



## The Blawenburg Beacon

**June 2010 Issue**

A newsletter for the members and friends

*of The Blawenburg Reformed Church*

### We'll Sing in the Sunshine

Do you remember that song - by Gale Garnett from all the way back in 1964? She sang of a woman advised by her father not to settle down too soon, but when she meets somebody she likes a lot to "stay with (him) one year." Here's the chorus:

*We'll sing in the sunshine,  
We'll laugh everyday-ay-ay.  
We'll sing in the sunshine  
And I'll be on my way.*

That's going to be my slogan for my last year here at Blawenburg. Let's "Sing in the Sunshine." Or maybe I should say "Son-shine."

By the end of August of 2011, I will have served here for ten years, considerably longer than the average American minister's tenure in a single church, more than double, as a matter of fact.

I think I speak for all when I say it has been a challenging stretch, punctuated by the events at the very beginning, namely the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks. We've seen surges of new members and just as many departures, some disgruntled. We've haggled over church policy and worried about the future. But we're still here, and where there's life there's hope.

While I won't be taking an active role in some aspects of the church's life (how we spend God's money is no longer an issue to me), I will still remain very active in worship and Christian education, our spiritual life, in other words.

And my emphasis in these areas, like Gale Garnett's, will be on singing and laughing, seeking out, identifying and embracing the gospel's promise of the abundant life.

We've already begun this in our Sunday morning Bible studies, and will continue well into the fall and perhaps even the winter, our focus being "out with the bad and in with the good." We've listed those qualities and emotions that bring us down or rob us of basic daily joy and we're learning scripture's methods for purging them and replacing them with something positive.

Our Tuesday morning "Jog Through the Bible" will continue in September, this being the best attended Bible study I've led in all my years here. Given its success, I'll probably lead another one sometime during the fall or winter.

Next spring, the Lord willing, we will recognize at least eleven young people as having fulfilled all educational requirements for membership in a Christian church (see their picture later in this issue). We pray this will be the beginning of their spiritual journey, not the end.

We'll probably say goodbye to some of our friends and family next year (God seems to summon us home on a regular basis), but we'll deal with that when it happens and until then rejoice in the

time we have together.

This summer we'll have a preview of what church life may be like for an extended time after Susie and I leave (I'll be going on sabbatical in Florida from June through August), but I know I leave the church in good hands with dedicated lay leaders and local clergy eager to step in and help if needed.

So let's sing in the sunshine. The summer Florida sun is a little hot for singing, so let's start singing together in September. Oh, yes, and let's make that Son-shine, because wherever the light of Jesus Christ shines we are together and our hope for the future never fades.

*Peace, Pastor Rich*

### Summer Pulpit Supply

June 6—David Mojica, Princeton Seminary  
June 13 - Sam Funkhouser, Princeton Seminary  
June 20 - Mait & Nancy (dramatic reading)  
June 27—Sean Jackson, Hopewell Presbyterian  
July 4— David Mojica, Princeton Seminary  
July 11—David Mojica, Princeton Seminary  
July 18—Rev. Frank Villerius  
July 25—Sean Jackson, Hopewell Presbyterian  
August 29 -

During the month of August we will be participating in worship with the other area Reformed Churches. August 15th is our Sunday to host the rotation. See the schedule below for the places of worship.

August 1 - Griggstown Reformed Church, 10 AM, Communion  
August 8 - First Reformed Church at Rocky Hill  
August 15th - Blawenburg Reformed Church  
August 22 - Harlingen Reformed Church



## "Mysteries and Heroes of the Bible" Breaks for the Summer

One down, one to go. M&H met for the final time this season on May 2<sup>nd</sup>. We'll resume in September when we'll learn about the Old Testament and all the fantastic stories found there. We'll also watch some movies and go on some outings, including a return to the haunted hayride in Bucks County.

By the time we finish next May, these young people, and perhaps others, will have fulfilled all educational requirements for membership in a Christian church. If they so choose, and the board of elders permits it, they may officially join our fellowship on confession of faith and become voting members.

Let's continue to pray that their eagerness to learn about God continues, not only next year but throughout their lives.

*Pictured: (standing) Patrick, Vincent, Barry, Concetta and Ian, (seated) Renee, Emma, Olivia, Morgan and Ariel, (not pictured) Cassie.*

## Honoring our Youth

On May 9th we celebrated George Gurzo and TJ Van Liew and their contributions to Blawenburg Reformed Church. Each young man was presented with a letter and a scholarship for \$500. Below is an excerpt from the letter.

“On behalf of the Consistory, the Student Aid Fund Committee, and the entire congregation here at Blawenburg Reformed Church, we are pleased to present to you this small scholarship contribution in the form of a check for \$500, in recognition of your outstanding contributions to your church and to all we stand for. You are a great example of how people your age can work to serve those you come in contact with, and a standout role model for the children coming up behind you. ”



**Farewell & Best Wishes  
Brunch for Chi-Yi Chen  
June 27, 2010  
Right After Church**

Join us right after church on June 27th for  
brunch to celebrate Chi-Yi's upcoming  
wedding and to say good bye.

**Menu:**

Quiche  
Fruit  
Muffins & Breads  
Coffee, Tea, Juice

**Congratulations Graduates!**

**High School**  
George Gurzo  
Neil Hunt  
TJ Van Liew

**College**

Caitlyn Curtis, Arcadia Univ.  
Jeremiah Van Doren, Rutgers

**Anniversaries**

1 John & Martha Van Zandt  
5 Rick & Lisa White  
21 Helen & Art Brown  
22 Dave & Evelyn Cochran  
24 Alan & Peggy Querec



**June**

2 Bill Herbert	20 Don Thiel
5 Chris Weingart	Jack Helberg
7 Alan Querec	26 Ariel Meyer
Bernice Van Nostrand	Susie Van Doren
11 Kevin Weingart	29 Patty Harris
14 Dave Cochran	Emily Blauw
18 Nancy Curtis	30 Cory Weingart

CONSISTORY MEETING HIGHLIGHTS  
BY BOB BRADSELL

**Consistory met on Wednesday, May 12<sup>th</sup>, and talked mostly about the future...**

**We Adopted a Budget for Fiscal Year 2010-2011.** It's basically a "flat" budget... no increases / several cuts where we were able / and some 'gray' areas, given the need for planning and transition to a new pastor over the next year. Given the state of our finances, we had little choice. The budget will be presented to the congregation within the next few weeks – and will take effect July 1 (the beginning of our fiscal year).

**A Musical Change in our Future.** We received and accepted – with a combination of 'regrets' and 'congratulations' – notification from Music Director, Chi Yi Chen, that she will resign from that post at the end of June...because she's getting married in July! We wish Chi Yi all the best. We understand she may be relocating to the Norfolk, VA, area with future husband, Jeff Wolbrink. We'll miss her...and we hope she'll come to see us now and then. The *Music Ministry* here at BRC will be added to the *Strategic Planning process*.

**Strategic Planning.** The Strategic Planning Taskforce (Wendy Herbert, Mike Vande Woude, Bob Bradsell and Scott Magliochetti) have been meeting regularly on Saturday mornings, and they reported on their work: A hard look at our *committee structure* – and a recommendation that we *revitalize it* around the church's *mission statement*...with a *slight change in the mission statement*. Wendy presented a recommended lineup of "Task Teams" around the mission statement largely to replace the current list of "committees"; and Mike presented as a cost-saving / cost-sharing move both a plan to consolidate several committee functions, and a plan to coordinate several basic services (snow plowing and lawn care, to name two) with other area churches. Stay tuned for developments.

**New Leadership.** In anticipation of two of us completing our terms (elder and vice president Bob Bradsell, and deacon, clerk and pre-school board president Scott Magliochetti), we elected elder Wendy Herbert to the post of vice president of Consistory, effective with the term beginning July 1<sup>st</sup>.

***Our next regular meeting is Wednesday night, June 16<sup>th</sup>. Let us know how we're doing...and if you have questions, ask. Corner one of us over coffee – or call – or put a note in the collection box. We'll do our best to respond.***

# Financial News

Dave Cochran, Chair of Administration & Finance

Below is the summary budget for 2010-2011. The budget will be presented to the congregation at a congregational meeting on June 13th following the 10:00 AM service.

	<b>Budget 2008-9</b>	<b>Budget 2009-10</b>	<b>2009-2010 Actual 5/31/10</b>	<b>Budget 2010-11</b>
Benevolences	6,000	2,000	400	2,000
Church Life	1,500	1,000	1,597	1,500
Education	2,350	1,400	1,038	1,720
Finance	19,187	20,100	28,601	22,800
Communications	5,750	4,900	4,273	4,800
Payroll	137,951	138,355	118,602	139,155
Properties	66,210	66,410	47,126	47,550
RCA Expenses	8,636	7,800	4,052	8,532
Worship	4,000	4,100	3,969	3,575
Memorial Hall	38,949	41,919	33,558	38,273
760 Tentionstalling start up	500	500		0
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>291,033</b>	<b>288,484</b>	<b>243,216</b>	<b>269,905</b>
<b>Estimated Income</b>				
General Fund Income	146,000	130,000	104,416	110,000
Memorial Hall Income	10,200	20,000	17,450	18,000
BVS Income	100,000	48,000	4,000	0
Assessments	3,500	3,000	2,528	2,500
Tentionstalling Seed Reimb.	500	500	0	0
Thompson Communications	2,800	2,800	0	2,800
Naumann Fund for Landscaping	2,000	2,000	0	2,000
<b>Subtotal - Income</b>	<b>265,000</b>	<b>206,300</b>	<b>128,394</b>	<b>135,300</b>
Transfer from Investments	26,233	82,184	114,452	134,605
<b>TOTAL INCOME*</b>	<b>291,233</b>	<b>288,484</b>	<b>242,846</b>	<b>269,905</b>

\* Income does not include designated (in/out) funds.



# Blawenburg Village School

PO Box 153, Blawenburg, NJ 08504

609-466-6600

blawenburgvillageschool@yahoo.com

Karen Hill, Director

On Tuesday, June 15<sup>th</sup> the following students will be graduating from BVS.

## **BLOSSOMS:**

Olivia Barrood  
Jackson Brennan  
Steven Daniels  
Ava D'Alessandro  
Paige Gallagher  
Cole Hurlbert  
Declan Kyler  
Coco Lainez  
Grace McAnear  
Rachel Merkel  
Paige Morrison  
Ava Vecchione

## **BERRY PATCH:**

Scott Anderson  
Ashton Basak  
Carina Davis  
Devon Leonard  
Melinda Matticoli  
Daniel Owen  
Hannah Park  
Alexis Samano  
Georgia Wess

We congratulate them on their many accomplishments!!

Summer Camp is scheduled for July 6<sup>th</sup> - August 13<sup>th</sup> from 9:00am-1:00pm, for children ages 3-6. Join us for one or all of the following:

Hooray for the USA: *Come celebrate America!*

The Great Summer Luau: *Get out your grass skirt and do the hula!*

Jammin' in the Jungle: *Come on a safari and meet some wild animals!*

Exploring Nature: *Let's spend a week with nature and see what cool things we can find!*

Wild, Wild, West: *Join us at the BVS Corral as we turn into cowboys and cowgirls!*

Ocean Adventures: *Discover the many treasures of the ocean!*

Call the school office at 609-466-6600 if you're interested in summer camp or enrollment for the 2010-2011 school year.

## Outreach Lunch Menus

June 2010

By Nancy Curtis

Every Tuesday, from 11:30 to 1:00, we serve lunch in Cook Hall. Lunch is served buffet style and a free-will donation is accepted (anonymously). This lunch has become a great outreach to the community. We average 25 people but occasionally have 40. I can always use extra help either during the morning hours setting up the dining room or later for kitchen clean-up. (Perk of helping—leftovers!)

June 1

Mushroom Soup, Chef Salad,  
Pulled pork sandwiches, dessert

June 8

Chicken Noodle Soup, Pizza,  
Baked Ziti with Chicken Parm, dessert

June 15

Broccoli cheddar Soup, Cheese steaks,  
Quiche with Salad, Nancy's Birthday Cake

June 22

Vegetable Soup, Egg Salad,  
Baked Potatoes with Toppings, dessert

June 29

Tortellini Soup, Sandwiches  
Chicken macaroni & Cheese, dessert

### **Bone Marrow Screening Drive**

June 5, 2010 from 9 AM to 1 PM

Cook Hall Basement

In Honor of Wyatt Geisel—Sponsored by Sue Weingart  
(Thankfully Wyatt does not need a bone marrow transplant)

An event to screen with a simple swab inside  
your mouth to be a bone marrow donor.  
Please come out and help the cause and bring your friends!!!

## **Croatia Update - Tunnel light in sight as school year nears end**

*By Nancy Titus*

The big push is on. Everywhere I look these days, talk around the seminary turns to the number of pages being written or the books yet to be read before the semester ends in mid-June. Students are flummoxed and a bit bleary-eyed as one big deadline after another rolls around relentlessly.

It is always so near the end of the school year, and professors like myself are not immune to the building pressure. We work to fit in all the material not yet covered in the number of class hours left while also preparing final exams and trying not to break students in the process.

This pattern fits for students and teachers everywhere. It is as much a part of the ebb and flow of school life as September and its vibrant newness is. I love September when you get the chance to start again. But late spring is tough. It is hard work and sleepless nights and requires boring ole discipline to finish what was started with such enthusiasm only months ago. Beautiful weather that puts joy into the steps also comes like a siren to beckon the wayward student to dashing himself against the rocks of procrastination. Then too late, he realizes there isn't enough time left to finish the task before him. I've seen it over and over again and have had the unfortunate task of telling students they have not earned enough English credits.

It has been so every May that we have been in Croatia, but this year the pressure is particularly acute as the stakes are higher for our family. Eric, who has been a student himself these four years, is facing the big deadline. This time, he is not just writing a 30-page paper for an area of concentration as has been the case in years past, but is finishing his dissertation, a paper that will be 250-plus pages and cover the material that he has spent months, even years, researching.

By the time many of you read this, he will have already sent it off to his doctoral mentor, and he will be turning his attention to the next big thing on his agenda: a conference for the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, where he will serve as the representative for the Reformed Christian Church in Croatia.

I guess you could call the conference details the light at the end of his dissertation writing tunnel. However, from the vantage point of the writing of this column, it is something we can scarcely think about now, with still two weeks to go in May. Except, of course, we have to think about it as airline tickets must be purchased, another deadline letting us know time is marching on – whether our agenda gets done or not.

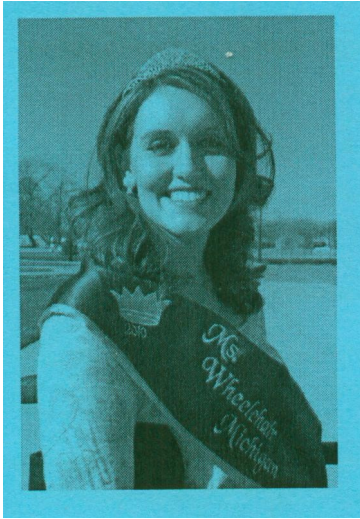
So, as I feel the pressure for myself, my students, and even more for Eric, I realize anew that school days are life in concentrated form. Yes, thankfully, all of life is not filled with literal exams and research papers, but exams of all sorts we will continue to have as long as we live. We will have times of intensity when the storms of life threaten to beat us down. We will feel the sting of the wind and have reason to question if we can keep going.

Life with God is about just that: continuing to go, walking with Him, in the midst of such stormy periods. No matter where we are we can look up and rejoice in the beauty He has given us, and when the going gets rough we can cling to the strength of His hand. And we can look around and appreciate the people He has put on the path with us and the very real shelter that is the church.

We thank you, our partners, for your prayers for us through this period of intensity. We thank you for praying for Eric as he writes his dissertation and continued prayer during the preparation of his defense, which will be in September.

We thank you for your prayers for the Evangelical Theological Seminary, especially during this special time of fasting as we as a community seek God for what He wants to do through us for the glory of His name in this region.

Eric and Nancy Titus are RCA missionaries in Osijek, Croatia, where they work at the Evangelical Theological Seminary and with the Reformed Christian Church in Croatia. They have three children: Samuel, 15, Valerie, 12, and Penny, 10.



**Emily Blauw**  
**Ms. Wheelchair Michigan 2010**

Emily Blauw, the daughter of former Blawenburg Reformed Church Pastor, David Blauw and Barbara Blauw, has done amazing things since the horrible car accident that left her a quadriplegic in 2001 when she was just 16. She graduated from West Ottawa High School (2002), Hope College (2006), and Western Michigan University (2009) with a Master of Arts in Speech Language Pathology. She works as a speech pathologist with pediatric and stroke patients at Mary Free Bed Hospital in Grand Rapids, MI – the same hospital where she spent four and a half months in rehabilitation.

Emily recently won the Ms. Wheelchair Michigan 2010, and she will compete for the national title of Ms. Wheelchair 2011 in Grand Rapids, MI from August 9-15. Her platform is Empowering Children with Disabilities. According to the literature supporting her, Emily “will be a spokeswoman throughout Michigan where she can combine awareness, acceptance, and understanding of disabilities to the general public.”

Health Partners Homecare nominated Emily for the award because of her spirit and determination in spite of her disability. She has overcome many barriers, and she is eager to help others do the same. Emily’s own words demonstrate her spirit. “I have accomplished a lot, but have been far more blessed by many opportunities and the surrounding of good people brought into my life.”

We have prayed for Emily many times in our church and it is wonderful to see what she has accomplished. Her progress is a great example of God’s grace. She is using her abilities to help others despite her disability. There is a message in her progress for all of us.

If you would like to donate to Emily’s campaign, please send your contribution to: Ms. Wheelchair Michigan, Inc., 990 Woodpointe Dr., Byron Center, MI 49315. If you would like to send Emily a message of support, you can do so at: [emily.blauw@gmail.com](mailto:emily.blauw@gmail.com). OR, a donation can be made to Blawenburg Reformed Church, memo Emily, and we will write one check to the Wheelchair Michigan organization.

# You Never Know

(a short story by Pastor Rich)

He eyed the metal cylinder with malevolent glee, the final piece in a years long puzzle nearing completion. The others also stared, some with looks of awe, others with laughter.

Moments before, the cautious Procurer had backed his windowless van into the cave, having called ahead that this was not another false alarm. He had, at last, secured their payload.

Hundreds of feet of stone in all directions would prevent detection from all forms of electronic snooping either on the ground or in the air. While this bought them time, they saw no reason to waste any.

The project leader summoned the Doctor to begin Stage Five in the bomb's assembly. Immediately, four technicians clad from head to toe in shiny metallic suits gathered around the cylinder, lifted it gently and carried it toward its future and final housing, an obsolete yet operational detonation unit on wobbly wheels. Within minutes they inserted the plutonium, sealed the chamber around it and activated the timing mechanism. At the leader's command the countdown would begin.

The four techs, one of them being the Doctor removed their headgear to breathe the refreshing cavern air.

"All else is in place?" the Doctor asked.

The Leader nodded with a smile, "Yes, my friend. In minutes our plan will proceed without delay. The Procurer will transport our gift from above to the secret cove where a small motor boat will ferry it out to the yacht. From there the yacht will sail to within five nautical miles of the city's border. We will then lower the speed boat with our payload aboard, initiate the timing sequence and send our hero to his glory.

"You see no possibility of failure?" the Doctor demanded.

"We've run through this procedure twenty times without any official interference. The only minor uncertainty is the speed boat. It will assuredly attract attention via radar. The Coast Guard will respond immediately, but the hero will deposit our Angel of Death well within the most potent blast radius long before their officers can intercept him."

"And the projections?"

"At least two million dead, another five million injured, perhaps ten million more contaminated."

"Excellent!" the Doctor exclaimed.

"God is great!" the Leader proclaimed.

At that moment the ground began to shake. Electrical wires tacked to the stone walls split and showered them with a cascade of sparks. A boulder crashed onto the van's roof, then another, and another. Finally, the entire cave collapsed, burying them all, the bomb and its payload under half a million tons of rock.

Someday, perhaps, archaeologists centuries in the future would find their remains and speculate as to their origins and purpose.

On this day, however, the attention of the world focused on nearby towns and villages decimated by the quake, untold thousands of men, women and children buried under rubble.

And a cry went up from voices the world over too many to number, "What kind of God would do something like this?"

- The End -

# **The Blawenburg Beacon**

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Dated Material

*The Blawenburg Reformed Church is a covenant community of God's people united in Christ through the Holy Spirit. We commit our gifts to worship, hospitality, life-long learning, serving those in need, and proclaiming the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ.*