

September 18, 2010

Annual Retreat – Moses Merrill Camp and Conference Center

This past August 52 men, 8 staff and a missionary family of 5 came to camp to focus on the importance of being in a small group and mentoring. Pastor Jason Workman led training and did an amazing job. Men were broken into groups of 4-6 and asked to share their lives with each other through a series of prepared exercises. The men were also blessed to have Evangelist's Dallas and Tanya Low of Torchbearer Ministries from Spokane WA with us to lead us in a wonderful time of praise and worship. It can be a very difficult challenge to be on God's front line - and if you are interested in finding out more about their outreach programs or if you would like to financially help their ministry, ask Bob Slechta how you can get involved.

The men kicked off Friday night with a **STEAK FRY** by setting a world record (or maybe a just a camp record) by grilling 75 delicious flat iron steaks in 20 minutes. Special thanks went to Bob Howe of 2nd Baptist Lincoln for selecting the steaks and Todd Ray of Sunset Hills and his team for preparing them. We could also never thank our Camp Staff enough for all they do for us – the food was OUTSTANDING! Many commented on how this was the best overall eating we have ever had! Men like to eat for some reason and with the word getting back on how good the corn on the cob was Friday night - the pressure will be on for next year.

For the 3rd year in a row we invited Senior Pastors of ABC Nebraska churches to attend our August retreat at no cost to them. ABMNE encourages you to honor our Pastors and bring them to camp for this retreat and time of fellowship. The first year we offered this program we had 1, then 3 and this year 6. We look forward to hosting more Senior Pastors next year. Should you have any questions please ask any board member for details.

During our time together, Clarence Reiss mentioned that the camp's 1972 vintage tractor used to mow had finally died. While he might have been able to manufacture some repair rigging for about \$2,000.00 and get it back running the men discussed it and instead donated \$7,000.00 from our Investment Fund and passed the hat for another \$9,770.00 individual pledges totaling \$16,770.00. Additional pledges since have raised that to \$18,070.00! Clarence was able to purchase a newer and more efficient tractor for the camp. **GOD IS SO GOOD....**

Disaster Relief Ministry

Our Disaster Relief Trailer (DRT) continues growing as a ministry for men across the state. The trailer is housed at Camp Merrill and is able to be moved from one area of the state to another as needed. Jason Workman continues as our Disaster Relief Coordinator and has been in contact with ABC pastors from across the state as floods and other events have alerted us to their potential need. We have also worked hard to get the men plugged into various state and regional responder agencies. Work continues on the development of our in-state responder process. Many times local church groups can enter an effected area before support agencies are "cleared" to enter. ABMNE continues to encourage each ABC church across the state that this ministry is available for them when they need it.

We are working to grow our call list of names that we can contact and advise of a need when the time comes. If you can help great, if not that's ok too – we just need to be ready. We have sign-up sheets available if you aren't on the list already but would like to be. See our display table here at the reunion, get one from us or go to the men's page on the ABC-NE website and you can download a sheet at your convenience.

DRT Ministries have been deployed in response to various Tornadoes, flooding, high wind damage, power outages and other disaster storm damages (King Lake and Valley communities) over the past several years. After a couple of seasons of significant wear and tear, we will be compiling a list of needed replacement equipment and supplies, and sharing them on the website prior to the end of the year as way for men's local church groups can support this ministry if they choose to as we prepare the trailer for 2011.

Seminary Scholarships

One of our other important ministries is supporting Seminary Students. ABMNE has long supported seminary students through two \$1,000 annual scholarships. Each year American Baptist Churches and their members are encouraged to have interested seminary students submit an application to the board for review of eligibility and award. You can go to the men's page at "<http://www.abcnebraska.com>" to find and print an application form.

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Following our retreat this August, ABMNE received and approved a application for our Seminary Scholarship for the 2010 – 2011 year. Scott Jones of Fairbury, NE a student of Sioux Falls Seminary was awarded a \$2,000.00 scholarship. Congratulations Scott and we hope you will come back and share with us how it's going as you move through your studies!

Membership (We Want You!)

Our annual ABMNE membership runs from January to December each year. If you haven't renewed your membership for 2011, please consider to do so. We ended 2010 with approx. 105 members, still a ways from our goal of 150. This year our goal is 165 and we're already up to 81 – we're half way there! Although our membership dues have remained at \$10.00 per year for as far as anyone can remember, ABMNE maintains the following other funds to support our various men's ministries: **General Fund (operating account) / Booster Fund (emergency–other than DRM) / Disaster Relief Fund / Seminary Scholarship Fund / ABM USA.** Please consider supporting each of these important men's ministries. You can find a membership form at our display table this weekend or on the men's page of the ABC NE website.

ABM USA

The reality is our National Men's Ministry is hurting while seeking to become relevant in men's lives and financially sound. I would say that exciting things are starting to happen as the board is working hard to re-energize active national men's ministries and as various board members donate their time to represent ABM USA at state, regional and national events regularly. At a recent board meeting the discussion and training focused on 1) study of the **Bible**, 2) **Mentoring** to those developing their own faith, 3) various levels of **Disaster Relief Ministries**, and 4) a course on "**Men's Leadership Development Training**". This material was made available to all ABC NE churches represented last month at Camp Merrill and if you didn't get one they remain available by contacting Bob Slechta.

The national board also continues to focus on Disaster Relief Ministries both locally and worldwide. This year men and women from all over the country traveled to Haiti following the devastating earthquake to assist with relief efforts on the ground. Additionally board members have traveled across the country assisting with men's training for developing small mentoring groups. The ABM Annual Gathering is this weekend September 17-19 in Grottonwood, MA. For more details or if you'd like to be on the national mailing list or to receive the quarterly newsletter "**ABM USA - Men In Action**" please drop Bob Slechta a note and he will be happy to make sure to forward your information.

2010 ABMen Board of Directors

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Please pray for our men's ministry and should you have any questions or suggestions for our ministries please always feel free to contact any member of our board.

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