

UMMA UpDate #58, July 18, 2008
e-bulletin of the
United Methodist Missionary Association
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"Linking mission workers worldwide and moving forward"

Summer issue:

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- [1] **SHOW TIME!** Proposal to Widen Leadership by Jim Gulley, chair

Dear Colleagues in Mission / Steering Committee Members:

Some time ago I drafted most of the issues below and titled the introductory paragraph: ***"It's show time!"*** Well, it really is nearly show time – time to show what we can do as an association.

The United Methodist Missionary Association (UMMA) is now confronted by a changed situation. The revolution in UMMA's relationship to the General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM) has succeeded due in large part to insurgents such as Howard "Che" Heiner, Norma Kehrberg and others who literally soldiered on with a few faithful troops in a hostile environment for the better part of a decade. Now we are in the position of successful revolutionaries who must answer: **"What do we do on the day after the revolution?"** Some of the troops have passed on the torch while others are waiting, I believe, for another rallying cry!

In my view, UMMA needs a broader, more active leadership. Relying primarily on a handful of elected officers is not going to empower UMMA as an organization to accomplish its purpose and goals (see <http://www.umma-global.org/history.html>). Following are some of the changes that have recently taken place that indicate UMMA's time to step into a new relationship with GBGM is now:

- emergence of a collegial atmosphere at GBGM reflected not only in the leadership luncheons but also at Board Meetings
- agreement to coordinate a Mission Forum & the Global Mission Personnel Conference.
- invitation to include mission associations in new Board Member orientation in the Fall 2008

- initiative of GBGM Treasurer to secure missionary pension and health care benefits and placing those funds with General Board of Pensions and Health; and renewed GBGM contributions to the Collins Pension Fund, moving the rate toward the desired target of 1% of DAC

- the genuine interest expressed by the new GBGM General Secretary to utilize the wealth of expertise that he recognizes resides within the missionary community.

The time is right for UMMA to step into the role of an effective partner in mission, if we are able.

Where to begin?

After gathering suggestions from our Steering Committee and other UMMA leaders, the following plan has evolved and is still open to tweaking to make it work. Let the games begin!

Join One of these Discussion-Action Groups

- 1 Expanding missionary presence and perspective within GBGM – Jim Gulley jim.gulley@comcast.net, Convener
- 2 Your Special Vision for GBGM- Howard Heiner heiner@ccountry.net, Convener
- 3 Concerns of new missionaries - Carol Seckel carkseckel@aol.com, Convener
- 4 Revising itineration procedures - Mark Abbott mark.abbott@ymail.com, Convener (with Fred Price, GBGM Itineration Exec. Secy.)
- 5 Mission Forum 2009 – Norma Kehrberg kehrbergn001@hawaii.rr.com, Convener

Hopefully these actions will be helpful.

Suggested Procedure

- 1 Ad hoc Discussion Groups led by a Convener (selecte a group & notify convener).
- 2 Convener establishes a channel of communication with a group (simple email group seems easiest.).
- 3 Six or more UMMA members, including 2 Steering Committee members.
- 4 Self-select but advise all SC members who have agreed to participate.
- 5 Convener will provide a single paragraph statement proposing the purpose of the Discussion Group.
- 6 Expected outcome from each Discussion Group: Outline key issues and proposed actions by UMMA in partnership with GBGM.
- 7 August 16, 2008: Action-oriented proposals submitted to the UMMA Administrative Council.
- 8 Admin Council will bring your input together & share outcomes in an action-oriented format in two places:
 - a. Global Missionary Personnel Conference (GMPC), Aug 20-24, 2008;
 - b. Board of Global Ministries Fall Board Meeting (new Board orientation), Oct 13-16, 2008 (remixed)
- 9 UMMA leadership to formulate action plan with GBGM.

We need first to “recruit” from among ourselves and other UMMA members those who will participate in discussion and action related to key issues. I suggest the following as a beginning point. You are welcome to suggest others or to propose modification of those listed.

MOST IMPORTANT: We need to involve all – YES, ALL of YOU – and OTHERS with fresh thought and commitment to *ACTION*.

We need to complete our own re-structuring of responsibilities: Shift some responsibilities from Coordinator to Treasurer, and recruit a new Coordinator who will take over at the Fall Gathering, Oct 12-13, 2008.

We need to recruit new and seasoned missionaries into UMMA:

- a. Communicate with newly commissioned missionaries (past two years) – offer free first year membership (proposed).
- b. Find out what active missionaries (“on the field) REALLY, want from regional Steering Committee members and UMMA.
- c. Renew the proposal to establish longer-term UMMA Blog / Discussion Groups on issues critical to a vital United Methodist Church in mission, such as:

Connecting with GenNext in Mission – the Next Generations

Mobilizing UMC Missionaries for Mission Today

Restructuring the UMC: Implications for Mission

Renewing Relationships with Autonomous Methodist Churches & Ecumenical Partners

The Future of Long-term, Cross-cultural Missionaries

Maintaining the Health & Welfare of the Mission Community

UMMA needs YOU! – BOTH active and re-activated missionaries to join and envision a new working relationship with the GBGM, national churches and other ecumenical partners while embracing new mission initiatives.

Will you join us by committing your time to lead a Discussion Group, outline proposed actions and participate in mission with UMMA in a new way?

[2] QUESTIONS & RESPONSES FROM THE GBGM AT 475

Dear Christine, Helen and others at GBGM,

In my June 1st consultation with GBGM retirees at Pilgrim Place they gave me an article from the LA Times (June 1, 2008) and asked me if the Express Scripts settlement will benefit missionaries. Could you please let me and others know, namely: Will these

“kickbacks” by drug companies to Express Scripts benefit GBGM missionaries with lower co-pays? Your answer will be greatly appreciated.

Regards and sincere best wishes,

Richard Schwenk, UMMA communications chair P.S. Below is the article from

<http://theenvelope.latimes.com/la-fi-lazarus1-2008jun01,0,3760516.column?page=2>

“Consumer Confidential Weak medicine for an unhealthy system” by David Lazarus.

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Dear Richard, I would like to share the response that I received from Stirling Benefits. And be sure that when I get additional information, I will pass along to you. Thanks,
Christine Lee 6/11/2008

"Andrea Itzo" <aitzo@stirlingbenefits.com> 6/11/2008, replied: Hi Christine, Jamie had referred this question over to me to research with Express Scripts.

At this time we don't have the full details of the impact to your missionaries. We have been advised that per the Assurance of Voluntary Compliance that was agreed to, Express has 120 days to complete the process of formulating letters to members (including going through their database to identify those members that might have been impacted).

What's known at this time is that potentially impacted members will receive notification of the situation & will have the opportunity to attest to the fact that they were impacted, and could then receive up to \$25 back. Payment(s) will not go out until sometime in 2009, due to the timeframes required in the agreement. We will continue to keep you posted. Let me know if you have further questions, Andrea L. Itzo, Account Service Representative, Stirling Benefits, Inc., 20 Armory Lane, Milford, CT 06460-3361 203-647-0621 Direct

Ric, I think the most important thing to share with retirees is the upcoming shift of the financial management of missionary retirement funds to the General Board of Pensions. They have a better record with investments and the funds. The Board continues to have final decision, etc, but the day-to-day management of the portfolio shifts to GBPHB.
- Fred Price, Executive Secretary for Itineration, General Board of Global Ministries
Room 320, 475 Riverside Dr., New York, NY 10115, fprice@gbgm-umc.org

[3] MISSIONARIES WRITE

Dear Richard, I am a little surprised that the issue of the ORC's lack of adequate response to the falling dollar hasn't shown up. I have taken a huge beating on this, and the COLA has not at all responded in kind. Blessings on you! Mark Abbott, Alcobendas, Spain,
www.centroseut.org/abbott E-mail: mark.abbott@ymail.com

Ric, I think two items that Methodist should be aware of are:

1. Latin America Study Group report recommending a strong tie between the UMC and the autonomous Methodist Churches of Latin America.
2. The restructuring of the UMC into regional groups that would eliminate the Central Conference. A study group has been named to bring a recommendation to the 2012 General Conference. Hope this is helpful. Shalom, Howard Heiner

Dear Richard, I have missed receiving the e-bulletins for the United Methodist Missionary Association. If you are able to add me back to the mailing list I would really appreciate it. Thanks for whatever you can do. - Kay Burlingham, Director of Alum Relations and Annual Giving, Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, 2121 Sheridan Road, Evanston, IL 60201 p.s. Have you ever thought about making a contribution online? You can at www.garrett.edu.

Hello Richard, I understand UMMA is looking for links to other GBGM missionary websites. Please add ours: <http://www.NewLifeZambia.com> Also, we have just started a new way of keeping in contact with our partner by sending a notice out each time something new has been posted on the "Recent Missionary News" page. God bless you and UMMA for all you are doing. Faithfully, Delbert & Sandy Groves

Ric, This summer I will be in Wisconsin visiting intensively with church and mission committees until Labor Day. Those interested in seeing me there should contact their District and Conference Missions Coordinators. Click to: <http://www.mujilafalls.com/> for more pictures, history, current project explanations and prayer and financial needs. Details or questions? Call me. Cell: 832-493-0793 - Paul Webster

Dear Friends, Some of you are aware that during the last of our 40 years of service in Chile, we were challenged to create an agricultural school in the northern Andes for the Aymara youth. In 2007, the Church found it necessary to temporarily close that school. However, under the dedicated leadership of a talented and dedicated Aymara educator, Dr. Emilio Fernández Canque, the school is on the path to reopening with the new school year that begins in March of 2009. In order to reopen considerable resources are needed. One way in which I am attempting to help to meet that need is through the sale of my book, *The Impossible Dream*, relating the story of the school's creation. Thanks to those who have already ordered it, I have sent a check to Chile for \$979.81, the totality of the royalties received to date. By ordering a copy and/or promoting it among your church and friends, you can enable us to help even more. I will be glad to send to you one or more signed copies. The cost is \$16.48, which includes \$14.00 for the book and \$2.48 for shipping costs (\$30.48 for two books). Some have generously included an additional amount, given the purpose. Please send your request by e-mail or by postal mail to: Stan Moore, 794 Plymouth Rd., Claremont, CA 91711 berylstan@verizon.net - Your collaborator in the Cause, Stan Moore

[4] MISSION GATHERINGS & REUNIONS

July 25-27 Korea Reunion at Lake Junaluska. Includes all denominations meeting together with breakout time for United Methodist related missionaries. Contact Gene Matthews: genematt@mchsi.com or phone: 319-358-9464

July 25-27, 2008 - Reunion of missionary pastors and others who attended Wesley Church, Medan, Sumatra, Indonesia, held at Scarritt-Bennett Center, Nashville. Contact: Lionel Muthiah lmuthiah@bis.midco.net

August 1-3, 2008 Servants of Sierra Leone 13th biannual reunion, Holiday Inn, Flint, Michigan, Contact: Anna Morford MorfordCT@aol.com 5420 Misty Creek Court Flint, MI 48532, Daytime: 800-334-0544 Ext 350

August 1- 4, 2008 Chile Gathering of UMC missionaries & friends at Collins Retreat Center near Portland, Oregon. Contact: Howard Heiner heiner@ccountry.net, or call 541-488-9348

Aug. 8-11, 2008 Philippine UMC Missionary Reunion & friends at St. Paul School of Theology, Kansas City, MO. Contact Gloria Coltharp: adaptiveservices@mindspring.com

August 24-26, 2008 – Mission Forum on “Theology of Commissioning” led by National Association of Deaconesses and Missionaries (NADAM) in cooperation with UMMA and GBGM, immediately following the Global Missionary Personnel Conference, Stony Point, Aug 20-24, 2008. Coordinator: Darlene DiDomineck DDiDomin@gbgm-umc.org

October 12-13, 2008 – UMMA Annual Gathering, Stamford CT in conjunction with the October 13-16, 2008 GBGM Board Meeting + Introduction of Missionary Associations to new Board Members.

April 2009 GBGM Board Meeting + Meeting of 2009 Mission Forum Planning Team

June 26-28, 2009 Malaysia/Singapore/Indonesia Missionary Reunion at Scarritt-Bennett, Nashville, Contact: David & Shirley Wu, shirleyawu@yahoo.com

August 2009, Tentative Joint Mission Forum and Global Mission Personnel Conference (exact date and theme to be determined)

September 25-28, 2009, Nigeria Missionary Reunion, UMC Canyon Camp, west of Oklahoma City. Contact: Delphine Jewell, 14901 N. Penn Ave. - Apt. 379, Oklahoma City, OK 73134; Phone: 405-753-9035; Email: edjewell@juno.com

October 20-23, 2009 Brazilian Missionary Reunion, Lake Junaluska. Contact: Jane Spencer, jane.robert@verizon.net

[5] TREASURER'S TIPS by Richard Vreeland

Missionary colleagues and other friends,

As of July 16 we have 113 Voting Members (who paid 2008 dues, including 2 Lifetime Members) and 24 Affiliate Members.

I am a bit surprised at the number who have been members in the past, but who have not as yet paid their dues for 2008. Please review your check register to make sure that you have sent in that payment which you thought was done. If you have any questions, please e-mail me for clarification: RLVreeland@sbcglobal.net . Those Economic

Stimulus checks which you recently received from the government may be just what you need!

If you find that you haven't paid, please complete the following form and send in your 2008 UMMA information and dues payment. We don't want to lose track of you and really do appreciate your support for the association. When completing the form, please print clearly, especially your e-mail address. This is the quickest way to acknowledge receipt of your check. Thank you.

[6] **THIS IS YOUR INVITATION, Join UMMA or Renew your Membership**

We hope you will include the work of UMMA in your prayers and consider one of the following **new options for membership**: If you are not yet a member, we hope you like this ***COMPLIMENTARY COPY*** of UMMA UpDate and will want to join or keep up your annual membership dues. If you have paid already, many thanks.

--- Please fill in this form, cut off here, and send to Richard Vreeland with 2008 dues ---

Your Name (Given, SURNAME):

Spouse's Name (Given, SURNAME):

Address:

City: State/Province: Zip: Country:

Email: Phone:

Please list the country(s) where you served as a missionary, including USA:

Annual membership dues payment options. Check one [box]:

[] Membership for a couple: \$40.00; [] Lifetime membership for a couple: \$800

[] Individual membership: \$25.00; [] Lifetime membership for an individual: \$500

Affiliate membership (no vote—just interested in mission work & UpDates): \$15.00

Please make checks payable to: "UMMA" and mail to:

Richard Vreeland
182 Ameren Way - Apt. 752
Ballwin, MO 63021-3317