January, 2003. How many of us held the 21st century in just a bit of awe? Here we are, living like we have, no flying cars, no robot maids, no vacations to the moon! We’ve all made it through another Holiday Season and welcomed another new year. Our work here goes on, we see the need grow every day.

Many times in our lives, the personal and professional cross. This happened to me during the past Christmas Season. My brother, Philip, passed away on December 23rd. His obituary was in the paper on Christmas Day. When I took that time off to deal with painful personal issues, many friends and volunteers helped fill the void. Life will never be the same for me. I knew my brother for 46 years, a long time to just not have that person in your life anymore. Thank you for all the wonderful heartfelt expressions of sympathy shared. Your prayers were felt. I know he is trying on angel wings now, to see if they can find one big enough for his heart.

On the other end of the spectrum, our son and his girlfriend of about five years, got eloped to Las Vegas and were married on New Year’s Eve day. All our children are officially grown, married and scattered! Two have graduated college and the third is going now. I feel it’s a job well done.

Now on to strictly business notes. We have had a busy 2002. Our visitor numbers have just about doubled since Dec. 2001, we have Children’s Connection groups at two schools, with two more coming soon. We have done much repair and maintenance to the Hospitality House and everything is looking very warm and welcoming!

With all the needs we have managed to meet this past year, our coffers have paid the price. We have received some very nice local monty. But, our budget shortfall is disconcerting. In these times of economic stress, we realize every business and non-profit is looking for ways to make ends meet. We have many angels out there that have been and continue to support us throughout the year. Let’s all prayerfully consider this ministry and what it means to us, to the guests we serve, the children and the community of Sioux Falls. As many as 75% of the inmates in the prison stay in Sioux Falls upon release. Keeping the family support strong during the incarceration reduces the chance of recidivism (recommitting), and produces healthier, safer Sioux Falls neighborhoods.

May your 2003 be blessed with love, joy, and fulfillment.

Dorothy Richards
Executive Director

Each new year begins with hopes and dreams, the best of intentions, and the ruffle of wings.
This newsletter we are going to talk about the Board’s accountability and responsibility. We will be working with the Family Connection Bylaws. In the Summer of 2002, several Board members worked on updating the Bylaws. The revised policies are available at the Family Connection office for anyone a copy.

We are fortunate to have some very active Board members. A few of the administration duties they use their time for:

Mary Montoya has been very active with public relations, decision making and coverage at the house. She has also worked on the bylaws update, goes to the prison for orientation and helps with the bookkeeping.

Bonnie Gregerson, Vice-chair, Maureen Schultz and Mike Powers are active on the fund raising committee.

Connie Matsuda, our treasurer, spends many happy (?) hours working on the financial business.

Nancy Thomas takes the time to go to the prison for orientation, and worked with Mary DeJong on the children’s Christmas program.

Clancy Matsuda and Steve Lee were the core leadership in the updating of the bylaws.

Leonard Johnson is a very active maintenance chair. When he finds our about a fix-it need, he fixes it!

Leroy Iseminger has been actively running around the region talking up a storm about Family Connection. Maureen Schultz has agreed to be our secretary for another year.

Mary Ann Giebink, has advised us on the bylaws and written two leases. Terry Welk, our newest Board member, has shown an interest in attending the orientation at the prison and working with the children in Children’s Connection.

Kudos to you all! It is reassuring to know the executive director doesn’t have to go it alone, there is always a Board member to count on.

We are in the process of recruiting two new Board members. We hope they will be as eager to be actively involved as the ones we have!

Some Dates to Remember

February 22nd- Saturday, “Time to Give Festival” at the Empire Mall from 10am-6pm. We need booth tenders for that day. If you would like to help, please call 357-0777.

April 27th-May 3rd- National Volunteer Week. A BIG Thank You to all our very angelic volunteers!

July 19th- Saturday, “Human Race”. We will be a part of this citywide fundraiser again this year. In 2002 we came in second, let’s see what we can do this year!

Meet Alden Medicine Horn. He is our new House Assistant. Alden is originally from Lake Andes. Alden works from 11am-3pm. He is a great one to have around as a “jack of all trades”! Stop by to meet and visit with him anytime.

The Angel Program

This is an annual program providing items to the Hospitality House on a monthly basis.

A sample of the schedule would be:

Month 1: Cleaning products disinfectant cleaner, window cleaner, furniture polish, toilet bowl cleaner, sink & tub cleaner

Month 2: Office supplies 7” envelopes, stamps, colored copy paper, address labels,

Month 3: Household needs trash bags, rubber gloves, air freshener, liquid soap

Month 4: Snacks homemade goodies

Month 5: Household needs after shower spray, shampoo, deodorant, toothpaste

Month 6: Office supplies stamps, 7” envelopes, address labels,

Month 7: Paper products kleenex, paper cups, plates

Month 8: Kitchen bread, milk, juice, fruit & vegetables

Month 9: Family Support $30 to house one family for one night

Month 10: Household needs dish soap, laundry soap, fabric softener, stain remover

Month 11: Office supplies stamps, 7” envelopes, notepads,

Month 12: Christmas goodies We like to have “thank you” goody bags for special angels.

Use this schedule, or create your own! This is a 12-month commitment to Family Connection ministry. If interested please call Dorothy at 357-0777.
Greetings from Family Connection! We’ve just come off a busy holiday season. The weather has more than cooperated with us and has allowed for safe travel for our guests.

We had a wonderful Thanksgiving dinner at the Hospitality House that served three families, each family contributed to the meal and even though some of the guests had just met by the end of the meal new friendships were formed. We also hosted a news reporter in the morning and had a feature story later that day on KDLT news.

During Christmas we had a very successful toy giveaway for the families that we serve in town and our out of town guests. Many children who may not have received a gift otherwise went home with presents and other Christmas goodies.

This past season I have been able to see some wonderful family reunions with the release of incarcerated loved ones. This past week I was lucky enough to see the reunion of a brother and sister after a 33 year sentence. It’s nice to witness these reunions and think that in some small way we helped make the visits more comfortable.

Jennifer Koepsell
Hospitality Director

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A guest arrived on a Friday afternoon.
As she knocked and opened the door
she called out: “I’m home”

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**Family Connection Staff**

Dorothy Richards ............................................................... Executive Director
Jennifer Koepsell ............................................................. Hospitality Director
Mary DeYoung ................................................................. Children’s Connection Dir.
Alden Medicine Horn ...................................................... House Assistant

**Board of Directors**

President ................................................................................. Mary Montoya
Vice President ........................................................................... Bonnie Gregerson
Secretary ................................................................................ Maureen Schultz
Treasurer .................................................................................. Connie Matsuda
Members .................................................................................... Leroy Iseminger
.............................................................................................. Leonard Johnson
.............................................................................................. Steve Lee
.............................................................................................. Mike Powers
.............................................................................................. Ronda Stensland
.............................................................................................. Nancy Thomas
.............................................................................................. Terry Welk

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**Advisory Board**

Dave Christensen
Del & Bernice Duncan
Bishop Norm Eitrheim
Mike Flynn
Rev. Roger & Ruth Fredrikson
Phyllis Fromelt
Glenn & Phyllis Jorgenson
Kelby Krabbenhoft
Bonnie Larsen
Ann Marie Rossing
Herm & Maizie Solem
Mary Lou Steib
Monte Walz

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**Veggie Pizza**

1/3 cup lowfat spaghetti sauce
1 Italian pizza shell
1/4 cup thinly sliced zucchini
1/4 cup thinly sliced yellow squash
1/4 cup thinly sliced red onion
1/4 cup thinly sliced mushrooms
1/4 cup broccoli florets
1/4 cup thinly sliced red bell pepper
1/2 cup shredded mozzarella cheese
2 tsp. Romano cheese

Spray non-stick pan with olive oil spray. Add all vegies and saute until tender crisp. Spread sauce on shell, arrange vegies on sauce and top with cheeses. Bake 4-8 minutes in 400° oven. Let stand 5 minutes before cutting. 211 calories per serving. Serves 6.

Kim BE
Wisconsin

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What though my winged hours of bliss have been like angel visits, few and far between. - Campbell
Children’s Connection activities have been heating up since November, when I began my tenure as Director. With the help of school counselors, we have begun support groups for children at two Sioux Falls elementary schools; and we are looking to add a third elementary school and a middle school in the near future.

The goals of these groups are to:
- Provide a safe environment for children with incarcerated parents to express concerns and feelings.
- Develop positive self-esteem and coping skills.
- Decrease the sense of shame and isolation these young people experience.
- Provide experiences that help children make positive choices and avoid behaviors that are unproductive or damaging.

It has been my experience that these children are bright, interested and loveable; and I’m very happy to be a part of serving them.

During the Christmas holidays, we were happy to receive from Royal River Casino in Flandreau a carload of Christmas gifts for children. In addition, other agencies and churches provided a variety of gifts, which we were able to pass on to the families that we serve. We invited families to stop by the Family Connection Hospitality House on December 20 for an evening of Christmas cheer. We had Christmas cookies to frost and eat and Christmas crafts for the children. While the children were under the guidance of our capable volunteers, parents were upstairs selecting and wrapping Christmas gifts. The children were also able to select a gift from under the tree to give to their parent or guardian. We were happy to meet and get to know these resourceful families; and I want to thank the volunteers who made the evening fun and satisfying.

Another part of my activities has been to go on a monthly basis to the prison to meet with men who are soon to be out on parole. I discuss the impact that imprisonment has on families in general and children in particular. I also discuss things that they may want to remember in relating to their children both while they are in prison and when they get out. Statistics show us that strong family connections are predictive of being more likely to stay out of prison in the future; and when possible, we want to continue to keep that family bond intact.

I’d like to thank the Family Connection Board, staff and volunteers for their support and helpfulness. I’m happy to be a part of this ministry.

Mary DeJong
Director, Children’s Connection

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**Wish List**

- **Kitchen Items**
  - Fresh vegetables & fruits
  - Individually wrapped snacks
  - Juice & cold drinks
  - Hamburger
  - Sharp knives

- **Housewares**
  - Swiffer mop
  - First Aid Kits

- **Children’s Connection**
  - Play dishes
  - Birthday gifts for children 8-12
  - Polaroid camera

- **Office Needs**
  - Postage Stamps
  - Colored copy paper
  - 7” envelopes
  - Toner for Canon copier
  - Ink for HP 812C printer
  - Computer address labels

- **Gift Certificates**
  - House one family ($30)
  - Grocery stores
  - Walmart
  - Office Max
  - Phone cards
  - Taxi Cabs
  - Gas Station

- **Special Needs**
  - Small fire extinguisher
  - Film for 35 mm camera

- **Furnishings**
  - Dehumidifier
  - Picnic table

Your gifts help to provide a dignified, comfortable place for our guests. Thank you for your generosity. If you would rather we buy the item, please mail a check to Family Connection, designated for “Wish List” item of your choice.
From a Guest’s Heart...

We received a letter from a woman whose son was incarcerated the first part of December. She was looking for answers. Here is an excerpt from her letter:

“Thank you for calling...my plans were to be with my son for Christmas but it didn’t work out at my work...so I hope you can help us with a place to stay after Christmas...

I’ve never been to Sioux Falls or to the penitentiary so I have no idea where I’m coming to...I guess we’ll get to Sioux Falls around 6pm. If we can stay at the Family Connection on these dates... This is all new to me so I’ll be lost this 1st visit. I’ve never been to a penitentiary (just seen them on tv) so I’m kinda scared. I’m hoping you can tell me how to get there.

Once again, I want to thank you for giving me and my family a place to stay. I haven’t met you yet but I feel I know someone now in Sioux Falls and that takes away some of the “stress” I’m feeling.

“To Jennifer and the staff at Family Connection, Merry Christmas and God Bless you.”

Family Connection wants to thank all the angelic support we receive to make visits like this possible.

We received some very touching Christmas cards this year with kind words added. One card reads: “There are those who open their hearts to others...who give of themselves, who make all the difference.”...It’s Christmas, and I just want you to know how wonderful it is having someone like you in my life.” We would like to share some of these with you.

“Thank you for bridging together the miles and states away seem a whole lot closer.

M.B.

“Everytime I look at my husband, I think of all the wonderful people who helped me feel like my life was less like a nightmare. I miss you. Thank you!”

R.L.

Many thanks for all the kindness shown to me and my family. We all have something to be thankful about this year. Happy holidays and God Bless all of you.

M.C.

The Younkers Benefit Sale on November 16th brought us $...
The Quilt Sale on December 6-7 netted us $660.

Thank you everyone for your support!
Blessed are the givers...and grateful are the receivers

Individuals
Anderson, Dean & Marilyn
Andrus, Milan, Stephen & Eulalia Katherine
Anonymous
Anderson, Dorothy
Baney, Calvin & Nina
Basche, Doug & Rebecca
Bauer, Barry & Judith
Bell, M. Agda
Bieber, Dale & Mardella
Bjerke, Jenneth & Nilda
Blake, Jerry & Susan
Buckwalter, Phyllis
Banek, Elizabeth
Braithwaite, Richard
Campbell, Kimberly
Caselli, Robert & Delila
Cimburek, Charley or Patricia
Crandell, John & Nancy E.
Dimick, Floyd & Karen
Dirckson, Michael & Pamela
Donohue, Dan & Laura
Duke, Marilyn
Dixion, Nola & Lola
Ekland, Norman & Muriel
Erickson, Raymon & Phyllis
Ericson, Ginny
Esom, Richard & Arlene
Graff, Curtis & Sally
Halverson, Kenneth & Mary Alice
Heidenson, Richard & Audrey
Hippe, Stanley or Ruby
Hoffman, Wendell & Holly
Holt, Joanie
Homan, Tim & Pamela
Hagen, Bruce & Beth
Heege, Robert & Grace
Hill, Willard & Betty
Hoxsie, Dagmar
Hurley, Tim
Hyland, Lowell & Norma
Jaqua, Drs. Richard & Mary Jo
Johnson, Nancy
Joyce, Jr. Mr. & Mrs. James
Jensen, Dorothy
Jensen, Elizabeth
Johnson, Orville & Belva
Knudson, David & Deanna
Knutson, Louis & Audrey
Krumm, Hildegarde S.
Larson, Dorothy
Leonard, Greg
Larson Katherine
Larson, LeRoy & Jorene
Lemon, Ruth
Lemonds, Thomas & Dorothy
Lewis, Allen Revocable Trust
Mckercher, Dr. Scott & Laurita
Mehrohans, Arden & Norma
Mikken, Doris
Moberly, Thelma
Mortenson, Brian
Miller, M. Robert
Montooya, Maria
Muth, Wayne or Karen
Nerhood, Harold
Nuegebauer, Lloyd & Janice
O’Dea, Doris
Oliver, Robert & Angela
Olson, Arthur & Ruth
Olson, Michael & Deborah
Parry, Rodney & Ruth
Plooster, Peggy
Pat & Bob Ludow Foundation
Powers, Michael C.
Richards, Ronald & Dorothy
Rorning, Doreen & Melvin
Rossing, Dr. David & Anna Marie
Rye, Kermit & Doris
Ritz, Beryl
Salmela, Steve & Connie
Schafer, Dr. & Mrs. C.T.
Schack, A.
Soben, Norman & Sandra
Svens, Kenneth & Ronda
Sundahl, Verna
Sullivan, M. Arian
Schuemann, Kathy
Thomas, Dr. David & Nancy
Thompson, Keith & Gloria
Tiegen, Jeanne
Tilberg, M. S. Randall
Tripp, Marvin & Marilyn
Waff, Dorothy
Warner, Harold & Carol
Wentzel, Rex & Carol
Yarrow, Arlan & Carol
Zylstra, Sharon

Organizations
Aabram Lutheran Church Women
American Lutheran Church Women
A Scension Lutheran Church Women
Badger Lutheran Women of ELCA
Benton Couples Club - Benton Lutheran Church
Bergen WELCA
Bethany Lutheran WELCA
Canton Lutheran Church
Crestwood Women - Sioux Falls
Faith Women of the ELCA
First Baptist Church
First Lutheran Church - Mitchell
First Lutheran Church - Sioux Falls
First Lutheran WELCA - Volga
First Lutheran WELCA - Britton
First Lutheran WELCA - Sherman
First Presbyterian Church
First United Methodist Church - Montrose
First United Methodist Church - Sioux Falls
Grace Lutheran WELCA
Grace Circle - Rosedale
Grace Lutheran Church - Sisseton
Grand Valley WELCA
Harry Weeks Aid
Highland Church Women
Hudson Lutheran Church Women
Huyt VELCA
Hilltop United Methodist Women
Local 750.0 Retirees
New Hope WELCA
Norway Lutheran Church Women
Oldham Women of the ELCA
Our Savior’s WELCA - Wessington Springs
Our Saviors Lutheran - Flandrude
Our Saviors Lutheran Church - Patience City
Renner Lutheran Church
Royal River Casino
Salem Lutheran Church
Scandinavia WELCA
Springdale Lutheran WELCA
St. John’s Women of ELCA
St. Joseph WELCA
St. Paul Lutheran WELCA
St. Vincent de Paul
Trinity Women of the ELCA
Trinity Lutheran Church - Arlington
Trondhjem WFM
United Methodist Women of Ethan
United Methodist - Sioux Falls
West Nidaros Women ELCA
Willow Creek WELCA
Woods, Fuller, Shultz
Zion Women of the ELCA
Zoear Mission Circle

Grants
Elmen Enterprises
John & Francis Beck Trust

In-Kind by Individual
Barbara Waff
Robert Callahan
Harold & Berdine Boster
con’t on page 7
A Sadness Shared...

My brother, Philip Bell was an angel here on earth. He was born August 12, 1956. He died suddenly of a heart attack on December 23, 2002.

Philip was what the world calls “handicapped”. He had a disease called schizophrenia, and a low I.Q. He attended Sioux Vocational School and was a client of Fifth Street Connection. When he got his own apartment, he was very proud. He made friends easily. We thought, when he wasn’t with a family member, he was home watching tv, enjoying his cigarette and coffee. But, as we learned at the prayer service, he had many friends and an active life. These friends told us about the day bus trips he would take to different casinos around...Royal River, WinnaVegas, Jackpot Junction. Places many of us have never visited! They told us about the fun times at McDonald’s and Grand Fun Alley with his friends’ children.

When we cleaned out his apartment, we stopped for a break in the bar in the basement. The people there all knew him and as I was leaving, one after another came up to me saying “You’re Phil’s sister?” then take my hand and offer their condolences. I was happy at that moment. Happy he had a life that touched so many people. Happy that he had a life full of friends and laughter.

The passage chosen for his funeral was the one where Jesus tells of “doing this to the least of my brethren”. For two reasons, society considered him one of the “least”, but also, he had no “least of these” in his life. It just never occurred to him to judge anybody.

I will miss him. We will all miss him. He was a kind man. He loved his family and his nieces & nephews very much, as much as we loved him. He had some very dear friends. I know, when each new year comes and I hear the angels’ wings rustle, it will be him, watching over us.

Dorothy Richards
Executive Director

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My Tax Deductible Gift:

Name: __________________________
Address: ________________________ Street City State Zip

Gift Enclosed: $ __________ I will pledge: $ ______________

Please return this pledge card or place your donation in the envelope provided.

Thank you!

If there is an error in your mailing label or if you know of someone who would like our newsletter, please let us know!

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In-Kind by Organization

Hurley Methodist Church
Rosholt Lutheran Ladies
Grace Lutheran Church
Canton Lutheran Church
American Lutheran Church
Our Saviors Lutheran Church
St. Vincent De Paul
Velden Seniors Citizens
Trinity WELCA
West Nidaros Lutheran
Hurley Methodist Church
Rosholt Lutheran Church
NABS Employer of NABS
St. Michael’s Parish
Christian Missionary Alliance Church
Our Saviour Lutheran Church
Holy Spirit Church

Memorials
Philip Bell given by Dorothy Richards

Consider making a memorial donation
When you wish to make a charitable donation in a loved one’s memory, please remember the Family Connection House.
“Keeping families together while they are apart.”

“Do not forget to entertain strangers for by so doing, many have entertained angels unawares” Hebrews 13:2

Check Us Out on the Internet! www.augie.edu/related/FamilyConnection

**Note new web page address!**

Happy Valentine's Day to all our angels out there!

Our e-mail Address is: family.connect@hotmail.com