



## On Being Countercultural

On April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2006, Interfaith Caregivers Trenton/FIA celebrated our 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Dinner, "Lifting Up God's Love Through Volunteerism at Trenton Catholic Academy. Close to 200 volunteers from our 26 member congregations and community organizations joined together to share a meal and fellowship. Students from the high school helped to decorate the premises and serve the many volunteers. Brother George Stevenson from Redeemer Lutheran Church provided live music, while Raymond Kolison sang a variety of songs. Pat Weeks, from UJIMA Christian Church, along with her daughter, Crystal ended our celebration with a rendition of "Where We Belong" as everyone joined in the chorus. John Jordon, Co-Chairperson of ICT, hosted the event as the Master of Ceremonies.

The 2006-7 Board of Trustees was introduced. In the photo below, from left to right is seen: Joy Mentzer, Fran Meade, Rev. James Pruner, Co-Chairperson, Mary Ann Isaac, Acting Director, John Jordon, Co-Chairperson, Jack Parra, Treasurer, Wendy Cacacie, Secretary, Tom Pryor, and Rev. Dr. T.L. Steele. Not in photo: Deborah Rader and Sondra Obstein.



Deborah Rader and her husband Ray, provided the novel "hot air balloon" table decorations that went along with the theme of the dinner: "Lifting Up God's Love Through Volunteerism". Nutri-Serve donated the desserts, while AARP provided door-prizes and "Chicken Soup" books for the guests.

Fr. Rich LaVerghetta, pastor of St. Gregory the Great Church in Hamilton Square gave the key note speech, honoring ICT volunteers



His message was that the volunteers who choose to help the elderly and disabled are truly countercultural in today's world in which commercials tout self-fulfillment and instant gratification. Instead, they care for their neighbor and give of their time and talent to do so. They find joy serving others and are putting their faith into action.

The following churches and congregations were given special honors for ten and five years of service to homebound elderly and people with disabilities:

- St. Gregory the Great Church -10 years
- St. Ann's Church – 10 years
- First Presbyterian Church of Ewing – 10 years
- St. Anthony's Church – 10 years
- St. Mary's Church in Bordentown – 5 years

Congratulations to all who have given such dedicated and outstanding service to our neighbors in need!

## How Can I Help?

One of the most gratifying aspects of my new job as Acting Director is talking to people who really want to assist us in our efforts to help seniors remain independent in their own homes as long as possible. Recently, I got some phone calls from people asking me for ways to help Interfaith Caregivers. Here are some ideas:

You can find out if your job offers funds for community organizations, either through matching gifts, special awards programs or grants. Perhaps they might like to sponsor an event? Let us know who to call and we will take care of the rest.

John Jordon, our ICT Board Co-Chairperson told us about a special program at Commerce Bank that will give Interfaith a donation for every account opened. Perhaps your bank offers a similar program?

If you enjoy socializing, you could invite a few friends over for coffee to tell them about the wonderful work being done by Interfaith Caregivers. We would be happy to join you, bring flyers and information, and show a short video. A couple of hours of your time could help expand our network of caring within the congregations and Greater Trenton Area. *You are our greatest asset!*

Last, but not least, you can support our Talent Show on October 7<sup>th</sup>. (Please see page 5 in this newsletter for registration information.) We are hoping to get at least one good act from each member congregation and the community at large. I think it is going to be a great evening of energy, fun and surprises. No telling what can happen when people of faith all gather together!

Thank you for your continued support of ICT. Please keep us in your prayers. Even more than all the material support, it is the promised prayers of all our friends that surely keeps us going, as together, we work to bring comfort and support to our elderly neighbors in need.

## Congratulations!



Betty Heuser from AARP (far left) and Pat Cacacie from United Way (far right) receive Corporate Angel Awards at Interfaith Caregivers Trenton 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Dinner

Thank you, Betty, for your professional expertise provided at the joint workshop presentation on Medicare Part D, and thank you to all our friends at AARP and United Way for your generosity and support.

## Graduation

On May 24<sup>th</sup>, Acting Director, Mary Ann Isaac received a Certificate of Non-Profit Management from the College of NJ. I wish to thank Dr. David Prensky and the Merrill Lynch Community Development Company for this opportunity to learn about the many facets involved in running a non-profit organization. Their generous scholarship came at a needed time and I am most grateful for the opportunity it afforded me.

Below: Carol Pillsbury (middle right) with 10 year plaque and Pastor Elizabeth Vandegrift (right) from the First Presbyterian Church of Ewing after receiving award at Interfaith Caregivers Trenton 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Dinner.





Interfaith Caregivers Trenton/*Faith In Action*  
207 Hillcrest Avenue, Trenton, NJ 08618



**INTERFAITH CAREGIVERS TRENTON/*FIA*  
TALENT SHOW  
OCTOBER 7, 2006**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE CIRCLE ONE

AGE      5-12      13-18      ADULT      SENIOR

CATEGORY:

Singing; Dancing; Comedy Act; Instrumental; Poetry Reading; Dramatic Presentation;  
Other (Explain) \_\_\_\_\_

CONGREGATION: \_\_\_\_\_

NEIGHBORHOOD: \_\_\_\_\_

DESCRIBE YOUR ACT AND HOW MUCH TIME AND SPACE IS REQUIRED.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**All registrants must provide their own accompaniment. Decision by judges is final. Interfaith Caregivers Trenton reserves the right to take photographs for publicity purposes. \$10.00 non-refundable registration fee is required. (Includes the cost of one free ticket to the show). Offer expires June 30, 2006. Audition time and place will be announced.**

Reverend James Pruner, Co-Chair  
John Jordan, Co-Chair  
Mary Ann Isaac, Acting Executive Director

Phone: (609) 393-9922  
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E-mail address: [info@interfaithcaregiverstrenton.org](mailto:info@interfaithcaregiverstrenton.org)

### Care Giving from a Biblical Perspective

by Pastor Darrell L. Armstrong, Shiloh Baptist Church

It is my great honor and delight to be able to write the following words regarding Care Giving from a Biblical Perspective.

The ancient four major divisions of the Jewish Scriptures (Torah, Historical Books, Wisdom Books and Prophetic Books) and the Christian Gospels and Epistles form the anthology of books we know as the Holy Bible.

This anthology of books is unique, diverse, but also manifests a consistent theme about salvation and deliverance. Embedded in these miraculous stories are stories of care and care-giving. From its beginning book in Genesis, the story is one about care and care giving...how GOD created, caring enough to create and to allow for the maintenance and cultivation of Creation through Adam and Eve, the first human beings and first family. Subsequently we see GOD's provision of care through the priestly functions of atonement from sin and those who did the atoning. Ultimately, the Bible culminates in the ultimate act of care, GOD's incarnation in the person of Jesus the Christ and Jesus unselfish crucifixion on Calvary's Cross and His resurrection and ascension. This act allowed for unmerited grace and forgiveness of sins and the ability to live a humble, yet powerful life of personal and communal change. The Bible is about care and care-giving.

One might consider the aforewritten words as a "macro" view of the Bible. However, there is also the "micro" view of not only how GOD cared and cares for humanity, but how humanity should also care for itself.

The two greatest commandments are to love GOD with totality of being and to love neighbor as oneself. There is a vertical relationship and a horizontal relationship.

The latter is predicated upon the former! True love of humanity is grounded in and based upon true love for divinity.

Thus, we cannot simply say we love GOD without acting upon that love for GOD and humanity. The Ten Commandments teach us this; the first four deal with our vertical relationship with GOD and the last six deal with our horizontal relationship with each other.

GOD provided a unique method of caring for the "stranger, children and widows" among us. These three along with the High Priest were provided for through the tithes given from the people of GOD back to GOD! There is an economic reality to these three classes. The "strangers, children and widows" were usually the most socio-economically vulnerable, marginalized and segregated classes of humanity in the Ancient Near East. These same classes represent the same vulnerable classes today. The church has a moral responsibility to take care of our foster, abused, neglected and abandoned children; our widows and single parents, particularly single mothers, and the "strangers," immigrants and non-citizens who are trying to better their lives in a land of opportunity. To deny these classes attention is to deny GOD and to abandon our divine charge of care-taking, advocating, and shepherding.

Interfaith Caregivers Trenton is attending to GOD's divinely given mission by caring for individuals and families who are fragile and vulnerable. If we truly love our GOD, we will continue to support agencies like Interfaith Caregivers and do the work of "care-giving" that they do so well!

*Interfaith Caregivers Trenton thanks Shiloh Baptist Church and all their volunteers who have contributed over 1,438 hours of friendly neighbor service to homebound elderly and people with disabilities.*



Sr. Barbara Schreier and students from Trenton Catholic Academy serve volunteers at the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Dinner

It is wonderful to see the many young people who volunteer. We wish to thank Msgr. Thomas Gervasio, the staff and all the students at Trenton Catholic Academy who helped make our dinner such a special event.

### Thank You, Faith in Action!

Over the past few months, the national office of Faith in Action, funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, provided Interfaith Caregivers Trenton with a consultant, free of charge, to help guide us through this time of transition. Janet Seckel-Cerrotti, who has run a similar program in Boston (for over 20 years), met with our Board for a special strategic planning session. We are most grateful for her expertise and hope that we may become as successful in providing many years of continuing care and support to seniors in the Greater Trenton Area.

#### AARP Save the Date!

Wednesday, June 21 9:30-2:30 pm at the Trenton Lafayette Yard Marriott  
 Long Term Care- You Decide Where  
 For more information call 866-542-8165

### Mailbag

We welcome your letters and we appreciate your feedback. Please feel free to write or call us anytime at 609-393-9922.

12/08/05

Dear Friends,

During the summer and early fall, while my son and wife were on vacation, my husband, Herb, needed transportation in order to visit me at Water's Edge Rehab. Your volunteer visited him at home, drove him to see me and later visited us both at Water's Edge. Herb passed away September 26<sup>th</sup>. I am so grateful for the time you gave to him and to me. Please accept this small donation.

1/19/06

This is a gift from my heart to you people. I honor all of you! God bless you. I am very ill, but your wonderful caregivers pick up all my medications and call for drivers when I have medical appointments. I can no longer drive.

### Get Out Those Dancing Shoes!

On Saturday, Oct. 7<sup>th</sup>, from 8-10 pm, Interfaith Caregivers Trenton will be presenting an exciting evening of local talent. We are looking for people from our member congregations and from the community who would like to showcase their special talents. All proceeds will go to benefit the work of ICT.

If you have always wanted to perform, but never had a chance, this is it! If you know anyone who can sing, act, dance or has other abilities, please fill out and send the registration form on page 3. For more information call 393-9922.

Interfaith Caregivers Trenton/FIA  
Board of Trustees 06/06/2006

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Beverly Bodine, Program Assistant

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Mary Ann Isaac, Acting Director

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**"Neighbors helping neighbors"**

Please be sure to check out the registration form for our October 7<sup>th</sup> ICT Talent Show. We invite you to try out or to sponsor this very exciting fundraising event to benefit Interfaith Caregivers Trenton. Hope you can join us. Bring your friends and family!