More than half of the country suffered this summer with hot, dry temperatures, reminiscent of my childhood in Wisconsin during the Great Depression. My parents owned a dairy farm and we never went without food during the “Dirty Thirties.” But one Saturday, mother wasn’t feeling well in her last pregnancy and didn’t bake that day. So I was sent to Webber’s Store in town to buy a loaf of 8 cent bread. When I got to the counter, the clerk frowned, folded his arms and loudly told me, “Bread has gone up to nine cents and if you want bread, you can pay the extra cent mighty quick!” I didn’t have one cent so I left the store. That humbling experience taught me a valuable lesson. I realized that poor people are ashamed of their poverty, just as I had been. In the years to come, I kept in mind that each person, no matter how poor, should be treated with dignity and respect.

This past summer, the Northern Cheyenne suffered not only from poverty, but also from one wildfire after another, which devastated many thousands of acres of forested hills and valleys. They lost homes, cattle, horses and wildlife, not to mention their ceremonial sites. Bobbi, one of our employees, the mother of 5 girls and a little boy, lost her home and everything she owned. Herb Bear Chum lost his family home and his adjoining workshop.

I cringe to think of what might have happened to the Cheyenne elders without transportation, or in wheelchairs might not have had time to escape the flames. Luckily, the resident Cheyenne elders at the Center were well cared for by our staff. In another section of this issue of Signals, you will find a column written by our CEO Mike Skaggs and his Fire Log describing the evacuation of HLC in a terrifying fire emergency that none of us will soon forget. Hats off to Mike and HLC.
Administrator Jamie Olson and his efficient staff, who did a terrific job of protecting the elders during this crisis. You may wonder where I was during the fire? Well, I wasn’t on vacation! I was flat on my back in a Billings hospital fighting off pneumonia. You can imagine how I felt, not being able to get out of bed during the fire disaster, let alone rush down to Ashland to see the situation for myself. For the first time in 58 years, I had to lighten my grip on the reins and allow others to do what needed to be done. Although Mike kept me updated on the safety of the elders every two hours, I was still stunned when he called me late on the night of June 26th to tell me they were evacuating the elders from the Heritage Living Center. At that moment my heart sank because I knew how frightened the elders must be. All through the evacuation and the struggle to find safe shelter for them, I knew that God was in charge. During my prayers, I felt like He was saying to me, “Don’t worry Emmett, I’m in control. Your friends will help you.” To me that meant that our loving donors would see us through any emergency. I was then able to relax, let go and let God.

After all danger had passed and the Cheyenne came home to HLC, I must admit it was emotional for me. I had to hold in tears when I saw them being helped out of vehicles. I had such a proud feeling of relief and renewal when I noticed how joyous they were to be back. One of the elders hugged me and said, “Father, we were staying in a nice place but it’s so good to be home again.” At that moment I felt so grateful to you, our donor friends, for the help you gave us throughout the ordeal. I never forget for a moment that without you, we wouldn’t have the Center and we wouldn’t be there to comfort these Cheyenne who suffered so much during their lifetimes.

In July, the elders, neighbors and tribal friends helped me to celebrate my 86th Birthday. Coming so close after the fire, it was good to get together for a meal and to watch the dancers out on the lawn. It was hard to believe that God had allowed me this much time to do His bidding. I’m just thankful I can still get around as well as I do.

On August 31st, we all enjoyed our Tenth Anniversary Celebration at the Center. My little dog Fergie and I greeted a donor who came all the way from Denmark and other kind friends from all over the United States. What a treat to see each and every one of them. In a special event, donors were invited to join in a Cheyenne prayer cloth ceremony and to share a traditional meal prepared by the elders themselves. Afterwards, some stayed to attend the Annual Ashland Labor Day Pow Wow.

Many people came up to say hello. I get a little embarrassed and tongue tied when I meet people, but on the other hand, I love to see everyone having a good time. After so much heartache over the summer, it was a time to relax and give thanks that the Heritage Living Center escaped the fire and that our Cheyenne residents came through the experience unharmed. We are extremely proud of our first ten years in our “Miracle on the Hill,” providing assisted living care for resident Cheyenne elders and we look forward to the next ten years ahead.

I hope when you look through our Fall Newsletter with all the colorful photographs showing the range of experiences we had this summer, that you will remember us. You are always in our daily prayers.

Your beggar friend,

Father Emmett Hoffmann
Eleven Days of Fire, Evacuation, Seeking Shelter...

June 26, 2012 - 8 p.m. Jamie Olson, HLC Administrator, calls with the terrible news that 20 mph winds have blown a small blaze near Lame Deer into a large and dangerous fire. Fire fighters can’t get in front of it. “It’s hotter than a lava flow.” The fire is moving toward the Center in Ashland.

June 27, 2012 – Reserve staff cook for fire fighters and townpeople coming up to HLC for meals, showers and sofas where they can sleep. Jamie’s wife, Kim Olson, is cooking up a storm. Fire fighters exhausted. All roads are closed out of Ashland. No sleep. Ashland still surrounded by fire. 700 people stayed at the Boys and Girls Club and the Center. A sleepless night. Elder Peter John Wilson, goes out for a hike. It’s so hot, he jumps into a pond on the golf course. His antics make us laugh. Since ancient times, the Cheyenne have confronted fear, worry and terror with teasing and humor. Motes and staff welcomed us and at one point, had everything ready when we arrived. He wiped away tears. Elders are nervous in times of crisis, but he can’t. He knows they must be terrified, wondering what will happen to them if the Center burns.

June 28, 2012 - Cheyenne elder Delpha Trost from St. John’s Lutheran Ministries called to ask: “Do you need any help?” Another blessing! He’s offered a building called the “Willows” in Red Lodge, up in the foothills of the Beartooth Mountains. Cheyenne elder, Peter John Wilson, goes out for a hike. It’s so hot, he jumps into a pond on the golf course. His antics make us laugh. Since ancient times, the Cheyenne have confronted fear, worry and terror with teasing and humor. Motes and staff welcomed us and at one point, had everything ready when we arrived. He wiped away tears. Elders are nervous in times of crisis, but he can’t. He knows they must be terrified, wondering what will happen to them if the Center burns.

June 29, 2012 - Moved elders to the Willows in Red Lodge. No smoke at all. David had everything ready when we arrived. He and his staff welcomed us and at one point, he wiped away tears. Elders are nervous in yet another new place. Cheyenne elder, Peter John Wilson, goes out for a hike. It’s so hot, he jumps into a pond on the golf course. His antics make us laugh. Since ancient times, the Cheyenne have confronted fear, worry and terror with teasing and humor. Motes and staff welcomed us and at one point, had everything ready when we arrived. He wiped away tears. Elders are nervous in times of crisis, but he can’t. He knows they must be terrified, wondering what will happen to them if the Center burns.

July 1, 2012 - Drove to Red Lodge with a surprise visit to Red Lodge to see the elders at the Willows. He had lunch with them. Peter John Wilson provides more comic relief. He went up the hill for a while and was chased all the way down by a moose and her calf. He looked scared but made a funny story out of his chase. He has more golf balls, which means he took another dip in the golf course pond.

July 3, 2012 - Back in Ashland, the reserve staff decide to stay at HLC despite the danger. Another emergency! The fire line backs up and one mile away and headed toward the Center again. Dear God save the Center! The wind is blowing the fire away from us. Mike making this possible. Mike Skaggs kept a journal of amazing events at the historic Ash Creek Fire with the terrible news that 70 mph winds have blown a small blaze near Lame Deer into a large and dangerous fire. Fire fighters can’t get in front of it. “It’s hotter than a lava flow.” The fire is moving toward the Center in Ashland.

July 4, 2012 - Back in Ashland - scary news - the wind suddenly shifted and is now heading back towards Ashland, 30 miles south. Mike tells us to take our medications for us. Grandma quipped, “We have to dig the elders out of the Center. We’re evacuating them now!” Father is in the hospital in Billings with pneumonia and I had to call him late with news of the evacuation. He wants to be with the elders in this frightening crisis, but he can’t. He knows they must be terrified, wondering what will happen to them if the Center burns.

July 6, 2012 - The elders arrive back at the Heritage Living Center! Fr. Emmett and I talked to the residents home. Staff prepared a traditional Cheyenne meal. They talked. Cheyenne elder, Lorraine Robinson, is lifted to the ground in her wheelchair, she keeps saying, “I’m back to my beautiful, wonderful home!” Mike Skaggs kept a journal of amazing events at the historic Ash Creek Fire with the terrible news that 70 mph winds have blown a small blaze near Lame Deer into a large and dangerous fire. Fire fighters can’t get in front of it. “It’s hotter than a lava flow.” The fire is moving toward the Center in Ashland.

June 27 - Call from Jamie – Our worst fear – the Ash Creek Fire is definitely headed for Ashland. Jamie told me: “We have to get the elders out of the Center. We’re evacuating them now!” Father is in the hospital in Billings with pneumonia and I had to call him late with news of the evacuation. He wants to be with the elders in this frightening crisis, but he can’t. He knows they must be terrified, wondering what will happen to them if the Center burns.

June 28 - Cheyenne elder Delpha Harris, said she just stood in the shower and thanked God for the “Hot water, fluffy pillows and fluffy beds.” Smoke from the fire is choking Billings residents and is making it hard for elders to breathe. Staff doing great job! David Trost from St. John’s Lutheran Ministries called to ask: “Do you need any help?” Another blessing! He’s offered a building called the “Willows” in Red Lodge, up in the foothills of the Beartooth Mountains. Cheyenne elder, Peter John Wilson, goes out for a hike. It’s so hot, he jumps into a pond on the golf course. His antics make us laugh. Since ancient times, the Cheyenne have confronted fear, worry and terror with teasing and humor. Motes and staff welcomed us and at one point, had everything ready when we arrived. He wiped away tears. Elders are nervous in times of crisis, but he can’t. He knows they must be terrified, wondering what will happen to them if the Center burns.

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Generations came from near and far to the HLC grounds this summer to socialize and celebrate Father Emmett’s annual birthday pow wow and the 10th Anniversary of the Heritage Living Center.
Greetings From Big Sky Country

Mike Skagg
Soaring Eagle CEO

W

ildflowers will bloom again, the grass will grow green in the spring, fences will be mended, but the Cheyenne won’t see the Ponderosa and Cottonwoods grow tall again in their lifetimes. But they will always have special memories of youth; riding horseback through the wooded valleys and camping under the cottonwoods along the river.

The words of William Shakespeare remind us of another truth: “One touch of nature makes the whole world kin.” For all of us at the Heritage Living Center, that “touch of nature” was fire and yes, it made us “kin” during one of the scariest evenings the Cheyenne elders have experienced, the night they were evacuated from the Center, on July 26, 2012.

For several days it was rough going, some nights with no sleep or trying to sleep under smoky conditions in hot temperatures. Things got a whole lot better, and I breathed a sigh of relief when we reached the “Willows,” some nights with no sleep or trying to sleep under the cottonwoods along the river.

The Fire Log in this issue of 'Signals' will give you an overview of what transpired during the fire and the evacuation. But what can’t really be conveyed in the log, was the tremendous joy and happiness expressed by all the Cheyenne elders when they came home to the Heritage Living Center, the home they made possible. One of the elders said it all, “There’s nothing like your own bed!” Shakespeare was right. A touch of nature, even a disastrous one, really made us “kin.”

So long from Big Sky Country,

Mike Skagg
Soaring Eagle CEO

Your Will Keeps on Giving

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

A. (Whatever is left after other bequests have been granted) “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.”

B. “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.”

C. “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 $_____. ”

D. “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, located at 745 Indian Trail, P.O. Drawer 879 in Billings, Montana, 59103, the sum of $_____. ”

For more information on preparing your Will, contact your attorney when preparing any legal document.

September is a good time to think about year-end giving. In many parts of the country it is still warm and thoughts of winter are still a long ways off. Here in Montana, especially in the high country, we’ve had cold nights with frost and thin ice forming on lakes and ponds. It won’t be long before the holidays and a New Year are upon us.

Many thoughtful donors start making plans to support their favorite charities early in the year. Soaring Eagle relies on year-end gifts to help get us through the long winter months when our expenses are higher.

Keep in mind the following information when you’re reviewing your charitable gift plans. Thank you for including Soaring Eagle in your planning.

Our Tax Laws Encourage Charitable Gifts

The deduction allowed for charitable gifts allows donors to reduce the “cost” of giving to help others. If you make your gift by December 31 and itemize your deductions, you could enjoy tax savings.

For example: If you make a charitable gift of $10,000, or multiple gifts totaling that amount in 2012, and are in the 33% tax bracket, you can save $3,300 in taxes.

The higher your tax bracket, the more you can save on taxes by making charitable gifts.
To give stocks held in your possession requires a different transfer method. You will need a stock power for each certificate to be transferred. A stock power is a document that allows Soaring Eagle to sell the donated securities. Stock powers can be picked up at your stock broker, financial institution or office supply stores. Sign the stock powers, but do not sign the stock certificates. Mail or send via courier (FedEx, UPS, etc.) the signed stock powers and stock certificates in separate envelopes. This is important as the unsigned stock certificates are not negotiable without the stock powers. You can ensure their safety by sending them separately.

If giving non-stock types of securities such as bonds, notes, mortgages, or other financial instruments, specific advice from your financial or other professional advisor should be obtained. As with all important and planned gifts to charity, the advice of competent advisors is highly recommended.

**Non-Cash Gifts**

If you give physical items such as personal property, real estate, and other non-liquid assets, you will need a qualified appraisal for gift purposes if the item is worth more than $5,000. Having the appraisal done is the responsibility of the donor and the appraisal cost is a deductible expense. The advice of qualified advisors is highly recommended.

Non-cash gifts of property totaling $500 or greater require filing Form 8283. If less than $500, you can use Schedule A on Federal Form 1040.

**Charitable Gift Annuity**

Many Soaring Eagle donors make a charitable gift and receive a fixed income for the rest of their life through a gift annuity. The donor transfers cash or stock to Soaring Eagle in exchange for an annuity payment. Payments can be made annually, semi-annually, quarterly or monthly. A Soaring Eagle gift annuity pays a fixed rate of return based on the donor’s age.

Gift annuities provide a charitable tax deduction in the year of the gift, up to the limits allowed by federal income tax law. Excess charitable deductions can be carried forward for up to five years. Some states allow a charitable tax deduction. If the gift annuity is funded with appreciated securities, some of the capital gain income is spread over several years and a reduction in estate taxes may be possible.

Many Soaring Eagle donors have used gift annuities to augment their retirement income or provide an income for a loved one. Some donors have even deferred receiving the income until they need it during their retirement years.

See the Gift Annuity display in this newsletter for current rates, or send in the gift annuity information request form for a free, no-obligation proposal.

**Giving Through Your Will**

Year-end is a time when many donors update their estate plans. A future gift to Soaring Eagle given only at the end of life will help the Cheyenne elders in the years ahead. Please consider a bequest by giving:

- A specific amount
- Specific property such as securities, real estate and other property
- A percentage of the value of your estate
- A remainder or residual gift (what is left after other gifts to beneficiaries are made)

**Giving Through Your Retirement Plan**

Similar to a remainder gift through your will, a gift through your retirement plan can benefit our work in the future. By naming Soaring Eagle as a beneficiary to your pension plan or retirement account, you still enjoy the income from your funds throughout your lifetime. You control your retirement funds and use them as your needs change. Many people worry about running out of money during retirement and cut back on their giving. By giving through a retirement plan you can make a lasting gift to Soaring Eagle. Giving through a retirement account can be a tax-wise way to give to charity and preserve other assets for family and friends with minimal tax consequences.

**Uncertain 2012-2013 Tax Environment**

Tax cuts enacted nearly 10 years ago are due to expire and new tax increases may be coming. It is not clear yet if a 3.8% Medicare surtax will be applied to charitable life income instruments for wage earners over $250,000, so if you are above this income threshold, please talk to your tax advisor.

By planning your year-end gifts, you can have a dramatic impact on our worthwhile work of caring for Cheyenne elders at the Heritage Living Center. We would be pleased to work with you and your advisors. For more information contact Mike Skaggs, CEO, Soaring Eagle, P.O. Box 879, Billings, Montana 59103, or call us at 406-256-8500.

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 to their personal financial situations. 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 and state tax laws, which can change each year. Charitable gift annuities may not be available in all states.

Consider for a moment how you can...

- Receive a fixed income for life.
- Save money on your taxes.
- Help Cheyenne elders at the Heritage Living Center.

Soaring Eagle offers gift annuities with income rates as high as 9.0%.

To learn how a Soaring Eagle charitable gift annuity can benefit you, please request our free, no-obligation proposal.

Please return the gift annuity coupon in this newsletter or call

Mike Skaggs at 406-256-8500.

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

**Annuity Rates**

Lower two life rates are available. Please contact us for information.
Northern Cheyenne ceremonial man and HLC resident Herbert Bearchum blesses a statue of Father Emmett Fergie presented by friends during the 10th Anniversary of the Heritage Living Center.
YES, I’m interested in a Soaring Eagle Charitable Gift Annuity. Please send me more information.

Name_______________________________________________________________________
Address_____________________________________________________________________
City________________________________________   State_______   Zip_______________
Birth date(s) of annuitant _______________   E-mail_________________________________
Annuity Amount $ ____________________

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.

Minimum annuity amount $5000 (up to 2 names/birth dates allowed per annuity.)

Order Form

Renegade Priest of the Northern Cheyenne

The Life and Work of Father Emmett Hoffmann 1926–

Father Emmett’s remarkable story of success is unequaled in the history of the 20th century Catholic Church in the American West.

Order your copy of Father Emmett’s biography today!

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TOTAL $______________

Please make checks payable to: Father Emmett’s Biography. Book purchases are not tax deductible.

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Address______________________________________________________________________
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4th Edition

Soaring Eagle Charitable Gift Annuity

Minimum annuity amount $5000 (up to 2 names/birth dates allowed per annuity.)

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Name_______________________________________________________________________
Address_____________________________________________________________________
City________________________________________   State_______   Zip_______________
Birth date(s) of annuitant _______________   E-mail_________________________________
Annuity Amount $ ____________________

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