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## A HEALTHIER CLERGY WALK SOME REFLECTIONS ON HEALTHIER LIVING IN CHRIST

complete lack of healthy work boundaries that include “legislated” time off. Simply put, if you want to thrive in your ministry vocation, you’d better have clear and regular time off and time away from your ministry duties! In this study, it was mentioned that many of the clergy subjects reported actually getting away from their locale, away from their ministry and even their homes, because the intrusions, even in their homes, was difficult to avoid! Please keep this idea in mind when considering time off!

**Hobbies:** Can you believe it? Healthy clergy apparently indulge in various hobbies! This, of course, would be subsumed under **time off**, since one would have a very difficult time engaging in a hobby while at work! A hobby (in case some of you out there have forgotten!) is “a favorite occupation, topic, etc., pursued for amusement (American College Dictionary, 1966, p. 575).” Golf, hiking, crafts, painting, photography, recreational reading (not theology or other such reading, please!), fishing, collecting antiques, model railroading, travel, knitting, sewing, collecting anything, hunting and skiing are but a few of the myriad possibilities found in hobbies. Truly, just about anything can be a hobby if it is pursued

**for amusement.** It is remarkably notable that a very high number of clergy who come to Marble Retreat report **no hobbies.** If pressed, most all of these folks can recount some kind of hobby during childhood or adolescence, but most all have since abandoned this very healthy practice in the interest of devotion to ministry! Hobbies are crucial to one’s healthy existence! Just like the other healthy coping strategies/activities, the emotional and psychological diversion that comes from hobbies actually makes it possible for people to function at their vocations more efficiently! The absence of hobbies, those activities/interests beyond one’s job, results in poor work performance and excessive degrees of stress. To state it simply: “You need a hobby! Find something!”

**Exercise:** This is one of the most heavily emphasized activities for healthy living that comes out of the medical and psychological health communities. There is a growing field of research supporting the presence of regular physical exercise for humans as a source of healthy living and coping. This is even more crucial for clergy! Consider the following quote from the Wheaton College study: “Various sports and recreational activities provide balance to the sedentary work and interpersonal demands of pastoring (McMinn et al, p. 20)”. The most recent federal health guidelines are now suggesting one hour of physical exercise daily. Walk, run, ride, x-country ski, dance (if your faith traditional allows!), bowl, horseback ride, golf, or combine any of these or other physical activity to get your heart rate up for a sustainable period of time. You’ll be better for it!

**Marital Relationship:** While not intended to discriminate against singles, divorcees or those who have been widowed, most clergy are, in fact, married. There is a significant amount of research to support the notion that most humans are healthier and happier if married. A healthy, reasonably fulfilling and vibrant marriage is a critical component to a healthy coping style for married clergy. The absence of this, of course, is most common to the couples who come to Marble Retreat, often struggling with both their ministry and their marriage. Make sure your marriage relationship is healthy, nurtured by you and experienced by you as nurturing. Anything less is almost a guarantee for high levels of stress, burnout and ministry failure.

In conclusion, we can observe that prayer, time off, hobbies, exercise and a fulfilling marital relationship can all serve to provide excellent coping for the unavoidable stressors common to the vocation of ministry. We here at Marble Retreat strongly encourage all of these practices in the dear folks who come seeking rest and restoration. There are, no doubt, many other factors that make for a “healthier clergy walk”, but these five factors are strongly supported by the Wheaton College study, by Scripture and by common sense! Our prayer for you who read this, clergy or otherwise, is that God will inspire you to embrace these healthy habits.

### DO YOU KNOW ANYONE?

Do you know anyone who would like to get our newsletter? Please, e-mail us or use the enclosed envelope to notify us of any new addresses you would like to add.

...prayer, time off, hobbies, exercise and a fulfilling marital relationship can all serve to provide excellent coping for the unavoidable stressors common to the vocation of ministry.

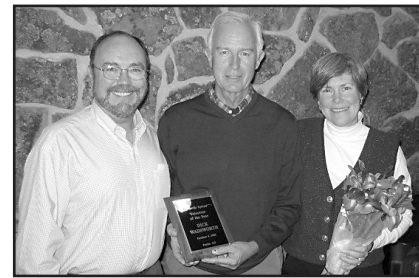
## CONGRATULATIONS To DICK WADSWORTH Volunteer of the Year

We were pleased to surprise Dick Wadsworth with the “Volunteer of the Year” award at our October 2004 Board Meeting. Dick has dedicated countless hours to the smooth operations of our computer systems. We are so blessed to have someone of Dick’s expertise in our office. Dick is an Associate Professor of Management, teaching courses for the



University of Texas MBA on-line program. He has been on faculty at University of Texas at San Antonio for 30 years. Along with his vast knowledge, he brings a godly patience and kindness that makes him such a pleasure to have around.

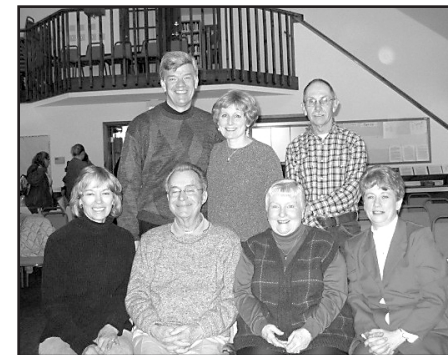
*Thank you Dick; we wouldn’t be running smoothly without you!*



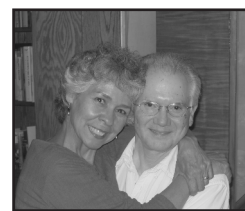
Steve Cappa, Dick Wadsworth, Patti Cappa

## VOLUNTEERS – A TREMENDOUS ASSET

Pictured to the right is a group picture of some of our local volunteers. They have done so much to keep Marble Retreat in fine form. They help with our mass mailings, proof-read our newsletters, make the accommodations comfortable for our Marble Retreat Fellows, helped us move our office and even came to stack firewood at our campus! We have a few dear people who have volunteered to be on our prayer team. By the way, it is not too late to be involved in that. Just e-mail, call or write us and, we will fill you in. We are so thankful to our many volunteers for God’s provision by their partnership with us in providing a safe haven for the clergy who find themselves at Marble Retreat.



Seated: Paula Henderson, Ed Stamsek, Enola Stamsek, Joyce Yoder.  
Standing: Bruce Gledhill, Connie Gledhill, Paige Meredith



Eva & Henry Villarreal

### Henry’s Creamy Tomato Bisque Soup

1 Tb. unsalted butter  
1/4 cup chopped yellow onion  
1 16oz can crushed tomatoes  
1/2 Tb. fennel seeds

1/2 tsp. anise seeds  
1 tsp. sea salt  
1/2 tsp. freshly ground pepper  
1 large cooked potato, mashed

The potato provides the “cream” in this recipe. Use one large potato, wash, peel, and cut into small pieces and boil in unseasoned water. When very soft, pour off most of the water (save some just in case you need the water to make the smashed potato “creamier”). Now, mash the potato to make the “cream”. Crush anise and fennel seeds in a mortar with a pestle or use a spice grinder. Melt butter in large saucepan over medium heat; add chopped onion and sauté covered, stirring occasionally until lightly brown, 6-8 minutes. Add crushed tomatoes, freshly ground anise and fennel seeds, salt and pepper, heat to simmering and cook 25 minutes. Stir in smashed cooked potatoes and cook a little longer. Serve hot. Makes 4 servings.

## A LOCAL CHURCH’S PARTNERSHIP WITH MARBLE RETREAT



Both by our words and our example we want to encourage other churches to support Marble Retreat financially. We are located just a few miles from Marble Retreat, and over the last 25 years our congregation has seen the fruitfulness of this ministry, and we have seen the dedication and effectiveness of the staff. Since we are close by, we have often had the opportunity to work in

hands-on ways like helping get mailings out. But we also realize Marble Retreat needs our financial support to be able to continue their wonderful ministry that benefits churches just like ours and yours. So this year we are giving 5% of our annual budget to Marble Retreat. Perhaps you are not able to give at that level, but we invite you to join us at the level appropriate for you in being a church that gives regular financial support to the ministry of Marble Retreat.

Pastor Bruce Gledhill and the Elders  
Church at Redstone

## ASKING FRIENDS FOR HELP GETS MORE DIFFICULT

Asking for financial gifts in support of our ministry is always a challenge for many of us involved directly in the ministry work itself. The fact of the matter is it makes many of those who actually perform “the very soul of the work” down right uncomfortable. But having just completed fifteen years at three Christian liberal arts colleges where I was the Vice-President in charge of fund raising, I can tell you it’s a vital part of the ministry and yes, it is difficult, it is tough and uncomfortable at times but it is the right thing to do. For us at Marble Retreat, to ask our friends and foundations to assist us financially so we can continue to offer quality and extensive psychotherapy administered by committed and highly trained Christian therapists for those in full-time Christian ministries, is most assuredly a privilege.

Many of you reading this newsletter have responded in the past generously and repeatedly but over the past several years putting out our message of love and healing to you has gotten extremely more difficult.

In all of the fifty states of the USA there is a concerted effort to identify and monitor the work of legitimate charities who solicit financial gifts within their borders. This effort has taken the form of legislation that requires charities to register with each state, in order for us to legally approach our friends with requests to support the ministry. For small charities like Marble Retreat this has proven to be a monumental and expensive task. But it is a “mountain” we must, and will climb. Then in most states we must continue to file annual updates – all of this so we can reach out in a personal, direct, and straight line manner to donors and potential donors, asking them to continue or begin partnering up with us in their prayers and gifts.

For many of you reading this article, this is the only avenue we have at the present time to ask for your support. So speaking as a ten-year member of Marble Retreat Board of Directors, my prayer is that you’ll seize this “message to all”, as one that is very personal in nature and prayerfully respond with a participatory gift.

Don Ray, Senior Pastor First Congregational Church of Otsego, MI  
and Board of Directors/Marble Retreat

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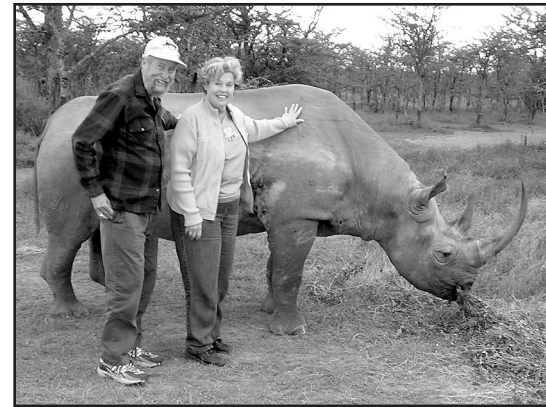
A higher standard.  
A higher purpose.

## OUT OF “AFRICA”

By Louis and Melissa McBurney

At 6:00 A.M. on October 21, we checked in at DIA for our flight to Washington Dulles. Four airports later we were met by John and Priscilla Sapp in Nairobi at 9:00 P.M. on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. That was a distinct reminder of how far Africa is from Colorado. We had a memorable reminder at 1:30 A.M. that night of how close Africa is to the U.S., when our cell phone rang! We didn't even know if we could connect internationally, and there was a friend in Texas calling to say he would be praying for us as we left for Africa. He just dialed our Colorado cell phone number and sounded clear as a 1:30 A.M. call can ever be. It seems like a small world—until you get the bill.

The Sapps, who are regional directors for a mission agency, gave us a nice bed and breakfast, then got us connected with transportation up to the Aberdare Country Club where our three therapy groups were booked. We did six weeks of group counseling at the Aberdare C.C. in 1990 and



knew it would work well. It certainly met our expectations: comfortable rooms, great meals, beautiful setting, attentive staff, and good communication with home. The only problem was that the “Women of the Harvest” had two weekend conferences scheduled during our stay. The quandary was that they had 75 missionary women in each conference, and that was a problem for our groups who didn't want others to know they were getting counseling! In the end, it was excellent P.R. for Marble Retreat Worldwide and none of our folks were exposed. We made arrangements for them to go to other lodges or just have meals in their rooms.

Naturally, we can't tell any specifics about our groups for confidentiality reasons. We can say there were 10 couples from East Africa (Kenya, Tanzania, Ethiopia, and Madagascar). Most were Americans, but others were Aussies, Brits, Dutch, Kenyan, & Korean. As usual, the Lord put the groups together in remarkable ways and we saw amazing healing occur.

We also heard strong confirmation for our sense of “call”. These couples said “we really needed more help than a weekly visit to a counselor could provide”, and “we

could not have stayed on the field without some intervention”, and “we could not have come if you had not offered it at no charge.” Several also pleaded with us to come back for the sake of friends. We want to do just that!

In fact, we went to Chiang Mai, Thailand in January to explore possibilities of doing groups there this year. We also plan a return to Africa in November. To continue, we need your help. First, to pray for wisdom for us, and second, pray for financial support. We will personally pay about half of the cost of this first trip. So pray for funding for this mission outreach, but also for Marble Retreat (Colorado). We can't do these groups without the foundation and administrative support of the Retreat Ministry.

If your church has a mission pastor or committee tell them about this needed ministry to the mission cause. It cost about \$20,000 for the African mission trip. The counseling kept 10 missionary couples on the field. If they had resigned or been terminated, the cost to the world mission cause would have been about \$150,000 **per couple**. Yes! That's \$1,500,000. We say that's a fantastic investment. That's a 1.5 million dollar return on \$20,000 contribution. We'll be happy - no elated - to provide written information or visit your church or a group of your friends and tell them the needs.

When I (Louis) made a commitment to full time Christian service at 14 years of age, I had no conception of what the Lord had in mind. I clearly remember the scripture passage that was included in the church bulletin announcing my decision. It was Romans 10:14-15, “How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent?”

You can be a vital part of providing those preachers by contributing to the ministries of Marble Retreat and Marble Retreat Worldwide.

## WHEN IT'S SPRING TIME IN THE ROCKIES



When it is spring time in the Rockies we still have lots of snow. Even though the picture was taken during later winter months, it can still look like this well into spring. In fact, some of our heaviest snows can happen in the spring in Colorado! As we up here all live with the wonderful snow through such activities as skiing, shoveling, snow blowing and cleaning off the cars, we have thought about how this accommodation to snow is much like the experience of our participants. It can be thrilling to “ski” through to clarity on the issues, but it can also be extremely tiring to muck through those same issues. Growth and change can be like shoveling heavy spring (wet) snow! It can sometimes feel slippery and icy and it seems like the snow may never stop. The benefits are the views you get from the hilltop and the sense of accomplishment you feel when you clean up the previously impassable walkway. You can move about with greater freedom. This is always our hope for people who come to Marble Retreat and for you!

*-Patti and Steve*

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## GROUPS FOR 2005

April 3 - April 15	June 19 - July 1	September 11 - September 23
April 17 - April 29	July 10 - July 22	September 25 - October 7
May 1 - May 13	July 24 - August 5	October 23 - November 4
May 22 - June 3	August 7 - August 19	November 6 - November 18
June 5 - June 17	August 28 - September 9	December 4 - December 16

Sessions are limited to eight people total. If married, your spouse is required to attend with you.

Due to the nature of our ministry, there is often last minute availability. However, sessions usually fill up a month in advance. Summer months are in high demand and may book two months in advance.

Session dates are subject to change on occasion. Please call to confirm a reservation prior to booking flights. When making travel plans, plan to arrive Sunday afternoon and depart by noon on Friday.



The mission of Marble Retreat is to help bring healing and restore hope to those in vocational Christian ministry through Christ-centered brief intensive psychotherapy.

Spring Edition 2005 • Providing Care since 1974 • Marble, Colorado

## A HEALTHIER CLERGY WALK SOME REFLECTIONS ON HEALTHIER LIVING IN CHRIST

By Steve Cappa

In previous newsletters, I have written about the numerous and complex stressors and challenges that our clergy face. While we might assert that the vocation of Christian service is one of the most rewarding to be had, many who come to Marble Retreat complain of such symptoms as **ministerial burnout**, a broad-based term that refers to symptoms of extreme fatigue, stress, depression, discouragement, familial and marital discord and even hopelessness. I wrote extensively about these struggles and how they can disable our shepherds. Having devoted a significant amount of newsletter space to the “problem” that befalls clergy, I'd now like to address some suggested antidotes, some ideas about healthier living. While these suggestions specifically apply to clergy, you will soon read that they are likely universally true, that all of us might benefit from these antidotes to stress.

I'd like to take credit for all the following thoughts because we here at Marble Retreat have observed many of these emerging healthy coping patterns for years. However, that would be inaccurate. Last year at the annual CAPS Meeting (Christian Association of Psychological Studies, St. Petersburg, FL, 3/04), Patti and I attended a breakout workshop presented by Dr. Mark McMinn, his colleagues and two graduate students, from Wheaton College. Their presentation highlighted 5 preliminary, but very solid, studies they'd conducted, focusing upon the healthy coping skills of a representative sample of clergy in this country (a full report of this study can be obtained through contacting Dr. McMinn: [mark.mcminn@wheaton.edu](mailto:mark.mcminn@wheaton.edu)). This project focused upon healthy coping activities and strategies; their strongest conclusion was that **clergy tend to utilize “intrapersonal” coping mechanisms** to provide antidotes to the regular and common stressors of ministry. Intrapersonal coping can be defined in the following manner: “By intrapersonal coping resources we refer to positive factors existing within a person's environment that are not directly experienced as relationship with

other humans (McMinn et al, p. 5)”. These coping skills might be better highlighted by the fact that they tend to lack relational features; they tend to be solitary activities to relieve stress and improve one's quality of life. These are things one does by oneself. This conclusion might be contrary to what we might normally think, given the fact that clergy are leaders of people and this implies a more extroverted, people-oriented lifestyle. However, one might speculate that because clergy are constantly surrounded by people (and often by people with problems and very high expectations!), they tend to find relief in activities separate from people, that they need to remove themselves, even briefly, from the rigors of regular human contact in order to find relief. JESUS DID THIS!!!!

“...a strong and vital prayer life is paramount to a healthy clergy person!”

Let's examine some of the coping skills that the Wheaton studies discovered: **Prayer:** Prayer is one of the strongest intrapersonal coping skills common to clergy. Good

news! Our clergy appear to rely heavily upon God and, moreover, tend to have a vital relationship with Him! Consider the following quote: “. . . for clergy, solitary care often involves a powerful and sustaining relationship with God through prayer, study, and meditation on scripture (ibid., p. 19)”. Many who come to Marble Retreat struggling with spiritual issues have experienced some kind of schism or break in their prayer/devotional life with God. Furthermore, and consistent with the positive aspects of the research, it is very common for the attendees of Marble Retreat to report improvement in their lives in conjunction with an improved spiritual relationship with God. Needless-to-say, a strong and vital prayer life is paramount to a healthy clergy person! **Time off:** Yes, taking time off is one of the other strongly endorsed areas of coping for clergy. This means “getting away from traditional work activities (ibid., p. 19)”. While this activity is likely universally true in our labor force, this is especially true for clergy. Why? Because, in our experience at Marble Retreat, clergy come here burned out, suffering from overwork and often a