



The Messenger

December 2008

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Gladness All the Way Around

Many Christmases ago, when a gift really meant something because a kid couldn't buy much for himself, I opened a gift from my uncle and aunt. The pink color peeking through the wrapping was the first sign that something was amiss. Moments later I found myself staring in disbelief, but not quite joy, at what I'd unwrapped. Sitting in my hands and staring back at me was my own pink "My Little Pony" piggy bank.

If you remember, "My Little Pony" was a fanciful cartoon series in the 1980's, featuring pretty unicorns flying around as friends. So, naturally, "My Little Pony" toys made great gifts for girls. Let me repeat. For *girls!* Of course, as a silly young boy, the only way I could deal with the indignity of this gift was to tell someone. About a half-hour later, I whispered to my other uncle. "Do you know what Uncle Poindexter gave me?" [Actual names have been changed.] "Can you believe it? He gave me a my little *pony* bank!" To my shock, that uncle said back to me, "Ah, Greg, actually, *we* gave you that gift."

Lessons from the story are. 1) Don't criticize gifts, because you may accidentally criticize the giver. 2) If you're giving a gift to a young boy, and the color pink takes up at least 20% of the square footage, look hard at the gift. 3) When a gift comes from the heart *and takes* into consideration the needs and wants of the recipient, both sides are so happy. The giver can rejoice in the home-run gift, and the recipient can lavish the thank yous in the joyful ease of sincerity.

At Christmas, we experience that. God rejoices that he has given us *the* home-run gift, having taken into account our soul's deepest needs and our eternal preferences. We dance in the joy of thanking our Lord for the ultimate gift – a divine Savior from sin who went from the manger, to the cross, to his victor's throne above. The angel Gabriel sums up God's present to us (Luke 1).

“You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end.”

The virgin Mary sums up our response. **‘And Mary said “My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed . . .”** Our praise with her of what the Lord has done goes on forever and ever.

Pastor Gregory Pope



Message From The President

TRINITY FAMILY CARE FUND

The third Sunday in November was our first monthly door collection for the Family Care Fund. The name Family Care Fund is twofold. The use is designated for members of Trinity's congregational family. The fund is to be used for persons or families of Trinity who are experiencing some difficult times.

The pastor and congregational president will determine if there is a need and disperse funds, as they feel appropriate.

The fund received very good opening contributions. This is another example of concern the congregation at Trinity has for the work of the Lord. December's door collection will also be designated for the fund. May the Lord continue to move the members of Trinity to support one another and continue their generous giving to all Trinity's needs.

John Smith, Congregational President.

WEATHER CANCELATIONS

Over the last couple of years we have had numerous weather related cancellations. It has always been difficult to determine whom to call to make sure the members know what is going on. This year we are letting you know just where to turn.

The council has determined that we will contact WCUB & WOMT radio stations with cancellations. These two are the most available and seem to be the most prepared to take cancellations. We will try other radio stations and even Green Bay TV stations but those have proved very difficult to contact or it has taken too long to get the word broadcast. One TV station I reached last year did not start broadcasting our cancellation until after church would have started.

So listen to WMOT and WCUB for cancellations. The Sunday School has asked to be notified at the time of the decision so they can call the families affected.

Please use common sense in deciding whether to try to go in bad weather. Listen to traffic reports. If those reports say to stay off the roads, that is probably good advice to take. There is always the radio broadcast at 9 a.m. Sundays on WCUB. You can also use the Meditation booklets. These are not to be used regularly as a substitution for church worship but will work in bad weather.

John Smith, Congregational President

News from the WELS

SC, COP address challenges and opportunities

From the office of President Mark Schroeder

Two important meetings took place last week as WELS leadership groups discussed the mission and ministry of our synod.

On Thursday, the Conference of Presidents (COP) and the Synodical Council (SC) met in a rare joint session. The joint meeting was intended to provide a forum in which these two leadership groups could discuss their respective responsibilities and to improve communication and mutual support.

The two major issues on the agenda were the Ad Hoc Commission's recommendations, which will be submitted to the 2009 synod convention in July, and the planning for the synod's program of ministry in light of the recent global economic downturn and its impact on financial support of WELS' operating budget. (For details, please see the special [Nov. 10 edition](#) of "Together.")

Ad Hoc Commission Chairman Joel Voss provided an overview of the commission's recommendations, along with the rationale for various recommendations. The joint discussion provided the members of the SC and the COP with valuable insight into the views of the respective groups.

The Synodical Council has the responsibility of formulating and proposing the synod's budget to the convention; the Conference of Presidents has the responsibility of encouraging congregations and individuals to support the budget with their offerings. These two different functions are closely related and interdependent. The joint discussion presented an opportunity for both groups to work together in the budget process as it moves forward in the coming months.

The joint meeting was seen as valuable by both groups; it's likely that similar joint meetings will take place on an annual basis.

On Friday and Saturday, the Synodical Council held its regularly scheduled meeting.

Following are some of the most noteworthy actions:

The SC accepted a recommendation from the Compensation Committee that the synod salary schedule for called workers provide for an increase of one percent to the base salary in each of the next two years, plus it bumped up the cap on salary increases from 30 to 31 years of service. When experience increments are included, the overall average salary increase for workers with less than 31 years of experience will be approximately 2.25 percent, roughly equivalent to the rate of inflation. (The original planning had provided an average increase of 3.5 percent—because of economic conditions, the actual increase was less than planned.)

The SC received a report from Chief Financial Officer Todd Poppe that the operating surplus in 2007-08 would be utilized to achieve a balanced budget for the current year. Cost-cutting efforts by all areas of ministry will also help to ensure that the 2008-09 budget remains balanced.

All areas of ministry have submitted initial ministry plans and budget requests to the SC as the budgeting process begins. In view of the recent financial news, the SC has asked all areas of ministry to revisit their plans and to identify strategies for reducing their funding requests.

The SC provided responses to all areas of the Ad Hoc Commission report and recommendations. Reaction to most recommendations was favorable; in a few instances, the SC has forwarded questions or suggestions to the Ad Hoc Commission as the final report is being prepared.

The Synodical Council has begun to address the challenges created by the recent financial news. Many options are being considered and some steps have been taken already. The SC is committed to doing all it can to enable the synod to carry out its mission and ministry

priorities in keeping with convention resolutions and the financial resources that God provides. The SC realizes that many decisions will hinge on things that we do not know at this time. For example, the results of the Year of Jubilee effort and the Congregation Mission Offering commitments will not be fully known until sometime in January. Until those details are clear, the SC will continue to explore all options and consider a variety of strategies to address the challenges before us.

Please keep both the SC and the COP in your prayers as our leadership groups wrestle with some difficult decisions. Above all, join them in continuing to trust in the promises of our gracious God as he prepares to bless us in ways that we do not yet know.

Serving in Christ,
Mark Schroeder

Year of Jubilee takes on added urgency

Given the worldwide economic downturn and its impact on the amount certain individual donors are able to give to the work of the synod, the special Year of Jubilee debt-elimination offering is taking on added urgency.

As reported in last week's special edition of "Together," one individual, who last year committed to give about \$3 million a year for five years for the synod operating budget, has announced he will not be able, at this time, to fulfill his commitment for the next fiscal year. Another foundation, which this calendar year gave about \$8 million toward synod operations and ministry, has indicated it will have to significantly reduce that amount next year.

Despite the shortfall, Rev. Dave Liggett, director of WELS Ministry of Christian Giving, remains upbeat. "When we are facing tremendous challenges in life it is mighty tempting to forget that thanks to Jesus, every moment of our lives is a moment of jubilee, a moment of the Lord's favor," he says. "The greatest debt of all, the debt of sin, has been forgiven. The cancelation of that debt definitely gives us reason to celebrate."

In that spirit, the Year of Jubilee offering was authorized by the 2007 synod convention with a goal of eliminating the synod's \$22.4 million debt, to free up nearly \$2.7 million in debt payments for other ministry. To date, congregations and individuals have been moved to offer more than \$780,000 toward Year of Jubilee.

Congregations are encouraged to kickoff the Year of Jubilee celebration this Sunday, Nov. 23. The Ministry of Christian Giving is providing [worship, Bible study, and promotional resources](#) for the next four Sundays, culminating Dec. 14 with a [special DVD presentation](#) that compellingly demonstrates the Holy Spirit at work through our mission dollars—saving souls for eternity.

Congregations are encouraged to submit a collective offering from all of their members—individuals can also [make gifts online](#).

WELS members safe in midst of wildfires

Although wildfires continue to rage in Southern California, WELS members in Yorba Linda are safe after fires passed through the surrounding area this past weekend. The fires, which are estimated to have destroyed more than 900 homes and scorched approximately 40,000 acres, began last Thursday.

Approximately 20 members of Grace in Yorba Linda—including one family whose home was destroyed—had to evacuate Saturday. Ten of them spent the night at the church, which did not sustain any damage. All have since returned home.

"We had a wedding Saturday afternoon and by that time the smoke was getting pretty thick—the fire was on the edge of Yorba Linda," says Rev. Daniel Wagenknecht. "At the

end of the wedding, a teenager ran into the church and told me his house [was destroyed] and he couldn't locate his family." Wagenknecht says phone service was spotty because of the fires; however, half an hour later the boy's family was able to get through and let him know they were safe and staying at a relative's house.

After the boy's parents picked him up, Wagenknecht says he went home and packed his things. He and his family also had to evacuate, and headed to the church where Wagenknecht began ministering to the other displaced families. "We are just thankful that the Lord protected both life and property," he says.

WELS Committee on Relief is sending \$7,500 to Grace to help the member family that lost its home. Some of those funds will also provide immediate assistance to affected community members. According to Wagenknecht, more than 90 homes in Yorba Linda were destroyed; however, he says most homeowners in the area—including the affected WELS family—have insurance.

New BME administrator called

WELS Board for Ministerial Education (BME) met today and called Rev. David Wenzel, professor at Fox Valley Lutheran High School, Appleton, Wis., to be the new BME administrator. The call meeting was scheduled after Rev. Paul Prange, president of Michigan Lutheran Seminary, Saginaw, declined the call Nov. 6.

Wenzel has served at Fox Valley Lutheran High School since 1991. He also served at St. Paul, St. James, Minn., and the former Martin Luther Preparatory School in Prairie Du Chien, Wis.

Rev. Donald Sutton, BME chairman, says getting a new administrator won't be the board's only change in upcoming months; next year all of the executive committee members will be finishing their terms. "There are going to be some big-time transitions," says Sutton. He adds that he's looking forward to getting someone on board soon, "so that we have a leader as we go through the present challenges and make plans for the future."

Forum to share ministry blessings

To help WELS congregations reach more people with the gospel, the Board for Parish Services is hosting a national leadership forum. Leaders from 30 congregations across the country that have been blessed with significant growth in worship attendance over the past ten years are meeting in Milwaukee, Wis., Nov. 16-18 to discuss ministry trends, identify opportunities and challenges, and share ideas.

"This leadership forum is being held in response to the fact that worship attendance across the synod has been declining for the last 17 years," says Rev. Bruce Becker, administrator of Parish Services. "Our ultimate goal is to learn from these congregations: what they are doing and how God is blessing those efforts. And we want to share those ideas with other WELS congregations in similar ministry settings."

To prepare for this forum, Becker says each participating congregation was asked to gather feedback from its members. "We asked them, 'What factors, beyond the power of the gospel, do you believe are contributing to God's blessing of numerical growth in your congregation?'" says Becker. "We received 100 pages of responses that are encouraging and positive."

Becker says information and ideas coming out of this forum, which was funded by special gifts and a grant from Thrivent, will be reviewed for common themes and shared with synod leaders. "Although the forum is designed to be a blessing to all of our WELS congregations, I'm convinced the congregations involved will also benefit as they learn from one another about God's amazing blessings," says Becker.

The Bible-Book of Chronicles

This month's part of the Bible focus' is on the Book of Chronicles.

GENERAL FACTS ABOUT THE BOOKS OF CHRONICLES

Like Kings, Chronicles was originally only one book but was divided into two in the Septuagint translation. The word "chronicle" means "a historical record" or "annal." The books of Chronicles are a historical record from Adam to the end of the Babylonian Captivity. One half of the pages of Chronicles are devoted to the reigns of David and Solomon and most of the remaining pages are devoted to the kings of Judah. We do not know the author of Chronicles. Jewish tradition says that the prophet Ezra was the author. Whoever the author was, he perhaps wrote the books about 400 B.C. after the time of the Captivity.

PURPOSE AND THEME

The people after the Captivity needed to know their history so that they could learn lessons from the past. If they were to build new God-pleasing lives, they would have to know the tragedies that their fathers' idolatry brought and the blessings of faithfulness to the Lord. The history lesson of Chronicles dare not be lost on us either. The Holy Spirit has preserved the inspired book for us so that we may be preserved from setting our hearts on evil things and test our faithful Lord. (See [1 Corinthians 10:66ff](#)) The theme of Chronicles can be taken from its own words in [2 Chronicles 15:21b](#): "**The Lord is with you when you are with him. If you seek him, he will be found by you, but if you forsake him, he will forsake you.**"

COMPARING KINGS AND CHRONICLES

The writer of Chronicles repeats many of the same records that are found in Kings and 2 Samuel. But there are also differences between Kings and Chronicles. First, at the time of the Divided Kingdom the author of Chronicles follows only the line of the kings of Judah and ignores the kings of the Northern Kingdom. Kings presents both lines of kings. Secondly, Chronicles gives us many details that are not recorded in Kings.

GENERAL OUTLINE OF THE BOOKS OF CHRONICLES

1. A Genealogy From Adam to after the Exile ([1 Chron. 1-9](#))
2. The Reign of David ([1 Chron. 10-29](#))
3. The Reign of Solomon ([2 Chron. 1-9](#))
4. The History of Judah to its Fall ([2 Chron. 10-36](#)) Note that 1 Chronicles has 29 chapters, and 2 Chronicles has 36 chapters.



Announcements

We appreciate it!

One thank you from our congregation, and especially our Sunday School, goes to Jeff Kasten for donating and installing the new programmable thermostats for the Family Center. All involved in Sunday School have enjoyed walking into an already warm building Sunday mornings.

Thank you also to everyone who setup and decorated the Christmas tree and church. Several members also replaced many lightbulbs that had burned out on the overhead lights in church. A big job that we're glad they did. Good to have more light in this season of light!

WCUB Rate Change

A note for those who would like to donate for our monthly WCUB sermon broadcast. The cost for 2009 goes up from \$82 to \$85 per month.

Possible Opening for Church Cleaner

There may be an opening for our church cleaning position in January. This is a paid position. If you are interested, and for more information, please contact President John Smith, Building and Grounds Chairman Gary Vetter, or Pastor Pope.

Door Collection for Family Care Fund Next Weekend

Remember, as the designated 3rd weekend in the month, December 20 and 21 will be our door collection for Trinity members in need. For more information on this, refer to the president's article above. The 3rd weekend in January, we are planning to have our WELS Jubilee Sunday to celebrate the gifts we have as part of the Wisconsin Synod. The door collection in January will go toward helping to remove synod debt. The February door offering will again go toward members in need.

Youth Group

The Youth Group was been real busy this past month in preparations for our cabin for Christmas @ Sinawa on December 6 & 7. Our theme is Oh, Holy Night. The cabin was decorated in silhouettes of Bethlehem, Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus. Our tree was decorated with angels. Some of the Youth made angel costumes to wear as they handed out angel food candy to all the children. We hope to have pictures put up on the churches website for all to see, soon. Many thanks to all who donated their time, talents, angel ornaments and angel food candy! Also thank you to all that came to see our cabin for Christmas @ Sinawa. This is a wonderful community outreach program that the youth have chosen to do and a great way to spread the true meaning of Christmas.

The Milwaukee Bucks game on November 15th was very exciting. The pizza was delicious as always. This is the first year that we did not have snowy weather and the first time the Bucks lost with us there. The second half of the game had us all on the edge of our seats, waiting with nervous anticipation. Then the overtime. Everyone had fun shooting a free throw after the game. The free throw contest was bitter sweet - Brett Glaeser won the contest. Well done Brett! But we were not able to collect the \$1000 prize money for the church due to WIAA rules.

The Youth Group will be serving snacks after the 7 PM Song Service in the church basement on December 13th. Any youth able to assist is encouraged to come to the song service and help after.

Fellowship Update

Candy Bags

Everyone is welcome to help fill the candy bags on Saturday, December 20 at 9am. These bags are distributed to the children attending the Christmas Eve service.

MLHS News

Week of 12/15 – 12/21

Mon 12/15 Boys' Basketball vs. Valders (H)
Tue 12/16 Girls' Basketball @ Brillion
Thur 12/18 Boys Basketball @ Brillion
Fri 12/19 Girls' Basketball vs. Chilton (H)

Week of 12/22 – 12/28

Mon 12/22 Girls' Basketball @ Algoma
Tue 12/23 MLHS Christmas Concert at Capitol Civic Centre; 4:30 & 7:30pm

Scott Reinhard, Development Director

Manitowoc Lutheran High School

4045 Lancer Cir.

Manitowoc, WI 54220

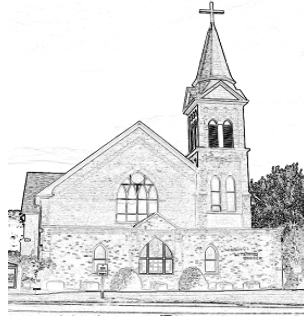
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*****Raise money for MLHS just by searching the Internet with GoodSearch - www.goodsearch.com - powered by Yahoo!**

Church Attendance for November



Combined Total for Saturday/Sunday

November 2005

Week 1: 34/116=160

Week 2: 39/129=168

Week 3: 61/77=138

Week 4: 49/87=136

Thanksgiving 131

Monthly=733

November 2006

Week 1: 27/180=200

Week 2: 29/121=150

Week 3: 38/89=127

Week 4: 34/89=123

Thanksgiving 123

Monthly=723

November 2007

Week 1: 18/158=176

Week 2: 60/85=145

Week 3: 37/119=156

Week 4: 24/154=178

Thanksgiving 125

Monthly= 780

November 2008

Week 1: 29/110=139

Week 2: 47/128=175

Week 3: 52/113=165

Week 4: 36/92=128

Thanksgiving 139

Week 5: 32/107=135

Monthly=881

“God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.”

John 4:24



A Happy Birthday and God's Blessings to...

- | | |
|--|--|
| 12/1 Lisa Kiesow | 12/12 Benjamin Kiesow |
| 12/2 Allyson Jungbluth | 12/12 Joshua Kiesow |
| 12/3 Carol Kasten | 12/13 Lawrence Teesch |
| 12/4 Kim Fischer | 12/14 Brittany Kenneke |
| 12/5 Sherri Kasten | 12/15 Alex Free |
| 12/6 Benjamin Lovell | 12/17 Denise Preston |
| *12/6 <i>Bernice Pleuss-87 yrs. young</i> | 12/23 Alexander Kenneke |
| 12/7 Chad Knutson | * 12/24 <i>Lorena Nagel-95 yrs.young</i> |
| 12/7 Beckee Williamson | 12/26 Janet Matthias |
| 12/8 Mark Kiesow | 12/27 James W. Ott |
| 12/10 Dean Bratz | 12/29 Charlotte Luebke |
| 12/10 Kaitlin Bushman | 12/31 Eunice Barnes |
| 12/11 Todd Glaeser | |
| 12/11 Shelby Johnson | |
| 12/11 Jodi Lovell | |
| * 12/11 <i>Caroline Schwalbe-85 yrs. young</i> | |



Happy Anniversary To...

- 12/6 David & Jessica Jungbluth – 11 Years!
12/10 Bob & Gail Lietzau – 25 Years!
12/17 Steve & Bonnie Wagner – 16 Years!

If you have a December birthday or anniversary and it is not listed or your anniversary is listed incorrectly please let us know so we can update your information. Thanks!

Date:	Ushers on Schedule:
Dec.13 th	James Glaeser, Derrick Krey, Steve Pleuss, Al Bonfigt
Dec.14 th	Gary Vetter, Brett Glaeser, Brian Glaeser, Elwood Free
Dec.20 th	Harold Bratz, Mike Kiesow
Dec.21 st	Dave Williamson, Jeff Kasten , Alex Kasten, James Ott
Christmas Eve	
Dec.24 th	John Smith, Wayne Otto , Len Arnold, Jeff Knutson
Christmas Day	
Dec.25 th	Fritz Wehausen, Larry Hochkammer, Eli Kenneke, A.J. Kenneke
Dec.27 th	Dan Knutson (Server), David Schultz (Server), Mark Kiesow
Dec.28 th	James Glaeser (Server), Brian Glaeser (Server), Brett Glaeser, Jim Krim

If you are unable to make your scheduled service, please call Brian Glaeser @ 775-3941.

Communion Liturgy: Take, eat; this is the true body of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, given into death for your sins.

Take, drink; this is the true blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, shed for you for the remission of your sins.

May this strengthen and preserve you in the true faith unto life everlasting. Depart in peace; your sins are forgiven. Amen.

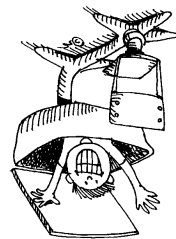
Altar Guild Schedule -December

Group 4: Marie Knutson, Darlene Kiesow, Marilyn Kaufmann, Grace Ott

Our Greeters For December



Dec. 7th August Teesch
 Dec. 14th Jim & Grace Ott
 Dec. 21st Len & Sharon Arnold
 Dec. 25th Eileen & Steve Pleuss
 Dec. 28th David & Dianne Schultz



Kids Corner

Bible Quiz – “Proverbs”

1. Who wrote the book of Proverbs?
 - a. David
 - b. Solomon
 - c. Saul
 - d. Hezekiah

2. The horse is made ready for the day of battle:
 - a. And the righteous man takes it to heart.
 - b. But the slothful man remains in his bed.
 - c. And by the fear of the Lord a man avoids evil.
 - d. But victory rests with the Lord.

3. Like a gold ring in a pig’s snout:
 - a. Is a beautiful woman who shows no discretion.
 - b. Is a wicked man in a king’s court.
 - c. Is a wealthy man in the company of fools.
 - d. Is a righteous man among sinners.

4. Dishonest money dwindles away:
 - a. But a poor man’s field may produce abundance.
 - b. But he who gathers money little by little makes it grow.
 - c. That one may avoid the snares of death.
 - d. And the way of the faithless is their ruin.

5. All a man’s ways seem right to him:
 - a. And by seeking them he will prosper.
 - b. But the Lord weighs the heart.
 - c. But in the end he will not be blessed.
 - d. But how can a man understand his way?

Answers: 1.) **b** [Proverbs 1:1] 2.) **d** [Proverbs 21:31] 3.) **a** [Proverbs 11:22] 4.) **b** [Proverbs 13:11]
5.) **b** [Proverbs 21:2]



Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.
Luke 2:11

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Bible Name Word Search



W Q L U B A N D R E W M P L J
 G Y L E R A C H E L B C V W D
 I E L F D S E L I Z A B E T H
 I A K W U P J O H N M X E K K
 C I H S Z A E D C D M F U Y L
 B X E V H U C L S Q A Q J M K
 I J M M R L K M K L R O G I K
 E D X E E M H F F R Y H A C E
 J L T B W J O S E P H A B H C
 P E G Z J B G L X J J N R A A
 P H M U Z O E B V V A N I E O
 S E I J M I R G L M C A E L C
 A G Y L N I R G G T O H L O N
 X P F A I M O E V O B V M Y G
 T S D G Q P C I R U L E Z S R



Can you find these Bible names in the puzzle?
 Beside each name is it's meaning.
 Is your name in the puzzle?

NAME	MEANING
Jesus	The Lord saves
Mary	Beloved
Joseph	He will add
Michael	Who is like God
Gabriel	Strong man of God
Peter	Stone
Daniel	God is my judge
Hannah	Favor or grace
Elizabeth	God's oath
Caleb	(promise)
Andrew	Faithful, bold
John	Manly
Jacob	God's gracious gift
Paul	Holder of the heel
Rachel	Small or humble
Philip	Ewe (female sheep)
	Friend of horses

