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Brother's death prompts ongoing suicide prevention efforts.

Dr. Sally Spencer-Thomas, Regis University in Denver, Colo., had grant funding for education on suicide and ordered 75 copies of *Fierce Goodbye: Living in the Shadow of Suicide* DVD and book to distribute at a meeting. Dr. Spencer-Thomas has spent her career as a licensed psychologist and student affairs administrator. She has seen students struggle with mental health issues, and she witnessed her younger brother, Carson, struggle with the same.

Two weeks before the tsunami of 2004 in Asia, Carson ended his own life. Although his family had tried repeatedly to get him help, Carson could no longer cope with the shame, stigma and desperation of his struggle. Devastated and lost, Spencer-Thomas realized she was experiencing her own tsunami and a feeling of drowning. She began a program, "Be a Shining Life of Hope" in which she offers campus community members a solid understanding of the mental health and community issues surrounding suicide.

Regis University hosted a national conference, "Bridging the Divide: Suicide Awareness and Prevention Summit," May 19-22 in conjunction with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment Office of Suicide Prevention.

Dr. Spencer-Thomas is available from the campus speaker's bureau at www.campuspeak.com/speakers/spencer-thomas/. More information on *Fierce Goodbye* is available at www.FierceGoodbye.com or by calling 800-999-3534. Dr. Spencer-Thomas started a foundation after her brother's death focusing on suicide prevention in the workplace with information available at www.carsonspencer.org.

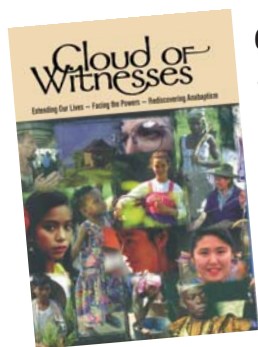
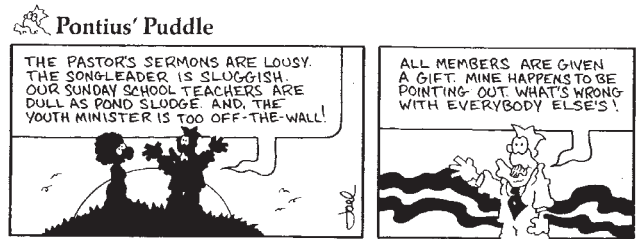
Sunday morning special focus on mental illness. Lindale Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, Va., used the *Shadow Voices: Finding Hope in Mental Illness* TV documentary/DVD to plan a special Sunday morning spotlight on mental health. They invited representatives from the local community services board, counseling center, a licensed professional counselor, and parish nurse to speak and host displays. "Many people expressed thanks that we were discussing this issue; too often the topic has been ignored," said planner Jennifer Sommers. "When I repeated the quote from Dr. Joyce Burland [from the program] about mental illness being the 'only illness in the world where you never get a covered dish,' there went up a collective 'ahh' as recognition of a truth they hadn't recognized before." For more, see www.ShadowVoices.com.



Dr. Sally Spencer-Thomas, a licensed psychologist-student affairs administrator in Colorado. Inset photo: Dr. Spencer-Thomas in an earlier photo with brother, Carson.

New or recent at *Third Way Café*:

- Joel Kauffman’s long running comic strip, “Pontius’ Puddle” debuted at *Third Way Café* in April. A new clickable thumbnail cartoon on Christian values and principles appears each Monday on the home page. Check out the funnies and find out more about the cartoonist at: [www.ThirdWay.com/Menno/?Topic=284|Pontius’+Puddle](http://www.ThirdWay.com/Menno/?Topic=284|Pontius'+Puddle)
- A video gallery with insights and reflections on “vocation” features Ella May Miller, Sam Janzen, Harvey Yoder, Abram Davis and more at www.ThirdWay.com/gallery/. These people also appeared in an earlier video, *Vocation! Vocation! Vocation!* still available at www.Store.MennoMedia.org.
- *Third Way Café* survey: Let us know what you like, don’t like, and what you’d like to see more of at www.ThirdWay.com by filling out the survey you’ll find there.



Cloud of Witnesses programs now on one DVD. A new DVD has been released including all three of the earlier *Cloud of Witnesses* videos (produced by Jerry L. Holsopple) which invite viewers into three thriving Anabaptist communities around the world. The programs also include dramatic interpretations of several *Martyr’s Mirror* stories and a study guide. Countries include England, Ghana, Benin, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Bolivia and Brazil. Any church or group with mission or other interest in these countries should access this DVD, or use it to be inspired by dedicated Christians all over the world. The DVD is \$17.95 (see www.Store.MennoMedia.org or call 800-999-3534).

Youth ministry idea: send “Sip of Scripture” to keep in touch. Lois Kaufman of North Goshen Mennonite Church, (Ind.), uses “Sip of Scripture” from *Third Way Café* to connect with and keep in touch with college students from her congregation. Every weekday morning she sends a daily devotional, a few words, poems or jokes and often the “Sip of Scripture” (www.ThirdWay.com/sip). “I started with our church kids and it has grown to include a lot of kids, some I don’t even know! I get many affirmations from the kids themselves but also from parents!” She adds that she never sends to a student until she e-mails him or her and asks them if they want to get it. “A parent may say their student would like it, but I want to hear from that person.” She credits the idea to a granddaughter who started such a service and encourages other people to copy it as well.

Exhibit at National Alliance on Mental Illness national convention. Participants at the national conference for NAMI in Orlando, Fla. in June had the opportunity to view segments from three documentaries at a booth shared with two partners, Pathways to Promise and Craig Rennebohm, a Seattle, Wash., chaplain ministering to those with mental illness and author of the new book, *Souls in the Hands of a Tender God*.

Radio spots of ‘much interest to community.’ Over 250 stations (to date) are airing the *Unsung: Family Voices on Mental Illness* public service announcements including these major markets: Montgomery, Ala.; Washington, D.C.; Atlanta, Ga.; Jacksonville and Tampa, Fla.; Minneapolis, Minn.; Raleigh/Winston-Salem, N.C.; Lincoln, Neb.; Oklahoma City, Portland, Ore.; and many more. (Check your state at www.ThirdWay.com/Rad/radstations.asp?set=unsung.)

- A station manager in Cliff, Wis., said, “Very good programs; much interest to this community.”
- A station in Canton, Texas, said, “I appreciate these spots. I am bi-polar and suffer from depression. Thanks a lot.”
- Ed Murray, CEO of Faith & Values Media said, “So to the point — a really wonderful support and reality check for families whose loved ones have a mental illness.”

Distribution coordinator Lois Hertzler says that any group (ministerial association, mental health organization, or church) can sponsor them on a station and add a tag on the end, or encourage a station to air them free. For a free CD, call 800-999-3534 or listen online at www.ThirdWay.com/rad.

American Association of Pastoral Counselors hosted screening. Pastoral counselors had the opportunity to screen *Embracing Aging: Families Facing Change* and *Finding Hope in Recovery: Families Living with Addiction* at their annual meeting in Norfolk, Va. in March. Sheri Hartzler and Wayne Gehman hosted an exhibit and spoke at the screening.

Menno Haven retirement community hosts outreach event on aging. Sheri Hartzler and Melodie Davis (producer, writer, respectively) were invited by Lorraine Eby, church and community relations coordinator at Menno Haven in Chambersburg, Pa., to present segments from *Embracing Aging: Families Facing Change* at the retirement community's spring spirituality conference on aging. Pastors, residents, families and community members watched the entire documentary on Thursday evening and then participated in lively discussions at a morning breakfast and afternoon seminar on topics ranging from churches doing a better job working at aging issues, and "thorny" questions as we age related to driving, death and dying. For more on the documentary and accompanying website, go to www.EmbracingAging.com.

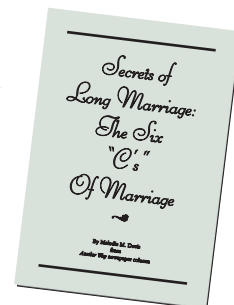


Melodie Davis (left) discusses stories from *Embracing Aging* documentary with participants at Menno Haven spirituality conference as co-presenter, Sheri Hartzler (center) looks on.

Embracing Aging wins "Communicator Award." *Embracing Aging: Families Facing Change* won an Award of Distinction in the Communicator Awards program in May, yielding a silver statuette. The award program received over 8,500 entries with the top award being an Award of Excellence. The Communicator Awards are judged and overseen by the International Academy of the Visual Arts.

CD Package impresses manufacturer. Disc Makers, the manufacturer for the *Unsung: Family Voices on Mental Illness* radio spots from Mennonite Media were so impressed with the design work for the CD package they asked Mennonite Media production manager Dorothy Hartman for permission to showcase it in their marketing materials. They noted that the CD package was "done exceptionally well and above industry standards." The designer is Jaye Brumfield of The Hatchery Design Company, Harrisonburg, Va.

Quantity pricing for new booklet: *Secrets of Long Marriage*. Out of a special series of *Another Way* newspaper columns, Mennonite Media developed a low-cost 20-page booklet, *Secrets of Long Marriage: The Six C's of Marriage* by Melodie M. Davis. Chapters include Compromise, Communication, Care, Commitment, Court, Can Do. Priced at \$3, or ten for \$20 (\$2 each), it is lower than the cost of many greeting cards and makes a suitable insert for wedding and shower gifts, pre-nuptial counseling, "date night" or couple events in congregations. Call 800-999-3534 to order or go to www.Store.MennoMedia.org and search for "marriage."



Planning way, way ahead. Organizers of a once-a-decade conference of faith communications practitioners, Religion Communication Congress 2010, announced a fund to help young religion media professionals and students attend the world's largest interfaith gathering of religion communicators scheduled for April 7-10, 2010, in Chicago. Mennonite staff members are participating on the planning committee for the conference. The application deadline for international scholarships is July 15, 2009 and recipients will be announced on September 15, 2009. Global visitors frequently need a long lead time for securing visas, invitations and funds for attending international events. Full details and applications for the Global Partner Fund scholarships are at www.rccongress2010.net/globalpartners.

Mennonite Media staffer named chair of Faith & Values Member Council. Sheri Hartzler, program manager at Mennonite Media, has been named chair of the Faith & Values Member Council for the remainder of 2008. By virtue of her position as chair, she has also been appointed by the National Interfaith Cable Coalition Board as an ex-officio trustee. Faith & Values Media uses the electronic media to enrich spiritual life, heal wounds by advocating religious tolerance, and build bridges of understanding among people of faith.

Did you know

... The NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) Tenn. affiliate has a “Latino Outreach Project” and is adding a Spanish voiceover to a few parts of *Shadow Voices: Finding Hope in Mental Illness* documentary to help Latinos who cannot read (even though the program does have Spanish subtitles). The finished product, an instructional book with drawings, and the video will be available for use by other affiliates but not for sale. They began with a pilot group in Nashville and Knoxville and they will make the project available on their website.

... Any purchase of Mennonite Media products goes to support the ongoing outreach of this varied ministry including documentaries on social issues for national TV audiences, congregational discussion DVDs and videos, a print newspaper column ministry, radio PSAs, and audio recording projects. Any donation above purchase price is tax deductible for this nonprofit organization, offering media to help make Christianity relevant in contemporary society. Request a free new brochure giving more information on Mennonite Media.



Meet newest staff member. Kimberly Metzler joined the Mennonite Media team as finance and office services assistant earlier this year. She worked previously as a bookkeeper at Highland Retreat, a Mennonite campground near Bergton, Va. for eight years. She and her husband Wendell and son A.J. live in Broadway, Va. and are members of Crossroads Church in Timberville. In her free time she enjoys scrapbooking.

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