

the *Good News* banner

Thoughts from the Pastor

by Jack Gill

There are two things that I'm a little leery about recommending to others: movies and books – especially if I haven't read or seen them for some time, or at all!

One time when I was in college, I remember getting a video from the store to watch with my roommates and friends. One of the guys in my apartment had a VCR. It was cutting edge technology at the time, and *everyone* was at our place to enjoy it.

I put the movie in, remembering that I had seen it several years before in the theater, and had thought at time that it was funny. I sat back, waiting for everyone to enjoy it...and then it happened. Somehow, I had forgotten several "parts" of the movie – parts that weren't so funny, but were offensive and just plain wrong. My mind had forgotten those scenes. To make matters worse, they were all in the opening scenes.

I had promoted this movie to everyone there and had just raved about it. I'll never forget sitting on the couch after a string of inappropriate language came out of the actors' mouths, and I distinctly remember everyone's head turning to look at me incredulously! That was a very embarrassing moment! Since then, I've learned that I need to be careful about what I watch. I also learned that I need to be cautious when recommending things! Also, since then, I've come to realize that when speaking to others about something that I want to encourage them to see or discover, *I don't want to remember merely a little bit of what the content is...I want to know it deeply and explicitly.*

That should not only apply to books and movies, but to anything that we seek to promote or speak of to another – including God! Many can speak about Him, and many can tell things that are true about Him, but as Christians, our call is not merely to know *about* Him, but instead to KNOW Him!

Where are you in your knowledge of the per-

son of God? I don't mean to ask what you

know about Him, but rather "Do you KNOW Him?" And what about the person of Jesus Christ? The Holy Spirit? How are you getting to know them better each day?

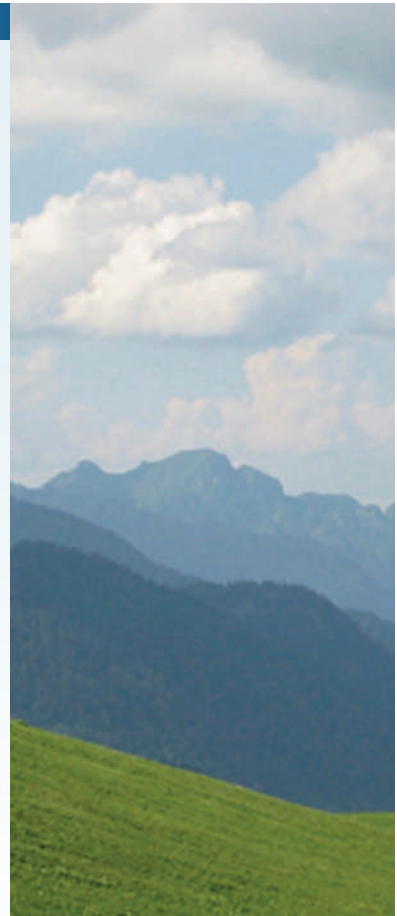
Nearly every relationship that we have requires an investment. We tend to pour ourselves into not merely being with the person, but studying them. We do this with our friends, spouses, and children. Just think about those times in which you want to treat someone who is special to you with a gift. You either need to hear from them personally what they want, or you have to study them in order to know. Either way, it requires knowledge of who they are, and not merely what they are about.

Interestingly, the first time in the Bible in which someone spoke *about* God, they stated these words, "Has God said...?" It was a challenge as to who God was, from the serpent, indwelt by Satan. Even Satan knows *about* God! Satan has verses of Scripture memorized. Satan can describe theology and doctrine to anyone that he desires, but he does not KNOW God. May that not be the case with us.

*While there are several ways in which you can seek to know God deeper, let me suggest one in particular – Sunday school. **This is a time in which we seek to know the person of God better as a community of believers.*** The purpose of this venue is that by the study of His Word and through the community of His body we might understand God better so that we might know Him, and begin to accelerate on the path to becoming like Him.

We have four great classes for adults this quarter, covering evangelism, obedience, discipleship, and the essence of who He is. Each class has the purpose of encouraging you to do more than just knowing *about* God. They are there to help you seek to *know Him*, and what He wants to do through you.

So what do you say? Why don't you pull up a chair, bring a Bible, and join in with the BRBC community on a journey that will bring about life change! I can highly recommend it – with no reservations or regrets!!!



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- Debbie Stevenson - Administrator
- Ryan Mottice - Layout, Design, & Editor

Administratively Speaking

by Debbie Stevenson

Usually my column is devoted to letting everyone know about service opportunities or covering behind-the-scene details of our congregation. This month I have both.

Creative Photo Organizer

You may have noticed that we have some blank walls in our building. For a number of reasons, the decorating committee has taken their time in planning and choosing the types of things we want on the walls, as well as wanting to be good stewards of finances in the process. The committee has purchased a quantity of frames and we have been collecting photos of various church activities. The goal is to create “areas” where church ministries can be highlighted. For example, we could have an area dedicated to activities of the men’s ministry, or the women’s retreat and Bible studies, or Vacation Bible School or youth. You may have already seen one area devoted to Awana. The committee is looking for someone with talent and time to take the digital photos we have, possibly take some additional ones, get prints made (reimbursement is available), and arrange them in the frames. Please contact me/Debbie Stevenson (debbie@brbible.org) if you are interested.

Emergency Medical Volunteers

From time to time we have had emergency medical needs at various activities or services. Although most needs have been skinned knees and thankfully only occasionally, the needs are real and could become more serious. To be more prepared in the future, we want to make a list of people within our congregation who are trained in CPR or First Aid and who are willing to make themselves available in these emergencies. Please contact me/Debbie Stevenson (debbie@brbible.org) if you are interested.

Parental “Paging”

Have you noticed the three-digit numbers that occasionally appear on the projection screens during the worship service? Ever wonder what they were and why someone usually gets up when the number appears? That’s our system for getting a parent out of the service if their child needs them in either the nursery or downstairs in the 2s/3s class or Heartland. So, parents with children in those classes...If you didn’t know that the sticker number you received when you checked in your child is also your paging number, be sure to take notice of those numbers on the projection screens next time. It may be yours! And teachers, in case you didn’t know about this system and wondered what you would ever do if you had to find a parent during class...Send someone to the 3rd level sound booth and give that child’s number to the techs, so they can put it up on the screen.

The Future of the Levite Cleaning Ministry

by Jeff Stocker

Over the past three years, we have been cleaning the facility on a volunteer basis. Due to the limited volunteers, the building was rarely getting completely cleaned and the burden was on just a few people and the deacons, so a new solution was needed. A line item was included in the 2009 budget and we have hired a PART TIME cleaning company. A company will come in and thoroughly clean the facility on Tuesdays every other week.

This will give the building a good regular and “deeper” cleaning...but every other week. With the use of the building on an almost daily basis, there is still the need to vacuum and spot-clean the other weeks. We will continue to clean during Awana for the school year (the summer schedule is yet to be determined). The cleaning will only need to be done every other week, and we will only clean the high need areas.

TRASH! Garbage removal is not part of the cleaning company’s package. Therefore we still need to empty trash on a regular basis. Since we don’t have a regular trash staff, it is helpful for individuals/groups to take care of trash when they see it needing to be emptied. Trash will also be emptied during the AWANA cleaning time and during the week.

This new schedule may all sound somewhat confusing, but one of my roles is to take care of the scheduling. The bottom line is that we should have a cleaner church and require less use of the volunteers (and deacons)...but we still need some help. If you are interested in being on the cleaning team schedule, please contact me/Jeff Stocker (jeffrey.e.stocker@aero.org or 540-338-8543).

Attendance

	2/1	2/8	2/15	2/22
Sunday School				
Adults	116	109	104	103
Children	114	132	115	116
Total	230	241	219	219
Worship				
Auditorium	445	398	386	393
Classes	42	44	40	49
Total	487	442	426	442

Getting to Know You: The Soltis Family

By Breana Paist



The Soltis family has been attending Blue Ridge Bible Church for ten years, which means that, by this time, you should be well-acquainted. However, please take heart if this is not the case, because you have stumbled upon a perfect way to “Get to Know Them”!

John and Dana Soltis moved with their children to a small neighborhood just south of Round Hill in November of 1997. Neither John nor Dana grew up in Virginia, but Dana was nearby in her hometown of Fort Washington, Maryland. Dana says she came from a “half-Christian home,” where her mother was a believer, but her father was not. She was raised attending the Free Methodist Church and accepted Christ as her Savior at a Free Methodist summer camp when she was thirteen. “I remember waking up in the middle of the night and getting my counselor to go to

the chapel with me to pray and give my life to the Lord,” Dana says. “It was a very spirit-moved experience.”

John, on the other hand, was raised in the Catholic church. He grew up in both Cleveland, Ohio and Kankakee, Illinois. When he was nineteen, a college friend invited John to church and after the service John surrendered his life to Christ. A mutual friend introduced John and Dana to each other at a party, which Dana says they now jokingly refer to as their last “Lonely Hearts Party” of 1988. John and Dana were later married in September of 1991.

Since then, John and Dana have lived in Greenbelt, Maryland, as well as Falls Church, Virginia, and are the parents of five children: Rachel, 15, can definitely be described as “artistic in many ways.” She also enjoys playing the violin in orchestra, singing, shopping, and BRBC’s youth group! Her 13-year-old brother Michael is fun loving and very active, enjoying baseball, soccer, skateboarding, and Boy Scouts. Samuel, 10, is an avid nature lover. He also enjoys baseball and Cub Scouts, and is soon to be a Boy Scout! Two years younger, eight-year-old Anna has a joyful spirit and loves to play the violin, sing, and play dress-up with her friends. Youngest of all is six-year-old Benjamin, a very affectionate little guy who likes playing with Legos and being a Tiger Cub in Cub Scouts.

As a family, they enjoy camping, visiting museums and historical sights, and reading books to each other in the evening. On her own, Dana enjoys sewing and sharing long walks with her dog in the early morning. She also loves to encourage her children, which will often mean coaching sports teams! So far, she has volleyball, soccer, and, occasionally, team mom under her belt. John enjoys reading, auto mechanics, and shooting at the Izaak Walton League. John is a consultant for Booz Allen Hamilton in Herndon, while Dana homeschools all five children in kindergarten through ninth grade.

As previously stated, the Soltis family has been attending Blue Ridge Bible Church since 1999. However in my, ahem, exclusive interview with the family I learned all about how they came to BRBC.

BRBC “Good News Banner” article-writer Breana Paist ;) **How did you come to BRBC?**

The Soltis Family: We had been attending McLean Bible Church while living in Falls Church and wanted to find a Bible church. We used the Loudoun Times Mirror to actually “find” the church. It was much easier to find a church than a house!

Why did you choose BRBC? The very solid Christian teaching and the friendliness of the congregation.

What do you like best about BRBC? The great teaching in Sunday School and from the pulpit, as well as the many opportunities for fellowship, and ways to get involved in ministry.

Are you involved in any ministries? Dana serves in Heartland and co-leads a Tenderfoot group for “American Heritage Girls.” John helps out in various ways with Cub Scout and Boy Scout merit badges and camping. We both attend the Wilcox small group on Wednesday nights and are very blessed by the teaching, discussions, and fellowship. *Thus concludes this section of our exclusive interview.*

Over the years, an important lesson that has stood out to John and Dana is that of perseverance. “While going through several employment and health challenges, James 1:2 has become an important verse for us. “Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know the testing of your faith develops perseverance,” Dana explains. Their family’s favorite, and often repeated, verse is found in Hebrews 3:15: “But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin’s deceitfulness.” Going right along with Hebrews 3:15 is a guiding thought in the Soltis household, which is to encourage and help each other out in our daily lives.

Missions Report: Building the Kingdom in India

by Bill Wilcox

Thank you to the members of Blue Ridge Bible Church collectively and to individual members who support my ministry at Smyrna Ministries International. You helped me to visit a Smyrna ministry partner in India during the first week in February. And what a ministry it is.

The man and wife leading the ministry are citizens of India who were called 32 years ago to reach Muslims for Christ in India. Their staff has seven members at headquarters and 55 field workers. The ministry started much more modestly.

They were both called in miraculous ways to minister to Muslims in India before they ever met. Then friends of both received divine instruction nearly simultaneously to bring them together in marriage at a time when they both adamantly desired to remain single. God had other plans.

After completing Bible college they married and moved to a predominantly Muslim area. Despite a complete lack of resources, they managed to eke out a living and slowly make friends among the Muslims. As Christians, their lives were often in danger, but they persisted in their efforts. After a decade in this location, the disturbances became so severe that Muslim friends came to their home one day while the ministry leader was at work and packed up their belongings. When he returned home, they told him that he and his wife and their two children must leave that night or they would be killed. He insisted that they stay, but his friends prevailed and they left for another location.

The Lord used those circumstances ultimately to expand their ministry through a significant portion of India. Our partner says that ministry to Muslims requires three things: life-long commitment, long-term goals, and sacrificial labor. His ministry is an ongoing example of those qualities. In the first 22 years of ministry, there was no fruit. Now 169 families of Muslim background believers worship in seven congregations.

The ministry includes personal evangelism, discipleship, church planting, Bible correspondence school for Muslims, vocational training centers for women, adult literacy programs, women and children's health centers, calamity relief and rehabilitation, summer training in Muslim ministry for Bible college students, advanced training for missionaries and pastors, reading rooms and study centers, literature ministry, and seminars and conferences for churches.

In addition to a better understanding of our partner ministry, my trip resulted in a much greater understanding about Muslim evangelism and about India. Muslims are 15% of the Indian population, but only 1-2% of the missions effort in India is directed toward Muslims. If you would like to hear more about the ministry in India in your home group or Sunday school, contact me at Smyrna Ministries International, 540-554-8188 or Bill@smyrnaministries.org. Check out our website at www.smyrnaministries.org



We are three-quarters of the way through our year! For those clubbers who are three-quarters of the way through their books by March 1st, there will be a special prize. Keep memorizing!

March 8th is "What Is Your Emergency? Night". Expect to see emergency vehicles and personnel on site that night for club tours. We will focus on God as our 911 emergency.

Our focus on March 15th is missions as we celebrate "Outta This World Night". We have had several clubbers go on mission trips and also some who intend to be missionaries in the coming year. We want to give them a chance to share how God is working in their lives and see how He is moving all over the world. PLEASE BRING MONETARY DONATIONS TO HELP SUPPORT OUR SISTER AWANA CLUB IN ROMANIA!

"Camo Night" is an opportunity to dress to be unseen! Break out the military gear and get ready to "blend in". Our goal is to always "hide" God's Word in our heart!

"Leaps and Bounds Night" will be full of hopping fun! It is a night of jumping ropes, leaping games, and hopping around. There will be prizes to those who can quote the verses from two or three sections or discoveries ago! Study up!

March Awana Calendar

March 1	3 rd quarter club attendance
March 8	What Is Your Emergency? Night
March 15	Outta This World Night
March 22	Camo Night
March 29	Leaps and Bounds Night

March 2009

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 Worship Practice Elders' Prayer Awana Newcomer Lunch	2 American Heritage Girls Scouts	3 Youth Shelter Outreach Group Fontaine Small Group Deacons	4 Children's Choirs Praise & Worship Practices Youth Group Wilcox SG Men's Bible Study	5 Outreach Committee	6 Fernandes Small Group	7 Brotherhood Men's Breakfast Shipe Small Group
8 Daylight Savings Time Begins Worship Practice Elders' Prayer Baptism Sunday Awana	9 American Heritage Girls Scouts Mom's in Prayer	10 Home School Support Group Youth Shelter Outreach Group Fontaine Small Group	11 Children's Choirs Praise & Worship Practices Youth Group Wilcox/Van der Vaart SGS Men's Bible Study Missions Committee	12 Smith Small Group	13 Women of Faith Fernandes Small Group	14 Brotherhood Men's Breakfast Shipe Small Group
15 Worship Practice Elders' Prayer Awana	16 Newsletter Deadline American Heritage Girls Scouts	17 Youth Shelter Outreach Group Fontaine Small Group	18 Children's Choirs Praise & Worship Practices Youth Group Wilcox SG Men's Bible Study	19	20 Fernandes Small Group Women's Retreat	21 Brotherhood Men's Breakfast Shipe Small Group Women's Retreat
22 Worship Practice Elders' Prayer Awana Women's Retreat	23 Scouts Purcellville Baptist Clothing Exchange	24 Youth Shelter Outreach Group Fontaine Small Group	25 Children's Choirs Praise & Worship Practices Youth Group Wilcox/Van der Vaart SGS Men's Bible Study	26 Smith Small Group	27 Ladies' Fellowship and Bible Study Fernandes Small Group	28 Brotherhood Men's Breakfast Shipe Small Group
29 Worship Practice Elders' Prayer Communion Awana	30 Moms in Prayer Scouts	31 Deacons Youth Shelter Outreach Group Fontaine Small Group				

Happy Birthday to...

1 Rebekah Mickahail
 1 Kent Mottice
 1 Greg Kendall
 2 Bob Mottice
 3 Todd Reynolds
 3 Julie Dodson
 5 Ashy Koshy
 6 Janice Jessberger
 8 Joe Garber
 8 Gabriel Lukasiak
 9 Emily Peacock
 10 Margo Lassiter

10 Amanda Rottman
 11 Randy Baer
 11 David McKenzie
 11 Jean Koshy
 12 Brian Lants
 12 Laurie Paist
 12 Daniel Blevins
 12 Sharon Zareva
 12 Brandi Benedict
 13 Cori Dowden
 13 David Derby
 13 Jonathan Blevins

14 Geoff Edling
 14 Grant Strickland
 14 Mary Ellen Tedrow
 15 Christa Garvis
 15 Abby Parker
 15 Anna Parker
 18 Tom Gossage
 18 John Richardson
 18 Kaitlyn Ziemnick
 18 Keston Miller
 19 Melissa Garvis
 19 Stan Watson

19 Marisa Dillmith
 19 Cade Reynolds
 20 Sophia DeFazio
 20 Michael Lung
 20 Todd Metzgar
 21 Callie MacKay
 21 Bill Parker
 22 Laurie Peacock
 22 Abigail Thomas
 22 Samuel Lung
 24 Suzannah Bozarth
 24 Philip van der Hoek

24 Brittani Benedict
 25 Ruth Kim
 25 Kevin Rottman
 26 Daniel van der Hoek
 27 Luke McHale
 27 Erin Watson
 27 Bijan Gilanshah
 29 Peter Farris
 29 Lydia Gilanshah
 31 Laura Ness

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1,000 Marbles

A man named Jeff wrote a story about a leisurely Saturday when he awoke and went downstairs with a steaming cup of coffee, and overheard a radio talk show. An older-sounding man with a golden voice was talking to a man named Tom. "Well, Tom, it sure sounds like you're busy with your job. I'm sure they pay you well, but it's a shame you have to be away from home and your family so much. Hard to believe a young fellow should have to work 60 or 70 hours a week to make ends meet. Too bad you missed your daughter's dance recital." He continued, "Let me tell you something, Tom, that has helped me keep a good perspective on my own priorities." And that's when he began to explain his theory of a "1,000 marbles."

"You see, I sat down one day and did a little arithmetic. The average person lives about 75 years. I know, some live more and some live less, but on average, folks live about 75 years. So, I multiplied 75 times 52 and I came up with 3900, which is the number of Saturdays the average person has in their entire lifetime. Now stick with me Tom, I'm getting to the important part. It took me until I was 55 years old to think about all this in any detail, and by that time I had lived through over 2800 Saturdays. I got to thinking that if I lived to be 75, I had only about a thousand of them left to enjoy. So I went to a toy store and bought every single marble they had. I ended up having to visit three toy stores to round up a thousand marbles. I took them home and put them inside of a large, clear plastic container right here in my workshop next to the radio. Every Saturday since then, I've taken one marble out and thrown it away.

"I found that by watching the marbles diminish, I focused more on the really important things in life. There is nothing like watching your time here on this earth run out to help you get your priorities straight. Now, let me tell you one last thing before I sign off with you and take my lovely wife out for breakfast. This morning, I took the very last marble out of the container. I figure if I make it until next Saturday then I've been blessed with a little extra time with my loved ones. It was nice to talk with you, Tom. I hope you get to spend more time with your loved ones, and I hope to meet you again someday. Have a good morning!"

According to the author, you could have heard a pin drop when he finished. Even the show's moderator didn't have anything to say for a few moments. I guess he gave us all a lot to think about. Jeff continues, "I had planned to do some work that morning, then go to the gym. Instead, I went upstairs and woke my wife up with a kiss. "C'mon honey, I'm taking you and the kids to breakfast." "What brought this on?" she asked with a smile. "Oh, nothing special," he said. "It's just been a long time since we spent a Saturday together with the kids. Hey, can we stop at a toy store while we're out? I need to buy some marbles."

Every day is a gift – make it count!