



# PAX CHRISTI

## Catholic Community

952-941-3150 • www.paxchristi.com • Third Sunday of Easter • April 18, 2010

### WE ARE NOW ESTABLISHING THE PAX CHRISTI CROSSROADS FUND

—Mary Kennedy, Director of Stewardship



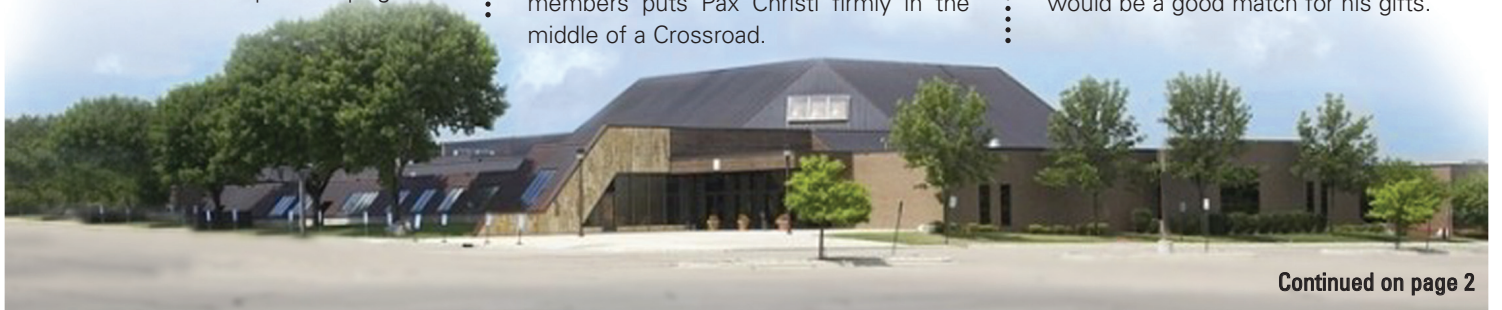
I met a steward named Jim a couple of months ago when he sought some help from Pax Christi at a time when he found himself at a Crossroad. He understood that he had some time and gifts that he was called to share; he just didn't know if or how his gifts could be put to the best use. Each one of us may find ourselves at a Crossroad at some point in our lives. A few months ago, Fr. Kennedy stated that even Pax Christi itself was at a Crossroad. It was just a year ago when the Community Council cancelled the capital campaign that

was to continue our progress on the Master Plan developed by leadership of Pax Christi over many years. In retrospect, this was a wise decision, and any expansion of this facility and grounds will need to be addressed at some future time by future leadership in this community.

However, a portion of that cancelled capital campaign included funding to solve existing and critical long-deferred maintenance needs of this facility and grounds, debt reduction, and technological improvements, and none of these needs have diminished in the last year. In fact, the maintenance and upkeep of the facility were overwhelmingly noted as most important when members were solicited for input during the two years of planning for that cancelled campaign. The needs were thoughtfully identified by the leadership and staff with a careful consideration and prioritization of what would best serve today and tomorrow's Pax Christi community. Determining how we as a community can best respond to the daily needs of this community as well as be good stewards of this facility and grounds for tomorrow's members puts Pax Christi firmly in the middle of a Crossroad.

Perhaps an examination of one steward's response to being at a Crossroads can provide us with some direction in how we as a community of faith can successfully travel through the Crossroads we now face.

When Jim called the office, he wanted some help to find another way to share his gifts. He said he was fairly involved in a service corps for retired executives but wanted to do more. I asked him to tell me a bit about himself, and he said he was "just a shade tree woodworker - a hobbyist at best" and asked if there might be any opportunities in that area. I shared a bit about the Hard Hat Group, but he said he wasn't too good at standing for long periods of time, and we laughed together about how tough it is as age creeps up on you. Ken Reineccius, our Facilities Director, joined the conversation and came up with a great idea that we needed someone to build a display box to mount our shofar, a ceremonial instrument made from a ram's horn, which had been gifted to Pax Christi. So Jim agreed to come into the office to take a closer look at the shofar and see if building this display box would be a good match for his gifts.





Shofar used at the Interfaith Celebration.

The next morning was the start of a busy day, and I was pretty sure I did not even have a morsel of time to squander, but God had other plans for my time that morning. God wanted me to meet Jim. I just didn't realize it at first. I got the call that someone was here to see me, and as I walked up to the front reception desk, my mind was busy with the details of the day. I know that I could have shown Jim the shofar and hurried back to my office and to the day's work, but something compelled me to sit down and learn a little bit more about this man and the Crossroads where he found himself. Jim came prepared to share a brief resume of his abilities before I agreed to let him do the task. First, he told me the story of how he used his woodworking talents to build a speaker's podium for St. Thomas Academy. He showed me the photos of similar podiums he had researched in his quest to make the best. He unfolded the drawings he had carefully made which provided dimensions and exacting notations proving his attention to detail. He shared with me how proud he was when he saw photos of speakers using the podium he had made, and the pride of workmanship showed as he shared how his gift was still in use to this day.

Jim mused that his wife in her good nature put up with him disappearing into the shop for hours on end, but he truly enjoyed creating things out of wood and reminded me that he was "just a shade tree woodworker - a hobbyist at best." We examined the shofar, and Jim said he was glad he had come to see it as this was going to be quite a feat of engineering. The ram's horn twists and turns require an intricately constructed display box. As Jim measured, his excitement about this project began to grow. We discussed the pros and cons of specific wood species and stain color and then did a walk about to look at another display box we have on site. Along the way we chatted

about our mutual alma mater, St. Thomas, attended a generation apart, Jim's years as a bank executive, and how a museum piece was stolen one time and how a shoddily made display box probably was a factor in the theft. I knew that our shofar would receive a display box that would demonstrate the very best gifts this shade tree woodworker had to offer. As Jim left, he thanked me for my time and I told him that truly the pleasure was all mine. I considered myself blessed to have had the opportunity to meet this talented man. Over the next few days, I found myself thinking about Jim and the stories of his life that he had shared with me in our brief encounter and reflected on the perfect symmetry that occurs when identified needs fit with gifts shared.

But just as God had other plans for me the day I met Jim, so, too did God have other plans for Jim. You see, Jim didn't get to complete the display box as he passed away ten days after I met him. Jim didn't know that his time left here was short, yet all the way to the end, Jim kept looking for ways to give back -however and wherever he could. I get to treasure some fine memories of a brief encounter with a true steward. This was a man who challenged himself to continue to find ways to share his gifts with his family, the community, and the institutions that were important to him, even when he was at the age where he had every reason to sit back and let others do the heavy lifting and giving. I met a steward named Jim Buckles, and he made a difference in my life. May you rest in peace, Jim.

Jim was at a Crossroads in his life but doggedly searched for ways to share the gifts he had been given to help him advance in his journey of stewardship as a way of life. Just as Jim needed assistance with determining the direction that best fit his needs to give, so must we at Pax Christi rely on our members to provide the answer to our identified needs to move us through the Crossroads we now face.

To assist in that endeavor, we are now establishing the Pax Christi Crossroads Fund. The Crossroads Fund is an attempt to be good stewards of our facility and grounds by establishing, over a period of three years, a fund of what we hope will be \$4 million.

\$1.5 million will be held in reserve for future sustainability, and the remainder will be used for needs identified and prioritized by staff and leadership when we were under consideration of the capital campaign. These needs include improvements to the relocated chapel, long deferred maintenance, technology, hospitality, and safety improvements for the facility and grounds, expansion of the pastoral care outreach fund, as well as reduction of existing debt. We are encouraged by the generosity of some members of this community who have already provided pledges as well as specific gifts to the Crossroads Fund, including a new Crucifix for the chapel and establishment of a permanent place for reservation of the Eucharist. The Crossroads Fund is an extraordinary opportunity for the members of our faith community to move forward the mission and vision of tomorrow's Pax Christi.

In the next few weeks, all members of this community will be asked to consider how they are called to participate in this extraordinary opportunity to serve the needs of Pax Christi through the Crossroads Fund. In addition to supportive prayer, we welcome gifts of any size and manner, immediate cash gifts, pledges that continue over three years, as well as gifts of stock, or gifts of labor or materials needed for a specific project. Should you have any questions about the Crossroads Fund, feel free to contact me, 952-405-7220, or [mkenedy@paxchristi.com](mailto:mkenedy@paxchristi.com).

