



January 31, 2006

The Rocky Mountain American Baptist

A Newsletter of the American Baptist Churches in the Rocky Mountain Region

Youth Gulf Mission Project 2006 *We'll Make a Difference in Gulfport!*



I recently went to Gulfport in preparation for the ABCRM youth mission trip scheduled for July 21-July 30, 2006. It has been four months since Katrina hit, and many broken trees and broken lives remain. The area looks like the storm hit last week! Some homes stand demolished, with no trace of walls or furniture. The word that kept coming to my mind was “pulverized.”

Many area residents report not knowing if families have returned or if they are planning to return. Businesses have signs on their doors noting that they will open “sometime in 2006.” Phones (and as a result, answering machines) are disconnected.

At the beach in Gulfport, there were no seagulls or pelicans—just dead silence. The beach is currently condemned and covered with debris. Many of the 300-year-old oak trees that lined Highway 90 have disappeared. Parts of the highway are still closed because bridges have not been repaired.

The local newspapers reflect the “best of people and the worst of people.” On one page you will find articles about the crimes committed when some people take advantage of others in times of crisis. On the same page is a story of volunteers who raised funds and built a neighborhood playground. Residents of Gulfport are voicing their appreciation to all those who come to Mississippi to help where ever there is a need.

While I was meeting with our contacts in Gulfport, a lady called the office to ask where she might put her FEMA trailer. She had just gotten her trailer and the date was January 5th! What a blessing it will be to go to Mississippi in July and make a difference. I am sure that there will be much to do and that our contacts will find the right project for our team. At this time it is uncertain what the actual project will be. Projects come in daily, and they are assessed, prioritized, and assigned.

Our team will be staying at the United Methodist Church in Gulfport where the Regional Disaster Office is located. I believe our team will have the opportunity to be part of the rebuilding, touch lives, and make a difference in Gulfport.

*Chris Buckles, member of Highland Park Baptist Church
in Colorado Springs and Mission Trip Planning Team Member*

**For more information
about the Youth Gulf
Mission Project 2006...**

• **check with your local church staff. Information has been mailed to each Region church.**

• **Go to www.abcrm.org and click on Youth Mission Trip under “News and Events” on the homepage.**

Northern Front Range Cluster to Hold First Gathering

On Sunday afternoon, February 26, at 3:30 p.m. the American Baptist Church of Ft. Collins will host the first Northern Front Range Cluster Gathering. Since churches in this Cluster are from three of the former ABCRM Areas, the leadership team chose "Getting to Know You" as the theme for this initial gathering.

The worship celebration will include three local church ministry vignettes, lots of good music, and inspiration. Each attendee is asked to bring some form of "finger food" to be shared during the time of fellowship at the close of the Gathering. Come and be a part of another first!

Each cluster church will be receiving electronic communication about this event which will include an insert for the Sunday worship folder or church newsletter.

The leadership team consists of Dan Vincent (American Baptist Church, Ft. Collins, CO), Tom Wheeler (First Baptist Church, Ft. Morgan, CO), Myron Reed (Calvary Baptist Church, Cheyenne, WY), Yvonne Whisenhunt (First Baptist Church, Longmont, CO), and Wayne Dvirnak (ABCRM Ministry and Mission Coach, Cheyenne, WY).

Questions?
Contact Dan Vincent,
abcpastor1@mindspring.com
or Wayne Dvirnak,
wdvirnak@abcrm.org

Justice Commission Addresses Legislative Issues

The Justice Commission of the Colorado Council of Churches met on Tuesday, January 24, 2006. Kay Farley is the ABCRM representative to this Commission.



Adrian Miller, the CCC communication liaison with the Colorado State Legislature, summarized the bills which have been introduced in the Legislature so far this term as they apply to CCC policy statements and areas of concern. Miller regularly notifies each commission member of important hearings and opportunities to speak to issues.

The Commission agreed to endorse legislation that would prohibit the criminalizing of care givers, usually hospice workers, who deliver palliative care to ease the pain of the dying. Palliative care, also called comfort care, is primarily directed at providing relief to a terminally-ill person through symptom management and pain management. The goal is not to cure, but to provide comfort and maintain the highest possible quality of life for as long as life remains. Well-rounded palliative care programs also address mental health and spiritual needs. The focus is not on death, but on compassionate specialized care for the living. Palliative care is well-suited to an interdisciplinary team model that provides support for the whole person and those who are sharing the person's journey in love.

The Justice Commission is also considering the issue of immigration. The group has designed a process for developing a consensus statement on the subject. It will be written from a faith perspective. It is intended that this statement will then go to member denominations for consideration.

In following up on the Denver mayor's faith-based initiative to end homelessness (reported in the Feb. 15 issue of this newsletter), it was noted that 69 churches have signed up to mentor a family or senior and 92 have committed to discuss it within their congregational structure.

The Commission has developed an affordable housing study curriculum along with a professionally produced video on the housing needs in Colorado. This curriculum and video may be ordered by contacting the Council office at 303-825-4910.

For additional information on justice issues, please contact Kay Farley at kfarley@abcrm.org.

Mission: Cordova, Alaska

Mary Burman Reflects on VIM Experience

During 2005, Mary M. Burman, (FBC/Laramie, WY), spent two months as a Volunteer in Mission (VIM) at the Cordova Christian Community Center. After returning to Laramie, she became involved as pastoral search committee chair, which just came to a successful completion with the call of Mary Beth Mankin as pastor of the Laramie church. Now—a year later—in this brief interview, Mary shares something of what being a VIM was all about.

RMAB: Why did you choose Cordova?

As a third grader in FBC Cheyenne, I was part of a Crusaders group learning about God's mission, particularly in Alaska. So on my application, I put "Alaska." Upon my approval by the Board of National Ministries, Susan Harding in Cordova requested that I come. So I said, "Yes, I'll come."

RMAB: Why did you go in the dark season of winter?

I figured maybe a new face might be welcome at that time of year. Having just retired as CE Director, I felt a change would be good.

RMAB: What did you do in Cordova?

I did routine tasks: mailing newsletter, organizing and cataloging their supply of children's Bible videos, teaching materials, pictures, craft supplies sent by White Cross, etc. I also worked with kids on Tuesday Family Nights and in Sunday School. I introduced the Workshop Rotation plan wherein one Bible story is studied for four weeks, using Bible,

drama, crafts, computer programs, and music to tell and retell the story.

RMAB: What was your favorite thing about this volunteer stint?

We had a Lenten Fair with activity tables filled with all kinds of Lent/Easter activities such as nail crosses, dyeing eggs, wooden crosses, life-size silhouettes of the kids, etc. The church had never had a fair and thoroughly enjoyed it.

RMAB: How do you get involved in VIM?

Contact National Ministries: Volunteers in Mission for an application. You can do this online at www.nationalministries.org. Type VIM into the site's search engine, and you'll easily find the form as well as other pertinent information about the program.



RMAB: What did you learn during your volunteer encounter?

I learned that Cordova gave me more than I gave them! Wonderful people live in the town; faithful people minister in the church and community center. Financial poverty is not the problem; people are in poverty because they do not know Jesus Christ.

RMAB: Would you volunteer through VIM again?

Perhaps, but right now I feel I need to be in my own church to support our new pastor.

Mary is available to speak about Cordova to ABCRM churches within a 100-mile radius of Laramie.

Contact her at
mmburman@wyomail.com,
 307-745-8463;
 1365 North 27th Street,
 Laramie, WY 82072.

American Baptist Women's Ministries of Colorado Winter Retreat 2006

The 2006 Women's Retreat sponsored by ABW Ministries of Colorado was held January 13-15 at Quaker Ridge Camp and Conference Center. Karen Selig was the guest presenter, developing the theme, "The Women Who Followed Jesus to the Cross.....and Beyond." Karen is a co-pastor of First Baptist Church in Manhattan, KS, the president of ABC/Central Region, and a former national president of American Baptist Women's Ministries.

Let the following comments from attendees and the pictures tell the story. . .

Question: What new learnings or insights did you gather from this retreat?

Some of the responses:

- I became closer to the Lord.
- A deeper understanding knowledge of women in the Bible.
- My first retreat. Wonderful experience. I gained too much to put down on paper. Women are important to God's Kingdom!
- Women and the importance of them in the Bible.
- Don't give up! Continue following Christ, no matter what the cost.
- Everything is not about winning. If you do your best, that's all God wants.
- Everything was a learning experience for me. I'm a new Christian!



Karen Selig portraying the biblical character, Lydia.

The list of positive responses goes on and on. We had a wonderful time learning new things about women in the Bible. We even had a Bronco party on Saturday night. The fellowship was great, even if you weren't a Bronco fan!

As one attendee said, "It was a true mountain top experience." We look forward to next year's retreat.

*Jackie Arnold,
President, ABW Ministries of Colorado*



Conference musicians:

Martha Lee Lowe and her mother (above). Martha led the group singing during the retreat.



Guitarist, Linda Hilton (right)

To view more retreat pictures, go to <http://www.abcrm.org/ministries/abwminretreat.pdf>

Scholarships Available Through Colorado ABW Ministries

- **Jane Loring Jones Scholarships** in the amount of \$2000 are available for American Baptist female students attending American Baptist colleges.
- **ECL Career in Teaching Scholarship** in the amount of \$1000 is available for an American Baptist woman planning a career in teaching and attending a four-year Colorado State college or university.
- **Student Grants** are also available to women who are 26 years of age or older on July 1, 2006, planning to attend an accredited American Baptist university, college, or seminary, an active member of an American Baptist church in Colorado, have a high school diploma or equivalent, and/or higher education degrees as appropriate.

American Baptist women from Colorado, New Mexico, or Utah who are related to the American Baptist Churches of the Rocky Mountains and who meet the requirements may apply.

For further information and application forms, please contact the president of your local American Baptist Women's Ministries or the chair of the Scholarship Committee, Phyllis Hugley, P.O. Box 53, Limon, CO 80828. She may also be reached by phone at 719-775-9336 or by e-mail at pmhugley@plains.net.

Applications must be postmarked by March 31, 2006.



Scholarships Available Through Wyoming ABW Ministries

- **Mabel Bolle Scholarship** in the amount of \$500.00 per year is available for a student who has committed to full-time Christian service and is attending an American Baptist school. The current scholar is Amanda Halliburton from Lander, who attends the University of Sioux Falls.

A word about the history of this scholarship: Mabel Bolle was the wife of a pastor who ministered in several Wyoming churches. The daughter of the Bolles is Margaret Prine, who has been a spiritual leader of women in Wyoming (and the nation) for many years. Margaret lives in Laramie.

- **National Conference Scholarship** in the amount of \$500.00 is available each summer to assist an American Baptist woman in Wyoming in attending the national AB Women's Ministries Conference in Green Lake, WI. The 2006 conference will be held July 22-29.

For further information and application forms, please contact the president of your local American Baptist Women's Ministries.

Some Musings on Tribal Theology in Northeast India (Part 2)

General Overview of Theological Approaches

(This article is the second in a series written by Ahaio Vashum, our global mission partnership specialist.)

Traditionally, theology is the study of how God acts and intervenes in human lives and stories. The classical definition of theology came from the 11th century theologian Anselm who defined theology as “Faith seeking understanding.” Since then, theology and theological understandings have undergone change and assumed various shapes and approaches. Each of these changes happened within the context of the Christian Western world. Even when theological reordering took place outside the Western world, the methods and approaches were informed and dictated by the dominant western theologies.

However, this was not the case indefinitely. The emergence of Liberation theologies in the '60s and '70s introduced an entirely new approach to theology and theological understanding. At that time, people outside Europe and North America, particularly in the so-called Third World countries, began to see and relate theology in an entirely different way. Other historically marginalized and oppressed groups such as women, African-Americans and Native Americans were also moved to recast their plight in light of these promising revelations. Liberation theologies brought a sociological perspective to the study of theology in that the notions of peace and justice were seen as real

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In Asia, C. S. Song, Kosuke Koyama, K. C. Abraham, Samuel Rayan, Aloysius Pieris, Archie Lee and others have taken the lead in articulating Asian theology by viewing life and God through the lens of the religious and cultural realities of the Asian people—doing theology in Asian ways. Theologians such as Tissa Balasurya, S. J. Samartha and M. M. Thomas have emphasized the importance of interreligious dialogue by doing theology in the context of religious pluralism and poverty situation.

In India, Indian Christian theology has been influenced by the Brahmanical traditions of Hinduism. This is ironic, because most Indian

Christians belong to low caste and out caste groups.

For a long time, Dalits* and tribal groups have been at the receiving end of the dominant and oppressive policies of the country. They were not only politically, culturally, and socially exploited but also religiously and theologically exploited and alienated. The so-called mainstream Indian Christian theology did not meet the needs of the suffering Dalits and tribals. It is in this context that Dalit and tribal theologies in India have emerged.

A. P. Nirmal, one of the pioneers of Dalit theology argues that the starting point for Dalit theology is the Dalits' experience of suffering. He rightly argues that people's pathos/suffering precedes praxis. Other important Dalit theologians are V. Devasahayam and Sathianathan Clarke.

It is in this wider context that I would like you to understand and appreciate the emergence of tribal theology in Northeast India.

**Dalits are an oppressed, down-trodden, and exploited social group. They are akin to the untouchables, and are not considered part of human society. They perform the most menial and degrading jobs. Neither they nor their shadows are allowed to touch a member of a higher caste.*

(To be continued in future issues.)

The Covenant and Code of Ethics for Ministerial Leaders of American Baptist Churches

Having accepted God's call to leadership in Christ's Church, I covenant with God to serve Christ and the Church with, the help of the holy spirit, to deepen my obedience to the Two Great Commandments: to love the Lord our God with all my heart, soul, mind and strength, and to love my neighbor as myself.

In affirmation of this commitment, I will abide by the Code of Ethics of the Ministers Council of the American Baptist Churches and I will faithfully support its purposes and ideals. As further affirmation of my commitment, I covenant with my colleagues in ministry that we will hold one another accountable for fulfillment of all the public actions set forth in our Code of Ethics.

- I will hold in trust the traditions and practices of our American Baptist Churches; I will not accept a position in the American Baptist family unless I am in accord with those traditions and practices; nor will I use my influence to alienate my congregation/constituents or any part thereof from its relationship and support of the denomination. If my convictions change, I will resign my position.
- I will respect and recognize the variety of calls to ministry among my American Baptist colleagues, and other Christians.
- I will seek to support all colleagues in ministry by building constructive relationships wherever I serve, both with the staff where I work and with colleagues in neighboring churches.
- I will advocate adequate compensation for my profession. I will help lay persons and colleagues to understand that ministerial leaders should not expect or require fees for pastoral services from constituents they serve, when these constituents are helping pay their salaries.
- I will not seek personal favors or discounts on the basis of my ministerial status.
- I will maintain a disciplined ministry in such ways as keeping hours of prayers and devotion, endeavoring to maintain wholesome family relationships, sexual integrity, financial responsibility, regularly engaging in educational and recreational activities for ministerial and personal development. I will seek to maintain good health habits.
- I will recognize my primary obligation to the church or employing group to which I have been called, and will accept added responsibilities only if they do not interfere with the overall effectiveness of my ministry.
- I will personally and publicly support my colleagues who experience discrimination on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, age, marital status, national origin, physical impairment or disability.
- I will not proselytize from other Christian churches.
- I will, upon my resignation or retirement, sever my ministerial leadership relations with my former constituents, and will not make ministerial contacts in the field of another ministerial leader without his/her request and/or consent.
- I will hold in confidence and treat as confidential communication any information provided to me with the expectation of privacy. I will not disclose such information in private or public except when, in my practice of ministry, I am convinced that the sanctity of confidentiality is outweighed by my well-founded belief that life-threatening or substantial harm will be caused.
- I will not use my ministerial status, position or authority knowingly to abuse, misguide, negatively influence, manipulate, or take advantage of anyone, especially children.
- I will report all instances of abuse as required by law to the appropriate agency. In any case involving persons working in ABC ministry, I will also report the circumstances to the appropriate regional and/or national denominational representative.
- I will show my personal love for God as revealed in Jesus Christ in my life and ministry, as I strive together with my colleagues to preserve the dignity, maintain the discipline and promote the integrity of the vocation to which we have been called.

Signed _____

Date _____

The Covenant and Code of Ethics: Part of the Commitment



It was right there—front and center—at Mary Beth Mankin's ordination on January 15, 2006 at First Baptist Church in Boulder, CO. Mary Beth chose to incorporate the partial reading and the signing of the Covenant and Code of Ethics for Ministerial Leaders of American Baptist Churches into the service. I commend Mary Beth Mankin for publically signing the Code of Ethics. It's important!

The Covenant and Code of Ethics is an official document of the American Baptist Ministers Council. *All* clergy in the American Baptist Churches of the Rocky Mountains are expected to read it, signed it, and live it. *Every* congregation should expect their pastor(s) to read it, sign it, and live it.

Wayne Dvirnak
Ministry and Mission Coach

For your awareness,
we have printed the Covenant and
Code of Ethics in its entirety
in the column at the left.
You may also access the
document and other helpful
information at
www.ministerscouncil.org

“Pure By Choice” Youth Rally

“Pure by Choice” will be holding their annual rally on Sunday, February 26, 2006 from 12:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at the Denver Coliseum. The youth of Old Landmark Baptist Church will be participating in the event, and they extend an invitation to all ABCRM youth groups to come and celebrate purity with them.

The “Pure by Choice” Rally is a time to celebrate Christian youth and young adults who are taking a stand for the freedom we have in Christ to be honest; to feel good about ourselves by not giving into peer pressure; to make educated decisions; to develop lasting relationships, to plan for our future, and to achieve our goals. The gift of purity is precious and too important to be taken lightly.

There will be a session for parents at the Coliseum as well. Youth leaders and parents are invited to participate in this highly informative session which will offer curriculum, follow-up materials, and parental help.

To find out more about the rally, please log onto www.purebychoice.com. You may purchase tickets online or at participating King Soopers locations.

Please contact Old Landmark at 303-365-9039 and leave a message that you will be attending the rally. We would like to have a short “meet and greet time” for all ABC youth immediately following the rally at the Coliseum. We would love to see a large showing of ABC youth.

Marie Heaton
Old Landmark Youth Coordinator

Wait on the Lord: An opportunity for all clergy and lay ministers

Spiritual Formation Conference

Presented by American Baptist
Churches USA

April 17-20, 2006



Psalm 27:14: *“Wait for the LORD; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the LORD!”*

It’s not too late to register for the “Wait on the Lord” conference to be held in Orlando, FL. Deadline is February 26, 2006.

Conference leaders include John W. Kinney, preacher; Jamie Clark-Soles, Bible study teacher on Gospel of John; A. Roy Medley, preacher; Brad Berglund, worship leader; Frank Colon, musician.

A variety of workshops will be offered. Following is a list of titles and leaders:

- “Wait Upon the Lord Using the Labyrinth” with Cheryl Dudley.
- “A Spirituality of Waiting in our Journey” with Willy Hernandez.
- “Spiritual Formation Within a Congregational Context” with Jeff Johnson.
- “Spiritual Formation and Ministerial Ethics (in Spanish and English) with Osvaldo Mottes.
- “For God Alone My Soul Waits in Silence” with Jeff Savage.
- “Fire Tenders: Keeping the Passion for God Alive in Congregations” with Nancy Tripp-Leport.
- “Cultivating a Sabbatical Imagination: Rationale, Timing, Funding, and Implementation” with David Wood.

For more details about leaders and workshops, or for a conference schedule and registration information, go to <http://www.ministerscouncil.com/WaitontheLordInformation.aspx>.

Are you doing your part?

Some ABCRM churches make printed copies of this newsletter available to their members. Others send the newsletter to the church’s electronic distribution list. Some individuals forward it to their friends. We’re hoping you’re doing your part to share the good ABCRM news. We’ll also be pleased to receive individual e-mail addresses to add to the general distribution list. Send e-mail address(es) to office@abcr.org.

Chaplaincy Position Open at Tennyson Center for Children

The Tennyson Center for Children at Colorado Christian Home is currently looking for a chaplain. Deadline for application is February 17th, 2006 at 5:00 PM. Resumes may be sent to employment@tennysoncenter.org or directly to Andrew Pasini, Human Resources Manager, Tennyson Center for Children at Colorado Christian Home, andrew.pasini@tennysoncenter.org. Individuals can also feel free to contact him with any questions by calling 720-855-3331. For general information: www.tennysoncenter.org.

The Tennyson Center for Children at Colorado Christian Home is a community of people dedicated to eliminating child abuse and neglect, serving and strengthening children and families. They provide competent and caring treatment as well as educational and advocacy services that are community-based, family focused and child-centered.

Tennyson Center for Children at Colorado Christian Home is the first certified residential treatment center for abused and neglected children in Colorado, and is the largest treatment center for children ages 5-14 in the Rocky Mountain region. They provide services for children and their families through intensive residential treatment programs which operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and are designed for children whose safety is in jeopardy, and /or who cannot function safely in the community.

Job Description

Position: **Chaplain**

Department: **Program**

Supervisor: **Clinical Director**

Summary of Duties:

Offer leadership regarding the Spiritual Health of the Agency and its staff. Provide or coordinate ecumenical and interfaith activities related to the spiritual growth and religious practices of children placed in residential and special services unit programs. Be available to provide pastoral care to specific children placed in Day Services as requested and permitted by parents or guardians.

Responsibilities:

- Provide initial and on-going spiritual assessments for residential clients for whom a release has been signed to participate in spiritual development and religious activities. Document these assessments in client data base to facilitate integration of spiritual assessment in client service planning.
- Identify the interfaces of spiritual themes and clinical issues for families and children placed in the residential and special services program.
- Work closely to provide or coordinate pastoral care, religious education and worship experiences for children placed in residential and special services unit programs when deemed clinically appropriate.
- Actively participate in Clusters and Clinical Team.
- Assist Volunteer Coordinator in screening individual and group volunteers who represent religious based interests.
- Coordinate with volunteer and treatment staff to assist child to participate in spiritual traditions and

activities that may not be available on the campus.

- Develop a network of religious leaders from diverse faith traditions in the metro area who can provide consultation for staff and/or direct pastoral care for children and families from these faith traditions when needed.
- Represent the Agency through ecumenical, denominational, and professional committees and selected task forces.
- Represent the Agency at Christian Church (Disciple of Christ) assemblies and other churches meetings to help the church communities further understand the mission and work of the Agency.
- Present at New Staff Orientation and other inservices as requested.
- Direct and coordinate internships and placements for graduate students and volunteers seeking experience in providing Chaplaincy services.
- Serve as an advocate of racial, ethnic and cultural differences of all clients and staff.
- Other related duties as assigned.

Education and Experience Requirements:

- M Div required. Ordination highly preferred. MSW or second Masters in a clinically related field, or equivalent clinical experience required. AAPC or CPE certification preferred.
- Two years previous experience with emotionally disturbed children preferred but not required
- Ecclesiastical Standing
- Current good standing in the Order of Ministry (or eligible to receive) of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), or equivalent good standing within another denomination.

Physical Requirements:

Standing, Walking, Sitting, Handling, Ordinary Talking, Hearing, Ordinary Vision

Mental Requirements:

Alertness	Creativity
Ingenuity	Concentration
Problem-solving	Judgment
Analytic ability	Reasoning
Persuasiveness	Imagination
Auditory discrimination	Initiative
Speaking ability	Patience
Memory	

Plans Are Underway for the 2006 ABCRM Gathering

Under the leadership of Larry VanSpriel, interim pastor of FBC/Greeley and chair of the 2005 ABCRM Gathering, the 2006 Gathering Committee met at the ABCRM offices in Centennial, CO, on Tuesday, January 24. The dates for the 2006 Gathering are October 20-21. New Hope Baptist Church in Denver, CO, pastored by Jim Peters, will be the host church. Many more details will be forthcoming, but save the dates and plan to attend this year's Region family event.

Someone You Should Know. . .



Susan Hall
6814 S. 15th Street
Phoenix, AZ 85042
(602) 268-5434
Email: hall.abf@att.net

Susan Hall is our American Baptist Foundation (ABF) representative. ABF is a center through which planned gifts may be made in support of all American Baptist churches or organizations. This program of planned giving is a cooperative effort of International Ministries, National Ministries and a majority of the ABC/USA Regions. As such it is a model of good stewardship of talent and resources within our faith family. Susan is available to discuss charitable estate planning and gift opportunities.

The Rocky Mountain American Baptist

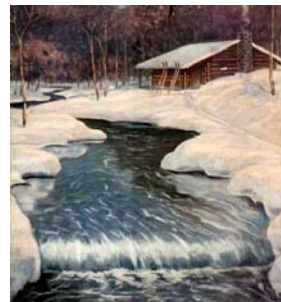
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Desmond Hoffmeister:
Transitional Executive Minister

Ingrid Dvirnak:
Newsletter Editor

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