



GREETINGS FROM MIKE

Fall 2017

Happy Thanksgiving! We are truly grateful for your friendship and generous support during 2017. We feel a closeness to you and hope you have become attached to us as well.

This past year was an exciting and challenging year for us. The year started out with some record snow and cold temperatures. We didn't think winter would ever end and when it did, it rained. Did it rain! Lots of it and when you live in a semi-arid climate like we do, you don't ever want to complain about rain. Everything became green and lush.

Suddenly the rain stopped like a faucet was turned off. The earth started to dry out. No rain fell as we watched each day for an afternoon shower. No moisture fell for two months and we were cast into drought conditions. It all happened so quickly. The tall grasses matured early and the lush brush dried out. Fire conditions were the highest seen in many years.

Dry lightning strikes surrounded us and smoke filled the air. Some fires came to less than a mile away from Heritage Living Center. The elders and staff practiced evacuation of their



Elders watch and wait to receive a Prayer Cloth blessing.

home – the Miracle on the Hill. We were ready just in case we had to move out. Thankfully, fires didn't get close enough to cause us to evacuate. We are thankful for the fire crews and volunteer firefighters who kept us protected. We are thankful to you for sending your gifts during the long, hot summer.

We learned that our fire sprinklers were not up to code with the standards for the solution that fills the pipes. Our fire sprinkler repair technician told us they couldn't touch a simple \$400 repair job unless we replaced all the fluid at a cost of \$18,000. It was a new fire code regulation. We had no choice and I didn't know what to do other than turn to our friends. Thanks to you, our fire sprinklers are now safe, up to code and ready to protect the elders.

We celebrated Father Emmett's birthday in July with a Mass at his gravesite followed by a mini-

powwow. It was a wonderful day with elders, townsfolk and visitors joining the celebration. We knew we were blessed when a rain shower fell from the heavens. Many of us just stood in the rain and thanked God for the moisture. We were glad to be wet. Dancers performed, especially children learning their dances and powwow skills. A handdrum contest brought out some of the best singers in the area. The judges had a difficult time picking a winner. It was a wonderful



Pauline Eaglefeathers and Dominga Bixby enjoy viewing the solar eclipse.

day that we shared together. Inside this newsletter you will find some photos of Father Emmett's Birthday Powwow. I hope you enjoy seeing one of the fun events your gifts allow us to give to the elders.

We had a little fun on August 21 during the solar eclipse. Montana wasn't in the path of the total eclipse but we were about 90%. It was amazing to see how much light there was with just 10% of the sun shining. It was equally amazing how the temperature dropped for those few minutes when the moon hid the sun. Elders traded special sunglasses we had for them and laughed and giggled at what they saw.

We were blessed with many donor visits throughout the summer. The elders love showing our friends their home and what the donors' donations make possible. I wonder sometimes what our donors think when they drive through our part of Montana passing by homes in less than good condition, some boarded up. I trust those donors know that their gifts have made a dramatic difference in the lives of elders who live at the Center. We are thankful for each donation, whether large or modest, helping us keep the elders safe and cared for.

We are not content with the status quo of assisted-living care. We want to do more for the elderly and I'm pleased to tell you that we will soon introduce a higher level of care for the elders. In Montana, we call them "B Beds" and they are a step up from the standard assisted-living services that most homes provide. We are granted five B Beds in our home. Watch for future letters about Heritage Living

Center's B Beds. We will need your gifts to allow us to provide more care for the Cheyenne elders.

Now, fall is here. In October, we invited Cheyenne Ceremonial Man, Francis Limpy, to come to the Center for a Prayer Cloth Ceremony. One of our cooks, Alec Sandcrane, assisted



Long-time Soaring Eagle photographer, John Warner, traveled to Wyoming's Wind River Canyon to view the total eclipse. He was delighted when a fly-fishing boat floated into the scene during the brief two minutes of darkness.

him. Mr. Sandcrane is a Chief, so it is impressive to know that a Chief works with us to serve the elders of his tribe. Each person stepped forward as Alec would direct them to the front of our lobby where the door faces east in the traditional Cheyenne way to greet the Creator each morning. Mr. Limpy would brush the prayer clothes across each person as prayers were said to take away the "bad" whether it be illness, harsh feelings or evil spirits and replace with "good". Then the two men went throughout the entire building with cleansing cedar burning



Ceremonial Man, Francis Limpy and HLC cook, Chief Alec Sandcrane smudge (bless) the elders' apartments.

in a small, cast iron pan allowing the smoke to "smudge" or bless each room and each resident. It was such a meaningful time for the elders, staff and visitors. A wonderful ceremony to start the fall months and head into winter.

Winter has arrived a little early. We've experienced rain and snow with some very cold temperatures for this time of year. We had one night where the temperature dropped to zero. One thing to be thankful for is our filled propane tank. We were able to fill it late this summer when propane prices were at their lowest. Thank you for making that possible.

This year saw many disasters hit our country. Hurricanes Harvey, Irma

and Maria struck our neighbors in the south, U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico. Americans stepped up and helped those devastated by the storms. Fires in California displaced thousands of friends with their homes and businesses destroyed. Again, citizens came to their aid. There have been some horrific crimes in Las Vegas and tiny Sutherland Springs, Texas. Our country responds with aid, prayers and support. No other country on earth gives like the United States.

As we reach the end of the year, I ask you to send a donation to keep our services going for the Cheyenne elders. Father Emmett loved them and I love these good folks, too, just as you do. Inside this newsletter, you will find a yellow envelope. Please use it to share your gift with elders.

I saved a note from George who lives in Illinois. He sends regular donations to us but his note at Thanksgiving time touched my heart. He wrote:

"Dear Mike – I wish I was there to partake of your bountiful feast. Just their companionship would be most enjoyable and gratifying. I

The elders enjoy each other's company during a game of Wheel of Fortune. Volunteers Jason Su and Samantha Smith made the game for the elders. Elders win "Fun Money" that they can spend at the HLC Store to purchase hard to find items like hand lotion, lip balm and household supplies that normally require a day long trip to Billings to purchase.

would pay my own way, no freebies. My Thanksgiving dinner will consist of a cheese sandwich. Have a good one. Geo."

I thought of this kind man and the sacrifices he makes to help the elders each month. I thank God for George, you and the other donors who make all we do possible.

It is truly a Time of Thanks and Giving. Happy Thanksgiving!

With a grateful heart,


Mike Skaggs



COMING HOME: TWO LOST CHEYENNE WARRIORS RETURN TO THEIR HOMELAND



The remains of two Cheyenne warriors who were killed during the Fort Robinson Breakout of 1879 were returned to the tribe by Nebraska institutions this summer for reburial. The day was ceremonial, spiritual and emotional, and when it was over the two men were buried alongside friends and family who attempted to escape with them on that freezing winter night so long ago. They joined 24 others retrieved by the tribe in 1993 from The Smithsonian in Washington D.C.

Top Left: Tribal members shoulder small cedar boxes containing their ancestors to be buried above Busby on the reservation.



Lower Left: HLC residents enter a tipi to view and offer prayers for the relatives resting inside before the remains were led through town and up a hill for reburial.

Below: HLC resident Rachel Carroll Pethers was asked to speak and pray prior to burial on the hilltop.



Upper Right: A drum group sings honor songs as people wait to pay their respects inside the tipi.

Center: Dr. Gilbert White Dirt reflects on the day as he watches younger men enter the cedar boxes, **center right.**

Center Bottom: Though the events ahead were to be solemn and emotional, Cheyenne men enjoyed their friendships beforehand.



Right: Mike Skaggs visits with elders from HLC who rode by bus the 40 miles to be there. **Left:** Eddie White Dirt pauses.



ANNUAL FATHER EMMETT BIRTHDAY POW-WOW



Father Emmett loved powwows.
So do we!

Left: A historical photo of Father and his old friend, Bisco Spotted Wolf.

Far Left: Gourd Dancers pray as they dance.

Below (under the flap): Children dance for their grandmothers and grandfathers living at Heritage Living Center.



THANK YOU FOR OUR SAFETY

In June, we learned that our fire sprinkler system was unsafe and didn't meet new fire codes. All the anti-freeze had to be replaced with new, factory-certified solution. It was a big, unbudgeted project. The photo at right shows our maintenance crew unloading barrels of anti-freeze solution for the project. Thank you for your generous donations and letters of support during this time. You are the best friends we can have. God bless you.



DETACH, MOISTEN GLUE STRIP AND SEAL

VETERAN'S DAY: REMEMBERING AND HONORING



On Veteran's Day, HLC elder, Susie Tall White Man Cain, remembered her brother who died in service to his country during the Korean War. Susie told about her brother, Private First Class Clarence Tall White Man, who joined the Army not knowing much English. Susie recalls how her mother cried

when her son left for training. During the war, Susie's brother returned home on a leave and her mother begged him not to go back. Susie says her brother was duty bound to return to combat and he was killed two weeks later. PFC Tall White Man was posthumously awarded the Purple Heart.

We honored thirteen veteran residents and staff members on Veteran's Day. The Cheyenne are warriors and proudly serve their country. We hosted a breakfast and then gathered near the flag pole at the entrance to Heritage Living Center. Effie Beartrack blessed the veterans and new flag as it was raised high over the elders' home. Drummers and singers chanted songs during the ceremony. The flag that flew over the Center during the past year was ceremonially folded and presented to Veteran Elder, Richard Foote, who served in the Army. Residents and guests shook each veterans' hand thanking them for their service.



Veteran Richard Foote receives the US flag that flew over Heritage Living Center.

MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR YEAR-END GIFTS



As a friend of Soaring Eagle, you are among the most generous people in the world. That's right. Americans are amazingly generous at home and abroad. When people are hurting, hungry or helpless, no other country responds like the United States.

It may surprise you to know that most charitable donations come from ordinary individuals who worked hard and saved to be able to experience the joy of giving in their golden years. Most charitable gifts are made between Thanksgiving and Christmas. This article presents some ideas for your consideration to make the most of your year-end giving.

Cash – Easiest and Always Welcome

Giving cash doesn't need much explanation. It's easy and we can use your gift immediately to feed and care for the elders living at Heritage Living Center. We try to make giving by cash convenient by including a return envelope with our mail. In fact, you will find a light yellow envelope enclosed with this newsletter. Cash, checks, and credit card transactions are all acceptable forms of cash gifts.

Cash gifts must be completed before December 31 to be tax deductible for the 2017 tax year. Since December 31 falls on a Sunday

Donor CR Willie Wurm and his mother, Bernie, visit with HLC staff members, Maria Sisolak and Eva Foote.

this year, be sure to mail any gifts you want to qualify for a charitable deduction before the deadline.

Remember to save receipts and acknowledgement letters from us as a record of your gift. If you are missing any acknowledgements, please let us know and we will send a record of your donations.

Donors can deduct up to 50% of their adjusted gross income. For most individuals that is a high threshold to reach, but in case you want to be very generous to your favorite causes, the tax code allows you to carry forward excess amounts to count against your AGI for up to five years.

Giving Other Assets

Investors have seen the market reach record levels this past year. With talk in Washington D.C. about tax reform, now may be a good time to evaluate giving appreciated stock rather than cash to Soaring Eagle. When you give appreciated stock, capital gains can be avoided and you receive a charitable deduction for the full fair market value of the asset given. Donors can deduct gifts of capital gain assets up to 30% of their adjusted gross income. Similar to cash donations, you can carry forward any excess deductions to count against your AGI for five years.

If you are considering a gift of securities, please contact us

for simple instructions on how to transfer stock to us. It is easy to do and your financial advisor can complete your gift with our transfer information. Be sure to plan ahead to make sure your gift is completed by December 31. The gift date is the date your transferred stock arrives in our account, not the date you give the transfer instructions.

Donors may own other property, both real and personal, that can make wonderful gifts. Gifts of property can be complex and time consuming, but when completed the right way, they are valuable gifts. Please know that special IRS tax rules apply and that a special independent appraisal for gift purposes must be completed for donations valued at greater than \$5,000.

Retirement Plan Giving

You can give from your retirement plan to meet your charitable goals now and in the future. If you have an IRA, you can give directly from your account if you have reached age 70½. IRS rules allow you to directly transfer funds from your IRA to charities. The transfer is a qualified charitable distribution and passes from your IRA without any tax on the required minimum distribution. You can give up to \$100,000 each year using the QCD. Many Soaring Eagle donors have begun to use their IRA accounts as a source for their gifts.

If you have an IRA, 401(k) or 403(b) account, you can make plans to give some or all of your account balance at a future date, usually at

death, by naming Soaring Eagle as a beneficiary of your account. Your financial advisor will have the form to fill out to make such a designation. You don't need to tell us that you have named us as a beneficiary, but if you extend the courtesy of letting us know, we can properly thank you for your future gift.

What if I Can't Give It All Away?

Many charitably-minded individuals want to make a difference in the world but can't completely let go of the financial security an asset provides to them. For some, it is a cash flow matter. They simply need a stream of income to live on.

A Soaring Eagle Charitable Gift Annuity could be a solution to providing a fixed income stream for as long as you live and making a significant and meaningful gift today to help the Cheyenne elders. Your rate is set by your age at the time of your gift and never changes. We offer rates as high as 9%. We also have rates that cover two lives. Those rates are usually lower than the single life rates.

Gift annuities can be funded with cash or securities. Most of the annuity income is tax free for a period of years. For annuities funded with securities, some relief from capital gains tax is available.

Check the gift annuity table on the next page to see the rate that we can offer you. A gift annuity just might be the ideal way to make a meaningful donation today and secure a lifetime income to help with future expenses.

Sometimes, a donor must wait until the end of life to share their gifts with loved ones and charities they want to benefit one last time. Life is uncertain and many friends need to rely on what they have saved. When the time comes to share your belongings, a well-crafted will can direct your bequests exactly where you want them to go.

Soaring Eagle is blessed to have donors who give to us in creative ways from their financial resources. Deciding what to give, when to give, and how to give can be a challenging task. We have three booklets available to help you consider ways to help the elders at Heritage Living Center in your year-end giving and future giving plans:

Giving Securities

Giving Through Gift Annuities

Giving Through Your Will

Request one, two or all three titles 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 \$5,000 for an annuity. Now, I can count on my payments for the rest of my life and help care for elders at 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:

- 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 \$_____."
- 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)."
- 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."
- 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."
- 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.

Twenty years ago, Father Emmett organized Soaring Eagle to raise funds for an assisted living home for the Cheyenne elders when he wrote these words in his first Thanksgiving letter to friends and donors.

The first hard frost always reminds me of my rural Wisconsin childhood. I close my eyes and I'm seven years old, walking out to the barn past ice-glazed box elder trees, each branch shimmering in the dazzling early morning sun. After chores, dad and I return to the house for a breakfast of fried eggs and potatoes, bacon and fresh baked bread. Oh Lord, I can still taste that bread!

These pleasant memories of hard work with a wonderful father have often helped me live through some very difficult days on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation. For more than forty years now I have visited Indian homes on Thanksgiving Day, and many times I have thought of Thanksgiving back on the farm as I knelt to pray with Cheyenne families huddled around makeshift woodstoves in drafty log cabins.

Today, elders and needy families on the reservation continue to suffer from the cold. Rough, dirt



Reminisce with Father Emmett

Thanksgiving 1997...

roads lead to poorly made low income houses, badly insulated and often in need of major repair. The elderly must live with insufficient heat because their meager incomes do not provide enough money for electric bills and provide food.

Often, they come to my door, and I can feel their pain and embarrassment. Their electric bills are overdue, and the electricity has been shut off. Old people literally live in bed with blankets piled around them until their suffering becomes unbearable.

Yesterday, I saw an old Cheyenne walking to town, his legs bowed from many years on a horse. He limped along with his cane, and I could tell that he was nearly blind.

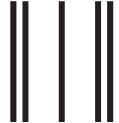
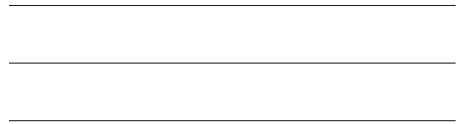
The needs of the elderly continue to haunt me until we can build an Assisted Living Center, a place where they can keep warm and eat nourishing food on a regular basis.

Your kind gifts have already made possible the purchase of land overlooking the Tongue River. It is the beginning of a dream come true! I have faith that somehow we will be able to begin construction in the summer of 1998. I know your gifts will make it possible.

When you celebrate Thanksgiving this year I ask you to remember the Cheyenne elderly as they struggle to survive during the cold winter months. I want them to look forward to having a home at this time next year, free from the basic worries of trying to keep their hands and feet warm and free from the worry of living without enough food.

May God bless you with many happy memories of bountiful childhood Thanksgivings and may He also bless you with a generous heart to help the Northern Cheyenne elders.

*Your beggar friend,
Father Emmett Hoffmann*



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SOARING EAGLE GIFT INFORMATION REQUEST

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Email *(Promise we will not share)* _____

YES, I'm interested in a Soaring Eagle Charitable Gift Annuity. Please send me more information.

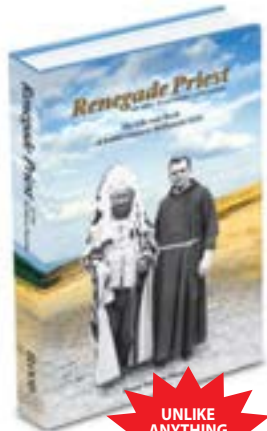
Birth date(s) of annuitant(s) _____

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.

Please send to me the following:

___ Giving Securities ___ Giving Through Gift Annuities ___ Giving Through Your Will



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