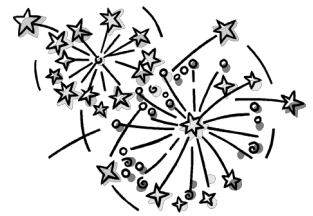


Bethel News & Views



August 2009
Volume 32, Issue 4

BREATHE AND BE FILLED: YOUTH REPORT ON COLUMBUS CONVENTION

During the worship service on July 12, Bethel youth and their sponsors shared highlights from the MC USA Youth Convention they attended June 30 to July 5 in Columbus. The five youth were Chris Thornburg, Brody Robinaugh, Jacob Shank, Patrick Graber, and Kelsey Oakley. Accompanying them were Ken and Cheryl Shank, Darin and Kathi Robinaugh, and Rick and Jessica Stoner.

Chris began the sharing by talking about the worship sessions they attended. He mentioned the first speaker, Brenda Matthews (a.k.a. Mama Brenda) who was very energetic and spoke with passion. "She set the mood for everyone in the Arena and got us pumped up for the rest of the week," said Chris. Other favorites were Leonard Dow, a black pastor from Philadelphia, and Shane Hipps, pastor at Trinity Mennonite Church in Phoenix, who introduced the youth to his own dance, the Booty X, and talked about breathing in the Holy Spirit.

Patrick's favorite speaker was Shane Claiborne, founder of The Simple Way Community and author of several books. "He told of seeing Mother Theresa and how she encouraged him to find his own Calcutta," reported Patrick.

The convention offered many seminars for youth on how to be Christian teenagers, and they attended at least two each day. Kelsey talked about two of the seminars she attended. *Struggle to survive: African youth in the HIV maelstrom* made her much more aware of the AIDS epidemic and ways she could help. The other seminar, *Faith and competitive sports*, offered guidance in finding the balance between faith and sports. "My faith needs to shine through my actions and words as I compete as a Christian athlete," said Kelsey.

Brody and Jacob told about the service project they participated in on Wednesday afternoon. They worked at a YMCA spreading mulch on the playground and later painting a shelter. Brody thought it was neat to see the kids playing on the playground after they had finished, and Jacob mentioned that part of their service was listening to the guy in charge who liked to talk a lot.

The four guys then dramatized a late-night activity where they were playing a game in the hallway of their motel and eating pizza, and then were asked to return to their room and get quiet.

Chris and Jacob reported on other free time activities such as

exploring the college booths in the giant exhibition hall, and playing soccer or ping pong in the gym. They enjoyed meeting youth from other places, relaxing at "The Cove," buying dinners at North Market, hearing the Christian rock band, Kutless, and taking in the city's annual *Red, White and Boom* fireworks display on Friday night.

After telling about the 5K race he ran on Sunday morning, Patrick summed up the entire convention experience saying, "It changes what you think about things; I'm definitely going to have to re-think some things."

He went on to compare living our lives to running a race. "We need to build momentum and keep going with God. Conventions help us build momentum in our lives with Jesus to keep moving."

Sponsors Ken and Cheryl Shank expressed appreciation to the congregation for their financial and prayer support of the youth. "Attending convention is a good way to get to know the youth," said Cheryl. "Seeing them in that setting is a great experience; it almost gives you goose bumps." Ken added that he really enjoyed the sounds of music made by 4,000 youth singing praise songs and traditional hymns.

For more convention highlights of Bethel volunteers, delegates, and attendees, turn to page 4.

Collected by Pastor Dave Maurer

CHALLENGES FROM CONVENTION

The gospel spreads best, not by force, but by fascination.

The biggest barrier to Christ is Christians, who have so much to say with their words and so little to show with their lives.

How can we worship a homeless man on Sunday and ignore one on Monday?

Stop complaining about the church that we have experienced, and start becoming the church that Christ imagined!

Lowell and Ellie Kauffman will celebrate 55th anniversary

Bethel Mennonite Church was the setting for the ceremony uniting Lowell Kauffman and Ella Mae (Ellie) Hostetler in marriage on August 29, 1954. Some of their siblings served as attendants, but Lowell wasn't quite sure of all those details about colors and flowers when asked about the wedding. He did remember that Lee Plank was one of his groomsmen, and that the Yoder Quartet provided music.

After the ceremony, which was conducted by Pastor Ed Stoltzfus, a reception was held at the home of the bride's parents. The newlyweds honeymooned at Niagara Falls.

For the first two years of their marriage, Lowell and Ellie lived in Cleveland and worked at Hawthornden State Hospital so Lowell could fulfill his I-W alternate service requirements. Both worked as aides, Ellie with women and Lowell on another floor with men.

In 1956 the young couple moved to the West Liberty area where Lowell farmed and milked cows, and they began their family. Five children were added to their family – Susie, Mark, Janet, Jim, and Doris. Mark, Janet and Doris and their families are part of our current Bethel family.

After six years of farming, Lowell got into the dry walling business, which he has

worked at for over 45 years. Ellie worked as an aide at Green Hills and also served as Volunteer Coordinator for several years. In the 1990's they built the home where they now live on Yerian Road in rural West Liberty.

Through the years, the Kauffmans have been active members at Bethel. Lowell was church and Sunday School chorister for many years and also has served as adult S.S. superintendent. Currently, he is head trustee. Ellie participated in women's groups and was a children's Sunday School and Bible School teacher for many years, which she saw as her mission.

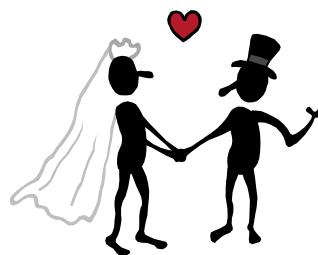
Both Lowell and Ellie are singers and enjoyed singing with choirs and ensembles through the years, including the West Liberty Choral Society. Lowell sang the bass solos for the Choral Society's annual production of Handel's *Messiah*, and continues to be a popular soloist on occasion.

In his spare time, Lowell enjoys bowling and is a train and bird enthusiast. Ellie likes gardening and has made quilts for her grandchildren. In the past she also did a lot of genealogy research with her sister, Norma Hostetler, on both sides of the family.

Congratulations, Lowell and Ellie, and may God continue to bless your marriage!

August Wedding 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 20, 1994 – Dale & Peggy Wirick
 August 21, 1971 – Jerry & Barb Landes
 August 29, 1954 – Lowell & Ellie Kauffman



BIRTHDAY PARADE



August

2 – Janet Wilkins
 3 – Michelle Link
 3 – Bill Shumaker
 10 – Patrick Graber
 12 – Matt King
 12 – Mary Psolla
 17 – Randy Longenecker
 18 – Art Newcomer
 23 – Cody Buck
 23 – Harry Graber
 23 – Jane Core Thomas
 24 – Pam Webb
 26 – Sally Harshbarger
 29 – Sam J. Plank

September

2 – Darryl Snyder
 3 – Byron Kauffman
 5 – Levi Schultz
 7 – Chuck Buck
 12 – Rick Norviel
 12 – Rita Roberts
 14 – Linda Hostetler
 18 – Maggie Maurer
 20 – Deanna Kauffman
 21 – Cheryl Shank
 24 – Rachel Snyder
 26 – Dean Horn
 26 – Suzanne Horner
 26 – Barb Kauffman
 26 – Daniel Lehman
 26 – Jessica Stoner
 27 – Jim Burkett
 28 – Greg Hostetler
 29 – Ellen Steiner
 30 – Logan Link

Columbus 2009 Musings: God's work continues in our midst By Pastor Dave Maurer

The Mennonite Church USA Convention was held more than a month ago in Columbus, and yet I find myself still reflecting on what took place there, and wondering what ripples will come from that time that the wider church spent together.

For me, convention is a time to reunite with friends from times gone by, and to create new relationships with followers of Christ from across the country. It is also a time to be reminded of who and whose we are and to be challenged to grow in new ways. Finally, it is a time to worship the God we serve and to seek his leading in fulfilling the call that he has placed on us.

While in Columbus, I saw people from my times as a student at Bluffton and Eastern Mennonite Seminary, and my times as a pastor at Harrisonburg Mennonite and Grace Mennonite. I found joy in reconnecting and was encouraged to hear the ways that God has been moving in their lives.

During convention, I had the opportunity to listen to a number of gifted speakers who challenged the church to stay faithful to Christ and encouraged us to continue growing in our ability to carry out God's mission on earth.

In the midst of convention, there were numerous opportunities to worship with adults, with youth and in a joint service. In those times, I was often moved by the music, not only because

of the skill of the leaders but also by the words and by the size of the gathering joining together in "one voice." I was also impacted by the elements of worship that enhanced the theme of the day. There were numerous dramas by Ted & Company among others, and participatory elements in which we were invited not to be just spectators but to contribute to the experience of worship.

Probably most important to me though was the fact that the times of worship were viewed as integral to the purpose and work of being together as a church. Worship was not set up as a tack-on. Worship was a part of how we sought God as we gathered together to do the "work" of the church. "We worship together believing that God is in our midst and trusting that God will speak to us and lead us forward." Elements of our worship experiences would carry over to our "work" together, and we took time in the midst of the delegate sessions for Bible study, prayer and singing.

Columbus 2009 is over, but what took place there carries on. God was moving in our midst and calling us to his purposes. Now we all, whether we attended part, all or none of convention; must continue the work of God in our midst and discern the ways that we are called to act in our own contexts.

Mennonite Women in Mission By Donna Lehman

There was a big turnout for 'picnic day' at the July Mennonite Women meeting – 27 attending!

Terri McGarry from Adriel came mid-morning and was given items (2 quilts, 1 wall hanging, 5 comforters) for Adriel's auction this fall. She was very appreciative.

Lunchtime came, and time for the picnic! Mary Psolla and Kyle VanOsdol were chefs, and they served 'Maid Rites' and other picnic-type side dishes. And, at our place settings – worms! (No explanations; you had to have been there.)

We had several guests at the meeting: Annie Steiner, Mary Psolla's sister Marge, and Miriam Headings' daughter, Christine.

For the business meeting, President Jeanette Hostetler read thank you notes from the Hopi Indian School for labels and box tops, and from Mennonite Women USA for a \$200 contribution towards their mission workers.

Pat Yoder reported that there is \$256 in the treasury.

For 'Show and Tell' Annabelle Hostetler showed several older pictures she recently found and had framed. She also had a framed pillow from an aunt's comforter handiwork. We also had news that Janice Rabenstein had a quilt at the county fair that came in second overall in quilts.

Several books were recommended: *My Faith or My Family* (in the Bethel library, and Ruth Yoder had a book from Ralph Buckwalter which she was willing to share.

Mary Ann King had devotional thoughts on "Give to God" based on the familiar scripture from Mark 12, "Give to Caesar the things that are Caesars . . ." She pointed out difficulties in balancing out our gifts from God in a wise way.

Work completed included two comforters.

REMINDER!

**The August 11
MW meeting
lunch will feature
a fruit bowl and
muffins.**



Volunteers and delegates report on convention experiences

Byron and Barb Kauffman, Miriam Lapp, and Pastor Dave Maurer worked as volunteers at the recent MC USA Convention, held in Columbus.

Byron served on the planning committee for worship, which met for four two-day sessions before the convention. He also helped in various capacities, including as usher, during the convention. Barb worked with pre-schoolers every day, and was able to attend some of the evening sessions and activities, which she found energizing.

Miriam Lapp also worked with children in the elementary age group. She enjoyed learning to know new friends, and found the worship services “regenerating and meaningful.”

Pastor Dave Maurer helped organize young adult activities and worked with the 89 young adult delegates. He found it “exciting to be a part of that portion of the convention.”

Dennis Showalter and Pastor Dave served as Bethel’s two delegates to the business portions of convention. Dennis enjoyed getting to know the other delegates sitting at his table and said the sessions were “anything but boring.” He is excited about going to Pittsburgh in 2011 for the next bi-annual MC USA convention.

For more detailed reports, listen to the recording of the July 12 worship service. Pastor Dave also has copies of the three resolutions passed by the delegate body.

Bethelites share seminar and worship highlights

Drumming for Peace, Starvation: the role of energy cost, biofuels and organic farming, Iran: More of the Picture, Islam and the Gospel, Christians and Muslims in Dialogue, Conversations with your aging parents, The Dark Night: A Gift from God, Breathe the joy, Greening the church experience, A conversation about our tools, Conflict transformation training for every member, The historical Jesus and the Holy Spirit, Middle East 101: Beyond the News

And the list of over 100 seminars offered for adults at the recent convention goes on. Those mentioned are some of the seminars attended by Carl and Elaine Newcomer, Jerry and Barb Landes, Paul and Sally Harshbarger, Suzanne Horner, Randy and Marla Longenecker, and Beth Maurer.

One seminar that stood out for Elaine was *Finding hope in recovery: Families living with addiction*. Two parents share stories of despair, hope and the constant struggle of living with children addicted to drugs. Carl enjoyed *Spiritual check-up for the church*, which explored ways to assess spiritual health and encourage spiritual renewal.

Barb attended *Sister-Care seminars for effective lay caring*, and noted that the focus

is similar to our Pastoral Care Team. Women need to be able to discuss hurts, sorrows and life issues. Jerry enjoyed *Jesus Matters! Good News for the 21st Century*, where the various authors of the book by the same name shared their perspectives about Jesus and the Bible.

Beth found the *Pro-life, Pro-peace* seminar the most interesting. “I am intrigued by the fact that some Mennonites are against war, but do not have a consistent stance when it comes to the value of all life,” she said.

Suzanne was inspired by the messages of Shane Claiborne, Jim Wallis of Sojourner Magazine, and Gene Stoltzfus of Christian Peacemaker Teams. She noted a prophetic message coming from all three speakers: “It’s time for Mennonites to shift their image from being the ‘quiet in the land’ to being a beacon of light and a more assertive presence for those who want to learn from our historic emphasis on the gospel of peace.”

For Paul and Sally, the highlight of convention was worshipping together with a lot of people and listening to the various speakers. “The way Ken Medema put energy into the meaning of what was going on was really worshipful to us,” said Sally.

Top 10 Highlights of Convention 2009

By Marla Longenecker

10. Seminar – *Greening the Church Experience*

9. Ted & Co. drama
*Speak Up:
I can’t hear your life*

8. Seminar
The Dark Night

7. Thursday morning
worship – Shane
Claiborne

6. Wednesday morning
worship – Jim Schrag

5. Seminar
*Conversations with
your aging parents*

4. Thursday evening
Joint worship

3. Dinner at Rigsby’s
with my brother

2. Late-night hymn sing

1. Going home
filled with inspiration!

Congratulations! Kelsey Oakley

Kelsey was recently crowned the 2009 Ohio State Junior Jersey Queen at the annual Jersey State Picnic in Wooster.

Her duties will include promoting the Jersey breed as well as the dairy industry throughout Ohio at various District Jersey shows and at the Ohio State Fair.

A senior this year at WL-S High School, Kelsey is a member of several 4-H clubs and the WL-S FHA chapter. After graduation, she hopes to attend Findlay University and study Pre-Veterinary Medicine and Animal Sciences.

French school group travels to France

West Liberty-Salem High School French teacher, Cheryl Shank, led a group of seven students and four adults on a trip to France in June. The group included son, Jacob, and also her brother, Chuck Graber.

This was the fifth trip Cheryl has taken with students. On June 18 the group flew to London where they visited Stonehenge and Salisbury before taking the ferry to Caen, France. They toured the Normandy beaches, Mont St. Michel, castles in the Loire Valley, and the city of Paris before taking a train south to the region of Provence, returning from the city of Nice.

This region was Cheryl's favorite. They spent time at an outdoor market where meats, bread, cheeses, baskets, spices, jewelry, soap, fabrics, tablecloths, books, scarves were for sale. "I also liked visiting Stonehenge in England," says Cheryl. "We were there right before the summer solstice, which is a big gathering for Druid pilgrims."

Jacob also enjoyed the cities of Avignon and Cannes in the south of France. He liked the "countryside views, and old thatch houses, cacti, miles and miles of grape vineyards, olive tree orchards, and more." He also "liked London a lot too, because of the lifestyle. The 'tube' is a main source of

transportation for many people, and the architecture resembles the monarchy styles and high class history of the city," he explains.

While in France, Madame Shank insisted the students speak French, at least while ordering lunch or asking other simple questions. "I tried to speak as much French as possible whenever speaking to any French person," says Jacob. "I felt really comfortable with reading signs and getting around in the cities. Maybe being brought up in a family where my parents speak French a lot helped," he adds.

Jacob says the trip inspired him to do more world traveling, which he has always dreamed of doing. "I think traveling is the best way to understand other cultures, and give you the knowledge to understand (world events) better. Seeing the world from others' points of view allows you to be more open to change and accepting others."

One night at dinner, after a stressful day for Madame Shank, the students sang "Happy Birthday" to her in French, in cahoots with the waitress who brought out a little cake for the occasion. Since all knew it wasn't really her birthday, everyone had a good laugh and it raised all of their spirits for the night.

Stacey King serves at English camp in Kosovo

Editor's note: On June 25 Stacey King traveled to Kosovo where she worked at a camp, returning on July 8. She reports briefly here in the newsletter, but we hope to hear more from her in person at a future date.

Several weeks ago I joined a group from Cornerstone University at an English camp in Kosovo that was directed by CrossWorld missionaries. I was a team leader for seven 9-year-old Albanian girls. Along with 100 other children from Kosovo, "my girls" learned English through songs, crafts, games, and class time each morning.

In the afternoon, I visited the students' homes. The people of Kosovo love

Americans and are very hospitable. I made many friends, both with language helpers, fellow team members, and the children's families.

I also enjoyed sharing my testimony with them. In a few cases I was able to share about Jesus' sacrifice for our sins, which is largely unknown in the nominally Muslim Kosovo.

Even though this was a short-term trip, I am very excited about the missionaries' long-term work. I have tremendous respect for them; they are humble people who love Jesus and love the people of Kosovo. It was a privilege to assist them for a short time as they continue to build relationships and share the gospel there.

"It was a privilege to assist (the missionaries) for a short time as they continue to build relationships and share the gospel there (in Kosovo)."

~Stacey King

Vacation Bible School Catches the Spirit By Joanna Hostetler

Mostly sunny June weather blessed our Vacation Bible School held June 15-19 at Bethel. An average of 48 children in preschool to grade six attended the five-day program around the theme, *Catch the Spirit! Join God's Work in the World.*

As in recent years, each day followed the same format including worship sessions, a special activity, recreation, and snacks.

Worship - During worship children watched dramas about the Holy Spirit and how it invites them to join in the movement in their lives, in the church, and with God's people around the world. Dramas were coordinated by Dick Lindemer and Dave Maurer, and acted out by various persons in the congregation each day.

James Lochridge and Beth Maurer led the music this year, choosing a variety of songs that the children enjoyed, including the theme song, *Catch the Spirit.*

Offerings were collected each day for our mission project, Habitat for Humanity. In addition to the offering taken at the Bible School program on June 21, we were able to raise a total of \$670.96. Thank you everyone for your support!

Activities – Each day the children attended one special activity intended to emphasize the week's theme of join in the action and catch the spirit.

Missy Snyder led *Creating* where children explored the church as a place of creativity as they made a symbol of the church (beaded fish) and the Holy Spirit (stained glass picture).

In *Feasting*, Janet Wilkins guided the children in exploring the church as a place of feasting and fellowship as they prepared and enjoyed a feast of international foods. They celebrated the blending of cuisines to create good things.

In *Moving*, Lindsay Hostetler and Elaine Newcomer had the children celebrate the coming and the moving of the Holy Spirit as they made ribbon streamers and did creative movements to music.

Dena Hostetler led *Playing* that encouraged children to celebrate that the worldwide church plays together. They learned and played new games from around the world.

Through *Stretching*, Ellen Steiner taught the children how the early church stretched beyond the boundaries of Jerusalem and reached out to anyone and everyone while doing activities.

Recreation and Snacks – Outdoor recreation, led by Kathy Lehman, Patrick Graber, and Jacob Shank, was a fun part of each morning followed by tasty snacks of cookies and juice prepared by Julia Yoder and the kitchen crew.

Trustees create costume closet

During a recent workday at the church, the trustees cleaned out the closet under the stairs at the south end of the fellowship wing. They uncovered many "treasures," including old tin cups used for fellowship meals in the past, and boxes of tattered songbooks.

These "treasures" have been placed in the south Sunday School room on the upper level, and those who are interested are encouraged to take one or more as a memento of days gone by.

Costumes, accessories, and fabric used for costumes by Sunday School groups, vacation

Bible School, and worship drama groups, have been organized and hung on a rolling clothes rack in the closet, for ease of use by these groups.

Thanks to the trustees (Lowell Kauffman, Ken Shank, Jeff Steiner) and others who helped clean out the closet, and to Dick Lindemer for heading up the costume project!

P.S. If you want to hear an interesting story about the origins of that closet under the stairs, talk to Paul Harshbarger, general contractor for the fellowship wing project.

VBS Offering Project

Habitat for Humanity
\$670.96 raised

Thank you, everyone,
for your support!

PEACE By Jojo*

If I could change all the world
I'd dismantle all the bombs
I'd feed all the hungry
I'd shelter all the homeless
I'd make all people free

I can't dismantle all the bombs
I can't feed all the hungry
I can't shelter all the homeless
I can't make all the people free
I can't because
there is only one of me

When I have grown
And I am strong
I will find many more of me

We will dismantle all the bombs
We will feed the hungry
We will shelter all the homeless
We will make all the people free
We will change the world

Me and my friends together,
Together at last.

*11-year-old Palestinian boy



“Daddy taught us to work hard, give respect to those who deserve respect, and to fear God.”

~Lisa Wenger

A Tribute to My Dad, Marion E. Wenger By Lisa Wenger

Editor’s note: Lisa’s father, Marion E. Wenger, passed away on July 9 following a lengthy battle with cancer. What follows is her tribute to him.

Daddy was a very special man. He worked so hard to provide for his family. He usually had a smile for you, but if he didn’t, ya better stop what ya was doin!

Daddy taught us to work hard, give respect to those who deserve respect, and to fear God.

He set a great example for us to follow.

He said to treat others as you want them to treat you, listen more, talk less. “God gave you two ears and one mouth for a reason.”

Daddy never got too excited about things. He would just take care of whatever came along.

And he loved the outdoors! We spent a lot of time out working and playing together! I will cherish my memories of those times always.

Let’s get acquainted with the Dave and Michelle Link family

This month let’s get better acquainted with the Dave and Michelle Link family, who began attending Bethel in 1998.

Michelle, a daughter of Richard and Darlene Yoder, is a native of West Liberty. She has one brother and one sister, and attended WL-Salem Schools. In 1979, she graduated from Goshen College with a B.S. in Nursing.

Dave was born in Michigan but grew up in Wauseon, Ohio, the son of Ralph and Patricia Link. His father died when he was 8 years old and his mother married Glenn Rupp. Dave has three siblings and four step siblings. He attended Evergreen Schools in Metamore, and graduated from Goshen College with a degree in biology in 1978.

“Dave and I met at Goshen College, the summer of 1977,” says Michelle. “He was working for New Paris Silo Company, and I was in nursing school.” They met in the dining room at the college, and Michelle says she “couldn’t have imagined then how much time we would spend together around the table having meals with each other and eventually, five children!”

Though Dave had planned to attend Ohio University to study entomology after they were married June 2, 1979, the newlyweds ended up living on Dave’s family farm for a year while his parents worked with MDS. In late March 1980, they moved to the West Liberty area, where they raised five children at their farm home on State Route 508.

Sarah is married to Hans Harman and lives in Harrisonburg, VA. Lila, married to Jason Anane-Sefah, has just moved to Peoria, IL. Royce is a recent graduate of Wittenberg University and hopes to attend law school. Logan attends Purdue University where he plays football, and Collin is a senior football and basketball player at WL-Salem. Two

grandchildren, Nina and Grady, complete their family, and one more is on the way!

Before coming to Bethel, the Links attended South Union, Michelle’s home church, where they were involved teaching Sunday School, Bible School, helping with musicals and involvements with other groups with young mothers and children. Dave has served as a church elder and on the Adriel School Board, and also coached the Bible quiz teams during the years that Sarah and Lila participated. “We have great memories of the ‘Quiz Kids’ coming to our house for practice every week during the winter and going to the invitationals,” says Michelle.

Dave worked for Humble Construction Company from 1980 until he formed his own company, Link Construction Group in 1997. He also farms with Michelle’s brother, Steve Yoder. In his spare time, Dave reads a lot, runs, rides bike, and enjoys skiing.

Michelle has worked as a nurse, and bookkeeper/secretary for the construction business, as well as home schooling her children. She enjoys reading and domestic activities like canning and freezing food, and doing mountains of laundry and ironing. “Well, if it needs to be done, you might as well enjoy doing it!” says Michelle.

Together, Dave and Michelle have spent a lot of time going to the many track meets, football, basketball and baseball games of their children. “We are hoping that in the near future, when the nest is empty, we will be able to go places together, in cars and on planes!” adds Michelle.

Dave, Michelle & family: We’re so glad you are part of our Bethel Church family!

Mennonite World Conference Reflections By Rick Stoner

Editor's note: Pastor Rick Stoner attended the Mennonite World Conference held in Paraguay July 14-19. Following are some of his reflections:

I went to MWC in a dual role. First, I went as a pastor in the Explore program, for high school youth who want to explore ministry possibilities. I also went as a seminary student, focusing on migration and missions. The group that I was traveling with was made up of pastors, youth, seminary students, and professors.

Our schedule in Paraguay was filled with a lot of different events and meetings, including a trip to a theological school and leprosy hospital prior to the conference. We also took part in the Theological Education Consultation (a discussion of meta-theology and education), and the Global Youth Summit (18-30 year olds coming together and dreaming about the future of the church and how we can begin to shape that future today).

At Assembly Gathered we saw the global body of Christ come together and worship together. Morning and evening worship sessions were designed to help us come together and featured different themes each day like "Unity in Christ" or "Walking in the Way of Christ." Two speakers that stood out for me were Antonio Gonzalez from Spain, who spoke on uniting in Christ and true glory, and Nzuzi Mukawa from the Congo,

who called us to follow the words of the prophet Micah which call us to "act justly and love mercy and to walk humbly with your God." (Micah 6:8b)

After the conference we got on a bus and rode out to the Chaco to visit the Friehiem, Neuland, and Menno colonies. We toured churches, schools, hospitals, factories, and went to way too many supermarkets! We also went to the indigenous colony of Yalve Sangre.

Perhaps, the biggest issue we learned about in the Chaco was inter-ethnic relations. The German Mennonites and the indigenous people are learning what it means to be neighbors. This is a hard process because the two groups come from such different worldviews, and there must be paradigm shifts on both sides if true community is to be formed. Overall, it was interesting to see the way that the Mennonites have been able to survive in the harsh and unforgiving environment of the Chaco.

MWC helped me to see just how much context matters. We all are affected by our context, and this means that we each have different understandings of what it means to be Mennonite. Yet, in taking communion with the global body, I realized that we are all part of one body. Sure, we have our differences, but we are all committed to walking in the way of Christ together.

Five Positives of Conflict*

"Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others." Phil. 2:4

1. Conflict is a mark of involvement.
2. Conflict clarifies and refines ideas.
3. Conflict stimulates creativity and improvisation.
4. Conflict opens up the potential for new and deeper relationships.
5. Conflict binds people together through shared experience.

*Randy Longenecker



Intergenerational S.S. class focuses on communication, membership

During the summer months of June, July and August when church attendance is down due to people taking vacations, the intergenerational Sunday School class that meets in the Fellowship Room is an opportunity to explore topics with persons from other classes.

This summer the class has been talking about communication skills and conflict transformation, based on a study guide called **Let's Talk**, written by Barry C. Bartel. So far, a variety of teachers have led lively discussions on such topics as What is your conflict style? From Win/Lose to Win/Win, The Bible on Conflict, Active Listening, and Speaking with Care. (See the box above for Five Positives of Conflict.)

The first two Sundays of August the focus will switch to church membership and how it relates to our Christian experience, with Doug Steiner, Congregational Chair as the facilitator.

August 2 will look at the value of church membership. Is it important or not? Who cares? The discussion on August 9 will center on how and whether our beliefs about membership shape our vision (worship, nurture, invite, serve) at Bethel.

Everyone is welcome and encouraged to attend these important discussions.

Fall Book Study

Led by
Pastor Dave Maurer

Stories:
*How Mennonites
Came to Be*

By John D. Roth

Wednesdays
7:15 – 8:15 p.m.
Sept. 2 – Nov. 18

Bethel library

Cost of book: \$13

**Talk to the church
secretary if you want to
order a book**

A book in the hand . . . By Marla Longenecker, Librarian

. . . is worth two on the shelf! If you have time during the lazy, hazy dayz of August check out some of the good books in the church library.

As always, there are some new ones to peruse as well as many old favorites. Remember, our church library has many titles written by Mennonite authors and about Mennonite theology that cannot be found in a public library.

Recently, a friend told me she is re-reading Christmas Carol Kauffman's books, which have almost become collector's items. Perhaps you remember *Not Regina?* Or *Search to Belong?* Or *For One Moment?* Our library has them all!

New additions include Arthur Paul Boers' *Lord, Teach Us to Pray: A New Look at the Lord's Prayer*. Be nourished again by this model prayer of Jesus.

Sharing Good Times, by former president, Jimmy Carter, is a donation from the

library of Dorothy King. He writes about the things that matter most in life: simple times with friends and family.

Becoming Anabaptist: The Origin and Significance of Sixteenth-Century Anabaptism (2nd edition), by J. Denny Weaver gives meaning to the contemporary church by telling of the diverse history of Anabaptism.

Words for Worship 2, edited by Diane Zaerr Brenneman, is a helpful resource of prayers, litanies, and other elements for worship throughout the church year.

You lovers of Amish fiction will want to pick up Cindy Woodsmall's Book Three of her Sisters of the Quilt series, *When the Soul Mends*.

Finally, from the People of the Promise series published by Herald Press, *Esau* is a fictional account of the life of the Biblical character.

Library adds new books with convention themes

One of the highlights of convention for a reader and book lover, is meeting the authors of current books, or attending seminars where these authors talk about their books.

I read *The Dark Night: A Gift of God* by Daniel Schrock this spring and added it to the church library, and then found out that the author was going to be leading a seminar at the convention, which I was able to attend. This is a fascinating book for anyone who has ever struggled with a "dark night" or wondered just what it is!

Jesus Matters: Good News for the 21st Century, edited by James R. Krabill and David W. Shenk, is a collection of 16 essays by mature authors who team with young adults to consider the various ways we encounter and experience Jesus. Jerry Landes attended this seminar and found it to be very interesting.

Beth Maurer, Randy Longenecker, and I attended a seminar, which discussed the use of technology (Facebook, YouTube, text messaging). A book related to the topic is Shane Hipps' *Flickering Pixels: How Technology Shapes Your Faith*, which Randy and I have both read since the convention and highly recommend. Hipps, who has a background in advertising, shows us how the technologies we use can end up using us if we don't wake up to the hidden influence of our media-crazed world.

I'd also like to recommend some books by convention speakers not yet added to our library: *Jesus for President* and *The Irresistible Revolution* by Shane Claiborne; *Letters From a Skeptic* and *The Myth of a Christian Nation*, by Greg Boyd; and *God's Politics: Why the Right Gets It Wrong and the Left Doesn't Get It* by Jim Wallis, editor of *Sojourners Magazine*.

Also added to the library is Bill Shumaker's journal from his trip to Palestine in December of 2001. Included are more recent letters from CPT members in Palestine.



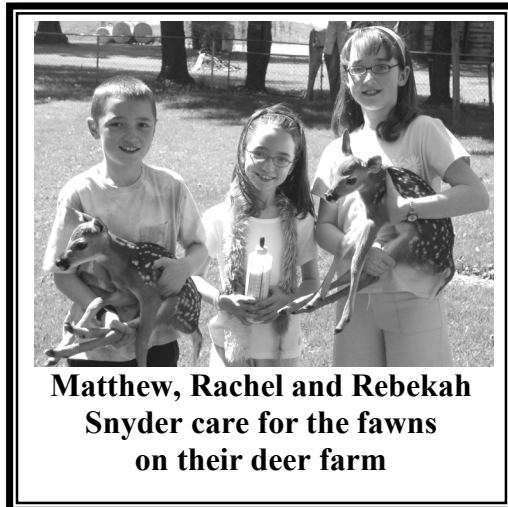
King's Daughters visit Snyder deer farm

On Tuesday morning, June 30, nine members of the King's Daughters Sunday School class, along with three spouses, met at Bethel to carpool to the Darryl Snyder deer farm near North Lewisburg.

"Darryl gave us a wealth of information regarding the care of the does and bucks," said Sarah Hostetler. "We also learned to know his family – Missy, Rebecca, Matthew, and Rachel, who were there feeding the deer vanilla wafers, a favorite snack."

Of course, since it was near lunchtime and they were close to Plain City, the group dined at Der Dutchman, and ended the day's tour at the MCC Thrift Shop.

Thank you, Darryl, for a fine morning!



Matthew, Rachel and Rebekah Snyder care for the fawns on their deer farm

ANNUAL CHURCH PICNIC

Sunday, August 30
12:00 noon

(following the baptism service in the creek)



Lions' Park Shelter House

Bring dishes to share; drinks provided
Everyone is welcome!

Bethel Mennonite Church

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P.O. Box 549
West Liberty, OH
43357

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Pastor Rick Stoner
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We're on the Web!
See us at:
bethelchurchwl.org
Webmaster:
Todd Hostetler

About the newsletter

This newsletter is published bi-monthly by the church secretary.

Its purpose is three-fold:

~Inform the church about events

~Acquaint persons who attend Bethel with each other

~Inspire us to Christ-like living

BETHEL HOMEWORK HELP NEEDS YOU!

WANTED:
Volunteer homework tutors
School supplies (glue/crayons/markers)
Healthy snacks

Talk to Dianne Oakley if you want to volunteer!
(The after-school homework help program resumes in Sept)