

CONNECTING | IMPACTING | CELEBRATING

VISITOR

JANUARY 2008 • VOLUME 113 • ISSUE 1



From Their Seats to the Streets

Churches Meet Community Needs



8

News & Features

8 | From Their Seats to the Streets

Ministry doesn't just happen in church on Sabbath morning. Find out how several Columbia Union congregations are leading initiatives and making a difference beyond the walls of their church.



14 | From Fate to Faith: My Journey to Baptism

Elizabeth Carter

Everyone's journey to Christ is different, yet special. See how one member, who used to chalk all of her life experiences up to fate, now relies on her newfound faith in Christ.

16 | Meadow View Junior Academy: 40 Years of Making a Difference

Ron Tayam

With "What Would Jesus Do?" as their theme this year, discover how teachers at this New Jersey school strive to equip students with a strong spiritual foundation.



In Every Issue

3 | Editorial

4 | Newslines

6 | Potluck

Newsletters

- 23 Allegheny East
- 25 Allegheny West
- 27 Blue Mountain Academy
- 29 Chesapeake
- 31 Columbia Union College
- 33 El Noti Visitor
- 35 Mountain View
- 37 New Jersey
- 39 Ohio
- 41 Pennsylvania
- 43 Potomac
- 45 Shenandoah Valley Academy
- 46 Takoma Academy

51 | Bulletin Board

55 | Last Words

On the Web: Find the latest news, resources, podcasts, videos, photo blogs, and more.

Podcast: Conductor Jason Max Ferdinand talks about the latest Pine Forge Academy CD.

www.columbiaunion.org

About the Cover: Kingston Seventh-day Adventist Church communication director Brian McElwee, pastor Troy Haagenson, and prayer warrior Mary Patrice are making prayer a public affair in Wilkes-Barre, Pa. Photo by John E. Kasko.

Wanted: Change Agents for Christ

Sometimes as I look at the state of our world, I try to imagine what Jesus must have thought as He looked down the corridor of time and saw where we'd be today.

I imagine that He saw humanity blinded by gross darkness, cruelty, hatred, envy, abandoned principles, and the passive religiosity that stalks our communities and cities everywhere. He saw houses of faith on every corner, yet they were void of His representation to a desperate world. In this "land of the free and home of the brave," He saw some 800,000 homeless men, women, boys, and girls living on our streets on any given night; an estimated 10,000 women battered and 8,500 children abused every day; and 2.4 million fires occurring each year, causing at least 6,000 deaths and hundreds of thousands of injuries. In a land where the pursuit of happiness is valued, He saw suicide as the third leading cause of death among 15- to 24-year-olds. And I imagine that He was moved with compassion.

But thankfully, as He looked down the corridor of time, I imagine that Jesus also saw the homemakers, accountants, lawyers, healthcare professionals, mechanics, educators, carpenters, community leaders, and a myriad of other individuals and groups seeking to make a difference. Moved with the same compassion, these ambassadors for Christ advocate for change, volunteer their "helping hands," and lead relevant community-based ministries.



UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL

Adventists often recite Christ's directives from Matthew 5: "You are the salt of the Earth. ... You are the light of the world. ... Let your light shine before men that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven" (Matt. 5:13-16, NIV). But what does it really mean to be "the light of the world" and "the salt of the Earth"?



Light infiltrates its surroundings. Salt mingles with food and enhances its flavor. Both affect change. If we are to dispel darkness and become change agents, then we, too, must infiltrate our communities and mingle with the people and their leaders. This cannot be done by proxy, nor from the safety of the sidelines. We must get into the trenches and work harmoniously to achieve community health, revitalization, and change.

This means meeting with public officials; joining the Rotary, Kiwanis, or other civic organizations; attending city council and town hall meetings; addressing community issues; and working hand-in-hand with leaders, citizens, and advocacy groups to find solutions for the needy and underserved among us.

The ministries featured in this issue of the *Visitor* are examples of how we actualize our mission to "interpret God's love to the poor, hurting, and disillusioned in Christ's name." They involve pastors and members who—moved with compassion—often leave their seats

and take to the streets in Jesus' name. Through prayer, a willing spirit, and, most importantly, *action*, they're dispelling darkness and affecting change in their corner of the Columbia Union.

What can you do to be "light and salt" in your community this year?

Minnie McNeil is director of Adventist Community Services (ACS), Disaster Response, Prison Ministries, and Women's Ministries for the Allegheny East Conference. She also serves as ACS coordinator for the Columbia Union.

LAVERNE HENDERSON

Columbia Union College Gets New President

This month **Weymouth Spence, EdD**, becomes the 19th president of Columbia Union College (CUC) in Takoma Park,



Md. He brings to the role 22 years of successful leadership in higher education

and a passion for Seventh-day Adventist Christian education.

“Dr. Spence has demonstrated his ability to be a transformational agent in previous organizations and learning institutions,” said Dave Weigley, president of the Columbia Union Conference and chair of the CUC Board of Trustees. “I’m excited to work with him to implement CUC’s strategic plan and discover our pathway to the future.”

After an extensive process that started with 50 names, the presidential search committee—which consisted of CUC administrators, faculty, and board members, and Columbia Union leaders—recommended Spence for the position.

“I am ready to move forward,” said Spence, who has served as senior vice president for Academic Administration at Atlantic Union College (AUC) in South Lancaster, Mass., since June 2006. “I have the support of my family, my church family, the learning community at AUC and, most of all, the Lord.”

He previously served as academic dean at both Baptist Health System School of Health Professions in San Antonio,

Texas, and Anne Arundel Community College in Arnold, Md. He holds a doctoral degree in Vocational/Technical/Occupational Education from Nova Southeastern University in Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., a Master of Science in Education from Central Connecticut State University, and an Associate of Science in Radiologic Technology from Kettering College of Medical Arts in Ohio. He earned a Bachelor of Science in Biology from AUC.

Spence and his wife, Rebecca, have two children, Melissa and Weymouth II. They attend the Allegheny East Conference’s Emmanuel-Brinklow church in Ashton, Md., where he serves as an elder.—*Celeste Ryan Blyden and Scott Steward*

Communicators Develop Certification Program, Elect Leaders

Communication leaders of the Adventist Church have partnered to develop a Communication Certification Program (CCP) to enhance, update, and strengthen the communication skills of professional communicators. Certification will be available in six tracks including Media Relations, Journalism, Web Communication, Public Relations, Corporate Communication, and Media Production.

The first electives were presented at the recent Society of Adventist Communicators (SAC) Convention in Nashville.

Columbia Union-related news from this year’s convention included an award recipient and the election of several

key officers. **Kimberly Luste Maran**, an assistant editor for *Adventist Review*/*Adventist World* magazines, received the Young Professional’s Award. In addition, SAC’s



18-member leadership team now includes: **Celeste Ryan Blyden**,



Columbia Union *Visitor* editor, as SAC president and chair of its board;

Don Wood, Potomac Conference communication director, as vice president for communication;



Chip Dizard, founder and creative director of Absolute Presence, as board representative for web design/social media; and **Rick Kajiura**,



Adventist Mission communication director, as chair of the group’s advisory board. Each will serve two-year terms.



Professional communicators in broadcast, print, technology, and education are encouraged to attend this year’s convention

October 9-12 in Denver. Visit www.adventistcommunicator.org for details.

Shady Grove Opens New Patient Tower

Shady Grove Adventist Hospital (SGAH) in Rockville, Md., recently celebrated the opening of its new patient tower. On hand for the event were federal, state, and local elected officials, including U.S. Rep. Roscoe Bartlett and U.S. Sen. **Benjamin L. Cardin** (pictured below, right, with Adventist HealthCare president



and CEO **William G. “Bill” Robertson**). The tower marks the first major expansion for Shady Grove since it began providing patient care in 1979.

“For nearly 30 years, Shady Grove has understood what it means to serve the healthcare needs of the region,” said Senator Cardin during his remarks.

“We celebrate the expansion of our hospital, which will help us meet the needs of our growing community today and in the future,” said SGAH president Dennis Hansen.

Shady Grove’s tower will house new and expanded space for oncology, maternity, orthopedics, medicine, and pre- and post-surgical patients. It will add 144 private patient rooms to Shady Grove—48 dedicated to the mother/baby unit—

increasing the hospital’s overall private rooms from 32 percent to 82 percent.

The tower’s patient-care units include a family lounge, equipped with a kitchen, which can be used to prepare home-made food for patients and provide an important reminder of home. Other modern changes include decentralized nursing stations, which allow nursing staff to remain closer to patients. This “relationship-based care” improves patient and staff satisfaction and safety.

Adventist Congressman Seeks Ninth Term

U.S. Rep. **Roscoe Bartlett**, of Maryland’s 6th district, will seek his ninth term in office during the upcoming February 12 primary election. His district covers Allegany, Garrett, Washington, Carroll, and Frederick counties and portions of Baltimore, Harford, and Montgomery counties. The 80-year-old Republican from rural Frederick County was first elected in 1992. The well-known CUC graduate has also worked as a professor, scientist, farmer, and an inventor. Read more about Bartlett on his website at www.bartlett.house.gov/biography.

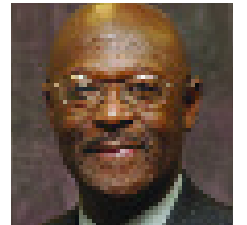


Allegheny East Member Appointed to State Board

Maryland Gov. Martin O’Malley recently signed

legislation into law creating the 15-member Life Sciences Advisory Board (LSAB) within the state’s Department of Business and Economic Development. **Hercules Pinkney, EdD**, vice president and provost at the Germantown Campus of Montgomery College in Maryland’s Montgomery County, is among the new board members serving a two-year term.

“I am both humbled and honored to have been appointed by the governor to such an important advisory board,” said Pinkney, who is an elder and Bible study leader at the Allegheny East Conference’s Breath of Life church in Fort Washington, Md.



LSAB is an important milestone in the governor’s mission to make Maryland the life sciences capital of the world. The state is currently home to more than 370 bioscience companies, one of the fastest growing clusters in the United States. The board brings together key state leaders to develop a comprehensive strategic plan for biosciences.

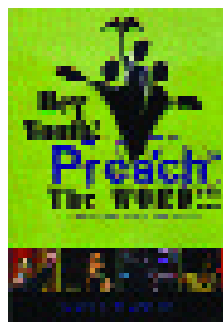
Montgomery College is Maryland’s largest and most endowed community college. Pinkney is the point person for the construction of a 1 million sq. ft. Life Sciences and Technology Park, a technology incubator, and a bioscience center on the Germantown campus.—*Beth Michaels*

For more news and photos, visit www.columbiaunion.org.

What's New?

Books >
Hey Youth! Preach the Word!!!
James Black, Sr.

"How will I know if I have been called to preach?" "How



do I prepare a sermon?" Youth often ask such questions of James Black, Sr., Youth/Young Adult Ministries director for the North American Division (NAD). In response to their

interest in church leadership, Black wrote this preaching guide:

"The book was designed to be a practical, elementary tool to prepare kids for going up to the pulpit," explains Black, a member of Allegheny East Conference's Miracle Temple in Baltimore. "It gives them all the mechanics and tools they need, including how to handle themselves from moments before preaching to the end of their sermon."

Black reports that the guide has become a necessary bridge between pastors and young people. He'd like to see every NAD Pathfinder obtain a copy, and he wants to see more of our youth invited to the pulpit more often. Before your preaching debut, order a copy from AdventSource at (800) 328-0525 or www.adventsource.org.

Music >
Rock in a Weary Land
Pine Forge Academy Choir

Pine Forge Academy (PFA)—Allegheny East Conference's pride and joy—has released a mammoth CD with 23 songs that include gospel numbers, Negro spirituals, classical pieces, and even a German selection. "I believe in exposing our students to all genres of music, and language is no barrier," noted Jason Max Ferdinand, PFA's director of choral activities since 2001, who conducted and directed the ambitious project. He says the

artistic variety required a full orchestra, gospel band, several guest artists, and collaboration with top-notch pianists, producers, and engineers like Adrian T. Westney, Neil Thomas, Toni Hall, Sandra Entermann, John Stoddart, Paris Hollins, and others. The project was recorded at a live concert in Washington, D.C., before an audience of parents, friends, and enthusiastic supporters. "This recording continues a tradition begun in 1961 when Harold Anthony led the choir in the making of its very first album," says PFA headmaster Cynthia Poole-Gibson. Listen for favorites like "Great is Thy Faithfulness" and "Lift Every Voice and Sing," as well as newer tunes like "Alleluia" and "Saints, Are You Ready to Go?"—*Celeste Ryan Blyden*



What You Bring to the Table

This year make smarter New Year's resolutions. First, ask God to direct you in choosing the one habit that will really make a difference to your health if you focused your efforts on it. Next, phrase it in terms of positive steps you are going to take, rather than on outcomes you can't control. Use the SMART acronym as a



guideline for writing your resolution. What *specifically* do you want to accomplish? How will you *measure* whether you have accomplished it? Considering your reality and resources, is it *attainable*? Is this healthy habit *relevant*, or meaningful, to you? Determine how much *time* you need to accomplish it and give yourself a deadline.

You'll find that a SMART resolution gives you a specific destination and sets you on the road to success.—*Lilly Tryon, MSN, RN, Adventist WholeHealth Wellness Center*

Correction: In the November 2007 edition of Potluck, Pastor Chester Hitchcock's email address was listed incorrectly. He can be reached at gospelmemory@sssnet.com. We regret the error.

5 Minutes With >
Political Staffer Wes Holden

Mountain View Conference member Wes Holden has served as Sen. Jay Rockefeller's director of Constituent Services since the West Virginia political leader took office in 1985. This lengthy service makes Holden the "longest tenured member" of the senator's staff, a position he intends to hold for at least six more years.

Holden, a Ripley (W.Va.) church elder and former conference Religious Liberty director, is just as committed to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Recently we talked with him about working in the political arena:

Q. What is it like to work in politics, and how involved are you?

I may work for a politician, but I also work for a U.S. senator. When he runs for re-election, I do become involved in his campaigns; however, I do not like to think of myself as political. My job is more about helping people; helping his constituents—federal, state, and local—solve

problems and resolve medical situations.

Q. Is it difficult to be a Seventh-day Adventist Christian in the political arena?

To me, as a Christian, working in politics is no different than doing any other job. Just tell the truth: explain why you believe the way you do. I always keep in mind that nothing is politically right if it is morally wrong.

Q. What are your greatest accomplishments?

I have basically been doing the same job for the past 24 years. People contact me when they don't know where else to turn for help; they consider me their last hope. For example, I have helped people obtain organ transplants. I like when the odds indicate that it cannot be done, and I am able to resolve the problem. I feel that God has me in this position, and I give Him the credit, as well as the senator,



Wes Holden (right) recently met U.S. Sen. Barack Obama (Ill.) when the presidential candidate visited Charleston, W.Va.

in opening the right doors to find the solutions.

Q. What advice do you have for Adventists interested in politics?

There's nothing wrong with running for office, and the reason you run is because there are things that you see need changing and you want to make a difference. But sometimes you have a to be a Daniel and go against the grain. Be a people's candidate.

WholeHealth

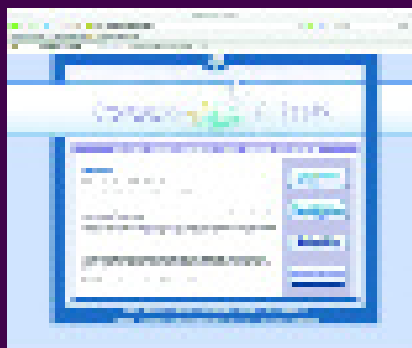
A SMART Resolution

Fueled by good intentions, many of us make New Year's resolutions to begin new healthy habits. The challenge, however, lies in turning those resolutions into reality. According to a University of Washington survey, the average American makes the same resolution three years in a row before taking action. For those who do begin, only 40 percent of all resolutions are successful the first time around, while 17 percent will take at least six tries to reach success.

Web Watch

www.gracelink.net

Created by Sabbath School Ministries, this is a new site with information about resources for beginner, kindergarten, and primary Sabbath School leaders.



From Their Seats to the Streets

Churches Meet Community Needs

They all started out trying to meet needs. One church saw a need for greater community involvement, another saw a need for community prayer, and the third saw a need for a holistic community service initiative. Thankfully, they all took action and have since made a profound difference in their corner of the Columbia Union. These are their stories:

Kingston Makes Prayer a Public Affair

The Kingston (Pa.) church is used to making the local news, but nothing could match their recent public relations coup.

It all started three years ago, when prayer warrior Mary Patrice came up with an idea to have a public prayer. "I'm from St. Lucia in the Caribbean, and we're used to going into the streets to tell people about Christ," said Patrice. "How will people know the truth if we keep it in the church?" So, despite being told it couldn't be done, she contacted Mayor Thomas Leighton's office and got the ball rolling. And, despite a driving rainstorm, just over 30 people attended the first program, called Public Prayer on Public Square. It was conducted in the heart of downtown Wilkes-Barre, the seat of Pennsylvania's Luzerne County. Last year's crowd of 65, double the inaugural number, drew print and local broadcast news coverage.

Realizing the potential to impact the community, no effort was spared in planning or publicizing the third annual Public Prayer on Public Square. Organizers sent press releases to local and community news sources. They decided to donate the free-will offering to Fallen Officers Remembered, a local charity that strives to increase awareness of local police departments and purchases bullet-proof vests for officers. They involved community members and leaders like long-time Wilkes-Barre City Councilman Jim McCarthy, who was invited

to deliver the opening address for the second year in a row. And they asked popular local news anchor and Kingston church attendee Dia Wallace to serve as master of ceremonies. She promoted the event and secured coverage on the local CBS affiliate's interactive news program. While on air, Kingston pastor Troy Haagenson and communication director Brian McElwee received emails and more phone calls than time permitted. One caller even requested that a future public prayer ceremony be brought to her community nearly an hour away!

"It was tremendous to see the members organize this event without relying upon the pastor," said Haagenson. "Public Prayer on Public Square was an entirely lay-led, lay-organized event!"

Members of six other churches also participated in the program, using their talents to share readings or musical selections or lending organizers their sound system. In addition, Wegman's Supermarket contributed funds for light snacks, Three Springs Water donated 15 cases of bottled water, and a restaurant owner brought chairs.

Their efforts were greatly rewarded when 134 people showed up for the event. The community impact was so impressive that residents outnumbered Seventh-day Adventists 2-to-1! "There's already so much bad news around us, it's important to spread some good news," says Patrice.—*Brian McElwee*

How will people know the truth
if we keep it in the church?



The Kingston (Pa.) Seventh-day Adventist Church's communication director, Brian McElwee; pastor, Troy Haagenson; and prayer warrior, Mary Patrice (left to right) took prayer to the Wilkes-Barre, Pa., Public Square.

PHOTO: JOHN E. KASKO

Sligo “AIMs” to Build Bridges

When Rebecca Brillhart, a pastor at the Sligo Seventh-day Adventist Church in Takoma Park, Md., talks to her congregation about issues of concern in their community, she does more than just pray for improvement. Brillhart is the clergy co-chair of the strategy team for a group called Action in Montgomery (AIM). “It’s an interfaith, citizen-based, nonpartisan, social justice organization,” she explains.

Brillhart brings concerns to the group of 28 other congregational representatives who pray and turn those prayers into action. The group, representing 30,000 congregants, then takes their concerns to politicians and officials in their jurisdiction—Montgomery County, Maryland. Some of the issues are affordable housing, healthcare, youth, transportation, and equitable education. Brillhart says the 10-year-old organization is a ministry that advances the quality of life for local citizens. “Since 2001 AIM has secured over \$90 million for affordable housing,” she says. “AIM is responsible for all-day kindergarten, services for our seniors and disabled citizens, and securing millions of dollars for refurbishing five community centers in historically underprivileged areas.” Brillhart admits that narrowing down the issues they address is a challenge because “there are so many needs and so much to do.”

But recently AIM garnered one of its most significant achievements: County Executive Ike Leggett pledged to support one-to-one replacement of affordable housing in a county where the median cost for new home construction is around \$1 million.

Brillhart became active in AIM in 2002 because she doesn’t believe that faith and real life should be separate. “I don’t want to see our lives as ministry disconnected from what is going on around us,” she says. “It is important to disciple others to understand that ministry to the church includes ministry in their neighborhood. As a result, our congregation is more in tune with the community. We know our neighbors and invite conversations for the benefit of the citizens.”

Though Sligo is the only Adventist church involved in the organization, she encourages others to join. “This is an incredible opportunity to build bridges and relationships in ways that we can’t as long as we stick to our own churches and programs. We have a lot to learn from other organizations and associations,” she says. “We need to ask ‘what do you need?’ instead of *telling* people what they need.”

Another result of working with the group? “There is definitely more interest in the Adventist faith and conversations about the Sabbath and the kingdom to come,” she notes.—*Taashi Rowe*



Ministry to the church includes ministry in their neighborhood.

Holistic Café Nourishes Pittsburgh Mission

In September 2004, Hurricane Ivan swept through Pennsylvania’s Chartiers Valley bringing massive amounts of rain. In its wake, the rivers and creeks in the Pittsburgh suburb of Carnegie overran their banks and flooded countless homes and businesses.

Though there wasn’t a great Adventist presence, disaster response volunteers from the Columbia Union joined others in helping those in need. They hit the soggy ground running and served over 400 households in the first two months. When it was time to leave, the residents begged them to stay. Recognizing the opportunity for ministry, the Pennsylvania Conference—with help from the Columbia Union Conference—hired a young pastor, sent him to the region, and created Adventist Community Services-Greater Pittsburgh (ACS-GP). That was two and a half years ago.

“To date we have served over 1,000 families,” says the pastor, Andrew Clark, who serves as ACS-GP’s executive director. Eviction prevention; utility assistance; providing coats, clothes, and furniture; rehabbing over 75 homes and three business basements; planting three community gardens; and building a \$70,000 playground (pictured) in the town’s hardest hit area are among the services he and his team of volunteers and interns have provided.

They’ve found a permanent location on Carnegie’s Main Street and have evolved into what they call “Greater Pittsburgh Metropolitan Initiative.” Pastor Clark, who also serves as mission director for the initiative, is committed to uplifting, rebuilding, empowering, and ministering to the community where he has made a home and many friends for Christ.

Its Conscious Café sign identifies the initiative’s headquarters. “This is where we get to meet people from our community,” says Clark. “It’s a place for residents to come and feel that they belong; a place where we know their names.” The menu includes herbal teas, vegetarian and vegan wraps, fresh salads, and other food and beverages. After overhead, materials, and staffing costs are covered, additional revenue goes toward community development projects.

Of the 40-70 average customers, a dozen are teenaged regulars who hang out after school. One of them heard someone refer to Clark as



Top, left to right: Volunteer coordinator Beatriz Flores, café manager Mayda Clark, Pastor Andrew Clark, and treasurer Charlotte Valentine manage the Conscious Café and other innovative ministry initiatives.

“Pastor,” and asked, “Where’s your church?”

“You’re sitting in it!” responded Clark.

“If this is church, I’m coming back and bringing everyone I know with me!” said the astonished youth.

Not surprisingly, the café is also home to the PULSE (People United by Love to Serve and Empower) Community Mission, a church plant. “We usually have 4-12 in attendance and have already had our first baptism,” notes Clark, who describes his mission as “holistic” (see story, p. 14). “We are excited to see where God will take our little church.”

The group recently hosted a 10-week business course where eight staff and community members learned entrepreneurial skills necessary to start small businesses. They also plan to have a computer lab and ESL training center at the café soon.

How to Connect With Your Community

Looking for a creative way to make a difference in your community, raise awareness of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and build lasting relationships for Christ? Here are more practical examples of how Columbia Union churches are meeting needs in their community:

Domestic Abuse Help Line

The Potomac Conference's Seabrook (Md.) church recently started Steps to Restoration, a toll-free help line to assist domestic abuse victims. At their kick-off event, Mildred Mohammad, ex-wife of John Mohammad—nationally known as the “D.C. Sniper”—shared her experience with domestic abuse.

“Through this service we’re trying to make a difference in the lives of hurting people,” says Chaplain Larry Jones, who co-founded the ministry with fellow church member Leslie Bridges. Although volunteers do not provide counseling or advice, callers can obtain information on shelter, food, clothing, and medical and legal services between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. weekdays. For more information, call (301) 577-6342. To access Steps to Restoration, call (866) 979-STEPS (7837).—Tracey Dortch

Health Screening Van

Adventist WholeHealth Network, a ministry of the Pennsylvania Conference, recently used a \$53,000 gift from a will written in the 1960s to purchase a used shuttle van (pictured). The vehicle was then converted into a mobile health screening center with four interior stations. Now people at Pennsylvania churches, shopping centers, fairs, and other community events are benefiting from blood cholesterol, glucose screening, blood pressure, BMI, body fat percentage, coronary risk assessment, and a number of other screenings. Educational materials and counseling are also a part of this “wellness delivered” ministry.—Lilly Tryon



Fleece Blanket Ministry

The Pittsburgh church's Adventurer and Pathfinder clubs began making fleece blankets three years ago. “We wanted an outreach ministry for kids to help other kids,” says coordinator LeAnn Austin.

The finished blankets are delivered to the pediatric unit of nearby Allegheny General Hospital. This entire Pennsylvania Conference church is now involved in the ministry and has made over 3,000 blankets. Each is labeled with the church's name, address, and phone number. “We've received letters from the hospital, parents, and the patients about how the blankets comfort the kids as they prepare for surgery and even after they go home,” Austin says.—LaVerne Henderson



Teen Drop-In Center

Three years ago, Ohio Conference's Walk of Faith Fellowship church opened its Teen Esteem center (above). Every evening, Monday through Thursday, Cleveland teens (aged 12-17, and sometimes younger) have a place to hang out that's free from violence and gang activity. They play pool, foosball, table tennis, darts, air hockey, board games, and get assistance with homework. Friday evenings are

Teen Talk nights where they can discuss real life issues such as dating, sex, drugs, gangs, family problems, and peer pressure. For more information, visit www.woff.org.—LaVerne Henderson

Home for the Homeless

The W.C. Atkinson Memorial Community Services Center, Inc., is located in Coatesville, Pa. This Allegheny East Conference nonprofit corporation is known as “Atkinson” and its primary program is called The Long Road Home. It begins at 5 p.m. each night when the shelter's doors open and homeless men arrive. The 22 beds fill quickly. Volunteers prepare and serve a tasty evening meal. Then a counselor meets one-on-one with the men to help them set goals and tap into area resources. Following a night's rest, breakfast is served, and they leave the shelter at 7 a.m.

Phase two of The Long Road Home consists of two transitional homes next door (pictured), where the men live more independently. Two men, each with their own bedroom, share each home. These men work—or have been granted disability—and pay rent. While the counselor remains available for periodic visits, they maintain the home and live a life of sobriety.

For more information about Atkinson's other projects, contact Minnie McNeil at mm10410053@verizon.net.



From Fate to Faith

My Journey to Baptism

I was once a very firm believer in fate. Each unexpected turn and new experience that took me to a happier and more fulfilled place, I chalked up to fate. Anything that brought me some form of enrichment was fate. Surprising fortunes, missed accidents, and new relationships were because of fate. I was constantly telling friends and family that fate led me down each path and brought me to the present. It was nice to be able to wrap my story in a neat little package that summed up the “why” in my life. But there was something missing; my neatly wrapped package was empty. And I didn’t even know it.

For the past six years, after deciding against becoming an English teacher, I worked as a web designer at a local university. Then I found a great opportunity as a technical writer for an insurance company.

One day I ran into an old co-worker, Paul Spradley. We made plans for dinner and miniature

golfing. Halfway through the golf game, we both looked at each other in a new light. There was obviously more than friendship between us.

We got to know each other’s interests, hobbies, passions, and goals. Then came the pivotal topic of religion. Raised in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, Paul was spiritual, focused, and his love for God was strong and clear. Me, I was on the other end of the spectrum. I was not raised with religion in my life. It wasn’t until I went to college that I felt the need to regularly attend church. I went to Mass every week and viewed my time in church as an obligation, something that I was supposed to do. I loved the sermons when I was sitting in the pews. But when it was over, I left it all there and never felt compelled to take my spirituality to the next level. My relationship with God was far from the passionate and dedicated one I saw in Paul.

So when Paul introduced me to his religion, my curiosity was piqued. I asked questions and

researched everything on the Internet. This time fate not only brought a new experience into my life, it also lit something inside that made me yearn for more.

THE ROAD TO FAITH

Paul also worked part time with Adventist Community Services–Greater Pittsburgh (ACS-GP) to help establish connections with surrounding Adventist churches. He arranged a meeting to introduce Pastor Andrew Clark, of the Pennsylvania Conference and executive director of ACS-GP, to his pastor, William Vincent of the Hillcrest church in the Allegheny West Conference. Since both of their wives would be there, Paul invited me. My emotions—anxious, excited, scared, hopeful, and nervous—were everywhere. As the liaison’s new girlfriend, I wanted to make a good impression with the pastors and wives. I didn’t want to say or do anything inappropriate because of my lack of knowledge about the Adventist Church.

I learned that ACS-GP came to the area during Hurricane Ivan in 2004. After listening to Pastor Clark, I wanted to be a part of this organization. So I started joining Paul at his ACS-GP meetings and got to know the people. They were warm, friendly, and dedicated to spreading love and compassion. I also wanted to take a deeper look at the Adventist faith.

I started attending Hillcrest with Paul and was literally welcomed with open arms. After a few weeks, I realized that going to church was no longer an obligation—it was a privilege that I cherished. For the first time in my life, I wanted to learn more about God.

After taking Bible studies with Pastor Clark, for a couple of months, I recognized that I was an Adventist, and my heart told me that I needed to get baptized. The peace I felt was indescribable. I was ecstatic that my baptism would be held July 28, the weekend before my birthday! What better way to welcome another year than with a fresh spiritual start and a stronger relationship with God. My friends and family were there, and Pastor Clark baptized me. It was an awe-inspiring experience. God gave me the most radiant joy I’ve ever felt!

Since my baptism, I’ve reflected on my journey. I’ve looked back at where “fate” led me over the



I was once a very firm believer in fate. Since my baptism, I’ve looked back at where “fate” led me and recognize why my neatly wrapped package was always empty. Fate wasn’t watching over me—it was God.

years and recognize why my neatly wrapped package was always empty. Fate wasn’t watching over me—it was God. He was guiding me every step of the way. And when He decided that I was ready for Him to play a bigger role in my life, He sent Paul, ACS-GP, and the members of Hillcrest. Now I know that I’m relying on faith—not fate.

Elizabeth Carter now attends the Hillcrest church in Pittsburgh, Pa.



Meadow View Junior Academy

40 Years of Making a Difference

Children develop habits from what they see and hear," says Hallis Gibson, whose granddaughter, Charity, attends Meadow View Academy. "Her life has improved in the four years she has been there. I wouldn't have it any other way."

Meadow View, located in Chesterfield, N.J., started making a difference 40 years ago, when the Trenton and Mount Holly Seventh-day Adventist churches joined forces to form a school. Located at 241 Bordentown-Chesterfield Road, in the heart of the "Garden State," the area was chosen for its rural properties and proximity to the two churches.

Aligned today with seven constituent churches—Robbinsville, Mount Holly, Browns Mill, Hightstown, Trenton Spanish, Princeton, and Tom's River—this New Jersey Conference school is thriving in a community that supports Adventist education. Solid home and church influences result in minimal behavioral issues and a family-like atmosphere among students.

Principal Sadrail Saint-Ulysee, in his third year, has impressed the constituent churches with his strong sense of commitment. "I truly believe that every Adventist child deserves an Adventist



Meadow View students wrap gifts for a community service project.

education," he says. "Spirituality is the biggest reason we are here. It's that special component that you won't find in any other school. So in everything we do, we make sure that Christ is integrated." Even this year's school theme, "What Would Jesus Do?" reflects Christ.

Meadow View's spirituality has resulted in several baptisms. Two years ago, two students were baptized at their respective churches; last year another two followed.

The school's enrollment is also increasing. Last year there were 47 students ranging from preschool to 10th grade. This year there are 61. Of that number, 20 are preschoolers. In the past, 85-90 percent of the students have been Adventists. But this year, an interesting statistic emerged: the preschool class is composed mostly of local children.

TRAINING UP A CHILD

Sixth-grader Jacob Tyler Strang says his education makes him feel closer to Jesus. "During our Bible class, we are given verses to memorize; it makes me feel like I'm getting a lot of biblical knowledge. And people come and speak to us about serving Jesus in our



Meadow View teachers (left to right) Beth Randall; Melanie Freeth; Malou Saint-Ulysee; Sadrail Saint-Ulysee, principal; Jamie Lee; and assistant Lynda Cortes strive to provide a spiritual atmosphere for the students.

Wednesday chapel session."

Beth Randall, the preschool and kindergarten teacher, exclaims, "We sing and have Bible study in the morning. Then, we do Bible-story activities. Even when we study science or the ocean, we teach them how all living things, with their different colors and shapes, are created and designed by God."

In addition to Randall, Melanie Freeth teaches grades 1 through 3; Jamie Lee has grades 4, 5, and 6; Malou Saint-Ulysee instructs the seventh- and eighth-graders; and Sadrail has grades 9 and 10. The teacher-student ratio is 1-to-10.

Although reading, writing, and arithmetic are important, Meadow View is also a praying school. Teachers encourage students to have a prayer partner and worship together every day. "We want our students to get into the habit of being in God's presence," beams Saint-Ulysee. "It's exciting to see them looking for their partners to pray together after our morning worship and Wednesday after chapel sessions."

Chapel speakers include pastors, elders, and lay ministers. Pastor Laffit Cortés, New Jersey's Youth Ministries director, is a regular. He conducts a Bible ministry program at the school and teaches a leadership class for the junior high and high school students.

"I've been teaching for a while now," recounts Saint-Ulysee. "But when Pastor Henry Wright [Potomac Conference] said last fall that we were

about to begin 180 days of evangelistic meetings with our students, it gave me a new perspective in teaching."

EMBRACING THE COMMUNITY

Meadow View students are also actively involved in the community. Monthly community outreach programs give all students an opportunity to participate. There are seasonal arts and crafts festivals, a classic car show, and an annual Christmas program. This fall students held a "Celebration of Community Heroes Day" and sent cards and letters or visited police and fire departments to thank their Chesterfield community heroes.

The school's mission statement speaks to providing a Bible-centric education and creating Christian leaders to make a difference in the world. Future leaders are also groomed and trained through avenues like the Student Association.

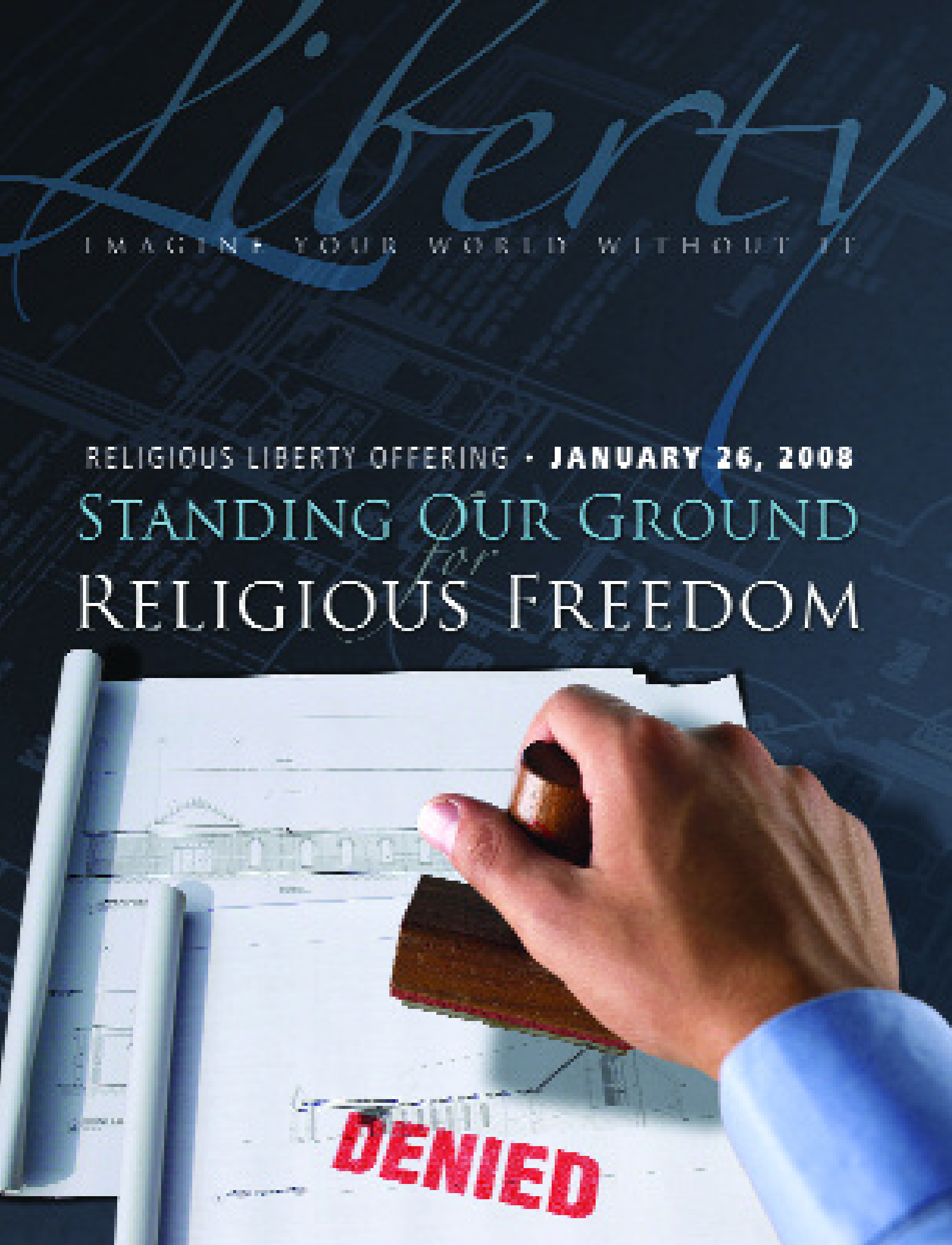
When asked about his future, Saint-Ulysee's goal is to make Meadow View a full academy. "We're always looking for creative ways to keep our precious students at home," he notes. "By offering Christian education from preschool through 12th grade, we could achieve this." He also envisions biannual international mission trips to expose students to other cultures.

In the meantime, Meadow View Academy continues to be a shining beacon for its youth and the community. For more information, visit www.mvja.org.

Ron Tayam, a member of the Jersey City Heights English church, writes from Ledgewood, N.J.



Teacher Jamie Lee engages her students in a classroom discussion.



IMAGINE YOUR WORLD WITHOUT IT

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY OFFERING - JANUARY 26, 2008

STANDING OUR GROUND
RELIGIOUS FREEDOM



YOUR HEALING MINISTRY

JANUARY 2008

The Ripple Effect

Frank Perez

In Matthew 9:35 we read that Jesus went through all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom; healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness. Through His life, He gave us the example that Kettering Adventist HealthCare (KAHC) continues to follow today. As a mission-oriented organization, we also believe that we must continually utilize our strengths and abilities to benefit others. Through this path of service, we recognize the virtue of our existence.

We are continually looking for ways to share Christ's love. That may mean helping others through bedside healthcare, conducting health screenings, obtaining much needed life-saving equipment, improving the lives of employees by assisting them in the purchase of a new home, or advancing mission work around the world.

At KAHC, we believe we can transform the patient's healthcare experience. Because of this belief, we continually strive to improve the quality of care given to patients. We do this through working together with physicians, and through innovative efforts with medical groups, insurance organizations, and both the federal and state governments.

Daily we are faced with circumstances that are out of our control. But we always aim to control how we respond to them. We may not benefit directly from the decisions we make, but each creates a ripple that has an effect—seen or unseen—on those we care for and on those around us.

We may not benefit directly from the decisions we make, but each creates a ripple that has an effect—seen or unseen—on those we care for and on those around us.



FOCUSED ON MEETING NEEDS

When Jesus was here on Earth, many found comfort, compassion, and healing in His ministry and touch. Today, through our many healing ministries, Kettering Adventist HealthCare continues to build upon the ministry that Christ started. Just as He did, we focus on meeting the mental, physical, and spiritual needs of those around us. As we commence another year of ministry, we will continue in our commitment to fulfill our stated mission: "Improving the quality of life in our community."

Frank Perez is president and CEO of Kettering Adventist HealthCare in Ohio.



Running God's Errands

Basharat Masih

It was late Friday afternoon, around 5 p.m., and the rush hour world on wheels was moving in every direction. I was a part of this scurry and was hurrying to complete a few errands before heading home. I'd received a phone call from my wife, Sheila, urging me to be on time for supper with my sister-in-law who was visiting from India.

Family is of the utmost importance in the Indian culture. Furthermore, it isn't often that family members are able to travel to the United States to visit. So, this was a big deal, and I would be in big trouble if I didn't keep my in-laws happy. *I had to hurry!*

My first stop was at Kettering Medical Center's credit union. Once finished, I was about to back my car out of the parking space when, in the rear view mirror, I noticed that an old weather-beaten Chevy had blocked my way. The window of this decrepit car was rolled down and a wrinkled hand was signaling for me to approach. I got out and walked up to an elderly

woman. She appeared to be about 90 and was perspiring. At once I was drawn to her worried, pleading eyes.

"Please help me, I am lost. Please tell me how to get to Sycamore Hospital," she said in a frail voice.

"Ma'am, just follow my car," I replied without a second thought. "I will take you to Sycamore."

I cannot describe the relief I saw on her face. She followed me with a backfire blast and smoky tail. When we reached the front of the hospital, I got out of the car and went to her open window. She grasped my hands and then noticed my hospital ID.

"Who are you?" she asked with tears of gratitude.

"I am a chaplain, and I work for the Kettering Adventist HealthCare," I responded, before parting.

By that time it was too late to finish my errands or to get home in time for supper. However, I believe that I did what was required of me by our Lord. What example did Jesus give? What prompted Him to come to this Earth and save the lost? What propelled

Him to go from city to city serving the needy, healing the lepers, and helping the blind? *Compassion.* Jesus' ministry was filled with acts of compassion. Over and over we read the accounts of His healing people who were physically, mentally, socially, and emotionally sick.

COMPASSION IS A VERB

Compassion is not some sentimental feeling. It's a verb, a visceral, divine feeling that demands action. It is something we feel in our gut. One definition comes from the Vietnamese monk Thich Nhat Hanh, who says compassion is the "trembling or quivering of the heart" that prompts us to respond.

Compassion is a major part of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and it has to be part of our witnessing. It is

All who have been born into the heavenly family are in a special sense the brethren of our Lord.—Ellen G. White



instrumental in our dealings with each other and with those who seek help in our healthcare facilities.

In my department, we have seven core values and cherished principles: Integrity, Stewardship, Spirituality, Imagination, Respect, Compassion, and Excellence. But compassion stands as number one. We should—and must—practice this God-given gift in our ministries, churches, and healthcare institutions. As Micah 6:8 states, "He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God" (NIV).

CARING FOR FAMILY

That is exactly what I was required to do on that eventful Friday afternoon when I was challenged to put into practice what Jesus taught us to do. Although that old lady may have seemed like one more thing before I could accomplish my family responsibilities, I knew in my heart that she was also a member of my family. As Ellen G. White wrote, "All who have been born into the heavenly family are in a special sense the brethren of our Lord. The love of Christ binds together the members of His family, and wherever that love is made manifest there the divine relationship is revealed" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 638).

A chaplain is a chaplain in all circumstances. As His servants we are required to manifest His love and reveal the divine relationship. On that day, I was not only representing Kettering Adventist HealthCare, I was representing our Lord.

Basharat Masih is senior manager for spiritual services at Kettering Adventist HealthCare's Grandview Medical Center in Dayton, Ohio.



Columbia Union Honors Kettering Leadership

Columbia Union Conference president Dave Weigley recently honored Kettering Adventist HealthCare's (KAHC) leadership for its dedication to healthcare ministry on behalf of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. "We want to recognize the excellent leadership contribution of president and CEO Frank Perez, his senior vice presidents, and CFOs," explained Weigley about the presentation and plaques he gave them. "They consistently strive to extend Christ's healing ministry to the local communities and around the world."

Over the years, KAHC's high level of quality and service has led to national recognition by *U.S. News & World Report* and many prominent organizations such as HealthGrades, J.D. Power & Associates, Magnet, and other corporate evaluators. These awards recognize the continuing efforts of Kettering Adventist HealthCare's leadership to help fulfill the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Now in its 44th year, KAHC continues to provide the healing touch of Christ in Ohio and beyond.—*Ken Chaij*



On hand for the recognition ceremony were (left to right) Seth Bardu, Columbia Union Conference treasurer; Pete King, vice president for Finance/Operations at Grandview Medical Center; Brett Spent, vice president for Finance/Operations at Kettering Medical Center; Roy Chew, president of Grandview; Frank Perez, president and CEO of KAHC; Dave Weigley, Columbia Union president; Fred Manchur, president of Kettering Medical Center; Russ Wetherell, CFO and treasurer of KAHC; and Neville Harcombe, Columbia Union executive secretary.

Greene Health Partners Joins KAHC

Kettering Adventist HealthCare (KAHC) and Greene Health Partners (GHP), in Xenia, Ohio, recently announced an affiliation agreement. Frank Perez, president and CEO of KAHC, and Michael Stephens, president and CEO of Greene Health Partners, reached the agreement after careful consideration by boards and management of both systems. It is seen as a mutually beneficial plan to increase healthcare services throughout Ohio's Xenia and Greene counties.

"We look forward to Greene Memorial Hospital joining Kettering Adventist HealthCare," Perez said. "We fully recognize and value the unique strengths that Greene Health Partners will bring to KAHC. They will continue to be the healthcare provider of choice for patients throughout Greene County."

"The decision to enter into an affiliation agreement with Kettering Adventist HealthCare strengthens Greene Health Partners' ability to fulfill our mission of delivering five-star service and outstanding patient care to all Greene County communities," Stephens noted.

The collaboration provides the opportunity for all Kettering Adventist HealthCare and Greene Health Partners hospitals and physicians to share best practices and draw on the combined resources and specialized healthcare services of their two systems.

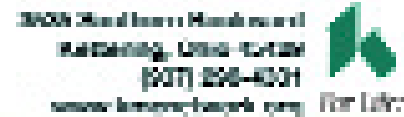
With the addition of the 1,200 employees of Greene Memorial Hospital, and other GHP affiliates, KAHC is now 8,200 employees strong. This makes Kettering a six-hospital network, covering the largest geographic area in their market.

Kettering College Founder Dies

Anna May Vaughan, founder and first dean of Kettering College of Medical Arts (KCMA), passed away recently at the age of 85. KCMA named its nursing center after Vaughan, a former professor of nursing and a missionary nurse in Africa for 18 years and Hong Kong for two years. At the time of her death, Vaughan was a member of the Summit Ridge Seventh-day Adventist Church in Harrah, Okla.



Frank Perez (front, left), Kettering Adventist HealthCare president and CEO, shakes hands with Michael Stephens, president and CEO of Greene Health Partners, in the presence of various administrators.



Family Emphasized at Southwest Philadelphia Church

On a recent Sabbath at the Southwest Philadelphia church, the atmosphere in the sanctuary was high. John Trusty, EdS, DMin, conference Family Life director was the featured guest speaker for Family Ministries Day. The stage was set and as "O Perfect Love" played quietly, 21 couples happily marched down the aisle to



renew their vows and commitment to one another. In introductory remarks, Family Ministries leader Winifred Hunter and her husband, Edval (pictured), helped demonstrate the strength possessed by a couple as they stand hand in hand, face to face against anything that threatens to interfere with their marriage. This bridge also offers support, direction, and guidance to children in the family.

Trusty referred to Genesis 34:1-5 as a springboard to explain the dysfunction that occurs in families when the father is a workaholic, absent emotionally, or there is divorce or death. He relayed that 24 million children are fatherless, and that the father plays a vital role and has a significant impact on shaping the behavior and character of his children. Families were led to face—not hide from—issues, and couples were charged to communicate positively. Trusty also encouraged parents to talk with their children and face personal failures.

All in attendance were truly blessed. Information imparted to the congregation was invaluable. After having been thoroughly fed by the Word of God, attendees were served a delicious meal to satisfy the physical body.—*Janice D. Jenkins*

Miracle Temple Eagles, Faithful Flock Feed Families

Through the combined efforts of the Faithful Flock of Calvary church in Jessup, Md., and the Miracle Temple Eagles Pathfinder Club in Baltimore, 65 inmate families in the Baltimore metropolitan area were recently blessed with a full course, holiday meal.

Faithful Flock is a congregation composed of inmates at the Jessup Correctional Institution. This is the third year that they have worked with the Eagles to benefit inmate families for the holidays. The Thanksgiving baskets were made possible through monetary donations from Faithful Flock members as well as monetary and food donations collected and earned by the Pathfinder members.

Dorian McDonald, Eagles Pathfinder Club director and co-coordinator for the project, reported that

the kids raised more than \$700 by hosting a drive-in movie and car wash this past year. That money was used to purchase food items missing from what the

teenagers collected during a recent food drive. In addition, Miracle Temple member Rob Wallace donated funds to provide turkeys for each basket.

"It is really neat to see their faces," said McDonald of her Eagles delivering the finished baskets. "The kids get to see for themselves that the families are grateful. One kid gives to another, and it makes them feel good to give to someone in need."

Co-coordinator Leroy Neal, lead volunteer for the Baltimore City Prison Ministries team and member of Berea Temple in Baltimore, added, "The Thanksgiving basket project is a ministry that exemplifies the true spirit of teamwork." Other assistants were Faithful Flock Personal Ministries director Jeffrey L. Johnson and first elder and resident leader Ronald Ellis.—*Beth Michaels*



PHOTOS: ABEENA CASSELL



Nearly 75 Eagle Pathfinders and volunteers from Miracle Temple in Baltimore helped prepare food baskets for 64 inmate families.

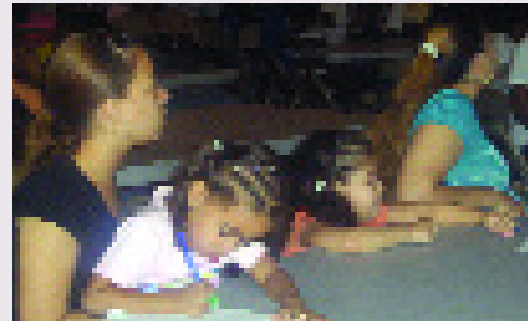
Trinity Temple Initiates "Knowledge in a Bag" Event

The program wasn't supposed to start until 7 p.m., but by 6:15, a long line started to form in front of the church, stretching from the front steps down the block. People of all ages from around Newark, N.J., and neighboring cities had gathered. They wanted to be among the first to benefit from Trinity Temple's "Knowledge in a Bag" event.

The program is part of the church's initiative to reach out to the community. Weeks prior, members were asked to help distribute 500 bags filled with school supplies

to the community, to which they responded unreservedly. Fliers were distributed around the neighborhoods inviting parents to come and learn how to help their child succeed in school.

The program opened with a 30-minute presentation by First Elder Larry Williams, who encouraged attendees to partner with their children. He shared study data that proved their involvement is essential to their children's school success. He encouraged parents to help their child set up a study area. "Allow your child to read aloud to you," he expounded. "Support your child's school discipline. Keep the lines of communication open." Parents were also urged to do *their* homework: get to know their child's educators and ascertain that they promote positive values, provide a warm and caring environment where children can learn and be nurtured, emphasize the worth of each child, provide the skills that will help children become productive citizens, etc.



Parents and children from the community learned valuable lessons about school success during Trinity Temple's "Knowledge in a Bag" event.



Trinity Temple member Keshawn Moody shows off the new school supplies.

Pine Forge Academy Freshman Wins Music Scholarship

Kandys Ward (center) is the proud recipient of a beautiful new electric piano, piano lessons, and a \$1,500 scholarship toward tuition at Pine Forge Academy (PFA) in Pine Forge, Pa., for the 2007-08 school year. This freshman, originally from Tuscaloosa, Ala., received the awards from the Leila Alexander Music & Arts Mentoring Association Foundation (LA MAMA Foundation), which encourages young people to pursue music lessons.

"Kandys is a beginner music student," explains her mother, Dondrea Ward. "She is currently focusing on her academics and life away from home; however her insight and interest in the ministry



of music has been heightened since receiving her piano and starting her lessons."

Darrell Alexander, a former member of the Columbia Union, started the LA MAMA Foundation in his mother's memory. To date the foundation has awarded four students around the United States with a

The excitement was contagious! Residents kept coming, calling friends on their cell phones and urging them to do the same! On their way out, some sent passers-by inside. More than 150 people formed a line around the fellowship hall, and they left with an excess of 300 book bags filled with school supplies, free of charge, of course!—*Sam Belony*

Allegheny East Conference
P.O. Box 266, Pine Forge, PA 19548
Phone: (610) 326-4610
www.myalleghenyeast.com
President, Charles L. Cheatham
Communication Director, Robert Booker
Editor, Beth Michaels

Shiloh Member Accepts Brother's Congressional Medal of Honor

Leila Cooper, a Shiloh church member in Huntington, W.Va., got a memorable call recently. She was asked to accept a Congressional Gold Medal of Honor on behalf of her deceased brother, Major William L. Hill (below), a Tuskegee Airman for the U.S. Air Force.

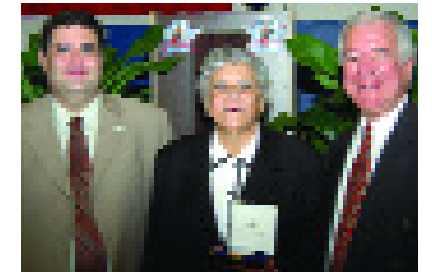
At a special ceremony held at the Spring Hill Elementary School in Huntington, Hill and another veteran were honored with the medal. The Congressional Gold Medal of Honor is the most distinguished award bestowed by the United States Congress. It is the nation's top civilian award



presented to those individuals that embody the best quality in American heritage.

"It was an honor for me to receive this award on my brother's behalf," commented Cooper. "I am very proud of all his accomplishments. My only regret is that he was not here to receive the medal himself."

The Veterans of Foreign Wars kicked off the Huntington service by Posting the Colors, followed by the school choir's performance of the "Battle Hymn of the Republic." The event was filled with distinguished guests: the officers of the West Virginia Chapter of the Tuskegee Airmen; Skip Holbrook, the police chief; and others. A representative from Gov. Joseph Anthony Manchin III's office gave a letter of greeting to the two recipients, followed by Huntington Mayor David Felinton who presented them with a proclamation from the city. The high point of the day was when U.S. Rep. Nick Rahall (W.Va., 3rd district) presented the beautiful medal to the recipients.



Huntington (W.Va.) Mayor David Felinton (left) and Rep. Nick Rahall present the Congressional Gold Medal of Honor to Shiloh member Leila Cooper, who proudly accepts it on behalf of her brother, Major William L. Hill.

Conference Organizes Area Ministeriums

Did you know that Allegheny West Conference (AWC) pastors have been collaborating and brainstorming about ways to improve church interaction and outreach? Organized into three ministeriums, these leaders are growing and strengthening their church bodies. The three groups are Central/Southern Ohio (SOMA), Northern Ohio/Western Pennsylvania (NOPA), and Virginia/West Virginia (VA/WVA).

Each group has its own officers and they meet monthly to foster professional growth, serve as a sounding board for innovative ideas, share resources, develop joint programs, and maximize fellowship among the brethren. Various special guests and area professionals are also invited to inform and empower the pastors.

"By supplying up-to-date information on the state and health of the local churches, the area ministeriums are vital to the success of the conference administration," says Donald Burden, DMin, conference Ministerial director. "They also provide a way for conference officers and departmental directors to relay information to local churches."

NOPA (right) officers are pastors Jerome Hurst of the

Southeast church in Cleveland as president; Mikel Moore from the Parkwood church in Toledo as secretary/treasurer; and Steve Valles of the Oberlin/Twinsburg district as chaplain.

SOMA officers are pastors William Cox from the Ephesus church in Columbus as president; Derek Adams from the New Life and Dale Wright churches in Dayton and Germantown, respectively, as secretary; and Cory Rowe from the Hillcrest church in Dayton as treasurer.

VA/WVA officers are pastors Jack McCrary from the Staunton/Charlottesville (Va.) district as president; Danny Milton from the Smyrna/Lynchburg (Va.) district as secretary; Andre Saunders, DMin, from the Danville/South Boston (Va.) district as treasurer; and Jason Ridley from the Charleston/Huntington (W.Va.) district as chaplain.



Sensational Seniors Have a Ball

When snow started falling in Cleveland, Roberta Brown, Sensational Seniors leader from the Bethel church, started counting down days to the Snowflake Ball. Originating as a black-tie event sponsored by another organization, this event was so popular that when Bethel's Sensational Seniors were given the opportunity to keep it going, they took on the challenge. The first matter of business was finding a name that would stick. Community Services leader Evelyn



Bethel member LaShai Shanklin enjoys the Snowflake Ball.

Martin delivered, and now six years later, the one-day Snowflake Ball has been extended to a full weekend.

The recent event started with Friday vespers, led by speaker Michael Tate, head elder at the Glenville church in Cleveland. The Anointed, a female trio, provided special music that lifted all to higher heights in Jesus. On Sabbath Michael Trotter, a native son of Bethel, provided the morning music and stirred the members' souls. Then guest speaker Jerome Hurst, pastor of Cleveland's Southeast church, gave a message titled "Doubled Minded Christians." Hurst challenged all to have a singleness of mind like Jesus.

The highlight of the weekend was the Snowflake Ball, a semi-formal event.

The emcee, also a native son of Bethel, was Kenny Hill. Through his charismatic way, Hill engaged the audience and had them interacting with one another to create an enthusiastic evening. Harold Palmer Jr. (right), from the Ephesus church in Columbus, blessed listeners with his booming bass voice. "This is an event for all ages," explained Brown. "It's only sponsored by the Sensational Seniors."



Maranatha Member Creates Young Adult Ministry

When she moved back to the Cleveland area, it became clear to Melissa Strickland (below) that there were many church programs and activities for elementary- and high school-aged children. Those left out of organized activities were people in college and older—her age. Anxious to get involved with others,



Strickland felt impressed to fill the void by starting Young Adventists Preparing for Service (YAPS).

YAPS is a group of people aged 19-40 from area churches who get together to fellowship, worship, and build stronger relationships with one another while telling others about Jesus. "If we lift up Jesus, our ministry will grow and others will come to Him,"

explains Strickland, a member of the Maranatha church in Cleveland. She reports that YAPS plans to begin its outreach in nursing homes, parks, and other places where people need to hear about Jesus.

Each Friday evening, groups meet in different homes hosted by YAPS members to bring in the Sabbath and study God's Word. On the following Sabbath, they have dinner together. On the third Friday of the month, they all come together for a joint program with a band, praise team, musical guest, and a creative way to drive

home the theme of the week's meeting.

During a recent third Friday, the theme was "Just Because You Messed Up Doesn't Mean Give Up." This theme was dramatized through three vignettes as part of a talk show with "Barbara Yalters." One vignette, titled "Jail Bird," was about a young inmate being offered freedom.

When asked to wear a white robe to leave the prison, the inmate refused and continued wearing his prison garb. The evening ended with a short message about the theme and an appeal to allow Jesus to "fix us after we have messed up."



Warren Whitfield (left), from Cleveland's Southeast church, and Crystal Ballard, from Maranatha, perform a vignette for a YAPS worship.

Catch the Vision is published in the Visitor by the Allegheny West Conference 1339 East Broad Street, Columbus, OH 43205 Phone: (614) 252-5271 ■ President, James L. Lewis Editor, Bryant Taylor ■ www.awcsda.org

Enabling is What Leadership is All About

Begin with 128 excited, energetic fifth- to eighth-graders. Throw in some footballs, basketballs, volleyballs, and soccer balls. Fold in cartwheels, flips, trios, and basket tosses. Gently stir in a dose of creative writing and a dash into the depths of Crystal Cave. Let simmer for a day and a half, including an overnight stay in the dorm. The result was Blue Mountain Academy's (BMA) Sports Festival. Many thanks go to each of the "cooks" who helped to put it all together.



This year our "chef" was junior Katie Paris (left). In the absence of a vice principal/recruiter, Paris took on the responsibility of making the festival a reality. Contacting the elementary schools, tracking students who planned to attend, arranging leaders for the areas of focus, and surveying and assigning attendee preferences were all tasks that she accomplished. In addition, Paris arranged for the field trip to Crystal Cave on Sunday afternoon, including scheduling and lining up buses and drivers.

BMA prides itself on being a mechanism for training leaders. We take the talents God has blessed our youth with, help to identify and develop them, and then give the students opportunities to use those talents. Paris used many principles of leadership and continues to grow through her experience. She rallied students to assist with the program, delegated responsibilities, and sought counsel. She struggled and planned, and ultimately pulled off a successful event. I look forward to watching as she continues to make an impact on our campus and our world.

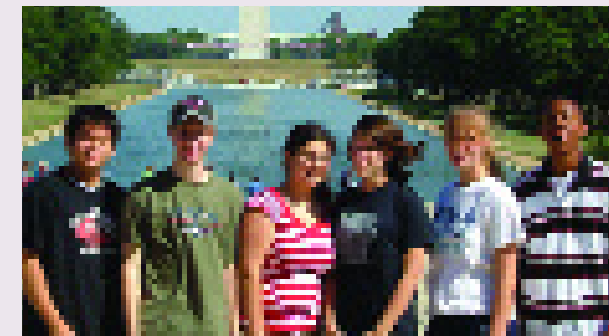


Spencer R. Hannah
Principal

Honor Students Tour Historic D.C., Virginia Sites

Six history honor students recently accompanied their teacher Doug Stewart on the annual History Honors Tour. The first stop was a tour of the Cannon and Capitol buildings in Washington, D.C. The group's tour guide explained the history of the buildings and what events happened at each one. The honor students spent the rest of the day visiting the many historical monuments along the National Mall.

On Sabbath the students attended Sligo church in Takoma Park, Md. They spent the afternoon visiting the



Students enjoy time at the Reflecting Pool in Washington, D.C., one of their many stops on the annual History Honors Tour.

Washington National Cathedral, where a celebration of the church's 100th anniversary was taking place. In the evening, the group attended *Agnes of God*, a play performed at the Silver Spring (Md.) Stage.

On Sunday the students toured Monticello, Thomas Jefferson's house located in Charlottesville, Va. They spent most of their time there walking around the buildings and grounds and learning about how Jefferson lived. They then headed to Historic Williamsburg, a beautifully restored colonial town in eastern Virginia, where people stroll around in traditional colonial garb dating back to the 1700s. "The trip helped us learn a lot of history, and gave us the chance to grow closer to the other students," said one student. "It was definitely a worthwhile experience!"—Carly Reed ('09)



Junior Carly Reed's favorite stop on the history tour was the World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C.

Students Serve Berks County Businesses, Residents

Brightening the day for Berks County, Pennsylvania, businesses and residents was the goal of BMA students during Service Explosion Day. Anyone driving along State or Fourth streets in Hamburg might have seen the students cleaning storefront windows or scraping and painting fire hydrants. Those traveling along I-78 in Tilden Township might have noticed students removing trash from the highway. Laurel Nursing Center was another stop, as students sought to bring a bit of cheer to residents there.

Other service activities included volunteering at a nursery school, day care, petting zoo, horse farm, shelter, learning center, Blue Mountain Elementary School, and Reading Junior Academy.

The school's task at Opportunity House in Reading was to prepare a meal for 60 homeless people. "We were welcomed with open arms," reported Diana Engen, BMA registrar. "The meal included Italian chicken, mashed potatoes, steamed

cauliflower, garlic bread, potato salad, tossed salad, fresh fruit, and cupcakes. Everything was made from scratch, including the salad dressing, and tasted like a holiday feast!" She added, "I know every student who went had a fulfilling experience and would do it again if given the opportunity."



A group of BMA students clean along a two-mile stretch of I-78 in Berks County, Pennsylvania, during the school's Service Explosion Day.

La Sonnette Musicians Enjoy Sixth Handbell Festival

The Toledo RingFest in Ohio has grown to involve groups from junior and senior academies throughout the eastern half of the United States. It is specifically designed for advanced Seventh-day Adventist youth handbell choirs. For the sixth consecutive year, BMA's La Sonnette Ensemble participated, adding to the more than 150 ringers and sponsors who packed the platform of the Toledo church, where the event was held. Most of the groups were new this year.

"It is a fantastic way to jumpstart our year," said La Sonnette director Eric Engen. "Having this workshop so early in the school year helps us to focus on learning our music more quickly, and learn to work together."

"This is my second year at RingFest and the most anticipated part of my year," said sophomore

Jonathan Lewis. "It is just amazing to listen to all the different bell choirs playing as one chorus. You learn so much, such as special techniques." He added, "You are surrounded by people from different schools, but you have the

one thing that binds you together—you all can proudly say you ring bells."

La Sonnette Ensemble also gave two concerts in western Pennsylvania on their way home: They presented the worship service at the Pittsburgh church on Sabbath morning and gave a community concert at Laurel Lake Camp in Rossiter, Pa., on Sunday.

—Eric Engen

Coming EVENTS

January	
18, 19	Tour Weekend
22-25	Student FOCUS Week
27	SAT Testing/Sunday School
30-Feb. 3	Home Leave
February	
6-9	Band Festival
16	Junior Presentation Parent Advisory Council
17-20	Phone-a-Thon
22, 23	Tour Weekend

Communique is published in the Visitor by Blue Mountain Academy 2363 Mountain Road, Hamburg, PA 19526 ■ Phone: (610) 562-2291 Fax: (610) 562-8050 ■ Editor, Kathleen Sutton ■ E-mail: kathys@bma.us ■ www.bma.us ■ Copy Editor, Louise Corbin

THE CHALLENGE

chesapeake conference newsletter

JANUARY 2008

Come Home!

God's heart aches over our distance and preoccupation. He longs for our presence. He invites us to come home. For too long we've been in a far country: a country of noise and hurry, of climb and push and shove, and of fear and frustration. And He welcomes us home: home to peace and joy, to friendship and fellowship and openness, and to intimacy and acceptance and affirmation. This is an invitation to prayer.

Please don't be shy. He invites us into the living room of His heart, where we can put on old slippers and share freely. He invites us into the kitchen of His friendship, where chatter and batter mix in good fun. He invites us into the dining room of His strength, where we can feast to our heart's delight. He invites us into the study of His wisdom, where we can learn and grow and stretch, and ask all the questions we want. He invites us into the workshop of His creativity, where we can be co-laborers with Him, working together for the completion of His plans. He invites us into the bedroom of His rest, where new peace is found and where we can be vulnerable and free. It is also the place of deepest intimacy, where we know and are known to the fullest.

The key to this home, this heart of God, is prayer. And when we pray, really pray, we will discover that in the praying we will find our heart's true home!



Rob Vandeman
President

Dundalk Church Celebrates 50 Years

Members, former members, and many friends of the Dundalk (Md.) church gathered recently to celebrate the congregation's 50th anniversary. The weekend was filled with times of remembrance, inspirational music, challenging preaching, good food, and fellowship. The celebration started with a Friday evening vespers conducted by former pastor



Roosevelt Marsden. It continued Sabbath morning with former pastor Dick Thomas teaching a general lesson study and conference president Rob Vandeman preaching the worship hour message. The afternoon



Dundalk (Md.) pastor Sedley Johnson (far left) shares a moment with (left to right) charter members Dana Debolt and Rosalie Stith and former pastor Dick Thomas.

program of reminiscing highlighted the celebration theme "This Far by Faith." The celebration continued Sunday morning with a prayer breakfast led by local elders.

The uplifting weekend music included specials by choirs from the Cornerstone church in Exmore, Va., the Pikesville (Md.) International church, and numbers by the outstanding gospel quartet from the Pocomoke church in Pocomoke City, Md., known as 4 AM (Four Adventist Men).

Founded in January 1957, under the leadership of Pastor Robert Kerr, the Dundalk congregation purchased its present building 11 months later. Although they have faced some lean years and the threat of closure, they remained determined. After a rebound, they now are a thriving, multicultural congregation of more than 150 with a dream to expand or rebuild. Pastor Sedley Johnson and his anniversary committee are to be commended for a well organized and inspirational celebration.



Current and former conference and church leaders helped lead in the anniversary Sabbath celebration.

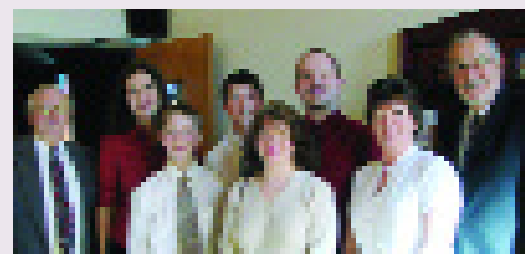
Evangelism Series for Sister Conference Proves Fruitful

Responding to an appeal by its sister conference, Mountain View, Chesapeake gave the gift of an evangelistic series to the Cumberland (Md.) church. Chesapeake Bible worker Stephanie Gladden made herself available for six months, and the conference sponsored executive secretary Charles Griffin and his wife, Evelyn, as the evangelistic team.

The series started by inundating Cumberland residents' mailboxes with offerings of Bible studies. More than 200 residents responded with interest. When Gladden arrived in July to begin visiting these interests, she was soon overwhelmed by the numbers and mobilized Cumberland church members to assist in the effort. Before long, one-third of the church members were giving in-home Bible studies. Within a few short months, church attendance grew.

The Griffins held the evangelistic series recently with an average attendance of 40. At the opening meeting, 17 guests attended. Evelyn, also a trained Bible worker, gave motivational health talks. Charles preached the Bible messages, while members of his home church in Williamsport (Md.) drove over the mountains each evening to share special music.

According to Cumberland church pastor Harold Wightman, five people were baptized and another eight are being prepared. The church has been energized by this effort and is planning for more evangelistic efforts in the future.



Evangelistic series participants included (left to right): Cumberland (Md.) pastor Harold Wightman; Bible worker Stephanie Gladden; members Aaron, Donovan, Kathy, and Jeff Kyle; Martha Robison; and Charles Griffin, conference executive secretary.

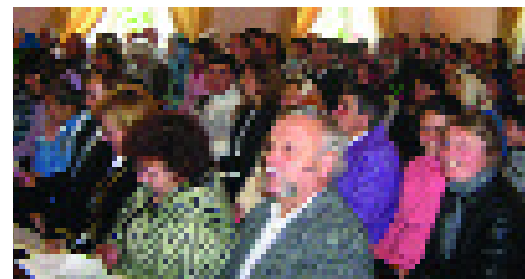
Members Join Mission in Ukraine

This past fall, three Chesapeake members headed for Ukraine to conduct evangelistic meetings as part of a 50-meeting initiative sponsored by The Quiet Hour. George Wennerberg, associate pastor of the Frederick (Md.) church, and his sister, Joan Franklin, clerk of the Brooklyn (Md.) church, worked together to conduct a meeting in the eastern Ukrainian city of Yagotin. Roland Smith, a member of the Westminster (Md.) church, led out in parallel meetings in the central Ukrainian city of Bohuslav.



In Yagotin, Wennerberg preached an 18-part series, utilizing materials from the Carolina Conference's "Share Him" program. Franklin (above with translator) conducted a daily conversational English class. Two of her students were part of the nine who were baptized at the end of the meetings. Pastor

Wennerberg reports that another six are continuing their studies. The siblings stayed in the home of local pastor Paul Buga and discovered firsthand how difficult life is for fellow believers in Ukraine. The pastor must borrow a car from his son to do visitations, and most of the 100 members of the Yagotin church walk to church or take public transportation. Despite the difficult circumstances, members are joyful and remain committed to the church's mission.



Members of the Bohuslav, Ukraine, church listen intently to their American guests.

In Bohuslav, Smith used similar presentation materials but conducted the meetings at 3 and 6 p.m. each day. Between sessions, other members of his team provided health screenings and an English language class. More than 20 community guests regularly attended and five decided to be baptized. An equal number continues their studies. The Lord blessed the concerted efforts of the Chesapeake volunteers, and the 50-site campaign netted more than 300 baptisms.

The Challenge is published in the *Visitor* by the Chesapeake Conference ■ 6600 Martin Road, Columbia, MD 21044 Phone: (410) 995-1910 ■ President and Editor, Rob Vandeman

Acro-Airs Lift Spirits at Children's Hospital

Young patients at Children's National Medical Center in Washington, D.C., were amazed as Columbia Union College's (CUC) Acro-Airs (below) recently entertained them and their families. According to a hospital events coordinator, this is the second time the gymnastics team has given one of the most well-attended programs at the hospital.

"Things like this step up the meaning of what we do," said Ben Johnson, Acro-Airs head coach. "It's a neat experience for everyone on the team to see the



Acro-Airs members make friends with a young patient in the hospital lobby.

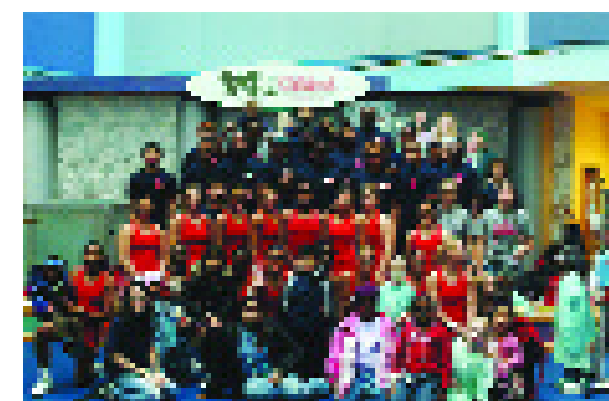
kids with their faces pressed against the windows looking down at the performance."

Team members performed on five blue tumbling mats that covered the small indoor seven-story courtyard lobby of the hospital. The 40-minute performance included traditional tumbling passes, a few comical anti-drug skits, an introduction to the team, and a final routine.

"The children, parents, and staff of the hospital let us know they appreciated us through their cheering and applause," said Jasmine King, a senior Elementary Education

Signature stunts and tumbling passes drew attention from hospital guests.

major. "I feel very grateful for having the opportunity to perform for them. It was really a blessing to know that we brightened a child's day."—PR Staff



New Director Oversees College Research and Facts

Janette Neufville (right), CUC's new director of Institutional Research, is excited to serve in her first college environment. She hopes to use her knowledge of information systems to take CUC to a higher level of academic recognition. In her new position, Neufville will present school data to CUC management and decision makers, as well as to media and government entities. In the future she envisions the school as one sought out for its successful and unique programs.



"I am a product of Christian education and am passionate about what it provides," said Neufville. "My education prepared me to carry myself with integrity throughout my college years at an extremely competitive institution and into the corporate world, where I was able to take advantage of wonderful opportunities." Neufville holds a Bachelor's in Electrical Engineering.

Prior to CUC, she worked in management at Sprint Nextel, the NASDAQ Stock Market, and at Andersen Consulting (now Accenture). She, her husband, Densil, and their two children attend the Cornerstone church in Herndon, Va.—Melanie Gordon and PR Staff

The team at Bohuslav included (left to right) Myron and Elaine White, Roland Smith, and translators Natasha and Oksana.

Gospel Choir Energizes Bucks County Church

Members of CUC's Black Student Union Gospel Choir recently traveled to Warminster, Pa., to perform their first engagement and outreach for the fall semester. Group members participated in the opening prayer, children's story, sermon, and benediction for the Bucks County church, and introduced a praise and worship segment that included members' testimonies.

Senior Sara-May Colón (left) delivered the sermon, expounding on a man named Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan and grandson of Saul. "The story was mostly about self-worth and how God created and redeems us," said Colón, a theology major. "A lot of people think that God's motives are negative, when in fact they aren't," she added. The church was very receptive to the choir's service and music and invited them to return.



CUC's Black Student Union Gospel Choir blesses members of the Bucks County church in Warminster, Pa.

Campus Observes Native American Heritage Month

Guest speaker Edward Keith Colston (below), executive director of the Maryland Commission on Indian Affairs, recently gave a fascinating account of the history of American Indians during CUC's Native American Heritage Month. During a colorful assembly, students and faculty learned about current issues facing America's first settlers.

As part of the commission, Colston initiates and supports activities that affect Native Americans in Maryland. He also participates in programs that further the understanding of their history, culture, and role in America's history. During his presentation, attendees learned several important facets of American Indian



Guest speaker Edward Keith Colston (center) is joined by (left to right) senior Audrey Moise, First Year Experience dean Nemeke Mason, sophomore Giovanna Garnique, and junior Keila Acosta in honoring Native American Heritage Month.

lifestyle and the cultural importance placed on balance, control, and symbols. According to Colston, the value of balance is first taught to young children by teaching them to stand on one foot at a time. Control and self-discipline are also instilled early and applied to every action and thought.

Colston described the symbols that appear on clothing and explained the honor or position they indicate within a tribe. He also explained the significant spiritual meaning attached to traditional dances. "Whenever we go somewhere or do something, we leave something out of place to

show that, in life, things aren't perfect," explained Colston. Toward the end of his presentation, Colston demonstrated a few traditional dances and taught students how to say "hello" in Cherokee. —Brittani Bissell and PR Staff

CALENDAR

January	
2-31	Unionwide Money for College Seminars Registration
14	Classes Begin
15	SA Ski Excursion
20, 21	Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday— <i>Campus Closed</i>
22-25	Missions Week
28-Feb. 1	Student Week in Spiritual Emphasis
February	
2-9	Band Festival
24	Open House for Prospective Students

The Gateway is published in the Visitor by the Columbia Union College 7600 Flower Ave., Takoma Park, MD 20912 Phone: (800) 835-4212 ■ www.cuc.edu Weymouth Spence, EdD, President Exec. Dir. of Marketing and Communication, Scott Steward Editor, Tanisha Greenidge

La Iglesia de Union City influye en la comunidad

Se puede imaginar las bancas del santuario de su iglesia con más de 250 personas, y muchas más esperando afuera para entrar al culto de oración? ¿Puede imaginarse a 30 visitas aceptando la invitación del pastor a recibir estudios bíblicos? ¡Esto es una realidad en la Iglesia la Esperanza en Union City, N.J.!

La iglesia opera un ministerio de banco de alimento los miércoles en la noche, lo que ha recibido una gran acogida. "Nunca nos imaginamos la influencia que íbamos a tener en nuestra comunidad cuando iniciamos," mencionó el Pastor Julio César Labrador. "En mi opinión, el ministerio del banco de alimento en Norteamérica ha sido una inversión con resultados mediocres. Creo que ha llegado la hora en que nuestras iglesias deben realizar todas las cosas con propósito de evangelismo."



Bajo el liderazgo de Luz Mayí (en la foto), el banco de alimento recibe más de \$5,000 en provisiones por medio de contribuciones estatales. Como resultado de los cultos de oración los miércoles de noche, el coordinador de actividades laicas, Daniel Díaz, no tiene que trabajar arduamente para conseguir interesados en estudios bíblicos. La iglesia ha empleado a un obrero bíblico que realiza más de 60 estudios bíblicos a la semana. ¡Esto ha resultado en más de 50 bautismos!



Una conexión en Puerto Rico se convierte en un bautismo en Lehigh Valley

Cuando el Pastor Gabriel Montalvo (en la foto) de la Iglesia de Lehigh Valley en Allentown, Pa., adquirió terreno en Puerto Rico en el año 2005, no tenía idea que ello resultaría en tres bautismos. Montalvo le compró la propiedad a un adventista, y sus planes eran de algún día usar la propiedad en su retiro. Cuando el ex terrateniente supo que Montalvo es pastor en Pensilvania, se lo comentó a su hija que vive al lado de él. Inmediatamente, ella le dio al



Pastor Montalvo la dirección de sus familiares que viven en Bethlehem, Pa. El hijo de esta señora, con su esposa y tres hijos, se habían trasladado a Pensilvania en busca de un mejor futuro. El Pastor Montalvo visitó a la familia y descubrió que la pareja y sus hijos ya no asistían a la iglesia. Como resultado de esa visita, la

madre comenzó a asistir a la Iglesia Hispana de Lehigh Valley, y la familia ha crecido en el Señor en los últimos dos años.

Este otoño, Montalvo y su esposa Ana viajaron a Puerto Rico para su vigésimo primer aniversario de boda. Estando allí, visitaron al ex terrateniente y su familia. Estando de visita con la familia, los tres nietos llamaron desde Bethlehem para compartir su emoción de su pronto bautismo. "Qué maravilloso es saber que a más de 1,700 millas de distancia el Espíritu Santo estaba obrando en los corazones de esta querida familia," comparte Montalvo. Luego añadió, "Nosotros, la familia de la Iglesia Hispana de Lehigh Valley, estamos orando por la mamá y el papá, para que tomen su decisión por Jesús. Qué bueno es saber que ni el tiempo, ni el espacio, ni la distancia pueden limitar al Espíritu Santo. Éste viajó 1,700 millas, cruzando el Océano Atlántico hasta llegar al pequeño pueblo de Bethlehem, a una casa humilde, y salvó a esta familia. Pensilvania es un campo misionero."

Potomac aumenta tres congregaciones

La Asociación de Potomac ha experimentado un rápido crecimiento entre las congregaciones hispanas. En el 2006 se organizaron 10 iglesias nuevas. Además de estas, muchas iglesias hispanas han iniciado nuevas casas-iglesias a través del territorio de la asociación:



Casi 60 personas se anotaron con entusiasmo como feligreses fundadores de la nueva Compañía Hispana de Roanoke (Va.).

Compañía Hispana Centreville (Va.) – Esta recién organizada congregación que comenzó con sólo 15 adoradores, obtuvo la firma de 42 feligreses fundadores en su reciente celebración. Los feligreses de la Iglesia Hispana Fairfax (Va.) formaron el grupo hace más de un año. “La casa-hogar mantiene el enfoque de su misión por medio del ministerio de los grupos pequeños, algo vital en el alcance y crecimiento,” comentó el Pastor Walter Castro. Actualmente, la congregación se reúne en la escuela primaria.

Compañía Hispana Roanoke (Va.) – Hubo razón de regocijo cuando esta nueva congregación nació. Cerca

de 60 personas firmaron como feligreses fundadores en su reciente ceremonia de organización.

El Pastor y obrero bíblico Fimed Omar y otros, dedicaron un mes a la oración antes de colportar en el área de Roanoke en octubre del 2006. “Después de orar para que las personas fueran receptivas al evangelio, salimos a colportar cada domingo en los vecindarios hispanos para ofrecer estudios bíblicos,” explicó Omar. Aún antes de la organización oficial, esta congregación en Roanoke ya había formado un grupo en Lynchburg, Va., con 16 personas estudiando la Biblia. José Esposito, el coordinador hispano de la Asociación, añadió: “Es emocionante ver el crecimiento de nuevas iglesias, y a los feligreses compartiendo el evangelio y cosechando almas para el reino, una tendencia que esperamos continúe.”

Iglesia Brasileira en Gaithersburg (Md.) – Recientemente, esta creciente congregación celebró su cambio de estatus a iglesia, con 65 feligreses fundadores. Hace cuatro años la congregación se organizó como compañía, fruto del alcance misionero de la Iglesia Brasileira de Washington (College Park, Md.). “Espero que los feligreses continúen con su enfoque en evangelismo por medio de los grupos pequeños, y sigan creciendo,” dice el Pastor Leonardo de Oliveira.—*Jeanie Allen*

Chesapeake fue la anfitriona del campestre hispano

El campestre hispano de la Asociación de Chesapeake que se llevó a cabo recientemente en Mt. Aetna Camp and Retreat Center cerca de Hagerstown, Md., atrajo a más de 500 participantes. El número de la concurrencia recargó las instalaciones, mas no afectó el espíritu de los participantes. El coordinador de los ministerios hispanos y tesorero de la Asociación de Chesapeake, Ramón Chow, indica que el exceso de asistencia exige un cambio en las fechas para el próximo año para permitir que la Academia Highland View pueda acomodar al grupo creciente en este evento anual. Según Chow, se espera que la tasa de crecimiento entre la población de habla hispana en Chesapeake exceda por lo menos un 20 por ciento en un futuro próximo.



Sonia Sicalo, feligrés de la Iglesia Hispana de Washington-Spencerville (Md.), les enseña a los jovencitos acerca de Jesús durante el campestre.



Los creyentes hispanos que representan a las ocho iglesias y compañías hispanas dentro de Chesapeake fueron bendecidas por las predicaciones del evangelista Víctor Collins, y el seminario presentado por Tevni Grajales Guerra (en la foto), profesor de Metodología de Investigación y Estadística en la Universidad de Andrews (Mich.). El Pastor Ben Sosa y su esposa Magay, de la Asociación de Pensilvania, presentaron los seminarios para jóvenes.

El Noti Visitor es publicado por el Visitor cada mes por los coordinadores hispanos de las Asociaciones. ■ Coordinador de Boletín, Beth Michaels, (301) 596-0800

Step Into the Water

At a recent convocation, the devotional speaker drew our minds to when Joshua and God’s people took a huge step in faith (Joshua 3). God instructed them to walk through the Jordan River into the Promised Land. Though the river was wide and deep, the priests courageously led the way. God parted the waters, and the people went over dry land. What humans can’t accomplish by the utmost of their ingenuity, they can do with ease by the power of God.

Early last year we wondered how, with our limited funds and small pastoral team, Mountain View could ever mount an effective, sustainable soul-winning initiative. In 2007 our sister conferences and union leaders joined the call of God to help make a huge impact for Christ in Mountain View. Many of our members “stepped into the water” to revolutionize the way evangelism will be done. Members, with support from their churches and pastors, are now ready to “launch out into the deep” and, by faith, believe that they will draw in a large sustainable catch in 2008 and beyond. Conference lay evangelists have responded to God’s call and are saying, “Here I am. Send me.”

As we go forward in pursuit of the mission Christ has appointed us, He will turn 2008 into a year of miracles; miracles of change in the lives of members and in the lives of those who will hear the call of God and become members of His remnant church. Jesus has given each of us the privilege to be co-laborers with Him. Can He count on you in 2008 to make a difference for Him?



Larry Boggess
President

Preteens Develop Websites to Promote Godly Living

I want to start a Christian club for girls,” said Hannah Hendron, 11-year-old daughter of Pastor Adam Hendron from the Braxton, Glenville, and Spencer district in West Virginia. “Sounds good,” her father replied. “How about something to reach non-Christians?”

As rural living puts them in contact with few children, the idea of a website sprang up: “Girls Embracing Moral Standards,” or GEMS! Hendron’s blog is a place for girls to swap ideas on how to exhibit virtue.

(Parents are likely to find this website when looking online for something acceptable for their children.) Benjamin, Hannah’s 9-year-old brother, wanted to make his claim as well and initiated “Boy’s Instigating Good” as his BIG idea.

These new websites, aimed at introducing others to our Savior, need Christians to go online and get the ball rolling. The siblings are appealing to readers for stories and suggestions. The content is intended

to be primarily for children and by children, but parents can certainly help.

Email addresses and other personal information are not required, so visitors will not be solicited afterward. All submissions, however, must pass through the pastor or his wife before being posted, in order that the content will meet biblical standards. Neither club gives access to the development of chat rooms or other ways of personal contact with those children who contribute. Please visit www.gemsclub.wordpress.com or www.bigclub.wordpress.com today!



Weirton/Wheeling Churches Host Religious Liberty Symposium

Guest speaker Kevin James (right), associate director of Public Affairs and Religious Liberty for the Southern Union, recently blessed members of the Weirton and Wheeling (W.Va.) churches during a recent Religious Liberty symposium. James presented messages on the biblical foundation and guiding principles of religious liberty.

His primary thesis is that Jesus is the author and guarantor of liberty as the inherent right of every soul. Thus liberty is not an act of toleration or beneficence on the part of the state; for it is beyond the purview of earthly powers, civil or religious, to grant what God has bestowed on everyone as a birthright. What air, water, food, and sunlight are to the body, liberty is to the soul. In his presentations, James also traced through Israel's ancient history and the great prophetic developments that have unfolded since Bible times, which are the reasons why liberty has been so scarce and so little understood. A true understanding and acceptance of the spiritual principles of liberty clarifies the civil aspects of freedom and places them on the proper footing.

James underscored prophecy's warning message, which indicates that religious liberty will face its ultimate crisis and peril when church and state reunite

under the miracle working and demonically guided coalition of church and state. Interwoven with his several presentations was the call for Seventh-day Adventists to be active proponents of religious liberty, not only for the sake of its preservation, but to enlighten society at all levels on the vital importance of this subject for a true understanding of God's character and mode of government.

"In my five years as a member of the Adventist Church, I've never before heard such a thorough explanation of religious liberty and its inseparable connection with the gospel," said one participant. Another agreed, saying, "I see now why the church has been so committed to advocating separation of church and state. I used to think our position on this issue was just self-defense, but I see now that it is rooted in the principles of righteousness."



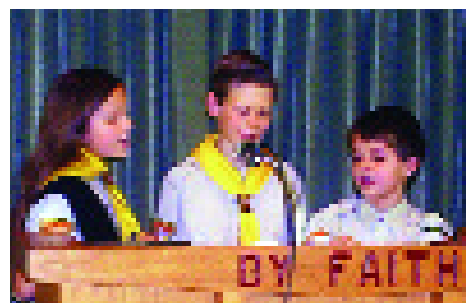
Spencer Samaritans Stand Up for Jesus

During the recent Pathfinder Sabbath at the Spencer (W.Va.) church, youth got the chance to take over the pulpit. The young people conducted the entire worship service, even asking members (and three visitors) to come forward for an "adult story." The response was quite favorable.

The day's message focused on "The Fruits of the Spirit." Benjamin Hendron, age 9, spoke about love, while 11-year-old Michael Arthur spoke on peace. Hannah Hendron, age 11, closed the sermon by highlighting self-control.

In the preceding month, the Spencer Samaritans received a third-place ribbon for their part in the Walnut Festival children's parade. Afterward the group collected more than 130 nonperishable food items from the community to make into Thanksgiving baskets for the needy. The Pathfinders even baked bread for the project. Master Guide Violet Hard deserves many thanks for making it easy.

This spring club members plan to help with the church's evangelistic series to be held at the community center in Upper West Fork Park. In addition, the Spencer Samaritans will conduct the song service for each evening's meeting.—Hannah Hendron



Young Spencer (W.Va.) church members (left to right) Hannah Hendron, Michael Arthur, and Benjamin Hendron helped lead the adult worship service during Pathfinder Sabbath.

Mountain Viewpoint is published in the Visitor by the Mountain View Conference ■ 1400 Liberty Street, Parkersburg, WV 26101
Phone: (304) 422-4581 ■ President, Larry Boggess
Editor, Brian Jones ■ www.mtviewconf.org

To Be the Hands of Jesus

It was Wednesday night. What an unforgettable evening! I was scheduled to visit La Esperanza, one of our Spanish-speaking churches in Union City. Shepherded by the district pastor, Jair Pinilla, La Esperanza had prepared a group of young people to be baptized. One of these precious people was a young woman named Jimena, whom the Lord had delivered, in a powerful way, from a sinful and perverse generation.

Jimena and her friends, who previously were consumed by their own worries, were recently preparing bags with food to serve others. The sight of these transformed people produced such positive feelings. They served a long line of people in need. Diverse individuals from various ethnic backgrounds patiently stood by the steps of the church. It was a beautiful sight to see, and it was unforgettable. I felt the presence of God among the thundering crowd. More than 250 people were fed bread and fish that Wednesday night. Should we not imitate our Lord Jesus Christ?

Our vision for the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and specifically for our New Jersey constituents, is to be the hands of Jesus in the community.



José Cortés
President

NEWS

New Communication Director Appointed

It was recently voted that Laffit Cortés (below), conference director for Youth Ministries and Health Ministries, should also serve as director of communication.

Cortés is a graduate of Atlantic Union College (Mass.) where he earned a Bachelor in Religion. He is currently enrolled in the Master of Leadership program at Andrews University (Mich.).



"Peter Drucker, the father of American management, believes that 60 percent of all management problems result from faulty communication," reports Cortés. "Having a message doesn't matter if we don't communicate it clearly and motivate others.

The administration and I feel it is vital to keep our congregation informed about what is happening around our conference."

"This page will be one medium that we will use to inform you of what the Lord is doing in our Garden State," Laffit adds. "However, I need your help. Please select a team of communicators (writers and photographers) at your church that will feed me with news articles and photos of what is happening at your church, and email them to me at pastorlaffit@aol.com."

La Esperanza Impacts Community

Can you imagine the pews of your church sanctuary filled with more than 250 people and many more waiting outside to attend Wednesday prayer meeting? Can you imagine the preacher's appeal for Bible studies

after each meeting resulting in more than 30 visitors accepting the invitation? At La Esperanza church in Union City, this is a reality!

The church operates a food bank ministry on Wednesday night, which has gotten a great response. "We never imagined the impact we were going to have in our community when we began," stated Pastor Jair Pinilla. "In my opinion, the food bank ministry in North America has been an investment with mediocre results. I believe that the time has arrived for our churches to do everything with an evangelistic intent."

Under the leadership of Luz Mayi, the food bank

receives more than \$5,000 in provisions from state contributions. As a result of the church's Wednesday night prayer meetings, Personal Ministries coordinator Daniel Diaz does not have to work hard to raise interests for Bible studies. The church hired a Bible worker who

is giving more than 60 weekly Bible studies. This has resulted in more than 50 baptisms!

"By His grace, our church has made a huge impact for the kingdom of heaven," explained Pastor Pinilla.



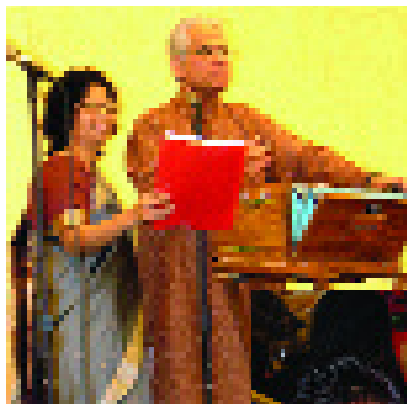
Pastor Jair Pinilla of the Hoboken Spanish, La Esperanza, and Englewood churches baptizes a new child of Christ, Tereza Dodie.

Conference Celebrates Worldwide Holiday

The New Jersey Conference recently hosted its annual Christmas banquet at the Marriot ballroom in downtown Trenton. Despite ice and sleet, more than 200 guests made it to the gala event. Guests included the families of administration, office staff, pastors, principals, teachers, Tranquil Valley Retreat Center staff, and past and present members of the Executive Committee.

The theme for the program was "Christmas Around the World," where several participants shared how the holidays are celebrated in their culture. The territories represented were India, the Philippines, Haiti, Indonesia, Korea, Brazil, Hungary, Latin America, and, of course, the United States.

Conference president José Cortés reminded attendees during his opening remarks that "Jesus is not the 'reason for the season' only at Christmastime, because, as our Savior, He is the reason for all the seasons!" The evening was concluded with the distribution of gifts to all attendees.



Vilas Urtekar, elder at the New Brunswick English church, and his wife, Vidya, represent India.



Zoraida Duany, a teacher at the Waldwick Adventist School, tells the children a Christmas story.



Carmen Soto, wife of Pastor Joel Soto, conference Personal Ministries director, represents Chile.



Pastor Rudney Bartolome, of the First Filipino church in Plainfield and Jersey City Heights English church, and his wife, Susan, represent the Philippines.

Above: Aura Garcia, conference administrative assistant to the president, enjoys dinner with her husband, Jorge Garcia, pastor of the Carteret Spanish and La Victoria Spanish churches and Somersville Spanish Company.



Young Suh, pastor of the Central New Jersey Korean church in Rahway, and his wife, Kangyee Suh, represent Korea during the conference's annual Christmas banquet.



Therezinha Barbalho, Bible worker for the Luzo-Brazilian church in Newark, makes music with spoons, but advises attendees "not to try this at home."



Conference treasurer Jim Greene and his wife, Joyce (left), join conference president José Cortés and his wife, Celia, in singing "Silent Night, Holy Night."

PHOTOS: ANDRE ASCALON & LAFFIT CORTÉS

New Jersey News is published in the Visitor by the New Jersey Conference 2160 Brunswick Ave., Trenton NJ 08648 Phone: (609) 392-7131 ■ President, José Cortés ■ Editor, Laffit Cortés www.njcsda.org

Annual Women's Retreat Impacts 200

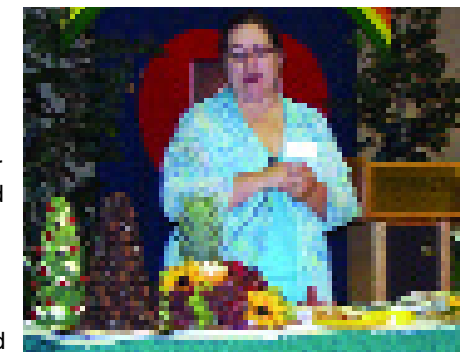
Nearly 200 women gathered at Deer Creek Resort in central Ohio for the annual Ohio Women's Retreat, and were richly blessed by the positive messages presented by guest speaker Joy Swift. Swift shared the story of the tragic death of her four children—murdered by a 14-year-old neighbor boy

whom the family had befriended and cared for—and her subsequent journey to discover the truths about life after death. She explained how she miraculously got to a point of being able to forgive the murderer. The women were inspired by Swift's honesty, scripture-oriented presentation, and positive focus.

A new event this year was a Saturday evening auction of over 100 brand new household items donated by a major retailer. As a result, more than \$1,700 was raised for the Solomon Islands tsunami relief effort. Together, with seminars on hospitality and positive thinking, it all added up to an A-plus weekend. The 2008 women's retreat is scheduled for the weekend of September 19-21.



Guest speaker Joy Swift (front, center) inspired attendees of the Ohio Women's Retreat with her hard-learned lesson of forgiveness.



Jeanine Keyes, a member of the Trinity church in Defiance, demonstrates how to make edible centerpieces during the hospitality seminar.

NEWS

Bi-Vocational Pastors Presented With Development Opportunities

Bi-vocational pastors are a significant part of the conference's staff, making up approximately 35 percent of the pastoral team. Recently, the conference started implementation of a detailed strategy to provide continuing education to these pastors in the areas of theological understanding,

spiritual commitment, ministering competence, and personal development. Conference leadership and bi-vocational pastors have covenanted to converge once each quarter for a full day of learning and growing. All



Bi-vocational pastors receive continued education and support during a recent quarterly meeting.

who are involved are finding this to be a positive and helpful learning experience.

Adventists Participate in Family Fun Day

Conference staff along with about 50 students from Mount Vernon Academy recently participated in the annual Family Fun Day hosted by the Knox County United Way. Approximately 5,000 persons attended the event held at the county fairgrounds in Mt. Vernon. The Seventh-day Adventist volunteers staffed several specialty booths, covering topics like Pathfinders and the Adventist Book Center, and activity/service areas. The volunteers were also able to recruit participants for The Amazing Race, a family/group-oriented contest first introduced at last year's fair.



Nathan French (left), Toledo church youth pastor, signs up people for The Amazing Race.

New Pastors Introduced

Marius Marton – Marton and his wife, Mary, are the new pastoral couple for the Clyde, Norwalk, and Sandusky district. Born to Hungarian parents in Romania during the Communist Regime, Pastor Marton grew up in Transylvania prior to immigrating to the United States. Although he was raised in a Seventh-day Adventist home, Marton turned his back on his religious training when he left home to attend college.

Simultaneously studying music during the day and private police training at night, he became a Certified Private Investigator and worked as such for three years in the Cleveland area, primarily hunting down drug dealers. When his parents found out what he was doing, they called him every day and encouraged him to quit, but it was his little brother who touched his heart by telling him, "I'm praying for you bro'." A few weeks later he walked into his commander's office and quit. Marton went back to church and has been serving the Lord ever since. He still hunts down



Marton Family

drug dealers, no longer with a gun but with God's Word and new hope.

Marton went on to study at Louis Torres' Mission College of Evangelism in South Dakota (now located in Oregon), graduating in 1996, and then worked as a lay evangelist and pastor in the United States, Hungary, and Romania. He is passionate about using his musical talents to lift people's hearts to heaven, and about sharing God's love with people and training church members to work effectively for God. He and Mary are proud new parents of son, Landen.

Karl Haffner – Haffner has joined the Kettering church as senior pastor. Coming from the Pacific Northwest, Haffner's previous pastoral experience includes founding the North Creek Fellowship in Bothell, Wash., and most recently serving as senior pastor of the Walla Walla (Wash.) College Church for the past 10 years. Haffner earned his Bachelor's in Theology and Business from Walla Walla College, a Master's in Divinity and Doctorate in Leadership from Andrews University (Mich.), and an MBA degree from Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma, Wash.

Haffner has authored several books, including his most recent *Pilgrim's Problems* (2004) and *Soul Matters* (2006). He has also written numerous articles for various Christian publications. His teaching style and storytelling ability make him a much-loved pastor and speaker. Haffner's family includes wife and ministry partner, Cherié, and two daughters, Lindsey (12) and Claire (7).




Haffner Family

For the upcoming Winter of Leadership Development for Ministry Leaders

Ohio Ministry University

Here for your ministry. Praying for your soul.

January 26-27, 2008
Pondcamp Lakes Hotel, Dublin, Ohio



Keynote Speaker
Stuart Tynes
Professor for Family Ministries
Lutheran University of Health,
Riverside, CA

Discover principles and strategies to lead your church to reach greater impact in ministry and mission!

For more information contact:
Ohio Conference of Seventh-day Adventists
710 397-6665, Ext. 167 or www.ohioadventist.org

Mission Ohio is published in the *Visitor* by the Ohio Conference ■ P.O. Box 1230, Mount Vernon, Ohio 43050
Phone: (740) 397-4665 ■ President, Raj Attiken
Editor, Nancy Barnett ■ www.ohioadventist.org

Grateful for the "Law of Unintended Consequences"

God has convicted our conference to take youth into ministry and mission as a strategic effort. Last summer was our second year of leading students to be literature evangelists in a conference-sponsored program. We had double the number of participants over the first year. Sometimes we do things without realizing what else may result from our actions. It's called the "law of unintended consequences."

Something wonderful happened this past fall as a consequence of the program. The junior academy-aged students in Lansdale decided to form their own student-led chapter of literature evangelists. They are going out into neighborhoods during evenings and weekends and are continuing to sell our truth-filled books and literature. God has moved upon their hearts and led them into a larger mission than we had intended with the summer program. We praise God in raising up a sense of mission in these youth.

God's tithe and your evangelism offerings help support leading more youth into mission here in Pennsylvania. Join me in praying for our youth and for eager support of the ministries that spring up as more members step forward in mission for Christ.

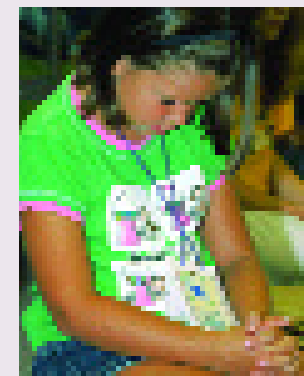


Ray Hartwell
President

Carlisle Church Introduces Real Superhero

Most of the little ones attending the Carlisle church do not know Jesus. They know about superheroes, and one little boy likened Him to Spider-Man. Through their children's church, the Carlisle congregation is changing these community children's perceptions and introducing them to what one little boy called "the real superhero."

Each Sabbath morning, a member leaves the church in a bus and brings back approximately 30-40 children. They get to enjoy music, prayer, skits, a Bible lesson, snacks, crafts, stories, and nature time. More importantly, they learn about Jesus as their "forever friend."



Community children who have never held a Bible, said a prayer, or known Jesus are learning about His love as a result of the Carlisle children's church ministry.

"The children enjoy every part of the program, and it is rewarding to watch their excitement as they learn the books of the Bible and master memory verses," shared one staff member. "During the first week, one of our little boys was so excited because he actually read from 'a real Bible.'"

There have also been challenges. Some of the

children require one-on-one care to help them fit in and enjoy the program. Staff members were initially concerned they would not have enough help to work with the children, but God brought volunteers ranging from preteens to more seasoned gray-haired members. Each brings a special set of talents and a willingness to show Jesus to the children. God's hand is evidently working. Just when the leaders are feeling overworked or tired of the week-to-week responsibility, a child gives their heart to God or a little boy who spent all morning complaining about being there raises his hand because he wants to be in heaven.

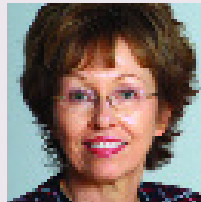
"We are a small church but God has called us to do a special project for Him," said one member who believes this is a ministry from God. "Our sanctuary may seem empty, but our basement is full of children learning about Jesus."—Amy Swett



Each Sabbath morning, community children are transported to the Carlisle church where they get the chance to learn about salvation.

Women Invited to Learn About Grace

In loving ways, God threads together joys, trials, friends, family, experiences, and all components of our lives. Then, through grace, He creates something beautiful in and through each of us. Women are invited to learn more about these "Patterns of Grace" at this year's Spring Women's Retreat. The event is being held March 14-16 at the Holiday Inn Harrisburg-Hershey in Grantville. Carla Baker (right), Women's Ministries director for the North American Division, will be the featured speaker. The weekend will include eight different breakout sessions on a variety of topics including God's love languages, family finances, menopause and hormones, and a seminar specifically for young women about understanding boys. The hotel is seven minutes from Hershey's Chocolate World, Hershey Gardens, and outlet shopping. Download an application at www.paconference.org on the Women's Ministries page.



Members From Five States Unite to Build Everett Church

The Everett congregation has dreamt of a new building for 12 years. They had outgrown their current facility, with limited classroom space and inadequate parking. The Lord provided, and they purchased land between Everett and Bedford. This location will enable the church to reach out to both communities, and places them on land with a developing community center and future medical facilities.

Volunteers started arriving before sunrise while ladies served breakfast under a tent. As dawn peaked, people moved toward the worksite and the Everett church's Arise and Build big day got underway. About 175 people from across Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland, New York, and Virginia converged to build the new house of worship.

Everett church pastor Bob Snyder documented the day by

taking hundreds of pictures. Retired Everett pastor Vince Dolan was also excited to help and to witness the realization of a long-time dream. By mid-morning, outside walls were in place, trusses were being set up, and windows installed. Workers of all ages—teens to 80s—worked tirelessly, doing whatever they could. A local television station and newspaper both covered the story.



By the end of the day, all outside walls were in place, trusses were being set, and the church was taking shape.



Volunteers from across Pennsylvania and four other states converged to help raise the walls—and much more—of the new Everett church.

Once finished, the 10,600 sq. ft. church will feature sanctuary seating for 175 with a stained glass window etched with a dove, a fellowship hall, classrooms, a vaulted ceiling in the foyer, and a lighted steeple. Although it is not finished, the work done by volunteers gives the church an enormous head start and saved them a lot of money. Members, volunteers, and contractors will continue working on the church in the coming months until it is completed.



Young and old, skilled and unskilled, all found ways to help.

What's happening

January 11-13 Community-based Ministries Training Harrisburg

25-27 Pathfinder Winter Retreat, Laurel Lake Camp

February 22-24 Marriage Retreat Bethlehem

23 Pathfinder Bible Achievement, Conference Level

29-Mar. 2 Equipping University Harrisburg

Pennsylvania Pen is published in the Visitor by the Pennsylvania Conference 720 Museum Road, Reading, PA 19611 Phone: (610) 374-8331, ext. 210 President, Ray Hartwell ■ Editor, Tamyra Horst ■ www.paconference.org

Washington Spanish Celebrates Quinquagenary

In 1953 F.E. Wall, president of Washington Missionary College (now Columbia Union College) in Takoma Park, Md., never imagined that his decision to teach a Spanish-speaking Sabbath School class in the balcony of the campus' Sligo church would have resulted in the formation of the Potomac Conference's first Hispanic church. On September 14, 1957, with a total of 46 members, the Washington Spanish church was organized at 5th and F Streets, NW, just a block away from the Verizon Center. News of this event appeared on the front page of the Religion section of that day's *Washington Post*. The heading read, "Spanish Organize Seventh-Day Adventist Church."

"For 50 years, this congregation has been telling this community, 'Jesus loves you,' 'God will forgive you,'" said Don Schneider, president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America, who spoke at the anniversary event. "But all around us are people who still haven't heard this message, and we must tell them."

"This is why we must be ready to take the gospel to a world that has changed so much," stated Homero Salazar, senior pastor at Washington Spanish church now located in Silver Spring, Md. He encouraged his members to remember that "we want to reach a sublime goal: To live with Jesus for eternity."—Hearly G. Mayr and Alix Echeverri



NAD president Don Schneider (right) congratulates Pastor Homero Salazar and the Washington Spanish church for 50 years of service in the nation's capital.

5,000 Attend Caravan of Hope Crusade

Potomac Conference Hispanic Ministries recently launched Caravan of Hope, a four-day intensive evangelistic outreach, in the Washington metro area. Speaker Alejandro Bullon (right), international evangelist and ministerial director of the South American Division, embarked on this marathon soul-reaping campaign, beginning at the Southern Asian church in Silver Spring, Md. There he shared the good news of the second coming to approximately 800 people.



Several people respond to a call for baptism at the Southern Asian church during the Caravan of Hope crusade.

On Sabbath morning, Bullon preached to a full house at the Washington Spanish church in Silver Spring, Md. Several hours later, he addressed approximately 500 people at the Capital Spanish church in Washington, D.C. The meetings continued Sabbath afternoon at the Takoma Park (Md.) church where more than 1,000 members and visitors attended. Pastor Bullon later returned to the Southern Asian church on Sabbath evening where more than 1,200 people exceeded its capacity. The meetings continued on Sunday at a high school in Manassas, Va., with about 800 guests, and concluded Monday at an elementary school in Alexandria, Va., with 500 attendees.

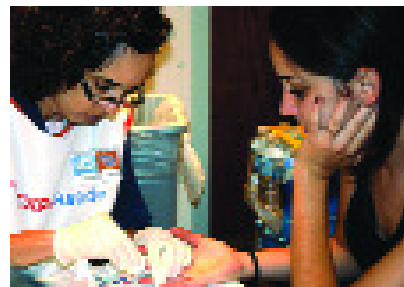
At the conclusion of the caravan, more than 170 people were baptized and approximately 400 responded to the call and will continue with Bible studies. As of November 2007, there were 810 baptisms within Potomac's Hispanic churches, and seven new groups started.



500 Attend Brazilian Youth Evangelism Congress

More than 500 Brazilian youth from across the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic states—and as far away as the West Coast—recently gathered at Takoma Academy in Takoma Park, Md., for the Brazilian Youth Evangelism Congress. The weekend of prayer, praise, and testimony was themed “Reach Out Your Hand.”

Williams Costa Jr., Media Services director for the worldwide Seventh-day Adventist Church, delivered the Sabbath message and urged the youth to explore



More than 60 Brazilian youth took advantage of the health services offered at the conclusion of the Brazilian Youth Evangelism Congress.

Brazil’s culture of tolerance: practice racial diversity and social inclusion in order to witness locally. Costa told the moving story of Jeffrey—an Indonesian Islamist who miraculously converted to Adventism—who

was later brought to the platform.

The congress concluded with a series of health education events. About 200 people, 65 with no religious affiliation, attended the events held at various locations. Fifty volunteers from three local Brazilian churches, including 12 health professionals, offered many valuable services ranging from flu shots to body mass indexing.

Pastor David Barrozo of the Washington Brazilian church in College Park, Md., and the conference’s Youth Ministries department sponsored the event. Many other volunteers from neighboring conferences also helped make the weekend a success.—Jesse Nascimento



Left to right: Artur Luiz, Elyssa Tassolo, and Kessilyn Storch, members of the Washington Brazilian church’s youth choir, enjoy the congress.

NEWS

Seabrook Launches Domestic Abuse Ministry

Mildred Mohammad (below), ex-wife of John Mohammad—the “D.C. Sniper”—recently shared her story of domestic abuse with members and visitors of the Seabrook church in Lanham, Md. She was there to help the church launch its new Steps to Restoration ministry, a toll-free help line for domestic abuse survivors. Larry Jones, ministry co-founder, hoped Mohammad’s story might motivate people struggling with domestic abuse to seek help.

Steps to Restoration—(866) 979-STEPS (7837)—directs domestic abuse survivors in the Washington, D.C., metro area to organizations and resources set up to meet their short- and long-term needs. “The ministry provides an opportunity to make a difference in people’s lives where they hurt,” explains Jones. “Many Christians



struggle with openness when it comes to others and God. They hold on to the secrets and pain, and they only develop into a shadow of what God would have them to become,” he adds. For more information, call Jones or ministry co-founder Leslie Bridges at (301) 577-6342.—Tracey Dortch

Beltsville Member Directs Nonagenarian Choir

Beltsville (Md.) church member Carol Thomas (pictured, front) is activities director at Elternhaus, an assisted living facility in Dayton, Md. Wanting the elderly to still feel productive, Thomas formed a bell choir, which now boasts 20 members who are predominantly Seventh-day Adventists. Participants—with an average age of 92—were thrilled to realize they could learn to make music and be a blessing to others.

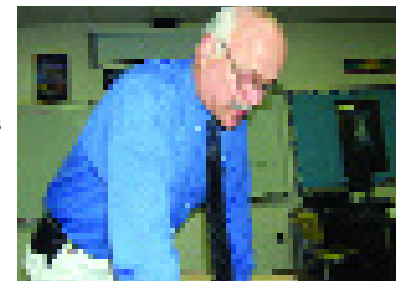
The bell choir plays at Elternhaus on Tuesday afternoons and has been invited to perform at many area churches, which is very rewarding. Thomas reports that it is quite a logistical challenge to travel with wheelchairs, walkers, and canes, but the joy they exude is well worth the effort. “If you have an elderly parent or friend who is discouraged because they don’t think they can learn anything new, encourage them,” Thomas remarks.—Gwen Ashley



Potomac People is published in the Visitor by the Potomac Conference ■ 606 Greenville Ave., Staunton, VA 24401 Phone: (540) 886-0771 ■ www.pcsda.org ■ President, Bill Miller Editor, Don Wood

Students Blessed by Serving

More than 120 Shenandoah Valley Academy (SVA) students and staff recently traveled to the Washington, D.C., area on a Sabbath morning, eager to share their talents. The Music and Religion departments joined forces to lead an uplifting Sabbath worship service at the Beltsville (Md.) church. Under the direction of Marc Elysee and Melissa Anderson, the SVA orchestra and Shenandoans prepared the church family for worship by leading praise time, and presented



several other pieces throughout the program. The school’s brass ensemble, under the direction of Robert Van Ornam, and the SVA Handbells, directed by Cynthia Coston, both performed several numbers that filled the church with instrumental praise.

The FLAG (Fun Learning About God) Team, organized by SVA chaplain Tim Harley (above), per-



Sophomore Tina Hartley (left) wrote the skit performed by classmates, like sophomore Janice Cosme, during SVA’s recent student-led worship service at the Beltsville (Md.) church.

formed a skit for the children’s story. “This was a highlight of the day for me,” said sophomore Janice Cosme. “The kids were really engaged in the story.”

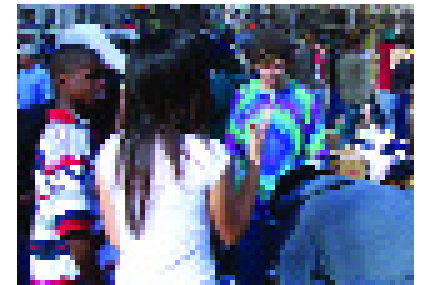
SVA chaplain Rebecca Lee spoke on Deuteronomy 23, emphasizing the

importance of a life of obedience and the blessings that come as a result.

Juniors Matt Frost and Chelsea Glass (right) performed a skit to complement



Lee’s talk. “I felt the sermon really touched people,” said sophomore Emily Myers, “and the congregation expressed how much they enjoyed the music.”



Beltsville church ladies fed a record crowd of visiting students and members and then sent the leftovers along with the other food and clothing SVA brought for the afternoon homeless ministry. Several dozen students from other area churches joined SVA for the afternoon visitation to homeless and nursing home residents.

That afternoon students served more than 150 homeless with hot food and clothing. Students got

names and Christmas wishes from many of the recipients, as they will be adopting a homeless person for the holiday. Last month the students returned with a gift for their adoptee.

Students also found joy in sharing with residents of two area nursing homes. Juniors Cassie Wilson and Taylor Turner (above) had fun singing “We are Soldiers in the Army” and inserting each resident’s name into the opening phrase. “The involvement with individual residents was really great,” said Taylor.

As one of the nine character traits SVA’s students are taught, service was demonstrated to return blessings back to the givers. “I liked telling the people in the park that my school was providing food and clothing for them,” said senior Nick Jones. “Their response was one of happiness, and it made me feel good.”

Happenings is published in the Visitor by Shenandoah Valley Academy ■ 234 West Lee Highway, New Market, VA 22844 Phone: (540) 740-3161 ■ Principal, Dale Twomley, PhD E-mail: twomleyd@sva-va.org ■ www.youracademy.org

www.ta.edu TATODAY

News you can use from Takoma Academy

JANUARY 2008

Are We Hastening the Lord's Return?

A New Year has begun. Many of us would never have believed that we would still be on this Earth in 2008. But, here we are! Is it because we haven't "spread the message" to all? I have to ask myself, what I am doing—on a consistent basis—to hasten the Lord's return? I am ready to go home. I am ready to be in a much better place where there is no sickness, death, or separation. I long to be in a place where there will be pure love, perfect friendship, and continual fellowship of all races, cultures, and nationalities. What will you do to hasten Jesus' return?



C. Dunbar Henri
Principal

Visitors Experience TA Life During Academy Day

Academy students from seven Seventh-day Adventist schools around the Washington, D.C., area came en masse recently to Takoma Academy (TA) for its annual Academy Day. There were also guests from local schools who joined in the special day.

Debbie Gessel, an eighth-grade teacher at Beltsville (Md.) Adventist School, and Cavel Melbourne, vice principal at John Nevins Andrews School in Takoma Park, Md., stated why they appreciated the information that was shared. "It wasn't just 'rah, rah TA,'" said Melbourne. "Specific information was shared so that the guests could make a knowledgeable decision about high school."

Eighth-graders from many of the same schools will return April 11 to participate in TA's Amazing Race. This is a time of physical activity where the students "compete" in various fun activities.

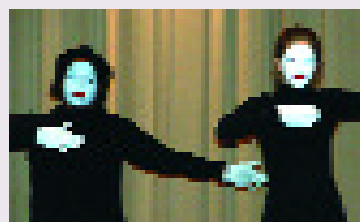
Academy Day guests get to enjoy TA's high-tech Graphics Design classroom.



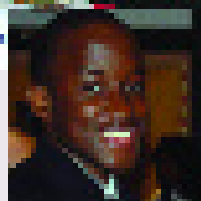
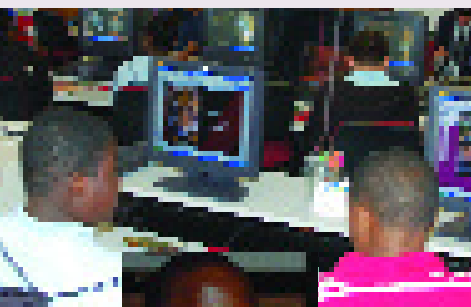
Kelsea Malin ('11) and Whitney Hucks ('11) were happy to share their volleyball skills with Academy Day guests.



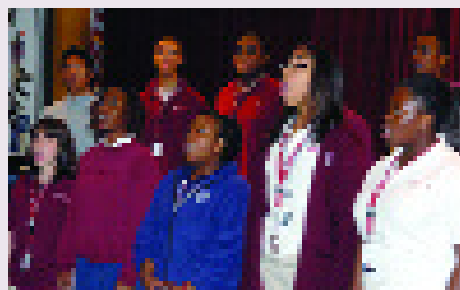
Left to right: Jalisa Cox ('09), Sydney Blount ('08) and Joseph Doukmetzian ('09) share information about TA's program with Academy Day guests.



D'Anna Hines ('09) and Sara Scur ('11) share a message in mime.



TA graduate David Mugerwa ('02) was happy to return to his alma mater, this time as an Olney (Md.) Adventist Preparatory School eighth-grade teacher.



TA's Camerata shares their talents with potential students.

Calendar

January

- 9 Academic Awards Assembly
- 17, 18 Semester Exams
- 23 Martin Luther King, Jr. Assembly
- 28 Finance Committee and Board Meeting
- 29 Back to School Night

TA Today is published in the Visitor by Takoma Academy ■ 8120 Carroll Ave., Takoma Park, MD 20912 ■ Phone: (301) 434-4700
Principal, C. Dunbar Henri ■ www.ta.edu



HAVE YOU HEARD OF THE COLUMBIA UNION REVOLVING FUND?

Revolving Fund Loan Program

CURF lends money to Adventist churches, schools and other eligible institutions throughout the Columbia Union. Borrowers generally use the proceeds to build, acquire, renovate and improve capital projects.

Revolving Fund Note Program

CURF raises cash for its Loan program by offering Notes to Adventist investors. Adventist members, churches or organizations may purchase CURF Notes. CURF offers the Notes for sale only in Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia and the District of Columbia. Over 1200 investors hold some \$73.5 million in CURF Notes throughout the Columbia Union.

Please review the Offering Circular for additional information about CURF and risks associated with the purchase of CURF Notes.

This advertisement does not constitute an offer to sell nor a solicitation of an offer to buy any of the securities. Any offer is made only by the Offering Circular. No one should consider any investment in CURF Notes other than by careful reference to the Offering Circular. Neither FDIC, SIPC nor any other governmental agency guarantees or insures repayment of CURF Notes.

2007 Note Offering

\$45,000,000

90-Day Demand Promissory Notes

Variable Interest Rates

For information call 410-715-0328

Fax 301-596-6781



CROSSROADS ADVENTIST SCHOOL

is a Christian elementary Pre-K to 8th-grade school in Ellicott City, Md., providing quality education. We promote character building through a biblically centered curriculum, competence through academic excellence, and creativity through various venues of artistic expression. Join us! Karohn Young, principal; contact: (866) 715-7752; CASPrincipal@yahoo.com.

GOOD VITAMINS ONLINE:

Quality vitamins and herbs help to keep you healthy. We use these for our patients. You can buy them direct online at www.VitaminsAndGoodHealth.com. Many vegetarian formulas. See the Doctor's Top 12 List online. Email your questions to: DrCRolland@Hotmail.com or call (814) 734-4848.

PACIFIC PRESS PUBLISHING ASSOCIATION

is seeking copies of audio versions of classic Adventist stories as told by our church's greatest storytellers. We are looking for "hidden gems," recordings not currently available. We can convert records, reel-to-reel tapes, cassettes, etc. Do not send recordings until requested. For more information, call Warren Riter at (208) 465-2530.

EVANGELISM THROUGH TECHNOLOGY:

Spread the message of God's love via the world wide web. Join churches from around the globe. Experience PondTV Media, video-on-demand and podcasting. Try our video/audio streaming services for free. 30-day free trial. For more information, contact urick@churchpond.com or visit www.churchpond.com/service.

REAL ESTATE

WWW.CHRISTIANHOME FINDERS.COM

(formerly Adventist-Realtor.com) is a nationwide real estate referral service, assisting church members and employees in the process of buying or selling homes. We have a network of nearly 300 Seventh-day Adventist realtors ready to serve you. Call Linda Dayen at (888) 582-2888, or go to www.ChristianHomeFinders.com. More realtors are welcome!

MOVING TO COLLEGE DALE/ CHATTANOOGA/OOLTEWAH?

An Adventist realtor with over 17 years of experience will be delighted to assist you in this major real estate investment. This area has a lot to offer. For a free consultation, call Sam Nkana at (423) 503-5286; email asnkana@comcast.net.

PHYLLIS NEWMAN Realtor, GRI, CRS

(800) 586 4669

phyllisnewman@realtor.com

www.MDsmartbuy.com
www.homesdatabase.com/realestate

Website allows you to search MD MLS database by price, zip code, and have new listings emailed to you.

Serving Maryland

Ask about our buy/sell program: Special pricing when you both buy and sell from Phyllis.

Recipient of Re/max Hall of Fame and Re/max Platinum Sales awards

Re/max Realty Centre, Inc. (301) 774-5900

Selling Maryland homes since 1987.

THE CARRENO CONNECTION Real Estate Team

Thinking of Buying, Selling, or Investing?

Making an informed decision begins with education.

Come to our free, one-hour sessions on various topics, such as "Prepare Your Home to Sell,"

"The Best Time to Buy," "Investing in Real Estate," and more.

Call us or visit our website for this month's topic, date, and location. (Space is limited.)

Enjoy the benefits of learning from our award-winning team.

Mel & Lisa Carreno Keller Williams Realty

(240) 485-0232

SOLD@CarrenoTeam.com

www.CarrenoTeam.com

FOR SALE: DEEP CREEK WATERFRONT CHALET.

Completely furnished, 3-level home with central AC/heat. Two decks, full kitchen, DR, LR, 5BR, 3BA, sleeps 12. Family room with wet bar and pool table; adjoining hot tub on deck under roof. Two gas fireplaces. Big sandbox near lake; boat dock. Plenty of trees, wild flowers, chipmunks, birds (no bears)! Paved parking. Year-round access to eateries, state parks, summer and winter entertainment. Only 3-5 miles to Wal-Mart Supercenter and Adventist church. Use this chalet all season for personal enjoyment, investment, or rental. Call Don (301) 922-5757 or Tim at Railey Realty (301) 501-6252.

SABBATICAL SUITES:

Completely furnished turn-key apartment in quiet New England home on peaceful farm at edge of woods near ocean. Peaceful solitude for time to commune with God, nature, and your own soul. Available for a few days to a few months. Call (207) 729-3115 for brochure and rates.

MOVING TO THE SHENANDOAH VALLEY?

Beautiful 3BR, 2BA, 1-level brick home, with 1-car garage in Luray, Va. Less than one mile from Adventist church, seven miles from Stanley Adventist Elementary School, and 15 miles from Shenandoah Valley Academy and Shenandoah Valley Adventist Elementary in New Market. For more information, email glennndarr@hotmail.com.

SOUTHERN COUNTRY LIVING AT JOHNSTON ESTATES:

92 acres to develop; 130-plus lots and homes for sale. Lots priced at \$45K-plus. Spec. and owner homes available. All utilities, low taxes, flexible financing. Four miles from Southern Adventist University. Adventist churches, schools, and ABC available. 15 minutes to mall and stores. Moderate climate, great people, and great place to live. Call David Job, (770) 601-6356 or Herman Harp, (423) 315-2661. No Saturday calls.

SERVICES

MARYLAND ADVENTIST PODIATRIST:

Dr. Scott Nutter—highly trained, experienced, and board certified—is available in several locations to help your foot/ankle problems, including arthritis, heel pain, spurs, diabetes, callouses, ingrown nails, sprains, fractures, warts, bunions, etc. Surgery, if it is needed, at Adventist hospitals. Laurel-(301) 317-6800; Greenbelt-(301) 345-5200; or Columbia-(410) 531-6350.

FOOT AND ANKLE MEDICAL OFFICE:

Premier Podiatric Services is eager to help you get "back on your feet." Dr. Rhonda Nelson, an Adventist podiatrist, seeks to provide you with exceptional podiatric care while relieving your foot and ankle discomfort. Flexible office hours are available. Office location: Largo, Md. (301) 773-1199.

MOVING?

Special Adventist rates and guarantees! Air Van north American is a nationwide mover. Whether you're moving a few items or a truckload, don't move before calling Air Van. It will assure peace of mind and a cost-effective move. Please call (800) 525-1177 to speak with a representative.

ELTERNHAUS:

Adventist Care for Adventist Seniors. The New Year! We at Elternhaus resolve to give the best Christian care to our residents: country living, personal care, help with medications, transport to the best physicians, supervision and assessment by our RNs, great vegetarian food too! Call Diane at (410) 707-7071.

Successful Computer Dating Exclusively for Adventists Since 1974

ADVENTIST CONTACT

P.O. Box 5419
TAKOMA PARK, MD 20913
(301) 589-4440

QUIET OAKS ASSISTED LIVING

A licensed 11-room home located 45 minutes from Southern Adventist Univ. in Collegedale, Tenn., on a country estate.

Seniors can enjoy the four seasons, walking trails, many gardens, a heart-healthy menu, and social activities.

Reasonable monthly rates include: laundry/housekeeping services, medication monitoring, transportation to four local Adventist churches and other excursions.

Contact: Irving or Elle Westney (301) 366-5112 (leave message)

or email: iewest@aol.com

ARE YOU MOVING SOON?

Before you rent a U-Haul and do it yourself, check our price and save yourself the hassle. Plan ahead now and reserve a time slot. Fast, direct, and economical. Contact Gary Erhard, Erhard Furniture, 6681 U.S. 31, Berrien Springs, Mich.; phone (269) 471-7366 evenings from 8-11 p.m, EST.

MOVE WITH AN AWARD-WINNING AGENCY.

Apex Moving & Storage partners with the General Conference to provide quality moves at a discounted rate. Call us for your relocation needs. Adventist beliefs uncompromised. Call Marcy Danté at (800) 766-1902 for a free estimate. Visit us at www.apexmoving.com/adventist.

SINGLE AND OVER 40?

The only interracial group exclusively for all singles over 40. Stay home and meet new friends in the United States, with a pen pal monthly newsletter of members and album. For information, send a large, self-addressed, stamped envelope to ASO40 or Ebony Choice ASO40, 2747 Nonpareil, Sutherlin, OR 97479.

MARYLAND ADVENTIST DENTIST:

David Lee, DDS, PA, has a comprehensive dental office in Silver Spring and Ellicott City, Md. He is excellent with children and adults, and is highly trained in cosmetic dentistry and implants. For appointments call: Silver Spring-(301) 649-5001; Ellicott City-(410) 461-6655. Mention this ad and receive 10% discount on all services (excludes third-party payers). Our office is a participating provider with Adventist Risk Management.

WWW.CHRISTIANSINGLES DATING.COM

Free 14-day trial! Join thousands and thousands of active Adventist singles online. Free chat, search, detailed profiles, and match notifications! Date chat, two-way compatibility match, 10 photos, and confidential online mail. Witnessing opportunities to the world through articles, friendships, chat, and forums. Since 1993. Adventist owners. Thousands of successful matches. Top ranked.

TRAVEL/VACATION

RVS!

Adventist-owned and -operated RV dealership has been helping Adventists for over 30 years. Huge inventory. Courtesy airport pickup and on-site hookups. Satisfied Adventist customer list available. Call toll-free (888) 933-9300. Lee's RV City, Oklahoma City. Visit our website at www.leesrv.com or email LeesRVs@aol.com.

2008 OGDEN ADVENTIST TOURS:

Norwegian Coastal Cruise, July 7-22. Including four days in Bergen area and a 12-day coastal cruise from Bergen to Russian Border and back, visiting Trondheim, Lofoten Islands, North Cape, Hammerfest, and more. Rhine River Christmas Markets Dec. 4-14, 2008, visiting Basel, Strasbourg, Heidelberg, Koblenz, and Cologne. Contact Merlene Ogden (269) 471-3781, ogden@andrews.edu, or Judy Zimmerman, zim41634@aol.com.

COME HOME TO FLORIDA LIVING!

Senior community near Orlando; Adventist lifestyle. Ground-level apartments and rooms for rent. Transportation and housekeeping available. Church on site; pool; shopping/activities. Website: www.floralivingretirement.com. Vacationers: Motel rooms for \$30, \$40, or \$75/per night, fully furnished. Call Jackie: (800) 729-8017; (407) 862-2646, ext. 24; email: JackieFLRC@aol.com.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SLIGO ADVENTIST SCHOOL CELEBRATES ITS 90TH ANNIVERSARY,

May 17-18. Sligo Adventist School faculty and constituency invite former students and faculty to join them on May 17, to celebrate our 90th Anniversary. Dr. William Loveless, former Sligo pastor, will speak for the 11 o'clock service. Look for further details later on our website, www.sligoadventist-school.org. Let us know where you are, what you are doing, and if you can join us. Be sure to send special memories and/or questions to Ardyce Griswold at ardyceg@mypotomac.org.

MUSIC FOR GENERAL CONFERENCE SESSION

in Atlanta, Ga., June 23-July 3, 2010. Needed: high-quality sacred music from vocalists, instrumentalists, choirs, ensembles, etc. Please visit www.gcsession.org for details and application. Send all requested materials to NAD Music Coordinator, Attn: Ron Christman, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904-6600. Deadline for application: January 31, 2009.

OBITUARIES

ACKERMAN, Orva L., born October 25, 1921, in Kantner, Pa.; died April 8, 2007, in York, Pa. He was a member of the York church. Orva served for over 30 years in plant management at Columbia Union College in Takoma Park, Md., at the Review & Herald Publishing Assn., and at the

	Jan 11	Jan 18	Jan 25	Feb 1	Feb 8
Baltimore	5:03	5:10	5:18	5:26	5:35
Cincinnati	5:35	5:42	5:50	5:58	6:07
Cleveland	5:17	5:25	5:33	5:42	5:51
Columbus	5:26	5:34	5:42	5:51	5:59
Jersey City	4:49	4:56	5:05	5:13	5:22
Norfolk	5:08	5:15	5:22	5:30	5:37
Parkersburg	5:23	5:30	5:38	5:46	5:54
Philadelphia	4:55	5:03	5:11	5:19	5:28
Pittsburgh	5:13	5:21	5:29	5:38	5:46
Reading	4:57	5:05	5:13	5:22	5:30
Richmond	5:11	5:18	5:26	5:33	5:41
Roanoke	5:22	5:29	5:36	5:44	5:52
Toledo	5:24	5:32	5:40	5:49	5:58
Trenton	4:53	5:01	5:09	5:17	5:26
Wash., D.C.	5:06	5:13	5:21	5:29	5:37

SUNSET CALENDAR

General Conference, from which he retired in 1986. He is survived by his wife, Edith Ackerman of York, Pa., and his daughter, Brenda-Jean Lamkelde of Dover, Pa.

BANGE, Michael Wesley, born February 16, 1957, in Hanover, Pa.; died May 12, 2007, in Lower Windsor Twp. Pa., from a motorcycle accident. He was a well-loved member of the Hanover (Pa.) church. He was the husband of Jonelet Bange and father of Luke and LeeAnn Bange. Michael was a graduate of Blue Mountain Academy. He was a truck driver for Wolf Distributing Company. In addition to his wife and children, he is survived by his parents, Sam J. and Peggy J. Bange; two brothers, Ben and Jon Bange; and one sister, Sue Smith; as well as many nieces and nephews.

BREETZ, Donald W., born May 25, 1924, in Campbell, Ohio; died October 13, 2007, in Youngstown, Ohio. He was a member of the Evergreen church in Boardman, Ohio, where he served as head deacon for many years. Survivors: his wife, Mavis Thorpe Breetz of Campbell, Ohio; his daughter, Elizabeth (Andrew) Bennett of Campbell; his son Donald W. (Janet) Jr. of Youngstown, Ohio; four grandchildren, Tiffany and Amanda Bennett of Campbell, and Joshua and

Adventist Health

Use Medicare to share God's love by providing physical, mental and spiritual healing

Physician Services
Imaging
Hospital
Nursing
Rehabilitation

Live the Dream
Retirement Options available

For more information, visit www.adventisthealth.org

Jonah Breetz of Youngstown. He was preceded in death by his parents, William L. and Elizabeth (Strahorn) Breetz, and his son David Breetz.

DRUMMOND, Virginia C. (Shifflett), born July 15, 1916, in Rockingham County, Va.; died October 20, 2007, at Living Waters Assisted Living in Timberville, Va. She was a member of the New Market (Va.) church. Surviving are a son, William R. "Bill" Shifflett; a daughter, Joann Shirkey; five stepchildren: Leon Shifflett, Marie Rush, Gary Drummond, Naylor Drummond, Jr., and Dwight Drummond, Jr.; nine grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren; and a number of stepgrandchildren and stepgreat-grandchildren.

FLOWER, Florence M., born September 25, 1919, in Baltimore, Md.; died August 3, 2007, in Glen Burnie, Md. She was a charter member of the Brooklyn (Md.) church, the church treasurer for 50 years, and also an elder, Sabbath School teacher and leader. She worked for many years in the church's hot lunch program, was a top ingatherer, and faithfully supported her church until her death. Survivors: daughters, Sharon Currie of Glen Burnie, and Jean (Cliff) Dawson of Pasadena, Md.; sons David (Sheri) Flower and Daniel (Lori) Flower, both of Pasadena; and six grandchildren: Rachelle Currie of Asheville, N.C., Erin Dawson of Elkridge, Md., Ryan Flower of Glen Burnie, Erika Flower of Charlotte, N.C.

HERSMAN, Lewanna, born April 20, 1920, in Buckhannon, W.Va.; died August 5, 2007, in Yaunhstown, Ohio. She was a member of the Evergreen church in Boardman, Ohio. She loved gardening and missionary work for the church. Survivors: daughters, Diane (George) Berrich of Struthers, Ohio, and Debra (Walt) Walker of New Middletown, Ohio; sons, David (Vicky) Hersman of Moreland Hills, Ohio, and Donald (Bernice) Hersman of Coral Springs, Fla.; grandchildren Brad Hersman, Brian Hersman, Laurie Mull, Lisa Iskacs, Kris Walch, Wes Walker, and Wendy Walker; and great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her parents and her Aunt Grace Kidd, who raised her.

HITCH, Geneva, born February 22, 1907, in Baltimore, Md.; died June 19, 2007, in Ellicott City, Md. She was a member of the Emmanuel-Brinklow church in Ashton, Md. As an active member of her church, she was very involved with their 50-Plus organization and was a former deaconess. A wonderful example of entrepreneurship, she started her own business in 1935—Gene's Beauty Salon—after attending cosmetology school. Later, in 1985, she opened a travel agency, Gene's Pleasure Tours. A world traveler, she's visited every continent except South America. Survivors: her daughter, Marsha Hitch of Baltimore, Md.; four granddaughters: Kecia Hitch, Monique Hitch, Tamiko Hitch, and Jenne (Kevin) Cooper, all of Baltimore, Md.; two great-grandchildren, Alexis Cornish and Zachary Cooper; and several nieces.

LEWIS, Iona Morgan, born October 11, 1924, in Northumberland, Pa.; died June 20, 2007, in Northumberland, Pa. She was a member of the Northumberland church. She served the church as an administrative assistant in the Nebraska Conf. office (1967-69) and in the Central Union Conference (1971-75), and supported her husband, Pastor G. William Morgan (died in 1986), during 33 years of ministry. She is survived by her sons, Dr. Clifford Morgan of Loma Linda, Calif., Dr. Timothy Morgan of Omaha, Neb., and Dr. Douglas Morgan of Silver Spring, Md.; a grandson, Joseph Morgan of Omaha, Neb., and a grand-daughter, Michaela Morgan of Omaha, Neb.

LOOSE, Ivan Ray, born April 2, 1928; died September 5, 2007, in Reading, Pa. He was a member of the Reading Kenhorst Blvd. church in Reading. He is survived by his wife, Sylvia, and his children, Carol and David.

GUAY, Iva Pearl (Wells), born June 8, 1909, in Oshawa, Ontario, Canada; died Sept. 2, 2007, at Howard County Hospital, Columbia, Md. She was an active member of Silgo church in Takoma Park, Md., for many years, where she served as a deaconess, assistant leader for children's Sabbath School, and assisted with the "Meals on Wheels" program. Iva was also a substantial contributor to the set up of the Life Line Call System. She attended Oshawa Missionary College for her second-

ary education, and graduated from Columbia Union College in Takoma Park, Md., with a nursing degree. She moved to Takoma Park in 1927. She met Stuart Guay in Canada, and they married in 1930. She worked for 27 years at Washington Adventist Hospital in Takoma Park, becoming a nursing supervisor. Survivors: a daughter, Cheryl Guay of Linthicum, Md.; and a number of nieces and nephews living in Canada. Her husband, Stuart, preceded her in death in 1963.

MERICKEL, Elmer "Bud," born September 4, 1928, in Mankato, Minn.; died October 9, 2007, at Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn. He was a member of the Wooster (Ohio) church. He was the son of Horace and Violet Merickel and grew up on a farm near Mapleton, Minn. He married Wilma Conquest in 1939. He attended Maplewood Academy in Minnesota, Union College in Lincoln, Neb., and acquired his Doctorate in Chiropractic Medicine from Palmer College of Chiropractic in Davenport, Iowa. He practiced in the Ashland, Minn., area for 20 years and was also a local developer. Survivors: his wife, Wilma; his son, Dr. Michael (Diane) Merickel of Georgetown, Tenn.; his daughter, Echo (Phil) Wickizer of Shawnee, Kansas; four grandchildren; one great-grandchild; a brother, Dr. Dwain Merickel; and a sister, Mary Lou Wiswell.

VISITOR SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

Would you like to receive the *Visitor*, or are you on the mailing list but have an address change?

Please email or call toll-free:

visitorlist@columbiaunion.net
(888) 4-VISITOR

or mail to:

Columbia Union Visitor Subscription Services
5427 Twin Knolls Road
Columbia, MD 21045

Please include the name of the conference where your membership is held and your telephone number. If an address change, also send your previous address as listed on the magazine label.

If you live outside the Columbia Union Conference territory, a year's subscription (12 issues) is \$15.

Please make your check payable to:

Columbia Union Visitor
and mail to the above address.

Celeste Ryan Blyden ■ Editor
LaVerne Henderson ■ Associate Editor for News & Features
Beth Michaels ■ Associate Editor for Newsletters
Kelly Butler Coe ■ Art Director & Designer
Sandra Jones ■ Copy Editor & Bulletin Board Editor

PUBLISHING BOARD: Dave Weigley (chair), Celeste Ryan Blyden (secretary), Raj Attiken, Seth Bardu, Larry Boggess, Charles Cheatham, José Cortés, J. Neville Harcombe, Ray Hartwell, James L. Lewis, Bill Miller, Rob Vandeman

MISSION STATEMENT
The *Visitor* provides news and information, resources for effective ministry, and insight on issues with a spiritual focus to help people celebrate God's transforming grace in preparation for His return.

COLUMBIA UNION CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS ■ 5427 Twin Knolls Road, Columbia, MD 21045 (888) 4-VISITOR ■ <http://www.columbiaunion.org>

Free to Columbia Union members. All others—\$15 per year.

COLUMBIA UNION CONFERENCE

Dave Weigley	President
J. Neville Harcombe	Executive Secretary
Seth Bardu	Treasurer
Frank Bondurant	Vice President/Ministry Development
Hamlet Canosa	Vice President/Education
Walter Carson	Vice President/General Counsel
Celeste Ryan Blyden	Asst. to the President/Communication
Rubén Ramos	Asst. to the President/Multilingual Min.
Harold Greene	Information Technology
Curtis Boore	Plant Services
Walter Carson	Trust Services/PARL
Peggy Lee	Revolving Fund
Carol Wright	Undertreasurer

CONFERENCES

ALLEGHENY EAST: Charles L. Cheatham, President; Robert Booker, *Visitor* Correspondent; P.O. Box 266, Pine Forge, PA 19548. Tel. (610) 326-4610 ■ www.myallegheyeast.com

ALLEGHENY WEST: James L. Lewis, President; Bryant Taylor, *Visitor* Correspondent; 1339 E. Broad St., Columbus, OH 43205. Tel. (614) 252-5271 ■ www.awconf.org

CHESAPEAKE: Rob Vandeman, President; (vacant), *Visitor* Correspondent; 6600 Martin Rd., Columbia, MD 21044. Tel. (410) 995-1910

MOUNTAIN VIEW: Larry Boggess, President; Brian Jones, *Visitor* Correspondent; 1400 Liberty St., Parkersburg, WV 26101. Tel. (304) 422-4581 ■ www.mtviewconf.org

NEW JERSEY: José Cortés, President; Laffit Cortés, *Visitor* Correspondent; 2160 Brunswick Ave., Trenton, NJ 08648. Tel. (609) 392-7131 ■ www.njcsda.org

OHIO: Raj Attiken, President; Nancy Barnett, *Visitor* Correspondent; P.O. Box 1230, Mount Vernon, OH 43050. Tel. (740) 397-4665 ■ www.ohioadventist.org

PENNSYLVANIA: Ray Hartwell, President; Tamyra Horst, *Visitor* Correspondent; 720 Museum Rd., Reading, PA 19611. Tel. (610) 374-8331 ■ www.paconference.org

POTOMAC: Bill Miller, President; Don Wood, *Visitor* Correspondent; 606 Greenville Avenue, Staunton, VA 24401. Tel. (540) 886-0771 ■ www.pcsda.org

COLLEGES

COLUMBIA UNION COLLEGE: Weymouth Spence, President; Scott Steward, *Visitor* Correspondent; 7600 Flower Ave., Takoma Park, MD 20912. Tel. (301) 891-4000 ■ www.cuc.edu

KETTERING COLLEGE OF MEDICAL ARTS: Charles Scriven, President; 3737 Southern Blvd., Kettering, OH 45429. Tel. (937) 395-8601 ■ www.kcma.edu

HEALTHCARE SYSTEMS

ADVENTIST HEALTHCARE: William G. "Bill" Robertson, President & CEO; Ray Tetz, *Visitor* Correspondent; 1801 Research Blvd., Suite 400, Rockville, MD 20850. Tel. (301) 315-3030 www.adventisthealthcare.com

KETTERING ADVENTIST HEALTHCARE: Frank Perez, President & CEO; Kenneth Chaj, *Visitor* Correspondent; 3965 Southern Blvd., Kettering, OH 45429. Tel. (937) 395-8167 www.kmnetwork.org

Published by the Columbia Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Printed at the Review & Herald Publishing Association. Adventist® and Seventh-day Adventist® are the registered trademarks of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists®.

Volume 113 ■ Issue 1

Fighting Spiritual Cold

It is so cold here that my bones ache." My two guests, pastors from tropical West Africa, shivered as we alighted from my car. "Welcome to winter in Washington," I said. "It numbs the soul."



A spiritual winter also numbs the soul. It may arrive due to the loss of a loved one, the loss of a job, a cancer diagnosis. But that is not the hardest part. The hardest part of winter is that God seems no where to be found. And what feels like His absence causes the greatest pain. Through the ages, the desperate, agonizing cry that has verbalized our struggle has been: "Where are you, God?"

Job's experience embodies the spiritual numbness of winter. He also cried out in wintry misery, "If only I knew where to find Him" (Job 23:3, NIV). The problems with Job are the problems of the human race. At some point, all of us wrestle with the absence of God. We assume suffering to be the result of something we have done wrong, and we forget that God *hates* suffering and pain.

Job ultimately discovered what others in pain have discovered: He was not alone. Not even in winter. God shivered with him warming his soul.

When God Himself came to this earth, He came in winter. Jesus, like Job, was a "man of sorrows." He was well acquainted with grief. The cross is the ultimate paradox: God experiencing the absence of God. "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" (Matt. 27:46, NIV) Thus He can draw close to us in our loss and grief and even in our so-called "God-forsakenness."

GOD CARES

If it is the winter of your life, and you wonder where God is, you don't have to wonder any more. Jesus was, in a sense, never closer to us when He was farthest from His Father.

An hour ago I sat holding the hand of my 96-year-old mother. This has been one of the coldest winters in my spiritual life. "Unresponsive" was the harsh reality coming from the nurse on duty. "Mom, this is your son, Neville," I said. But no flicker of recognition warmed her tired lips. There was only silence and the numbness of death itself. I brushed her grey hair aside and whispered in her ear: "Mom, Jesus is here." Instantly, like summer itself, her room warmed radiantly when, through a parched throat and cracked lips, her trembling voice rebuked the wintry numbness: "God is so good," she said. "I am fine."

J. Neville Harcombe (nharcombe@columbiaunion.net) is executive secretary of the Columbia Union Conference.

Book of the Month
FROM YOUR ADVENTIST BOOK CENTER

25% OFF
January 1-31, 2008

SALE \$10.49

Regular Price US\$13.99

In this brilliant retelling of an old story, Patty Froese Ntihemuka skillfully weaves together the story of Lazarus's sisters. Dark secrets, betrayal, and shame haunt the two women—until the Savior brings them back to life.

978-0-8127-0463-1. Paperback, 175 pages.

R Review and Herald® Publishing Association

Call 1-800-765-6955
Online at AdventistBookCenter.com

THE... your calling.
REVIEW... your faith.
HERALD... your soul.

Published by the Columbia Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Printed at the Review & Herald Publishing Association.

Adventist® and Seventh-day Adventist® are the registered trademarks of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists®.

Volume 113 ■ Issue 1

OBITUARY SUBMISSION

For information on placing an obituary in the *Visitor*, please call Sandra Jones at (888)4-VISITOR or email sjones@columbiaunion.net. Obituaries are placed in the order they are received, on a space-available basis.

OPEN HOUSE

FEBRUARY 11, 2008 • 1:00 P.M.



Your opportunity to...
meet with faculty, financial aid and academic
counselors, NCAA Division II coaches, and more.

change creatediscoverexperience

MONEY for COLLEGE

FREE SEMINARS

Nervous about college bills or tuition rates? If you are a new parent, or your student is headed to college this fall, these seminars are a must.

January 28
Springville Adventist Academy
7 pm.

February 3
Mt. Vernon Academy
2:00 pm

March 2
The Mountain Academy
1 pm.

March 11
Columbia Adventist Academy
6 pm.

Watch for other events at:
Ohio, DC, and VA locations or at
Highland, Indiana, Shenandoah
Valley, and Pine Forge Academics

Presented in partnership
for Columbia Union
members by the CUC
Financial Office



Call toll-free for details and to reserve your place today!
800-835-4212 or E-mail us at openhouse@cuc.edu

www.cuc.edu

Columbia Union College

THE ADVENTIST COLLEGE AT THE NATION'S CAPITAL

Visitor Magazine
Columbia Union Conference
5427 Twin Knolls Rd.
Columbia, MD 21045

Nonprofit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Hagerstown, MD
Permit No. 266