

LAVERNA VISION

YEAR OF UNITY ❖ SUMMER 2008 EDITION

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LAVERNA REGIONAL
COUNCIL OF THE
SECULAR
FRANCISCAN ORDER

Regional council elections highlight LaVerna 2008 Chapter

Three newly elect Secular Franciscans step-up to stewardship

Their service is marked by a ready and willing spirit. A duty of responsibility to each member and to the community.

The *spirit* of esteem work and sharing and service to the Secular Franciscan Order and its community continues with eight elect members to the La Verna Regional Executive Council.

Three of the elected council, Rodney Knier, Patricia Yates and Jeanne Thill, replace previous council members. Leaving the council after three years of mindful and loving service is Mary Fedor, Southeast District Councilor, and Lee Ann Niebuhr who served dual roles of Regional Vice-Minister and Central District Councilor.

Patrick Mendes, NAFRA Minister of the Secular Franciscan Order, presided at and confirmed all elected members to regional executive council. Friar Thomas



Zelinski, OFM Cap was the appointed witness to the election. The 2008 Chapter of Elections was held at St. Anthony Retreat Center, Marathon, WI from June 20 – 22. The special and warm gathering of Franciscan brothers and sisters attracted the attendance of 45 voting and non-voting members from all regional fraternities in Wisconsin and the Michigan Upper Peninsula.

Ken Beattie said that he looks forward to his servant-leadership role as regional minister and it is his desire to promote Franciscan work which embraces individual growth through unity. Along with the newly elected members, Kathy Sutliff, Peter Bekkers, Bob Henning, and James Carlson were reinstalled to the council. Sutliff and Bekkers held-on to their respective positions as secretary and treasurer, Henning remains district councilor, and Carlson, who served in the capacity as Fox Valley councilor from 2005 – 2008, will embark on his new position as regional vice-minister. Fr. Lester Bach, OFM Cap will continue his role as regional spiritual assistant. All Secular Franciscan and OFMs present for the Rite of Elections gave each council member a special prayer for their upcoming service to the region. T



The elected LaVerna Regional Council members of the Secular Franciscan Order. left to right back row: Rodney Knier, district councilor; Kathy Sutliff, secretary; Peter Bekkers, treasurer; Bob Henning, district councilor. Middle row: Jeanne Thill, district councilor; Patricia Yates, district councilor; Jim Carlson, Vice Minister; Front row seated: Ken Beattie, Regional Minister

From Gospel to Life—From Life to Gospel
La Verna Region Executive Council and Formation Team

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The LaVerna Region of the Secular Franciscan Order in the USA consists of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan. The area is divided into four districts: Southeast, Central, Fox Valley and Upper Michigan. *La Verna Vision* is a vehicle of communication with the LaVerna Region. It presents a forum for presenting information and insights that relate to the SFO way of life. Permission to copy materials printed in *LaVerna Vision* is freely given except where the copyright is specifically reserved to the author or artist. Please credit *LaVerna Vision* if you copy any of the articles.

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La Verna Vision editor—Ed Boss, ed-joann@execpc.com (262) 250-9251.



REFLECTIONS

Regional Spiritual Assistant - Lester Bach OFM Cap

NEW LIFE

The Lord gave me, Brother Francis, thus to begin doing penance in this way: for when I was in sin, it seemed too bitter for me to see lepers. And the Lord himself led me among them and I showed mercy to them. And when I left them, what had seemed bitter to me was turned into sweetness of soul and body. And afterwards I delayed a little and left the world.

Testament - Francis of Assisi - The Saint - Page 124

These written words of St. Francis reflect our own feelings when we are called to serve the "lepers" of our time (even if they are "us"). Our Franciscan spirit does not permit us to label people and then push them aside because we do not like their lifestyle, ideas or opinions.

It is Francis' temptation repeated in us. *It seemed too bitter for me to see lepers.* I'm not certain we can change ourselves through will-power and self-talk. Will-power and self-talk might help. But Francis is quite clear about how his conversion occurred. *And the Lord himself led me among them and I showed mercy to them.*

Consider some of the labels we use to separate ourselves from those "others." Liberal / conservative - progressive / traditional - good / bad - Democrat / Republican - gay / straight - orthodox / freewheeling - nice / awful - handicapped / healthy - etc. Attitudes and judgments like these diminish relationships.

Like Francis we find ourselves following a new path. *And when I left them, what had seemed bitter to me was turned into sweetness of soul and body. And afterwards I delayed a little and left the world.*

Leaving the world would seem to mean leaving the world's negative perspectives. Francis chose to embrace the gospel perspectives of Jesus.

Embracing his call to personal conversion, Francis became a spokesperson for the Gospel. Jesus' way of seeing things and people became Francis' way of seeing things and people. Francis took his Spirit-call seriously. He engaged in the process of learning to live a gospel life.

Each of us is different. Our path to conversion will have our fingerprints all over it. But none of us can deny our need for conversion. As we reflect on our attitudes, judgments, perspectives, and approaches to life and people, we will likely

find more than one area that needs conversion. *Human frailty makes it necessary that this conversion be carried out daily.* (SFO Rule #7).

Consider how the following quotation may call you to new perspectives.

The Franciscan mission within the Church does not consist in defending the faith against outside forces; there are other groups in the Church with that charism within the Church. The Franciscan challenge is to accept Francis' call to heal and to mend and to call according to the Gospel. As loyal and committed Catholics, as Francis insisted we must be, we have the duty to do our part to challenge the Church to be imbued with these gospel values, even to the point of prophetically speaking out when the Church is seen to act against such values. This demands courtesy and courage of which we have already spoken.

Build With Living Stones - Unit 14 - Page 7

It is not our role to constantly complain about what we think is going wrong in the world, or the Church, or peoples' lives. Rather, we seek ways of healing and mending, calling for values, perspectives and attitudes that flow from the Gospel. We are Franciscans *motivated by the dynamic power of the gospel ...* (SFO Rule #7) *... and fostering an open and trusting dialogue of apostolic effectiveness and creativity.* (SFO Rule #6)

And whoever observes these things, let him be blessed in heaven with the blessing of the Most High Father, and on earth with the blessing of His Beloved Son with the Most Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, and all the powers of heaven and with all the saints. And, as far as I can, I, little brother Francis, your servant, confirm for you, both within and without, this most holy blessing.

Testament - Francis of Assisi - The Saint - Page 127



"Can I not deal with you as the potter deals with his clay?" says the Lord. "House of Israel, you are clay in my hands like the clay in his."

Jeremiah 18:6

Minister's Message

Dear Sisters and Brothers:

So, here we are at the beginning of a new period in the life of La Verna Region. Where do we start! There are so many topics I would like to discuss and focus on for the SFO, but what should be on the top of the list? There are always ongoing formation issues, which help us grow in Spirit. One point of interest, for example, is Justice Peace Integrity of Creation (JPIC). That theme alone is filled with topics that can focus on unlimited Franciscan stewardships. Then there is another issue of how do we make ourselves known to draw more vocations into our Way of Life.

Another topic is how will we approach the Rule to be our conversion and support for ourselves and others? There is starting point in that area: I am very delighted to receive and review all the local fraternity *Franciscan Values* information listings. Your written *Franciscan Values* comments will help the Council to better study, ponder, and understand how our Rule applies in your fraternity and life.

This letter is written following our Regional Chapter of Elections, held in Marathon on June 20-22. I want to thank you for placing your confidence in me as Minister of the La Verna Region and our full Council. I am very humbled and filled with the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit that leads and guides us. We place our strength and endurance in Him. Continue to pray for all Council members that we may keep focused and draw guidance from the Holy Spirit, through the charism examples of Sts. Francis & Clare.

You are all very fine examples of living the Gospel life. I regularly hear about the many different tasks that you, either as a group or individual, perform in your communities and the less fortunate communities. Your work has shown and recorded so many good examples towards others that it is hard to say who or what event is more valuable than the other. All the immeasurable love from Gospel and Franciscan examples occurring—right now—around the Region show how much you care towards others. There are many who look-up at the kindness from their neighbor, the SFO.

Whenever I travel to attend the NAFRA Chapter, conferences, the FAN (Franciscan Action Network) meetings, or the many other events which give me cause to share your stories, I have the inner-ability, the historical proof from your dedication, to express my pride in being a member of the La Verna Region.

This is not to say that we don't have a long way to go. But it is my hope that together we accomplish much in the next three years. The newly elect Regional Council meets at St. Mary of the Angels Friary in Green Bay on July 26. As we end this year and welcome 2009, we will have our directions laid out and implement plans for the Region. We will present a theme outline on the upcoming three years, in a style similar to the TAU theme from the previous three years. Please pray for the Council as we begin on many good events which will lead us deeper into the Franciscan Way of our love for life.

Peace and All Good – Ken, LaVerna
Regional Minister

ECOLOGY/ ENVIRONMENT: How To Keep Those Pesky Mosquitoes Away!

by Judy Stouffer, B.S., M.S., SFO



Judy Stouffer, SFO



It's that time of year when the mosquitoes are out full force. While DEET is an effective synthetic insect repellent, scientists are always on the hunt for new products that work as well or better. "Bite Blocker," an all-natural mosquito repellent, has recently become available nationwide.

The active ingredients: soybean oil and geranium oil! Laboratory and field tests proved that this combination is effective as high (15%) concentrations of DEET, non-toxic, non-flammable, and won't harm plastics or the environment. We asked friends and family to try out "Bite Blocker," to see how well it repelled Wisconsin's hungry skeeters during a canoeing trip in the Boundary Waters, and during Cub Scout outings. The results: it had to be applied more often than DEET products, but it worked so well that other campers using DEET asked if there was enough "Bite Blocker" for them to use, too! It repelled not just mosquitoes, but also biting black flies. "Bite Blocker" is made by HOMES, LLC. It's available at most Wal-Marts, as well as through natural food stores and directly from HOMES online, at http://www.homs.com/index_sub.htm. It comes in your choice of spray, lotion, or wipes, and there are also formulations available for your furry friends. Give it a try - and send those skeeters scooting!

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Book Review

The Road to Cana

by Anne Rice

The Road to Cana, by Anne Rice is well written and I strongly recommend it. This book is the author's second in a series entitled **Christ The Lord** published by Alfred A Knopf. Her first book, entitled *Out of Egypt*, was the author's fictional account of Jesus as a 7-year-old, living with his family in Egypt. In this new book, Jesus is about 30, and getting ready for his public ministry. Although these books are fictional, they rely heavily on the Gospels and respect New Testament scholarship.

In reading this book, I found myself relating more deeply to the humanity of Jesus. He truly comes to life on these pages. Here is an excerpt that profoundly moved me.

Jesus visits a Scribe, who had witnessed him years earlier with rabbis in a Jerusalem Temple. The Scribe is critical of Jesus because he did not stay

in the Temple, and that he is merely a carpenter. Jesus replies: **"It's where I live ... not in the temple ... in the world.** And when it is time for me to do what the Lord has sent me to do in this world, He will reveal it to me. And what this carpenter shall yet build in this world on that day, the Lord knows and the Lord shall reveal it." (pp. 99-100).

This prophetic passage moved me in two ways: First, it gave great insight into Jesus' mission, "IN THE WORLD;" and secondly, it affirmed me as a Secular Franciscan, living in the world today and everyday.

Pope Benedict XVI recently said: *"Anyone who has discovered Christ must lead others to Him. A great joy cannot be kept to oneself. It has to be passed on."* Thus, having grown in my relationship with Jesus, I pass on to you my recommendation and pray that you too will be deeply inspired by reading

Book Review by Ken Beattie

From Gospel to Life—From Life to Gospel

Caminando Juntos by Jim Carlson, SFO

The Archdioceses of Milwaukee and Green Bay have sister parish/mission relationships with the people of the island of Hispaniola nations, the Dominican Republic and Haiti. Earlier this year I made my third visit, returning to our Milwaukee Archdiocese sister parish, La Sacrada Familia (The Holy Family) located in the village of Sebaná Yegua, 75 miles west of the capitol, near Azua.

I was joined with a group of 13 pilgrims from various archdiocesan parishes, with a variety of relationships to our sister parish. After a two-hour flight due south from Miami, we arrived in Santo Domingo, the capitol of the Dominican Republic, located to the Southeast on the Caribbean shores.

The Franciscans have established an important presence here shortly after Columbus first landed in 1492. Touring Santo Domingo, I visited the Catedral Santa María la Menor, the oldest and first cathedral in the new world. Inside the cathedral, I noted a statute of St Francis on the main altar, memorializing the Franciscans as one of four religious Orders significant to historical national development.

Since my first trip to Haiti in 2000, I have been giving Mission Sunday talks on that country and our sister parish. On this trip, I wanted to see first hand the progress we are making and what needs remain.

I stayed with the del Carmen family who hosted me in 2000; they remembered me and it was a joyous reunion. I brought a St. Francis jig-saw puzzle for their two granddaughters, a gift from Fr. Sereno Baiardi, OFM, Director of Franciscan Missions, Waterford, WI. We had fun trying to piece the puzzle together. Later, we toured Sebaná Yegua on foot and outlying villages by vehicle.

I learned that since 1981 Milwaukee archdiocese priests have ministered closely to the Dominican people throughout the parish's 28 villages. Currently their parish pastor is Fr. Martí Colom and his assistant Fr. Oriol Regales, of the Missionary Community of St. Paul.

The people own few resources. Many of their homes are made of wood with palm-branch roofs. The hurricane season continues to play havoc with their lives. In October 2007, the parish village Quinze lost all its homes to the ravages of a terrible storm, and the homes in Los Negros were covered in mud. Several roads connecting the villages were wiped out. A large portion of the population lives without access to drinkable water and electricity. But the people of La Sacrada Familia possess a strong faith and trust in God's care, and are grateful to our archdiocese for 27 years of faith and friendship.

On the journey we saw many of the projects sponsored by our Archdiocese. Here are few fine examples: Across the street from the parish church, there is a new Health Center. At Quinze, we saw the first five homes built and re-located with archdiocese donations. At Barrera we visited the new San Francisco chapel. Fr. Oriol asked me if the Franciscans might be willing to provide a nice picture of St Francis and a group to present it to a chapel dedication. At Los Ganaderos we saw a chapel financed by the parish and nearby we interacted with schooled youth serving youth.

At Los Galindos, Fr. Oriol held community church services in a parishioner's backyard. We saw signs of mal-nourished youth. I also witnessed a heart-rending scene here: Although financially poor, I noticed, located in a rear room, that the parishioners were housing and caring for an undocumented Haitian woman, abandoned in a field. She was delivering a child.

After each day of touring, we prayed with our sisters and brothers at daily Mass at La Sacrada Familia, a bonding that could only result a tear-filled farewell Mass on Sunday. Walking over to this event with my host family, I approached, first one grand-daughter, then the other took my hands and proudly led me into their parish hall - and to a lasting memory of what solidarity is all about, *caminando juntos*: walking together.

Should we as Franciscans take-up Fr. Oriol's request and provide a picture of St Francis and a group to present it?

For your own virtual tour of other scenes from our sister parish, please log-on to www.archmil.org, scroll down the homepage to the "sister parish" button.



LaVerna Franciscan Retreat Endowment Fund

By Peter J. Bekkers, SFO, Regional Treasurer.

At the LaVerna Regional Executive Council Meeting October 26 – 28, 2007 and finalized and approved at the Executive Council Meeting on June 21, 2008, we have implemented a plan whereby we could have a way to safeguard the funds received from St. Francis of Assisi Fraternity of Milwaukee upon their deactivation in 2007. Since this fund was a contribution for the precise purpose of helping financially challenged Professed SFO members with the financial burden of going on a retreat, we have set up the **“LaVerna Franciscan Retreat Endowment Fund”** whereby we would use only the proceeds to help professed SFO members within the LaVerna Region who need financial help to make a retreat. We have worked up the logistics of just how this will work. We would implement this to **begin in 2008**. This could amount to between \$750 and \$900 per year. With this amount, perhaps, we would be able to help up to 10 or more SFO members with a maximum amount of **UP TO ONE HALF** of the retreat fee.

If the fund would grow this amount could be even larger. For those who are able and willing, this Endowment Fund could be added to and thus enable more dollars to be available to help a larger number of members who need financial help for retreats. Since we are a 501 (c) (3) organization, any contributions made to this fund are tax deductible for federal and state tax purposes.

Following are the guidelines we’ve set up to help us determine whether a member would qualify for financial assistance. These guidelines will be updated each year as the cost of living index adjustments are made.

* * * * *

THESE GUIDELINES WILL HELP US TO DETERMINE YOUR QUALIFICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE:

| <u>FAMILY SIZE</u> | <u>MAXIMUM MONTHLY INCOME</u> |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1 | \$ 1,107.00 |
| 2 | \$ 1,484.00 |
| 3 | \$ 1,861.00 |
| 4 | \$ 2,238.00 |
| 5 | \$ 2,615.00 |
| 6 | \$ 2,992.00 |
| 7 | \$ 3,369.00 |
| 8 | \$ 3,746.00 |
| 9 | \$ 4,123.00 |
| 10 | \$ 4,500.00 |
| 11 | |

CONTACT PETER BEKKERS FOR APPLICATION FORM

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From Gospel to Life—From Life to Gospel

La Verna Regional Fraternity SFO
STATEMENT OF REVENUE & EXPENSE
FOR PERIODS ENDED DEC 31, 2007 & 2006

| | THIS YEAR Y. T. D. 2007 | TOTAL Budget 2007 | Budget Variance 2007 | LAST YEAR TOTAL 2006 |
|--|-------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| BEGINNING BALANCES: | | | | |
| REGULAR CHECKING ----- | 1,140.99 | | | 1,174.63 |
| INVESTMENT SAVINGS 7 DAY CD ---- | 5,764.65 | | | 0.00 |
| INVESTMENT SAVINGS 9 MONTH CD - | 10,000.00 | | | 7,094.67 |
| CASH ON HAND ----- | 0.00 | | | 250.00 |
| TOTAL CASH ON HAND & IN BANKS - | 16,905.64 | | | 8,519.30 |
| REVENUE: | | | | |
| DONATIONS ----- | 1,649.09 | 1,000.00 | 649.09 | 2,300.34 |
| INTEREST INCOME ----- | 720.81 | 1,000.00 | (279.19) | 269.98 |
| SPECIAL MEMORIALS ----- | 12,732.19 | 0.00 | 12,732.19 | 1,300.00 |
| MEETINGS ----- | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| CHAPTER ----- | 947.00 | 800.00 | 147.00 | 796.00 |
| FAIR SHARE ----- | 23,198.34 | 24,387.50 | (1,189.16) | 24,322.50 |
| MISC INCOME ----- | 2,929.60 | 3,450.00 | (520.40) | 3,174.00 |
| TOTAL REVENUE ----- | 42,177.03 | 30,637.50 | 11,539.53 | 32,162.82 |
| TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDS ----- | 59,082.67 | | | 40,682.12 |
| EXPENSES: | | | | |
| STIPENDS ----- | 2,300.00 | 2,500.00 | 200.00 | 2,000.00 |
| RENT INCLUDING EQUIPMENT ----- | 520.00 | 250.00 | (270.00) | 50.00 |
| MATERIALS & SUPPLIES ----- | 1,075.81 | 750.00 | (325.81) | 263.02 |
| MEETING ROOM & FACILITIES ----- | 100.00 | 850.00 | 750.00 | 815.00 |
| OFFICE SUPPLIES ----- | 47.44 | 150.00 | 102.56 | 103.15 |
| DONATIONS ----- | 630.00 | 1,000.00 | 370.00 | 0.00 |
| ADMINISTRATIVE EXP ----- | 1,335.32 | 1,000.00 | (335.32) | 66.70 |
| NEWSLETTER ----- | 1,588.54 | 2,400.00 | 811.46 | 1,629.38 |
| TRAVEL EXP ----- | 6,822.29 | 5,000.00 | (1,822.29) | 4,705.12 |
| FAIR SHARE TO NAFRA ----- | 4,850.00 | 4,850.00 | 0.00 | 4,870.00 |
| ANNUAL CHAPTER EXP ----- | 6,846.98 | 4,500.00 | (2,346.98) | 3,719.29 |
| NAFRA MEETING HOSTING ----- | 1,712.80 | 0.00 | (1,712.80) | 5,056.82 |
| MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSE ----- | 403.00 | 850.00 | 447.00 | 498.00 |
| TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS ----- | 28,232.18 | 24,100.00 | (4,132.18) | 23,776.48 |
| ENDING BALANCE ----- | 30,850.49 | | | 16,905.64 |
| GAIN OR (LOSS) FOR PERIOD ----- | 13,944.85 | 6,537.50 | 7,407.35 | 8,386.34 |
| CURRENT BALANCES: | | | | |
| REGULAR CHECKING ----- | 1.36 | | | 1,140.99 |
| RETREAT SUBSIDY FUND (Restricted) - | 177.90 | | | |
| INVESTMENT SAVINGS 7 day CD ----- | 4,521.02 | | | 5,764.65 |
| RETREAT ENDOWMENT FUND CD ** --- | 11,150.21 | | | |
| 9 MONTH 5.1 % CD 1/07/08 ----- | 15,000.00 | | | 10,000.00 |
| CASH ON HAND ----- | 0.00 | | | |
| TOTAL CASH ON HAND & IN BANKS - | 30,850.49 | | | 16,905.64 |

** Note: Includes \$11,150.21 From St. Francis of Assisi Milwaukee

PETER J. BEKKERS, SFO, TREASURER 06/20/08

FOUR COMMISSIONS – ONE COMMISSION – HUH?

In the course of the last decade the National Fraternity of the SFO has structured various commissions to help us live the Rule more effectively. The Work, Ecology, Peace & Justice, and Family commissions were established as a means of assisting SFO members to live **articles 13 to 19 of the SFO Rule**. To assist your memory, here is a summary of those articles of the SFO Rule that Seculars profess to live.

Article:

13. Accepting all people as an image of Christ and treating everyone with courtesy, respect and reverence.

14. Working to build a more fraternal and evangelical world – competently fulfilling their responsibilities in the world.

15. Promoting justice by the testimony of their human lives – especially in the public domain.

16. Esteeming work and offering honest and supportive work as a way to *share in the creation, redemption and service of the human community*.

17. Live an exemplary family and spousal life and show the world what can be done in a Christian, Franciscan family.

18. Caring for creation and avoiding an exploitation of creation. Developing a brother/sister relationship with creation that Francis shows in his *Canticle of Creation*.

19. To be peacemakers wherever they go – seeking the ways of love, pardon and reconciliation rather than revenge and violence. Living their Franciscan lives so well that Sister Death is a welcome guest.

The fact is simple. These four particular commissions (there are other commissions e.g formation commission) were established to share ways and means to understand and implement articles 13-19 of the SFO Rule. Whether commissions continue to exist or not, Secular Franciscans are required to live the entire Rule. Commissions were and are servants to achieve that end. With or without commissions, all Secular Franciscans are expected to fulfill their profession and put the entire Rule into practice every day of their lives. Sharing ideas and experiences about all articles of the Rule will remain our common desire.

For many Seculars the commissions fulfilled the role of helping to live particular articles of the Rule. For others, the commissions presented a structural problem. They seemed to demand commission chairpersons in every fraternity, big or small. It became more a burden (apparently) than a help. After an extended study on the national level, part of the commission structure (not the vision) was changed. The national structure of the four commissions is now a single commission called the ***Justice, Peace, and the Integrity of Creation commission (JPIC)***.

As before, the commission is a servant, helping to give flesh to specific elements of the SFO Rule. Each fraternity will implement JPIC in order to assist its members to live that portion of the SFO Rule. It has an educational and motivational role among the Seculars. Fraternity members share their ideas and experiences of JPIC within the region and at the national level. Sharing enables us to help one another in living the Rule. The JPIC commission serves the SFO as a guide and help in living a particular portion of the SFO Rule. It serves the SFO (though not the entire Franciscan Family) in the USA. continued on page 10

From Gospel to Life—From Life to Gospel

Always remember that the SFO Rule has articles not included in JPIC commission. Secular Franciscans are required, by their profession, to live the entire Rule.

Franciscan Action Network / F.A.N.

FAN desires to gather the entire Franciscan Family in the USA into a single national structure - Seculars, Poor Clares, First Order / Third Order Regular friars, plus numerous Franciscan religious and lay groups. It will enable Franciscans to address serious social and community issues in the United States and perhaps beyond our borders. Our common Franciscan Family's power of love and insights can be used to deal with issues beyond what JPIC could do. It serves a much wider goal, pooling our common Franciscan Family's dedication and numbers, to influence social issues that are important to Franciscans in the USA and, possibly, even internationally.

Regions and fraternities may find it difficult to speak with a common Franciscan voice on the national level. FAN gives us the ability to speak with one voice in the name of our entire Franciscan family. We can use our influence to be heard on social and religious issues that are important to us. FAN (Franciscan Action Network) seeks to help us speak with one voice as we attempt to transform the world in the spirit of St. Francis and St. Clare.

FAN is a grassroots, faith-based legislative advocacy organization with a growing national base of organizations and persons who are inspired by the witness and example of St. Francis and St. Clare of Assisi. FAN's mission is to bring a coordinated and effective voice to matters of peace, justice and care for creation to Washington, D.C., throughout the USA, and beyond. FAN website: www.franciscanaction.org

PLEASE REMEMBER US IN YOUR WILL

We value our life as Secular Franciscans and wish to have our way of living the Gospels continued through generations. If you as an individual feel strongly about this, we ask you to remember the La Verna Regional Secular Franciscans in your will. Please advise your attorney to have the request read: "I give and bequeath the sum of \$_____ unto the La Verna Region of the Secular Franciscan Order for the purpose of furthering the ideals of the Secular Franciscan Order." Correspondence can be mailed to:

**La Verna SFO Regional Council
c/o Ken Beattie, SFO
Regional Minister
4613 Amanda Lane, Apt. D
Sheboygan, WI 53081**

Your generosity will be remembered for years to come by those following the Franciscan Way of Life. Feel free to call Ken at (920) 458-6437 / or e-mail at beatiesfo@aol.com.

Editor's note:

There are some *new* arrivals to the summer newsletter and the regional council. First, you may have noticed that the council has new elected members. The council would like you to read a brief biography behind their page one photo. Rodney Knier and Jeanne Thill's election nomination biographies did not appear in the 2008 Spring LaVerna Vision, but now you can get a chance to know them little bit better.

Jeanne Thill - Resident of the beautiful Garden Peninsula, Michigan. (Directly north of Door County in Lake Michigan.) Married to Alvin and reside on the family homestead. Both are members of St. John the Baptist Church in Garden, and Jeanne is active as Eucharistic Minister, Lector, Faith Formation, Picnic Committee & a member of the Offering Committee team. She has been a Secular Franciscan for over 38 years; professed at the St. Francis Fraternity, Escanaba, MI. Currently, she serves as Fraternity Minister, and has served in all capacities for the fraternity. Retired from the State of Michigan and have spent time teaching in college & high school in business and economics, and a variety of work with the State of Michigan in Agriculture, Treasury, County, and Corrections.

On the farm, Alvin and Jeanne have raised children, cows, horses, pigs, chickens, dogs & cats, and maintain a garden for lots of fall canning. We like spending time at our campsite, traveling south mostly in winter months, and take time playing cards with family & friends. We are also Packer and Cubs fans and enjoy quiet time reading, needlepoint, crafts, and oil painting or - just doing anything that peaks our interest. We love Our Lord, His Mother, St. Francis & St. Clare . . . and will do what we can to help spread the 'good news'. Pax et Bonum.

Rodney Knier – Resident of Kiel, WI. Rodney and his wife Valerie have eight children and are blessed with 17 grandchildren. He has a M.A. degree in Languages: English Literature from the University of Wisconsin – Oshkosh. He taught English and German at Premontre High School in Green Bay. He has thirty years volunteer service with jail and prison ministry, in addition to thirty years volunteer work at Salvatorian Mission warehouse. He is a member of the Legion of Mary, Green Bay Diocese, at Good Shepherd Church, in Chilton, WI; an active parish member with St. Peter and Paul Catholic church in Kiel. At his parish church, he taught religious education for high school and grade school students.

Rodney is a people person with a penchant for the integrity of creation in gardening and enjoying family activities especially with his grandchildren. Social peace and justice concerns are in his daily prayers and applied involvement.

The final new arrival is our LaVerna Region website address. We now have two addresses to locate the website: www.laveranasecularfranciscans.com and/ or www.lavernasecularfranciscans.org. If you happen upon the former website address, you will automatically be taken to our new URL address. Also, in the near future, we will be sending the LaVerna Vision newsletter to many of you via e-mail, although you still will be able to download it from our LaVerna website. One reason for the PDF newsletter mailing is cost. By using PDF mailing, the postage and printing expenses will be considerably reduced, and that saves money to help support the retreat endowment fund.

Calendar of events coming this fall 2008

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| September 26-28 | Franciscan Living Retreat—St. Anthony Retreat Center, Marathon, WI |
| September 26-28 | St. Paschal Baylon Fraternity annual retreat at the Schoenstatt International Center, Waukesha, WI. All Franciscans are welcome! |
| October 4 | Mini-Pilgrimage to Marytown and the National Shrine of St. M. Kobe. All District SFO's and their friend or families are invited to join us. Cost is approximately \$40 adult, \$15 kids 7-12, kids under 7 are free—includes coach, lunch, Mass, Adoration Chapel, bookstore, gardens, Kolbe and Holocaust exhibits, tips. For information: dbderozier@new.rr.com by August 25. |
| October 12 | An afternoon of reflection on the spirit of poverty. Attend the 10:30 a.m. Mass at St. Mary's Church in Rhinelander, enjoy a pot-luck at noon, followed by an afternoon of reflection. Sr. Jolynn Brehm will be our guest speaker. For more information: Linda Welbes, SFO. (715) 564-2214. |
| October 12 -19 | NAFRA National Chapter, Nashville, TN. All SFOs are welcome. |
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