



The DEAF LUTHERAN



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

May-June, 1996

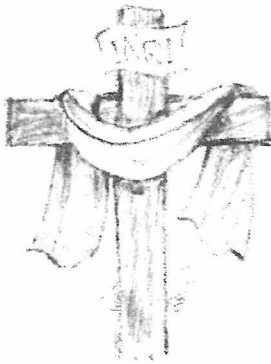
St. Louis, Mo.

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ASCENSION AND PENTECOST

Rev. William A. Ludwig
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
Seattle, Wash.

Ascension means going UP. The Bible describes many of God's great acts in vertical terms. In this article, you will notice some of the exciting "UPS and DOWNS" of the church



year! At Christmas God the Creator came DOWN to share and redeem the life of people through His Son, Jesus Christ. In Lent and Good Friday God's Son was raised UP on the cross in order to draw all persons to Himself and to His sacrificing love. He went DOWN into hell and was raised UP as the victor over sin, death and hell. In His ascension He went UP TO His Father in heaven so that on the day of Pentecost He can come DOWN to His church in the person of the Holy Spirit.

At our Lord's ascension, the angels asked the disciples and other witnesses, "Why do you stand looking into heaven?" (See Acts 1:11). Some years ago when Soviet cosmonauts returned from outer space, they are reported to have said that they failed to see either God or heaven. Well, they apparently did not know that God is a spirit and that during His ascension Jesus Christ left the limitations of space into the invisible heaven. When we die, our spirits will go to Jesus the Judge.

On the day of Pentecost, just 10 days later, the Holy Spirit entered all 12 disciples and gave them the power to speak the Gospel of Jesus in various languages. (Read Acts 2). This happened precisely as Jesus Himself had promised. (Acts 1:5).

The purpose of all God's saving activity from Christmas to Pentecost is that we, the members of Christ's body, the holy Christian Church, might share in His life. Jesus Christ, God's only Son, ascended in order to send to His church the Holy Spirit. And through the Holy Spirit Christ now lives in the Church at all times and all places on earth.

Although we do not see Jesus Christ visibly during our life on earth, we meet Him in His Church where He promised to be found. In fact, He said, "Where two or three are gathered in My Name, I am there in the midst of them." (Read this in Matthew 18:20). We meet Christ in the Gospel as it is declared in sermon, songs, liturgy and in conversations. We also meet Christ as Holy Communion is given to us personally.

We go to church on Sundays (or which ever day of the week is your day of worship) to worship God, and as we hear and read the Word of God, the Holy Spirit is active within us, bringing us to understand and appreciate God's acts through Christ, His full forgiveness of all our sins and His continuous showing of grace and keeping us with Jesus in faith. Thus those who neglect to go to church and/or read the Bible are in grave danger of breaking themselves away from God's acts.

During this season of Pentecost the Holy Spirit helps us raise UP our minds and hearts to God in the life of worship, learning and service, as we look forward to Christ's final coming DOWN to take our souls to Himself in His heavenly home.

TRINITY SUNDAY

This year, Trinity Sunday falls on June 2nd, the week following Ascension (Whitsunday) which is on May 26th. On this day, the Christian Church focuses special attention on God's self revelation as being **TRINE**, that is, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, three separate persons, but **ONE** God. Our human intellect is not sufficient to understand this mystery of our God, but we accept it through faith which He gives to each of us who trust in Him. The Father is not the Son and the Son is not the Father and the Holy Spirit is neither the Father nor the Son, yet they are one God.

Using Scripture as our guide, both the Apostles' and the Nicene Creeds ascribe distinctive works to the Trinity, to God the Father, the work of creation; to God the Son, the work of redemption; and to God the Holy



THE HISTORY OF MOTHER'S DAY

In Great Britain, Mid-Lent Sunday or "Mothering Sunday" was originally a day on which the Church laid emphasis on Mother Church. People were encouraged to return to the church at which they were baptized, which usually meant returning to the place where one's parents lived. It was natural for those returning to bring presents for their parents, especially their mothers. The traditional present was the sinnen cake, a rich currant cake. Unfortunately, the old customs of Mothering Sunday have been forgotten as its observation has been replaced by Mother's Day.

In the United States, Miss Anna Jarvis from Pennsylvania, whose mother died on May 9, 1906 determined that a day should be set aside in the American calendar to honor motherhood. The day received national recognition on May 9, 1914, when President Woodrow Wilson issued a proclamation asking American citizens to give a public expression of reverence for mothers.

The selection of carnations as a symbol of the day, pink or red for the living mother and white for remembrance, was made in memory of President William McKinley, who always wore a white carnation, his own mother's favorite flower. In the United States, Mother's Day is now observed on the second Sunday in May.

Spirit, the work of sanctification.

The Triune God is still active. Jesus said, "My Father is working still, and I am working." The Father carries on His work of preserving, upholding and controlling the universe. The Son, having completed His work of redeeming the human race, still intercedes for us. The Holy Spirit is unceasingly active in bringing people to Christian faith through the Gospel.

In their proper spheres God's people, too, are to be active in His world and church. They are cast in caretaker roles, in keeping with their entrusted capabilities and according to their capacities. St. Peter says, "As each has received a gift, employ it for one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace." Christian stewardship is predicted on the truth that we are **not owners** of our treasures, talents and time; but rather, we are **managers**, to the end that God may be glorified and our fellow human beings served. In honor of God the Father we are good stewards of the world He created, cultivating the earth for food, enjoying His workmanship in nature and keeping the environment free of pollution. In honor of Jesus Christ, God's Son, we are good stewards in proclaiming the Gospel and showing His kind of love in a world that knows evil, hatred and hostility. In honor of God the Holy Spirit we remain true to the saving faith and are fruitful in all good works.--Adapted

REV. HERMAN GRAEF DIES

Rev. Herman F. Graef, 64, pastor emeritus of Zion Lutheran Church, McHenry, Ill., passed away Feb. 6.



Rev. Herman Graef

A 1958 graduate of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Pastor Graef was installed as pastor and missionary of the Omaha (Nebraska) field of Deaf Missions where he served until 1965. During this time he authored several tracts for deaf children and served as counselor of the Midwest region of Deaf Missions.

He was pastor at Atonement Lutheran Church at Omaha from 1965 to 1968 at which time he became pastor at Zion, McHenry.

Survivors include his wife, Irene and seven children.

NEW BIBLE CLASS ORGANIZED IN SOUTHEAST MISSOURI

ILDA Treasurer Russel Healey and his wife, Betty Jo have resided most of their lives in large metropolitan cities such as St. Louis, Edmonton, Alberta and Chicago. Finally, after all these years they have retired to a small town in south Illinois near Cape Girardeau, Mo.

But, alas! There are no church services, a fact of life in many small rural areas, especially for deaf people who depend on sign language for ease in communication and understanding. And after many years of regular church attendance, the loss of this part of their lives bothered them greatly. What to do?

Russ knew there was an LCMS pastor in Chester, Ill., who knows sign language and whose wife was a qualified interpreter. Could the pastor come and start a class? Pastor Mark Willig of St. John in Chester already had a full schedule at his own church, but was

willing to work something out to accommodate the small group who wanted God's Word, too. The elders of his church gave their approval to allow Rev. Willig to travel to Jackson, Mo. every first month; on the second month Russel would teach and on the third month, the group would drive to his church in Chester for services.

Eight persons attended the first class on Feb. 24, who posed for the accompanying picture. The distance from Healey's home to class is 40 miles and to Chester, Ill., where St. John's Lutheran Church is located 70 miles. The willingness of people to travel considerable distances to attend services is indicative of this problem in other areas and we hope that more groups similar to this one can be started.

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty

Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty!
Early in the morning our song shall rise to
Thee

Holy, Holy, Holy, merciful and Mighty!
God in Three Persons, blessed Trinity!

Holy, Holy, Holy! All the saints adore Thee,
Casting down their golden crowns around the
glassy sea;

Cherubin and Seraphim falling down before
Thee,

Which wert and art and evermore shalt be.

Holy, Holy, Holy! Tho' the darkness hide
Thee,

Tho' the eye of sinful man Thy glory may not
see

Only Thou art Holy; there is none beside
Thee,

Perfect in pow'r, on love and purity.

Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty!

All Thy works shall praise Thy Name in earth
and sky and sea.

Holy, Holy, Holy, merciful and Mighty!

God in Three Persons, blessed Trinity!

Amen.



NEW BIBLE CLASS STARTED--Standing from left are Russel Healey, Jewell Babb, Betty Jo Healey, Barb Lange, Ruth Holman, Brenda Hawkins and Pastor Mark Willig. Kneeling from left, Tyler Holman, Bill Holman and Paila Willig, wife of pastor.

CONFERENCE DATE CHANGE

The Eastern Region of the ILDA (ER-ILDA) has now changed the dates of its 1996 conference from June 21-23 to **June 14-16**.

The site remains at the Ramada Inn at Calverton, Md. Conference theme is, "With God, all things are possible."

SAGE ADVICE. . . . Be careful what you pray for, you might get it!

NEWS FROM HITHER AND 'YON

The 1996 Church Interpreter Training Institute (CITIC) will be held June 22 to July 14 at Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Ind. CITI is a four week training workshop to learn religious signing for classroom settings, worship or personal evangelism.

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A young lady, 21, has asked to come to Canada to experience deaf ministry in the Edmonton, Alberta area. **Pastor Bauer** has sent her an invitation to come from Cologne, Germany so she can apply for a three-month visa. Last year she spent six weeks in Tanzania, a country in southeast Africa.

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We are not sure how many hats **Pastor Bob Bauer** of Edmonton, Alberta has, but it looks like he has just added a new one. This one is "Padre." The Alberta Command Legion of Frontiersmen has invited him to be "Padre" with the rank of Major. According to Webster, a Padre is military slang for a chaplain. In any case, we are sure their corps has got a good man

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BELATED ANNOUNCEMENT: The Great Lakes Regional Conference (GLRC) will meet at Trinity Lutheran Church, 409 Swissvale Ave., Pittsburgh, Pa. on the date of Aug. 2, 3 and 4, 1996. The theme for the 44th annual meet is, "Church Growth". Catering meals will be provided by Starr's Catering Service at the Western Pennsylvania School for the Deaf across the street from Trinity.

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Adding to the excitement this year is both the 30th and 75th anniversary of Trinity which will be observed on Sunday, April 21. The day will begin with Bible study at 9:30 a.m. and worship at 11:00 followed by a potluck dinner. The guest pastor will be Rev. Bryan Borger of Pittsburgh.

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Two long time members of the Memorial Lutheran Church in Fremont, Calif. were called home by the Lord during the recent holidays. **Helen M. Layne** died on Dec. 16 and **Pearl A. Brodie** passed away Jan. 3. Another long time member was **Glady E. Krohn** who went home to be with Jesus on Jan 19. One other long time member and supporter, **Ray Rasmus**, became ill in New York while visiting family members and was hospitalized for kidney problems. Following intensive care and surgery and the loss of 40 pounds, Ray is mending and putting

some of the lost weight back on.

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A service of Thanksgiving and celebration was held at the Lutheran Center for the Deaf at St. Augustine, Fla. May 1 for 25 years of ministry at the Florida School for the Deaf and Blind and the 10th year of the renovated chapel. **Rev. Walter Bushy** is pastor.

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A new \$2 million dollar Deaf Cultural Center is set for construction this spring directly across the street from Emery Hall at the **Kansas School for the Deaf** at Olathe. Funded exclusively thru private donations and grants, the center will serve as a regional and national resource center and will include a museum, library, auditorium, exhibition and recreation area as well as offices for various organizations of the deaf.

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NORTHWEST REGIONAL ILDA CONFERENCE: will be held at a Christian camp near Langley, B.C., Canada on the dates of June 21-23, 1996. The cost will be only \$75 in U.S. funds and will include two nights and about five meals. Hosts for the event are Trinity Lutheran Church which is served by Rev. Wayne Bottlinger.

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Art Harper and his wife, **Opal** of Lincoln, Neb., decided a Caribbean trip was the thing to do to escape the cold weather . . . they visited seven islands and report a swell time. Art is the last president to serve the Midwest ILDA Conference.

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Are you a person who has been exceptionally challenged by illness, loss or some other calamity in your life? Are you a person who likes to express yourself in poetry and would appreciate an outlet for your creativeness? Please mail any of your writing to E.C., 89-11 63rd Drive, Flushing, N.Y. 11374 including your address and the circumstances which led you to express yourself in this manner. Everyone whose poem is chosen will get a copy of the book and will keep all rights to your work.

JOKE OF THE MONTH

Q: Why are there so few men with whiskers in heaven?

A: Because most got there by a close shave.

MONTHLY PASTORAL DEVOTION

By Rev. Donald E. Leber
 ILDA Pastoral Adviser
 6950 Center Ave.,
 Alta Loma, Calif. 91701

HE HEALS ALL OUR SICKNESSES

Recently I received a beautiful card from a member of one of our deaf congregations. In the card the member reminded me of Psalm 103 and the words "He heals all our sicknesses." Since I have been diagnosed with a brain tumor I have a different outlook on life. When we are young we think that we will live forever and we do some crazy things. Maybe we even put our life in jeopardy. Even in our 20's, 30's and 40's the end of life was not a part of our vocabulary.

It is only when some tragic circumstance happens to us that we begin to look at life and death in a different way. Sometimes in our life we do experience healing of our sicknesses, but I remember that Jesus told to Lazarus' sister that Lazarus died so that God would receive the glory. And Jesus told the Jews that the blind man was born blind not because of any sin committed by his parents or any sin that he had done but to show forth God's glory. And so it should be an

important part of every Christian's life to look forward to the home that Jesus won for us on the cross, and not to look back to all the things we missed in our life.

The verse before the one about sickness is more important. It says, "God forgives all the sins we do." Those are the most healing words you can find in the Bible. All those wicked, evil, sinful things that we find ourselves doing are wiped away clean in the suffering and death of our Saviour. And a later verse says that those sins are as far away as the east is from the west. If you travel west, will you ever meet the place where east begins?? Never!! So that is another way of saying your sins are gone forever.

Finally, the Psalm tells the angels in heaven to praise the Lord and obey HIS commands, and that is what the Lord asks from all HIS people, you and me. During this time called LENT read again the Ten Commandments and see that they are a good way to serve your Lord and live happily yourself. And find every opportunity you can to be in God's house and sign those songs of praise to your Triune God. And all God's people will say, "Amen! Praise the Lord! Amen!"

GOLDEN WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

The honor of your presence is being requested as Rev. and Mrs. George C. Ring observe the 50th chapter of their marriage on June 9, 1996 at Hope Lutheran Church, 3857 E. 42nd Street, Des Moines, Iowa.

George Christian Ring and Doris Eileen Carls were united in holy matrimony by Rev.

Raymond Witt on June 9, 1946 at Trinity Lutheran Church in Arenzville, Ill.

Their ministry has spanned 50 years from the far west at Hanford, Calif., Portland, Ore., then to the midwest at Sioux Falls, S.D., then to the east at Pittsburgh, Pa., and lastly at Des Moines, Iowa where the couple now reside in quiet retirement.

The reception at Hope Lutheran Church is from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. This is the hearing church next door to our Calvary Lutheran Church for the Deaf and is being utilized due to the large attendance being expected.

Hosting the event will be the couple's children, Rachel and Ken Schwalbe; Michael and Sue Ring; Rhoda and Joe Kraig; Rebekah and David Shoeman, Deborah and David Knock; Mark and Elizabeth Ring and twenty (20) grandchildren.

Friends wishing to remember the honorees may send cards to 3215 Cedar Court, Des Moines, Iowa 50320.



Christ Asks . . .

"WHOM SAY YE THAT I AM?"

Let us imagine for a minute that we, too, are standing with the disciples with the Lord present when he asked the above question, "Who am I?" How would we answer?

Most people have heard of the Gallup Poll, which has been gathering information for many years. This group operates in most countries of the world, sampling opinion on various issues of the day. Several years ago, the Gallup Poll asked Americans what they thought about Jesus Christ.

Nearly everyone (91%) believed that Jesus Christ lived; 70% confessed that they believe Jesus is God; but only 13% of those asked said the most interesting or important thing to them about Jesus was the forgiveness that Jesus offers. Another poll taken on a college campus which asked a different question, "Who would you say was the most important person in history?" It is interesting that the responses had Christ tied for 14th place with someone else. These results clearly show that many people know about Christ, but most people have no idea what Jesus did for them.

Today, you may be one of the 91% who believed that Jesus lived. This is important. Know that through Jesus' death on the cross, Jesus paid completely for all your sins and failures. He (Jesus) is the way our sins are taken away, and not only our sins, but the sins of all people (see 1 John 2:2). This is the Good News of the Gospel for you. Jesus

wants the perfect and complete forgiveness He earned for you on the cross to be yours. Jesus wants the new life He showed in the Resurrection to be yours. "A thief comes to steal, and kill and destroy, but I came to give life--life in all its fullness." (Please read John 10:10).

Don't delay answering your Saviour's call. Confess your sins to God. Be baptized into Christ Jesus, as He commands, and be united with Jesus, both in His death and also in His glorious resurrection. Did you forget that all of us became part of Christ when we were baptized? We shared His death in our baptism. When we were baptized, we were buried with Christ and shared His death. So, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the wonderful power of the Father, we also can live a new life. Christ died, and we have been joined with Him by dying, too. So we will also be joined with Him by rising from the dead as He did. (See Romans 6:3-5).

Let your old life be forever behind you. In Christ, you are a new creation! "If anyone belongs to Christ, they are a new creation. The old things have gone; everything is made new!" See 2 Corinthians 5:17.

PRAYER:

"Dear Lord, as I look at your Son, Jesus, I see the scars where the nails tore His flesh as He hung on the cross. I now understand, O Lord, by faith, that these nail prints were caused by my many sins. O Lord, enable me to unload my sins unto Jesus. Assure my heart of His perfect forgiveness. Unite my body and soul with the power of His victorious resurrection. Lift me up, assure me of your forgiveness, heal my spirit, enable me to serve others. And by Your grace, destine my soul for heaven. Amen."

--Adapted from Good News

ILDA BOARD CONVENES

The first meeting of the ILDA Executive Committee and the Board of Directors since the 13th biennial convention in Schaumburg, Ill. on the dates of June 29 to July 2, 1995 was held at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis April 12-14, 1996.

In addition to regular business, a good part of the agenda revolved around planning for the 1997 convention at St. Louis. Included was a tour of the Adams Mark Hotel, headquartera for the 14th convention, which is located in close proximity to the famed Arch by the river front.

A number of new faces will be sitting at this meeting for the first time. The 1997 convention runs from July 3 to 6 with the Board of Directors meeting on the preceding Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.



A PASTOR'S VISION FOR THE ILDA

It is probably true that many of the members of the International Lutheran Deaf Association (ILDA) do not have a clear understanding of all the work and preparation that went into planning and organizing the Association in the years prior to 1970. By the same token, it is also probably true that few people have any idea of the vision these planners had for an association of deaf Lutheran in the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod.

A recent letter from Rev. Herbert W. Rohe, who has been involved in deaf ministry for well over 50 years and is a former Synodical Representative to the ILDA Board of Directors gives us some insights as to what he envisioned for deaf Lutherans in those early days when the association was still in its infancy. Inasmuch as Pastor Rohe was intimately involved in early planning, he has given permission for publishing in these pages some notes he says recently "resurfaced" from his files.

In fact, he mentions that these visions for the ILDA were carried on a paper he carried in a pocket for presentation at an ILDA Board meeting but were never given due to a surprise "Farewell Dinner" given in his honor. It is easy to forget and get "carried away" when something totally unexpected happens, but even so, the Editor feels these visions make for good reading.

For the ILDA:

1. CREDIT COURSES AT ALL OUR COLLEGES (now Universities) AND SEMINARIES for both deaf and hearing students.

2. A CENTRALLY LOCATED NATIONAL CONVENTION CENTER AND CAMP FOR THE DEAF providing more for the money and which more deaf can afford. As an example, Rev. Rohe said such a facility would provide:

A) A site for annual Regional Conventions; retreats; Art, Talent and sports competitions.

B) For youth camps and retreats (Jr. ILDA)

C) ILDA Conventions

D) Ephphatha Conferences

C) Family vacations with workshops in religious education, inspiration and spiritual growth to be scheduled by the week or weekend.

3. THE DEAF LUTHERAN AS AN EVANGELISTIC VOICE OF THE DEAF; not only Lutheran subscribers but an ongoing effort to get all the deaf (children, youth and adults) of all faiths and denominations as readers and sub-

scribers. With a hired and paid staff of workers, qualified and trained for the various departments and ongoing features, e.g., counseling, problem solving and spiritual advising.

Aim at 50,000 readers--and reaching the unreached, isolated, lonely, depressed, aged, and bedridden shut-ins. A Gospel voice, going into the home, perhaps the only "caller" each month.

Does this sound a little far-fetched? Impossible to do? Not at all. With God, nothing shall be impossible, if He wills it. It might be a preview of things to come in the new century to come soon. It was not so very long ago that the very idea of a "man walking on the moon" would evoke laughter. No one is laughing any more.

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Rev. H. W. Rohe has submitted three pages of typewritten memoirs of his early days in the ministry. It makes for some very interesting reading. These stories will appear in future editions of THE DEAF LUTHERAN as space permits.

EASTER ACTIVITY BOOK

"Signs of Easter"

Following the success of its Christmas Activity Book, the Mill Neck Foundation for Deaf Ministry has produced a 20-page Easter Activity Book, "Signs of Easter." This Christian based activity book is designed for elementary age children who are hearing or deaf. Through the "Signs of Easter" activity book, students will learn signs for the numbers, colors and words associated with the story of Jesus' death and resurrection--"Jesus", "cross", "prayer", "rock" and more. Children may color black and white pictures; do word/sign games; take Mary Magdalene through the maze to the tomb; and create a resurrection greeting card to send to a friend.

The book may be used for Sunday School classes, elementary school religious programs, used as a family activity during Holy Week or placed in the pews during the Easter season for children to enjoy. "Signs of Easter" is available in sets of 20 for \$20.00 (to offset printing and shipping costs). Single copies are available at \$2 each.

To order or if you have questions about other resources, call Barbara Lanman, Coordinator of Deaf Ministry at (516) 922-3880 or call our toll free number 1-800-264-0662.

VACATION SCAMS--A REMINDER TO BE CAREFUL

Vacation scams appear all during the year. It does seem that during the summer months, you see even more offers--not just in the mail, but at fairs, home and boat shows or other community events. You do need to be cautious as hidden costs and restrictions can turn so-called "free" vacations into costly mistakes.

With these offers, you are usually required to write your name and address on a contest entry form. Your name will usually find it's way to a "hot" contact list for con-artists and promoters. If you sign up, expect to receive a phone call or postcard weeks or even months later announcing you have been selected to receive a vacation package.

At this point if you are a so-called "winner" you may end up losing if you fall for the scam. Consumers across the country call the Consumer Protection Division of their State Attorney General's Office complaining about such things as unexpected processing fees, unavailability of accommodations and high-pressure attempts to see expensive upgrades. Hidden costs and/or restrictions may even require you to buy merchandise "qualifying" you for the trip or, even further, listen to a high-pressure real estate sales pitch. And many such promotions exaggerate the features of the trip. You may get to the hotel and find it not nearly as nice as you were lead to believe it would be.

Good advice to follow is not to sign up for "free" vacations. If you've already signed up, just hang up when you receive a phone call stating you've won a "free" or low-cost vacation. Or, when that postcard

or letter comes in the mail, tear it up and throw it away.

The best advice if you're interested in taking a vacation, is to shop around for the best rates and accommodations. You can't expect to get something for nothing but remember, unsolicited vacation offers will generally end up costing you more than if you book a trip through your travel agent.

Companies selling vacation packages are, in most cases, required to register with the state and post bond. So if you have any questions or want to report what you think is a vacation scam, call the Consumer Protection Division of the Attorney General's Office in your state.

With a little care and proper planning, there is really no need to be a victim.



"We made \$125 on the chili supper and \$231 on the antacid stand."

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