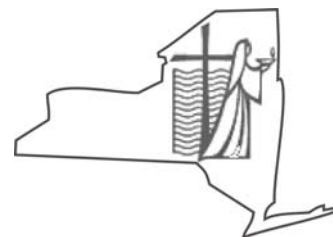




Special points of interest:

- 2010-2011 Special Project - see page 5
- Dates Coming Up in 2011 - see page 2
- Convention Information - see page 2



Winter 2011

Volume 33, Issue 2

A WITNESS

A publication for and by American Baptist Women's Ministries of New York State

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Get Ready!

President: Audrey Davidson

Email: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

The winter months have been especially challenging all over the world. Usually people living in the south ask, "How can you stand all the snow and cold weather?" Needless to say, they did not have to ask that question this winter, because it was reported that all 50 states had snow, including Florida and Hawaii.

Although winter is not over, we can say God has truly blessed us, and we can continue to pray and envision the sweet smells of spring blossoms and all the beautiful green grass and trees.

Are you ready? If you are not ready, **GET READY! GET READY! GET READY** for the 2011 New York State AB Women's Ministries Conference to be held in Auburn, New York, April 29-May 1. We will embark on the new National ABWM theme: "In the Potters Hands,"

Jeremiah 18:1-6, and Psalms 138:8. We anticipate amazing and enriching experiences as our Keynote speaker Rev. Karen Selig, our Bible Study Leader Rev. Dr. Trinetta V. McCray, and our Missionary Speaker Rev. Dr. Christine Roush lead us through the

growth and challenges of God shaping and remolding our lives and empowering us to dwell deeper in examining ourselves and our relationship with Him.

Don't forget! we also have many interesting workshops for you to choose from, so get your registration forms in early so you can get into the workshop of your choice.

My prayer and hope is that each person in attendance will experience deeper aspirations as we continue our goals of connecting women of God, serving God's people.

In Christ, *Audrey*

2011 Convention

Convention Co-Chairs: Carol Seidel and Laura Palada, Coordinator. Of Personal Development
 Email: [REDACTED] Phone: [REDACTED]
 (please put ABW in the subject line)

It's time to get carried away! Where do you ask? Convention is in Auburn of course!

April 29th through May 1st. Promises to be totally amazing! Keynote Pastor Karen Selig

Bible Study Leader Rev. Dr. Trinette Mc Cray and Rev Dr. Chris Roush- Missionary oh my gosh! Let

yourself be remolded with "In The Potter's Hands"

We have a tour available to the home of Harriett Tubman (underground railroad) this will take place between the last workshop on Saturday and our banquet. Sign up for the tour when you register so you will not miss it.

You should have your packet by

now but if you don't you can download the information at www.abwm-nys.org, our web site for American Baptist Women's Ministries of NYS! Please join us.

Co Chairs,
 Laura Palada
 Carol Seidel

Dates to Remember (all dates are for 2011)

- March 1 Scholarship Applications due
- March 15 Funds to Association Treasurer's (see page 5 for Barbara's article explaining more)
- March 30 Funds due to State Treasurer (see page 5 for Barbara's article explaining more)
- April 2 Registrations due for Annual Convention
- April 21 - May 6 2011 Mission Encounter to Africa **
- April 29-May 1 AB Women's Ministries of NYS 2011 Convention in Auburn, NY
- June 3-4 Western Area Conference, at Houghton College with Pat Robinson as Pastor
- June 10-11 Central Area Conference Retreat at Delta Lake Conference Center, Rome, NY
- June 24-26 ABC Biennial Meeting in San Juan, PR
- July 16-22 2011 National Women's Conference in Green Lake, WI **
- July 16-22 2011 National Gathering for Girls in Green Lake, WI **
- September 18 AB Women's Ministries Sunday
- September 30 Deadline for information to Betty for Fall Directory (see page 4 for her report!)



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Editor: Rebecca Walters
 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]

Address Changes/New Subscriptions: Cherie Baker
 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]

Personal Development

Coordinator of Personal Development: Laura Palada

Email: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

As I write this, we are in the midst of cold and snow! I don't know about you, but this time of year makes me want to hole up inside in my pajamas with a good book.

It's easy to get the "winter blues" when we don't see the sun for days and it is so cold that your nostrils freeze. The snow is dirty and makes a mess. The trees are barren. Sometimes my soul feels barren too.

But even in February, when fresh snow falls and decorates snow branches, the beauty of it can grab your senses. And when sunshine creates glistening snow diamonds, your spirits lift, and you might even find yourself smiling.

Of course, you could miss the beauty if you are concentrating on how cold it is or how long the winter is lasting.

The days of our lives flow in cycles like the seasons. Circumstances can sometimes weigh us down like the dreary snow banks that seemingly never melt.

When something new, fresh, and beautiful happens, we may feel as glistening as the white sun-stroked snow. Or we might not even notice because our thoughts are filled with troubles and struggles.

We all live with the ups and downs, the good and bad, and the blessings and struggles of life.

If we focus on the difficulties and the problems, we may not even

realize the blessings and the opportunities that we encounter.

But if we are focusing on Jesus and looking at the challenges as opportunities for spiritual growth, we'll find sparkles and spiritual riches, even when the worst of life's snowdrifts come our way.

Hebrews 12:2 "...looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." (NKJ)

I have been reading a beautiful devotional book recently entitled "Winter: A Spiritual Biography of the Season" by Gary Schmidt and Susan Phelps.

I quote you the words on the back cover: "For many, winter is a time of postponed activity - and of shoveling snow, navigating ice, and trying to keep warm.

"What can easily be forgotten in winter's cold and occasional dreariness is that it can also be a time of shoring up, of purity, praise, delight, and play.

"In thirty stirring pieces - from translated Sanskrit and Hebrew poems to the writings of Henry David Thoreau, Jane Kenyon, John Updike, Kathleen Norris, and Annie Dillard - we share in the recognition of winter's hardships and celebrate the glory of winter as a spiritual gift - a quiet time in the rhythm of life, a time of

thoughtfulness, and of unexpected hope."

It has been a good read and one you might enjoy as well.

I am so looking forward to our Convention Gathering in Auburn this April.

I hope that you are making plans to join us for what promises to be an uplifting and wonderful time!

And just think..... by then the snow will be gone (please, God) and the flowers and trees will be beginning to be beautiful and green again. I'll see you there.

Laura

Secretary

Secretary: Betty Adkins

Email: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Greetings to each of you, my fellow secretaries, I hope each one is having a healthy winter.

Today is beautiful; cold, but very sunny and cheer-filling. I have not had a very busy winter, not many outings, (which is good, considering the amount of snow we have!) my local ABW group doesn't meet in January and February and other meetings have been postponed or cancelled...so I've had time to quilt and read. Now I'm getting into some painting.

However the sunshine makes me think ahead to Spring, and the

change in schedule it will bring. And not far into Spring is our Convention in Auburn.

I look forward to meeting many of you again. The fellowship of Convention is one of its high points! I will have a display at the Convention with (I hope) helpful and interesting information for you.

Also, there will be an envelope for each of you with the form to fill out with your new officers and return to me. Please be sure to pick up your envelope or have someone from your Association get

it for you if you cannot attend.

I hope you will be able to return your information promptly, especially this year as I have to be away part of October and have set a deadline of September 30th for completing the 2011-2012 Directories.

So until April, I wish you a healthy, contented rest of this winter and for all of us an early spring. For now I am out the door to see if I can still cross-country ski!

Blessings to all, In Christ's Love,
Betty

White Cross

White Cross Chair: Dolores Mikolon

Email: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

"He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ"

As you begin the New Year of 2011, we are already half way through our White Cross quotas of our partnership with our Missionaries.

As I was looking at my backlog of mail there were letters of thanks for our gifts of White Cross articles and how much they are appreciated.

I did get the report from Chris Marziale on how our State was doing towards the purchase plan, Kits for Dominican Republic, sewing materials for Philippines, along with Congo supplies and Gifts of

the Heart for Church World Service.

Assigned request for India/ Philippines/ Uganda -
\$29,800.00

Amount Received - \$12,168.12

% received - 41.43%

Still needed - \$17,631.88

Kits for the Dominican Republic -	\$ 110.00
Sewing for Philippines -	\$ 632.00
Congo Supplies -	\$ 95.00
Gifts of the Heart -	\$ 612.00

Please share this information with your churches.

Thank you again ladies for all you do.

Blessings, *Dee*



Mitendi Women's Center in the Democratic Republic of the Congo



Special Project Chair: Lorraine Brownell

Email: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Project 2010-2011

A Day of Victory!

Our project for 2010-2011 is the Mitendi Women's Center in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Our goal is \$16,000.

The women of CBCO (Baptist Community of Congo), are courageous women - they have met many obstacles but they did not give up. They trust that God will provide a way for them to refurbish Mitendi.

In an email from the Lowery's, our IM Missionaries there, we heard the following on Feb. 11:

"Something great happened today!!!

I just got home and I'm exhausted, but I don't care.

I can't wait to tell you all the good news!

Today, was a day of victory for the women of CBCO (Baptist Community of Congo), especially for Mitendi Women's Center!!!

After almost 2 years of fighting our latest legal battle over the property of Mitendi, we finally have in our hands multiple copies of all the official documents that prove that the land and all the buildings within the property boundaries do in fact belong to the women of CBCO!

I say "we" because I'm part of the staff, but I can claim no credit for this victory. All honor goes first to the Lord, and secondly to the 4 women, who tirelessly, and at

great personal sacrifice, went from government office to government office badgering the officials who finally did their jobs and enforced the law.

A few weeks ago, I asked Mama Koba, our women's president, if it would ever end. Her calm response was, "You'll see, we're stubborn women, and God is on our side. We are going to win." We laughed together about it, but she wasn't kidding.

I can't tell you how excited we are. It was like being there to witness David beating Goliath. We didn't have the weapons necessary to beat our enemy (in this case money), but God brought about the victory anyway.

This also means that the 3 small houses that were built illegally on our property also belong to us! As the document states, we have been threatened and in disputes over the Mitendi property going all the way back to 1999.

Having this paperwork means we can finally stop worrying about all of that and really focus our efforts on Mitendi's true purpose: providing training and education to young women at risk to prostitution so they can move on to a new life of hope!!!

Today is a great day, but not only for us. Many of you have stood with us in prayer, literally for years, over this issue. Today we share that victory with you!"

Our NYS ABWM project will

help the center provide computer training, teach English, teach sewing and other marketable skills as well as train and educate single mothers.

Mitendi will also minister to teenage girls who are prostitutes or who are victims of sexual violence.

The women of CBCO also want to start an orphanage to minister to children who are victims of the ongoing civil war and whose parents have died from AIDS.

These women have big dreams!

Let's meet our goal and go beyond as we help these women reach for all that God is planning in that place!

On their behalf we thank you so much for your prayers! Lorraine

Church & Community

Church & Community Chair: Ruth Wilder

Phone:

I received a letter from our new National Coordinator of Church and Community Ministries, Nancy Adkins.

She presented a challenging question. Can you give a 90 second elevator speech to someone who asked you to describe your women's ministry and "What draws you to it?"

Through our A.B. Women's Ministry we are both challenged and encouraged in the following three areas:

1. To grow spiritually in God's word and in fellowship with each other.
2. To get outside of ourselves so we can give and serve in missions
3. To love others as we love ourselves by going out beyond our church walls and bringing others into the Kingdom of God.

Loving our neighbor as ourselves as Christ has commanded us to do is not always an easy task, but I ask these two questions:

1. Is it satisfying to be where God wants you to be, to serve where God wants you to serve, to surrender to His purpose for your life?
2. Is it satisfying to be anywhere else but where He wants you to be?

What does this women's ministry mean to you?

Is it worth telling other women about it?

How passionate are you about the ministry that God has called you to serve?

Will others see that same passion in you?

There are so many women inside and outside our church walls who

want what we have. We must go out, find them and bring them in.

- Ruth

What is an Elevator Speech?

It takes approximately 90 seconds to go from one floor to another on an elevator.

If you had 90 seconds to respond to a question what would your answer be in that 90 seconds?

Scholarship

Scholarship Chair: Lecia Rodriguez

Email

Phone:

One of my favorite verses in the Bible is from Zephaniah 3:17, "...He will rejoice over you with gladness, He will quiet you with His love, He will rejoice over you with singing."

These words give us a picture of a Father in Heaven who takes a very personal interest in us.

Just imagine the Lord rejoicing over you with singing! Does that

not fill you with a sense of comfort? How about quieting us with His love? I think about all the harried moments in my day...God is just waiting to quiet me with His love. Anyone who knows me realizes what an effort it is to quiet me, and yet God is waiting (and able!) to do just that.

God has been bringing quite a

few changes in my life recently and as such, He has had to do a lot of "quieting" my heart. But more of that in a couple of paragraphs...

This is a crazy time of year for our scholarship girls. They are getting back to school from a few weeks of Christmas vacation, adjusting all over again to living

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

away from home, starting new classes, etc.

On top of that, those who still have some years before they graduate are thinking about next year.

The Scholarship Committee has been busy getting the new Scholarship forms and directions out to all the returning girls and making sure they remembered the deadline of MARCH 1st.

We also are making sure that new girls have all the information available to them. The deadline

for this year has already passed but for next year please know that the Scholarship form and directions are available to be downloaded from our website, www.abwm-nys.org. It is very important that the directions are downloaded as well so that all information is included with the application.

I have had to leave the Scholarship committee, however Ann Brooks has graciously taken over as chairman and is being assisted by Irene Ingram.

I am forever grateful to these ladies for stepping into the gap and

taking over for me. The Lord truly does provide! All applications should be mailed to Irene Ingram;

Her email is

Please continue to encourage your current and future scholarship girls and to support your Scholarship committee.

The next couple of months will be very busy for them both!

In Christ's love, *Lecia*

Dolls & Dollars

Love Gift Chairwoman: Denise Myers

Phone:

Email:



Scripture Psalm 22:22-31

Yesterday when I was at my daughter's home, I was looking at her doll collection.

On one of the shelves I recognized a doll that I had made 30 years ago. It was made to keep her company while she was in the hospital. It was made from scraps of material and yarn. She had placed it on the same shelf as her expensive ceramic dolls. It seemed to me that it was a bit out of place there. But my daughter thinks otherwise. She cherishes it as much as her other dolls. This doll is a lasting expression of love that continues to warm our hearts even today.

Love Gift dollars have been lasting expressions of our love since 1932.

During the Great Depression, when American Baptist Churches faced a half million dollar deficit, the Board of Missionary Cooperation devised a plan to raise money. They asked people to make financial contributions that were over and above their tithes and pledges.

In 1932 few women were employed outside the home. Nevertheless, the Committee on Conference challenged women of the denomination to raise \$150,000 to help meet the crisis.

The women enthusiastically received the challenge, and the concept of Love Gift was born.

Love Gift boxes and over-and-above approach to giving continues to hold a special place in the hearts of many American Baptist

women.

From the beginning, American Baptist women wanted their gifts of love to support the total mission of the denomination.

If one area suffers financial shortage, the other areas are also affected.

Love Gift dollars are part of the total mission of American Baptist Churches.

Please continue to support Love Gift at your Church and women's group. So continue your support and be creative in how you promote this worthwhile cause.

May God Bless Everyone and Love Gift, *Denise*

Mission & Service

Coordinator of Mission & Service Ministries: Lorraine Brownell

Phone: [REDACTED]

Email [REDACTED]

I pray that you all have had a good winter (a real old fashioned winter) and now we are ready to face a spring filled with the excitement of serving our Lord in innumerable ways.

I recently received an email from Chris Marziale, (International Ministries Consultant to AB Women's Ministries, White Cross & Special Interest Missionary Coordinator) which includes the following report. I figured this is the best news to share at this time.

Materials available:

- 2010-2011 Global Mission Study Guide - Mexico and Cuba. We have 1,300 still in stock.
- 2011 Mission Service Projects book is completed and ready to go to the printers. It should be available by the middle of February.
- 2011-2013 White Cross Magazine will be available by June at the Biennial and July for the National Women's Conference.
- 2011-2012 Global Mission Study Guide - South Africa will be available by the National Women's Conference in July. This will feature articles, Bible Study, Devotional from our partners, missionaries Anita and Rick Gutierrez and those

women who will be going on the Mission Encounter in April.

To order these materials please call Judson Press - 1-800-222-3872 ext 2038

AB GIRLS

The ABGIRLS are doing something special this year at National Conference and help is needed.

As many of you know ABGIRLS do a mission trip during the conference. This year it will be held on Tuesday and will go to the Milwaukee Christian Center.

On Wednesday they would like me to help put together mission stations, i.e. hands-on projects for overseas.

This is the first time a day will be given to International Ministries. I am really excited about the possibilities of what could happen.

That day will be Wednesday - July 20. It will be set up so that each group will go from one station (in one hour segments) to another doing projects. At the end of the day, when the ABGIRLS have the evening program, everything completed will be dedicated and ready for shipping.

Chris is asking each state to help provide supplies for one of the stations.

Her ideas include the following

ideas:

- Rolling bandages and make 4" x 4" cotton squares for Congo - These would be sent to New Windsor, MD
- Flannel Graph Bible stories - Costa Rica and South Africa - (My linda Baits - Costa Rica and Rick Gutierrez - South Africa)
- Teaching Aids for Children with Disabilities - Bolivia (Mario Morales)
- Making Puppets as teaching tools - Mexico (Patti and Tim Long)

All of these projects can be found in the Mission Service Projects Book.

We will keep you posted as to what our state would like to help supply and how we will collect those items.

God's blessings on each of you as you look for ways to expand His love to all.

Lorraine

Endowment Fund

Endowment Fund Coordinator: Gail Carlsen

Phone:

Envisioning ...for God's Purpose

Your gifts to the Endowment Fund Campaign will help ensure that vital ministries with women

and girls continue into the future.

- Resources
- Leadership Training
- National Events
- Use of emerging technologies that reach more women and girls
- Women's ministries that are relevant to the next generation
- Strong partnerships for greater mission outreach
- Envisioning and planning for the

future.

The suggested goal for New York State is \$10,000.00. Gail Carlsen is our coordinator for NYS. We are asking that gifts for this fund be sent to the National ABW Ministries office in Valley Forge.

Please let Gail know of your gift so it can be included in the totals for NYS.

Western Area Conference

Claudia Little

Email:

Phone:

June 3 & 4 Houghton College

Theme: "The Other 6 days"

We'll continue with our traditional "total mind, body and soul" approach to the issues of our daily lives - amidst the stress and crisis of our world when it's not Sunday and we're not on the mountain top.

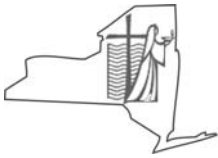
Join us for 24 hours of rejuvenation. Pat Robinson will be our leader as we explore some of the issues we face today.

A Note from the Editor on Article Submissions

Whenever space allows we would love to include articles on how your AB Women's Ministries Group, or just Women's Group are ministering to those around you. To see how you are making a difference in the lives of the community around you and how you are reaching the women you see every day.

Please feel free to send these to the Editor, Rebecca Walters, contact information is on page 2 or on the back page. If it is not included right away, look for it to be included at a later date.

Thanks so much for all of your hard work! With God's Blessings, *Rebecca*



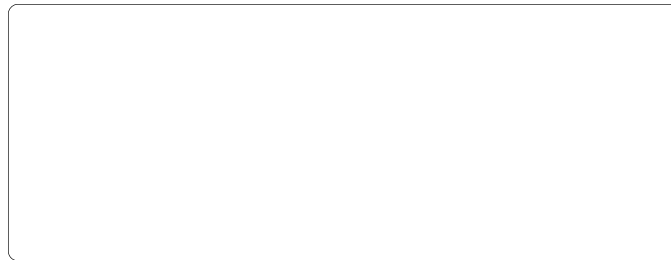
All women are invited to participate in American Baptist Women's Ministries. Each woman is encouraged to participate according to her own needs, interests and gifts as led by the Spirit of God.

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page 2. Thanks!



From the Editor

A Witness Editor: Rebecca Walters

Phone: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Spring is on it's way... even in New York. The days of freezing cold and snow are beginning to show signs of some warmth during the days even as the nights still require the blankets that we have become accustomed to these last few months.

As Spring and our Easter season approaches, let us try to renew our promise to God to prayerfully look for his purpose for our lives. For where he wants to lead us and what it is he wants us to be doing.

Sometimes it feels contrary to what we thought was right. Sometimes it takes us so far out of our comfort zone, we deny it. When in reality we later realize

that this denial only makes it more difficult on ourselves.

As we begin our process of moving from "Women Destined for God's Purpose" to our new theme that we will be introduced to at convention, April 29th-May 1st, in Auburn NY, I am praying for you to feel God's purpose and molding of your life in a way that reflects his love for you and for those that you touch every day and those you may only touch with his presence even just one time.

You never know what that one touch can do to a person. You will never know how many people you can touch with your experience of God in your life.

And sometimes it is those touches that you never realized even happened that later come back to help you during a bleak time.

Spring will come. And with it the sweet smell of flowers, longer times of light instead of darkness. And the rejuvenating experience of our annual convention.

Make sure you get your registrations in SOON! The deadline is April 2nd. Hope to see you there!

Becky

