

Briefly

BUILDING WESTLEAF

THEOLOGY OF PEACE
Methodists United for Peace with Justice is sponsoring a Sept. 28-Oct. 1 National Conference on "Building a Wesleyan Theology of Peace for the 21st Century" in San Francisco. Leaders include Mubarak Awad, Arun Gandhi, James Lawson, and Bishops Kuehiger Minor (Germany), Sharon Rader, Beverly Shamana, Melvin Talbert, and C. Dale White.

The registration fee of \$200 includes nine meals, written materials, participation in all sessions, and a one-year membership in *Methodists United for Peace with Justice*. Any person under the age of 25 and all full-time students in United Methodist seminaries will receive a discounted registration fee of \$125. Students are invited to a pre-conference dialogue which will begin with dinner on Sept. 26 and end with lunch on Sept. 28. Registration for the pre-conference event is \$75. A limited number of travel scholarships are available. For information and to register, go to www.mmpwj.org/conference.htm or write to Temple UMC, 1111 Junipero Serra, San Francisco, CA 94132

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Denman Evangelism Awards go to Dickerson and Harrison

Roberta L. "Berta" Dickerson and the Rev. Hiram Harrison will be honored as the 2006 Denman Evangelism Award winners at the June 4-7 Memphis Annual Conference in Paducah, Kentucky.

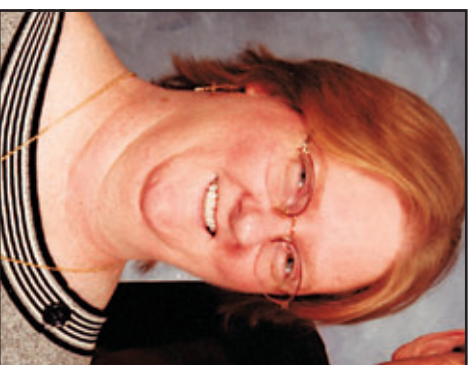
The Denman Evangelism Awards are in their 26th year. The awards are presented annually to a United Methodist lay and clergy person in each Annual Conference for outstanding work in Christian Evangelism. Over those 26 years, 1894 persons have been honored for their faithfulness in making disciples of Jesus Christ.

Roberta Dickerson

Berta Dickerson has the amazing ability to start conversations with strangers.

An automobile accident left the woman with the beautiful reddish gold hair confined to a wheelchair, but the physical challenge strengthened her faith instead of weakening it. She's quick to introduce her faith to others in a positive and heart-warming way, sharing the importance it plays in her life. Berta passes out over 100 copies of her testimony every year.

A member of Concord United Methodist Church where her husband, the Rev. Earl Dickerson is pastor, Berta is a teacher who

**Roberta "Berta" Dickerson**

has been co-leading a Women's Inspirational Study Experience weekly since June of 2004. She co-leads a college age Sunday School class, and led 40 Days of Purpose. She serves on the Concord UMC Evangelism Committee, co-chairs the Paducah District Committee on Witnessing, is a Certified Lay Speaker and has taught Basic Lay Speaking.

Those who know Berta, know that she is quick to point out that evangelism is best done by ambassadors and that it is relationally based and is the will of God for every Christian.

The fruit of Berta's efforts is seen in the increased number of people inviting others to her church.

When Berta nearly died in the

**Hiram Harrison**

accident that changed her life, she was a Licensed Practical Nurse. Since then, she has received her RN degree. And that beautiful red gold hair? Berta has three times worn it long and donated her locks to cancer patients.

The Rev. Hiram Harrison

The Rev. Hiram Harrison has served Medina United Methodist Church since 2002, during which time the church has seen its average worship attendance grow from 58 to 140. Additionally, he has brought thirteen people into Medina UMC by Profession of Faith and 71 by transfer of membership.

Hiram's commitment to Christ and his dedication to spreading the Good News has revived

Medina United Methodist Church. His stated goal is to "fill the church with people and fill the people with the spirit of God."

He has truly led the church in Medina into a new era of ministry and service. He has initiated an active visitation program which involves lay participation. He is actively training fairly, developing programs and ministries, and praying for both the present growth of the church in God's kingdom and for the future pastoral leadership that will continue to help "fill the church with people and the people with the spirit of God."

Those who nominated Hiram for the award said they can honestly say they have seen all the "Fruits of the Spirit" mentioned in Galatians in Hiram. "He strives to share with members and visitors to our church the joy and peace that comes from a life dedicated to serving our Savior."

"Hiram works very hard to help cultivate a unity of spirit in our church," the nomination continued. "He will be an exemplary recipient of the Denman Award because he lives the life of one committed to making disciples of Jesus Christ."

The Denman awards are made possible by The Foundation for Evangelism, which was founded in 1949 by Dr. Harry Denman, a distinguished lay evangelist. *

'The needy shall not always be forgotten'

By **MICHAEL BLAKE**
Executive Dir., Reelfoot Rural Min.

In Psalms 9:18, these words are recorded. "For the needy shall not always be forgotten: the expectation of the poor shall not perish forever."

In January, I received a phone call from Barbara in Lake County. The voice on the other end of the line was deeply concerned. I soon learned that Barbara and her father had only lived in the area for about a year, moving from one of the northern states. However, they had already befriended a sister and brother on the outskirts of town named Bill and Carolyn.

Barbara told me Bill had just died a week earlier and she was

worried about Carolyn's housing situation. The weather had turned cold and rainy and the Mississippi River shantytown's shack had deteriorated to the extent that Bill and Carolyn had been living on the enclosed front porch. Their only warmth came from a small heater in the 20 x 10 foot room, the walls were covered with plastic, tacked-up old coats and blankets. The house had neither running water nor a bathroom, and the short, four-plug electrical strip accommodated their little microwave, refrigerator, hot plate and TV. Hidden from public view by a matted thicket, it seemed they were forgotten.

Upon Bill's death, community churches discovered the need and paid the burial expenses for his

funeral. Left with inadequate financial means, few friends and nowhere to turn for help, grief-stricken Carolyn felt a sense of hopelessness.

Barbara heard of Reelfoot Rural Ministries, and in the phone conversation that cold January day, she asked if RRM could assist Carolyn in some way.

Barbara, our Community Service Manager, a local newspaper journalist and I met with Carolyn right away in her deteriorating home. Through Barbara's trusted relationship with her, Carolyn now lives in comfortable government housing. Reelfoot Rural Ministries provided furniture and various household items. The community completed what RRM did not have.

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Briefly

REPORTER NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE

Your conference newspaper, the Memphis Conference United Methodist Reporter, is available online in pdf format at www.memphis-umc.org. All issues of the Reporter are now available for viewing with the latest version of Adobe Reader. You may download Adobe Reader on the conference website. For tips on viewing the Reporter, click *Reporter*.

CAMP SCHOLARSHIP SUNDAY FOR KIDS WITH LOW INCOME

Lakeshore Assembly, Memphis Conference Summer Camp and Retreat Center, is asking local churches to take a communion offering on a Sunday designated by the church as Camp Scholarship Sunday. Every penny of the money collected will go to camp scholarship for children and youth from low income families. Bulletin inserts will have

been mailed to churches.

POSITION AVAILABLE

Part-time Choir Director, Calvert City UMC, Calvert City, Ky. The successful candidate will give 10-15 hours per week selecting music for the Sunday morning worship service, choosing anthems and developing a youth and children's choir. Send resume to: Calvert City UMC, Attn. Rev. **Ronnie Peck, P.O. Box 128, Calvert City, KY 42029**

Editor's note: Information for this story was provided by David Reed.

Waldon named Dyersburg D.S.

By **CATHY FARMER**

It was shocked and surprised to receive a call from Bishop Willis inviting me to serve on the cabinet," said the Rev. Stan Waldon, senior pastor of First United Methodist Church in Union City, Tenn.

"I am honored that Bishop Willis and my colleagues on the cabinet felt me worthy and capable of this assignment. I'll do my best to fulfill the responsibilities of the assignment with God being my guide."

Waldon, whose home church is Bandana United Methodist in Western Kentucky, has served in the Memphis Conference for 31 years. He began his ministry in 1975 after graduating from Lambuth University in '74. He graduated from Vanderbilt Divinity School in 1978. Over the ensuing years, Waldon

**The Rev. Stan Waldon**

has served churches in both Kentucky and Tennessee. Pleasant Grove in Marshall County, Ky.; as Associate Minister at Dickson First United Methodist in the Tennessee

Conference; the Clinton Circuit, First United Methodist in Gleason, Tenn.; St. Mark's UMC in the McKendree District, First United Methodist in Clinton, Ky.; First United Methodist in Brownsville, Tenn., and most recently, Union City First United Methodist Church.

In addition, Waldon participated in two pulpit exchanges to England—one to Chester and the other to London where he attended the British Methodist Annual Conference.

Over the years, Waldon has joined four volunteers in Mission teams—two to Indian reservations, one to Louisiana to help Katrina survivors recover, and one to help build an orphanage in Leon, Nicaragua.

He holds several conference positions: he's a member of the

Board of Ordained Ministry, serves on the Program Ministry team as Conference Chair of Stewardship, and has been Council on Ministries chair of both the Brownsville and Paducah Districts.

"I feel I know how to be a pastor of a local church," Waldon said. "However, I'm not sure I can fully know and appreciate at this time the ministry of the superintendent. I ask for the prayers of everyone."

Waldon, stressing the strong need of co-ministry between clergy and laity, added, "I'm looking forward to working with the laity and clergy of the Dyersburg District as we do 'Kingdom Building' together."

He's married to Marilyn McCarty Waldon, an Early Childhood Specialist Educator. They have one son, Eric Alan Waldon. *

500 men jam Archer's Chapel for annual Fish Fry

FROG JUMP, Tenn. — A little box wrapped in brown paper with warning stickers on the sides saying, "Do Not Disturb" and "Do Not Shake" started vibrating and bouncing all over the place as soon as Bishop Dick Willis set it down on the pulpit at Archer's Chapel United Methodist Church. The 500 men jamming the sanctuary for the annual Memphis Conference United Methodist Men's Fish Fry, could hear a small voice inside the box plaintively begging, "Excuse me, excuse me, will you let me out of here?"

"Will whatever is locked inside you ever get out?" Bishop Willis asked the men as they watched the little brown box bounce around.

"Or will we continue to be the Church of the Great Omission?" Willis went to Africa on a mission trip that transformed his life and his ministry. As he told the men, the "Owner's Manual" (the Bible) began to take on new meaning for him. When he returned to his Florida congregation, he started asking people in the church to accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. It made them angry. "Well, if you've accepted Jesus Christ, start proclaiming him to others; begin living out the Great Commission," Willis told his church members.

Many answered, "But my faith is a private matter!" "And as a result," Willis responded, "85% of the local churches in the United States are in decline. In this country, we have become a people and a church of the Great Omission, instead of a people and a church living out the Great Commission."

Fifty percent of the people in Tennessee are not in church, Willis said. "I challenge you, as men, to become a movement of the Holy Spirit in



Men poured into Archer's Chapel for the annual fish fry. Church buses crowded the parking lot. Pictured above are the men from Humboldt First.



(Right) Bishop Dick Willis.

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