



NAB Retired Workers' Retreat Reflections



Randy Tschetter
Director NAB Heritage Commission



To call this a retreat for retired workers is something of a misnomer. For sure, most of those in attendance at the Cedar Springs Retreat Center near Sumas, Washington, May 13–15, have technically achieved retirement status. In welcoming attendees to Sumas, I reflected on the life of former NAB missionary, Bee Westerman,¹ who often described retirement in automotive terms of “putting on four new tires.” Although attendees are no longer full-time pastors or missionaries, they have “re-tired” and continued to find ways to serve God in their local churches and communities.

The Sumas retreat might well be characterized as a North American Baptist family reunion. It is a family gathering in which seminary friends and classmates from forty-five to fifty years ago are able to reconnect; in which former missionary colleagues recall the joys and challenges of service in places like Cameroon, Japan, and Brazil; in which pastors who have served as colleagues in NAB churches across North America can renew friendships, revisit ministry highlights from years gone by, and share how God is using them in their retirement years; and in which individuals who are meeting for the first time feel free to disclose personal joys and pains. Every time another car arrived and the door to the lodge opened, the family spirit intensified as folks greeted each other with handshakes, hugs, and laughter.

To complement this familial atmosphere, our time included good food and sitting together around tables.

Table prayers were generally sung as reminders of God’s good blessings in our lives. Time at the tables led to conversations about family, ministry, and life experiences. Around these tables we had a few new faces, mine included. I was given the chance to promote the NAB Heritage Commission, relating the story of Venturia Baptist Church in North Dakota, from which God has called missionaries and pastors. Missionary Yuri Nakano shared her faith journey, as well as her ministries in Japan. Chris Gorman spoke about God’s incredible grace and provisions for our lives and shared how opportunities for ministry are all around us.

Even as different people shared of physical ailments, what we did not find among this group was a sense of despair or uselessness. Even in retirement, these workers are living into what became an underlying theme of the retreat: “pulpits come in many shapes and sizes” and “everyone has a pulpit.” These faithful workers have re-tired and discovered new pulpits from which to live out their faith in local churches and in their homes and communities, through teaching Sunday school, serving as a medical director for a hospice / home health organization, organizing and hosting a neighborhood Bible study, organizing White Cross shipments, etc. That is reason to praise God.

Please let us know about your changes, celebrations, prayer concerns, particular interest in any area of conference ministry, and resources you have discovered to make senior life better. **Send updates to Ron & Joan Stoller.**

Ron & Joan Stoller
17266 NW Stoller Dr., Portland, OR 97229
(503) 629-5053 | stoller@japan.email.ne.jp

¹ Bee completed her earthly sojourn a few days after the retreat ended.

Home to Glory

Mildred Jane “Aunt Mil” Wolfe—February 28, 2018 (96) in Midland, Michigan. Mildred was a charter member of Gladwin Cornerstone Baptist Church, where she attended until she passed. She served in many areas of the church over the years, including in the choir, teaching Sunday school, as a youth leader, in children’s ministries, as a pianist, and in women’s missionary fellowship. She continued to play the organ until 2017.



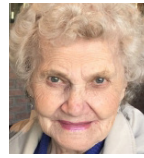
Lois Reeder McLatchie—August 18, 2018 (86) in Quarryville, Pennsylvania, after battling congestive heart failure.

Lois met a young seminary student, William “Bill” Richmond Locky

McLatchie, III, whom she won over by untying his shoelaces. The two were married in 1955 at Pilgrim Baptist Church of Philadelphia and had two children, Ruth and John. After suffering from bipolar disorder and finding relief through treatment, she obtained her doctorate and became licensed as a clinical psychologist, eventually opening a private practice where she had a lasting impact upon the mental health and spiritual needs of many individuals and families. Lois and Bill together served in Pennsylvania at Forest Baptist of Winburne and First Baptist of Lanse and then in Ohio for thirty years at Hillcrest Baptist.

John Ziegler—December 14, 2018 (89) in Alexandria, Virginia. John met and married Millie Richert in Sioux Falls in 1954. In 1956, he received his bachelor of divinity from Sioux Falls Seminary. John and Millie went on to pastor churches in Minnesota, Michigan, Ohio, and Iowa. In 1977, John, Millie, and their two children, Kim and Mark, moved to Illinois, where John served as associate secretary and then general secretary for Church Extension at the NAB International Office. John later accepted the pastorate at First Baptist Church of Colfax, Washington, in 1982, followed by assignments as the NAB Regional Minister for the Eastern and then Atlantic Associations. After Millie passed away, John met and married Joyce (Joy) Catalano in 1993. Upon his retirement in 1996, John then moved to Queens, where he and Joy served interim pastor positions in

Hamden, Connecticut; Jamesburg, New Jersey; and Middle Island, New York.



Mary Boymook—January 21, 2019 (86).

Mary was the youngest of six children and was raised on a farm in Minitonas, Manitoba. She married Arthur in 1955, and they ministered with the NAB in

Jamesburg, New Jersey; Lansing, Michigan; Vancouver, British Columbia; and other Canadian cities before their retirement. Mary is survived by her daughters, Nola (Mike) Weiss and Nicole Boymook, and her two grandchildren, Christopher and Taylor. Mary and Art were married fifty-five years before his passing in 2012.

Henry Rose—January 27, 2019 (96) in Eldora, Iowa. He served briefly in the Navy during the end of WWII. He married Elizabeth Frerichs on October 13, 1948, at Steamboat Rock Baptist Church, where they were lifelong members, serving in many different positions and committees. Henry believed in helping others and had a heart for missions and missionaries.



Lillian Grabke—February 3, 2019 (81) in Regina, Saskatchewan. Lillian served faithfully and enthusiastically alongside her husband, Rev. Richard Grabke, as they served several NAB churches.

She held a variety of roles, including serving as a co-facilitator with Richard of grief share support groups for many years, leading them even after his death in 2010.

Al Lamprecht—February 21, 2019 (94). After graduation from North American Baptist Seminary, Al and Irene served in several German Baptist churches in Golden Prairie, Saskatchewan, and Edmonton, Alberta, before being called to a pastorate at Ridgewood Baptist Church in Queens, New York, for seventeen years. In 1980, Al and Irene began serving the congregation that met in the US embassy in Moscow. After that experience, they felt called to foreign mission work and served in Vienna. Al was very proud to be associated with international ministries. Al and Irene retired in 1991 to Sun City West, Arizona. After Irene passed away in 2012, Al moved to the Royal Oaks Retirement Community

in Sun City. Al is survived by his children, Barbara in Pasadena, California, John (Puri) in Spain, and Virginia (Mark) Dosch in Washington, D.C.; and two grandchildren, Maria and Alfonso.

Paul Brannon—February 27, 2019 (81) in Sydney, Montana. Paul served for over fifty years as pastor at a number of churches alongside his wife, Sally, including NAB churches in Sidney, Montana, and Underwood and Linton, North Dakota, as well as on staff at Crystal Springs Camp. He is survived by his two sons, three daughters, seventeen grandchildren, fourteen great-grandchildren, and one great-great-grandchild.



Constantino "Connie" Salios, Sr.—February 27, 2019 (92). Connie and Harriet served the Lord in ministry throughout their sixty-two years of marriage. They ministered in NAB churches in Texas, Illinois, and California. Connie also served as the director of God's Volunteers, the NAB director of Development, and an estate planner. He was preceded in death by Harriet, and he leaves behind his four children, nine grandchildren, and fifteen great-grandchildren.

Jacob Ehman—March 8, 2019 (95), surrounded by his loving family, pastor, and caregiver. After marrying Helen Fischer, his wife of sixty-six years, Jacob felt the call to ministry and enrolled in North American Baptist Seminary in Rochester, New York, which he graduated from in 1951. He was ordained in his home church, Ebenezer Baptist Church, and proceeded to serve churches in Bessie, Oklahoma; Sidney, Montana; Goodrich, North Dakota; Steamboat Rock, Iowa; and Alpena, Michigan, before becoming the regional minister for the Midwest for six years and then for the Great Lakes Association for four years. He retired in 1997 but continued his ministry as pastor emeritus at Word of Life Baptist Church, teaching weekly Bible study and Sunday school until 2017 when, at the age of 94, his health began to deteriorate. Jacob and Helen were blessed with four children. Jacob was preceded in death by his wife; two sisters, Ruth Weisenburger and Ella Bender; and three brothers-in-law.

Jacob Hufnagel—March 22, 2019 (83). Jake will be dearly missed by his wife, Bertha; his children, Dale

(Marcy), Glenn (Vivian), and Nicole (John) Voth; his eight grandchildren; and his two great-grandchildren. Dale and Marcy served as NAB missionaries to Cameroon in the 1990s.

Fred Moore—March 23, 2019 (92) at a care center near Seattle, Washington. Fred and Pat Moore pastored a few NAB churches and went to Japan as missionaries in the late 1950s, where for many years Fred was the missions director and the president at Osaka Bible Seminary. They returned to North America in the late 1970s, ministering for many years in Creston, British Columbia, until Pat passed away after a short battle with cancer. Fred then moved to Abbotsford, British Columbia, and married Margaret. They enjoyed retirement and singing in a large choir for many years. Margaret also endured cancer and passed away. Fred's daughter, Joy, moved him to the Seattle area about eight years ago. You can contact Joy (Moore) Kennard at joykrn@comcast.net.

Meraleen Kern—April 2, 2019 (89) in Edmonton, Alberta. Meraleen and her husband, Edwin, who preceded her in death, followed God's call to Japan as NAB missionaries in 1955. They spent seventeen years in Japan in three different cities before moving to the Edmonton area. Four of their five children were born in Japan. While taking care of her family, Meraleen also worked as a substitute teacher for Edmonton Public Schools and as a recreational coordinator at Shepherd's Care. She continued to pursue her love of music by playing and singing at Central Baptist and other churches in the community. She was also very active in supporting the Edmonton Japanese Christian Church, and she made time to volunteer with many new immigrants coming to Edmonton, teaching English to them and helping them get established.



Walter Dingfield—May 3, 2019 (97) at a Portland, Oregon, hospital after three minor strokes. In 1940, Walter went to work at the NAB in Chicago, where he met Gladys Engel. They married two years later. In 1954, they and their four children began their many years of ministry with the NAB, including working with The Church of the Open Door in Louisiana and then in Fargo and Bismarck, North Dakota; Kankakee, Illinois; and Lodi, California. Gladys passed away in

2003, and Walter retired back to Oregon to be close to his daughter, Grace Reichen. She can be reached at 8450 NW 185th, Portland, OR 97231.

Loretta June Strauss—May 14, 2019 (85) in Medicine Hat, Alberta. Loretta was born June 19, 1933, in Odessa, Washington. Her daughter Karen is married to Ralph Korner, academic dean at Taylor Seminary in Edmonton, Alberta.



Berneice "Bee" Westerman—May 21, 2019 (95) in Hillsboro, Kansas. Bee was appointed as an NAB missionary to Cameroon in 1949 to serve as a teacher and school manager. In 1961, when the NAB began a secondary school for girls in Cameroon, Bee was asked to select thirty-six girls for the first enrollment and was named the first principal of Saker Baptist College. Since then, over six thousand girls have graduated from Saker. Upon her return to Sioux Falls after forty years in Cameroon, she began working in the NAB Heritage Commission as an archivist and editor of *Heritage Horizons*. She is survived by her brothers, Raymond Westerman and Elmer (Delores) Westerman, along with nephews and nieces spanning three generations, plus hosts of friends, associates, and former students.

In Care & Prayer

Gordon Harris recently suffered a stroke and is in assisted living near his daughter, Jami Harris Knight, in Columbia, Missouri. Joyce Harris is living in a memory care facility in Columbia.

Milton Zeeb has moved to the board and care home where his wife is living. She is bedridden but knows and recognizes Milton. Milton would love to hear from you at 6456 E. Orion St., Mesa, AZ 85215.

Don Decker has been moved to a nursing home in La Mirada, California. Alice lives in the mother-in-law suite at the home of one of their two sons in the area and visits Don several times a week to talk and play games. You can reach them at 13532 Castanet Dr., La Mirada, California 90638 or (503) 559-465.

Ron and Sharon Mayforth live in an assisted living residence near Kelowna, British Columbia. Sharon is

doing well. Ron had several falls, which left a crack in his back. He is trying to walk it well. He also has other health problems that are progressing. They can be reached at (778) 476-3022 or (250) 300-3233. They appreciate all of the prayers and good wishes.

Dorothy Patzia was moved into a full-time nursing care facility earlier this year as her health has been deteriorating greatly. About five years ago, after some strokes, she was diagnosed with Multiple System Atrophy. Pray for the family as this has been a big adjustment, especially for Art, as they now live apart after fifty-eight years of living together. Art can be reached at 214 S Atlantic Blvd., #216L Alhambra, CA 91801 or (626) 200-6925.

Keir Hammer is recovering and in a great deal of pain after his sixth surgery to repair scar tissue from burns he suffered when he was a child. Pray for continued improvements and Keir's long-term health as he endures a process of multiple surgeries and recuperates from each.

Celebrate

Bill Neuman married Wilda Sockel from Eagle Rock Church in Idaho Falls, Idaho, on May 18. Bill is retired from pastoring after years of ministry in the Central and Western Associations. His wife, Virginia, passed away three years ago after a long struggle with cancer. Bill and Wilda will reside in his home near Grace Fellowship Church in Sultan, Washington.

Donald Miller from Hillsboro, Oregon, who pastored a number of NAB churches and was vice president for Development at NAB Seminary, continues on dialysis three times a week but is holding his own beyond the doctor's expectation. Donald has just completed writing his twentieth book, *Learning to Love like Jesus*. After June 15, he will offer the book free of charge to whomever requests it by contacting him with their name and address at dnmiller@whiz.to.

Wilfred Weick, his two daughters, and some family members traveled to Nagoya, Japan, recently to join the fiftieth celebration of the Nagoya Inokoishi Church that the Weicks and Kerns started. The Weick family plans to travel to many of the conference churches and visit pastors.