



The DEAF LUTHERAN



Official Publication of the International Lutheran Deaf Association & the Board for Missions of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

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CHRISTMAS: WHOSE BIRTHDAY IS IT?

A shabby, tired-looking couple appears at the door. The woman is a pregnant. The man says that the baby is going to come soon, and asks for a room. We sigh: It's most unfortunate. The Inn is already full (of paying customers, we think to ourselves.) We are perhaps even somewhat relieved that there isn't room, because this family just doesn't fit in with the rest of the clientele.



Even so, we pause a moment. There is something about them that touches us, after all.

Something about the man's eyes or the woman's peaceful face. So we give them a room in the stable, out back, out of sight, because we just cannot shut them out altogether. Little do we realize that upon this tiny act of half-kindness depends the hope of entire humanity.

Each year we re-enact this scene. Amidst rounds of parties, gift buying, decorating, and feasting we make a small, inadequate space in our lives to remember the birth of Christ. From the large amounts of money we spend on presents for family and friends who don't need them, we manage to set aside a little for the Christmas offering. Perhaps we take some time, even though we're awfully busy getting ready for Santa, to visit a sick friend or help with the Christmas baskets.

We feel that this is just the best we can do, even though we don't like the commercialization of Christmas. We feel sad to see our children (and maybe even ourselves!) judging the success of our Christmas celebrations

according to "how much we got." We are appalled at the stories of stampeding shoppers fighting for the latest status item. We know as we prepare sumptuous spreads for the Christmas feasts that not far from our doors there are people without food or shelter, prisoners awaiting execution, soldiers battling one another around the world--often "religious" reasons.

The irony is searing. As surely as the Innkeeper relegates the Christ child to a stable, we relegate the meaning of Christ's

Please see CHRISTMAS Page 2

THE "X" IN CHRISTMAS

I am not sure how and why the "X" ever got into the Christmas we have always known. In mathematics, the letter 'X' always stands for the unknown. Christmas is the celebration of God's Gift to a lost and sinful world, His beloved Son, Jesus Christ. To pass off this most sacred and Holy of the days with a mere 'X' either because we do not fully understand its significance, or worse, because of our apathy, is an insult to our God. When we know that Christmas is Jesus' birthday, why do we say X-mas?

Many businessmen who do not believe in Christ, nevertheless use the Christmas season to sell more merchandise than any other month of the year. Many of the stores in the malls sell enough between Thanksgiving and New Year's to more than make up for the slow months.

When you know in your heart the CHRIST OF CHRISTMAS when the holiday takes on a new and glorious meaning. It becomes to us one of the most sacred and holy days of the entire year. Keep CHRIST in your Christmas conversation, keep Him in your Christmas cards and all your activities.

Most important, keep Him in your hearts.

ILDA HANDBOOK REVISIONS

Larry Gorton, President-elect
Chairman, Law Committee

During the past several years, the ILDA Board of Directors has made many changes in the ILDA Handbook without sharing them with the members. We regret this has happened and will try to communicate better during the years ahead. According to the ILDA Constitution, Article XIV of the Handbook, Section

CONTINUED: FROM PAGE 1

CHRISTMAS

birth, the work He gave His life for, and the people He came to serve to the very periphery (out to the edge) of our Christmas celebrations.

To be sure, most of us would like things to be different. But we say to ourselves: "That's just the way things are." Perhaps we even struggle with the advertisers and with pressure from peers, family and relatives to escape from the "Christmas Rat Race" and remember whose birthday it really is. But it seems like a losing battle. After all, we reassure ourselves: "You can't change the world.

Or can we?



We believe the important news at Christmas is not who comes down the chimney, but who came down from heaven. We invite you to come and join us as we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ.

B, it states that each section cannot be changed more than one time in any calendar year and that all changes shall be printed in THE DEAF LUTHERAN.

Among some revisions made in the Handbook by the ILDA Board of Directors' meeting June 29-July 1, 1993 are:

ARTICLE XIX--Conventions, Sec. V
Mission Projects (Page 24)

1. Mission projects are chosen by voting members at conventions. The rest of the paragraph is deleted and the following added: "Priority of the mission projects as set up and voted by the Board of Directors shall be presented to the convention for approval."

2. Deleted.

ARTICLE XIX--Conventions, Sec. Z
Time and place of next convention (Page 25)

4. Prospective host(s) must vote in their own meetings and bring to the convention a letter written on official church stationery with the secretary's signature and approval for bid.

5. Prospective host(s) shall make a presentation encouraging the convention to accept their bids.

Extensive changes were made in the following:

ARTICLES XXI--Scholarships (Pages 27-28)

4c. The amount of need shall be determined by the (delete the words, "Financial officer") and insert "ILDA Board of Directors not exceed \$500 per student per year and shall be place in the student account in the financial office. Scholarships should be distributed after committee approval. If a student drops out the scholarship loan must be repaid with prime interest due from the time of drop out."

At the last ILDA Board of Directors' meeting April 15-17, 1994 the following action was taken:

ARTICLE V--Regional Presidents, Sec. C
Election (Page 4)

4. Deleted. (This restricted presidents to a term of two years. The change will allow regions to make their own guidelines regarding president's terms in office.

MISSIONS PROJECT UPDATE

Mission Projects Chairperson Susan J. Konkel reports as of Sept. 7, 1994 contributions have reached \$15,110.55 of our \$23,000 goal.

A Chronological Sketch . . .

ORIGINS OF LUTHERAN DEAF WORK

By Rev. Walter D. Uhlig (Ret.)
3832 N.W. 54th Street
Lincoln, NE 68534

(Note: In this centennial year of deaf ministry, Pastor Uhlig reviews the history of the Lutheran School for the Deaf in Detroit and the role it played in the development of ministry to the deaf in The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod. The importance of this role, Pastor Uhlig believes, has not been adequately understood or appreciated. His article, to appear in two separate segments, will be an attempt to make amends and should be considered especially significant during the Centennial year. We are indebted to him for making this article available to our readers.)--The Editor

PART I

Lutheran Institute for the Deaf 1873

Detroit area Lutherans established an orphanage in Royal Oak, Mich., and took steps immediately to construct a small building.

Rev. G. Speckhardt of Sebewaing, Mich. was called as the superintendent. He had experience working with orphans and deaf in Germany. The call was accepted with the proviso that he be permitted to bring Margaret Graaf of Frankenmuth, the two deaf girls he had been instructing in Sebewaing.

Financial problems and the surprising enrollment growth raised questions about the adequacy of the building under construction and the nature of the organization.

1874

In the spring enrollment was 17 deaf children and 10 orphans. The Synodical convention in Pittsburgh in 1874 urged that the orphans be transferred to the new orphanage in Addison, Ill. and a deaf school be started in Detroit. The Lutheran Institute for the Deaf was established and a plot of 20 acres purchased in North Detroit for the deaf school.

1875

Mr. D Hermann Uhlig, a senior at St. Louis seminary, was called as assistant to Rev. Speckhardt. School was started with 20 deaf enrolled after the orphans were sent to Addison. The new building was dedicated in May. A third teacher was called but remained only 18 months. Rev. Speckhardt and Mr. Uhlig re-

mained as full teaching staff.

1879-1905

After Rev. Speckhardt died in 1879, Mr. Uhlig was called as director and served as such until 1899 when he resigned as director although he continued to teach until 1905. Rev. H. Bentrup, who served as director from 1899 to 1901, was succeeded by Rev. William Gielow.

Enrollment in 1889 was 47 pupils, the peak of the first five decades of the school's existence.

Originally, German was the only language used with speech instruction by the German oral method. After 1894 tensions arose in regard to switching to English instruction and the use of sign language in the classrooms. In 1897 sign language was first used in the classroom when Miss Thompson joined the staff. Oralism continued as the main instructional medium and eventually the school became a completely oral school in its instruction. In 1899 English was introduced as the official language in the classroom. In 1902, German instruction was discontinued.

The Lutheran School for the Deaf, the eventual name of the institute, was important for the later work of ministry to the deaf because it was a source of communicant members and impetus to hold services in the sign language.

Serving the Adult Deaf 1892

Among the visitors at a picnic at the Lutheran School for the Deaf in Detroit was Edward Pahl, a 1884 graduate whose home was in Michigan City, Ind. and who belonged to Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Chicago. Ed repeated to his former teacher a plea he made frequently: that church services for the deaf be held in sign language. He was advised by Director Uhlig to contact his pastor, Rev. August H. Reinke of Chicago.

1893

Director Uhlig corresponded with Rev. Reinke about services for the deaf early in 1893. In the summer he attempted to visit Rev. Reinke on a trip to Chicago, but upon arrival there was disappointed to find him to be out of the city. A lay person, Mr. Fraedrich, was asked to discuss the matter

NEWS ROUND UP FROM HERE 'N THERE

A long planned move by Hope Lutheran Church, Portland, Ore., has of necessity been postponed until a later date. Another church planning to purchase the building owned by Hope was unable to get a loan.

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Five members of Pilgrim Lutheran Church, Los Angeles, attended the LWML convention in Palm Springs June 10-12. The church was given a generous gift of \$10,000 by the LWML to purchase a new van for the congregation.

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Rev. Mark and Carol Seeger of Austin, Texas were visitors in the Twin Cities in June. Pastor Seeger will be the speaker at Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Delavan, Wis. Oct. 23-25.

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Although the pages of THE DEAF LUTHERAN seldom if ever devote any space to such events as the Miss America pageant, we cannot help but take a bit of notice this time around. The winner last week was Miss Heather Whitestone, a profoundly deaf lady from Alabama who was the stunning surprise! She is the first person with a disability ever crowned in the annual pageant.

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Mrs. Joan Mass, wife of Rev. Lavern Mass of Washington, D.C. was recently recognized for outstanding performance in her work with the National Science Foundation at their office in Ballston, Va. She was also cited for her suggestion the company employ part time interpreters to assist with the increasing number of deaf employees.

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Alvin and Meta Luetzow of Seattle celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary Sept. 10 at a reception in Auburn, Wash. Congratulations.

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The newest president of the Midwest ILDA Regional Conference, Ken Derby and his wife, Loretta, of Council Bluffs, Iowa observed their 40th wedding anniversary with an open house at the Best Western Crossroads Sept. 18. Congratulations!

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Rev. Bud Palmer was the guest speaker at the open house at Jesus Lutheran Church at Austin, Texas Sept. 25-27.

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An unusual event occurred at Christ Lutheran Church in Silver Spring, Md. recently. Immediately after the offering was taken, Don

and Ruth Peterson went forward to renew their wedding vows first made on Aug 21, 1954. They also invited all other married couples to join them. A reception was held in the Fellowship Hall after the morning worship service.

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We know all about the practice of recycling used newspapers, cardboard, oil, glass, plastic and many other things. Even eye glasses. But hearing aids? Oh, yes! There is a national non-profit organization located in Denver, Colo. that desperately wants discarded hearing aids, whether working or not. They are either repaired and given to people who cannot afford them, or else, used for parts to repair others. If you have or know of someone who has an aid they are no longer using, you might wish to consider donating the device to "Hear Now", Suite 300, 9745 E. Hampden Ave., Denver, Colo. 80231-4923.

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Rev. Darrel Kois, serving Calvary Lutheran Church in Des Moines, Iowa was told by his doctor recently, "not good." The remark was in reference to the pastor's eyesight. The ailment is medically known as "Retina Pigmentosa" or more commonly as "tunnel vision." The disease is progressive and as far as we know, there is no known cure. However, the power of prayer is one tool we have as God's people and healing is always possible. We ask your prayers for the pastor and his family.

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If that is not trouble enough, the three Kois boys and their friend were involved in a serious car accident with a dump truck loaded with gravel that ran a red light. The car, a Toyota van, was crushed, but thanks be unto the Lord, Dan, Steve, Bill and Mike are alive! Son Steve required many stitches and their friends required 2½ hours of plastic surgery by two surgeons. We pray for their recovery.

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We also hear that Rev. Mark A. Anderson who serves the Northern Illinois District suffered an unfortunate accident resulting in a fractured leg. While the details are sketchy as this goes to press, we understand surgery may be necessary to pin it. We pray, too, for his quick recovery.

CONTINUED: FROM PAGE 3

A CHRONOLOGICAL SKETCH

with Rev. Reinke. If this was done there were no tangible results.

Late in 1893 Ed Pahl was urged by a number of fellow deaf men, Jacob Heinold, August Henschel, Fred Schmidt and Matthew Steinmetz, to write a letter to Director Uhlig at the Detroit school. He repeated in impassioned words his request for services for the deaf in sign language.

1894

In January meeting of the board of directors of the deaf school, Director Uhlig presented the letter of Ed Pahl with its plea for church services for the deaf in sign language. Rev. J. A. Huegeli of Detroit, president of the Northern District of Synod and chairman of the institute board, gave whole hearted support to Ed Pahl's request, both locally and in synodical circles.

A lengthy, serious discussion of Ed Pahl's letter followed with various suggestions as to how the goal could be accomplished. There was no obvious, easy way to satisfy the request. If Rev. Reinke could not serve the deaf with a signed service since he was the pastor of a large congregation, perhaps another pastor like Rev. Herzberger of Hammond, Ind. could do it. Also suggested was that a pastor could write a simple sermon which would be interpreted by one of the deaf as it was preached.

Finally Director Uhlig was requested to write a letter to Rev. Reinke relating the

board's concern as well as its suggestions. This letter was sent Feb. 14, 1894. The letter is quoted completely in translation in THE DEAF LUTHERAN issue of August, 1969.

1871 was the year of the Chicago fire, the end of the European wars of France, Austria and Germany, the 30th birthday of Rev. August Reinke and his installation at Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Chicago. By 1894, Rev. Reinke was a seasoned pastor 53 years old in a bustling city in a church that like the city was rapidly growing. In 1894 Bethlehem congregation had 3000 communicant members with the pastor's son, Rev. Ed Reinke, as assistant pastor.

In about 1885 a new phase of ministry had opened to Rev. Reinke, the spiritual care of growing numbers of deaf members. Deaf children of the congregation were becoming communicant members after being instructed at the Detroit school by Director Hermann Uhlig and being confirmed in their home congregation.

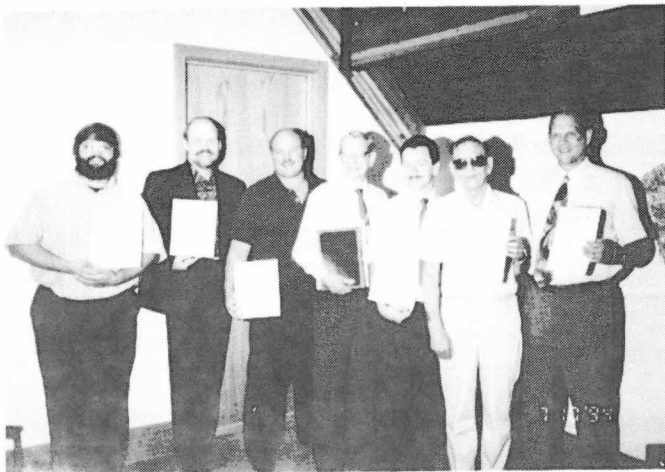
* * * TO BE CONTINUED * * *

LOCKARD GETS NCC APPOINTMENT

Beth Firnhaber Lockard, former ILDA secretary from 1985 to 1989 has been given an appointment as the first deaf coordinator of the National Council of Churches of Christ (NCC) Deaf Ministries Committee and is the first deaf person ever hired by that organization.

Lockard, 36, is a member of Christ the King Lutheran Church (ELCA) in West Chester, Pa., where she serves as a parish assistant.

Following a six month training period, she will assume her new duties on Jan. 1, 1995. Lockard and her husband, Bill, are the parents of two sons, Jesse and Aaron.



1994 EPHPHATHA AWARDS—These pastors display their service awards presented during the annual conference at Mahoney State Park near Omaha this year. How many can you identify?





ILDA 25TH ANNIVERSARY



13TH BIENNIAL CONVENTION
HYATT REGENCY HOTEL - WOODFIELD, SCHAUMBURG, ILLINOIS

Convention Tour of the Chicagoland

Friday, June 30th, 1995

10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Odyssey - a taste of world-class cruising

Join us for an exciting trip of world-class cruising of two (2) hours along the beautiful sight of Lake Michigan and Chicago's glittering skyline. Fresh Nautical breezes. Live Entertainment provided with delicious lunch. Also included is a bus tour of downtown Chicago after the cruise on the way back to the Hyatt Regency Hotel. It is hoped that the visitation of the 1st Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Church (where the first ever Deaf Lutheran worship service was held on March 4th, 1894) will be part of the bus tour.

Tour Cost: \$60.00 per person (*age of 11 years and older*) including the cost of bus ride, meal, etc.

**(1995 ILDA CONVENTION REGISTRATION REQUIRED
FOR THE TOUR)**

.....
TOUR REGISTRATION DEADLINE: April 30th, 1995

Name: _____ Phone: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Odyssey: \$60.00 per person, Number of Reservations _____ Total Cost _____

Make checks payable to: 1995 ILDA Committee
Mail to: Shirlene Williams, Head Registration
c/o Ephphatha Ev. Deaf Lutheran Church
7956 S. Martin Luther King Dr
Chicago, IL 60619



ILDA

25TH ANNIVERSARY



13TH BIENNIAL CONVENTION
HYATT REGENCY HOTEL - WOODFIELD, SCHAUMBURG, ILLINOIS

MEMORIAL PAGE

FOR

DEPARTED LUTHERAN BRETHERN

IN ETERNAL REST WITH

THE LORD JESUS CHRIST OUR SAVIOR

WE ARE PLANNING TO INCLUDE IN THE 1995 ILDA PROGRAM BOOK PHOTOGRAPHS AND A BRIEF LIFE HISTORY OF ALL LCMS-ILDA BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN CHRIST WHO HAD SINCE DEPARTED FROM THIS LIFE TO BE WITH JESUS.

WE WISH TO HAVE THE MEMORIAL PAGE PRINTED IN OUR PROGRAM BOOK SO AS TO SHOW OUR THANKFULNESS AND APPRECIATION FOR THOSE FINE PEOPLE WHO GAVE THEMSELVES FOR THE SERVICE OF GOD AND HUMANKIND DURING THEIR LIFETIME.

DEADLINE: APRIL 30TH, 1995

MAIL PHOTOS & INFO TO: **JAMES BEST**
MEMORIAL -PROGRAM BOOK
408 WALNUT ST
BATAVIA, IL 60510

NORTHWEST REGION MEETS



The Northwest Regional Conference of the ILDA convened at the Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Association (LOMA) Retreat Center north of Issaquah, Wash. on the dates of Aug. 19-21. Attendance for the three-day event was about 40 people from Washington, Oregon and Alberta, Canada. Our Redeemer of Seattle were hosts.

Leading the workshops was Dr. Rodney Rynearson of St. Louis. A beautiful new banner created by Hope congregation of Portland graced the meeting. It contains all the colors of the provinces and the states and will be used in future conventions.

Regional officers chosen for the coming biennium are as follows: Richard Sharp, Tacoma, Wash. president; Victor Lyon, Seattle, president-elect; Mae Madding, Portland, secretary; Elmer Francisco, Spokane, Wash., treasurer and for pastoral adviser, Rev. William Ludwig of Seattle. The new board is to

study ways to improve the constitution and by-laws.

For the next four years, the conference will hold its meetings in Canada.

DEAF CENTENARIANS IN FLORIDA



Alvin and Clara Heinz of Safety Harbor, Fla. celebrated their 77th wedding anniversary Aug. 1. Clara became 100 on Oct. 21. Alvin was 101 on Aug. 18.

The Heinzes were for many years members of Alpha Lutheran Church in Rochester, N.Y. before moving to Florida. The couple reside in their own apartment and are in good health and have assisting living arrangements.

Pastor Larson brings them Holy Communion to them at their home as they are not able to attend services.

The couple are not able to answer cards or letters, but persons wishing to send congratulations may address them to 155 Second Ave. S., Safety Harbor, Fla. 34695.

The DEAF LUTHERAN

November-December 1994

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