

# Conference Connections October/November 2006

Pursuing God's dreams by the power of the Holy Spirit in the way of Jesus Christ

# **Rocky Mountain Mennonite Relief Sale Results**

Rocky Ford Fairgrounds – October 20–21, 2006

by Lois Franz Bartel

The 31<sup>st</sup> Rocky Mountain
Mennonite Relief Sale began with
the traditional loaf of bread,
signaling that we were working
toward Christ's command to 'give
to the least of these.' This year, the
auctioning had a poignant
moment. The bread was
purchased by the family of
Solomon (Salty) Schlegel for
\$1800, in memory of him and his
work for the sale in previous years.

The entire sale had a preliminary income of \$120,600. Money will continue to come in in cash and checks. The weather forecast was grim for Saturday. Friday evening's meals and concert came at the end of a pleasant fall day. The free-will offering taken for the work of Mennonite Central Committee at the Tony Brown Concert totaled \$1640.

Clair and Faye Brenneman, Sale Coordinators



Saturday morning the low was 37. The sun came out and the wind-still air felt warmer than the forecast. Most activities were indoors. Following are preliminary totals for some of the booths/auctions. The cheese sold out first. Previous fund-raisers had paid the bill for the cheese, so all \$3289 in sales went to MCC. At the auction the proverbial tie, which had previously generated \$2300, brought \$65. A large wheel yard ornament sold for \$275. Priscilla Wero's historic traditional design pot sold for \$185. A P. Buckley Moss framed print generated \$450. Water bottle holders from Peru, along with a bottle of water, selling for \$5 each, brought in \$300. The Quilters' Corner generated \$1600. Ten Thousand Villages sales totaled \$5500.



Ten Thousand Villages Shopping

The crowd grew as we anticipated the auction of the 1941 Ford 9N tractor, restored by Rich Thomas. Bids increased rapidly until the final bid of \$4300! The Greyeyes Navajo Weaving brought \$2000. Ms Greyeyes was introduced to the crowd and Bob Fowler explained the nature of the expertly woven pictoral weaving. An oak chest, crafted by Merle Brenneman sold for \$1000.

The crowd, led by Arlin Buller of N. Newton, KS, sang, "Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow," as a reminder of our motive for this fund raising. This ushered in the quilt auction. A traveling "Share your heart" quilt was brought to the sale by MCC Central States staff member Elizabeth Raid. Donations in the amount of \$5475 were given in recognition of this quilt. It will continue traveling to the rest of the sales. Ten quilts other than that fund raiser sold for \$1000 or over, which equals last year's statistics. The total for the quilt auction was \$33,400. That's slightly down from last year's \$34,000.



Pecan Booth volunteers Amzie Yoder, Carlsbad, NM; Don & Marie Schroeder, KS, SOOP volunteers



The highest price received for a quilt was \$1650, down from last year's high of \$2300. A 418 piece 12x27 bear claw wall quilt sold for \$400. It had been pieced and quilted by Esther Nafziger. Mid way through the quilt auction we stopped to hear about one facet of MCC work called Global Family Fund. It helps families in many ways, primarily with funds for education. Money was raised for this by asking people to raise their auction number to contribute the amount being stated. Through this method three donated \$500 each, 2 @\$250, 8 @\$200. It brought in \$4525 in contributions.

The Rocky Mountain Mennonite Relief Sale is one of 47 such sales held in the U.S. and Canada throughout each year.

Two more remain in 2006: Enid, OK November 3 and 4 and Houston, TX November 11. For more info contact www.mcc.org.



Rosie Short & Madora Stauffer, Aurora, CO. 60 Peru water bottle holders brought in \$300



Face Painting



Deanna Hostetler, Rocky Ford, CO

We're grateful to the communities in the Arkansas Valley for their support and to the many people from a distance, both those contributing or helping and those who purchased. Also, we're grateful to God for the opportunity to help aid those less fortunate through Mennonite Central Committee, an organization we trust as it carries out its work "in the name of Christ."

### **Denver MCC Auction – September 22**

by Jim Brenneman

The 19<sup>th</sup> annual auction was held at the Garden Park Mennonite Church gymnasium the evening of September 22. A group of approximately 45 generous folks gathered together to support the work of MCC. Donations included food items such as pies, cookies, iellies, bread and cinnamon rolls. Other items included wooden crafted items, hand made pillows and a dinner for 4. The selling price for some of the items include: dinner for 4 - \$80, blackberry pie-\$65, cinnamon rolls-\$55, 1 doz. Cookies-\$55, shoo-fly pie-\$75 and 2 packages of 6 bierrocks for \$145 each. Total proceeds amounted to \$2258.50. All proceeds from this event become part of the Rocky Mountain MCC Relief Sale total. Coffee and cookies were available for the enjoyment of those in attendance. The auction lasted just over an hour. Thanks to all for your generous donations and bidding.



Del and Joann Roupp and Dennis and Juanita Simonich with Bierrocks

### Chicken Barbecue, Cheraw, CO - October 1

East Holbrook Mennonite Church hosted the annual chicken barbecue to raise pre-Relief Sale funds. They served about 120 people and took in \$1370.



Steve & Wanda Schmidt and Sandy & Don Penner with grandchildren

### **Other Totals**

Soup Bar on Friday \$875 Chicken Barbecue \$2,000 Cheese Booth \$3,289 Apple Butter \$1,010 Apple Cider \$1,178

# Beth-El Celebrates 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and Building Dedication

by Rick King

October 7, 2006 was a momentous day for Beth-El Mennonite Church. Not only was it the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of its first service but it also was the Dedication for the new church building that was just completed a few weeks earlier. Early in the day was a service celebrating 50 years of history. It was a look backward to the first Mennonites in the Colorado Springs area, CPS, and the origins of Beth-El. A brief review of major events in Beth-El's history was given. The Mennonite Heritage choir sang. There was a lot of congregational singing focusing on songs from each decade to give a flavor of how music changed over the decades. The MYF gave a humorous skit detailing changes in language and fashion in each decade of Beth-El history.

After the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary service there were numerous displays and activities. Some of the displays included pictures of all the pastors who served at Beth-el, former (and current) pictorial directories, a time line of events in the church, items for a new time capsule, and quilts that

the church's quilting group have recently finished. There was a scavenger hunt, volleyball, building tours, and a bluegrass concert by Fireweed entertaining people. A spaghetti supper was served to all.

After supper a time capsule was sealed to be opened in 50 years. The church historian was asked to contribute items of historical interest. The church leadership contributed items to document spiritual issues that are of interest today. Each of the children in Sunday School wrote a letter that was included. Some chose to describe life today, others predicted the future. The letters were quite interesting to see life from the viewpoint of our children. Probably the most prophetic statement by one of the children was that Beth-El will likely have a new pastor in 50 years.

In the evening the Dedication Celebration Service was held. There were approximately 270 people in attendance. The theme of the service was Jesus is the light of the world. The service started by singing "Praise God From Whom all Blessings Flow" (606 in the old red hymnal). This was followed by a Litany of Thanksgiving written by Rhonda Wray. Kara Birky and several youth performed a liturgical movement interpretation that was very emotionally moving to "Revelation Song" by Jennie Riddle. After congregational singing Don Ramler sang the song he authored "Light of the Lord". Herm Weaver as conference minister spoke briefly advising that Beth-El is not alone and has lots of support from our fellow conference congregations and he read selections of blessing from other churches. He went on to tell the



congregation to remember that the building was built for the purpose of serving others and challenge us to use it for that purpose. The bluegrass group Fireweed sang a few songs followed by pictures of the building being built while Roseann Sachs played piano. Following more music by an octet from the church, Pastor Merv Birky and others led the church in a prayer of dedication. The leaders of the dedication prayer included one of the

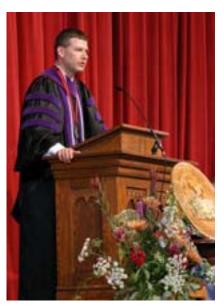


original members who was present 50 years ago at the first service, a 9 year old, a young adult, and someone from the middle years. This was to represent the generational handing off that must occur for the church to remain viable for the next 50 years (and beyond). Perfect Peace Baptist Church (of which Beth-El has an ongoing relationship) then sang two songs in southern gospel tradition. After the congregation singing the theme song for the building project (sung monthly during Building Fund Sundays) "Great is the Lord" the lights were turned off and in the dark Karla Rowley started singing the song "Christ be our Light". As the choirs

gradually joined in singing the children passed out 300 glow-sticks. The auditorium was lit solely by the brightly colored fluorescent glow-sticks. It was a true moment of awe and joy for those in attendance to remind us of Christ's light in our lives. In closing with the benediction Pastor Merv Birky challenged all to let the light of Christ in our lives shine in the darkness of the world.

# "Holy space" of Bethel College expands to celebrate inauguration

NORTH NEWTON, KAN. — The "holy space" of Bethel College (named from the Hebrew Beth-El, "house of God") was a much-invoked metaphor during the celebration that marked the inauguration of the college's 13th president, Barry C. Bartel, on October 8.



Almost 120 years ago, the Mennonite founders of Bethel College "established this special meeting place by both defining its mission clearly in the context of the Mennonite church and, in the words of our charter. 'opening wide the doors of the institution, so that all may have an opportunity to

partake of whatsoever advantages may be offered by it.'," Bartel noted in his inaugural address.

"With the foundation in Christ reflected on our seal, the founders created ... this house of God, this holy space. What an incredible vision and risk, a vision and a heritage we continue to nurture in the company of this great cloud of witnesses. And now that vision is a sacred trust, the leadership of which I accept today."

Nearly 1,000 people gathered in Memorial Hall on the Bethel campus for a worship service in the morning and inaugural ceremonies in the afternoon of Oct. 8. Bartel's vision of a house of God that continues to be open to the world was reflected in participants in both events.

In the morning, Angela Opimi, whom Barry and Brenda Bartel had known as a church youth leader and a coworker when they served with Mennonite Central Committee in Bolivia, who is now MCC country representative in Nicaragua, read the New Testament Scripture. In the afternoon, Willi Hugo Pérez, president of the Seminario Latinoamericano Anabautista SEMILLA in Guatemala City, brought greetings in Spanish and

English on behalf of all Mennonite institutions of higher education.

Barry and Brenda Bartel spent a total of eight years in MCC service in Haiti and Bolivia, requiring them to study several languages, including Haitian Creole and Spanish. Bartel used language learning as a metaphor as well. "With language, as in all disciplines, we learn best when we take risks. That risk creates potential and holy space." Bartel said. He illustrated the point with a story about himself as a new learner of Spanish, visiting in a Mennonite church in Argentina where the pastor kindly interviewed him in front of the congregation instead of asking him to speak, as is customary.

At one point, the pastor, Tito Gutierrez, asked Bartel if he was married - in Spanish, casado. Bartel admitted that to this day he has trouble distinguishing between "married" and "tired" (cansado) and that he replied to Pastor Gutierrez and the whole congregation that he was "not much married."

Bartel said he often tells this story on himself for its humor and its reminder of the importance of humility, but that it also invokes a memory of a group of people who, rather than laughing at him, affirmed him for his willingness to take the risk of speaking to them. In doing so, he said, they created "holy space" for him.

Ronald J.R. Mathies. former director of Mennonite Central Committee who is now a visiting scholar at Conrad Grebel University College in Waterloo, Ont., in his commissioning address lifted up Bartel's "global perspective" as one of the gifts he brings to the presidency of Bethel College.

"You have experienced that meeting people - really meeting people and 'walking in their shoes' - is a profound and transformational experience," Mathies said. "You have learned to travel not as a tourist but as a pilgrim. ... Pilgrims journey through life recognizing they are on holy ground, that God is already there."

The inauguration events capped Bethel's 36th annual Fall Festival weekend that drew nearly 6,000 people to campus for alumni reunions, musical and athletic events and children's activities.

Guests ranged from prospective students to members of the extended Bartel family to representatives of Mennonite Church USA, MC USA's Western District Conference, other small independent colleges in Kansas and other Mennonite institutions of higher education in North America – one of which, Bluffton (Ohio) University, was inaugurating 1978 Bethel graduate and former faculty member James Harder as its president on the same afternoon.

Bartel, a 1984 Bethel graduate with a triple major in Bible and religion, mathematics and peace studies, also has a juris doctor degree from Willamette University

College of Law in Salem, Ore. He was a practicing attorney in the Denver area before returning to Bethel College in June as president-elect. He and his family lived in Lakewood, Colo., and Bartel was the first moderator of the newly formed Mountain States Mennonite Conference and chair of his congregation, Glennon Heights Mennonite Church in Lakewood. He also served on the boards of the Denver Conflict Center, the Colorado chapter of Mennonite Economic Development Associates and Mennonite Urban Ministries of Denver.

Bartel is married to Brenda (Isaak) Bartel, also a 1984 Bethel College graduate, a musician and teacher. They are the parents of two children, Jordan, a first-year student at Bethel, and Leah, a high school sophomore.

When he received the telephone call telling him he had been selected president of Bethel College, Bartel recalled for a convocation audience of students and faculty on Monday, Oct. 9. "I said, 'That's great – I'm thrilled, and I'm terrified."

His wish for all students, he said, was that they could experience similar feelings during their time at Bethel College – the excitement of being in "this special meeting place" and also "the challenge of being stretched beyond what you thought you could do."

Bethel College is a four-year liberal arts college affiliated with Mennonite Church USA. Founded in 1887, it is the oldest Mennonite college in North America. Bethel is known for its academic excellence and has been named a Top Tier college by U.S. News & World Report every year since 1998. For more information, see the Bethel Web site at www.bethelks.edu.

# **Conference Financial Update**

by Larry Stoltzfus, Conference Treasurer

Conference Finances as of September 30, 2006

Planned Contributions to Date: \$78,434. Actual Contributions to Date: \$73,181.

Variance to Plan (Unfavorable) \$(5,253.)

Although most contributions are received from the treasurers of our various congregations, any individual contributions to the conference will be joyfully received.

Please send to:

Mountain States Mennonite Conference Attn: Larry Stoltzfus, Treasurer

6888 Pike Count

Larkspur, Colorado 80118

### **Congregational News**

### **Emmanuel Mennonite, LaJunta**

The last several months have been a special time for La Junta's Ten Thousand Villages/Crossroads Thrift store. In August the store celebrated its 20th anniversary with sales, drawings and other events. September was the annual business meeting which reported another good year. Also present to help recognize the anniversary were MCC/Ten Thousand Villages guests Barb Schrag, Dan Unger and Doug Dirks. Their stories of producers and how the Self-Help Program helps so many people inspired us anew. In October, the store volunteers were honored by receiving the Sunshine Award at the monthly community Wake-Up Breakfast. The store continues to help many persons both in the community as well as around the globe. Pat Miller is the new store manager.

October means a flurry of activities as many in this area are involved in the annual Rocky Mountain MCC sale. Emmanuel enjoyed visitors on Sunday following the sale. Tony Brown and Ken Rodgers from Hesston, KS, provided our worship music while Conference Minister Herm Weaver made his first visit to our group and gave the sermon.

Births: Ryan James, Oct. 1, to Jim and Rexella Day. Wedding: Frances Lucero and James Dudley, Sept. 26, at Emmanuel.

Carolyn Stutzman

#### First Mennonite, Denver

Guest speakers in August and September were Annie Lengacher and Sarah Leatherman Young.

The Mennonite Urban Ministry River of Life Event for youth ages 12 and above held here at FMC August 18-20 was well-attended. The youth participated in several service projects here in Denver.

The children's Sunday School Department is using new curriculum published by the Mennonite/Brethren Press called Gather 'Round. Grandparents are assigned to each class. This is an exciting way to facilitate intergenerational connections. Opening day (the first day of Sunday School for the year) was held September 10 and was a glorious celebration led by Pastor Vern Rempel.

Our FMC Getaway Weekend Retreat was held September 22 to 24. Connie Shelley, our Mountain States Prayer Network Coordinator, was the featured speaker.

Congratulations to Rachel S. and Shawn Gerber on the birth of Owen Shawn Gerber August 29.

Wedding: Griffen Bishop and Ryan O'Shaughnessy, August 12, at FMC.

Irene Martin

# Save the Date!

April 21, 2007

Faith and Life Forum
"Exploring Steps Toward a
Multi-Ethnic Conference"
8:30 am - 2:30 pm
Location to be announced.

August 3-5, 2007

MSMC Annual Assembly Beth-El Mennonite Church, Colorado Springs

# Roth serves in MVS assignment

ELKHART, IN (Mennonite Mission Network) — Meryl Roth, of Palmer Lake, Colo., began a one-year term of Mennonite Voluntary Service Sept. 11 in Seattle, Wash., as a direct service advocate with Sacred Heart Shelter.

A 2006 graduate of Goshen (Ind.) College, Roth is the daughter of Karen Wiens and Lynn Roth and attends



Mountain Community Mennonite Church.

Rooted in the spirit of Jesus, MVS invites adults, age 20 and older, to join together in Christian ministry for one- or two-year terms in more than 20 locations in the United States. Since the program began more than 60 years ago,

thousands of volunteers have had the opportunity to live out their faith through this program of Mennonite Mission Network.

Mennonite Mission Network is the mission agency of Mennonite Church USA and envisions every congregation and all parts of the church will, together, be fully engaged in God's mission sharing all of Christ with all creation.

More information about MVS is available online: Service.MennoniteMission.net

# **News from Rocky Mountain Mennonite Camp**

#### **Board and Advocate Retreat**

On Oct. 13-15 members of the RMMC board and camp advocates met to review the past year's camping season and talk about upcoming programs. The 2006 family camps and youth wilderness camps were particularly successful with record attendance, however, youth camps attracted fewer participants than in previous years. Another highlight was the newly renovated Chalet Emmental, which was well utilized and appreciated this season by guest groups. Looking to the future, the board discussed plans to renovate the Eiger bathhouse, which is slated for next fall.

#### **New Well Drilled**

A test well was drilled on the "Boy's Side" of camp as an important part of the VISION 2012 capital campaign. The



well will enable camp to utilize these facilities year-round instead of only during the warmer summer months. At 500 feet deep, the well produced a strong three and one-half gallons per minute which is excellent for this area of Colorado. Underground cisterns will be utilized to store the water for peak use. Final approval from the state on camp's water plans is needed before the new water can be used.

# **Upcoming Programs at Camp** 2006

November 3-5 Fall Quilter's Retreat
November 10-12 Pastor/Spouse Retreat

### 2007

January 19-21 Scrapbook Retreat February 9-11 Jr. High Snow Camp (returns!) February 16-18 Senior High Snow Camp I February 23-25 Young Adult Snow Camp March 2-4 Men's Retreat March 16-18 Senior High Snow Camp II March 30-April 1 Women's Retreat Spring Quilter's Retreat April 21-23



### Rocky Mountain Mennonite Camp

709 County Rd 62 Divide CO 80814 www.rmmcamp.org 719-687-9506 719-687-2582 fax info@rmmcamp.org

# Conference Students Participate in College Music Programs

### Goshen College

**Breanna Nickel**, daughter of Donovan and Jewel Nickel of Windsor, plays first violin in the Goshen College Orchestra. The freshman collegiate studies major is a 2006 graduate of Windsor High School and attends Greeley Mennonite Church.

Rebekah DePry and Jenna Preheim are participating in Voices-n-Harmony, Goshen College's Gospel choir, during the fall semester. Rebekah, daughter of Randy and Diana DePry of Palmer Lake, is a freshman biology major. She is a 2005 graduate of Lewis Palmer High School and attends Mountain Community Mennonite Church. Jenna, daughter of Gayle and Jana Preheim of Monument, is a junior social work and peace, justice and conflict studies double major. She is a graduate of Lewis Palmer High School and attends Mountain Community Mennonite Church.

**Jesse Landis-Eigsti,** son of Randall and Anita Landis-Eigsti of Lakewood, sings bass in Chorale and Men's Chorus. The junior Bible and religion major is a 2005 graduate of Lakewood High School and attends Glennon Heights Mennonite Church.

**Chase Snyder**, son of Merle Snyder and Mary Alderfer of Denver, sings tenor in Chorale and Men's Chorus. The freshman collegiate studies major is a 2006 graduate of East High School and attends First Mennonite Church of Denver.

#### **Hesston College**

**Audra Hofer**, freshman, is a member of the Hesston College Bel Canto Singers. Audra is the daughter of Marjorie and Preston Hofer and attends Peace Mennonite Community Church.

# Conference Website MountainStatesMC.org

Our website has a new look! Check it out!

We are looking for feedback and suggestions for improving the information provided on our website. What information are you looking for on our Mountain States Mennonite Conference website that you have not found?

If you have ideas, please contact Karen Martin, Administrative Assistant, at administrator@MountainStatesMC.org.

# **Upcoming Events for Youth**

January 12-14 **30 Hour Fast for Hunger, Colorado Springs** 

Begin fasting at noon on Friday and then gather at Mount St. Frances Retreat Center Friday evening through Saturday evening when the fast is broken with communion and support together Raise financial support which is donated to MCC, Heifer International and a local charity.

February 9-11 Jr. High Snow Camp at RMMC

February 16-18 Sr High Snow Camp I at RMMC

March 16 - 18 Sr. High Snow Camp II at RMMC

July 2-7 San Jose 2007 Youth Convention

August 3-5 Mountain States Conference Annual Assembly

**Youth Gathering** 

Conference Youth Coordinators are Bruce and Paula Kuhns (Beth-El), 719-596-1718, <u>kuhnsfam@earthlink.net</u>.

# Report on "River of Life"

by Gail Erisman Valeta, Executive Director of Mennonite Urban Ministries

Mennonite and Church of the Brethren youth in the Denver and Colorado Springs area participated in "River of Life", a weekend of service on August 18-20, 2006. Students arrived at First Mennonite Church on Friday, August 18, and examined how the Anabaptist faith tradition teaches them to be in service to others. Some students gave up their last free weekend of summer to come for a weekend of service, while others rushed from school to attend.

Twenty-six participants were divided between four service projects on Saturday. The projects included painting a Community Outreach Center at Garden Park Mennonite Brethren Church; pulling weeds and picking up trash at Yarrow Gardens, a Mennonite owned low-income housing project; scrubbing a club at a Denver Boy's and Girl's Club, and office work, yard work, transforming pallets into firewood, and serving lunch to the homeless at Franciscan Friends of the Poor.

Mennonite Urban Ministries (M.U.M.) and Discovering Opportunities for Outreach and Reflection (D.O.O.R.) sponsored the event.

Conference Connections is published monthly for the Mountain States Mennonite Conference congregations.

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Conference Connections can be viewed on the website.

Next Deadline: November 25