



SOUNDING BOARD

Newsletter of the North American Relief Sale Board

September 2005

Coordinators' Report

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We have recently returned from the 2005 Biennial Workshops held at Conrad Grebel University in Waterloo, Ontario and are newly inspired by all of the hard work, creative ideas and Christian love that was shown by all who attended. It was especially encouraging to see Jerry and Marty Freeburne in attendance representing the new Idaho Relief Sale to be held on May 6, 2006, in Nampa, Idaho.

This year's workshops provided the attendees with a number of opportunities to learn about and reflect on the relief efforts that MCC is conducting around the world "In the Name of Christ". Arlie Klassen, Stephan Cherry, Dave Worth and Jerry Koop all provided us with first hand accounts of the on-going efforts of MCC. We found it very interesting to learn that MCC's example of Christ's love is influencing the ways that others respond to their neighbors. For example – the first relief buckets that arrived at Bonda Ache did not come from Akron or Winnipeg, but from Jakarta!! The Mennonite Churches in Jakarta took it upon themselves to help their brothers and sisters in Ache Province (even though there is a civil war going on between the Ache Province and the government in Jakarta).

As we all work at making our sales better and more of a witness for MCC, it is important to remember that "The Love of Christ" is as powerful in Jakarta as it is here in North America. Have a safe and prosperous Relief Sale!!

Doug & Harriet Berg

North Am. Menn. Relief Sale Coordinators

Jerry Koop of the West Coast Relief Sale in Fresno, California completed his Cycle Tour of 58 days across the United States. Accompanied by a motor home announcing "www.mcccycletour.com Tsunami Cycle Tour" broadly on its side, he arrived in Akron, PA and then on to Waterloo, Ontario to share with the Biennial Workshop attendees. Jerry comments "I wanted to bring attention to compassionate deeds done because of the love of God."



The Workshops @ Conrad Grebel University

This year's Biennial Workshops attracted over 80 attendees from 19 different Relief Sales in the USA and Canada. It was fun to see so many good friends who had attended previously and also to see many new faces who were attending these workshops for the very first time.

There are many benefits to these workshops and it was interesting for us to read the evaluation forms that were returned to us at the conclusion of this two-day event. The formal sessions are important; but equally important is the time spent networking with others over meals or during the free time provided between the formal sessions.

Many of us have similar questions and the same problems with our boards and the day of sale activities, etc. Thus it is good to share experiences and the unique solutions that we have tried at our respective sales. We all have issues with recruiting and keeping volunteers involved at our sales - this was one of the workshop topics discussed this year. The Kansas Relief Sale addressed this issue by producing a video called "Where is The Apple Butter?" to show at their churches when they were looking for new persons to get involved in the sale. Matt and Amy Schmidt produced this video and were at the workshops to explain its history and use. Over twelve copies for this video were requested by other sales to also help in the recruiting of volunteers for their sales. If you would like a copy for your sale give us a call at (814) 445-6945 or e-mail Daheberg2@aol.com.

The 2007 Biennial Workshops are scheduled to be held in conjunction with the Kansas Relief Sale on April 12 & 13, 2007. Mark your calendars now and start to make plans to attend!!

New NAMRSB Representatives.

The North American Mennonite Relief Sale Board is comprised of 5 volunteers who represent different regions and meet twice a year to discuss how we can best help relief sales as they give of their time to support the many programs of MCC. Do you know who your representative is? In the side bar of the front page is the name, region and contact information of each board member. You will notice a change from previous issues.

According to our bylaws, a board member may fulfill only two terms of three years each. Hilton Mierau of Cochrane, Alberta, is the new chairman. Richard Ediger of Buhler, Kansas replaces Paul Isaak of Inman, Kansas who resigned due to illness. Paul has been a faithful supporter since April 1998. Dale Miller of Harrison City, Pennsylvania replaces Cheryl Heatwole, formerly of Wytheville, Virginia, due to the expiration of her term. *Cheryl has served since November 1997 and comments:*

"Where can a person take a few days of vacation that will actually aid our brothers and sisters around the world? Why not try to vacation close to where one of the 47 different relief sales in North America take place—i.e. Alberta, Atlanta, Fresno, Goshen, Harrisburg, Houston, Minneapolis, Sarasota, etc., where the dollars you spend at the auction or at a food booth or a craft booth really do make a difference. Did you know that 88 cents out of every dollar you send to MCC actually gets to the recipient?"

Over the past eight years I have seen relief sales become more of a reunion-festival-celebration of life and an educational tool for informing people about what MCC is doing in the world. We have many dedicated volunteers across North America who help with their specific tasks at their relief sale each year. When we, as volunteers, get overwhelmed with our job at the relief sale, just remember that what you do that day goes a long way in helping another human being. Thanks to each one who has worked long hours to make each relief sale a reality. I've had the privilege of attending many relief sales, eating different foods, and learning to know new people. I have enjoyed the journey! "

Faye Claassen of Albany, Oregon replaced Dave Englebright of Reedley, California in 2004 due to the expiration of his term. Laurel Horst of Orrville, Ohio is continuing her term.

Please give them a thank you for their service when you see them at your sale. Any concerns or questions may be passed on to your representative as well as to coordinators Doug & Harriet Berg. Our next board meeting will be November 11, 2005 in Houston, Texas.

Retired MCC Executive Director Ron Mathies made the following statement concerning

Relief Sales: "Relief Sales are a time of celebration. They celebrate compassion and community and the wish to demonstrate God's Love." Thank you Ron for your dedicated service with MCC.

New MCC Executive Director, Robb Davis, shares the following:

Terms like globalization, global integration and transnational are, by now, anchored deep within our vocabulary and psyche. To some they represent lost jobs that have moved to some distant part of the globe. To others they imply opportunity and the possibility of making a great deal of money. Interestingly, for those of us who organize and participate in relief sales, these terms describe what some of us have been a part of for many years. Each time we organize, carry out or make purchases at a relief sale we are directly participating in the global struggle against poverty.

Globalization implies linkages or connections between people and economies. Relief sales are a living example of this concept as our gifts of time and financial resources (via our purchases and donations) flow out across time and space to reach victims of poverty, violence and oppression the world over. At MCC we refer to this entire endeavor as "connecting people" and it is one of the central concepts that describe our work. We connect people so they see that they have much to give and much to receive. Relief sales connect those of us in North America to a vast population of people around the globe and their stories of courage flow back and enrich our lives. So, while the term globalization is a relatively new concept, those who participate in relief sales have always engaged in a global endeavor as we have reached out and connected with brothers and sisters across the globe. MCC is grateful for the way relief sales help us as an organization to "connect people".

MCC Resource Update

1. **The 2005/2006 MCC Resource Catalog** is now available from the MCC office nearest you. This catalog advertises MCC Resource Library's extensive library of DVDs, videos, posters, printed material and displays available for purchase and/or loan. To order your catalog, contact the MCC office nearest you, or contact Shirley Mast at (717) 859-1151 or e-mail sam@mcc.org. The Resource Catalog is also found on the web at www.mcc.org/catalog

2. **The "Moving With Compassion" video and DVD.** In the name of Christ, Mennonite Central Committee seeks to answer this call. For the past 85 years MCC has sought to demonstrate God's love through relief, development and peace work around the world. This DVD includes the 5-minute video, "After the Tsunami," about cleaning up, distributing relief kits, and rebuilding after the tsunami in Asia. The DVD also includes a Spanish translation of the video. 10 min | DVD and video CC | Grade 7 to adults
Borrow from all offices
Purchase from all offices
\$6 Cdn./\$5 U.S.

3. Resources will be available in the near future to support **Food Projects** including Fun Sheets, Storybooks, and a Food Project Tool Kit. Contact your provincial/regional offices regarding availability.

**Penny Power -
Small Change for a
Big Change!**



**Total as of Aug. 19 -
\$416,449Cdn (\$341,716 US)**

Penny Power is bringing a lot of excitement to congregations as they support relief sales. Not only excitement, but Penny Power is a great tool to teach others about urgent needs around the world and how to respond with compassion.

We have not witnessed any projects growing this fast since our involvement with relief sales. Many sales have seen a 50% to 100% increase in coins rolling into their jugs.

New - www.pennypower.org - stories, tips & hints, downloadable fun pages - check back as we grow!

Reminder: New date & location for the 6th Annual Peach Cobbler Relief Sale - Oct. 28 & 29, 2005 at the Georgia National Fairgrounds in Perry, Georgia. Go to www.peachcobblerale.org for further information or call (404) 525-4225.

The year 2006 will see a number of relief sales celebrating special events.

One such event is the **Pennsylvania Relief Sale** in Harrisburg, PA which will be celebrating their 50th Anniversary Sale on March 31 & April 1, 2006. Start making plans now to join them in the celebration!

Another special celebration will be the **Idaho Mennonite Relief Sale in Nampa, Idaho** as they celebrate their 1st relief sale on May 6, 2006. For information or to share items for their event, contact: Chairman, Rick Bollman, 11657 West Florida, Boise, Idaho 83709 Ph. (208) 378-8109

E-mail: rickmarjb@access4less.net

What's New in Relief Sales?

MCC Alberta Relief Sale - "Recreated Goods" tables - volunteers worked during the year to make saleable items from worn-out items - such as handbags from old denim jeans.

Ohio Relief Sale - highlighted a long time food booth (Egg Rolls) on the auction which raised \$1,900 U.S. for 1 dozen egg rolls.

Brandon MCC Relief Sale cycle Clear Lake - 64 cyclists biked 34 km - along with a BBQ and an MCC speaker - raised \$23,900 Cdn

Ontario Relief Sale - booth signs included "Watering Hole" and "Menno Café"

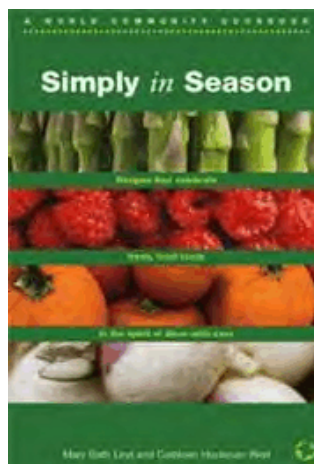
Black Swamp Relief Sale - mud volleyball tournament for teens.

Bike Power for Ice Cream Maker

What are two things kids love the most? Lots of kids love bikes and ice cream.

Jim Bowman and his son have designed an ice cream maker powered by pedal power. Go to http://bowco.com/~access/Bowman_OCM/index.htm for photos or call the Bergs at (814) 445-6945.

Lots of good, fresh produce available all over right now and the "Simply in Season" cookbook is a good way to make the most of it.



Thanks to the Oregon Mennonite Festival for World Relief, an autographed copy of "Simply in Season", the new MCC cookbook, has been made available for each relief sale.

The autographed book, along with a Simply in Season shopping bag and information regarding the

book, is on its way to your sale. This may be used various ways - on the auction as a package, perhaps including fresh made jelly or pie - on a Silent Auction at a fund raiser - or a cooking demonstration fund raiser.

If your sale is not until 2006, you will receive a copy prior to your sale.

Information about the book can be obtained via web site:

<http://www.worldcommunitycookbook.org/season/index.html> and/or www.simplyinseason.org.

Check with Ten Thousand Villages to see if they will have this book available for sale at your relief sale.

If you would like to purchase books for resale, they can be ordered at cost through the MCC Online Store. Call toll free (888) 563-4676 and ask for the Online Store department and mention the Relief Sale discount.

Happy cooking as we help to raise funds for the hungry and the hurting!

The MCC Mission Statement reflects the biblical call to care for the hungry and the thirsty, the stranger and the naked, the sick and those in prison(Matthew 25:35-36).