

# Mennonite Weekly Review

Putting the Mennonite world together

## Major-league dream finally comes true

By Mennonite Weekly Review staff

**M**ore than most baseball players, Erik Kratz paid his dues to earn a big-league job.

After eight and half years in the minors, the 30-year-old catcher finally got a major-league call July 14. He moved up to the Pittsburgh Pirates from the Indianapolis Indians of the International League.

A native of Telford, Pa., Kratz is a member of Souderton (Pa.) Mennonite Church. He graduated from Christopher Dock Mennonite High School in Lansdale, Pa., and Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, Va.

In his major-league debut on July 17 in Pittsburgh against the Houston Astros,



Kratz

Kratz hit two singles in five times at bat.

Rob Roeschley, Kratz's coach at EMU, said Kratz showed diligence in earning a shot at the big leagues after playing professionally for eight years.

"It's totally a reflection on him and the work that he put forth," Roeschley said. "He did everything he

needed to get in position to get drafted, and he did everything in his pro career to put himself in the position he is in now.

"If anyone else besides Erik deserves credit, it's his wife, Sarah. She stood beside him and supported him and has shown what a fine wife she is. She should get a lot of credit."

Kratz came to EMU after grad-

■ See **Baseball**, page 2

## 51 killed in Congo explosion

By Mennonite World Conference staff

KINSHASA, Congo — Mennonite Brethren churches in eastern Congo are raising funds to aid victims of a July 2 fuel truck explosion that killed or injured more than 100 members of one of their congregations.

About 250 people were killed and 200 were injured after a fuel truck overturned in Sange, a town in eastern Congo's South Kivu province, according to international news reports. The fuel spilled and caught fire, causing a major explosion.

According to Charles Mbuyi, a Mennonite pastor in Bukavu, 51 of the dead and 50 of the injured were from the MB congregation in Sange.

MB churches in eastern Congo are collecting contributions locally for the victims. Outside assistance is also being organized.

Congo's Protestant church umbrella organization reported that 20 homes were destroyed in the fire, numerous children lost both parents, and many survivors were suffering from psychological trauma.

Tim Lind, Mennonite World Conference staff and Mennonite Central Committee representative in Congo, is communicating with Mennonite and other church leaders in Bukavu to determine how best to respond.

## Lutherans, Anabaptists reconcile

By **BYRON REMPEL-BURKHOLDER**  
Mennonite World Conference

STUTTGART, Germany — Almost 500 years of guilt were laid to rest July 22 as representatives of 70 million Lutherans around the world asked forgiveness for the violent persecution of Anabaptists in the 16th century.

They also apologized for negative portrayals of Anabaptists and Mennonites that have continued in their communities and theological institutions.

Mennonite World Conference representatives acknowledged the request and granted forgiveness.

The landmark action by about 480 delegates from around the world came during the 11th as-

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## Fire damages Ohio church



Photo by Lee Miller

Firefighters work July 13 to contain a fire in the older section of Martins Creek Mennonite Church in Holmes County, Ohio. The fire destroyed the old sanctuary, built in 1906. The new part of the building was not damaged. **Story on page 2.**

## Cyclist's goal: 10,000 miles for MDS

Journey supports Hesston College disaster program

By **CELESTE KENNEL-SHANK**  
Mennonite Weekly Review

Neal Friesen, 26, wasn't sure what he wanted to do next in life.

He had graduated from Goshen (Ind.) College and spent three years as a resident director at Hesston (Kan.) College.

He decided to take a bicycle trip around the U.S., but wanted a good reason to do it.

"Was there any greater purpose than just my own selfish ambitions of taking a six-month vacation while I was unemployed?" Friesen wrote on his blog, cyclemds.blogspot.com.

He told his family of his plans.

"We said, 'If you're going to do it, do it for a cause,'" Nancy Friesen, his mother, said in a phone interview.

Friesen decided to raise awareness and money for Mennonite Disaster Service and the Hesston



Photo provided by MDS

Neal Friesen started biking May 31 from an MDS site in New Iberia, La., and plans to be back in Louisiana by the end of November.

College Disaster Management Program while he cycles about 10,000 miles by himself through

all 48 contiguous states, as well as Ontario.

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## EMU grad speaks up for undocumented students

By **BONNIE PRICE LOFTON**  
Eastern Mennonite University

HARRISONBURG, Va. — For years, Isabel Castillo lived in the shadows in Harrisonburg. Recently she stepped into public view.

Castillo, a 2007 Eastern Mennonite University graduate, joined 20 other students and recent graduates who are undocumented immigrants in getting arrested for civil disobedience at the Hart Senate Office Building July 20 in Washington.

"I am not just doing this for me," Castillo said. "I am doing this for the 65,000 undocumented students who graduate from U.S. high schools each year



Castillo

**I want to have an opportunity to do the right thing, to get in line for residency.**

— Isabel Castillo

and who have no future the way things are now."

All of those arrested were brought to the U.S. as children. They have been raised and educated here. Few recall living anywhere else, Castillo said.

Castillo and others were arrested after they refused to leave the office of Senate majority leader Harry Reid of Nevada when requested to do so by his staff members.

Reid's office initially welcomed the protesters when they visited to ask him to put the

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### ■ Help for homeless

MEDA and MCC team up in Haiti to help those the earthquake left homeless who can't afford loans to rebuild / 8

### ■ Hope amid conflict

Central District Conference addresses ways to follow Christ and grow in unity even when there is conflict / 8

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