



Sharing the Love of Christ in Haiti

Seven members of the **LWML Iowa West District** reflected the love of Christ by toting 12 suitcases overflowing with a myriad of supplies for the people of Jacmel, Haiti. **Jeni Zeller** writes, "We saw the faces of the elderly light up when we brought them a bag full of food and supplies. We saw the kids dance with excitement every time we showed up, ready to play with us and teach us their games. We saw tired mothers' gratitude when we gave them new cloth diapers for their newborn babies. None of these signs of grace would have happened if our group didn't step outside of our safe, comfort-filled homes and venture to a country that needs our help. I wasn't worried about what I looked like or what I was wearing. All that mattered was I was creating a better environment for those around me."



And they're off! Women wearing beautiful hats and exquisite outfits weren't only at the Kentucky Derby this past May. Ladies of **Grace Lutheran, Huntsville, Alabama** (Gulf States District), hosted a Mother/Daughter Derby Day Salad Luncheon where everyone wore decorated hats and elegant outfits. After an opening devotion, the women shared delicious food, fun, fellowship, and prizes. Obviously there were many winners that day!



The LWML of **Christ Lutheran Church of Yuma, Arizona** (Pacific Southwest District), has been quite busy gathering and assembling Bundles of Joy for people within their local community. Wrapped in a beautiful hand-made baby quilt, each bundle includes a Bible, congratulations card, devotion book, diapers, newborn clothing, receiving blanket, lotion, baby shampoo, a toy, and wipes. What a loving way to bless new parents in their neighborhood!

40 Years of Service as District Presidents!

LWML North Dakota District Presidents, both past and present, met for a luncheon reunion. Wonderful memories were shared, along with laughter and tears, as everyone reminisced about their years of service together.

Pictured left to right. Top: Lilly Hintz-Henke (1984–1988), Paulette Huber (2012–2016), Sue Corwin (2008–2012), Debbie Larson (2004–2008), Dee Pavicic (1968–1972), Valerie Biberdorf (2016–2020), Dorothea Sincebaugh (1996–2000). Bottom: Marlene Brandenburg (1992–1996), JoAnn Bladow (1988–1992), Kay Kreklau (2000–2004).



For the last 65 years, the **Mary-Martha Society of St. Peter Lutheran Church, Hemlock, Michigan** (LWML Michigan District), has served its church and community through various programs and faithful support of mite offerings. This past year, these faith-filled women met to assemble “hope totes”— bags overflowing with personal hygiene items given to the Saginaw City Rescue Mission. Since 1905, this rescue mission has served the people of Mid-Michigan by guiding low-income and homeless people toward sustainable, godly-living.



Treasure within a blessing! **Irene Gehring**, member of **Hope Lutheran, Seattle, Washington**, has had the joy of processing mites gathered at her church. Recently she spied an unusual-looking coin. She writes, “What to my wondering eyes did appear, but a coin with a date of 1864 year! It was an Indian Head Penny!” Since that time, Irene has been searching the coins for dated coins, wheat pennies, and silver dimes and quarters. *Keep a sharp lookout for precious coins in your Mite Boxes. You never know what treasure you may find!*



Albuquerque convention attendee **Arleen Lautenschlager** (LWML Pacific Southwest District) recalled her attendance 64 years ago at the 1953 Portland, Oregon, LWML Convention. “I remember walking to the convention center from our hotel. I was so excited to be there as my husband, Rev. Adam Lautenschlager, started an LWML group in our mission congregation in 1942, as soon as the LWML was founded. He credited most of the church’s growth to our participation in the LWML!” Now a young 97-year-old, she is looking forward to being in Mobile, Alabama, in 2019.

Mission Workshop Saturday

Last spring, volunteers ranging from age 2 to 75+ gathered in the Family Life Center of **St. Paul Lutheran Church in Ankeny, Iowa**, to find out just how many mission projects could be completed in one day. Hosted by the their LWML and Mission and Christian Life Committee, members of the church and surrounding community worked in shifts from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. They had a great time putting together this incredible list of items to bless people both near and far away: 12 egg casseroles for Salvation Army, 541 rolled bandages for Global Health Ministries, 362 witness bracelets, 148 yarn crosses for local mission outreach, 18 pillowcase dresses, 10 knitted hats, 19 bereavement bags for Diana’s Angels, 10 tied fleece blankets, 226 cross bookmarks, 48 Easter cards, and 72 chalk cross pictures. This was so successful that it may become an annual event! Great work, St. Paul Lutheran LWML!

SPRING 2018 THEME: BEING FAMILY

Please share your stories and photos of joyful, mission-minded service with News Editor Linda Guterres:
newseditor@lwml.org or
3 Timber Trail, Medford, NY 11763

Deadline: September 15, 2017.

Include: name, address, phone, and email.



Mary and Rebecca after the 75th Anniversary Diamond Dazzle Celebration

The Little Girl With The Big Voice

By Cheri Fish, Mission Editor

It is said that she began singing as soon as she could talk. She sang her first solo in church for a Baptism at age four and competed in her first music festival at age eight. When, as a high student, Rebecca Smith auditioned to sing the National Anthem for the Saginaw Spirit hockey games, Spirit hockey officials dubbed her “the little girl with the big voice!” She was on her way to sharing her God-given talent for singing with growing crowds.

Rebecca, along with her mother, Mary, was invited to the 2010 LWML Michigan District Convention where Rebecca sang for the President’s Dinner. This launched her involvement in the LWML. Rebecca returned to sing as entertainment at the LWML Michigan District conventions in 2012 and 2016. At the 2016 convention, LWML President Patti Ross was in attendance and, subsequently, invited Rebecca to share her gift at the 2017 LWML Convention in Albuquerque. Rebecca then began preparing her repertoire for the convention where LWML would celebrate its 75th Anniversary Celebration.

With the support of her mom and dad, she searched for period music and attire to fit the theme of the decades to be highlighted. Her dad, Brent, helped her compile a list of songs for the various decades as she and her mom scoured second-hand stores for period dresses. It was a family endeavor to help Rebecca make this a memorable experience. Mom and Dad were looking forward to traveling to Albuquerque to celebrate with LWML and witness Rebecca’s performance.

Her family’s plans and excitement for the convention came to an unexpected halt in March of 2017. Brent, Rebecca’s 49-year-old dad, passed away suddenly from a heart attack. It was a shock to the family, friends, and our congregation to have lost such a wonderful man. The question on

everyone’s heart was, “Lord, why did You allow this to happen?”

Despite her profound grief and pain, Rebecca wanted to sing at her father’s funeral. When Rebecca shared that she hoped she could get through the song, she was told that no one would fault her if she could not. She responded, “I have to do this for my dad.” We all prayed her through that piece!

Rebecca sang “Thy Will” by Hillary Scott. You could hear her heartbreak as she sang, but she did make it through the song.

In the months following her father’s passing, Rebecca’s thoughts slowly returned to her plans for the LWML convention presentation. Arrangements were made for her mom to fly out to Albuquerque to be with Rebecca.

Saturday, June 24th, the day of the LWML 75th Anniversary Diamond Dazzle Celebration, was Rebecca’s mom and dad’s 28th wedding anniversary. Although it was a painful day for her mom, she was glad to be in Albuquerque to witness the culmination of the hard work done to prepare for this event. One of the songs Rebecca and her dad chose for the evening’s program was Whitney Houston’s “I Will Always Love You.”

Her mom shared that Rebecca had difficulty getting through that song emotionally during her rehearsal earlier that day. As we sat and listened and were engaged in the 75th Anniversary Celebration, we heard Rebecca sing the powerful ballad without a single catch in her voice! The consummate performer raised her voice and her heart in love and gratitude to God for His goodness and mercy despite the trials of the previous months.

In addition to performing, Rebecca has dedicated her life to serving Him in the classroom as she looks to begin teaching soon. The “little girl” uses her “big voice” in praise to her Lord wherever He leads her, sharing the gift He has given her. Q