

CONESTOGA Connections



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Life is not Over Until it is Over! . . . by Kathleen Weaver



Gordon Denlinger, Pennsylvania State Representative, personally presented 100-year-old Arlene Kurtz a special tribute. Arlene and Gordon are first cousins. (Gordon's father started El-Mor Chevrolet in Morgantown.)

The following was given by Arlene's daughter, Kathleen Weaver, on May 11—Mother's Day.

My name is Kathleen Weaver, I grew up on a farm along Best Road, Morgantown, where my brother Arlan and Louise, live today. As a child I had two brothers and no sisters. Looking back, I remember that I was so bashful that when we went to the Honey Brook Bank, I would hide behind my Dad's leg, very shy to anyone who would pay attention or notice me. But I wanted that piece of candy they offered children out of the tin container!

Living on a farm gave me a wonderful childhood. My mother and I were very different. I do not remember of doing many things together. She did not go shopping, play games, or get excited about prom or teen activities. She stayed home nearly all the time, and enjoyed working in the garden especially raising her flowers. I enjoyed cooking, sewing, cleaning, music, being with friends playing card and

board games, and swimming in the summer and skating in the winter on Brubacher's pond.

As I grew older, it was always my desire to get married and have a family of our own. I would play pretend family with my dolls and kitty cats taking them to church, and sending them off to school, etc.

Time marches on—seasons change.

At age 20 after I planned our wedding, Gene and I were married. We drove to Florida on our honeymoon and were gone for two weeks not calling home one time—this was before cell phones. Four years later, Gene started having health issues after a fall at work. He developed arthritis which caused years of severe pain and many limitations and surgical operations—in and out of the hospitals was a repeated occurrence.

No longer was Gene able to do the job of delivering water, but he had a dream and desire to purchase a tractor trailer truck. He did this without consulting with me. One day I came home from the bank where I worked and a truck was sitting in the driveway. Really, it was a good thing. I knew nothing about trucks and would have said "NO," probably freaking out even over the idea. But, as a child it was instilled in me to support my husband in his ventures as he was to be the leader in the household.

Over the years we had no children and went through multiple medical tests giving us no reasons why we couldn't. Our lives were so busy with Gene and his painful health issues and a busy, struggling trucking business. It took all our focus to keep plugging along each day.

Since Gene suffered physically, there were many Sundays that he did not go along to church. I can remember on Mother's Day when they would have a special service and give out carnations to the mothers. I would be so sad and did not even want to take a carnation, even when offered one to me. I remember driving home by myself and crying so hard that I had to pull over alongside the road because I could not see to drive.

During my twenties and thirties, It was a very difficult time in my life. All I could see was a husband who endured daily terrific pain while trying to run our trucking business, causing us to have great financial difficulty. There were eight major accidents in eight years. Yet, Gene had a

(continued on p. 7)



Anticipating a Mountain-Top Experience in Kentucky

It is a bit difficult to believe we are already in June! And for the youth leaders and I, it has been quite an interesting journey so far this year, and our mission trip hasn't even started!

As many of you know, on June 9-14, Conestoga's youth will be gone on their mission trip. This year we have decided to serve in Harlan, Kentucky, with SWAP (Sharing With Appalachian People).

Now, back to why it has been quite the journey leading up to the trip. This year has included a VERY long winter, and unfortunately (or fortunately, depending on who you are talking to), many schools kept calling off due to inclement weather. And what happens when you keep calling off school? Typically those days get tacked on at the end of the year.

Twin Valley Schol District currently has school until the 13th of June. So this left myself and the other leaders in a bind as to come up with a whole new trip in just a few months time or just stick with this one and half the group miss out on their last week of school.

To make a long story short, after much deliberation, conversations, and prayer, we decided that continuing with our plans was best even if it does mean some have to ask off school. I do ask that you pray for those who have to miss school that they can continue to keep their grades up and do well on their finals.

There is so much excitement around this trip! I wish I



Base for SWAP home repair ministry.

could tell you more about what there is to be expected, but I am not even sure what to expect!

SWAP is a home repair ministry that serves low-income families. And from what I have heard, not only do teams help build/repair homes, but we also will get to see, interact, and build relationships with the homeowners.

Our group includes 11 people: Dan Mast, Rachel Mast, Lyle Essick, Tina Essick, Josh Beam, Mindy Beam, Anne Lambert, Weston Caley, James Valentino, Mason Stoltzfus, and Natalie Stoltzfus.

Keep us in your prayers as we travel and work in Harlan, Kentucky! We will report about our trip to the church on June 15.

- Rachel Mast, Minister of Youth and Young Adults



CONESTOGA MENNONITE CHURCH

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"Picnic at the Pond"

— Sunday, July 27 —

*after the morning worship service at
Pastor Bob and Cindy's pond*



Sewing Circle

Sewing Circle met on Wednesday, May 7, 2014. There were 15 ladies present. Three comforters were donated, and three other comforters were completed, as well as 16 hygiene kits.

For devotions, the ladies joined in singing "There Were 12 Disciples" followed by a special presentation by Joyce Martin describing her involvement in training dogs as "seeing eyes" for blind persons. She shared a short video, the Scripture Proverbs 20:12, and spiritual applications she learned along the way.

The special offering amounted to \$58.00 for hygiene kits. We sang "Take Time to be Holy" before adjourning.

- Betty Cannell, Secretary



Parenting is Heart Work

This video series will be shown during Sunday School on three Sundays this summer (June 8, July 13, and August 10) to encourage parents of preschoolers to look into the hearts of their children and get to know them on a deeper level so that they relate to the true needs of their children rather than simply react to surface behavior. The sessions encourage parents to study their children's motives and attitudes, thus becoming more effective in guiding their children's development. Practical strategies are presented so parents don't have to rely on anger to solve problems with their children.

Each session will include a half-hour video presentation followed by a time of discussion and sharing. This will provide opportunities for participants to learn from each other. Childcare will be provided. **Call the church office at 610-286-9124 to register.**

The content of the series is appropriate for parenting children of all ages, but encouragement is for preschool parents to participate so that sharing is out of similar experiences. The series is published by Biblical Parenting Resources and taught by Scott Turansky and Joanne Miller. A book by the same title accompanies the series, and will be made available for those choosing to use it. (For more info, see www.biblicalparenting.org).

Titles of the three sessions are:

1. Teaching Kids to Listen and Follow Instructions
2. Reaching Deep into a Child's Heart
3. Correction Ideas that Touch the Heart

NEIGHBORS caring & sharing

Neighbors meets on Tuesday mornings during the academic school year in our church fellowship hall from 9:15 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Everyone is welcome for this time of fellowship!

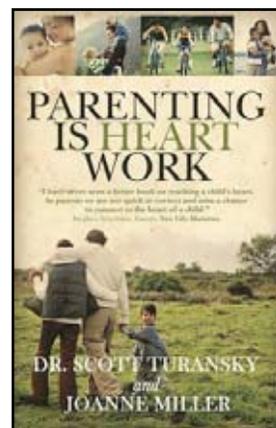
— June 10 —

Tour of Zimhaven Farms

Barb and Dale Zimmerman will serve as our hosts at 10:00 a.m. on their farm at Route 23, East Earl, before Shady Maple on the right. Then it is on to Poole Forge for a picnic lunch.

**"What shames us,
what we most fear to tell,
does not set us apart from others;
It binds us together
if only we can take
the risk to speak it."**

- something to think about from
Still Waters Counseling Ministries





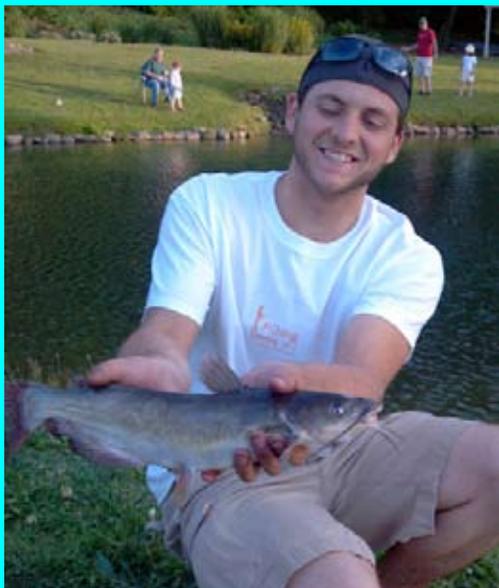
Congratulations to Conestoga's Three College Graduates!



Denise Beam (*pictured here with her father Nelson Beam*) graduated on May 12, 2014, from Pennsylvania State University with a bachelor of science in animal science and a minor in Agri-business management. For two weeks after graduation, she collected data at University of Pennsylvania for a trial in conjunction with Iowa State University. Over the summer months, Denise will either work at home or go to North Carolina to help with data collection at a boar stud before she move to Ames, Iowa, for graduate school.



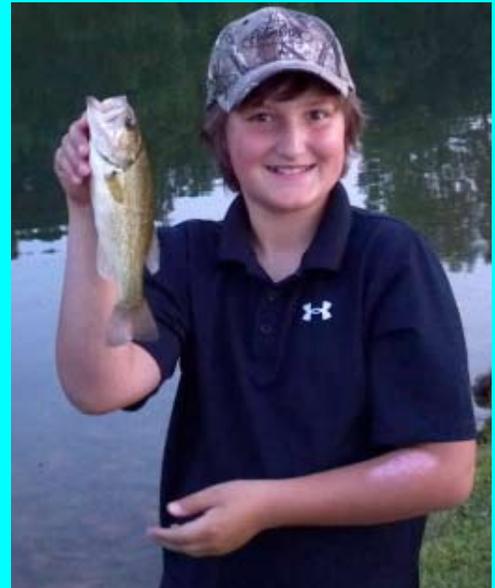
Austin and Kristy Unruh (*pictured here with Kristy's parents, Jerry and Freda Petersheim*) graduated from Lancaster Bible College on May 12, 2014, with a B.S. in Social Work and Biblical Studies. After graduation, they took a nine-day "Wilderness First Responder" medical course at Gettysburg College, and then went to Grand Junction, Colorado, to interview for a job. The month of June will be spent visiting friends and family in Belgium as they travel to several organic farms in Belgium and Sweden through the WWOOF program (Willing Workers on Organic Farms). They are hoping that this will be a great learning experience and mission opportunity. In July, they will enjoy a family trip to Sweden with Austin's parents and brothers, and then return to Pennsylvania by mid-July. If they get the job in Colorado, they will be moving there at that time. Request their



Father/Children
(cross the generations)
Fishing Derby
this
Friday, June 6, 2014,
after 6:00 p.m.
at Pastor Bob & Cindy
Petersheim's Pond.

*A light supper will
be provided, plus prizes!*

Coordinators for this
2014 Fishing Derby
are Mason Stoltzfus,
Bronson Fox, Abe
Oberholtzer, and
Cindy Petersheim.



**CONESTOGA'S
YOUTH
ENJOY A
BEAUTIFUL
AFTERNOON
KAYAKING**



**PHOTOS
COURTESY
OF
KAREN
BORNING**





Bev Smucker and Janet Peachey sorganized this afternoon Tea Party at Tel Hai Retirement Community on Monday, May 12, for Conestoga members who live there: Ruth Essick, Ada Fisher, Ruth Stoltzfus, and Mildred Yoder. Ada Fisher (96 years old) recited the following poem: "Hey diddle, diddle, I'm watching my middle, Hoping to whittle it soon; But eating's so much fun, I probably won't get it done, Till the dish runs away with the spoon." Photo credit: Bev Smucker.



2014 Conestoga Softball Schedule

Games start at 6:45 p.m.

- Tuesday, June 3 - Conestoga vs. Calvary at West Nantmeal
- Tuesday, June 10 - Conestoga vs. CFC2 at West Nantmeal
- Thursday, June 19 - Mt Zion vs. Conestoga at Mt. Zion
- Tuesday, June 24 - Conestoga vs. Lighthouse at West Nantmeal
- Tuesday, July 8 - Conestoga vs. CFC1 at West Nantmeal
- Tuesday, July 15 - Conestoga vs. NH Nazarene at West Nantmeal
- Tuesday, July 22 - Twin Valley vs. Conestoga at Mt. Zion

Coach Mike Petersheim
Assistant Coach Ryan Bosdorf



The Mennonite and Brethren in Christ Churches of North America will host the next Mennonite World Conference Assembly on July 21-26, 2015, in Harrisburg, Pa.!

What a great opportunity for us to participate in this Assembly that meets every six years around the world! These Assemblies are reunions of the Anabaptist-Mennonite family worldwide—you won't want to miss this gathering at Harrisburg! The theme for the Assembly is "Walking With God." Put these dates on your calendars.

Life is Not Over Until it is Over . . . (continued from p. 1)
way through his adversity to rise above the situation and not complain. He taught me many things in life. People would say there is no way you are going to make it. We chose together to trust God for the outcome.

God made it clear to me to start reading through the Bible. I started in Genesis. WOW! It was amazing about all the women in the Bible who prayed for children like I did. There was Sarah—mother of Issac, Rebekah—mother of Jacob and Esau, Rachael—mother of Joseph, Hannah—mother of Samuel, Samson's mother, and in the New Testament, there was Elizabeth—mother of John the Baptist. It was clear that I was not alone.

One weekend while at a retreat at Camp Hebron, our speaker said to pray for our children. Following this, a woman came to me and said, "I guess you were praying for your children too." Later that day while taking a walk, I told a close friend about what happened. I stated, "I really never stopped praying for my children. Because, I always knew in my heart that God would bless me with children someday.

Time marches on—God does answer prayer!

God revealed to me a special verse at that time in Matthew 7:7: "Ask and it will be given to you, Seek and you will find, knock and the door will be opened to you." He revealed that: ask is to pray, seek is to stay busy (don't give into a "WOE IS ME" attitude), knock is to patiently wait until there is an answer. This gave me peace.

In the course of time, Gene's father got remarried to a younger woman and had three more children. Then he passed away.

After 20+ years of marriage, Gene's brothers and sisters were getting together to take a professional family group picture just before Christmas. During that time, we heard that Gene's stepmother (Nancy), who now was remarried with an additional daughter and living in the Pittsburgh area, was sick and thought she may be getting ALS or Lou Gericks disease. She was wanting the children to stay with their father's family. When Gene and I heard this, we knew it was the beginning of God's answer to our prayer.

Nancy passed away of ALS on May 1, 1997, leaving John (George) 16, Anna 13, and Joseph 11, as orphans. In Nancy's will she willed the children to me. They had a little half sister, Katrina (8), and they did not want to be separated from her. The children requested to stay with their step father until school was out and then we would decide how to handle the situation.

It was amazing how God answered our prayers—these children even had the same last name as ours! Even though I missed having children of my own, I could not have had better children. They are a great blessing to my life today too!

Time marches on—sometimes we have to eat our words!

When I got married and left home, I never dreamed of

ever living with my mother again. I even said there was "NO way." But, she had always said I don't ever want to go to a nursing home! She is an outdoor person, happy in her own world. While at the nursing home for a couple months, it was like a prison to her, so now she lives with me.

Working full-time at the business that Gene started and then later after he passed away in 2002, it is a blessing to operate and maintain this trucking and warehouse operation. Since I am so tied down with the business, it is hard to get away. So, not having the freedom to do things is the norm for me now. During the day, my mother has very good caregivers who take care of her while I am at work.

There are many sacrifices in serving as the caregiver of an elderly parent, but untold blessings as well. If my mom were at a nursing home, I would need to take time out of my busy schedule to visit her. It would be more stressful knowing up front she would not like it there, plus not being sure of the care she would receive as a dementia patient, plus not to mention the added cost.

Guess what! My mother has a completely different life than when I was a child. Her caregivers take her to the nursing home to visit the younger people. I take her to Wyoming Farmer's Market, out to eat, and shopping with my girlfriend and her mother. The transport wheelchair comes in handy on many occasions. Last week, I took her to her 81st East Lampeter Alumni class reunion. There I met other children of parents and had a good time as well. She does make me angry and other times make me laugh. Her favorite game is hide and seek. Hiding her teeth, hair pins, clothing, and food. She can even pull you in on that game. She waters the artificial flowers. She enjoys washing the dishes.

Every night I wake to her foot steps coming toward my bedroom, she seemingly is checking if I am ok. She may need help to change her depends, or tell me her throat hurts, or just to tell me it is so dark outside. After tending to her need, I tell her the time and then say to go back to bed. She shuffles off to her bed.

In getting older, it is clear to see that where you are born, and the circumstances and events in your life define who you are. It is not about how good you are, God knows I am blessed beyond what I deserve. Yet, God still answers our prayers. God can give us a heart to do what we have no intentions of doing, yet find exceeding joy in it.

With circumstances leaving me childless, God has answered my prayers in giving me children and allowing me to be a mother to them. Even though growing up with an older mother who was over 40 years old when I was born and not having a close relationship with her, at age 59 years old, I now have a relationship with my mother. At times, she even calls me Mom. Isn't it comical how God can put a twist on life?

Life is not over, until it is over! Only God knows what our future holds.

- Kathleen Weaver



Moving Day for Tammy Schmidt with a number of Conestogans assisting in the move, but after her possessions were moved, hail struck the next week breaking several windows in her rental house. Pray that the needed repairs will be done so that she can move in for good. Photos: Bob Ebert.



Small Group Bible Studies are available for all ages at Conestoga

Pictured on the left is the “Wandering Shepherds Bible Study” that meets monthly in various homes of seniors. On May 20, we met at the home of Dave and Becky Yoder. We enjoy sharing, praying, singing, and studying God’s Word.

Left to right: Lemar Mast, Betty Zook, Marian Stoltzfus, Lena Smoker, Mabel Petersheim, Allen Weaver, Becky Yoder, Dave Yoder, Harvey Stoltzfus, Lillian Stoltzfus, Julia Yoder, Bob Ebert, and Jo Ebert. Photo: Lois Ann Mast.