



*The mission of Marble Retreat is to help bring healing, hope and restoration to those in vocational Christian ministry and the Church at large through Christ-centered brief intensive counseling.*

Summer Edition 2008 • Providing Care since 1974 • Marble, Colorado

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## STOP! IN THE NAME OF LOVE

By Patti Cappa

I am sure most of us can remember the old Supreme's song that was sung by Diana Ross so many years ago. In the 60s I would stand on my fireplace hearth wildly singing it, but that's not the story I want to convey here.

So often through our years at Marble Retreat, I have heard men and women alike say that they have been working so hard at ministry. In fact, many are putting in 80 hours a week. They are working days at counseling, organizing, meeting after meeting ad nauseam and having night activities every night. Yes, I said every night. Some working 7 days a week or, if they are really lucky, they get one day off, and that often gets interrupted by the crisis of the day.

What happens when, in the name of ministry, we end up having no time for ourselves, our spouse or children? Many of us know what happens; we end up not knowing our children, our spouse or ourselves, and, sadly, we can become known better by someone other than our family or by no one at all.

This phenomenon of working too hard and too long is not unique to clergy, but it seems to be very prevalent with those of us in Christian service. We love to think that since we are doing God's work it must be more important than everything else. With all due respect, I am here to tell you to Stop! In the name of love! Love your Lord, love your spouse, love your family. Ministry is still a job. I know many of you may disagree with that statement. That's fine, but don't put ministry before your relationships that really matter.

I must confess that I am as susceptible to this working too hard just like anyone else. The following story I have told often in groups in the last year. I apologize if you have heard it before. Over a year ago in the spring I had been very busy with ministry trips, mailings and the usual heavy counseling schedule. Did I mention the volunteer stuff I was doing too? I was feeling pretty full of myself and all the accomplishments I was stacking up. About that time I had one of my little conversations with Jesus. Do any of you ever imagine talking to Jesus and asking him questions and having him answer? I know at least one hymn writer who did and that lets me know I am not totally wacked off

the charts. *"He walks with me and he talks with me and he tells me I am his own."* (*In the Garden* by C. Austin Miles, 1912). So we are having this little conversation at the pearly gates and I have in hand my yellow legal pad. Every line has something on it, married 25 years to the same man, mother for 22 years, counselor for 15 years, Sunday school teacher on and off for 25 years, and the list goes on and on and on. This is really embarrassing, but I want to ask Jesus what my crown is going to look like. He says, "Come sit down by me." I sit down and say, "Can I show you my list now?" He says "No, I don't want to see your list." Of course, we all know that he already knows my little list of achievements. Despite that fact, I am very disappointed. "You mean you don't want to see my list?!" I ask incredulously. How could he not want to see my list? Jesus looks into my eyes and calmly asks me, "Why did you do those things?" I am a bit tongue tied and I think it over for awhile. Finally, in a very soft and young sounding voice I say, "Because I love you." He hugs me and kisses me on the cheek and smiles. Suddenly, the list is irrelevant.

That little conversation really changed my perspective. It was especially helpful when I got sick and couldn't keep adding achievements to my list. I could no longer "do things" to be loved by God. I had to accept that he simply loves me and my main endeavor is to love him back. The "doing" is a side effect of the loving. Not the other way around.

So I say to you, "Stop, in the name of love! Stop ministering so hard! Stop working so hard! Look at the lovely ones around you, the one that you chose to marry so long ago or the children you have brought into this world and your dear family members and friends. Let some of the work go and start loving." Accomplishing things for the Lord is wonderful. See James 2:14-26. But, we must have our priorities in order. See Matt. 22:37 & 38. Loving the Lord and our neighbor as ourselves is the first priority and that neighbor may just be your spouse or child. If I have a thousand items on my list and not have love..... You know the scripture; it won't be sweet and lyrical hymns. It will be dissonant noise. I Cor. 13.

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## SALUTE TO BYRN WILLIAMSON

By Louis and Melissa McBurney

In March, Marble Retreat bid adieu or more accurately “auf wiedersehen” to Dr. Byrn Williamson and his mate, Anita. Byrn joined the Board of Directors in 1974 and faithfully served for 34 years as secretary/treasurer followed by personnel committee chairman, without missing a single meeting.

Byrn and Anita brought not only wisdom and foresight to the Board, but unforgettable humor, breadth of knowledge, and common sense. Our friendship with them dates back to Baylor and Mayo Clinic days. Not only did we share the vision of the Retreat, but also enjoyed skiing, hiking, biking, and almost bungee jumping. Still on our to do list is a Barefoot Cruise.

When he wasn't working for Marble Retreat's ministry, Byrn was a consultant in Radiology at the Mayo Clinic. He was also at the forefront of “computer applications in radiology”, serving on a national committee involved in pioneering that technology. Now retired, Byrn and Anita split their time between Rochester, MN and Vero Beach, FL. We're hoping they'll be unable to escape the lure of the Crystal River Valley and that “auf wiedersehen” will mean frequent visits and eventually that windjammer adventure!



Anita & Byrn Williamson

## WHAT'S GOING ON?

By Louis and Melissa McBurney

NEW KNEES! Melissa had knee replacement surgery April 23. She chose the classy, latest, chromium/cobalt model with a 30 year or 400,000 mile warranty. She is recovering very well, plans some foot surgery later this summer, and replacement of her other knee next year. Don't know if she'll be up to running a 10k like Patti just did, but summer hiking is definitely in the picture. We'd been told the surgery was very painful, but Melissa declares the discomfort was minimal. Of course, you all know how stoic she is. As a porter in Singapore once said, “You prenty tough rady”!

Plans are also progressing well for this year's mission groups in Thailand and Kenya. The family is well and God is good!...Always.



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# RUNNING THE GOOD RACE

By Steve Cappa

*Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.*

*(Hebrews 12:1 NIV)*

She did it! Memorial Day, May 26, 2008, my bride successfully completed the Bolder Boulder 10K race. Approximately 1 year after her right nephrectomy, she ran in this, the largest citizen race in the world, I think (54,000 entrants!). Not only did she actually do it at all, but she bettered her estimated time by about 20 minutes! Better still, I was actually able to capture a picture of her as she entered Folsom Field, the CU Boulder football stadium and finish line for this event. My finding her as she entered had to have been God's will, because watching the runners enter the stadium was a bit like one standing by a downtown interstate, at rush hour, trying to find one's best friend driving by! The human traffic was overwhelming. Nonetheless, there she was jogging, filled with life and happily completing this post-surgical milestone.

No small task, this running—especially after such a horrific bout with cancer, surgery and the very real threat of the end of life. Patti faithfully trained many days out of each week for weeks at a time. She could be seen by many, including me, jogging on our county road just below the Marble Retreat campus, happily listening to her i-pod and laying down the miles. It took a lot of courage, strength and. . . Perseverance for her to do this and, of course, I'm filled with great pride and awe for her accomplishment. I may join her next year at the Bolder Boulder. She's invited me. . .

Interesting how the Bible seems to have quite a few references to running (about 6 or so). Must be something to this! Almost everyone has run at least once in their lives, usually in childhood when the body can tolerate such rigor without a lot of pain. The exhilaration and freedom that can come from running is evident. While a lot of work, it is also a lot of fun. So throughout the 6 or so references in scripture to running, there's this implication of competing. The passage cited above suggests that the purpose of the competition is to serve and grow in Christ. This particular passage is heavily informed by ancient Greek competition (the forerunner of our modern Olympics) of which running was an event. Apparently, the Greek runner would doff his clothes and any other unnecessary weight so that he might better compete! In the case of this passage, we are to rid ourselves of sin—any discouragement, hopelessness or burden of any kind, so that we might better serve Him. And then there's this word, *perseverance*. It's a most interesting word. I take it to mean, "Hang in there!" "Don't give up!" "Keep going!" The implications are that the race is hard, that there are many obstacles, often within one's self. Moreover, there's a strong part of us that wants to quit. Maybe even never start the race in the first place!



A race of any kind is hard and challenging. There are other competitors and then the ever-present risk of some kind of failure or injury. Apparently, in walking with and serving God, giving up is not an option! Many who come to Marble Retreat (and if truth be known, all of us from time to time!) have withdrawn from the "race". Overcome and disabled by discouragement of all kinds, our guests arrive exhausted and forlorn, seeking some cheering up and encouragement. While we, too, are participants in the race and, therefore, vulnerable to discouragement, we all do our best up here to encourage and cheer those seeking transformation to "*run with perseverance the race marked out for us.*" God has set the course ahead and is cheering us on and we, too, must do the same. He does, in fact, have a plan for each of us, the greatest of which is to love and serve Him. Moreover, we are also to encourage and even cheer one another to compete well, to forge ahead, to not give up. Take a moment, won't you, and ask God for that deep sense of commitment to serve and love and then go out and do that very thing for others. The race is long and hard and fatigue is to be expected. But the rewards are fun and great and we are all ultimately better for that race. Run it well. . .Patti sure has!

## WAYS TO SUPPORT THE WORK OF MARBLE RETREAT

Fundraising continues to be an issue for Marble Retreat, as it certainly is for non-profits here and abroad. We are thankful for the many ways that Marble Retreat is supported by our friends. We want to encourage you to continue that support. If you haven't supported our ministry before, we want to invite you to join the many people who do and keep the doors open. Fees continue to cover only a percentage of our costs. We need financial support for basic ministry needs, new equipment such as a snowplow, for which some funds have come in to purchase a functioning one. Your monetary gifts are tax deductible and you may give through our website (just hit the "donate" button), by check in the envelope provided or credit card. If you would like a copy of our annual report, please just ask. Thank you again for all of your support.

A big thank you to those of you around the country who have chosen to be on our prayer team. I can't tell you how reassuring it is to know you are praying, while Steve and I or our fellows are in the group room counseling the sometimes desperate fellow Christians and leaders. You are a treasured gift. If anyone would like to join this army of prayer warriors, please e-mail Patti at [pcappa@marbleretreat.org](mailto:pcappa@marbleretreat.org).

### WELCOME TO THE BOARD DAVID WILSON!



We are pleased to welcome David Wilson to the board. He spent 29 years as a District Judge in Texas. David and his wife Martha Alexander Riley now live in Livingston, Texas where David is retired, but feeds fifty mother cows, mows pastures and serves as handyman for anything that needs "fixing," as they say in east Texas. On occasion, this "gentleman farmer" holds courts for various judges when they must be away. On Sundays, he may be found singing bass in the Methodist Church choir.

### FAREWELL BRUCE ROBINSON

We bid a fond farewell to Bruce Robinson as he steps down from the board. He has been a great asset to this wonderful Board of Directors who governs the ministry. Thank you, Bruce, for your gifts that you've shared with us!

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### GROUP SCHEDULE FOR 2008

**August 5 - 14\***  
**August 19 - 28**

**September 2 - 11**  
**September 16 - 25**  
**October 14 - 23\***

**October 28 - November 6**  
**November 11 - 20**  
**December 2 - 11\***

*\*Indicates group is open to all believers. All other listed groups are for clergy only. Sessions are limited to eight people total. If married, your spouse is required to attend with you. 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 Tuesday late afternoon and depart Thursday morning.*



*A higher standard.  
A higher purpose.*

## ALUMNI NOTES

Dear Friends,

*We want to thank you for all you allowed God to do in and through you to minister His grace to us. We want to be regular spiritual and financial supporters of this amazing ministry. We pray for the ministry all the time and now we are committing \$100.00 a month to the work. We know it is not much, but I know God will multiply it and use it for his glory.*



*I was working through my directory, updating it, when I came across the info on Marble Retreat. That prompted me to write a note to say thanks. It was 15 years ago this past March (1993) that my wife and I drove up the driveway somewhat nervous, no very nervous, about what laid before us in the coming days. A part of the nervousness was due to the fact that we were only arriving on Tuesday, due to weather, that had messed up our flights. As I reflect back on that time, it was a critical point for us as we had “stuff” to resolve. Now, 15 years later, we enjoy a rich relationship and we have celebrated 26 years of marriage this past April. A great big thank you to Louis and Melissa, who loved us and guided us in a time when things were very shaky. The work wasn’t done for us, but the foundation was laid for us to be able to move forward in a healthy way. The following year on our anniversary, my wife presented me with one of the greatest gifts ever – a new wedding band to signify how dramatically our relationship had changed. We have often said to other couples that we have had two marriages, the first 11 years and the last 15. Thank you for all that you did and are doing to help ministry couples receive what they so desperately need. This coming November, we will be celebrating 25 years in the ministry. There is no doubt in my mind that if we hadn’t have gone to Marble when we did, that would not be the case and, likely, our marriage would not have survived, as well. So may you continue to know God’s blessing as you minister His love, grace and wisdom to those who come to Marble.*



*Missionaries recently wrote the following about Marble Retreat in their newsletter: Sharing about the ministry God has called us to in Venezuela is always a joy. It is always good to reflect back and see what God has done through us, as well as seeing where He is currently leading us and what we need to be working on. Realizing that we need to be more carefully guarding our marriage and keeping ministry in its proper place, we sought out professional help. We were able to attend an 8 day intensive program at Marble Retreat, in Colorado in January. We highly recommend Marble Retreat.*



Another pastor recently wrote in his update:

*During our leave of absence, we availed ourselves to a couple of counseling retreats; one is called Marble Retreat. It was begun about 35 years ago as a ministry primarily to pastors and their spouses who were encountering any manner of difficulty. Marble has a combination of group therapy and individual sessions. Steve and Patti Cappa are professional counselors and offer a wonderful ministry. If you know a couple or a single really struggling with various issues, I cannot recommend Marble Retreat enough! God has used the time and the friendships we developed there to strengthen us and encourage us.*



Henry & Eva

### Recipe Correction

*Eva’s Enchilada Casserole Recipe, printed in the last newsletter, was missing one cup of tomato sauce in the “sauce” ingredients.*

## Great and Exciting News!

The Marble Retreat Alumni Forum Discussion site is now up and running and ready for your participation! To access the site, you will need a password, assigned by us. Please begin, however, by visiting the Alumni Forum site on our home page ([www.marbleretreat.org](http://www.marbleretreat.org)) and reviewing the "register information." You may **initially** register and we will be notified; we will then send you an "in-house" ID. Please remember, this site is for alumni only and is intended to provide ongoing support and encouragement for all of you out there!

*Steve and Patti*



*Patti & Steve*

Summer 2008

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