

Bethel

Mennonite Church

Vol. 37
Issue 4
July 2014

Newsletter

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The 3rd Annual Windmill Awards



A number of Bethelites have been seen about town in theatrical productions this year. Recently, The Holland Theatre hosted its 3rd Annual Windmill Awards and our members shone like stars. (Continued on Page 2)



Becky Wilkins and Annie Steiner were Flowers in "Alice in Wonderland."



The Maurers in "The Wheel on the School".

Announcements:

♦ **The Red Cross Blood Drive** returns to Bethel on August 22, 2014 from 1:00 - 7:00 pm. Volunteers are needed for assistance in both setting up and tearing down. We also need to provide refreshments. If you are willing to help, please see the sign up sheet on the bulletin board.

♦ **August Brunch Schedule** is now forming. Our worship service will be at 9:30 a.m. August 3 & 10 to allow for the popular August Brunch groups. Please see Mary Newcomer if you wish to be a bruncher, or if you would like to host a brunch group, and let her know how many guests you can accommodate.

♦ **Worship Service will also be at 9:30 a.m.** August 17th, as we prepare to say goodbye to Rick, Jessica & Mckenna Stoner with a special luncheon following the morning service, and on August 24th as we welcome Daniel Lehman into membership by baptism followed by a church picnic.

♦ **Our normal worship time of 10:40 resumes** Sunday August 31st.

♦ **Sausage Booth Volunteers Needed** -- If you would be willing to help with the sausage booth at the Labor Day festival this year, please sign up on the bulletin board.

The Stars Among Us by Beth Maurer

On Tuesday, May 27th, the Holland Theatre hosted their 3rd Annual Windmill Awards. A number Bethelites have participated in various productions and received awards the past two years.

Best Ensemble in a musical in 2013 went to The Flowers in "Alice in Wonderland." Becky Wilkins and Annie Steiner were both flowers in the production.

Best Ensemble in a play in 2013 went to the Dwarves from "Snow White." Savannah Hostetler played a dwarf, and Josie Hostetler also played a little girl in this show.

Best Jr. Ensemble in a play in 2013 went to the six main children's cast members of "Wheel on the School." Taking part in the show were Elam Maurer as Eelka, Maggie Maurer as the Peddler's daughter, and Beth Maurer played Eelka's mom.

The Best Band award went to the "Winter Wonderettes," and our own Bill Barrett was a member of the group.

Also in the fall of 2013, Annie and Becky were in West Liberty's production of "The Canterville Ghost." Becky was a cook, and Annie was a visiting neighbor girl.

Then in the February of 2014 Elam and Beth were in a Valentine's Day variety show at the Holland called "My Sweet Valentine." Elam sang and danced "My Girl" with a young boys group. Beth sang in a Lullaby with Mckenna Stoner, and in a group that sang "Mr. Postman." The cast closed the show with "Love Train" and we all wore 60's clothes.

In April both Annie and Becky were in the cast of "Annie Get Your Gun." Annie was a cowgirl in the chorus and Becky played the role of Mrs. Schuyler Adams, a high society lady.

In May Savannah was a waitress in "Ramona Quimby." The show won the Best Overall Show at the 2014 Holland Achievement Awards.

In the spring, WL produced a one act play called "Cheaters," and Annie was the Principal and Becky was the teacher.

Annie is also participating in an upcoming school related drama club production in August.

(See page 10 for more photos.)



Becky Wilkins and Annie Steiner played flowers in Alice in Wonderland. The group won Best Ensemble.

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Next Newsletter Deadline: August 18, 2014

What If I Pastored the Way that I Garden?

by Pastor Dave Maurer



One of the things that I enjoy about spring and summer is the chance to work in the garden. In fact, I enjoy it so much that we have two plots. One is in our back yard with raised beds and the other is at the Adriel community garden.

To be honest, I enjoy gardening just for the sake of gardening, but it also provides fresh produce and can serve as a family activity. At other times, gardening provides space to reflect and pray while doing something with my hands. One might say that gardening is therapeutic for me. In fact, a recent Facebook meme sums it up well saying, “Gardening is cheaper than therapy, and you get tomatoes.”

Well recently I have been thinking about the number of images in the Bible that are based on gardening and agriculture. There are, for instance, the parable of the sower and the imagery of the vine and the branches to name a couple. These are models for ministry and I wonder “What would it be like if I pastored the way that I garden?”

For instance, I am not the most orthodox gardener. It’s a hobby and I figure I have nothing to lose so I get creative. In fact, I often tell people that gardening is just one great big experiment. I read and listen to what others say. I see pictures of creative gardening and then I take these ideas, adapt them and make them my own; learning through trial and error. If it doesn’t work this year, I may try again next year with a few alterations.

Doing this has led me to plant giant sunflowers alongside my tomatoes to provide 8-10 foot living tomato “stakes.” It has also led me to doing potato towers which are about 2 foot in diameter and allow me to add more soil as the plants grow. And this year, with my abundance of volunteer tomatoes, I am experimenting with growing tomatoes upside down, out of the bottom of hanging “baskets.” We’ll see if it works.

What would this mean for ministry? While I don’t want to diminish ministry to a “hobby,” I find myself wondering what it would be like to have that same holy abandon about the work that I do on God’s behalf. Not that I shouldn’t take it seriously, but that I not take it so seriously that I squelch the sense of playful abandon that can come with partnering with the Lord in “growing fruit” for the kingdom and doing it in creative ways. Perhaps this would allow me to adapt more readily to the changing context

around us.

Another consideration comes in part from a joke in which someone comes up to a gardener and says, “You and God have a beautiful garden.” To which the gardener replies, “Yeah, you should have seen it when God had it by Himself.” The first person is naming God’s part in the gardening process; and with a little humor, the gardener is reasserting his part in the process. This is true of ministry as well, isn’t it? We can’t bring about transformation in the lives of people and our community on our own, and yet God is committed to working with, in and through us in this endeavor, to be co-laborers with us.

Well one of my tendencies in gardening that frustrates some is to allow plants that I didn’t sow to grow. A gardener must have a discerning eye about which plants are for harvest and which are weeds, but sometimes the lines blur. Sometimes plants that can produce fruit pop up unexpectedly, in unplanned spaces as weeds that can choke out what we intended to grow there.

When a volunteer plant comes up, I must determine whether to let it go, transplant it, or discard it. I often let these plants go for a time to see what they are and in the process have had a bumper crop of rat tail radishes this year that I did not plant. On the other hand, while I have transplanted some of the volunteer tomatoes that have popped up, I have also had to pull more than 800 of them because if I didn’t, they would choke out my beans.

I look at this approach to gardening as being a co-labor with God in an atypical way. It is not simply me planting, God growing, and me weeding. It is incorporating what God has planted, a “volunteer” plant, into my set and structured plan for the garden. It is being discerning about what should stay and what should go and adapting along the way for growth of the spirit that springs up unexpectedly.

In ministry, we have a tendency to plan everything out. And we have a tendency to squelch or pluck that which is not a part of our plan. But I wonder if as co-laborers with God, if we could be more discerning and flexible about the “volunteer plants” that sprout up. And if in doing so, God may supply a harvest that we didn’t expect and that is beyond what we would imagine possible. What would it be like if I pastored more like I garden?

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Joining in with God's Movement by Pastor Rick Stoner

When I was a student at AMBS (then, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary) one of my favorite professors was Alan Kreider. His passion for God's mission in the world was infectious as he sought to hold together peace and missions, which can so often be ripped apart.

One of the prayers that he would often use, and encourage us to use, was, "Lord, we know that you are moving in the world around us. Help us to see your movement and have the courage to join in." The prayer reminds us that God is a living God, and that God is already at work in our community; in the lives of those who we encounter on a daily basis. And, the prayer reminds us that we need to work on our vision!

In our year of discernment prayer, we pray, "We want to join in what you [God] are already doing in the world." This is a powerful statement. To pray this and really mean it we must let go of our agendas, which can be risky because we are no longer "in control." Yet, this cannot happen if we cannot see God's movement.

The Jews of Jesus' day had a vision problem too. Although Jesus was right before them many struggled to see, truly see, him. Jesus often quoted from the prophet Isaiah saying, "You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving. For this people's heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes." It would seem that there was something blocking their vision, and maybe the same blockage is plaguing us too. You see, whenever something becomes too familiar we don't see it fully. We grow accustomed to it as it fades into the background of our minds. Maybe God's story had become too familiar for the people around Jesus. Maybe they were so stuck in the rut of the law that they had closed their eyes. Now if we fast forward in time to us, maybe we have done the same thing with our faith. Maybe our worship has become too routine and we are sleepwalking through our times of worship thus missing God's movement. Additionally, maybe we have become so accustomed to the community we live in and the people here, that we think we know what's going on; but we are still missing the movement.

Recently I had the youth go out into the neighborhood and take pictures that represent new life (Alex Steiner took this picture of an old car, saying it can become like new when restored.) This exercise was meant to help the youth begin to see the world around them with fresh eyes. We need to do this on a daily basis. If we are able to daily submit our vision to the Lord, then perhaps we can begin to enter into God's movement because we can see it.

So then, through this daily submission to God's will, we too can begin to see the world around us through new eyes. This is crucial because if we are to truly join in God's movement, we must first see it! We must allow the scales and crust that form over our eyes after years of comfort, to be peeled off. The familiar must become unfamiliar again, until we see the movement of Jesus in the life of our worship and fellowship, as well as in the relationships with those around us.

For if we dare to allow ourselves to be swept up in the movement of the Spirit, then maybe we might be transformed from those who are "ever seeing but never perceiving," into those who see the righteousness of God as it springs forth in unexpected places.

"Lord, we know that you are moving in the world around us. Help us to see your movement and have the courage to join in."



Meet Our Newest Baptismal Candidate, Daniel Lehman

Daniel, son of Gary and Kathy Lehman, is 14 years old and will be a freshman at West Liberty-Salem High School. He is planning to be baptized in August.

Some of Daniel's favorite things include pizza, good company, ice cream cake, and warm beds. His favorite Bible verse is John 21:17. Daniel's hobbies include soccer, fishing, playing games, and eating.

On the top of the list of the people Daniel admires is "my grandpa, because he is cool." He also admires Dick Lindemer – "Everyone always wants him to weld things." Daniel says, "My grandma, uncles, and aunts are cool too."

Daniel's plans for the next five years are to get a driver's license and graduate with good grades.

He is choosing to be baptized because he is ready to make his commitment official. His favorite things about Bethel are the people and the awesome Christmas Eve services.



Mission Presentation by Dennis & Connie Byler

Dennis and Connie Byler were present to share with us on June 29th during the worship service and in a joint Sunday school time that took place in the sanctuary. They spoke about their missionary work in Spain, and Dennis presented "The Tale of Jonah: A Missions Sermon."

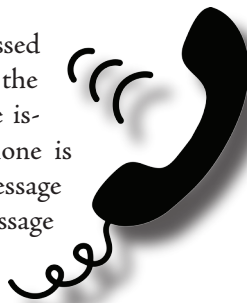
Dennis and Connie Byler have served in Burgos, Spain, with Mennonite Mission Network since 1981. Dennis teaches at the Protestant seminaries, Centro Teológico Koinonía and Seminario Evangélico Unido de Teología. He also serves as secretary for the Anabaptist network in Spain, and edits its monthly newsletter, El Mensajero. Connie is an elder on the leadership team at their local Mennonite church, Comunidades Unidas Anabautistas, and provides spiritual companionship and counseling to many people, including those not accepted by society.

As Connie reflects on their work, she wrote, "I'm so thankful for the loving support from the Mennonite churches and mission agency over these nearly four decades of my involvement in Mennonite missions."



Missing Prayer Chain Messages

A number of people have expressed concern about missing messages on the prayer chain, due to answering machine issues. The problem is, as soon as a phone is answered, One Call Now's recorded message begins, while the recipient's outgoing message is still playing, resulting in the message being cropped.



If you discover that you have received an incomplete message from the prayer chain, call toll free: 1-877-698-3261. At the greeting, press 1 and enter your phone number (the number you signed up to receive prayer chain messages,) and the complete message will play.

As a reminder, to request prayer, call the church office at 465-4587, Dave Maurer, Pastor at 937-597-0504 or 465-0899 or Tesa Jordan, Administrative Assistant at 419-302-8848.

Soccer Camp Sign Up

Bethel Soccer Camp is July 28-31 2014 at Lions Park from 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

The purpose of the Bethel Soccer Camp is to encourage the skill development of soccer players in an affirming environment. The fundamental skills (dribbling, passing, shooting, defending, heading, etc) will be covered by the coaches who will encourage each player's development. We encouraged around 50 youth in their soccer abilities last year!

Each session will be opened with a brief devotion and prayer. Although the faith of the coaching staff will be evident, our goal is not to evangelize the players, but to model God's love through service and positive role models. If you can help with camp, please see Dave Maurer.



Bethel's History Notes

by Donna Lehman

Let's go way back in time this month. One of the early young people's meetings which were held was called the Literary Society. These were mid-week meetings with the young people of the 3 churches, Oak Grove, Bethel and South Union back in the 1930's, early '40's, that included singing and Biblical studies.

One of the highlights for these groups in the fall was "The Box Social." The girls would pack two lunches, and the fellows would bid on the box, then there would be friendship in sharing the meal.

Another highlight was "The First Saturday of June Outing." This was for couples only (discrimination??) And again, the girls

packed the lunch. Remember, this was before there were any McDonalds or other deli or burger shops. One of the favorite places for the outing was Indian Lake, where they were able to rent boats for rowing. Some of the group sometimes would even go to the skating rink (which may have been frowned upon by some of the parents.) --Thanks to Miriam Headings for this information about these young people activities.

In the 1950's, the next young people's group was formed and called MYF (Mennonite Youth Fellowship,) also with the 3 churches. And, speaking of MYF, it was 35 years ago, Green Hills was just opening and the local MYF spent a Saturday there, picking up rocks and stones so the lawns would be smooth and mow-able.



July Birthdays

3- Julia Yoder
10- Ella Mae Kauffman
12- Jeff Steiner
13- Alex Steiner
13- Brody Robinaugh
17- Ruby Byler
18- Mary Yoder
19- Miriam Lapp
20- Hayden Sanford
20- Sharon Showalter
23- Darin Robinaugh
25- Elaine Newcomer
25- Madelyn Sanford
27- Beth Maurer
30- Dena Hostetler
30- Doug Steiner

August Birthdays

2 - Janet Wilkins
3 - Michelle Link
3 - Bill Shumaker
12 - Mary Psolla
18 - Art Newcomer
23 - Cody Buck
23 - Harry Graber
23 - Jane Core Thomas
26 - Sally Harshbarger
29 - Sam J. Plank

July Anniversaries

July 4, 2005 --Lee & Tesa Jordan
July 6, 1980 --Neil & Peggy Wirick
July 18, 1964 --Carl & Elaine Newcomer
July 21, 1979 --Greg & Jane Core Thomas
July 23, 1965 --Chuck & Jeanie Swartz
July 27, 1968 --Mike & Rita Roberts

August Anniversaries

August 6, 1994 - Greg & Joanna Hostetler
August 6, 1966 - Jim & Kay Burkett
August 8, 1981 - Jeff & Suzan Hooper
August 11, 1978 - Rick & Kathy Norviel
August 15, 1970 - Bill & Carole Barrett
August 18, 1973 - Steve & Miriam Lapp
August 19, 1961 - Art & Mary Newcomer
August 19, 1967 - Byron & Barb Kauffman
August 21, 1971 - Jerry & Barb Landes
August 29, 1954 - Lowell & Ellie Kauffman

Noteworthy Dates

Mennonite Women

by Donna Lehman

Mennonite Women met on May 13th, and enjoyed a picnic lunch which included chicken salad, chips, fruit and ice cream sundaes! The tables were decorated with flowers and some of Dorcas Kauffman's carved birds. Hostesses were Elaine Newcomer, Barbara Kauffman and Lydia King.

For our devotional, Jeanie Swartz shared about "The Courage of Naomi," who with the loss of the men in her life (husband and two sons), embarked on a return to her homeland with many challenges. However, she had a daughter-in-law, Ruth, who stayed by her side and pledged, "Your people will be my people, and your God, my God."

There was no June meeting because of Vacation Bible School. The July 8th meeting will feature 'sack lunches.'

Attendance was 23. Work completed: 1 comforter, 3 baby comforters, 3 newborn bundles, 440 Box Top Labels for Education were sent to Hopi Mission School, AZ.

Vacation Bible School

by Michelle Link

Another season of our annual Bethel Vacation Bible School has come to a close. The impression I am left with is that the members of The Body at Bethel are faithful and obedient in sponsoring a Vacation Bible School every year. How many years has Bethel had a VBS? The historian would have to answer that question. But I can imagine that for years and years, young women and mothers have prepared to teach, and have loaded up their children on beautiful summer mornings to spend a week at church. Older folks have remembered the young families and been obedient, answering the call to come to the church on beautiful summer mornings, sacrificing their time and leisure to faithfully pass on Love and Truth we find in Jesus.

Our curriculum from our publishing house is Scripture based. Sometimes we are learning new stories, sometimes reviewing stories learned years ago.

It is exciting to see how the Lord works through our teachers. Our Group Leaders, Active Response Leaders, and Creative Response leaders each bring unique and fresh ideas to convey the Bible lessons to the children. This year our theme was: Welcome! Give and Receive God's Great Love. Dramas and lessons were based on stories of Sarah and Abraham; The Good Samaritan; Zacchaeus; Abigail, David and Nabal; and Luke and Paul shipwrecked on Malta.

We had kind of a fun little addition to our VBS this year. With the theme of welcome and hospitality in mind, Paul Harshbarger built a beautiful little playhouse. This little house sat at the front door to the church and delighted the children (young and old!) as it welcomed everyone each morning. Thank you Paul!



Silas Maurer enjoying the little house that Paul built.

We also had Bethel VBS T-shirts this year. Almost every child wore their shirt on Friday and we took a group picture at the front of the sanctuary. We hope their shirts will be a happy reminder of the week they spent at Bethel this summer.



We had 54 children total, in preschool through grade 6, who attended. Our daily average attendance was 49. We had three 8th graders who attended the annual Jr. High Camp-out and graduated from VBS this year: Daniel Lehman, Stephen Hostetler and Christian Steiner. They have faithfully attended VBS since they were little boys. "Thank you" to these three boys for your service the past two years of coming every morning to VBS and your willingness to jump in and help wherever you were needed. Our three High School girls, Becky Wilkins, Annie Steiner, and Savannah Hostetler have once again been faithful in using their individual talents in assisting the committee members - thank you girls!

Our mission project this year was contributing to MCC project of assisting with education of Syrian refugee children. The offering amount was \$1232.56. Hopefully through concentrating on this project adults and children alike will be more aware of the plight of the refugees of Syria.

Thanks to all who prayed, donated snack items, prepared and taught, and brought children to the church each morning.

As we think of this VBS season where we came together again as family and friends old and new, let us be aware of our faithfulness and our obedience in answering God's call. "We leave the responsibility of the growth of the seeds planted to You, Lord. Amen"

Pizza Oven Update

Now that warmer temperatures have arrived, progress is being made on the pizza oven. Mark, Todd and Dave worked on laying fire brick for the bottom of the oven and started the walls recently. To do this, they cut the bricks to shape, and used fire clay (mortar) to hold them in place. Next they will be working on forming the dome.



Peace & Justice Focus on Syria & Immigration by Bill Shumaker

The Peace and Justice group has been concentrating on the issues of Syria and immigration, our two priorities at the present time. Homelessness, Human Trafficking, Everyone a Peacemaker, Palestine, Veterans and Bullying are on hold for now.

Response in giving for the Syrian crisis has been exceptionally good. Through designated offerings and the Bible school project approximately \$1300 has been raised. This will be sent to MCC and they will put it to use as they see fit. That is very good because the crisis there is not going away. In fact it is getting worse by the day. The present violence in Iraq is complicating the problem. In addition to the money for Syria, \$1205 has been donated for the crisis in south Sudan.

The immigration keeps growing due to violence in Central America. Many young people (13 years old and up) are fleeing because their life is being threatened. Chuck has re-

cently been in contact with an acquaintance in Brooks County Texas, right in the heart of where immigrants are crossing the Rio Grande river, and Eleanor has a grand niece teaching in the valley. Intentions are to make further contact with them, and ask what kind of support is needed.

As time goes on, we want to keep you informed about other Peace and Justice issues for the furtherance of your prayer life. And who knows, perhaps there is a specific issue close to the heart of an unknown supporter.

In the meantime, I must say that I am impressed with the generosity of Bethelites!!

Pray that in the words of Isaiah, "He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore."

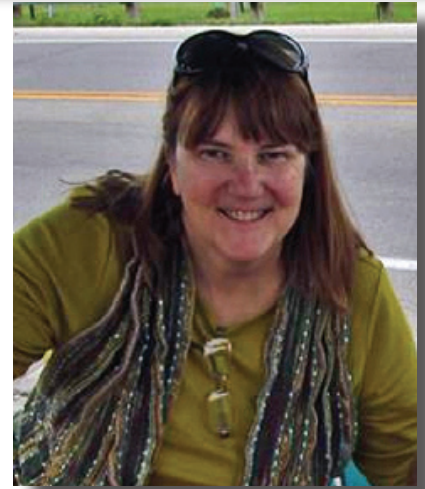
From the Editor

Tesa Jordan

I still have the key to my first apartment. It symbolized a rite of passage to me somehow. Even though they are just small pieces of metal, keys play a very important role in our day to day lives. AAA saved me many times in college when I perpetually locked my keys in my car! The keys to my first house were another weighty set, as I took on the responsibility of home ownership.

Recently, I received a new set of keys. A key to the church, the church's post office box, my office door, and another key – what it opens, nobody seems to know. I look forward to serving the congregation in my new position as Administrative Assistant and hope that you all will be patient as I learn the ropes and fumble with my new keys.

When I logged on to my Facebook account early one June morning, one of the first posts I saw was a quote called "8 Keys to Daily Joy." As I read through the list, I found that I couldn't think of a better way to invite Joy into my life than the suggestions listed there. So, I thought you might also enjoy having a new set of keys, and I pray you find them helpful in your daily walk!



8 KEYS TO DAILY JOY -- by Pastor Richard Hilton

Begin each day with: I will have joy tonight because I began this day with joy!!!

1) **PRAYER** this morning I will pray first, because you are my source, my hope, my rock, and my King!

Matthew 5:3

2) **FAITH** this morning I will not worry, because I trust in you, The Lord who comforts and encourages me. Matthew 5:4

3) **PATIENCE** this morning I will be patient and gentle with others, because you Lord are patient with me. Matthew 5:5

4) **RIGHTEOUSNESS** this morning I will pursue righteousness, because you are my righteousness. Matthew 5:6. *So I hunger for more of you and less of me.*

5) **FORGIVENESS** this morning I will forgive, showing mercy to others, because you have forgiven



me. Matthew 5:7

6) **INTEGRITY** this morning I will guard my heart, placing the integrity of my motives before your eyes, because you alone know my true heart. Matthew 5:8 *and you alone can purify my heart as I behold you.*

7) **WISDOM** this morning I will carefully choose my words so I do not disturb the peace, because you have called me to peace and

unity. Matthew 5:9 *others will only see me as your child when I pursue peace!*

8) **ENDURANCE** lastly, this morning I will endure anything that comes my way, because Father YOU are the strength of my heart. Matthew 5:10 *And no words or weapons brought against me shall prosper!*

And what about that mysterious key among my new set of keys? It gives me joy and wonder, just thinking about any number of possibilities of what it might open!

–Tesa Jordan

Bethel's Shining Stars



Bethel Garden Tour to Benefit West Liberty Cares

Many of our Bethel members like to garden, both for fun and for food. July 6th, following the worship service, we will have a Garden Tour of several member's gardens. Some traditional, and some not so traditional!

A donation of \$5, or the equivalent in non-perishable food items is suggested, and the money and foodstuffs will go to West Liberty Cares.

The tour begins at the home of Lee & Tesa Jordan, with a pot luck lunch after the worship service. They will provide the meat and table service. Participants are asked to bring a covered dish.

Once there, you will receive a map to tour the other homes at your leisure for the afternoon, and we will all end up at the home of Joe & Donna Lehman for Trains & Games, and a light refreshment.

At present time we have 7 stops on the tour but can use a few more. Contact Tesa or Mary Newcomer if you would like to be a stop on the tour.