

UM MEN

The magazine of United Methodist Men



SHAPE UP

A letter from the General Secretary



This issue is all about “getting in shape” not just physically or health wise, but in every aspect of our lives.

Just a few words about how things are shaping up here at GCUMM. The

first of this year we had a great planning retreat with the staff, deployed staff, jurisdictional presidents and the National Gathering Planning Committee. It was a wonderful group and we worked hard to plan our key meetings this spring and summer.

We are so blessed to have the deployed staff. Everywhere they go and every task they do is done with skill and grace. These guys love Jesus, and they keep me in shape and on track. As you plan for your meetings this spring and for the meetings of your annual conference, please consider having one of these four guys there.

As you read in our last issue, and will read in today’s issue, things are going well with the plans for the 11th National Gathering. Reservations began coming in last month, and each place we talk about it there is great excitement. All the plans and preparations for your arrival are in great shape.

Another place where things are shaping up is in local churches like yours. Men continue to meet monthly or weekly in traditional UMM meetings, but they know

that only reaches a small number of the men in their church and in their community. They are adding men’s Bible studies, men’s studies, sport ministries, community-help ministries, mentoring through Boy Scouts of America or Big Brothers Big Sisters, and reading to kids at a local school. The long list of activities is driven by the Holy Spirit and your imagination.

All the men of your church should know there is a place for them to meet with other men at church, a coffee shop, an office, or via Google+ or Skype.

As some of you know, I have four meetings with men every week. One of those meetings is face-to-face, the other three are face-to-face via my computer. Interestingly, I am more consistent with the electronic meetings as I can participate in them as I travel for this great church.

As you might have read in the bi-monthly electronic newsletter (sign up on our website), in conjunction with Rethink Church and with men from several other denominations, I would like you to participate in a day of service on Saturday, April 27th. Do something as a men’s ministry that shapes up your church, a local school or a park. Plant a community garden, visit a hospital, nursing home or Veteran’s center, or do whatever and where ever God leads you on that day. Take a few pictures, write a few lines, and send them to me.

May we continue to realize all the ways God is blessing us and shaping us as we journey together. –

Striving to be His servant,
Gilbert C. Hanke
General Secretary
General Commission on
United Methodist Men



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UM Men

Spring 2013

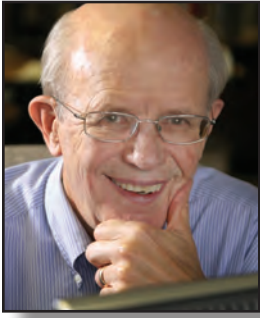
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Editor's note: This magazine includes articles from individuals who hold diverse opinions. We hope all articles are thought provoking; they are not necessarily the opinions of the General Commission on UM Men.



You used to be a runner didn't you Uncle Rich?"

That was the question my 22-year-old Denver nephew

asked me during a 1977 Thanksgiving visit with us.

"Well, yes I was," I responded proudly. "I was a state mile champ in high school and received a full-tuition track scholarship to the University of Colorado."

"Is there a local 5K Thanksgiving Day race we could run together?" asked Jim.

"I'll check and see."

Sure enough there was a 5K that began at 7 a.m. in a Nashville park.

I pulled out an old pair of running shoes and Jim and I hurried off to the park.

"I better only set a 6 minute pace," I said as we toed the starting line. "I haven't run for 20 years." The truth is I regarded running as a necessity to pay college expenses—not a fun activity—so it was easy to quit.

One half mile later, I was sucking wind. I barely jogged to an eight minute finish where Jim was waiting for his out-of-shape uncle.

Since I was a weekend warrior who played basketball, volleyball and softball, I thought I was in shape, but that sucking-oxygen event got me back into the habit of daily runs. Over the next 35 years, I competed in every-other-weekend races, Senior Olympics, triathlons, marathons and bike rides across Tennessee.

It's easy to get thinking Saturday activities are sufficient to keep us in shape, but the truth is getting in shape requires daily training.

When I was in seminary I was also in spiritual training. Old Testament, New Testament, church history, theology, homiletics, church administration courses and seminary chapel kept me in condition during the week. Sermon preparation, Sunday school, and service projects maintained that conditioning over the weekend.

After graduating from seminary, I confess, I only read Scripture as I needed to for sermon preparation, my prayer life diminished, and I only participated in service projects when the church sponsored an event.

Yes, we can also get out of shape spiritually.

It's easy to think that we can maintain spiritual conditioning with a Sunday morning worship service, but true spiritual conditioning requires daily prayers and Bible reading along with weekly worship, study in a small group and weekly service projects.

It may not be a serious thing for us to get out of shape physically for we will operate in our bodies for only a few decades.

However, getting out of shape spiritually could have eternal consequences.

When we finally jog up for a final examination, we don't want to hear our heavenly coach tell us we are out of shape and there's no time for additional training.

This issue of *UM Men* discusses ways in which we can shape up physically, financially and spiritually. We'd better pay special attention to our spiritual conditioning.

Rich Peck

Care for the body and the spirit

By Bishop Robert T. Hoshibata

From the early days of the Methodist movement, John Wesley was a proponent of healthy living. He even wrote *Primitive Physick*, a book filled with advice on good health.

Some of his advice seems like common sense to us today. Wesley urged people to exercise regularly and get lots of fresh air. He also suggested that it was important to eat right and to abstain from alcohol.

But then he warned: "Coffee and tea are extremely hurtful to persons who have weak nerves" (I call this meddling with church fellowship hour).

By these and other suggestions, Wesley insisted that we take special care of our bodies.

But more importantly, he counseled early Methodists to maintain a healthy spirit.

Tests for spiritual wellness

When Wesley gathered with the faithful at class meetings, he asked, "How is it with your soul?" He wanted each person to prayerfully look at his or her own life and honestly reflect about what was missing or needed improvement.

Wesley said you are not spiritually well if:

- you have any sin;
- you constantly think more highly of yourself than you ought;
- you hate anyone;
- you are envious, angry, or bitter, or
- your conversations are marked by profane, untrue or unkind words.

According to Wesley, these are among the things that "will cleave your innermost soul" and make you spiritually unhealthy.

We all stand in need of healing

You and I are blessed in many ways but we experience times when all is not well with our soul. We all stand in need of healing from time to time. If you had an honest conversation with God what would you lift up for healing in your life?

We need to do this difficult work of self-reflection and prayer with God because we must be spiritually healthy before we can be fully engaged in ministry that proclaims the good news of Jesus to the community and the world.

Let's get our own house in order before we try to clean the neighbor's house!

Lots of people need to hear the Good News and know the healing touch of Jesus. We know hard-working folk who have lost their jobs. There are persons in our congregations who are hungry and homeless, perhaps having lost all they own in the economic downturn. Hatred, prejudice and fear of those who are different from us continue to injure and divide us.

Deep grief envelops those who have lost a loved one. Many fearful people have hit absolute rock bottom and need the healing that we can offer.

People of the resurrection

Some people think we are a dying church. When I hear that, I can't help but think: Where is your faith? We are a church whose faith is in a mighty God



Bishop Robert T. Hoshibata preaches during worship at the 2012 United Methodist General Conference in Tampa, Fla. A UMNS photo by Mike DuBose.


of Resurrection, God of the empty tomb and God of the Risen Christ who heals and can bring new life to our United Methodist Church.

Our faith should stir our hearts and inspire us to care for all others, and when that happens, we become instruments of the healing love of Jesus Christ in the world.

Imagine a church that believes in and lives the power of resurrection and hope, where spiritually healthy disciples of Jesus Christ are inspired by passionate worship, drawn closer to God and closer to one another, connecting us in genuine love. That's a church where disciples are healed and strengthened in faith and empowered for evangelism and ministry.

Imagine a church for all God's children—intentionally opening hearts, minds, and doors to everyone. Imagine a church where disciples of Jesus Christ proclaim and practice acceptance of all others without regard for who they are, or what they look like, or who they love. That's a church healed of fear and mistrust.

Imagine a church that refuses to be static, and instead chooses to be an active movement, launched by the Holy Spirit, venturing out of steepled walls into the world, moving out into neighborhoods and communities in grace-filled ministries of justice and reconciliation with the hungry, homeless, and the marginalized. That's a church afire with new life for mission and ministry that changes lives and transforms communities. That's a church that cares for one another and proclaims the good news of Jesus Christ to all.

That's a church that knows love heals. 

Phoenix Area Bishop Robert T. Hoshibata was elected into the episcopacy in 2004. After serving two terms of episcopal leadership over the Portland Area, he was assigned to the Desert Southwest Conference. This article is adapted from a sermon the bishop delivered at the 2012 General Conference.

Rebuilding the temple

By Dr. Steve Furr

United Methodists know how to preach a sermon. We are masters at it. We teach courses on it. But being a sermon is a whole different matter. That is what will really preach.

At one point in my life I weighed 236 pounds, and I am only 5 foot 3 inches tall.

Today I weigh 157 pounds.

As part of my personal transformation, a part of me had to die so the real me could live.

Churches are places for transformation

Today, as we struggle to transform our lives and our churches, we must realize some things are going to have to die; some things are going to have to be left behind so that we can continue to live—and thrive

If you are not willing to be transformed by the grace and power of God how can you hope to transform your local church, much less the world? If you are not willing to participate in the



Dr. Steve Furr, a physician in Jackson, Ala., and the lay leader of the Alabama West Florida Annual Conference, speaks to the 2012 General Conference. The 5'3" physician once weighed 236 pounds, and after watching his diet and working out at the gym, he lost 61 pounds prior to delivering the laity address at General Conference.

disciplines of Bible reading and prayer, how do you hope to be transformed into God's image?

As a young person, as I struggled to determine if I really wanted to wholly follow this one called the Christ, it was the transformed lives of the people who chose to follow Jesus that sealed my decision. Lives so transformed, so different, that some of them even had to change their names—from Simon to Peter, and Saul to Paul. They were such different people it was as if they had been born again.

Jesus chose to transform the world by transforming 12 individuals. He invested himself in their lives and their development. He has given us the model by which transformation is to occur.

Gyms are places for transformation

As I go to work out, I see people who come and spend most of their time in the gym talking about what they're going to do and rarely doing it. The gym is not a place for talking. It's an action place. It's a place of transformation where our bodies are changed from one form into another.

Our churches and our men's organizations must also be places of transformation.

Even when my personal temple was in disarray, I always knew that it would not remain that way. I always had the

belief that one day not just my Savior, but my King would come. Not just the one who would save me but the one who would empower me and set me free.


No matter how dark or dim the days, no matter how far I strayed from my true purpose, I knew that He would come with power and majesty, and that once again He would clean out His temple and make it a place of worship and prayer.

Truly Jesus Christ is the best personal trainer ever!

We can change personally--and corporately.

Rabbi Samuel M. Silver says that "The greatest of all miracles is that we need not be tomorrow what we are today, but we can improve if we make use of the potential implanted in us by God." Praise God!

I'll see you in the gym of life. But then again, you might not recognize me because I've been transformed.

And by the way, offer a gym membership to somebody else along the way. 



Dr. Steve Furr is lay leader of the Alabama-West Florida Annual Conference. This article is adapted from a speech he delivered at the 2012 General Conference.

HUMOR

Actor pawns ring

A Broadway actor, who thought very highly of himself, had been travelling in style through New York for weeks when he suddenly realized he had no more money. He entered a pawn shop, pulled a large ring from his finger and said: "My good man, this ring is known as the Star of India. It's yours for 10,000 dollars."

The pawn shop owner said: "I'll give you 20."

The actor protested loudly: "Don't you know who I am? I am the biggest name on the Broadway stage."

To which the pawn shop owner sang: "When you wish to pawn a star, makes no difference who you are!"



Ironman pastor shows 'Anything is Possible'

*A UMNS Feature by Susan Passi-Klaus**

Emotionally, the Rev. Scott Sharp was in a rut. Physically, his body was a mess. And, spiritually, he admits he was having a midlife crisis of meaning. Something had to change.

"I had to do something to prove to myself that I wasn't dead yet," Sharp said. "After two knee surgeries, being in the hospital twice for viral meningitis and then being told I had a heart condition that required implanting a pacemaker, I was shaken pretty deep."

The 44-year-old pastor decided a makeover was in order—inside and out.

Last May, he started training for a triathlon—not just any triathlon, but the Ironman variety. How



tough is this pinnacle of human-endurance sports? Ironmen wannabes must be able to swim 2.4 miles, then hop on a bike for a 112-mile ride and then run a full 26.2 marathon before calling it a day—all in 17 hours or less.

When people heard he was taking on the challenge—especially his congregants at Central UMC in Albuquerque—they asked, "Why?" and "How?"

"The 'why' I answered by saying I wanted to prove that anything is possible—just like the Ironman mantra," Sharp said. "For me as a pastor, I know that 'with God anything is possible' also comes straight out of Luke's Gospel.

"Every moment I can," is the way the father of three answered the 'how' question.

Cut to the chase—The first-time competitor successfully crossed the finish line in May in The Woodlands, Texas, where he heard the race announcer say, "Scott Sharp... you are an Ironman!"

Sweat poured from his brow. His arms rose in victory. Hands in the crowd reached out for high-fives. His wife cried. Mission accomplished. Now the victorious pastor/athlete could cross the Ironman Triathlon off his bucket list.

Out of shape clergy

Sharp described himself in the same boat as many other clergy.

"We're an unhealthy group in almost every category," he said. "We don't handle stress very well, even though we have high stress jobs. We work too much. We're a sedentary bunch. We don't take care of ourselves physically. We're not doing the things we're supposed to be doing.

"Ultimately, I think it's a matter of discipleship," Sharp said. "I don't think we're called to lead people into unhealthy lives, and too often that's what we model ourselves."

One of the lessons that came out of training for the Ironman was that no one was going to do the physical work except Sharp. No matter what the demands were on his time — and there were many—ultimately the daily decision to walk, swim, bike or run was up to Sharp. He began to see a parallel between his physical training and taking responsibility for his spiritual "workout" as well.

"At first, it was about overcoming illness," he said. "But it's really about the meaning of life. It's about what it means to live and die.

"One of the things I figured out after the Texas Ironman was that if I'm not dead yet, then what am I alive for? That's been a great question to wrestle with as a pastor, as a dad and a husband. Is what I'm doing meaningful? Is it making a difference? Is it effecting change? Is it transforming the world for Jesus Christ?"


Sharp said that for the first time in a very long time, he feels "inspired."

"I've had a lot of people tell me,



The Rev. Scott Sharp from Central United Methodist Church in Albuquerque, N.M., competes in Ironman Texas. The Ironman pushes participants to their athletic limits with a 2.4-mile swim, 112-mile bike ride and 26.2-mile run. Photos by FinisherPix

"I don't know what's going on with you, but your sermons have been really provocative and a lot more impassioned," he said. "For a long time, I wasn't invited to really change my life, and I think that sometimes that's what the church fails to do ... inspire people to change their lives and to dig deeper into what it means to be a person of faith.

"The Ironman has reminded me that there's always risk involved in life and that we have to try things that we don't know if we can accomplish." 

**Passi-Klaus is a public relations specialist for United Methodist Communications.*

Reflections on the Ironman

By Scott Sharp

Crossing the finish line at the Ironman triathlon and hearing the phrase “Scott Sharp you are an Ironman” was one of the best moments of my life. Through the bumper-car like swim, the hot and windy 112-mile bike ride and the agonizing 26.2-mile run I absolutely enjoyed myself for 12 hours 48 minutes and 44 seconds. Truthfully, it was over too fast.

As I trained for the race while overcoming obstacles related to health and eventually completed the race I learned a lot about myself as a man, as a pastor and as a Christian.

As a man, I learned that as much as my strength mattered in the race I also had to be keenly aware of my weaknesses. The cramping muscles, the nagging hamstring injury and the voice of doubt in my head were all facets of my race that I had to acknowledge and respect. Finding the balance between focusing on my strengths while at the same time being aware of my weakness during the race taught me a lot about how I deal with people as a man. Sometimes what we do is about our strength and sometimes it is about our weakness. The good news is that God’s grace is made perfect in our weakness.

Part of training for an Ironman requires “brick” workouts. In a brick workout two of the three elements of the triathlon are practiced back to


back. Often during my training I would ride my bike for several hours and then go run for an hour. The toughest part of the brick workout is the shift between disciplines. As a pastor I am shifting between disciplines every day. One moment I am studying for a sermon and the next I am visiting in a hospital. One day will have multiple

meetings which move between administrative details and big picture vision. One element of pastoral ministry is the ability to move between disciplines with agility and effectiveness; the Ironman taught me a lot about that.

Finally, as a Christian and a person of faith, the Ironman taught me about love. My wife and children loved me enough to support me in this endeavor for a year as I trained, wound up in the hospital, got very

depressed and trained some more. My wife especially demonstrated sacrificial love in a way that I could never say thank you enough.

Similarly, having the experience of racing the Ironman with my younger brother and my brother-in-law allowed me to love them as I supported their training, their goals, their set-backs and their achievements.

In the end, it was not me who became an Ironman—it was us; my family, my friends and my church who supported me. And we did this because of love. 





How to get in shape spiritually

The Rev. Tom Albin

All we have to offer God is our spiritual vitality. Regardless of our age, height, race, or body composition, each of us has a unique ministry and mission. Our ability to achieve that mission and glorify God in our ministry is directly related to our vitality—body, mind, and spirit.

Here is a checklist to help assess your spiritual vitality. Rate yourself on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being low and 5 being high.

Spiritual Diet:

Just as our bodies need food, oxygen, and water, our souls need the spiritual bread of scripture, the oxygen of prayer, and the living water of the Holy Spirit. How is your diet?

1 Desperate for help **2** Need help **3** Doing OK **4** Feeling fit **5** In the Spirit

Spiritual Exercise: Just as our bodies need exercise, we need spiritual exercise: time spent reading scripture, meditating on what we read, praying alone, and praying with our families and other Christians. Fasting, silence, and participation in the Lord's Supper are also essential spiritual exercises. How is your current level of intentional spiritual exercise?

1 Desperate for help **2** Need help **3** Doing OK **4** Feeling fit **5** In the Spirit

Spiritual Rest:

What happens if we do not get adequate sleep and rest or if we never take a vacation? We become tired, dull, and irritable—unable to care for ourselves and useless to others. The same is true with our souls; if we do not make time for spiritual rest, silence, contemplation, and occasional spiritual retreats, we find ourselves spiritually weary, heavy, dull—unable to care for ourselves and useless to others. Are you spiritually rested and available?

- 1**
Desperate for help
- 2**
Need help
- 3**
Doing OK
- 4**
Feeling fit
- 5**
In the Spirit

Spiritual Relationships:

We were created in God’s image for relationship with God and others. The worst thing we can do to human beings is to put them in solitary confinement. Do you have a soul friend or spiritual guide or mentor—someone who can help you grow in grace?

- 1**
Desperate for help
- 2**
Need help
- 3**
Doing OK
- 4**
Feeling fit
- 5**
In the Spirit

Time:

Jesus had much to say about the use of time, talents, and money. If someone looked at your appointment calendar for one week, would the way you invest your time reveal that you are a Christian? Do you know how to work, rest, pray, and play? God rested on the Sabbath. Do you? Circle the number that reflects your spiritual time management.

- 1**
Desperate for help
- 2**
Need help
- 3**
Doing OK
- 4**
Feeling fit
- 5**
In the Spirit

Talents:

Jesus’ teaching is clear: every one of us has at least one talent or special ability. God expects us to use our talents to build up the body of Christ, the church, and to make a positive difference in the world.

- 1**
Desperate for help
- 2**
Need help
- 3**
Doing OK
- 4**
Feeling fit
- 5**
In the Spirit

Treasure:

Jesus said, “Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” Do your bank and credit card statements reflect the importance of God in your life? How much are you investing in evangelism, missions, and caring for the poor, imprisoned, or oppressed?

- 1**
Desperate for help
- 2**
Need help
- 3**
Doing OK
- 4**
Feeling fit
- 5**
In the Spirit

Now total all the numbers you circled. If the total is between:

0-10: Emergency spiritual life support needed! Consult with your pastor or spiritual mentor for help and guidance now; don't wait until Sunday.

11-19: Ask God to guide you to a Christian man with spiritual strength and maturity to be your mentor. You won't make it on your own. Seek prayer support and guidance from your pastor, lay leader, and one or two Christian men you respect. You can wait until Sunday, but not more than a week.

20-24: You are doing OK. Is that good enough for you? for your spouse? for your children? Are you the spiritual role model, protector, and provider they need? Remember, you are not in this world for yourself—you are here to be a spiritual partner with your spouse and, together, to raise a new generation of disciples.

25-29: Well done, good and faithful servant! Open your heart and life to the Holy Spirit's presence and power. Pray for wisdom (see James 1:5). Nothing less than the wisdom and will of God will satisfy your soul.

30-35: Give thanks to God for your life. Enjoy it and give it away! Pray that God will give you wisdom to be a spiritual leader, teacher, and mentor to your biological children and your spiritual children. If you are married, ask your spouse to help you discern new ways to give her the spiritual support she needs. Explore ways the two of you can pass on the love and joy of the Christian life to your children and grandchildren.



Concluding Thoughts

My good friend John Mogabgab reminded me recently that the spiritual foundation for a man begins at home. A man's spiritual vitality is directly related to the spiritual practice and unity in his home. The Upper Room bookstore has some excellent resources if you need help (bookstore.upperroom.org).

For many men, prayer and action go together. We can pray with our hands as well as our hearts. The key is to pray as you can, not as you can't.


Derek Maul is another friend with great books and great insight. If you have not read *10 Life-Charged Words for Men* and *Get Real: A Spiritual Journey for Men*, please get them soon. If you are an extravert, start a small group and study these books with other men who want to grow spiritually. If you are an introvert, find a prayer partner or spiritual guide.

Remember these five words from Derek: **Intentionality, Regularity, Repetition, Struggle, and Accountability.**

1. *Intentionality:* We have to make a deliberate choice to become spiritually fit. It's not something that happens without intention and planning.
2. *Regularity:* Personally, the only time I make significant spiritual progress is when I have a regular, focused time with God every day. Like air, water, and nourishment, spending time with God is essential.

3. *Repetition:* Repetition is distinct from regularity in that it helps move the heart-level learning of regularity into the hardwired reflexes of our moment-by-moment life. Spend three minutes with God when you get up? Repeat that three minutes on the hour, every hour and see your spiritual muscles begin to bulge.

4. *Struggle:* Struggle is at the heart of fitness. Muscles have to break down in order to build up. Likewise, working through the dry times, the uninspiring prayer interludes, and the dull Bible readings typically leads to a breakthrough. God respects our commitment to the struggle.

5. *Accountability:* I believe accountability is crucial to spiritual fitness. Join a men's group; meet a trusted friend for coffee; touch base frequently with another man who knows your struggle; find a mentor; disciple someone yourself. Spiritual community is an essential part of spiritual vitality. 



The Rev. Tom Albin is dean of The Upper Room Ministries and Ecumenical Relations with the General Board of Discipleship.

Tips for good health

By Dr. John Bright Cage

How do you live your life?

You love God; you try your best to take care of your family, but what do you do with your spare time? Do you sit in front of the TV or a computer? Do you have snacks beside you? I'm willing to guess it's not yogurt or celery sticks.



UM men need to take control of their lives in ways that honor their bodies.

It's not just about exercise; it is also about what we put in our bodies, how we handle stress, adjust to the aging process and keep our bodies around long enough to enjoy this life as long as we can in a productive way.

Our bodies are holy temples. What we do to [and put inside them] is a matter of respect to God. To say the least, most of us are not doing what we should.

Diet

A lot of processed and fast foods have way too much sodium and calories. A quarter-pounder with cheese has over half of a day's worth of recommended daily allowance of sodium. Add fries, and you are now over the recommended maximum, not to mention the calories. One fast food meal can provide a full day's worth of



calories. It takes walking a mile to offset the calories contained in a 12 oz. regular Coke. Now supersize everything, and guess where you are.

It is no surprise—60 percent of Americans are overweight. Look around the next time you go to the mall, airport or church. Obesity is epidemic.

Taking control of your diet and weight requires a change in life-style. You have to make up your mind that you will not snack between meals or after supper. When you get hungry, you need to control your appetite with foods that do not have empty calories. Take a walk with your wife or children. Find ways to cook meals that do not have the word "Crisco" in them.

Fried is bad; baked and broiled is good. See how easy that was. Yes, we all love fried chicken. Yes, we can still have it, but not every Sunday! Pasta, salads, lean cuts of meat, are all good in moderation. Take smaller portions. Stay away from seconds. Know your LDL cholesterol level. Be accountable to someone.

Sleep

Do you get enough sleep? Until we hit the Medicare age, we still typically need 7-8 hours of sleep. Later on in life, most of us need less. Late night television has robbed us of needed sleep. A predictable and consistent bed time is likewise important to our health.



Limit your alcohol. Yes, it can make you sleepy, but typically it wears off in the middle of the night and then you cannot go back to sleep. It can also work havoc on your prostate and cause trips to the bathroom when you should be sleeping.

Prescription drugs for sleep are all potentially addictive. Once you start them, you will not be able to go to sleep without them. They can also have untold side effects. One of my patients started on a familiar prescription sleeping pill. The next morning he noticed there was an empty McDonald's sack and empty wrappers of a quarter-pounder with cheese, fries and Coke. He had no clue how they got there. He had no recollection of getting out of bed, much less driving and going to a fast-food establishment. Be careful when you start any new drug.

Going cold turkey off sleeping meds will work; but you will have a few sleepless nights until the effects wear off. Many of the over-the-counter sleep aids have either Benadryl or Melatonin as their primary agents. In most cases, these are not harmful, but can still give you an early morning "hangover," whereby you still feel sleepy once you awake in the morning.

Try to use the last 30 minutes of the day in a quiet setting and put the computer away.

Aging

How do we grow old gracefully?

The first half of our lives is full of creating and doing. Our bodies heal quickly and misadventures are more forgiving. The second half of our lives is accompanied by aches and pains as our bodies wear down.

Our prostate forsakes us, our coronaries clog up, and the joints grind and ache. Our hearing goes and we need two or three pairs of glasses to get through the day. Constipation is a constant worry. The hair is gone and our stamina with it.


So how do we handle the aging process?

First, be aware of changes. Are you experiencing episodes of chest tightness or pressure? Have you noticed blood in your urine or stools? Are you losing weight without trying? Do you have a cough that will not go away?

New signs and symptoms should be investigated by your primary-care physician. They could be warning signs of a serious medical problem.

Be aware of the guidelines recommended for screening. Get an annual prostate exam by your primary care physician. Get a colonoscopy every ten years after age 50. Know your cholesterol levels.

Take each life stage as it is presented. Make the most of it. Honor your family and your faith. Focus on others, rather than your aches and pains.

The fall and winter of your life can be full of joy and wonder. 



Dr. John Bright Cage is a physician in Nashville and a member of the General Commission on UM Men

4,000 expected at National Gathering

United Methodist leaders expect 4,000 men to attend the 11th national gathering of United Methodist Men, this summer in Nashville.

Speakers for the gathering include Don Davis, former member of the Super Bowl Champion New England Patriots now serving as regional director of the NFL Players' Association; Mississippi Area Bishop James Swanson, president of the General Commission on United Methodist Men; the Rev. Shane Bishop, pastor of Christ United Methodist Church in Fairview Heights, Ill, a church that increased membership from 200 in 2009 to 1,000 in 2012; and David Delk, president of Man in the Mirror Ministries in Orlando, Fla.

The theme of the event will be "From the Inside Out," words from a song



5,000 men attend the 1957 national gathering at Purdue University

performed on a CD "Into the Light," by Phil Stacey, one of the five finalists on season six of the American Idol television show. The song is a prayer for Christ to change us from the inside out. The Nashville public will be invited to his concert on Saturday evening.

Richard Alegria, former president of Rio Grande Conference United Methodist Men will be the accompanist and son, Andrew Alegria, will serve as the choral director.



The site of the National Gathering was changed from Purdue University in West Lafayette, Ind., to Belmont University in Nashville in 2009. The 2013 gathering will be held at the same site, but new dormitories will be open.

Workshops, mission projects and basketball

Participants will be invited to attend two of 17 workshops on topics ranging from "Men's Health"; "Faith Sharing"; "What Women Wish Men Knew about Women and Spirituality"; "Sexual Sanity and Addictions"; "Freed up Financial"; "When Twitter Meets Scripture"; and "Conducting Prison Ministry."

A select crew will film, edit, upload,



The Rev. Shane Bishop



Bishop Swanson



David Delk



Don Davis



Phil Stacey

tweet, blog, interview and produce content to stream on the web.

The men will also sack 40,000 pounds of produce provided through the Society of Saint Andrew, package 100,000 Stop

Hunger Now dehydrated food packets for emergency situations around the world and build hand-carts for people in Africa who have lost the use of their legs.

On Friday afternoon, two 3-hour pre-event training experience will be offered for men interested in men's ministry or scouting ministry. The first event for everyone will be Friday evening and the weekend will end with worship and communion on Sunday morning.

For the first time, men will be invited to participate in a three-on-three half-court basketball tournament at Belmont. Men from the same church may enter teams in the under 40 and over 40 age competition. Winners of the tournament may claim they are national champions. Rules and brackets will be posted at www.ummgathering.org.

Great event

"Each year I seek out and attend many men's conferences and events," said Mark Lubbock a United Methodist pastor who serves as a part-time deployed staff member of the General Commission on United Methodist Men. "I can say without

qualification that the line-up of the 11th National Gathering is absolutely world class. The caliber of the speakers, the quality of the break-out sessions and the music is head & shoulders above what you can find elsewhere!"

Registration and costs

There are three ways to register. Men may mail a registration to GCUMM, P.O. Box 440515, Nashville, TN 37244-0515. They may call 615-340-7145; or they may register on line at www.ummgathering.org.

Cost of the event is \$239 if registration is received prior to March 15. That amount includes two dinners and a lunch. On campus housing for two nights is available for \$85. That price is based on two-person occupancy and includes breakfast. Neighboring hotels are available at prices ranging from \$99.95 to \$145 per night. Payment can be made by check or credit card.

History

This is the second quadrennial conference to be held in Nashville. Earlier gatherings were held at Purdue University in West Lafayette, Ind.

In 2009, the site was shifted to Belmont University, site of the 2008 U.S. presidential debate.

While this is the 11th national conference since the conclusion of World War II, Earlier meetings of Methodist Men were held in Indianapolis after World War I.



"The car won't start," said a wife to her husband. "I think there's water in the carburetor."

"How do you know?" said the husband scornfully. "You don't even know what the carburetor is."

"I'm telling you," repeated the wife, "I'm sure there's water in the carburetor."

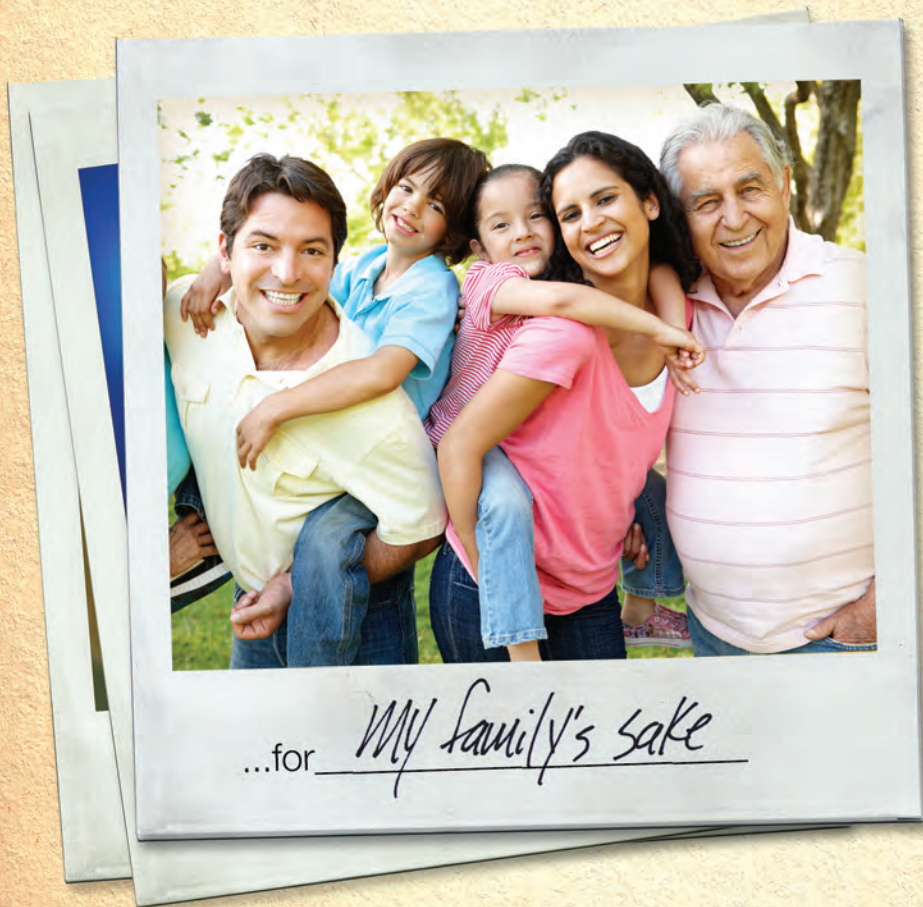
"We'll see," mocked the husband. "Let me check it out. Where's the car?"

"In the swimming pool."

HUMOR



I am making a global impact...



**Learn how to
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The Permanent Fund provides a permanent source of funding for the ministries of the United Methodist Church. Your estate gift truly does change the world for generations.



*The Permanent Fund for
The United Methodist Church*

umcglobalimpact.org



You'll spend about forty years working hard to provide for your family.

You'll spend another ten to twenty years conserving your earnings and investments.

It's important to make all of those years matter by thinking ahead, having a plan, and preparing for the future.

Planning Ahead

Would you believe that an estimated 70% of Americans don't have a will? Creating a will is the first step in the estate planning process and it will ensure your wishes are followed.

The Permanent Fund for the United Methodist Church provides a critical base of support for the mission of the United Methodist Church, and we offer a **free** online Estate Planning and Will preparation guide at www.umcglobalimpact.org. This password-protected site is a great way to start the process of planning for the future. To have a copy mailed to your home, please call or email Rhodes Logan, Development Director for the United Methodist Church General Council on Finance and Administration, at his office.

(615) 369-2382 rlogan@gcfa.org

Why should I consider naming The Permanent Fund of The United Methodist Church as a beneficiary of my estate?

God has the power to provide you with more than enough of every kind of grace. That way, you will have everything you need always and in everything to provide more than enough for every kind of good work.

—2 Corinthians 9:8

Naming the Permanent Fund as a beneficiary in your will means that The United Methodist Church is equipped for **effective ministry** to God's people everywhere.

A donation to the Permanent Fund of The United Methodist Church:

- supports local church ministries to adults and children and those with special needs
- provides college and graduate educations for those who may not otherwise have the opportunity
- helps eradicate killer diseases and improve healthcare in remote regions
- encourages a more ethical, just, and humane world

Rhodes Logan is available to assist in the process of completing the guide, and once your attorney has reviewed this document you will be on your way. If you do not have an estate planning attorney, we can assist you by recommending estate planning attorneys in your area.

I am making a global impact.

Art & Carol's Story

Carol's story is hypothetical, but demonstrates how an ordinary plan can make a real global impact on the United Methodist Church



When my husband, Art, passed away a few years ago I was devastated, of course, but grateful that he saw to it that the fruit of all our hard work was taken care of. We ran a small business for 40 years and were lucky enough to pass it on to our children, and my Art was meticulous about financial planning, so he made certain we would live comfortably after retirement. According to our kids, I have done a great job at managing my income since the death of my husband and God blessed us with a thriving business, so we have more than enough to give away. Once the kids and grandkids are taken care of, I can't think of any better place I'd want the blessings God bestowed on us to go, than to the United Methodist Church. As I finish my planning on this earth, I want to honor Art and give glory to God. I want to leave a much-needed gift for loved ones in order to care for their needs. I know that giving some of my estate to The United Methodist Church is an important way to love others by equipping God's ministry here on Earth, just as Art would have wanted. I am making a global impact for my husband, my Church, and its ministry.

Carol

Member of the United Methodist Church and donor to UMC global impact, the Permanent Fund of the United Methodist Church.



Everyone should give whatever they have decided in their hearts. They shouldn't give with hesitation or because of pressure. God loves a cheerful giver.
—2 Corinthians 9:7

What is estate planning?

The process of estate planning is simply deciding how, when, and to whom you will transfer the stewardship of what God has given to you when you are no longer able to serve as the steward.

Why is estate planning important?

Estate planning is important because it serves four needs:

Peace — An estate plan is designed to help you provide for those you love and protect both you and your family.

Provision — With the right plan you can pass along God's blessings to you in the right way, at the right time, and at minimal cost.

Protection — In addition, a good plan will provide for you in your senior years. It may be important to designate a specific person to manage your property, help doctors and other medical staff with important decisions, and make certain that you are receiving the best possible care. An estate plan can increase your lifetime security and also achieve your goals for family and the Church.

Spiritual Legacy — 1 Chronicles 29:11-12 clearly illustrates God's ownership of all. An estate plan acknowledges that planning helps to prepare the next stewards of God's grace and ensures that your plans are rooted in good stewardship.

What happens to my donations once it becomes part of the Permanent Fund of The United Methodist Church ?

This fund brings over 125 years of lifetime contributions from people who have given portions of their estates to the United Methodist Church.

The Permanent Fund provides a permanent source of funding for the ministries of the United Methodist Church and contributed more than \$3 million to missions around the world in the last 10 years. An estate gift to the Permanent Fund truly does change the world for generations.

Getting Started

- Visit www.umcglobalimpact.org and download the free *Your Legacy: A Christian Guide to Planning Your Will and Trust* (or complete it online). A copy can also be mailed to your home. rlogan@gcfa.org (615) 369-2382
- As you are filling out the guide, remember that Rhodes Logan if available to assist in the process.
- Decide how you'd like to include The Permanent Fund of The United Methodist Church in your estate planning.
- This guide will save time and expense when visiting your attorney, since you have already recorded the decisions about your estate plan. If you would like assistance in recommending an attorney in your area, we can help with this as well.

How can I learn more about estate planning, financial stewardship, and UMC global impact the Permanent Fund for the United Methodist Church?

Visit our website at
www.umcglobalimpact.org

or contact:

Rhodes Logan

Development Director
General Council on Finance and Administration

1 Music Circle North Nashville, TN 37203
Phone: (866) 369-2382



*The Permanent Fund for
The United Methodist Church*

My memories of previous gatherings

by Glenn Wintemberg

I attended my first gathering 24 years ago. At that time it was called the International Congress of UM Men.

I had never attended anything outside my local church and I had only been connected with my local UM Men group for 18 months prior to the time my local group asked if anyone was interested in attending,

I volunteered.

That decision on a whim started an amazing journey which still has a major effect on my life.

I was not looking forward to getting up at 4:30 a.m. to meet the bus that would leave at 6 a.m., but it didn't take long to realize this was the way to go. Taking a road trip with a bunch of like-minded guys made that first experience a memorable one.

It wasn't too many gatherings later that my son, Derek, joined me. He has attended the 2001 and 2005 events at Purdue University and the 2009 gathering at Belmont University. He has also attended South Central Jurisdiction gatherings in Oklahoma in 1999, Texas in 2003, and St. Louis in 2007.

I am proud of how Derek has matured over these years. Even at the age of 15, when Gil Hanke


and I were leading a presidents' training meeting, I suggested Derek go with a couple of other men to operate the prayer line. Derek had no previous experience and was going off with two men he had never met before.

Following the training, the men were singing Derek's praises on how he openly prayed for strangers on a phone. Over the years, he has participated on other prayer teams.

One of my favorite moments occurred during the 2005 gathering at Purdue when Derek and I were on stage where I was to give the traditional welcome as the new national president. Following the speech, I gave Derek a big hug.

It is rare when a son sees his dad pray, hug and cry and know that it is OK.

"It meant a lot to me," Derek told me, —"to be able to grow through experiences like that with you was very enriching. I am very proud to call you my dad and very grateful to be able to play a part in your life."

Dads—there is no better place for you to connect with your sons. I hope that you will be at Belmont with your son this July. 



Glenn Wintemberg served as president of the National Association of Conference Presidents from 2005 to 2008.

My memories of previous gatherings

by John P. Burlew

I first began attending the National Gathering of UM Men in 1977.

I heard about the event in 1973, just a week before it took place, but I was too late to register, and I wasn't sure that I even wanted to attend. My new pastor, the Rev. C. Gordon Chaphe, told me that a group of men from his former church were going and he told me about the interest it had stirred in those men.

"Maybe next time," I said to myself.

I went on about my business.

Since I was serving as lay leader of the Syracuse (New York) District, I was a member of UM Men and ready to attend the National Gathering at Purdue University in July, 1977.

Plenty of advance information was made available at our Conference UM Men retreat in the fall of 1976. Excitement was growing.

We chartered a 46-passenger bus, and our wagon

master, Jack Starr, provided us with music while the other passengers shared snacks with everyone on the bus. Jack even had a Bible quiz that he made us take. "No cheating," he admonished. "Remember, God is watching!"

I was surprised at the caliber of men I met on the bus. Their commitment to God and their church was deep and spiritually well-grounded. Some of the men became close friends that week-end, and I had 45 new contacts with UM Men that helped me over the following 35 years.

Since 1977, I attended national Purdue gatherings in 1981, '85, '89, '93, '97, 2001, 2005, and the 2009 gathering in the beautiful city of Nashville.

Nashville is a happening place!


Belmont University is a beautiful campus that has all of the amenities to make a weekend a religious experience without you knowing it 'til the ride home!

I even watched a 70-year old man climb the rock

wall in one of the buildings!! I asked a knowledgeable man, "Who was that climber?" He said, "That is Rich Peck, editor of UM Men magazine."

The takeaway from this story is that over those 35 years, I have been RIDING WITH SAINTS. I can't tell you all of the great speakers I heard at these events, or the great singers and wonderful music (except Vince Gill- he was special!).

Had I never taken the opportunities to attend these gatherings, I would have never met these

spiritually powerful men. Some were farmers, some mechanics, some pastors, and some teachers. They all had stories to tell, and I was lucky enough to hear them. 



John P. Bulew is a former president of North Central New York Conference UM Men and he is a current director on the board of the UM Men Foundation

My experiences at previous National Gatherings

By Richard Alegria Jr.

As a 24-year-old Hispanic man from a small congregation, my first visit to Purdue University in 1973 was very memorable.

Prior to the trip I had served for 13 years as a pianist with the men of my home church, El Buen Pastor UMC in Corpus Christi, Texas. My father, Richard Alegria Sr., had decided that his piano-playing son would keep the Corpus Christi men in tune. I had also played for annual Rio Grande Conference spiritual retreats since I was 18 years old.

When I arrived at Purdue in 1973, I was overwhelmed by the size of the campus. I remember getting to the Great Hall for the first plenary session. I got there late and had to sit in the last row of seats. The singing of those 5,000 men still gives me goose bumps.

The speakers were inspiring and the music was incredible. I still remember Bill Mann singing "Born Free." Oris Baldwin, a truly gifted musician, was the pianist.

I hoped one day I would be on stage.

Four years later—guess

what—I was on stage. In 1977, I was invited to give the benediction as the president of Rio Grande Conference UM Men. I offered the closing prayer in both Spanish and English. What an event that was.

I invited Jim Snead, director of men's ministry to speak at our annual Rio Grande Conference spiritual retreats. Jim visited our conference two times, and we became good friends. On the last day of our second retreat, Jim invited me to be the organist for the 1981 National Men's Congress. He also invited my friend Santos Reyes to be the singer.

At the 1981 Congress, I knew the hymns and organ pieces, but I was still nervous. Only when I finally started to play did I feel like I was back home, playing for those 20 faithful UM Men. My father, who had taken me to those meetings, was in the audience. I know he was proud of me.

I have played for every gathering since 1981, and I am now 63 years old.


I have met inspiring speakers at these gatherings including Robert Schuller,

Andrew Young, and Rudy Ruedinger, whose life inspired the film "Rudy."

I have seen men come to God for the first time and men who recommitted their lives to God at these gatherings.

Now it's my turn to bring in the next generation. I am proud to say that my son, Andrew, will be directing the men's chorus for the 2013 gathering. He recently received his master degree in choral directing from the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque, and this will be our first time to work as a professional team.

I encourage you to take a trip to Nashville this summer.

If you go, tie rubber bands around your socks because the sermons and the singing are going to blow them away. 



Richard Alegria Jr. is the former president of Rio Grande Annual Conference UM Men, and he has served as organist and pianist for every national gathering since 1981.



Society of St. Andrew

GLEANING AMERICA'S FIELDS FEEDING AMERICA'S HUNGRY

United Methodist Men are leaders in ending hunger ...

In 2012, UMMen led 2,551 volunteers into farmers' fields to pick 1.97 million pounds of fresh, nutritious surplus food for America's hungry. At the same time, through their Meals for Millions contributions, UMMen provided another 9.1 million servings of fresh produce (in direct relief to the hungry) through the *Potato & Produce Project* — an increase of 13% over 2011.

In times of uncertainty, it is great to count on the support of the UMMen. On behalf of all of the hungry people that were fed, we thank you.



Meals for Millions — UMMen and Society of St. Andrew are in partnership to end domestic hunger. Your donations provide millions of servings of nutritious food to the hungry. Join today and make a real difference! For more information contact Wade Mays, National Meals for Millions Director, at 800-333-4597 or Development@EndHunger.org.

EndHunger.org/UMM

Society of St. Andrew (Advance #801600)
800-333-4597 ~ sosainfo@endhunger.org



Across the Nation

FULTON, Md.—

UMW, UMM join fight against domestic violence

Through testimonies, insights, questions and action planning, about 20 Baltimore-Washington Conference leaders of UM Women and UM Men grappled with the problem of domestic violence and abuse during a meeting seeking faith-based solutions.

The Nov. 11 gathering at the conference mission center followed a commitment the two groups made during a luncheon at the 2012 annual conference. They agreed to join forces in the fight against the epidemic of violence and sexual abuse that harms and destroys countless homes, families and lives.

The orientation session provoked intense reactions and gave birth to a planning session to determine a strategy for collective advocacy and action.

The denomination's men's and women's organizations formally agreed to work together against domestic violence and abuse. Baltimore-Washington may be one of the few conferences acting on that national commitment.



ALEXANDRIA, Va.—

UM Men sponsor FIDO

UM Men of Fairlington UMC sponsored FIDO, (Fairlington-Improvement-Day-Opportunity) to make improvements around the church. Forty volunteers painted youth rooms and offices, made electrical repairs cleaned the kitchen and halls and removed brush and trash.

The men also sponsored a blood drive on Father's Day, conducted a September barbecue and yard sale, and sold Christmas trees.

The men honored UM Men leader Ted West by inducting him into the John Wesley Society.

DUBUQUE, Iowa—

Men's group forms SWAT Team:

Men of Grand View UMC meet monthly for a MAD (Make-a-Difference) men's breakfast. One of these get-to-know-you meetings gave birth to the SWAT (Specialized-Workers-and-Techniques) team, a group of volunteers who do handyman jobs for the church, members and community residents.

As requests come in for fixing a lawn mower, repairing a faucet, fixing a storm door and other jobs around the house or yard, a coordinator rounds up two or more men to do the tasks.

A 25-member SWAT team engaged in a two-weekend task of remodeling restrooms at Pictured Rocks UM campsite in Monticello, Iowa.

Grand View men also participate in "Days of Caring" and serve meals for the Bridges-Out-of-Poverty program and the Rescue Mission. They also teach Sunday school classes and help with Vacation Bible School. They volunteer for trustee work days and community-wide weatherization projects.

For the last 30 years, the men have cooked a Thanksgiving Day meal for some 130 people. "The men do the setup and cleanup which gives the seniors a break from all the preparation and cleanup mess at home," said Ron Turner, coordinator of Grand View men.



Men of Grand View UMC work on a door frame of a house damaged by Hurricane Katrina.

STILLWATER, Okla.—

Bishop installs officers

Oklahoma Area Bishop Robert Hayes Jr. installed 2013 officers of Stillwater UM Men and presented an inspiring message to 60 men at a December meeting.

The group meets Friday mornings for breakfast, fellowship, devotion and Communion. Attendance has increased from 15-20 men five years ago to 45 today.

Men serve Thursday Night Community meals at First UMC Family Life Center, and they distribute food from a nearby storehouse.

Each year, Stillwater men also engage in construction and maintenance work at three UM camps in Oklahoma.

A "Helping Hands" program assists widows and seniors, and several teams completed construction work at Fairfax UMC.



Bishop Robert Hayes speaks to Stillwater men at an installation service.

CHARLOTTE, N.C.—

Men aid family after house fire

Men of St. Mark's UMC presented Patricia Prince and family a \$100 certificate following a house fire in which her 19-year-old son suffered third-degree burns trying to extinguish the fire. She is also the legal guardian of Jeffery, age 7, and Lyannah, age 5.

After her story appeared in the *Charlotte Observer*, the men decided to give her a hand.



James Russell a member of St. Mark's UMC Men presents a check to Patricia Prince after fire destroyed her home.

WINTER GARDEN, Fla.—

Troop holds 80th reunion

In January, 120 past and present members of Troop 210, chartered by First UMC of Winter Garden, celebrated their 80th reunion at the Jesse Brock Center.

The gathering included 24 Eagle Scouts.



Eagle Scouts and scoutmasters attending the 80th reunion in Winter Garden included (seated from left) Steve Eisinger, Richard Stebbins, Charlie Joiner, Bob Karney; (second row from left): Darryl Dennis, Adam Barnes, Richmond Vernon, Lee Drake, Tyler Byers, Brandon Wilkins, Austin Ritner, Alex Kittendorf, Travis Leslie, Brett Clafin (third row): Aaron Barnes, John Boyd, Mohid Mirza, Jason Frey, Jordan Askew, Connor Stanford, Joey Scott, Matt Cappleman, and Tim Keating.

ROBINSON, Ill.—

Scout troop back in place after church fire

First UMC of Robinson, sponsor of a Cub Scout Pack and a Boy Scout troop that received a Shepherd Church Charter Recognition, was damaged by fire on Christmas night.

Several fire departments arrived at First UMC shortly after 6 p.m. on Christmas.

“My first thought was this is a joke. And then, when I realized it wasn’t, it was an immediate I gotta get there,” First United Methodist Church Pastor the Reverend Tiffany Black said. “We all continue to meet, we are still a body of Christ, the building was just that, a building.”

Otterbein UMC, in Robinson, opened its doors to members of First Church immediately after the fire.

Since the education plant was not

completely destroyed First Church renovated the area and the congregation, troop and pack moved back in. The charter certificate was presented Feb. 3.



KANSAS CITY, Mo.—

Kansas City Area Scouts lead nation in PRAY awards.

Troops and Packs in the Heart of America Boy Scout Council gave more awards from the St. Louis-based Program of Religious Activities with Youth (PRAY) than any other council in America.

This is the sixth year in a row and eleventh in the past 13 years that the Kansas City, Mo.-based council has topped the PRAY chart.

In 2012, Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts and Venture Scouts in the Kansas City area received a total of 672 PRAY awards. The God and Country Program located at North Cross UMC in Kansas City accounted for 144 of the awards in that council. Since 2005, a total of 1,328 youth have earned PRAY awards at North Cross UMC (115 young people earned all four PRAY awards).

In the national competition, Sam Houston Area Council was a close second with 664 awards and the National Capital Area finished third with 492 awards.

“We are doing the Lord’s work in the Kansas City Metro area, but by no means should we rest on our laurels,” said Jeffrey A. “Yogi” Cook, scouting coordinator for UM Men in the North Region of Missouri Conference, and director of the God and Country Course.



Jeff Cook and Cub Scouts at a Pinewood Derby

Send news of your men’s organization to Rich Peck (rpeck@gcumm.org).

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Our local church in Texas did an exhaustive search looking for a bus, and we continue to be blessed by the bus we bought from Carpenter Bus Sales. Because of the excellent care they demonstrated to our church, I have recommended them to other churches and institutions, and I recommend them to you.

**Gilbert C. Hanke, General Secretary
General Commission on United Methodist**



More info: www.gcumm.org/buses • Or call us at: 615-435-1066

Daily devotional book now ready for first responders

NASHVILLE, Tenn.—

Patterned after a non-denominational book for U.S. troops in World War II, the General Commission on UM Men has published *Strength for Service to God and Community*, a book of daily devotions for police officers, fire fighters, health-care workers, EMT personnel and for all who are in the service of others.

In the process of publishing this resource, the men's commission is also creating a tax-exempt [501(c)(3)] non-denominational board to assume responsibility for the new volume and the historic *Strength for Service to God and Country* book for members of the Armed

Forces. The original book was distributed to one million service men and women between 1942 and 1958. An updated version of the book has been distributed to 460,000

people.

Some 10,000 copies of the new devotional book for first responders have now been printed, and the interior copies of an additional 20,000 are available for printing the covers

with the names of sponsoring individuals, businesses, corporations or churches.

Individual copies may be ordered through Amazon (www.Amazon.com) or Barnes and Noble (www.BarnesandNoble.com.)

Normal retail price is \$11.95. Bulk orders of 25 or more copies of the new volume may be ordered for \$7 each (plus shipping) from Eight Eleven Press by sending an e-mail request to 811books@edmondspmg.com.

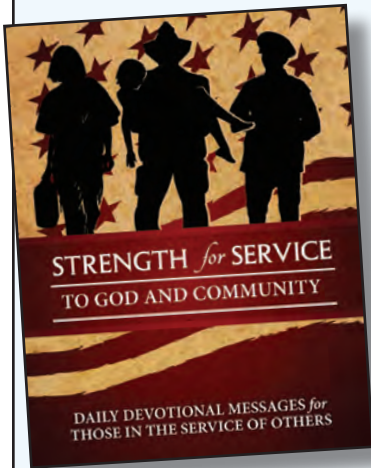
Sponsors

If your local church or a business in your community is able to donate \$6,000, the Strength for Service Board will publish 1,000 books with the name of the church or business on the back of the book. The books may then be distributed to first responders in your communities, or the books could be made available for churches or Boy Scout troops to distribute to first responders in cities and towns across America. Prices drop from \$11.95 to \$5 if more than 5,000 copies are sponsored and \$4 if more than 10,000 copies are sponsored.

This is a wonderful opportunity for companies, churches and individuals to provide a spiritual resource for these men and women who serve our communities, but seldom receive our appreciation.

The first 100 copies of *Strength for Service to God and Community* will be given to first responders in Newtown, Connecticut, the site of the Dec. 14 killing of 28 children and adults at Sandy Hook Elementary School.

There are similar opportunities to sponsor the original *Strength for Service* book for members of the U.S. military.



Four ways to support both books

Give Online:

Visit www.strengthforservice.org and click on the Donate Now tab, or visit <http://www.umcmision.org/Give-to-Mission/Give-to-Mission-Advance-Fund-3021221>

Give at your local church

Make your check payable to your local church. Write the name *Strength for Service* and the Advance code number 3021221 on the check. Drop your gift in any United Methodist church offering plate or give your gift to your church treasurer, so that your church and annual conference will get Advance credit.

By Phone:

Credit card gifts can be accepted by phone. The telephone number is: 866-297-4312.

Through Planned Giving:

You can make a planned or estate gift in support of the Eugene Hunsberger Endowment Fund at the United Methodist Church Foundation (www.umcfoundation.org <<http://www.umcfoundation.org>) Eugene Hunsberger was the World War II ensign who inspired his grandson to reprint the historic book of daily devotions. Only the interest from this fund will support current efforts to distribute the books.

The fund continues to provide the historic World War II book of daily devotions to U.S. troops, and the new book for fire fighters, police officers and other first responders.

For additional information, contact Larry Coppock (lcoppock@gcummm.org).

100 UM churches receive free materials from Letters from Dad

RICHARDSON, Texas —

Last year, Greg Vaughn, president and founder of Grace Products, and producer of the nationally acclaimed “Letters from Dad” project, received great news.

A generous donor, whose life was radically changed by participating in “Letters from Dad,” gave sufficient monies to provide 100 sets of the “Leadership & Training Kit” to qualifying UM churches. Each kit is valued at over \$400.

There is one catch: the qualifying church must actually use the kit.

History

The “Letters from Dad” project began seven years ago after the death of Greg Vaughn’s dad.

Vaughn was frustrated by the fact, that although he knew his dad loved him, their relationship was not all that children need and want. That frustration led him to find a way to verbally and tangibly express his love for his children. That was a big task for him; he has seven children!

To begin, he called some of his friends together. They made a pact to write four specific types of letters to their family over a four-month period. They would be letters of blessing, love and affirmation to spouses, children and parents.

The letter-writing effort dramatically changed their lives. Those 12 partners soon grew to be 75, then 200, then over 500. It was then that Vaughn knew God had something more in mind.



Greg Vaughn



Starting in 2005, Letters from Dad was released to the general church population, and to date over 40,000 men have participated in the project.

“Letters from Dad gives men the tools and confidence to do what they have always wanted to do, but didn’t know how,” says Vaughn.

Eighty-four major newspapers across the nation have featured the Letters from Dad story.

Relationship with UM Men

Because a partnership with the UM Men started in the summer of 2006, a call was placed from Grace Products Corp. to Gil Hanke, general secretary of the General Commission on UM Men.

As conversations ensued, an amazing endeavor was launched. Hanke was asked to find 100 UM churches to receive the free material.

Hanke then asked the five jurisdictional presidents of UM Men to nominate 20 churches within their jurisdictions to receive this gift. There was only one condition: They had to use the material.

A news article about the give-away resulted in the names of additional church leaders wanting the material.

Responses from those selected to receive the material range from disbelief, to shock and extreme gratitude.

“It’s hard for some to believe that over \$400 worth of ministry material is being given away for free, but it’s true, and many are very willing to take advantage of the donor’s generosity,” said Monte Strother, national director of the Letters from Dad program.

In the coming weeks and months leaders of these churches will be contacted by Strother. He will share details of the program and expectation of the churches.

Previous users

Strother says many church leaders on the list are previous participants in Letters from Dad programs.

One of those is the Rev. Rob Grotheer, former youth director at Isle of Hope UMC in Savannah, Ga.

“Although church attendance was nearly 800 on Sunday morning, our men’s ministry at Isle of Hope would normally only get 25 men out to an event,” said Grotheer. “We saw Letters from Dad as a way to change that. We had 107 men attend the opening barbecue and were shocked when 91 men signed up to attend four-month training experiences.”

When Grotheer was appointed pastor of College Place UMC in Brunswick, Ga., he found a number of couples were in the process of getting a divorce.

“I knew the men of this church would never come to a weekend marriage encounter or participate in a marriage renewal conference,” said Grotheer. “My experience at Isle of Hope gave me an idea. Why not use Letters from Dad as a back door to marriage renewal. We were thrilled to see 75 men show up for the first barbecue and we were elated when 60 men signed up to go through the four-month Letters from Dad program.”

The Rev. Rich Jones, pastor of Wolfthorpe (Texas) UMC, is also a previous user of the program and an applicant for material to begin a second series of classes.

“If you haven’t heard about Letters from Dad by now you have been living in a closet,” said Jones.

One hundred and eighty-eight Wolfthorpe men showed up for an introductory gathering led by Greg Vaughn.

“I bought your book and I ain’t a reader,” one of the participants told Vaughn. “I read a chapter and sat down and just cried. I sure hope you can help me. I ain’t a writer but I sure wanna write my mamma!”

For more information about “Letters from Dad” visit www.lettersfromdad.com or call 1-800-527-4014.

In Memoriam

GENE WINLAND

Gene Winland, 72, president of the Florida Annual Conference UM Men, died Jan. 12 in St. Petersburg.



Gene served as scouting coordinator for the Florida Conference and Southeastern Jurisdiction, and he was a life member of the National Association of United Methodist Scouters (NAUMS) and president of the Central Florida Chapter. He served as vice president and secretary of NAUMS,

and he was beginning his fourth term on the NAUMS Board of Directors while serving as chair of the Nominating Committee. He also served as a staff member at six Boy Scout National Jamborees.

Most recently, Gene helped operate a display area for the Commission on UM Men at the 2012 General Conference in Tampa.

Gene played basketball and he played trumpet in the Woodsfield (Ohio) High School band. He was class president for all four years in high school, and he was presented the Leader of Tomorrow Award.

Following graduation from Marietta College (B.S. in physics and math), Gene went into the US Air Force. After Officer Training School, he and his wife, Martha, started their 30-year world-spinning tour where two sons were born along the way – Scott in 1963 and Brian in 1965. He served at Keesler Air Force Base (AFB), Mississippi; Maxwell-Gunter AFB, Alabama; Davis-Monthan AFB, Arizona; Tan Son Nhut, Vietnam; Korea AFB; Thailand, Offutt AFB; Hanscom Field, Massachusetts; Ramstein AFB, Germany; Pentagon (two tours); Warren AFB, Wyoming; and Yokota AFB, Japan.

Following 30 years with the U.S. Air Force, Gene and Martha retired to St. Petersburg where they lived together for 21 years. In St. Petersburg, Gene served as scouting coordinator for his church following service as the lay leader

and a trustee.

Gene is survived by Martha, Brian and his wife, Darla, of Wildomar, Calif., and grandchildren, Leigh, of California, and Zachary and Rachel of Virginia.

Donations in Gene's memory may be given to: Florida Conference UM Men, 450 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave., Lakeland, FL 33815 or Boy Scouts of America West Central Florida Council 11046 Johnson Blvd., Seminole, FL 33772.

BILL COOK

William (Bill) Cook, president of Oregon-Idaho Conference UM Men, died Nov. 22, 2012, in Beaverton, Oregon at age 81.



Born March 22, 1931 in Oakland, Calif., Bill spent his childhood in Ogden, Utah. He graduated from Claremont Men's College in 1952 and earned a master's degree in industrial relations from University of California, Berkeley in 1956.

Bill served in the Army during the Korean War and met his wife, Beatrice (Bea) Dodge, while stationed at Fort Ord, Calif.

He worked for U.S. Steel Supply for 30 years, but said his life really started when he retired in 1989. He began his retirement as a steel consultant in India and then became active in UM Men, Christ UMC in Portland, the World Methodist Council, Doernbecher Children's Hospital in Portland, Mt. Hood Kiwanis Camp, Loaves and Fishes and square dancing.

Bill will be remembered for his service to others, his quick wit and his love of family.

Bill is survived by his wife of 58 years, Bea; children, William B. III, Thomas and Jennifer Loney; two sisters, Barbara Wormser and Nancy Aldrich; and eight grandchildren.

Contributions may be made to Christ United Methodist Church, Doernbecher Children's Hospital or Mt. Hood Kiwanis Camp in Portland.

ROBERT MANN

Robert Mann, 91, former president of North Central New York UM Men, died Dec. 30, 2012 in Dundee, N.Y.

Robert served as lay leader of the North Central New York Conference and he was nicknamed “Mr. Methodist” by church colleagues.

A decorated Army-Air Force World War II veteran, Robert served as lay leader of the Geneva District (1963-1971), chair of the Conference Council (1970-1972), and delegate to the World Methodist Council (Denver, 1971).

He was elected to General Conference five times over a 20-year period.

He was awarded a life membership in UM Men in 1989 and he was named a fellow in the John Wesley Society in 2002.

Robert was elected repeatedly to the Dundee Central School Board of Education and is listed in the Official Registry of World War II veterans enshrined at Washington National Cathedral, Washington, D.C.

He is survived by sons Paul of California and Philip Mann of Keuka Park, N.Y.; sister-in-law, Inez, of Liverpool, U.K. and many nieces and nephews.

John Burlew, former president of UM Men in the North Central New York Conference, says Robert served as his mentor.

“At his funeral, one of his requests was that his son, Philip, play the Air Force hymn as the World War II veteran was wheeled from the church,” said Burlew. “As Philip played, ‘Off we go, into the wild blue yonder.....,’ I thought to myself, ‘What a wonderful send-off for another Saint!’”

WILLIAM EARL (BUD) SEARS, III

Bud Sears, 67, president of North Georgia Conference UM Men, died Jan. 20, in Sugar Hill, Ga.



Bud was a men’s ministry specialist, a graduate of the UM Licensing School for Pastoral Ministry, and director of Lay Speaking Ministries of North Georgia Conference.

A 38-year member of First UMC in Suwanee, Bud served as the minister of music, adult Sunday school teacher, safe-sanctuaries instructor, chair of the missions committee, lay member of the North Georgia Annual Conference, and president of the local UM Men organization.

As vice-president for missions, Bud led efforts to upgrade a battered women’s shelter and helped restore the fire-damaged Leigh Cottage at the UM Children’s Home in Decatur.

Born in Buford, Ga., Bud was the valedictorian of Buford High School. He earned his B.S. and M.S. degrees in electrical engineering from Georgia Institute of Technology.

He started working for Georgia Tech while still a student and continued there for the next 30 years, retiring as the director of the Electronic Systems Laboratory at Georgia Tech Research Institute.

Bud was one of the founders of the Peachtree Roost chapter of the Association of Old Crows, a member of the Association of Old Crows Technology Hall of Fame.

For many years, he coached basketball, softball, and baseball through the Buford area recreation league.

He was a devoted husband, father, and grandfather who gave generously of his time and talents to all who knew him.

He is survived by his wife of 46 years, Beverly Miller Sears, Sugar Hill, Ga.; daughters and sons-in-law, Emily Sears Warlick and husband, Dr. Michael D. (Dave) Warlick, Flowery Branch, Ga., and Susan Sears Sharp and husband, Kevin Sharp, London, England; and six grandchildren.



UM Men Awards

Gregg Barfield

UM Men induct past president into John Wesley Society

BRYAN, Texas—UM Men of First UMC inducted Gregg Barfield into the John Wesley Society during a Nov. 25 worship service.

Steve May says the group made the surprise presentation to Barfield in honor of his service as president of the men's organization, a Sunday school leader, and chair of the 2013 church council.

Barfield also serves as president of the Brazos Valley Church Food Pantry, and he spearheaded the fundraising and coordination of rebuilding a UM church and four homes in Hackberry, La., after hurricanes Rita and Ike. He also coordinated the fundraising and rebuilding of a parsonage in Bastrop, Texas, after the September, 2011, wildfires.

"Gregg is currently working to rebuild a non-denominational church and repair a Christian Mission Camp destroyed or damaged in Bastrop, Texas, wildfires last year," said May.



From left: Don Montgomery, president of UM Men of First UMC in Bryan, Texas, and Steve May, treasurer, present a John Wesley Society plaque to Gregg Barfield.

The Rev. Larry Greenwood

District Honors Pastor

WICHITA, Kans.—UM Men of the Wichita East District honored the Rev. Larry Greenwood, pastor of Calvary UMC in Wichita, with the Cross and Flame Award.

Greenwood has been consistently involved with youth during his 43 years as a pastor. He has served on youth councils and annually participates in camp programs, including annual sailing camps. You can usually see this busy pastor sitting on the floor helping youth with their God and Country projects or playing his guitar at a camp retreat. Greenwood was the inspiration for three annual youth mission trips. He participates in Calvary's annual Music Camp and he comes alive at Vacation Bible Schools.



The Rev. Larry Greenwood (right) receives a Cross and Flame Award from the Rev. Gary Brooks, superintendent of the Wichita East District (left), and Bill O'Neal, scouting coordinator.

Charles Ogletree

St. Mark UMC men give life membership

WICHITA, Kans.—Men of St. Mark UMC gave Charles Ogletree a lifetime membership. The active layman is a member of the Conference Committee on Criminal Justice and Mercy Ministries. The church is called "a place of possibilities and transformation."



Charles Ogletree (in white coat) receives a lifetime membership from the Rev. Junius Dotson, pastor of St. Mark UMC, while Adolfo Counts (left) and Edward Jones, treasurer of UM Men, join in the Sunday morning presentation.

The Rev. David Dietzel **Men honor pastor**

BOSSIER CITY, La.—UM Men of First UMC presented their pastor, the Rev. David Dietzel, with a life membership. The award was presented at a district pastors' appreciation banquet.

Dietzel attends many of the men's weekly breakfast meetings and sometimes presents the devotional message, and he helped implement the "Letters from Dad" program.



The Rev. David Dietzel

David Erickson **Men honor former president**

VIRGINIA BEACH, Va.—UM Men of Haygood UMC presented David Erickson, former president of the group, with a life membership.

Erickson served as vice chair of the Board of Trustees, a shepherd for Vacation Bible School, a leader of Bible study groups and he frequently prepares meals for Wednesday night gatherings.

Mike Almy **Richland Hills Church presents tenth Barnabas Award**

FORT WORTH, Texas —Men of Richland Hills UMC presented Mike Almy an award that recognizes men who are active in

ministry but not part of the chartered men's organization. It is the tenth time the annual award has been presented.

Men selected for the Barnabas Award are followers of Jesus in their daily lives and witnesses to the faith.

As a young man, Almy served as the church's youth director; he still accompanies young people on summer mission trips. He has served as a trustee and continuously volunteers for maintenance work on church facilities. He is married to the Rev. Amy Tate-Almy, a recently ordained deacon.

"Mike serves as an exemplary role model for our youth and all the men of the church," said Mark Hancock.

Ross Kershaw, Bill Rapp and Roger Owens **District honors three leaders**

DENVER, Colo.—UM Stout Hearted Men presented life memberships to three men in the Metropolitan District.

The Rev. Ross Kershaw, pastor of First UMC in Golden, and Bill Rapp, a leader in that congregation, invited the district to hold their fourth annual gathering at the Golden Church.

"Pastor Ross is an effective leader in the men's fellowship and an influential follower," said Bob Phillips, president of Metropolitan District Stout Hearted Men's Ministry. "He helped plan the annual district retreat program and took an active role in the program."

Phillips said Rapp was honored for his service on the executive board.

The district also honored Roger Owens as prayer advocate for the Westminster UM Men. He also played a major role in planning the 2012 annual district retreat.

UM minister named president of PRAY

ST. LOUIS, Mo.—

The Rev. Dr. W. Kenneth Lyons Jr., a retired pastor and former district superintendent in the Baltimore-Washington Annual Conference, has been elected to a two-year term as president of Programs of Religious Activities with Youth (PRAY), the organization that presents God and Country Awards.

Lyons serves as the conference coordinator of scouting ministries and a member of the Baltimore Area Boy Scout Council and president of the Council's Interfaith Committee.

He is also the creator of Baltimore Area Boy Scout "God and World Program," a study and award now being considered as a national BSA award.

"My first encounter with the God and Country Program (now PRAY) was in 1959, when I was 13," said Lyons. "I was an active Scout and was fortunate enough to have a father who had been a Scout chaplain who recognized the importance of utilizing the Boy Scout God and Country Award as a means of connecting Scouts with their faith.

"All my Scout buddies and I received the award from my father, the Rev. Dr. W. Kenneth Lyons Sr.," said Lyons. "In those days, every Boy Scout in the D.C. National Capitol Area Council wanted to attain the rank of Eagle, make a trip to the Philmont Scout Ranch and receive a God and Country Award."

Lyons served his first church in 1969, and has taught God and Country classes from that day to the present. "During the past few years my PRAY classes have averaged more than 60 in attendance, possibly the largest in the nation," said Lyons.

"These children and young people usually represent five to six Protestant denominations, with many of them having their first contact with the Bible and the Christian faith through the PRAY program," he said.



Rev. Ken Lyons

The new president recommends PRAY programs as a evangelism tool.

"It is a fact that children and young people are more willing to enter the church building for a Scout meeting than for a worship service or Sunday school," said Lyons. "Half of the children in our scouting programs have no church home, but they are in our church buildings once a week!

"I served a church for 20 years and during those years the church tripled in attendance and membership. Our church council made a concerted effort to connect the church to the scouting program, and we recruited lay people to serve in scouting leadership positions. We also made extensive use of the PRAY program. It is not a coincidence that parents and children in scouting showed interest in our church, and the church grew because of it."

Lyons says he is honored to be president of the PRAY board for the next two years. "Our PRAY staff and board include some of the most creative and dedicated Christians you could ever find."

For more information about PRAY, visit the website: www.praypub.org.

Former B-52 pilot serves as scouting ministry specialist

BENTON, La.—

A former B-52 pilot and a 26-year veteran of scouting now serves as a scouting ministry specialist in the Louisiana Annual Conference.

Jim Maker has been involved with scouting since 1986 when he began as an assistant cub master. He later became a cubmaster, an assistant scoutmaster, and scoutmaster.

After his sons graduated from scouting in 1998, he took some time off until his grandsons entered scouting in 2006 when he again became an assistant cubmaster and then cubmaster.

“This is my last year in the pack since I’m also chair of the Outings Committee in the Boy Scout Troop,” said Maker. “The local BSA Council asked me to organize a February Bishop’s Dinner for Scouting and even paid part of my way to Philmont Training Center in 2012 where some fantastic people gave me the ‘fire-hose’ treatment.”

Maker calls the Philmont training experience “amazing.”

“I realized I haven’t been promoting the 12th part of the Scout Law or the first sentence of the Scout Oath,” said Maker.

As a scouting ministry specialist, Maker is now available to help neighboring churches form Scout troops or other youth-serving organizations. He will also help churches initiate Programs of Religious Activities with Youth (PRAY) courses for their young people.

“I love organizing and sometimes leading outings with the troop,” said Maker. “Our local Scout camp is Garland Scout Ranch (GSR) in Stonewall, La. I jokingly refer to myself as a GSR Geezer at the ranch during summer camps. Rappelling the rock wall is a hoot; it can cause some minor aches but it’s fun and Scouts get a kick out of it.”



Jim Maker and son Adam place a flag at the top of Mt. Baldy during a 1998 trip to Philmont Scout Ranch in Cimarron, N.M. Jim plans to return to Philmont this summer.

Jim’s wife, Carmen, is an American Heritage Girl (AHG) Ambassador to Boy Scout Councils and is starting a new AHG troop. She also serves as the advancement chair of the pack, and charter organization representative for the troop. “I’m her official AHG chauffeur and ‘gopher,’” says Jim.

Carmen and Jim received Silver Beaver awards about a decade ago.

The couple also teaches a 6th and 7th grade Sunday school class at First UMC in Bossier, La.

Jim is a retired U.S. Air Force B-52 pilot. He worked for a while for the Louisiana Association for the Blind. He now runs a home-based business. He recently rotated off the board of the Louisiana Lions Eye Bank and completed 12 years as the chair of the Missions Committee at the Bossier church where he led several mission teams to northern Mexico.

Scouting Awards

Mathew Finley

Scout builds tool shed for church

ROSEVILLE, Mich.—With the help of UM Men and other Scouts, Mathew Finley, 16, built a tool shed for the community garden at Trinity UMC. The shed is one of his first projects as a future architectural engineer.

Mathew raised funds for the project by a bottle drive, a bowling fundraiser and by the support of the UM Men organization.



Mathew Finley

Mathew says his biggest problem came in setting the support beams for the 8-foot-by-4-foot shed. He had to pull out some hidden concrete. “I had to keep 14 boys from my troop on task and working while we determined what tool we’d have to rent and if we had to change our plans.

“It enhances our whole church, but especially our community garden,” said Bill Dillenger, president of Trinity UM Men.

Mathew achieved the rank of Eagle Scout following the project and the UM Men organization presented him with a Good Samaritan Award.

Benjamin Kuhns

Scout remodels church entryway

EAST SPARTA, Ohio—

East Sparta UMC presented Benjamin Kuhns

with a Good Samaritan Award after he remodeled a deteriorated and unusable church entryway. Completion of the project enabled Benjamin to achieve the rank of Eagle.

“This was a daunting task and a very large undertaking, but the new entryway allows access to our fellowship hall without going through the main entry of the church,” said the Rev. Peggy A. Garner, pastor of the East Sparta congregation.

Benjamin also assisted in teaching Programs of Religious Activities with Youth (PRAY) classes, and he led Scouting for Food drives, providing meals for 150 families for four days.



Benjamin Kuhns, a 10th grade student at Heritage Christian High School, works on the entryway to the fellowship hall of East Sparta (Ohio) UMC.

Anderson Reid

Church gives Cross and Flame Award

CLERMONT, Fla.—First UMC of Clermont presented a Cross and Flame Award to Anderson Reid.

As a youth, Reid was a Boy Scout in Barbados, and when he came to Florida, he enrolled his son, Jamal, as a Cub Scout, and he became a leader of Wolves, Webelos 1 and Webelos II.

When Jamal became a Boy Scout, Reid became the assistant scoutmaster, a unit



Anderson Reid, left, stands with his son, Jamal, during a Scout meeting at Clermont UMC.

commissioner, and finally a commissioner for the Apopka Shores District.

Reid subsequently organized a district church service in Oakland, Fla., for Boy Scouts, Sea Scouts, Girl Guides and Brownies.

“Anderson is an intelligent, capable, dedicated, and personable individual,” said Antoine LaFontant, top executive of the Apopka Shores District of the Central Florida Council. “He is always quick on his feet, with sensible reaction in all circumstances.”

Alec Goff

Scout receives God and Life Award

LUTZ, Fla.—Alec Goff, a member of Van Dyke UMC, received a God and Life Award, one of four awards presented by PRAY (Programs of Religious Activities with Youth).



He received both his Eagle rank and his PRAY award at a February service.

Lucas Heple

Alaskan youth aids South African community

ANCHORAGE, Alaska—St. John UMC presented a Good Samaritan Award to Lucas after he helped build a wall around a church in Cape Town, South Africa. He also assembled food bags for residents of that community. “Lucas also took time to develop his own faith through group Bible study, prayer, personal journaling and leading worship,” said the Rev. Peter K. Perry, pastor of St. John UMC.

Lucas is active in the youth group, volunteers at Parent’s Night Out, helps with Special Olympics, and he started a chapter of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes at his high school.

Sierra De La Cruz

Girl Scout participates in mission trips from several churches

ANCHORAGE, Alaska—St. John UMC presented a Good Samaritan Award to Sierra De La Cruz who has attended school in Dubai, UAE; Stavanger, Norway ; Midland, Texas; and Anchorage.

While living in Texas she went on mission trips to Amarillo, Floydada, Denver City and Manuel Benavides, Mexico. During the trips she helped build wheelchair ramps, paint houses, and teach Vacation Bible School.

In Alaska, she has worked at a food bank, volunteered for Parent’s Night Out, and participated in a two-week mission in Cape Town, South Africa.

Guidelines for scouting ministries now available

NASHVILLE, Tenn.—

Guidelines for Scouting and Civic Youth-Serving Ministry are now available from Cokesbury.com at \$3.25 each.

With a subhead of “Building Effective Scouting Ministry in Your Church,” the booklet is part of a series of 26 guidelines for teachers, finance officers, pastors, trustees, lay leaders, and leaders of worship, the church council, stewardship, small-membership churches and the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee.

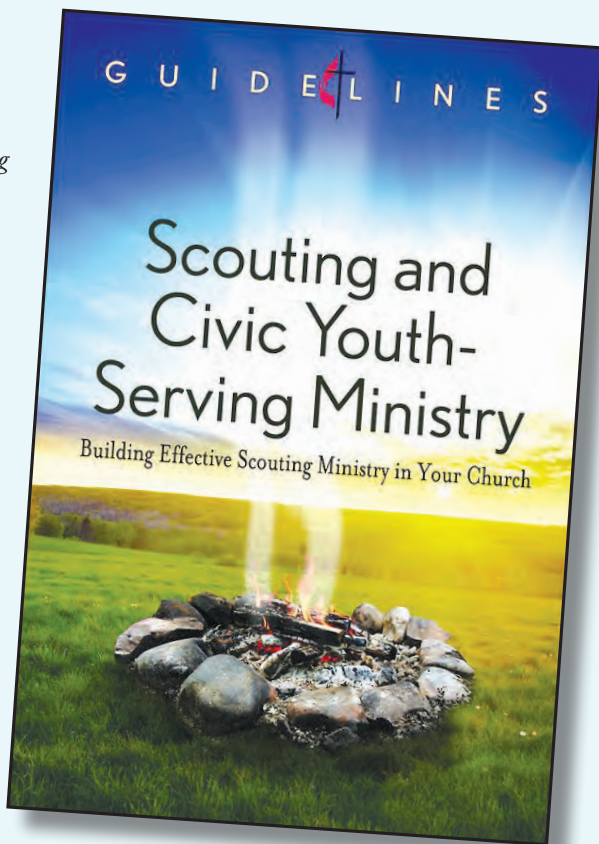
Scouting ministries guidelines provide information about Boy Scouts of America, Girl Scouts of the U.S.A., Camp Fire Boys and Girls, the National 4-H Council and Big Brothers Big Sisters.

Included in the 32-page booklet are 10 reasons to consider scouting as a ministry of the local church and information about child and youth protection.

The book also provide information about scouting coordinators, scouting ministry specialists, bishop’s dinners, Programs of Religious Activities with Youth and scouting awards.

The booklet encourages men and women serving as Scout leaders to survey their communities to assess what types of additional youth-serving organizations should be introduced, and they are asked to organize a night to recruit children and youth for various troops, units or clubs.

Scouting guidelines were prepared by Larry W. Coppock, director of scouting and youth-serving ministries for the General Commission UM Men, and the Rev. Greg Godwin, a leader of UM scouting ministries.



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