

The Joan Times

Newsletter #1
from Joan Huguenard
September, 1984

MOVEMENT FOR NORTH AMERICAN MISSION

This is the first of a series through which I plan to inform you of the good work of this mission movement and of my involvement in it. If you'd prefer not to be on the mailing list, just let me know (I won't be offended.) Otherwise, a few 20¢ stamps dropped into an envelope would help me with the postage - but don't feel obliged.

My Story...

It begins five years ago this summer when I decided that when Andy (my youngest) had finished high school, I would return to college. Pondering then my post-college life, I knew it would have to be in a dedicated ministry of some kind. I was profoundly moved as I recognized God's applause for my decision in the brightest and hugest display of Viceroy Butterflies you'd ever want to see in one spot! I, too, would emerge from the cocoon where I'd hidden so long, and go wherever the Spirit would send me.

To be ready for that time and to cement my commitment, I purchased a nice second-hand van equipped with sleeping, eating, working and cooking space. Subsequently I moved from the city of my birth and studied theology at Marquette University. After graduation, I spent a year working with Senior Citizens and other social activities of a Catholic parish dedicated to the life-giving concepts of Vatican II. It was a great learning experience for me.

Then I was led to the Movement for North American Mission. So many significantly "coincidental" events occurred as I searched out my next move that I am confident that I have indeed been "led" in this direction. So on September 23rd, I will begin five weeks of intensive training for the work. The training headquarters, Wellspring House, is a 335 year old home in Gloucester, Massachusetts. Imagine being there for, the whole show as Nature puts on her annual color spectacular in glorious New England!

After training I will return to Milwaukee until I begin my two-year field placement in January. Waiting 'til January will be difficult. My assignment will likely be either Chicago or Milwaukee.

The M.N.A.M. Story...

MNAM was created, according to the brochure, to respond to two kinds of need - the need of poor and marginal people (in wealthy North America) for immediate practical help, and for help in shaping their own future, and - the need of Christian lay people for realistic training and opportunity to follow their vocation to serve the poor in their own country.

MNAM was founded just three years ago by two great women, an American educator and a renowned theologian from England. When they met in 1979, they discovered they had similar vision. They saw needs not being met and they shared energies to find new ways to meet them. They recognize that the roots of our Christian tradition are missionary and they are calling people back to their roots.

Nancy Schwoyer taught and principalled for many years and Rosemary Haughton raised 10 children and authored over 30 books. They established Wellspring House as headquarters for MNAM and also as a residential crisis center. Homeless, marginal, recovering and disenfranchised find shelter there and nurturing of both body and spirit.

At this time there are just six graduates of the training who are working in the field. Three are in Appalachia, offering home health care, health education and shelter for battered women in this pocket of desperate poverty in our beautiful nation. Two women offer the distribution of food and clothing as well as G.E.D. training in Gary, Indiana, a place aptly termed "America's armpit" where incredible unemployment lies even heavier than the rancid air. And a former history professor from Canada is now based in Chicago where he ministers to street people - prostitutes, bag ladies, mentally deficient, immigrants from isolated corners of the world, and despondently unemployed.

I find it exciting to be on the ground floor of this movement. Though in these early stages the few missionaries can't yet be surrounded by the supportive Christian community MNAM steadfastly represents. (Rosemary and her husband have just celebrated the tenth anniversary of a successful experiment in Christian community in Scotland.)

Your Story...

You are invited to participate, too, if you agree that this is an important work. How? Let me count the ways...

1. PRAY for MNAM. Please pray for guidance, courage, insight, energy, tenacity, vision, faith, hope, unconditional love and you name it!
2. Read and share the newsletters. Maybe you'd even want to run off a few copies for friends.
3. Forego a cup of coffee or an extra magazine to donate the money instead. MNAM is so new, it must depend on

your generosity for its support.

4. Let me send you a puppet! I bought dozens of adorable animal hand puppets so I could give one to anyone who makes a TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATION of \$18.00 or more. They're realistic, washable, easy to operate. Make check to MNAM, send to me and ask for a lamb, raccoon, beaver, gopher, gray or red squirrel, spider (!), gray or white rabbit, monkey, black, red, white or black-and-white pig, puppy, kitten, skunk, gray or tan floppy-eared rabbit, or bear - panda, koala, polar, black or brown. A friend is taking orders in a distant city from a full color brochure showing all my little critters. Let me know if you'd like a brochure, too. One of my pigs went all the way to Hong Kong!!

My address til Oct. 25 - Wellspring House, 302 Essex Ave. Gloucester MA 01930. After that - Joan Huguenard, 932 East Townsend Street, Milwaukee WI 53212