



*The*  
*Community of Hope International*  
**CONNECTIONS**  
*Summer 2016*

*A Letter from Carla Cooper, COHI Development Advisor*

We are delighted to announce that COHI has been awarded another challenge grant for 2016! Our generous donor was very pleased with how well we responded to last year's challenge and commended us for both "the hearty way you rose to the challenge and the changes you have made in your organization toward becoming more financially sustainable and toward integrating giving into your organizational culture." Needless to say, we are deeply grateful to every single donor who helped make last year's campaign such a rousing success! And now on to our 2016 challenge.

Between now and December 31, 2016, COHI has the opportunity to earn as much as \$10,000 in a matching grant from our benefactor. This year's incentive is smaller than our 2015 match because our funder sees that our fundraising capacity has matured and assumes that we should be able to raise funds in excess of a dollar-for-dollar match. As such, we want to use this year's opportunity not only to realize the full \$10,000, but also generate at least an additional \$5,000 in gifts from individuals and an additional \$5,000 in gifts from other sources.

As you will see, every penny raised will be put to good use. In the weeks to come, we will be communicating much more about the 2017 goals and objectives that drive this next campaign, including the continued growth of centers, increased support for regional representatives, the move of the annual conference to Trinity University in San Antonio, and the hiring of a part-time Executive Director, which will in part help relieve our beloved founder of administrative burden, giving her more time to articulate the unique power of COHI's vision and mission, as only she can do.

Thank you again for helping ensure that COHI grows stronger in service and in spirit in the year ahead.

*Welcome New Centers!*



**St. George Episcopal Church,  
San Antonio, TX June 20, 2016**

**Church of the Advent,  
Brownsville, TX June 20 2016**

*Coming Soon...*

*Keep a watchful eye!*



COHI is looking for a part-time Executive Director! Please watch the website for the job description and directions for application. The work location is virtual, the travel minimal, and the job will be exciting!  
[www.cohinternational.org](http://www.cohinternational.org)



# 2016 COMMUNITY OF HOPE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

June 6-8, 2016 \* Camp Allen, Navasota, Texas

In early June, 121 people gathered, in Community, at Camp Allen. Attendees came from Alabama, Arkansas, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Kansas, Minnesota, New Mexico, Utah, and Virginia. Our speakers came to Camp Allen from New York and Australia



Some Reflections from Fr. Casey's talks:

- We are always in a state of beginning.
- We need to expose ourselves to the God of unconditional love.
- The spiritual life is becoming the person God designed us to be.

Our journey is God's work. We should pray for the grace of self-doubt.

*from Jennifer Sassin*

- We become more aware of the full reality of who we are through prayer
- When we pray we find the person we really are.

*from Pam Heidt*

- Michael Casey characterized the "full reality of who we are" like Thomas Merton's True Self. He continued with the exhortation to stop being GOOD trying to fit into others' expectations, and to find your heart at the center of your being.

*from Melanie Klotzman*



Highlights included:

Talks and discussions with Fr. Michael Casey and Sr. Carol Perry; Lectio Divina and Meditation talks with Br. Michael Gallagher and Carla Cooper; Debriefing video; meeting old and new friends; and the always one of the favorite and moving services - the Blessing of the Hands.

Some Reflections on Sr. Carol's Talks:

- God's time is now. We are to live in the fullness of today.
- God is never on hold. If we start the day in prayer we can't become a victim; a day ending in prayer is less likely to unravel.
- Reflection on Luke 13:10 (the woman who was bent over and healed by Jesus in the synagogue). Sr. Carol asked, "How tall can you stand?"

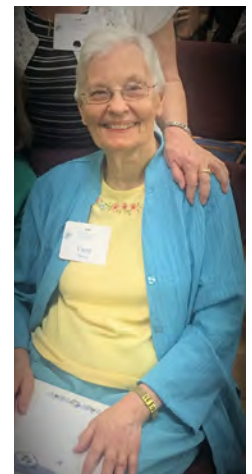
*from Jennifer Sassin*

- God's revelation to the ancient Hebrews was: God's steadfast love for us (which no other deity exhibited.)

- Time dominates our lives: "Time is all we have and what we don't have."

- Irish proverb: "God created time and He created plenty of it."

*from Pam Heidt*





# News from the Regions

## HERITAGE REGION

BEVERLY DAVIS

PAT BEACHY



East Houston Medical Center and Bayshore Medical Center held a Commissioning Ceremony on June 28, 2016 at Love Walk Christian Center. Front row (left to right): Jacob Mohammed, Alice Madrid, Marlen Denova, Linda Meyer, Dolly Ondrias, Marie Salas, Clydette Baker, Pastor Phillip Roman (Spiritual Advisor); Back row (left to right): Enrique Cruz, Wilfred Mathew (hiding), Angela Poochia, Sandra Montelongo, Rita Sanchez. Not shown: Randolph 'Randy' Hamid.  
*Submitted by Dolly Ondrias*

Upcoming Heritage Region events:

- September 8-11: **Women's Retreat with Sr. Adeline** at Holy Cross Monastery in Beaumont
- October 21-22: Community of Hope **Heritage Region Retreat** at Holy Cross Monastery in Beaumont.

*Submitted by Beverly Davis*

Western Heritage Centers members enjoying the porch at Camp Allen, *left to right:* Vicki Knipp, Mary Clarke, Deb Archer, Lee Lopez, Reggie Akers, Martha Zumwalt, Ann Marie Ellis, Frana Keith and Bob Davis.



*photo submitted by Ann Marie Ellis*

*submitted by Pat Beachy*



The Community of Hope at Christ Church, Nacogdoches enjoyed our annual Feast of St Benedict meal and then packed 200 bags of weekend food for the children at Briar Forest Colonia. *Submitted by Wanda Cuniff*

The Western Heritage Centers had several in attendance at Conference: from St. David's, Grace Georgetown, and St. Julian's. It is my joy to report that St. Julian's Center recently recommissioned its first graduating class of lay chaplains and commissioned two others. St. David's has a training class that will soon be completed. St. James, Austin, and Christ Church, Cedar Park, will enthusiastically begin training this fall and start their own centers.

These Centers have had two socials to get acquainted and attended a workshop on addiction. Other activities are being planned: a retreat and spiritual gifts workshop. It is my pleasure to work with these dynamic centers.

*Submitted by Pat Beachy*



# More Region News...

## WEST TEXAS REGION

Lin Boudreaux

I am delighted to report that the West Texas Region has two New Centers; the Church of the Advent in Brownsville and St. George's Church in San Antonio! The Church of the Advent starts its first class this September. I would also greatly commend the generosity of the wonderful folks in the Diocese of West Texas when asked to contribute to the coffers of COHI via their silent auction donations! I must say we did have an abundance of beautiful and varied gift baskets and individual donations. On behalf of COHI, I thank you all from the bottom of my heart.

*Lin Boudreaux*



*Adele Novak and Tricia Jones helping Lin load auction items.*



West Texas Region members Adele Novak, Tricia Jones, Lin Boudreaux, Marty Worsley, Andrea Wise and Martha Bernhardt finishing another wonderful breakfast at the Conference at Camp Allen in June.

Martha Bernhardt's comments after attending her first COHI Conference: *I wish I could do it all over again (the speakers that is.) The food was too much and too good. My room was really a home away from home. Very nice. I got some very nice items at the auction and from the shop (Nancy). Almost forgot the wine and cheese. How could I miss that. A lovely way to spend the evening.*

## SOUTH REGION

JENNY SMITH

PAT SHAHA



Attending conference from the South Region: Pat Shaha, Reni and Steve Golnik, Art Williams, Gayle Fiser, Jenny Smith, and Craig Williams.

*Submitted by Jenny Smith*



# More from the Conference...



Photo by Ann Marie Ellis

Photo by Patti Suler

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Photo by Patti Suler

## About the Live Auction and Raffle:

The 2016 COHI Conference and Auction was enjoyed by all and brought in a total of \$4,521, \$3300 from the auction itself. The remainder of the earnings was from notecards, debriefing cards and books, and \$400 in donations. There were 99 items in the auction; all items generously donated by members of COHI. Our appreciation is given to those who so generously made these donations – without you the auction would not happen. Great thanks to all who participated in bidding and congratulations to the winners. Many thanks to all who purchased raffle tickets and congratulations to the winners. Lin Boudreaux and I wish that we could thank each of you in person. We are grateful for your generosity. Last, but definitely not least, a very special thanks to the lay chaplains who volunteered and worked so well at the auction and raffle!!

Pat Beachy and Lin Boudreaux 2016 Co-chairs for COHI Auction and Raffle



*In closing:*

## *Thoughts and Prayers for these stormy times.*

### **Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer**

Oh God, we have had the wind knocked out of us. We have been knocked to our knees by violence. We are mourning.

*How can we take another step without you?*

God give us **patience**. We know that non-violent changes take time.

*Are we listening to all the voices at the table— even those that oppose us?*



God give us **wisdom**. People have always gotten scared and angry. People have always lashed out.

*Are we open to change?*

God give us **compassion**. Violence is timeless.

*Are we giving solace to the victims and finding a way of justice for those who are marginalized?*

God give us **courage**. Giving birth to change is scary.

*Are we standing together against the ways that need to be changed?*

God give us **perseverance**. Over and over and over again. Oh please God, give us the strength to keep on going.

*Are we tending to our minds, bodies, and souls so we have the strength to keep running this marathon?*

God give us – as impossible as it might seem – **love** for all our siblings. Amen.

***I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.***” John 13:34-35 (NRSV)

Prayer by Lynn Willis, Spiritual Guide – LEAD (Living Every Day as Disciples)

*(Shared with COHI Regional Representatives by Beverly Davis, COHI Regional Representative for the Heritage Region)*

### *Reflections from Community of Hope President and Founder*

Dear Community of Hope lay chaplains,

...’united in prayer - equipped for serving’,

At our annual conference last month, our closing hymn was, ‘Here I am Lord, Is it I Lord? I have heard you calling in the night, I will go Lord, if you lead me, I will hold your people in my heart’. Today those words are a clarion call to all of us.

The language of grief and disbelief is all around us; haunting scenes of violence, people running for their lives. Let our tears renew our baptism as ONE in Christ. Let our prayers be for strength to be instruments of hope and healing. Let our hearts be filled with gifts of humility and compassion so that our ‘ministry of presence’ showers the broken-hearted with God’s comfort, peace and love. Pray for each other; pray without ceasing, pray for peace. Amen

*The Rev. Dr. Helen Appelberg*