

American Baptist Men of the Great Rivers Region
416 Glendale St.
Creve Coeur, IL 61610-3242



UpStream

Summer
2009

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American Baptist Men
of the Great Rivers Region
Men on a Mission - from God

Work Projects

The American Baptist Men currently have one work project scheduled for July 20-24 at the Baptist Student Foundation at the University of Illinois in Champaign, IL. Housing and some meals will be provided during the stay.

Also, another trip to the Gulf Coast is being planned for the fall. If you would like to participate in either of these projects, please contact George Meyer, our Work Projects Coordinator at 217/488-7190 for more information.

Jesus is looking for a few good men.

Building Relationships

A men's group can strengthen your church and is an important way to introduce new people to others in your church. Men's groups help to foster relationships between the men of your church and strengthen existing relationships. If you don't have a men's group, we would like to help you get one started. We can provide materials and speakers to help you get started and ideas to continue to grow your men's group. We also have a variety of ways your men can work together with other men to expand our circle of brothers in Christ and do important work for the Kingdom.

Do you already have a men's group in your church? We would like to offer speakers to come and let your men's group know what other men in the region are doing. We can also provide opportunities for your men to connect and serve with other men in the region. Please contact Dave Comstock at 217-732-9938 to schedule a speaker for your Men's group.

Another successful trip!

A group of American Baptist men and women from the Great Rivers Region have made the latest in a series of trips to the Gulf Coast to help continue the rebuilding effort. A group of six spent the week of May 5 to May 9 finishing the exterior of one house and the interior of another. Shown in the picture at the right are, in the back row, Zack (an Americor Volunteer), George Meyer, and Jessie Short. In the middle row are David Harmon, Gary Short, and Les Sorenson In the front row is Earl Troyer.

Help is still needed in the continued rebuilding effort. While it isn't in the newspaper headlines, nearly four years later, thousands of people are still displaced along the Gulf Coast by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, along with additional people after Hurricane Ike struck the Texas coast last year. You can help in the recovery. Volunteers are needed for future trips. Contact George Meyer at 217/488-7190 for more information and to volunteer.



A Word for the wise

In the days before colleges and trade schools, young men were trained for a career by their fathers or another man that was skilled in a trade. This process, referred to today as mentoring, prepared young men to be successful and provide a living for him and his family. Today, we often rely on institutions of higher learning to provide the training our young men need to be successful in life, but there is nothing that can replace a mentoring relationship. A mentoring relationship goes well beyond teaching a young man a trade. It teaches young men social skills, honesty, integrity, and how to live a Godly life. A good mentor can prepare a young man in many ways that far exceed any classroom training. Today, many young people are ill prepared for marriage, parenting, finances, and leadership because they have not had relationships with older men that have prepared them for these aspects of life. While there is no substitute for college and trade school educations that prepare young people for careers, they still need mentoring relationships to prepare them for life. There is no substitute for a good example. Take advantage of every opportunity you have to foster and develop mentoring relationships. Our future depends on it!

UPDATE

*Informing **Disaster Relief Volunteers** of our ongoing mission and ministry as American Baptist Men, Women & Youth.*

Mac and LaVerne Shotwell, Editors
Brian and Julie Romanowski, Publishers
Vol. 5, No. 2 June 2009
"Because Jesus Came, We Come"



Team working in Herrin--Teams Return to Southern Illinois (See page 4)

SUMMER CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS DISASTER RELIEF

CALLING ALL MEN & BOYS to join us at Illinois Wesleyan University on **Friday, July 10 at 6:30 p.m.** for our **DISASTER RELIEF MINISTRY REUNION CELEBRATION** and stay for the entire conference if you can. We want to celebrate what God is doing with us, among us and through us. This opening session of our 2009 Spiritual Life Conference begins with a rally of all volunteers for fellowship, team building, reflecting and remembering. **HIGHLIGHTS** include **VISUAL** and **VERBAL TESTIMONIES** of some of the disaster relief sites; **A PowerPoint presentation: "RESPONDING TO THE CALL"** prepared and presented by **Brian Romanowski**; **Report from JACK COBB**, national coordinator for ABMen's Disaster Relief; **Reflections by ROY and CAROLYN DAVIDSON**, host pastor and wife of the team in Cave in Rock; **Dedication of our newest trailer** and the **HIGHLIGHT will be a time of verbal testimonies**-when every volunteer will be given an opportunity to share (if you wish); **Climaxing with Communion** and a time for rededication to this ministry. The celebration will be preceded by a pizza party at 5:30. **REGISTRATIONS** are needed so we can complete plans. *If you have not already registered, please use the form in this mailing and send it is ASAP! If you can only come for the Friday event there is no charge, but we hope you will plan to join us for the two day gathering--filled with many opportunities for spiritual refreshment, fellowship and "hands on" ministries.*

TRAINING SESSION FOR TEAM LEADERS

As the demands for more response teams increases we are in need of more trained volunteers who will be available to be in charge of an assignment. To make this possible we have scheduled a two-hour training session on **FRIDAY AFTERNOON, JULY 10 3-5 p. m.** at Illinois Wesleyan, preceding the 5:30 pizza party and after the nationally scheduled Leadership Summit. **Loren Wobig** (at right) is one of the leaders for this training event. Turn the page for more information.



TRAINING SESSION for TEAM LEADERS

(continued from previous page)

This two hour training session is designed for volunteers who are open to the possibility of being a team leader when needed and available. Coming to the seminar does not obligate you, but says you are willing to consider. Training in “mud out” and “chain saw” calls for help, as well as administrative and other leadership helps will highlight the agenda. **Leadership** includes **Loren Wobig** (pictured on the previous page) and **Paul Stivers** (pictured at right) as well as members of **the Leadership Team, with Mac Shotwell** leading.

Loren is a registered professional engineer, certified flood plain manager and project manager in the Division of Water Resources for the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) in Springfield. He received his civil engineering degree from Iowa State University in 1984 and has worked for the Office of Water Resources in various capacities ever since. As project manager for IDNR, Loren primarily leads a team of engineers in the planning and preliminary design of flood damage reduction and dam modification projects, Currently Loren is an executive officer in the Illinois Association of State Flood Plain Managers. **Loren will lead the session on “mud out”.**

TO REGISTER FOR THIS JULY 10 LEADERSHIP TRAINING SESSION call Mac @217-241-4048 or email him at macs@warpnet.net by July 1.

Open to all who will consider being a team leader or assistant, if your time permits. No commitments expected until after completing the training.



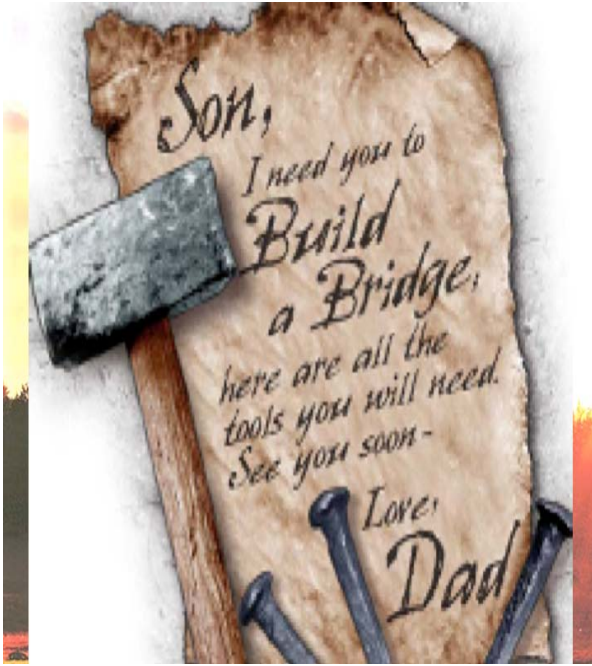
Paul Stivers, an active member of disaster relief team two has been on many response teams. He led one of the teams in Jacksonville. Most recently Paul was involved at Cave in Rock and was team leader in Cairo. As this is being written (5/20) he and his son, Fred, are on their way to Herrin to help. Paul, retired from Horace Mann Insurance Co, has his own lawn care service and is married to Candy, one of the administrative assistants in the GRR office. **Paul will lead the session on “chain saws.”**

REUNION INVITATION

Ron Greenfield, Team Two Captain, in a letter to his team members, wrote, in part: *“On Friday evening we would like to have all the men who have worked on any of the disaster teams at any time or place to come together for a reunion. It will be a great chance to see some of the men you may not have seen for a while, to swap stories and pictures that you have and get the latest updates on what the teams are doing...It will be a great time of praise and sharing.”*

Paul Webb, Team Five Captain, adds: *“The Conference is a great opportunity to meet others in the Region who are involved in disaster relief, the major ministry of ABMen. For this reason, I encourage all of you to give serious consideration to attend...an opportunity for sharing new ideas for the ministry and finding answers to questions or concerns.”*

Dave Comstock, our president and Team Three Captain, wrote: *“I hope you will makes plans to stay for the entire conference...It will be a great time of fellowship, sharing and worship. I hope to see you there!”*



Thank You!

Since our last publication, the following have sent monetary gifts:

ABMen's Prayer Breakfast, Area 1
 Ruby Baker, Murphysboro, IL
 James & Marcella Belt, Elizabeth Town IL
 Bob and Garnett Briggs, Springfield, IL
 Patty & Donald Carson, Herrin, IL
 Warren Craig, Normal, IL
 Marissa, IL First Baptist
 Mattoon, IL First Baptist (2x)
 McComb, IL First Baptist (2x)
 Harvey Sanders, Murphysboro, IL
 Mac & LaVerne Shotwell, Springfield, IL
 David Stein, Murphysboro, IL
 Wood River, IL First Baptist (2x)
 West Frankfort, IL First Northern Baptist
 Van Peters, Creal Springs IL, for the gift of 48 orange t-shirts with our logo.
 Pete Ryan, VOAD rep. for the special "Chain Saws For Christ" t-shirts given to the Cairo team. **All volunteers coming to our July 10 Celebration are reminded to wear their orange t-shirts. Extras will be available onsite if you need one.**

MAC'S MUSINGS...

On Easter Sunday, the picture at the left was in our local newspaper, thanks to Hobby Lobby. With nails and a hammer, Jesus became a bridge--**the bridge** over troubled waters for you and me, and all who will accept his salvation--the Good News of God's Grace. The bridge to God and to meaningful living with each other.

As we thank God for this gift of Grace made possible by Jesus becoming our bridge to Eternity, I want to ask you to consider ways in which we, too, can become bridge builders. No, we do not have to die for our sins. Jesus did that for us. There is no toll booth at the bridge to heaven. Jesus paid the price! But when we accept this gift of grace, we need to build bridges of relationship with each other and invite others to cross the bridge of Jesus into eternity with God.

"It is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God--not by works, so that no one can boast." (Ephesians 2:8-9 NIV)

That's good news! But, read on: "For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works..." (Eph. 2:10)

Costly grace leads to good works. Cheap grace does not!

I look forward to seeing YOU, men and boys on our disaster response teams, on July 10-11 as we celebrate costly grace and hear how bridge building, in the name of Jesus, takes place today.
-Mac Shotwell

TEAMS RETURN TO SOUTHERN ILLINOIS

As this copy is being prepared, the third of a projected five teams is in southern Illinois responding to damages made by an "inland" hurricane-like storm, which reached 100-130 mph early in May. Gov. Pat Quinn declared Franklin, Jackson and Williamson counties disaster areas. Ron Haynes of Marissa led a team of 10 volunteers in Murphysboro May 14-16. Work was coordinated by one of our newest members, Larry Stanton from Pate Chapel Baptist Church. Team members were housed and fed by the church members. The team worked at nine sites for 90 hours. Elmer Voudrie of Mattoon was in charge of the first week in Herrin where 21 jobs were completed by 25 volunteers, working 416 hours for 6 days. Dick Gillespie of Peoria led the second team in Herrin for May 26-29; John McConnel of Mt. Carroll and Chuck Johnson of Sandwich will lead a team June 7-12. Ron Haynes and Van Peters of Creal Springs will lead the fourth team June 14-19. Ed Hoke and Peter Ryan, local Methodist pastors, have been in charge of arrangements. If you can give the time, call your team captain or assistant or Mac Shotwell for details. Pictures and highlights of these most recent responses will be part of our REUNION CELEBRATION on July 10. Another reason not to miss! Send in that registration NOW!

How Can YOU Help?

- (1) **PRAY** for the victims & volunteers
- (2) **GIVE** a monetary donation to help with expenses and ask your church to put us in their mission budget. Send gifts to Cliff Hopwood @416 Glen-dale St., Creve Coeur, IL 61610 or thru your church mission receipts—line 10, Specifics. Designate: "ABMen's Disaster Relief, GRR".
- (3) **GO** if you can, when a disaster response call comes.
- (4) **COME** to our Reunion on July 10.



TO BE AT OUR REUNION

Carolyn and Roy Davidson, our new friends from Cave in Rock, will be part of our Reunion Celebration at 6:30 p.m. on July 10. Hope YOU will be there, also.

ABM Disaster Relief Work



**Herrin, Illinois
May 18-21, 2009
Picture from Terry Maurizio**

Herrin was hit by what was termed an inland hurricane on May 8. Many large trees were uprooted by the 100 plus mile per hour winds. This was one of the first job sites that we worked on. Les Sorensen and Larry Stanton are measuring the tree. I don't remember the circumference, but I think the diameter measured 42". --Terry

On a Lighter Note

Children were lined up in the cafeteria of a Catholic school for lunch. At the head of the table was a large pile of apples.

The nun made a note, "Take only one: God is watching."

Moving through the line, to the other end of the table, was a large pile of chocolate chip cookies.

One boy said to another in line, "Take all you want: God is watching the apples."

A Word from Our Sponsor

The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever.

– 1 John 2:17 (NIV)

AB Men-USA & AB Men of the Great Rivers Region Annual Men's Conference - July 9, 2009 through July 11, 2009

All American Baptist Men in the Great River Region and American Baptist Men nationally are invited to join us at Illinois Wesleyan University in Bloomington, Illinois for fun, fellowship, and inspiration.

Activities begin Thursday, July 9, with a meeting of the AB Men-USA National Board. All AB Men in the USA are invited to attend and learn what is going on around the country, as regional representatives give their reports. The Board will also be voting on changes to the AB Men's Constitution.

On Friday, July 10, 2009, AB Men Past President Manuel Luquin will conduct the "Leadership Development Training Summit" This training is a must for all AB Men, both in Disaster Relief and other areas of men's mission work.

Friday at 5:30 PM the national leadership and those attending the leadership training will gather with other Great Rivers Region men and those from across the nation that have traveled to the conference for Pizza and fellowship. The evening program will start at 6:30 PM with a review of the Disaster Relief activities this year and the dedication of the new Disaster Relief trailer. This will be followed by the Man of the Year award, devotions, and Communion.

Saturday after breakfast, and a session on Missions and Outreach, we will depart in small groups to work projects in the community at Home Sweet Home Mission, the Campus Religious Center at ISU and Habitat for Humanity. After lunch on your project site we will reconvene at IWU for open swim time and our closing session "Take your Mission Experience Home".

We are excited about the opportunity to meet with the National Board and do some Mission work in our community. We look forward to seeing all of you.

See the last page of this mailing for the registration form or for additional information call Earl Troyer at 309-965-2342 or email etroyer@juno.com.

Schedule of Events:

Thursday:

National AB Men Board Meeting

Friday:

9:00 AM – 3:00 PM - Leadership Development Training Summit

3:00 PM – 6:30 PM – Conference Registration

3:00 PM – 5:00 PM - GRR Disaster Relief Leadership Meeting

5:30 PM – 6:30 PM – Pizza & Fellowship

6:30 PM – 10:00 PM – Conference Session

Saturday:

7:30 AM – 8:45 AM – Registration, Morning Devotions & Breakfast

8:45 AM – 10:15 AM – Conference Session

10:15 AM – 3:00 PM – Community Outreach

3:30 PM – 5:00 PM – Closing Session

Locations:

Housing and registration will be in Magill Hall (210 E. Beecher Street)

Sessions will be held in the Memorial Center (104 E. University Street)

For directions to Illinois Wesleyan University and maps of the campus, visit their website at <http://www.iwu.edu/aboutiwu/campus/index.shtml>. For more information call Earl Troyer 309-965-2342 or email Earl at etroyer@juno.com.

REGISTRATION FORM

AMERICAN BAPTIST MEN AND BOYS CONFERENCE JULY 10 & 11, 2009

NAME _____ ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____ TELEPHONE _____

HOME CHURCH _____

YOUNG MEN AND BOYS ATTENDING WITH ME:

NAME _____ AGE _____ NAME _____ AGE _____

NAME _____ AGE _____ NAME _____ AGE _____

CONFERENCE COSTS: (Please indicate the number attending)

___ Friday Leadership Summit	\$20 (includes lunch)	Make your check payable to: ABM/GRR
___ Adult	\$58	Send to: Cliff Hopwood
___ Youth (18 & under)	\$33	416 Glendale St.
___ additional Youth (family)	\$25	Creve Coeur, Il 61610
___ Saturday only	\$35	
___ Friday only	No Charge	

AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$ _____ A deposit of \$20 should accompany each reservation unless Friday only.

SIGNED _____ DATE _____

More information, including directions and maps will be mailed to you upon receipt of your registration form. Please call Dave Comstock at 217-732-9938 if you have any questions or for more information.