

Evangel

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Chilly Weather Doesn't Dampen Spirit of Annual Relief Sales

by Phyllis Franz & Cathleen Hockman-Wert

Overcast skies and cool temperatures did not keep people away from Washington's 28th annual Mennonite Country Auction and Relief Sale or Oregon's 22nd annual Mennonite Festival for World Relief, held this past October 1 and 8 at Menno Mennonite Church and the Linn County Fairgrounds respectively.

The events, which together culled nearly \$175,000 for world relief, featured a plethora of items for auction, from tasty miniature bread loaves symbolizing "feeding the hungry of the world" (one of which sold for \$1000) to weekends at the Oregon coast, antique furniture and, of course, traditional handmade quilts.

"Absolutely nothing" was sold eight times at the Washington event, raising \$1,775. A 1990 Mercury

Marquis brought in \$1,650. Eight quilts sold for over \$1,000 each, including a "Log Cabin" quilt which sold for \$2,100. A "Pineapple" design quilt from the MCC headquarters in Akron, Pennsylvania, sold for \$2,000 and then resold for \$1,500.

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LEFT: Ringing up the sales for world relief at the Mennonite Country Auction and Relief Sale, held at Menno Mennonite Church on October 1.



Teens serve up tacos with a smile at Oregon Relief Sale Oct. 7.



A Word from Our Moderator

The Board of Directors continues to work at communication with the churches in PNMC. We are restarting a bulletin insert that will come to your church once a quarter. Earlier in PNMC's history these were provided for you but discontinued at some point. It is our hope that this communication piece will acquaint you with how these committees can be a resource for your church. They will be provided by the four standing Committees: Peace and Justice, Pastoral Leadership, Congregational Nurture, and Outreach Development. These will inform you of the work, activities, and vision of the committee. When you read these inserts during the next year, please remember that committee in prayer.



The Nampa Mennonite Church took action June 20, 2005 to voluntarily withdraw from PNMC. This has been very painful for the Board to acknowledge their action and also painful for some of Nampa's members who desired to remain in conference. I believe the Board and Conference Ministers did all we could to encourage them to remain a member of Conference. It was with regret and sorrow that we accepted their action. Nampa had been a member of a Mennonite conference for over 100 years (first in the former Pacific Coast Conference and the last 11 years in Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference). During these years we have experienced many wonderful times of fellowship, worship, and ministry with the Nampa congregation. We will miss that.

The Local Arrangements Committee for "Mt. View 2006" is active in planning for our coming to Kalispell, MT for our annual sessions next June 23-25. We are in the process of appointing the Program Planning Committee. The Board has chosen the theme "Calling and Nurturing for Lives of Service" and our focus this year will be for youth. Please encourage the youth in your church to begin planning to attend. Excitement is building for me as I contemplate the potential of our annual sessions.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John Willems".

John Willems, Moderator

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Susan McCarthy Palmer, Editor
19532 NE Glisan St.
Portland, OR 97230
503-492-4216 office@pnmc.org

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The word "Evangel" is written in a large, bold, stylized font. The letters are thick and slightly irregular, giving it a hand-drawn or artistic feel. The 'E' is particularly large and prominent.

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TRUST: The Essential Ingredient for Christians

by Sheldon Burkhalter

At the “instigation” and encouragement of Pastor Brent Kauffman, I climbed Mt. Hood last summer. I was naïve enough to think that this would be a typical hike, just longer than others I have enjoyed in the past. Brent prepared me for the many new things I would have to learn, like using crampons, an ice ax, being “roped in,” breathing in high altitude.

Beginning from the timberline base at midnight, our goal was to summit by sunrise. Amazingly, we accomplished this almost on schedule. I just kept pushing for the top as I did while a child climbing the silo on our family farm. Now, as then, the encouraging words of my older brother echoed in my mind: “It’s not scary if you don’t look down!”

The last half mile was the most grueling of our ascent. Brent, his climbing buddy and I spent over an hour traversing the treacherous Hogsback and Pearly Gates to reach Mt. Hood’s summit — the three of us roped together, equipped with harnesses and helmets to protect us from possible falling rocks and ice chunks. Taking turns, one step at a time, we dug in with our ice axes, lest anyone should slip. It was a painstaking process to the peak, but when we got there, the breathtaking beauty of the Cascades extending below us, north and south, accented the sense of achievement.

Turning around for the descent was when *real* fear gripped me. I could see the steps we had to retrace and the sharp-edged crevasse and cliffs below. Despite this, I also felt a compelling sense of trust in my climbing partners, as well as a responsibility for them, lest I slip and drag them with me.

Everything seemed to hang on each step, carefully guiding my two-inch spiked crampon boot to solid footing in the ice, digging my ax deeply into the ice to hold me and the others in the event of a fall. Each step had to be as carefully premeditated as a toddler taking its first step. It was all about mutual trust and responsibility. Finally, fifteen hours after the start, our mission was accomplished!

Like mountain climbing, Christian community is all about trust and responsibility: trust in the God of grace and a good dose of grace demonstrated toward each other. But trust is the most important. Theologian Hans Kung was right when he wrote, “. . . it is true that, without trust, there can be no common human life, no friendship, love or marriage, no business life, . . . , no politics, science or culture.” And without trust there can be no church, no Body of Christ, no effective mission.

One word alone cannot translate the Greek New Testament word. “Belief,” “trust,” “faith,” “reliance,” “confidence” begin to delve into its depth. Its opposite is unbelief, unfaithful, unreliable, untrustworthy, deceit. The highest level of trust is in relationships, not in a list of absolutes or even high ethical standards. The church fulfills its mission as it actualizes a relationship with God in Christ and with our fellow travelers/climbers.

The fearful, self-centered times in which we live strain our capacity to trust God and each other. Trust denied or breaking trust fragments community and thwarts mission. But God is faithful and **trustworthy**. In Christ, we overcome our cultural stresses and learn to trust Christian community, and together we fulfill God’s mission.



Conference Minister Sheldon Burkhalter, far left, Pastor Brent Kauffman, Lebanon Mennonite Church, Oregon, center, and pal grin brightly at the summit of Mt. Hood, Oregon.

Following in Her Parents' Footsteps: Swiss Woman Serves MCC at WMS

By Andrea Wall

Inspired by her parents' service with Mennonite Central Committee's International Visitor Exchange program 30 years ago, Switzerland's Debbie Sprunger joined the staff of Western Mennonite School in August, where she will serve the school as a part of the same MCC program that once brought her parents to Indiana.

A graduate of the University of Education and Social Work in Basel, Switzerland, where she earned a bachelor of arts degree in education, Debbie will serve WMS for the next year as a library aid and teacher's assistant.

"Service and cultural awareness are two important strengths to Western's academic program," commented WMS Executive Director Darrel White, "and Debbie encompasses them both. Around 60% of our faculty and staff have served outside of the US and it is our desire to instill an attitude of service in each student."

Following her year at Western, Debbie hopes to return to Switzerland and earn her Masters in German and English and then teach high school. "My experience in this country will help me reach my personal goals of understanding another culture and growing in my faith," Debbie shared. "I want to allow God to work in my life-that is really why I came in the first place."

Peer Mediation Team Launched at WMS

In an effort to practically live out Jesus' call to be peacemakers, 15 students at Western Mennonite School have committed themselves to serve as WMS's first peer Mediation Team. The new campus program, launched on October 13, challenges students to become leaders among their peers and build community by supporting one another in times of conflict and challenging them to discover the opportunity to live like Christ in each situation.

Each student was asked to commit to being available during the school day to lead the conflict resolution process among their peers. The process creates a safe environment for students to have open communication about a conflict, to problem-solve creatively and to commit to a plan to resolve the conflict.

Faculty members Jacinta Nafziger and Susan Stinson, both of whom have a background in mediation work, were involved in the first training session offered to students on October 13, along with Leah Yoder and Kevin Chambers, students who were previously trained as peer mediators in the Salem-Keizer School District. The social studies teacher at Western, Jacinta was a Justice, Peace and Conflict Studies major at Eastern Mennonite University and also worked as a mediator for a victim/offender reconciliation program. Susan, an English and business teacher at Western, has experience in training conflict resolution teams for four years in public schools in Canada. Students will continue to receive training throughout the school year. Joyce Yoder, a member of Salem Mennonite Church and assistant principal and head of the Peer Mediation Program at Leslie Middle School, will be involved in future training sessions.



What's Happening at WMS?

December 14, 2005: Middle School Christmas Concert, 7 p.m. Free Admission.

December 15, 2005: High School Christmas Concert, 7 p.m. Free Admission.

February 4, 2006: A Cappella Benefit Concert. Proceeds will help the choir travel to the Mennonite Schools Council National Music Festival in PA in April. Tickets available in January.

February 7, 2006: Middle School Visitors' Day.

February 9, 2006: High School Visitors' Day.

March 11, 2006: Alumni Jamboree.

For more information on the above events, call WMS at 503-363-2000 or 866-343-9378.



Evangelizing Evangelism

By Steve Kimes

The “e” word

In the deep, dark shadows of Christian practice it is rarely spoken of. Private prayer is praised and quiet service is rejoiced in, but who dares speak in this 21st century of... *evangelism*? Evangelism is sometimes hated, often feared, and certainly not spoken of in polite society. And yet it is as neces-

sary as peacemaking and as offering mercy to those in need. Why is evangelism such a nasty word?

Lack of tolerance and humility

Evangelism is often regarded as offensive. This is sometimes because evangelism has an implied arrogance: “I am completely right and you are completely wrong, and you need me to teach you the truth.” Tolerance and humility seems to be absent from evangelism. This kind of evangelism is similar to placing a gospel of John in the center of a pornographic magazine. Sure, the gospel is there, but the context is so offensive that the truth cannot be seen.

Yes, we want to be welcoming. No, of course we do not want to punish someone for believing something different than we do. Nevertheless, it is important that we all believe in something. And if we believe, then we are saying that others with different beliefs are wrong. If I believe I am in the bathroom, then those who hold to the opinion that I am in the garage are wrong (at least I hope they are!). If God is in heaven, those who hold the opinion that God is not in heaven are wrong. If Jesus is Lord, those who hold the opinion that Jesus is not Lord are wrong. Tolerance has its place, but once we place tolerance above our conviction about Jesus, then we are no longer Christians, but pluralists.

But evangelism does not have to be done arrogantly. Many people evangelize by speaking of their personal views or experience; there is nothing arrogant about simply sharing what we have experienced ourselves. Evangelism can also be done while teaching (in a sermon for instance) but it is more often effective in a context of humility. The formerly blind man in John 9 had this kind of humble evangelism: “Of Jesus’ origins I know nothing; all I know is that once I was blind, but now I see.” Later he asks the Pharisees, “Do you want to follow Him, too?” Although one might question this man’s wisdom, certainly his humility could not be questioned. And yet he was clearly evangelizing.

Nor does evangelism have to be done without gentleness. Evangelism has gotten some bad press by way of some who do street preaching and knock on doors to evangelize in an offensive, rude and obnoxious manner. Evangelism does not need to be offensive. It can be done quietly by expressing one’s personal beliefs with a friend. Evangelism can be simply inviting someone to an event at church. Evangelism can be telling your Muslim friend why you do not agree with Christians who want to kill Muslims.

What is evangelism?

Part of the problem with evangelism is its association with crusades or long monologues. But we must not confuse a style of evangelism with the act itself. Evangelism is no more or less than speaking about Jesus or Jesus’ teaching to those



who do not believe. It does not require an altar call or an organ. It is simply calling Jesus our Lord, and His ways our ways. If we believe in peace because Jesus did, and we are telling others' about Jesus' view of peace, then we are evangelizing. If we believe in Jesus' life, in His teaching, in His lordship over the earth, in the benefits we gain from Him, we cannot fail to tell others about what we know about and have received from Jesus.

Why should we evangelize?

- Because Jesus told us to do so: "Preach the gospel to all creation" Mark 16:15
- Because we must talk about Jesus to enter God's kingdom, and to receive of His blessings: "If anyone confesses me before men, I will confess them before my Father in heaven. Whoever denies me before men, I will deny him before my Father in heaven." Matthew 10:32-33
- Because we love people too much to let them live without a chance at Jesus: "Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them." Luke 18:16
- Because everyone needs Jesus: "Go and make disciples of all nations." Matthew 28:19

Our speech may be simple or subtle. It should take into account the culture and understanding of the person to whom we are speaking. We need to be as clear as possible. But most of all, we need to speak the word and life of Jesus. No one can receive from God unless they first know about Jesus from someone who knows him.

Let's get out there and tell 'em!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

*From the PNMC Board and Staff
and the Planning Committee of*

Mt. View 2006

*The Annual Meeting of the Pacific
Northwest Mennonite Conference*

June 23-25, 2006

Kalispell, Montana

This year's theme:

*"Calling and Nurturing
for Lives of Service"*

Special Emphasis on Youth

Plan to Attend!

Mark Your Calendars Now!

SALT Program Takes Four PNMC Church Members To Jamaica

by Kathy Heinrichs Wiest—West Coast MCC

Four PNMC young adults began a year of service this fall in Jamaica as part of Mennonite Central Committee's (MCC) SALT program. SALT, which stands for Serving and Learning Together, is MCC's global program that places young single adults in one-year assignments based in local church and community organizations.

Sara Beachy of Zion (Ore.) Mennonite Church, now plans activities at a center for homeless mentally ill street people in Montego Bay through an organization called Committee for the Upliftment of the Mentally Ill.

Susanna Rempel of Seattle Mennonite works among unwed teenage girls who cannot attend school during their pregnancy. She teaches and tutors them in academic subjects and helps with personal counseling. Susanna is associated with Evergreen Mennonite Church in Seattle.

Sports and youth activities is Ben Handrich's focus as the Salem Mennonite Church member works for the August Town Primary School and Community Development Foundation in Kingston.

Joni Jantzi, from River of Life Fellowship, Sweet Home, OR, teaches computer skills to children and youth as a teaching assistant at Kingston's inner city North Street United Church.

Other PNMC church members currently serving in MCC assignments include Nelly Ascencio of Ministerios Restauracion, Oak Grove, OR, who works with immigration matters in Portland; Derek Hostettler and Ana So of Portland Mennonite, who serve in technology/community development in Mexico; Phil Oyer of Portland Mennonite, who teaches English in China; Kelsey and Zachary Knight-King of Corvallis (Ore.) Mennonite, who assist with medical/AIDS work in Washington, DC, and Carolyn and Clark Yoder of Pacific Covenant Church, Canby, OR, who are assisting MCC work in Bolivia.

McCoy Named MDS Region 4 Director

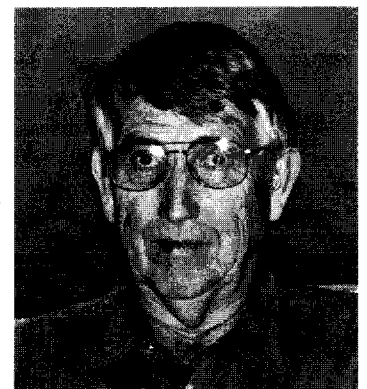
William Mc Coy, a member of Portland Mennonite Church, was named director of Mennonite Disaster Service's Region 4 in September. Region 4 covers all MDS activities in Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Alaska, as well as four other Western states and U.S. territories in the Pacific.

Active with MDS since 1996, William and his wife, Esther, have served for several months each year as project directors for MDS in Alaska, California, North Carolina, West Virginia and Florida. McCoy has served as treasurer, assistant chairperson, and, since 1998, as chairperson for the Oregon Unit of MDS. He has also served as a member-at-large on MDS's bi-national board since 1999.

The ministry MDS provides to communities is very rewarding to both Esther and I," McCoy told the Evangel. "To assist homeowners in their recovery after a disaster, meeting so many people and making so many friends, is a blessing, hard to explain. Our challenge in Region 4 is to find more people with a passion for helping people volunteer with MDS. With all the horrible disasters in 2005, we are really going to need more volunteers, especially leaders, next summer than we ever have before. I pray anyone available with leadership skills will contact MDS and plan to spend time on a project in 2006. MDS is looking for long-term people with a giving heart, willing to be cooks, crew leaders, construction foremen and project directors." If you feel a calling to this ministry, contact the MDS office at www.mds.mennonite.net or McCoy himself at wilmccoy@aol.com.



Some of the children ministered to by the Committee for the Upliftment of the Mentally Ill in Montego Bay, Jamaica, where Sara Beachy of Zion Mennonite Church is now working.



(Continued from Page 1)

Top sellers for the Oregon sale included a log cabin quilt from the MCC Akron Quilt Room (\$1,200), the "Peacock Dream" quilt (\$1,100), an antique Singer Feather Weight sewing machine (\$1,100), and a concert by the Corvallis Mountain Boys (\$800).

The Mountain Boys sang a tune a capella before bidding in Oregon began. Other entertainment was provided by storyteller Neville

McDonald and musicians Kim Thiessen and Daryl Neustaedter Barg of Alberta. Washington sales goers were entertained by the Liberty Quartet.

Anything warm and edible were also "hot" sales items during each event. African peanut stew, home-made soup, coffee and hot chocolate were top sellers at the Washington sale.

In Oregon, participants got the opportunity to sample vegetarian curry and pear chutney, two items from a new MCC cookbook, *Simply in Season* by Mary Beth Lind and Cathleen Hockman-Wert. The authors donated an auto-graphed copy of their book to each North American relief sale. In Oregon,

the book, along with a basket of local food specialties, brought in \$95.

Next year, Washington's auction will be held October 7. The Oregon festival will take place October 14. It will feature an historic quilt exhibit, entitled "Passing on the Comfort."



TOP: Carolyn Heggen talks with children visiting the Oregon Festival.

RIGHT: Jana Gingerich, youth pastor at Zion Mennonite Church, adds a big "Yee-Ha!" and a barrel of laughs to the auction at Linn County Fairgrounds in Oregon.

NEXT YEAR'S FESTIVALS: OCTOBER 7 in WA, OCTOBER 14 in OR!



Ladies roll out the rolls at Washington's Mennonite Country Auction and Sale.

