

From a Haitian hillside

By ANJE ACKERMAN CASSEL

RN, BSN, member of first VMM medical team to Haiti
Staunton Mennonite Church

Evening was beginning to fall on Haiti as our two vehicles, loaded high with our 12-member relief team, attempted the steep rocky ascent of the crumbling road towards our next work site. This was week two of our mobile relief clinic, and exactly two weeks since the first earthquake that toppled Port-au-Prince and sent its citizens to the streets. The streets are where most still remain, with no more than a sheet and a stick for shelter.

We parked the truck and began the ascent past crumbled homes and street fires, stopping to hear an elderly woman weep and gesticulate to the skies, her cloudy eyes rich with the baptism of pain as she reached out and proclaimed that she is “under the arm of the grand master.”

A white dove led the way past twisted rubble as we “blancs” (whites) followed the pastor who was leading us into his own devastated community. We crested the hill and he reminded us to wear masks if we had brought one. It’s been two weeks since the quake, yet many bodies of the victims remain under hopelessly crushed structures, their scent a painful reminder to the families who mourn them.

No vehicles can pass through this area. Demolition will continue one neighborhood block at a time—one cinder block, one board, one red and blue high chair compressed to the floor with a small plush reindeer lying dusty next to it.

Beyond the crumbled homes and offices was another vast hillside, a slumping array of flattened dwellings and leaning structures, pockmarked with eroded



Anje Cassel, a registered nurse, administers oral rehydration salts to a baby in a “tent city” in Port-au-Prince.
Photo by Jeffrey Kiser

sites of homes that slid to crush what lay below. Power lines drooped, waving their dark flags of black plastic bags, soot and other various materials that now cling to them like sea kelp.

The pastor wept as he showed us where his office once stood, across from the spot where his church once stood. A parishoner’s wife lays buried beneath this ground. The woman’s young daughter, eyes red from dust and sorrow, sits quietly by, her arm in a makeshift sling.

An odd thing happens as we stand together weeping. A rainbow cuts through the haze and reaches heavenward. Its arm curves to embrace the hillside, much like the arm of our loving God, the true “Grand Master” that covers the elderly woman who cried out to us in the street.

Joe Arbaugh has prayer with the community’s pastor. They pray for each other loudly as we circle around to lay on hands. Fires burn in the street, fires that burn trash and cremate bodies. We keep pray-

ing. We sing Amazing Grace in two languages and we weep some more. We lay hands on Dr. Richard Alderfer and on each other, nurses, EMTs, and relief workers. We feel God’s presence.

Tomorrow will begin another day of mobile clinic work in tent cities. We will see more wounds, more fractures, and more sick babies. We will see patients who still have not seen a doctor since the day of the quake. We will treat them if we can. Those too badly injured we will transport to the Miami University tent hospital near the Port-au-Prince airport. They will be treated there or flown to the USS Comfort for surgery. We will see a young girl with a fractured femur, a grown woman with a crushed pelvis, and a boy whose hand must be operated on before gangrene dictates amputation.

Meanwhile, as we return to our truck in the dusk, a shy girl reaches for my hand and flashes a bashful grin. I smile back and she loves this. I think of my own young

Snowstorms and earthquakes

For most of us snowstorms have now moved beyond a thing of beauty to an annoying inconvenience. I'm just plain tired of them! For others in the world however, an earthquake has become a tragedy of unimaginable proportions. Snowstorms and earthquakes. The two don't even belong on the same scale of human affliction. Add to that the fact that, even before this winter, there was little equality between the circumstances of Haitians and that of Virginians. Let's just go ahead and ask it. "Where is God in all of this?" If afflictions were to be handed out, would I not have given Americans the earthquake and Haitians the snow? Shouldn't God have evened things up a little?

I don't have the answer. The questions, however, are implied everywhere we turn. How could an earthquake of this magnitude happen to a people described as the poorest nation in the western hemisphere? How could it be centered so devastatingly in such a population center? How can so much suffering be heaped upon suffering?

We do find some redemption in testimonies of incredible courage and survival. We are inspired by stories of the indomitable human spirit. We are lifted by



Loren Horst
VMM President

illustrations of God's mercy and grace and wonder whether God suffered too in all of this. God has suffered before at the hands of that which he has made. Creation is indeed groaning.

We too groan, and we cry, and we question. The response of God's people however does not end in

hand wringing and mourning. It may begin there but it does not end there. God's compassionate heart is instinctively expressed in the responsiveness of God's people. A suffering and a dying world is precisely the place God has called his people to serve. We just forget sometimes.

Virginia Mennonite Mission responded to the earthquake within days by sending emergency medical teams. We are discerning our ongoing activities as emergency response shifts to rebuilding and reconstruction. From around the world a nearly unprecedented response of aid has been directed to this tragedy.

Shortly after the earthquake I was interviewed by our local TV station. "Are you surprised by how quickly and generously people responded?" I was asked. I am not. I see it over and over. When the chips are down, people respond. I was surprised by the magnitude on the Richter scale, but not the magnitude of response

of people around the world to this tragedy. God's nudging is evident in the responses of millions of people even perhaps in those who do not recognize him as their origin.

Now, wouldn't it be wonderful if compassionate people would respond in like manner to thousands of tragedies happening every day in the world? And wouldn't it be marvelous if those people would all recognize God as the author of such love? Our work is not finished.

Loren Horst

Young adult says 'Yes' to YES in Albania

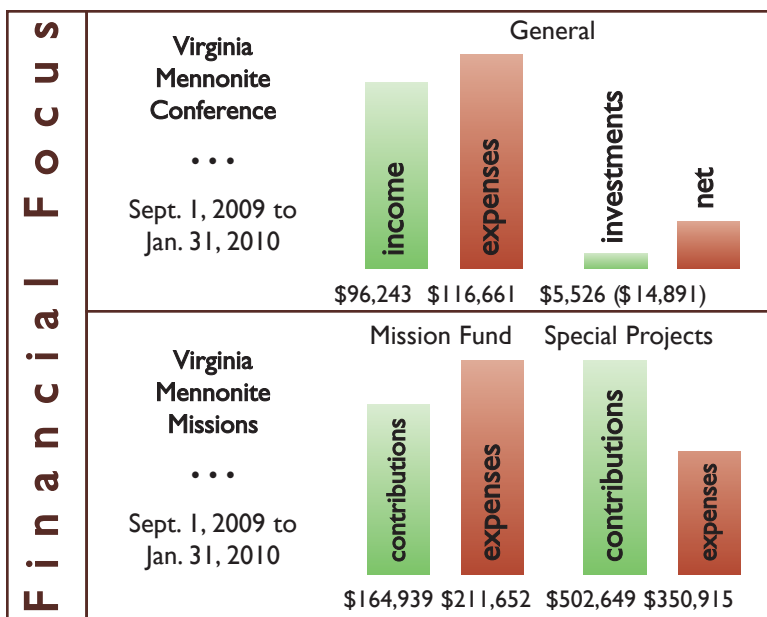


Melody Tobin of Harrisonburg, Va., is serving for six months in an assignment with a Youth Evangelism Service (YES) team to Lezhe, Albania. The YES

team is sponsored by Eastern Mennonite Missions, Salunga, Pa.

Melody is a 2009 graduate of Hebron School, India. She is a member of Harrisonburg Mennonite Church.

Along with four other members of the YES team, Melody will be building relationships while ministering to local children and youth and teaching English.



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Standing with neighbors: the real Operation Pacific Haven

By **NICHOLAS DETWEILER-STODDARD**
 VMC Peace Committee

When governments declare battle against national enemies, Christians can feel helpless to be Jesus' hands and feet in international arenas of violence. Despite growing powerlessness regarding the Iraq War, Mennonites and others in Harrisonburg recently found ways to be God's vessels of peace for Iraqi people by responding to the war's effects in their own town.

During the 1990's the US brought 67 endangered Kurdish families from northern Iraq to the Shenandoah Valley as political refugees, as part of Operation Pacific Haven. They were among thousands threatened for their relief work. As families resettled and found work in the Shenandoah Valley, they sent money back to Iraq. But in the culture of fear after

9/11, the FBI put several under investigation. In August 2004, 14 government agencies collaborated in a fearsome operation, surrounding the homes of six Kurdish families, confiscating belongings, records, even finances. Families aroused from sleep were reminded of Saddam's terror tactics. Given no effective opportunity to respond, the refugees were traumatized by the violation of their dignity.

In the end, the government decided none of the families had connections to terrorism and that all their money had been sent to legitimate family, friends or charities. Yet four men, Fadhil Noroly, Rashid Qambari, Amir Rashid and Ahmed Abdullah, were arrested in 2005 and charged with unlicensed international money transfers which, in post-9/11 anxiety, had been changed to a felony.

Seeing an opportunity to strive for

Christ's peace in the needs of their Kurdish neighbors, community members responded to the xenophobic trials. To recognize the Kurds as human neighbors, not dangerous foreigners, they ran a full-page ad with nearly 700 signatures, publicized the unjust charges, accompanied the men to trial, agreed to respond quickly as witnesses in the event of further FBI raids, prayed around the courthouse, created a documentary and even contributed thousands of dollars to legal fees. In the end, the men were fined thousands of dollars and put on probation but not charged with felony.

While local churches could not work directly for peace in Iraq, the pressure from the faith community helped restore some stability and dignity to their local Iraqi neighbors. May we continue to seek Christ's peace locally.

Haiti continued from cover

children back in America, and I nearly fall to my knees to mourn this girl's loss of innocence. It is more than a mother's heart can bear. As we weave through the makeshift tents, I pass a hand-painted message "God is good all the time." I pull myself together and we continue. In the morning we will return to provide medical care-but my hope is to provide more than

just that. I pray that we will have the time

to listen to a story as a patient waits in line, to give them a chance to tell their stories of loss and redemption in the midst of suffering. I know already that these good, strong suffering people will teach all of us what it

A Haitian boy walks past graffiti in Port-au-Prince. Photo by Anje Cassel



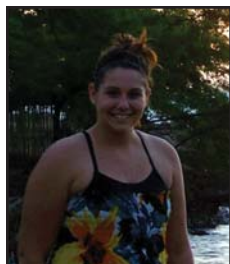
The 10 member VMM medical team with James and Joe Arbaugh and British volunteer Lee Clifford.



Young adult finds short-term service in Jamaica a rewarding experience

By **HALEY KIRSCHNICK**

Partners in Mission participant,
Maranatha School for the Deaf



I can honestly say this was the most incredible life-changing experience any 18-year-old can have. I had the time of my life along with ups and downs. Graduating

from high school, leaving my parents and friends for the first time made it a hard transition for me. There were times I was homesick but a little dose of Moriah [Nice] hugs and kisses always heals everything.

The first couple of months I helped out at a physical therapy clinic on Mondays and Wednesdays. On Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays I cared for Moriah at home and at the Maranatha School if needed.

I began to feel God work in my life and lead me toward Special Education as a career. I observed the deaf children at the Maranatha School; some have multiple disabilities. Instead of going to the clinic on Mondays and Wednesdays I sat in the level four class and shadowed their teacher. I enjoyed experiencing what it was like in a “deaf” classroom, learning some sign language while being with the students.

I have enjoyed building close relationships with the students at Maranatha, especially the dorm students. Paul and Andrine are amazing 18 year olds [will be graduating in June]. The younger kids steal your hearts by their smiles. Getting to know adults and children in the community has also been very rewarding, not just working with the deaf children but also getting to see both communities--hearing and non-hearing.

Lindsey and Rodney are two wonderful, godly people. Their love and joy assures me that this is absolutely God’s calling on their lives right now. Thanks to everyone that has supported me financially, emotionally, and all the prayers that were said on my behalf.



Leanna and Paul Beiler. Courtesy of Paul Beiler

A faithful legacy in Mennonite camping

By **KENT KAUFFMAN**

Director of Highland Retreat

What Paul and Leanna Beiler are leaving behind is no less than a legacy in Mennonite Camping. Having served 26 years at Spruce Lake Retreat in Canadensis, Pa., and 10 years at Highland Retreat, Paul and Leanna have out-served the vast majority in Christian camping.

As a child and a young person, I remember Paul and Leanna being the constant face of Spruce Lake. After joining the staff team at Spruce Lake in ‘96, I learned of Paul’s wisdom, temperance, stewardship, and faithfulness. I learned of Leanna’s good taste, organizational skills, and work ethic. These were daily expressions of their deep commitment to Jesus Christ and His kingdom!

Personally I remember getting in over my head early in my career constructing log lean-tos at Spruce Lake. When the job was bigger than I had imagined Paul worked the backhoe several nights til dark to help get the job done. I am thankful that I was hired at Spruce Lake during the “Paul and Leanna Beiler years.” Little did I know then that Paul made his directing debut

in 1967 as summer camp director right here at Highland Retreat.

Of course when they left Spruce Lake we all joked that it took four people to replace them! But in the midst of that service, they maintained a commitment to the church and their family that was deep. Their children, Mary Jo (now Veurink) and Ryan, are now beautiful adults full of passion, creativity, and serving Christ’s church.

Paul and Leanna are active members at Valley View Mennonite Church and will continue to be a strong presence in both the Virginia Mennonite Conference and their local community. Paul serves as the chair of the Northern District churches, volunteers at Highland, and is actively involved with his local Ruritan club. Leanna serves as a teaching assistant in the local elementary school.

They will be missed from the wider community in Mennonite camping. From Laurelville, Pennsylvania to Drift Creek, Oregon, from Frasier Lake, Ontario, to Lakewood Retreat, Florida, thank you Paul and Leanna for contributing over 36 years of your life to Christian camping.



Rafael and Solange Tartari. Photo courtesy of Willard & Eva Eberly.

Brazilian couple joins Albanian missionary team

By **EVA EBERLY**

VMM Mediterranean Regional Assistant

“Upon receiving a letter from a missionary serving in Albania, our hearts were so deeply impacted that it became a turning point in our lives and marked the beginning of a growing call and love for the Albanian people!” Four years and two months later after much prayer, preparation, and many challenges, Rafael and Solange Tàrtari arrived in Albania on January 26 to fulfil that call.

Although only 24 years of age, Rafael and Solange have a résumé displaying a surprising variety of experiences that will serve them well in missions! Besides employment in various secular jobs, they both graduated from Hebron Bible Institute (Brazil). It offers not only theological studies, but also integrates practical experience in evangelism and discipleship into its weekly program.

The Tàrtaris have experience in church planting through street, tent, and hospital evangelism, mentoring and discipling youth, evangelizing youth through sports clubs, helping conduct camps for teenagers and families, ministering to the homeless and in orphanages. Following their marriage in 2006, they felt an urgent need for pastoral experience, so accepted

a full-time internship in a congregation and began praying about their future. By faith the Tàrtaris began raising support in 2008 and were invited to share their mission vision in more than 50 churches, spending seven months “on the road” throughout Brazil. Between weekend appointments, they worked as missionaries with “Christians in Action.”

In June 2009, they applied to serve with JMMI (Junta Menonita de Missões Internacional) who partner with VMMissions in Albania. Recognizing their outstanding spiritual qualities and commitment, the Albanian missionaries extended a strong invitation to Rafael and Solange to join their team. Although not all needed funds have been raised in Brazil, JMMI recommended that by faith, they be deployed as planned. VMMissions is committed to receiving additional funding for their support. Tàrtaris purchased their own airline tickets with funds from the sale of their car, demonstrating their willingness to serve with sacrifice.

For the first year they will be relating to the missionary team and church in Lezhe while learning the Albanian language and culture.

Drug addiction is a growing menace in Montenegro

By **VLADIMIR & MARIJANA CIZMANSKI**

Serbian missionaries in Montenegro
Exerpts from January 2010 newsletter

When we came to Montenegro as missionaries in 1992, the number of drug addicts was very small. Today this “pandemic” has spread so much that there is one or more addicts in almost every extended family! What is worse, many youth between 18 and 30 lose their lives through overdosing, suicide, or car accidents.

Almost weekly we hear reports about tragedies, a lot for Montenegro that only has a population of 650,000. Recently we heard about the tragic end of a young man who visited us 13 years ago and with whom we talked about eternal life. He was full of restlessness and youthful vitality. We lost contact with him but remember his unforgettable personality. Lazar (a believer in our church) at one time hung out with him and knew about his violent behaviour that caused much pain and suffering to many people. He lived life and ended his life at “full throttle”—driving in a narrow street in Podgorica at nearly 130 mph he crashed into a small shop. He was only 37 years old. I hear that one of the leaders from a rehab centre had been talking with him and had offered him a rehabilitation program, but he refused.

Another of Lazar’s friends had a tragic end. He was found dead, after having overdosed. Many from that circle of friends are no longer alive; in fact only a few are left. . . As Lazar says, “I too would probably be dead by now if the Lord hadn’t bumped into me on my journey through life...”

One big prayer request for Montenegro is that the young people be protected from drug addiction!*

**The Cizmanskis organize summer camps for youth with the hope of reaching them for Jesus Christ.*

VMRC opens new community for Alzheimer's residents

By **MAUREEN PEARSON**
VMRC Director of Communications

A new living community designated for persons with memory issues and other cognitive challenges has opened at Crestwood Assisted Living on the VMRC campus, 1401 Virginia Ave.

The new designated living community called "Redbud" has the capacity to care for 13 persons with Alzheimer's diseases, dementia and other memory loss disorders. "Redbud" will join two other designated communities in Crestwood which are all a part of Memory Care at VMRC. In total, the three neighborhood communities have the capacity to serve nearly 40 persons with memory loss disorders.

"Memory Care at VMRC is an all encompassing approach for residents and families which offers specialty services and support for those with memory loss," said Melissa Fortner, vice president of Supportive Living at VMRC.

Included in Memory Care at VMRC is dedicated care and treatment of Alzheimer's diseases and other dementias from specially trained staff, neighborhoods



Courtesy photo

designed with kitchenettes, social seating areas and shared family-style dining areas to replicate family living, focused services and programs developed around residents' current strengths, past interests and life

experiences to create meaningful moments of joy. Memory Care also includes educational resources and speakers for the community, often free.

"Our training for staff who work on Memory Care neighborhoods is designed by and in collaboration with the Alzheimer's Association with whom VMRC partners," said Fortner. VMRC also offers a Dementia Certification program for staff to become certified dementia specialists.

Locally, approximately 42,000 people suffer from Alzheimer's diseases and dementia illnesses in Central and Western Virginia, according to the Alzheimer's Association Central and Western Virginia chapter.

The next Memory Care educational session will be "The Memory Loss Tapes," from the HBO documentary "The Alzheimer's Project," 7-8:30

p.m. Feb. 18 in Detwiler Auditorium on VMRC's campus, 1501 Virginia Ave. Free and open to the public.

VMRC's SpringFest to be day of food, fun and entertainment for community

By **PEARL LANTZ**
VMRC Auxiliary

Celebrate the approach of spring and join family, friends and the VMRC community at SpringFest, a day of food, fun and entertainment for the whole community!

SpringFest, sponsored by the VMRC Auxiliary, will be held Saturday, March 13, 7:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. at VMRC. All profits will benefit the VMRC Good Samaritan Annual Fund - a program of the VMRC Foundation which fills the gaps for residents with financial



need in Oak Lea Nursing Home.

Events for all ages are planned. The day begins with a delicious breakfast, followed by baked goods and crafts sale, silent auction, Ted & Co. TheaterWorks, clown and balloon animals, petting zoo, musicians, a la

carte lunch, magic show, and more.

Ted Swartz, from Ted & Co. TheaterWorks, uses drama and a touch of humor

to make Biblical stories come alive in delightful ways! Come and enjoy this entertaining program combining scripture, story and humor, entitled "Slightly Left of Normal."

Tickets are required for breakfast and Ted & Co. TheaterWorks and may be purchased at Park Gables, VMRC; Park View



Federal Credit Union, Harmony Square; and Red Front. Advance adult tickets are \$8; at door, \$10. Children, ages 4-12 are \$5, and under age 4 are free.

For more details, go to www.vmrc.org, or call (540) 564-3400.

MARCH 2010

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

7 Today the Jamaica Mennonite churches are gathering for worship in Kingston, singing, praying and hearing God's Word. Thank God for inspiring the church members to continue serving Him, especially in difficult circumstances.

14 Today is "Launch Sunday" for Eastside Church pastored by Peter Eberly and Matt Schwartz. Praise God for this new congregation which is meeting at the Skyline Middle School, Harrisonburg.

21 Pray for the Stephens City Korean Community Church as Pastor James and Sharon Rhee tap the gifts and talents of EMU students who attend, as they share in music and teaching.

28 A Celebration of Missions is held today at 1:00 p.m. at Northern Virginia Mennonite Church. Come and join the fellowship around what God is doing through VMM workers around the world.

Monday

1 David & Shirley Yoder arrived in Trinidad last month to serve as overseer and to encourage the pastors of Mennonite Church of Trinidad. Ask God to give them a good transition and to bless their connections with the church.

8 Malerie Plank, *Travels* participant, arrived in Honduras last month to serve as a nurse in a hospital and to relate to the local church. Ask God to bless her with good health and close connections with her co-workers.

15 Thank God for the availability of Jerry & Mary Holsopple from Harrisonburg who teach and connect with Steve & Betsy Dintaman at LCC International University and relate to students from various countries.

22 Rafael & Solange Tartari, Brazilian missionaries to Albania, are studying the Albanian language while also learning to communicate in English with their missionary team. Willard Eberly is their administrator. Pray for them today! [see page 5]

29 Ask God to bless Chris & Melody Riddle and their sons today as they go to school, shop at the market and interact with a variety of people. May Christ's light shine through them.

Tuesday

2 Pray for the newly formed Iglesia Disciplinada Anabautista Church, Harrisonburg, with Pastor Byron Pellecer, along with the leadership team: Pablo Hernandez, Gerardo Martinez, and Carlos Madrid.

9 Pray for those who are part of the believers' church movement in Italy. Still only 1% of the population, they deal with many spiritual obstacles as well as subtle legal discrimination.

16 Ask God to give Rose Jantzi, *Travels* participant in Paraguay, extra patience and love today for the children that she serves. May Christ's love flow through her.

23 Michael & Ruth have been praying intensely for the work that God has called them to in South Asia. Ask God to bless them with insight, energy and wisdom for the days ahead, as they live and work in a challenging place.

30 Prepare your heart and mind for Maundy Thursday and Good Friday as we remember Christ's suffering and death, before celebrating the resurrection on Sunday.

Wednesday

3 Dino and Mara Colonna, Italian *Travels*, organize a monthly "Giorno Felice" (happy day) activities for children at Centro Koionia, an outreach to families in Bari, Italy. Pray it would have a powerful spiritual impact.

10 Pray for Allen Umble as he serves in Lushnje, Albania and in the nearby agricultural villages that God would use him to encourage the believers and to touch many for the Gospel.

17 Vladimir & Mariana Cizmanski, Serbian missionaries in Montenegro, minister in countless ways to the people of Podgorica, capital city. Pray the Spirit would strengthen them today and supply their needs.

24 Willard & Eva Eberly, Bari, Italy, mentor mission workers in various settings providing encouragement and counsel. Thank God for their wisdom gained through many years of witnessing for Christ in Italy and other settings.

31 Pray for Rodney & Lindsey Nice who on Wednesday evenings assist with Bible study and prayer at the Ridge Mennonite Fellowship, Top Hill, Jamaica. Ask God to bring both men and women to this group and for His blessing.

Thursday

4 The fraternal delegates from Memm. Church of Trinidad are coming to Jamaica to participate in the Jamaica MC conference. Thank God for the interchange between these two Mennonite groups in the Caribbean region.

11 Nancy Marshall, Orange Walk, Belize, uses a computer to aid learning in her classroom of 11 deaf students. They love using technology! Pray that Nancy will have the energy and inspiration needed to capture minds and hearts.

18 Pray for the suffering people of Haiti as they continue to recover from the earthquake devastation on Jan. 12. May relief workers give aid to meet the wide needs that are presented—physical, emotional and spiritual.

25 A YES [Eastern Mennonite Missions] team of five teenagers is serving in Lezhe, Albania. Pray God's guidance and protection over their lives. May they be good role models for their peers in Albania.

This month's prayer calendar is sponsored by



540-434-6444 • www.pvfcu.org

Saturday

6 An installation service for Ervin Stutzman, MC USA's new Executive Director, is held at Park View Mennonite Church tomorrow at 4:30 pm. Pray for wisdom as Ervin leads.

13 Duane Yoder, pastor of Lindale Mennonite Church, concludes the Adult Winter Bible School tomorrow evening at Eastern Mennonite School auditorium. Pray for God's anointing on him and those who hear him teach.

20 A Celebration of Missions event is held this evening at Williamsburg MC. If you have pre-registered, come and see what God is doing around the world through VMM workers.

27 Tomorrow is Palm Sunday, the beginning of Holy Week, when Christians all over the world remember Christ's passion. Pray that all might come to know Jesus and experience God's love.

5 VMC's Adult Winter Bible Study continues on Sunday evening at Eastern Mennonite School auditorium. Pray for all who will come and hear Pastor Duane Yoder teach on the Seven Signs and Seven Saying of John's Gospel.

12 Richard and Barbara Gehring are teaching classes today at West Indies Theological College, Trinidad. Pray for them to have God's insight and for their students to grasp the concepts they are teaching.

19 Olivia and Roxy Gehring are preparing Sunday school for two young children at the Diego Martin MC in Trinidad where their parents give pastoral leadership. Thank God for their initiative and creativity expressed in these settings!

26 On Fridays at Maranatha School, Rodney & Lindsey Nice teach the older students woodworking, cooking, and sewing. They also teach physical education and first aid. Thank God for their continued commitment to these tasks.

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Locations

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VMRC-1491 Virginia Ave, Harrisonburg**



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 Virginia Mennonite Missions
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 901 Parkwood Drive
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Announcements



The VMC Adult Winter Bible School, on the theme “**The Gospel of John: Seven Signs and Seven Sayings**” continues each Sunday evening through March 14 under the leadership of Pastor and Bible teacher Duane Yoder. Please come to the Eastern Mennonite High School auditorium at 6:30 pm for this highly informative and engaging series. Child care will be provided and an offering will be received.

Williamsburg Christian Retreat Center and Mennonite Men of Virginia are hosting **Men’s Retreat**, March 5-7. Ervin Stutzman, recently appointed Executive Director of Mennonite Church USA, will be the guest speaker. The weekend will be filled with meaningful worship, inspired teaching and great fellowship. For more information check www.wcrc.info or contact the office at (757) 566-2256.

Join us in honoring Phil, Marcia, Crystal and Christopher Lehman for their ten years of service in Bari, Italy (1999-2009) on Sunday, March 14 at 4 p.m. at Shady Oaks (Weavers Mennonite Church), 2501 Rawley Pike, Harrisonburg, Va. A short program and refreshments will express our gratitude for their ministry.

Eastside Church will be launching on Sunday, March 14 in Skyline Middle School, 478 Linda Lane, Harrisonburg. Fellowship at 9:30 and worship at 10. All are welcome.

You are invited to attend a **Women’s Mini-Retreat** on the theme: “**Beautiful at any Age**” with speaker Matilda Kipfer and special music by Mary Jane Bevan at New Beginnings Church, 101 Pike Church Rd., Harrisonburg, Va. Friday, March 19, 5-9:30 p.m., and Saturday, March 20, 7:45 a.m.-4 p.m. Matilda is an ordinary woman with an extraordinary God living inside! Call or email Barb Bortrager for registration form at (540) 867-9959 or jbortrager2008@comcast.net. Flyers are also available at the Conference office.



The Center for Justice & Peacebuilding and Ted & Company TheaterWorks will present “**I’d Like to Buy an Enemy**,” a hilarious, poignant, thought-provoking new show exploring peace and justice issues, on Monday, March 22, 7:30 p.m. in Lehman Auditorium on the EMU campus. The play stars Ted Swartz and Trent Wagler along with Pete Nelson. Tickets are available only at the door for \$12/adults; \$6/students. For more information, call (540) 574-4877.

Williamsburg Christian Retreat Center’s **Pedal the Peninsula** cycling fundraiser is scheduled for May 15. Route distances are 10-mile, 21-mile, 32-mile, 48-mile, and Metric Century. Registration is \$35/person; family cap is \$70. Registration includes lunch and T-shirt. For more info, visit www.wcrc.info or phone toll free (866) 566-9272.



Virginia Mennonite Conference’s **annual winter delegate session** will be held at Weavers Mennonite Church on April 10 from 9am until 3 pm. All interested persons are welcome. **This event begins the celebration of VMC’s 175th anniversary** on precisely the same date and location as the first recorded session in 1835. Portions of the original German minutes will be read. There will also be skits and re-enactors who will help connect us with VMC’s history. This is the first of sixteen months of congregational and conference-wide events marking this anniversary. The Valley Brethren-Mennonite Heritage Center will be open with special tours and exhibits from 3 to 5 p.m. that day. Gloria Diener’s new book on VMC’s history, *People of Peace* will also be unveiled.

Virginia Mennonite Missions is seeking a full-time **Director of Financial Services** beginning May 1, 2010. This person will be responsible for the financial operations of VMissions, a Virginia Mennonite Conference mission agency working in the United States and around the world (see website at vmmissions.org). The Director of Financial Services functions with a team of program directors and reports to the VMissions president. Qualifications include familiarity and competency in bookkeeping and accounting. Experience with Jenzabar’s Teams Elite software is desirable. Along with financial competencies, VMissions is looking for a person with a strong interest in missions and a vibrant faith in Jesus Christ. Direct inquiries and applications to Lois Maust at lois.maust@vmmissions.org or (540) 434-9727.