



The Fiddlekick Cloggers from the Dickinson, North Dakota, area energized and entertained the audience at the the Dakotas Regional Fraternal Leadership Seminar.

Sharing Enthusiasm

Branch leaders gather to network and learn

JUST AFTER THE BEGINNING of each new year, NMB branch leaders and their families gather at two regional fraternal leadership seminars hosted by National Mutual Benefit. There they learn new leadership skills, share successful volunteer stories, and are recognized for their past year's collective accomplishments in the areas of organizing family events, improving

Youth Members Wrap Up a Heartwarming Fundraiser



While adults attending the Wisconsin Leadership Seminar enjoyed a general session on Saturday morning, youth ages 12 to 17, known as the "Teen Team," learned about a project called *It Takes a Community to Raise a HOUSE*. **Restoring Hope Transplant House**—the beautiful, 1890 Victorian Pierstorff House in Middleton, Wisconsin—is being renovated to serve as a home away from home for patients and their caregivers who are in the Madison area for organ, bone marrow, or other transplants. In addition to high quality, affordable accommodations, it will offer hospitality, compassion, and hope to support the healing journey.

The Teen Team was impressed with the concept and wanted to help with this worthy cause. With 37 yards of heavy fleece fabric, 80 ounces of pillow filling, and five pairs of heavy-duty scissors, the teenagers laid out, cut, and assembled ten fleece blankets and three large pillows.

Then their creative skills went on display for a raffle to raise funds for Restoring Hope Transplant House. Tickets were purchased by seminar attendees, as well as other guests staying at the Madison Marriott West, who stopped by to admire the teens' accomplishments. Altogether, the youth group raised \$470 in one afternoon for the transplant house.

"They were very proud of what they accomplished in one day, and very, very excited to sell the blankets [and pillows] they made," stated Teen Team facilitator Shawn Rogers. "Hopefully, we sparked their interest in helping people in a different way than they've seen before."

Restoring Hope Transplant House will only be the fourth of its kind to open in the United States. The other houses are located in Omaha, Nebraska; Rochester, Minnesota; and Scottsdale, Arizona.

If you would like to give a monetary donation to Restoring Hope Transplant House in 2007 on behalf of National Mutual Benefit, please send your donation to: Restoring Hope Transplant House, c/o National Mutual Benefit, P.O. Box 1527, Madison, WI 53701-1527.



Shiocton Branch 882 Trustee Janet Gloede and NMB Director Nancy Heykes share a laugh or two while renewing their friendship at the Wisconsin Seminar.



During the recognition banquet in Madison, Wisconsin, NMB Teen Team members announce the winners of the blankets and pillows they made for the Restoring Hope Transplant House benefit.



The banquet gives seminar attendees a great opportunity to network. Pictured, left to right, are: Cynthia and Ken Mandl, Richfield, Minnesota; Michele Visser and Tim Jacak, Wausau, Wisconsin; and George and Joan Raymaker, Green Bay, Wisconsin.

communities, promoting respect for America, and helping people in need.

A Motivating Weekend

Local speakers and entertainers touched the hearts of participants at the first of the two seminars. In Dickinson, North Dakota, Senator Rich Wardner addressed the group and commended the volunteers for the work they do to improve communities and the lives of others. NMB President George Yanna presented Senator Wardner with an Honor Award for his endless volunteer efforts in the Dickinson area.

Comedian and motivational speaker Terry Fleck, otherwise known as *The Attitude Doctor*, reinforced the concept of how a positive attitude can not only impact what you do and how you do it, but also the attitude of others.

NMB member LoAnn Wegh, president/owner of LoAnn's Marketing Inc., shared the moving story about her insurance experience with National Mutual Benefit and agent Lyle Berndt. She taught attendees the importance of volunteering in her presentation *Setting Your Sail—Make a Difference*.

During the evening banquet, NMB's branch leaders were recognized for their 2006 volunteer efforts and accomplishments. The award ceremony concluded with a tribute to Ruth Doyen, for her 25

years of loyal service to National Mutual Benefit and its regional agency office in Spearfish, South Dakota.

To round out the evening, the group was treated to an energized performance and some hearty laughs as the Fiddlekick Cloggers danced to humorous Irish and classic American songs. Attendees went away with a renewed vision for their 2007 volunteer activities.

Attitudes and Awards Abound

The second regional leadership seminar was held in Madison, Wisconsin, where volunteers were welcomed by state Senator Jon Erpenbach, who congratulated them on their volunteer efforts in the region. Senator Erpenbach urged the crowd to get involved in contacting their local elected public officials to share their views on important topics.

Debra Schmidt, a.k.a. the *Loyalty Leader*®, taught seminar participants how to recognize different communication styles and to adapt their own style to build rapport and trust among fellow volunteers. During her workshops, motivational speaker Donna Manning emphasized how having both humor and a positive attitude will help you survive many tough situations in life.

Mary Nachreiner, with the University of Wisconsin Hospital and Clinic's Organ Procurement Program, shared

her daughter Kelly's story at a seminar workshop. When Kelly's life was cut short at age 17 due to a car accident, her parents followed through with her wish to save other lives by donating her organs. During 2007, NMB is building awareness and urging members to consider becoming organ donors (read "It's About Life" on page 15).

While adults attended workshops, the "Teen Team" met to complete a special service project in connection with the proposed Restoring Hope Transplant House in Middleton, Wisconsin. (See sidebar on previous page.)

Branch leaders were honored at the evening banquet, and the top two society volunteer awards were announced. The respected President's Award was presented to Denny Richmond, 2006 Fraternalist of the Year, and the distinguished William J. Wenger Award went to Mary Holm, 2006 Fraternal Agent of the Year. (Articles on these two fraternalists can be found on pages 6 and 18, respectively.)

If you'd like more information about a specific branch, or to find out how YOU can become a branch leader (in Illinois, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, or Wisconsin), please call Fraternal Services at 1-800-779-1936, or e-mail bennyb@nmbfrat.org. ♦