

EVENTS & PEOPLE

Families in short-term missions grow and give

By **JEWEL SHOWALTER**
Eastern Mennonite Missions

SALUNGA, Pa. — For young adults, short-term missions and cross-cultural experiences have almost become an educational requirement and rite of passage. Educators and church leaders see and value the impact of these worldview-shaping experiences.

But what about short-term, cross-cultural experiences for families with dependent children? Different questions, concerns and obstacles arise.

But families can also experience profound learning and make valuable contributions in service.

Three families recently served on GO! assignments with Eastern Mennonite Missions.

■ Brad and Lici Roth, with Mateo and Elijah, ages 7 and 4, most recently from Warden, Wash., served for a year in Peru.

■ Andrew and LaRee Eby, with Eliana, 13, Caleb, 10, and Arizona, 10, from Portland, Ore., served for a year in Honduras.

■ Brian and Renita Denlinger, with Kira, 10, Kyle, 5, and Katie, 3, from Lancaster, served for

three and a half months in Peru.

All three families say one of the biggest obstacles to service was simply extricating themselves from work, school and home responsibilities. There were jobs to resign, houses to rent, favorite toys to stash, pets to consider.

They also had to face the challenge of raising the necessary finances to be free to serve.

“It has taken considerable time and expense,” LaRee Eby said. “We planned for years to pay off our mortgage before going to Honduras. But we feel so blessed to be here. At times I wonder who the real missionaries are, given the kindness and generosity of Hondurans.”

Brad Roth said it’s not cheap to live and minister overseas.

“We’ve had incredibly generous people come alongside and support us in this mission in Peru,” he said.

On the field, the Roth family said a highlight was traveling out to the rural communities where they shared life — even if just briefly — with brothers and sisters in Christ in remote areas. They were grateful for the op-

portunity to interact with and impact a young and growing church.

When Roth taught a class on Anabaptist history and theology, he saw the potential it had in shaping the Peruvian church. He saw the hunger for biblical and theological education.

The Denlingers acknowledged that not knowing the language made developing relationships with Peruvians difficult, but their expertise in teaching English at PROMESA met a need in the school. PROMESA is a bilingual Christian school owned and operated by the Peruvian Mennonite Church.

“We’ve been able to bless the school here, and we’ve been blessed,” Brian Denlinger said. “It’s also been wonderful to visit the churches and see their passion for Jesus. It’s awesome to worship the same God — only in a different place and language. Hopefully this experience, and our reflecting on it, will shape a passion for missions in our children’s lives.”

The Eby family loved the chance they’ve all had to interact with Honduran children — particularly through their work at *Casa Feliz*, a children’s home, and in *Los Laureles*, a community near the garbage dump in La

Ceiba. LaRee Eby hopes this experience is planting mission vision in the hearts of their children.

All three families were delighted to see their children have a Spanish-language immersion opportunity. The Roths already spoke Spanish at home, but it was fun to see their children “take off.”

Even though the Eby family found learning Spanish to be hard work, it has been a great experience they hope to build on. The children learned Spanish more quickly than the parents and sometimes even helped mom and dad.

Solar lights up classrooms and new learning opportunities at Pa. school

By **MELISSA L. BEIDLER**

EPHRATA, Pa. — Students at Hinkletown Mennonite School will look at the weather forecast in a whole new way this fall as they monitor the results of the sun’s energy in their own classroom.

Through new solar panels installed at the school, HMS will meet much of its energy needs through renewable sources while giving students opportunities to investigate creation care in real-life ways.

More than 460 solar panels have been installed on HMS roofs and will generate more than 75 percent of the school’s current electrical needs. Under the terms of the Power Purchase Agreement, Sun Energy LLC is placing the solar panels and will provide the electricity at a negotiated rate that is very favorable for long-term savings for the school, estimated at more than \$250,000 through the life of the panels.

The HMS board was pleased to take action on sustainable solar practices when the opportunity arose in late 2011.

“We are able to utilize the sun as a resource with unlimited supply. This releases some of the financial resources with which HMS is entrusted to be applied in areas of eternal significance — teaching children God’s unchanging truth,” said Keith Brubacher, HMS board member. “An added benefit is the on-premise learning labora-



Hinkletown Mennonite School

Dawson Mast and Josiah Snader explore solar energy and solar panels in the “Become a Solar Power Expert” special enrichment cluster held in the spring.

tory the solar energy system creates for students.”

In 2009, the pre-kindergarten through grade-eight school replaced modular units with six classrooms in a new school wing. Through energy-efficient insulation, heating, air conditioning and hot water systems for the new classrooms, and improvements in the existing building areas, HMS reduced its energy usage by more than 25 percent even as it added 10,000 square feet of facility space.

The electricity generated by the new solar panel system will be measured in real time via web-based tracking, making it

available in the classroom and on a lobby monitor. Students and teachers will use the information as part of their learning and see the results firsthand.

HMS students have already started taking advantage of the learning opportunities through “Becoming a Solar Power Expert” in the HMS school-wide Enrichment Cluster program held in the spring.

Led by Chris Byers of Advanced Solar Industries, and Kathy Stoltzfus, HMS principal, students built their own small vehicles and toys using small solar panels mimicking the large roof panels.

English teacher was happy to help others

■ **Everett Metzler, teacher and pastor, dies at 81**

Mennonite Mission Network

ELKHART, Ind. — Known for his wry sense of humor, ability to fix anything mechanical and humble approach to mission, Everett Metzler, 81, died July 26 at his home in Goshen.

Metzler and his wife, Margaret, taught English in China from 1985 to 1996

with China Educational Exchange, a predecessor agency to Mennonite Partners in China and a partner of Mennonite Mission Network. As the first long-term teachers at the agency, the Metzlers served as mentors to later teachers and were highly respected by both students and fellow mission workers.

“Mr. and Mrs. Metzler treated everybody kindly and equally,” one Chinese student is quoted as saying in a report. “We know that their affection for life stemmed from their belief that happiness is to help others. They always smiled patiently at the numerous questions and welcomed the visitors who came regardless of day or night. Their love and sincere friendship affected everyone around them and rekindled the same feeling in return.”

Friends and coworkers in China remember Metzler as a man of wisdom, humility and faith. Myrrl Byler, then-director of

China Educational Exchange, said Metzler had great respect for the Chinese people and culture, which came through in his work as a teacher and how he related to others.

“Everett was low-key in most things that he did. He easily shared his faith with others, but it was more just being around him that one would see and feel the depth of his love of God, the church and the people around him,” Byler said.

Metzler was born Oct. 31, 1930, in Ronks, Pa., to Isaac J. and Mae Metzler. After graduating from Eastern Mennonite College in 1955, he married Margaret Joann Glick in 1956.

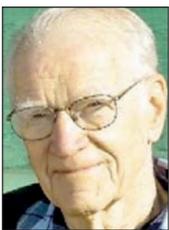
The Metzlers spent the next 12 years serving in Vietnam with Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions, followed by six years in Hong Kong. When they returned to the U.S., Metzler pastored at Park View Mennonite Church in Kokomo for 10 years.

After returning from China in 1996, Everett and Margaret retired to Goshen and became members of North Goshen Mennonite Church.

Metzler was known as a skilled handyman who could fix almost anything. He delighted in his many mechanical creations and helped with numerous repair projects at La Casa, Habitat for Humanity and the MMN offices over the years.

He is survived by his wife, Margaret; three sons, Malcolm, Eric and Andre; two daughters, Jennifer and Gretchen; five grandchildren; and siblings.

A memorial service will be held in Goshen within a few months.



Metzler

Yoder Heritage Day to take place Aug. 25

YODER, Kan. — The annual Yoder Heritage Day celebration will take place Aug. 25.

The day begins with an all-you-can-eat pancake and sausage feed at 6 a.m.

The hand-crafted market, bake sale and food booths open at 8 a.m.

The parade starts at 10:30 a.m., followed by buggy races and horse events at noon and the antique tractor pull, kid peddle tractor pull and quilt and craft auction at 1 p.m.

The quilt drawing will take place after the quilt auction, with tickets on sale that day.

Live music will be performed all day by various artists with a special evening performance by Steel Wheels.

The finale will be at dusk with a fireworks extravaganza. For a complete schedule of events visit yoderkansas.com.

Museum hosting talk on immigration

NORTH NEWTON, Kan. — Kauffman Museum at Bethel College will hold a Sunday-Af-

ternoon-at-the-Museum program in connection with the current exhibit, “Americans by Choice: The Story of Immigration and Citizenship in Kansas,” Sept. 2.

Caleb Lázaro, a resident director and multicultural student adviser at Bethel College, will present “From Pioneers to Space Invaders: The Changing Face of Immigration in Pop Culture” at 3:30 p.m.

Sept. 2 is also the last day to see “Americans by Choice.” The traveling exhibit will move next to the Eisenhower Presidential Museum and Library in Abilene. — *Bethel College*