

Hillcrest Calling

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QUILTING CLUB

Hillcrest Family Services is a mission of the Iowa Conference of the United Methodist Church and, because of this relationship, we are the recipients of many wonderful gifts. The Busy Bee Quilters at St. Luke's United Methodist Church in Dubuque Iowa is one such group. This group of quilters has donated quilts to Hillcrest Family Services every year for many years. Thank you ladies for the wonderful quilts sown with love.



Still Walking Through Hillcrest

WRITTEN BY: REV. KEN GIBSON

In our last edition of **The Hillcrest Calling**, we shared stories in our Walking through Hillcrest. My walk is still on going and I am continually lifted up by the experience of walking with so many here at Hillcrest. In this edition, we continue our walk together through Hillcrest.

My joy-filled journey over the last few months gave me the chance to see and experience a holiday season here at Hillcrest. So many people, literally hundreds of volunteers, helped to make a "ride" through Reflections in the Park memorable and rewarding for so many people. Such a display of loyal support was a treat to experience in my walk, and the light of hope shone through the volunteers actually to me, was even brighter than our beautiful displays.

My walk of late also allowed me to experience the love and support of literally hundreds of faithful people as they gave end-of-the-year gifts in support of Hillcrest's mission. Even though I have not yet met all of the people who supported Hillcrest, I feel that they are walking alongside all who serve the mission of Hillcrest Family Services.

My grandfather once told me that, whenever possible, never take a walk in the woods alone. When I was younger, I thought that was for "safety" reasons, but as I have grown older I realize that my grandfather was intending for me to understand that life's walk is to be walked with others, for it is only in our relationships that we truly rejoice in life's joys and survive life's challenges.

I thank all of you who walk with Hillcrest. Your hand of compassion allows others to walk on in life, find hope and promise to be all that they might be. ■

25 years Twenty-Five Years



On July 7, 2008, one close to our hearts is retiring, after an incredible walk of 25 years at Hillcrest Family Services. **Howard Haigh** first walked through the doors of Hillcrest on July 5, 1983; the following is a

history and thanksgiving of Howard's time here, in his own words:

It has been a privilege and a blessing to have this opportunity. In my twenty-five year journey with Hillcrest Family Services, I have experienced things that helped me grow, and understand and appreciate the role of everyone working for this agency. I am thankful for what my colleagues and staff have taught me over the years. I am also humbled by the strength and courage that I have seen in the families, youth and persons with Mental Illness with whom I

have worked. Lastly, I thank my wife Sue Davison, and my daughters Sara and Shannon, for their tremendous support, providing both joy and comfort, and helping me to maintain my perspective.

Before I retire, I would like to share with you some of the things I have experienced in my 25 year journey with Hillcrest.

THANKFULNESS

I am thankful to have been part of a social movement, centuries long, in which people and human services agencies link together and provide services to those who need a boost to reach their dreams and goals. Without our donors, dedicated staff, public agencies, churches, clubs, businesses, organizations and volunteers it would be impossible to provide the services needed in our communities. The generosity and commitment to helping and being part of this great "Mission" overwhelm me. This commitment has grown rapidly since I first started and each Christmas brings increased participation from all of our communities.

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25 Years, continued...

www.hillcrest-fs.org



Hillcrest Family Services is a ministry of the Iowa Conference of the United Methodist Church, and they Synod of Lakes and Prairies, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Hillcrest is the only childcare agency related to both the Iowa Conference and the entire six-state region of the Synod.

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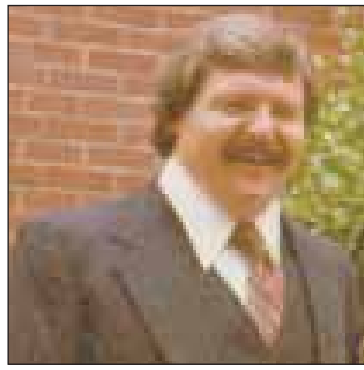
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Howard in 1985

Cedar Rapids, Iowa City, Washington and Ottumwa. This list is only a few of the cities where Hillcrest teams have offices. Hillcrest touches people from nearly all of Iowa's counties and surrounding states. Our team also includes dedicated board members, guiding us along the way. Our board has been a source of direction and inspiration for 25 years. The United Methodist Church and Presbyterian Church are also part of the 'team' helping us in our mission. The churches form the basis of our Spiritual connection throughout the country. Lastly, our team consists of Gary Gansemer and his predecessors Don Osborne and Don Lewis. Their leadership, open door, empowerment and willingness to provide community services to those in need make Hillcrest an extraordinary organization. I cannot believe how much we have grown over the past 25 years.

CONTINUITY

Continuity at Hillcrest makes retirement easier. I am not the first Haigh that has worked at Hillcrest. My mother volunteered at Hillcrest in the 1950s as a member of the Women's Society of Christian Service, Manchester Methodist church. When I accepted a job in 1983, I looked forward to following in her steps and sharing in the mission. She passed away before I started at Hillcrest, but I am sure that she would have been happy with my choice of agencies and the Methodist connection. Change has been a constant at Hillcrest over my 25 years. While the outward face of Hillcrest has changed much from when I started, what has remained the same is the delivery of the Mission of Hillcrest. When I started, the face of Hillcrest included the Barbara Butler Center & Hillcrest house (the Main), Peterson House, Don Osborne's home, River View and Fenelon Place. Between the Main and Don Osborne's house was an open field where we played tag football and held Family Day activities. Off campus, the girl's program, River View, was located on Jefferson Street, and Fenelon Place was near the top of the 4th Street Elevator. We had some great baseball games at Fenelon place, in a very small yard.

TEAM

Hillcrest consists of a great team of people who believe in "good deeds" and a "client-centered approach" to solving problems. This extends through-out all communities I have worked; Dubuque,

Unfortunately, some of our young people could really hit the ball and we ended up paying for windows in the Fenelon Elevator, a house next to Fenelon and a car. I want to apologize for this breakage, I thought no one could hit my faster-than-fast pitch!

Since then the Barbara Butler Center and Hillcrest House became the Main administration building, the open field became the residential homes of Pathways, New Pathways, Molitore, School and Shelter House while closing River View and Fenelon Place. Our agency grew steadily and expanded in Dubuque, Cedar Rapids and Iowa City. Deinstitutionalization came to Iowa allowing money to be available for persons with Mental Illness to return to their communities to live in apartments or group homes. It was an exciting time. Our mission led us to set up two group homes in Dubuque, apartment living, and career services for our adults suffering from mental illness. Later we added Intensive Psychiatric Rehabilitation Services, a Homeless program, our Highland Place facility for very difficult psychiatric symptoms, and a call to operate the Washington County Mental Health Center and take over Dubuque's Gannon Center services. Our Intensive Psychiatric Rehabilitation program's success, led Magellan's Merit Behavioral Health to allow us to work with youth ages 16-18, a first in Iowa and most of the nation. 2007 brought us a Wellness Center and grant funding from Magellan. I am amazed that we continue to find new staff that step forward, define quality services, embrace and enhance the mission. The continuity of the mission is the beauty that allows one generation to step aside and another to pick up the torch of "Service to Humanity".

BEAUTY OF IOWA

With that closely comes my fourth observation, based on driving to our facilities in Cedar Rapids, Iowa City, Washington, Ottumwa and meetings in Des Moines. Iowa is a beautiful state and I enjoyed my weekly 900-mile commute. I have seen many sights along the way, most at 60-70 miles per hour. I have seen eagles flying majestically overhead, red-tailed hawks sitting on fence posts, and deer feeding along the road. Remarkably, I had only one encounter with a deer as he flew over the hood of the Ford Taurus in one jump! Winter brings some of the most beautiful sights, flocked trees, ditches frosted with snow, and blowing fields. Iowa springtime bursts forth with some of the most beautiful wild flowers that I have ever seen. Summer brings acres of green cornfields that you can actually see growing and soybeans fields that look green with a purple haze on some evenings. Some of my favorite sights

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Highland Place, Ottumwa

Social Worker for Riverview, Fenelon and Wesley Place

Program Coordinator for Dubuque Programs for adults with mental illness

Director of Adult Mental Health Services

Clinical Consultant with Magellan Behavioral Health Corporation

Leadership Award from the Iowa Association of Community Providers

celebrating 25 years

7.5.83 - 6.1.89

6.1.89 - 6.18.01

6.18.01 - present

April 1997 - Present

10.19.07

occur around the Amish community in Kalona. I have seen some of the most beautiful gardens and stopped to buy some of the best pie in Iowa! Of course, no trip is complete without a stop at a restaurant. My goal is to visit all 300 Iowa restaurants that, according to the Iowa Pork Producers, sell tenderloins. My list of favorites includes Joensy's in Centerpoint, Rookies in North Liberty, the Flying Wienie in Cedar Rapids, Hamburg Inn in Iowa City, Doldici's calamari in Washington, Fireside Grill in Kalona and Ellis's in Ottumwa. No trip is complete without a favorite stretch of road. Mine is the backroad from Solon, past the new high school, out by Lake McBride, across Mehaffey Bridge and into North Liberty. In early May, to rephrase a line from "Field of Dreams," it is not Iowa but heaven.

SPIRIT OF HOPE

Hope is what we do best at Hillcrest. Many people who come to Hillcrest have nearly reached the point of giving up. Our staff works them through those moments and walks with them on the road to recovery. This does not mean that the road will continue to run smooth, but it does mean that someone else is there to help them along. The honor of being part of this mission for 25 years gives me hope that we can truly make a difference in the lives of our youth, adults with mental illness and women's programs. I take my hat off to the direct care staff of Hillcrest who work tirelessly on night shifts, weekends and holidays to help make the changes that instill hope. You have answered a call to help young people and adults with mental illness change a small but very important part of the world right here in beautiful Iowa.

After I retire, I will continue to work on a part-time basis in the Mission Advancement Office. I look forward to meeting many of you who read Hillcrest Calling as I continue my journey around Iowa and share some of the wonderful work that this agency continues to do. Also, if you know where to get tenderloins, let me know. ■



FROM THE PRESIDENT/CEO

GARY L. GANSEMER



A 17-year-old young man in our residential education program, who has been with us nearly two years, will be leaving soon to go out on his own. His parents have

decided they won't have him back in their home. When I first met this young man, a few months ago, the depth of his understanding of issues and his ability to talk comfortably with me and other adults impressed me immediately. He showed poise that I doubt I had at his age. Later he told me of not being able to go home and I became frustrated, thinking we had failed him. However, I discovered that through our unique mix of ministries, we have been preparing him for beginning a life of independent living. Additionally, he will leave with a stronger relationship with Christ, because of his relationship with our Chaplain. Hillcrest does not control all of the factors in his life, but for those for which we are empowered we have fulfilled promises to him.

A young mother resides in our transitional housing programs for homeless families. Recently, staff responded to a near tragic situation in her apartment as she tried to end her life. Hopelessness enveloped

her as the reality of losing her children sank in. As the scary event unfolded, I wondered if we had prepared her for the cruel turn of the road in her life. Had we shown her how a relationship with a higher power could bring her solace and hope for the future? We had provided her with training but we had not brought her that deeper relationship. We had fulfilled some promises to her but not all.

Most recently, I was touched by two stories of two families, on one day. Two Hillcrest employees received information that their sisters had been diagnosed with cancer. In less than two weeks, one of these sisters faithfully went to meet her loving Father. The other received tremendous news of hope for a recovery. Both women and their families are blessed with strong faith lives and spiritual connections outside of Hillcrest. In August 2005, Jim Rice suddenly died without warning. He was the husband of Nancy Rice, our Executive Secretary, and Lori Rice, our Family Planning Medical Assistant. Our chaplain responded immediately to provide them with spiritual guidance. Reverend Judy Wadding provided them peace and hope. Hillcrest is also called to fulfill promises to our internal family members.

Hillcrest has had a vision for over 100 years of ministering to Iowans who come to us for service. We guide them to have greater control of their lives. By most accounts, we have been tremendously successful. The lessons of the young moth-

er and the grieving Hillcrest employees push us to do more, to have a New Vision.

THIS NEW VISION IS DRIVING US:

- To be the premier faith—connected health and human service provider in the Midwest, not just Iowa.
- To reduce our dependence on government funding for services, so that we can provide the services that people need not just what fits into the program requirements.
- To fulfill six promises to the people served by Hillcrest and to those who serve at Hillcrest.
 - To provide caring adults
 - To provide safe places
 - To provide effective education
 - To provide healthy starts
 - To provide opportunities for service to others
 - To provide opportunities for a spiritual connection

The six promises build upon the Five Promises developed by General Colin Powell and America's Promise, by adding a promise that reflects our Christian ministry rooted in the traditions of the Presbyterian and Methodist Church. John Wesley spoke of the Works of Mercy. Hillcrest seeks to do these works of mercy by fulfilling six promises. As has been the case for 100 years, we will not be able to do it alone. We will need your help. ■

ADOPTION HOMECOMING UPDATE

Homecoming... what sorts of thoughts surround that word for you? For some, thoughts go immediately to football games, dances and a parade.

Homecoming meant something different to us at Hillcrest during 2007. Homecoming meant coming home to Hillcrest. The history of Hillcrest is one of the joys of adoption. This need to place children and babies with families was recognized by Dr. Nancy Hill, continued by Anna Blanche Cook, and has lived throughout the years as an important service of Hillcrest Family Services.

In October 2007 we called those families that adopted through Hillcrest to come home to Hillcrest. As an agency that loves families, we were anxious to reconnect with those families dearest to our hearts. Thus was born this weekend of Homecoming.

The festivities began on October 19 with a very informal gathering at a nearby hotel. This was an opportunity for people who traveled to Dubuque to get together with Hillcrest staff and work out any logistical/driving problems. On October 20, the families and Hillcrest staff met at Westminster Presbyterian Church. Westminster also has a history connected to Hillcrest, as at one time Westminster was the location where babies were first introduced to their new adoptive family. In fact, two families attending our Homecoming met their adoptive children there at Westminster many years ago. On that Saturday morning in October, our Homecoming families listened to Dr. Craig Nesson speaking on the "Struggles and the Joy: The

Vocation of Parenting Adopted Children," Hillcrest staff give a thorough update on the programs of Hillcrest and the families toured the Hillcrest Main Campus on Asbury Road. During this time on Saturday and again on Sunday, adoptive families were able to sit in a panel format and discuss what their joys and struggles had been. The weekend ended with a special worship service in the sanctuary at Westminster and an omelet brunch.

This brief description of the events cannot explain importance of the weekend: the emotions that were felt, the connections made and the relationships that grew out of it. It was amazing to see parents who had adopted their children over 30 years ago speaking to the thoughts and concerns of parents who had adopted their children within the past five years. ■



John Bellini, Residential Education Supervisor, gives a tour of the Hillcrest Main Campus.



IN THE FUTURE, WE WOULD LIKE TO INVITE PEOPLE HOME TO HILLCREST AGAIN. PLANS ARE TO HAVE ANOTHER HOMECOMING WEEKEND IN 2009, WATCH FOR INFORMATION.

Dr. Craig Nelson, Wartburg Theological Seminary, speaks of his family's experiences in adopting 6 children.

A Goodbye Note:

Molitore is Hillcrest's home for dual diagnosis, conduct disorder and substance abuse issues. When participants have completed this program, they have the opportunity to write a good-bye note. Poem written by a Molitore resident, names have been changed.

GOODBYE DRUGS

There's a story called Romeo and Juliet
That's ever so sweetly told
An anxious rend of love and passion
Then hearts turned stone from gold

They were said to be "star crossed lovers"
As was my precious high
But my passion for this poison
Would only leave me left to die

The night when we first met
One hit blew my mind
It was love at first sight
So I left my dignity behind

Down, down, down we went
To injections and morning shots
I sold you my hobbies, friends, and my body
In which you splurged and quickly bought

I handed you my pride
My innocence and my soul
I filled my pipes with broken dreams
And smoked them out of bowls

You made me hate myself
And hate you just as much
But as soon as I tried to leave you
I was desperate for your touch

You always whispered lies
That you'd stop the pain, make it go away
But the longer I indulged in you
You even stole my two week pay

You were abusive dear friend
You were the razor on my wrist
The finger in my throat
And many a forgotten kiss

You landed me in institutions
You landed me hidden in my bed
I didn't know how to handle life
Until I was almost dead

You're responsible for many years
You broke my heart in two
But poisonous venom
I am saying goodbye to you

Just like the end of Romeo and Juliet
One of us will have to die
And I've worked to hard to give up now
Just for a stupid temporary high

Were done forever now
I'll leave it just at this
Here's our contract, signed in ink
Heidi Hockenmith

Homelessness

What you are about to read is the intersection of two stories. One about myself, a fifty-three year-old guy. One about a community.

The stories begin in March of 2007 at the recently opened Crescent Community Health Center. I had gone to the center to have a slow-healing wound checked. At the time, I had been homeless, living in my car since August 2006. I must have looked the part because the nurse practitioner asked me if I would see a social worker. I had not sought any help the previous eight months because of my upbringing and a warped concept of rugged individualism. Six weeks of a particularly biting winter had taken its toll and I agreed without a whole lot of reservation.

A social worker made the short drive over from the Visiting Nurses Association and, following a brief intake, delivered me across the hall to Jenny of Project Concern. It was the first of many meetings with Jenny, who proved to be an attentive, compassionate woman, with a razor-sharp memory. That day, she hooked me up with Hillcrest Mental Health Services, and soon thereafter I saw one of Hillcrest's nurse practitioners, Tim Wedeward. He diagnosed me with Schizophrenia, and supplied me with pharmaceutical samples of Invega, the market's latest anti-psychotic. I did not initially buy into the diagnosis, but if I was going to let the system help me, and Lord knows I had been particularly unfruitful in helping myself, I had to follow their instructions. So, I faithfully took the Invega.

Very little of substance happened the next few months. As the weather warmed, I moved into a tent. Jenny helped me file for disability, and we



began the very difficult process of tracking down the required copy of my birth certificate and naturalization papers. I am an orphan adopted in post-war Germany by a U.S. Air Force family. I was not showing any substantial side effects to the Invega so Tim gradually increased the dosage. In mid-June, I ran into Jenny again at the Dubuque Housing Office. She was quite excited about a Shelter Plus Care Program that Project Concern and the city were working on jointly. The idea was to use a federal HUD grant to provide housing for the homeless with disabilities like mental illness. She pointed out, that meant people like me. She said they were hoping to implement the program August 1. Very, very encouraging. I had handled ten months of homelessness, I could handle another six weeks. She also introduced me to Erica, a young woman with both the brains and fortitude to match her idealism and compassion. Erica would become one of my closest confidantes during the four months of anguish I was about to endure.

The increased dosage of Invega was gradually clearing me out of a fog I had not known I was in. The process was one of incremental degree, but I do recall a point toward the middle of July when I finally came to understand that my entire adult life had been lived around the grandiose delusion that I was, pretty much Superman - and that it was my destiny to save the world. Not quite in agreement with the prevailing set of facts. The Rip Van Winklish discovery that I was now old and had not done anything with my life led first to shock and then to guilt. It was of little or no consolation that the problem was at least considerably exacerbated by biochemically faulty neurotransmission. I finally realized I *was* schizophrenic, which did not exactly open up a can of roses either. Moreover, the Invega, having cut me off from the fog and my 'cast' of characters, showed me how isolated I actually was. For the first time in my life, I was lonely. Acutely so.

Anxiety attacks. Frequent and prolonged. That was my initial response to suddenly being confronted with a reality I had zero coping skills. If you have had them, you know just what I mean. If you have not, consider yourself lucky. I was very overwhelmed. My past was spilled milk. My future all but bereft of hope. My present a litany of problems. I made the mistake of trying to process simultaneously. I was at the point of complete meltdown when I desperately made my way into Erica's office. I did something I had never done in my adult life; just flat broke down.



I remember literally having to hold her hand for about fifteen minutes. It was, if not the lowest ebb, then certainly close. Erica got me a room in the Canfield for a couple days, and through her kindness, the hospitality of the hotel, and the grace of God I got some blessed relief.

Jenny managed to get my appointment with Tim moved up. He prescribed me anti-anxiety and anti-depressant medications. He also got me a counselor. A fellow about my age named Denny. Brilliant person. Wide range of knowledge. A very, very big help. My only complaint is our sessions were too short and too few. Denny referred me to Ashley, Hillcrest's Homeless Outreach Coordinator. A dynamic young woman, I was amazed by Ashley's energy and focus. She called and consulted with Erica and Jenny and agreed that, in spite of the delay in implementation, the Shelter Plus Care program was perfect for me. She also gave me some blankets and yummy snacks.

Two unrelated things happened that helped me quite a bit. First, one morning I was feeling particularly hopeless about my future. In a nutshell, I was schizophrenic; therefore, I had a screwed-up kind of thinking. Trying desperately to escape the mode, I turned on Iowa Public Radio in hopes of being distracted. That day the discussion was about mental illness. One of the speakers was himself a schizophrenic with symptoms worse than mine. Yet his story was one of success. With the help of the medication, he had overcome the downside of the illness and built a decent life for himself. This gave me hope. The other incident happened after I had spent a considerable amount of time outside the public library. I had been

watching people go in and out, and I was envious. There was an understanding that my life could not be like theirs, and when I finally put my finger on it I realized it was because I had lost my sense of purpose. Later that evening, pacing outside my tent, a private epiphany came to remind me. I settled down some, and resumed reading a novel by Tom Robbins. Amazingly, in the next paragraph, Tom totally switched directions and the narrative exactly confirmed my epiphany. I think it would take a diehard atheist not to attribute the serendipity to the hand of a Higher Power. I had been praying a lot, however I was still lost, but at least I'd been reminded of my destination.

My situation stabilized enough for me to take some actions on my behalf. I started reading materials related to my illness, going to the downtown church suppers, reopened relationships with best friends from the past, visited the library. At the library, I got on the internet and reconnected to an online community. I wrote an online journal, more or less laying my present circumstances bare, and 47 people responded with encouragement and advice. I have since written a dozen journals, and their continuous responses were and are a very bright spot in my life. People who'd never even met me actually mailed me stylish new clothes and things! I got Ashley to introduce me to Carolyn, who runs Hillcrest Family Services' Wellness Center and teaches a class empowering the mentally ill. I arranged to enroll in the next session.

Finally, my ex-wife located copies of my birth certificate and naturalization papers. The birth certificate made me eligible for Iowa Care, a program administered for the otherwise uninsured by the University of Iowa Medical Center. An appointment was made with Crescent's Dentist, Dr. Souto. That news was not good. My remaining teeth needed to come out and the dentist spotted a possible carcinoma on my lip. He strongly suggested a biopsy. The sliding scale of the clinic would pretty much cover the clinic's cost for dentures but an \$800 lab fee pretty much ruled dentures out. The limited amount of work I was getting barely kept gas in the car. Short of a miracle, my best hope was in being granted Social Security Disability, and then Medicaid. Unfortunately, my application for disability was eventually refused. However, Jenny got the good people at Great River Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery to agree to do the biopsy free of charge.

Meanwhile The Shelter Plus Care Program kept being delayed. I suppose this is inevitable in trying to get a new federally funded program off the ground. It certainly was not for lack of effort on the part of Jenny, Erica or Janet, their partner in the Dubuque Housing Office. Although it was frustrating, in an odd sort of way it helped me, thinking that placement was just around the corner. I was close enough to the edge and had so little in my hope basket that I needed to think in terms of imminence. By late October, all the hurdles had been cleared save one. We needed a landlord with an available one-bedroom apartment to agree to be part of the program.

The biopsy came back positive, I had cancer. Yeah, I freaked out. That very morning I had been in Erica's office when she looked up, smiled and asked if I wanted to go check out an apartment. Like a child offered candy, I just vigorously shook my head in assent and said, "Yes, Please." I was on such a high I was sure the biopsy would be negative. The next step was a catscan to see if the cancer had spread. The apartment we visited was very much to my liking. However, except for a new bed it was unfurnished. By nature a pessimist, and more than a little paranoid, I was sure something would go wrong, but the deal went through. In a strange Halloween juxtaposition of the eerie and the joyous, I moved in the same day my catscan was done. What a great blessing and relief. Finally, after 14 long months, a roof over my head, an actual bed to sleep in. The next day Ashley arrived in a truck loaded with a very nice couch, a dresser, a table, a chair and various items to supply a kitchen. Erica tagged along to help with the moving. How blessed can a person be?

The community has given me a chance to have a normal life. The community supplied me with the medication to escape the fog of the schizophrenia. The community held my hand when I had trouble adjusting to reality. The community showed me where to go to learn the coping skills I need. The community put a roof over my head and a couch on which to plop. The rest is pretty much up to me. As I write this, this afternoon I receive the results of the catscan. This evening I'll be at Carolyn's WRAP (Wellness/ Recovery Action Plan) class. Carolyn is one of those positive, dynamic speakers whose charisma just lifts the room around her. Friday I'll be at a sleep-out to call attention to the homeless. I think most people would agree with the nobility of the cause. I certainly do, but I'm really going as a show of

solidarity with my team. If I can by my presence, as the first one placed in the Shelter Plus Care Program, prove the practical result, that this isn't just a bunch of idealistic social workers tilting at windmills, then that is the very least I can do. I love these people well beyond gratitude; they have enriched my life more than I can possibly say.

The rest of my story is indeed in the future. However, being given the proverbial fishing lesson, the wonderful individuals involved in my life gave me more than the fish that would feed me for a day. They gave me a lesson in how to feed myself for a lifetime. ■

Mental Health and Physical Health

Homeless people suffer from high rates of **mental and physical health problems** exacerbated by living on the streets and in shelters. The lack of residential stability makes healthcare delivery more complicated. Homeless people often lack access to preventative care, waiting until a trip to the emergency room is a matter of life or death. These emergency room visits are costly. Additionally, when homeless people become ill, they often do not receive timely treatment.

In addition to chronic health problems, approximately half of homeless people suffer from mental health issues. At a given point in time, 45 percent of homeless report indicators of mental health problems during the past year, and 57 percent report having had a mental health problem during their lifetime. About 25 percent of the homelessness population has serious mental illness, including such diagnoses as chronic depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorders, and severe personality disorders.

The above information is from the *National Alliance to End Homelessness*.
www.endhomelessness.org

Make a difference—support Hillcrest Family Services

Prayerfully remember Hillcrest Family Services in your will.

Does Hillcrest Take Gifts In-Kind

BY REV. KEN GIBSON, VICE PRESIDENT OF MISSION ADVANCEMENT

Recently a donor called and asked a pertinent question. She had just heard, *again*, a radio advertisement that pleaded for donors to “push, pull, drag or just call and they would haul her car” as a donation to a charity which she now could not even recall. She would then be entitled to a charitable deduction for the value of the vehicle. All of which led her to wonder whether her favorite place to give gifts, Hillcrest Family Services, received such gifts-in-kind and how they worked. Her question to me was the following: “What advantages are there to such gifts; first to Hillcrest and, secondly, to me as a deduction on my taxes?”

Yes, Hillcrest does receive gifts-in-kind including automobiles. On January 1, 2005, new laws took effect that affect the donation of a vehicle. Hillcrest is a qualified, eligible recipient of a gift of a car. In fact, a gift of a vehicle is welcome as the car may provide transportation to our services for so many. Some cars could in fact be valuable as they could be used by a special mission of Hillcrest. All in all Hillcrest Family Services has a fleet of over 31 vehicles.

If the donor itemizes the federal tax return, a deduction can be claimed for *fair market value* of the vehicle. In calculating the value of the gift for a deduction, there are several factors to consider including the age, condition, mileage, accessories, etc., of the car. Should repairs be necessary to make the vehicle usable, the cost of same is deducted from the value of

the gift. If the deduction is \$5,000 or more, IRS rules call for a qualified appraisal for verification of the gift.

Hillcrest has received various gifts-in-kind, including land, houses, machinery and equipment, and most recently the equipment from the office of a retiring medical doctor team in northwest Iowa. Gifts such as hotel night stays, meals, etc. can be very beneficial as we look for ways to provide parents with troubled youth enjoyable events as they spend time with their children.

Some gifts-in-kind are sold at auction, e.g., coin and stamp collections, as they are not specific to Hillcrest’s mission. In these instances, Hillcrest will provide a receipt for the gift of property and then a second receipt with the actual sale amount. The full amount of the sale is then claimed as the charitable deduction.

As always, we in Hillcrest’s Mission Advancement office suggest consultation with your own financial consultant or tax advisor in making certain IRS guidelines for gifts-in-kind are followed correctly. IRS Publication 561: Determining the Value of Donated Property helps donors and appraisers determine the value of the gift-in-kind given to a qualified recipient like Hillcrest. Be assured that your call or contact with us in Mission Advancement is always welcome regarding gifts of all types to Hillcrest Family Services. ■



REV. KEN GIBSON

Forming Promise People

If you could give a gift to a child in need, a child whose world has been upended in crisis, what would it be? If you could give a gift to a young single mother who worries how she will feed her baby, what would it be? If you could give a gift to a mentally ill adult with no place to call home, what would it be?

We can't do our work without you! Charitable giving is essential to enable Hillcrest to help the troubled children and adolescents, women and their families, and mentally ill adults who need our help. Hillcrest accepts outright gifts of cash, by check or credit card, and stocks and securities. Planned gifts to Hillcrest can be made through bequests, trusts, charitable gift annuities, life insurance, personal property, real estate and retirement plan assets.

As a certified 501(c)3 organization, gifts to Hillcrest Family Services are fully tax deductible according to IRS guidelines and your individual circumstances.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Contact the Vice President of Mission Advancement
563-583-7357 or 877-437-6333

Other Giving Opportunities:

THE MOST COST-EFFECTIVE GIFT

Before you write a check for your next donation, consider this smart tax-saving strategy: a gift of long-term appreciated securities.

LEAVE A LEGACY WHILE BOOSTING YOUR INCOME NOW

Receive a lifetime income and a variety of tax benefits while making a philanthropic gift to Hillcrest.

WHAT DO YOU GET THE PERSON WHO HAS EVERYTHING?

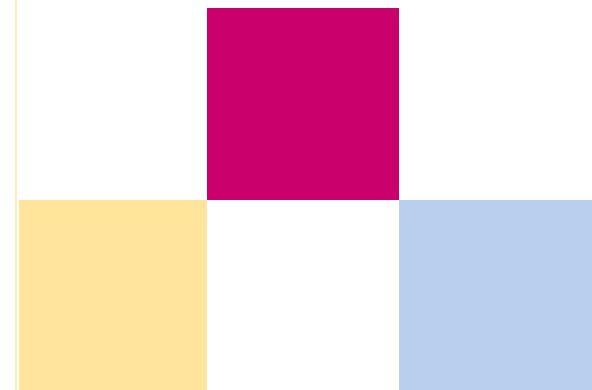
Think of the difference you could make if you stopped shopping and started making gifts in honor of your loved ones to charitable organizations.

ANNUAL GIVING

Annual donations help us meet the substantial operating costs that are required to provide comprehensive treatment services to children and families. In addition, special projects help us meet special needs.

WAYS TO GIVE TO HILLCREST FAMILY SERVICES

- Planned Giving
- General Contributions
- Memorials & Tributes
- Matching Gifts
- Secure Online Donations
- Gifts of stock or securities
- Charitable gift annuities
- Gifts of life insurance
- Bequests through your will
- A Will is Still the Best Bargain in Estate Planning
- The Ways to Leave a Legacy



Hillcrest Calling

Our Vision

Children, families and adults will be safe and healthy and will gain greater control of their lives.

A CHRISTMAS LEGACY

The Christmas season is full of wonderful memories from our childhood, eggnog, Christmas caroling, getting together with family. For many families in the Dubuque area, Christmas also means *Reflections in the Park: A Hillcrest Lights Festival*. One family in particular has close ties with this event—the family of Mike and Sharon Faley. A ‘lucky 13’ years ago, Sharon wanted to create something special to benefit a local organization and the community at the same time. Thirteen years ago *Reflections in the Park* was born.

Many people told Sharon that this event would not work, that people would not drive through a park to look at Christmas lights. Others said if you are open from Thanksgiving until New Years there will not be enough volunteers to help. Sharon proved them all wrong. On Thanksgiving night, 1995, the first *Reflections in the Park* opened and since then over 400,000 people have visited the park!

Thousands of volunteers have also helped every night from Thanksgiving to New Years, taking tickets and handing out programs, for 13 years. Even more volunteers have helped in the setting up and tearing down that inevitably has to occur

for every event. Without these wonderful volunteers to help in this endeavor, the lights of *Reflections in the Park* would not shine as brightly.

Year 13 is a lucky milestone for *Reflections*. Years ago, Sharon had a goal of raising one million dollars for Hillcrest Family Services. She wanted to leave a legacy in this city and for the thousands of children, youth, adults and families that Hillcrest serves across Iowa every day. Sharon will reach that goal this year. Unfortunately, reaching this goal means that Sharon will step back from her involvement with *Reflections*. This does not mean the end for *Reflections*, however.

After 12 years with the same display vendor, we signed a contract with a new company. This meant that all new displays were in the park (with just a few previous displays). The new displays were bigger, brighter and more animated. Animated Santas jumped into sleighs, read, watched Mrs. Claus bake cookies, and peeped from behind a tree. As with any Christmas celebration, we had a Nativity scene, angels and candles. The famous leaping deer arch was back along with new arches, toy soldiers, reindeer playing tennis and frogs. This year we also had a

menagerie of animals that were “loose” in the park. Everything from deer, bears and moose to an opossum, beaver and raccoon lit up the hills.

Reflections in the Park officially closed for the season in January with an amazing 9,243 cars that had entered the park. In 2008, *Reflections* will open on Thanksgiving night, November 27, and will be open for 36 days during the Christmas season. ■



Major Roy Buol, with Sharon Faley and her family on December 21, 2007, **Sharon Faley Day**.



THE REFLECTIONS IN THE PARK ADMISSION REMAINS THE SAME AS WHEN THE PARK FIRST OPENED, AN AFFORDABLE \$7.00 FOR PRIVATE VEHICLES. PROCEEDS FROM REFLECTIONS HELP FUND THE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES OFFERED BY HILLCREST FAMILY SERVICES.