

Inspire Uplift Renew

JUNE 2008

June and summer seem to be wrapped up all in one! We finally are getting our warm “spring” days and what a blessing it is. Do you count your blessings- one by one? Lately, I have just been feeling so thankful for each blessing that I have. Here is some of my list and I challenge you to make your own list too: good health, family, friends, jobs, house, food, the Bible, God and His forgiveness, strength, love and freedom, a great church family- the list could go on and on.

Please, I encourage you to make your own list. Take 5 or so minutes to sit down and think about how much you have to be thankful for. Think about how God has blessed you and you can't help but praise Him while you are making your list and afterwards! “God is SO good, God is SO good, God is SO good, He's so good to me!”

Maybe you are going through some hard times, some storms in your life. You feel that God “let you down” and I am so sorry for what you are experiencing . I gently encourage you to ask God to help bring to mind something you have that is a blessing in your life and He may lift your heavy spirit in that process. He promises never to leave us and I know He is Faithful.

I pray you enjoy the month of June and continue to count your blessings- one by one!

Shari

A New Kind of Get-Away!

Last year our church had the awesome privilege—and the rather huge responsibility—of planning the Fall Women's Retreat for the Minnesota/LaCrosse Association. This year the job has passed to the lovely and talented ladies of Elm Creek. Girl, do they ever have a great weekend planned for us! This get-away will be closer to home



than in previous years, right next to the Twin Cities in Plymouth. Rather than the traditional retreat-type surroundings of a camp, the

venue is the considerably less rustic Radisson Hotel and Conference Center. While that isn't everyone's cup of chai, for those of us who like to be comfortable 24 hours a day, and who must always be close to any number of amenities, this retreat will be just what we've been waiting for. “Save the date” for October 24 - 26, start saving up for the \$145 registration fee, and stay-tuned for more details!

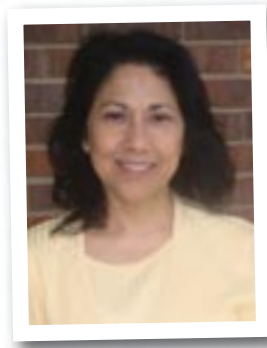
Pray

Yes, this is the same headline in the same place as last month, but for a different reason. There was a lot of devastation recently due to severe weather, but as is obvious from the photo here, few storms produced worse damage than suffered by some in Parkersburg, IA.

The Schwerdtfeger family has relatives and friends—and Dave's home church—all in that area, and has asked us to pray, and do whatever else we can “for our neighbors” there. In order to be of assistance in helping these people on their long road of cleanup and rebuilding, you can visit the NAB Conference website at <http://www.nabconference.org/pages.asp?pageid=1547>.



Getting to Know You: Valerie Ruiz



- 1. What brought you and your family to Redeemer and how long have you been attending?** My eldest had some issues and I was in need of a stronger strength, guidance and comfort to just help me through a “good” day. While looking for a church nearby, I was intrigued by the marquee sign outside for the Growing Kids God’s way classes, and I joined that session. Approximately 5 1/2 years. But I am not any older :)
- 2. Tell us about your family:** Pedro and I have been married for 19 years have two boys: Victor 8 1/2 and Roman 10 1/2. The boys are active in Awana Bible study, Boy Scouts, and Karate. And, of course, video games.
- 3. When is your birthday and where you were born?** June 28th (same as Helen Martin), and I was born in Los Angeles, CA.
- 4. When did you move to Minnesota?** Pedro and I moved to Minnesota when 3M was consolidating my position to St. Paul. A relocation package was offered and I accepted it. We have lived in MN since 1991.
- 5. What is your occupation?** I am a Quality Systems analyst in the Commercial Graphics division at 3M. And the complaints don’t stop when I get home. :)
- 6. What are your hobbies?** Piano, crafts, computers, reading, writing, singing in the 3M Choir.
- 7. What did you dream of being or doing when you were growing up?** A major in English or literature and a minor in Theatre. I thought I would teach English and write the school plays.
- 8. Do you have a hero/someone you look up to?** It is a co-worker; Angie. She is facing a horrible disease which is fatal, but the beauty of her commitment to a spiritual and loving life shines from the inside out. I continue to grow, in part, because of her belief and commitment.
- 9. What ministries has God laid on your heart?** I love to organize the Free Garage Sale, and have involved my sister. In fact, she felt very bad for missing this year’s event, but she’ll be out of town for work. I also like to work with the children in Awana and like to see the new ones be so successful at the closing ceremonies.
- 10. Share a tradition that your family has at Christmas:**
Mmmmm..... Making Mexican churros: fried dough covered with cinnamon and sugar, Mexican “pan dulce” (sweet bread), making homemade tamales, and a Puerto Rican recipe called “Pastele”- which is sort of the P.R. version of the tamale
- 11. Favorite things:**
Book: Chicken soup series, mysteries, stories of hope
Color: What ever fits me in purple.
Food: Mexican and some Middle Eastern foods.
Drink at a coffee shop: Coffee w/ shot of espresso
Verse or Scripture: John 8:7
Song/Hymn: *You Lift Me Up* and *How Deep the Father’s Love for Us*

Valerie’s Testimony

I remember the day; September 12, 1984. I had a heavy burden on my mind for many years. I was invited to listen to Dave Reover by a good friend. One of his messages in his testimony was that God doesn’t condemn you for your sins—His Son has paid the price. Dave asked for anyone to come and join him—even if no one else knows your burden—to be saved and commit to Jesus Christ.

At that moment, it felt like a band was playing inside my chest and would just burst out if I didn’t let go. And so I did; I let go of the guilt, tears, anger and self-destructive attitude and walked to the front and stood next to Dave. Everyone prayed for the few that joined him. I was so lucky to have been there on that day.

June Birthdays & Anniversaries



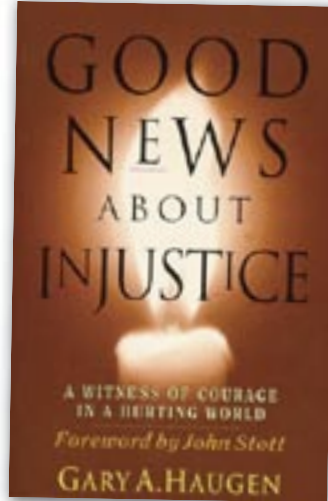
- 5 Audrey Canaday
- 5 Roxanne Harris
- 11 Sandra Daley
- 14 Mike & Wendy Albrecht
- 18 Josh & Irene Burbal
- 19 Joanna Lerud
- 26 Irene Burbal
- 26 Susan Carlson
- 28 Helen Martin
- 28 Val Ruiz
- 29 Michelle Paul

“Good News About Injustice”

By Helen Martin

Gary Haugen, formerly of the U.S. Department of Justice, is well equipped to explain injustice; and as a devoted man of God, he can share the hope that exists in the face of it. *Good News About Injustice* starts at end of the journey God took him through in order to prepare him to start IJM; a path that literally led him through the remains of hundreds of thousands of victims of the Rwandan genocide.

In the book, he explains why seeking justice for the poor is such a specialized ministry and why traditional missions workers—whose oppression everyday and seek to help its victims—can do little to stop them from being victimized again and again. He’s truthful, both about the horror and the hope. He says there is something that can be done by “people of good will” but does not condemn Christians for not having acted yet, nor compel them through guilt. He invites. If we RSVP, we feel sure to have no regrets.



But I have a confession to make. Years ago I heard a radio interview of a man from a Christian organization that was fighting injustice. Immediately I thought, “Liberal!” I was suspicious about everything he said. He shared that when he’s faced with overwhelming suffering and oppression, he doesn’t ask “Where is God?” anymore, but now asks, “Where are God’s people?” My gut reaction was extreme defensiveness, and I half-shouted toward the radio, “You don’t know what I do!” The man I was shouting at is pictured below with Kenny and me. It’s Gary Haugen.

How attitudes can change! I no longer see that question as an indictment of me and my fellow American Christians, but as a motivation to act, and to hope! It says to me that God *wants* to do something about oppression... through us; through me.

God seems, by and large, to have chosen to limit the good that can be done in this earth to what can be done through “whosoever will” do it. But He hasn’t left us alone to tackle the heartbreaking problems that we face here. And He’s provided us with an abundance of talent, education, and resources to draw from.

Instead of feeling guilty and defensive about that, now I’m grateful, and full of anticipation.

Taken at the International Justice Mission Benefit, Minneapolis, MN, May 27, 2008.

Hi Again, Ronald!

We are mixing up a couple of big bowls of pasta salads, sharing some mini croissants and grapes, and topping it all off with strawberry shortcake! Sounds great, doesn’t it. Well then, plan to join us for our service project at the Ronald McDonald House on Tuesday, June 24, (and the prep-day on Monday, the 23rd)!



Sheri Pope is the woman to see about signing up for any of the areas in which we need help, whether it’s financial help to cover costs, or people-power for chopping, cooking, mixing, or serving the sweet little kids and their families at the house itself.

We wouldn’t be able to do it without help, so be sure to let Sheri know if you want to join us for this great opportunity to serve!



More Luncheon Recipes

By Helen Martin



Romaine and Mandarin Orange Salad with Poppy Seed Dressing

6 slices bacon, crisply fried, and crumbled
1/3 cup apple cider vinegar
3/4 cup white sugar
1/2 red onion, coarsely chopped
1/2 teaspoon dry mustard powder
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup vegetable oil
1 teaspoon poppy seeds
10 cups torn romaine lettuce leaves
1 (10 ounce) can mandarin orange segments, drained
1/4 cup toasted slivered almonds

Directions: Place vinegar, sugar, red onion, mustard powder, and salt into the bowl of a blender. Cover, and puree on high until smooth. Reduce blender speed to medium-low; slowly pour in the vegetable oil and blend until incorporated and the dressing is creamy. Stir in the poppy seeds and set aside.

To serve, toss the romaine in a large bowl with the crumbled bacon, mandarin oranges, and enough dressing to moisten. Place onto salad plates and sprinkle with toasted almonds.

Tequila Berries Salad

Salad Mix

1 head lettuce, cut up
1 1/2 lbs. bacon, crisply fried
1 head cauliflower, finely chopped

Dressing

2 cups mayonnaise
1/2 cup shredded parmesan cheese
1/2 cup dried parmesan cheese
1/4 cup sugar
2 T. milk
1 tsp. garlic
1 tsp. pepper



Make the dressing the day before. When ready to serve, toss the salad and the dressing until well mixed.

Cool Water Ministries' June Calendar



Monday, June 2
Remember to do your self-check!

Friday, June 13
White Cross

Saturday, June 14
Flag Day

Sunday, June 15
Father's Day

Tuesday, June 24
"Cooks for Kids" service project
@ Ronald McDonald House

Looking Forward...

Friday, July 4
Independence Day

July 28 - August 1
VeggieTales VBS

October 24 - 26
Minnesota LaCrosse
Fall Women's Retreat
"Relax, Revive, and Rejuvenate"

The Veggie Pirates Are Coming!



Redeemer will present a Veggie-Tales Vacation Bible School at the very end of July. Jennifer Loucks has taken on the task of recruiting and coordinating the sea of helpers that will be needed to launch this effort, which is aimed both at ministering to our kids, and reaching out to the community. Let's make sure all hands are on deck on this one!