

# BenefitNews

NEWS ABOUT THE MINISTRIES OF BROTHERS BENEFIT TRUST

SECOND QUARTER 2012

## Brethren Insurance Services

### National Walk @ Lunch Day brings colleagues, congregations together

Walking might be the easiest form of exercise — which also could make it the most effective. It's a low-intensity workout that can burn 204-305 calories for every hour of brisk walking.

Employees of the denomination walked on April 25 to celebrate National Walk @ Lunch Day, an annual fitness event sponsored by Brethren Insurance Services and Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield.



Patrice Nightingale

Church of the Brethren staff members participate in the event, which was sponsored by Brethren Insurance Services and held at the General Offices in Elgin, Ill.

BBT encouraged congregations across the country to participate, and it also hosted a walking event at the Church of the Brethren

General Offices in Elgin, Ill., where employees left their desks at noon and took walks for health and fellowship.

The event even inspired the General Offices community to hold a Walk @ Lunch event once a month through autumn.

Photos from the BBT-sponsored event can be found on BBT's Flickr page at <http://goo.gl/fKZbM>.

If you want to start a fitness walking routine, pick up a pedometer and visit <http://goo.gl/3wSi8> to download a chart that will help you keep track of the miles, steps, and minutes you've walked. — B.S.



Patrice Nightingale

CoB and BBT employees head out as they begin their participation in National Walk @ Lunch Day.

## Socially Responsible Investing

### Department of Defense contractor lists released; FedEx moves up

Honoring the Church of the Brethren's historic peace stance can be accomplished in many ways, and one way Brethren Benefit Trust chooses to do so is through its investments.

BBT does this by compiling lists of publicly traded U.S. Department of Defense contractors each year and prohibiting its investment managers from investing BBT funds in them.

Two lists are produced: One includes the top 25 DoD contracts held by publicly traded companies; the other includes all publicly traded companies that earn more than 10 percent of their revenue from Defense contracts.

This year, some of the nation's largest



Nevin Dulabaum

companies made it on the two lists produced. For example, shipping giant FedEx is at number 23, up one spot from when it joined the list in 2011. The list showing companies that earned more than 10 percent of their revenue from Defense contracts removed 20 companies and gained 19 new ones for a total of 78.

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## Staff Contacts

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**Benefit News** is published by Brethren Benefit Trust, an agency of the Church of the Brethren that provides health and welfare benefits, pension and employee financial services, asset management, deferred gifts, and financial advocacy for the entire denomination and its affiliated organizations.

### Address corrections and editorial suggestions:

Send to *Benefit News*, Brethren Benefit Trust, 1505 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120, call 800-746-1505, ext. 373, or send an email to [newsletters@cobbt.org](mailto:newsletters@cobbt.org).

## How much, how long, and by when?

Ensuring that Brethren Pension Plan will meet the needs of our members for decades to come is one of our top priorities at Church of the Brethren Benefit Trust. That is why in November 2010 the BBT Board created a task team composed of Board and staff members to perform a comprehensive review of the Plan.

Since its creation, the task team has identified some concerns and has commissioned several studies that examine key components of the Plan. At the BBT Board's meetings last month, the full Board and staff reviewed three such studies.

The first study compares the assets and liabilities held within the Brethren Pension Plan's Retirement Benefits Fund. The RBF is the fund from which all annuities are paid. Each year, human resources consulting firm Aon Hewitt projects how much money is available to pay present and future monthly benefits. This year's report showed that as of Dec. 31, 2011, the RBF was 78 percent funded, which was down from 82 percent at the end of 2010, equal to the 2009 number, and up from 68.5 percent at the end of 2008.

Although some of our members assume that the funded status is directly tied to the performance of the investment markets, it also is tied to several other factors: the liability of those in annuity status, the single life or joint/survivor option each annuitant chose, the mortality experience of Plan members, and the number of people who entered the Plan during the preceding year. This is a study that we will continue to receive as we strive to return the RBF to fully funded status.

The second study, also conducted by Aon Hewitt, examined the mortality assumptions that we have used when determining the life expectancies of our Plan members. Choosing the right table is incredibly important; it determines average life expectancy for a population based on historical data. If too many annuitants



Patrice Nightingale

*Director of Employee Benefits Scott Douglas shares a report from the Pension Plan task force with BBT Board members as Tim Fallon, consultant from Marquette Associates, looks on.*

live longer than their annuity was calculated for because of an underestimated life expectancy, the Plan could experience financial difficulty. After comparing several mortality tables versus the Plan's actual mortality experience, Aon Hewitt concluded that the table we have been using is accurate, but it would be appropriate to choose a newer table in the future. The report also listed other options that Aon Hewitt believes could be beneficial for the Brethren Pension Plan to adopt. The Plan's task team will consider these options at its next meeting.

The third study, performed by Marquette Associates, looked at the RBF's funded status, investment market trends, interest rates, actuarial assumptions, and demographic experience. Marquette staff then developed four possible investment portfolio scenarios; each one showed when the RBF could return to fully funded status based on a different asset allocation model that included a unique degree of market volatility and risk. Although this study is based on a number of assumptions, the data was clear: A return of the RBF to fully funded status could take a decade or more.

All of these studies are projections, and yet they give Board members and staff information that will be crucial to the future success of Brethren Pension Plan. While we know that the funded status of many state, municipal, and corporate pension plans is far worse than Brethren Pension Plan's, we will not be satisfied until we have reached a point where the RBF is fully funded with ample reserves.

Brethren Pension Plan was created in 1943 to help give the leadership and employees of the denomination financial security in retirement. It is our goal that the Plan will continue fulfilling that mission for another seven decades and beyond. — N.D.



Brian Solem

*BBT Investment Committee Chairman Harry Rhodes and Board Chairwoman Karen O. Crim share a light moment during the April Investment Committee meeting in Elgin, Ill.*

## How to plan for — and possibly postpone — memory loss

Busy lives can make it difficult to remember the simple things in life. What did that colleague ask me to do? What do I need from the grocery store? What is my checking account number?

When these memory slips become more severe and begin to seriously affect one's life, it may be caused by something more substantial than stress or the natural aging process. The Institute for

Dementia Research and Prevention estimates that at least 5 million people in the country have some form of dementia, which is defined by the National Institute of Health as "a loss of brain function that occurs with certain diseases" like Alzheimer's, for example.

Although there is not a cure for dementia or Alzheimer's — or even day-to-day memory loss — there are ways to help keep your memory sharp and safeguard your family.

### Early prevention may keep your mind sharp

Memory loss, dementia, and Alzheimer's are triggered by many factors, including health history, heredity, and factors beyond doctors' awareness. Nevertheless, there are several things you can do to help slow or prevent the onset of these disorders.

A guide published by the Harvard Medical School suggests that keeping your mind sharp means keeping your body sharp, too — getting regular exercise, eating well, and getting an adequate amount of uninterrupted sleep are at the top of the list of things to do to prevent memory loss. Building a strong social network and continuing to learn new things are two other helpful techniques to stave off memory



BBT staff members take a short afternoon break to get some exercise and have some fun together.

Brian Solern

issues. Read more about these tips from Harvard at <http://goo.gl/XI3H7>.

### Protecting your assets and your loved ones

If you have a history of dementia in your family, you may want to take more serious action beyond the steps above. If you do develop the symptoms of dementia and Alzheimer's, what are your options?

Once dementia sets in, you may need routine medical attention or supervision. Memory care facilities are more and more commonplace at retirement communities, but they can be expensive. Paul and Lori Hogan, authors of *Stages of Senior Care: Your Step-by-Step Guide to Making the Best Decisions*, report that these services can cost between \$4,500 and \$7,000 each month.

One way to prepare for the possibility of this cost is to invest in long-term care insurance. LTCI pays for medical services related to a prolonged physical illness like Alzheimer's. While it cannot reverse the effects of memory loss, it can safeguard your financial resources against the burden of paying for at-home care, nursing care, or assisted living. — B.S.

Randy Yoder is a contracted agent working with BBT to offer Long-Term Care Insurance to all members and employees of the Church of the Brethren, as well as their family and friends. Contact him at [ryoder@cobbt.org](mailto:ryoder@cobbt.org) or 847-849-0205 to learn more about LTCL.

## BBT Staff

### Connie Sandman celebrates 30 years of service

On April 26, 1982, Argentina surrendered to England on South Georgia near the contested Falkland Islands. Singer Rod Stewart was mugged, and the robber stole his Porche. Meanwhile, back at the Church of the Brethren General Offices in Elgin, Ill., Connie Sandman had her first day of work for the Pension Board, which later became Church of the Brethren Benefit Trust. Thirty years later, Connie's anniversary was celebrated by BBT staff.

Connie currently works as a member services representative in the department in which she started with BBT — Brethren Insurance Services.

"Connie has dedicated her career to helping BBT's members, clients, and staff, and she has brought joy and discipline to BBT every day for the last 30 years," said Nevin Dulabaum, BBT president. "We are all thankful to Connie for her amazing service!"



Connie, left, receives appreciation from her BBT colleagues, German Gongora and Veronica Aragon.

Brian Solern



## Meet BBT in St. Louis at the 226th Annual Conference

The 2012 meeting of Church of the Brethren members is in a few short months — how will you spend your time at this year's Annual Conference? Meet with Brethren Benefit Trust's staff members, learn something new at a BBT-sponsored insight session, or get an early-morning workout at BBT's Fitness Challenge walk/run.

### Insight Sessions

Experts on BBT's staff will be presenting insight sessions on topics ranging from long-term care insurance to website development. You can get an update on big changes for Brethren Pension Plan or learn about the state of the economy from a *USA Today* reporter and BBT Board member. For more details about insight session options, visit [www.brethrenbenefittrust.org/ac-workshops](http://www.brethrenbenefittrust.org/ac-workshops) or look at your Annual Conference book.

If you aren't attending Annual Conference but are interested in hosting one of these insight sessions in your church, retirement community, or district, contact **Loyce Swartz Borgmann** at **800-746-1505, ext. 364**, or [lborgmann@cobbt.org](mailto:lborgmann@cobbt.org) to check staff availability.

### Fitness Challenge

Whether you're a walker or a runner, BBT invites you to race with your fellow Brethren and the BBT staff on Sunday, July 8, at 7 a.m. Get some fresh air and exercise as you move along a three-and-a-half-mile path at Forest Park, which is located about six miles away



Patrice Nighthawke

from the Annual Conference site. You may register at BBT's Annual Conference booth — the cost is \$25 per individual and \$60 per family. You'll still have plenty of time to head back to the America's Center Convention Complex before worship officially begins!

For more information before Annual Conference, contact **Diane Parrott** at **800-746-1505, ext. 361**, or [dparrott@cobbt.org](mailto:dparrott@cobbt.org).

### Business Session

Are you interested in hearing about the past year in the life of BBT? Head to the main hall at 7 p.m. on Sunday, July 8, to watch a video overview of BBT's ministries and ask questions of BBT President Nevin Dulabaum and BBT Board Chairwoman Karen O. Crim.

### Memorial Tribute

At each Annual Conference, BBT presents a multimedia celebration of the lives of church leaders, Pension Plan members, and Plan members' spouses who have passed away in the previous year. Join the delegates in the main hall at 4:05 p.m. on Monday, July 9, to honor those who have gone before us.

## Two temporary BBT employees work on special projects

Brethren Pension Plan staff welcomed a new member to its team on April 16 — Barb Ingold joined Brethren Benefit Trust as a member services representative in a temporary, full-time capacity.

Barb has a long history with BBT and the Church of the Brethren denomination; in addition to serving the Church of the Brethren General Board in the 1980s and 1990s, Barb also worked for 10 weeks on a special project for Brethren Pension Plan in 2010.



Barb Ingold

### Socially Responsible Investing

*"Department of Defense ..."* continued from Page 1

The firms on the lists are screened from BBT investment portfolios, along with firms that receive more than 10 percent of their revenue from abortion, alcoholic beverages, firearms and other weapons, gambling, pornography, or tobacco. BBT also avoids using the services of any of these companies — most notably FedEx.

Visit [brethrenbenefittrust.org/screening](http://brethrenbenefittrust.org/screening) for the complete lists. — B.S.



Bob Mosley

Bob Mosley joined the Finance team in May on a temporary, part-time basis to assist with projects as that department begins to implement a new general ledger system. Bob worked for BBT from September 1998 to April 2010, when he retired from his position as director of financial operations.

## From good health to financial wellness — there's an app for that

Sometimes it's the little things that make maintaining healthy habits and sound financial practices successful. That's where apps come in — programs that you can download to your smart device (like a smart phone or tablet computer). Both Apple and Google have cornered the market on these apps for their mobile operating systems, iOS and Android. Here are a few apps available on both platforms that can keep your body and your wallet on track —

### MapMyRun/Walk/Hike/Ride

This suite of exercise tools allows you to either set a path for your jog, bike ride, hike, or walk, or it will record the path you've traveled (while you hold your smart phone) using GPS technology. *Cost: \$0-2.99*

### Lose It!

Keep track of calories burned and consumed with this handy app. Set a daily calorie goal, and then select the foods you've eaten and any exercise breaks you've taken. *Cost: Free*

### Instant Heart Rate

Your phone can't replace *everything* in a doctor's office, but it can replace a heart rate monitor. Instant Heart Rate will tell you how fast your heart's beating, and it'll keep track of your past monitored rates. *Cost: Free (or \$0.99 for the Pro edition)*

### SleepCycle/Sleep as Android

The importance of a good night's rest is up there along with eating right and exercising. To keep an eye on your sleep patterns, turn on SleepCycle (iOS) or Sleep as Android (Android), slide your



smart device under your fitted bedsheet, and the device will record and interpret your nocturnal movements. You can also set an alarm clock that will awaken you at an opportune time during your sleep cycle within a time range that you set. *Cost: \$0.99*

### Your financial institution's mobile app

Whether you belong to Wachovia, Chase, Bank of America, Corporate America Family Credit Union (which merged with Church of the Brethren Credit Union in June 2011), or another financial institution, it's likely that your bank or credit union has an app that will allow you to check your balance and make deposits using your phone's camera. *Cost: Free (typically)*

### Mint.com Personal Finance

This budgeting website has developed an app so you can sync your bank or credit union account information, budgets, and savings goals to your smart device. Did you exceed your budget or do you have a bill to pay? It will alert you. *Cost: Free*

### Bloomberg Mobile

Need to keep an eye on the markets? Want to get up-to-the-minute reports from Wall Street? Download this app and stay on top of your investments. *Cost: Free*

### Debt Payoff Planner/Debt Free

If you're working toward paying off a loan, these apps can help you keep track of how long you have until the loan is totally paid off. Debt Payoff Planner (Android) and Debt Free (iOS) offer the ability to pay a loan through the app and monitor your progress. *Cost: \$0.99-\$1.99*

## Three tax tips to think about all year long

Do you only think about your taxes once a year — when you're shocked at how much you owe to your federal and state government? Make tax time easier on yourself and your wallet. Consider these three simple tips that can help you lower your tax burden —

**Contribute more to your retirement account.** Because your employer-sponsored retirement plan (like Brethren Pension Plan) is tax-deferred, you won't pay tax on that money until you withdraw it. This will lower your taxable income and may put you into a more favorable tax bracket.

**Keep track of your deductions and credits.** Being an organized taxpayer means you won't forget about the charitable contribution you made in July or the education tax credit you became eligible for in August. Save all paperwork in one place, and you'll thank yourself come April when those deductions might come in handy.

**Keep your investments invested.** Withdrawals from your retirement plan or personal investment portfolio can result in hefty tax penalties. Think twice before you do it.

Questions? Consider meeting with a financial adviser for help. — B.S.



# CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN BENEFIT TRUST

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***Fitness Challenge? Worship? Our booth? Where will BBT meet you at Annual Conference?***

## ***Annual Report will be online only — unless you request a paper copy***

In order to save both financial and environmental resources, the paper version of Brethren Benefit Trust's Annual Report will be mailed only to members and clients who request it.

It will also be printed for Annual Conference delegates. Otherwise, the report will be available online before Annual Conference. Contact BBT at [communications@cobbt.org](mailto:communications@cobbt.org) or 800-746-1505, ext. 376, by June 1 to request the paper version.



Have you signed up to receive *Benefit News*, BBT news briefs, and the organization's *Annual Report* electronically? It's not too late to do your part in helping BBT save trees and member dollars. Visit [www.brethrenbenefittrust.org/green](http://www.brethrenbenefittrust.org/green) to get important news items from BBT via email.

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