



GREETINGS FROM MIKE

Fall 2016

You are a blessing to us. I say that often and truly mean it. Your friendship and gifts sustained us through one of the hottest, driest and most difficult summers we have seen in many years.

This past summer was a record-breaker both in Montana and across much of the nation. We know many of our friends from coast to coast suffered with heat, humidity and storms that seemed like they would never cease. Each day was sort of a ritual. We watched the news, especially the weather, to see what we would face the next day and when we saw what was happening in other parts of the U.S., we shook our heads and knew we should be thankful for our Montana home. Thank you for standing with us and helping us pay some huge utility bills and keep the elders safe.

Autumn is now upon us and cooler temperatures and rain lift our spirits. The rain is most welcome as it puts out the wild fires and recharges the soil moisture lost during one of the driest summers on record. A new fire ignited about 40 miles west of us in the Wolf Mountains on September 20th. We

were on alert and then rain kept that fire from spreading. We are thankful!

Early this summer, I wrote about the need to replace our dishwashing machine. I'm pleased to report that our friends and benefactors sent the donations needed to purchase a new machine. Our timing couldn't have been better. The technicians who installed the new dishwasher said it wouldn't have lasted much longer. We enjoyed 14 years of rigorous, daily use from the old equipment. A friend



Mike enjoying a laugh with Richard Tallbull.

of mine who runs a few restaurants couldn't believe we had gotten that many years of service from the original dishwasher. We pinch every penny we can to keep the elders' home in good repair. The kitchen workers are working in a safer place now, without scalding hot water spraying them as they open the dishwasher door. The pots, pans and dishes used to prepare and serve the elders' meals are sparkling clean and sanitized. Thank you for your gifts that helped us do that.

Do you remember my letter about buying new mattresses for the elders so they can rest better? Edna Seminole alerted me to the need for new mattresses. It broke my heart to hear how her 14-year-old mattress hurt her arthritic hips. I decided then and there to write to our friends and plead for help. Inside this newsletter you will read about the healing of the Fort Robinson Breakout Memorial, which Edna spearheaded for 15 years.

I talked with elders, staff and former staff members, and learned that most mattresses were the original bedding when Father Emmett opened Heritage

Living Center in August 2002. If Father were with us, he would say, "It is time for new beds."

We shopped around for the best deal we could find for good quality mattresses. We knew the elders needed a supportive bed that had a softness to it for their aging and often, painful joints. That kind of bedding is higher priced. We looked at out-of-state vendors, but were shocked to learn the additional shipping cost of \$8,000 for forty mattresses and box springs made the cost prohibitive. A local supplier recommended a set that will meet our elders' needs and offered us a significant charity savings. We don't

have fancy furnishings. There are no king-size, queen-size or standard beds at the Center. Just simple single, twin-sized beds.

Inside this newsletter, is a yellow envelope you can use to send a mattress gift to us. Your generous gift will be greatly appreciated. I'm hoping that we can soon purchase new mattresses for the elders.

All of the residents are elders among the Cheyenne. They live at Heritage Living Center because they need the assistance we provide to help them with life's daily activities. Tasks like dressing, personal care, transferring from a bed or chair to a walker or wheelchair,

help with medication schedules, and transportation for medical appointments. Part of life is passing on or as the Cheyenne spiritually say, "moving on to the next camp." I want to share with you the passing of two friends, Rita Shoulderblade and Mark Small. Friends who your gifts have helped live longer, better lives.

Rita was a sweetheart. Always kind and easy to talk to. She lived with us for a little more than two years. During those years, she quickly became part of the Center family, helping others and especially being part of the holiday activities. Your gifts made her life richer and in turn she made our lives richer.

Mark called the Heritage Living Center his home for ten years. He and Father Emmett were close friends and could be found in the evenings, just the two of them, sharing stories and supporting each other. Mark was one of the first elders I met and we became close friends. I'm going to miss picking up hearing aid batteries for him so that he wouldn't have to make the long trip to Billings just for batteries.

We say farewell to these friends knowing new elders will move into the Center in the near future. They won't take Rita's or Mark's places, but they will enrich our lives and yours as you can know that your faithful support allows us to help many who are lonely and need a safe, warm place to live. God bless you for all that you make possible for the elders.

With a grateful heart,


Mike Skaggs



HLC staff removing a few of the aged, worn-out mattresses.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATIONS TO PURCHASE OUR NEW DISHWASHER!!!



Left: Thanks to donations from friends and benefactors our kitchen staff work in a safe environment while ensuring that the dishes, pots, and pans are sanitized.

Below Left: HLC Administrator, Jerry Thex and the dishwasher technician study how the new machine will match up with our existing stainless steel work tables. The machine fits seamlessly into the corner making an efficient space for cleaning and sanitizing dishes, pots and pans.

Below: Elders have plenty of reading material to enjoy and study in the comfort of our library or in their apartments. Most of the books are sent to our remote location by generous donors.



“No Doubt, It’s Edna”



Editor’s note - Heritage Living Center friend John Warner locked on to Edna’s story a few years ago and traveled to Nebraska to document the dedication of the monument for this newsletter. A career photojournalist, he also pitched the story and images to the Billings Gazette’s editors, who gave it major play in Montana’s largest daily newspaper. It also ran across the Associated Press wire services, reaching national and worldwide audiences. It is reprinted here. (John has been ‘around the rez’ for quite awhile. He and Father Emmett established a lifelong friendship in 1989. “I love the place! We’re all just fine friends,” John says of the Heritage Living Center.)

Descendants of Northern Cheyenne tribal members who fled Fort Robinson, Nebraska, in 1879, returned on July 14 and 15, to dedicate a memorial that’s been 15 years in the making.

More than 200 members of the tribe gathered around a four-sided pyramidal-shaped monument inlaid with precisely cut slabs of red pipestone. A brass plaque on each side is inscribed with historic words of the Northern Cheyenne. The 15-foot-high, 22-ton monolith becomes 20-feet tall with the two-dimensional stainless steel Morning Star designed to appear straight on from all angles.

The dedication began at Fort Robinson in the morning as people joined together to walk the two miles to the monument, turning off of Highway

20 onto a newly built road leading up to the site. Above the monument are skyscraping cliffs called the Cathedral, where archeologists have uncovered clues that skirmishes with soldiers took place there after the escape.

“This is healing event,” said Jay Mullins, an engineer who has been working on the project for more than a decade. His remark echoed the sentiments heard over and over from speakers during the dedication.

The idea for the memorial came in 2001 after Edna Seminole, then 75, made the pilgrimage from Montana to Fort Robinson with others to visit the site where her ancestors had made a heroic, desperate escape from Army imprisonment during the freezing Great Plains winter. She, Rosie Eaglefeathers and others left in tears, heartbroken.

There was no tangible recognition of the Fort Robinson Outbreak, in which 149 escaped and 61 were killed in their efforts to reach freedom.

“There was an old wood sign with bullet holes through it, that’s all,” Seminole said. How could this be, they wondered, during the long drive home. Their thoughts then turned to “What can we do about it?”

Determined to get a proper memorial erected on the site, Seminole and Eaglefeathers began fundraising on the Northern Cheyenne reservation.

They began with \$200 from Seminole’s son Vincent Whitecrane’s employer, Western Energy. With the



Northern Cheyennes Vincent Whitecrane, left, and Gilbert Whitedirt cedar and bless the new monument commemorating the Northern Cheyenne breakout from Fort Robinson, Neb., on Jan. 9, 1879. About 200 tribal members traveled from their Eastern Montana reservation to witness and participate in events on July 14 through 16.

money they bought the best cuts of meat, and their “meat bingo” games were wildly successful. From their small apartments at the Heritage Living Center in Ashland - an assisted living facility funded solely by private donations - they brainstormed.

Then there was a breakthrough with the land. A Nebraska rancher and friend of the Cheyennes, T.R. Hughes, had always believed there needed to be a monument. He and his wife Kay’s land surrounded the site. When the land the monument sits on

today came up for sale he bought it, and donated 350 acres of it to Chief Dull Knife College in Lame Deer.

Another friend who had received a rare permit to pull stone from the famous Pipestone rock quarry in Pipestone, Minnesota - the only place on earth where geology has formed the red soft rock - determined he would help, a lot. Rick Hall, a Northern Cheyenne, mined the massive pipestone slabs for the monument, noting the specific grade and thickness required was 12 feet below ground. Machinery is

not permitted in the quarry. “Shovel, sledgehammer and buckets,” he said. Hall eventually moved to Crawford, Nebraska, a few miles down the road from the monument.

A huge development came when a Wisconsin engineer spoke with Seminole’s brother Ralph in the early 2000s. Jay Mullins threw in, and brought a contractor’s arsenal of equipment and labor every summer to the site starting in 2004. The structure began to take shape.

“Then we ran out of money,” Seminole’s son Vincent said, who by then was fully invested in the project.

David Sands runs a private land conservation organization out of Lincoln, Nebraska. “They had it three-

continued below flap ▼

fourths finished, but needed money for the professional services they couldn’t do,” he said. The road, plaques, and trimming would require \$150,000. Sands and others facilitated behind-the-scenes fundraising and discovered there were many in the Lincoln area who loved the project. In two years they had the money.

Looking over the scene Friday one couldn’t help but sense a feeling of pure joy and satisfaction. “Few Indians came here before this (to Fort Robinson),” said pipestone supplier Hall. “Now they will.”

Right: Edna Seminole, 89, was heartbroken after visiting Fort Robinson, Neb., 15 years ago. Today she proudly stands with the monument her tears led her to create.

T.R. Hughes died before he could see it completed. Today his wife Kay was humbly ever-present at the dedication. She knows the story of the escape well. “They found breastworks over there. They were up on top over there. Some made it to where Harrison is now (30 miles away) and then went north another 16 before...”

Four tipis were positioned a hundred yards or so from the monument forming the corners of a rectangle. Bison grazed in an adjacent field on Fort Robinson State Park land.



Left: During the commemoration, Northern Cheyenne spiritual leaders, including Winfield Russell, right, sat down and faced Fort Robinson, two miles in the distance, to smoke a pipe and imagine relatives running toward them on a freezing January night in 1879. “We Are Going Home” was the spiritual message of the three-day event.

DETACH, MOISTEN GLUE STRIP AND SEAL

Overcast skies turned sunny, and an eagle appeared overhead.

The monument is on private land and unaffiliated with state or government operations. However park services have endorsed and supported the project from the beginning.

“The thing is, we are all, from here,” Whitecrane said, meaning those on the reservation today are all descendants of the men, women and children in a single wooden army barracks 137 years ago, breaking out into the winter.

Rosie Eaglefeathers passed away in 2013. Edna, now 89, would have to see it through.

A dozen speakers took turns over the microphone. Clearly there were many people, subcommittees and organizations who contributed to getting the monument built. From Mullins’ perspective there’s only one reason it’s there.

“She was firm and determined, she made staunch decisions. No question, it’s Edna.”

HLC HAPPENINGS



Above: This past July, Heritage Living Center elders and staff paid their respects to Father Emmett and celebrated Mass in his honor.



Above: Mark Small and Rita Shoulderblade



Left: HLC Residents enjoying an afternoon shuffleboard with HLC staff.



Robert Leader Charge and Richard Tall Bull enjoying some fall sunshine while catching up on the latest news.

PLANNING YOUR YEAR-END GIFTS TO SOARING EAGLE

Christmas and year's end is still three months away, yet I know many people are already shopping for the holidays. Some stores already have Christmas decorations and music playing!

Donors make annual, special, and often, larger donations to their favorite charities at year-end. We hope and pray that Soaring Eagle will be one of your chosen causes to benefit with a gift as 2016 comes to a close. With that in mind, here are some thoughts for your consideration as you plan your charitable giving.

Gifts of Cash

The majority of donors give cash to

Soaring Eagle usually in the form of a check. Not much planning is needed. The gift is immediate and we put your donation to work right away caring for the elders at the Heritage Living Center. If you want your gift of cash to qualify as a charitable deduction for income tax purposes, remember that it must be dated and mailed before or on December 31.

More and more donors make charitable gifts using a credit card. It is convenient and each month's statement will have your gift recorded as a transaction. Some donors will set up an automatic monthly donation and then not have to worry about writing checks and mailing their gift. Now

might be a good time to set up regular gifts in the months ahead. If you mail a credit card donation to us, please allow a few days before December 31 for us to receive it. The transaction must be successfully charged before midnight December 31. Please keep in mind that December 31 falls on a Saturday this year. If you call in a credit card donation, please tell our staff that you wish to have your donation processed for 2016.

For tax purposes, charitable gifts of cash are deductible to reduce your taxable income up to 50% of your adjusted gross income. Large cash gifts can result in significant tax savings for donors in high income tax brackets. If your gifts are greater than the 50% limit, any excess can be carried forward and used as a charitable deduction during the next five years. Check with your financial or tax advisor when considering large gifts to maximize your tax benefits.

Giving Securities

While most donations are cash gifts, donors who own stocks may want to consider the benefits of giving securities rather than cash. The stock market has recovered from the recession and investors are holding "paper profits" due to the growth in value of their portfolios. Giving securities may provide flexibility and tax benefits. Some donors may

discover that by giving appreciated stock, they can make their charitable donations at a reduced cost or give more than they thought possible.

You can make charitable gifts of stocks, bonds, and mutual funds that are appreciated in value, enjoy income tax savings based on current values, and eliminate capital gains tax that would be due if the asset was sold.

To receive the most favorable benefit from gifts of securities, you must have owned them for at least one year and a day. Gifts of stock are deductible up to 30% of adjusted gross income. Any excess deduction can be carried forward to reduce taxes in as many as five future years.

Giving strategies vary based on whether the stock you are considering giving has appreciated, remained the same, or declined in value. Donors should consider donating stock rather than selling it for gifting purposes. If keeping a position in a particular stock is desirable, there are ways to give a security and “keep” it. In addition, some donors can balance their capital gain through gifting. To do so takes some planning.

Giving from Your Retirement Plan

Many Americans saved for retirement through qualified plans such as IRAs, 401k Plans, and other tax-deferred plans. Whether you are retired and enjoying the benefits of your savings or contemplating

retirement, doesn’t mean you have to cut back or eliminate the charitable giving you enjoyed during your working years.

U.S. tax laws favor giving through retirement plans and careful consideration should be given when donating from those plans. Donors may find it is tax-advantaged to give to charity from a retirement plan and give other assets to loved ones. If left in an estate that passes to heirs, the funds from a retirement plan could be taxed as high as 50% or more. By carefully planning where retirement plan funds go and other assets go, a donor can preserve more of his or her estate to benefit family, friends, and the charities they supported during their lifetime.

There is a special opportunity for donors to give from their IRA plans. For donors who are 70 ½ years of age, qualified charitable distributions of up to \$100,000 each year can be given to charity. Such gifts are not considered part of your taxable income, yet still count towards your required minimum distribution for each tax year. This giving method may be beneficial for donors who own IRAs whether or not they itemize deductions on their tax returns.

Effective Giving

Many donors are blessed with plentiful resources to care for themselves, family, and charities important to them. Deciding what to give, when to give, and how to give

can be a challenging task. Whether your year-end gifts are from cash, stocks, retirement plans, or other assets, it is not too early to begin planning.

We have three booklets available to help you consider ways to help Soaring Eagle and the elders at Heritage Living Center. The booklets are titled:

- *Your Guide to Effective Giving in 2016*
- *Giving Securities*
- *Giving Through Retirement Plans*

Request one, two or all three titles on the newsletter’s attached reply form and we will gladly send them to you.

The information in this newsletter is presented to Soaring Eagle’s donors and friends to provide general information and encourage charitable giving. Soaring Eagle is a public charity incorporated in the state of Montana and does not engage in rendering legal, tax, financial, or any other professional advice. Consult your own professional advisors as it pertains to your individual situation. Consult an attorney if your plans require the creation of or revision of a will or other legal document. Tax deductions vary based on numerous factors including personal financial circumstances, tax codes, and applicable federal discount rates, which can change each month. Charitable gift annuities may not be available in all states.

Soaring Eagle Annuity Rates

One-Life Annuity

Age	% Rate	Age	% Rate
65	4.7	78	6.4
66	4.8	79	6.6
67	4.8	80	6.8
68	4.9	81	7.0
69	5.0	82	7.2
70	5.1	83	7.4
71	5.3	84	7.6
72	5.4	85	7.8
73	5.5	86	8.0
74	5.7	87	8.2
75	5.8	88	8.4
76	6.0	89	8.7
77	6.2	90+	9.0

Lower two-life rates are available. Please contact us for information.

“I learned that I could receive a good return with a gift annuity. I asked Soaring Eagle to send me information illustrating the benefits of a gift annuity. It was free and there was no obligation. It was straight forward and simple to complete, so I sent \$10,000 for a 7.2% annuity. Now, I can count on my payments for the rest of my life and help care for Cheyenne elders at the Heritage Living Center. I received a tax deduction when I set up my annuity. Best of all, most of each payment is tax-free.”



I RECEIVE HIGH FIXED PAYMENTS FROM MY SOARING EAGLE GIFT ANNUITY!

To learn more about the benefits of a Soaring Eagle gift annuity, please use the coupon in this newsletter or call Mike Skaggs at 406-256-8500, Soaring Eagle, PO Box 879, Billings, MT 59103.



YOUR WILL KEEPS ON GIVING

Please use one of the following sample forms of bequest when preparing your Will:

- A. Giving a Specific Amount – “I give, devise, and bequeath to Soaring Eagle Public Charity, a corporation created under the laws of the State of Montana, located at Billings, Montana, the sum of \$_____.”
- B. Giving a Specific Property - “I give, devise, and bequeath to Soaring Eagle Public Charity, a corporation created under the laws of the State of Montana, located at Billings, Montana, (identify specific property, example: 500 shares of XYZ stock).”
- C. Giving a Percentage – “I give, devise, and bequeath to Soaring Eagle Public Charity, a corporation created under the laws of the State of Montana, located at Billings, Montana, _____% of my estate.”
- D. Giving the Residue - “All the rest, residue, and remainder of my estate, I bequeath to Soaring Eagle Public Charity, a corporation created under the laws of the State of Montana, located at Billings, Montana.”
- E. Giving a Contingent Bequest – “I give, devise, and bequeath to Soaring Eagle Public Charity, a corporation created under the laws of the State of Montana, located at Billings, Montana my bequest to (name of intended recipient) should he/she not be living or be able to accept my bequest.”

The above are sample forms only. Consult your attorney when preparing any legal document.

To learn more about giving to Soaring Eagle through your will, request our free booklet “Giving Through Your Will” by writing or calling: Soaring Eagle, PO Box 879, Billings, MT 59103 406-256-8500.

At dinner last night we had what seems to be everyone's favorite dessert, pumpkin pie with Cool Whip topping. I watched the elders enjoy the pie; no one would ever have guessed that it was sugar free.

Pumpkin pie has always been my favorite. I close my eyes and there she is – my mom in her apron – baking Thanksgiving Day pumpkin pies; no one has ever been able to duplicate her special touch. The tender care that mom gave the pumpkins in her garden helped make her pies a special treat.

The elders' faces reflect the joy that fills their hearts. They at last have a home where they are safe. Elders no longer have to face the cold winds and blowing snow to buy a few groceries. The hunger they experienced for so many years is now a memory. Today they have a warm home, food on the table, and attendants to look after their needs.

The years do pass quickly; it seems like only yesterday that I visited reservation homes on Thanksgiving Day, including the homes of some of the elders who now live at the Heritage Living



Reminisce with Father Emmett

Thanksgiving 2003...

Center. It was heart-breaking to discover that instead of a festive meal, many had little or nothing to eat. We were celebrating a national holiday recalling how the Indians provided food to the pilgrims in their time of need. How could they be suffering from serious malnutrition and starvation in this land of plenty?

As Thanksgiving approaches, recollections of the past come to mind once more. The days have turned into years and together the elders and I have grown older. Memories of the past, when elders had little hope for their futures, have now turned to gratitude and good health. The Heritage Living Center, once only a dream of the

“old chiefs,” now provides the care they need without the worry of keeping warm, especially during the subzero days of winter.

The elders no longer need to survive from day to day. They enjoy the security they dared not hope for in their “golden years.” You continue to make the difference in their lives because you care and have helped us to build the Heritage Living Center and provide for their needs each day.

I am more than grateful for your continued help and never cease asking God to bless your generosity. At times it is difficult to pay the monthly bills and embarrassing to pay only part of the amount due. I have learned to trust that your gift will arrive in time to make our monthly mortgage payment and pay outstanding bills.

I look forward to celebrating Thanksgiving Day with the Cheyenne at the Heritage Living Center. Before enjoying our turkey dinner with all the trimmings, we will gather in our little chapel to ask “Maheo,” our Creator, to bless you and your loved ones.

Your beggar friend,
Father Emmett



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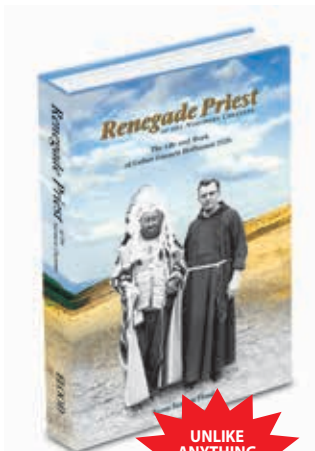
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Annuity Amount \$ _____ Minimum annuity amount \$5,000 (up to 2 names/birth dates allowed per annuity.)

This is a non-binding proposal. Upon receipt of actual payment for an annuity, a formal contract will be mailed. For more information call (406) 256-8500.

I am interested in your Year-End Giving Booklets. Please send to me the following:

____ Your Guide to Effective Giving in 2016 ____ Giving Securities ____ Giving Through Retirement Plans



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