

SOJOURNS

Vol. XXVII, Issue 1

The Newsletter of the Sonnenbera Mennonite Church

January 7, 2018

SENIOR SAINTS—January, 2018 Birthdays/Anniversaries



Happy birthday to our senior saints who are celebrating birthdays/anniversaries in January!



*Dave Ross (65), Friday, January 5
Welcome to the Senior Saints, Dave!*



*Dan Cartwright (82), Saturday, January 13
Belvia Hann (84), Tuesday, January 16*



Try to guess who these persons are. **Their names are listed on the back of this issue of Sojourns.**

Who am I? _____

1. Vocation: 1st job: Mowing lawns
Present Vocation:
Programming CNC machines



2. Favorites:
Food: Pie
Book: The Biggest Bear
Book of the Bible: OT-Psalms; NT-John
Song or Hymn: Wonderful Grace of Jesus
People & Places to visit: Amish farms and families
Vacation Destination: Mountains
Sports team: CCS Soccer
Favorite Movie: Ben Hur
3. Hobbies: Woodworking, writing, hunting, reading
4. Pet Peeve: When people pull out in front of me then drive slow.
5. Least favorite chore: Sorting and filing stacks of paperwork



Who am I? _____

1. Vocation: 1st job: Harvest snails
Present Vocation: Dentist
2. Favorites:
Food: Rice with beans or vegetables
Book: Masters of the Dew, Asterix the Legionary
Book of the Bible: Matthew
Song: Wonderful Grace of Jesus
Place to visit: Family and relatives
Vacation Destination: New places
Sports team: Brazil National Football Team
TV Show: Star Trek—The Next Generation
Favorite Movie: Jungle Book (cartoon from 1967)
3. Hobbies: Computer scrapbooking of new and old photos, letters and documents
4. Pet Peeve: Clutter and piles of paper everywhere
5. Least favorite chore: Lifting or carrying heavy things
6. Nobody knows: I witnessed two small planes colliding above my school.



MY CROSS CULTURAL EXPERIENCE IN GUATEMALA By Rowena Zuercher

Hello/Hola/At'kola,

At the end of this past August, nine Bluffton students, including myself, flew down to Guatemala for the semester. We went through the CASAS program (Central American Study and Service) which is a program through Semilla, the Latin American Anabaptist Seminary. Our group leader was a Bluffton professor whose wife and children also spent the semester in Guatemala with us. They lived in a small apartment at Semilla, while all of the students had individual host families.

For the first two months of the semester, we lived in Guatemala City and commuted from our host homes every day to Semilla for class. My commute was the longest of the students; an hour in the morning and up to two hours in the afternoon depending on rain and traffic. We had Spanish class every morning from 8:30 to 12:30

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NEWS & NOTES

and then in the afternoon, we had two more hours of either guest lectures or field trips. Though the weeks were pretty routine, we did a lot of traveling on the weekends, including trips to Antigua, Chichicastenango, Lake Atitlan, and Coban (though our optimistic 5 hour drive to Coban turned into 10). Traveling anywhere in Guatemala required an exorbitant amount of patience, collectively.

After two months of classes, we had a week of free travel, and after free travel began our service placements. Each student was placed with a different organization to work for a month and live with a new host family. Most of us were within four hours or less of Guatemala City. Myself, along with two other guys from my group, were placed at Lake Atitlan to live and work in different towns around the lake. I lived just outside of the town of Santiago Atitlan in a little village named Panabaj. I worked for ANADESA, which is an MCC supported organization that works to empower women, youth, and children through education reinforcement, job skills and training, and employment opportunities. It was only a two minute walk from my host home to work which was a relief after my tiring commute in the city.

My second host family was a family of nine. They are indigenous Tz'utujil and spoke very little Spanish. The local language in the municipality of Santiago is Tz'utujil, and the area has well preserved its indigenous culture, language, and dress. The diversity of Guatemala, for being such a small country is rather astounding. There are more than 20 Mayan languages still spoken in Guatemala, though Spanish is the national language.

Each place I had the chance to visit in Guatemala was very different from any other place I had been previously in the country. Unlike in Guatemala City, Santiago Atitlan was tranquil, safe, and relaxed. I spent a lot of time exploring and writing and soaking up the peaceful lifestyle that I knew would shift again as soon as I returned to my life in the States. Guatemalan culture, especially in rural areas, is relationship based. I was touched by the way I saw this demonstrated many times, especially during my month at Lake Atitlan.

This semester was challenging but very rewarding, and I am thankful for all the people I built relationships with in Guatemala, including the students in my Bluffton group. Living in a developing country for almost four months really strengthened my confidence in traveling in unfamiliar areas and overcoming language barriers. Of all the countries there are to travel in the world, I think Guatemala is definitely one for the top of the list.

KIDRON SWISS MEAL: Kidron Community Council invites you to their annual Swiss Meal which will be held on Tuesday, January 16, 2018, 6:00 p.m., at the Kidron Community Center. Bring a covered dish to share, including serving utensils. Entertainment will be provided by Honeytown. Everyone is welcome.

MCC: Mennonite Central Committee invites you to an anti-oppression workshop to be held on January 20, 3:00-7:00 p.m., at Friendship Mennonite Church, located at 21881 Libby Rd., Bedford Heights, OH 44146. We will view *13th*, a documentary about the prison system in the United States and the history of racial inequality. Dinner will be served following the movie combined with discussion on how we all can work towards building a more just and equitable society. Please RSVP by January 17 to BrookeStrayer@mcc.org.

MCUSA:

- **Prayer for the new year:** As Mennonite Church USA, we are embarking on our Journey Forward in this new year. We invite prayers that we may seek the beauty and hope of God's spirit drawing us into this community of faith. Let us continue joining our voices in song, in prayer, in fellowship—that even the mountains and the hills may join.
- **Journey Forward Writing Team:** The five-person Journey Forward writing team met for the first time on December 11-13 to begin their work with Journey Forward, a churchwide process for following God's calling for MCUSA. The team invites prayers for their second Face-to-Face in Philadelphia on January 25-27. Read about their first meeting here: <http://mennoniteusa.org/news/writers-gather-plan-journey-forward-draft/>
- **Anabaptist Leadership:** Each fall, a new group of leaders begin the Values-Based Leadership Program, which provides leadership resources and development with an Anabaptist lens. 2018-2019 Registration is open. Learn about the experience from current participants: <http://mennoniteusa.org/news/developing-leadership-strengths-anabaptist-context/>
- **I've Got the Power! Book Release:** The Women in Leadership Project is excited to announce the publication on January 31 of *I've got the power!* Naming and reclaiming power as a force for good, a collection of essays based on presentations from the 2016 Women Doing Theology Conference. Visit <http://mennoniteusa.org/wlp> for details.

The next issue of *Sojourns* will be printed for Sunday, January 21, 2018. Please submit items to the church for this issue by Thursday, January 18, 2018, 9:00 a.m.

Answers from
today's Fun Facts
#1 Dave Ross
#2 Myriam Raber