Going Home to Grenada
From Childhood Memories to Covenant Love

Servant Camp
Ten Things to Do

Buffalo Camp
Celebrating the Shrivers
In 12 Hours, Back from the Brink of Death Twice

Photos from Action Summer

Buffalo Camp Celebrates the Shrivers

Last Summer, Tom and Theresa Shriver led Buffalo Camp for the last time. Chris Meehan collects some memories of their decades at the helm.

Going Home to Grenada

Catherine Bulger’s earliest memories come from Grenada, where she lived from age two to age five. Twenty-seven years later, she returned to the island.

Ten Things to Do at Servant Camp

From storms to squirt gun battles to songs to where to get that much needed cup of coffee, Sean Connolly has the lowdown.

DEPARTMENTS

Tributes

Lifenotes

CONTENTS

STORIES

03

04

06

08

12

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DEPARTMENTS

16

18

Tributes

Lifenotes

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At 11:25 a.m. on January 15, 62-year-old Ed Varevice (Servant Branch), a property-tax management consultant for the Minnesota Department of Revenue, was walking with several coworkers on a downtown Minneapolis sidewalk in the middle of an ordinary workday when he collapsed. He lay unmoving on the sidewalk, not breathing. He had suffered a cardiac arrest.

One coworker quickly called 911. Another knelt and held his head up off the sidewalk, while a third found a sheriff from city hall across the street. At 11:32, seven minutes later, paramedics arrived and started chest compressions and rescue breathing. They shocked his heart with a defibrillator. An ambulance transported Ed to Hennepin County Medical Center four blocks away.

About 12:45 p.m., an emergency room doctor warned Phyllis, Ed’s wife, that brain damage was a possibility for Ed since his brain had been deprived of oxygen for longer than five minutes. The medical plan was to induce a coma. It would allow Ed’s brain to heal but, as Phyllis recalled, the doctor said he couldn’t predict what the outcome would be “if he wakes up.”

Instead of moving Ed directly to the ICU, the doctors sent him to a lab for some testing because he’d been randomly selected to participate in a medical study. The cardiologist reported that they had found a blockage in Ed’s left anterior descending artery and inserted a stent. His artery had been 80-90% blocked. They moved him to the intensive care unit and started injecting him with saline to cool his body temperature and induce the coma.

Soon after that, about 5:00, Phyllis and her daughter Anne Varevice, along with Bernie and Louise Schwab, prayed with Ed. By 8:00 p.m., the hospital staff encouraged Phyllis and other family members to go home for the night and get some rest, since Ed might be in a coma for several days.

Phyllis was driving home when the hospital called. Ed had experienced a second cardiac arrest, but the hospital team had managed to revive him. Phyllis was terrified, but she recalls thinking, I’m not going to give up hope now. She says the staff told her that the stent they put in earlier might have saved Ed’s life.

About 9:30 p.m., the doctors decided to allow Ed’s body to warm up, since the cold treatment was making his condition unstable. Phyllis, back at the hospital, asked Anne to contact Principal Branch Coordinator Tom Caneff and ask him urgently to come to the hospital and be with them. During Tom’s 45-minute stay after 11:00 p.m., he and the family prayed over Ed three times. “I think Ed is going to come back to us,” Tom said.

Phyllis spent the night praying and dozing at her husband’s bedside. At about 5:00 a.m., she clasped Ed’s hand and noticed that it had warmed up. The doctors who came into the room around 8:00 said that they were going to try and wake Ed up.

Almost immediately, Ed opened his eyes and swallowed. He listened to the doctors and responded well to their directions. Soon he was sitting up in bed talking, smiling and laughing. “It was wildly wonderful,” Phyllis recalled. “The doctors were flabbergasted” at the speed of his restoration.

Over the next few days, Ed’s most obvious symptom was a loss of short-term memory. “It seemed like every five minutes he would ask us what happened and someone would have to tell the story once again,” Phyllis said.

By the following Saturday, five days after the incident, he had recovered sufficiently to be released from the hospital.

Three-and-a-half weeks after collapsing on the sidewalk, Ed returned to work. Dr. Paul Zenker, a Servant Branch member and emergency room specialist who was at the hospital during parts of Ed’s stay, noted, “Ed’s follow up echocardiogram was totally normal and showed no evidence of heart disease. Brainwise, he had a normal MRI and was neurologically normal—even though there had been signs that brain damage was a definite possibility.” To ensure the ongoing health of his heart, Ed now has a defibrillator and pacemaker.

A few months later, Ed joked that he was “up to 85% capacity,” but he wasn’t sure he ever did have that 15% (which proves he’s back to normal, according to Phyllis).

Ed reports that he remains humbled and amazed by the whole episode. He’s been able to share his story, and plans to share it at an upcoming national Christians in Commerce conference. He keeps in touch with one of the EMTs from the ambulance ride, who told him that his recovery had restored his faith in the Lord. Ed says, “God has gotten some mileage out of this!”

Phyllis says, “Ed was like Lazarus emerging from the tomb. The Lord saved Ed’s life two times and gave him back to us. My heart is full of gratitude and praise.”
Upper left: An Action crew does some landscaping at John and Colleen Bowar’s house on Dove Street in Allendale. Photo by Mary Brophy.

Upper right: Evansville summer camp boys with leader Isaac Willard (Mission, Evansville) meet a desensitized skunk from a petting zoo. Photo by Elizabeth Grams.

Lower left: John Zimmel (Mission, Allendale) visits with his neighbor Dorothy Anderson at an ice cream social this summer in Allendale. Photo by Julie Bruber.

Lower middle: Abby LaBadie (Colorado Springs) and Ann Hrbacek made a bonfire with the girls at summer camp on the South Side of Indianapolis. Photo by Rachel Osterhouse.

Lower right: Summer camp girls in Evansville on a Praise Harvest tour. Photo by Mary Timler.
Buffalo Camp Celebrates the Shrivers

BY CHRIS MEEHAN

There’s a legend that the original idea for Buffalo Camp, which came from Tom and Theresa Shriver, first met with some resistance from branch children. Several parents cautioned the Shrivers privately that their children might want to bail out early. One concern was that the location was a derelict 4-H camp where critters abounded. Yet, with the Shrivers leading the charge the kids loved it. No one bailed and a decades-long pattern of fun was set in motion.

Many of those campers are now grown and send their own kids to Buffalo camp. In 2019, the camp welcomed 101 campers, including some from Hawaii, Grenada and Barbados. For the first time, more than half (61%) came from outside the community. Fourteen attended from the branch’s outreach in Buffalo’s Black Rock neighborhood (see Vine & Branches, winter, 2017).

The camp continues apace, after 31 years and some 2,000 campers, but the Shrivers are passing the baton of leadership. For the past four years, they’ve been training their replacements, Peter and Sarah Hammer, as directors. Next year, the Hammers will be at the helm, with the Shrivers coming to camp to serve as assistants.

This year’s campers and staff honored Tom and Theresa by placing crowns on their heads and carrying them in a procession in wooden chariots to the dining hall, where they were presented with cake and an album filled with camp photos and sharings from former campers and staff members.

“It was a little difficult to step down from running camp,” Tom said, “kind of bittersweet.”

“This year’s camp was a sad but happy time,” Theresa added. “It was a relief to finish up. We loved leading camp, but it’s time to move on.”

Both Tom and Theresa are quick to give credit to the efforts of the rest of the branch, especially stalwarts such as John (who died in 2018) and Marlene Gehl, Martha Delaney, and Tim Hammer, as well as Bob Pawlosky from northern Virginia.

The Shrivers say it was never difficult to maintain enthusiasm, even after 31 years. No matter how tedious the prep work. “Once we get there, the kids’ excitement is contagious,” Tom said. “Some kids have been counting down the days from the previous year’s camp, so it’s hard not to be excited.”

Mary Dufresne, who grew up in the New Orleans branch, says Buffalo Camp helped form her faith and gave her lasting friendships. “The Holy Spirit stirred in my
soul in 2009 when I was about 11. It was the first time I ever saw kids praising God with such zeal. I immediately entered into praise and worship with a completely open heart, asking for more! And surely God set the spark flaming. I often refer to camp as the beginning of the Holy Spirit working in me. It was at camp that I learned how to use a prayer journal and hear the Lord’s voice.”

Branch members Eric and Sarah Dolph, and their children Jacob, Nicholas and Gabriella, honored the Shrivers, saying, “The impact you’ve had on our lives and our family is immeasurable. Jacob attending camp three years ago set in motion our entrance into the People of Praise, which has been such a blessing to our family. Thank you for starting camp and persevering through all of those years.”

Bud and Marilyn Northway put it this way in their honoring: “Tom and Theresa’s generous use of their gifts has had a dramatic effect on our children. So many kids from our various branches, plus our children and grandchildren and now children from Black Rock, have had life-changing experiences at camp. Tom and Theresa’s creative minds never stopped. They were always searching to give our children the best camp experience they could have.”

This year’s theme for camp came from a song by Christian songwriter Tim Timmons called “Everywhere I Go.” Like Tom, Timmons has survived cancer. He was diagnosed with incurable cancer in 2001 and given five years to live. Eighteen years later, he is still writing songs.

At Peter Hammer’s suggestion, Tom wrote Timmons a letter, telling him about the camp and his own battle with cancer—surviving a malignant tumor on his spine. Timmons sent back a video message for the whole camp. Summarizing the theme of his song Timmons said, “Every day, everywhere I go, Jesus is at work. He’s not done with me yet and apparently he’s not done with you yet. He has huge things in store.”

It was a message aimed at the campers, but no doubt his words echoed in the hearts of Tom and Theresa, faithful servants who continue to find new ways to share the love of Jesus everywhere they go.

Top left: Tom and Theresa were honored with leis in 2013 for the camp’s 25th anniversary. Top right: Older campers served by distributing mulch around camp. Photo by Martha Delaney. Bottom right: This year Tom and Theresa were crowned king and queen and rode in kid-powered chariots to a camp-wide celebration. Photo by Martha Delaney.
Editor’s Note: Catherine Bulger has joined the staff of Vine & Branches both as a writer and as the managing editor.

In August of 1988, Catherine’s parents, Jim and Beth Bulger (Servant Branch), moved to Grenada with two-year-old Catherine and six-month-old Annie in tow. The community sent them to implement a high school Christian Family Life program that Laurie (Tychsen) Magill (northern Virginia) and Linda Porto (South Bend) had written for religious education teachers in Grenada, at the request of the then bishop of Grenada, the Most Rev. Sidney Charles. The Bulgers shared People of Praise life first with John and Amy Zwerneman and, before long, with Grenadian branch members as well.

The Bulgers lived in Grenada until May, 1991, when Catherine was five. Twenty-seven years later, in February, 2019, she fulfilled a longtime hope to return to Grenada and see her former home again, traveling with her parents, who visit annually on behalf of the community’s branch relations office.

Part I: Remembering a Distant Home Before a Long-Awaited Return

Nutmeg, lime, coconut, mango, ginger. The warm smell of spices in the air. Tall palm fronds waving gently high above my head. The deep, deep, endless green. The ferns on the mountaintop. Little green-brown, funny lizards scurrying down the walls. Juicy ripe fruit with brilliant sweetness exploding in my mouth. Goats grazing in the yard when we came home from church. Women walking on the roof of the cocoa-processing plant outside our kitchen window, stirring the cocoa pods with their bare feet.

These things flit across the edges, the beginnings of my memory. I see people, places, images. I remember our house: our wrap-around veranda, the mosquito netting on the beds, the laundry tub out back. The prickly pear cactus that the cat liked to sit in. The two swings my dad built for us under the trees. The bats swooping through the living room at dusk. And our cat, Salty, named by Annie and me, that we got to catch the bats (she was bad at it).

I remember racing Annie down the long lane, flanked by rows of stately royal palms, at Mount St. Ervan Retreat Center. Ordering BLT sandwiches at the restaurant on La Sagesse Beach (the taste of all the fresh-caught fish so wasted on us). Riding the waves to shore in my floaties and trying to walk on the water because I
had plenty of faith, just like Jesus said.

I remember eating pieces of fresh coconut in the kitchen, and drinking fiery homemade ginger juice, and popping the fleshy little fruits called skin-ups in my mouth, and my favorite treat: sweet, chewy, translucent-red guava cheese candy.

Once we found five newborn kittens under our bunk bed. One day I woke from a nap to learn I had a baby brother, Joseph.

There were Lord’s Day meals on our veranda with the fledgling People of Praise branch. And long evenings at John and Amy Zwernemans’ home while the adults played Uno and other games. Sometimes we’d go to sleep there and get up to be driven home late.

Early memories are funny, though. As time passes, I become less sure of them. How much is truly real? How much is influenced by the pictures I’ve looked at, by the stories we’ve told again and again?

Back in Minnesota, we did tell and retell the stories. We did treasure our photographs, and we savoured for years a jar of bay leaves we collected off our Christmas tree—along with a jar of nutmeg and a little hoard of guava cheese. We would eat one tiny slice of that guava cheese on the rarest of occasions, and I would nibble it slowly, treasuring those morsels like a bit of heaven in my mouth.

I know this, anyway. I know how my heart leaps when I see a Grenadian brother or sister at a People of Praise leaders’ conference. I know the tears that welled in my eyes when I went to Jamaica in 2002 and realized I was back in the Caribbean at last. I know the flavors that are dearest, most familiar, most comforting to me are nutmeg, coconut, ginger, lime, mango. I know the sound of calypso music or a steel pan drum makes my eyes light up.

And this: I’m going home.

**Part 2: The Return**

I step out of the small airport into the bright, tropical sunshine. The air is warm and pleasant, dry and breezy. Dominic Jeremiah, the branch leader, is there, giving me a big hug, flashing a smile. I had wondered if I would cry, but I don’t. Instead, I sit in the front passenger seat of Dominic’s van as he drives us across the island from the main city and capital of St. George’s to the town of Grenville on the east side of Grenada.
I stare out the rolled-down window, hardly hearing a word of the conversation between Dominic and my parents. Cars honk on the busy curving roads, whizzing past each other around treacherous corners. We wind upwards, high above the calm, turquoise harbor dotted with bright-colored fishing boats, into the rainforest of Grand Etang National Park, with its extinct volcano that forms the center of the island, and there they are: great banks of ferns—my ferns! And banana trees, palm trees, towering bamboo stands. I feel the cool dampness of the mountaintop. It starts to rain. It’s the middle of the dry season, and Dominic jokes that we brought the rain with us.

We drive down the other side of the mountain into a quieter, homier world. Open-air shops and houses line the hillsides in shades of pink, orange, blue, green and yellow. People sit outside on their verandas and stoops. Sheep graze in yards. Strings of Grenadian flags—red, yellow and green—decorate rooftops. We slow down outside a white cinderblock house with a pinkish tin roof next to a cocoa-drying factory.

“Do you recognize it,?” Dominic asks. “I thought it was bigger!”

Our old house.

Three minutes later, we pull into Dominic and his wife Jenny’s driveway.

Jenny has made us supper. Pea soup, and I remember: Annie and I used to shuck pigeon peas on our veranda—a chore we loved. Besides the peas there are dumplings and yams and breadfruit and green bananas and pork.

After supper I stand on Jenny’s veranda and watch the bats circling the electric light in the yard. Jenny and I walk down the lane to the main road. We wait at the corner until Lucy Ogilvie picks us up. We drive through the old, busy little harbor town of Grenville to Walter and Ann Ogilvie’s house for a branch meeting.

“Good night!” the brothers and sisters exclaim, as they enter the room, using words that serve as both greeting and farewell in Grenada. Everyone keeps telling me, “Welcome home!” It’s an adults-only meeting, and about 15 people sit around the living room in a tight circle. My dad gives a short talk. There’s some general sharing and conversation. We sing praise and worship songs, unaccompanied but with much clapping and harmony.

After the meeting, Jenny announces to a laughing audience that we are having “fellowship and swallow-ship.” Mercedes Ogilvie and her sister Lucy list our drink options: mauby, light sorrel, coconut water and ginger. Soon I’m holding a glass of ginger juice: ginger root steeped in sugar water, spicy and sweet, a drink I remember so vividly. I sip my ginger in a happy daze and listen to my Grenadian brothers and sisters laughing and talking and affectionately teasing one another.

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For the next few days, I don’t talk as much as usual. People keep asking me if I remember things. Some things—the flavors most of all, the smells, many of the plants, the colors—feel familiar, but there are many details I do not remember. There was a major hurricane (Ivan in 2004) that necessitated a great deal of rebuilding and replanting. There are more
cars on the road, more stores in the towns, more houses. I look different from most Grenadians. I sound different. I have to strain a bit to understand the Grenadian accent. I feel like a stranger, a foreigner in my homeland.

The young adults take me on an island tour. Mercedes and Lucy organized the trip, and Sabrina Ogilvie, with her son Liam, Che and Felicia Alexander, and their brother-in-law Ryan come along too. We pile into two vehicles and spend the day driving up the east coast of the island.

We visit a waterfall, a former airport, a 300-year-old rum distillery that still operates using 18th-century methods, a crater lake, a couple of glorious beaches, a sulfur spring and a mangrove forest and bird sanctuary.

Fruit trees grow everywhere: breadfruit and lime, orange, paw-paw and sour sop. Mercedes has a fruit-bearing mango tree that grew from a pit she accidentally dropped in her yard. There’s almost always a breeze blowing off the ocean, and often you can hear vinyl kites whining high in the sky, like lofty giant mosquitoes, as the wind whistles against them.

One evening, my parents and I come back to the Jeremiahs’ home from a long day driving to some of our old haunts. Mercedes comes over and joins us for supper. We sit around the table, eat delicious food, drink a bottle of wine, and talk, like I have so many times before in community. I notice that all the strangeness, all the sense of being a foreigner, is gone.

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On Saturday evening, the whole branch gathers at the Jeremiahs’ home for a Lord’s Day opening meal. There are about 18 adults and maybe a dozen children. We will be eating oil down—the national dish of Grenada, a coconut-milk-based stew laden with breadfruit, vegetables and meat and boiled for hours—as well as chicken and fish and salads and rice and peas and pumpkin and cake and ice cream.

I listen to Dominic leading us in the familiar prayers I’ve heard almost every Saturday night of my life. “We praise you for the blessings of the past week: for life, health and strength, for home, love and friendship.” Often, when I hear those words, I think of Grenada, because my earliest memories of opening the Lord’s Day are here. My parents told me that it was in Grenada that they started making a point of regularly opening the Lord’s Day. Now here I am, celebrating the Lord’s Day, back in Grenada, full circle. Grenada is home still, not only because of nostalgia or memories or formative experiences but because my covenanted brothers and sisters are here.

I sing in my head and my full heart, over and over, the song, “What shall I say unto the Lord? All I have to say is, thank you, Lord.”
Wear thick-soled shoes. When I arrived at Philippo Scout Reservation, fellow counselor Mike Wacker (Servant Branch) inspected my carefully selected thick-soled sandals (with socks, per the rules) and broke the bad news, “Sandals have to be closed-toe.” With just a little bit of a gleam in his eye, he showed off his Hoka running shoes, their soles as thick as a couple of peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. The pair of running shoes I had brought had extremely thin soles. I’ve run marathons, I figured, I’ll be fine. Wrong. By Wednesday I would be begging for mercy, strategically seizing every opportunity to park myself on the ground, and then feeling my feet ache late into the night. Gravel roads have a way of reminding you just how many nerve endings there are in each of your feet. It’s about 7,000. Trust me, you don’t want to learn their names.

Get coffee in the staff lounge at 6:00 a.m. Servant Camp runs according to certain predictable patterns and rules. Breakfast, lunch and dinner will each be followed by dodgeball for the boys. The metal snap hooks that connect the American and Canadian flags to the halyard will clang delightfully against the pole during a reverent silence. And my personal favorite: there will be coffee in the staff lounge at 6:00 a.m. Credit for the coffee goes to Bob Pintozzi, retired dean of boys at Trinity School at River Ridge, who rises at 5:00 to start the 100-cup percolator that he had prepped the night before. “It’s a great job if you want to be a hero,” he said.

Drink water or be homesick. Dr. Paul Zenker leads a medical team, with three nurses, who give out some 1,200 doses of medicine to the 400+ people who attend camp, the right dose to the right person at the right time. (One of the nurses, Becca Maslow, won an award for all the work she did analyzing and organizing data from the camp’s website to make this happen.) But Dr. Zenker’s biggest concern is water. “I will try anything to keep kids hydrated,” he told me. He explained: when a child is dehydrated, the body pulls water from the gut, creating the perfect conditions for clogged pipes. Young kids don’t like spending long periods in the outdoor latrines, so stomach pain can erupt. Dehydration also causes headaches. It’s these pains that get the young ones crying for mama. An elegant biological explanation with a clear bottom line: drink water or be homesick. Better yet, stop by the medical cabin a few times a day to get some free Gatorade.
Pray for at least one storm. On Wednesday, our group of third-graders had to abandon plans for a hot dog cookout and hurry to the dining hall: a storm was brewing. As we arrived, we saw a shelf cloud forming outside. Inside the packed, noisy dining hall the atmosphere was electric, with hundreds of us crammed in and everyone talking loudly. Outside, the wind started whipping. The sky was darkening. I looked into the eyes of our third-graders, seated in a row on their usual bench, and saw fear. Then the junior counselors started leading everyone in “I’m a Little Teapot,” usually a gentle tune, but this time done to the rhythm of the stadium classic, “We Will Rock You.” Soon everyone was slapping thighs, pounding tables and clapping hands, and the boys had relaxed. Down in the basement, we started a game of four square and, when that petered out, a game of basketball, with junior counselors serving as hoops. Eventually, we got called up to dinner. By the time we were through, the storm had passed, leaving a glorious effect: cooler temperatures.

Walk a mile in someone else’s shoes. After an epic pillow fight in our third-grade boys’ cabin, all the boys’ clothes got tangled together. Jimmy couldn’t find his shoes anywhere. This nightmare scenario was relieved when another boy, T.J., suggested that Jimmy wear T.J.’s shoes—a gesture that allowed us to leave for the swimming pool. Later that afternoon, Jimmy found his shoes. On Peter’s feet! Peter and Jimmy swapped shoes and Peter wore T.J.’s shoes back to camp. All of this proves the point that if you really want to get to know a brother you should walk a mile in his shoes. At Servant Camp, it’s possible.
**Shoot the chute.** There were precious few moments during the week when the attention spans of the eight-year-old boys stayed focused on a single activity, but that’s what happened when we made the trip to the two side-by-side sledging chutes. These are corrugated black plastic pipes that run down a steep hill. Campers grab a long plastic sled and crash helmets and whiz down the hill. For added fun, you can stack 10 or so of the extra sleds beneath the plywood at the bottom of the chute to create a ramp. Bonus: if you’re willing to do the hard work of peddling a go-kart up the hill that leads to the chute, you can have a heck of a good time riding it back down the hill once the sledging time is over.

**Hike to Friendship Point, but not right away.** The hike up to the lookout known as Friendship Point takes ten minutes if you’re with high-school students or about an hour if you’re with eight-year-olds and take a wrong turn. But the view is worth the effort: a panorama of Lake Byllesby, a four-mile-long man-made lake, with hawks and an occasional eagle soaring above the trees, and a view of the camp below you. The boys ate goldfish crackers and balanced on round wooden posts that let you get up a bit higher to see the view. We listened to “Revive this Land” on a portable speaker, and, though we didn’t say much, a sweet feeling set in among us. After surviving epic squirt gun battles, bouts of homesickness, dodgeball games, a storm and long nights in a sweltering cabin, we had become something more than a group of boys from four different states. We were a true pack of Bears, comfortable in our own skins.

**Listen to the rhythm of the footfalls.** On the final night of camp, all the units, dressed in their new camp T-shirts, form up into a procession. Counselor Chris Schwab stands at the front, carrying a djembe, and four torch bearers line up behind him. Chris intones a rhythm, boom-boom-boom-ba-boom-boom-boom-boom-boom-boom, and the marching begins. Four hundred pairs of feet crunch in unison over the gravel road, then swish loudly over a grassy field, then beat softly over dirt, then crack resoundingly through a concrete tunnel, until finally they enter the amphitheater where each unit takes its place. The drum continues its rhythm and singers lead everyone in the Servant Camp song (to the tune of “Scotland the Brave”). “Glory to Almighty God who gave us Servant Camp,” the camp intones, as rays of orange light from the setting sun filter through the pine trees behind the stage.

**Sing your heart out.** Servant campers are always singing. There are silly songs like “The Cat Came Back,” about an unkillable cat who survives numerous attempts on his life: shotgun blasts, a fall from a hot air balloon, even a nuclear apocalypse. In the morning, there are chants which often begin with: (Leader) “This is a repeat after me song.” (Crowd) “This is a repeat. . . .” You get the point. But best of all are the praise songs. One of my favorite moments came as our group was walking back to our campsite with the sun setting, the moon rising, and the sounds of “10,000 Reasons” (“Bless the Lord”) reaching our ears from the amphitheater more than half a mile away. At the closing ceremonies, the praise songs are loud and go late into the night, and as far as I know those hallelujahs are still being raised through the woods and fields of Camp Phillippo.

**Fall asleep listening to Bible stories.** Each night the Bears fell asleep to the sounds of our unit’s head counselor, Pat Flynn, a.k.a. Papa Bear, reading stories from the Jesus Storybook Bible. He takes requests. If you are going to sleep at Servant Camp, this is the way to do it.
TRIBUTES

DONNA MASTERMAN
By Phyllis Varevice

After her mother’s early death, Donna was raised by her loving Irish immigrant grandparents; she credited them with her love of reading and her quick Irish wit. During her high school years they moved to Minneapolis, where Donna met Al Masterman. They were married just before he left to serve in the Navy during World War II. After Al’s return, they raised five sons and two daughters. Their children say they learned honesty, hard work and unity from their parents’ example.

Donna worked many jobs to help pay for the children’s education. Her favorite job—a makeup artist for Elizabeth Arden cosmetics—was at Dayton’s department store. There she experienced freedom in sharing her faith in Jesus Christ as the Holy Spirit led her. Donna could see the inner beauty of each person she met, and she used her talents to enhance their outer beauty as well.

When asked to share her cosmetic wisdom with the women in the branch, she said makeup shouldn’t take over five minutes. “Keep your makeup simple. God has already made you beautiful!”

In 1973 Al and Donna moved to Nicollet Village, a townhouse complex in South Minneapolis. Over the next 18 years many more branch families and singles joined them, and they experienced a rich community life on a daily basis. Donna said they “grew in great love and lasting friendships during those years.”

Donna was a loving mother, friend and sister in the Lord. She was homebound for the last few years, retaining her great sense of humor, remaining strong in her love for the Lord and continuing her ministry of intercessory prayer.

facts
• Donna Elizabeth Grow was born in Princeton, MN, October 7, 1925, and on October 20, 2018, she died in her sleep at home—just as she hoped she would!
• During World War II she worked in a factory, like Rosie the Riveter in the 1942 song—except Donna was Wendy the Welder.
• Donna and her beloved husband Al, who died in 2011, made the covenant of the People of Praise January 27, 1985.

JIM SHRACK
By John Carnick

What a happy man! Jim had an infectious smile, a booming voice and a huge laugh. Life for him was a big adventure, and he was fearless. He made good friends from all walks of life.

After getting his bachelor’s degree from IU Bloomington, Jim returned to South Bend and became very involved in People of Praise prayer meetings. Soon he was spearheading trips back to Bloomington to evangelize his friends. There are countless stories of him evangelizing on the road, from London to North Dakota. He welcomed new evangelistic methods and praise songs throughout his life. His sharings and prophecies at our branch meetings were often about reaching out.

He worked hard to provide for his large family, tirelessly doing his own home repairs and automobile work (one time with an on-the-air assist from “Car Talk”). He taught his children many useful skills. He would take on anything.

Jim had a big heart and loved celebrating others. Spending time with his family brought him so much joy. He was an avid golfer with keen eyesight and loved to work on his game with his buddies. He was also an avid reader and a big fan of Notre Dame football and IU basketball. In some wacky card games—which he seemed to invent extra rules for—Jim would laugh until tears came, and soon everyone was howling.

In the last weeks of his life, his body was shutting down, but not his spirit. With his eyes fixed firmly on his future with God, he picked “Happy Day” for one of the songs at his wake.

facts
• Jim was born August 19, 1950, in Covington, KY, grew up in South Bend, and died there November 11, 2018.
• He and Jeanie Kramer were married in 1977, and their family now includes nine children, seven grandchildren and one great-grandchild.
• Jim worked a variety of jobs over the years: Welfare Department, real estate, furniture sales and furniture rep. For a while he manufactured his own furniture line, and most recently delivered RVs nationwide.
• Jim made the covenant of the People of Praise on April 18, 1976, and Jeanie on September 19, 1979.
JEAN SCHMITT
By Ann Kinkley

Jean never lost her dietitian’s love of food: discussing it, planning it and tasting it. When her community sisters brought pots of soup during her last months, she lavished praise on the cooks and their creations.

Jean led our social ministry in the early days here in Corvallis and traveled throughout Oregon giving Life in the Spirit Seminars with Fr. Charlie Harris’s team. She loved to learn. She avidly read about and discussed current events. She wanted to figure out the right way to think about things . . . and then to pray about them.

Jean was a hard worker, leader and cheerleader of those she served with. Her favorite saying: “You girls are great!” Her women’s group of the past 14 years appreciated Jean’s humble wisdom and gratitude. They agreed, “If you did anything good, Jean would never forget about it. She would shout it from the rooftops!”

In her last days she was still trying to take care of people. She phoned community members about scholarship opportunities for their children and coordinated job offers for her home-care helpers.

Jean taught us to appreciate people. A positive outlook and a never-ending smile were hallmarks of our wonderful sister. We treasure the gift she was to us in the Corvallis branch.

facts

• Jean Marie Vertovec was born March 8, 1929, in Elmhurst, IL, and died peacefully at home November 8, 2018, in Corvallis.
• She graduated from the University of Illinois and worked several jobs as a dietitian and a home economics professor.
• She and Roman Schmitt were married from 1954 until Roman’s death in 2016. They eventually settled in Corvallis in 1966. Their family includes four children, six grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.
• Roman and Jean became involved in Catholic charismatic renewal in the mid-’70s. They made the covenant of the People of Praise October 14, 1984.

BARRY CHIN
By Vince Keaveny

Barry was a really hard working all his life. Wherever he worked and whatever he did, he was strong and steadfast, reliable and dedicated. Whether it was running church or school barbecues— which hundreds attended—or setting up chairs for prayer meetings when the charismatic renewal started here in the early 1970s, Barry was there, willingly and joyfully serving. The only hard part for him was keeping his special recipe for barbecue sauce a secret . . . that was a big deal! Of course, all this service was simply an extension of how Barry loved and served the Lord.

Barry became quite well-known as the singer of choruses. His favorite was “From the Rising of the Sun,” which his daughter Simone remembered him singing every morning.

Barry had a major stroke in 1998, followed by another in 2000. This left him almost totally dependent on his beloved wife, Hazel. For the next 18 years he continued to keep his eyes on the Lord, and a new level of courage and endurance emerged in him as husband, father, grandfather, brother and friend.

During those long years at home, Barry spent a lot of time drawing pictures of the Lord’s face. These sketches he signed, dated and gave away. I suppose it was his way of saying what was on his mind in the hope of moving people closer to the Lord!

Barry was an outstanding example to us for 57 years of married life—through hard times and good times, in sickness and in health, through many challenges and crises—as was Hazel in her love and dedication to him.

facts

• Barry was born in Kingston July 2, 1940, and died in Portmore, Jamaica, October 10, 2018.
• He and Hazel Russell were married for 57 years and have seven children, 17 grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.
• He worked in sales for various companies, including GraceKennedy, a large Jamaican food manufacturer, both in the office and on the road. Later he turned his hand to cooking.
• Barry and Hazel made the covenant of the People of Praise December 14, 1991. Their son Christopher is also in the community.
LIFENOTES

Births
Welcome to our newest little brothers and sisters!
Elisha Reid Robert, born to Josh and Mary Claire Canef (South Bend) on February 9.
Lydia Elizabeth, born to Micah and Rachel Olson (Servant Branch) on February 11.
Damien Matthew, born to Matt and Mary Brickweg (Servant Branch) on February 23.
Bentley Michael’s adoption by Dana and Patty Hammer (Buffalo) was finalized on March 20.
Ronald Francis, born to James and Alicia McShane (Servant Branch) on March 24.
Patrick Pascal, born to Collin and Margaret Anderson (South Bend) on April 12.
Joaquin Alexander, born to Alex and Julia Shek (northern Virginia) on April 20.
Jeremiah James, adopted by Justin and Cathy Walters (Mission, Indianapolis) on his birth date, April 22.
Lillian Christine, born to Joe and Lisa Murphy (Servant Branch) on May 11.
Clark James, born to Bart and Mary Durand (northern Virginia) on May 13.
Edison James, born to Jon and Amy Gapp (on assignment from Servant Branch) on June 5.
Martha Azelie, born to Abe and Trish Olson (Mission, Indianapolis) on June 8.
Ignatius Thomas, born to Will and Angie Bornhoft (Servant Branch) on June 17.
Rose Abigail, born to Thomas and Jeanette Duddy (Mission, Allendale) on July 9.
Isaac Reinhardt, born to Peter and Becca Coleman (Muncie) on August 4.
Elise Mary, born to Bryan and Marya Huntington (Servant Branch) on August 21.

Weddings and anniversaries
Best wishes to Rebecca Sklorenko (Indianapolis), who married Corey Klee on April 26 at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church.
Best wishes to Jack Lindberg (Vancouver-Portland), who married Kate Waldron on May 18 at Holy Redeemer Church in Vancouver.
Best wishes to Emily Schwab (Servant Branch) who married Simeon Willard on July 20 at St. Peter’s Church in Mendota Heights.
Best wishes to Sarah Coleman (Servant Branch), who married Patrick Philipp on August 31 at St. Peter’s Church in Mendota Heights.
Phil and Jean Monaco (Corvallis) celebrated 45 years of marriage on February 9.
Paul and Peggy Go (South Bend) celebrated 50 years of marriage on August 30.
Jimmy and Madonna Greco (Tampa) celebrated 50 years of marriage on September 6.

Work and Achievements
Congratulations to our recent college graduates!
Thomas Brophy (South Bend), B.A. in history, Holy Cross College.
Carlos Castro (Vancouver-Portland), bachelor of business administration, University of Portland.
Jorge Castro, Jr. (Vancouver-Portland), B.A. in psychology, University of Portland.
Melinda Davis (South Bend), B.A. in peace studies, University of Notre Dame.
Olivia Griggs (South Bend), B.S. in accounting, Saint Mary’s College.
Peter Kabele (Vancouver-Portland), B.S. in mechanical engineering, University of Notre Dame.
Stephen Kabele (South Bend), B.A. in industrial design, University of Notre Dame.
George Kane (Mission, Indianapolis), doctor of medicine, Indiana University.
Mike Kueber (Servant Branch), Ph.D. in ministry in preaching, Aquinas Institute of Theology (St. Louis).
Sarah Loughran (South Bend), B.S. in nursing, Saint Mary’s College.
Levi Martinez (Vancouver-Portland), associate degree in applied science: computer-aided design, Portland Community College.
Kevin Martinez (Vancouver-Portland), associate degree in applied science: welding technology and computer-aided design, Portland Community College.
Ben Mysliwiec (Vancouver-Portland), B.A. in theology, University of Notre Dame.
Genna Olsen (Vancouver-Portland), B.A. in Program of Liberal Studies, University of Notre Dame.
Claire Raway (Indianapolis Triangle) (December, 2018), B.A. in art history, IUPUI Herron School of Art & Design.
Mary Raway (Indianapolis Triangle), associate of science in mechanical engineering technology, Ivy Tech Community College.
Hana Shin (Servant Branch), doctor of pharmacy, University of Minnesota—Twin Cities.
Joe Walker (northern Virginia), B.S. in
mechanical engineering, Virginia Tech.

Lily Zusi (Mission, Evansville), B.S. in biology and English literature, Saint Mary’s College.

Deaths
Since our last issue, we have received word that the following members of the community have died. We pray for their family and friends in this time of loss.

Barry Chin (Kingston) died October 11, 2018.
Loyd Fortenberry (Biloxi) died January 17.
Dick Shirey (Muncie) died March 2.
Marlene McLaurin (Tampa) died March 29.
Elinor Thompson (South Bend) died April 21.
Bernie Boegemann (Servant Branch) died June 12.
Joe Klein (Servant Branch) died August 8.
Ralph Rath (South Bend) died August 12.
Bill Sturman (Servant Branch) died August 23.

Executive Office Announcements
Because of declining numbers and after consultation with all concerned, the board of governors of the People of Praise has disbanded the Yakima branch. The community members still living in Yakima have had their membership transferred to the Vancouver-Portland branch:

Gerry and Cathy Orthmann were transferred from the Yakima branch to the Vancouver-Portland branch March 28, 2019.
Mike and Ann Hays were transferred from the Yakima branch to the Vancouver-Portland branch March 28, 2019.
Ron Rice was transferred from the Yakima branch to the Vancouver-Portland branch March 28, 2019.

Pat and Edna Malone were transferred from Christians in Mission in Allendale to the South Bend branch August 16.
Rebecca Rooney was transferred from the branch in northern Virginia to the branch in Indianapolis July 15. Patrick Rooney, who is underway, has left his underway commitment in northern Virginia and has gone underway in Indianapolis.

Appleton:
Bob Radosevich was released from the covenant of the People of Praise June 7, 2019.

Buffalo:
George Meyerhofer was appointed to a three-year term as area coordinator beginning March 10, 2019.

Biloxi:
Dede Schneider has been assigned to Houston for an indefinite period of time.

Colorado Springs:
Michael Hanson made the covenant of the People of Praise Easter Sunday, April 21, 2019.
Cathy Hanson made the covenant of the People of Praise Easter Sunday, April 21, 2019.
Don Isban was released from the covenant of the People of Praise January 29, 2019.

Indianapolis:
Walt Seale was granted tenure as a coordinator of the People of Praise June 11, 2019.

Muncie:
Bill Bolka was appointed to a second three-year term as area coordinator, effective March 1, 2019.

New Orleans:
Anderson Sunda-Meya made the covenant of the People of Praise Easter Sunday, April 21, 2019.

Doryne Sunda-Meya made the covenant of the People of Praise Easter Sunday, April 21, 2019.

Northern Virginia:
Mike Busekrus was appointed to a three-year term as area coordinator, beginning August 1, 2019.

Therese Rosenthal was released from the covenant of the People of Praise March 22, 2019.

Shreveport:
Sr. Susie Maria Lea was released from the covenant of the People of Praise February 5, 2019.

Servant Branch:
Hugh Springer, Jr., will continue to work on assignment in Bellingham, WA, for an additional year. The new date for the completion of his assignment is August 10, 2020.

Pat Buitenwert was released from the covenant of the People of Praise February 26, 2019.

Bill and Patty Mitchell were released from the covenant of the People of Praise April 4, 2019.

Steve Nicklaus was released from the covenant of the People of Praise May 3, 2019.

South Bend:
Chuck Bridges is no longer covenanted, as of March 22, 2019.

Dave and Maggie Temeles were released from the covenant of the People of Praise September 30, 2019.
“He who loves his brother abides in the light” (1 Jn. 2:10).