

# THE BEACON

## News and Notes from your Moderator



The people living in darkness  
have seen a great light

Matthew 4:16

### The Beacon

Is a publication of the East Coast Baptist association in Canada, serving New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island NFLD & Labrador and far eastern Quebec

### Our Mission:

Churches partnering together to start and strengthen churches and take the gospel to all people on Canada's east coast.

### Our Vision:

To see God transform lives in healthy, cooperating, and reproducing churches for every language group and within each community on Canada's east coast.

A partner, "on mission" with the Canadian National Baptist Convention

### Deadline for submissions for next issue February 25

Send to:

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God Bless you as you grapple with a new year! It has been some time since we've enjoyed a Beacon due in part to some technical difficulties (computers! Aren't they a wonder).

Before we go too far with the joy and enthusiasm of a new year on the calendar, I think it's nice to reminisce. Looking at 2011 there are many ways in which God has blessed us and I am excited for what he has in mind for us in the year ahead. Looking at the blessings, as your moderator I'm grateful for:

Sharon and her work in making the Beacon a reality. After all, what would we as an association without a vehicle to tell our stories and read about the good news of God in our midst?

The wonderful people from Spartanburg SC and their gift of the block-party trailer. It has been a delight to read stories of how it has been used for God's glory and purpose.

For Jim Tranquilla and his work in our partnership with God's people in North and South Carolina. How blessed are we for all the people who travelled to our region and laboured side by side with us this summer. More than 20 teams and over 100 of God's people!

The appointment of Derek Jones to Atlantic Canada. What a blessing to have his knowledge and personal commitment dedicated to our region. It has been my privilege to call him friend and to get to know his heart for God's people.

Gerry Taillon and his leadership team at the CNBC; for their commitment to grow the Kingdom and for their willingness to come along side to enable and encourage healthy reproducing churches. What a wonderful example of "walking the talk".

And, I'm grateful for Jack and Sharon's dedication as they've travelled to various regions to strengthen and encourage you in your work in your communities.

The venue for our Annual Meeting and the wonderfully welcoming attitude of the staff of the Hampton Bible Camp. Especially pleasing was their provision of a program for our youth and children. Mums and dads really appreciated being freed up to participate in the adult program, fellowship and learning without having to be concerned that their kids were well cared for.

Indeed there are many reasons to be thankful as we reflect on our personal lives, our church families and on our associational life. I am drawn to the Apostle Paul's words; how he begins his letters with a blessing – "Grace and Peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" and generally follows with words of thanksgiving. "I thank my God in all my remembrance of you . . . ." – how encouraging!

I have been blessed in my experience and remembrance of you and am grateful for the picture I have of so many of you labouring for the gospel in your communities. Some years ago, my wife Norma and I were transferred from Montreal to Toronto. At the same time friends were also moving to Vancouver. They were a senior couple (Eber and Norma) and it was likely we wouldn't see them again. However as I often do, I dislike god-byes and said something like – "we'll see you again". Oh, says Eber, "I think not – but we will meet at the Lords table". How insightful – I hardly miss taking communion without thinking of them. I think in some small way, Eber gave me an insight into what Paul meant and his feeling for the people of God and his fellow labourers for the gospel.

It is from this place that I thank God for you. It was a blessing to be with many of you in my travels

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## Discipleship

(excerpt from *Disciplines for Life*—C.J. Mahaney & John Loftness)

What does it take to please God? To know Him more intimately? To discern His will? To serve His purpose? First, it takes a listening heart, for discipleship begins with contemplation not action.

If you are not regularly hearing God's voice, ask yourself, "Am I regularly making time to listen?" If your schedule reveals that you haven't made listening a priority, you shouldn't be surprised that you are not having fresh, intimate encounters with God.

**First it takes a listening heart, for discipleship begins with contemplation not action.**

Listening requires that we spend unhurried, uninterrupted, undistracted time waiting on Him. (Jesus instructed us to find a room where we can go and shut the door behind us.) Yet many Christians consider prayer a time to talk to God, if not at Him. But He has much to say to us, and we can only hear Him if we're listening instead of talking.

At the other extreme, we can become overly intense, trying to make God speak. As you wait on Him He will speak. He has promised to speak. He is a communicating God who desires to teach. Remember, we didn't discover God; He revealed Himself to us. There is no divine reluctance to communicate that we must overcome by sheer force of effort—as if that were in our power.

A primary aspect of listening involves the reading and study of Scripture. I believe the Holy Spirit desires to apply specific parts of Scripture to the life of each Christian on a daily basis. This is one of his main ways of communicating with us. At any given time, each of us—if we are spiritually healthy—should be able to identify distinct truths from the Bible that the Lord is revealing or emphasizing to us.

Through Scripture, creation, the church, and by His Spirit, God fills the world with His voice. The only issue is, "Are we listening?"

So let's be provoked by the Lord's example (Mark 1:35), and not just in the practical aspects such as reading the Bible in a year or praying 30 minutes a day (as good as those disciplines are). Let us also be aware that God has spoken through His written Word and desires to speak by His Spirit. We have the opportunity to hear our Father's voice—rich with wisdom, guidance, and affections—if we will simply devote time to listening and waiting on God.

Submitted by Jack Gautreau



Sharon, Jeff Slaughter & Marilyn Bartley



Mindy, Julie, and Angie

## Vacation Bible School Is coming

I had the wonderful opportunity to go this year to the VBS training seminar in Texas. Thanks to Lifeway, three individuals from the Atlantic Provinces were able to take part in this wonderful training event.

I was overwhelmed at the number of participants and the work that is involved to put such an event like this on.

I was able to take part in various workshops and learn many things on how to put on a successful Vacation Bible School.

It was also a pleasure to meet other brothers and sisters from the west coast who too have the same passion for spreading the gospel to children.

The closing was truly wonderful with over 1000 in attendance.

In the coming months each church will be contacted to see if you would be interested in a training day in which Julie, Angie and myself would go and present to you the curriculum for this year.

This year's theme is called "Amazing Wonders Aviation". The kids will tour some of the world's most marvelous natural wonders and learn to trust and recognize God as they explore His awesome power.

**Theme Verse:**

Our Lord is great, vast in power; His understanding is infinite. Psalm 147:5 (HCSB0)

**Motto:**

Awesome God! Amazing Power!

Hope you will come along with us on this amazing adventure.

Sharon Gautreau

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during 2011 and also through the "Give God the Glory" part of our annual meeting. I'm excited and refreshed for having heard so many stories of God's goodness told by those who were able to attend.

Looking ahead to the remainder of 2012 I'm praying God will use our ECBA leadership team to be a blessing to all the churches which belong. "Belong" - isn't that a wonderful word? As fellow members, I'm praying God will use us to encourage each other through fellowship, learning opportunities and periodic get-togethers where we can laugh and love together. Hebrews 10:24

May God Bless you and in the words of Paul, "The grace of the Lord Jesus be with your spirit."

### Block Party Trailer Schedule 2012

During 2012, its movements will be more organized reducing the miles and towage. We encourage you to make your plans for events around the schedule if you would like to use it while it is in your area.

The plan is as follows:

June 27 to July 7<sup>th</sup> Halifax

July 8 – July 21<sup>st</sup> Prince Edward Island

July 22 – Aug 4<sup>th</sup> Cape Breton

Aug 5 – 18<sup>th</sup> New Brunswick

Please send your requests without delay to Derek Jones at [djones@NAMB.net](mailto:djones@NAMB.net) and Deborah Burns at [dburns.cnbc@me.com](mailto:dburns.cnbc@me.com)

## John and Erin Evans win a trip through Contagious 4 Joy

Last fall I was shocked and delighted to win a cruise for two through a website for pastor's wives called "Contagious Joy 4 Him." My husband (John) and I flew to Ft. Lauderdale on January 10th and boarded the gorgeous Royal Caribbean Liberty of the Seas on Thursday, January 12th for a 4 night cruise to Cozumel, Mexico and back. Another ministry wife from Illinois had also won, and we were so excited to hit it off instantly. The four of us had so much in common and made many wonderful memories. Having another couple to dine and sightsee with was an added blessing that made the cruise that much more memorable.

The charter group that we were sailing with was actually a Girls' Getaway Cruise with Premiere Christian Cruises. We really enjoyed their evening sessions even if our husbands felt a little out of place. Christian comedian Chonda Pierce was as funny as ever. I appreciate how authentic (albeit sarcastic) she is. Illusionist Harris III was awesome too. He did an excellent job of communicating his message of how easily we can be deceived by our senses and really drove home the importance of living by faith and not by sight. There was also a christian improv group that kept us in stitches one evening.

I was a little worried about our day in Cozumel because we did not book a shore excursion through the cruise line. The four of us hired a taxi driver for the day (much cheaper than any of Royal Caribbean's excursions). The driver originally assigned to us was sick that day so a replacement was sent to meet us at the pier. He turned out to be a dear christian man who was so encouraged and excited to find out

he was driving around two pastors and their wives for the day. (I think he was used to very different customers who simply like to drink their way around the island.) We crammed so much into those six hours we had with Crescencio, taking many beautiful pictures at deserted beaches, having our pictures taken with three huge iguanas draped over us, seeing alligators and flamingos at Punta Sur, snorkeling with lots of beautiful tropical fish, eating a delicious lunch at a local market in town (the best guacamole and chicken enchiladas I've ever tasted), and shopping for souvenirs. Crescencio even took us to his house to meet his wife and daughter. What a blessed time, despite the wet and windy weather that day!

The alone time John and I had on this vacation was a first for us since we started having babies about six years ago. A whole week to ourselves! Amazing! A cruise was certainly not something I thought was ever in the realm of possibil-



ity for us, and it was so different from the vacations we usually take. We were completely unplugged (or at least we chose to be at internet access costing \$0.65/minute) and it was a totally carefree vacation...not worrying about driving and navigating and booking hotels and figuring out where to eat and how to order our food in a penny-pinching fashion. Wow - cruising is really a mindless bliss! Even the physical exhaustion from traveling

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## Oasis East encourages pastors and wives

The Oasis East retreat for pastoral couples was held in November at the Atlantica Hotel, Western Shore, Nova Scotia. The ministry couples were encouraged by speakers, Bob Shelton and Hamish Buntain, to “enjoy the journey, stay the course and finish well” in their places of ministry.

During the weekend, pastor’s wives gathered for a breakout session on “Are You Thriving or Surviving.” The theme verse was, “Therefore encourage one another and build one another up” (1 Thessalonians 5:11).

Kathy Morales and Debbie Shelton shared about the importance of finding ways to be strengthened and encouraged in faith, especially during a tough season in life or ministry. It’s easy to become discouraged and think God doesn’t care. When one is down, the tendency is to want to give up. Ministry is extremely demanding with unique concerns and challenges; pastors’ wives need each other to share tears, trials, heartaches and joys.

In small groups, the ladies shared their thoughts on the following:  
How can



you thrive and not just survive in ministry?

What has helped you balance your family and ministry life?

If you feel you are just surviving in ministry, what would help you move toward thriving?

"Oasis for me is a little like watching soldiers come off a war field to gather in a safe place and find refreshment. Sometimes Pastor's and their wives go to Oasis dry and barren, shamefully hiding their thirst for living water, like a wounded soldier barely holding on but still fighting. Others come to Oasis strong, armed and ready for battle. We come to Oasis to remind ourselves of the cause, to be encouraged that Jesus is our Lord, the commander in chief. We come to Oasis because we need to drink from the living water, and remind each other that we are not alone, and the victory is ours. Praise God!"  
Kelsey

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and the mile long to-do lists that awaited us at home can’t dampen the overwhelming sense of gratitude for the blessing of this amazing experience! We are so thankful to Contagious Joy for the cruise itself (not to mention the wonderful online friendships with other ministry wives that [www.contagiousjoy4him.com](http://www.contagiousjoy4him.com) has provided). We are thankful that Grandma and Grandpa Evans travelled all the way to PEI to spend the week with our three little girls. And we are thankful for a church family who was so genuinely happy for us to have this experience and was willing to give us the time off to go. Most of all, we are thankful to our Heavenly Father for the gift of such an undeserved blessing! Looking forward to seeing all you Canadian National Baptist Convention ministry wives online at [www.contagiousjoy4him.com](http://www.contagiousjoy4him.com)!

