



# New Horizon Emmaus Community

## Newsletter September 2006

### MY WINNING STRATEGY

Allow yourself to love and be loved.

Serve others.

Develop a cause beyond yourself.

THIS IS A FOOTBALL TEAM??????????

By Joe Ehrmann, Baltimore Maryland

**COACH, THE KIDS CALL ME.** FOR ME, the most important meaning of the word goes all the way back to the 1500s, when a coach was a horse-drawn carriage with a specific purpose: to transport a person of importance from where he was to where he wanted to be or needed to be going. In an ideal world, isn't that exactly what we'd want from our youth sports coaches of today? Not victories and championships, but the movement of our people of importance--our children--to where they need to be going. That is the main reason I coach high school football. And it is the reason that the central theme of our team --"Building Men for Others"--is starting to have an impact on other teams across America. A book by Jeffrey Marx called *Season of Life* features a season with my Gilman Greyhounds. We've finished three recent seasons undefeated and ranked number one in Maryland. But *Season of Life* shows how those accomplishments are really just the by-product of everything else we do with the boys. They're what comes of building our team into a true community by focusing on concepts such as empathy, integrity, inclusion and kindness. The story of one of the seniors on last year's team -I'll call him Michael shows perfectly what we're all about. Four years ago Michael was the last kid you'd expect to go out for varsity football. In a sport where size and speed are important, he was short and slow. Michael was also nervous. Most of our ninth graders already knew one another. But Michael had just

transferred into Gilman. More than anything, he just wanted to belong. I love to welcome someone new and to make him part of our community. Sometimes that surprises a newcomer. After all, I'm a big, burly guy, six-foot-four, 260 pounds. I guess I can look pretty intimidating, and most of the Gilman boys have heard at least something about my football career. I was an All-American at Syracuse University and an All-Pro NFL lineman with the old Baltimore Colts. "Huddle Up!" I shouted that first day Michael came to practice. The players gathered in a circle, but Michael hung back on the outer edge. "What is our job?" I asked the boys speaking for myself and the other coaches. "To love us," the boys responded quickly in unison. "What is your job?" I asked. "To love each other !" they said I could see by the startled look on Michael's face that none of the new boys knew quite what to think of this standard exchange that has come to define Gilman football.

Later, a senior sided up to Michael. This older boy was much bigger and stronger than Michael. The kind of athlete who, in Michael's last school, probably wouldn't have even talked to him. "The coaches here teach a different kind of football," I heard him say. "They teach what it means--what it really means--to be a man." *To be a man.* That was a lesson I didn't learn until I was 28, when my little brother, Billy, died. All these years later, I am able to see a connection between Billy and Michael. Billy was a football player too. And a wonderful kid. His biggest wish was to join me as a teammate in the NFL. That was my dream too. Though I was 10 years older, we were as close as brothers could be. And Billy was a promising player. But then came the phone call. Billy had been diagnosed with cancer. During the next five months, he just wasted away. "Joe, please don't let me die," he said one night in the hospital. I'd looked after-him all my life. There was nobody in the world I loved more than Billy. But there was nothing I could do. It devastated me that I couldn't help Billy.

---

**NEW HORIZON EMMAUS COMMUNITY**  
**P.O. BOX 742**  
**FRIONA, TEXAS 79035**

PRESORTED STANDARD US POSTAGE PAID MAILED FROM ZIPCODE 79035 PERMIT NO. 53
---

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Nothing I had invested my life in—signing the big contract, making the Pro Bowl, getting the prettiest women—would help him one bit. All that glamour and fame, now it was meaningless. A few weeks later we buried Billy in our hometown of Buffalo, New York. When the minister said he last amen and everyone else drifted away, I stood alone at the gravesite. What was the purpose of Billy's life? I wondered. What is the purpose of mine? I didn't have the vaguest idea of who I was, beyond being a man who could throw bodies around on a football field. I had never been a particularly religious person, but right then I started a dialogue with God. "Who am I? How do I find real meaning, real value in this world?" There were no answers that day, but they would come. Seven years later, following the 1985 season, my thirteenth in professional football, I retired from the game. Naturally, there were times I missed it. What I missed most was being part of a team. We were 53 guys from all walks of life: black and white, rich and poor, urban and rural. Each year we came together and set aside our personal ambitions to put our team first. I wanted to spend the rest of my life putting together teams of people. I started by making God the center of my life. I became a Minister and worked in Baltimore's inner city. I created a local organization that teaches racial tolerance. Then I became a pastor in a church that has grown to 4,000 members. But football was what I knew best. When Biff Poggi, one of my oldest and closest friends, landed the job as head coach at Gilman, he asked if I would be his assistant. "Only if our goal is more than winning games," I told him. "What do you mean?" Biff asked. "I want to teach boys about community, about sharing and supporting one another, about how to find the good in everyone they meet—things that have taken me a lifetime to learn. I want to teach them to look beyond themselves. I want them to know how to be men of substance and impact." "Funny," Biff said. "I've been thinking about some of the same things. I've been wondering, can we really love these boys and, at the same time, coach them? Can we do all that and *win*?" We began our experiment at the first team meeting. "The first thing you need to know," Biff said, "is no boy gets cut, and everyone plays—and not just in blowout situations. The second thing is, this team is a community. For the community to work, you must base every one of your actions on one question: What can I do for you?" A good number of the kids looked at us like we were nuts. I'm sure they were thinking, *We're going to be some kind of touchy-feely team with a lot of losses on our record.* But Biff and I know football, "Don't get the wrong idea, I told the boys. "This is how we're going to win games." That got their attention. And our approach has worked. Anyone who follows Maryland football knows about Gilman. And now, thanks to *Season of Life*, people all over have begun using our team theme "Building Men for Others" with their own teams. The program has been adapted by churches, schools, corporations, community groups and even prisons. Now, back to Michael. Last fall, when he had to write his senior essay, he wrote about the impact Gilman football was already having—and would always have on his life. Michael had not played a whole lot during the season, but his contributions to the team—to the community—were tremendous. In fact, he had contributed in so many ways that his teammates had come to call him "The Mayor," and they also had elected him to be one of our team's four co-captains. "I know I'll probably never play football again after this," Michael wrote. "I also know that I might never again be part of such an amazing community. But I know I will always have the friendships and the memories of this team with me. I will always know how to be a man. I will always know how to bring people together. I will always be a man built for others." I was so proud of Michael. I was so pleased to be his coach—not just for football, but for life. What a blessing that God has allowed me to help boys become men. What a gift to be able to parlay something so negative—the loss of my brother, Billy—into something so positive—the opportunity to help others. That's something Billy would have liked.

Borrowed from Guideposts/October 2005

## THERE IS NO "I" IN TEAM!

**September Community Meeting**  
**Thursday, September 21st**  
**Board Meeting - 5:30 PM, Sponsorship Training - 6:00**  
**Praise & Worship - 7:00**

**FOOD & FELLOWSHIP AFTERWARDS**  
**GUESTS ARE WELCOME, A NURSERY IS PROVIDED**  
 First United Methodist Church, Littlefield  
 Dimmitt/Hart will Host

### FUTURE COMMUNITY MEETINGS

<u>DATE</u>	<u>HOST</u>
OCT 19	SUDAN/MULESHOE
NOV 16	FRIONA/ANTON
DEC 21	LEVELLAND/SUNDOWN

### 2007 New Horizon Walk Dates

Jan 11	Women's Walk # 34	Melody Link, LD
February 8	Men's Walk # 24	Homer Haile, LD
April 12	Women's Walk # 35	Peggy Goettsch, LD
June 14	Men's Walk # 25	Doyle Davis, LD
July 12	Women's Walk # 36	
Sept 12	Men's Walk # 26	
October 1	Women's Walk # 37	Sabina Schilling, LD

### MEAL SIGN-UPS

The food is furnished. We need groups (4-5) to come in and prepare, serve and clean up. These meals are not signed up by the lay director.

### MEALS CAN ONLY BE SIGNED UP BY PAM.

**Currently need help with meals for Women's Walk #33.**  
**IF INTERESTED OR HAVE QUESTIONS CALL PAM**  
**HUMPPHREYS AT 246-3686 OR 227-2123**

### Women's Walk # 33 October 5 - 8

#### Team

Ann Favor, LD	Mary Lou Grappe	Mickey Oglesby
Dee Woolam, SD	Stacy Hall	Gloria Recto
Christina Addison	Gary Hughes	Royce Riggan
Karen Baker	Katie Ivey	Patti Slaughter
Linda Blount	Robert Kerby	Terri Stansell
A'llan Bradley	Fredna Lair	Nancy Stuart
Martha Carabajal	Ingrid McNamara	Regina Wise
Angie Carver	Kathy Obenhaus	Laura Woolam
Shelly Farris		

IF YOU HAVE HAD A CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR PHONE NUMBER,  
 PLEASE NOTIFY THE DATA REGISTRAR AT [tchadwick52@hotmail.com](mailto:tchadwick52@hotmail.com)  
 THIS IS IMPORTANT IF YOU WISH TO WORK A WALK.

### NEW HORIZON REGISTRARS

<u>Women</u>	<u>Men</u>
Carolyn George 1618 W. 9 <sup>th</sup> Street Friona, Texas 79035 <a href="http://www.cdgeorge@wtrt.net">www.cdgeorge@wtrt.net</a>	Noel White P.O. Box 24 Friona, Texas 79035 <a href="http://www.nwhite@wtrt.net">www.nwhite@wtrt.net</a>

**Prayer Vigil Coordinator:** Vandii Combs. You may contact her at 806-272-5158, [www.v\\_co@yahoo.com](mailto:www.v_co@yahoo.com)  
**Name Tags:** Send \$6.00 along with name and address to Terri Stansell, 1461 Hwy 54, Littlefield, TX 79339.  
**Data Registrar:** Tanya Chadwick, P.O. Box 819, Farwell, TX 79325  
**Newsletter Articles:** Send to Shirley White by the 5<sup>th</sup> of each month to PO Box 24, Friona, TX 79035. [nwhite@wtrt.net](mailto:nwhite@wtrt.net)

**"Always be joyful, Pray continuously, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus." I Thess. 5:16-18**