Servant-leadership is sometimes portrayed as a lovely philosophy which is, ultimately, impractical in the tough world of competition. Don’t tell that to employees of the Sisters of St. Joseph (SSJ) Health System in Michigan, which is the largest group we know of practicing servant-leadership as part of their corporate philosophy. Employees of the SSJ Health System are enjoying the congruity of values implemented at work, home, and places of worship. As one employee said, “It was exciting to find that my values and the values of the System are the same.”

The SSJ Health System employs over 13,000 people in a network of hospitals, nursing homes, adult day care centers, home health care services, clinics, and other agencies across four regions in Michigan. In the early ’60’s, the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Nazareth, who had begun their Michigan work in 1889, began to broaden their governance by adding lay trustees, lay administrators, and finally lay CEO’s. In 1993 the SSJ Health System appointed its first lay President/CEO, John Lore. He strives to be a servant-leader and is committed to supporting integration of the core values system-wide. In 1990 the Board began an effort to ensure that the Scripture-based but universally-applicable values which created the System were honored in the most intimate fabric of organizational life. Thus was born LEADERSHIP IN A CHRISTIAN ORGANIZATION, a conscious effort to promote a value-based culture transformation and preserve core values no matter how many Sisters remained in the next 100 years.

Joyce DeShano, SSJ, and Senior Vice President of the SSJ Health System, brainstormed with System leaders on how to turn this initiative into a reality. “We resisted becoming a ‘program’,” she says. “That’s why we go very slowly and try to deepen the experience with each group of employees.” Phase I of the effort was a year-long effort by a steering committee to define System Values.” They arrived at five:

• Service to the Neighbor. Unhesitating outreach to those in need, respecting the dignity of each person.
• Servant Leadership. The use of gifts and talents on behalf of all of us in a way that models what we can be and empowers us to try.
• Compassion. The ability to enter into the deepest experiences of life and be present with one another in our need.
• Wisdom. The ability to appreciate the complexity of life and make sound judgments for the common good.
• Stewardship. Responsible, innovative use of human and material resources.

(Continued on page 4)
A Legacy of Commitment
by Carole Hamm

"Sigmund Freud, when asked about his recipe for happiness, replied: 'work and love.' If one finds satisfaction in work and in relations with other people, one is well on the way toward improving the quality of life as a whole."

From the book, Flow, by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi

This past winter I had the opportunity of having dinner with several of the members of the Greenleaf Center. During the course of the conversation, I asked what I might do to help the Center. One of the members suggested that I consider speaking at this year’s conference. I didn’t give her invitation much consideration that evening for I have come to realize that I am much more comfortable helping to make tough decisions in our own family business at Country Cupboard than I am speaking in front of people.

A few days after I returned home, a letter arrived from the Greenleaf Center and it started me thinking about our corporate story. A story that started with a vision from my Dad. A story that we don’t spend a lot of time thinking about. We just live it daily. But the request made me pause for reflection.

My Dad was working in a large corporation back in the early ‘60’s when he found himself very disillusioned that his voice was not being heard and disappointed with the direction the company was taking. He felt he was not serving himself well and could better demonstrate a decency in business by going into business for himself. With very little support from family or friends, he followed his dream. I remember his long working hours—sometimes a very tired Dad—and a need to go to work myself at a very early age to help meet household expenses.

Thirty years later, the business has grown beyond any of his expectations. Never in his wildest dreams would he have thought that what exists today would have been possible. We never thought much about what we did, we just did it. We were committed to what we had begun as a family. We were committed to the people that worked there and the community in which we lived. We wanted to provide them with the best quality product and services that we could render. It was a way of life for us—extending ourselves for the good of others. I always thought that the principles we lived by were a blending of how I was reared as well as learning from the demands of the business.

There were tough times and tough decisions along the way. There were times of frustration as I sought out my own awareness and what part I played in our business as it grew and went through many transitions. I have come to appreciate those times as growth for myself as well as those individuals working with us. And I have come to realize that the greatest investment of time and money that we’ve made over the years has been to impart our knowledge and experience to others about how things work, the elegance of simplicity within our business, and the dignity of the job we perform.

We have been blessed with the opportunity to have built a business. We would also like to think that our entrepreneurial endeavors have been a demonstration of free enterprise and that there are still opportunities for the visionary—the person who can see it, feel it, and make it work through commitment and integrity.

I look forward to seeing many of you at our servant-leadership conference this Fall (October 6-8), and to sharing with you how our principles of serving others has worked for us in a very real and personal way.

(Carole Hamm is co-owner of Country Cupboard Inn-Restaurant-and-Shops, located in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania. Carole has recently joined the Greenleaf Center’s Board of Trustees.)
Message from the Executive Director

by Larry Spears

For well over a year now I have had posted over my desk a copy of a poem by James Autry entitled: “Resisting.” In it, Autry has captured perfectly the internal conflict I sometimes feel when it comes to balancing the need for getting things done in organizations against the need to understand-and-care-for others.

I now begin every work day by reading it (which may give you some idea of the depth at which it speaks to me). I have found it to be most helpful in quelling within me some dark-and-disturbing waters of lifelong impatience. My thanks go to Richard Smith for first introducing me to this poem.

Perhaps Autry’s poetry will speak to you as well. In any case, I am happy to be able to share it here with you. I also invite you to share with me any poems which you find speak to the issues of servant-leadership.

Resisting

by James Autry

There are days when the old ways seem easier.
To hell with consensus
and community building
and conflict resolution
and gentle persuasion.
Time to kick some ass,
turn some heads around,
get some action,
make this place move.
Time to stop asking questions
and give some orders.
Time to get things ready for inspection.

It’s an old urge,
the luxury of power,
the first temptation of bosshood,
and it comes like a bad temper
on a day when someone won’t accept
the answer I gave,
and pushes again,
another five-minute meeting that eats up an hour,
another printout to prove a point not worth proving,
another ploy to protect someone’s invisible turf,
another dance along that border
between debate and defiance.
I feel the anger flashing
and fight what I want to say,
all the top-sergeant stuff
like “Shape up or ship out,”
or “Tell it to the chaplain.”
When I’m lucky,
the thought of those words
bouncing off the paneled walls
makes me smile.
When I’m not,
I take a very deep breath.

“Resisting” is reprinted with permission from Love and Profit: The Art of Caring Leadership, by James A. Autry.

Who is the Servant-Leader?

The servant-leader is servant first. . . . It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. . . . The difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant — first to make sure that other people’s highest priority needs are being served. The best test, and difficult to administer, is: do those served grow as persons; do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? And, what is the effect on the least privileged in society; will they benefit, or at least, not be further deprived?”

— from The Servant as Leader
by Robert K. Greenleaf

The Greenleaf Center’s Mission

“The Center’s mission is to fundamentally improve the caring and quality of all institutions through a new approach to leadership, structure, and decisionmaking. Servant-leadership emphasizes increased service to others; a holistic approach to work; promoting a sense of community; and the sharing of power in decisionmaking.”

The Greenleaf Center’s Goals

1. To help deepen an understanding of the original ideas of Robert K. Greenleaf and the principles of servant-leadership, via the preservation and promotion of his writings.
2. To nurture colleagues and institutions by providing a focal point, and opportunities to share thoughts and ideas on servant-leadership.
3. To produce and publish new resources by others on servant-leadership.
4. To connect servant-leaders in a network of learning.

Originally founded in 1964 as the Center for Applied Ethics, Inc., the Center was renamed the Robert K. Greenleaf Center in 1985. The Center is an international, not-for-profit institution headquartered in Indianapolis, Indiana.
The Heart Aroused: Poetry and the Preservation of the Soul in Corporate America

by David Whyte, Currency (Doubleday), 1994, 298 pages, $22.50 hardcover.

Reviewed by Jeff McCollum

(From time to time, reviews of books relating to the idea of servant-leadership are included in The Servant Leader. This review is written by Jeff McCollum, a member of the Greenleaf Center’s Board of Trustees, who is a teacher and consultant. Jeff was formerly Education Director for AT&T Consumer Products.)

"It seems," David Whyte writes in the opening chapter of The Heart Aroused, "that all the overripe hierarchies of the world... are in trouble and are calling, however reluctantly, on their people for more commitment, creativity and innovation." In the pages that follow, Whyte's poetic ear, eye and language knife open the underbelly of pain and suffocation and personal sacrifice induced by life in post-modern institutions—for-profit and eleanosmary.

Whyte is a full-time poet (his published volumes include Songs for Coming Home, Fire in the Earth and Where Rivers Meet) who has consulted to a broad base of American organizations. To Whyte, soul, "the ineffable essence of spirit and being," has been anesthetized by the modern corporation's desire for order, control and no surprises. As a consequence, spontaneity, creativity and discovery have also been put to sleep.

Robert Greenleaf, who wrote and talked about a theology of institutions, was concerned with the freeing of the human spirit in the workplace. Allowing my mind to drift, I can imagine quite a spirited dialogue between the two.

The Heart Aroused is punctuated by selections of poetry (Whyte's own, Robert Frost, Pablo Neruda, Rainer Rilke, Derek Walcott and many more) and "teaching" stories drawn from around the world. They are woven with Whyte's direct observations based on his consulting experience to create a rich tapestry. Each chapter addresses an aspect of soul development and expression.

One chapter uses Beowulf to amplify issues of power and vulnerability and, ultimately, spirituality. Finding our soul means coming to grips with our fears (Grendel) and their source (Grendel's mother). "Whatever strategy we employ, or whoever we choose to speak with, we are eventually compelled to bring our work life into the realm of spiritual examination."

In "Fire in the Earth—Town toward a Grounded Creativity," Whyte urges us to slow down in order to grow smart... "...all of us are familiar with frantic busyness as a state which continually precludes us from opening to the quiet and contemplation it takes to be smart. The fast-moving mind rebels against slowing the pace because it intuits that it will not only have to reassess its identity but also take time to recover and recreate... and that would be a loss of momentum difficult to justify." In my own life and work, I notice that busyness has become epidemic. It was as if busyness could ward off the dark omens of potential layoffs and would build in an insurance policy against failure.

Whyte's description of the soul at mid-life is compelling. He describes mid-life as preparation for "eldership." The pattern described is the pattern of Greenleaf's life. He passed mid-life while still working at AT&T. His retirement from AT&T was an initiation into eldership and marked the beginning of his most prolific period of writing and consulting. Greenleaf's eldership created the Center for Applied Ethics, which has become the Robert K. Greenleaf Center for Servant-Leadership.

Eldership is about service. "There is," Whyte writes, "tremendous natural beauty in an organization that allows people to bloom and grow, to be excited, to be proud of their work, and to understand the connection of the work to a greater ecology than the organization alone." This is precisely the garden that the servant leader cultivates.

I found The Heart Aroused to be provocative in the sense that Whyte's observations would trigger an intense moment of reflectivity and a fresh insight into my own experience in a large, bureaucratic organization. It also deepened my understanding of servant-leadership. If you are looking for something prescriptive, don't pick up The Heart Aroused. Whyte, ever the poet, insists that we learn through experience.

David Whyte lives on Whidby Island, WA. He can be contacted through Many Rivers Company, P.O. Box 868, Langley, WA 98260. In addition to writing and consulting, he leads tours to the Lakes District of England, Ireland and other sacred spots.

SSJ (Continued from page 1)

In Phase II, the core leadership group worked with Design Teams to create an agenda for a series of retreats, first for executives, then for administrators and managers. By all accounts, the retreats are experiential vehicles for integrating the System's values. A remarkable animated, Academy Award-winning film, The Man Who Planted Trees, shows the power of one dedicated, patient human spirit in transforming a barren landscape into a lush forest of life and living. Each participant is given an acorn to keep after the retreat, a tangible symbol which triggers recall of the ideas and emotions of the retreat experience. Small group sharing, prominent, visiting presenters, and resource materials help employees translate values into specific activities.

Phase III and IV of implementation are currently underway, exposing larger numbers of employees to System values. On paper, the implementation process sounds like a "top-down" approach. Not true. Trustees only went through the retreat in 1994, four years after System leaders developed the outline. Employees at many levels have designed and implemented the initiative. Not every one of the four Regions has moved at the same pace, nor has each implemented System values in exactly the same way.

Even though implementation will continue for several years, results so far have been impressive. This process of implementation is a slow evolution that is providing a foundation for formulating responses to current and future health care issues. At the more personal level, exposure to this initiative has inspired managers to undertake improvements ranging from greater diversity in choosing minority suppliers to changes in leadership styles. Coaching is spontaneous.

There is much more to learn from the SSJ Health System and its ongoing efforts. Leaders of the System have authorized the Greenleaf Center to share details of their efforts. For a packet further explaining the SSJ Health System's transformation, contact the Center.
We invite you to join The Greenleaf Center as it celebrates its 30th anniversary. This year's conference celebrates servant-leaders and their institutions practicing Greenleaf's concept. Leadership development is on the agenda of many organizations today. Servant-leadership is different. Based on the ideas of Robert K. Greenleaf and the experience of scores of individuals and institutions, servant-leadership is being explored by those seeking to align personal and institutional life with values which can build a better, more caring society. It is a new paradigm for thinking about leadership, and for the mature expression of the human spirit in life and work.

Come hear over 30 practitioners tell their stories of how they've implemented servant-leadership. The weekend provides time to learn, share, listen,

reflect, teach and grow personally and professionally. There will also be:

- Inspiring keynote addresses from noted authors Peter Block and Dr. Ann McGee-Cooper.
- A servant-leadership bookstore with essays, books, videos and audiotapes available which reflect the richness and variety of the servant-leadership tradition.
- The opportunity to gather with other servant-leaders, to exchange ideas and information, and to consolidate your understanding of servant-leadership for individuals and institutions.
- Pre-conference workshops: "Introduction to Servant-Leadership", "Receptive Listening" and "Servant-Leadership: An Emerging Model."
- Optional luncheon roundtables and fellowship dinners.

Enrich your personal journey of servant-leadership and join us in Indianapolis!

REGISTRATION
Return this form, with your payment, to: The Greenleaf Center, 1100 W. 42nd Street, Suite 321, Indianapolis, IN 46208; or FAX (317) 925-0466.

Name_________________________ ____________________________
First name for Name tag
Organization______________________________
Address__________________________ ____________________________
City/State/Zip__________________________ ____________________________
Daytime Phone__________________________ FAX__________________________

CONFERENCE FEES (Please check appropriate box):
Pre-Conference (includes lunch) Oct. 6 Postmarked On-Site (As available)
Non-member $150 $150
Member $275 $275
Seniors 62+ and Students $225 $225
(please provide verification with registration)

One-Day Conference
(Please check one: __Fri., Oct 7 or __Sat., Oct 8)
Non-member $175 $200
Member $150 $175
Seniors 62+ and Students $115 $125

Meals
Fri. and Sat. Lunches $ 35 $ 35
Friday Dinner $ 30 $ 30
Saturday Dinner $ 30 $ 30

Membership
(One year individual Greenleaf Center membership. If included with this form, you are able to attend at member rates.)
$ 35 $ 35

Total Enclosed $ __________ $ __________
Method of Payment: □ Check/Money Order □ Visa □ Master Card □ American Express
Card Number ____________________________
Expiration Date __________ Name as it appears on the card ____________________________
From the Membership Director

by Marcia Newman

Servant-leadership and the martial arts have a lot in common. Both take hard work. Both require discipline, a vision, commitment and community. Both develop the inner and outer person.

Some days servant-leadership is like the karate classes where we spend an hour getting thrown on the mat. I have to overcome fear and maintain sharp mental focus. Active listening requires the same and, for me, will take repeated practice to learn. I wasn’t born a good listener. Being reflective has become easier with age and honesty, and I am trying to honor my intuition more. But the listening is a skill that to master will take good repetition—the same way I am learning karate.

My dream of earning a black belt is what keeps me committed to paying for and going to class through hard days of bad weather, forgetfulness and bruises (no pain, no gain). Likewise, the quality of life which I desire, and my belief in servant-leadership, also gives me a vision that keeps me committed to practicing the techniques that are challenging, sometimes bruising, yet necessary for my life to grow and enrich others.

Fellow karate students with whom I study make the “hard mat” days bearable. They are in it with me—they give me hope that I can do it too! Servant-leaders need the same kind of support. Road hazards and detours on the journey are better travelled with company. Greenleaf Center members provide that same kind of community; our shared common experiences enable us to encourage one another along the way.

Martial artists celebrate their stages of growth at formal “promotion” ceremonies. Students of all levels of mastery and belt rank share in accomplishment, because one must be willing to be a teacher and a student at the same time. For those who are able to gather, the Greenleaf Center’s annual conference becomes a weekend’s promotion in spirit. It becomes a time to strengthen our commitment and refresh our vision—to celebrate our challenging, but joyful growth. At this promotion, however, nobody gets thrown to the mat! Won’t you join us October 6-8, here in Indianapolis?

Leadership in a New Era is Now Available

“Leadership in a New Era . . . is a must read.”

Darrell Brown, president and executive editor, Leaders Magazine

RKGC Executive Director Larry Spears is a contributing author to a new book on leadership which has just been published by New Leaders Press. Leadership in a New Era: Visionary Approaches to the Biggest Crisis of Our Time is an outstanding collection of vision and wisdom for tomorrow’s institutional leaders.

Contributions by such successful authors on the subject of “new leadership” as Warren Bennis (Leaders and On Becoming a Leader), Margaret Wheatley (Leadership and the New Science), James Autry (Love & Profit and Work & Life), Max DePree (Leadership is an Art and Leadership Jazz), and Ann Morrison (The New Leaders and Breaking the Glass Ceiling) highlight this rich collection of essays.

TV producer Norman Lear is interviewed by Stewart Emery exclusively for this exciting book. Larry Spears offers an original essay on servant-leadership which will be of special interest to Greenleaf Center members. RKGC member and Nestle executive Tina Rasmussen is also among the twenty-two contributing authors. These authors collectively call for a fundamental transformation in the way we see leaders, the way we allow ourselves to be led, and how we think about leadership.

The 350-page book is edited by The New Leaders editor/publisher, John Renesch, published by New Leaders Press, and available through the Greenleaf Center for the special price of $29.50 plus $3.50 shipping and handling ($33 total). Quantity discounts are available when ordering ten or more copies. Call (317-925-2677) or fax (317-925-0466) the Greenleaf Center today to order this exciting new resource.