



# THE HOUSE OF YODER NEWSLETTER

December 2012

## Celebrating with Thanksgiving

The House of Yoder  
16th Annual Meeting  
Saturday, November 3, 2012, 12:30 pm

This house is mine, yet not mine.  
The same is true of him who follows me.  
A nd a third will let it go to another,  
A nd the fourth will not live forever.  
The fifth also will leave this house.  
Now tell me, my friend, to who belongs this house?

The 16th Annual Members Meeting of The House of Yoder was held at Penn Alps Restaurant, Alpine Room. The Welcome was given by Doris Ours, President, The House of Yoder. The praise song "Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow" was sung, and the noon-time blessing was given by Philip Dayton, Ridgeley, WV.

A delicious buffet meal was enjoyed. There were 47 people in attendance.

*Pictured right: Those in attendance at The House of Yoder Annual Members Meeting. Alpine Room, Penn Alps Restaurant.*



## ***Remembering Our Roots***

### ***Yoder Freundschaft***

The moderator for our program was Earl Yoder, of Springs, PA. Group singing was led by Lowell Bender. Lowell and his wife Verna also sang “The Shepherd Medley”.

Rev. Merle Christner, of Cumberland, MD presented a historical drama portraying his ancestor, Bishop William J. Yoder.



*Rev. Merle Christner, as Bishop William J. Yoder*

Virgil Yoder of Irwin, PA presented a slide presentation entitled: “How Did I Get Here?”

Our main speaker for the program was John Crist, of Lilburn, GA. While John lives in Atlanta, Georgia, John has never forgotten his Yoder lineage. In fact, he’s proud of it! He’s the grandson of Eva (Yoder) Barton (Pinto, MD) and son of the late Dale and Eva Mae Crist (York, PA)

After graduating from Lancaster Mennonite School (PA), Goshen College (IN) and Eastern Mennonite Seminary (VA), John completed his D. Min. at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, CA. He and his wife Anne have raised their 8 children in a historic home outside Atlanta.

While pioneering the Atlanta Vineyard Church and being the Senior Pastor for 30 years, it birthed 20 additional churches. He resigned the position on 8 January, 2012 when he took the oath of office of Mayor of Lilburn, GA. Presently John is serving his first term as Mayor.

*John Crist, the keynote speaker. John was also the keynote speaker at the ground breaking ceremony for The House of Yoder on October 21, 1995.*



### **“STORY TELLING”**

“It’s an art form. It just happens to be the most popular way to preach these days. Pastors are encouraged to tell the bigger story of the Bible and help us see how we fit into it. We are living in a time where each of us is encourage to tell “our” life’s story. Because the media devises have overshadowed conversations between humans, story telling has enjoyed a resurgence of popularity.

When people know my story the assumption is that they’ll be more likely to accept me because my road has been tough. When people know my story, they are more likely to look past my outward veneer to see the real struggles that war inside. It’s called story telling.

Stories hold the listener. From children to adults, everyone goes silent at the telling of a story. Why? Why is story telling so powerful? Because it is personal, No one can deny the facts. This is a true recounting on a chronological time –space continuum. People love to tell their stories. Companies like to tell their company's story. Groups like to tell their story, to influence others to become like them. Politicians like to tell their story so they can tell it the way they want it told. Christians like to tell their story to help others find their way through life.

But maybe we should ask, How do people tell their story?" There's lots of ways to tell it. Painters tell their story on a canvas. Musicians tell their story through their music. Actors tell their story or the story of others on stage. All these powerful mediums are simply ways to tell the story.

Two nights ago I took Anne and our daughter to the live performance of "The Fiddler On The Roof" at a community theater near our home. What a powerful story of a people attempting to hold it's family traditions in an ever changing world. It always stirs my heart. When Tevye first made his appearance on stage along with the Rabbi, Mottle and the townsmen, I thought they were all Amish. They looked just like them- beards, black hats and Amish looking attire.

Because I grew up in the Lancaster (PA) area, when I think of Mennonites and Amish, my heart is warmed. In fact, I was stunned when I stopped at a McDonalds on the way home from the Baltimore airport when an Amish woman was working behind the counter taking orders at a McDonalds restaurant!

I know the story of the Mennonites and the Amish and knowing the story makes me want to become like them.

The House of Yoder is also a story, It's a story of a people. A people who worked harder than one should. It's a story of traditions that have identified a family by it's faith, tenacity, and love for the land. Whatever it is, there is some part of this bigger story that we want other to know. There is inspiration in this house. There is a story and life lessons that you want other to know.

2,845

Since January of this year, 2,845 people have come through the doors of The Yoder House! Likely more have toured, but those who have signed the book total 2,845!!

How many people have heard our story!

The House of Yoder has told our story for us! In fact, it tells the story every time someone comes through the front door!

2,845

What does 2845 people look like? If I entertained 2,845 people in my home since January and spent just one hour with each of them in a 40 hour work week, I would have to invest a year and a half to meet with them. The truth is that the 2,845 people who came through The House of Yoder this year likely spent an hour here.

One hour to tell our story! One hour to influence! One hour to possibly edge that person closer to a living relationship with Jesus Christ! One hour to possibly make a difference!

Wow, what an opportunity, what a trust! I bet most of our churches haven't had that many visitors since January.

Why did they come?

Anne and I have often traveled to England in the past decade. It's a lovely part of the world that always holds our attention. After our speaking engagements, we don't look forward to going back to London, but we head straight to the countryside. The Cotswold's, the castles, homes from the 16th century, the cathedrals that have withstood the centuries, these places beckon us again and again. We go there to be refreshed, to learn, to reminisce. Most likely we have also been to other historic houses in America-there may be as many as 15,000, more than four for every county in the country. Historic buildings tell a story. It's a compelling story that somehow when we leave them, our lives are richer, more satisfying and grateful for the amenities that make our lives a bit simpler. But we also leave with appreciation of our great country, our opportunities and our connection to each other.

Historic houses and buildings are a vital part of America's communities. They are the tangible reminders of our history. People come with the intent to le

to learn, to remember, to expand their horizons.

The problem is simply that, now, many of their caretakers and owners of historic building are struggling to attract visitors. Maintain the properties and make ends meet. Some thrive, but many are barely solvent, scarcely surviving in upkeep or relevance. With modern competition from amusement parks, aquariums and interactive diversions, historic houses run by nonprofit organizations purely as museums face uncertain futures.

As Mayor of a suburban community in the Atlanta area, my horizons have been significantly expanded the last several years as I have been in countless meetings with city, county and state elected officials addressing our economy, our budgets and the looming costs of doing business like we've always done it.

No doubt the board of The House of Yoder has struggled with similar questions. Preservation is important-vital, in fact-if we as a nation are to retain authentic examples of history, culture and place. Preservationists are realizing that historic structures can be used for other purposes while maintaining their significance and structure and, in most cases, some public access.

A thriving restaurant in our restored downtown community has gone under due to the economic conditions of the country. A turn of the century building now sits vacant. So we asked ourselves some very penetrating questions. While we are trying to lease the space to another restaurant (during a time when investors money has seemed to dry up) what could be done with this space. We answered the problem by gathering all the artists in our community together and made an art gallery of it until the time when it will again function as a restaurant.

A handful of other historic house museums have already made successful transitions to new uses. One popular idea is to make these wonderful buildings "lifelong learning" centers, where 18th and 19th century crafts, such as furniture making, embroidery and scrimshaw are taught.

But The House of Yoder does not seem to be falling on difficult times. So what might God be saying

about the future?

What is God's plan here?

2,845 people. They've come from 38 states, 13 countries and 4 provinces. That's a gift, a trust, that's an incredible amount of folks!

Let's put it into perspective. How many people have been a guest in your home this year? Did you invite someone for dinner? Did you host a Bible study? Did someone stay overnight with you? Likely none of us can come close to competing with the number of people who have come here.

And the strangest part is that they came without knowing anyone! They didn't come because you offered them dinner, or they wanted to talk with you. No, these are strangers who came out of curiosity hoping that something would happen in their visit that would transform, encourage, or grow them in some way.

So, I'm a traveler who just happened to stop at Penn Alps for dinner. It was a lovely experience and I came to this part of the county as a tourist to grow, learn and maybe leave with something that I could apply to my own life back home. What is it that you want others to know? Is it a call to commit to Christ? Is it a love for family? Do you see families in trouble and hope that ones coming here to this house will have a changing dynamic in their lives?

What is the "trust" that the Father has specifically given to the trustees of The House of Yoder? I sense here that The House of Yoder is a story of faith. It's a legacy to be shared.

I've been in church life all of my life. After seminary I became a pastor and have attended thousands of hours studying churches and their success. Many churches don't have any goals.

In church we often make the assumption that because someone showed up to our building they embrace and are sympathetic to our message. Actually it takes multiple contacts to make anyone embrace our cause.

So what do you want to see happen here at The House of Yoder? Changed lives? Turn to Christ? Family reuniting?

Luke 12:48 "From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the ones who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked."

Our Yoder ancestry has so imprinted our lives that when Anne and I relocated to Atlanta in 1982 we could not imagine living in a house in a subdivision. So we searched the city until we found a dilapidated 1892 clapboard Victorian home that somewhat resembled the original Yoder home across the river from Pinto, (MD) there at the ballistics plant. We not only wanted to preserve a part of Atlanta's history, but we wanted to live in a house that constantly reminds us of those who've gone before. We are only the third family to live in our home in 100 years.

I simply love the poem that was printed in the program:

"This house is mine, yet not mine.

The same is true of him who follows me.

And the third will let it go to another.

And the fourth will not live forever.

The fifth also will leave this house.

Now tell me, my friend, to whom belong this house."

This summer we were eating dinner when we heard our front door open and several people walked in. Not knowing who would have just walked in I asked our 16 year old daughter to check it out. Two ladies walked in. Our daughter greeted them. With a look of embarrassment on their faces, they asked, "This is a Bed and Breakfast isn't it?" So we invited them for dinner and enjoyed making new friends.

Old homes make people talk. Old homes invite people to interact. This in and of itself is a viable end. Creating human relationship in a world that has become so isolated in and of itself a worthy goal of The House of Yoder. The story of The House of Yoder is a story worth repeating. This is a story of a family much like that of Abraham. A family that became a "people."

I'm grateful that these are my people. Thank you for investing in a house that tells that story!"

*Thank You John for such an inspirational and motivational address!*

The business part of the Annual Members Meeting was typed and handed out to our members. Reports were given to our members by Treasurer: Edgar Yoder; Secretary: Mayla Yoder, and our Librarian:



*Lowell Bender directing the chorus.*

Ray Yount. Christmas in the Village will be held Friday, December 7, 2012, 4-8 pm and Saturday, December 8, 12-8 pm. The House of Yoder will be open and passing out popcorn to our visitors. Everyone is welcome!

# With Grateful Thanks

The House of Yoder was met with a LARGE reconstruction problem! The wood shingles on the roof needed to be replaced. The House of Yoder Board of Directors were challenged with a dilemma: replace the roof while maintaining the natural, authentic look of real cedar shakes, or use another material that would alter the appearance of The House. After much prayer and discussion, The House of Yoder Board of Directors decided to use DaVinci Polymer (valore`) shakes, with a 50 year warranty. DaVinci Roofscapes has created a line of polymer-composite synthetic shake tiles that offer all of the natural, rustic beauty of a real cedar shingle, but without any of the natural drawbacks of real wood. The contract was awarded to Barry Knotts, of Knotts Construction, Ridgeley, WV. The cost of the replacement shingle.....\$25,000.00!!

The House of Yoder was truly blessed with a generous contribution towards the installation of the new shingles. The members of The House of Yoder were challenged to meet this contribution..and they did!!

A very sincere ***“THANK YOU”*** to all that contributed to the shingle replacement project. The Board of Directors realize that The House is a treasure that must be protected and preserved. Without your help, we would not have been able to complete this worthwhile project.

The following are the contributors to the shingle replacement project:

Henry Erb, Baltic OH

Grace and Donald Honeywell, Birmingham, AL

Carol Hinds, Allison Park, PA

Ann and Ralph Sebrell, Harrisonburg, VA

Phyllis Weaver and Sons

Winston, Steven, Gregory, all of Harrisonburg, VA

Theresa and Lonnie Yoder, Harrisonburg, VA

Marie and Paul H. Yoder, Grantsville, MD

Thomas Yoder, Argyle, TX

Rita and Virgil Yoder, Irwin, PA

Yoder Newsletter, Chris Yoder, Goshen, IN

John Yoder, Pinto, MD

Marilyn and Lowell Yoder, Holland, OH

The House of Yoder Board of Directors:

Verna and Lowell Bender, Bittingner, MD

Anna and Dan Yoder, Accident, MD

Ellen and Edgar Yoder, Grantsville, MD

Mayla and Mark Yoder, Berlin, PA

Nancy and Harvey Yoder, Holliday, MO

Doris Ours, Keyser, WV

Contractor, Barry Knotts, Ridgeley, WV



*Knotts Construction, Ridgeley WV, replacing the shingles.*

2845



*The "South Side" of The House of Yoder*



*The completed project. It looks wonderful!*

We felt God's hand each step of the way—

March through July— Your generous contributions

August 22 through September 2, 2012-installation.

Today we behold a beautiful roof and celebrate with you who helped make it possible.

Thank You!

*The House of Yoder* was open from the last week of May until the last full week of October. Our hosts asks our visitors to sign the guest book. 2,845 visitors signed the guest book. We even had a family pet "sign" in!! Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Washington, Washington, D.C, rounds out our visitors from the United States. International visitors came from: Africa, Australia, Brazil, China, Denmark, England, Germany, Hungary, India, Philippines, Russia, Scotland, Switzerland, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Ontario.

### ***The House of Yoder Hosting Program***

A very **Sincere Thank You** to our hosts for the 2012 hosting season. *The House of Yoder* could not exist without their help. Here are our hosts for 2012:

Mary Lou and Paul Bowes, Iowa City, IA

Sand and Val Dzwonczyk, Baltimore, MD

Lou Ann and David Kanagy, Archibald, OH

Ann and Ralph Sebrell, Harrisonburg, VA

Phyllis and Wayne Kornhouse, Orville, OH

Rita and Virgil Yoder, Irwin, PA

Vernie and Emma Fisher, Niverton, PA

Ray Yount, LaVale, MD

Paul H. Yoder, Grantsville, MD

Daniel Yoder, Sr., Accident, MD

Lowell Bender, Accident, MD

Doris Ours, Keyser, WV

*If you are interested in hosting, please contact the editor.*

# Christmas in the Village

Friday, December 7 and Saturday, December 8, 2012



Once again, *The House of Yoder* was beautifully decorated for the 2 day festival. No snow, only rain, but that did not dampen our visitors' spirits as they enjoyed (over 600 bags) of popcorn that was handed out by Board Members.



*Pictured above are Dan Yoder, Sr. and Mark Yoder, making popcorn for our visitors.*

A local group of German singers entertained our visitors on Friday evening.



*Visitors to The House*

One visitor in particular to *The House* caused quite a stir with everyone, young and old alike. He even had a sack~~ was it filled with toys for all of the good little girls and boys? Just who was "Our Visitor"? Was he shopping at the various shops in the Spruce Forest Artisan Village? The editor will let the reader decide.....



*May the gift of God's grace and the gentleness of His peace Bless you this Christmas*





A “multi-family” bird house, built by Brian Pebley, of White Oak, a suburb of Pittsburgh, PA for the 2006 National Yoder Reunion, held in Grantsville, MD. Brian’s Grandparents are Merle (YR23448713) and Mary “Ruth” (Berkey) Yoder. His mother was Marilyn Yoder. The family farm was located in Hollsopple, PA. Growing up in Hollsopple, Brian became interested in building miniatures. He built a scaled model of his own 125 year old home in White Oak, PA.



*Above: The scaled down model/ bird house of his own home in White Oak, PA. Notice his car in the driveway, and also the lights on the porches.*

*Right: Brian with the 18x24 birdhouse built to the exact detail of The House of Yoder.*

Brian and his family toured The House of Yoder. While there, Brian took many pictures. Using these pictures, he began building . Brian had measured the doors, and having a “pretty good eye for spacing”, the project was begun. It took Brian approximately 4 months to build the model. He says that he “had to be in the mood” to work on the house. He used copper on the roof to keep it from weathering, thinking the house would be outside. The stones on the outside of the house came from the Yoder homestead in Hollsopple, PA. Brian estimated that he spent \$150.00 (2006 money) to build the house. The finished size of the house was 18x24.

The public auction of Yoder arts and crafts was held October 20, 2006 at Spruce Forrest Artisan Village. All of the net proceeds went to benefit The House of Yoder. Brian said everyone was surprised when he brought the bird house to The House of Yoder to be auctioned off to the highest bidder. When the bidding was over Ted Yoder of Hickory, North Carolina became the owner with a final bid of \$800.00. That was a surprise to Brian!

In November of 2012, the bird house was returned to The House of Yoder, by Ted Yoder, with one stipulation: the bird house was not to be outside, but on display for everyone to see and enjoy. So that is what happened. The bird house is on display on the second floor at The House. Brian and his family were on hand at the 2012 Christmas in the Village celebration .





### ***NEW TO THE HOUSE***

Above is pictured the bureau that was purchased from the Amish Benefit Auction, June 2012. This bureau was owned by Christian Yoder (YR2611a) and is on loan and on display at The House of Yoder. The following is a “condensed” version of the entire story:

“For some years Fayette County (PA) was over run by an organized gang of marauders known as the “McClellandtown Gang.” Fayette County was not, however, their exclusive field of operation. There is little doubt that the robberies committed in the northern part of Somerset County in 1877 and 1888 were the work of this gang. Other Pennsylvania counties and the border counties of Maryland and West Virginia were frequently visited by these desperate villain and their many misdeeds. If fully chronicled, it would fill a good sized volume. All attempts on the part of the authorities of Fayette County to arrest the gang proved unsuccessful.

On the evening of April 13, 1889, the house of Christian Yoder, a wealthy old resident of Elk Lick Township (Somerset County) was entered by four masked men, who bound a gagged the hired man, Samuel Stevanus, and all the members of the household, except Mrs. Yoder, who was in feeble health. The leader of the gang told Mr. Yoder that they had

come for his money, and that they would take his life if they failed to get it. Mr. Yoder directed them to a bureau drawer in an adjoining room when he said they would find all the money that was in the house. Here they found \$400.00, which they counted and told Mr. Yoder they wanted all of the money he had. He assured them that that was all of the money he had at home. But they did not believe him and started to make a thorough search of the house. In a trunk, they found \$50.00 belonging to Mrs., Yoder and eighty-six dollars belonging to Miss Ellen Baker, the hired girl.

In spite of Mr. Yoder’s repeated assurances that they had gotten all his money the cowardly scoundrels did not believe him and dragged the feeble old man out of the house, across the yard and into the barn, where they started a fire on the threshing floor and told Mr. Yoder they would burn down his barn if he still refused to tell them where the rest of his money was concealed. Mr. Yoder again protested that he had no money, when one of the gang produced a rope and fastened it around the neck of the defenseless old man, remarking as he drew up the noose, “The old man has lived long enough anyhow—hang him up, boys.” The other end of the noose was thrown across an over-head beam and pulled my the strong arms of two of the gang, the old man’s form was dangling in the air, six feet from the floor. With in a few minutes, his breathing became labored, they lowered the half dead victim to the floor and again demanded that he tell them where his money was hidden., but again he denied that he had any more money about his home. Again, Mr. Yoder was drawn up, and not content with the atrocities they had already inflicted on the aged man, these devils



Editor’s note: The complete story about the Christian Yoder Robbery can be read on line at:

[www.yodernewsletter.org](http://www.yodernewsletter.org)

Click—biographies— stories, wills

Click— The Robbery of Christian Yoder (YR2611a)

collected straw and hay, which was set afire underneath Mr. Yoder. After being suspended several more times over the fire, the cruel flames blistered his hands and scorched his garments. The old man was unconscious and no longer able to plead for his life.

Mr. Yoder was taken to the house. The other members of the gang ransacked the house, finding hams, sugar, breads, pies and meats, eating what they could, the rest was destroyed. Binding Mr. Yoder, the gang took a team of gray horses, and rode away at break-neck speed.

Anxiously waiting for her husbands return, Mrs. Stevanus (the hired hands wife) sent her two sons to inquire about their father. They found the Yoder household in the same condition as they were left by the gang. Word was sent to Summit Mills, where a large posse of armed men on horseback started from Summit Mills in pursuit of the gang. Near Pinkerton, on the western slope of Negro Mountain, the jaded animals were recovered, but not the thieves.

On Saturday, April 27, 1889 a telegram conveyed the information to the sheriff that the gang had come home and would remain at home over Sunday. The sheriff and 17 men met at Confluence, PA. They were joined by five other men, and together reached Markleysburg. The citizens of the town offered to feed them, the generous invitation was accepted, but the sheriff placed guards around the village to prevent the news of their arrival in Markleysburg from reaching the headquarters of the gang. After dinner, a plan was made to capture the gang. It was known that the rendezvous of the McClellandtown gang was at the house of William Hill, located in a lone -some woodland, near the road leading from Markleysburg to McClellandtown, but there were three houses with a radius of a mile which the members of the gang were know to frequent.

The sheriff and posse tied their horses to trees about a half mile distant. They approached the house and a foxhound set up a dismal howl, which brought the owners of the house to the door. As the couple stepped out of the front door of their domicile, they were ordered to throw up their hands, and they were allowed to look down the barrels of several Winchester rifles. The rest of the gang was arrested with out incident.

The news of the gangs capture spread over the county in an almost incredibly short time. Large crowds of people gathered at every station along the railroad.

The court sentenced the prisoners to 10 years separate and solitary confinement in the western Penitentiary.

\*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\*

The House of Yoder operates completely on donations. During the winter time, while The House of Yoder and also the entire Spruce Village is closed, meeting our op-



*Pictured above is The Rev. Johnny Crist, with his mother, Eva Mae (Barton) Crist, standing in front of the door that was in the home of Eva Mae's Grandparents, Norman S. (YR2611915) and Annie (Yoder) (YR121736) Yoder on Posey Road Grantsville, MD. The door was purchased at the 2011 Amish Benefit Auction and donated to The House of Yoder by Eva Mae. Thank you for your generous donation. To read more about the Norman and Annie Yoder family, see the October 2011 House of Yoder Newsletter.*

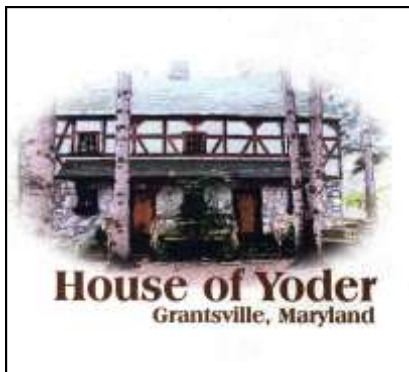
erating expenses is a struggle. Any donations to The House of Yoder or The House of Yoder trust fund would be greatly appreciated. You may send your check to:

Edgar R. Yoder, Treasurer, House of Yoder  
479 Hemlock Drive Grantsville, MD 21536

\*\*\*\*\*

#### Corrections:

May 2012 Newsletter: Page 2, second column under Erasmus 1466?-1536. The sentence after his death, many of his followers engaged in a bloody war against those who put their leader to death. This sentence should be with the paragraph John Huss (1372-1415) and the name Hiss should read Huss.



The House of Yoder Newsletter is published by The House of Yoder, Inc. Grantsville, MD. 21536, located 1/2 mile east of Grantsville, MD., on Route 40 East, at Penn Alps Restaurant and Spruce Forest Artisan Village. President: Doris Ours. Vice President: Lowell Bender. Secretary: Mayla H. Yoder, Treasurer: Edgar R. Yoder. Board Members: Harvey Yoder, Phyllis Weaver Hearn, Mark H. Yoder, Daniel Yoder, Sr., Associate Members: Nathan Yoder and Benny C. Yoder. Honorary Member; Gerald Yoder; Editor: Mayla H. Yoder.

The House of Yoder Membership:  
 Make check payable to “*The House of Yoder*” and mail to Mayla H. Yoder  
 Membership Coordinator 2274  
 Salco Road Berlin, PA 15530

	1 Year	5 Years	Lifetime
Individual	\$25.00	\$100.00	\$1,000.00
Couple	\$35.00	\$150.00	\$1,500.00

### *The House of Yoder Newsletter*

%Mayla H. Yoder  
 2274 Salco Road  
 Berlin., PA. 15530