



# Leader's Digest

## Oasis: A Ladies Day Away

An oasis is defined as “a fertile area in an arid region.” At times life can become difficult and one’s spiritual life can become dry. In those times, it’s nice to find a place where a person can be encouraged and refreshed. Oasis: A Ladies Day Away seeks to do just that; to be a day of renewal, relaxation, and rejuvenation for women of all ages.

This year’s event is scheduled for Saturday, April 21, 2012 at Troy Christian Elementary School from 10:00 AM—2:00 PM. Jill Sovine, our keynote speaker and husband, Todd have been in ministry for over twenty years, serving within the Christian and Missionary Alliance in a variety of

settings. Currently, Todd serves as the Director of Church Planting for the CM&A, which allows Jill many opportunities to minister to women across the denomination, as well as outside groups.

Besides a keynote speaker, the day offers practical workshops for women, as well as vendors who will display the latest in kitchen and fashion accessories. Overall, the day is one of encouragement and fellowship.

The cost of Oasis is \$10 per person, which includes a lunch, and provides a wonderful opportunity for the women of your church to have a fun day away.

### Inside this issue:

<i>From Our District Superintendent</i>	2
<i>Camp Capital Campaign Update</i>	3
<i>Keeping the Faith</i>	3
<i>From Our Director of District Ministries</i>	4
<i>Coming Events</i>	5
<i>Kid’s Kamp Info</i>	5
<i>3DYC</i>	6



## Christian Ministries Conference: An Education of the Heart

The theme for this year’s Christian Ministries Conference is “An Education of the Heart.” Too often in our churches, we stuff a lot of Christian knowledge up in our brains, but not all of it gets pushed down to our hearts. This year’s conference will attempt to encourage ministry leaders to work toward developing well-balanced disciples in their churches.

CMC is scheduled for Saturday, February 25, 2012 at Troy

Christian High School in Troy, Ohio, from 9:30 AM—1:00 PM. With the cost being free, what a wonderful opportunity to provide quality training for the leaders of ministry in your local church.

Dr. Gary Wilber, Superintendent and Founder of Troy Christian Schools and Fort Wayne Bible College graduate, will be our keynote speaker for the day. The day will also provide several practical workshops led by top-  
*(Continued on page 6.)*

### Your District Team:

*Rev. Dale Leinbach, District Superintendent*  
Email: [dalel@ecdistrict.org](mailto:dalel@ecdistrict.org)

*Rev. Jeff Gerig, Director of District Ministries*  
Email: [jeffg@ecdistrict.org](mailto:jeffg@ecdistrict.org)

*Mrs. Jean Gerig, Secretary*  
Email: [jeang@ecdistrict.org](mailto:jeang@ecdistrict.org)

*Mrs. Wendy Dyke, Financial Secretary*  
Email: [wendyd@ecdistrict.org](mailto:wendyd@ecdistrict.org)

*District Office Information:*  
Phone: (937) 339-0015  
Fax: (937) 339-1924

*Website:*  
<http://www.ecdistrict.org>

## From Our District Superintendent



### Do You Love Me?

Probably the second most famous

time that phrase was uttered was by Tevye to his wife Golde in *Fiddler on the Roof*. It went something like this:

(Tevye) Golde I'm asking you a question... Do you love me?

(Golde) You're a fool.

(Tevye) I know... But do you love me?

(Golde) Do I love you? For

twenty-five years I've washed your clothes, cooked your meals, cleaned your house, given you children, milked the cow; after twenty-five years, why talk about love right now?

The first most remembered time that phrase was uttered was by Jesus in John 21. As you remember it was after the resurrection and he asked Peter "Do you love me?" You remember the interchange and almost every pastor has preached a message on this encounter. I have preached on it and I focused on the Greek words used by Jesus and Peter. Jesus asked if Peter loved with an *agapao*, a perfect, God-like love that would never fail. Peter answered that he loved with

*phileo*, a brotherly style love that just might fail from time to time.

The last time Jesus asks the question he uses the word Peter has used. It is as though Jesus wondered if Peter was going to promise perfection, something Peter had already shown was outside his ability to achieve. I believe Jesus used Peter's word to show he was willing to take what Peter could offer

and go on from there, regardless of the past mistakes, and Peter had more than a few.

But, Wayne Jacobsen in his book "He Loves Me" gave me another thought on this incident. Jacobsen says it

is incredible that Jesus asked the question at all. In Peter's life all the domestic gods of the people around him did not care about love; they demanded strict obedience. And if the 'worshipper' did not fully obey, they would pay for it. Obedience, not a relationship, was the object.

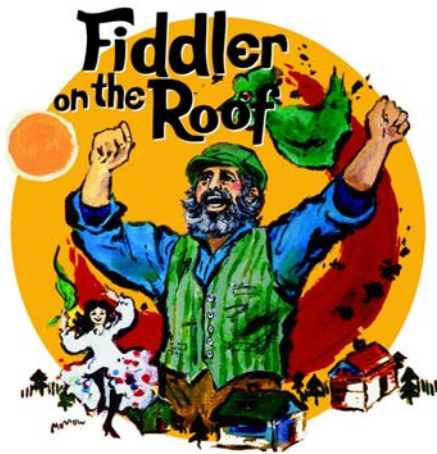
Even the God of the Old Testament seems to be more interested in obedience. Read the many passages that promise blessing if the people obeyed. And read the warnings to the people if they dared disobey. Why would Peter even consider that

Jesus/God had any interest in a relationship built on love?

Even consider the "Great Commandment" **Mark 12:29-31 (NIV)** <sup>29</sup>"The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. <sup>30</sup>Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' <sup>31</sup>The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these." This is a commandment, and no command can ever make love happen. My parents could command me to act in a loving manner toward my older (sometimes mean) brothers, but they could not command love.

It appears that Jesus is telling Peter (and us) that love is the key. He desires a loving relationship, not strict obedience to any OT law or even a NT teaching. He desires a relationship based on love that is not tied to Peter's past mistakes or indiscretions. For that Peter was overwhelmed and a bit confused. For that truth I too am overwhelmed and a bit confused.

Paul prayed a wonderful prayer in **Ephesians 3:16-19 (NIV)** <sup>16</sup>*I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, <sup>17</sup>so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through* (Continued on page 3.)



## One-Year Update on Camp Capital Campaign

It was about a year ago that the Camp Task Force kicked off its three-year "Forever Faithful" Capital Campaign in an effort to eliminate the debt incurred by the mandated installation of a new water and sewer system at Ludlow Falls Camp. The water and sewer project had its start in 2004 and cost over half a million dollars by the time it was completed in 2006.

Through the generosity of many people, that debt was reduced to approximately \$360,000 by the time the

Capital Campaign had its start. Since that time, \$138,768 has been pledged, with \$68,975 given to date, a total that represents 49.7% of monies pledged.

At present, the debt sits at \$314,000, with another \$20,000 waiting to be placed on the debt and approximately still another \$70,000 to be received. A wonderful goal to shoot for by



the end of 2012 would be to see the debt reduced to under \$200,000. That would be very attainable if several new givers would join in the campaign and pledge support to the camp. There are still two years left and every dollar goes toward the elimination of the debt. Pledge envelopes may be obtained on request by contacting the district office.

God certainly has been faithful to Ludlow Falls Camp, blessing its ministry over the years, bringing hundreds of lost souls into his kingdom.

## Keeping the Faith: A Way to Help Safeguard Your Faith

This year's Keeping the Faith event is scheduled for March 2-4, 2012 at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Blue Ash, Ohio. The purpose of this event is to challenge high school teens (grades 9-12) to own and safeguard their faith in Christ. Dr. Jeff Kephart will be this year's KTF speaker, helping teens to get started with developing a Christian systematic belief system that will give them the

spiritual support necessary once they start out on their own.

Several workshops are also scheduled which will help give teens a glimpse of where the decisions they make in life may ultimately take them.

The deadline for registering has been extended to Monday, February 13, 2012. Please encourage the teens of your

church to attend. The cost is \$85 per person if there are four to a room. For more information, please visit our district website, [www.ecdistrict.org](http://www.ecdistrict.org) and find Keeping the Faith under Upcoming Events.



## Do You Love Me? *Continued from page 2*

*faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, <sup>18</sup>may have power, together with all the saints, **to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, <sup>19</sup>and to***

**know this love that surpasses knowledge--that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.**

That is my prayer for myself,

and for each person in the ECD. May we know the God who desires to be loved and may we understand and live in His love today. AND may we be quick to talk of God's love to others.

# From Our Director of District Ministries



## Whose Guarding the Gate?

The Great Wall of China is a 3,948 mile long man-made wall

[actually a series of walls] spanning nine provinces, built by three dynasties, the Qin, Han and Ming, to help delineate boundaries and keep out the invading Mongol barbarians from the north. "Like a dragon, the Great Wall of China winds its way across grassland, deserts, and mountains." The first section of the wall was constructed by Qin Shi Huang, the first emperor of China, who lived between 259-210 BC. Wow, the Great Wall existed even before Jesus walked the earth!

What a massive undertaking, but did it really work? Did it serve it's intended purpose, to keep out invading armies from the north? The answer to that question is "Well, sort of."

Jean and I have had the privilege of visiting the Great Wall twice, the second time with Jenna. I still remember climbing to the top of one of the towers with Jenna. We wanted to reach the top and get a certificate. All of

us adults were huffing and puffing as we managed the awkward stone steps which were by no means uniform. At three years old, Jenna bounded up the steps with no problem. When we reached the top, all the people there applauded her.

These high towers served as lookouts. When an enemy army approached, a signal was sent from the lookout post and an army was quickly assembled. Horses could run the wall faster than an army could maneuver on the mountainous terrain. In this way the wall was extremely effective in warding off barbarian invaders, although throughout its history, the Chinese boundaries have changed often.

After centuries of doing things the hard way, enemy armies came up with a simple solution. Why not just bribe the Chinese guards to open the gates and let them in. That's what they did during the Ming dynasty, and the Mongols and Manchurians overran the country.

So here's a question for you? Who guards the gate of your heart, keeping

out the enemy? If not you, than who? I am amazed at how many of my Christian brothers and sisters in Christ build up their spiritual wall



A View from the Top of the Great Wall

through church attendance, prayer, Bible reading, small groups, and even accountability partners, but then simply open up the gate and allow temptation to turn the key and walk right in, creating horrific consequences not only to their life, but to loved ones as well.

Who guards the gate of your heart? If you're a Christian, the Holy Spirit serves as watchman, so do those you allow to have input into your spiritual life. Yet you hold the key and make the ultimate decision as to who you let into your heart.

The picture I want you to have in your mind is one found in Nehemiah 4. As the Israelites worked feverishly to finish the (Continued on page 5.)



The Gerig Dynasty!

## Whose Guarding the Gate? *Continued from page 4*

wall, opposition arose from their enemies, who threatened them, plotted evil against them, and sought to discourage them. They said, "Before they know it or see us, we will be right there among them and will kill them and put an end to the work." (v. 11)

To some degree the strategy worked as the Israelites began to grumble, "The strength of the laborers is giving out, and there is so much rubble that we cannot rebuild the wall." (v. 10) But Nehemiah came up with a plan and "from that day on, half of my men did the work, while the other half were equipped with spears, shields, bows and armor." (v. 16) "When our enemies heard that we were aware of their plot and that God had frustrated it, we all returned to the wall, each to his own work." (v. 15)

As Christians, we are called to build on our spiritual foundation, maturing in our walk with Christ, but we are also challenged to put on the full armor of God so that we

can take our stand against the devil's schemes. But why do so many solid well-grounded believers simply swing open the gate of their heart at the first sign of temptation? I think it may be because of a lack of readiness that the enemy is really coming and/or an overconfidence that the wall is well enough defended.

Let's get personal. Do you stand vigilant over the gate of your heart or are you ill prepared for Satan's surprise offensive? Maybe you're a bit overconfident, kind of like the gingerbread man who ran from everyone screaming, "Run, run as fast as you can. You can't catch me! I'm the



## Coming Events

- ✓ **February 2-4, 2012**  
Pastors & Wives Retreat  
Embassy Suites in Blue Ash
- ✓ **February 11, 2012**  
Youth Quizzing  
Fairhaven Community Church
- ✓ **February 18, 2012**  
Kids Quizzing  
Grace Community Church, Lima
- ✓ **February 25, 2012**  
Christian Ministries Conference  
Troy Christian High School
- ✓ **March 2-4, 2012**  
Keeping the Faith  
Embassy Suites in Blue Ash
- ✓ **April 21, 2012**  
Oasis: A Ladies Day Away  
Troy Christian Elementary School
- ✓ **April 27, 2012**  
District Conference  
Rona Community Church, Fairborn

gingerbread man!" He became a great snack for the fox.

Don't let that "Great Fox," the devil, trick you into giving him the key to the gate of your heart. The consequences will be severe.

# Kid's Kamp

June 25-30, 2012

Cost: \$135\*

Speakers: Paul & Jessica Deltzel

More information on Kid's Kamp will be out in next month's issue along with details on a new and exciting 2-day camp for 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> graders.

\*By pre-registration deadline.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!



## 3DYC—Replica Conference

This year, a total of 777 people attended 3DYC's Replica Conference, held at the Grand Wayne Center in Fort Wayne, Indiana, December 28-30, 2011. This total included over 60 from the East Central District. The theme, Replica was taken from Ephesians 5:1, "Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God."

Jason Miller, teaching pastor at Granger Community Church, near South Bend, Indiana was this year's main

speaker, with Seth Abram leading the teens in times of worship. The conference also included several breakout times, which challenged teens on a variety of topics.



The next 3DYC event is scheduled for December 28-30, 2013 at the Grand Wayne Center in Fort Wayne, IN.


## CMC *Continued from page 1*

notch presenters. Whether your church is interested in getting more involved in its community or wanting to institute a new discipleship strategy; maybe your church needs a revitalized prayer ministry or wants to get more involved with missions work, this CMC is for you. Age ministry tracks for women, youth and children will also be offered, as well as a track for church treasurers.

Promotional information on CMC, including workshop descriptions, have been posted to the district website, [www.ecdistrict.org](http://www.ecdistrict.org) under Upcoming Events.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



  
The Missionary Church  
East Central District  
607 South Market Street  
Troy, Ohio 45373-3334

U.S. Postage Paid  
Permit No. 325  
Non-Profit  
Organization  
Troy, Ohio