



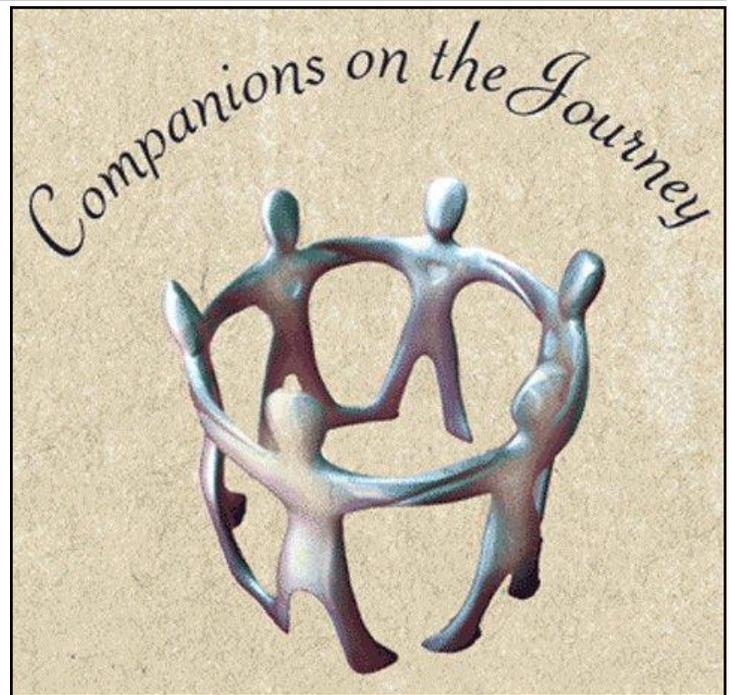
galanews

THE  LETTER

Serving members and friends of
Community of Christ

July 2013
Volume 24 Issue 3

GALA Retreat 2013



Retreat time is just around the corner and this year we are asking that you pay in advance of arriving at the campgrounds. Early registration is \$150 per person, children ages 5 – 12 \$75 and children under 5 are free. Early registration helps us plan with the campgrounds the number of people who will be attending so they can more accurately purchase food and clean specific areas for gathering as a group and for sleeping. So I urge you to please send in your registration form today with your payment.

We anticipate an awesome time with Becky Savage of the First Presidency as our guest minister sharing with us the progress on the new USA policy and how we can journey through this new territory with our church families across the country.

Get ready for GAY Bingo on Friday night as we all arrive at the campground and then on Saturday we will have our sharing circles and plenty of fun and

games and time to just sit and talk with each other and catch up on the latest news from all our friends.

Closing service will be on Monday morning so schedule flight times out of Ohio for late afternoon or evening to make sure you can stay for all the planned events. Cleveland airport is the closest to Temple Grove but you can always fly into Columbus or even Buffalo, NY and drive a little further.

Please don't forget to bring your own bedding as the campground does NOT provide anything but the room with a mattress on a twin bed frame and if you require private room please plan on paying \$175.

I am looking forward to a great turnout for this year's retreat and know that we will have a truly blessed time of renewal and celebration.

Sandra Merth, GALA President

GALA

Executive Board

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Nathan Phillips-Frey

NateP617@aol.com

Visit us on the web
at:

galaweb.org

President's Message

by Sandra Merth

In my daily life I find myself printing and cutting out short quotes that speak to me and then attaching them to the walls of my cube at work. It wasn't until one day a coworker pointed out one quote that especially touched her that I realized that I wasn't doing this just for me. In preparing for this year's retreat and in my search for a location for 2014, I went back through all the newsletters we have online, looking for where we have been, literally.

It was an interesting journey looking back while preparing for the future . . . when you have a minute check out our old newsletters which can be found on our website www.galaweb.org. There are also some great pictures of members we haven't seen in awhile and some who are gone that makes my heart ache for both.

I came across this quote from Grant McMurray printed in our Spring 2002 newsletter, that strikes me as a call to come together with our larger church families across the country, and be the true companions God is calling us to be:

"We have been on a long journey, this sometimes frail and occasionally despairing church of ours. We have traveled so far and seen so much. But now the journey brings us home to see what we need to do, who we need to be. Here, in the comfort and security of our spiritual home, we can look to the horizon and imagine where it is God would have us go." *Grant McMurray*

Eleven years later it would seem to some that our journey has come to an end with the decision by the USA National Conference for full inclusion and rights for all members.

I am praying that as many of you as possible will join us this year at Temple Grove for what will be the first GALA retreat since this decision and our time to celebrate the long road traveled by all.



If you make a purchase from Amazon, don't forget to go to the GALA website first, then click on the Amazon logo. GALA receives a percentage of all purchases this way. Here's a trick: Create a bookmark for Amazon and then go into the properties of the bookmark and change the address to the GALA website.



GALA Board Elections

by Cindy Campbell

The following are the candidates and positions with the calendar year terms which we are electing in the 2013 election. Ballots will be mailed by end of July and must be returned by Friday, August 16th.

Member-at-Large candidates will be the only names on the ballot since there are 2. The single candidates for the other offices will be elected by

affirmation at the Annual meeting Labor Day weekend.

See June 2013 issue of GALA Newsletter for complete bios.

Please remember that GALA members with annual dues paid are eligible to vote. If you have a question about your dues payment status, contact me at cicamp7@gmail.com. If you haven't paid your GALA dues for calendar 2013, please do so today!

President-elect (2014)

Clyde Phillips-Frey

This position will serve as President for the period 2015-2016 and as Past President in 2017.

Vice President (2014-2015)

Erin Cavanaugh

Undersecretary for Publications (2014-2015)

Gabe Horner

Member-at-Large (2014-2016)

Della Mowry

Jerry Dale

In Memorium

by Sandra Merth

MARGE DAMITZ

Marge was a long time GALA member and supporter who loved everyone unconditionally, including those she met at the annual retreats. When you met her you were drawn in by those bright eyes, awesome smile, striking white hair and her compassion for your own journey. It was impossible not to immediately love her back. She never really understood why everyone didn't accept the worth of ALL persons as she did but you would never guess her frustration. After 94 years she always knew how to roll with it with dignity and grace. Her beautiful spirit will be missed by all those who were touched by her kindnesses.

I first met her at the 2002 annual GALA retreat at Camp Bountiful in Ohio. By that time she was a regular at the retreats having gone for at least 6 years. I realized then that she lived in northern California and went to the same campground as me. Sure enough at the next women's retreat there she was with her daughters and granddaughters surrounding her. We had such a wonderful time touching base and becoming friends in spite of only seeing each other once or twice each year.

I found this statement of hers in a GALA newsletter from 1997:
"I looked forward with great anticipation to my second GALA International Retreat. I needed to meet with my new friends of last

year. What a joy it was to watch the volleyball games with the diversity of players and witness the joy and love you had for one another. A paradigm could be drawn here.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if all walks of life could be so.

Frankly, I considered not going to the campfire on Lake Huron. I was tired. However, I went and enjoyed so much the singing, words expressed, Lauren singing and Mark playing the instrument he had made. On the way back to camp I was walking alone, but I didn't feel alone. At the top of the stairs Alan Cochran just came out of the blue and took my hand. God's love touched me deeply through Alan's firm hand as we walked back to camp. When we least expect it we are abundantly blessed."

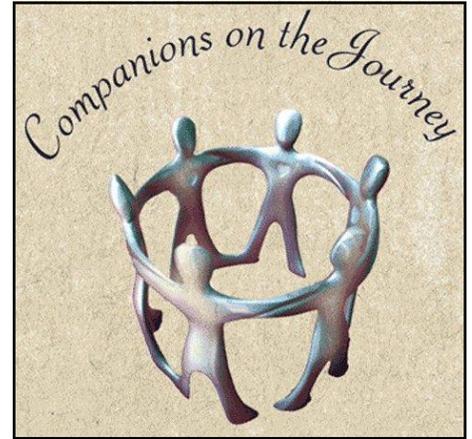
Truly we were greatly blessed by Marge's presence within our organization and will miss her dearly. Services will be held August 11 at 3:00 pm at the Sacramento, CA Community of Christ Congregation.





We are Companions on the Journey

GALA RETREAT 2013
REGISTRATION FORM
August 30-September 2
Temple Grove, 347 Hamburg Road
Transfer, PA 16154



Becky Savage, First Presidency, Guest Minister

Please complete this form and return it by August 17 so that we have an accurate count and can prepare for you. If you are unable to pay early, final payment is due at the beginning of the Retreat on August 30. Please plan to pay for auction items separately.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: (____) _____ E-mail: _____

Special Dietary Needs: _____

Medical/Special needs: _____

Fees: Early Registration (by August 17th) - \$150.00

Late Registration (after August 17th) - \$175.00

Children (5-12) - \$75.00 (under 5 free)

Private Room—\$175.00

(Limited sponsorships available; contact Sandra Merth at smarth_coc@yahoo.com)

Payment Enclosed: \$ _____

2 people per room; Roommate Preference: _____

Mail Registration to:

GALA RETREAT

P.O. Box 2173

Independence, MO 64055

Note: Temple Grove does not provide any bedding; only a bed and mattress.

For more information: Contact Chuck Hewitt, (816) 616-5883, galatreasurer@gmail.com



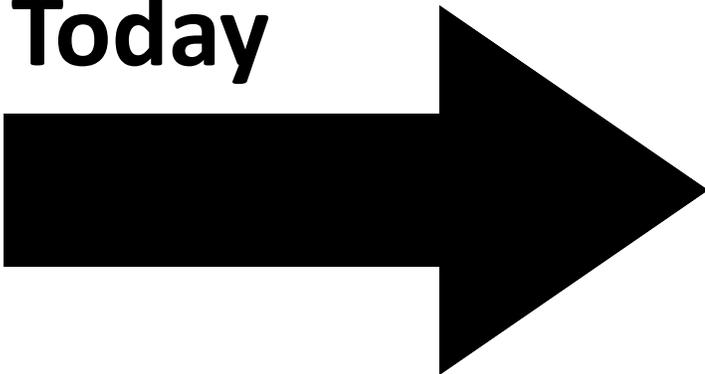
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P.O. Box 2173
Independence, MO 64055

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Join, or Renew Your Membership Today



2013 GALA Membership

Name(s): _____

E-mail: _____

YES; send me the newsletter by e-mail

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Membership Level (U.S. dollars):

Individual(\$25) Family(\$40)

Limited Income(\$10)

I would like to make an additional contribution to advance GALA's outreach and educational goals:

\$50 \$100 \$200 or \$ _____

Contributions to GALA are tax deductible.

Please return to: **P.O. Box 2173
Independence, MO 64055**