

the MESSENGER

American Baptist Churches of Nebraska



June-July 2007

ABC/NE Date Data

AB Women's Ministries
Conference
June 1-3 Camp Merrill

Good Soil Project Meeting
June 9 FBC Grand Island

ABC-USA BIENNIAL
June 29—July 2
Washington, DC

Luis Palau Festival
July 14-15
Omaha

E-Mail Addresses:

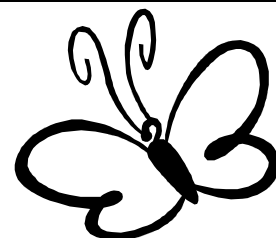
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"IMAGINE THAT . . ."



A Very Special Family Reunion is Planned for This Year. Join In!

"Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen." Ephesians 3:20-21 (NIV)

The **140th Anniversary of the Nebraska Baptist State Convention** will be celebrated at the ABC/NE Family Reunion (annual convention) **Sept. 21-23, 2007**, at the Sandhills Convention Center in **North Platte**.

Plans are underway for a very special gathering. According to Region President Darren Stroh "While we will honor the past and learn from it, our focus is on the future. We will 'imagine' all God will do through us. It will be a great time of glory!"

Keynote speaker is Dr. David Laubach, author of *12 Steps to Congregational Transformation*. The convention will feature special music, drama, workshops, and fellowship.

Everyone is encouraged to make plans now for to take part in this great event. Every ABC/NE church is urged to have representatives at the convention.

Registration materials for the convention will be mailed to churches and will also be included in the August issue of THE MESSENGER.

The simultaneous Youth Convention will be held at Camp Maranatha. The youth will join the adults & children Sunday morning for worship.

ABC/NE Churches Respond To Opportunity in Sudan

Benson Baptist in Omaha is leading an effort to build a Baptist church in Nasir, Sudan. Paul Marine, Senior Pastor at Benson reports, "God is working a miracle among the Nuer people of Southern Sudan. Churches are popping up all over and people are coming to know the Lord in great numbers. Our Baptist witness in Nasir needs our prayers and support."

Sudanese members of Benson planted the idea with Pastor Paul, explaining to him that there had been no missionary work in Nasir since the start of their civil war. In 2006 Pastor Paul, and Benson members Jon Mayo, Daniel Gatkuoth and Yat Kueth traveled to the community of Nasir. Since their return they have shared the story with ABC/NE churches. The project has been "blessed" by ABC's International Ministries which featured the story of the project in one of their publications. The ABC/NE Department of Mission has also endorsed this project.

Churches in Nebraska can help with this ministry. More information is available through Benson Baptist. Contributions can be made through ABC/NE marked "church in Sudan."



From the Executive Minister Susan Gillies

Baseball Averages

Sometimes I listen to Kansas City Royals games on the radio. I'm not a big fan. It's just what's on. When I was a kid I was a St. Louis Cardinals fan because, in those days, Omaha had a farm club of the Cardinals. My dad and one sister were Cubs fans. My other sister was a White Sox fan. In later years, my mother became a Cubs fan. If a game was on TV, mother could follow it even though she was blind. She liked to "watch" things she could see in her mind's eye. She loved Sammy Sosa. His greatest year was the one following her death. We've always wondered if she pulled supernatural strings for him.



Now, what is the purpose of a baseball player? It's getting hits. Right? Basically you need to get hits to be successful. If you are great enough at something else – like pitching strikes, then you don't need to be so great at getting hits. If you are really, really good you might make it to the major leagues. The average salary in 2007 for major league baseball players is \$2.94 million. [The average broke \$1-million in 1992 and broke \$2-million in 2001.] There are 162 games per year. Not bad.

What does "really, really good" mean? If their job is to get

hits, you'd think they would need to get a hit just about every time they get up to bat. Right? Well, as many of you know, the greatest lifetime batting average record belongs to Ty Cobb who played from 1905 to 1928. His average was .366. Ted Williams once said that those that fail 'only' seven times out of ten attempts will be the greatest in the game. He was right.

How many times can we "fail" with each other and still be considered great? What expectations do we have of our leaders? I'll bet your pastor's batting average is just fine – even major league. [A pastor's batting average would include conducting worship, preaching, Bible study, Sunday School, counseling sessions, weddings, funerals, visitation, new member classes, board meetings and lots of time answering questions. And all this for about 48 weeks (if you give your pastor the standard four weeks vacation).

Don't get me wrong. Life is not a baseball game. We should each strive for excellence all the time. But on a hot summer afternoon you might give a thought to celebrating the "hits" when they come. And you might give a thought to lightening up on other folks (and yourself) in terms of your expectations.



From the Associate Executive Minister Steve Bills

Different Ways to Do and Learn About Missions

Last month in this space we discussed the value of having missionaries from the field come to our churches and associations to raise our awareness about the mission and ministry that we are a part of throughout our country and around the world. Sitting face-to-face with a missionary certainly is an effective way to catch a vision for what is and can be done.

But there are other ways to help our folks "catch" the vision.

Participating in a Short-Term Mission Trip or Project. Back in 2000 the ABC/NE Mission department focused on discipleship, education, and training purposed to create a recurring short-term mission opportunity for the churches in Nebraska that would allow its members to have an "out-of-the-box" mission trip experience that would have a cross-cultural component, would not be prohibitively expensive, would not involve international travel with its attendant passport, visa, and inoculations requirements, and would not require any foreign language skills. Now in its seventh year, the Emergency Services Center ministry at the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally (see story on page 3) has introduced many Nebraska Baptists to the challenge and satisfaction of mission service. A group project like the ESC allows individual members of any congregation to share this experience. The trip to Alaska in 2005 and to Lodge Grass, Montana, last fall



are further examples of regionally coordinated mission trip opportunities.

If a group from within a church or cluster of churches would like to plan a mission trip we can help make it happen. Some of the places and projects our churches have gone to serve recently include working in the Katrina-devastated areas around the gulf coast, building a Habitat for Humanity house on a South Dakota reservation, painting at the Bethel Neighborhood Center in Kansas City, and organizing and leading a VBS for an inner-city church in Omaha.

Attending the World Mission Conference. For 64 years the ABC Board of International Ministries has held its annual World Mission Conference at the American Baptist Assembly in Green Lake, Wisconsin. Last year they experimented with holding one elsewhere with exciting results. So this year there are three scheduled throughout the county during the autumn months. The conference in Kansas City hosted by Central Seminary is scheduled for November 16-18 (see the postcard insert). The ABC Nebraska Mission Department is encouraging each and every one of our churches to send several delegates to this conference to be able to report back to the congregation on the tremendous work being accomplished by our missionaries on the foreign field. Put these dates on your calendar and watch for group travel opportunities from Nebraska.



Nola's Take Five . . .

Ideas from Nola Oberhelman
ABC/NE Christian Ed Consultant

Five uses for leftover Sunday School material.

1. Offer it to another Sunday School or to home schoolers.
2. File useful ideas to apply in another unit.
3. Use in a session when attendance is record low--a snow Sunday, for example.
4. Give out when a student needs extra material or incorporate into your "early arrival center."
5. Take to a crisis or homeless shelter or a detention center.

Thanks to Everyone for the Broken Bow Response!

Following a recent fire that destroyed part of downtown Broken Bow, American Baptist Men of Nebraska responded.

Pastor Betty Johnson, First Baptist Broken Bow, reports that the American Baptist Men's Disaster Response Trailer was a real blessing for the community. She said, "The trailer was the key that allowed not only Baptist men but others in town who wanted to do something find a way to respond with others. One of the neatest things was that other churches in town wanted to help when they saw what the Baptists were doing." Rev. Johnson also expressed the deep appreciation of her congregation for the prayers from folks across Nebraska.

ABC/NE President Darren Stroh in a letter thanked ABMen on behalf of ABC/NE, "Thanks for your witness and your willingness to be our witness as well. You are very much appreciated."

ABMen Disaster Trailer Coordinator Bud Keenportz extended a particular word of appreciation to Dennis Flanagan and Orin Clinger for their help.

In late May, ABMen from eastern Nebraska and western Iowa were helping with flood clean-up in Missouri Valley, IA, using the Iowa ABMen's trailer.

"Ministry With Children" Christian Education Event

Twenty people took part in the first Moses & Eliza Merrill Christian Education Event at Camp Moses Merrill May 4-5. The focus was on ministry with children.

While those attending felt their time was well spent, they also generated many ideas for future gatherings, including expanding the time frame.

One person indicated she had taught Sunday School for 30 years but this was the first continuing education event she had been part of.

Program leaders were Casey Williams of Valley Forge, Nola Oberhelman of Chapman, and Pastor Irv Jennings of Arnold. Rev. Jennings spoke on the importance of engaging men in children's ministry. A video of his presentation will be available soon.

The idea for the event came from Gina Slechta, Sunset Hills Baptist Church, a member of the Department of Camps & Conferences.

ABMen Conference August 10-11

American Baptist Men of Nebraska will join together for their annual conference at Moses Merrill Camp & Conference Center August 10-11.

Rev. Ron French, pastor of Sunset Hills Baptist Church in Omaha, is taking the lead in preparing an exciting and relevant program that is designed to reach men's lives today.

Men from all ABC/NE churches are invited as well as their friends & neighbors. The conference provides a time of fellowship, learning, sharing, relaxing and growing.

It's Time for Sturgis

ABC Emergency Service Center Will Again Open Its Doors for Bikers

Once again, the ABC of the Dakotas and ABC of Nebraska will join forces to provide a ministry of rescue, relief, and renewal during the annual bike rally in the Black Hills of SD. Headquartered in the First Baptist Church of the Northern Hills in Deadwood, the Emergency Service Center works in cooperation with local law enforcement and health care facilities. The specific mission of the Center is to help stranded bikers, relatives of lost persons, victims of theft or abuse, and any other persons needing assistance.



Associate Executive Minister Steve Bills coordinates ABC/NE efforts. [See his column on p. 2]

All the workers in the Center are volunteers. Individuals and couples from Nebraska churches are encouraged to give a day or two or a week. Lodging is in the church basement.

Additional details about the ministry and what you might expect to experience as a volunteer are available on the Sturgis Aid web site (www.SturgisAid.com). If you have any questions or want to know how you can support this ministry even if you are unable to be present in person, please call Steve at the region office.

ABC/NE Trivia

1. The first woman elected president of the ABC/NE was elected in what year? a. 1898, b. 1937, c. 1967, d. 1982
2. How long did Moses Merrill serve as a missionary in Nebraska territory? a. 3 yrs b. 7 yrs c. 12 yrs d. 24 yrs
3. In a 1967 *Messenger*, there is an announcement of a church closing following 77 years of ministry. It was in the North Platte Association. Which church was it? a. Farnam, b. Octavia, c. Palmyra, d. Brady.
4. Camp Moses Merrill featured what kind of programming first in its life at Linwood? a. Children's camping, b. youth camping, c. family camping, d. conferencing.
5. Besides regular programming at Fullerton and Linwood, The ABC/NE held camps regularly where else or under what other name? a. Far West Camp near Chadron, b. Camp Kaleo near Burwell, c. Camp Comeca near Cozad, d. Camp Rock near Bridgeport. (answers on p. 8)



ABC/NE Prayer Focus for June/July:

- For all who serve on the new ABC/NE Department of Church Vitality
- For cabin leaders & camp coordinators at Camp Merrill
- For each of us to reach out each week to one other person in our church with a word of encouragement
- For our pastors
- For Mike Mann, ABC Global Missionary

Prayer is a vital part of our life together as American Baptists in Nebraska. Each year we have a special prayer emphasis. In 2007, The Messenger is featuring a prayer focus list each month.

- CLIP OUT AND PLACE ON YOUR REFRIGERATOR OR IN YOUR BIBLE. THANKS!

ABC-USA Biennial Convention

The Biennial Convention of the ABC-USA will take place in Washington DC, June 29—July 2, 2007. The theme this year is "Arise & Shine" and the theme verse is Isaiah 60:1.

This year's Biennial features a special service of worship with the Progressive National Baptist Convention and the Co-operative Baptist Fellowship. There will also be a special celebration of the 100th Anniversary of the organization of the ABC as the Northern Baptist Convention.

More information can be found at www.abc-usa.org
The next Biennial will be in 2009 in Los Angeles.

History Headlines

During the ABC of Nebraska's 140 anniversary year, we are looking into stories from our history:

Our second oldest church in ABC/NE is FBC, Omaha. The church, as most, has weathered bad times and good. They were confronted by a crisis in **1874**. At the convention that year, General Missionary J.N. Webb reported that he had been giving time to raise money for the church. "The result of this effort has been such that we may regard our Church at Omaha as saved.

Our brethren there will have \$5000 to pay, but time will be given them to pay this, and, relieved of this heavy burden they will breathe a purer atmosphere and engage in this work with new life and courage, and we will yet look on Omaha as a bright star in our sisterhood of churches."



In **1968**, ABMen had a Northwestern Men's Retreat at Camp Norweska near Chadron State Park and a Central Area Seminar at Westminster Wood Camp near Lexington as well as a conference at Camp Merrill.

In the **Feb. 1915 Nebraska Baptist Bulletin** (earlier version of *The Messenger*) there is an interesting suggestion to pastors:

"Suppose you make a map of your entire field, locating your church and the schoolhouses in the country round about you, if possible the farm houses and who lives in them for five miles out from your church. Hang this on your wall, study it, pray over it, call on the people living in the vicinity who are not regular church members or church attendants and visit the district schools. If possible, arrange to hold a series of meetings in some of the schoolhouses. We believe the time has come for us to extend our work."



SUMMER SUNDAYS Can Be Something Special

In some parts of the country, churches stop meeting during the summer. Fortunately that's not the custom in Nebraska. With folks on vacation there are certainly Sundays with lower than usual attendance but summer Sundays can be very special. Make plans now for some unique summer happenings.

ICE CREAM SUNDAY

One idea is an "Ice Cream Sunday." Serve small dishes of ice cream with a choice of toppings between Sunday School and Worship or after Worship.

SUNDAY SCHOOL PICNIC

Another possibility is to re-introduce the Sunday School picnic. The old version can be freshened with new games & ideas. The whole church is invited. It can be held following Worship or on another day of the week.

OUTDOOR WORSHIP

Outdoor worship is a possibility in some locations. Some churches have a Sunday morning worship in a park. A music fest on the church lawn on Sunday evenings can attract the neighbors. [Try to attract them not annoy them!]



REAL FLOWERS

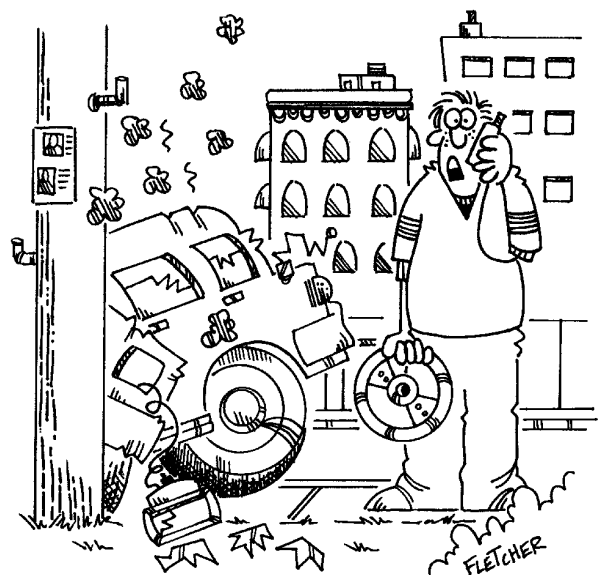
Carefully put away the silk flowers and permanent arrangements and adorn the sanctuary with garden flowers and greenery.

CHRISTMAS IN JULY

A few churches have picked up on the idea of celebrating the true meaning of Christmas without all the hoopla of December. One Sunday is set aside for Christmas carols, stories and teaching.

WORSHIP IN THE MANNER OF ANOTHER CULTURE

Set aside one Sunday to have a worship service in the tradition of Native American Christians, or a cultural group in which your church has a mission interest or experience.

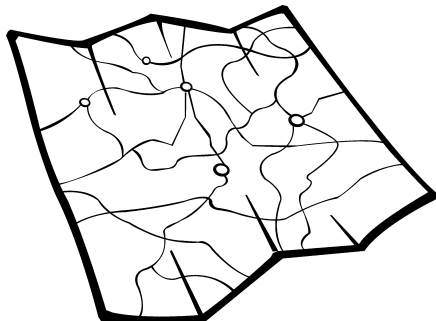


HELLO PASTOR. THIS IS BILLY JAMESON.
IF YOU HAVEN'T DECIDED ON A SERMON TOPIC
FOR THIS SUNDAY, I'D LIKE TO SUGGEST
"THE IMPORTANCE OF FORGIVENESS IN THE PARENTING PROCESS."



Moses Merrill News

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Follow me

Summer Campers are on a "ROAD TRIP"

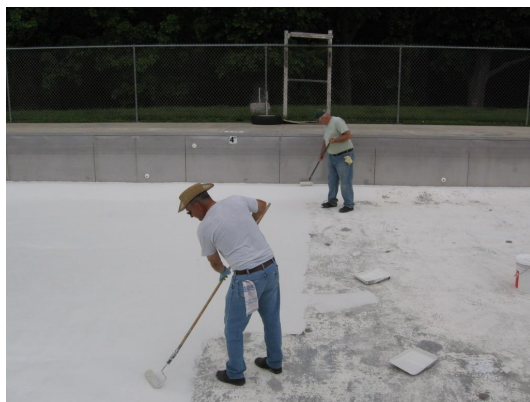
Summer campers are descending on Camp Moses Merrill for an adventure! Boys & girls will be learning that life is like a ROAD TRIP and that Jesus is calling them to follow him.

Each camp is staffed by two cabin leaders for each cabin and a camp coordinator. These folks volunteer their time and energy to provide high quality camping experiences. Program Director MaryBeth Robertson recruits them and helps them with curriculum and program ideas.

Year round and summer staffers under the direction of Clarence Reiss maintain the facility, serve as lifeguards, assist with horse care and do all the other duties necessary to have a great camp. THANKS EVERYONE!

BIG JOB . . .

Clarence Reiss and Jerry Buss apply a new surface to the bottom of the swimming pool at Camp Merrill. The pool will be ready for use by Memorial Day.



Be part of the Summer 2007 X-TREME MAKEOVER

Plans are underway to remodel an old bathhouse into a lodging facility for staff and volunteers. Teams are needed to clean the area around the building, move some walls, install windows and a door. It is great stewardship to save a building and put it to a new use much needed by the camp. If you'd be willing to help, contact camp or the Omaha office 402-556-4730.

Worth A Trip to See . . . THANKS MARTHA!

The Ward Conference Center's Fullerton Room now features an amazing Collage. This striking piece of art was created by Martha Sorenson, FBC, Lincoln. Martha was given and gathered items from nature from across Nebraska and from her travels around the world. She then arranged them to make a work of art. A photo can't do it justice — you need to come to camp to see it! It is awesome!

MAKE PLANS NOW FOR YOUR PERSONAL, FAMILY OR CONGREGATIONAL RETREAT

Fall weekends at camp and the Ward Conference Center are filling up fast. There are only a few openings. However, there are many openings remaining for mid-week retreats. Check with camp and make plans for a life-changing experience.

We are grateful for these special gifts: Memorials for Lou Grotelueschen from: Eula Pearson, Evelyn & Louis Dostal, Dean & Emily Bartlett, Robert & Fayette Molby, Dale & Lucy Cooper, Erma Nolan, Barbara Hedlund. A gift in honor of Stan Murdoch from Kipp & Sandi Petersen. Money contributions from: Grand Island ABWomen's Ministries, York Association, Southern Union Association AB Men, Sharon & Bill Evans, Gibbon Baptist Church, Custer Association ABMen, George & Joyce Gallu, LaLeche League of NE, and others. Campership funds from: Mr & Mrs Jon Buerstetta, Southern Union Association.

THANKS to the folks at the Butler Co. Public Power company for helping us eliminate a couple of hazards here at camp. They trimmed and cut a couple of trees by the RV loop Bathhouse which were hanging over the building and beginning to split and die. These men did an excellent job in helping us improve our camp and with helping us keep it safe for everyone and for our buildings.

From the Associate Executive Minister Dave Lundholm

Church Vitality

On the weekend of May 11th, the new special emphasis Department of Church Vitality met at Camp Merrill for group building, a retreat and visioning.

The department: had fun, searched the Scriptures, prayed together, individually considered the components of church vitality and then came together to develop their vision for church renewal in ABC-NE for the next five years.

The vision statement looks like this: "Five years from now the ABC-NE Churches are continually striving for greater levels of vitality."

This vitality is characterized by:

- o Churches working together (both within the congregations and with other congregations)
- o Churches that are connected with each other
- o Churches serving and reaching those outside their membership.
- o Members growing spiritually toward full discipleship.
- o Unity
- o Each church guided by mission and vision.
- o Each church participating in mission at the local, regional, national and international level.

There are several components of this vision that I really like. First, there is always room for additional growth. By this vision we never "arrive," but continually strive for more. Secondly, churches aren't behaving as "lone rangers," instead they are working together and urging each other to greater life. And finally there is the emphasis on unity, the recognition that we are all in this together.

What are the next steps for your congregation in the areas of renewal and vitalization?



LOCAL CHURCH NEWS

by Darlene Rimpley

August Deadlines
July 6, 2007 - Print Copy
July 11, 2007 - E-Mail

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ALLIANCE FBC: The church was saddened by the death of Joyce-Lea Rowe following a two-year battle with cancer. The funeral was held on March 29 with Susan Gillies officiating. The NW Association meeting was held on Apr 13. There was a carry-in dinner and brief program by Region President Darren Stroh. The church celebrated the marriage of Craig Carter and Laurie Rein April 14.

ARNOLD FBC: The annual May Breakfast, with area ladies as guests, was held on May 4, with the theme "Apron Strings". Each lady present wore an apron, with prizes given in several categories. The "Apron Angels" played the bells. FBC sponsored the Walk For Life on May 6, with proceeds going to the Women's Resource Center in North Platte. The Seniors and eighth grade graduates were honored with gifts on May 6. A Baccalaureate service was held on May 10 at the United Methodist Church. Two of the young people from the church family will be going on summer mission trips: Steven Johnson to Australia with Teen Missions, and Kerri Coleman to California with Campus Crusade.

BELLEVUE NEW LIFE BC: A portion of the land beside the parking lot has been tilled and a community garden will be planted.

ARTHUR BC: Arthur Baptist has been touching

base in the Good Soil Project with a team from Arthur going to Bridgeport on Apr 29 with a presentation on *Spiritual Disciplines* by Foster. Bridgeport reciprocated on May 20. The deacons of the church prepared a meal for the high school graduates and their parents before the Baccalaureate Service on May 2. The graduates were also presented with new Bibles that evening. A Baptism Service was held on Mother's Day and the deacons presented roses to the mothers present. Bible school is being planned for the week of June 18-22. The lessons this year are being prepared locally with emphasis on Bible Characters and their portrayal of desired traits, later taught by Jesus, such as Responsibility, Honesty, Compassion, Perseverance and Salvation.

BRIDGEPORT FBC: For Easter, we held our annual Sunrise Service followed by our regular worship service. During our regular worship service, Andrew Stroh and Leora Weborg were baptized. On Apr 15 our Varsity Youth Group (7-12th grade) took over the worship service, leading us in song and in the Word. Our Kid's Club and Jr. Varsity youth programs celebrated the year's end during April as well. On Apr 29 the elders hosted a brunch and the Good Soil Team from Arthur came to present their journey with *Spiritual Disciplines*. The progress on the new building continues to move forward. We've

hired an architectural firm to help us through the intricacies of the interior design and have met with them twice. In May, we said "see you later" to two of our youth group as they graduate and go off to college--Mason Stevens and Cassie Wegelin. Our Good Soil team traveled to Arthur on May 20 to present our journey. We'll be holding the Crown Ministries Biblical Financial Concepts class on Wednesday nights and will be holding a brown bag study of the Good Soil's *Celebration of Disciplines* book.

CHADRON FBC: A Baccalaureate Service was held on May 13 at the high school auditorium. A National Day of Prayer Breakfast was held on May 3 at the Country Kitchen. A men's breakfast was held at FBC/Kenwood on May 12, followed by a clean-up day at both churches.

DECATUR RIVERSIDE BC: The new addition providing for handicapped accessibility to both the basement and the sanctuary was dedicated on May 27.

FAIRBURY FBC: A reception was held following worship service on May 6 to honor the 2007 graduates. Baccalaureate was held on May 9. Sam & Marilyn Johnson celebrated their 64th wedding anniversary on May 12, Virgil & Betty Richards their 61st on May 21, and Buck & Lois Welch their 52nd on May 7. Ruth Witt

recently observed her 85th birthday. A "Hawaiian Shirt Sunday" was held on May 20, with Hawaiian-style food served for dinner, and followed by a labor and dessert auction to raise funds for the youth's mission trip to work on a Habitat For Humanity house in SD.

FREMONT FBC: Bob & Billie Beckner celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary. The National Day of Prayer observance was held on May 3. Graduation recognition was held on May 20 with a breakfast. Darroll and Kimberly Prusia and four boys will be going to full-time missions work in Mexico.

GIBBON BC: The high school and college graduates were honored during the May 6 morning worship service. Four FBC/Ruth Ice scholarships were awarded to Tyler Herter, Ali Clevenger, Brian Gangwish, and Aubrey Jones. A "Road Trip to Camp" was held on May 20. All ladies were honored during the worship service on Mother's Day. AWANA picnic and awards was held at FBC on Apr 25.

GRAND ISLAND FBC: The FBC ladies completed 10 school kits, 32 health kits, and 17 layettes for White Cross work. Volunteers served at the Salvation Army during May. Bob & Kay Chipps celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary recently.

HOLDREGE FBC: The Westside Bible study group sponsored a linen shower for the church kitchen. High school Baccalaureate was held on May 6, hosted by FBC, and Senior recognition was held on May 13 during the worship service. National Day of Prayer was observed with a breakfast at the Holdrege Senior Center and a service at the Courthouse lawn at noon. Bob & Felsa Lenon celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary on Apr 28. The 5th/6th grade ASFJ class had a movie party on May 4.

LAVISTA JUDSON BC: The ABW attended a Ministries Program at New Life in Bellevue. They also visited and toured Uta Halee. AWANA wrapped up for the year with a party and an awards ceremony. Camp scholarships have been turned in and the kids can't wait to go to Camp Merrill this summer. The Spring Fling was a rousing success and the ladies learned they didn't know *everything* about dolls. All mothers were honored on Mother's Day and money in honor and memory of mothers was used to purchase blankets for Blanket Sunday. The potluck this month honors all graduates. Our military past and present were remembered on Armed Forces Day. Pastor Williamson held a baptism service. This year's VBS theme will be "Avalanche Ranch." Stay turned for Judson is planning a picnic and an open house so you can all see the new building with Fellowship Hall, library and offices.

LINCOLN FBC: The FBC men cooked and served breakfast to the ladies at a "Dining Divas Brunch" on Mother's Day. An ABC/NE Men's Golf Tourney was held on May 12.

LINCOLN, SECOND BAPTIST: The ABYouth Group met with UNL Football Player, Aaron

Gillespie; the SAM (Senior Adult Ministry) group took a day-long bus trip to Pella, Iowa to experience the Dutch Tulip Festival Celebration; On May 4 the ABW honored Mothers at a "Faith Chicks" Mother-Daughter Tea. The church prayed for Mariam Cummings, May 6 - 19 during the time she was on a Costa Rica Mission trip with International AB Missionaries; the Men's 2007 Softball Summer Season began. On Mother's Day all mothers were honored by the ABMen's group; May 26,27 SBC Family Ministries families traveled to K.C. to spend a "Fun Weekend" together at the "WORLDS & OCEANS OF FUN".

MCCOOK FBC: The ABW held a spring salad supper on May 1 with Martha Roe as the guest speaker. A Graduation potluck dinner was held on May 13 for high school and college graduates.

NORFOLK FBC: "Building For Life" is the theme of the giving campaign towards the new church building. A Block Party was held on May 19 giving people the opportunity to "meet the neighbors". Thirteen health kits were recently mailed to the Gifts of the Heart Disaster Relief. The ABW Spring Banquet was held on May 10 at a potluck salad bar, with Kay Marshall speaking on her recent trip to India. A Men's Breakfast was held on May 26.

NORTH PLATTE FBC: Greg & Lisa Mamula will be coming to FBC in June to serve as Associate Pastor for Youth and Family Ministry. The Mamulas live in McGregor, TX, where Greg serves as Youth Pastor while he completes his graduate education. Lisa teaches high school English. Please be in prayer for Greg and Lisa as they prepare for their move to Nebraska. Our Mission Team has returned from St. Louis after a wonderful week of mission ministry in Child Evangelism Fellowship.

OMAHA BENSON: We joined the community at a National Day of Prayer observance at Glad Tidings Church. The ABW held a "picnic" on May 5 in the Family Life Center. The Senior caring Ministry attended a jam session (country and bluegrass music) at the Western Trail Historic Center on May 24. A Spud Night (potato bar) was held on May 20 as a fundraiser for the youth mission trip. The graduates were honored with a reception in the narthex on May 20. Adam DeFrancesco will be going to China on a two-month mission, where he will teach English. Jim & Donna Donner celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary recently.

OMAHA FBC: Four new members were received into the church family of FBC on Sunday, Apr 29. Our "Electric Wednesday" program for kids came to a close on May 13 with a picnic on the church lawn. All the volunteers who gave of their time to make the program a success were recognized at the worship service on May 20. FBC will be one of several churches offering tours of its facilities the first part of June, as part of the Destination Omaha program. This will be an opportunity for the people in the area to catch a glimpse of what is happening at First Baptist as well as the surrounding churches.

OMAHA PARKSIDE: Alvena Bahr, who was the longest time member of Parkside, having joined in the early 1930s, passed away on Apr 25. A food drive was held for the Open Door Mission on May 6, when a representative from the mission spoke at the church. The church served cold water to participants and spectators at the Florence Day Parade on May 26. The church is putting school starter kits together. The ABW May Salad Luncheon was held on May 5, with Rev. Charlene Morris-Quarrells as the speaker. A shower is being held for the church kitchen. Pastor Joan Stewart is going to a part-time arrangement with a 20-hour week plus five flexible hours, worship, special meetings, etc.

OMAHA, SUNSET HILLS: The musical group "Forgiven" sang the national anthem at the Omaha Royals game on Apr 27. The Lightbearers Circle held a Spring Fling supper at Jack and Mary's Restaurant on May 7. Four high school graduates were honored during the May 20 worship service. VBS, an Indiana Jones-style "Quest for Truth," will be June 3-10. Stacey Nelson and Joe Vanourney are parents of a baby boy, Andrew Craig. SH Men have two new ministries to help the needy: a monthly drive to help replenish the Benson Baptist food pantry and a periodic clothing drive for the Together Inc. store. The E.D.G.E. youth served a spaghetti dinner for the May 6 quarterly congregational meeting, a fundraiser for their summer mission trip to Kansas City. A bridal luncheon and shower are planned June 10 for Megan Caughey, who will be married June 29. Sing Until Sunset, an outdoor music festival, will be Sunday, Sept 9.

OXFORD FBC: Our graduating seniors and their families were honored on Sunday, May 6, 2007. A "carry-in" dinner was served. Plans were discussed and prayers were said for our Community Vacation Bible School, to be held at FBC, beginning the week of July 9.

SCOTTSBLUFF FBC: "The Whetstone Fellowship", a new men's ministry has begun. The annual talent show was held on May 6.

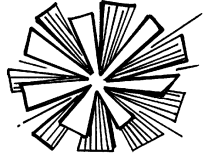
TEKAMAH FBC: The National Day of Prayer was observed at Emmanuel Lutheran Church. A coffee for the graduates was held on May 6, and they each received a Bible. Mothers were honored during worship on May 13 Baccalaureate was held on May 16. May 27 was Food Pantry Sunday for the Tekamah Food Bank.

TECUMSEH FBC: A "Bake Walk and White Elephant Auction" was held on May 6 following an International Potluck dinner. An FBC web site is being created. Christian Women and graduates were honored during the worship service on May 13.

WILSONVILLE BAPTIST CHRISTIAN: Our weekly Bible study will go to once a month until fall harvest is over. The "team" has been working on the church gardens, and is planning the float for the Wilsonville parade. We mailed a "goodie" package to our local gal in the military in Germany. Richard Macy was selected to receive the church scholarship. We are gathering items for our 2 "bags" for the auction for women's group.



Notice to Omahaland churches:
 Mark your calendars for "A Music Extravaganza," a sandwich supper and music program organized by Omahaland ABW and ABM. It will be Sunday, July 22., at Sunset Hills.



Welcome new members

- FREMONT FBC: Edie Hoffman.
- HOLDREGE FBC: Sara Barnes, Cole Watts
- LINCOLN FBC: Bob and Carol Ann Clark, Sandee Vermaas, Tyrone Yelling
- MCCOOK FBC; Jolene Burns, Devin Coats
- OMAHA BENSON: Jeff Jagim
- OMAHA FIRST: Marjory Braman, Felecia Carter, William West and Crieg Hutchins.
- SUNSET HILLS: Wade Gilmer.

Trivia Answers

(questions on p. 3.)

1. C. The first woman president of ABC/NE was Margarete Fauquet of Broken Bow, elected in 1967.
2. B. Moses Merrill served for 7 years before his death.
3. A. Farnam Baptist closed in 1967 with "thanksgiving for these seventy-seven years and not with despair." There were three remaining members.
4. C. Family camping was the first programming offered at Camp Moses Merrill. Special weekend activities were scheduled through the summer of 1976 for families with RVs and tents.
5. A. ABC/NE held camps for a number of years called Far West Camps. They were held at Chadron State Park and at Cedar Point Camp.

ABC of Nebraska Staff

Executive Minister.....	Susan Gillies
Associate Executive Minister	Dave Lundholm
Associate Executive Minister	Steve Bills
Director of Camps & Conferences	Clarence Reiss
Camp Program Director	MaryBeth Robertson
Camp Staff.....	Jerry Buss, Trudy Reiss, Darcie Jones Elizabeth Dietrich, Denise Harris, Joe Huss, Beverly Pacas
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Church Life Consultant.....	A. J. Wagstaff
Pastor to Pastors (W)	Paul Kondy
Pastor to Pastors (E)	Dick Peterson
Youth Ministry Adjunct.....	Jason Workman

Join the great group of volunteers who prepare The Messenger for mailing. This usually takes place on the last Tuesday of each month at the region office.
 Please Note . . .
THE MESSENGER is published 10 times each year. There is no edition in July or January.



They shall mount up with wings like eagles.

Isa 40:31



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