



Annual ski weekend brings snow, chili, and friends



The snow tubers pose for a picture before heading out.

The Midwest Area MBA had their annual ski weekend on January 29 and 30. As always, the weekend was a huge success and a lot of fun for all. On Saturday morning, area young people from Ohio, Kentucky, and Pennsylvania joined the Cincinnati-Morrow branch at Perfect North Slopes in Indiana. The time was spent skiing, snow boarding, snow tubing, and keeping warm in the lodge. Everyone had a great time enjoying the winter weather.

On Saturday evening, the group traveled to the Licata home for homemade chili and grilled cheese sandwiches. A wonderful night of fellowship followed complete with socializing, games, and plenty of laughter.

Brother Josh Gehly on the topic of deliverance. Brother Josh encouraged all to trust in God for deliverance from trials, referencing the story of how Nephi obtained the plates. Brother Lucas Martorana followed, continuing on the topic of deliverance using a creative analogy of a pizza delivery. The meeting continued with communion, feet washing, and testimony. At the end of the meeting, the group held hands in a circle as a representation of their continuing love and support for one another. The meeting was closed in prayer, and everyone enjoyed lunch together before heading their separate ways.

The next day, everyone gathered at the Cincinnati-Morrow branch for a full day of worship. The meeting was opened by



Everyone enjoyed socializing together on Saturday evening.

This Spring, the MBA will host a social event and the annual business meeting.

Be on the lookout for further details!

How does God strengthen our faith?



One of God's cures for weak faith? A good, healthy struggle. Several years ago our family visited Colonial Williamsburg, a re-creation of eighteenth-century America in Williamsburg, Virginia. If you ever visit there, pay special attention to the work of the silversmith. The craftsman places an ingot of silver on an anvil and pounds it with a sledgehammer. Once the metal is flat enough for shaping, into the furnace it goes. The worker alternately heats and pounds the metal until it takes the shape of a tool he can use. Heating, pounding. Heating, pounding. Deadlines, traffic. Arguments, disrespect. Loud sirens, silent phones. Heating, pounding. Heating, pounding.

Did you know that the *smith* in *silversmith* comes from the old English word *smite*? Silversmiths are accomplished smiters. So is God. Once the worker is satisfied with the form of his tool, he begins to planish and pumice it. Using smaller hammers and abrasive pads, he taps, rubs, and decorates. And no one stops him. No one yanks the hammer out of his hands and says, "Go easy on that silver. You've pounded enough!" No, the craftsman buffets the metal until he is finished with it. Some silversmiths, I'm told, keep polishing until they can see their face in the tool. When will God stop with you? When he sees his reflection in you.

- Max Lucado in *Come Thirsty*