

Prayer team to Albania prays “on-site with insight”



By ERIC MUSSER
 Pastor of Huntington Mennonite Church

The prayer team to Albania with Albanian friends.

Soon after the end of communism in 1991 in the country of Albania, a mission team with Virginia Mennonite Missions led by Sam Scaggs was able to bring the message of the gospel to a people who had been living in an officially atheistic society for over 25 years.

During a time of preaching in the city square of Lezhe, an Albanian couple, Dini and Klementina Shahini heard the message and responded. Now 18 years later, God has put a burden and vision upon their heart to return to Lezhe to establish a Christian school there, and to strengthen and support the church.

While finance and vision work has been ongoing for some time now, another step forward took place with the sending of a VMM prayer team. The team’s mandate was to pray “on-site with insight” and to assess and address any spiritual

hurdles to the establishment of this vision. The team also sought to encourage the VMM workers currently working in the country.

The team was made up of individuals from various Virginia Mennonite churches: Dini and Klementina Shahini, Linda Overholt, Merlin Miller from Mt. Pleasant; Ken Horst, Lavonne Lehman, Milton and Mary Ethel Heatwole from

the Harrisonburg area; and Lois (Lewi) Blosser and Eric Musser from Huntington.

In 1967, during a nationally broadcast speech at a communist youth rally in the central square of Lezhe, Albania, Enver Hoxha (Communist dictator for over 40 years) declared Albania to be “officially athiest,” and unleashed a wave of persecution and destruction that closed all churches in Albania for the next 30 years.

A significant moment for the prayer team was when we were able to stand in that same square, where Dini and Klementina first heard the gospel, and proclaim the truth of Psalm 2. Although kings and rulers through the ages conspire against God and His Anointed One, Jesus, yet all nations—including Albania—are Jesus’ inheritance.

From the same city where Enver stirred the hearts of the youth of a generation for destruction of the church, God wants to establish a school for the raising up of a generation of youth who will live fully for Jesus Christ. Praise be to God for, “Greater is He who is in [us] than he that is in the world.” [1 John 4:4.]

The prayer team overlooking the city of Lezhe, Albania. Photos courtesy of Ken Horst.



Two women: extraordinary challenges and blessed faithfulness

Two women: one, an African-American who lived her entire life in Harrisonburg, Virginia; the other, a Vietnamese whose life was interrupted by the aftermath of the conflict in her home country.

Peggy Ann Harris Curry was born in Harrisonburg, graduated from the Lucy Simms School, and even with her deteriorating eyesight became a matriarch in the community. She served as president of the local chapter of the National Federation for the Blind and worked for Friendship Industries until she retired in 1999. Peggy died on April 11, 2009, two weeks short of her 80th birthday.



Peggy, along with Roberta Webb and several others, served as prayer warriors and pillars in the Broad Street Mennonite Church. Her husband, James

Alfred "Billy" Curry was ordained as a deacon on October 8, 1961, the first person of color ordained in the history of Virginia Mennonite Conference.



Owen Burkholder
Conference Minister

Peggy and Billy responded to early Bible school ministries of Mennonites on the east side of Harrisonburg and became bridge builders in that community. Peggy was long-suffering with the witness of her chosen faith as she participated in Broad Street Mennonite, Immanuel Mennonite, and more recently, New Song Anabaptist Fellowship.



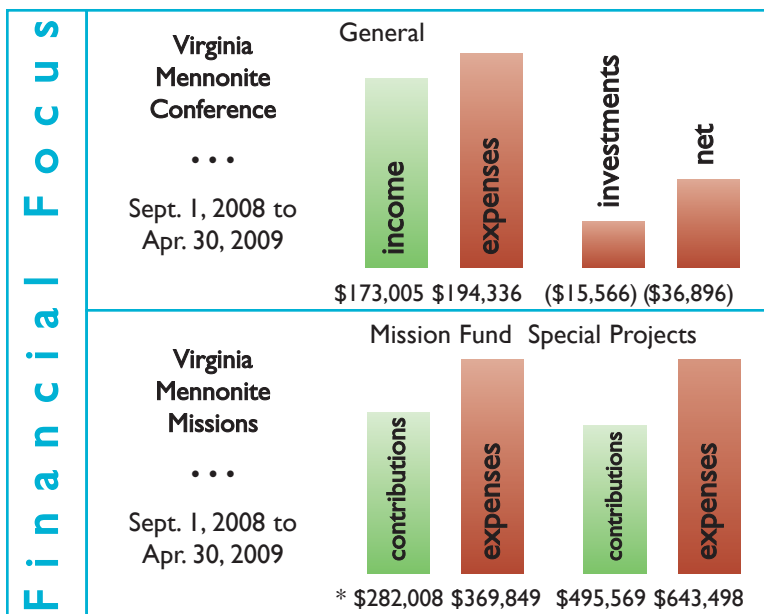
Xuan Huong (Lisa) Thi Pham was born to Christian parents in Vietnam in 1945. Participating in InterVarsity Christian

Fellowship deepened her faith during university years. It was at IVCF that she first met Can Ngoc Le who would become her husband in 1972. After study in Australia, she returned to Vietnam to teach economics at a local university. After the surrender of South Vietnam in 1975, Can was forced to attend "re-education camps," while Lisa cared for their newborn son, Samuel.

The family tried unsuccessfully to leave Vietnam several times. In 1985, they reached a refugee camp in the Philippines. Here they dedicated themselves to serving God with their whole lives. Their lives in the USA began in Florida, then Pennsylvania before studying together at Eastern Mennonite Seminary in Harrisonburg. At EMS the professors noted Lisa's aptitude for language. Following the MA in Church Ministries, they developed a church plant that became Vietnamese Mennonite Church in Fairfax, Virginia, where Can served as pastor while Lisa earned a PhD in Old Testament.

Lisa's dream was to participate in translating or revising the 1925 version of the Vietnamese Bible. She was employed by the American Bible Society as a consultant for that project.

In 2004, she was diagnosed with lung cancer and endured surgery, radiation and chemotherapy. Through the next several years, she labored through these physical challenges to complete her portion of the revision project in August 2008. She died on March 7, 2009, at the age of 63.



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I tried to be reasonable

Excerpted by permission from a longer story by Ernest Miller, previous member at Mt. Pleasant Mennonite, Chesapeake, Va. Ernest died in 1973.

I believe that the church should know about the experiences of which I and many others suffered for Christ's sake during World War I. When I was drafted in 1918, I reported to Camp Funston, Kansas. As a conscientious objector, I refused the uniform and rifle. It was very frustrating to the officers to have men placed in their companies for training and have them refuse to obey orders or to cooperate in any way. I tried to take a reasonable attitude. To do absolutely nothing was very difficult.

I was taunted over and over by officers, because I refused all noncombatant service. We found that quoting from the teaching of Jesus Christ was the most

effective way we could answer the officers. At my court martial proceedings, I knew and called attention to the fact that provision had been made for sincere COs and that they were to be given farm furloughs, relief, or reconstruction work in France. I signified my willingness to do this work but was ignored. I was given a sentence by the court-martial for 25 years in Leavenworth Prison. I cannot describe the mental depression nor the pressure I felt to take some form of service and avoid this suffering. I appreciated the fact that we knew that many persons were praying for us during these trying experiences. In Leavenworth, I saw COs in solitary confinement, handcuffed to the bars of their cells nine hours each working day. They slept on a cement floor with insufficient clothing or blankets to keep warm, and were given bread and water to eat because they had refused to

work even in Leavenworth.

"God moves in a mysterious way. His wonders to perform." I was in prison only nineteen days when an order came that I should have an immediate and an honorable discharge. This came on December 26, 1918, a nice Christmas gift indeed.

My experiences gave me a desire to do something constructive in the world. So after my release, I applied through the church for the privilege of doing relief work and was assigned to service with the American Committee for Relief in the Near East. I spent two years with this organization. The first year I worked in Beirut, Lebanon, and the second in Sidon, Lebanon, helping in orphanages. These experiences had a lasting influence on my life and gave me a desire to be faithful to God.

Shoo-fly pie baked with love, accompanied with tears

By **MIKE SHENK**

Highland Retreat Director of Development

It's not unusual for spirited bidding at fundraising auctions to receive a round of grateful applause. It was unusual for the ovation that rewarded the sale of Carol Heatwole's freshly baked shoo-fly pie for \$650 at Highland Retreat's annual event last February, to be accompanied by tears.

Carol was a member of Harrisonburg Mennonite Church and until shortly before her death on April 10, following a four-year battle with cancer, actively involved in a variety of local ministries including Highland Retreat. Recent advancement in the disease limited her activity and it seemed unlikely that Carol could participate in the auction again this year. Early in the morning on the day of the event, the set-up crew was pleasantly surprised when her husband, Leo arrived

with Carol's contribution. He quietly explained that her weakened condition had permitted the baking of a single shoo-fly pie.

Near the midpoint of the auction the pie was put up for sale. With Leo's permission, auction volunteer and oncology nurse, Rita Lehman, gave a brief update on Carol and explained the significance of the pie. Excitement and emotion began to increase as bidding climbed into the triple digits. When the sale finally closed at \$650, the crowd responded with tearful applause. A few minutes later the shoo-fly pie came full circle as the buyer and long-time family friend gently presented it to Carol's daughter, Carmen Miller.

At Carol's memorial service many stories of her commitments to family, church and community were recounted. One of the tributes was this quote from the spring issue of Highland's newsletter: "In years to come the total auction

receipts may dim in memory...but Carol Heatwole and her shoo-fly pie will never be forgotten."



Leo and Carol Heatwole.

Courtesy of Leo Heatwole

Next generation of Italian church leaders meets at retreat

By **CHRIS RIDDLE**
VMM mission worker in Italy

“The gifts he gave were that some would be...pastors and teachers for the work of ministry, for building the body of Christ...” [Ephesians 4:11-12]

This was the message from Ulric Reber, a long-time Swiss missionary, to the leaders of the Italian Mennonite Churches at a two-day conference held in Montelepre, Sicily, on April 24-25. Ulrich taught the importance of not just delegating activities for people to do in the church, but for current leaders to walk beside potential leaders in order to develop the next generation of pastors and new ministries within the church. Ulrich used the Biblical examples of Moses with Joshua, Jesus with the twelve and Paul with Timothy to show how current lead-

ers in the church should raise up new leaders for the church.

“It is important for us to look at this issue because it takes years to develop leaders in the church. The Blossers (VMM missionaries from 1982 to 1997) worked 15 years to establish leaders in the church they were a part of,” said one of the pastors in attendance.

Apart from the lessons, there was also worship led by *tranSend* members, Shawn and Laura Green who are currently serving at the church in Termini Imerese. We also shared around tables filled with great Italian foods and discussed many of the ideas that we heard during our meetings.



Italian church leaders at a two-day retreat conference in Montelepre, Sicily, April 24-25.

Sixty years ago VMM began the process of planting churches in Palermo, Italy, and part of that mission was to develop and train national leaders. Now, those leaders are looking to pass on the torch that will take the Italian Mennonite churches far into the future.

Serious eye condition brings about spiritual sight

By **EVA EBERLY**
VMM Mediterranean Regional Assistant

As a boy, Alberto's mischievous eyes and grin enlivened the children's Bible class he often attended at Palermo Mennonite Church. During adolescence Alberto turned his full attention to other interests, although his three siblings became fervent believers. But God had His eye on Alberto. The lovely young lady he married had an open heart and hunger for God. Through the witness of Alberto's siblings, Carmen soon invited Jesus into her life.

For 15 years Carmen patiently prayed for Alberto's conversion. “Not knowing God's timing, I learned not to rush and push.” His occasional visit to church for special events seemed to have no significant effect. Sergio (a brother at Centro Agape) began reaching out to Alberto in friendship and suggested they meet to study the Bible together. Alberto says, “The seed fell on the rocky soil of



Alberto and Carmen and their girls.

my heart. At every crossroad, I always chose the wrong way.”

Last summer Alberto began having alarming symptoms in his eye, diagnosis—a detached retina! Through this frightening time of crisis, God softened Alberto's heart.

Immediately after hospitalization, Alberto decisively announced that as a family they would attend the annual retreat/seminar for Italian Mennonites. A delightful surprise for Carmen!

There during a Bible study, Alberto experienced an overwhelming conviction that all those years he'd been rebelling against his Creator who rightfully deserved his loving allegiance. The Word had finally fallen into good, prepared soil! He describes that moment of surrender as “a powerful inner explosion” as light burst through spiritual blindness. “I feel so clean and peaceful inside; I have a new spirit! With

eyes of faith I now worship spontaneously. Our unity in Christ is deepening our marriage relationship!”

Carmen concludes, “Only God knows how to use a serious eye condition to open spiritual eyes!”

Hope in the face of death

By AARON BOGGS

Pastor of Crossroads Mennonite Church
Timberville, Va.



This winter, Crossroads Mennonite Church experienced the death of the longest standing member of the congregation. I have participated in several funerals in my lifetime, but the giving of the meditation would be a new

experience for me. What was I to say in the face of a grieving community?

After a great deal of nervous prayer, I came to a conclusion. In a time of apparent hopelessness, my role was to represent the hope of the Christian faith. But what is that hope?

A passage from 1 Corinthians 15 seemed to cry out to me from behind the leather cover of my Bible. Paul reminds the Corinthians that, even in death, the promise is for new life, new bodies.

What a bold thing to suggest! I will not attempt to analyze the reality of this new body. Regardless of what it looks like, Paul attacks the unease that many carry concerning death. The loss of the body, the inability to interact with those whom we love, is at the heart of those fears. The disciples experienced that very feeling at the death of Jesus. Death, it seems, brings separation.

This Easter season has reminded me of what it means to have the hope of resurrection.

Resurrection is about a God who provides this new life. Resurrection is about the community of believers interacting in love. Resurrection is about a continual embodied life through Christ. And though the essence of the new body is something that we do not understand (for lack of experience), it seems clear that the fellowship of believers in the presence of the Almighty is a reality that will never come to an end. It begins on earth and continues in the heavenly realm.

Now that is a hopeful thought!

"I have completed the *Perspectives* course twice. My eyes have been opened to a new world from which I can never return. *Missions* has become my life and I blame it partly on this course!"

Mike Souder
Outreach Pastor, Grace Covenant Church

Perspectives on the World Christian Movement is offered in Harrisonburg!
Registration details at www.perspectives.org/harrisonburg

Perspectives Tuesdays, September 1 - December 8, 2009
7:00 - 9:45 pm
Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Rm. 123
Harrisonburg, Va.

Contact Philip Rhodes with questions at philip.rhodes@vmmissions.org

2009 Penny Power

Your spare change makes a difference!

Bring jugs of coins to:
Virginia Mennonite Relief Sale
Saturday, October 3, 2009
Rockingham County Fairgrounds

www.vareliefsale.com

The money raised will be divided equally between Mennonite Central Committee and Virginia Mennonite Missions.

The money MCC receives will partner with churches in western Democratic Republic of Congo that help provide medicine, supplies and equipment to hospitals, which will train medical workers. VMM will use its portion of the money to support ministries to the deaf in education and faith settings around the world.

Our goal is to raise \$35,000 for this year's Penny Power projects. In 2008, congregations and individuals contributed a total of \$35,640.16!

Let's continue the momentum from last year! Please consider matching the amount of your church's contribution. This is a great incentive for people to drop lots of coins in the Penny Power jug!

Virginia Mennonite Missions
901 Parkwood Drive
Harrisonburg, VA 22802
800-707-5535 • www.vmissions.org

Mennonite Central Committee
21 South 12th Street, PO Box 500
Akron, PA 17501-0500
717-859-1151 • www.mcc.org

Megan Waltman teaches a student at Maranatha School for the Deaf, Jamaica. A project of Virginia Mennonite Missions.

Anne-Marie Ngangula runs the pharmacy at the hospital in Mukedi, DRC. A project of Mennonite Central Committee.

What's new with MDS?

By **BERNARD MARTIN**
Shenandoah Valley MDS Coordinator

Bi-national (US and Canada) Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) is promoting two new programs that are putting disaster work back to the grass-roots level of participation. This means that local units are directly involved in responding to service needs.

The first new program is First Response Teams. MDS wants each unit to have equipment and a team of 20-25 people who are willing to commit to volunteering for one week on a 24-hour notice immediately after a disaster strikes. Shenandoah Valley unit currently has most of the equipment to supply a

trailer for this purpose. There is still a need for a list of volunteers who will participate in a one-day training session and be prepared to move quickly anywhere in Region I (Maine to Florida).

The second program is Partnership in Home Construction with MDS. The local unit will take responsibility for providing leadership, volunteers and constructing a house from start to finish at a location in a disaster area.

Shenandoah Valley unit's first house was started in February in Gulfport, Miss., and will be completed by early June. Rod Burkholder (Weavers Mennonite Church) is the designated superintendent. Six van loads of volunteers traveled to Mississippi to work on



Homeowner Venisha Bridges and son with MDS volunteers Timothy Koogler and Rod Burkholder. Courtesy Rod Burkholder.

this project. A single mother with four children whose home was destroyed by Hurricane Katrina will be occupying the house soon.

If you want information about either of these programs, call Bernard Martin (SV unit 540-434-1916) or Joe Blumber (E. Va. unit 757-875-0372). Thanks to all who have volunteered in disaster areas this past year.

What happens at the Hinton Relief Center?

By **ELVA SHOWALTER RHODES**
Hinton Mennonite Relief Center



Gerald Knicely

Three weeks each fall volunteers meet to peel, snitz and dry 450 bushels of apples for relief. Several times throughout the year—whenever Mennonite Central Committee

(MCC) sends out an SOS for relief, health or school kits—small groups, Sunday school classes and youth or young adults from the various Mennonite groups meet to put the kits together, placing items into buckets (relief) or handmade cloth bags (health & school).

In early spring “canner week” is held when the MCC mobile canner arrives with crew and equipment. Each day 150 volunteers prepare turkey thighs, turning 48,000 pounds of turkey meat into 26,384 cans to feed the world's hungry.

The work day begins at 5 a.m. and the last cans are boxed around 11 p.m. The meat is pre-cooked, canned and pressure-cooked. The cans are cooled, washed, dried, labeled and packed into carefully numbered boxes. Many behind-the-scenes tasks are done include washing, drying and folding hundreds of white jackets every day, stamping thousands of labels each day, and sanitizing tables, cutting boards and knives every 4-6 hours. Many volunteers lighten the load for everyone.

Congregational Resource Center

Ever heard of Christmas in the summer? That's what it feels like at the Congregational Resource Center. We have been receiving gift packages in the mail—dozens of new resources for your congregation and for individuals.

Here are a few of the new titles:

Lights, Drama, Worship! - four volumes of plays, sketches, and readings for the church by Karen F. Williams

When Church Kids Go Bad - how to love and work with rude, obnoxious, and apathetic students - by Les Christie

750 Engaging Illustrations for Preachers, Teachers, and Writers from Craig Brian Larson and Leadership Journal

Downtime: Helping Teenagers Pray - by Mark Yaconelli

Uncovering Your Church's Hidden Spirit - an Alban Institute publication by Celia A Hahn

Shaped by the Story - helping students encounter God in a new way - by Michael Novelli

Instant Skits - using improv to create memorable moments in ministry - by Eddie James and Tommy Woodard

Four “Berenstain Bears” books for children: Go to Sunday School - God Loves You! - Say Their Prayers - the Golden Rule

These are just a sampling of many exciting new resources available by visiting the Congregational Resource Center, first floor of Eastern Mennonite Seminary. Hours are Monday through Friday 7:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. You may also visit the online catalog by going to www.emu.edu/seminary/crc.

A free Hartzler Library or CRC Library card gives access to all materials. Call Director Linda Alley at 540.432.4219 for assistance or mailing of resources outside of the Harrisonburg area.

JUNE 2009

Connections

Prayer Calendar

Sunday

If you would like to sponsor the prayer calendar, please contact Gloria Lehman at (540) 434-9727 or (800) 505-7735

Monday

1 In this month of weddings and anniversaries, pray for strong and enduring marriages, centered in Christ. May destructive distractions be eliminated through commitment and prayer.

Tuesday

2 Richard & Margaret Keeler arrive in Virginia today from their ministry in Trinidad. Pray for them as they share in churches about what God is doing through the believers in the churches there.

Wednesday

3 From June 1-19, a youth team from a Mennonite church in Germany will serve in Lezhe, Tirana and Lushnje, Albania, providing Bible school activities for children, working alongside the missionaries. Pray for this ministry!

Thursday

4 Evelyn Kratz, Trinidad, asks us to thank God for the power of the Holy Spirit in delivering persons from the bondage of oppression and sin. Pray for these persons to grow in grace.

Friday

5 Crystal Lehman graduates today from Black Forest Academy, missionary school in Germany. Pray a special blessing over her life and future as she returns to Virginia and to EMU for her college years.

Saturday

6 Pray for the Michael W. Smith concert tonight in Bari, Italy. May the Spirit use this worshipful event to bless the believers and touch those who don't yet know Jesus personally.

Sunday

7 Eastern Mennonite High School, Harrisonburg, holds commencement today. May God bless the graduates and their families in this celebrative milestone.

Monday

8 Congregations are planning for Vacation Bible School experiences for their children both in the congregation and in the community. Pray for this outreach as children learn new truths from God's Word.

Tuesday

9 Today Chris & Melody Riddle and sons travel from Italy for their summer "home assignment." Pray for a safe trip and God's blessing over this time with family, friends and churches.

Wednesday

10 Jason Gerlach, VMC youth minister, reminds us to pray for high school seniors who are facing big decisions in the months ahead. May God's love and strength guide them each step of the way.

Thursday

11 Church planters in James City Co. Va., Randy & Lea Ann Coblenz, ask that God helps them establish relationships with pre-Christian and unchurched youth and their parents in and around their neighborhood.

Friday

12 During the summer months, congregations plan and hold church retreats in various settings. Ask God to guide and bless these times of relationship building, and spiritual renewal.

Saturday

13 Jared & Traci Stoltzfus, Santiago Atitlan, Guatemala, express appreciation for the opportunity to serve through VMM's *travSend* program. Thank God for their enthusiastic witness.

Sunday

14 Pray for the congregation gathering at Temple Hall Menn. Church in Kingston, Jamaica today. Pastor William Broughton gives consistent leadership to this vibrant congregation.

Monday

15 Paul Kratz, Trinidad, asks us to pray for younger persons to make themselves available for the role of leading a congregation in the future. The vision of the Mennonite Church of T & T is seven new churches by 2015.

Tuesday

16 VMM *travSend* participants, Shawn & Laura Green, in Termini Imeresi, Italy, interact with youth and demonstrate the love of Christ in various ways. Hold them in prayer today.

Wednesday

17 Pray for Carlos & Wendy Malvaez and the *Manantial de Vida* Church, gathering in Ridgeway MC, Harrisonburg. The church of about 50 people is active in inviting persons to faith and discipleship.

Thursday

18 Pray for our brothers and sisters in Haiti who experience difficult living conditions and trials of many kinds. Ask God what He wants you to do to support them.

Friday

19 Intercede for the Lehman family today as they leave Italy following 10 years of missionary service, for God's comfort and strength as they say farewell to friends, church, and colleagues and transition to a new beginning in Va.

Saturday

20 Taking time to pause and reflect on God's creation in the natural world helps us to slow down and listen for His voice. Enjoy some of this today and ask others to join you.

Sunday

21 Pray for Big Spring MC, Luray, Va. as the congregation calls a new pastor. May the work of articulating who they are be helpful to them as they imagine the future together. Kathy Hochstedler now serves as interim pastor.

Monday

22 Yesterday Skip & Carol Tobin returned to Va. from their ministry in Thailand. Thank God for their dedication to witnessing for Christ wherever they are, and pray for their months of transition ahead.

Tuesday

23 Nancy Marshall, Orange Walk, Belize, faces a full summer of travel and service. Ask God to bless her as she closes the school year, and makes preparations to spend time with her family and supporters in the US.

Wednesday

24 Remember Willard Eberly as he now coordinates leadership at Centro Koinonia in addition to administrative responsibilities in the Mediterranean region. Thank God for the Bari believers who serve with the Eberlys.

Thursday

25 Pray for the earthquake victims in central Italy where the Italian government gives leadership to relief and rebuilding. Remember the small evangelical churches there who seek to demonstrate Christ's love in this tragedy.

Friday

26 The school term at Maranatha School for the Deaf closes today. Pray for the students returning to their homes around the island. May God's protection cover them as they face some difficult circumstances.

Saturday

27 Pray for the board of Maranatha School meeting today. Galen Lehman, VMM Caribbean Regional Director joins with Jamaica Mennonite Church leaders in making managerial decisions for the school's well-being.

28 Pray for the congregation gathering at Hope Mennonite Church, Trinidad, with Pastor Rawl Gumpath today. Join them in thanking God for the roof on the building, and for other construction progress.

29 Many youth and adults are traveling to Columbus, Ohio, today with great anticipation of joining with other Mennonites around the theme "Breathe and be filled" at the MC USA convention. Pray for all to arrive safely.

30 Mennonite Church USA convention, Columbus 2009 opens today. Pray that God will mightily pour out His spirit during the worship and delegate sessions in the days ahead.

This prayer calendar is sponsored by:

Omar and Lena Showalter

in loving memory of
Esther Showalter
and Norman Yutzey.

"Our mouths were filled with laughter, our tongues with songs of joy. Then it was said among the nations, 'The LORD has done great things for them.' The LORD has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy."
Psalm 126:2-3 (NIV)



Connections (USPS 007-205)
 Virginia Mennonite Missions
 Virginia Mennonite Conference
 901 Parkwood Drive
 Harrisonburg, VA 22802-2498

Announcements



Register now for Virginia Mennonite Conference Assembly!

Forms are available from your church or the Conference Center, or you can register online at: vmconf.org/assembly/

The annual **homecoming celebration** in the former Whitmer School/Cove Church at CrossRoads, 1921 Heritage Center Way, will be held on Sunday, June 7, at 4 pm. It will include singing, reminiscing, special music and an evening meal. Bring a lawn chair and finger foods for the evening meal. Drink will be provided. An offering will be received to support the work of the Heritage Center. www.vbmhc.org, info@vbmhc.org, (540) 438-1275.



ALBANIAN CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Dini and Klementina Shahini will share their vision for launching the **Albanian Christian School**. This informational meeting, planned by the Vision Support Team, will be held at Shady Oaks, June 21 at 7 p.m. Hear the Shahini vision, see pictures of a recent trip, and enjoy refreshments together. You will be invited to give financially to this project.

The annual **Tears & Ashes** Civil War-related bus tour sponsored by the CrossRoads Heritage Center is set for Saturday, June 27, 8-4 p.m. It will cover places in northern Rockingham County that were impacted by the Civil War. The tour price of \$65 includes a tour booklet and a lunch at the Linville Creek Church of the Brethren in Broadway. Call (540) 438-1275 by June 22 to register for the tour, which will include the homes of families featured in the book series, *Unionists and the Civil War Experience in the Shenandoah Valley*. The tour will depart from CrossRoads, 1921 Heritage Center Way, Harrisonburg. www.vbmhc.org, info@vbmhc.org.

The annual **Steak Barbecue** will be held at Highland Retreat, Saturday, June 27th. Afternoon activities starting at 3:00 include zipline & super swing for teens, and funyaks at the pond. The swimming pool will be open all afternoon and evening. The barbecue begins at 5:00 p.m. Bring a potluck salad and dessert. Donations will benefit the summer youth camping program. Music by Blue Mountain Sunrise. A-frame cabins and campsites are available and free for families and individuals participating in the barbecue. Advance reservations are required for cabins and campsites and can be secured by contacting the office at (540) 852-3226 or info@highlandretreat.org



Poarch Community Church in Atmore, Alabama is calling a youth pastor to serve with this indigenous congregation, creating the youth program and working with community outreach.

This position is for one or more years.
 For information, contact Ken Horst, VMM tranSend director, at (540) 434-9737 or ken.horst@vmmissions.org

Bike riders of all ages and abilities are invited to enjoy the scenic Shenandoah Valley

Bike Shenandoah 2009

September 26, 2009
 Begins and ends at
Eastern Mennonite School
 801 Parkwood Drive, Harrisonburg, Virginia

Choose one of five courses (5 - 100 miles)
 To print a registration form, go to www.bikeshenandoah.org