

# "Ripples"

Spring, 2009

A publication of  
American Baptist Women  
Of the  
Great Rivers Region  
American Baptist Churches

**NOTICE: Please copy and share this information  
with the women of your church.**

# COME

TO THE

GRR WOMEN'S RETREAT

JUNE 5, 6, & 7, 2008

LAKE WILLIAMSON CHRISTIAN CENTER

CARLINVILLE, ILLINOIS

COST – FULL WEEKEND \$145.00

SATURDAY ONLY \$45.00

YOUNG GIRLS (ages 10 – high school) — \$100

THESE ARE THE EARLY BIRD RATES AFTER MAY 15<sup>TH</sup> THE COST WILL BE \$5.00 EXTRA

Be refreshed through Bible Study with Henrietta Brown – 2 Timothy 1: 3-14.

Share & Learn - in the Mug & Muffin Groups.

Be uplifted through a wonderful blend of contemporary and traditional music with Rev. Rachel Cocar & Praise Team from Dixon, Illinois.

Browse the Second Hand Rose Shops featuring used Christian Books and Beautiful Loved Jewelry. All proceeds from the shops will go to “Breaking The Chains”.

Learn about the KAREN KONNECTION that is happening in the churches in our region and how you can help.

Participate in the workshops, including a hands on White Cross Project.

Renew old friendships, make new friends, relax and enjoy the beautiful and peaceful grounds of Lake Williamson Conference Center.

PRAY that you will be able to attend, ENCOURAGE all women of your church to attend, PRAY about providing a scholarship for someone new to attend.

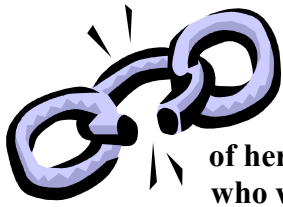
We praying that each woman and girl that attends will be blessed and renewed. God Bless

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COORDINATORS OF WOMEN'S RETREAT

**WELL, THAT WAS AN INTERESTING TWO YEARS. . .**



**This June we will have completed two years of raising funds and learning about trafficking of women and girls – BREAK THE CHAINS.. I don't know about you, but it has been a steep learning curve for me. Sometimes I wish I did not have to learn about such things, but as Annie Dieselberg, missionary in Thailand said in one of her workshops, "If Christian women are not informed and praying about this issue, then who will take it on? We are the only ones who have the true answer to their needs – Jesus!"**

**A new project will claim our attention in 2009-2010, but we dare not forget about this scourge in our country and the world. We dare not forget about the young girls and the women who are driven into this situation by poverty, demands of family or other bad circumstances.**

**If you just change that top line to "WELL, THAT WAS AN INTERESTING THREE YEARS. . . it applies to me. I am now finishing my third and last year as president of Great Rivers Region Women's Ministries.**

**During that time you supported your region board as we struggled with a significant deficit in funding. This was due to many reasons including the fact that the region no longer can afford to subsidize our ministry. We lost about 1/3 of our budget each year, but you all magnificently stepped up and we are able to function now with no fear of not being able to pay our bills.**

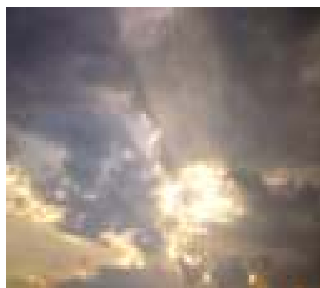
**Of course, we did "pull our belts in a bit tighter, saving over \$500 each year just by changing how we use the facility at Lake Springfield Baptist Camp for our board meetings. Countless board members have donated time and money to keep from draining our treasury. You need to know that our treasurer, Doris Kaisner, is a careful money manager and has earned us money even in these difficult times.**



**Because of this frugality, I am thrilled to tell you that when we heard of the need to fix up the cabin for the new managers at Lake Springfield, we were able to vote to give an immediate gift of \$1000 to make it ready. God has blessed us, so we wanted to bless others. Pray for both of our camps. We do not want to lose this grand opportunity to minister to our youth.**

**Finally, let me mention that as I was mulling over the request to serve as president of the GRR Women's Ministries about this time three years ago, I was really struggling with my answer. Driving home alone from one of our interim ministry sites, God spoke to me very dramatically saying, "I have a job for you to do, so get on with it." I still am shy about sharing the details (have you ever had that feeling?) but I knew from that moment on I should accept the position.**

**I do not know any particularly spectacular thing that has happened during my time as your president, but I do know that a dedicated group of board members has blessed me over these years. We know we are facing change from many directions, and they are willing to wrestle with that. We do not want to lose our commitment to mission and service locally, nationally and internationally. BUT we need to learn how to package it so many more will catch the vision.**



**And TO GOD BE THE GLORY!  
Ruth Peterson**

## Treasurer

We Treasurers always seem to be asking for dollars. So this time I will share a couple of special things....

The little "Spare & Share" - "Second\Time Around" - "Once and Again" shops are in most of our towns/cities. They sometimes ask why are you buying so much of this or that....after explaining... I now get sheets, pillow cases, yarn, thread plus more for missions...at no charge...oh, also back packs for school.

These supplies help us in making quilts for babies for Mexico that the ISU Student Foundation takes there on spring break. Not all students go on spring break just for fun. It also helps with quilts for Murrow Indian Children's Home in Ok. Yarn is used for neck scarves for winter for any and every neighborhood center...also the special bazaar in Kodiak, Alaska...those ladies do not have the privilege to go to store like we do any and every day. They depend on us lower states to provide home-made items for their bazaar... most of their Christmas shopping is done there.

Yarn also helps with Prayer Shawls and Lap Covers for nursing homes. Murrow Indian Children's Home is opening another cabin with 13 beds...we should be able to provide sheets and pillow cases for all those..

So...I encourage to check with you local shops.

Doris Kaisner, Treasurer  
ABW Ministries of the Great Rivers Region

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Ways we can help in this economy:

Example 1:

Our pastor (1<sup>st</sup> Baptist, Mt. Vernon), discovered that many of the children in our Primary Center (K thru 3<sup>rd</sup> grade) received free or subsidized lunches. When he checked further, he discovered that many of these children have little or no food for the weekend. So he suggested to us that we do a "Brown Bag Program" to supply some food for these children for the weekend. These bags are prepared around noon on Friday and then are delivered to the school by the time the children are dismissed. The school determines, by drawing names out of a "hat", which children get the bags each week. In these bags we put: 2 boxes or bags of drink, 3 packages of crackers & cheese, a package (2) pop tarts, rice krispy treat, granola bar, potato chips, an apple, a banana, soda crackers & cookies. Our congregation has really gotten behind this and we have many donations come in each week. We figure that each bag contents cost approximately \$3.00. We shop at mostly Sam's club and Aldi.

Example 2:

The Jr. Women's Club in Champaign is doing a similar thing. They learned that one of the schools had over half the children receiving subsidized lunches. They were concerned that these children were not receiving sufficient meals on weekends. Now they assemble back packs which these children can wear home for weekends. This insures that these children come to school without hunger pangs impeding their ability to learn.

Example 3:

Most of us use Campbell's soups and other items. We usually throw out the label. Just a moment to clip the UPC symbol gives us an opportunity to help spread our mission dollars. By contributing these proofs of purchase the Campbell Soup Company allows Murrow Children's Home to receive sports equipment and other items they can use. It also keeps a bit of trash out of the landfill!

DON'T MISS THE 40 HOURS OF RETREAT  
JUNE 5-7  
LAKE WILLIAMSON, CARLINVILLE

Ripples March 2009

It is indeed a joy to hear from our students who are receiving the Sallie Peck ABWM student scholarships. There have been phone calls and note cards expressing appreciation from our students. In the last few weeks I have received 1 new application and several requests for the application forms. Our present students are now contacting me to renew their scholarship for the 2009-2010 school year.

I am sure each of you can appreciate how important it is to hear from someone when you are away from home. Please send your scholarship recipient a note card and let them know you are thinking about them and praying for them. Names, addresses, and birthdates were included in the Fall Ripples. If you have lost the list contact your area Student Aid chairperson or ask me. If you can include a little gift with your card – McDonald certificates are always a treat.

If you know of anyone who may be interested in a scholarship please have them contact me.

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#### COORDINATOR OF MISSION & SERVICE

Benzena Barton

#### HELP!

Our missionaries and their families need our Help!

Food, shelter, clothing, transportation and education are vital needs for us. So it is for our missionaries!

Our support for them has been dwindling so much that many of them may have to return to their homeland.

We must not let that happen! Missionary Partnership Teams are a way of Helping--Join them!

Sending directly to the missionary is another good way to support them. Also, support can be sent to International Ministries at Valley Forge. Get your Church involved with giving to mission support!

Whichever method you use, PLEASE HELP!

God made a promise to us in Isaiah 41:10 when He said, "I will Help thee."

Prayerfully, remember these words as you continue to support our missionaries!

They are in dire need of our Help!

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White Cross by Marlene Andoe

March 12, 2009

I received today from Valley Forge the requests for 09-10. They will be divided and handed out at Conference in June.

Inform your churches it is time for final 2008 reports. It is important to get me your reports so I can get them to Valley Forge

Times are hard and the need is big. So do your best. Any amount will help.

The forms have been reduced. The "Triple Payment Form" has been changed to White Cross payment form. This is on white paper, not color. Make a copy for yourself before you mail final reports. Good Luck.

Associate for Love Gift & Special Project:  
Rebecca Davis

We are approaching the end of our two-year National Special Project: “Break the Chains: of Human Trafficking. It was an honor to be in Washington, DC in July of 2007 at the American Baptist Churches USA Biennial when this project was launched. Only God knew at that time that I would be asked to serve as the Associate for Love Gift & Special Project in the GRR as the end of this project approached.

I am pleased to announce that from July, 2007 to the present \$238,857.33 has been received toward the national goal of \$250,000! God is good & this project has especially touched the hearts of both men and women in the ABC. Our goal in the GRR is \$30,000. As of the date of this report (3/13), we have received \$22,631.17 (07-08, \$16,790.34; 08-present \$5840.83).

Here in the GRR, we are especially proud that our own Sarah Chetti in Bierut, Lebanon will receive funds from this project for her Maids in Lebanon outreach ministry, as well as the Peoria Friendship House in Peoria, IL. We are also well acquainted with other recipients, Karen Smith (Thailand) & Mylinda Baits (Costa Rica). We must encourage these women, not only through our giving to the BTC, but also through our continuous prayers and encouraging e-mails, cards and letters.

**A special offering** will be taken at the Region Mission Conference (April 24-25) and a display on the Break the Chains project will be set up in the foyer of Cherry Hills Baptist Church. Stop by for copies of our brochure or to pick up information about the recipients of these funds.

**But . . . . . don't forget Love Gift!!!** Reports for the 2008 giving are in. The GRR did quite well, ranking 5<sup>th</sup> on the national list. Our total receipts for 2008 were \$32,815, down slightly from the 2007 total of \$33,856. Nationally, 2008 giving was down to \$553,282 from the 2007 total of \$621,972. In 2009, we have received \$1,261.88. Remember to put those LG dollars in your LG boxes. Encourage everyone to do the same.

**And . . .** we'll see you at Conference in June where we'll have a drawing for a great gift. Everyone who puts a dollar in the Special Project offering box on the display table will be eligible to win!

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Personal Development Coordinator  
Hilda Smith

A Devotion by Rick Warren, which I read recently, says “*You will never arrive at a state in life where you're too important to help with menial tasks*”. I remember once when we were on a Mission Work Project in Alaska and one of the daily jobs that needed doing was scrubbing toilets. We were asked if we were willing to do that. We said “Yes, we are here to help.”

We were reminded that Jesus did menial tasks that others tried to avoid. Nothing was beneath Him because he came to serve. He washed the disciples feet and He even served the lepers. Absolutely nothing was beneath Him.

Often great opportunities come as we serve others. Don't wait for big, important jobs to come along. Just bloom where you are planted.

Rick Warren says “There will always be more people willing to do GREAT things for God than there are people willing to do little things.” Next time you are asked to do some seemingly unimportant job be a willing servant (even if that means cleaning toilets.). The way God blesses will surprise you.

Matthew 25: 23 (NLT) “*Well done good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more responsibilities.*”

Church and Community  
Judy Allison

How do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time. When I accepted the position as Coordinator of Church and Community Ministries, I was overwhelmed with the task. This is such a broad ministry that it was difficult to know where to start. So like the elephant, it started with a nibble. What were we doing in the church and the community. Realizing that we do many things was a beginning. You, too may want to start here. After reading many reports, it was apparent that you are doing much across the GRRegion in your churches and your communities. One can get inspiration and ideas from seeing what others are doing.

Thinking about what we are doing is a good place to start. Since our community was celebration 100 years of our courthouse and that our congregation once met there, and because we are located on the square around the court house and because I have a love for history, this was a natural place to involve our church with the community. Volunteering to write the history of the businesses around the courthouse square, took five months of work. It involved working with the businessmen, lawyers, county officials, and many more. It was a way of showing our church's involvement in the community. We also constructed a float and shared the love of God through this float to the community.

Our women are also involved in volunteering to work for the American Cancer Society, the Red Cross, and the local hospital as grey ladies and serving birthday cakes to the nursing home residents. Persons are also involved in raising funds for a new hospital being built. We give and serve the local food pantry, serve as nurses for the hospice and the local health department. Our women serve on boards for political action. One can find many place to show your support for political action on the internet through emails, faxes, and phone calls for important issues such as the red envelopes in support of life.

Members of ABWM prepare Christmas Boxes for the needy in the community. We prepare and distribute Valentine Plates for members of the church and community. We inform our church of the positive actions of the ABWM in participating in this and other activities.

We worked with younger women in having a special dessert tea in April where a local musical group performed. We spend Wednesday after school time working with Kid's Club feeding, educating, and leading recreational time for these children. After seeing some of these children in school where we substitute, it is a good witness to them.

We reach out to the greater community by participating in mission projects such as sending used curriculum, food, and monetary support to our missions. Our July Breakfast in the park program this year was devoted to getting to know our missionaries better, plus our areas of emphasis. For the past two summers we have had Bible Studies for women of the church as well as women who came from the community to attend. We timed it so they could come at noon with their brown bags and get back to work.

We have said all of this to say that you do not have to have monthly meetings, which we do not have anymore. We only do the meetings that involve the most people and have the most interest. We have maintained our July Breakfast in the Park to inform the women of the June Conference and our October Brunch where we pay our yearly obligations, our Christmas Brunch for fellowship, and a spring tea of some sort. We have a Board to direct activities. Amazingly, the money comes in to support our activities when the needs are presented. As the local president I endeavor to keep our activities before the congregation to maintain their support. As you examine your local group, you will see that ABWomen naturally do much in their church and community. See how many elephants you have eaten without realizing it. Encourage your women in how they participate, even without coming to all of the activities.

SEE YOU AT THE RETREAT IN CARLINVILLE  
JUNE 5-7, 2009