

SERVANT LINK

Connecting Retired Christian Workers & Friends of the NAB Conference

UNTIL WE MEET AGAIN

By Amber Pedroni



“Growing old is a privilege we don’t all get to enjoy.”
—Paraphrased from Mark Twain

A month ago, I had the privilege of attending The NAB Retired Workers’ Retreat in Sumas, Washington. It was the first retreat after a three-year break due to COVID. Coming together again was sweet, like a long overdue reunion. As I connected with many friends, new and old, I thought about how this time together was so integral to continuing the oral history and storytelling of the NAB. As I looked around the room and saw retired pastors, retired career and short-term missionaries, college friends, and family, I was struck by the embodiment of God’s hands and feet at home and abroad. It was a privilege to worship and share with such a group!

During our three days together, there was a growing sense of loss, however. The thought that this might be the last retreat hung heavy in the air. As we walked through those three days, worshiping, and hearing from guest speakers

and from those who lead the conference, there began to be a new feeling, one of hope and joy. You see, the NAB International Office simply was passing the torch of planning and hosting the retreat to those who attend it. It was wonderful to watch as many at the retreat began to grab hold of planning the next gathering. Some professed the need for a retreat in Canada, and some said how they would like to hold a one-day gathering closer to their homes so more people could attend. God broke down defensiveness and division and once again created unity within his people.

As the three days came to a close, there were many who knew they may not have the chance to meet again on this side of eternity, but there still was much rejoicing. For God put this family called the North American Baptists together, and we all know that a family knit together in him will not be separated easily. Thank you all for adopting me into your beautiful family; it is a privilege.

Until we meet again.



IN NEED OF PRAYER

Wilma Binder has been recovering from a stroke she had last fall, which affected her left side. While at an assisted living facility in Bismarck, North Dakota, in April, she was surprised for her 86th birthday by many of her Cameroonian students who are living in America now. Wilma is living with a sister in Plains, Montana, for a few months before going to live with another sister in Idaho for a few months, after which she will return to Bismarck. You can reach Wilma at (701) 975-3057.

Jan Gruber is in need of prayer. She is at Trail Ridge Retirement Community in Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

Al Harsch is doing well in New Orleans, Louisiana. He was in the hospital for ten days, where they discovered he has a heart issue. He is on meds to keep it under control. Moving to New Orleans was a very good move. His son Lloyd takes good care of him!

The family of **Annemarie Hattenhauer** send this announcement: "Thank you for praying for Annemarie. She is living in a full-care facility in Edmonton, where she is well taken care of and is content. Annemarie has dementia and is no longer able to read, understand, or respond to emails."

Jarene Rudolph has entered hospice care in Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

HOME TO GLORY

Amalie "Molly" Rapske, 102, departed this earthly life on January 7, 2022. She is survived by her three children, David (Kathy) Albert Rapske, Roger (Donna) Rapske, and Lois (Chris) Woods; her siblings Harry (Verna) Unger and Elsie Kerber; seven grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren; and a multitude of extended family and life-long friends. She married Rudolph Rapske at First Baptist Church in Olds, Alberta, on October 18, 1944. The Rapskes served in church pastorates in Medicine Hat and Hilda, Alberta; Hutchinson, Minnesota; and Terrace, British Columbia. For more information, contact David Rapske: daverap@comcast.net.

Bill Keple passed away in July 2022. His wife, Polly, lives in their home in Summerfield, Florida, but has plans to move this summer to be closer to their two sons in the Minnesota / North Dakota area and take Bill's ashes to Martin, North Dakota, where they served in the early 1980s. Bill directed the 1979 Triennial choir in Bismarck, North Dakota. You can reach Polly in Florida at 16565 S.E. 96th Ave., Summerfield, FL 34491.

Ruth Hunter, 96, passed away in November 2022. She worked at the NAB International Office in the 1960s and 1970s as a German/English secretary. Her husband passed away in 2015. Her niece Cheryl Schmitke can be reached at petdavjam@aol.com.

Joyce Harris, 81, passed away on November 28, 2022, in Columbia, Missouri, with her daughter Jami at her side. She married James Gordon Harris in March 1967. They lived in southern states until they moved to the Philippines as missionaries, where Joyce was a choir director while Gordon was an Old Testament professor. They moved to Sioux Falls in 1975, where Gordon became the Old Testament professor at the NAB seminary. She was a wife, mother, sister, friend, musician, singer, helper, and dedicated Christian. Her husband and one daughter preceded her in death. You can find her obituary at millerfh.com/obituary/joyce-harris.

Elaine Ruth Eisele-Strobel, 87, left this earth on January 11, 2023, to go to the home Jesus has prepared for her. She was born in a farmhouse near Elmo, Kansas, and was a member of Ebenezer Baptist Church until

she moved away, but she came full circle to attend again in the later years of her life. She was married to Chester Strobel for over 63 years; they had four children together. Elaine was a pastor's wife for 38 years, serving churches in Beatrice, Nebraska; Redmond, Washington; and Bison and Hope, Kansas. Elaine also was involved in her community as a Sunday school teacher, Bible study leader, choir member, and in Christian women's luncheons in Abilene. She is survived by her husband; children, Susan (Gary) Weimar, Steve (Wendy) Strobel, Sandra (Wayne) Anderson, and Sheila (Jody) Waldrop; 14 grandchildren; five great-grandchildren; brother-in-law Robert Carey; sister-in-law Darlene Frueh; and many cousins, nieces, and nephews. Memorials will be accepted for Ebenezer Baptist Church or The Gideons.

Ernest "Ernie" Radke, 94, passed away peacefully at Brentwood Care Center on February 24, 2023. He was very involved with the Alberta Baptist Association and Camp Caroline. A celebration of life was held at Brentview Baptist Church on March 18, 2023.

Milton Hildebrandt, 96, went to be with the Lord on March 29, 2023. You can find his full obituary at johnsonpeterson.com/obituary/milton-hildebrandt. You can reach his daughter Mary at (651) 492-6702 in Minnesota.

Sena Brust, 90, passed away on March 31, 2023, in Elk Grove, California. Born and raised in South Dakota, Sena served in ministry alongside her husband, **Arthur Brust**, for over 60 years. **Arthur Brust**, 91, passed away on May 12, 2023, in Elk Grove, California, just six weeks after his beloved wife, Sena. Born in Alberta, Art served the Lord as pastor to churches in Worthing, South Dakota; Salem, Oregon; Surrey, British Columbia; Missoula, Montana; and Lodi, Sacramento, Lincoln, and Roseville, California. Sena and Arthur leave behind daughters Janell Laskowski and Janine (Wade) Schauer; grandchildren Nicholas, Alexis, Dean, and Logan; as well as numerous cousins, nieces and nephews, and friends. Sena also leaves behind her brother Harley (Valeria) Plucker and cousin Gladys Richter. Arthur also leaves behind siblings Reinhart Brust, Harvey Brust, and Myrna Collingham. A joint celebration of life will be held July 7, 2023, at Creekside Christian Church in Elk Grove, California. In their remembrance, the family asks charitable donations be made to the NAB in furthering the Gospel of Christ. You can email their daughter Janine Schauer at janine_schauer@hotmail.com.

Don Miller, 90, passed away on May 4, 2023, in Hillsboro, Oregon. Born of Russian parents in Camrose, Alberta, he was a student,

pastor, farmer, trailblazer, historian, visionary, author, and founder of the Samaritan Ministries in Ukraine. He is mostly known for his passion for life and ministry. He met and married Nancy Bauder from New Jersey in 1956, and they were blessed with three children. He leaves his wife, eight grandchildren, and one great-grandchild. A memorial celebration was held at Living Hope Fellowship in Aloha, Oregon, on May 13. You can reach Nancy at dnmiller@whiz.to. Contributions can be made to Samaritan Ministries in Ukraine. A few weeks before he passed, Don wrote, "Nancy and I celebrated our 65th wedding anniversary on April 5. I have just completed another booklet in the series *Conversations with God in the Midst of a Storm*. It is entitled *Being Transformed into the Likeness of Jesus*. Copies are available free of charge by emailing a request. I continue to have many health challenges with kidney failure and congestive heart failure, but I am still driving at 90 and living with meaning and purpose."

Willis Potratz, 99, passed away on May 5, 2023, in Bismarck, North Dakota. Willis was born in Sumner, Iowa, and called to ministry in 1947; he graduated from the Sioux Falls seminary in 1954. He and his wife, Ruth,

Continued on Page 8



**Pictures from
the 2023
Retired
Workers'
Retreat &
Reunion**





ON THE MOVE

Jim Black traveled in Nigeria the month of June.

Bob Krahn, the regional minister for the British Columbia Baptist Association, will be retiring at the end of July.

John Siewert is trying to sell their house in California. They will likely not move until sometime this summer after the house is sold.

Ken Solberg retired as the regional minister for the Saskatchewan Baptist Association at the end of October 2022.

Earlier this year, **Ron and Joan Stoller** spent two months in Japan. They were there volunteering as the chaplain of a Garden Chapel in a large hotel in Tokyo. They also spent two weeks visiting many acquaintances in Japan.

Alan and Judy Steier went to Japan in April with Barnabas Ministries and spent a great four weeks touching the lives of many missionaries in Japan. They returned to their home in Delaware on May 11.

Robert and Marilyn Walther spend their winters in Alamo, Texas, where he has the privilege of being the winter chaplain in the RV park. They are RV park hosts in various parks in the US during the rest of the year.

CELEBRATIONS

Barbara Binder was surprised by about 30 family and friends for her 88th birthday with a party in March. She lives alone in Twin Lakes, Wisconsin.

Bert and Myrna Harsch celebrated their 60th anniversary on April 6, 2023! You can reach out at msharsch@shaw.ca.

Fred and Edy Penner celebrated their 60th anniversary on September 1, 2022, and Fred celebrated his 86th birthday on September 20. Email them at fepenner09@hotmail.com or you can reach them at their home address: 501 E. 39th St., South Sioux City, NE 68776.

Sarah Redlich turned 90 in June. She is in Elmhurst, Illinois, and is struggling with health issues.

Roselyn Wolf celebrated her 90th birthday on March 31, 2023, in Texas with her four daughters.

There were over 40 people who attended the **NAB Retired Workers' Retreat & Reunion** in Sumas, Washington, May 15–17, 2023. It was a time of celebration, fun, food, fellowship, and studying, with NAB leaders Harry Kelm, Kerry Bender, and others speaking.





ANNOUNCEMENTS

The family of **Herbert Hiller** has published a booklet entitled “The Legacy of Herbert Hiller” containing interesting biographical information, as well as excerpts of wisdom in his own words and themes from his ministry. It is available free of charge to anyone interested; simply write Harry Hiller at hiller@ucalgary.ca. Herbert pastored numerous NAB churches, and there is even a lectureship at Sioux Falls Seminary established in his honor.

David Rapske would like to gift his pastoral library to a young theological student or young, budding pastor. If anyone aware of someone who would like some great books to add to their library in NAB circles in the Pacific Northwest, contact daverap@comcast.net.



Continued from Page 3

pastored churches in South Dakota, North Dakota, and California before being chosen as the regional minister in the Great Lakes area. He later served as associate executive director of the NAB. In 1990, he and Ruth retired to Bismarck to be pastor of care and visitation at Century Baptist. He is preceded in death by his wife and his daughters – Linda, Eloise, and

Leora – and he is survived by his sons, Steven and Nathan.

Inger Kerstan, 87, passed away in Sarasota, Florida, on May 21, 2023. She is survived by her husband, Reinhold, and their children.

Gertrude “Trudy” Schatz, 95, went to be with her Lord on May 30, 2023, after spending the past three years at Sherwood Care Nursing Home in Edmonton,

Alberta. Trudy attended various schools but got her nurses training at General Hospital in Calgary, Alberta. She also attended Christian Training Institute in Edmonton. For 34 years, Trudy served as a missionary nurse in Cameroon. She was involved in a healing ministry, in particular at Bansa Baptist Hospital. After retiring in 1995, Trudy lived with her sister in Edmonton. The memorial service was on June 8, 2023.

For more information on these items or new information for the next edition of *Servant Link*, please contact Ron and Joan Stoller at Stoller@Japan.email.ne.jp or by phone, either (503) 629-5053 or (503) 709-4041.

