

The Menno-Hof Newsletter

reunion

Thanks so much!

We want to recognize and thank two individuals that have contributed to the success of Menno-Hof by serving on the board of directors. Our board members meet every other month and most member serve on board sub-committees that require additional meeting time.

Mark Regier has served as a board member for 10+ years and as president the last five of those years. He provided enthusiastic and effective leadership which was highly valued by staff and board members. Though he will no longer function as board president (ending Dec. 2010), Mark will continue to serve as a member of the board and chairperson of the Marketing Committee. Thank you, Mark, for all you have done and for your continuing service to Menno-Hof.

Larry Chupp, former vice-president, has agreed to step into the president position for which we are very grateful.

John Rempel, Professor of Theology and Anabaptist Studies at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., has served as a Menno-Hof board member since 2007. John has indicated that he is not available for another term in this position. He brought important insights and creativity to the board and we are grateful that John has agreed to continue as a community member on the Program Committee. Thank you, John, for your service on the board and for your continuing committee work.

-Jerry Beasley, executive director

Seasons of change

by Mark Regier

Having completed over ten years of service on the Menno-Hof Board, I've had the advantage of watching this vital institution move through many seasons of change. As president of the board for the past five years, that perspective has been more intimate than I ever would have imagined. I have been and continue to be inspired by the founding vision of Menno-Hof: to share God's story, through the Mennonite and Amish experience, with our churches and those visiting our community.

Over the years, I've witnessed God's consistent faithfulness to Menno-Hof, regardless of the challenges or opportunities it has faced. The foundational leadership of Tim Lichti in the beginning years of Menno-Hof was followed by interim leadership from Oliver Yutzy and briefly by current Executive Director Jerry Beasley. In 2001 Joseph Yoder brought his passion to Menno-Hof's leadership role helping move us into a new phase of program growth and deepening relations with constituents. LeRoy Mast served as director for one year from 2008-2009. God's hand was clearly at work in Joseph's availability to return as interim executive director in the fall of 2009 and in the selection and arrival of Jerry Beasley as current executive director in September 2010. Today Menno-Hof is exceptionally well equipped and staffed by a dedicated team. Add to this list a host of long-term and daily volunteers from throughout our community and across the continent and we can see that Menno-Hof is truly blessed.

These years have also seen the Menno-Hof Board expand, adding new skills and perspectives—including representatives of the Amish faith for the first time. God has consistently worked through this group to provide energy, wisdom and vision, particularly during the challenging economic times of 2007-2009.

As visitor trends change in the Shippshewana community and the region, so must Menno-Hof. Today, regular traffic in our facility stands at less than half of what it was during our opening year in 1988. Bus tours may some day be a thing of the past. Funding for school field trips is increasingly restricted.

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Jerry Beasley, executive director, presents **Mark Regier** (left), outgoing president, with a certificate of appreciation at the January 2011 Menno-Hof Board meeting.

Through the eyes of a child

November 23, 2010, a small group of excited school children and teachers from the Old Brethren Christian School in Wakarusa, Ind., came through the doors of Menno-Hof, not sure what to expect during their tour.

They were not disappointed. Larry Miller, their tour guide, got the children involved in pushing buttons and helping to act out the stories. First grader, Aaron, was chosen to be the ship captain on the 17th century sailing vessel depicting the Anabaptists' voyage to the New World in search of a country where they could freely worship and follow Jesus according to Scriptures. Aaron

"A great inspirational experience!"

—recent visitor comment



Trent, pictured above (front) with hands in pockets, surrounded by his family and friends.

photo by Larry Miller

"Seasons of Change"... (cont. from cover)

I see these changing trends as an opportunity to strengthen and refocus Menno-Hof's message and offerings—not just for tourists but for a broad cross-section of our own community. For over two decades Menno-Hof has been known primarily for the provision of a singular, exceptional experience. I hope that the future will demonstrate our ability to produce multiple experiences and opportunities designed to educate and engage various constituencies. Rather than just telling a story, Menno-Hof will tell many stories, all seeking to help others see the face of God in the life, experience and challenges of the Anabaptist faith community.

None of what has been—or will be—accomplished at Menno-Hof, however, can happen without the prayer and support we have received from you. As a board member and former board president, I'm deeply grateful for the many gifts of time, skill, and resources that have been shared with this organization in so many different ways. We invite you to continue to join with Menno-Hof as we prepare to carry out our mission in the coming decades.

"The tornado room was radical!"

—recent visitor comment

got to scope out the boat first to make sure it was ready to set sail before leading the rest of the class aboard.

Aaron's friend and fellow first grader, Trent, was so excited about his visit to Menno-Hof he wanted to bring his parents back to see the boat, hoping that he would be chosen to be the captain for his family. One week later his wish came true when he returned with his parents, siblings, grandparents and family friends.

We asked Trent what his other favorites were at Menno-Hof and he said "laying on the bunk beds in the ship while listening to Anna's Story—and the tornado room."

Trent's parents, Jeff and Allison Hilty, were impressed with Menno-Hof and thought everything was presented very well—"no belief was presented as being more right (Amish over Mennonite, etc.)."

Allison says "my parents were here from Iowa for Thanksgiving. Dad enjoys church history but I wouldn't have chosen to come to Menno-Hof with all the children because I figured they'd be bored. After Trent came home from the school trip so excited I thought maybe it would be a good place for the whole family after all." They also invited friends from Archbold, Ohio, to meet them in Shipshewana for the tour.

"The tour guide is crucial to the Menno-Hof experience" says Allison. "We all felt that Larry and Vernard Guengerich did an exceptional job. Thank you!"

by the numbers

- 74** admission discount coupons were redeemed from Blue Gate Theatre's *The Confession* musical (adapted from the novel by Beverly Lewis) presented in Shipshewana.
- 1,458** students—all the way from elementary to college age—visited Menno-Hof in 2010.
- 22,284** visitors from around the world came to Menno-Hof in 2010.
- 847,969** visitors to-date (since 1988 when Menno-Hof opened)
- 40** religions were represented by visitors in 2010 including Eastern Orthodox, Jehovah's Witness, Hindu, Pagan, Buddhist, Quaker and Atheist.



Why I give

“The catalyst for giving my time has been due to the economy as I was one of many faculty and staff at Bethany Christian Schools, Goshen, Ind., who have shared in reduced contracts this year—in my case two

fewer days per month. I chose to use this newly-available time to volunteer as a tour guide at Menno Hof, where I can engage my passion for history.

I have made new friends—with staff and other volunteers—and have met interesting people from around the world who have helped me learn more about my faith and history as I share it with them. And I have found that serving as a tour guide is a comfortable way for me to engage in ministry with those who are curious about Anabaptist faith.

Though I typically volunteer on my days off from Bethany, on occasion I volunteer on Saturdays. I now realize I could have been volunteering all along—even with a full-time job.” —Kevin Miller, Goshen, Ind.

Are you looking for a way to serve while sharing your faith? Menno-Hof needs individuals and couples in agreement with Anabaptist values and beliefs to serve as host and/or hostess during July and August 2011. Responsibilities include conducting tours and some light housekeeping. Two furnished apartments are available on-site. For more information contact Susan Miller, managing director: 260-768-4117 or smiller@mennohof.org.

Mark your calendars:
Singspiration 2011
September 11 at Menno-Hof

Come for an evening of a cappella singing in praise to God.



Beginnings and endings

Welcome!

Bill & Marilyn Goossen, Beatrice, Neb.
host & hostess: March-April 2011
family: combined family of 7 children, 16 grandchildren and 8 great-grandchildren



Why did you choose to come to Menno-Hof?

Volunteering is a way of life for us. We're newlyweds and both enjoy meeting new people. We're looking forward to our time at Menno-Hof.

Good-bye

Larry & Maxine Miller, Macon, Miss.
host & hostess: Sept. 2010-Feb 2011
Larry & Maxine provided a welcoming atmosphere to all our visitors at Menno-Hof but especially to children. As retired school teachers they did an excellent job of helping kids understand the Anabaptist story in a comfortable, fun way. We will miss their warm spirits and willing hearts.

“I left there jealous of the Amish’s deep devotion to their faith, family and community.”

—recent online Menno-Hof review

Help keep the Anabaptist story alive: become a member

Become a member and help us continue to tell the story of how God is working in people's lives—past, present and future. Your support is vital to Menno-Hof. Thank you!

Membership benefits

- the joy of supporting an organization with values similar to your own
- free admission for you, your family and friends
- quarterly *Reunion* newsletter
- exclusive e-mails with promotions and upcoming events
- entry to special events by invitation only
- 15% discount on gift shop items and books.

2011 Menno-Hof membership

Yes, please enroll me as a member as indicated below:

Individual—\$35 includes free admission for you; 6 admissions for your family and/or friends

Family—\$50 includes free admission for you, your spouse and children; 10 admissions for your family and/or friends

Enclosed is an additional gift of \$_____.

Gifts in excess of membership fee are tax-deductible.

Name(s) _____ Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____ Phone _____ E-mail _____

Make checks payable to Menno-Hof and mail to PO Box 701, Shipshewana, Ind., 46565



DIRECTOR'S DESK

During the recent holiday season I was impressed with the number of families and friend groups that visited Menno-Hof. It was clear in many cases that the visits were planned with serious intent of reviewing the Anabaptist story during a time when our thoughts and senses regarding our faith journey are already at a heightened state in anticipation of celebrating Christ's birth. What a joy it is to see parents and/or grandparents engaging their younger family members in review and dialogue about issues and challenges faced by those who have gone before us. Our confidence in the future is further strengthened as we observe teenagers and young adults bringing friends to acquaint them with the story and values we Anabaptists hold dear.

It is easy to get caught up with life and forget to recall and share important stories. Passing on family stories is important but we should also take time to make them a priority in our faith circles. At the beginning of this new year I challenge you to use stories as an effective tool to frame the important faith and life values you cherish.

Few of us live our lives consciously thinking that what we did yesterday, do today or will do tomorrow, will someday be presented as our story. What difference would it make if this was our expectation? The reality is, we are a potential story to all those with whom we come in contact. Are we a story worth repeating?



Jerry Beasley
executive director

Menno-Hof staff:

Jerry Beasley, executive director
Susan Miller, managing director
Charlotte Long, program and communication associate
Dana Sommers, grounds, plant and equipment manager
Bill & Marilyn Goossen, host & hostess

Board of Directors:

Larry Chupp, president, Shipshewana, Ind.
Andrew Eversole, Goshen, Ind.
Leanne Farmwald, Elkhart, Ind.
Rachel Nafziger Hartzler, Goshen, Ind.
Dorothy Hostetler, Shipshewana, Ind.
Donna Jones, Shipshewana, Ind.
Orie E. Lehman, Shipshewana, Ind.
Mark Regier, Elkhart, Ind.
Lovina Rutt, Goshen, Ind.
Wayne Schrock, Millersburg, Ind.
Don Stauffer, Union, Mich.
Alvin J. Yoder, Shipshewana, Ind.
Fern Yoder, Millersburg, Ind.



Reunion is published quarterly to keep our friends informed of happenings at Menno-Hof. Direct questions or comments to director at info@mennohof.org

Menno-Hof Amish-Mennonite Visitors' Center

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510 S Van Buren St, SR 5
Shipshewana, IN 46565
Tele: (260) 768-4117
Fax: (260) 768-4118

Did you know? January 21, 1525, marks the beginning of the Anabaptist movement in Zurich, Switzerland, when George Blaurock requested baptism from Conrad Grebel and others followed.



MENNO-HOF

AMISH-MENNONITE VISITORS' CENTER

P.O. Box 701

Shipshewana, Indiana 46565

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the Amish-Mennonite Story*

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