



SOUNDING BOARD

Newsletter of the North American Relief Sale Board

June 2008

Coordinators' Report

On several occasions we have commented on how our relief sales not only provide a witness to so many who are suffering in the far corners of our world but they are also a powerful witness to the many who are attendees at our sales. Our market research work that was conducted at ten sales in 2005 showed that the #1 reason that folks attended the sale was "To support the cause of MCC" and they felt good just being with others at the sale.

It was very gratifying to read a letter to the editor that appeared in the May 5th issue of the *Mennonite Weekly Review*. Bob Hayes of Wichita, KS, had recently attended the Kansas Relief Sale and was very impressed with what he heard and saw! I'd like to quote two passages from his letter. "The people I was introduced to were warm and welcoming to this non-Mennonite visitor from Tennessee. I felt a sprit of compassion and a strong desire to serve God by helping others." Bob concluded his letter with this last paragraph. "The day was a wonderful time of celebration and friendship renewal. What a witness it was for MCC and its ministry. May God continue to bless and nurture the faith and witness of some of God's gentle people."

We can sense these same feelings at the many sales we attend each year and it is very reassuring to hear that a non-Mennonite from Tennessee felt the same way after attending the Kansas Mennonite Relief sale in 2008!! It is our prayer that your sale might provide this same feeling for all who attend and participate in the sale and MCC's mission.

Blessings,
Doug & Harriet Berg,
Relief Sale Coordinators



2009 Relief Sale Biennial Workshops

Thursday & Friday, May 28 & 29, 2009

Iowa City, Iowa.

This is the same week as the 2009 Iowa Mennonite Relief Sale to be held May 29 & 30, 2009 in Iowa City.

Many Relief Sale Volunteers comment that these workshops are most helpful, especially the interaction with other relief sale volunteers as they share their experiences. Perhaps your Relief Sale Board would consider helping to send a representative to attend. Mark this important date now on your calendar. More details will be forthcoming. *Any questions, please contact Daheberg2@aol.com.*

- **Penny Power questions or updates - contact Susan Wadel - swadel@mcc.org**
- **Woven Rugs & Denim Comforter Kits Available - see LJP insert for details.**

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Thank You Letter from Arli Klassen, MCC Executive Director

Greetings distinguished and wonderful Relief Sale People - I am new in my role as Executive Director of MCC, but not new to the relief sale world. In my previous role as Executive Director of MCC Ontario, I supported the 5 sales in Ontario, and have had the pleasure of also visiting relief sales in Manitoba and in Pennsylvania. I continue to be astonished at the amount of time and depth of experience that is needed to organize just one of these sales, and I am thrilled at the calibre and commitment of all of you folks who make them successful. Thank you for being part of MCC, and for making such a difference in the lives of suffering people all around our world, through events that strengthen community and service right here at home.



Mennonite
Central
Committee

We have approved an aggressive budget increase in international programming for this new fiscal year. We are significantly expanding program in Congo, in Sudan, in Afghanistan, in Iraq, and in Global Family. Most of these are countries that have experienced war and conflict, and are trying to rebuild economies and infrastructure while building peace. We intend to walk with them, both in building peace and in rebuilding communities. We are also currently in major disaster response mode in Myanmar (Burma) and China. And, as a foundation through all of this, we continue our regular work in about 70 countries around the world. Every penny, and every dollar, makes a difference in someone's life. Thank you for doing what you can in responding to need. That is all God asks of any of us - to respond in the ways that we can to the needs around us. I pray that your work and our work together will motivate more people to respond in the ways that they can to these needs. *Thank you for your joyful service.*

High Tech Barn Raising of the Michiana Relief Sale Early on the morning of September 22, 2007, a fire broke out in one of the food booths on the Elkhart County Fairgrounds during the Michiana Mennonite Relief Sale. Fortunately no one was injured, but a number of buildings and

their contents were destroyed before the fire could be extinguished. In several hours, the second day of the Michiana Relief Sale was held as scheduled. The board of the sale withheld about \$100,000 to cover the losses that they anticipated would not be covered by their insurance policy.

However, due to new building codes and the high replacement costs of the appliances and refrigeration equipment that was lost in the fire, the Michiana Sale is faced with another large bill again this year! This is where your sale might be able to help via an old-fashioned Barn Raising!! We would like to set a goal of \$100,000 that might be raised by special project/offering/fund raisers. Each sale should decide if they want to participate and the type of appeal that might work best at their event. This fund raising project will conclude on Dec 31, 2008.



One idea may be to present your sale goes with the opportunity to purchase an empty pie box. At the Michiana Sale the smoke from the fire drifted over the building where the fresh baked pies were stored for sale on Saturday. There did not appear to be any damage to the pies.

However, the food inspector and the sale board did not feel comfortable selling these pies so they sold only the empty pie boxes on the auction. Over \$7,000 was raised from the sale of these empty pie boxes!! If your sale would like to use the pie box idea and would like pictures and /or more information, please contact Melba Nunemaker at pnune@aol.com or (574) 238-6616.

If you need more information about setting up a different type of fund raiser for Michiana please contact the Bergs at Daheberg2@aol.com or the Chair of the Michiana Sale, David Yoder at davegtsart@embarqmail.com or (574) 536-4387. Monies raised by your sale should be made payable to the Michiana Mennonite Relief Sale and sent directly to the treasurer Ora Troyer 1444 Canterbury Court Goshen, IN. 46526.

[E-mail:Otroyer1@verizon.net](mailto:Otroyer1@verizon.net)



The Need to Work with Health Departments

Have you talked with your health department representative recently? State food inspectors are becoming more and more stringent with their requirements and that includes relief sales. Some sales have limited regulations while many are experiencing tougher rules and strict compliance with close, on-site observation by their health department representative.

Our eager sale goers patiently stand in line for fresh sausage, for their once-a-year indulgence of apple fritters, New Year's cookies and other area favorites. But some of us are perplexed with how we can continue to prepare and serve the traditional foods and still meet the requirements of our state food inspectors. Start by being proactive. Inquire about new rules. Keep the health board informed about new foods you plan to serve and work together to arrive at a plan on how you can accomplish your goals under their regulations.

Use the relief sale list serve to share your concerns or helpful suggestions with other food committees. Though we do not all have like health department issues, we can all empathize with each other and sometimes another person can share a new perspective to your situation. We can have a safe and successful experience by keeping in touch with our health departments and by building good, trustful relationships.

Melba Nunemaker, Great Lakes Relief Sale Board Representative & Michiana Food Committee

Traveling Items Still Available

There are still dates available in the schedule for the traveling items representing the following projects:

Good Shepherd Quilt - Street Children

Homes for Bangladesh Quilt - Rebuild homes due to the cyclone

Meat Canner Model - Funding food projects

Contact the Bergs 814-445-6945

Resources Available:

The MCC web site contains useful information regarding the current Food Crisis and MCC's response on <http://mcc.org/food/> You may wish to share this information with your publicity committee and Penny Power committees. If you are hosting the model meat canner at your sale or are presenting MCC food projects on the auction, this information may also be of interest.

Also, we have available recent photos from Bangladesh regarding the building of houses as a result of the recent cyclone.



If you are interested in obtaining any of these photos, please contact Daheberg2@aol.com.

So far, sales have raised over \$30,000 or enough funds to rebuild 75 houses.

A new MCC Theme and Resource CD and



DVD has been sent to each relief sale chairman. This contains logos and photographs of MCC's work around the world.

The MCC web site - www.mcc.org contains information on many other projects and the relief sale page www.mcc.org/reliefsales contains quite a few resources available for download.

“Tips, Guidelines and Templates for Writing an Effective Press Release” have been sent to relief sale chairmen. If this information would be helpful to you, please ask the chairman for a copy or contact Daheberg2@aol.com. The following web sites also have good information:

<http://ezinearticles.com/?Publicity-Tips-from-the-Pros&id=4871>

http://www.utexas.edu/lbj/rhodesprp/01_02/toolkit/press.htm

<http://www.prwebdirect.com/pressreleasetips.php>

http://marketingpr.suite101.com/article.cfm/press_release_template

Publicity Tips from the Pros by Cathy Stucker

If you want to know the best way to approach the media, *get advice directly from the source*: the editors, producers and journalists who choose the stories that get publicity. Here are some of the best tips I've received from media representatives about getting your story in the news.

- Many now prefer e-mail pitches to fax. E-mail can be reviewed quickly, and can be easily forwarded to several others in the newsroom. Faxes often pile up unread, but e-mail gets read.

- Keep your e-mail short and to the point. DON'T send any attachments, as they will be deleted unopened (if they get through at all), but you can include a link to your web site or online media kit.

- Journalists are busy people, and they get hundreds or thousands of press releases and pitches every week. Make your story interesting and make it easy for them to work with you, and you will have an edge.

Things to consider when you are talking with your insurance agent or reviewing your insurance coverage:

- If you only need coverage for your sale's exposure on the days of your event, check with the manager of the facility where you are holding the event. You may be able to be added by a rider to the facility's policy as an additional insured. Be sure to have them explain exactly what coverages you would obtain.
- A policy termed "liability policy" will only protect your sale if an attendee was injured or there was damage to property of others.
- Make sure the liability limits would be adequate if there was a fire causing damage to the entire facility.
- If you have a liability policy, you may wish to ask about the possibility of obtaining coverage if a volunteer would be injured by an accident while at the event through no fault of the sale's.
- Liability policies are available to include coverage throughout the year or a "special event" policy would cover exposure for the sale days only.

- Check if your fundraiser and special events are covered - such as dinners, bike events etc.
- You can obtain a policy to cover relief sale owned property for fire or other risks such as theft, water damage and vandalism. This policy would only protect property that was actually owned by the relief sale, not the property of volunteers or churches.
- Question if donated items would be included in this coverage.

What is Happening at Relief Sales?

Pennsylvania World Relief Heifer Sale - a larger number of donated heifers and donation of facilities, transport and services of auctioneers made this event a success.

Illinois Mennonite Relief Sale - Celebrated their 50th year with a first time Coffee House.

Central Missouri MCC Relief Auction - An antique steam engine was used to steam potatoes in a specially designed pressure cooker. They were served with or without the open-kettle cooked chili.

West Coast Mennonite Relief Sale & Auction - A two day art show during the sale displayed works of local artists who donated some of the art items. These were priced and sold.

Pennsylvania Relief Sale - Special projects sold on the auction raised \$18,000 and \$4,500. A new food this year was chicken wings.

Nebraska MCC Relief Sale - A three hour take-home food and leftover auction raised additional funds.

Upper Midwest Relief Sale - Unusual coins were sorted from the mix of Penny Power change and were sold on the auction for many times their value.

Kansas Mennonite Relief Sale - 40th Anniversary. Restored tractors included a Minneapolis Moline Model U that sold for \$4,700 and a cockshutt Series 30 that sold for \$4,000.

