff on Saturday, December 7, 2013 and consider us as one of your charities to support!

Margaret Bock Housing at a Glance

1021 Third Avenue SE, Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52403

Margaret Bock Housing (MBH) continues to have a variety of activities in its everyday management of the building and tenants. For an example of on-going responsibilities, see the second paragraph below. At this time, MBH is also planning a gradual internal facelift that will include new beds, mattress and box spring covers, paint, carpet in the hallways, plus a new washing machine. These upgrades are needed as a result of many years of use by tenants. We want the ECC community to have the opportunity to be a part of these improvements. Consequently we are asking for donations of time and material or money so that we can keep moving ahead. Grants for this type of upgrade are difficult to find, so kindly consider an investment in housing for low income individuals who strive to achieve stability in their lives.

One might ask, what variety of on-going work occurs at MBH. On a frequent basis, property manager Mike, cleaning lady Marie, board volunteers, plus a few tenants handle a variety of tasks. Some of these, in NO order of priority or frequency, are:

1. Interview candidates for tenant occupancy.
2. Collect rent and pay operating costs.
3. Cleaning and painting and maintenance
4. Deal with a variety of tenant issues.
5. Coordinate with Orkin for pest treatments and inspections.
6. Provide monthly income and balance sheet financials.
7. Monthly board and tenant policy council meetings.
8. Coordinate information with the ECC BOARD.

If activities such as these are or could be of interest to you, read on. If providing housing to prevent homelessness is an interest of yours, any financial help from you is much appreciated. Any request from an individual or church or organization for a tour of MBH can be addressed to our mail station at the Ecumenical Community Center building:

Margaret Bock Housing, 601 Second Ave SE, #9. Cedar Rapids IA 52401, &/or call Mike Williams, property manager, at 319-366-2651.

Jim Federer, MBH President

ECCF Board of Directors

Executive Committee

- Don Leonhart, President,
St. Pius X Parish
- David Jiruska, Vice-President,
Westminster Presbyterian
- J.D. Combellick, Secretary,
Peoples Unitarian Universalist
- Conrad Baumler, Treasurer,
At-Large
- Jim Kennedy, Past President,
1st Lutheran
- Scott Olson,
Development & At-Large

Board Members

- Peter Riley, At-Large
- Vacancy,
Mound View Neighborhood Assoc.
- Mark Minger,
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 Assoc.
- Jean Oxley, First Congregational
- Darlene Schrimper,
Echo Hill Presbyterian
- Donna Fernandes Jiruska, At-Large
- John vonLackum,
First Presbyterian, Cedar Rapids
- Vacancy, First Christian
- Mary Ann Stewart,
Lovely Lane United Methodist
- Vacancy, Christ Episcopal Church
- Vacancy, At-Large

ECC News:

**Contributions received between January 1 & October 31, 2013
(not including private donations and agency rent)**

Unity Center	Christ Episcopal	Echo Hill Presbyterian
First Lutheran	First Presbyterian	Gloria Dei Lutheran
Mission of Hope	Grace Episcopal	Our Savior's Lutheran
St. Pius X Catholic	St. Joseph's Catholic	King of Kings Lutheran
St. Matthew's Catholic	Marion Christian	St. Stephen's Lutheran
Living Water United Methodist	Lovely Lane United Methodist	
Oakland Church of the Nazarene	Peace Christian Reformed	
Salem United Methodist	Peoples Church Unitarian Universalist	
St. Paul's United Methodist	The Mother Mosque of America	
Westminster Presbyterian	Buffalo United Methodist	
Immaculate Conception		

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!

**New business partner: Collins Community Credit Union
New partnership with HyVee— Another way to support ECC & MBH**

HyVee, Shop HyVee!

The Ecumenical Community Center and Margaret Bock Housing have formed a partnership with HyVee to raise funds to support our programs. You can help by purchasing **coupon books at a cost of \$10** that have over \$100 worth of savings! For example coupons **will not expire until December 31, 2014** and cover items most households purchase on a regular basis such as \$1.00 off HyVee ice cream, Di Lusso meat, a gallon of milk, 24 pack of water, and Amana ground beef.

Those who eat at the HyVee deli can get \$2 off a jumbo pork tenderloin sandwich, free cup of coffee with any breakfast order, \$2 off a Chinese express entrée meal and \$3 off any Italian Express 16 inch pizza. Any purchase of a \$100 or more, you will receive a \$10 HyVee gift card! These are only a few examples.

Consider purchasing books for donation to the food banks or collection for needy families over the holidays. Coupon books can be ordered over the phone (366-2651) or by e-mail (ecumenicalcommunitycenter@yahoo.com). You must come into our office at 601 2nd Avenue to pick up the coupon books unless other arrangements are made with the HHM staff.

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!



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 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
- Laundry Soap
- 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 & Internet hubs
- Photos of animals, vehicles, farm equipment for game development
- A-2 (invitation sized) envelopes for quarter-fold greeting cards
- 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)
- 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 Lois Rude, Editor.