

# CONNECTIONS

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2008

## THE FIRST WORD

### Resources for You

One MHS Alliance membership benefit for CEOs is a subscription to *Health Progress*, a magazine produced by the Catholic Health Association. Many CEOs have told us that they enjoy the thoughtful articles about church-affiliated organizations' aligning mission and identity. Topics that staff have found valuable include "Evidenced-Based Community Benefit," "Leadership Formation," and "Sponsorship."

In the 2007 member survey, you told us that the value of the *Health Progress* subscription is not so high as some other services. We want to put our resources into areas that are most important to you, so we promised to explore our options.

We're pleased to report that you can have your cake and eat it too. *Health Progress* is now available free. Simply go to [www.chausa.org](http://www.chausa.org) and click on either the current issue or browse the archives for issues you missed. As staff, we will keep *Health Progress* on our reading list and alert you to articles most germane to our mission.

In the September-October issue of *Connections*, I told you about a program called Executive Circles that we're launching to support and sustain CEOs. Meeting dates have been set for 2009, and registration materials will be coming to you soon via email.



Mim Shirk  
Vice President



### SUNNYSIDE VILLAGE SENDS FULL TEAM TO MENNONITE HEALTH ASSEMBLY

Year after year, Sunnyside Village of Sarasota, Fla., makes a strong statement at Mennonite Health Assembly by sending an entire team to the four-day event. Again in 2009, they plan to be well represented at the assembly in Cleveland, Ohio, March 19-22.

As Sunnyside Village board members and staff assess the annual assembly, they can quickly name some concrete benefits. Among other lessons, they have learned to:

- Clarify their mission, vision, and core values;
- Report on operations vis-à-vis professional benchmarks;
- Anticipate and cope with change, including succession planning;
- Use the insights of colleagues in sister organizations to recognize challenges and focus on realistic solutions; and
- Embrace the best professional practices.

H. Greg Lee, vice chairman of the Sunnyside Village board, appreciates the team-building advantages of attending Mennonite Health Assembly. He said, "It is a time for board members to get to know each other. When you know each other, you can work together more easily."

Another board member, Naomi Miller Schlabach, echoed Lee: "Mennonite Health Assembly for me has been a process of learning, networking and relaxing. The time spent at MHA has provided our board an opportunity to develop meaningful relationships with each other, as well

*(continued on next page)*



Menmonite Health Services  
[www.mhsonline.org](http://www.mhsonline.org)

*(continued from first page)*

as professional relationships with others in similar fields of service.

Schlabach added, “Many of the presentations and workshops presented — ranging from reminders of our missional and community focus to CEO and board evaluation tools, conflict management strategies, and process improvement issues — have served as templates for our own growth journey at Sunnyside Village.”

Nursing home administrator Diane Marcello commented, “MHA allows me time to learn about what other faith-based organizations are experiencing. Networking, learning about innovations, and seeing friends and listening to how well they are doing or what challenges they are facing are important to me.”

In the judgment of Sunnyside Village administrators, investing resources in board development by participating in Mennonite Health Assembly is returned to the organization. Board members believe they are better equipped to steer Sunnyside Village into the future with an Anabaptist vision.



**J. David Yoder**

J. David Yoder, Sunnyside’s executive director, said, “In my experience, I have seen a correlation between the effectiveness of a board of directors and its

regular participation in board development activities such as Mennonite Health Assembly. The assembly has provided a common setting for board members to think together about how they will do their work as a board more effectively.”

Begun in 1968, Sunnyside Village now includes 38 duplexes, 66 villas, 122 garden apartments, and a lakeside community center. Its mission is to enrich the lives of residents, staff and the community by providing homes and facilities, services and programs in a Christian environment.

“Board members who strive to adapt best practices of governance are best equipped to lead nonprofits in navigating through uncharted waters.”

— Ann Kent

## **SPEAKER ANN KENT WILL HIGHLIGHT CHANGING CLIMATE FOR NONPROFITS**

Your **not-for-profit** organization might be generating the revenue it needs, but today’s dynamic climate suggests that current methods of operating will likely undergo continual change. Will your organization thrive in the future?

Ann Kent, vice president, services, for Nonprofits for Business Volunteers Unlimited, will present a major address on “Trends Impacting Today’s Nonprofit Community” at Mennonite Health Assembly in Cleveland, Ohio, March 19–22.

Kent plans to review changing emphases regarding earned income, administrative service organizations, new strategic alliances between for-profit and not-for-profit organizations, and likely implications for public policy changes that will affect not-for-profit organizations.

Kent will also address some new trends in fund raising, including the increase in family foundations, the growth in on-line contributions, and greater transparency requirements in completing IRS 990 forms.

Following her address, Kent will also lead a workshop titled “Best Practices of Nonprofit Governance.” She will highlight topics such as establishing board member expectations, building a supportive structure for the board’s work, and recruiting and engaging board members.”



Kent noted, “Board members who strive to adapt best practices of governance are best equipped to lead nonprofits in navigating through uncharted waters.”

**Ann Kent**

## \$30,000 GRANT FROM FRIENDS FOUNDATION WILL HELP MEMBERS STRENGTHEN IDENTITY

A \$30,000 grant from the Friends Foundation for the Aging and additional funds from Greencroft, Rockhill, and Virginia Mennonite retirement communities will help MHS Alliance member organizations incorporate Anabaptist values more strongly into their corporate identity and daily practice.

The grant will fund the following project activities:

- Describing the Anabaptist story and convictions in a readable format.
- Creating values statements based on Anabaptist understandings.
- Developing a tool to measure behavioral markers for each value.
- Writing an interview guide and orientation outline to assist boards in selecting new executives.
- Delineating key activities that

executives can use in shaping identity

- Editing a resource kit that highlights what other organizations have done to reinforce values.

Tim Stair, consulting services associate for MHS Alliance, is serving as overall project director. He said, “All along the Values Integration Initiative has been driven by the desire of member organizations to see our values — Anabaptist values — lived out in the work place. We formed a members’ task force around this initiative at the outset, and the CEOs involved shaped the planned outcomes of this project.”

Two other MHS Alliance staff members are also assisting with the grant. Rick Stiffney, president and CEO of MHS Alliance, is conducting interviews with member executives. Mim Shirk, vice

president, is directing marketing and production of resource materials.

The project will conclude with a consultation with Friends Services for the Aging and the Association of

Brethren Caregivers. Together, they will share what has been learned, looking especially at the correlation between Peace Church values and a high quality of care.

Friends Foundation for the Aging supports programs that advance Quaker values in senior care, that provide new or expanded options to support seniors in their own homes, and that promote career development in the field of long-term care.



Tim Stair

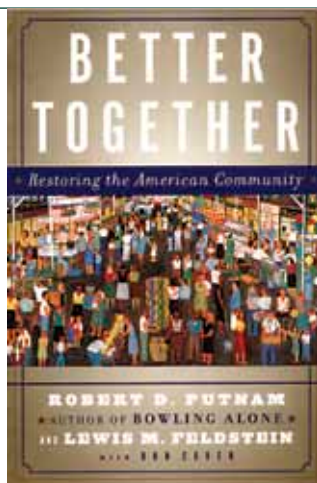
## THE LATEST TRENDS

### Feldstein to Emphasize Building Social Capital

Robert Putnam astutely observed in his 2000 bestselling book, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, that Americans had become less and less connected to one another and to community affairs.

Three years later, Putnam and co-author Lew Feldstein focused on ways Americans were working to re-establish bonds of trust and revitalize community spirit. They wrote a second book titled *Better Together: Restoring the American Community*. It includes vivid stories of 12 successful efforts to build community in every region of the country.

Feldstein, now president of the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation, will give a keynote presentation at Mennonite Health Assembly on “Building Social Capital: It Is Better



Together.” He plans to weave these themes into his address:

- No one sets out to build social capital;
- Scale matters: smaller is better;
- Aggregate to achieve impact;
- Social capital does not end conflict;
- Telling stories has power;
- Multiple connections are stronger than a single touch; and
- There is no magic formula. Act individually,
  - and through organizations,
  - and through public policy.

Feldstein said, “Social capital is built through hundreds of actions, large and small, that we do every day. Try some actions on your own or with your co-workers and neighbors. Build trust in your organization and neighborhood. Get involved.”

Lew Feldstein





## MEMBER NEWS

**J. David Yoder** has been appointed executive director of **Sunnyside Village**, Sarasota, Fla.

The **Kings View Corp.** of Fresno, Calif., has appointed **Leon Hoover** as its new chief executive officer effective Dec. 1. He will succeed **Frank Duerksen**, who will retire Nov. 30.

**Rich Heim** has resigned as chief executive officer at **Kidron Bethel Village**, a retirement community in North Newton, Kan.

**MDC Goldenrod**, which provides services for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families with offices in Middlebury, Ind., received a \$3,000 grant from the Elkhart County Community Foundation for board development. The grant will enable the board to address these topics: governance, committee organization, self-assessment, clarification of board and staff roles and functions, and strategic planning. Rick Stiffney, president of MHS Alliance, will serve as a consultant to MDC Goldenrod in implementing this grant



## COMING ATTRACTIONS

### Developmental Disabilities CEOs

Nov. 13, Goshen, Ind.

### MHS Alliance Board Meeting

Nov. 13-15, Middlebury, Ind.

### Anabaptist Providers Group

#### Senior Team Forum

Nov. 18, Harleysville, Pa

### Midwest Chaplains

Jan. 21, Goshen, Ind.

### Safety Officers

Jan. 26, Teleconference

### Plains HR Network

Feb. 5, Newton, Kan.

### Midwest Development Network

Feb. 12, Archbold, Ohio

### Midwest HR Network

Feb. 17, Berne, Ind.

### Values-Based Leadership Program

Feb. 24-26

Laurelville, Pa.

### Executive Circles, Session 1

March 18-19

Cleveland, Ohio

### Mennonite Health Assembly and Annual Members Meeting

March 19-22, 2009, Cleveland, Ohio



234 South Main Street • Suite 1  
Goshen, Indiana 46526  
800.611.4007 • 574.534.9689  
www.mhsonline.org

Nonprofit  
Organization  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit No. 751  
Sioux Falls, SD



## THE LAST WORD

The core mission of MHS Alliance is to support the development of faithful and effective Mennonite-Anabaptist health and human service ministries. Both the faithful and effective dimensions of this mission are critical to our ongoing success.

If member organizations lose their distinctive identity as organizations with clear roots in a faith community, they will likely become secular organizations. When organizations depreciate the essential values that motivated their founding, they both risk losing their reason for being and jeopardize their mission.

In addition, if member organizations don't pay attention to key performance issues, they might fail to deliver key services, and their doors could close. In these economically tumultuous times, we must stand together, inspire faithfulness, and find ways of offering practical resources to each other.

At MHS Alliance, we covet the feedback of every member organization. We need to know whether we — as your national organization — are being faithful and effective in developing and delivering resources that help you to be faithful and effective. We hope you find our ongoing relationship nurturing and beneficial.

Please complete the member services utilization and satisfaction survey when it comes to you in December. MHS Alliance is your organization. Your feedback counts. Our board pays attention.

**Rick Stiffney** President/CEO

