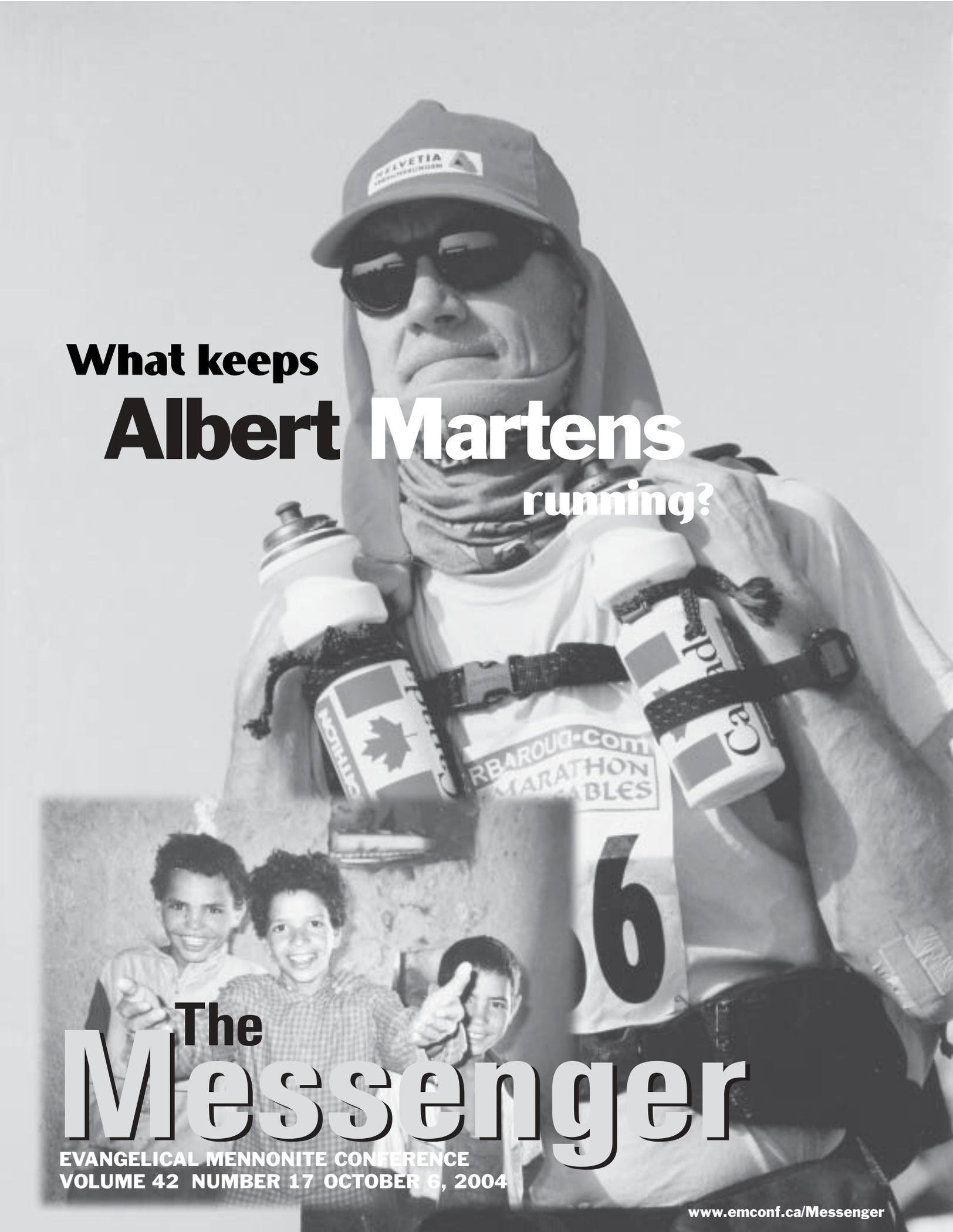


**What keeps**

**Albert Martens**

**running?**



**The  
Messenger**

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# Jesus is driving me

# CRAZY!

Conroy Koop

Reproducing the  
new testament  
**church**  
through  
**Witness**

**H**AVE you ever wondered what God wants to do with your life? Do you feel like as you give him more and more of your life your mind tends to go a little scared because you think you are losing your marbles?

Have you ever tried to witness to someone and halfway through sharing your hope you wonder whether you actually believe the things you say, because what your saying doesn't make sense now that you have spoken it? And yet we are to share of the hope that we have in him.

We are to be a witness of something that is very weird.

Jesus told his disciples, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

We in the church have this tendency to look at those outside the church and label them as lost, unsaved, pre-Christian seekers, unbelievers, unchurched, worldly, or (more harshly put) pagan or heathen. But just to help us understand what we will be talking about today, I want to say that those outside the church are actually normal; and the reason we find it so hard to witness to people is because the things we give witness of are by all accounts weirdness to the max!

How many people find it hard to share your faith with your friends and neighbours? It's because what we believe as Christians is absolutely crazy.

I want to share with you right off the start that if you really are a follower of Jesus Christ you are abnormal. People outside of Christ are actually normal.

We can now do away with the thought that I'm OK and you're OK if you are a follower of Jesus Christ—

because you aren't. When you become a disciple of Jesus Christ, *normal isn't good enough anymore.*

Look at anyone around you who shares their faith in Jesus Christ constantly and you will find they are a bit weird in their thinking at times. They are a bit out of touch with reality.

As I grow in my faith as a Christian I am coming to realize that as Christians we have an off-kilter, off beat view of the world.

The number one problem that faces the Church today is that it has tried so hard to become normal that it blends in with the rest of its surroundings. Everything that Jesus taught goes against how normal people see and function in the world. Jesus taught us to:

- Turn** the other cheek
- Go** the second mile
- Give** the spare coat
- Wash** the feet of those beneath you
- Bless** those who anger you
- Live** without anger
- Lay** down your life

**N**ormal people don't think this way. Let me share a little more craziness with you. Jesus thought that:

The way <sup>UP</sup> is <sub>down</sub>

The way in is out.

The way first is last.

The way of success is service.

The way of attainment is to relinquish

The way of **STRENGTH** is weakness.

The way of security is vulnerability.

The way of protection is forgiveness.

The way of life is the way of death—death to self, society, family.

**K**now your strengths. Why? Because that's the only way you can lay them down.

Want to get the **most**? Go where the **least** is.

Want to become **great**? Become the **least**.

Want to **discover** yourself? **Forget** your self.

Want **honour**? Put others' interests ahead of your own. Honour yourself with **humility**.

Want to **"get even** with your enemies"? Bless and **love** them.

**How many people find it hard to share your faith with your friends and neighbours? It's because what we believe as Christians is absolutely crazy.**

The world is obsessed with power and success, and the teachings of Jesus are absolutely crazy.

Barbara Brown Taylor in her book *Bread of Angels* contrasts the words of Jesus as he refers to Herod as being a fox and himself being a hen: “Jesus likened himself to a brooding hen, whose chief purpose in life is to protect her young, with nothing much in the way of a beak and nothing at all in the way of talons. About all she can do is fluff herself up and sit on her chicks. She can also put herself between them and the fox, as ill equipped as she is. At the very least, she can hope that she satisfies his appetite so that he leaves her babies alone.” How do you like that image of God?

Jesus has disciples. Herod has soldiers. Jesus serves; Herod rules. Jesus prays for his enemies; Herod kills his. In a contest between a fox and a chicken, whom would you bet on?

Don't be discouraged if you find it hard to witness. It's a tough calling.

Jesus replied, “Go tell that fox, ‘I will drive out demons and heal people today and tomorrow, and on the third day I will reach my goal.’ In any case, I must keep going today and tomorrow and the next day—for surely no prophet can die outside Jerusalem! O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! Look, your house is left to you desolate. I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord’” (Luke 13:32–35).

The good news we are to share is really crazy news but good news none-the-less. Jesus was history's biggest deviation from normal standards of being—fully human, yet fully God. This is complete madness, a definition of leadership that turns leadership upside down—crazy stuff! What he showed and thought was nuts. Even his own family rejected him. His best friends thought it best to put him to death.



What *Good Shepherd* would risk the survival of 99 safe sheep to find the one sheep that was lost?

What father would out-prodigal (waste more than) his own prodigal son by lavishly giving “all I have” to his two kids in celebration of the one son's return home?

What employer would pay last-minute workers the same wage as those who had worked hard the full day?

What bank would reward investors who risked their clients' money in the futures market, while criticizing those investors who played it safe, took no risks, but protected the money entrusted to them?

What guest would wait until the end of a party to surprise the hosts with 180 gallons of the finest wine they would ever taste?

What teacher would save the day by feeding five thousand listeners, only to make 12 extra full baskets?



The biggest problem in the church today is that we have tried to become normal. We look at the world and we learn from them as to what it

means to be successful. Our focus is so often on our own churches and making sure they are healthy. We focus on our own families: As long as they do well God is blessing. But I think we need a transformation of thinking and to work hard at promoting other churches even at the expense of our own. Other families lifted instead of our own.

We need to be giving more blessings than receiving. This is crazy thinking. But we are to be a witness of God's Spirit in us.

We need to judge ourselves, not by wealthy North American standards, but rather by the wealth of relationships that we have seen improve because we have been around.

Howard Hendricks, a seminary professor, tells the story of flying on American Airlines. The guy in front of him was being an absolute jerk. He had had too much to drink before he got on the plane, and then he ordered some more and he was loud and boisterous and vulgar. He was disrupting the entire plane and just being a jerk.



**You are the only Bible many people will ever read...You've got to tell them, "This is what Jesus did to me..."**





Conroy Koop is pastor of Fish Creek Christian Fellowship (EMC) in south Calgary, Alberta. He was previously youth pastor at Wymark EMC in Saskatchewan.

Howard says that the flight attendant was handling the guy with absolute class. She was unflappable, not losing her cool, being positive in spite of the fact that this guy was being a jerk.

Howard Hendricks says that he was so impressed by her attitude, her classiness, that after everybody had been served in the cabin, he walked to the back and said, "I can't believe how you handled that guy up there. You were just so positive and so cool about it. I would like to write a letter to your boss at the head of American Airlines and give you a commendation." She said, "Well, thank you, but I don't work for American Airlines. I work for Jesus Christ."

He said, "When I picked myself up off the floor, this girl started witnessing to me. I'm a seminary professor and she's witnessing to me about the changes Christ can make in her life. It absolutely blew my mind." A positive attitude makes all the difference in the world.

You are the only Bible many people will ever read. You've got to tell them, you've got to talk about your faith. You've got to tell them, "This is what Jesus did to me...."

This Jesus is driving me crazy! ❗

Faith, work, sport

# What keeps Albert Martens running?

**Terry M. Smith**

**A**LBERT MARTENS is over 6 foot, two inches and weighs in at 180 pounds. Sitting in my office, he wears a black sports shirt, a chain with a figure of a male runner, and blue jeans.

He is sometimes perplexed when Christians testify that they give up their involvement in sports when they begin to follow Christ. While for them such a decision might be appropriate, he says he has never felt a conflict between being involved in sports and being a Christian—though faith tempers his competitive edge.

Raised near Gretna, Man., in a Sommerfelder home, he played baseball and skated with his six brothers (he also has four sisters). By age seven he was in organized baseball, and sports stayed with him. Years later, when he left Steinbach, Man., to serve as an administrator at Black Forest Academy in Germany, he had to forgo travelling with his Steinbach Steelers baseball teammates to the national championship held in Hull, Que.

But in Germany, though he did not know it, new physical challenges awaited him.

In Manitoba, Albert was involved in credit unioning in Halbstadt, Portage la Prairie (where he joined the EMC) and Steinbach (where he transferred to Steinbach EMC). Later he was involved in accounts receivable, taxes, and payroll at Loewen Windows. There, owner Cornie Loewen with a "good missionary heart" had a "huge impact and



Albert Martens integrates sports and ministry in his work with Athletes in Action.

influence on my life,” Martens said, and he began to consider missions service.



Martens has participated in many sports activities: skiing, running, hockey and baseball are among them.

Five years later Martens and family were in Kandern, Germany.

Black Forest Academy, where Albert and his wife Edna served from 1977 to 2002, is a school for children whose parents are missionaries in Europe, North Africa, the Middle East, and Korea. At first, the school was small and he “was responsible basically for everything” in the school’s business; later, as the school grew, his responsibilities became more specialized. His burden grew stronger for non-Christians, and he and Edna began using their gifts of hospitality, business and sports.

Because of business dealings where he was “confronted by problems,” Albert was “immersed” into German “very suddenly.” Drawing upon a limited school background in the language, he had “a dictionary in one hand, pencil and paper in the other hand” and went to businesses where he grappled with local dialects. He and Edna learned quickly.

Beyond telephone conversation and business dealings, he says that true tests of knowing a language well are the abilities to pray freely and to understand local political news.

In his work he dealt with budgeting, housing, residency permits, purchasing, mortgages, visas,

vandalism, theft, and accidents—and much else. *Messenger* reports tell of his involvement in Project Nehemiah, a major construction expansion.

Because of his contacts and language skills, he became informally known as Mr. BFA. He had genuine interest in a wide range of business contacts, and he saw an opportunity for more than business. A two-year assignment in Germany developed into 25 years.

With baseball “not prevalent” in Germany, Martens started running. It was a quarter-century ago that he clocked his first two-kilometre run. Now he has completed more than 30,000 kilometres.

He ran 330 kms from the Alps of Italy through the middle of Switzerland, and later ran across Germany. Twice he ran in—and on his second try completed—the *Marathon de Sables* ultramarathon; this 238- to 243-kilometre race is held in the Sahara desert in Morocco, north Africa.

Recently on July 12 to 14 he competed by invitation in the 135-mile Badwater Ultramarathon in Death Valley, from Badwater to Mount Whitney Portals, Calif. He usually runs one or two marathons a year, and has competed in 32 marathons and seven ultramarathons. An ultramarathon is any run beyond 42.195 kms, he explains.

Martens has also competed in World Loppet cross-country ski events in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, United States, Italy and France—events that varied from 42 to 76 kms. A past article in *The Messenger* tells of his playing for 10 seasons on hockey teams in Germany and Switzerland, where he reported, “I take my share of penalties.”

When the Martens returned to Canada in 2002, they were unsure of their next step. Albert, now 56, was soon working for Athletes in Action, a Christian-outreach focused on sport, which he knew of from previous contacts.

He works with “35 to...50” summer sports camps held in Manitoba, in administration, and in “creative ministry”—such as ultramarathoning and other sports endeavours.

Martens has plans. He wants to take a soccer team to Benin, a landlocked African country bordering Burkina Faso, and government permission is being sought for him to run across Benin.

When some Christians might question the value of believers being involved in extreme sport, how does he respond? He says that in the California run he pledged not to permanently damage his health, was aware of risks and took what safeguards he could.

He feels that any suffering he endures in running “is really no pain compared to what you see in Africa”—the poverty, short life spans, and the high rates of children’s deaths because of contaminated water.



Albert Martens tended to many administrative details in his work at Black Forest Academy.



Steinbach EMC member and ultramarathoner Albert Martens slows long enough to be interviewed by editor Terry Smith in the EMC national office.

(Becky Buhler)

And to better the lives of poor people is a motive behind his running. The generosity of many people—along with his business contacts and administrative skills—has raised money for various charities. Funds to be used for well drilling in Benin continue to come in from the July run in California.

Albert acknowledges that it has been important for him to link faith and work. What encouragement does he have to Christians who struggle to link the two?

Perhaps for once, Martens hesitates for a split-second at the start line.

in heaven.”

He sees the ability to make money as “a special gift” that has to be placed “under the umbrella of the Lord’s direction and blessings, otherwise I don’t know how you can be victorious in the Lord.”

At the interview’s close, Martens mentions a sponsor of the Badwater event has invited him to attend “a huge grand opening” of a Keihl store in Toronto, Ont., along with three other Canadian runners. There’s a conflict, though: He’s scheduled to attend an Athletes in Action summit in Abbotsford, B.C.

After he says, “I really want to go to the one in Toronto,” I joke that’s where “sports sometimes conflicts with administration.”

“Well,” replies Martens patiently, “...it’s an appointment conflict.” Then he goes on to explain how he sees it as a ministry to represent Athletes in Action and to visit the runners and business people who will be there.

In saying that, Martens runs down a familiar path. ❧

## EMC Hockey News

### Women’s EMC Hockey Saturday, January 22, 2005

**All** players must be EMC members or regular attenders!

**Come and have a great time!** Register by November 15, 2004. Call Laura Thiessen at 204-475-1419 or e-mail [cl\\_thiessen@excite.com](mailto:cl_thiessen@excite.com)

\*This year, there will be no playoffs



### EMCup Hockey Tournament November 11–13, 2004 Steinbach, Manitoba

**Special 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary** banquet, Saturday evening, Steinbach EM Church.

Everyone is invited, with a special invitation to EMCup players.

**Speaker: former NHL player Ryan Walter**

**Tickets** are \$20 each. All proceeds to go to Hockey Ministries International. For tickets call Russ Dyck at 204-326-6503.

## Urgent needs and spiritual tourism

**T**HE Christian Church needs more believers to commit themselves to serve for a lifetime in other countries and overlooked regions of Canada.

In the age of mass communication, there remains no substitute for individuals who are willing to become a student of a language and culture in order to become a teacher of the Christian message over a lifetime.

Workteams, summer service, and short-term missions have an important role. They can open our eyes and meet

limited needs. But we need to guard against being turned into spiritual tourists who are more focused on getting than giving.

Many people groups remain unreached. Years ago missionaries committed themselves to one country for life and often moved on only if forced to. Talented Christians have many options today. Perhaps they need to leave some tasks to others and hear again the call of Francis Xavier: "Tell the students to give up their small ambitions and come eastward to preach the gospel of Christ." ❧

Terry M. Smith

## The Army and the Navy

**A** WOMAN on the American frontier joined the Baptist church. Her Methodist mother explained it this way: "She's left the Army of the Lord and joined the Navy."

That was a healthy description. The Army and the Navy are different branches, but they're on the same side. How healthy are we in our descriptions of others?

With one exception, the EMC focuses on only one of 31 provinces in Mexico—and we only scratch the needs in one small part of it. We *urgently* need more missions staff in the Spanish work and more are welcome in the German part. We can be grateful for other branches of Christ's church that are touching some of the country's 105 million people.

We are involved in Nicaragua, but beyond the Roman Catholic Church, can you list other churches that are active in that country? The Lutheran Church has a challenging ministry of responding to the needs of soul and body. We can thank the Lord for it.

In Africa, AIMM is only one mission among many on that continent; while significant to us, AIMM is unexceptional. There are more than 50 countries in Africa; our EMC involvement in AIMM focuses on three, and we struggle to find people willing to serve.

Our conference has more workers in Africa than go through AIMM, which sometimes seems to be overlooked through our emphasis on that partnership. But as much as we value each worker, on sheer numbers alone our workers are quickly absorbed among the thousands of missionaries who serve, and continue to be needed, on that needy continent.

In Canada, our church planters do not start where they might harm another evangelical believers' church—a kindness especially important in small towns. In this, we recognize that the Church in Canada is much wider than our small conference, despite every denomination's tendency to magnify its sense of self-importance.

Our conference isn't like McDonald's, with its franchises in many places small and large. We need to be careful, then, how we view members who move outside of our few locations. Do we view them as *ex-EMCers*, Christians who must be doing less for the Lord because they serve elsewhere?

Forgive the military analogy if you need to, but armed services that fail to recognize allies end up shooting each other. That does little to meet the real challenge at hand. ❧

Terry M. Smith

### MESSENGER SCHEDULE:

No. 19 – November 3  
(copy due October 20)

## Mongolia

### Mongolian Rocks—symbols of luck and of needs

Two hours out of Ulaanbaatar, on our way up to Erdenet in northern Mongolia, our driver suddenly stopped his Hyundai taxi and got out.

Intrigued, my two colleagues and I peered out our windows and watched as he crossed to the other side of the ditch and approached a huge pile of rocks with blue strips of cloth fluttering out from between the stones. With an air of confidence and determination, he proceeded to circle the stone pile—not just once but four times! Then he bowed, returned to the car, and we continued our journey as if nothing had happened.

Somewhat perplexed, I continued to mull over the significance of those rock heaps as we drove through more breath-taking scenery. Grassy rolling hills were dotted with the ubiquitous *ger* (round igloo-like felt dwellings of Mongolian nomads) and herds of cattle, sheep and goats—and horses by the hundreds. I had read that Mongolia's horse population was greater than its human population, and now I could believe it.

This wasn't the first time we had

noticed those heaps of stones with their blue pieces of cloth. Just a couple of days previously I had seen them in another part of Mongolia. My colleagues and I had taken a ten-hour train ride down to the Gobi desert where we were scouting the area for the placement of a Korean couple.

Five hours from the China border we disembarked at a town surrounded by sand as far as the eye could see. We soon discovered more than sand—a community of 20,000 beautiful Mongolians. Up on a large sand dune we saw a tiny building, identified as a church by the cross boldly reaching up from the roof. Jesus is here, I thought. His people are here. What a thrill!

Then I saw it. The heap of stones decorated with blue cloths, right at the edge of another huge sand dune overlooking the town. It was a symbol of luck, we then learned. It was a plea for protection, for a future for the town, for their children, for healing, for eternity. A thousand years ago, Genghis Khan requested that a hundred Christian missionaries come to Mongolia

and bring his people the Good News of Jesus. Not a single Christian answered that call. Buddhist Lamas did. And later Communists did too.

But neither of them could offer a cure for the superstition they felt deep in their hearts. Fearful of the evil spirits, the Mongolian people desperately sought to appease the spirit world by resorting to Shamanism. Today, blue cloth-decorated stone heaps dot the countryside, turning them into places of worship of the spirits. Blue strips of cloth are hung on bridge railings, from the roofs of restaurants and work places, from homes—and then the Buddhist shrines to add to the confusion.

Our people have gone to Mongolia to bring the Good News, the message of hope, of love, of security, of healing. They have come to replace the stone heap with the Rock. With Jesus! The “chosen and precious corner stone—the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame.”

We have only a few people working in Mongolia: one works with families of prisoners to bring hope; another teaches English in a language institute; two teach in a Bible college, training Mongolian Christian workers and church leaders; and two others with their two daughters are moving to the desert in August.

Our team is multicultural: Filipino, Singaporean, American and Korean. We would love to add others: Canadians, Kiwis, British, Germans—the list goes on.

We are so glad that we can be involved in encouraging our team in Mongolia and helping to equip them for the ministry God has called them to. Thank you for being a part of our team as you pray for us and for Mongolia.

Continue to pray for workers for that wide-open country. Think of our taxi driver for that one trip. Whenever we passed one of these blue-clothed stone heaps he would do a little wave—for good luck. He was doing the best he knew how to ensure a safe trip, to buy his luck for the journey. He, like so many other Mongolians, needs a messenger of the *Rock*. Could you be that messenger?

Names Withheld



Will join BF council

## EMC signs on with 'new' Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission

Len Barkman, General Secretary of the Evangelical Mennonite Conference, was one of seven African and North American church leaders to sign the Joint Ministry Agreement of Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission (AIMM) creating a new and innovative vehicle for mission. In doing so, he committed his church to work at mission as part of a truly international and inter-Mennonite consortium.

The signing ceremony was a high point in the week of formal and informal meetings of African and North American church and mission leaders. The celebration and banquet on Saturday *Thanking God for the Past and Trusting Him for the Future* included a wonderful opportunity for AIMM missionary alumni to reconnect with each other and with African church leaders.

The evening ended with a powerful challenge by Siaka Traoré, Vice-President of the Evangelical Mennonite Church of Burkina Faso, to support the new vision for mission of AIMM, to work together in unity towards the completion of the mission task.

The EMC has a long and rich history of involvement in the work of AIMM. Barkman indicated the EMC's commitment to continued strong involvement in Burkina Faso and the intention of the conference to join the Partnership Council for that country.

African churches joining the new venture include the Eglise Evangélique Mennonite du Burkina Faso (Evangelical Mennonite Church of Burkina Faso), the

Communauté Mennonite au Congo (Mennonite Church of the Congo), the Communauté Evangélique Mennonite (Evangelical Mennonite Church) of the Congo and the Communauté des Eglises de Frères Mennonites au Congo (Mennonite Brethren Church of the Congo).

Other North American groups in the consortium are Mennonite Mission Network, the mission agency of Mennonite Church USA, and Mennonite Church Canada Witness. MBMS International, the mission agency of the Canadian and US Mennonite Brethren Conferences, indicated their intention to sign on shortly with specific program interest in Burkina Faso.

The inaugural meeting of the AIMM International Central Council is tentatively scheduled for Burkina Faso this Fall, to be followed immediately by initial meetings of the various country-based Partnership Councils.

In the new arrangement final decisions concerning program and budget for each Partnership Council will be made in the country in which the mission activity is to occur—rather than in a North American board room—and African conferences will be full and equal partners in these decisions. North American congregations will benefit from a new accessibility to missionaries and African churches, and the size and cost of the AIMM central office will be significantly scaled down.

Dave Dyck



Len Barkman, EMC General Secretary, signs the AIMM Joint Ministry Agreement as other African and North American church leaders look on.

### coming events

#### Oct. 23

2004 Women for MCC Conference  
First Mennonite Church  
Winnipeg, Man.  
204-888-2239

#### Oct. 29

Eden Foundation  
Fall Banquet  
Steinbach Mennonite Church  
Steinbach, Man.  
1-866-493-6202  
www.edenhealth.mb.ca

#### Oct. 30

Church Finance Seminar  
Morrow Gospel Church  
Winnipeg, Man.  
204-326-6401

#### Nov. 4

Eden Foundation  
Fall Banquet  
Douglas Mennonite Church  
Winnipeg, Man.  
1-866-493-6202  
www.edenhealth.mb.ca

#### Nov. 9

Eden Foundation  
Fall Banquet  
Winkler Bergthaler Mennonite Church  
Winkler, Man.  
1-866-493-6202  
www.edenhealth.mb.ca

#### Nov. 12-13

Christians Responding  
to HIV/AIDS in Africa  
Dr. Allen Ronald  
Calvary Temple  
Winnipeg, Man.  
204-452-1374 or  
204-895-0608

### 2004 Women for MCC Conference

Saturday, October 23, 2004  
First Mennonite Church  
922 Notre Dame Avenue  
Winnipeg, MB  
Theme: Education

Coffee and Registration at 9:30 a.m.  
Sessions begin at 10:00 a.m.

Cost: \$10 each women's group

Bring: bar(s) of soap for newborn kits, a bag lunch (drinks are provided), new or recycled items (already priced) to be sold at the conference.

Contact: Marlene Mueller, 204-888-2239

#### MCC Alberta is moving!

Effective **November 1**, MCC Alberta's new address will be  
Suite 210, 2946 32 Street NE  
Calgary, AB  
T1Y 6J7

(phone and fax numbers will stay the same)

# Missionaries meet for supper and support

Missionaries gathered for the EMC Missionary Fellowship on July 27 in Steinbach, Man. The evening began outdoors with a barbecue supper, but was rained out before dessert. The gathering continued at the Steinbach EMC.

A program followed the meal. Gerald Reimer Conference Youth Minister (who serves half-time with the Board of Missions), led a time of singing and prayed, "Thank You for blessing us with Your presence this evening."

Ernie Loewen, chairman of the BOM, gave a devotional based on Psalm 27. Citing a survey that says our society will radically change in the next 10 years, he asked if "our type of Christianity...[will] be relevant...when these changes come."



National staff and current and former EMC missionaries gathered July 27.

Missionaries introduced themselves, telling their name and where and how they serve. Following that, Lester Olfert, EMC Foreign Secretary, invited missionaries to share prayer requests and praise items. At various points in the sharing, those gathered paused to pray for requests mentioned.

Among items shared:

✿ Len Barkman conveyed thanks on behalf of Elma Janzen for prayers for her and the family after George's passing. He also requested prayer for EMC office staff and AIMM's transitions.

✿ Jake Kroeker: Pray for him and Bertha as they reach out to Mexicans who come north to work.

✿ Erna Plett shared about excellent opportunities in schools in Paraguay to talk about sex, drugs, Satanism, abortion and other issues from a Christian perspective.

✿ Wayne Herrod, telling of how he led a woman to the Lord through his work in an apartment complex, said there is ministry even after the field.

✿ Hernan Benitez desires to have a servant's heart to listen to people.

He and Landis are preparing to serve in Paraguay.

✿ Joe Reimer: Things are changing in South Africa. While black people were conditioned to think themselves incapable of leadership, they are now taking more initiative in society and in the church. Many people are broken and hopeless due to AIDS, but this has opened wide a door for evangelism.

The evening closed as people gathered in small groups to pray for one another.

Becky Buhler



Helen Kornelsen and Doris Thiessen visit.

## with our churches

### Summer events at Straffordville EMC

**Straffordville, Ont.:** Our summer has been a busy one for most of us. Many have taken the time to go on vacations and to go camping.

The young couples group went camping July 23-25. It was a relaxing time and also a time of drawing closer to each other. John and Sara Bartsch from Leamington EMC were our speakers for the weekend. They spoke on different relationships. We also had two couples from our church cook for us; we were spoiled! Thank you to everyone for making this weekend great.

For the months of July and August, we didn't have Sunday school. Instead, we had a children's feature during each Sunday morning service.

On June 27, we had a family social at the Jaffa Outdoor Recreation Centre. We enjoyed a walk in the woods, followed by a wiener

roast for supper. At 7:30 p.m., we gathered at the church for a fundraiser program for our former youth leader, Jake and Katherine Reddekopp, who are now serving in Africa.

We look forward to sharing with you about our VBS program held August 9-13.

Margaret Berg



Straffordville's young couples group camped July 23-25.

# A Glimpse of Far Away

**Lorette, Man.:** *Sitting on the street ahead of Pastor Moses and myself is a woman nursing her baby. Her rags, and the meager possessions that surround her, are mute evidence to her poverty. She cries out to us in a language I do not understand. I regard her sympathetically as we approach, unsure of what I can do to help. She takes out her unoccupied, sagging breast and shakes it at me, desperately.*



**Alan Fehr (middle) spent two months in Uganda with Venture Teams International.**

*I fumble in my pocket and pull out the two American dollars I had. I press them into her hand as we walk by. I realize afterward what a futile gesture it was. What Currency Exchange would give her*

*Ugandan shillings in return for two measly dollar bills, I did not know. God willing, someone would.*

OUR lives are shaped by our experiences. The two years I spent with Venture Teams International molded, stretched, and changed me more than I can understand. Living and ministering in a cross-cultural

situation gave me an appreciation of human diversity I could not have otherwise gained. I learned to take my own opinions a little less seriously, and to consider the whole person when trying to understand them.



I was challenged as an actor, a director, a writer and a speaker to utilize the arts in a way that would communicate an important truth to a people I knew very little about. My teammates and I endured the good and the bad, knowing that God was orchestrating it all for our personal benefit, but more so for that of His Kingdom.

Because of my time in Africa with VTI, I've seen the Nile River. I've eaten fish head soup, jackfruit, and *matokee* (a member of the banana family) cooked as a treat for seven hours. I've seen an albino black child. I've shared the gospel with complete strangers who have accepted Christ as their Saviour. I've seen poor children with scalp dis-eases and growths on their bodies. I've

celebrated New Year's by burning down a Christmas tree.

I've seen how basic a church building really can be. I've been mobbed by 100 kids, each eager for one of my 15 candies. I've seen people accept the Gospel warmly, and I've seen them walk away.

All these things I've experienced because God showed me an opportunity to step out in faith, and placed a desire for it in my heart. We lead short lives. It would have been easy to miss out on such a powerful, impacting opportunity by letting a fear of the unknown dissuade me or by letting the world convince me that it was not important.

My time overseas impacted me, it impacted the people I met, and most importantly, it furthered the Kingdom of God.

How richly I've been blessed.

Alan Fehr  
Reporter: Jolyn Braun

Further information by Alan: He joined Venture Teams International at 21, and was involved in stage ministry across North America, Uganda (two months), and England (two months). Now 24, Alan has attended Prairie Grove since he was 17, and is working toward "a double degree" in Drama and Worship Arts at Steinbach Bible College.

## Region 1

### Leaders retreat to be refreshed and encouraged

Representatives from many of the Region 1 churches met April 30 to May 1 for a leadership retreat at the campus of Peace River Bible Institute in Sexsmith, Alberta. The retreat was an opportunity for pastoral and leadership couples to be refreshed and encouraged in their walk with God and in the work they do within their churches and respective communities.

The weekend kicked off on Friday evening with a fabulous pizza supper. Couples reacquainted themselves with old friends and met new ones. Back on campus, after a time of worship, Danny Penner brought greetings and gave a report from the Vanderhoof Christian Fellowship church. John Bueckert also reported that evening on behalf of the La Crete and Hillside churches.

Waldie Neufeld, professor at PRBI, spoke three times over the course of the weekend on spiritual mentoring and discipleship, based on John 8:31-36—an excellent and very relevant topic for attendees. Waldie demonstrated that one of the first steps in effective discipleship is to help people

understand what true freedom in Christ is. We need to teach individuals who they are in Christ. Waldie referred to Christ's model of discipling and how He taught people to move from an earthly perspective to an eternal perspective.

Session two, on Saturday morning began with worship led by Frank and Cora Winsor, pastoral couple at La Crete Christian Fellowship church. Mervin Brandt updated the group in regards to activities happening in Mission Heights Community Church in Grande Prairie. Bill and Rosalie Bueckert along with Henry and Doris Plett gave a very entertaining musical rendition informing everyone of the growth evident in their church back home in Burns Lake, B.C. Len Barkman, executive secretary provided a brief report on behalf of the EMC.

After a great lunch provided by the staff at PRBI, representatives from the churches participated in a business meeting covering topics such as the EMC Annual Convention 2005 being held in Region 1, and mission conferences.

Session three, held Saturday evening

after supper opened with worship led by Richard Krahn from Mission Heights Church. Evan Kornelsen shared information about the many programs and ministries occurring within High Level Christian Fellowship church.

Waldie wrapped up the evening by reminding us to lead God-centered lives. He illustrated this point with an example: in Roman times, carrying the cross beam signified submission to Roman authority. Taking up our cross, as Christ instructed us to do, does not necessarily mean for us to suffer through the trials or troubles in our lives, but to submit to Christ's authority and mandate. Living a God-centered life means that we embrace God's values and living by those values is our focus. We can do this only when we submit to His authority.

Overall, it was an excellent time for all who attended to be encouraged in their leadership positions and personal spiritual growth, enjoy times of worship and fellowship and eat great food (isn't that always an important part of fellowship?)

Wendy LeMoal

## What's happening at Mission Heights?

**Mission Heights (Grande Prairie, Alta.):** In the past few months, Mission Heights Community Church has gone through a few changes. As of January 14, our church adopted a new constitution, and on June 10, we held our church elections. These two events have brought changes to some of the structures of the church, and also to members of the church as many of them adapt to their new roles within the church body.

On February 29, the church had an installation service for Pastor Rick Hall



Angela and Fernando Reimer enjoy a Mexican theme night at church camp.

and his wife, Lori. On May 2, we had another installation service for Pastor Jared Schroeder and me, his wife Jennifer. We hadn't heard the term "installation" for a pastor before and so there was a joke going around that the pastors were getting installed, like you would install a new furnace?! Anyway, we are happy to be here.

On May 29, the youth group put on a



Youth car wash fundraiser—cold weather, but youth had fun!

yard sale, bake sale, BBQ, and car wash. It was a bit cooler than the youth would have liked, but very productive. Cam Clarke provided us with two water trucks for the car wash part of it, and kept the water nice and warm so that at least our hands were warm while washing vehicles!

Our annual church campout was held June 18–20 at a Bible Camp 30 minutes north of Grande Prairie. The weather was perfect for all those well-loved water fights, so we had a few! Roberta Widdifield did a tremendous job of organizing a Mexican theme night for supper on Saturday evening. We had tacos and played games like *Fajita Toss* and got on our hands and knees to push a lime across the floor with our noses! It was great.

The church service was held at the camp on Sunday morning. We celebrated Father's Day, and also celebrated four baptisms and the addition of two new members. Bethany Goertzen, Katelyn Hein, Brad Harder, and Jay Brandt were baptized as well as became members. Charlene Thiessen and Zach Hein also became members. It's so encouraging to see these young people take this step in their walk with the Lord.

We also want to congratulate our four graduates of 2004. Congratulations to Dailyn Widdifield, Bruce Harder, Stuart Wiebe, and Russel Vanderschaaf!

Jennifer Schroeder



Baptized at church camp on Father's Day were: (clockwise from top left) Bethany Goertzen, Brad Harder, Jay Brandt, and Katelyn Hein.

## Sara and Harvey were baptized

**Stony Brook (Steinbach, Man.):** On Sunday, June 6, two new members were accepted into our congregation through baptism: Miss Sara Wiebe and Mr. Harvey Wiebe. Our pastor Earl Unger officiated. It was great to see both of them make a public confession to Jesus Christ and we must remember to support them in prayer. We welcome their contribution as members in our congregation.

On June 27 we had our annual Sunday school picnic. The day began with a lovely service in wonderfully warm summer weather. The service began with some great praise and worship and was highlighted by a super children's message by Charleen Barkman. She taught us that teamwork is the way we get things done as a church. The grade four to six Sunday school class also impressed us with their creative abilities by putting on a skit including many Bible characters.

After our stomachs were satisfied we all enjoyed some games. Children from ages two to adult got involved and we had many laughs over the silly things people had the courage to attempt as we participated and competed in the games. The day wrapped up with our annual baseball game.

More recently, we've been preparing for the *40 Days of Purpose* campaign with a sermon series entitled *Becoming a Contagious Christian*. The last five weeks have focused on finding our specific witnessing style. The campaign began September 19, after a week off for our annual church camp. We are quite excited about what the Lord will do in us during the 40 days we want to spend focusing on Him. Also, our Sunday school program gets back into swing on Sept. 19 as we return to our regular winter programming.

Miryam Bueckert



The Sunday school picnic involved some silly games—including eating watermelon hanging from a stick.



Edwin Friesen

## Who is the Financial Gatekeeper?

**D**URING my growing up years, the local bank held a certain mystique. Though only open a few hours before lunch and again a few hours mid-afternoon, it wielded a great deal of influence over people's financial lives.

Other than an occasional loan from family or friends, the local banker was generally the financial gatekeeper for families in the community. Often it was the banker who stopped people from overextending themselves financially or making purchases they could not afford. And if the bank said "no" to a loan, you could try the competition in the next town, but likely the answer would be the same.

People regarded the advice rendered by the banker as compelling and adjusted their financial lives accordingly. Since people did most of their debt banking in one place, the role of the banker was essentially that of a financial gatekeeper, controlling the total debt load of clients.

My, how times have changed! Now there is no banker who acts as the financial gatekeeper of family finances, no banker to say "no" to more credit. In fact, many people who find themselves in financial distress never consulted a "banker" about their financial decisions.

With credit readily available at every major retail outlet selling anything from cars to furniture, there is no one person who takes an overview of the financial status of the consumer. With the sales person and the banker now one and the same, both having vested interest in your purchase, who is left to offer independent guidance or to stop you from adding another payment to your already overextended loan commitments? Given our bent to secrecy about all things related to money, likely no one.

But some things have not changed. Debt is still debt, even if charged on a credit card and the "borrower is (still) servant to the lender" (Prov. 22:7).

There is a place for leases, loans and credit cards, but don't take the offer of credit as your approval to make yet another purchase. Just because you can afford to make the monthly payments on that new, wide screen TV doesn't mean that you should buy it.

To have the sales person and the credit officer working together is a brilliant and profitable business strategy. Add to this the shift from looking at the overall cost of the purchase to the easily affordable monthly payments and it has the makings of a win-win-win situation.

It's a win for the retailer who makes a profit on the sale. It's a win for the retail loan or credit card company who expects to make a profit on your unpaid balance on the loan, and it's a win for you the consumer because



you get to enjoy that new TV tonight and put off paying for it until later.

Most people make thoughtful financial decisions, but for some, easy credit is hard to resist and may lead to overspending. Who is the financial gatekeeper in your household? Since you are the one expected to make the payments, shouldn't you also be the gatekeeper? If you aren't, who is? ❏

*For stewardship education and services, contact your nearest Mennonite Foundation of Canada office: Abbotsford – Dave Kroeker, 1-888-212-8608; Niagara – Darren Pries-Klassen, 1-888-212-8731; Kitchener – Mike Strathdee, 1-888-212-7759; Winnipeg – Edwin Friesen, 1-800-772-3257 (www.mennofoundation.ca).*

### EMC post-secondary student luncheons

#### University of Manitoba

Tuesday, October 26  
11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.  
Room 224A-C University Centre  
Speaker: Ward Parkinson



#### Canadian Mennonite University

Wednesday, October 27  
Noon – 1:00 p.m.  
Room C-11 South Campus  
Speaker: Mike Plett



For more information, contact Gerald Reimer, 204-326-6401, emcger@mts.net.



**Peter B. Dueck  
1915–2004**

Dad was born in 1915 in Rosenhof, north of Morris, Man. There he attended school until the age of 13 and then worked on the family farm. His parents were the Bernhard R. Duecks. At age nine, Dad began his life of faith and was baptized in 1936 in the Rosenort Kleine Gemeinde Church.

At age 27 during World War Two Dad served as a conscientious objector. This was a memorable experience that remained part of him all his life. (His experiences as a C.O. are written up in the Henry L. Friesen book.)

Our mother and Dad were married in 1944. Dad was 29 when he proposed to our mother, Mrs. Katherine Friesen, who was widowed and had six children. It was a marriage of faith in which Mom and Dad spent endless hours in prayer as they raised a large family.

In the 1940s Dad had been very supportive of the many people who moved to Mexico at that time. Much later in 1965 the family moved to Fisher Branch in the Interlake. Dad was drawn by the possibility of more land, a more conservative church, and a growing opportunity for Christian outreach. Dad enjoyed visiting people who were sick or lonely, giving out Christian literature and sharing his faith in the community.

Dad was song leader in the church for most of his life, and he took great pleasure in singing, which served as encouragement and an expression of faith both in good

times and in times of trouble. He also took great pleasure in wild nature.

Dad also enjoyed writing. He wrote news articles for several church-related papers, he wrote a lot of poetry and took a special interest in recording genealogy and our family history. In much of his writings Dad emphasized principles of faith such as stewardship, abstaining from worldly living and following “the narrow way which leadeth unto life.”

When Dad retired in 1977 he spent the next 20 years looking after Mom because of her dementia and other health problems. He approached his caregiver role with love, enduring capacity, often humour, and always with abiding faith. Because of her condition, there were many years when they were not able to live together. One of Dad’s unfulfilled dreams was to live with her in the Woodhaven apartments.

Dad lived in Rest Haven for several years enjoying moderately good health, until a few weeks ago. Then he began to suffer from internal bleeding, kidney and heart complications. Then, peacefully, on Thursday morning, September 2, four days short of his 89<sup>th</sup> birthday, he passed from among our midst to meet his God whom he served.

Dad is survived by children Erna (the late Pete Klassen), Helen (Frank) Plett, Edward (Leona), Fred (Doris), Hilda (Bernie) Brandt, Norman (Catarina), Bert (Helen), Bernie (Marie) and Allan (Rose); 34 grandchildren and 67 great grandchildren. He is also survived by siblings Annie (the late Isaac Brandt) of Man., Tina (the late John J. Reimer), Willie (Betty) of Man., Eva (Klaas) Reimer of Belize and Menno (Liesbeth) of Mexico.

Dad was predeceased by his wife Katherine (1998), daughter Bertha Friesen, son-in-law Pete A. Klassen, his parents Bernhard R. and Anna Dueck, and 13 brothers and sisters.

The family wishes to especially thank Dr. Krahn and the nurses at Bethesda Hospital, the Rest Haven staff and Chaplain Mary Dyck for their care of Dad.

The funeral service was held September 6, 2004, at the Rosenort Evangelical Mennonite Church in Rosenort, Man. Interment was in the church cemetery.

Donations in Dad’s memory can be made to the Canadian Food Grains Bank, 400–280 Smith Street; Box 767; Winnipeg, MB R3C 2L4.

Ephesians 2:8–10: “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”

His Family



**Jacob D. Koop  
1928–2004**

Jacob D. Koop of Virden, Man., beloved husband of Helen Koop, passed away suddenly on August 24, 2004, at Ste. Anne Hospital. He was 76 years of age.

He was born in Satanta, Kansas, on March 5, 1928, to Jacob N. and Helena Koop. He was the youngest of five children, having had three sisters and one brother. At age nine, they moved to Mitchell, Man., where he took his schooling and started his vocational years.

While working in a bush camp at Red Lake, he met Helen Friesen who was also working there, helping her sister with housekeeping and cooking. They were married on July 16, 1950, in Steinbach, Man. After working several different jobs, including road construction, they bought a dairy quota, farmland and cows.

In 1966, on May 8, they moved to Kola, Man. This is where they lived and worked until their official retirement in 1994 when they sold the farm and moved into Virden, Man.

During their married years, they have seen both the blessing of having seven children as well as the heartache of losing their oldest son to a farming accident at the age of 15.

His relationship with Jesus Christ was foundational to his life, and in later years, he became actively involved with the local church, MCC and the Food Grains Bank.

He was predeceased by both his parents, Jacob and Helena, all of his siblings; Cornelius, Helen, Sarah and Katherine and by his son Jakie.

He is survived by his wife Helen, his children Dianne (John) Fehr of Kola, Man.; Helen (John) Buikema of Delta, B.C.; Norman (Karen) of Lacombe, Alta.; Sharon (Murray) Klassen of Toefield, Alta.; Leonard (Lori) of Kola, Man.; and Delores (Sheldon) Bittner of Hilbre, Man.; 20 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

His Family

## births

**DUECK** – to Amanda Dueck of Calgary, Alta., a daughter, Courtney Alexandria Burke, on May 14, 2004.

**NEUFELD** – to Aaron and Helen Neufeld of Leamington, Ont., a daughter, Serena Evelyn, on July 17, 2004.

**KRAHN** – to Jake and Mary Krahn of Aylmer, Ont., a daughter, Shelbe Anne, on August 4, 2004.

**FRIESEN** – to Jim and Helen Friesen of Aylmer, Ont., a daughter, Megan Justina, on August 9, 2004.

# shoulder tapping

Menville EMC, a rural church near Riverton, Man., seeks a **half-time youth leader/pastor** to give spiritual leadership and be a program director for a youth group of approximately 25 to 30. Call for information or send resume to Kenton Barkman, Box 576, Riverton, MB ROC 2R0. Phone 204-378-5623 or e-mail kenton@mts.net.

The Archives Committee, under the EMC Board of Church Ministries, seeks a **part-time volunteer archivist** to work out of the Steinbach, Man., office. Tasks involve the organizing, filing and tracking of historical materials within the vault and over-flow areas in the building. Assets are an interest in history and a skill or willingness to operate a computer database; an exceptional asset would be the ability to read German. For information, contact executive secretary Terry Smith at 204-326-6401 or emcmessenger@mts.net.

Endeavour Fellowship Chapel (EMC), a warm, friendly congregation with 50 to 60 in attendance on Sunday morning, seeks a **pastor**. It is located in a small town/rural part of east-central Saskatchewan, between Yorkton and Hudson Bay.

The church is flexible in standards for both candidate education and experience. As an evangelical church in town, it serves a wide range of people. Contact chairman of elders Neil Fenske at 306-547-4738 or Box 263, Endeavour, SK S0A 0W0.

Pelly Fellowship Chapel (EMC) is looking for a **full-time lead pastor**. Pelly is a small rural community (300 people) in east-central Saskatchewan. The congregation averages 40 on Sunday mornings and is the only evangelical church in the community.

Please forward your resume or questions to the search committee by mail at Box 70, Pelly, SK S0A 2Z0 or phone Eugene Prokott at 306-595-2287, Lewis Anfinson at 306-594-2151, or e-mail woodlandsigns@sasktel.net.

**MDS workers** are needed! Canadian volunteers, remember to connect with the MDS office in Winnipeg prior to making service arrangements directly with an MDS project. This will ensure that you receive a border crossing letter, travel assistance/receipting details and other important MDS information. Extension office: 866-261-1274.

Braeside EMC in Winnipeg, Man., is seeking a **full-time associate pastor of Spanish ministries**. The applicant should be familiar with the Anabaptist perspective and willing to be guided by the EMC statement of faith. Responsibilities to include: pastoral care, teaching, and outreach. The Spanish part of the Braeside congregation has an average attendance of 60 people.

Please forward your resume and references to Braeside Evangelical Mennonite Church, Attn: Spanish Ministry Search Committee, 1011 Munroe Ave., Winnipeg, MB R2K 1J7.

**Program officer(s)** are required in Nuevos Casas Grandes, Chihuahua, Mexico. This is a MCC voluntary position for a two- or three-year term. For information contact the MCC Canada office at 204-261-6381 and ask for Marsha Jones or Mary Friesen. See web site for details: [www.mcc.org/getinv.html](http://www.mcc.org/getinv.html) (Service Opportunity of the Month).

Inner City Youth Alive is an organization in the North End of Winnipeg, Man., that reaches youth and their families in the community. It seeks a **program director** that should possess pastoral gifts and be ready to support and encourage the staff team. Phone: 204-582-8779. E-mail: [icya@mts.net](mailto:icya@mts.net). Website: [www.innercityyouthalive.org](http://www.innercityyouthalive.org).

Riverton Gospel Chapel (EMC), a small rural town in Manitoba's Interlake, seeks a loving **leading pastor**. Housing is included in the salary package. This friendly and loving congregation has an average attendance of 75-100, with a high percentage of young families. The area has good schools.

Contact Paul Peters, board chair, by mail: Box 356, Riverton, MB ROC 2R0, by e-mail: [paul@vidir.com](mailto:paul@vidir.com), or by phone: 204-378-2740 (home), 204-364-2442 (work).

Urgent: **English teacher** needed immediately for a small school in the northern part of Mexico. The school is under CMM Mission. The applicant should be single, as couples accommodation is not available. The applicant must be willing to adapt to a different culture. Contact: Hans Friesen, P.O. Box 752, Santa Teresa, New Mexico, 88008-0752; Ph. 01-152-636-699-3177.

MCC Central States **executive director** is sought to provide vision and oversight for all programs. Familiarity with constituency, strong relational and administrative skills, and cultural competency required. Experience with budgeting, administration, Spanish language skills preferred. Women and people of colour are encouraged to apply. Significant travel time within the United States.

Contact Charmayne Brubaker, 717-859-1151, [cdb@mcc.org](mailto:cdb@mcc.org), or your nearest MCC office for a job description. Application review begins now. Position available January 1, 2005, or sooner.

Mennonite Foundation of Canada seeks a **full-time stewardship consultant** to manage its new Calgary office and promote Biblical stewardship in Alberta. MFC is a charitable foundation serving seven Anabaptist church conferences across Canada.

Candidates should communicate well in group settings and with individuals; understand charitable gift and estate planning; be creative, organized, and self-motivated; support our stewardship mission; contribute as part of our staff team; and be a member of a participating conference.

Apply by October 23, 2004, to Robert Veitch, General Manager, 12-1325 Markham Rd., Winnipeg, MB R3T 4J6, phone 1-800-772-3257, fax: 204-488-1986, e-mail: [rveitch@mennofoundation.ca](mailto:rveitch@mennofoundation.ca), [www.mennofoundation.ca](http://www.mennofoundation.ca).

La Crete Christian Fellowship seeks a **full-time youth pastor**, an energetic leader with vision who has a genuine love and passion to reach out to young people and the ability to be a partner with us to build a strong ministry with the young people in our congregation and community.

Join dedicated parents and adults eager to be led and students ready to grow and learn. This person will work primarily with high school and junior youth, and also with children's ministry. We're eager to incorporate new ideas and capitalize on the gifts and talents of our youth pastor.

This person should have some understanding and respect for EMC theology, diversity, and traditions. There is a generous salary, health insurance, and a new house to live in. La Crete is located in beautiful northern Alberta, eight hours north of Edmonton. To find out more about La Crete and the church, see [www.lacretechamber.com](http://www.lacretechamber.com); [www.telusplanet.net/public/lccfc](http://www.telusplanet.net/public/lccfc); e-mail: [lccfc@telus.net](mailto:lccfc@telus.net) or [lfem@telus.net](mailto:lfem@telus.net); phone: Frank Winsor at LCCF, 780-928-3783.

Abbeydale Christian Fellowship (ACF) Church of Calgary is seeking a **lead pastor** with strengths in preaching, teaching and pastoral care. Duties would also include mentoring lay leadership. ACF is a medium sized congregation (170-200) in east Calgary seeking to disciple members and attendees, encourage their gifts and involvement in the church, and reach out to the neighbourhood and families of church adherents. ACF is part of the EM Conference. Please submit resumes in confidence to SearchCommittee@Abbeydale.org by December 1, 2004.

## weddings

NEUFELD – BARTSCH: Peter, son of Johan and Maria Neufeld of Port Lampton, Ont., and Linda, daughter of Peter and Anna Bartsch of Leamington, Ont., were married on July 17, 2004, at Leamington EMC, with John Bartsch of Leamington officiating. The couple lives in Leamington.

UNGER – REIMER: Travis Blane, son of Paul and Jessie Unger, and JoDee Estelle, daughter of Wilmer and Pearl Reimer, all of Calgary, Alta., were married on May 30, 2004, with Rev. James Paton officiating.

## Co-operation makes it happen!

Celebrating all we do together with a special joint issue of **The Chronicle (CMC), The Recorder (EMMC), and The Messenger (EMC)**

Chortitzer Mennonite Conference



Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference



Evangelical Mennonite Conference



Coming to you end of October 2004



Dave K. Schellenberg

## A cup of coffee and memories of 54 years ago

CYCLING for me is a time of exercise, friendly chance encounters, reflection, and spiritual renewal—to name some things.

Summer, to our minds, may have been slow in coming this year. However, a morning like Monday of the August long weekend is hard to beat—at least, if you got up before 7 a.m. and went cycling, like I decided to do. And I was not disappointed.

My usual route lies along the cycling-walking path past the Clinic and on to A.D. Penner Park and the new Aqua Centre. Today, however, I went along Highway 12 and returned via the park route.

I suppose most people still slept as I started out. Since it was a holiday, traffic was thin, which suited me just as fine. But a few hardy souls were already up as I proceeded. There were the joggers—dedicated, I guess. An aircraft was also taking off. Someone was unloading a golf cart; he certainly got an early start.

At the Steinbach Fly-In Golf Course, which I pass, there was already a machine on the green, getting ready, I guess, for the influx of holiday golfers.

As usual, the windmill at the Mennonite Heritage Village, which was at the far end of my excursion, proved an excellent photo-op. I took a number of digital snapshots of the placid morning lake with the stately windmill in the background.

When I started out I had planned to stop at Tim Horton's for a muffin and coffee. They are known for their good coffee. However, I opted for McDonald's. Here I have the advantage of getting my coffee at the senior's price; this helps to bring the price for a muffin and coffee down slightly from Tim Horton's. The raisin bran muffin was large and of excellent quality.

Returning the way I came, I stopped at

another photo-op, where I met another early morning enthusiast—a mother pushing a stroller, no less. Mothers take note! I was delighted to hear that she was a *Messenger* reader; it always encourages me when I hear that.

From here my route took me past some of the stately Steinbach homes in a later housing development. The water tower was my return point from where I started on my way home along McKenzie Avenue.

On this route lies Steinbach's Memorial Cemetery, which became my last stop on this morning's outing.

Memorial Cemetery is located at the south end of Steinbach on Highway 12; it was replaced years ago by Heritage Cemetery on Loewen Boulevard. However, at Memorial Cemetery I usually look for a headstone dating back to a burial in 1950. Close by stands a tree, though what then was likely a fledgling evergreen planted nearby has over the years grown tall, spreading its mighty branches to extend even beyond this little marker.

Our son Davey was a gift from God when he was born in 1945, but his earthly pilgrimage was not to be long.

"Heaven is now nearer to us while David is there waiting for us. Through the great grace of God, who spared not His own son, we know that we shall see him again"—that was included in our son's obituary in the August 25, 1950, *Christlicher Familienfreund* (our EMC German language paper at that time).

After 54 years one does not forget a son and the assurance of a future reunion, because of Christ, brings me great comfort.

After leaving the cemetery I head for home, not far distant. Surely as the hymn writer says,

*All things bright and beautiful,  
All creatures great and small,  
All things wise and wonderful  
The Lord God made them all.*

I'm sure my bike trip could be duplicated in many places in city, town or country. I would encourage some of you to try it. You can experience the beauty of the season and the miracle of God's creation.

You will get some physical exercise and can take time to reflect on God's grace: "For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come" (1 Tim. 4:8). ❏

