

MCA CONNECTION

MCA Speaks: The “MAN” Trip by Mark George

...

On Friday May 31st, thirteen men from MCA set out for a weekend “man trip” in the remote hills of West Virginia. We enjoyed a time of sitting around the fire, shooting guns, biking, playing cards, and of course, eating. The trip offered a wonderful opportunity to meet and become closer to the other men in the group as well as connect with God. It was a weekend filled with personal and spiritual growth.

The group consisted of men from many cross sections of the church including the young, less young, and young at heart. I believe this was one of the more beneficial aspects of the group as we were able to interact with individuals we might not otherwise come in contact with on a typical Sunday morning.

We departed from the church on Friday afternoon and arrived at the cabin early Friday evening. After unpacking, we ate dinner and sat around the fire talking for the remainder of the evening. It was wonderful being able to sit back and listen to some entertaining stories from the men in the group.

Saturday morning after breakfast, we had a devotional time. Steve prepared a series of passages for us to reflect on dealing with being a man after God’s heart. We then were given an opportunity to find a quiet place in the woods with our Bibles and have some one on one time with

God. There is something about being out in God’s creation alone with Him that is truly awesome.

After coming back together as a group, we discussed what the Lord had laid on our hearts.



Continued on page 3...



CONTENTS

Upcoming Events1
 Pastor’s Picks1
 MCA Speaks.....1
 Family Spotlight2
 Jeremy’s Jots3
 AREA514

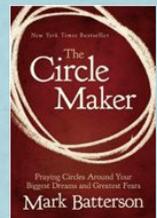
UPCOMING EVENTS

- JULY
 Area51 Bike Trip (8th)
 Walking Roots Band (10th)
 Red Cross (30th)
- AUGUST
 Church Picnic (11th)
 Worship Night (14th)
- SEPTEMBER
 Youth Fun Weekend (13th)
 Red Cross (24th)

PASTOR’S PICKS....

Looking for something to read?
 Check out Jeremy and Jeff’s top picks.

Blue Like Jazz The Circle Maker
 by Donald Miller by Mark Batterson



ABOUT US



Anniversary: Oct. 24th

Attending MCA Since:
1987

Live near: Berlin

Occupation: Jim - Truck Driver, Marlene - Provia.

Favorite Recipe: Roast Beef and Mashed Potatoes for Sunday Lunch

Favorite Activities: Camping, spending time with extended family and visiting their children.

Core Group: Homebuilder

The Schlabach Family

Jim and Marlene Schlabach live outside of Berlin and have attended MCA since it's origin in 1987. Through those years their family has grown and now extends throughout the United States. They have three daughters who live in Pennsylvania, Montana and Oklahoma. Take a look at a map and you will see that their family comes close to spreading from the east coast to the west coast.

Jim and Marlene met through church social activities while attending Fairlawn Mennonite Church and Sharon Mennonite

Church. They like to go camping and enjoy spending time with extended family. They also like to take road trips to visit their girls. Driving the open road is right down Jim's alley. He is a truck driver by trade and spends his days running a logging truck. Marlene works in Sugar creek at ProVia. She works in the "Storm Window Department".

The Schlabach family extends beyond Jim and Marlene at MCA. Several of Jim's brothers also attend. Lee, Dave and Steve Schlabach are all brothers to Jim. We won't tell you who the oldest is, but you might be able to get some good stories from this band of brothers.



Jim and Marlene

**Worship
Fun**

Food

2013 MCA Church Picnic

**Skyview
Ranch**



August 11th

MCA “Man” Trip continued...

After our devotional time, many of the men went to an open clearing to shoot clay pigeons. While I am definitely not one of them, MCA can be proud of the number of skilled marksman in our congregation. In the evening before dinner, a group went on a bike ride while others went hiking or played cards. After another fantastic meal, we again spent the evening sitting around the fire talking. Interestingly, most of the younger contingent was in bed by 10:00 while the elder statesmen stayed up talking well into the evening.

After breakfast Sunday morning, we had additional devotion time. During this period, I truly felt the presence of God as many of the men opened up and shared their thoughts and concerns with the group. It was an amazing time of fellowship and prayer. After cleaning up, we departed for Ohio.

While I had a great deal of fun and ate some amazing food during our trip, the two things I will take



As iron sharpens iron,
so one man sharpens
another.

Proverbs 27:17 (ESV)

away from the weekend are the relationships developed and the spiritual rejuvenation that took place. I believe that the other men on the trip would agree that the weekend was a success and that all of us came away closer to each other and more importantly to our Lord. The trip also reminded me how fortunate I am to be a part of a great family of believers at MCA.

JEREMY'S JOTS: TWITCHES

by Jeremy Miller

Sarah tells me that when I think really hard or am trying to focus intently on a situation, my body breaks free from its normally composed self. When the cat is out, the mice play. My face, in particular, is notorious for its rebellious escapades when my mind is fully occupied. The tongue might launch its self in one of many directions; hanging out the front or bulging in one of my cheeks. The jaw will often begin to shift listlessly to one side of my face then the other, inviting the teeth to begin chewing on the inside of my cheeks causing the lips to move like some salsa dancer. The forehead is able to create mountainous furrows as the eyes squint to the point of closure. All of these facial twitches create loads of enjoyment for my family.

I have come to accept these twitches. I can't do too much about them anyway. You see, those annoying little rascals accompany one of my few useful traits, pure focus. When the twitches play on the playground of my face, it is a sign that I have entered a zone of focus that is wonderfully productive.

I think everyone has a twitch or two. They are the odd little companions of our most helpful attributes, given to help us remember we are imperfect creatures. Wonderfully flexible people often have a twitch that keeps them from remembering anything. Wonderfully organized people sometimes have a twitch that keeps them from being able to respond to events they didn't predict. Children laugh and play, blissfully ignorant to the concerns of the world, while their twitch is....plain old ignorance.

The temptation for us is to focus on the twitches in others instead of the useful traits they accompany. "Boy, she's really good at making people feel welcomed, but...(twitch is described)." As we get to know people, their twitches become more apparent and we are forced to decide how to deal with these twitches. I would suggest that when possible, we get a good laugh about them and seek to help each other use the wonderful gifts those little twitches accompany. 1 Peter 4:8 tells us that Love covers over a multitude of sins." Perhaps Peter was also trying to say, "love covers a multitude of twitches."

Running On Empty...

by Jeff Polen

...

I was on my way to Little Eden Camp in Onekema, MI last week, cruising down the highway and listening to a very interesting audio book. As I was driving, I noticed my gas light turn on. Wow! I must have been driving for longer than I realized.

I quickly looked to see what kind of gas stations were available at the upcoming exit.

My gas cap says, "Ford recommends BP Gas", so BP is always my first choice. There was only a Pilot station at the upcoming exit, so I decided to drive on to the next.

As it turns out... there was no next exit.

I had forgotten that this particular stretch of highway has no gas exits.

I watched as my indicator light went from "50 miles to empty" to "40 miles to empty" to "35 miles to empty", and I'll admit that my heart rate started to increase somewhat.



Around "35 miles to empty" my prayer life picked up significantly. It's not so much that I am unable or unwilling to walk, but I really didn't want to...

At "15 miles to empty" I decided that air conditioning was no longer a necessity.

"10 miles to empty"... "5 miles to empty"... now I was getting nervous.

Lord, I will walk if I have to, and I know that this is my mistake, but would you please help me get to a gas station before I run out of gas?

At "0 miles to empty" I put my car into Neutral and coasted down a hill and into a gas station.

Ahh! Thank You, Lord!

I could breathe again. God is good.

Now, I'm not recommending that you try this exercise for yourself, but I will tell you that this little incident really set the tone for the rest of my trip to Michigan. I was able to enjoy sweet fellowship with the Lord in my little blue car, and in my little cozy cabin, and during the speaking sessions, and during the meal times, etc. It's not that He was more present -it's just that I was more aware of His presence. There is a certain peace that comes with knowing that God is with us, and God is for us -even when we clearly do not deserve it. So where are you at today? Are you running on empty? Have you turned to Jesus?

Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you (1 Peter 5:7, NLT).



To contribute an article for the next MCA Connection please contact Keith Tennefoss at ktennefoss@mcachurch.org