

A Stranger in a Strange Land

This is a little background on the new Executive Director of the Ho Chunk Community Development Corporation, Frank Schersing. I was born in the state of Bavaria in 1952. The city was Gersthoffen in West Germany. Both of my parents were Hungarians who settled in West Germany after World War II. We immigrated to America in November, 1956. My parents, my one-year old sister and myself came to Milwaukee. My brother was born in Milwaukee. I attended St. Anne Grade School on the north side of Milwaukee, and Marquette University High School. I started my first two years of college at the University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee, but could not decide on a major so I dropped out and went to work. I married my wife, Lucinda (Cindy) Cantrell in January, 1973. Cindy is from Missouri, but we met in Florida. That's a longer story than I have space for.

I then enlisted in the U.S. Air Force in January, 1974 and stayed there more than 21 years; retiring in June, 1995. We had a lifetime of experiences while we were in the Air Force. I spent my first five years in the enlisted ranks teaching pilots to fly on instruments at Vance AFB in Enid, OK. That's when I received my associate degree in Applied Sciences and Training Devices from the Community College of the Air Force. I also received my Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from Phillips University. I received my Commission in the U.S. Air Force and was afforded the opportunity to attend basic training again in January, 1979; this time as an officer. As an officer and B-52 Electronic Warfare Officer, we moved around the country and overseas. Our son, Sean, was born in December, 1984 while we were stationed at Castle AFB in Atwater, CA. I also completed my Masters degree during this tour from Embrey Riddle Aeronautical University. As an officer I have flown over the North Pole and South of the Equator to Australia. I've been to Guam and was assigned to Germany when the Berlin Wall fell. Before I retired, I have visited over two dozen states.

After my military retirement, I looked forward to moving back to Wisconsin to be near my parents. That is where I started work as the Executive Director of the Oconto Commission on Aging in January, 1996. I was also the Treasurer for the Wisconsin Association of Aging Unit Directors (WAAUD) and the President of the Wisconsin Nutrition Directors Association (WAND). My wife, Cindy, also started delivering home delivered meals for the Commission before becoming the receptionist in the office. During my time as the President of WAND, with the help of the other nutrition directors and the elders around the state, we were able to

add slightly over an extra million dollars into the State Budget for the Nutrition Program. On March 27, 1997 I experienced a heart attack while changing the tire for one of my meal site managers who was delivering home delivered meals. This was a wake up call that really caused me to question some of the "important" things in life. This really caused me to focus on doing things for others; especially the elders in the community. Directing a private, nonprofit organization with limited county assistance really gets you to start thinking out of the box to help individuals with services. I believe this was also good experience for my roll as the Director of an Area Agency on Aging (AAA) which started on August 1, 2003. The primary role of an Area Agency is to advocate for older people, per the 1965 Older Americans Act. We also provided the technical assistance needed by the Aging Units so that the elders were better served. While at the Bay AAA, I tried to educate and inform the elders and aging staff about what is coming down the road for our elders. Hopefully, this inspired some people to contact their elected representatives to voice their opinions on how services can be improved for elders.

I started to work for the Ho Chunk Community Development Corporation (HCCDC) on July 13. I'm looking to bring the same openness to HCCDC that I had back in Wisconsin. Together we can make this a shining example of how a community can grow into something we can all be proud of. Words and ideas by themselves, no matter how good, can not do anything unless there is a commitment and partnership made to accomplish these ideas.

I hope you have learned a little of my background and my dedication and drive to advocate for more and better services for the elders of our communities. At HCCDC I have the additional responsibility of moving the community forward. I am looking forward to the challenge of keeping the community growing in a good way. Stop by and let me know what you are thinking, our offices are currently in Walthill, but we are hoping to move up to Winnebago soon.

**Winnebago
Community
Blood Drive
Ho Chunk, Inc.
Friday, August 14
11:00AM – 2:00PM
Be a Hero – Donate Blood**