

You are the  
**LIGHT**  
of the  
**WORLD.**

A city on a hill  
cannot be hidden.

Matthew 5:14

*RVURC*

*Summer Newsletter*

*2013*



## *"Been Thinkin' Bout Weeds"*

Many of us have gone on vacation this summer only to return home to some pretty impressive weeds. Judging by the size of them they must have already been there before we left home, we just didn't notice them – perhaps our weeding wasn't as frequent or as thorough as it should or could have been. But these weeds were small, that's how all things start out – small: small little resentments, small little jealousies, small little dislikes and annoyances, small little hatreds. We read in Hebrews 12:15 "See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled..." Wow, weeds are ugly and they tend to take over. Our hearts are a garden and they need constant tending. But it's our nature to assume we're O.K. We're Christians after all – our hearts are right with God thru Jesus Christ. What could possibly be amiss? We find out with the help of God that even redeemed hearts can become a host for some ugly sentiments: thoughts, emotions, conclusions that are sinful and unworthy of one who professes to be a Christian. We often find things in our hearts that grieve our God and Savior.

This is why the Apostle Paul writes to first century Christians: "...Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by Whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you" (Eph. 4:30-31). This is easier said than done. Weeding is hard work especially when we've let things go for a while and the weeds have an incredibly deep and long taproot. Weeding is dirty, often hot and sweaty, backbreaking work. And the examination of our hearts and rooting out all the bitter roots that have the potential to destroy many is a dirty business too, but we've all got to do it. God calls us to repent (weed) daily and turn to Jesus in Humility and faith for the forgiveness of sins, and the power to live a renewed life with a cleansed and renewed mind.

What a transformation! I can actually see my flowers and the annuals I knew had to be in there somewhere. Gone is the quack grass and the crabgrass, gone are the milkweeds, ragweeds, and pigweeds, gone the puslance and thistles. Now we're looking good! This is the life God has called us to. A new life, a life of love, a life of forgiveness, a life of service in consideration of others. "All hard work brings a profit" the Bible says (Prov. 14:23). And that's true of spiritual things too. When we sincerely repent of our sin and confess it to God, God by His Grace forgives us and causes us to overcome all the destructive and sinful tendencies of the old man within. God delights to reward the hard work of weeding – He does so in our gardens, He does so in our hearts and in our lives together. Beautiful, colorful, fruitful - that's the purpose and potential of your life, Christian. May God be praised and all be blessed. What a beautiful thing to behold, a well weeded garden, a repentant and restored heart

*Rev. Joel Vander Kooi*



# Installation of our New Minister

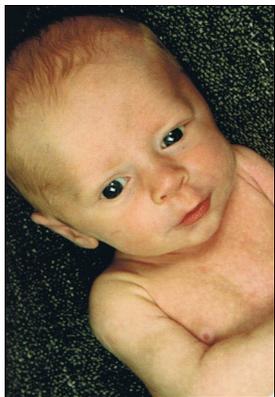
Installation of Rev. Joel Vander Kooi as Minister of Rock Valley URC took place on Thursday, May 16, 2013.

Rev. Bradd Nymeyer from the Sioux Center URC preached on 2 Timothy 4:1-5 under the theme "Fulfilling Your Ministry", with an emphasis on the command to "preach the Word". Rev. Simon Lievaart from Doon URC gave the charge to the congregation and the minister. The RVURC Choir also participated in the service with the songs: "Wonderful Merciful Savior" and "All Ye That Fear Jehovah's Name", with additional trumpet accompaniment by Miss Caity Laman. Korrie Van Maanen read letters of fraternal greetings from neighboring churches.

Following the service refreshments were served for everyone in the Youth Room.

We extend a warm welcome to the Vander Kooi's, and we thank the Lord for bringing the man of His choosing to our congregation, all in His perfect timing. We look forward to serving Him together, minister and congregation, shepherd and flock, for many years to come. To God be the Glory!!

Janet,  
Rev. Joel,  
and Marijke  
on the  
evening of  
Installation



## Rock Valley URC Welcomes Jakson James

Congratulations to Brett and Megan on the birth of their first child, a healthy baby boy named Jakson James. Jakson was born on Wednesday, July 3, 2013. He weighed 6 pounds and 9 ounces, and was 21 inches long at birth.

Proud grandparents are Hank and Gail and Mike and Jodi. Also rejoicing in his birth are Jakson's great grandparents from RVURC, Walt and Alta.



It is our prayer that Brett and Megan will be granted the wisdom they need to raise Jakson in the fear and love of the Lord, and that we, as their church family, will always be faithful to support and help them in this joyful task.

# MISSION: POSSIBLE!

# RYS CONVENTION ST. PAUL, MN

By Lindsay



The crew from RVURC



Lindsay in the volleyball tournament.



Getting' ready for fun at Valleyfair!

This year our convention crew consisted of Carla, Josh, Lindsay and Jessica. Monday, July 22, we had a later start than past years because, lucky for us, it was at University of Northwestern in St. Paul, Minnesota. We hit the road at about 10 o'clock and took our time getting there, collecting McDonald's Monopoly stickers along the way. We even took an "unexpected detour" past the Viking's Metrodome!

Once we got there we checked in, had supper and attended Session #1. Sessions are basically sermons, given this year by Rev. Bill Boekestein and Rev. Greg Lubbers. Each Session focused on our theme, "Mission: Possible!" and based on 2 Timothy 2:3-4. They challenged us to be members of God's army in our daily lives.

Tuesday, the 23rd, we had Session #2 and workshops #1, #2 and #3. Workshops are hour long speeches given by pastors. My favorite workshop was "Grow Up!", given by Rev. Shane Lems. He went into depth of why young people are leaving the church, and he discussed the changes the churches are making to make them more appealing to teenagers and young adults. Rev. Lems concluded that the young people need to "grow up" in their faith, but churches are making it difficult because they are "dumbing" everything down!

Also on Tuesday Jessica and I participated in the volleyball tournament along with Stephanie from Doon URC and some kids from Sanborn Cornerstone URC. We didn't do very well, losing our 1st game and then we were out.

Every morning we had "Son-rise" groups, which are designated small groups that we had devotions with, and every night we had "Son-set" groups, where we were able to meet and talk about our day.

Wednesday, the 24th, we started with Son-rise groups and Session #3, and then we were off to Valleyfair amusement park. We rode some roller coasters and had a great time. When we returned to campus we had free time and then Son-set groups.

During most of the free time during the week Jessica and Josh spent it socializing and making new friends, and I spent it playing Bocce ball and Frisbee with my friends from Sanborn.

On Thursday Jessica and I woke up early to participate in a 5K run. We didn't win, but still had fun doing it. After the run we had Son-rise groups, workshops #4 and #5, Session 4 and some free time, so we watched some friends play in a basketball tournament. Later that night was the talent show, which ended with a song from the Convention Choir. Carla and I both sang in the choir.

Friday was our last day. We had check-out and Son-rise groups, Session #5, and then headed for home.

Throughout the week the speeches and talks we heard got us thinking of how we can deepen our faith so that we can fight against the world, which may seem impossible, but with God's help all things are possible. That's what our theme meant by "Mission: Possible!"

Loren, Carla, Josh, Jessica and I want to extend a hearty thanks for all your support, not only in making Convention possible, but also for all the support throughout the past year. It was greatly appreciated.



## Stand and Deliver

By  
Marijke

July 20, 2013 was my first *Stand and Deliver* outing in Sanborn, Iowa. Our speaker, Mr. Dekkers, had an engaging seminar, about how the Holy Spirit worked through him in helping convert his Muslim neighbor, Mohammed, to Christianity. Mr. Dekkers was explaining to us that we don't need to go all the way across the world to bring the Bible to unbelievers. What was fascinating was that Mohammed would have dreams, which in the Muslim tradition is very significant to the individual. Mohammed's dreams resulted in him asking Mr. Dekkers about them. Interestingly, these dreams were about stories in the Bible that Mohammed never even heard about, and yet the Holy Spirit revealed them to him through the dreams! It was these dreams that resulted in Mohammed's conversion to Christianity.

Before the inspirational session, we played games and had pizza. One game was water balloon volleyball and another was a relay race that also involved water. They were both genuinely fun and I enjoyed them! I was surprised at how many people were there from so far away but that was because some attendees were anticipating the RY convention in St. Paul, MN. I think that *Stand and Deliver* is fantastic and I look forward to the next event. Anyone who hasn't gone should consider coming to the next one.



Rachel and the boys joined us, too.

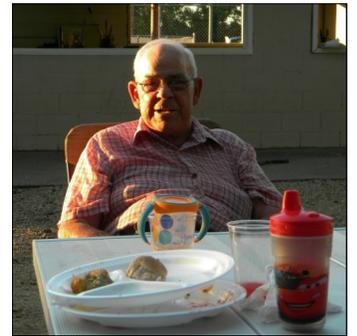
Guess Caity wasn't as excited about her food options as most of the rest of us were!



# Church Picnic

Our annual Church Picnic was held on Tuesday evening, July 9, at the Rock Valley City Park. We had beautiful weather for eating outside and playing games. Naturally, there was plenty of good food to suit anyone's taste. We could play horseshoes, bean bag toss, farmer's golf, volleyball, and Human Jenga. Marijke came with her best buddy, her dog Ruger, and he provided us with lots of entertainment, too!

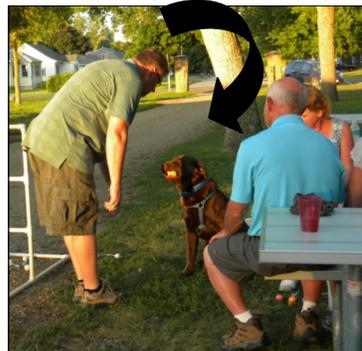
Simon quickly made friends with Ruger.



Gloria and Marijke trying their hand at the Human Jenga game.

Okay, Ruger, you can have a bun, too, but you need to shake on it first and give us a big smile!

Good boy!!





Out of all of the games we played that night, the one who had the most fun seemed to be Jonah, getting tossed in the air by AI!



One game was to roll a marble through pieces of pipe that we each held and attempted to line up with each other. We formed two teams and raced to see who could get the marble all the way down the line first without losing it.

We also competed as two teams trying to thread a hula hoop down the line we formed by holding hands. Who could step through it and get it over all their shoulders to the end of the line first? Maybe we're not as limber as we once were...



Coming from the Wild West city of Calgary, Marijke showed us her skills with the lasso. Even though her dad did his best to get away, Marijke was able to rope him in, getting the lasso right around his neck!



She got him!



Take a look at all the women in the hula hoop game...don't most of them look a bit, um, "awkward"? But now take a look at Lance — look at the grace and finesse on *that* guy! Who knew the dude was so smooth?



Always  
give  
yourselves  
fully to  
the work  
of the  
Lord ...

1 Corinthians 15:58

*Have you ever wondered how  
the Lord uses our weekly offerings  
to advance His Kingdom?  
The "Thank You" notes we receive  
help us to see His work.*

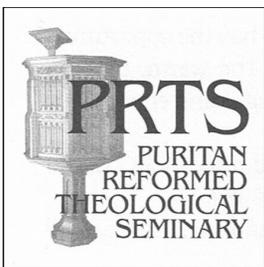
**From Hope Haven:** "We gratefully acknowledge your recent gift for the local and global outreach ministries of Hope Haven. Your gift truly blesses children and adults who have special needs, both locally and globally. With support from friends like you, we served 1367 people in our region in 2012, along with their families. Blessings were extended to 445 children who learned discipline, responsibility and coping skills, while their parents gained strategies for creating more stable families. Mental health services offered practical support to 368 adults; employment programs served 432 adults in Minnesota and Iowa and many succeed in jobs at community sties, while residential services in multiple communities taught skills for independence to 480 adults. And in 2012, Hope Haven International delivered our 100,000th wheelchair in Guatemala! Thank you. You helped to equip Hope Haven to share Jesus' love with people locally and all over the world."

"On behalf of our students and professors, we want to convey our appreciation for your offering for the support of **Dordt College**. We gratefully receive your generous gift, and want to assure you that the funds will be used carefully in helping provide a biblically-directed Christian higher education for our students. In our effort to serve Christ's Kingdom by serving your congregation and its young people, we ask for your continued prayers that God may direct and bless Dordt College."



**From Heidelberg Seminary:** "On behalf of our board, faculty, students, and staff, we once again want to express our appreciation for your ongoing support of Heidelberg Theological Seminary. We are happy to tell share an encouraging note that two more students are considering moving to Sioux Falls next fall to enroll in M.Div. course work. Their move would bring on-campus enrollment of the seminary to 5 students in the M. Div. program. For these blessings we praise the Lord! Please receive our sincere appreciation for your financial and prayer support."

**From Rev. Paul and Messiah's Reformed Fellowship:** Dear friends in Rock Valley, Iowa, thank you for your gifts and for your prayer support for the Lord's work in the heart of New York City."



Dear Rock Valley United Reformed Church, We trust that you are having a blessed year. God has blessed PRTS in remarkable ways. Our student body continues to grow in size and diversity. There is an ever increasing interest in PRTS by prospective students from around the world. May we rejoice together as we see the Lord's bountiful hand bless the work of PRTS. We want to thank you for your commitment to the mission and vision of our growing seminary. Thank you so much for your prayers and financial support. May the Lord bless your efforts to steward all that He has placed in your care, for His glory, as well." **Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary**

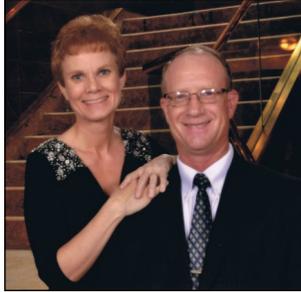
**From the Alpha Center:** As we grow the Alpha Center, we are so grateful for your prayer and financial support. It is through your support that we are able to reach men and women right where they are, come along side them and help them make healthy choices for their life and the life of their child. Your commitment means we can continue to work on our vision for the future of the Alpha Center—such as taking our mobile pregnancy center to more communities and needing a larger facility and additional personnel. Thank you for standing alongside us, just as we stand alongside the clients we serve every day."





Wedding Day, June 22, 1988

25th Anniversary  
June 22, 2013  
On board the MS Statendam



# North, to Alaska!

By Lora

Most newlyweds have big dreams for their future. Needless to say, not all of them work out the way they were planned “once upon a time”. We were no different, but one of the things we talked about on our honeymoon (in the Wisconsin Dells!) back in 1988 was that we would love to go to Alaska. “We should go there for our 25th Anniversary”, we decided. And so for years, we talked about how we were going to try to go to Alaska for our Silver Anniversary, *way out* in the future. It seemed like big talk, especially through all the years of raising a family, paying Christian School tuition, paying on a mortgage, etc, etc. (You know what I’m saying, right?) As the time grew closer,

we started revisiting the whole “dream trip” idea, and last summer when Loren attended Synod Nyack, he met another elder there named Gerry who was a travel agent. Loren mentioned our idea to him, and Gerry said, “If you’re serious about it, I can help you plan it out and get it done.” And so, we took him up on it, and this summer, on our 25th Anniversary, our dream came true!



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Our floating home for a week



Group of whales coming out of the water



At Denali Park, with Mt. McKinley in the background



Moose in Denali Nat'l Park. This was a mom and a baby, which the arrow is pointing to.



Grizzly Bears drinking from the river.



Nic and Holli by the army base sign.

Our trip began on the Holland America Line Cruise Ship *MS Statendam*, which we boarded in Vancouver, B.C. Canada. Our captain had a very thick Dutch accent, and interestingly enough, his last name was “De Boer”, which is the last name of our future son-in-law, Austin. Having never been on a cruise ship before, we were amazed by how much there was to do and see. We met people on board from all over the world, and made friends with couples from Oklahoma and California, as well as from as close by as Sioux Falls and as far away as Australia.

On our first port of call in Ketchikan, Alaska, we took a tour on one of the fishing boats used in the show *Deadliest Catch*, and they demonstrated how they set and retrieve crab pots, just like they do on the show. Afterwards we even got a private tour from the captain, who also was on the show, and Loren sat right in the captain’s chair in the wheelhouse. Later on we enjoyed fresh crab legs, just harvested from the ocean—delicious!

In Juneau we went whale watching. It was incredible to see them jumping right out of the water as they scooped up herring for their dinner. We had one of these hump back whales come up right in front of our small boat, and man, then you know how big they are! Scared us half to death!

After a week of cruising the Inside Passage, we began our land tour in Seward, Alaska. We went through Wasilla, home of Sarah Palin, and on to Denali National Park, home of Mt. McKinley, the highest mountain in North America. Most of the time the peak remains in the clouds, but we were able to see the entire mountain for approximately 10-15 minutes before it went behind the clouds. Only about 25% of people ever get to see that, so we were really happy. In Denali we saw all kinds of wild-life, such as moose, grizzly bear, caribou, bald eagles, and doll sheep.

We traveled from Denali to Fairbanks on board a glass topped train, which gave amazing panoramic views of the scenery. We had one delay on the trip, though, when our train hit a moose!

In Fairbanks we panned for gold, and were able to come up with \$39 worth of gold, which we put into earrings for me. We also traveled on the Dalton Highway, which is the road featured in the show *Ice Road Truckers*. We couldn’t believe how difficult that road was to travel on in a car in June, let alone in an 18 wheeler on ice in the middle of January! At the last truck stop before Coldfoot, we met one of the drivers who was on the show for 3 seasons, and even got a picture with him. Also in Fairbanks we were able to visit our nephew, Nic and his wife Holli. Nic is stationed there with the US Army at Ft. Wainwright. He had some interesting stories about winter in Fairbanks!

One thing that was so remarkable was being in the “Land of the Midnight Sun”; and it truly is! These pictures were taken from the deck of our hotel room and from our plane as we were leaving, and on both it’s about 12:30AM - yes, after midnight! One morning I scared awake, thinking we’d overslept when I saw light coming in the window, but found out it was only 3:10AM! We didn’t see darkness at all for over a week! Weird!

We are so thankful we were able to take this wonderful trip and enjoy God’s beautiful creation. If you ever have the opportunity to go to Alaska, DO IT! You’ll have a great time.



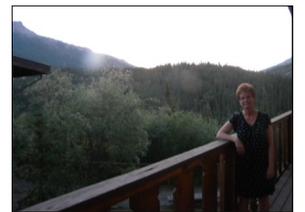
Loren examining our crab catch, and sitting in the captain’s chair!



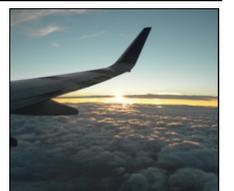
Panning for gold in Fairbanks.



Lora with Ice Road Truckee Tony M.



Land of the Mid Night Sun!





# What's Cookin'?

## **Italian Pasta Bake**

**Cheryl**

1. Brown 2 lbs hamburger, onions, peppers.
2. Cook 1 package of Italian noodles.
3. Layer in 9x13 greased pan:  
hamburger/pepperoni  
cooked noodles  
1 jar Alfredo Sauce  
1 jar Ragu Sauce  
Cheddar & Mozzarella Cheese
4. Bake for 40 minutes at 350 degrees.

## **Twice Baked Potato Casserole**

**Cherie**

- 7 medium red potatoes - baked
- 1/4 tsp salt and pepper
- 1 lb bacon, cooked and crumbled
- 3 c sour cream
- 2 c mozzarella cheese, shredded
- 2 c cheddar cheese, shredded
- 3 green onion, sliced

Directions:

1. Cut baked potatoes into 1 inch cubes. Place half in a greased 13 x 9 baking dish.
2. Sprinkle with half the salt, pepper and bacon.
3. Top with half the sour cream and then the cheeses. Repeat layers.
4. Bake uncovered at 350° for 20-25 minutes or until cheeses are melted. Sprinkle with the sliced onion.

## **Pecan Rocky Road Bars**

**Carla**

- Line a 9 x 13 pan with Graham Crackers
- Sprinkle over top:  
2 cups marshmallows  
6 oz. chocolate chips  
1 c. pecans

Melt 1/2 c. butter, 1/2 c. brown sugar, and 1 tsp. vanilla until sugar is melted. Pour over bars and bake at 350 degrees for 10 minutes.

*If you have a favorite recipe you would like to share, or if you would like to request a recipe from someone, submit your recipe or request to Lora or Cherie, and we'll include it in the next newsletter.*

## **Breakfast Casserole in the Crock Pot!** **Cherie**

Cooks while you sleep!

- 1 26 oz. bag frozen hash browns
- 12 eggs
- 1 cup milk
- 1 tablespoon ground mustard
- 1 16 oz. roll sausage (maple, sage or regular sausage)
- Salt and pepper
- 1 16 oz. bag shredded cheddar cheese

Directions:

1. Spray crock pot and evenly spread hash browns on bottom of the pot.
2. Crack 12 eggs in a large bowl.
3. Mix well (and slowly) using a whisk.
4. Add the milk.
5. Go ahead and sprinkle in the ground mustard. This might sound like a weird ingredient, but I've come to love (and use) this in most of my recipes.
6. Add plenty of salt and pepper. Mix well, set aside.
7. Cook the sausage on high heat, drain, set aside.
8. Add sausage on top of hash browns.
9. Is this enough cheese? Maybe? Probably. Throw the whole big bag in there.
10. Mix it up well.
11. Pour the egg mixture over everything in the crock pot. Using a wooden spoon, even everything out so it's spread evenly.
12. Turn the crock pot on low for 6-8 hours.



# Yummy!!



# Place the Face!



You may think you know every-  
one in our  
congregation pretty well,  
but do you recognize these  
familiar faces?

Answers are hidden somewhere  
in the Newsletter!



Little boy blue, it's quite fundamental,  
the sheep's in the meadow, the dog's in the kennel!  
And where is the boy who looks after each one?  
At Pella Windows, gettin' er' done!

As a child, the word "diamond" brought only one thing to his mind—it's time for baseball! But recently, the thought of a "diamond" makes him get all mushy about a certain young lady! Who is he?

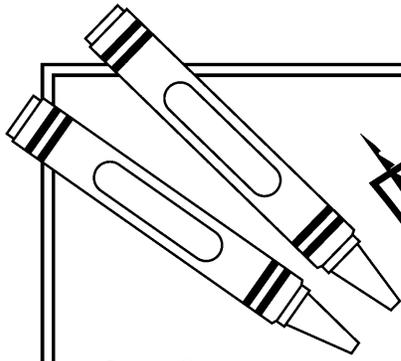
## Did You Know?

- Did you know that **Levi** is engaged to be married? His fiancé's name is Mandy, and she is the daughter of Dave and Audrey from Sioux Center. Levi and Mandy have been dating for a year and a few months. About a month ago Levi asked his mom and Mandy's sister to go to Sioux Falls and pick out a ring. With that mission accomplished the next thing was to plan a night to pop the big question. The couple ate at The Texas Roadhouse, their favorite restaurant, and then headed to Falls Park, a place they like to go to. Levi got down on one knee and asked Mandy to marry him, and the answer was "Yes!" The wedding date is set for June 21, 2014. Levi currently works in Sioux Center and also part time in Doon. Mandy is employed in Orange City and also works in Sioux Center. Congratulations Levi and Mandy!
- Did you know that Carla had some great new part-time help in the pig nursery? Being in the middle of summer, young kids tend to get a little bored, and their moms get a little weary of trying to find things for them to do, and that's where Brenda was at. When she mentioned to Carla that she wished she could find something for the girls to do one week, Carla said she had something they could do—help her process and wear pigs! So off went **Mary Kate, Allison and Abby, and Marijke** was also up for the challenge, and they spent the day catching 400 little pigs, castrating the males, and loading them on the bus to be transported. They killed two birds with one stone—the girls were definitely not bored that day, and Carla got some help with the pigs! Win-win!
- Speaking of pigs, did you know that **Brooke and Lindsay** were in the greased pig contest at the fair? Brooke tells us: "Lindsay and I still have the scratches and bruises to show that our Greased Pig Contest was a success. Lindsay and I put our forces together again this year, hoping to take home another first place trophy in the contest, but we fell just seconds short. We had the pig caught within 10 seconds, but getting it in the barrel proved to be a bigger challenge. He got away, but we were on the chase again and nearing 20 seconds on the time clock. We caught the pig again, got it in the barrel and sealed it with a kiss with the pig in just over 30 seconds. We're looking forward to next year already!"



- Did you know that **Lindsay and Jessica** participated in the Sioux County Youth Fair showing rabbits again this year? Lindsay received first place with her Market Rabbit and Pen of Three. Jessica received first place with her junior Buck and also Champion with the California Pure Breed Rabbit. They also both received second place in showmanship, because they were in different classes. Together they showed in eight different classes. Congratulations girls!





# PUZZLE

## The ants go marching...

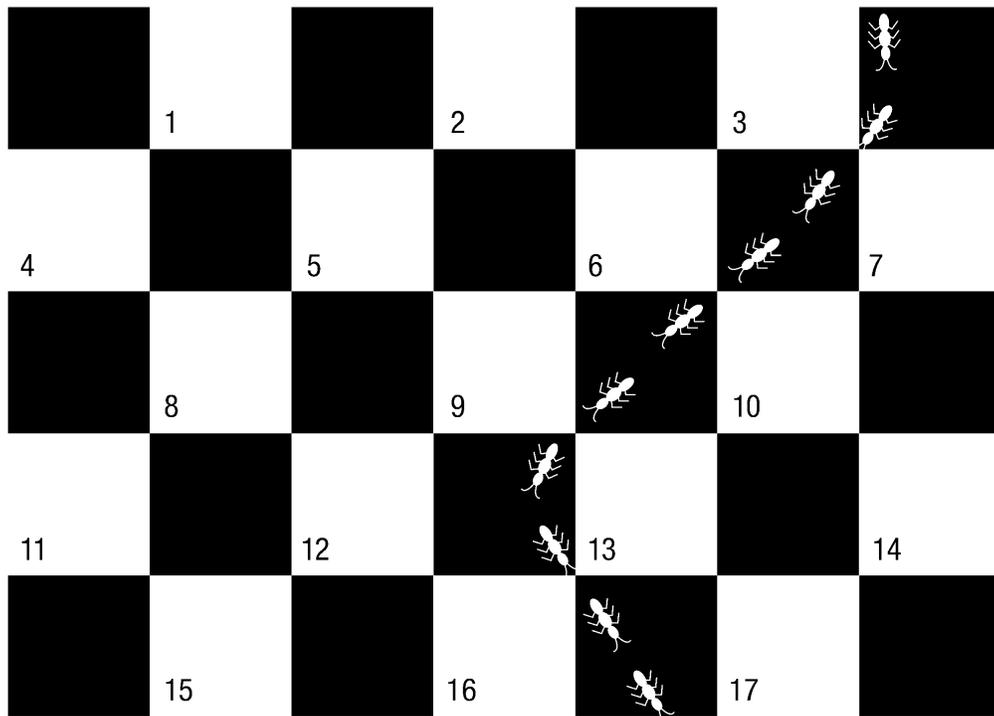


God created amazing insects and says we can learn lessons from their hard work.



Directions: Use the word bank below to fill in the tablecloth grid for ant-based wisdom from Proverbs 30:25, NIV.

- |         |              |            |          |           |         |
|---------|--------------|------------|----------|-----------|---------|
| 4. of   | 6. strength  | 15. summer | 12. food | 9. store  | 2. are  |
| 8. they | 3. creatures | 5. little  | 7. yet   | 10. up    | 14. the |
| 1. Ants | 16. Proverbs | 17. 30:25  | 13. in   | 11. their |         |



Answers to Place the Face: Levi and Jay

Answer: "Ants are creatures of little strength, yet they store up their food in the summer." Proverbs 30:25, NIV