



# UpStream

Summer  
2014

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American Baptist Men  
of the Great Rivers Region  
*Men on a Mission - from God*

## A Word from Our Sponsor

I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. – Philippians 3:14 (NIV)

## Save the Postage

If you are receiving a printed copy of this newsletter and have an email address, please help us save some money on postage by sending an email with “AB Men Newsletter Email” in the subject line to [bs.romanowski@gmail.com](mailto:bs.romanowski@gmail.com). Thank you for helping us to be good stewards of our resources.

## AB Men Website

For the latest information on the AB Men of our region, be sure to check out our website at: [www.abm-grr.org](http://www.abm-grr.org). Thanks to Terry Maurizio for putting it together and keeping us informed!

American Baptist Men of the Great Rivers Region  
204 Barbara Dr.  
Mahomet, IL 61853-9135

## AB Men Work Project at First Baptist Church of Macomb

The AB Men of the GRR assisted FBC Macomb May 5-9 with the siding of their new building.



The group consisted of Bill Lotz, Dave Harmon, Ellis Loper, Les Sorensen, Earl Troyer, George Meyer and Chuck Searcy. They installed the siding on over half the building in a week's time!

## Judson University Work Project



The AB Men & women of our region went to Judson University June 2-6. Pictured, from left to right are Ellis Loper, Jack Sparrow, Don Rogers, Don Cox, Shirley Rogers, Chuck Searcy, Beverly Searcy, Earl Troyer, George Meyer, and Les Sorenson. The projects were installing a wall in the business office, repurposing a door but it needed work to make it fit, washing air conditioners and fixing the walls that were damaged by a flood. Much was accomplished!

## AB Men Work Project at Green Lake

For the third consecutive year, the AB Men will return to Green Lake, WI the week of September 28-October 3 to complete a number of indoor and outdoor projects at the conference center.

For more information, contact George Meyer, our Work Projects Coordinator, at 217/488-7190.

## AB Men Work Project at University Baptist Church

The AB Men and women helped the University Baptist Foundation on the campus of the University of Illinois in Champaign the week of July 14-18 with the remodeling of the church basement. Pictured below (left to right) in front are Bev Searcy, Chuck Searcy and George Meyer. In the back row are Les Sorensen, Ellis Loper, Brett Smith, Eli Koehler and Earl Troyer.



Earl (left) removes bricks in the old kitchen wall. Ellis and George (below) build a new wall for the kitchen hallway. Chuck (left) removes the old kitchen ceiling while Bev cleans up.



## Gifford Blitz Build

On November 17, 2013, 73 tornados ripped through Illinois, destroying homes and devastating communities. One of those communities was Gifford, Illinois. The AB Men assisted with the cleanup, but with a third of the community destroyed, they needed help to rebuild.

The American Baptist Churches, in partnership with Habitat for Humanity, responded with a two week blitz build. Victoria Goff, ABHMS national coordinator of volunteer and disaster response ministries, coordinated the project along with Habitat personnel. Over 70 volunteers from ABC churches across the U.S. and AB Men from Illinois, Massachusetts, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Nebraska participated in the project. The volunteers completed three homes. ABHMS, the GRR, the AB Men and many ABC churches financially sponsored one of the homes. The sponsored home was dedicated on June 13 by Dwight Stinnett, Regional Executive Minister of the GRR.

“I had never participated in a Blitz Build before and was truly amazed at how God used the gifts of the volunteers to come together as one and have the three homes under roof in one week. As myself and two other volunteers from Bethel Baptist Church in Jerseyville worked together with the others, it soon became evident who had experience and quickly became leaders and who had little experience (like myself) and found niches where their skills could be utilized. It was an example of how the church should look if we all would use the gifts that God has given each of us and work together in unity. We would see amazing results for His Kingdom.”

Terry Maurizio, Area II Vice President (on the left in the first picture below)

“I can only say that I was blessed and impressed with the planning, coordination and energy exhibited by all of the volunteers. The leadership, including Brian Romanowski, Vicki Goff and Kim Gollings from Habitat for Humanity did an excellent job organizing the teams and keeping them on task. It was great to see so many union professionals volunteering their time and talents. Our Team Leaders (bosses) were great fun and very friendly and very knowledgeable. Everyone showed great compassion for the families. The families who will live in these homes are very deserving and very hard workers. I was proud to be a part of this event and very proud of how the AB Men's Ministry was represented. I am sure that God was pleased with what occurred here.”

IHS, Lucky Ray, President, American Baptist Men (on the right in the first picture below)





## ABMen Work Day at SIUC

Jean Bode, Board President for the American Baptist College Ministry Student House at SIUC, contacted me about a workday at the student house. On June 25, thirteen of us went there and helped again doing general handyman kinds of things.

Prior to today, Jay Arnold from West Frankfort Northern Baptist came and worked all the plumbing issues and Van Peters and Jerry Elliot came on a pre-survey and also handled the window glass issues. Today, I think we did everything Jean had planned for us and some of the things I recall were old blinds taken down and new window blinds installed, gutters cleaned, an inoperative five-way light (4 switches) plus dimmer was trouble shot and fixed, dryer vent duct work replaced, ceiling fan replaced, calking replaced around bathtub, light in bedroom replaced, excess items discarded, tree limbs trimmed and hauled away, and good Christian Fellowship and brownies were enjoyed and all without injury.



Right to left are Casey Pitchford, Jean Bode, Duane Miesner, Jerry Elliot, Bill Bottiaux, Charles Heyl, Diane Chandler, Murphysboro Pate Chapel Pastor John Pitchford (new House Minister), Joan Galle, Pastor Richard Reed (hiding) behind Van Peters, and Marissa Pastor Jim Harkness in back by his buddy Pastor John.

“Because JESUS Came, We Come”

Thanking God for the opportunities to serve.

—Ron Haynes Area IV VP

# **“BE PREPARED!”**

## **FIVE-YEAR GOALS**

(updated April, 2014)

**GOAL ONE:** Create and maintain at least one team in each of the five areas of the Great Rivers Region with a captain and assistant for each team. Subdivide the teams into smaller geographical units with team leaders, which will enable quick response and contact when teams are needed to be alerted.

**GOAL TWO:** Enlist and maintain 25 or more members for each team and offer on-hands training each year at the annual men’s fall gathering.

**GOAL THREE:** Equip and maintain the disaster relief trailers. The 18-wheeler will be used for storage, one of trailer for mud-out and one for chainsaws.

**GOAL FOUR:** Meet annually in spring as a Regional Leadership Team (coordinators, trailer coordinators, team captains and assistants) for communication, planning, evaluating and ongoing support. Also, be represented at National Coordinators gatherings.

**GOAL FIVE:** Keep team members informed with periodic publishing of “UPDATE” as part of “UPSTREAM” publication or separate mailings.

**GOAL SIX:** Be in communication with IEMA, MEMA (Illinois and/or Missouri Emergency Management Agency), VOAD (Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster), local Emergency Managers, Mayors, and local authorities, cooperating with them when disaster strikes.

**GOAL SEVEN:** Be ready to respond when a disaster strikes anywhere in the Great Rivers Region. When disaster is outside GRR we will cooperate with our National Disaster Coordinator and/or the Regional Disaster Coordinator and respond as needed.

**GOAL EIGHT:** When we respond to a disaster call, the team should take time to pray for God’s guidance. If we ask why we do what we are doing, we will refer to our motto: “Because Jesus Came, We Come”. If the inquirer wants to know more, a personal testimony is in order. When possible, we will leave a Bible and a devotional guide as gifts for the survivors and pray with them.

Mac's Musings:

## "Bittersweet Times!"

This was my 11<sup>th</sup> year of volunteering as a mentor at my daughter's school. I was helping students research the Lincoln neighborhood, searching for examples of how Lincoln influenced his neighbors or the neighborhood influenced the Lincolns. As we began to summarize our research one of the students, noting that the slaves had been freed and the Union saved, but Mr. Lincoln had been assassinated, observed: "this was a bittersweet time".

I have felt that way in recent weeks, as I have had to find another home for my wife who has regressed from her strokes to the need for intermediate care. At the same time, I have been moving from the house we shared for 24 years to a downsized dwelling—trying to dispose of "stuff" we have collected during our 60 years of marriage. Twenty friends volunteered to move my belongings to my new abode. A "bittersweet time" indeed!

These events have reminded me that life brings its joys and it's sorrows, but thru it all God gives us the strength to carry on and friends help carry the load! Ps. 24 has taken on deeper meaning for me during this bittersweet time.

My new address is printed on the registration form for our Fall training sessions (I do hope you will respond!) and my new telephone number is 217-546 3422. My wife's address: Room 221 St. Joseph's Home, 3306 South Sixth St. Springfield, IL 62703.

Looking forward to our Gathering in Sept. —Mac Shotwell

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### **MORE INFORMATION ON OUR SEPT. 19 TRAINING EVENT...**

***Here's the schedule*** (for all who send registration – see page 1)

9:30-11:45 a.m. – CPR Training

Noon – Lunch for ALL disaster relief team members

2:00 to 3:30 p.m. – Chain Saw Training and Session Two for CPR

3:45 to 5:00 p.m. – Each Team meets with Captain and Assistant

6:00 p.m. – Fall Gathering begins.

Every Disaster Relief Volunteer is invited to be our guest for the noon luncheon. Van Peters will lead the afternoon session on chain saw safety and maintenance. Certificates will be awarded all who participate in these training events.

**NEW ADDRESS for ABMen's Treasurer, George Vest: One Masonic Way- Hart 201 Sullivan, IL 61951. Contributions for Disaster Relief can be sent direct to him or with mission gifs to GRR office. Be sure and mark "for disaster relief in GRR". Next edition will list contributors for this year.**