

# MercyMatters

Newsletter for the staff of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas – South Central Community

Fall 2010

## WHAT'S INSIDE

- 2** A meaningful name  
Mercy Lynn Tasi is born in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.
- 2** Keeping the faith  
The Hernandez family endures the Nashville flood.
- 3** Service Award Winners  
Forty-nine employees have reached five-year milestones in their service to the Sisters of Mercy.
- 4** Catherine's Residence  
Beauty shines from the inside, out.
- 5** Best wishes, Ray  
Ray Harris retires from his driving job in Cincinnati, Ohio.
- 6** Benefits for 2011  
Our enrollment begins in November.
- 7** Employee reminders
- 8** South Central adopts a highway  
Clean-up along North Main Street in Belmont is needed and appreciated.

## CALENDAR

- November 2  
All Souls Day (Guam only)
- November 25-26  
Thanksgiving
- December 8  
Immaculate Conception Day (Guam only)
- December 24-27  
Christmas (check your schedule)



Sisters of Mercy of the Americas  
South Central Community

## Model of Mercy Norma Headspeth

# Part of Mercy for some 50 years, she serves with "fidelity and love"

In her 53 years with the Sisters of Mercy, Norma Headspeth has witnessed firsthand the changes in the sisters and religious life. The length of the sisters' veils shortened, then sisters stopped wearing habits. But for more than a half-century, one thing hasn't changed: the mutual love between the sisters and Norma.

Norma first worked at Mercy Hospital in downtown Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. However, when the sisters needed someone at Mount St. Mary to care for the sisters in the infirmary, they turned to Norma. Arriving at the Mount, Norma cooked, cleaned and helped the sisters with their baths. In 1975, Norma moved with the sisters to Mercy Health Center Convent; many sisters said they wouldn't move if Norma didn't come with them.

"The sisters absolutely love her," says Joanne Griswold, director of nursing at Mercy Health Center Convent. "She was with them before any of the rest of us here. They all think the world of her."

Today, Norma still helps them with meals, baths, showers and dressing. She always strives to treat people right, and she treats the sisters as she would want to be treated or how she'd want someone to care for her mother. She doesn't get upset or mad with the sisters; instead, she relies on smiles and hugs.

"Even when they're upset, I just sit and smile and wait," Norma says. "I like what I'm doing, so what do I have to gripe about?"



Several of Norma Headspeth's children attended Mercy schools in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Sister Clotilda Toelle, one of the sisters for whom Norma now cares, once taught Norma's children.

Joanne describes Norma as kind, caring and patient.

"She gives wonderful care to the sisters," Joanne says. "I can't say enough about her. She's a wonderful example of mercy."

Several years ago, Norma stopped working full time at the convent, cutting back to weekends, holidays and filling in when needed. However, that doesn't mean she's retired. During the week she cares for four to seven small children in her home.

Model of Mercy continued on page 3

# A most meaningful name

## Mercy Lynn Tasi is born in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

When Brenda Tasi started working as a nurse at Mercy Hospital in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, in 2000, the name Mercy instantly struck a chord with her. Although she didn't have children at the time, she told her husband, Junior, that when they had a daughter, she wanted to name her Mercy. On September 4, Brenda's wish came true when Mercy Lynn Tasi was born, fittingly, at Mercy Health Center.

Brenda says she and Junior wanted something unique and, with their strong Christian background, something meaningful. Mercy, meaning compassion, fit the bill. The connection to the sisters

and the idea of showing love and compassion to others led Brenda and Junior to choose Mercy as their daughter's name.

Mercy already has made two visits to Mercy Health Center Convent, where Brenda has worked since 2001. Mercy is well loved by co-workers and sisters alike.



Brenda and Mercy Tasi

A healthy baby who loves to eat, Mercy weighed 8 pounds, 6 ounces, and was 21 inches long at birth. Her long eyelashes caught the attention of hospital nurses, with several bringing other nurses in to see Mercy.

Brenda loves her work with the sisters at Mercy Convent because she has the opportunity to build relationships with them. She's grateful for the generosity of the sisters and her co-workers and how they've supported her, Junior and Mercy.

"The sisters care about you," Brenda says. "Co-workers are like family with the sisters."

# Keeping the faith

## Hernandez family endures flood

When Rubidia Hernandez and her family left their Nashville, Tennessee, home on a rainy May morning headed to a birthday party across the street, they had no idea the devastation they would find when they returned.

From her mother-in-law's home, Ruby, a housekeeper at Mercy Convent in Nashville, and her husband watched the rising water and decided to return home. They found their home flooded and everything inside gone. Ruby says they were basically swimming through chest-high water.

"We lost everything," she says. "It was awful to see our home like that."

Ruby, her husband and four children stayed with her mother-in-law until September, when they were able to return to their home. The four months were filled with cleanup and repairs.



Rubidia Hernandez

Despite the long process of rebuilding, Ruby showed up for work every day with a positive attitude. At first, many of Ruby's co-workers didn't even know what she was going through. Today, as Ruby and her family settle back into their home, Ruby is grateful for the support she received from her co-workers and the sisters at Mercy Convent.

"They gave me a lot of support because it was hard for me to come to work and know I didn't have a home to live in," she says. "Thank God I'm working right here. Every sister that is living here is good to us. They were praying a lot for me and my family."

Although their home still needs some repairs, Ruby says her family is happy to be home.

"Everything is good now," she says.

## Model of Mercy Norma Headspeath

(continued from page 1)

"I'm not a sitting-down, sitting-around person," she explains. Norma thinks that if she didn't have these two jobs, she'd end up going back to bed every day. "I feel that if you don't keep going, you're going to go down. When you stop, everything else stops."

### "I'm not a sitting-down, sitting-around person."

Norma Headspeath

Parents often marvel when Norma gets their children to do things they can't. The mother of eight, grandmother of 13 and great-grandmother of 15 keeps the children in a routine, something she did when raising her own children. That routine always starts with a hug, just as her routine with the sisters does.

Sister Rose Elizabeth Power, who has known Norma for years, says, "The sisters think of her as a member because she has served with such fidelity and love. I don't know of anyone who doesn't love her."

For now, Norma has no plans to stop caring for the sisters.

"As long as I can, I will," she says.

*This is an excerpt from a poem expressing what Norma has meant and continues to mean to the sisters in Oklahoma City.*

#### Norma of Oklahoma AND OF MERCY By Sister Rose Elizabeth Power

She came to Mercy Hospital on 12th and Walker  
Young and ready to fulfill what life had already  
taught her  
Pray, work hard, love God, smile, go on.

The year was 1957  
Hospital work was hard and heavy  
Hours were long and weary and many  
But Norma continued with a steady grace  
It was her duty to each day face  
Pray, work hard, love God, smile, go on.

So she continued until a fine day in 1968  
The Mount Sisters were overwhelmed with  
daily chores  
Some members had already paved their way  
and could walk no more.  
Hospital Sisters then sent Norma, their very best,  
To relieve the others and give them needed rest.

## CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR SERVICE AWARD RECIPIENTS

This year, we're recognizing 49 full-time and part-time employees who have reached five-year milestones in their service to the Sisters of Mercy. Each recipient will receive a letter and a certificate of appreciation from the Community Leadership Team, a gift he or she selects from a catalog, and engraved luggage tags. Congratulations to these co-ministers for their years of service!



Name	Service level	Name	Service level
<b>North Carolina</b>		<b>St. Louis, Missouri</b>	
Rhonda Collins . . . . .	5	Venita Lofton . . . . .	10
Patricia Howell . . . . .	10	Jennifer Ross . . . . .	10
Natasha Alexander . . . . .	10	Mary Ann Kaletta . . . . .	20
Kimberli Timmons . . . . .	10	Barbara Chihak . . . . .	30
Karen Mikell . . . . .	10	Richard Stockton . . . . .	35
Renee Reynolds-Darity . . . . .	10		
Emma Addison . . . . .	15	<b>Louisville, Kentucky</b>	
Jennifer Hardin . . . . .	15	Rosanna Kemper . . . . .	15
		Brinda Johnson . . . . .	15
<b>Cincinnati, Ohio</b>		Mary Ann Moore . . . . .	15
Maryetta Willingham . . . . .	5	Carolyn Gough . . . . .	15
Debora Stockburger . . . . .	10		
James R. Lohre . . . . .	10	<b>Mobile, Alabama</b>	
Kathy Dillon . . . . .	10	Jaunga Nettles . . . . .	5
Yvette Jewell . . . . .	15	Betty Beckham . . . . .	5
Judy Barnett . . . . .	25		
Charlie Ihle . . . . .	40	<b>Nashville, Tennessee</b>	
		Francis Mendieta . . . . .	10
<b>Fremont, Ohio</b>		Diane Singleton . . . . .	10
Ann Bixler . . . . .	5	Jackline Robertson . . . . .	15
Marsha Cook . . . . .	10		
Lavonne Babione . . . . .	25	<b>Barling, Arkansas</b>	
		Elizabeth Boles . . . . .	10
<b>Baltimore, Maryland</b>		Linda Massey . . . . .	10
Tracey Hough . . . . .	5		
Dionne Henson . . . . .	5	<b>Guam</b>	
Janice Holeman . . . . .	5	Gina Lasam . . . . .	5
Shirnette Goodall-Brown . . . . .	5	Liza Salanatin . . . . .	5
Donna Fleming . . . . .	10	Anthony Camacho . . . . .	35
Linelle Dorsey . . . . .	15		
<b>Oklahoma City, Oklahoma</b>		<b>Savannah, Georgia</b>	
Brenda Tasi . . . . .	5	Evelyn Wright . . . . .	10
Larita Tipton . . . . .	20	Patricia Sheppard . . . . .	10



Chapel at Catherine's Residence

# Catherine's Residence

## Beauty shines from the inside, out

Catherine's Residence, home to 36 sisters and one sister's mother, is located on the campus of Mercy Center in St. Louis, Missouri. Residents stay busy with Friday afternoon tea, spirituality activities such as scripture study and days of reflection, morning exercise, movie afternoons, participating in the chimes group, and arts and crafts. Sisters also enjoy lunch at local restaurants and trips to Cardinals baseball games or local theater productions. With the help of the dietary staff, sisters bake and decorate cookies, cupcakes and pies for local soup kitchens and shelters.

"What makes Catherine's Residence special is the sisters and the staff and those who planned the new building," says Sister Barbara Grant, administrator.



Front entrance of Catherine's Residence.

"So much of the outside can be seen from the inside."

Special features at Catherine's Residence include a chapel, an indoor therapy pool, three outdoor patios, a physical therapy room, a computer room and a library. More than 40 staff members care for the residents.

Construction on Catherine's Residence began in October 2004, and sisters moved into the 51,649-square-foot retirement residence in April 2006. Catherine's Residence earned Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Certification for New Construction in recognition of the efforts to provide a healthy living space while reducing the environmental impact.

## Best wishes, Ray



Ray Harris

We send our best wishes to Ray Harris, who retired in October after 12 years as a driver at McAuley Convent in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Known for his wonderful personality, Ray took good care of the sisters he transported, and they always enjoyed traveling with him. When he wasn't driving, he took on other responsibilities at the convent such as waxing floors, cleaning carpets and caring for the birds.

We thank him for his years of dedicated service in the spirit of Mercy. The sisters and his colleagues will miss him.

“You must be cheerful and happy, animating all around you.”

*Catherine McAuley*



Although Catherine's words were intended for those who joined her in serving women and children in need in 19th century Ireland, her insight holds just as much meaning for us today.

She was a compassionate, prayerful woman who founded the Sisters of Mercy in 1831. Despite her spirituality, Catherine realized that serving others

can be stressful and she frequently encouraged those around her, placing her trust in them. She also laughed frequently and loved to dance, traditions that the Sisters of Mercy—and many co-ministers—continue today.

### Fast facts about our South Central Community

Geographic reach . . . 18 U.S. states, Guam and Jamaica

Sisters of Mercy . . . . . 687

Mercy Associates . . . . . 618

Employees . . . . . 534

Retirement Convents . . . . . 13

### Test your knowledge, win a prize!

Answer these questions correctly and your name will go into a drawing for a **\$50 gift card**. You'll find the answers on our South Central website ([www.mercysc.org](http://www.mercysc.org)) or in this newsletter. Good luck!

Who founded the Sisters of Mercy? \_\_\_\_\_

What year were the Sisters of Mercy founded? \_\_\_\_\_

Name a country besides the U.S. where groups of Sisters of Mercy live? \_\_\_\_\_

How many employees are there in our South Central Community? \_\_\_\_\_

Which policy in our Employee Policy Manual talks about bad weather? \_\_\_\_\_

Your name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Your work location: \_\_\_\_\_ Work phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Please copy this completed questionnaire and send it to: Patricia Manzi, Mercy Administration Center, 101 Mercy Drive, Belmont, N.C. 28012-2898 or fax it to 704.829.5267. **Deadline for entries is Friday, November 19, 2010.**

# Benefits 2011

## Enrollment begins in November

In November, you'll receive materials at work providing you with background information and steps for enrolling in benefits that go into effect January 1, 2011.

Those steps include completing a new enrollment form.

The most significant change is that Christian Brothers Employees Benefit Trust will provide our benefits package, instead of Aetna. However, all of the providers—including doctors, dentists and hospitals—that you currently use will still be available to you.

Coverage that Christian Brothers will provide for 2011 is:

Health	Life insurance
Dental	Short-term disability
Vision	Long-term disability

“Our sisters already are covered by Christian Brothers, so we know their service is excellent and their processing of



“Our sisters already are covered by Christian Brothers, so we know their service is excellent and their processing of claims is very timely.”

Patricia Manzi,  
director of human resources

claims is very timely,” says Patricia Manzi, director of human resources for our South Central Community. “We believe this will be a smooth transition for our employees.”

Our current employee pension and

403(b) already are Christian Brothers plans and those will continue.

Only our flexible spending account (FSA) will be provided by a different vendor, and we'll announce that shortly.

## OBSERVED 2010 HOLIDAYS

### Continental U.S.

**Thanksgiving Day:** Thursday, November 25

**Day after Thanksgiving:** Friday, November 26

**Christmas Eve Day:** Friday, December 24

**Christmas Day:** Saturday, December 25

(if scheduled to work)

**Monday after Christmas:** Monday, December 27

**New Year's Day 2011** will be observed on Friday, December 31, 2010

### Guam

**All Souls Day:** Tuesday, November 2

**Thanksgiving Day:** Thursday, November 25

**Day after Thanksgiving:** Friday, November 26

**Immaculate Conception Day:** Wednesday, December 8

**Christmas Eve Day:** Friday, December 24

**Christmas Day:** Saturday, December 25

(if scheduled to work)

**Monday after Christmas:** Monday, December 27

**New Year's Day 2011** will be observed on Friday, December 31, 2010

You can download a copy of MercyMatters at <http://www.mercysc.org/news/mercymattersstaff-newsletter>.

# Employee reminders

## Keep an eye on PTO

As we near the end of 2010, please keep in mind that it's your responsibility to keep track of your paid time off (PTO). You can use PTO for vacation, sick and personal time.

Although you're not required to use all of your PTO each year, you can only carry over a maximum of 136 hours into the next year. Any hours above that amount will be lost at the end of the year.

You'll find your current balance of PTO hours on each pay stub. The amount you earn depends upon your years of service and the scheduled hours you work. For more details, read Policy 403 in our *Employee Policy Manual*.

## Thanks for taking part

In all, 243 employees in retirement conventions took part in voluntary staff surveys

we completed in late summer. Our thanks to you for your time and valuable input. The results identified a great deal of good work that's underway, as well as some areas needing improvement. If you haven't already received the results from your administrator, you will soon. Please feel free to ask when results will be shared at your work location.

## Don't ignore request

If you receive a notice asking you to provide documentation for unsubstantiated claims charged to your flexible spending account (FSA), please be sure to respond with the receipts and other information necessary. Employees who don't respond promptly will receive IRS Form 1099 requiring that they pay income taxes on the claims.

Beginning January 1, 2011, you will need a doctor's prescription when you use your FSA to pay for certain over-the-



counter medicines. Examples of those products are:

- Allergy and sinus
- Anti-itch and insect bites
- Cough, cold and flu
- Pain relief
- Stomach remedies

The reason for the new requirement for a doctor's prescription is federal healthcare reform.



Sometimes severe weather strikes even in locations like Belmont, North Carolina, that rarely receive significant snowfall. As the weather gets cooler in many of our locations, it's important that you read our Inclement Weather Policy (Policy 307 in our *Employee Policy Manual*) so you're familiar with it before bad weather hits. If you have questions, please ask your administrator or supervisor.



## South Central adopts a highway

Not afraid of getting their hands dirty, eight staff members and two sisters from Belmont, North Carolina, collected litter along a two-mile stretch of North Main Street on October 1, 2010. To support Mercy's Critical Concern for Earth, each person received two garbage bags—a blue bag for recyclable material and an orange one for trash. The Adopt-A-Highway program in North Carolina is one of the largest in the U.S., covering 12,000 miles.

Sister Barbara Wheeley appreciated their efforts:

*Thank you! Thank you! For the great clean-up on North Main Street! I noticed it immediately on Friday when I was driving home from work —both the clean areas along the road and the many orange and blue bags! I very much appreciate your contribution to the environment that I travel every day!*

Sandy Mansir, accounts payable coordinator; Sister Rose Marie Tresp, justice director; and Patricia Manzi, human resources director, collect trash along North Main Street in Belmont, North Carolina.



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