



The Circuit Rider

Life in the Big Bend Episcopal Mission – November 2004

Jeffrey Steenson Elected Bishop Coadjutor



The Rev. Dr. Jeffrey N. Steenson was elected bishop coadjutor of the Diocese of the Rio Grande on the third ballot at the diocesan electing convocation in Las Cruces, New Mexico on October 16th. Although many of us know Jeffrey Steenson personally, we may not know that the bishop-elect was Rector of St. Andrew's Church in Fort Worth, Texas from 1989-2000, and he was previously Rector of the Church of the Good Shepherd, Rosemont, Pennsylvania. Since 1987, he has been a board member of the Living Church Foundation. He holds a doctorate in theology from Oxford, a master's in divinity from Harvard Divinity School, a master's in church history from Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, and a bachelor's in history from Trinity College. He has been married to Debra J. Arnold since 1974 and is the father of three adult children.

Jeffrey Steenson's "principles of ministry" have been listed as "Above all, to honor and serve the Lord Jesus Christ in the Church and in the world; to emphasize preaching and teaching which is biblically centered and stands faithfully within an orthodox Christian perspective; to seek a deeper and wider vision of the Church than is found in modern denominationalism, being especially attentive to new possibilities for promoting Christian unity; to recover those principles at the heart of the classical Anglican pastoral and theological tradition that are in danger of being forgotten in modern church life; to defend the spiritual freedom which the Gospel establishes as a basic right of a mature and committed Christian laity."



Jeffrey Steenson at the 2002 Big Bend Mission retreat

The bishop-elect is scheduled to be consecrated to the episcopate on January 15, 2005 at the Cathedral of St. John in Albuquerque. Due to the relatively small seating capacity of the Cathedral, attendance is restricted. However, a web cast of the event is in the planning stages, and details will be provided as they become available. Jeffrey Steenson will begin ministry as diocesan bishop following Bishop Kelshaw's retirement effective July 31, 2005.

A Big Thank You to Jack Probst

For many months, St. James' member Jack Probst has served as our representative on the diocesan Episcopal Discernment Committee. He has attended committee meetings, participated in interviews, and traveled all over the country. Thank you, Jack, for all you have done to help us discern the will of the Holy Spirit in choosing and electing a new bishop. We know that the process has been time consuming and at times frustrating. We appreciate your willingness to serve and your patient persistence. A big thank you from all of us!



"So much has been given to me; I have no time to ponder over that which has been denied."

-Helen Keller
from *The Joyful Noiseletter*

Youth Club Celebrates Play Day

The Big Bend Youth Club (BBYC) recently celebrated Nickelodeon's World-wide Day of Play, as part of the applica-



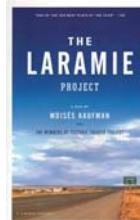
tion process for Nickelodeon's Let's Just Play grant. The grant is given to non-profit, child-oriented organizations to provide opportunities for physical and healthy play for kids in their community-based organizations. The BBYC is applying for the grant to go on a river-rafting trip with some of its members.

(continued on back of calendar)

Marfa Theater to Present *The Laramie Project*

Several Big Bend Mission parishioners are rehearsing for the November 4-7 Marfa Theater presentation of *The Laramie Project*.

The Laramie Project was created by the Tectonic Theater Project. Members visited Laramie, Wyoming several times after the demise of Matthew Shepard, a 21-year-old gay man who was beaten to death by two local men about the same age as Shepard. The Tectonic Theater Project conducted interviews over a one-year period with many community members about their involvement, feelings, and the effects of the incident on the community.



(continued on back of calendar)

Spears Baptism at St. James'

On Sunday, October 24th, Jared Ray Spears was baptized into the Body of Christ at the St. James' Sunday morning service. Jared is the son of Ray and Grace Spears. Grace is a nurse, and Ray is a game warden.



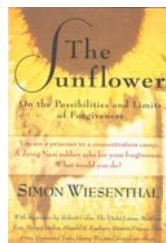
Probsts Donate New Nativity Figures for St. James'

Jack and Judy Probst have donated new nativity figures in memory of Judy's parents, Morgan and Catherine Singleton. The figures will be used in the church at St. James' during the Christmas season. Many thanks to Jack and Judy for their generosity.



Marfa Study Group to Start New Book

The Marfa study group will be starting *The Sunflower, On the Possibilities and Limits of Forgiveness* by Simon Wiesenthal.



"While imprisoned in a Nazi concentration camp, Simon Wiesenthal was taken one day from his work detail to the bedside of a dying member of the SS. Haunted by the crimes in which he had participated, the soldier wanted to confess to -- and obtain absolution from -- a Jew. Faced with the choice between compassion and justice, silence and truth, Wiesenthal said nothing. But even years after the war had ended, he wondered: had he done the right thing? What would you have done in his place?"

Books are available. Everyone is welcome. Contact Judy or Elaine.

Blessing of the Animals Draws Mostly Canines

At St. Paul's on Saturday, October 2nd, lots of dogs and a few cats showed up to be blessed despite the cool cloudy weather in Marfa. Animals were prayed for, and everyone got a chance to introduce their pets. Both two- and four-legged friends got treats.

A similar event is being planned in South Brewster County. So break out your leashes, halters, and pet carriers! Details will be forthcoming.



Last Month's Question: What is prayer?

Answer: Prayer is responding to God, by thought and by deeds, with or without words.

This Month's Question: For what do we offer thanksgiving?

St. Paul's Thanksgiving Dinner is Just Around the Corner

The parishioners of St. Paul's, with help from others in the Big Bend Mission, are gearing up for the annual Thanksgiving Eucharist and dinner to be held on Thanksgiving day, Thursday, November 25th. The Eucharist at 11:00am will be followed by the dinner at 12:30. Don't spend Thanksgiving alone; bring your family and friends. The service and dinner are open to the community, and there is no charge.



Volunteers are needed for cooking, set-up, serving, and clean-up. Sign-up sheets have been placed at St. Paul's and St. James'. Cooks are asked to sign up and indicate the dishes they will bring. Call Libi Rhodes at 432-729-3792 with questions or suggestions.

THE FAMILY CIRCUS



"Maybe when that lady's cell phone rang, it was God answering her prayer."

from *The Joyful Noiseletter*
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Youth Club Play Day *(continued from page one)*

The Official Worldwide Day of Play is October 2nd, but Big Bend Youth Club celebrated it on September 30th. BBYC members Alonzo Aranda, Rene Baeza, Willy Blackstock, Alan Carrasco, Javier Galindo, Georgina Garcia, Roman Orrosco, and Beto Salgado all participated in an array of hilarious and fun activities at the Club. The favorite of the kids was the challenging Obstacle Course. First, the players had to catch a football and take it back to the thrower. Then climb up and down a hill, carry a quite heavy chair to the basketball hoop, and shoot the basketball from the chair. After they made a basket, they then had to hop to the finish line. Every member participated in the Obstacle Course, and they all loved it. The kids also had a Q-Tip War, a 3-Legged Race, an Egg Race, a Banana Duel, and a Kool-Aid Taste-Off. In the Kool-Aid Taste-Off, the players had to eat an entire packet of unsweetened Kool-Aid with just one finger. In the Banana Duel, the players were divided



into 2-person teams, and their left hands were tied together. To win, each team had to peel a banana using only their teeth and right hands, then shove the banana into their partner's mouth. The winners of each activity received a ribbon.

The BBYC has now been open for one year and is completely dependent upon the generosity of our community for its support. For more information, please call 432-371-2304 or 432-371-2333. Tax deductible donations may be sent to BBYC c/o Beth Garcia, P. O. Box 421, Terlingua, Texas 79852.

The Laramie Project

(continued from page one)

The play is directed by James Scott and produced by Dawn Trook. Cast members include Marfa residents Shere Whitley, Vance Knowles, Wendy Lynn Wright, Melissa Keane, Alberto Halpern, Allison Scott, Sarah Rangel, Ken Whitley, Mark Haslett, and Cliff Harrison, plus Alpine residents Kendall Craig, Robert Schmitt, and Andrew Stuart. Stage manager is Tara Sechrest of Alpine.

The Laramie Project will play Thursday, November 4; Friday, November 5; and Saturday, November 6 at 8 p.m., as well as Sunday, November 7 at 2 p.m. at the Goode Crowley Theater, 98 S. Austin Street in Marfa.

Opening night performance will include a reception at 7 p.m. to benefit Marfa Health & Wellness, Inc. 50% of the opening night ticket price will go to the new non-profit community clinic. Tickets for opening night are \$10. For other performances, tickets are \$5 for adults, \$3 for students and seniors, and \$1 for high school students. For reservations or information, call Marfa Theatre at 432-729-3436.



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