

### ASSIGNMENT: CHAD

Working for Peace in a Land of Strife

By Kathryn Smith Derksen MCC Worker, Republic of Chad

Did he just say women are mango pits? Sure enough, our co-worker, Obed, a peace trainer for the Chadian Association for Nonviolence (ATNV), was drawing a cross-sectioned mango and pointing to the inner circle. Women are the pit (core) of the family and of society. Children are the fruit; men the skin. This was all explained in the local language, Ngambai, leaving me to extrapolate the explanation of this "Law of Human Nature" as he called it.



Chadian women preparing a meal.

My husband and I are peace workers and capacity builders for ATNV, an MCC partner organization in southern Chad. MCC has been a partner of the peace organization for more than a decade, but we are the first service workers in the partnership. While Chad has made US news recently in connection to the Darfur

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Jeanne Zook (left) and Mary Elliott, Peace Mennonite, Portland, display two of quilts for sale in Oregon.

### Making a World of Difference Relief Sales Raise Nearly \$207,000 for MCC

By Susan McCarthy Palmer, Rick Bollman, Phyllis Franz and Cathleen Hockman-Wert

People in desperate circumstances throughout the world will receive much needed aid thanks to nearly \$207,000 raised for Mennonite Central Committee at relief sales staged in May and October in Idaho, Washington and Oregon.

#### **IDAHO SALE GARNERS \$61,800**

For the second year in a row Idaho PNMC churches staged their own relief sale for MCC. Held on May 12, 2007, the sale brought in nearly \$62,000 for projects to aid the needy throughout the world.

Over \$6000 of the funds will be used to help built a water canal in Vietnam. In addition, quilts donated by Michelle and Sarah Schroeder of Pocatello,

and Janet Buschert of Eagle sold for \$2,600 and \$2,500 respectively.

The next Idaho Mennonite Relief Sale will be held May 10, 2008, at Northwest Nazarene Unversity in Nampa.

### **WASHINGTON SALE RAISES \$115,000**

The 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Mennonite Country Auction & Relief Sale, held Oct. 6 on the Menno Mennonite Church grounds, raised a record of \$115,000 for MCC, despite a smaller attendance than in 2006.

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# The Most Important Work of All

Lately, I have been contemplating the meaning of the phrase, "Faith without works is dead." Perhaps it is because this is the season of MCC relief sales in Oregon and Washington. (Idaho had theirs earlier last spring.) Perhaps it is because Mennonite Disaster Service's Region IV held their annual meeting at my home church last month. Perhaps it was viewing the mountain of school and health kits that Bob and Barb Buxton loaded up in Washington to take to the MCC "red barn" receiving center in Hubbard, Ore-



gon. Or perhaps it is because I am writing this in Diamond, LA, where Forrest and I are serving as volunteers this fall for Mennonite Disaster Service.

Joyous, hard work seems to be a hallmark of truly "being" a Mennonite. And the church in all of its many facets gives many opportunities for activities that enable us to put our faith into action. The Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference has both youth and adults serving in various positions throughout the world as well as here in the United States.

As I've pondered the "why" of all of this work and these activities, I keep remembering that the rationale for all this is our desire to live as Christ would have us live. The joy and satisfaction we get is just a bonus.

I have been gratified to see the new "Operations Team" of PNMC beginning to take shape. (See article on Page 5.) As head of the Transition Team, Moderator-elect Dave Hockman-Wert has been very successful in recruiting workers to serve to put the new structure of the conference in place. The current PNMC Board met in early November to empower and bless the work of the Operations Team.

As we embark on this journey, I am deeply conscious that prayer, the most important work of all, is essential if the efforts of our teams, boards and committees throughout the church are to bear the bountiful fruit we desire. The undergirding foundation of the loving prayers of God's faithful people is what makes all of these things possible. So we covet your prayers as we begin, particularly for wisdom, patience, joy and discernment as we carry out God's work among us.

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Shalom,



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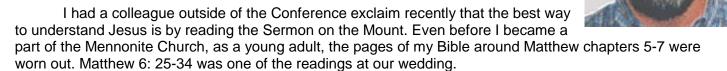
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# Reconsidering the Import of The Sermon on the Mount

"Therefore, do not worry, saying, 'What will we eat?...But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well." (Matthew 6: 25-34)



All in the Mennonite Church are, I realize, not excited about this type of emphasis. In fact, I find myself in conversations, sometimes rigorous ones, with people across the PNMC on this very subject.

Why has this section of Jesus' teaching been so important to me? Why is it often so central to Mennonite life and teaching? Here are some of my responses.

**No cheap discipleship.** The Sermon on the Mount provides concrete ways to be a follower and disciple of Jesus Christ. Jesus' words in Matthew 5-7 help put flesh on the word discipleship, but one quickly realizes this is not a cheap discipleship. For example, we are to "pray for our enemies" (Matt. 5: 43- 48). Being a disciple of Christ means to live in such a way that our inner life matches our outer actions. Another example given is that we are called not to commit adultery, but also not to lust after another person (Matt. 5: 27- 30)

A different way of living. The Beatitudes (Matthew 5: 1-12) emphasize not just a blessing bestowed, but a call to live and see the world in the way God does. Peacemakers are children of God (verse 9), the pure in heart will see God (verse 8), and the meek will inherit the earth (verse 5). In this new worldview persecution is even a blessing, but not persecution for our sake, but for the sake of Jesus. These are truly understandings which are upside down from the way the world looks at things.

**Giving testimony to God.** Just as we are persecuted for Jesus' sake our (non-cheap) discipleship and different way of living is to give glory to God, by being a "...light of the world", and "...salt of the earth." (Matt. 5: 13-16) This will happen as a matter of course as our lives and words are a testimony to the way of God.

**Trust in God.** The verses partially quoted at the top of this article are a part of a larger section, Matthew 6: 25-34, which remind us to put our trust and faith in God. While grace is not explicitly mentioned in this section there is no mistaking Jesus is exhorting us to put our trust in God's care.

The danger and the concern I hear is that the Mennonite Church worships or codifies the Sermon on the Mount. The Sermon on the Mount is not God, thought it does points to and helps us find the way in which God would have us go. We do not worship the verses on the page, but the Giver. Nor is the Sermon on the Mount a wooden formula which we can codify into programs as if making a legal transaction. To truly love an enemy (Matt. 5: 44), for example, requires an inner transformation, if we are to fully live out such a profound action.

The Sermon on the Mount has held an important place in the Mennonite Church because brings together the Good News of Jesus Christ as we have understood it. Jesus invites, if not exhorts, us to trust in our God who calls us, in love, to a new, transformed way of living. For me, as a young adult, it was a roadmap. It continues to be a roadmap for us as a collective Body of Christ called Mennonites. It puts flesh on the transformation of God's grace and love in Jesus Christ for the Church is a visible, not invisible, community.

Dunas Smith

### ASSIGNMENT: CHAD (Continued from Page 1)

atrocities, that reality feels a world away from us in Moundou, southern Chad, which has much more tangible struggles. The city is constantly out of money and can't buy fuel to provide power for more than the army quarters, even though crude oil is exported daily through the south to Cameroonian ports by US and European oil companies.

Chad is one of the poorest and most corrupt countries in the world. Recently, all government workers (including the hospital) have been on strike for over a month, seeking higher wages. All the while, corrupt officials chase away potential investors and tie the hands of foreign missionaries. Under the current government, most officials are sympathetic to Islam, and Christian villages go without working boreholes (water pumps) and medical supplies, although Muslim communities suffer from lack of basic supplies, too. Conflicts between Muslim cattle-herders and Christian farmers grow worse every year, as under-development and lack of education plague the lives and mentality of the people.

ATNV works to combat this negative situation on several levels: training locals in methods of mediation in daily conflicts, teaching women and youth from areas of unrest practical skills for economic development

Kathryn and Dan Smith Derksen, members of Evergreen Mennonic on several levels:
acts, teaching women commic development (Continued on Page 6)

Kathryn and Dan Smith Derksen, members of Evergreen Mennonite Church, Bellevue, WA, are MCC's first service workers with ANTV, a Chadian peace organication in Moundou, Chad.

### RELIEF SALES (Continued from Page 1)

As usual, many colorful and well-crafted handmade quilts were the highlight of the auction. A "friendship" quilt made by the Warden Mennonite Church women's group garnered the highest bid, selling for \$3,025. Ten other quilts sold for at least \$1,200 each.

Other items which brought in significant sums to benefit MCC included a refurbished 1972 Harley Davidson XHL Sportster Chopper (\$5000); a laminated wooden bowl designed and hand crafted by Walt Reimer of Moses (\$2,100); and a model log cabin fashioned by the Warden Hutterian Brethren Colony's children (\$800). The rather famous "Absolutely Nothing" raised \$5,200.

At a 30th anniversary service the following day, Sheri Wiedenhoefer, new executive director of West Coast MCC, shared her story and an update on MCC ministry activities.

Washington's next auction and relief sale will be held October 4, 2008.

#### **OREGON SALE BRINGS IN OVER \$30,000**

Top bids for beautiful quilts added up to a record year for the October 13 Oregon Mennonite Festival for World Relief in Albany. The 24th annual fundraiser for Mennonite Central Committee raised more than \$130,000, a 45 percent leap over last year's sale-day total.

Six quilts topped last year's highest bid of \$3,000, including the last quilt of the day, "Pastel Rose of Sharon" by Albany Mennonite Church, which raised \$3,700. Albany's "Stars over Georgetown Path" raised another \$4,500, with items from anonymous donors and the MCC Quilt Room in Ephrata, PA, also bringing top bids.

The top seller of the day, at \$6,000, was the Roma Eicher Memorial Quilt. The well-known musician and church leader helped run the Oregon MCC auction with her husband, Sam, for many years before she died of cancer in December 2006.

The festival's earnings were boosted by \$6,600.42 raised through Penny Power. The collection topped last year's local record by almost \$1,000. Salem Mennonite Church collected \$1,643.87 of this total, which will support MCC water and sanitation projects.

A wooden peace candle also garnered \$6,300 for the School for Peace in Colombia.

"We are deeply grateful to everyone who made this such a wonderful day," said festival chair Ron Litwiller of Albany. "Seeing the bids climb so high was thrilling, and we have never seen the parking lot so full. Thanks to each person who gave of their time, energy, and gifts to support the life-giving ministry of MCC through this fun community event."

Oregon's next Festival for World Relief is scheduled for Oct. 11, 2008.

# PNMC Transition Team Sets Priorities for Coming Year

By Dave Hockman-Wert, Transitional Team Chair

At the PNMC annual meeting in June, delegates approved a proposal to align the conference structure more closely with the new vision statement the conference adopted the prior year. Developed by the Structure Vision Task Force and brought by the Board, the structural change proposal will lead to a smaller, gifts-based Board, a new Conference Executive staff position, and increased clarity between staff and Board roles, which should improve the way PNMC functions.

To move this proposal forward, PNMC delegates approved formation of a Transition Team (TT), composed of members of the Board and Structure Vision Task Force, as well as others skilled in finances, constitutional matters, and human resources.



Dave Hockman-Wert, Transition Team Chair

Knowing that restructuring the PNMC will take a lot of work, the TT made clarifying which tasks were time-sensitive and which could occur later in the journey the focus of their first meeting in August. During that conference call gathering, the TT determined that the following tasks must be completed (or in the works) by June 2008:

- Appoint the Finance Team and the Capacity Building Team
- Appoint the next Board
- Conference Executive write job description, hire
- Clarify staff transition issues and the new staffing structure
- By-laws (this will be a work in progress may not be complete by June 2008)

The following items, the TT decided, could wait until after June 2008.

- Finalizing By-laws
- Passion-based Ministries proposed approach
- Delegates role, responsibilities within new structure

Policies – writing new policies that streamline the staff/Board relationships

To move forward quickly, the Board authorized the TT to function as the acting Gifts Discernment Team (formerly known as the Nominating Committee). The team would identify people to serve in the new conference structure. One of the first big discussions focused on whether to get the "new" Board started this year or whether to wait until the present Board ends its term. In order to generate more ownership among the "new" Board for the new structure, the TT decided to identify persons for the new Board as soon as possible so they could begin to operate during this time of transition. While they will not replace the present Board until next July, the new group will be called the Operations Team and start functioning on behalf of the present Board this year.

At their first face-to-face meeting in September, the TT focused primarily on the "gifts discernment" task, identifying people to serve on the Operations Team and on the TT's subcommittees. As they move forward, subcommittees made up of TT members and others skilled in particular areas will do a large part of the work. For example, a Personnel/Hiring/Staff Transition Subcommittee will focus on the Conference Executive job description and hiring process. A By-laws Subcommittee will focus on developing the new PNMC By-laws. A Passion-Based Ministries Subcommittee will hash out the possible directions that this new approach could take.

All of the Transition Team's working documents (work plan, meeting minutes, etc.), along with periodic updates, will be placed on the PNMC website (http://www.pnmc.org/Resources/Transition\_Team), so that PNMC delegates can stay well informed about the TT's work. If anyone has more questions that the website cannot answer (or if you don't have web access), please contact Dave Hockman-Wert, TT Chair, to be added to a mailing list. Phone: 541-752-0444, E-mail: <a href="mailto:dhwert@yahoo.com">dhwert@yahoo.com</a>

### Fond Memories Fuel Enthusiasm of New Drift Creek Directors

By Susan McCarthy Palmer

When Brenda Kauffman learned that she and her husband, Tony, had been selected by the Drift Creek Camp board to become the new directors of the Oregon facility, she was immediately filled with nostalia.

"When I think of going home," the Oregon-born Brenda said wistfully, "my mind meanders up the winding gravel road to Drift Creek. My early memories traveling up that road with my cousins and I huddled in sleeping backs under the cab, eating Hershey's ® minatures," are as vivid today as ever.

Now, as she and Tony take over directorship of the camp which has garnered like rich memories for thousands like them, Brenda is filled with awe and respect for DCC and a desire to continue the tradition that has brought such blessing to so many.

"I consider DCC to be one of those sacred places where things have a deep and spiritual significance," Brenda said. "So much of my childhood development and spiritual formation occurred there that it is hard to imagine how empty my life might have been without it."

Former counselors at Drift Creek, where they also met and were married, Brenda and Tony bring the combined skills of elementary education, business, graphic design, people skills and handyman attributes, along with their enthusiasm for the work of DCC. "They are an answer to (our) dreams and prayers!" remarked Ken Snyder, DCC Board chair.

For more info, visit the DCC website: www.driftcreek.org.

# Being Missional in Local Papers

By Steve Kimes

The recent church plant, The River Mennonite Church in Bend, has come up with a creative idea to let their community know about their faith. They have taken out ads on the back of their local (and liberal) Village-Voice style paper. The local readers see advertised, beside ads for psychic readings and massages, Jesus' message of peace.

"Jesus said to love your enemies, not kill them," reads the ad, along with the church's name and phone number.

"We've received a number of intereted phone calls, and a few people have visited our service because of it," says pastor Sam Adams.

## Record Crowd Gathers to Mark Mennonite Village's Sixtieth Anniversary

Over 2,000 people turned out this past summer to mark the 60th anniversary of the founding of Mennonite Village.

The anniversary celebration, which took place on July 27-29, included a festive Friday evening dinner for over 900 people (an overflow crowd, beyond the 500-600 expected); a Saturday antique car show and barbecue; and a special commemorative service and dessert on Sunday.

Chaplain Byron Gingrich of Capital Manor, Salem, OR, delivered the message for the service. Rick Stiffney, President of Mennonite Health Services, Goshen, IN, also made remarks.

Opened in July 1947, the Village, originally called The Mennonite Home for the Aged, initially housed just 24 residents, with separate quarters for the superintendent and his family. Today, it provides care to more than 700 individuals throughout the community on its 196-acre complex in Albany, OR.

**ASSIGNMENT: CHAD** (Continued from Page 4) such as shea butter production. Both Muslims and Christians are invited to participate in these events, in an attempt to build peace.

This day, I was learning about "women as mango pits" in Bessao, a small village near the Central African Republic border, another country suffering from violence and poverty. These women sat patiently through three days' worth of teaching on conflict resolution. The trainer's charts were in French, so I was able to follow along.

The literal translation of the definition of "conflict" being used in the training here is "shut within destructive gears," a vivid image of a malfunctioning machine grinding to its own demise. This means that the main work of the mediator is to sit in the middle and re-establish communication.

A good resolution is necessary for true transformation of conflict. In my US-based trainings, this involves "making things right" between conflicting parties. In Africa, Obed, explained a good mediator is one who "participates in the effective application of the solution that will guarantee the re-establishment of the peace in the *hearts and spirits*" of those involved. Wow! To me, that sounds deeper than "pay what you owe" and more meaningful than "forgive and move on." There are some mediation programs that work hard at relationship and restoration in conflict. But do we know how to involve our *spirits* in peace work in the West?

Want to support the Smith Derksens? Contact MCC.

## Picking up Sticks: WMS Kicks into Gear with Afternoon Service Project

By Eric Ivanitsky Spiritual Life Director Western Mennonite School

Picking up sticks may not sound like the most exciting thing to do or like something that can make much of an impact. But when we step out to bless others, regardless of how big or small it may seem, God has a way of making it significant.



Such was the case during the first week of October when Western Mennonite School students teamed up for the school's annual Service Afternoon Project.

Held each year to give WMS students the opportunity to share the love of Christ by being a blessing to the local community, this year's event combined the forces of students from all classes to answer a big need: picking up debris from a former filbert orchard to create a new community park for the city of Keizer. Ninety-six middle school and 149 high school students spent two days clearing the ground for the planned Keizer Rapids Regional Community Park, so that grass could be planted. The students' assistance was greatly needed, as the park's preparation is dependent totally on the work of volunteers to make the community's dream a reality.

Students were rewarded by the experience, gaining lessons from labor that would last them the rest of their lives. "It can change your life knowing that you helped out," commented eighth grader Kaila Tabeau.

# Resources Flowing to and Through Zion MCC Center

By Bob Buxman

The MCC Material Resource Center has received, packaged and shipped out 17 bins of material resources to MCC headquarters in Akron, PA since it opened this past spring on the grounds of Zion Mennonite Church, Hubbard, OR.

These 17 pallets, the bulk of which were received following the MCC sales in May and October, consisted of 3532 school kits, 725 health kits, 109 newborn kits, 685 bars of soap, 130 comforters, 56 baby blankets, 50 sewing kits, 49 caps, 23 emergency kits, 27 dresses, 3 men's shirts, 11 wash cloths, 116 towels, two boxes of Bandaids®, and one box of toothpaste.

Jana Gingerich, youth pastor at Zion and a member of the local MCC Center committee, has taken the center on as a youth group service project. The youth itemize and pack all deliveries into a large pallet sized cardboard box. When a number of pallets have been filled, a Mennonite trucking firm from PA picks up the available pallets and deliver them to MCC PA. The local committee for the MCC MR Center also includes Gene Gascho, Gloria Gingerich, Nancy Beachy and Jana Gingerich.

For more information on making donations, call the Zion Church office (503-651-2274).

# Planting Church in Needy Portland Area is YAF Aim

By Susan McCarthy Palmer

When some 30 young adults from across the United States gathered for the annual MC USA Young Adult Fellowship retreat at Drift Creek Camp this past September 28-30, being missional wasn't just a subject for a discussion but a point of planning.

Under the leadership of PNMC credential holder Rusty Bonham and his wife, Mary Lou, who led the September gathering at Drift Creek, the group is currently leading the groundwork for a new church plant in an underprivileged area of Portland, OR. Currently a site in the Mount Scott area of the city is being considered, according to Steve Kimes, pastor of Anawim Christian Fellowship, a church of the homeless and mentally challenged in Portland, who has been talking with the Bonhams about their plans. "This would be a great area" to plant a church, Kimes enthused, "one that we're currently not reaching.

Kimes has recently begun another church plant in his neighborhood, also among the disadvantaged of Portland. This second plant (Kimes continues to lead Anawim) is meant to create a cross-cultural fellowship of believers, both from the mainstream and homeless populations of the city.

# 2008 National MDS Annual Meeting to Gather in PDX

### by Tim Manickam

Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) volunteers and staff from the United States and Canada will gather at Slavic Evangelical Church in Fairview, OR, a suburb of Portland, February 8 & 9, 2008 for the Annual All-Unit Meeting.

The theme, "Building on our Strength," flows out of the text from 1 Peter 4:11.

Kevin King, Executive Director of MDS, will report on the organization's recent activity and present a vision for the future. Updates on MDS relief to victims of Hurricane Katrina, the tornadoes which hit Greensburg, KS, he floods in Terrace, BC, will also be given

Loren Swartzendruber, President of Eastern Mennonite University, will be the keynote speaker for the Friday evening banquet. The Slavic Church Choir and the Western Mennonite School Singers will perform.

The cost for the entire event, including Friday's banquet is \$65. The banquet alone is \$15. Friday evening's program following the banquet is free and pre-registration is not required.

Visit www.mds.mennonite.net for more info.

### Alan Roxburgh to Address Conference Ministers in Canby

"The Role of the Conference Minister as a Missional Change Agent" will be the message of featured speaker Alan Roxburgh at MC USA's annual gathering of all MC USA conference ministers, to be held November 27 - December 1, 2007, at Canby Grove Conference Center, Canby, OR.

Mr. Roxburgh is the Vice President of Allelon Canada, an association which promotes the missional task of church leaders and organizations in the U.S. and Canada. He is the Director of Allelon's Educational Resources throughout North America and serves as the coordinating team leader for the Mission in Western Culture initiative. He has over twenty-seven years of experience in church leadership as a pastor of congregations in small towns, urban centers and the suburbs and in denominational leadership. As seminary faculty he was responsible for teaching in the areas of leadership development and domestic missiology. Alan is ordained in the Baptist Federation of Canada.

### Facilitating Caring Congregations to Be Elder Training Theme

Facilitating the formation of caring teams in congregations will be the focus of a series of elder training workshops being offered to pastors and chaplains throughout the PNMC.

To be led by the PNMC conference ministers, and assisted by Pastor Todd Lehman and Ken Beachy of Zion Mennonite Church, the three-hour workshops will be offered to each cluster group at a location near them. The first workshop is tentatively planned for the South Oregon Cluster on February 16, from 9 a.m. to noon at Lebanon Mennonite Church. A workshop is also tentatively scheduled for the North Oregon Cluster from 9 a.m. to noon on March 1, at a location yet to be determined. Workshops are also planned for the Washington cluster sometime in April or May, and for the CIHAN and Idaho clusters in Fall 2008.

Please contact your conference minister for further information.

### **Conference Calendar**

November 27-Dec. 1, 2007 - MC USA Annual Conference Ministers Meeting, Canby Grove Conference Center, Canby, OR

December 14, 2007 - WMS High School Christmas Concert, 7 p.m., Western Mennonite School Chapel, Keizer, OR

December 18, 2007 - WMS Middle School Christmas Concert, 7 p.m., WMS Chapel, Keizer, OR

December 30, 2007 - January 1, 2008 - New Year's Youth Group Retreat, Drift Creek Camp, Lincoln City, OR. Info: www.driftcreek.org

February 8-9, 2008 - 2008 National MDS Meeting, Slavic Evangelical Church, Fairview, OR. Info: www.mds.mennonite.net

February 9, 2008 - Sixth Annual WMS Annual Choral Benefit Concert, 7:00 p.m., Western Mennonite School Chapel. Info: 503-363-2000

February 16, 2008 - Elder Training 2, South OR Pastors Cluster, Lebanon Mennonite, 9 a.m.-noon.

Spring Break 2008 - Art and Drama Camp, Drift Creek Camp, Lincoln City, OR. Info: www.driftcreek.org. Details TBA.

March 1, 2008 - Elder Training 2, North OR Pastors Cluster, Lebanon Mennonite, 9 a.m.-noon.

April 4, 2008 - Mary Oyer speaks at Oregon Mennonite Genealogical and Historical Society meeting. Details TBA.

May 3, 2008 - Western Mennonite School Auction

May 10, 2008 - Idaho Mennonite Relief Sale, Northwest Nazarene University, Nampa, ID

June 20-22, 2008 - PNMC Annual Meeting, Northwest Nazarene University, Nampa, ID

October 4, 2008 - Mennonite Country Auction, Menno Mennonite Church grounds, Ritzville, WA

October 11, 2008 - Oregon Mennonite Festival for World Relief, Albany, OR

Have an event to list in our coming events calendar? Send info to Sue Palmer at office@pnmc.org . Submission deadlines on Page 2.