

Communio

That All May Be One

Newsletter of the
Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis Region
Secular Franciscan Order
Winter 2009

A New Vision

JPIC replaces apostolic commissions

By Judy Haupt, SFO
BSSF Region minister

The background:

The apostolic commissions — Family, Work, Peace & Justice, and Ecology — were established to emphasize and support Articles 14–19 of our Rule.

Unfortunately, over time the structure of commission teams overshadowed the spirituality; each article (14-19) stood on its own without the underpinning of the entirety of the Rule. For some fraternities, they became a burden rather than an aid.

Apostolic works are certainly a vital aspect of life for SFO members. Thus, at the NAFRA annual meeting in October 2006, the Regional ministers and the National Executive Council (NEC) passed a motion to establish an ad hoc committee to re-vision the apostolic commissions. The task was not simply to create a new structure but rather to reintegrate Articles 14-19 into our lived expression of the Rule.

Through prayer and study, the ad hoc committee discerned that a justice, peace, and integrity of creation (JPIC) model, would, at this time, best serve the SFO in fostering greater understanding and living of the Gospel. All voting members at the NAFRA Chapter accepted the proposal in October 2007. JPIC encompasses family, work, ecology, peace and justice.



The recommendation:

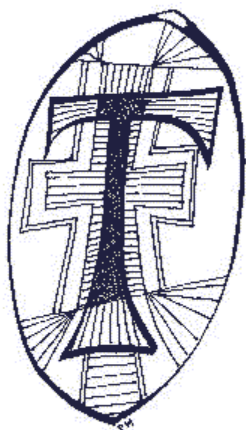
The apostolic commissions' structure will cease in their current form.

In their place will be a Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) team (up to four persons) with a keen awareness of Articles 14-19 of the SFO Rule and of the social issues before the USCCB (U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops).

NEC expects regional fraternities:

- to collaborate with the national JPIC team and to disseminate information to the local fraternities;

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Minister's message

Eight hundred years ago a humble man gave a roadmap to follow the gospel of his lord, Jesus Christ.

We are blessed and challenged in our calling to follow this road. Let us begin this New Year with prayerful reflection on how we can follow God's will in what we are called to do for him.

The roads then were rough with dust and mud and the journey was slow. Now we have super highways to whisk us at rapid speed (e-mail, Internet). But do we get lost in all the hustle and miss the turn?

Slow down.

Give the Holy Spirit a chance to lead us. Reflect on where we are and what we can do to live our Franciscan lives as fully as we can. Step back and look at who we are and how to *be* as God intended us to be.

Secular Franciscans from around the world met in Hungary in November to share their Franciscan identity and seek to find the vehicles to move us on the road that St. Francis defined so many years ago.

CIOFS held many discussions to zero in on what direction the Order should take, on what the Order should focus on for the next six years. The group reports covered a lot of areas, and it took a lot of negotiating and leadership skills to synthesize everything to the top five priorities (which the Chapter voted on):

1. Formation,
2. Communications,
3. Franciscan youth,
4. Presence in the world,
5. Emerging national fraternities.

We have scheduled three workshops (see agenda and registration, pages 16–17) this year with focus of formation, improved communications, and working with youth, as well as answering your questions.

Let us begin.

Peace and Joy,
Judy

Editor's Journal



In *The Song of the Bird*, Fr. Anthony de Mello, S.J., tells the story of "The Five Monks."

The "Lama of the South" contacts "the great Lama of the North" and asks him to send "a wise and holy monk to initiate the novices in the spiritual life." Everyone is astonished when the great Lama sends five monks instead of just one, but he says, "We will be lucky if one of the five finally gets to the Lama."

Which, in fact, is what happens.

One by one, as they travel down the road, the monks abandon their quest: one agrees to take the place of a village priest who has just died; another decides to influence the people for good by becoming king when the current king dies (the monk also gets to marry the princess); the third stays behind to show compassion on the local level; the fourth opts out of the quest to become a savior by reconverting the people to the faith they've abandoned.

The fifth monk finally reaches the monastery.

Fr. de Mello writes: "Years ago I went on a quest for God. Time and again I dropped out along the way. Always for the best of reasons: to reform the liturgy, to change Church structures,

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to update the study of scripture and to make theology relevant. It is easier, alas, to drown myself in religious work, any work, than to keep steadfastly on that quest.”

How are we doing on our Secular Franciscan quest, which is our way to God?

Do we ask ourselves, “What is Franciscan about *that?*” as Fr. Steve Gross suggested at the NAFRA chapter, when we’re offered an opportunity to get involved with a perfectly worthwhile ministry, but one that will leave us less time to deepen and broaden our Franciscan lives?

“Francis said his cloister was the world; that’s where we are,” Teresa Baker said in her talk at the NAFRA chapter. “Our action in the world should not be dependent on the needs of others. If our life changes, the people around us will change. We become holy in the world. We don’t have to look different. We have to make a difference.”

What Teresa said about our actions not being dependent on the needs of others startled me, at first. Of course we want to reach out to help the hungry, the homeless, anyone else who needs help.

After I thought about it, I understood her to mean that we respond, not because of what *they need* but because of who *we are*.

Who are we? Secular Franciscans, whose Rule calls us to be people of prayer and contemplation; people who spend time in meditative reading of the gospels; people who engage in regular, ongoing formation to live SFO life more deeply; who reach out as members of a fraternity, a Region, and an Order.

In this Communio, you’ll find opportunities for fraternity, regional, and national outreach: the novena for suffering people (page 12), which we as a Region will pray twice this year as we did the novena prayer for Darfur. There’s the JPIC committee (page 1).

And the H2O project (page 15).

“Please consider making the 2009 H2O Project a fraternity apostolate,” Jennye Taylor Johnson, SFO, our apostolic commissions coordinator, wrote in an e-mail. “It would be absolutely **wonderful** if all the fraternities in the BSSF Region could join this project and ‘make a difference,’ not only by supporting those less fortunate but by also supporting the work of our Franciscan Youth/Young Adults.”

What about inviting your parish to pray the novena and to participate in the H2O project along with us? If we want to make our presence known in our parishes, these would be excellent ways to do that.

Pace e bene
Joanita

Available on NAFRA Web site: www.nafra-sfo.org

- 2008 CIOFS Meeting/Chapter of Elections, Hungary
 - Reflections on the Chapter by Bob and Mary Stronach
 - Belonging to the SFO by Emanuela de Nunzio, SFO, past minister general
 - Profession in the SFO: Gift and Commitment by Br. Felice Cangelosi, OFM Cap.
- 2008 NAFRA meeting — Scarritt-Bennett Center, Nashville, Tennessee
 - Articles by Bob Stronach on events of interest within the SFO:
 - Message from Most Rev. David R. Choby, bishop of Nashville [Word] [PDF]
 - Ongoing formation from Teresa Baker [Word] [PDF]
 - State of the Order [Word] [PDF]
 - Participation of Anglican and Ecumenical Franciscans in NAFRA meeting [Word] [PDF]
 - New Phase in Development of YouFra [Word] [PDF]
 - Photo gallery and news roundup
 - Full text of talk by NAFRA Peace Award recipient Marie Dennis, SFO [PDF] [Word]
 - Ongoing formation presentation by incoming NAFRA Formation Chair Bob Fitzsimmons, SFO [PowerPoint — 5Mb] [PDF handout]

JPIC, from page 1

- to consider a JPIC person or team focus.

The transition:

Please review TAU-USA articles to understand JPIC:

- winter 2007 — “From the Apostolic Commission Model to the Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Model,” by Pat Brandwein-Ball, SFO, national councilor and JPIC Committee chair, page 11; and “Apostolic Commissions Farewell,” by William Wicks, SFO, national historian, page 12;
- spring 2008 — “Justice, Peace, and the Integrity of Creation (JPIC) Formation,” by Pat Brandwein-Ball, page 23;
- summer 2008 — JPIC column, by Pat Brandwein-Ball, page 15;
- fall 2008 — JPIC column, by Pat Brandwein-Ball, page 15;
- winter 2008 — JPIC column — “Theological Reflection: A Process for On Going Formation,” by Pat Brandwein-Ball.

If you don't have those issues, you can get them by going to www.nafra-sfo.org and clicking on “TAU-USA National Newsletter.”

We will not move too quickly into JPIC structure. That implies trading one system for another, remaining dysfunctional and unsure of our Franciscan culture. We must take the time to study and pray about our identity, direction, and the Secular Franciscan vision.

Formation requires prayer, patience, lively discussion, and openness to the Holy Spirit's guidance.

The plan for local fraternities:

- Continue apostolic works in which you are currently engaged.
- Continue as you are today with current appointees and join as a combined team.
- Ensure that all members have read the past articles on JPIC in the TAU-USA.
- Pray for guidance from the Holy Spirit.
- Appoint a JPIC coordinator to disseminate information and to serve as contact with Region.
- Submit names as candidates to serve of regional team.

A request for regional team members:

Please submit names of members willing to serve on the regional JPIC Team to Judy Haupt, SFO, by March 13, 2009.

The regional team will be appointed to serve for two years and will work closely with national team when selected. Members of the BSSF Regional JPIC Team will assist local fraternities and meet with Regional Executive Council. T

JPIC job description and overview of the committee

The members of the National Secular Franciscan Order Justice Peace and the Integrity of Creation Committee (JPIC) shall consist of five persons, one of whom is the appointed spiritual assistant. The National Executive Council (NEC) will choose the persons after a nationwide search. One SFO member will be designated as chair.

Those qualified for service:

- should have a mature lived experience of the SFO Rule and the ability to articulate that experience;

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- must understand our penitential and baptismal foundations;
- should have an interest and experience in the fields defined by our Rule and interpreted in our General Constitutions;
- must lay aside their personal JPIC interests in favor of a well-rounded approach to JPIC issues;
- should have writing and computer skills to communicate effectively;
- should be willing to respond to e-mails and telephone calls in a timely manner.

Together the five persons will cover all of the fields of the apostolate. Each of the persons should have an interest in and ability to work with the other members of the JPIC Committee and the Formation Commission. Committee members will need to keep informed of the position of Catholic prelates on all issues that are the concern of their area of the JPIC Committee.

How the committee will operate

The five JPIC Committee members will meet initially. Frequency of future meetings will be determined by the work required and by the financial resources available to them.

Additionally, it is highly recommended that there be a joint meeting with the NEC annually.

The JPIC Committee's success will depend on how well the members communicate with fraternity members and with one another. The responsibility of the JPIC Committee members is to the National Executive Council, which appoints them.

Their work will be with the regions and, in particular, with the local fraternities. They need to work directly with fraternities in various ways. They should be willing to present information at regional and local fraternity meetings.

Above all, JPIC Committee members must have a servant leader attitude that will build relationships with regional and local fraternity members.

Goals:

- a. To foster an atmosphere in fraternity, the privileged place where, with openness and trust, we may share with each other the manner in which our personal conversions are shaping our Franciscan lives;
- b. To reinforce the appreciation of the dignity of the human person in the choices made in our professed lives by responding in charity and patience to all we meet and to respond as Franciscans to anything which would denigrate the dignity of the human person, beginning with our own personal communications with one another;
- c. To assist in the living out of obedience to the common good as intended by God so that the professed Secular Franciscan builds up all that is good for all of Creation and does nothing which would damage the fabric of communal interdependence;
- d. To strengthen the professed Secular Franciscans' commitment to solidarity with all of Creation, enabling them to make those choices in life which would bring about a more fraternal and evangelical world (*build up the world fraternity*). **T**

Positions Open in Region

Please consider sharing your gifts and talents. We are searching for four members to serve on

JPIC (Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation) Committee
and for a

Youth/ Young Adult chair
for our region.

The BSSF Region Executive Council will review all names submitted at March 21 meeting. Appointments will be made for two years.

Names to be sent to Judy Haupt,
SFO, jahaupt@yahoo.com.

Newly Elected Councils Congratulations

Seven Dolors of the Blessed Virgin Mary Fraternity Nashville, Tenn.

Oct. 12

Minister: Dale Anesi, SFO
Vice Minister: Anne Panagatos, SFO
Secretary: Judy Korchaki, SFO
Treasurer: Richard Russo, SFO
Formation Director:
Deacon Simeon Panagatos, SFO

St. Stanislaus Fraternity Wilmington, N.C.

Oct. 19

Minister: Linda Perunko, SFO
Vice Minister: Frances Bindewald, SFO
Secretary: Mary Tocidlowski, SFO
Treasurer: Francis J. Otto, SFO
Formation Director:
Frank S. Bindewald, SFO
Councilor: Brenda H. Wells, SFO

St. Francis of the Living Waters Fraternity Franklin, N.C.

Nov. 3

Minister: John Knippel, SFO
Vice Minister: Kelly Long, SFO
Secretary: Alice Yuzzi, SFO
Treasurer: Theresa Knippel, SFO
Formation Director: Sharon Edwards
Councilor: Jacque Brown, SFO

Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament Fraternity Burlington, N.C.

Nov. 8

Minister: Paula Zanker, SFO
Vice Minister: Carolyn Ashby, SFO
Secretary: Brian Ward, SFO
Treasurer: Lorraine Johnson, SFO
Formation Director: Kay Sutcliffe, SFO

CIOFS election results

The international council was elected to a six-year term during the international chapter in Hungary in November.

Known as the presidency, the leadership consists of the minister general, vice minister general, and the presidency's international councilors, who are elected according to major language groups and geographic areas.

New International Council

Minister General: Encarnación del Pozo, Spain

Vice Minister General: Doug Clorey, Canada

Presidential councilors:

- English I (North America and Europe): Tibor Kauser, Hungary
- English II (Africa, Oceania, Asia): Lucy Almiranez, Phillipines
- French: Michele Altmeyer, France
- German: Ewald Kreuzer, Austria
- Italian: Benedetto Lino, Italy
- Portugese: Maria Aparecida Crepaldi, Brazil
- Spanish: Consuelo Nuñez, Venezuela
- YouFra (Franciscan Youth): Ana Fruk, Croatia

At the international chapter, the minister general reported that, "The number of professed active members (worldwide) remains constant at some 400,000. They belong to 65 established national fraternities, 42 emerging national fraternities, and three areas working toward canonical establishment of their first local fraternities. Franciscan Youth, or YouFra, is present in 64 countries as an organization.

"The Western World, particularly Europe, has seen a decline or stagnation in numbers, while so-called Third World countries, including some in Latin America, Africa, Asia, and Slavic nations as well, are seeing an astonishing growth in vocations. In one country there are young people in their 20s serving in leadership positions." T

NAFRA speakers highlight moving forward, challenging ourselves, living our vocation

By Joanita M. Nellenbach, SFO
Communio editor

I hope that every Secular Franciscan in the United States will be able to attend the National Fraternity (NAFRA) annual Chapter.

It's a wonderful opportunity to see how our Order operates at the national level and to hear excellent speakers. I finally could meet so many of the people whose names and faces were familiar to me only from reading TAU-USA.

As you probably know, our region was host for this year's meeting, held Oct. 14–19 at the Scarritt-Bennett Center at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tenn.

Much of what happened is in the winter 2008 TAU-USA, but I'd like to highlight three of the speakers: Pat Brandwein-Ball, Fr. Steve Gross, and Teresa Baker.

Pat Brandwein-Ball, SFO, one of our national councilors, spoke about how we're in a time of transition as an Order, but there still seems to be some misunderstanding about basic concepts.

"I've actually heard people refer to the 26 rules," she said. "We have one Rule with 26 articles that flow into and out of each other. We need to understand that entanglement."

She also spoke of, "Belonging to God —belovedness — believing with all our hearts that we are the beloved; that sets our hearts on fire. The belovedness that I experience is not diminished by the belovedness that someone else feels. We shine forth belovedness, responding to others because we see them as beloved...."

"To move into God, we have to let go. We think about: What am I leaving behind? What am I giving up? It's a moving into. We are entering into the mystery in a little different way. I'm letting go of these other things to move into God."

Pat spoke of letting go in order to go forward, like the "trapeze artist (who) has to let go to get down. If you just swing back and forth, you don't go anywhere."

That might also mean letting go of some of the ways we've done things in the past as CIOFS sets new priorities for our Order's future.

"There are always temptations to go back to what we had because it was more comfortable" Pat said. "To go back is stagnation. God is not stagnant; God is dynamic. In stagnating, we rot. Stagnation is not lifegiving. Change will be disquieting. It is only out of that change that the scales fall from our eyes. It is imperative that we reflect on where we've been and where God is calling us to go now."

Fr. Steve Gross, OFM Conv., outgoing president-in-turn, Conference of National Spiritual Assistants, noted that, "The fraternity is the place from which we're sent forth to rebuild the world. How does profession give meaning, purpose, joyfully proclaim, who we are in the world?"

The SFO has bound itself to be in service to the Church and the world, to live Catholic Christianity as expressed through Franciscanism. Does the world really have an experience of

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Franciscanism? Would the world be upset if Franciscans disappeared?

Fr. Steve also spoke of learning as much as we can by reading material that stretches our Franciscan knowledge.

“We’ve got to challenge ourselves to look at and read Franciscan sources,” he said.

“Challenge yourself to read tough scholarship. The Franciscan Institute Web site (www.sbu.edu/FranciscanInstitute.aspx?id=1752) is a good source for Franciscan materials.

“The Church is asking the laity to be authentic examples. Formation will continue to look at who we are, what we’re about. The basic question to ask in whatever we do: What is Franciscan about *that*? Your job is to share your lives, to discover who we are as Franciscans. The Franciscan vocation is rooted in the Christian vocation.

“Francis said, ‘The Lord led, gifted, showed *me*.’ For him, the world was about him until he had that conversion experience that showed him that it was about *God*. We have to be able to see the larger picture.”

Teresa Baker, SFO, outgoing NAFRA formation director, also spoke about the bigger picture. Regarding St. Elizabeth of Hungary, she asked everyone to think of:

- a challenge that the life of Elizabeth of Hungary places before you in living your Secular Franciscan life;
- what in her life convicts you of not living the SFO Rule?

Teresa is co-author with Fr. Lester Bach, OFM, of *Come & See: An invitation to explore the Secular Franciscan Life — Orientation & Inquiry*. She talked about how we, as Secular Franciscans, have a triple call: evangelical (gospel living), penitential (daily conversion), and secular (living in the world). “If you say what your apostolate is, you’re describing an apostolic life. We need to say who we are (rather than what we do). We need to *be*. Apostolic is not wrong; it’s just not us. It’s not who we’re called to be.”

“Our call,” Teresa said, “is to be an image of God in our world. We’re always to be present to his people, to the space we find ourselves in.

“Francis was to be present in the moment, to not take the baggage from the past or the worries about the future. He was called to be present to the Father. Jesus didn’t have a plan for the day. He just went about his day, present to what God would have him do that day.”

Speaking of emulating Francis, Teresa said, “Francis said his cloister was the world; that’s where we are. Our action in the world should not be dependent on the needs of others. If our life changes, the people around us will change. We become holy in the world. We don’t have to look different. We have to make a difference.” **T**



What does the TAU mean to me?

By Madeline Rousseau, SFO

Formation director, Franciscan Martyrs of Siroki Brijeg Fraternity

It is precious and priceless. Every time I put it on, I sense the connection of all Secular Franciscans, but especially my own dearest fraternity and our beautiful regional fraternity.

Just a little witness: About a year after my Profession, I was torn between wearing my TAU or a very special cross that was given to me by my husband. Sometimes I wore both of them as a kind of compromise. As I was speaking with a dear Franciscan friar, I mentioned this frustration of mine. At that moment, I realized that I was wearing my TAU alone more frequently. I said this to him and added that I seemed to have become “infected” with the TAU.

He chuckled and replied, “That’s what has happened. When we become infected with something, it means it has gotten into our bloodstream.”

My Franciscan life, of which my TAU is the symbol, had truly become part of my very blood, mind, and heart. Praise God! **T**



Formation Director

By Faye Martin, SFO
BSSF Region formation
director

Cricket Aull, SFO,
did an amazing Day of
Reflection for my

fraternity (Channel of Peace, Chattanooga,
Tenn.). One of her handouts was the
following:

I AM

I was regretting the past
and fearing the future.
Suddenly my Lord spoke:
My name is I AM.
He paused. I waited.
He continued.

When you live in the past,
with its mistakes
and regrets,
it is hard. I am not there.
My name is not —
I WAS.

When you live in the future,
with its problems
and fears,
it is hard. I am not there.
My name is not —
I WILL BE.

When you live
in this moment,
it is not hard. I am here.
My name is —
I AM.

Helen Mallicoat

St. Francis renounced everything only
that he might better possess
everything. The lives of the immense
majority of our contemporaries are
ruled by the fatal error that the more
one possesses, the more one enjoys.

Paul Sabatier, *The Road to Assisi*

Thanks to all who helped with NAFRA

By Judy Haupt, SFO
BSSF Region minister

Our region was host to NAFRA's annual
chapter in October.

The National Fraternity held its chapter
at the Scarritt-Bennett Center in Nashville.

Dale Anesi, BSSF Region vice minister
and minister of Seven Dolours of the Blessed
Virgin Mary Fraternity, Nashville, chaired
our host committee and did a fantastic job of
making this a memorable experience for our
brothers and sisters from across the country.
He worked out all the details and kept the
meeting going without a problem.

Our special thanks to Bishop David R.
Choby of Nashville for attending the
opening of the NAFRA Chapter, for
celebrating Mass, and for his words of
support.

The BSSF Host Committee included
Kathy Taormina, SFO, special assistant and
friend from Queen of Peace Region, who
made beautiful decorations and most of the
materials needed; and Jan Parker, SFO, St.
Clare Region minister, who coordinated all
the music for liturgies and many
hardworking members of our region.

Other host committee members were:

- Cricket Aull, SFO, Immaculate
Conception Fraternity, Jonesboro,
Ga.;
- Pat Cowan, SFO, regional councilor;
formation director, St. Francis of the
Hills Fraternity, Hendersonville,
N.C.
- Barbara Freeman, SFO, minister, St.
Clare Fraternity, Asheville, N.C.;
- Joanita Nellenbach, SFO, minister,
St. Francis of the Hills Fraternity,
Hendersonville, N.C.
- Jerry Rousseau, SFO, BSSF Region
treasurer, minister of Franciscan
Martyrs of Siroki Brijeg Fraternity,
Blairsville, Ga.;
- Madeline Rousseau, SFO, regional

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councilor; formation director, Franciscan Martyrs of Siroki Brijeg Fraternity;

➤ Members of Seven Dolors of the Blessed Virgin Mary Fraternity: John Blake, SFO; Cathy Courtney; Jimmy Crawford, SFO; Judy Korcheck, SFO; Tamara Marshall, SFO; Anne Panagatos, SFO, vice minister; Deacon Simeon Panagatos, SFO, spiritual assistant; Richard Russo, SFO, treasurer.

In addition to greeting attendees at the airport, running errands, setting up for meetings and many other duties, we furnished entertainment each evening.

On Tuesday evening, Barbara Freeman, a professional storyteller, told humorous and heartwarming stories.

Wednesday evening, Tamara Marshall presented an ecology program for which she wrote the script and music and sang the songs she had written.

Tamara created masks or other special effects, which several actors wore to portray Brother Wolf, Sister Gazelle, Brother Earthworm, Sister Butterfly, Brother Lion, and Sister Passenger Pigeon. Each told the story of his or her species and pleaded for the preservation of creation.

Tim Taromina, SFO, played Brother Wolf, Richard Russo was Brother Worm and Barbara Freeman portrayed Sister Butterfly.

The Ridley Dance School of lovely, talented young girls from Nashville performed on Thursday evening.

On Friday evening, Cricket Aull spoke on spirituality; her husband, Jerry, sang and played the guitar.

Many fraternities sent gifts to represent their state and show our southern hospitality.

I don't have the complete list but want to thank everyone who contributed. The NAFRA members were impressed with your generosity.

Jerry and Madeline brought a carload of gifts, including stone-ground pancake mix, from Franciscan Martyrs of Siroki Brijeg Fraternity.

Others gifts from Georgia were pens from Immaculate Conception Fraternity and pecans from St. Elizabeth of Hungary Fraternity.

Tennessee gifts included Moon Pies from Channel of Peace Fraternity and many goodies from Seven Dolors of the Blessed Virgin Mary Fraternity.

St. Stanislaus Fraternity in Wilmington, N.C. sent packets of sand and shells from their beaches (neat idea).

Our Lady of Good Counsel Fraternity in Greenville, S.C., sent several items including scapulars of St. Francis.

Everything went perfectly thanks to Dale and help from everyone. They did the work and I got the thanks but accepted it on behalf of everyone in our region.

Pride may not usually be a Franciscan virtue, but I am so proud to be a member of Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis Region. **T**

Today, as in the past, mortification means rejecting those values and patterns of acting that are destroying us; and our conversion, which is even more difficult, means an interiority which will enable us to see through the great lie that some consumer product is the answer to our search for life....

Our whole culture has been hyped beyond what it can do and we can tolerate, including our experience of time. Every moment has been accelerated, so that we need the mortification of slowing down and living again the rhythm of nature and our own inner movement instead of trying to keep up with the frenetic pace around us, which most of us have interiorized to such an extent that we cannot relax.

The way of Francis slows us down and leads us into that quiet center within, where God speaks softly the truth of our own worth. It is the way of prudence and charity toward ourselves, as many of the early stories of Saint Francis illustrate.

Murray Bodo, *The Way of St. Francis*

Professions

Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary Fraternity

Hilton Head Island, S.C., Oct. 4, 2008

Peggy Ross, SFO

DorothyAnn Rowland, SFO, Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary's minister, sent this story about Peggy, who made her Profession at the age of 84.

Peg has had this dream, finally realized, since she has been 16 years old. Peg had the example firsthand of her grandmother who was a member of the Third Order. Her grandmother's witness to Peg planted the seed that burned fervently in her heart.

She had tried to study years ago as a young mother, but couldn't as she had five children and her husband to care for.

Peg had a few "stumbling blocks" during her candidacy phase: Her husband, Juan, was diagnosed with cancer at the beginning of her candidacy; Peg had breast cancer early last year; her husband died on Sept. 11 as we were in the process of planning her final preparations for Profession.

She has never given up nor has she ever forgotten about God's holy will in her life's journey. Peg is a beautiful woman and example of faith and Franciscan virtues.

St. Anthony of Padua Fraternity

Fayetteville, N.C., Oct. 8, 2008

Norman Gill, SFO

Gloria Ruiz, SFO

Mary Ruiz, SFO

Rose Vega, SFO

St. Michael the Archangel Fraternity

Spartanburg, S.C., Nov. 8, 2008

Dr. Michaeleen Ann Davis, SFO

Sarah Beth Quinn, SFO

If you're a minister or formation director and aren't receiving the monthly formation communications, please contact Faye Martin, SFO, at fmartinsfo@bellsouth.net.

The greeting

By Joanita M. Nellenbach, SFO

St. Francis of the Hills Fraternity minister

December 22.

That morning members of my fraternity were at Immaculata School, preparing small bags of gifts for local Hispanic children.

We fill paper bags (those little ones with handles) with all sorts of goodies:

candy canes, crayons, pencils, coloring books, modeling clay, stickers, balls, bubble-blowing fluid, small stuffed animals.

December 22.

The first anniversary of the death of our beloved Mary Ethier, SFO.

We thought of Mary and planned to remember her during Morning Prayer just before we attended the 12:10 Mass together at Immaculate Conception Church.

Mary was one of our fraternity's founding members and served as our first minister after we were established in 1987. Later, she was formation director.

Until worsening health made it impossible for her to come regularly to fraternity meetings or our Annual Regional Gatherings, she had always been there, her wonderful, beaming smile lighting the room.

We thought she must surely be with us in spirit this day.

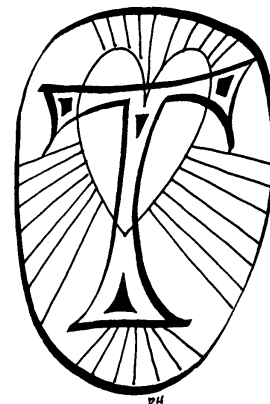
Patricia Paton and I stayed to finish the bags.

I picked up a small white one with "Belk" in turquoise letters; not a new bag, but still in good condition. Opening it, I found a credit card receipt and put it aside to throw away later.

As I finished the last bag I was filling, I heard Patricia gasp: "Look what I found."

She was holding the receipt.

Mary had signed it — in 1990. T





Novena of intercession for suffering people

At the recent NAFRA meeting, the SFO in the United States voted to institute a “perpetual” novena for at least one year on behalf of the suffering people both at home and abroad, especially for those in Orissa, India, as we did in 2007 for Darfur.

Every day for the next year, members of the SFO will pray the novena (see prayer, page 14). For this to happen, five regional fraternities are assigned to cover each month.

To make sure we cover the entire month, there will be four to five “waves” of the novena, each starting on **Sunday**. People are assigned to these waves by Region, as noted below. For example, the first Sunday of December, members of St. Elizabeth of Hungary Region began praying the novena; the second Sunday of the month Lady Poverty began the novena. In this way, the SFO will hold the people in prayer for the entire year.

If you want to continue to pray before or after your week/month you can certainly do that! You are also encouraged to share the novena with people in your parish, youth groups, or other organizations to which you belong. A novena allows us to hold a particular concern before God in a special way.

The word “novena” comes from the Latin for “nine.” Traditionally we pray a novena every day for nine days, and the prayer is usually a bit longer than a brief intercession. This allows us to give more of ourselves to our prayer for the concern we are bringing before God.

**Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis Region is asked to pray the novena
Feb. 8–16 and again Aug. 9–17.**

	Dec/June	Jan/July	Feb/Aug	Mar/Sept	Apr/Oct	May/Nov
Week 1	St. Elizabeth of Hungary	Bl Kateri Tekakwitha	Fr Solanus	The Tau Cross	Our Lady of the Angels	St. Katharine Drexel
Week 2	Lady Poverty	St. Margaret of Cortona	Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis	Five Franciscan Martyrs	St. Maximilian Kolbe	Holy Trinity
Week 3	Divine Mercy	Our Lady of Indiana	La Verna	Mother Cabrini	Franciscans of the Prairie	St. Clare
Week 4	St Joan of Arc	Queen of Peace	Juan de Padilla	Los Tres Companeros/ Three Companions	Our Lady of the Rockies	Santa Maria de las Montanas
Week 5 or Week 1*	Our Lady of Guadalupe	Troubadours of Peace	Bl. Junipero Serra	St. Francis	St. Thomas More	Ohana O Ke Aneunue

Spiritual assistant course update

By Joanita M. Nellenbach, SFO

Spiritual assistant course coordinator

The spiritual assistant class met Nov. 15 in Belmont, N.C. to discuss “SAs and ongoing formation” and “Franciscan writers.”

Fr. Linus DeSantis, BSSF Region spiritual assistant, was instructor.

In sessions in March, June, and August, the class covered “The Role of a Spiritual Assistant,” “Franciscan theology/spirituality,” “The Trinity and us,” and “SAs and initial formation.”

Presently, 13 students are enrolled in the class: five each from Areas 1 and 2, two from Area 3, and one from Queen of Peace Region.

“Ongoing formation has always been a fact of life; for us who are spiritual assistants, all the more so,” Fr. Linus said.

He added that spiritual assistants can’t rely on what they’ve already learned but must continually seek to deepen their Franciscan knowledge: “If we slip into automatic pilot, we die. We become a chore and burden.”

The spiritual assistant never tries to control a fraternity or council meeting or formation session.

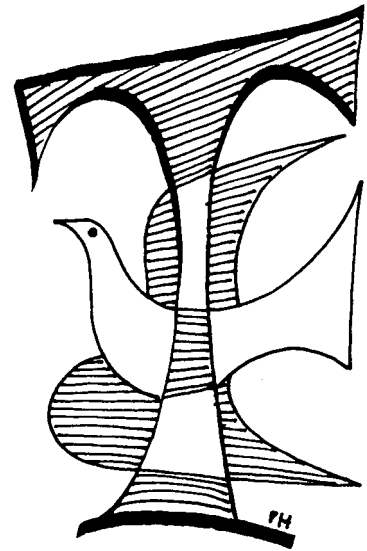
“Christ animates us; Francis moves us,” Fr. Linus said. “We are the instruments. It’s not about us. We are to facilitate, encourage, counsel. As Franciscans, we revel in the fact that others have made conversion. I encourage them, and then I move on. Use the gospels as invitations to growth.”

Just as ongoing formation is essential for spiritual assistants, it’s also a must for every other Secular Franciscan.

“Ongoing formation needs to be an integral part of fraternity life,” Fr. Linus said. “If you don’t have ongoing formation, close up shop. Everything we do flows out of ongoing formation. ... Ongoing formation clarifies, quantifies by engaging us. Who am I? What am I about? Ongoing formation is a retooling, a refocusing, once a month.”

The text, *Franciscan Family Connections*, and the class presentation encouraged us to study Franciscan writers. *Franciscan Family Connections* provides short overviews of Alexander of Hales, St. Bonaventure, John Duns Scotus, and Blessed Angela of Foligno:

- Alexander of Hales (1185–1245) “developed a Trinitarian theology.” He developed and contributed to the theological development which taught that God’s “creative action is the love at the heart of the Trinity. Jesus came among us because of the Trinity’s loving desire to be with God’s people. Sin is NOT the reason for the Incarnation. The Incarnation is a pure gift of God’s love, springing from the loving heart of the Trinity. It was not caused by influences from outside the Trinity but from the Trinity’s very core. God freely chose to create the natural world and to become incarnate” (p. 43).
- St Bonaventure (1221?–1274) was one of Alexander’s students, but his theology was also “influenced by St. Francis’ religious experiences and by Scripture. Bonaventure often theologizes about Francis’ focus on Christ with an emphasis



See SPIRITUAL, page 15

SPIRITUAL, from page 14

on the nature of God as being fruitful, creative love. We can discover meaning for life by meditating on Christ. This, in turn, leads us to explore the mystery of the Trinity.” St. Bonaventure entered the Franciscan Order in 1243 and was elected minister general in 1257. He wrote several books, including the *Life of St. Francis*, which “portrays the inner life of Francis.” (FFC, p. 43)

- John Duns Scotus (1266?–1308) followed the “Franciscan tradition that sees Jesus coming among us as a free act of God.... The Trinity seeks a relationship with the people of planet earth. Jesus gives flesh to this love of God for God’s people” (FFC, p. 43).
- Blessed Angela of Foligno (1248–1309) was a mystic who was known as the “teacher of theologians.” “On a pilgrimage to Assisi she experienced a sense of the Trinity in her life. She entered into intimate conversations with the Trinity. Her insights gradually became known. Her rich experiences helped many people embark on the spiritual journey” (FFC, p. 45–46).

Fr. Linus pointed out that the basic idea of fraternity comes from the Trinity’s interactions with each other: “The Trinity are all present to each other in everything any of them do.”

Francis and Clare underwent conversion. “It’s the same with us,” Fr. Linus said. “We learn, we experience, we interact, we grow. You interact in fraternity, then you go out to the streets to minister. If you have a Franciscan life, there’s balance: fraternity, ministry, prayer.”

For the next chapter, “Vatican II’s influence,” students will e-mail their answers to the questions to Fr. Linus by the end of January.

We’ll meet for class to discuss Chapters 8 and 9, “SFO organizational structure” and “SFO in the world/leadership,” on March 21, in Belmont, N.C. **T**

Novena Prayer of Intercession

Merciful Father, Prince of Peace, Spirit of Wisdom and Compassion, please look with mercy upon our suffering brothers and sisters here at home and around the world, [particularly in *Orissa]. We humbly pray:

- ❖ For those who have been subjected to violence, and their families, we ask for healing, consolation, and relief of further suffering.
- Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be
- ❖ For those who have done violence, we ask for healing, forgiveness, and the grace of conversion.
- Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be
- ❖ For those in authority throughout the world, we ask wisdom, creativity, compassion and courage in addressing these situations.
- Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be

Lord Jesus, your Sacred Heart burns for love of all your people. Please place in our hearts that same love and inspire us to have the courage, wisdom and ingenuity to take what measures we can personally to relieve the suffering of our brothers and sisters. We pray this in the name of Jesus, our Lord, through the intercession of the sorrowful and Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Memorare: Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thy intercession was left unaided. Inspired by this confidence I fly unto thee, O Virgin of Virgins, my Mother! To thee do I come; before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in thy mercy hear and answer me. Amen
*Insert specific concerns for which you would like to pray.

Sister Water joins SFO for Lent

The Franciscan Youth/Young Adult H2O Lenten Project 2009 has begun!

We invite you to join in solidarity with the poor of our world by participating in raising funds for clean drinking water.

Last year, we raised \$12,977.47 to build wells in Honduras. It is an easy way to make a big difference.

The H2O Project is a Franciscan Youth fund-raising event to help create clean water for youth and their families most in need.

Franciscan Youth groups around the USA and SFO fraternities will join to bring clean water to those most in need.



THE PROBLEM:

- Ø Women and children walk 2 hours each way to fetch water (hauling dirty water back to their families.) They have no time or energy left for education or small businesses, and many of them die.
- Ø Preventable water-related diseases kill one child every 15 seconds. That's 8,000 every day (and that's just the children). Imagine if that many precious ones were dying in the United States!

THE SOLUTION:

- ♥ Take the H2O Challenge!
 - ♥ For 2 weeks in Lent make water your only beverage.
 - ♥ Contribute the money you would have spent at the soda machine and coffee shop toward the drilling of clean-water wells.
- ♥ Is it a sacrifice to give up your milk, coffee, soda, etc., for 2 weeks?
 - ♥ Will you be changing someone else's life forever? Absolutely.
- ♥ What does The H2O Project get out of it? Financially, absolutely nothing; but they get the joy of knowing they have helped you (and many like you) make a difference.

THE PROCESS:

- ♥ Pick one 14-day period during Lent.
- ♥ Use a scorecard (page 22) to keep track!
- ♥ Start fasting ... start saving ... save the children!

TO SEND THE MONEY COLLECTED:

- ♥ Make all checks payable to: **NAFRA**.
You must note on the check memo the name of the *Fraternity* and the name of the *Region*.
- ♥ Mail **ALL** checks by **May 1, 2009** to:
Kathy Taormina, SFO, 920 Whitney Drive, Apple Valley, Minn. 55124

AGENDA**Ministers'/Formation Directors' Workshop 2009**

Saturday, Feb. 28, in Chattanooga, Tenn.

Saturday, April 25, in Apex, N.C. [very near Raleigh]

Saturday, June 6, in Spartanburg, S.C.

8:30 a.m. – 9:00 am	Registration
9:00 a.m. – 10:00 am	Mass
10:00 a.m. – 10:15 am	Continental breakfast
10:15 a.m. – 11:00 am	<u>Keynote</u> – Dale Anesi “Franciscan Youth – Our Order’s Legacy”
11:00 a.m. – Noon	<u>Session I</u> for Ministers and Formation Directors “Respectful Communication” “Mutual Invitation Process” – Judy Haupt
Noon – 12:45 p.m.	Lunch
12:45 p.m. – 1:45 p.m.	<u>Session II</u> for Ministers and Formation Directors “Conflict Resolution” – Faye Martin
1:45 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	Break
2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	<u>Session III</u> – “Open Forum” groups Ministers – Judy Haupt Formation Directors – Faye Martin
3:00 p.m. – 3:10 p.m.	Complete Evaluation Forms
3:10 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.	Reconvene for Evening Prayer
3:30 p.m.	Adjourn – Safe Trip home

**Brothers & Sisters of St. Francis Region
Minister/Formation Director Workshop
Registration Form**

Cost per person: \$14.00

Fraternity: _____

1. Name _____

Address _____

Phone: _____ E-mail _____

A. Workshop attending [circle one]

Chattanooga, TN, 2/28/09 Apex, NC, 4/25/09 Spartanburg, SC, 6/06/09

B. Session attending [circle one] Formation Session Minister Session

Question for Open Forum:

2. Name: _____

Address _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

A. Workshop attending [circle one]

Chattanooga, TN, 2/28/09 Apex, NC, 4/25/09 Spartanburg, SC, 6/06/09

B. Session attending [circle one] Formation Session Minister Session

Question for Open Forum:

Enclose \$14 per person. Make your check payable to **BSSF Region**. Send your completed registration form and payment **one month before date of workshop** and mail to:

Faye Martin, sfo
6940 River Run Dr.
Chattanooga, TN 37416

Are we examples of perfect joy?

Messengers of perfect joy in every circumstance, they should strive to bring joy and hope to others.

From Article 19, SFO Rule

We are challenged to follow our promise. So many are in great need of joy and hope in our world, especially youth and young adults.

The young are being misled by media messages and immoral examples. They have doubts and questions. The youth of today may be misled, but they do express a need to find a better path. They are open to a way of life and service for the good of humanity. When given the example and opportunity many are enthusiastic to embrace a life of peace, love, and mutual respect.

But they need examples of hope and joy in their search to know Christ. This is not directed to establishment of Franciscan youth groups but, rather, to our call to be bearers of hope and joy by our witness to the Gospel and its message of hope.

By our example, not our preaching, we can lead the youth to know the Gospel message.

We can bring the youth and young adults back to the faith and help them discover the great gift that they are, children of God.

Consider offering your time to parish youth groups. Volunteer at schools. Be a quiet yet constant ray of light and joyful hope. Volunteering is not what you do but who you are to others. **T**

BSSF Region considers Order's present and future



This past summer, in preparation for the Secular Franciscan Order's International Chapter, Encarnación del Pozo, SFO, minister general, asked the Order worldwide to consider where we are now and our future as an Order.

The spring 2008 Communio included the letter and the International Chapter's "Preparatory Document to Deal With the Themes of the Next General Chapter: The Profession of Secular

Franciscans and Their Sense of Belonging."

During the summer, our Region's Fraternities and groups pondered these questions:

1. What is our sense of belonging to the SFO and our Order's uniqueness?
2. What are our objectives for the next six years?

At our Annual Regional Gathering in August, ministers and leaders discussed what their fraternities and groups had shared. These responses were sent to our National Fraternity for inclusion in NAFRA's contribution to the discussion at the International Chapter in Hungary. Here's what we had to say:

A. Do we have a sense of belonging?

1. We have a sense of belonging to a spiritual family and to a real religious order. Our lay Order is unique in that it originated with its founder, St. Francis.
2. It feels like being a Secular Franciscan is part of my being.
3. Our fraternity gatherings are Christ-centered; we share examples of Gospel living. We have a true sense of bonding. I feel like I "fit in."

See ORDER, page 19

ORDER, from page 18

4. The gatherings feel like an extension of the Mass.
5. Our Order comes under the protection of the Roman Catholic Church; the pope approves our Rule.
6. We are part of a community of joy. We serve together. We are encouraged to be our own unique selves. We feel like we are part of a world-wide family.
7. Our fraternities give us support and encouragement; they help us to grow in holiness.
8. We bring our whole selves to our fraternity meetings; we are open about our weaknesses and difficulties, and thus receive love, healing and support from others. The love of the fraternity helps me to accept myself as well as others. I have experienced God's unconditional love in my fraternity.
9. We pray for each other and the parish, the community, the nation and the world.
10. In our fraternity we are allowed to grow at our own pace, there is no pressure.
11. Our fraternities are inclusive and welcoming.
12. Sense of belonging:
 - a. IS in direct proportion to involvement in local fraternity and region (retreats, gatherings, workshops, apostolates);
 - b. IS promoted through sharing in formation, supporting one another, and through communications (phone, e-mail, Communio, TAU-USA);
 - c. IS enhanced by faithfulness to Church (spiritual strength);
 - d. IS a serious commitment made at profession (to be a "family");
 - e. IS developed through our interconnectedness with greater network of the Franciscan family (all three Orders) — a worldwide "family."

B. Realizing our Order's uniqueness

1. Being a Secular Franciscan gave me peace after a restless journey.
2. Being a Secular Franciscan resulted from exposure to Franciscans as a youth.
3. Being a Secular Franciscan brought peace in turmoil and made me calmer.
4. Being a Secular Franciscan enables me, with a sense of poverty, to be detached from possessions.
5. Being a Secular Franciscan gives a sense of belonging to a family. We are different yet share the same spirit.
6. Being a Secular Franciscan challenges me to follow the Gospel in daily life.
7. Being a Secular Franciscan gives me confidence in God's love.
8. Being a Secular Franciscan changed my life.
9. Being a Secular Franciscan makes me aware of creation and the need to conserve not waste.
10. Being a Secular Franciscan is my way to God.
11. As Secular Franciscans, we fully support the Church.
12. Our uniqueness shows because we:
 - a. go where others fear to go;
 - b. are called to holiness by our specific way of life (live the Gospel);
 - c. are visible signs of openness (i.e., people seek us out for prayer, etc.); our Habit (the Tau);
 - d. were founded directly by St. Francis himself;
 - e. work together in apostolates (rather than individually).

See ORDER, page 20

ORDER, from page 19**C. Objectives for the next six years:**

1. How do we find an apostolate that we can all be involved in?
2. Help us to grow in numbers; we need recognition and visibility. We have a problem because we come from different parishes.
3. We would like to promote more collaboration from the First and Second Orders. We want to work with the First Order, not be controlled by it.
4. We would like to see more mentoring of fraternity spiritual assistants by regional spiritual assistant.
5. We would like to see fraternity members wear their Tau more often to enhance visibility and promote recognition.
6. We would like to see a regional, national, and international directory to connect Franciscans when traveling.
7. We would like more structures, more help in reaching out to youth on the fraternity level; also we would like more communication from national in helping and reaching out to youth.
8. We would like the Order worldwide to focus on one issue, such as hunger or water, to adopt as a project and make a difference.
9. We appreciate having a good ARG with good breakout groups to discuss what we have learned and how we can change.
10. We would like the region to make copies of presentations available from the ARG and from the Quinquennial.
11. Be more inclusive of Hispanics; reach out to serve them, such as helping them paint their houses, saying the rosary together.
12. Have a 40-day “Fast for Life” as Franciscans.
13. Using Focolare as an example, could we reach out to families with children more by having activities for families with children?
14. Promote creative study of the Rule — help each other to live each article as part of who we are.
15. Promote “Franciscan Family” at all levels.
16. Promote visibility (wear simple wooden Tau — our distinct habit — at all times and places.
17. Promote greater involvement with youth.
18. Develop “Four Pillars” as a worldwide standard.
19. Be credible with bishops, clergy, religious, laity, and greater community.
20. Develop worldwide directory and use it as a tool for prayer and visitation.
21. Find our lepers.
22. We must find ways for all members to be involved.
23. We must work together for common goals.
24. We must attract younger people to discover a vocation to SFO.
25. We must take a stand for peace.
26. We must be involved with political action for justice.
27. We must be visible as Franciscans.
28. We must be grounded in our Franciscan identity.
29. We must join with other fraternities to pray and share.
30. We must be creative in our formation and energize it.
31. We must study and be challenged by the Gospel.
32. We must share apostolate ideas with others. **T**

Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis Region Calendar

2009

Jan. 10.....Election, Morehead City, N.C. (Alan Zanker officiates)
 Jan. 17.....Election, Augusta, Ga. (Judy Haupt officiates)
 Jan. 18-19.....Visitation, Aiken, S.C. (Fraternal, Judy, Audrey Binet; Pastoral TBD)

Feb. 28Minister/Formation Director Workshop, Chattanooga, Tenn.

March 21-23REC/Spiritual Assistant Course, Belmont, N.C.

April 25Minister/Formation Director Workshop, Apex (near Raleigh), N.C.

May 22-24.....Formation Session, Five Franciscan Martyrs Region, San Pedro, Fla.

June 6.....Minister/Formation Director Workshop, Spartanburg, S.C.

June 6-7.....Regional Executive Council (REC) Meeting, Spartanburg, S.C.

June 25-28.....Course, "Franciscan Spirituality," St. Francis U., Loretto, Penn.

May, June, July ..Spiritual Assistant Class Retreat (date/location to be determined)

Aug. 7-9.....ARG, Ridgecrest, N.C. — Visitation from National

Oct. 22-27NAFRA Annual Chapter, Albuquerque, N.M.

2010

Aug. 6-8.....ARG, Ridgecrest, N.C. — Region Election

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Publication date — Sept. 25

Summer 2009

Copy deadline, June 19

Publication date, June 26

Winter 2010

Copy deadline — Dec. 24, 2009

Publication date — Dec. 30, 2009

To contact me or to submit copy, e-mail jnell@dnet.net.

Joanita M. Nellenbach, SFO, editor

The H2O Project Savings Scorecard for(Name)_____

Beverage	Cost Per Serving	X	Number drinks skipped first week	Total	Savings
Milk-home, 8oz.	\$.20				\$
Milk-restaurant	\$1.50				\$
Soda-home, can	\$.25				\$
Soda-restaurant	\$1.50				\$
Soda-machine	\$.75				\$
Juice-home, 8oz.	\$.25				\$
Juice-restaurant	\$1.50				\$
Juice-conv. store	\$1.00				\$
Sports Drink-conv.store	\$1.00				\$
Coffee-home	\$.25				\$
Coffee-Shoppe, small	\$1.50				\$
Coffee-specialty, small	\$2.50				\$
other					\$

Total \$ _____

The H2O Project Savings Scorecard for(Name)_____

Beverage	Cost Per Serving	X	Number drinks skipped second week	Total	Savings
Milk-home, 8oz.	\$.20				\$
Milk-restaurant	\$1.50				\$
Soda-home, can	\$.25				\$
Soda-restaurant	\$1.50				\$
Soda-machine	\$.75				\$
Juice-home, 8oz.	\$.25				\$
Juice-restaurant	\$1.50				\$
Juice-conv. store	\$1.00				\$
Sports Drink-conv.store	\$1.00				\$
Coffee-home	\$.25				\$
Coffee-Shoppe, small	\$1.50				\$
Coffee-specialty, small	\$2.50				\$
other					\$

Total \$ _____

MY contribution \$ _____