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ORDINARY LIFE



Stroke Recovery: With a Touch of Courage and an iPod Touch

by Sean Connolly

Forty years after their wedding, Glenn Hilton (Saskatoon) says he loves his wife Judy more than he ever has. "I have a hard time being away from her," he admits. "I've seen how precious our life together is, and I don't want to miss anything."

He's talking about a woman who, four years ago, suddenly became unable to speak. In February, 2007, Judy, a professional clown, had a stroke during a performance at a Saskatoon church. She had spent the previous year taking long hikes in the mountains with Glenn, three- and four-day treks, carrying her supplies on her back. "She was probably in the best physical shape of her life," Glenn says.

The stroke crippled her right side, disabling the right hand of a right-handed woman, a fiddler, a painter and a baker, not to mention a fast-

moving mother of four and grandmother of eight. It also damaged that precious process that turns thoughts into spoken words, and left her with a condition known as aphasia.

Her story is one of hardship, but it's no somber tale. It's an adventurous and heroic story, like the accounts of the Antarctic explorer Ernest Shackleton and the climber Edmund Hillary, men who pushed against the limits of human endurance. "Judy is the best fighter I know," Glenn says. "She will not give up. She will not slow down. She keeps going." Her story reveals a personality pressed but not crushed, a middle-aged stroke victim who is learning to use one of today's hippest gadgets, the iPod touch, in her quest to communicate.

Her recovery began in earnest two weeks after the stroke. "She had physiotherapy, speech therapy, occupational therapy, recreation therapy and every kind of activity you can imagine," Glenn remembers. Soon she began taking steps and pronouncing syllables, but there was a problem with her speech.

"Judy knew what she wanted to say," Glenn explains, "but she couldn't form the right words. Sounds came out, but they were not under-

standable. It sounded like a foreign language, like speaking in tongues."

Her rigorous routine continues to this day: hours of physical exercise and physical therapy, private speech coaching and a speech group for aphasia patients, and plenty of practice—practice talking, practice using her right hand, practice

painting. Improvement does not come quickly, and yet, in the last year or so, signs of her progress are unmistakable. "Something's happening," Glenn says.

Speaking for Herself

Bit by bit, Judy has learned to pronounce a few single words and even some short phrases: "yes" and "no," "my husband" (she sometimes struggles with "Glenn"), "how are you," "thank you" and, one of her favorite phrases, "it is good." Today, she can answer the phone and navigate through a basic conversation—but sometimes punctuated with bursts of nonsensical syllables:

"Is Glenn there?"

"No. He's at the store . . . downtown."

"Will he be back soon?"

"Yes . . . What's your name?"

But there are still some moments when Judy can manage only garbled speech. When that happens, the hardest part is figuring out what she wants to talk about. If Glenn can figure out the subject she wants to discuss, he can ask her simple questions, and the conversation can move forward.

Enter the iPod touch. Before this device was invented, electronic machines that could augment speech were only available for thousands of dollars. In late 2009, Judy's speech therapist showed her a touchscreen iPod and a new software application, Proloquo2Go that could help her when she couldn't get the right words out. Combined cost: a few hundred dollars. Glenn could see Judy's excitement, so he bought her an iPod for her birthday in 2009. (She has to compete for it with her grandkids at family gatherings.)

The Proloquo2Go software allows Judy to create a bank of words and phrases—the names of her children and grandchildren, her favorite



Before her stroke, Judy worked as a professional clown. In this shot from about ten years ago, she is joined by three of her grandchildren, Brin (left), Simon and Ruby (the baby).

places, likes and dislikes, etc.—all stored on the iPod. She can also choose a picture to go with each word or phrase. Then, when she has trouble saying a word, she flicks the iPod's touch screen with her finger, scrolling through the collection of pictures until she finds the one she wants. It's easier for her to process pictures than written words. So, when she taps on a picture that means "lake house," the

"It's tempting to put words in her mouth," Glenn says. "But I try not to take over the conversation."

iPod pronounces "lake house" for her in a computerized voice.

Now, when Judy gets stuck in conversation, she has a backup. She can use the iPod to pinpoint what she wants to say and the conversation can go on, with less frustration. Because the iPod is a small device, she can carry it to women's group, community meetings and even noisy public places. She has a small pair of speakers that attach to the iPod to amplify the computer voice.

Cathy Rice says that the iPod has combined with Judy's improving speaking ability to ease her participation in women's group discussions. "She makes such an effort to communicate with us. At first it was really quite sad, her not being able to communicate. But that sadness is not there now. Her communication has become much more natural, and you can see the joy she has from participating."

Judy brings up conversation topics, and when she

doesn't understand what's being said she interrupts with a question. This determination to understand and be understood is very important, notes Judy's friend of 30 years, Iris Macalese. "Judy used to let misunderstandings ride, to just go with the flow of the conversation even when she had been misunderstood. Now, when I ask her a question, 'Do you mean such and such?,' she'll say 'no!' She's more determined to get her meaning across."

Glenn also has to work hard to create the space Judy needs to speak for herself. "It's tempting to put words in her mouth," he says. "But I try not to take over the conversation."

Sometimes her words still fail, and yet among friends—with Glenn and the brothers and sisters she has known for



image courtesy of Proloquo2Go

Judy's iPod touch is valuable as a communication aid—especially in situations where she knows what she wants to say, but can't manage to speak the right words. The iPod speaks for her.

It contains a special software application called Proloquo2Go (pictured above). The software stores a bank of pictures. Below each picture is a phrase. If Judy wants to say "I want," she uses her finger to scroll through the bank of pictures until she finds the picture associated with "I want." (Judy, like many aphasia patients, has difficulty with reading comprehension, so the pictures help her to locate particular phrases.) Once she finds the right picture, she taps on it with her finger. Then the program speaks the phrase for her, using a computerized voice. Voila! Her listeners can understand her meaning.

Judy can customize the software by entering and storing names and phrases she frequently likes to use. Her favorite phrases are always there on the iPod when she needs them. She has a special set of speakers that clip to her belt to amplify the computerized voice in noisy public settings.



Ray Hickey

decades—Judy can speak in ways that go beyond words. For years before the stroke, Judy and Iris prayed every time they got into a car together. “Judy does that still,” Iris says. “She’ll put her hand on me, pray this prayer that I can’t understand, and then say Amen.”

Iris and Judy sometimes sit together drinking tea for long stretches, holding hands and saying nothing at all. “I’ve had to work harder at maintaining the same kind of friendship we had,” Iris says. “And Judy is working at it, too, because it’s different. She wants to know what’s happening in my life, why I am feeling down, what is wrong if I’ve been to a doctor. We’re still light-hearted together, joking back and forth. We’ve always been like that.”

The Blessings of Work

Judy’s days begin with exercise—up to two and a half hours, six days a week. She does 45 minutes on a stationary bike, then walking, balancing and strengthening exercises, and all of this before breakfast, with her physical therapy appointments coming later in the day.

She’s faithful to the routine, and the payoffs are coming. First, she left her wheelchair behind and began venturing into public with the aid of a walker. She soon switched to a cane and today she uses only a walking stick. More recently she has aimed at improving her balance so she can handle stairs. For the first time since the stroke, she began doing laundry on her own, a feat that involves ten or more trips up and down stairs.

She’s always busy. When she isn’t exercising or attending appointments, she does things with her left hand. She has relearned painting as a lefty, and can now produce detailed watercolors. She paints flowers, animals and landscapes, and even though her left hand is not as finely tuned as her

Perhaps their strongest witness comes from simply being together.

right hand was, she makes up for it by expressing herself with “greater artistry,” as Glenn says. (Her watercolors are “worth framing and hanging on the wall,” notes Cathy Rice.) She spends time turning many of her paintings and her photographs into

Since her stroke, Judy has learned how to use her left hand to create her watercolors. Here are a few of them.



greeting cards.

Thanks to her newly recovered balance and dexterity, the smell of her butter tarts is once again blessing the Hilton home. She's a volunteer baker, producing two dozen cookies or muffins for her church every couple of weeks.

She can answer the phone and take a message, and she's happy staying home alone. If there's nothing else to do, she passes the time doing math problems and practicing her reading and pronunciation, using the iPod touch.

Unveiled Faces

The road from 2007 has not been without its setbacks, and perhaps the worst were the ones that hard work couldn't help. Eight months after Judy's stroke, Glenn found out he had colon cancer. Judy, a former nurse, had to watch him endure chemo treatments and radiation, with a PIC line in his arm and an infusion pump pinned to his shirt. She couldn't help, or even offer any comforting words. In those days, her face revealed a broken heart. "She had a drawn look. You could see the concern lines and the worry," Iris says.

But Judy's face soon showed her relief. Treatments and surgery killed the cancer, and Glenn has been cancer-free since June, 2008.

For now, Judy and Glenn are in a celebrating mood. On December 4 they threw a 40th anniversary party for their family, friends and the Saskatoon branch, featuring traditional Ukrainian fare for Judy, pierogi and cabbage rolls, an Irish blessing for Glenn, delivered by their son Curtis, and a slideshow created by their son Paul. Glenn gave a short speech thanking his family and honoring the community in Saskatoon, which the Hiltons have been part of for 33 years. The brothers and sisters in the



Glenn and Judy Hilton

branch have served the Hiltons faithfully and often since the stroke.

The Hiltons have been written up in the newspaper and asked to talk about their marriage to a stroke association and to a Marriage Encounter group. But perhaps their strongest witness comes from simply being together. Judy is an avid scrapbooker. She and Glenn were shopping for supplies at a hobby store recently, pausing over various items and deciding whether to put them in their cart. Later the store owner stopped Glenn. "You know, the last time you guys were in here," she said, "after you left, my husband and I talked about you. We said, 'Do you see how they love each other, how they care for each other?'"

On a morning close to their 40th anniversary, Glenn and Judy were

exercising together, working hard, side by side. Glenn leaned over and looked Judy in the eye. "You're pretty happy aren't you?," he asked.

Her shining face held her reply. No iPod required. ■

A short interview with Judy Hilton

V&B: Glenn has told us a lot about you, but is there anything you want to say about him?

Judy: He is really great. He is good.

V&B: Is there anything you want to say to the whole community?

Judy: I love you. He is working things out.

V&B: When you say "He," do you mean God?

Judy: Yes. And community.

Everyday Allendale



Greg Walters

Allendale boys jump rope with help from Karen Rice (Saskatoon, right).

by Sean Connolly, with reporting by Elizabeth Grams

Editor's Note: This issue of Vine & Branches is dedicated to ordinary life: bathroom-scrubbing, cell phones, exercise regimens, men's and women's groups, recovering from strokes, fast-growing families and household living. It's dedicated to Jesus, always present but sometimes discovered in humble glory amid straw and farm animals.

Many think of community life in the Allendale neighborhood of Shreveport as just the opposite of ordinary. It can certainly call forth heroism. Yet life in Allendale is also full of recognizable and mundane features. Most of the brothers and sisters have full-time jobs. They teach, manage property, work in sales and raise young children.

They take neighbors shopping, fix bikes, give rides, play chess and host Lord's Day meals.

Sixteen brothers and sisters currently live in Allendale. They are: Nathan and Genevieve Barrett and their children Paul and Marie Elise, Laura Brummer, Josh Caneff, Gerry and Patti Deakin, Thomas Duddy, Claire Holovaty, Kathleen Mehaffey, Colleen Murray, Joan Pingel, Ben Reinhardt and Ron and Ruthanne Seitz. (Cathy Grill and Jeanette Zimmer, who also appear in this article, lived in Allendale until recently. Cathy now lives in South Bend. Jeanette lives in Evansville.)

Here are some snapshots from their ordinary life.

visit Sheila, Terry and other friends. "I see Terry in the hallway and she gives me these huge smiles," Laura says. Terry was super-excited about the picture of us that we gave her as a Christmas card."



Miss Carrie Jordan, an elderly woman, lives around the corner from our Yale Avenue houses. Jeanette, Cathy and Laura spotted her one afternoon hauling some furniture out of the house next door to her own. (Her tenant had just died.) The three women offered to help. "The Lord sent you here!" Miss Carrie said in reply.

Sometime after that, Miss Carrie had a bad car accident and some community sisters went to visit her in the hospital. She can't get around as well anymore, but she survived the accident and still loves to tell how God saved her life. She told Laura, "Every night, I mean EVERY NIGHT, child, I ask the Lord, I say, 'Lord, bless all my peoples around the corner, because you know I love them. Protect them, Lord!'"



Mickey, a homeless man with a long gray beard and scars running the length of his arms, frequently used to walk past the houses on Yale. He would curse loudly or talk in-

"When we walk through the nursing home doors, people call out to us, 'Pray for me,' or 'What's the word of the Lord for me?'" says Laura Brummer. She's talking about Harmony House, a dirty and crowded nursing home a few blocks from our houses on Yale Avenue.

"It can be hard to go in and not have solutions for people—you just want to get them out of there," she says.

Last fall, unsure what to do or where to begin helping, Laura began talking with Nathan Barrett. (He leads the community's work in Allendale.)

"Why don't you ask the residents what they want?," he suggested.

Laura continues, "I asked Sheila, a woman suffering from depression and panic attacks, what she wanted, thinking that she'd say something impossible. She said, 'I want fulfillment and friends.'"

"I want friends, too!," her roommate, Terry, chimed in.

Laura says, "I thought, aha, that is something possible!"

Laura and others have been visiting Harmony House about once a week, sometimes bringing neighborhood children along with them. They

coherently, swing a golf club, kick the air and hurl rocks into the cemetery across the street. He slept in backyards, worked odd jobs for beer money and often spent time in jail for petty offenses. He usually carried a stick or a knife.

Once, Nathan met him on the street and started talking to him about God. "Who are you to offer me God," Mickey said, before walking away. Another time, he pointed his knife at Nathan, saying, "I don't want your Jesus, leave me alone!"

Nathan and the other brothers and sisters began praying for Mickey whenever he walked down Yale. More than a year passed, then Mickey came up to Nathan and said, "I am looking for the door to a new life—so I came to talk to you."

Nathan led him in a prayer for repentance, and they began a conversation about the Holy Spirit and prayer. The conversation would go dormant, then begin again, often just after Mickey got out of jail. Nathan began to sense something new growing inside of Mickey.

"His demeanor changed. He would smile, speak normally and end by telling me, 'I am praying for you and your family,'" Nathan says. "He was calm and clear."

Once Mickey came over and pointed to Harvard Street, the next street over. "Out there, there's drugs and prostitutes on the corner and people throwing bricks through each other's windows," he said. "But no one comes over here to do that, no one does that on your corner, because God is protecting you."

Another time, he got a gash on his face during a fight, and came to see Nathan. "My friends wouldn't help me," he said, "but I knew you would." Nathan treated his wounds, with advice from Dr. Cliff Vaughan (Shreveport).

Last year, Nathan visited Mickey in jail. "When I get out I want to get a place to live, go to church, work and spend more time with you guys," he said. "He had never seemed so alive," Nathan remembers. "It was like a deliverance had happened."

A month later and just three days after getting out of jail, Mickey died on the street from heat exhaustion.

Nathan and Gerry went to the wake and met Mickey's family.

"I think he found salvation with us," Nathan says.



"She would get angry at the other girls and start trying to whale on them," explains Joan Pingel. She's talking about Brittany, a 10-year-old who, two summers ago, frequently got sent home from camp. "I'd have to restrain her. Then I would walk her home and she'd kick and fight the whole time," Joan says.

Last summer at camp, Brittany and the other campers learned about controlling their feelings and behavior. Camp staffers used the metaphor of a car. Feelings, thoughts and behavior are the car's wheels, but the driver is the only one who has the keys that make the wheels turn.

During a group activity, one of the girls began bugging Brittany. Brittany stood up. "I'm not letting you take my keys," she said. "I'm going to take a time-out."

She walked over to the front porch swing at the Deakins' house and sat there for a spell.

"That was such a victory," Joan says. "If you knew this girl . . ."



Laura Brummer

Top: The orange brick house stands adjacent to the houses built by the community on Yale Avenue in Allendale. Community members living in Allendale purchased the house in 2009 with hopes that it could be used for educational and children's activities. Action volunteers renovated the house this summer. Above: Allendale girls work in the front room. From left, Raquel, Jabbareanna, Paige, Trinity and Tanyra.



A shotgun-style orange brick house stands adjacent to the row of houses the community owns on Yale Avenue. It rests on a level area just below a steep bank that carries rainwater down from the street toward the front door. It was a high-turnover rental house until the Allendale brothers and sisters bought it for \$17,000 in late 2009. They used money from a common savings account, and Gerry Deakin estimates they've spent another \$5,000 fixing it up. The house is a down payment in bricks and mortar for a larger vision to improve the educational situation in Allendale.

The house came without a working bathroom or kitchen, without insulation, adequate plumbing or wiring, but with the unmistakable smell of cockroaches. Last summer, Ben Reinhardt and several crews of Action volunteers removed everything but the studs, then added insulation and drywall, new pipes, electrical wires and a furnace. The kitchen and bathroom now work, and the house has a large, open space in the front. Late in the summer, middle-school girls and camp staffers spent their afternoons in the house cooking, playing chess and writing in their journals.

"The house is perfect for us,"

Dorothy Anderson, Gladys Moore and Patti Deakin enjoy a walk. Patti leads a regular walking group with neighborhood women.



Laura Brummer

Gerry says. "It's safe and will work very well for neighborhood kids."

Renovation work continued into the fall. "Parents came by to ask when it would be ready because they wanted their kids to come over," adds Gerry.

Brittany was the most frequent inquirer.



"Gerry and I have been going over the *Spirit and Purpose*," says Patti Deakin.

"There's a section on outreach where it says we want to bring dignity to humankind. I really have felt that is what the Lord is doing here. The Lord is giving us opportunities to bring our neighbors dignity. For many, their only companion is the TV. They don't talk to a human being all day. When we visit them, we're showing them their dignity."



Miss Caddie was living a reclusive life on Yale Avenue. Her house was dark and full of clutter. She came out of it only occasionally, to walk up to the corner store for cigarettes. She constantly complained about people breaking in at night, though no one ever saw any evidence.

Patti made it her mission to talk to Miss Caddie. "I started calling her and saying 'I'm going to the store. Is there anything you need?'" After several weeks of asking, Miss Caddie requested some eggs, then some butter. After a few more weeks, she started coming to the store with Patti, picking out her own items, leaning heavily on the grocery cart. Patti would help her unload when they got home.

"Maybe people are breaking into your house because they think it's



Laura Brummer



Laura Brummer

Top: Ruthanne Seitz has hosted a Bible study in her house for the last four years. From left, Ruthanne Seitz, Judy Biddle, Val Chatman, Patti Deakin, Renee Williams, Dorothy Lewis and Ruth Christor. Above: Community members helped make Miss Caddie's front porch a more inviting place to be.

empty," Patti said to Miss Caddie one time. "Let's make your house look more lived-in, so people won't break in."

Her words got Miss Caddie's attention. Miss Caddie asked Laura to put a motion sensor light on her house, and Patti helped her get more bulbs for the rest of her porch lights. Patti also suggested moving the pile of bricks that was blocking the front door. "If we move these bricks, your neighbors will be able to see if someone is breaking in," she said. Gerry took Miss Caddie's metal front porch chairs and painted them bright red with some paint Miss Caddie paid for. "Now we find her sitting on her porch," Patti says.

Miss Caddie has started calling Patti and one of her other neighbors on the phone during the day just to talk. One of the neighbors began to get annoyed by the calls. "It's your fault," she told Patti. "You made her social!" The same neighbor used to

refuse to talk to Caddie, but one time Nathan and Genevieve talked to her about the importance of reconciling with Caddie. Though she still sometimes gets annoyed, this neighbor has started bringing food to Caddie and checking in on her from time to time.

Miss Caddie has even started coming to the neighborhood barbecues the Action teams host each summer and meeting her neighbors. "She is hungrier for fellowship than she was before," Patti says.



When our Allendale brothers and sisters first met Miss Gladys, she was mourning the loss of her husband and rarely left her house. Patti asked her if she'd like to help out with the barbecues, and Miss Gladys started coming and staying after to help clean. "She would come with her apron on and her umbrella in hand in case it rained," Laura says. Gladys became a regular member of the women's walking group that Patti leads a few times each week. "One of the people we can count on," Laura adds.

Last summer, Miss Gladys took a bus to Chicago so she could attend her grandson's wedding. She called Patti several times from Illinois asking about the other ladies in the walking group. Patti and Gerry picked

her up from the bus station when she came back and took her out to dinner. "We've developed a pretty good friendship," Patti says.

One of Gladys's neighbors, Lillian, has Alzheimer's disease. Like Gladys, she also lived alone. Her only son used to live with her, but he died in 2009. Gladys and Jeanette were out walking one day when Gladys mentioned that she had heard Lillian mouthing off at Jeanette. Gladys was surprised that Jeanette kept on helping her. "The Lord wants us to treat one another well," Jeanette explained to Gladys.

After their conversation, Gladys started checking up on Lillian more frequently. One day she found Lillian collapsed on the floor. She called the paramedics and then she called Patti. She stayed with Lillian until the paramedics arrived.

Miss Lillian is in a nursing home now. With no living relatives, she has become a ward of the state. Laura was surprised when someone at the nursing home called her to ask her a question about Lillian's medical treatment. "You're on the family list as someone to contact, and so we contacted you," the person said. Laura and Colleen visit Lillian regularly, and sometimes Miss Gladys goes with them.



Nathan Barrett (right) with KaTrayvon and Shemario (on bikes), Marco and Day-day.



Greg Walters



Greg Walters

Ed Allison

This summer the brothers and sisters in Allendale needed a way to pick up building supplies from Lowe's each week, so the Action team would have enough for their home-repair projects. Patti suggested they ask Ed Allison, a retired auto-worker who owns a truck and lives a few blocks away. Ed agreed, so once a week he and Sam Mertz (Servant Branch) made the trip together. "We had some great conversations walking around the store and driving in the car," Sam remembers.

Ed has stopped by from time to time to ask about the progress on the orange brick house. He was excited to see neighborhood children, especially boys, playing nearby. He told Sam that he had seen too many neighborhood boys make bad decisions, get hooked on drugs and go to jail. The new house represents hope for something better.

Ed has lived in Allendale since 1968. "I thank God for bringing a change about in my life," he says. "I wasn't always a positive asset to the neighborhood, but I try to be now.

"Somebody needs to go where it's not so good, and try to make it better. I know God sent the People of Praise into this neighborhood to try to improve it. Sometimes it doesn't seem like you're accomplishing much, but little by little and day by day you're accomplishing a lot." ■

Yes + Yes (+ Yes) = Eight Crossing Borders with the Shreves Family

By Elizabeth Grams

“**Y**es” is a simple word. Whispered aloud, it fills a void with the breath of life.



January, 2005

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

A blue and white taxi dodges people, cattle and vehicles as it passes tin-roof shacks, glassy skyscrapers, minarets and dusty open-air markets. In the back, Hilary Shreves (Vancouver/Portland) and her mother Connie Hackenbruck (Corvallis) hold two Ethiopian children on their laps: Eli, a smiley two-year-old boy, and Sophia, a bouncy baby girl. Hilary’s husband Eric sits in front, next to the cab driver, alternating between calm conversation and nervous glances out the front window. The road ahead is crowded with pedestrians and zooming vans. A third child, nine-year-old Naomi, sits quietly and pensively between Hilary and Connie. Eric and Hilary are already planning to adopt the younger two, but then Naomi leans forward and whispers something to the cab driver in her native Amharic. The driver translates: “She says she loves you and wants to be in your family.”



After doctors told Eric and Hilary they could not conceive their own children, they came to Ethiopia from northern Virginia looking to adopt. Their plan was two children, but then they met Naomi. She clung so sweetly to them and to the younger two children in the orphanage, just as though she were another member of the family. She proudly showed off a cross she wore around her neck, indicating that she, too, was a Christian.

In saying yes to bringing Naomi into their family, the Shreveses were overlooking her age and theirs (about

30), as well as the chaos that would follow as a result of growing from zero to three children in a matter of months.

Their second yes came just one day after the cab ride, their last in Ethiopia.

They accepted an invitation from the driver of the blue and white cab to come to his home for a traditional Ethiopian

coffee. They knew it was ill-advised for them to drink local beverages but they decided to do it anyway. Both got sick. Back in the US, both began a regimen of antibiotics, and then, . . . Hilary became . . . pregnant!

Hilary’s doctor gave the stunned couple his theory: the antibiotics had reacted with another of Hilary’s medications, and to make a long story short, had made pregnancy possible. And so, a few months after the cab ride, the Shreveses had two new children at home, the adoption paperwork for their third child in process, and Hilary was expecting their fourth child.

There was one more surprising yes just over the horizon.



The adoption agency told the Shreveses that Naomi had an older sister. Her name was Yodit (pronounced yoh-DEET) and she also lived in Addis Ababa. Eric and Hilary hated the thought of separating Naomi from any living family members, and figured they’d adopt Yodit, too, if they could. Sensing the further



The Shreveses. Back, from left: Naomi, Hilary, Eric, Yodit. Front, from left: Charlotte, Sophia, Isaac, Eli.

disruption this might cause, Hilary’s parents, Terry and Connie, volunteered to be the adopting couple.

But there was a problem. Yodit was 19, too old for adoption. Eric and Hilary hired an immigration attorney to see if there was another way to bring her to the US, but they couldn’t find a way.

In April, 2006, Eric returned to Addis Ababa to pick up Naomi. Together, they paid a visit to Naomi’s old home so Naomi could say goodbye to Yodit. Naomi led Eric down a dingy alley and into a one-room hut with no electricity. They found Yodit leaning on a crutch. Her right foot was badly twisted, a condition called club foot. She limped outside to make a small fire, roasting coffee and popcorn for her visitors.

Eric sat on a couch that doubled as a bed, with just a few feet separating his knees and the opposite wall. He noticed the tenderness Naomi and Yodit shared, and thought about the cripples he had seen in the streets of Addis Ababa, dragging themselves through the dirt. Without a wheelchair or access to transportation, Yodit had few job prospects and no way

“She says she loves you and wants to be in your family.”

to support herself.

Though Eric had figured he would probably be arranging trans-continental visits between the two sisters, meeting Yodit put a new fire in him. “That visit made our connection to Yodit much more personal,” he said later. “It was like part of our family was back in Ethiopia—and we wanted to do whatever we could to get her here.”



As soon as Eric and Naomi returned to northern Virginia, the family began packing up all their possessions for a move to Portland, Oregon, to share in the life and work of the Vancouver-Portland branch. Isaac Shreves was born a few months after the move.

As Eric and Hilary settled into life on the other end of the country, they began looking for ways to provide for Yodit from afar. The orphanage director in Addis Ababa told them that Yodit’s twisted foot was becoming increasingly painful and debilitating. Hilary, a nurse practitioner herself, helped arrange for Yodit to get medical care in Addis Ababa,

but the local orthopedic doctors reported that they couldn’t do anything more.

In August, 2007, Hilary sat next to the exam table in the office of her children’s pediatrician, Dr. Margaret McCloskey. As the doctor shone a light into Sophia’s ears and monitored her heartbeat, Hilary waited for the right moment to nonchalantly pull out some foot X-rays from her satchel.

When the exam was finished, Hilary brought out the images and told Dr. McCloskey about Yodit. She asked the doctor if she could recommend any orthopedic surgeons who might be interested in helping.

“I know the surgeon,” Dr. McCloskey replied immediately. “His name is Hans Moller. Let me think about this and keep the X-rays with me.”

A few evenings later, the phone



A crowd of branch members and other friends gathers at the airport to welcome Yodit to the United States.

rang and Hilary heard the jubilant voice of Dr. McCloskey. Dr. Moller had signed on to help, and St. Vincent Medical Center had offered to provide the surgery free of charge. Eric and Hilary just had to find a way to get Yodit into the country and raise money for any remaining medical expenses.

They needed more help, and it was on the way. Shandy Welch, Dr. Moller’s wife and assistant, volunteered her time and spent long hours with Hilary working on the documentation required for a medical visa application. Twice the Shreveses and Shandy applied for a medical visa, but were denied both times.

Meanwhile, a journalist caught wind of the story and wrote about it in the local newspaper. Hundreds of readers sent in donations and a few Amharic speakers even volunteered to translate for Yodit whenever she came. Vancouver-Portland branch



Far left: In the airport, Yodit rushes to embrace her sister, Naomi.

Left: From left, Hilary Shreves, Sophia, Yodit and Isaac walk through the airport.

Below: Carmen Fraga (Vancouver/Portland) gives Yodit a piano lesson.
Bottom: Yodit with some Vancouver/Portland sisters. From left: Teresa Milano, Sarah Caneff, Yodit, Natalie Clairmont, Hannah Caneff.



members and many others prayed for Yodit's admittance to the US. Ron Wyden, one of Oregon's senators, offered his advice, recommending a legal avenue called humanitarian parole that he thought might help get Yodit into the country.



It took three years of forms, letters and waiting, but finally in June, 2010, the Shreves family gathered at the Portland airport, hoping to see a sweet-faced 25-year-old Ethiopian woman emerge from the immigrations area. Eric, Hilary, Naomi, Eli, Sophia, Isaac and—yes, one more Shreves, baby Charlotte, were all there.

Eric paced. Hilary chatted with the small crowd of Vancouver/Portland branch families and Shandy. Naomi tried to distract herself by talking sports with the older kids. The other children kept busy coloring welcome banners.

Yodit had gained admittance to the US on the condition that she arrive within 30

days of the issuance of her humanitarian parole license. No one was sure that she would make it, since she spoke only Amharic and her trip required stopovers in several countries.

Passenger after passenger emerged from the immigrations hallway, but there was no sign

of Yodit. At last, after hours of waiting, Yodit appeared, hobbling down the hallway as fast as she could. Naomi reached her first, in tears, and when Yodit let Naomi go, she embraced Hilary and covered baby Charlotte with kisses. Soon all the children were in her arms.

A few days later, attendants wheeled Yodit into an operating room, as she clasped one of her only possessions, an Ethiopian prayer book. The goal of the surgery was to loosen tendons in the front of her leg and near her heel so that her foot could flatten into a more normal position. It had been angled upward, the result of an earlier surgery that had overcorrected her clubfoot.

After the successful surgery, Dr. Moller walked out to tell the Shreveses that Yodit was the only patient he'd ever had who awoke from anesthesia with a big, bright smile.

Yodit's humanitarian parole license meant she could stay in the country after the surgery to undergo the physical therapy needed to continue the restoration of her foot. As her life became more and more intertwined with the life of the Shreves family, it soon filled up with more activities. She took English classes at a nearby community college. She followed Hilary around during the day to learn how to plan a menu and shop for groceries. Eric, an ex-Marine, showed her how to clean a house with military enthusiasm.

Eric and Hilary live within walking distance of several other branch households, so community brothers and sisters frequently stopped in to visit. The young single women of the branch began coming to dinner with the Shreveses weekly and became Yodit's friends.





Yodit near her home in Ethiopia.

While her English is coming along slowly, Yodit has little trouble expressing her affection with the children. “Everybody loves Yodit,” says branch leader Charlie Fraga.

The Shreveses are looking for ways to keep Yodit with them in the United States, exploring the possibility that she might extend her stay in the US through a student visa, or a work visa, but they don’t yet know what the future holds. Yodit’s club foot is mostly healed—she doesn’t require a crutch anymore, but she still has a slight limp and may need surgery again in the future.



On a weeknight in December, 2010, the Shreveses are gathered around the table: Eric, Hilary, Naomi, Eli, Sophia, Isaac, Charlotte and Yodit. Eric asks the children about what they learned at school that day, and then everyone discusses the life of Thomas Aquinas—the whole family has been reading about him. Eric describes a business negotiation he’s working on. (He provides real estate services on behalf of the federal government.) Hilary, who still works part-time as a nurse practitioner, describes a cancer treatment she performed earlier in the day. Peppered in with the sharings, Eric and Hilary offer occasional corrections of the



Yodit (pink shirt) plays basketball with Sophia and Eli Shreves, while Isaac looks on.

children’s table manners. In halting English, Yodit shares about a passage she read from the Bible.

After dinner, Yodit and Eli are on cleanup with Eric. Eli requests some music, so they take out Eric’s iPod and dishwashing turns into a dance party. Once they’re done and the young children have gotten ready for bed, everybody regroups in the living room for some reading time. Yodit practices reading a children’s book to develop her English skills. Then

Yodit’s daily routine ends with prayer. “I am, every day, loved,” she says.

everyone stops for evening prayer. They read a psalm aloud, lift petitions to God, and thank the Lord for the blessings of the day.

When the younger children are in bed, Naomi and Yodit both have some studying to do. Hilary is off to women’s group while Eric sits at the table with the students, paying some bills.

Yodit’s daily routine ends with prayer.

“My life is good,” she says. “Hilary and Eric are my good sister, my brother, my mom, my dad. At my home I am one—no children, no sister, no brother, no happy. My good People of Praise loves me. I am, every day, loved.” ■

Photos by Abby Olson and Hilary Shreves

An after-dinner card game at the Shreves’ home. From left: Naomi, Eli, Eric, Sophia, Yodit.



TRIBUTES



Jean Chambers

“We experienced Christ in Jean, and that changed us, and we are very glad for that.” With these words, Pat Pingel opened the wake for our covenanted sister Jean Chambers, who died on August 22, 2010. In his online tribute, Tom Noe passes along comments from South Bend branch members who knew Jean and loved her:

“Jean was totally dedicated, whether to her teaching or to her women’s group or to the community or to her husband Stan and the boys.”

Stan says, “As a teacher, Jean was never happy just putting in hours. She threw herself into it, and she worked until nine or ten at night. I had a heck of a time talking her into retiring. Finally we decided that we would both have to retire at the same time.”

Maureen McDonough recalled, “Jean taught the children math, reading and so on, but she

also bore their burdens right along with them: hard times, difficult home situations, physical problems. She entered their lives and worked to solve their problems and make life better for them. From her, the students learned a great life lesson—courage. Jean didn’t make a big deal out of things. She simply walked and lived courage.”

“She loved the community,” Stan says. “Being in the community gave her friendships with so many godly women. They influenced her and she influenced them. They prayed together, they partied together.”



Terry Schneider

Terry Schneider, our covenanted brother in Servant Branch since 1987, died suddenly at the age of 71 on February 11, 2010. “He had a wonderful life,” notes Jack Weiland in his online tribute to Terry. His life included “meeting and marrying Sue, raising their own four natural children and being foster parents to two Vietnamese teenage refugees, and then fostering many newborns.” He served in the Army Reserves and was a permanent deacon in the Catholic Church.

“Both Terry and Sue were known for their willingness to pray with people, especially those with physical ailments. In January of 2007, while he and Sue were in Florida sitting around the

pool, a young man came by and Terry noticed he seemed to be in pain. He told them he had a severe back injury and hadn’t been able to work for over a year. Terry and Sue took him into their condo and prayed over him. After 30 minutes he said the pain was gone, and it was the first time he felt the Lord near him in a long time. He must have told the whole condo complex, because the next day Terry and Sue had 11 people knocking on their door to be prayed over, and many reported feeling at peace and receiving healing in some way as well!”



Areta Thomas

Areta Thomas wanted to belong to the People of Praise because it was Christ-centered and she wanted to live in Christ. She made the covenant in September, 2008, at the age of 82!

At that time, she was living with her son-in-law and daughter, Marty and Fran Willard (also members of Servant Branch), and their six children. Since the Willards’ home was the place where many of the neighborhood children gathered after school, Areta became “Yiayia”—the Greek name for Grandma—to all of them. In fact, as Renee Long shares with us in her online tribute, Areta’s hospitality and openness lit up the room whenever anyone knocked on her door: “Oh, hi, come in! I’m so glad to see you!”

“The year after Areta made the covenant brought its challenges, with a stroke that took much of her sight and mobility. She moved to a nursing home in 2009 and saw this as an opportunity to be able to spend more time with her son and his family, who lived nearby. She reached out to others at the nursing home and brought comfort to the woman she shared a room with.

“She was a woman of prayer. She prayed for many community brothers and sisters and she prayed for those who did not know the Lord, because she had a great concern for humanity, for all the people of the world. Her service was intercession, and as her health declined she interceded even more.”

Read more about these brothers and sisters at

peopleofpraise.org/news/branches/tributes



Katy McShane

Katy McShane (South Bend) died October 9, 2010, at age 51 from pancreatic cancer, just a few months after the cancer was diagnosed. No one could possibly list all the projects and activities she was involved in, or the hundreds of people she knew, or the hundreds of lives she touched.

Katy Moo joined the People of Praise in March, 1976, when she was 17. In those days, high-school students weren't invited to come underway, but Katy was absolutely determined to join the community, so we made an exception for her. She and Kevin were married on June 21, 1986, and their union was blessed with four children: James, Kevin, Sarah and Mary Kate. Katy taught math and science at Trinity School for many years.

Kevin honored his wife at the branch wake: "Katy was self-sacrificing in everything she did. This was true in so many areas that it resulted in our perennial conversation about her being over-committed. Many times Katy would convince me that, with all the needs out there, it really made sense for her to continue doing almost everything that she was doing. It was hard to argue with her on this point, since it was true that she had all the gifts that she needed to do the task—or, rather, the tasks."

Lucy Henneberger

Carol Ehemann (Colorado Springs) writes that her friend Lucy Henneberger (Biloxi) had "a fun-loving spirit with a mischievous sparkle in her eyes." Lucy passed away peacefully on May 21, 2010, in Jackson, Mississippi, at the age of 77. Besides George, her husband of 54 years, she is survived by five children and ten grandchildren.

From Carol's online tribute to Lucy:

"Lucy laughed easily, and her smile would light up a room. Community teachings on loving and serving brothers and sisters emphasized showing sincere interest in others and hospitality toward all. If Lucy didn't

write those talks, then she should have! From the moment you arrived at her house, she was interested in focusing on you. She asked questions, then probed your answers with more very genuine questions about family, children and on and on.

"Her generosity was noted by Liz Palermo (Biloxi), when their third child Jeremy was baptized. Lucy gave him the most elaborate knitted white sweater-coat. Liz's heart was so touched because the gift seemed like a 'grandma gift.' Liz explained, 'We were stationed in Biloxi with the Air Force, living far away from our extended families. By being a part of a community, our children had some

sweet grandmas, like Lucy.'

"Another sister recalls that Lucy's generosity extended to the point that if one admired something of hers, Lucy would automatically say, 'I want you to have this.'"



Leonard Kadera

"Leonard was born in Iowa in 1913," writes John Ostby in his online tribute. "His early years growing up on a farm prepared him well for life, and also seemed to prepare him for a perfectly natural transition into Christian community life in Servant Branch years later. After being introduced by friends, he and Edith were married on June 4, 1940, and they enjoyed 68 years of life together, with 13 children, 60 grandchildren and 46 great-grandchildren. (Edith died peacefully in August, 2008.)"

"After retiring in the early 1980s, Leonard and Edith moved from St. Paul to a rural area near Prescott, Wisconsin. This placed them in the East Area of Servant Branch, and their retirement farm was the site of numerous area activities.

"They were the epitome of being provident and resourceful. They built their retirement house to be very energy-efficient, and they had a large garden planted every summer. Brothers and sisters in the East Area were always invited to stop out and pick some vegetables or fruit that was ripe. If that didn't take care of the sometimes enormous Kadera surplus, Leonard would load up the extra produce in boxes and bring it to an area gathering or a men's group meeting. He would have a huge smile and that familiar twinkle in his eye as folks took home what he called the 'gifts from God's country' that he brought to share." ■



School's Out . . . Let's Clean!

by Joe Gleason

Just after the three o'clock bell rings, most students are heading out of their Trinity School at River Ridge classrooms, but Servant Branch Action students are heading back in. Armed with vacuum cleaners, spray bottles and rolling wastebaskets, they've been cleaning Trinity's classrooms every day for the last five years. And in the process they've earned about \$94,000 for city-building efforts.

In 2005, River Ridge's building managers were looking for a more affordable classroom cleaning service. Pat Murphy, Servant Branch Action coordinator, proposed that Action members take on this work together.

"We're always looking for ways to raise funds," says Pat. "We've put on variety shows, sold Christmas trees, even operated a bakery for a day. Those projects were a lot of work! The idea of consistent work every day had a lot of appeal over the big productions, and it's been a lot more economically doable."

About 20 River Ridge students are in Action this year. Their daily to-do list includes wiping down the tables and whiteboards, vacuuming the carpets and upholstered chairs, emptying the trash, and tidying up the school's 33 classrooms and 4 main hallways. They also move

lunch tables and roll up the floor mats so that the gym can be used for sports practices.

The early days were longer ones. "We'd still be cleaning at 5:30," Pat recalls. But after five years of experience, the students have streamlined the process so that six of them can finish the job in less than an hour. Tom Kruse, a retired postal employee and Action member since 2003, drives in every day to supervise and help out.

The work involves sacrifice. Senior Kaitlyn Raway chose to give up playing soccer and singing in the Chamber Choir to be more available to clean after school. "It's much easier to clean when more people are helping," says Kaitlyn. "I want to have time to help."

Sophomore Chris Kadera is a new Action member who has gone on four Action trips in the past year, but he has cleaned with Action since he was in eighth grade. "At the time, it sure beat study hall," Chris admits, "and I was in good company. I really liked the other students, like Sam Mertz and Dan Schwab. I cleaned with Dan a lot."

Two years later, Sam and Dan have both graduated, but Chris con-

tinues to vacuum carpets and wipe down tables almost every day with his other friends in Action. "It's a tangible way of affirming the commitment I've made to Action and the People of Praise," he says. "I can serve the Lord like this for 30 to 45 minutes every day. Then I see the fruit of our service in the school being clean, and I also get to travel to actual city-building locations and see the fruit of what I'm working for day after day. We've even been able to

"They work hard even when they don't feel like it, and they've made humble service their rallying cry."

help smaller Action teams send people on Action trips by plane."

Dan Lindeken is the building manager at River Ridge, and he says the results speak for themselves. "I tell Pat every year, 'This is wonderful! I can't thank them enough. I hope they keep doing it.'"

"It's very humble, very heroic work they're doing," says Mike Zusi (South Bend), the overall Action coordinator. "They work hard even when they don't feel like it, and they've made humble service their rallying cry." ■

Kaitlyn Raway



Marty Mertz



Jonathan Willard



Elena Radtke



Jonathan Frank



photos by Tom Kruse



Dominica is a Caribbean island north of Grenada. Above, a panorama of the capital, Roseau.

Ron Isidore: God's Man in Dominica

by Sean Connolly

A promise made to Joel Kibler (Servant Branch) can send you off in some interesting directions. So says Ron Isidore, a member of Parliament on the Caribbean island of Dominica (pop. 70,000).

Twenty-three years ago, a promise to Joel carried Ron from his island birthplace to South Bend for two years of college and household living. The same promise took him home again 13 years later and set him on his course in politics. Today Ron is inserting his booming voice into a quiet but important fight—to stem the growing influence of powers like China, Venezuela and, by extension, Iran in his island nation and the Caribbean region.

Joel did not have international politics on his mind when he first ran into Ron in the early 1980s. Back then, Joel was traveling throughout the Caribbean as part of an overall mission the community had to identify young leaders and to support Catholic charismatic renewal. In 1985, Joel and Mike Zusi (South Bend) gave a retreat on Dominica which Ron attended. Ron met more community members on a trip to Grenada, and in 1987 Joel invited him to move to South Bend to attend Holy Cross College and live in household with Paul and Peggy Go.

Ron stayed in the US for 13 years, finishing up math and psychology degrees at Iona College in New York, then teaching at Catholic high schools in New York and New Jersey. He might have stayed longer, but . . .

"I made a commitment to Joel: As many years as I spent in the US, I

would spend just as many years back home, making a contribution to the people and the country," Ron says. "Part of the reason I entered politics was the covenant I made with Joel."

This Joel-launched journey has taken Ron from life in a busy Indiana household with four adults and seven children to delivering fiery speeches on the streets of the capital, Roseau, and his adventure may only be beginning.



Peggy Go remembers the day Ron first arrived in South Bend. It was August, 1987, one of the coldest Augusts on record, with temperatures falling into the 40s at night. "He was so cold," she says. "I remember telling him that by March he would think this was warm weather. He kind of rolled his eyes." Ron jumped into life at the Go household, quickly befriending their seven children and enjoying lively political discussions with his roommate Roy Somerville (South Bend). "Ron has an amazing capacity for friendship," Paul says.

"Living in the Go household was a great experience for me," Ron remembers. "I learned what it means to serve, what it means to love people the way they want to be loved."

For pocket money, he worked with Pat Pingel (South Bend) on the grounds crew at Greenlawn. (Pat and Ron had met in Grenada a few years earlier.) The two also labored side by side in Campus Fellowship, the branch's outreach to local college students. Pat remembers how Ron turned his gift for friendship to

the fellowship's advantage, bringing many of his new friends to meetings and joining in as they prayed with students to be baptized in the Spirit. "My prayer life grew from the experience of living in community," Ron says. (Ron also played the bongos at Campus Fellowship meetings.)

After moving to New York to finish college, Ron made an effort to keep in touch with the Go household and others in the South Bend branch. When Paul and Peggy's daughter Beth died, Ron came back for the funeral. He stayed a week, an act of kindness that cemented his position as a member of the Go family. In 2007, Paul and Peggy attended his wedding in Dominica (to Marva), and their son David gave a toast at the wedding.



In Dominica, Ron worked in human resources and briefly managed the country's national soccer team. In 2009 he decided to run for a seat in the Dominican Parliament. Since returning to the island, he had witnessed the rise of the ruling Dominican Labor Party (DLP) and its efforts to strengthen Dominica's ties to China and Venezuela. In recent years, China has built a soccer stadium for Dominica, rehabilitated a hospital and begun work on a major west coast road. The DLP welcomed Venezuela's socialist leader Hugo Chavez with open arms in 2006, and Dominica became the first Caribbean nation after Cuba to join a Venezuelan-led regional alliance called ALBA (an



Ron Isidore speaks at a street protest against Dominica's ruling party.

explicit alternative to US influence in the region.) Venezuela has written off Dominica's debt and has built an oil storage facility on the island.

All this spelled trouble in Ron's eyes. "One of the issues I ran for Parliament on is the need to manage the agreements we have with foreign governments," he says. "Dominica's people know what we're getting, but we don't know what we have to give up in return." Dominica's prime minister is allowed by law to ratify agreements privately with foreign countries, but Ron argued during his campaign that treaties should be debated publicly in the Parliament. He's also worried that Venezuela's friendly relationship with Iran will link his country to the dangerous Iranian regime.

Ron ultimately lost the election, but he made it into Parliament by an alternate route—as a senator, appointed to a five-year term. (Dominica's Parliament has two types of members, popularly elected representatives, and senators appointed by party leaders.)

He has witnessed some interesting turns during his first year in office. Dominica registered the largest increase in corruption in the world in 2010, according to a survey by Transparency International. News headlines in Dominica have been dominated by a story about a businessman who spoke out about his fears that the government was misusing aid money from Europe and the UN. In response, the minister of national security recommended a boycott of his business, raising concerns that dissent will meet with reprisals from the government. In recent months, the prime minister has been accused of

violating his oath of office by secretly holding dual citizenship in both France and Dominica, and the Chinese government has offered Dominica a \$10 million loan to finance a new presidential palace.

Ron has joined his party in two walk-outs from Parliament, and in demonstrations in the streets of Roseau. He has been making fiery speeches like this one, delivered by microphone during a recent street protest:

"Anytime you have an administration bent on the division of Dominicans, we are in trouble! Anytime you have an administration who is doing well and the . . . farmers, the guys who pick up the garbage, are not doing well, we are in trouble! We have to organize this country under the rule of law!"

Ron knows he has a big fight in front of him—his party controls just three of 21 of the elected seats in Parliament—but he also takes the long view. He hopes to run for an elected seat in a few years and to increase his leadership role within his own party. He has seen how quickly political winds can shift, and he prays that the Lord will continue to inspire his actions.

In October, 2010, Ron traveled to South Bend for the wedding of Paul and Peggy's daughter Monica. He came to a branch meeting and thanked the community for reaching out to him so many years before.

"Sometimes we look for God to do big things, but often big things don't happen all at once," he says. "My time at Paul and Peggy's was over 20 years ago, but the community has had a permanent impact on an individual who is seeking to affect the life of a nation." ■

LifeNotes

- **Pete and Sarah Hammer** (Clarence, NY) want everyone to rejoice with them for the birth of their son **William Benedict** on August 6.
- **Jesse and Amy Barrett** (South Bend) are announcing happy tidings of the birth of **Juliet Jeanne** on September 16.
- **John and Claire Kurdelak** (South Bend) have some wonderful news to share—the arrival of **Eva Marie**, born November 29.
- Congratulations to **Colin LaVergne and Tina Matthews** (both Servant Branch), who were married on July 10 at Church of the Incarnation.
- Congratulations to **Peter Timler and Sheila Payne** (both South Bend), who were married November 20 at Holy Cross Church.
- Congratulations to **Martin Martinez and Ann Carey** (both Vancouver/Portland), who were married on November 20 at Holy Redeemer Church in Portland.
- **Abby Olson** graduated from the University of Portland in May with a B.A. in English.
- Congratulations to **James McShane**, who graduated from Xavier University in June with a B.S. in mathematics.
- Congratulations to **Eury Gordon** (Vancouver/Portland), who received her B.B.A. degree from Warner Pacific College in December.
- Congratulations to **Jim Cahill** (Servant Branch). On September 30 *The Catholic Spirit*, the newspaper of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, honored him as a Leading with Faith winner for 2010. Jim is founder and president of Marketing Roundtables.
- Best wishes to **Fran Dashner** (South Bend), who retired on August 25 after more than 25 years of working for the community in a wide

variety of jobs, including keeping the boilers running at Greenlawn. Thanks for everything, Fran!

■ **Martin Couch** (South Bend) completed Command and General Staff College for the Army in July. It took 20 years off and on, and he says, "I'm still learning."

■ In September, **Jeri Bartek** (Burnsville, MN) received the Sr. Jeanne Therese Condon Award from Total LifeCare Centers for her 10 years of service as executive director of the Southside LifeCare Center and Pregnancy Choices LifeCare Center.

■ Two community members have become citizens of the United States, having come to Appleton (by way of Canada) from Burundi. **Egide Nimubona** became a citizen on August 19, and his wife, **Revocate Niyizonkiza**, on December 17.

Since our last issue, we've received word of the deaths of four covenanted members of the People of Praise. Tribute articles will appear in a future issue and will be permanently available on the People of Praise web site. For now, in this time of loss, the whole community joins in praying for their families, friends and those who were close to them.

Leonard Beskar (Servant Branch), October 4, 2010.

Betty Cerrentano (Rockford), October 16, 2010.

Dick Dudek (Buffalo), January 6, 2011.

Abbie Teeter (South Bend), January 11, 2011.

From the Executive Office:

Buffalo:

Congratulations to John Gattie, Greg Miller and M'Lou Adornetto, who made the covenant of the People of Praise on October 10, 2010.

Tom Shriver has been appointed to a second six-year term as principal branch coordinator, effective November 9, 2010.

Dave Grzybowski has been appointed

to a second three-year term as an area coordinator, effective December 18, 2010.

Colorado Springs:

Keith and Joey Koski were released from the covenant of the People of Praise on December 3, 2010.

Mobile:

Walter Drey was released from the covenant of the People of Praise on December 3, 2010.

Northern Virginia:

Congratulations to Nadia Fraga, Tony Fraga, Mary Beth Harris and Matt Harris who made the covenant of the People of Praise on October 17, 2010.

Rockford:

Congratulations to Eric Bomkamp, Nancy Brandon, Aaron Drog and Amy Drog, who made the covenant of the People of Praise on October 30, 2010.

Servant Branch:

Dan Gleason has been appointed to a three-year term as an area coordinator, effective January 26, 2011.

Ed Varevice has been appointed to a

second three-year term as an area coordinator, effective January 26, 2011.

Dick Stauble has been appointed to a one-year term as a nonvoting coordinator for purposes of training, effective January 26, 2011.

South Bend:

Congratulations to John Behrens, Mary Behrens, Isaac Bolduc, Laura Brummer, Naomi Caneff, Beth Couch, Martin Couch, Jaci Lamont, Mary Seale, Anne Swan, Mary Timler, John Xenakis, Eric Yost and Jeanette Zimmel, who made the covenant of the People of Praise on October 10, 2010.

Bill Flynn has been granted tenure as a coordinator, effective January 10, 2011, and appointed to a third three-year term as an area coordinator, effective January 17, 2011.

Pat Pingel has been appointed to a second three-year term as an area coordinator, effective January 17, 2011.

Vancouver/Portland:

Congratulations to Mike Stapp, who made the covenant of the People of Praise on October 10, 2010.

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Photo on p. 17: provided by flickr.com, "Dominica seen from the ship (9)" by gailf548. under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non-commercial License.

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“I have given you as a covenant to the people” (Is. 42:6).



Fourteen people made the covenant of the People of Praise in South Bend on October 10. Back row, from left, Isaac Bolduc, Mary Timler, John Behrens, Mary Behrens, Mary Seale. Middle row: Martin Couch, Beth Couch, Jeanette Zimmel, Anne Swan, Jaci Lamont. Front row: Eric Yost, Laura Brummer, Naomi Caneff, John Xenakis.