

GRACE NOTES

News from and about Grace Christian Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan Volume 3 # 3 MARCH, 2011

THANK YOU MARY



Mary Van Harn has retired from five years of service on the Facilities Committee of Grace Church (for 3 of these years she served as chair). Mary didn't want a farewell banquet or any other public recognition of her service, but we Grace Church members need to know how much we owe her for her quiet, patient, and cheerful service to the mission of the church through her care of the facilities.

This building and these grounds belong to God, but we have to take care of them. They are our statement to the community about our love for God and our love for our neighbors here in the Southgate community. Mary led the committee in caring for this building and these grounds with attention to detail, with care for upkeep and maintenance, and with a desire that everything be clean and beautiful.

We open these facilities to church members and visitors every Sunday morning. During the week church programs such as GEMS (30 girls, 8 counselors) and Cadets (8 boys and 4 counselors) meet here too. Besides these groups, we offer hospitality once a month to the Southgate Block Club (5-10 members), to a group of 10 teenage boys from Wedgewood every day from 3-5, to about 50 neighborhood residents looking for food assistance every week, to 40 members of Narcotics Anonymous every morning between 11 and 12:30, and we recently added a "CHILL" group of teens on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday afternoons. All these groups find a clean, warm, and welcoming building. Kim Eggebeen, our custodian keeps busy washing, polishing, vacuuming, repairing, and straightening the place up. The Facilities Committee tries to make sure that she has what she needs, that major repairs get taken care of right away, and that trouble spots get attention. Mary participated in that work for 5 years, leading it for the last three.

Mary says that she enjoyed the Facilities Committee work. "This committee gets things done," she said. "And we have a good time at our meetings." The rest of the committee agrees, adding that Mary's good cheer is contagious. The committee plans to keep on maintaining and improving the Grace Church building. We welcome

new members or help from those with special interests. The grounds, for instance, need work. They were planned lovingly by Chuck Bouwsma, but need constant re-planning—to say nothing of weeding and planting. The Facilities Committee will schedule periodic work days, and we hope the congregation will see these work days as a way to take part in the Grace Church mission. We want to present a pleasant and welcoming testimony to our neighbors, and we thank Mary for her leadership.

Virginia LaGrand



Dear Grace Church family,

We pray that our Lord continues to bless each one of you. David, Anthony, and I are doing well. We wanted to give you a brief update on the latest happenings in Jubilee's ministry here in Tegucigalpa, Honduras. We're now in our fourth week of classes for the 2011 school year and are so thankful for a great start to the school year. Our first grade class, only a dream several months ago, is now in full gear with 33 students. We also continue with four sections of Pre-K & Kindergarten with 85 students. The last two months have been very busy, but it has been exciting to see how the Lord is putting all the pieces together to make Jubilee's expanding school a reality in La Era, a very needy neighborhood in Tegucigalpa.

Doña Teresa, a part time janitor at the church Cántico





Nuevo, "New Song," where the pastors have graciously let us use one of their classrooms for our first graders, told us how thankful she was when she heard we would be opening a first grade class in the church for

her daughter Ana Belen. However, she was disappointed we don't have a second grade class for her other daughter Michele. Michele goes to the public elementary school in the neighborhood. Doña Teresa explained to us that Michele is in a class with more than 50 classmates and only one teacher. She shared that she worries greatly for Michele because there is no discipline in the school and the older children pick on her, hit her and often steal her lunch. "Here in Jubilee's school," she stated, "I don't have to worry if Ana Belen is OK, or if other kids are beating her up. And she will be learning about God's word which is the most important thing."

We are so appreciative of your prayer and financial support that has made this school year a reality allowing Jubilee to impact the lives of 120 kids and their families! We are deeply thankful for Grace's commitment to sponsor one of our Pre-K/Kindergarten classrooms. In the next update we will send pictures and information about the specific classroom and teacher that you are supporting.

Urgent Prayer Support Needed:

Our Pre-K/Kindergarten teacher Gisela's 13 year old sister Maria is missing. She never came home from school on Monday, Feb 28. Her mother Eduviges, another one of our volunteers, is anxiously searching for her. Please join us in praying for Maria's safe and quick return. We continue to ask for your constant prayers for strength, comfort, protection, health, and provision for our teachers, for our students and their families, and for our family. Anthony continues to be struck by viral or bacterial infections almost once every month. Thank you for your prayers. They truly are our daily bread. Stay in Touch. You can always contact us at: emilyromero@jubileehn.org our website is www.jubileehn.org May the Lord bless you and keep you, Emily, David & Anthony Romero

If you have news items for Grace Notes, please pass it on to Chris and Greta Overvoorde. Call 616 956-7454 or email them at: overcalvin.edu. For previous issues of Grace Notes go the Church's website: www.gracegr.org

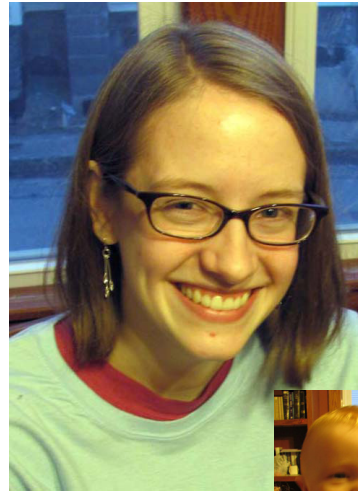


The GRACE House

Top left: Nicole Lenko is substitute teaching, and getting ready for her December wedding! She's also working on making penpal

relationships between kids here and in her home town in Pennsylvania. **Middle left: Jason Carrigan** is the new Youth For Christ staff person working with youth in urban Grand Rapids. He's Oliver's dad, and he and his family live in the Grace House and are building relationships with youth in Southgate. Jason also teaches Spanish part time in GRPS.

Middle right: Erin Carrigan is working to organize the Grace library, and being mom to Oliver and teaching Spanish part time. Grand Rapids is her favorite place to live (after Dominica!).



Bottom left: Mary Nasca is celebrating her second year in the Grace House. She's working with Cadets, and developing Dude and dudette friendships between Grace members and neighborhood kids."

Bottom right: Emily Derks is the newest member of the Grace House; she's a student at Calvin, and loves children and caring for babies. She is majoring in education and psychology."

