



# Penn-Del Tips

The official newsletter of the American Baptist Men of Pennsylvania and Delaware

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## A Message From The Executive Vice President

The 58th Annual AMOPAD Men's Retreat was a great time of rest of refreshment—time spent in fellowship with our brothers in Christ. We live in a changing world—and we don't always fit into it. The values that Jesus taught never change in the lives of those who love him. It's always a joy to spend time in the company of men who love the Lord.

Thank you for taking the time to share your views on this year's retreat by sending in your retreat evaluation form. You can be sure that every comment—praise or criticism—will be taken seriously. We are already thinking of ways to make next year's retreat the best one yet. We want it to be a comfortable, intellectually stimulating and spiritually rewarding experience for everyone.

Because of issues on the Shippensburg campus, they cannot accommodate us during our usual weekend. The date for the 2013 retreat will be July 26-28. If you can register for next year's reunion by March 31, you can take advantage of 2012 retreat rates. A "Let it Ride" form is included with this mailing. Send it postmarked by March 31 **with a \$100 deposit** and we'll hold your place at this year's rate.

Your evaluation forms show that our common concern is how to get the support our retreat needs to continue year after year.

The workshops got great reviews. Someone suggested that there were too many workshops, making attendance

in each low. Someone else wanted workshops that encourage more sharing and personal testimonies.

We heard that the AV equipment that didn't work when it was needed, and the music amplifiers worked entirely too well. There were locked doors that should have been open. We could have communicated certain details with you more effectively; improved the signage and directions. We hear you and are taking steps to correct these issues.

Most agreed that the food was good and there was plenty of it. Someone suggested snack foods for Friday and Saturday night fellowship time. As Baptists, one thing we can agree on is that whenever we gather together, food is a good idea!

A prevailing concern is our organization's apparent inability to attract young men. The Board is equally concerned. We urge you to share your ideas with us. What can we do to encourage the boys and young men in your church to attend the retreat next year?

How do you think we can get the word out everyone? Do we need more advertising? What kind of vehicle do you suggest to reach the men in your church?

How can we improve our music ministry? Do you know a musician you would like to see at next year's reunion? Tell us about them and how we can contact them.

I am grateful to each of you for your support and prayers. I am already looking forward to next year's retreat. With God's help, let's make it the best one yet.

## Meet Kyle West—New Youth Director

I would like to thank the men of our region for electing me for the youth director position. Many thanks to Bob Sterling who served in this job for a number of years. I have big shoes to fill, but I think I am up to the job.

A little bit about me... I am a 26 year old *young* man currently living and working in Newark Delaware. I work for a small manufacturing company doing their IT and Graphic Arts support. I graduated from Rowan University in Glassboro NJ in 2008 with a degree in Radio/Television/Film production. I started my "American Baptist" life when I was 7 years old joining First Baptist Church in Bethlehem PA. I accepted Christ only 2 years

later and have grown a lot in my faith since then. I enjoyed being part of the youth group at FBC under the leadership of our now Region Youth Minister Eric Kraihanzel. In 2001 my family moved to Newark DE and I became a part of Calvary Baptist Church. After college, I got back involved at CBC where I now serve on the board of trustees and volunteer with the youth group. I also am active as a Boy Scout leader for a local troop. I hope I can use the skills I have learned though working with my own church youth group and my Boy Scout troop to serve the young men and boys of our region.

See "Youth" on page 2

## Youth (continued from page 1)

58<sup>th</sup> Annual Retreat Wrap Up.... I had a great time at the retreat this year and I hope you did too! We had a successful youth program with 9 young men participating and 3 volunteers helping out. Bob led 2 different short lessons that I think were meaningful for the group and we enjoyed playing organized games in the morning and free time in the afternoon. Laser pointers, bouncing balls, water balloons, and free pizza and ice-cream were some of the memorable items from the weekend.

Looking ahead to the 59<sup>th</sup> Annual Retreat... It's not too early to think about next summer's retreat! I am working on a few new and different ideas for the youth program next year combined with some old favorites. I want to point out that the retreat is not just for "old men". If you know of boys or young men in your church that would

benefit from the retreat experience please bring them along... they don't have to be your son or nephew, men of all ages are welcome. See you all July 26<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup>, 2013.

### Other Youth Events...

This past fall we had 2 great American Baptist youth events for boys (and girls too). Reunion East 2012 was held September 28-30<sup>th</sup> in Palmerton, PA and Reunion West was held November 9-11<sup>th</sup> in Ligonier, PA. These weekends were big successes with over 100 people attending. We had a "guys only" breakout session where questions were answered about what young men struggle with in this world.

Go to [www.abcopadym.org](http://www.abcopadym.org) for more info. Please feel free to contact me with comments or questions about the youth program. You can email me at [youth@abmopad.org](mailto:youth@abmopad.org).

## Kingdom Builders and Disaster Relief

Since the Retreat in August, our ministries have been very active.

Thanks to Bob Singley and his Kingdom Builders teams we have completed projects at the Central Baptist Church in Delaware and the First Baptist Church in Conshohocken, PA.

One of our future projects is to rehab a parsonage for Rev. Debbie Loessy in Northeast PA and to work on the booster call 56 project at Camp Ichthus.

The Disaster Ministry has been busy working on Sandy Storm damage in Bucks and Montgomery County. In January we started to work on clean up and rebuild in the Old Bridge and Union Beach, New Jersey area.

We are preparing additional trips to work on Sandy storm damage. If you or your church are interested in being part of a team, please contact Bob Singley or Bob Swan.

If you care to send donations for equipment please make your check payable to ABMOPAD Disaster Ministry and forward to

Robert H. Swan, Sr.  
21201 Ann's Choice Way  
Warminster, PA 18974

God Bless,

Bob Singley  
[Singley09@comcast.net](mailto:Singley09@comcast.net)

Bob Swan  
[Swantown@aol.com](mailto:Swantown@aol.com)

## Pastor Counselor's Corner

I believe it was Robert Burns who first said: "*The best-laid plans of mice and men often go awry.*" No matter how carefully a project is planned, something may still go wrong with it. Another way to think about this is that men make plans - God makes the future and we need to be *flexible* - because the things that thwart our efforts just might be the hand of God. So - men's conference 2012 - one plan after another just didn't seem to work out:

- Rev. Dr. Roy Medley Executive Minister of American Baptist Churches, USA was the scheduled speaker. The week of the conference - Roy was called to Florida - to be with his gravely ill mother. And so - he had to cancel his speaking engagement with us. Our prayers and thoughts were with Roy when we learned that his mother had died just prior to the conference.
- Devotions were planned for Saturday and Sunday morning at the theatre in the student union (CUB). Saturday - the door to the CUB was not open - so the group of men gathered on wet picnic tables in the outside court next to the building and held their devotions. It was easy to identify who attended = those with soggy bottoms!
- Sunday morning - the theatre was open - but the technology connection didn't work - despite the heroic efforts of Ed McQue. We persevered.
- The horseshoe tournament was scheduled, but one look at the pits (pardon the pun) and it was clear there were no stakes. That makes it tough to throw horseshoes! Jason West to the rescue - stakes purchased - tournament on - life is good.

So, in small ways - in very significant ways - people stepped up. You men were flexible, and the conference was a real success. Of course, I believe that God was a very real part of that entire process. God doesn't cause bad things to happen - but God certainly empowers His people to cope, overcome, move on and thrive. So - thanks to all of you for your understanding - to John Kofroth and all of the leaders for their hard work and thanks be to God.

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## Building For Our Youth

Our booster Call #56 has been selected to raise \$5,000 toward a building at Camp Ichthus. This camp is near Palmerton, PA. Many of the regions youth and adult programs are held there. The building (pictured here) is an existing shed that is to be converted to office space and a much-needed infirmary. To date, we have received approximately \$3,000.

Please take the time to send your gift. We encourage your men's and women's groups as well as your church to support this Booster Call. Make your gift payable to ABMOPAD, and put Booster Call on the memo line.

Mail to: Robert H. Swan, Sr., Booster Chairman  
21201 Ann's Choice Way  
Warminster, PA 18974



## Photos from the 58<sup>th</sup> Annual Retreat



These and many other pictures can be found in the ABCOPAD Photobucket at <http://s1137.photobucket.com/albums/n515/msmsmail/>

## From The Editor

I umpire girls fast pitch softball. The protective gear I wear includes a chest protector, shin/knee guards and a face mask. In order for it to work effectively, I have to have faith in their protection. If I duck out of the way, turn to the side or even flinch, I will more than likely miss the call. Faith in my protective gear helps me do my job correctly. But faith in my protective gear also keeps me from being injured. The face mask covers just that – my face. The chest protector wraps slightly to the sides, but not all the way around. The leg guards protect my shins and my knees. If I don't stay down and turn away, I am most likely going to get struck in an unprotected area. Direct shots in the chest, face mask or leg guards don't hurt and rarely leave a mark. Turn your body so the protection is not between you and the ball, though, and you're likely going to get a softball sized bruise. I have to train myself to have faith in the equipment. I've taken direct hits on it. I KNOW that it will do its job, but each time I go out there, I have to make a conscious decision to stay down and ready. As I call more games and get more practice, it becomes natural and I no longer need to think about trusting my protection, I simply trust it.

God is my spiritual protector. I turn to him and lean on him when I am under attack by Satan's forces. Just like I train myself to trust my gear, I need to train myself to trust my Lord. I KNOW that he protects me. Any time I've turned to him, He's given me the help I needed. He is not the one who is hurling attacks at me, He is the one who protects me and keeps me from spiritual harm. When Satan manages to get to me, it's because I didn't trust in my protection and turned away. I need to face them head on, just like when I call a game. And the more I trust in His protection, the more it becomes natural and when I get to the point where I no longer turn away from God, my life will be forever changed.

We are told in the scriptures over and over again that God is our strength, our shield and our protector. Put your trust in him. Don't flinch or turn away. Your spiritual safety depends on it.