



CROSS WALK



REFLECTIONS – ANITA RETZLAFF

I offer to you, the readers of this newsletter, a story of a life. It is through story and community that we learn about the love of God. My Dad was not a perfect man but I learned about love and about God from my father. Following is a slightly shortened version of the tribute given at Dad's funeral on March 14. Nutana Park Mennonite Church was a rock and an anchor for him and so this is a tribute to a community as well.

Bernhard (Bernie) Retzlaff July 1, 1932 – March 14, 2013

The Bible is the sweeping story of God's people with their God. Just so each human life is a story within that larger story and Dad's story, his journey on this earth, is a testimony to the goodness of God and creation itself. His relationship with God was the motivation behind much of what he read, studied and expounded upon – and he could expound! Dad was a very human guy: an introvert, an observer, a man who often enjoyed the background – as you will have seen in many of the pictures – sometimes as stubborn as a mule and someone who struggled at various times in his life.

Dad often spoke about the fears of a judgmental God from his early years and that caused him to spend a lifetime finding friendship and grace in the sight of the Divine Presence. Hence the scriptures chosen today reflect the

comfort and peace Dad found along the way as he journeyed through life. He never hesitated to talk about this with anyone who would listen. He had felt traumatized and wanted to make sure that others didn't ever have to live with this kind of fear and despair. Needless to say that as we grew up, Emily, Sharon and I always had a listening ear when we were trying to make sense of life. Together with Mom they made growing up something to anticipate not something to fear. This may have sometimes made us a little too critical of what we saw around us but we are very grateful for the home support we had as our world expanded.

Dad was a gentle boy says his oldest sister, someone who helped his mother in the kitchen because the older boys were working outside and the younger siblings too young to do some of the jobs that fell to Dad. He was not always delighted with these but it seems that he was quite close to his mother as a result. He was always good with women – that is all that he ever had in his household – until we, his daughters, started dating and marrying. Then Dad tried his best to get to know all the men that came into our lives.

So, Bernie was a student of life, of people, of faith. He earned academic degrees in liberal arts, education and

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Cross Walk

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*Photographs, articles,
funeral tributes, and recipes
are welcome for submission
to Cross Walk.*

*Please give Lori
suggestions of other items
to be included in Cross
Walk.*

**Articles for the next
Cross Walk are due on
July 3rd.**

theology. He was also schooled in the art of cleaning sinks, vacuuming Cheerios and finding tiny little shoe buckles in the dust of the vacuum canister for a distraught little 4 year old. Dad had many a conversation with dust rag in hand, here at the church in his later years and also at Rosthern Junior College in the early 70s after he quit teaching there.

Bernie was a good husband and father. He and Mom moved around a lot in the early years of their marriage – more than 20 times in 4 years. They met and married in Rosemary, Alberta and one of Mom's first memories of Dad as a kid was that he punched her in the stomach – doesn't sound like Dad! Though Dad worked on his father's farm for some time he soon decided to go to school. This is the reason for their many moves. They went to CMBC in Winnipeg, Bethel College in Newton, Kansas and Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Indiana. When that was all said and done, internships completed in Nebraska and Ohio, Mom having helped Dad through school and tending 3 little girls they began their trek through Saskatchewan. Bernie taught at Swift Current Bible School, was a pastor at the North Star Mennonite Church in Drake, taught at RJC in Rosthern and then took on janitorial work there. In 1975 they moved to Saskatoon and Dad was Associate Pastor here at Nutana Park for a short time, worked at Loewen Windows and then took on janitorial duties again here at the church from which he resigned when he was diagnosed with cancer in April of 2008.

We have memories of Dad watching Bugs Bunny with us on Saturday nights, the smell of fresh buns still in the air: a testimony to Mom's weekly offering of baking.

Mom and Dad were a team. Mom was the social convener, a very necessary contribution to the relationship. In the years that Dad struggled with depression and his feelings of self-worth were at a low ebb, he would have become a hermit if Mom wouldn't have been such a gregarious hostess, encouraging activities out of the house, going on picnics, trips to Fort Carlton and summer

vacations in the tent trailer that we rented from Irvin and Donna Driedger back in the late 60s and early 70s. The biggest loss that we all feel upon Dad's death is that Mom is now alone and will have to fashion a life without him. We have no doubt that she will do that and do it well.

After the diagnosis of stage 4 metastatic prostate cancer five years ago Dad's life changed course yet again. Now he had to re-invent himself as someone who would be facing death shortly. He was very clear about the fact that he did not want to leave us and leave this earth but now God was a companion in his life, a comfort and a refuge not to be feared but to be cherished. And as the quality of life diminished the quality of relationships were enhanced. Dad and Mom grew even closer and they often ended each day sitting together enumerating the good things in life. It was a powerful thing for us children and grandchildren to see, a testimony to a love that had weathered all things. And so we all grew closer to Dad as he grew weaker and in his last days we became the most intimate yet as we tended to his physical needs in his dying days. Indeed Bernie's was a life well lived. Life is a gift and so were you Dad! We will miss you so very much. May the Lord bless you and keep you. AMEN



On a rather frigid Jan 30th, a handful of NPMCCers descended on Station 20 West with eager hands to help with the packing of Good Food Boxes. The Good Food Box programme is one of the many great things that CHEP Good Food Inc. does in its efforts to build “a community where good nutritious safe food is always available for everyone no matter what their circumstances, where there is care for the environment, access to local food production, and knowledge about making healthy food choices”.

There are varieties CHEP Good Food boxes, to suit different needs and preferences, from the Sunshine box featuring mainly Saskatchewan produce, to the snack box, with pre-portioned veggies, a few fruit, and a healthy seed mix.

Good Food boxes can be ordered by anyone, and anyone can sign up to help pack them! After measuring mushrooms, lifting lettuce, moving melons and carting carrots, those that could stay enjoyed a delicious lunch prepared by other CHEP volunteers.

This doesn't have to be a one-time affair! John and Jonathan, the coordinators of the Good Food Box, would be happy to have more regular volunteers, and it is a great way to continue to put a few faces to our congregation in the larger community.

If you are interested in volunteering or have questions about the Good Food Box programme, you can contact the coordinators at: goodfoodbox@chep.org or call 655-4575.

CHEP Experience

- TERRI LYNN PAULSON

- PHOTOS BY KIRSTEN HAMM



CHURCH Family News

Joys

The young adults in our congregation.

Those among us who share their talents in our worship services and in other services across the city.

The National Council of the Canadian Cancer Society posthumously awarded **Howard Willems** the 2013 Impact Award for Leadership in Public Policy for leading the way in asbestos awareness.

Congratulations to **Delmar Rempel** on the occasion of his 80th birthday.

The lovely jewellery displayed by **Geraldine Balzer**.

Our best wishes to **Emma & Matt Love** on the arrival of Tom Shepherd Love, born February 9th.

Congratulations to **Rowena Kehler & Maikel Unrau**, on the birth of **Jonathan Ty**, born March 22nd.

Crystal Barnes and Humberto Garcia Lacasse who were married on March 29, 2013 in Tarara, Cuba.

Olivia and Gracelyn Sawatzky, grand daughters of **Pat & Kurt Sawatzky**, who placed well in the Provincial 5-pin bowling tournament in Regina.

Jac Nickel had triple by-pass surgery and has made a remarkable recovery.



Crystal and Humberto

Photo by Janet Barnes



Michael, Humberto, Crystal, Janet and Norm

Photo by Garth Farough

Sorrows

The family of **Bernie Ratzlaff** as they mourn his death.

Inez Kinzel as she grieves the death of her brother, **Bryant Brooks**.

Judy, Bill and Josh Salloum as they mourn the death of Bill's father.

Prayer

Helen Unrau fell and suffered a compressed vertebrae, she recovered well and will be moving to Bethany Manor soon.

Eric and Lois Wiens welcome prayer as they have a long road to go.

Ag Peters, Marlene & Dave Froese and families on the death of brother-in-law **Wayne Crossley**.

The family of **Hilda Klassen** from Saskatoon who was an aunt of **Helen & John Siemens**.

We hold **Frieda & Paul Enns** closely in prayer as they deal with Frieda's diagnosis of stage 4 pancreatic and liver cancer.

Erica UnRuh was in hospital and is now in a long term care facility.

from the Board

by **Tommy Forrester**

In keeping with the past theme of Strategic Planning and how the Board of Deacons has found it valuable to take our church down the path of planning, I wanted to take a few moments to express my interest and desire in being a part of the future envisioning for and with the Church. As a mother, a wife and a career woman, I spend many hours in my week looking to the calendar to ensure we have "the plan" ready for our household. What's the plan for dinner tonight, for our weekly meals? What's the plan for our work days and our after school time? Do we have the right equipment for volleyball games, ball tryouts and music performances? Is there money in the bank to pay for our activities, for food, for mortgage? Any extra? If we make this decision today, how will it affect our family in the future? Is what we are doing, day in and day out relevant and consistent to our family values and core beliefs? Somewhat simple activities and questions – ones we most likely plan and ponder without even realizing we are thinking strategically. I suppose one could call this strategic planning for our family's future...sound familiar?

Well, as we develop our plans for the continuing health of our Church and the future health of our congregation, we look to understand how it is we belong, what it is we are doing as a Deacon on the Board, and how what we discern contributes to the broader health of the Church and our programs. Are we relevant and consistent to the values and beliefs we hold dear? Do our committee mandates fit with a vision that is true and meaningful to our Church membership? Do we need to revisit so that we truly are creating a future plan for decision making that is aligned to that which we believe and say we are?

A time of discernment can sometimes lead to discomfort, fear and anxiety but with the focus of the stages of the planning process we anticipate that the exercises that the Board and the Church will engage in will lead to further clarification, enlightenment and a clear picture for our future. Challenges I am thrilled to be a part of in this planning time for our Church. Please ...join in!

God Bless you on this journey.

CHURCH Family News

from the Board

- **TAMMY FORRESTER**

MDS ADVENTURE

-LYDIA WIENS

On March 2, 2012 a tornado hit West Liberty, a city of 3400 nestled in the Appalachian Mountains of Kentucky. The tornado had a continuous ground path of 137 km reaching an astonishing one mile width. The main business area lay in ruins. The roofs on the elementary school and hospital were twisted off. In the ravines of the city, hundreds of trees were snapped or uprooted causing massive damage upon landing after their turbulent flight. Many homes were destroyed. Others needed major repair. No one was killed in West Liberty, but there were six deaths and seventy-five injuries in the outlying area. At present, MDS is working on building a new home for Mr. Ron, a West Liberty resident whose recently built home was decimated by the tornado. The tornado threw his wife, daughter and him out into their yard. His wife died. Mr. Ron had multiple injuries. He has only recently returned back to work.

Region II MDS mobilized and was engaged in the clean-up of the 800 tons of debris that was gathered and disposed within the first few weeks following the tornado. Local Mennonite Churches rose to the challenge. By November, 2012 a long term building site was established with volunteers from the states and Canada. Except for two homes which were sponsored by a local church, the new builds are being done in partnership with Habitat for Humanity.

Carl and I were part of this energetic MDS Community for the month of February. We were delighted when Peter and Lydia Schroeder joined us

as project directors in mid-February. They will be here until the end of March when the MDS Project in West Liberty will shut down. Many West Liberty residents are still waiting for homes and much work still needs doing. Habitat for Humanity will continue here and work in partnership with a Baptist Group. Since our arrival three homes have been completed. Eight homes are at various building stages. Here as in other units, MDS is rebuilding for the most vulnerable and needy.

This was my first MDS experience. The learning curve has been steep. Living in community had its perks. Having a scrumptious dinner cooked for you every night, engaging in interesting conversations, hearing inspiring devotionals every morning, dancing with locals at a bluegrass concert, hiking in the Appalachians, watching Lydia and Peter work as one managing the site, and working hard at something you knew was needed sooner rather than later, all wove together creating a rich experience for Carl and I. And intermingled in this rich tapestry were challenges. Being awakened at 5 every morning proved quite traumatic for this night owl. Ego needs I thought had been satisfied made surprising visitations. Feeling klutzy on the job as I watched others work so proficiently was humbling. Watching pain and struggle on the faces of the people in West Liberty as they spoke of their personal and community challenges that are ongoing was a sobering honour. As I reflect on this and more, I know that it was good to have been part of West Liberty MDS.



Losing Mum and Pup by Christopher Buckley is a gentle reflection of the lives and deaths of William F. and Pat Buckley. Buckley shows us how to walk with aging parents and forgive them of past failings.

A Thousand Mornings by Mary Oliver is another delight by this poet who gets better with age.

The Midwife's Tale by Sam Thomas was a fun read about medieval England and the real power that midwives have always had.

The 100 Year Old Man by Jonas Jonasson had me laughing out loud at the antics of the centenarian who runs away from his nursing home on his birthday.

Pope Joan is a book club read that provided interesting conversation in

these days of the new pope in Rome.

The Last Runaway by Tracy Chevalier is the engaging tale of slave runaways and their Quaker helpers on the Underground Railroad.

Wheat Belly by William Davis confirms that some of our intestinal and auto-immune illnesses can be helped by reducing or eliminating our wheat intake.

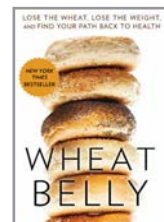
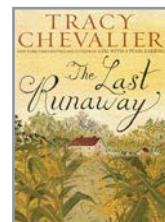
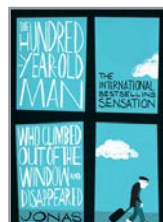
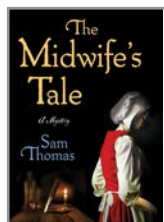
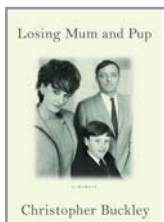
Amour DVD is the award winning and heart-breaking French film about a couple's journey with dementia.

Quartet DVD is also a favourite film about aging.

The Words DVD is a story within a story about authors and the creative writing process.

Patty's PICKS

- PATTY FRIESSEN



Patty's Ponderings

I am a part of a Dementia/Alzheimer Support Group that helps each other by listening to our grief, sharing books and laughing our heads off.

The Memory Clinic by Tiffany Chow is about a doctor whose own experience with her grandmother's dementia led her to study the disease in depth. It tracks the journey and hope in the midst of this illness.

Relentless Goodbye by Ginnie Horst Burkholder is the intimate experience of a wife whose husband had Lewy Body's disease.

Dementia: Living in the Memories of God by John Swinton helps families and church communities make sense of this disease theologically.

Thankfully, more research is being done and more people are writing about dementia, as we try to understand this mysterious illness that is affecting more of us all the time.

Open Heart by Elie Wiesel is the physical and spiritual journey of the greatest Jewish writer philosopher of our time. Wiesel is a modern Job reflecting on personal and global suffering, trying to help us understand what possible purpose suffering might serve. Wiesel, writing at age 82, post heart surgery, represents the passing WWII generation, and the elder wisdom that our society still desperately needs.

Patty's PONDERINGS

- PATTY FRIESSEN

Seniors Experience a Delightful Afternoon

-DONNA DRIEDGER

-PHOTOS BY HOWARD GILES



On Sunday, April 7/13 – 69 Seniors responded to the Invitation from the NPMC Care Groups to come to the church for a party!

It was a delight to be welcomed at the door, then to enter the Education Wing and see the tables nicely set in preparation for us. The smell of coffee lured us in and we found our places. We enjoyed a glass of fruit punch and settled in to visit! We all seem to enjoy visiting a great deal.

We were invited on a trip down Memory Lane by three lovely musicians – Marj Smith –piano, Kathy Peters – recorder, and Ron Peters – guitar and ukulele. Their warm smiles and musical talent brought us into their musical space so well.

After enjoying their singing and playing to us, they invited us to join them and sing along. It truly was a trip down Memory Lane! We joined in heartily to YOU ARE MY SUNSHINE; THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND; THE HAPPY WANDERER; DU, DU LEIGST MIR IM HERZEN and many more “oldie goldies. Thanks Marj, Kathy and Ron!

After our musical entertainment we were served a delicious “Faspa”. The Faspa was served by NPMC Youth and Young Adults. Thank you for serving us so kindly and well. We enjoyed more visiting and then departed for our homes.

Our spirits truly were brightened by the delightful afternoon. Thanks to all who made this event happen and for “Making Our Day!”

