

IHMs in Action



Patrice Boyle, IHM

The IHM Elder Council serves as an advisory board for residents of the IHM Motherhouse. They listen, communicate and offer recommendations to administrators.

Initiated in 2006 by Judy Smith, Motherhouse residents' administrator, the Elder Council was formed to address the concerns of those who live at the Motherhouse. Residents bring issues or suggestions to the council members, which helps set the agenda. Meetings are held every six weeks and meeting summaries are provided for the residents.



Alys Currier, IHM

Sisters Patrice (Marie Patrice) Boyle, Alys (Gerontia) Currier, Mary Anne (Stanislaus) Huddleston, Mary Jo (Patrick Ellen) Maher and Marie Andre Walsh served on the Elder Council during its first year and will have "Council Member Emerita" status as their terms of office conclude.

"We have input into decisions, but we don't make them," Sister Mary Anne explains.



Mary Anne Huddleston, IHM

"We also bring the administration's concerns back to the other sisters, and explain why and how some decisions are made," Sister Alys adds.

The operating norms of the Elder Council include respect, honesty and confidentiality.

"We've discussed sensitive topics," recalls Sister Mary Jo, "Residents know the council is listening to them and that their opinions are valued."



Mary Jo Maher, IHM

"We discuss things before making our recommendations, many of which have been implemented," Sister Patrice notes.

One of those recommendations was to provide whistles for residents. Those who live in the health care center of the Motherhouse wear call pendants, but other residents do not, and there was concern about what would happen if they needed help. The Elder Council took the matter under advisement, and as a result, the whistles are now available to any resident who would like to have one.



Marie Andre Walsh, IHM

"The key to the council's success is that we have all learned to listen better," says Sister Marie Andre. "We receive and communicate valuable information which is helpful to all. We're committed to working toward the common good of the IHM Community."

Sisters Mary Anne and Mary Jo concluded their service at the end of 2006. The two newest members of the council are Patricia (Joan of Arc) Guthrie, IHM, and Josephine (Valencia) Karas, IHM.