

GREAT RIVERS REGIONAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS

There are scholarship programs in the Great Rivers Region to assist young people who are members of Great Rivers Region American Baptist Churches to help with college and/or seminary education costs.

Scholarships for any college student (regardless of major) or seminary student are available from the Gernenz-Shurtleff / Wilcoxon Scholarship.

Ministerial students attending ABC-related schools and seminaries in preparation for ministry can also apply for the Harold O. Long Scholarship. All applications must be received in the GRR office by April 1, 2009.

To receive an application for these scholarships, write to: Scholarship Committee, Att: Sharon Downs, PO Box 3786, Springfield, IL 62708, phone: 217-726-7366; fax: 217-726-7566, or email: Sharon@abcgrr.org



Harvest Grants

Harvest Grants are intended to empower and encourage churches to "open their eyes" to the fields all around them during 2009. These matching grants can be used by GRR churches for just about any evangelistic effort. Our operational definition of an "evangelistic effort" is any program, activity, or event **directed to those outside the church and including an intentional invitation to Christian discipleship.**

To get a packet, including application, call the GRR or download it from http://www.abcgrr.org/evangelism/Harvest_Grants_2009.pdf

The Mainstream is a twice-monthly publication of the American Baptist Churches of the Great Rivers Region, 3940 Pintail Drive, Springfield IL 62711

Telephone: (217) 726-7366 Fax: (217) 726-7566

Email: grrabc@abcgrr.org Web: www.abcgrr.org

Our Great Rivers Region Family Is Growing!

First Baptist Church, Jerseyville, IL Welcomes: Josh Ealey, Mandi Ealey, and Anna Hausman

First Baptist Church, Kansas City, MO Welcomes: John C Barton and Gay Barton

First Baptist Church, Macomb, IL Welcomes: Julie Bunch, Damaris Hanson, Derek Helling, Gerald Jones, Pat Jones, and Emily Richardson

First Baptist Church, Newton, IL Welcomes: Alexis Davidson, Caelin Dhom, RaeLee Dhom, Ivie Iffert, Jacob Iffert, Taylor Alzate, David McCall, Pamela McCall, Maria Huddleston, and Phyllis Rudolphi

Northern Baptist Church, West Frankfort, IL Welcomes: Kathy Johnson and Daniel Johnson

Mainstream Contact Information

Send your stories of mission and ministry. Please also send the names of new members (fruit of this mission and ministry) to:

Linda Ricks

232 Devron Circle

East Peoria, IL 61611

E-Mail: Ricks4Lr@comcast.net



The Mainstream

News of Ministry and Mission

American Baptist Churches of the Great Rivers Region

January 2009 No. 1 Email: grrabc@abcgrr.org web: www.abcgrr.org

GRR Calendar

2009 Theme - Plant the Harvest

January

16 - 19 - SKWIM at Green Lake

March

14 - Area V Annual Meeting,
FBC Edwardsville IL

15 - Area II Annual Meeting
Jacksonville FBC

21 - Area IV Annual Meeting
First Baptist Church, Benton IL

22 - Area I Annual Meeting
First Baptist Church, Ottawa IL

22 - Area III Annual Meeting
North Bridge Baptist Church
Normal, IL

April

17 - 18 - Clergy Spouse Retreat
Lake Springfield Camp

24 - 25 - GRR Missions Conference
Cherry Hills Baptist
Church, Springfield, IL

May

28 - Church for All Generations
with Edward H. Hammett
FBC Bloomington, IL

Grace Baptist Church Ministers To Karen Refugees

Grace Baptist Church, Kansas City, MO has had a ministry of mentoring and friendship with the Karen refugees since June of 2008. Working through JVS (Jewish Vocational Services) as the sponsoring resettlement agent, Grace has found many ways to build a bridge of friendship to these new residents in our community.



Karen Committee pictured left to right: Ina May Fakhoury, Pastor David Moor, Vangie Webb, Carolyn Baxter, Carolyn Cook-Head, Ed Baxter, Nancy Ashworth, and Don Fakhoury.

The church members have provided transportation to church, Bible School, Wednesday suppers, choir practice, community events, home visits, and English classes at a nearby school. Since the church does not own a van, many members volunteer their vehicles to transport about 60 Karen on Sunday mornings.

(continued on p. 3)

Bethel Neighborhood Center News

It was the day before Thanksgiving and I was in Pennsylvania with family when I got the call from Bethel: "Can you use 1000 pounds of chicken?" Even though I had difficulty picturing how much space 1000 pounds of chicken would occupy, I said "yes!" This Tyson chicken was donated by the Kansas City Chiefs and distributed by Harvesters.

In mid December our faithful volunteers from Grace Baptist, Kansas City, MO went on a snowy day to Arrowhead Stadium to pick up the 28 cases of frozen chicken. It completely filled a large pickup truck with about 3 cases in the cab. We distributed it to refugees on both sides of the River (about 20 families). Some was given to three of our churches that have food pantries in Kansas City, Kansas or cook meals for the poor. The rest we kept at Bethel to give to families that participate in our programs.



Matthew Sweeten, Bethel Program Director, holding two of the 28 cases of chicken.

It took just 45 minutes from the time we unloaded the pickup truck until all the chicken was either in the freezer or on its way to the families. What a great group of staff and volunteers we have to help with such a great gift. We are always dependent

on the contributions of churches and individuals, but it is a special day when we get a donation of 1000 pounds of chicken without even asking! Look us up on line at www.bethelcenter.org or give us a call at 913-371-8218.

*Ed Baxter,
Interim Executive Director.*

Skinner Family Home Nears Completion

Colten and Duey Skinner enjoyed visiting with guests at the December 21st Open House celebrating the near completion of their new handicap accessible home in Jerseyville.



First Baptist members Tim & Kaye Buis, Kim Hawkes, Kellie Hill and Debbie Wedding were the nucleus of what became a community wide effort to provide a new home for the family.

In their old house the boys could not use their wheelchairs making it necessary for them to crawl from room to room. The new house has an open floor plan with handicap rooms and baths for each of the boys, as well as access to all parts of the home in their motorized chairs.

Minor detail work inside the house will soon be finished so the family can move into the house. In the spring volunteers will complete the project by working on landscaping and sidewalks. The entire project was made possible by donations of time, money, and labor of local volunteers. The Skinner family are members of Jerseyville First Baptist Church.

Cookoff Challenge

Bethel Baptist Church of Sharnsburg, IL and Old Stonington Baptist Church, Stonington, IL went head to head (or stomach to stomach, as it were) on December 26, 2008. Chef (Pastor) Eric Hunt and sous chef, Issac



Hunt, represented Old Stonington while Chef Tim Sievers (Pastor Ted Marrinan's son-in-law) and sous chef Tracy Lee Sievers represented Bethel Baptist in a challenge to prepare an appetizer, an entree and a side dish to serve 4 people within an hour's time limit.



Each chef was given a week's notice on the list of ten possible ingredients. The rules of the challenge stipulated that five of the ten items had to be used as main ingredients but other 'garnish' ingredients could be used as deemed necessary. Each chef then brought their needed kitchen implements and 'garnish' ingredients and were allowed to arrive one hour prior to the contest to set up their equipment and work space, but no food could be prepared until the appointed starting time.

Each chef gave running commentary on their methods and choices to the crowd gathered for the event. Pastor Ted Marrinan also

interviewed the chefs and shared some background information on each of the chosen ingredients.

At the conclusion of the time limit the table was set and food presented. After appropriate recognition and prizes were awarded, the people were allowed to sample each dish. Everyone got a sample of each as both chefs prepared enough to serve everyone. The entry fee for the spectators was a finger food dish or dessert to share. Coffee, tea, punch and soft drinks rounded out the evenings repast.

"This was a fun way to get our two churches to come together," commented Pastor Hunt. Plans are currently underway for the next Cookoff Challenge which may be focused on a bar-b-que meal coupled with an ice cream social for both churches.

Grace Karen Ministry (continued)

Help with furnishing apartments, car seats, bicycles, clothing needs, bedding supplies, school supplies, fans, and food are just some of the expressions of caring given to our new friends. Volunteers have taught new skills, played games, tutored young children in reading and math, and opened their homes to mentor them in their new culture.

Recently Duane Binckley visited Grace Baptist to assist in our ministry. JVS noticed the exceptional amount of commitment on the part of the church in the resettlement process. They recently invited the committee from Grace Baptist to come to their annual meeting to accept The Dr. Marvin Borden Distinguished Service Award for volunteer efforts.