

Connecting National and Local Secretariats

CONEXIONES

Volume 23
Number 4
December 2005

Official Publication of the National Lutheran Secretariat, VdC

NLS 2006 Annual Meeting: July 27 — 30, 2006
Hosted by Southern California and the Central Valley, California

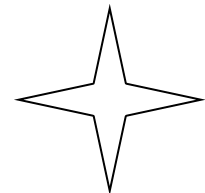


Greetings Brother and Sister Cristoistas and Cursilistas,

The Via de Cristo community of Southern California and the Central Valley graciously invite you to join us in sunny California next **July 27-30, 2006** for the National Lutheran Secretariat Annual Meeting 2006. We will be hosting you at the ocean view campus of Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, CA.

Loyola Marymount University is located just a few minutes from Los Angeles International Airport (LAX). We will make arrangements to pick you up from this airport only. Anyone that would like travel information may contact Martha Pflieger at pfleger@earthlink.net or call at (818) 884-0839. We are located within an hour to many southern California attractions: such as Disney, Universal Studios, Knott's Berry Farm, Hollywood, Magic Mountain water park and Amusement Park, just to name a few. Plan your summer vacation now for your trip out here.

Additional information and details can be found on page 3 of this newsletter.



CONEXIONES

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National Lutheran Secretariat

Conexiones-on-the-web

E-Mail Notification Request Form

E-Mail Notification

Please notify me by E-Mail when the latest edition of Conexiones has been posted on the NLS Web Page

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: & State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: (____) _____ Work Phone: (____) _____

Name of Secretariate _____

Position on Secretariat: _____

E-Mail Address: _____@_____

Write in large letters - be very clear, computers rely on EXACT information

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Volume 23
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Official Publication of the National Lutheran Secretariat, VdC

CONEXIONES is the official publication of the National Lutheran Secretariat, a national association of the Via de Cristo (Way of Christ) movement, representing over 84,000 who have participated in 43 movements across the U.S. Via de Cristo is a Lutheran expression of Cursillo®, a renewal movement developed within the Roman Catholic Church in the late 1940s. The Lutheran movement had its beginning in Florida and Iowa in 1972. The purpose of this publication is to inform all members of each NLS affiliated secretariat, ELCA bishops and the Directors of the Division for Ministry and the Division for Ministry in Daily Life about the activities of the National Lutheran Secretariat and its affiliated secretariats. Subscriptions to the above are free. If you know one of the above is not receiving CONEXIONES, call Larry Witham at the numbers listed on the side.

Subscriptions for the general public are \$6.00 per year, and are available by sending your name, complete mailing address, and phone numbers to CONEXIONES Treasurer, Jerry Lemcke, 1520 Fountain Drive, Oviedo, FL 32765-8688; 407-977-7568.

Material for CONEXIONES: If you have information for CONEXIONES, items, requests and/or information, address corrections, changes or additions - even inspirational bits - send them to the CONEXIONES Editor at the address on the side. DEADLINES: January 15th, April 15th, August 15th, and November 15th.



instrument and want to bring it please do. If not we may have something you can borrow. If you have music you would like to share please bring it. Remember to be aware of your licensing agreements.

Greetings Brother and Sister Cristoistas and Cursillistas,

As you plan your trip to California, we wanted to let you know a few things in advance to help you prepare.

1. Registration will start on Thursday, at 9:30 a.m. Orientation – will start promptly at 11:30 and then lunch at 12:30.
2. Since we will be housed at the coast there are no air-conditioners in the dorms, but blankets, a pillow w/case, sheets, two bath size towels and a washcloth will be provided. You may request another blanket at an additional cost. The dorms do have a coin operated laundry facility and elevators. Your registration cost will include Thursday lunch and dinner, Friday and Saturday, breakfast lunch and dinner, with only breakfast on Sunday.
3. Rooms are set up as doubles and you share a bath with the room next to you. You can request a roommate and you can request your bathroom neighbors. ***The campus policy is to room only women with women and men with men, bathroom sharing is set up the same way, the exception to this is married couples, we can room a married couple together and they will share a bath with another married couple.***
4. If you request a single room you need to include an additional **\$78.75** with your registration fee. If your flight arrangements cannot be made without bringing you out a day early you can request an extra night, with dinner and breakfast for **\$45**. (For a single add \$26.25 for a total of **\$61.25** for the extra night). You must have your registration in by the **June 16th** deadline in order to fill your request.
5. The campus recreation facility is open to all guest of the campus for a \$5.00 per day fee (Cash only). More information to come.
6. Our praise and worship leader is inviting all musicians to join in a music jam session nightly at the dorms during our hospitality hour. If you have an

7. We invite you to participate in the creation of a *National VdC Cookbook* by submitting your recipes with the recipe form included in this issue of the Conexiones. Let's make this a real national opportunity and all share our favorite recipes with each other. Pre-orders can be submitted with your recipes or you can purchase at the NLSAM 2006. (Just a hint – Pre-orders get a discount if paid in advance.)
8. Annual meeting T-Shirts will be available to pre-purchase on your registration form. Limited quantities will be available for purchase at the NLSAM 2006.
9. Registration form and schedule will be included in the next issue of Conexiones.
10. Any questions please contact **Nanette Helgager**, Asst Co-Chair/Registrar, at vdC12nanu@sbcglobal.net or **(818) 535-9980** (I am on Verizon).



NLS Board Minutes — Conference Call Sunday, September 18, 2005, 9:00 PM EST

President Larry Witham, Dave Erdman, Judy Laabs-Foss, Jerry Lemcke, Jan Long, Joe Nilsen, and Tracy Ziemke attended the meeting. Pastor Joe opened the meeting with prayer.

President's Report: Larry Witham welcomed everyone to the meeting. All had received agendas. Items of concern were discussed during the course of the meeting.

Vice President of Administration's Report: Tracy Ziemke received the 2005 Host Committee evaluation from Rainbow. A total of 103 evaluations were received from attendees at the annual meeting in Maryland. A brief summary was shared with printouts showing exact details to be complete for the mid-year meeting in California.

Mid-Year Meeting plans are to arrive in Los Angeles on Thursday by 2 p.m. Tracy has been in contact with California host committee and plans are in line with our needs at the moment. Larry received a message from Bob Northrup that if we still desire him to attend the mid-year meeting that he will make plans. It was decided that he does not need to attend the mid-year meeting due to California host committee having made arrangements to have a lot of computers available.

A financial report from the 2005 Annual Meeting has yet to arrive. There is money to cover the cost of Loyola MaryMount University, which will be paid soon. \$5,000.00 will be sent on to the South California host committee as seed money.

The question was raised if we would like to have audiocassette tapes for the blind of the Pilgrim's Guide produced and made available from the distribution center? A woman from the *Good News!* Community had done this for someone and she thought of the national. Do we also want to offer Braille versions along with cassette tapes? The board was in agreement that this would be a good idea. Jerry will ask his sister (certified Braille copier), if she would be interested in assisting to convert the Pilgrim's Guide into Braille. The next step would be to look at costs. Tracy will follow up.

Vice President of Outreach's Re-

port: Dave Erdman has been in touch with Judy Mowery from Notes of Grace. They commissioned their rector today for their co-ed weekend in March. Eastern Tennessee group is assisting and things are going well. \$250 start-up money, 100 Pilgrims Guides and Reunion Cards have been requested from the National. Formal request will be sent by e-mail to Jerry, who will then make the request of John Bradford. Judy Mowery's address will also be sent to Jerry for forwarding on to John.

Heart of America, Yellowstone, and Wisconsin people will be contacted in the near future. Possible new movement in Wisconsin is on the northeast side of state. Judy Laabs-Foss gave contact information of rectors for weekend in October with SonRise VdC Wisconsin at Camp Luther in Three Lakes WI not far from Rhinelander to Dave. (Dick Neitzel and Pat Herdt)

E-mail was received from Ron Millard (Past VP of Outreach) stating that most changes have been made on the VdC web site, except the one on the Outreach page. Updates will need to be made.

A Swedish Weekend is being planned for next summer in Latvia. It will be in English and held in Latvia with the team being ½ American and ½ Latvians, American rector; Marcis Diaga from Indianapolis was selected. Rector is not sure if any help or support is needed at this time. Latvian VdC website is www.ltn.lv/~vdc.

Secretary's Report: Jan Long reported that minutes from the Annual Meeting were posted on the website and are in the current issue of the *Conexiones*.

Our letterhead was updated with the new board members information and was distributed by e-mail. An envelope document was also formatted with the national's logo for use in correspondence.

A copy of the database has been received from Lucy Hightower to be kept for a back up. Thanks to Lucy for all of her help, guidance, support and servant heart.

Palanca posters that remained at the annual meeting were mailed to their respective movement.

Copies of acceptance letters from Notes of Grace, Tennessee and Heart of Amer-

ica, Kansas have been received and filed.

Treasurer's Report: Jerry Lemcke reported that a check for \$500 was received. Contact was made with other movements who have yet to pay 2004/2005 annual dues.

Jerry states that Thrivent is now paying 3% interest and he will be checking into the flexibility of the account in hopes of transferring some monies from our checking account that is currently paying 1% interest. The board agreed that if the monies would be readily available, then Jerry should go ahead with Diane's suggestion. The address change with Thrivent has been finalized.

Notices will be sent by e-mail to all treasurers regarding the 2005/2006 NLS dues.

Spiritual Director's Report: Pastor Joe Nilsen is in the process of revising the Spiritual Director's manual. Spiritual Director's nationwide will be asked to give their input and evaluation of the manual. Some specific Spiritual Directors will be asked to participate in the revision.

Newsletter Editor's Report: Judy Laabs-Foss states that the current newsletter is posted. There was a little bit of a delay in the posting of it on the web site.

Web Page Coordinator's Report: Bob Northrup stated that he would gladly reply to any inquiries. He will make arrangements to attend the mid-year meeting if we feel it is necessary. Consensus of the group is that there is not a strong need for him to be there. He is still maintaining the web site.

Distribution Center: John Bradford had Pilgrims Guides printed and now has a 2-3 year supply on hand. Also has an estimated 1-year supply on reunion cards.

John would like to have the price list reviewed, changes made, and approved. Jerry will forward the price list that was received by e-mail for review at the mid-year meeting.

More items need to be printed - the Spiritual Director's manuals are one of

those items. Pastor Joe envisions the new Spiritual Director manual to be a lot thinner and available by next spring.

There is a concern with funding. Jerry will call and inquire about his concerns and what it is that he is requesting from us. The Center has been self-sufficient to date.

Database:

Lucy Hightower has sent a copy of the database to both Jan and Larry for back-up purposes.

Palanca Coordinator:

Paul Sabatier-Smith had nothing to report at this time.

Old Business:

Travel Expenses: Discussion was held regarding mileage for travel expenses. Suggestion was made that travel expenses should not exceed the cost of airfare plus mileage to the airport. Policy needs to be drawn up for review and approval at the mid-year meeting. Jerry will send a recommendation of a policy that is clear, stating "x" cents per mile for transportation travel.

New Business:

Travel Plans for Mid-Year Meeting: A request was made for travel reservations to be copied and e-mailed to the group so that we are aware of the plans.

Recommendation for Future Annual Meetings: A suggestion was made by Larry to make name badges at next year's annual meeting more readable. Names should be in large print, especially the first name.

Newsletter Deadline Dates: Nov 15, Jan. 15, Apr 15, and Aug 15. Discussion was held if we want the newsletter to read a certain month when it comes out the month after? All were in agreement that the e-mail notification should continue to read, "The current month's newsletter is available". Suggestion was made to put the next month on the actual newsletter itself. All were in agreement.

Visionary Committee: Discussion was held regarding the Visionary Committee's report and request given at the 2005 Annual Meeting in Emmitsburg regarding a position for a National Coordinator. Recommendations and an action plan were made.

Youth group: Discussion was held re-

garding the request made at the Annual Meeting to consider supporting Youth Movements. Contacts will be made in an effort to gather information that would provide information at the business meeting at the 2006 Annual Meeting.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Tracy and Larry closed the meeting in prayer.

Water is thicker than Blood

As I write these words I am sitting in the surgical waiting area of a hospital in Nashville. A brother in Christ was entrusted a short team ago to a team of surgeons. His wife is ill and not even aware of the seriousness of his situation. His children are not here either, too busy with other priorities in their lives. And so, another friend and I are his "family" today.

We sat with him for hours while his surgery was delayed, filling the time with light-hearted banter as well as moments of deep sharing. We prayed with him to the One who will never leave him or forsake him. We squeezed his hand as he was wheeled through the doors marked "No Admittance", but his brother Jesus went right on in with him. What a privilege to be "family" today.

Years ago I came across a play on words of a familiar expression. It said, "Water is thicker than blood." In this world of sick spouses and preoccupied children, impersonal bureaucracy, and institutional procedures, sometimes the water of Baptism is the most powerful bond between us.

A common refrain after a Via de Cristo weekend is, "I can't believe I could become so close to people I didn't even know three days ago." It is the work of the Holy Spirit that helps us realize that in Christ we have a connection to one another that makes us family in the deepest sense. Christian Community is the family that LOVE builds. This is why it is so important for us to maintain personal, healthy, caring relationships with one another (a la reunion groups) after we experience our weekends.

Our brother will come out of the operating room soon. When he finally returns home his Christian family will surround him with love and TLC. We are related in Christ. Perhaps one day he will sit at my bedside. I am grateful for my secure place in the family... with you.

Joe Nilsen,
NLS Spiritual Director



Seasons Come and Seasons Go

It has quickly turned to winter in Minnesota and soon the Holidays will be here, along with the snow, creating our winter wonderland. I'm not sure about you, but I look forward to the change of seasons. Each one has their special qualities, along with some challenges too. Like seasons, there are life transitions for each of us. Some changes we look forward to and others we may struggle with, and then there are those surprises. I find that first Christmas held one of the biggest surprises for our world. Who would have dreamed that God would send his only Son into the world to save us?

As a Christian, we know we have a Father who wants to be a part of the changes in our life. When I allow God to come in to the seasons in my life, he surprises me with a peace that passes all understanding. I pray that this Christmas will hold a new meaning of excitement for you. Take time to embrace that small little baby in your heart this year. Jesus was and still is God's special gift to the world!

Judy Laabs-Foss,
Conexiones Editor



2006 VdC National Cookbook

Pre order Form

I would like to pre-order copies of the National VdC Cookbook at \$10 each, regular price \$12 (to receive discount payment must be included with order). Additional Cookbooks will be available for purchase at NLSAM 2006.

Please send copies to the following address:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip _____

_____ Number of Cookbooks pre-ordering X \$10 = _____

Shipping and Handling - \$3 X Number of cookbooks = _____
(No shipping charge if you pick up at NLSAM 2006)

TOTAL = _____

Please make all checks payable to: NLS Annual Meeting 2006

Enclose with recipe form and mail to:

Nanette Helgager
6504 Farralone Avenue
Woodland Hills, CA 91303-2411



Recipe Type

- Appetizers, Beverages
- Main Dishes
- Miscellaneous

- Soups, Salads
- Breads, Rolls
- Other _____

- Vegetables
- Desserts

Name of Recipe _____

Ingredients

Measuring abbreviations to use: c. = cup; tsp. = teaspoon; Tbsp. = Tablespoon; qt. = quart;
pt. = pint; oz. = ounce; pkg. = package; lg. = large; sm. = small

Method

Submitted by: _____

VdC Movement and State: _____

President's Report

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

2005 is almost over and it has been another busy year for your NLS Board. Since we shared three wonderful days together in Emmittsburg, Maryland in July, your Board has been busy preparing for the future of Via de Cristo. We have listened to your comments, thoughts, ideas, and hopes for our movement in the coming years and I believe you will be pleased when you see the progress.

We have carefully reviewed our notes from the business sessions of our past annual meeting and have already made plans to implement a number of your suggestions. We hope to make next years meeting in Los Angeles another mountaintop experience!

We met November 3rd to the 6th with next years Host Committee in California and saw the plans for next July take shape. We developed our agenda, selected topics for the forums and seminars, and are currently lining up the speakers. The theme "Know, Grow, Go" is based on 2 Peter 3:18 and just as Peter urged his readers to grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, we will be providing you another opportunity to grow in His grace. You don't want to miss this one!

The beautiful campus of Loyola Marymount University (LMU) will be less than a ten-minute ride if you arrive at Los Angeles International Airport (LAX). The campus sits high above the city of Los Angeles, on a hill that overlooks both the city and the Pacific Ocean. Its palm tree lined walkways has all of the buildings we will be using within a short and easy walking distance. The distance from the dorms where we will be staying to the dining facility is the furthest walking distance, and it's only about 200 yards!

The Host Committee is well organized and plans to make your stay in the Los Angeles area a comfortable, rewarding, and fun experience. Those from the east may want to consider some additional vacation time while in California. There are many interesting places to visit within an hours drive; including Disneyland, Knott's Berry Farms, the wine country, and Hollywood. Mark your calendars now for **July 27 -30, 2006** as you don't want to miss this gathering.

As we enter into this Advent season, take time to share with family members and loved ones. Share our love for Christ by being the face and voice of Christ as He intends us to be. Reflect on all He has done for us and celebrate His birth with joy. May you have a blessed Christmas and happy New Year.

Larry Witham, NLS President

News from Bolivia

I recently received an email from Sheldon Groff that I want to share portions of with you. I ask that as you read this, say a prayer for their ministry and needs. May God continue to bless all in the mission field!

We have just finished two great weekends of Camino de Cristo in which we had 25 women participants and 30 men participants. There were 4 women and 5 men from Venezuela. Next year there is a possibility of beginning Camino de Cristo in Venezuela with probably a team of 25 people, consisting of hopefully 10 or more from the United States, 9 from Venezuela and probably 6 from Bolivia. Sharon and I will serve as rector/rectora for the two weekends # 1 and # 2. In my mind I am hoping all team members can arrive in Venezuela one week before the two weekends so we can form community, hear each of the Rollos and tie together any loose ends and get set up to receive the participants. I am excited and yet realize success in this depends on the Lord, not on frail human beings.

This year our two Camino de Cristo weekends were so blessed with palanca letters from areas in the world from where we never have received palanca before. Besides the team manuals that I translated from Minnesota Via de Cristo about three years ago, we have "The Essential Elements of Camino de Cristo, and also the National Council Manual.

I have copied all the material I have on the computer for the leaders in Venezuela so I hope they will copy all the manuals for their use. One concern I also am having difficulty with is convincing pastors from the IELB, Iglesia Evangelico Luterano Boliviano synod to attend. It is the largest Lutheran synod here but we have very few pastors from there.

We had our radio-TV station of the mission do a video of parts of the weekend so I can use this to show pastors of that synod. I have also made up a pastors packet to present to them. Our pastor suggested we have an evening get-together for them to show this video and maybe serve food with it.

May God bless you in your ministry.

*In His love and service,
Sheldon Groff
Camino de Cristo of Bolivia
La Paz, Bolivia*

Merry Christmas



Vice President of Administration

Report on July 2005 to July 2006

What a wonderful blessed moment in time at Mount St. Mary's! The university was a beautiful setting and the Grotto was an extra bonus that many people were able to enjoy. From the weather breaking to the final good-byes, our bodies, spirits and minds were fed so we could leave ready to cast our nets!

The host committee did a wonderful job; they worked hard, played hard, stayed up late and rose early every day – just for us. All too quickly it came to an end and we are now looking to Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, July 27 – 30, 2006. Clear your calendars now and make it part of a great vacation!

We received 103 evaluations, which was a 54% return. Thank you for your efforts. 55 were from delegates, 35 from visitors and of those 49 were first time attendees. The rest of the evaluations came from the board; host committee and some were not marked.

The forms have been processed and, yes, we do “listen” to the comments – some of which are very instrumental in preparing the next host committee, some help with programming, some are really site specific, others cause me to wonder if we provide too much information so that the attendees cannot sift through to find what they need or are expectations too high? By in large the findings were that the speakers were good, the topics appreciated and you liked having a choice of seminars. In fact, the majority of you, the NLS body, rated this meeting very good to excellent in literally all areas. However it has been noted, the meal situation was a little bumpy to begin with and the housing had a few glitches. Hopefully you have been assured that the board is addressing issues regarding Saturday's business meeting and it was longer than any of us wanted. Worship received high ratings, airport transportation was difficult in some cases and several people still could not find the Palanca Chapel. However 92% rated the meeting rewarding and desire to return.

At the 2006 Annual Meeting we want to be more intentional about 4th day topics for the individual, your communities and Secretariats. We will have an informational table set up for youth movements, and the chance to meet with other Secretariats that are in your region (more on that later). You will see more financial information for local Treasurers in regard to tax form 990 and possible new laws, and we will offer a website informational seminar.

We will again have more seminars than any one person can go to, so we ask you to rate them on your registration forms. Please pay attention to the registration forms and try to get someone from your Secretariat to

attend the annual meeting with you to cover the information. The registration forms and explanations of seminars will be in the January newsletter and on the website to be downloaded.

May Christ be at the center of your holiday season!

Tracy (Ziemke) Schmidlin, VP Administration



Vice President of Outreach

Giving birth in far away places

It seems appropriate at this time to be thinking of Christmas and remembering Jesus birth that occurred in a far away place from here. In Via de Cristo new birth is very important and it is the subject of my article this month.

Over the years the Via de Cristo outreach has included several foreign countries. Some of you have been involved with the birth of these “children” in far away places. The children have grown and two, Latvia and Bolivia, are planning the birth of their own child.

Latvia Via de Cristo is a strong, healthy, vibrant God-provided movement. They are planning to give birth to Via de Cristo in Sweden. The weekend date is **August 3-6, 2006** and will be held in Burtnieki, Latvia. It will be in English since many Swedes know English. The team is expected to be about half Americans and half Latvians. They are asking for help in the form of prayer, volunteers, and financial contributions.

Leaders in Bolivia and Venezuela have begun the planning to give birth to Via de Cristo in Venezuela. Nine people from Venezuela recently attended the Bolivia Camino de Cristo. No weekend date has been set yet, but up to 10 Spanish-speaking people from the US may be needed for the first weekend. Minnesota Via de Cristo has committed to match dollar for dollar any contributions up to a total of \$1500 towards the Venezuela startup.

Please pray for these Via de Cristo startup ventures in Europe and South America. If you are able to help either of these births, please contact me for further information.

Dave Erdman
NLS vice president of outreach



NLS Distribution Center

DeColores from Salt Lake City, Utah

Your Distribution Center has been operating here for almost nine months and we are happy to be able to serve you. We have dedicated an entire bedroom to the storage of N.L.S. printed material. To us every N.L.S. order is an important order so we do our best to process every order as accurately and promptly as we can. We have actually learned to like the Quick Books Software we use to do our accounting, inventory, & billing.

The best way for you to order materials from us is through the N.L.S. Web Site.

<http://www.viadecristo.org/resources/supplies/index.htm>

If you have lost your secretariat's ordering code number, please email me with your secretariat's name, phone number, and the state you are located in.

We can also accept phone orders at 801-561-0122 if you don't have computer access. Please call after 2 PM Mountain Time, or on weekends.

All orders are shipped by USPS "Media Mail" rate unless otherwise specified. As you may know, Priority Mail is costly and FedEx Overnight is very expensive.

For those who want to order the **new lay talk outlines**, we sell them on a CD Disk that also contains several other products on it such as **Leadership 101 & 201**. Specify disk **NLS-001** in the "comments" box at the bottom of the order form. Disks are \$10 each.

All of the available Annual Meeting forums are on a second CD Disk called **NLS-002**. These are in **text format** and include forums from 1991 through 1999. They also sell for \$10 each.

All of the NLS VHS videotapes have been converted to **DVD Disk format** and sell for \$15 each. Specify these in the "comments" box of the order form or call us.

That about does it, other than "Get your orders in early, before your weekends start".

Merry Christmas and see you in the New Year!
John & Carol Bradford

SECRETARY NOTES

A time for thanks and a time to prepare

Autumn is one of my favorite times of the year. The trees here in Michigan begin to change in the middle of October and are full of color throughout the entire month into November. It is a wonderful reminder to me of how God's love and grace is so colorful. As I see the leaves full of red, orange, yellow, green and gold I can't seem to stop singing. The chicken song for some reason, keeps repeating in my head!

There are many blessings that God sends my way each and every day. My husband has recently been blessed with a job that he enjoys going to after 10 months of unemployment and

no income. My sons are doing well in their careers. One of my daughter (-in-laws) was promoted to the lead position in her department at the hospital. God gave all these blessings so that I could continue working part-time at my church, giving me the flexibility to perform duties as your NLS Secretary and to be with my 2 grandchildren more. He saw my needs and has blessed me. He truly is an awesome God!

Colder weather is inevitable this time of year though. It tells me that it is time to prepare. Time to bring out the warmer clothing and make sure the house and cars are running properly.

It also reminds me to prepare myself for that other wonderful blessing in my life - The birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. More time on bended knees, and continuing on with the Bible Study even when it is the busy time of year. It's not too much of a hardship. After all, He comes complete with all the "trimmings". All of His Father's Love, Grace, Joy, Peace, Hope, Strength, and best of all, Eternal Life with our triune God, our creator, and the lover of our souls. Just for us!

Have a very wonderful *Christmas*, complete with all of His blessings.



Jan Long



TREASURER'S REPORT

Greetings to all and blessings on your holiday celebrations,

I hope to be speaking to all the treasures by phone prior to the annual meeting, not just to remind you of annual dues, but to try to develop a relationship with you as a fellow servant of Christ and to provide any assistance or information you might need. This will also be a good way to update the roster of treasurers in case of changes..

Corporate Registrations

This is a good time of the year to confirm the status of your corporate registration in your state of incorporation. Many states require a yearly filing of your corporate registration. Diane Purcell can help you with any information you might need.

Financial Position as of November 15th 2005

Cash balance - General fund	\$ 7,589.29
Cash balance - NLS savings	\$ (0)
Cash balance - Distribution Center	\$ 3,660.00
Investment (Thrivent)	\$ 15,104.49
Total assets	\$ 26,353.78

Net assets

Unrestricted - General Fund	\$ 7,589.29
Unrestricted - Distribution Center	\$ 3,660
Designated Restricted	\$ 15,104.49
Total Net Assets	\$ 26,353.78

(For Internal Use Only)

Blessings,
Jerry Lemcke, NLS Treasurer

Palanca!!!

For Future weekends

All pending weekends for the next six months from publication will be printed in each Conexiones.

- Jan. 2006 - Minnesota: **Lutheran VdC of Minnesota**, Men's #462, Jan. 19-22, Women's #463, Jan. 26-29, Send palanca to: Lenore Jesness 899 Sherwood Ave. St. Paul, MN 55106-1825
- Jan. 2006 - Florida: **Sonshine VDC**, Mixed #95: Jan. 26-29, Send palanca to: Ginny Esch 2360 SW 70th Terrace Davie, FL 33317
- Feb. 2006 - North Carolina: **Eastern NC VDC**, Mixed #55 Feb. 9-12, Send palanca to: Vicki McCombs PO Box 760 Rockwell, NC 28138
- Feb. 2006 - South Dakota: **South Dakota VDC**, Men's Feb. 9-12, & Women's Feb.16-19 Send palanca to: Margaret Svitak 86238 559th Ave. Randolph, NE 68771-6004
- Feb. 2006 - Minnesota: **Lutheran VdC of Minnesota**, Men's #464, Feb. 16-19, Women's #465: Feb. 23-26, Send palanca to: Lenore Jesness 899 Sherwood Ave. St. Paul, MN 55106-1825
- March 2006 - Wisconsin: **Wisconsin SonRise VDC**, Men's #53 Mar. 2-5, & Women's #54: Mar. 9-12, Send palanca to: Richard Pettitt 772 Dogwoods Dr. Beloit, WI 53511
- March 2006 - Minnesota: **Lutheran VdC of Minnesota**, Men's #466, Mar. 9-12, Women's #467: Mar. 16-19, Send palanca to: Lenore Jesness 899 Sherwood Ave. St. Paul, MN 55106-1825
- March 2006 - Missouri/Illinois: **River's Edge VDC**, Men #6: Mar. 16-19, Send palanca to: Marylee Howard 1225 No. State St. Litchfield, IL 62056
- March 2006 - Tennessee: **TN Lutheran VdC**, Mixed (coed) #16: Mar. 16-19, Send palanca to: Bill McComb 21 Meadowlark Cr. Fairfield Glade, TN 37931
- March 2006 - Tennessee: **Notes of Grace VdC**, Mixed (coed) #1: Mar. 23-26, Send palanca to: Bill McComb 21 Meadowlark Cr. Fairfield Glade, TN 37931
- March 2006 - Washington: **VdC of Western Washington**, Coed #2: Mar. 30-April 2, Send palanca to: Jan Ozias 23609 NE 25th Way Sammamish, WA 98074
- April 2006 - Florida: **Sonbeam VDC**, Men's #47: Apr. 20-23 & Women's #47 April 27-30: Send palanca to: Skip Young 2885 10th Ave. No. St. Petersburg, FL 33713
- April 2006 - Florida: **Sonshine VDC**, Women's #94: Apr. 20-23, Send palanca to: Ginny Esch 2360 SW 70th Terrace Davie, FL 33317
- May 2006 - Florida: **Heart of Florida VDC** Women's #32: May 4-7, Send palanca to: Jan Fry % St John Lutheran Church, 1600 S. Orlando Ave Winter Park, FL 32789
- May 2006 - Minnesota: **Lutheran VdC of Minnesota**, Single Men's #468, May. 18-21, Single Women's #469: May 25-28, Send palanca to: Lenore Jesness 899 Sherwood Ave. St. Paul, MN 55106-1825

PALANCA NEWS

Greetings in the name of our Lord from Florida,

Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

2005 has certainly been a Year of Overflow. We have experienced many weekends and have hundreds of new Cursillistas in our Communities. Join in prayers of thanksgiving with me for all God has blessed us with this year. Our palanca is a part of the mystery of Faith. We provide prayers and sacrifices just because we know that we know our God will provide.

In reading a daily devotional from "The Purpose Driven Life", I was reminded of times in my youth playing ball, when someone from the sidelines would yell, "kick the ball" or "hit the ball". Sometimes I would kick, sometimes I would hesitate. In that split second of hesitation, I would miss the opportunity. How many times in our daily walks, are we presented with an opportunity to pray for another? How many times do we hesitate and miss (or forget) the opportunity? Prayer is simply a conversation with our Lord and savior - our Brother. How easy it is to talk with our close friends on Earth, but sometimes we hesitate to talk with our Brother in Heaven. Let's take time today and everyday to talk with our "Best Friend" and lift up our families, friends and communities.

As we approach the Holiday Season, plans are being made for the 2006 VDC Weekends. We have received information on some of those Weekends and know that more are forthcoming. We encourage you to send in the information from your Secretariat, regarding Weekends and Palanca Coordinators, so it may be added to the Palanca pages of the National Lutheran Secretariat Website. Also, we encourage you to communicate with one another concerning the Weekends, offer Prayers and send the visible expressions of those prayers and sacrifices. Through these "levers" of prayer, the Lord will be faithful and bless us to be a blessing to others.

Blessings, YBIC and Ultreya!
Paul Sabatier-Smith <><
NLS Palanca Coordinator

THE CHRISTMAS STORY



And she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone around about them; and they were terrified. And the angel said unto them,

"Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger." Luke 2:7-12



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— NLS Executive Board

NLS Distribution Center

John Bradford, Director Phone: (801) 561-0122
E-Mail: joab@aros.net

Annual Meeting Items Available

All the material that was available at the 2005 Annual Meeting along with video tapes can be obtained from the Distribution Center. Order forms for all NLS materials can be found on the web page.



Conexiones Subscription

About 200 of you are choosing to obtain the Conexiones through mail delivery. The suggested annual donation is **\$6.00** and can be sent to the treasurer, address is found on page two. Please help us to be good stewards of these materials and we thank you in advance for your payment. Again if you would prefer to receive an email notification, just fill out the E-Mail Notification Request Form that can be found on the web.



Order Forms

In this newsletter you will not find order forms for our NLS materials or tapes and the numerous crosses from Symbols, Inc. Those forms can be found on the web and can be downloaded as needed. A smaller version of the email request on page two is a reminder to sign up, but that too can be downloaded off the web. This change has been done to continue to be good stewards of our resources, since it will save us and you time and money in printing costs. We are aware that not everyone has access to the web and email service. If you are in need of either form, we encourage you to talk to someone in your secretariat who can obtain a copy of that form for you. Don't hesitate to contact the board with any of your questions in this change. Their address, phone numbers and email addresses can be found on page two. Thank You!

Visited our Web Site Lately?



<http://www.viadeCRISTO.org>

Webmaster: Bob Northrup

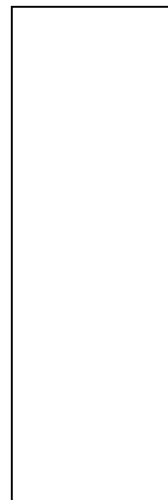
CONEXIONES-ON-THE-WEB

Are you interested in saving the NLS money? Please sign up to receive the E-Mail Notification by filling out the E-Mail Notification Request Form. How this works is that you will receive an email notification when the latest edition of the Conexiones has been posted on the NLS Web Page. You then can view the newsletter at your leisure and chose to copy it.



Judy Laabs-Foss
4495 Margaret Street
White Bear Township, MN 55110-3773

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