

CONNECTING | IMPACTING | CELEBRATING

VISITOR

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Inside: Spaghetti Dinners,
Home Churches, and Other
Creative Evangelism Strategies

**Writing God's
Story On North
Marshall Street**



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Even before the Year of Evangelism begins, congregations across the Columbia Union Conference are seeking imaginative and modern ways to draw new disciples to Christ. Read their stories and get some ideas for your church initiatives.

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Well known as the “melting pot,” the United States continues to increase in cultural, religious, and ethnic diversity. That’s why Columbia Union churches are expanding their evangelism efforts and reaching out to burgeoning multicultural neighborhoods. Three new groups—Jewish, Ethiopian, and Romanian—have recently formed. Find out how they’re doing and *what* they’re doing to grow.



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David Clevenger

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About the Cover:

Lillian Torres, Columbia Union Conference Bible worker, and Gail Guy, former executive director of the Adventist Humanitarian Resource Center, were photographed on North Marshall Street in Philadelphia by Jared Castaldi.

All I Need To Know About Evangelism I Learned In Elementary School

In the 30 seconds it took you to glance at our front cover and skim the Table of Contents, about 125 people were born and 53 people died—36 of whom did not claim to know Christ. Last year 3.8 million people died who likely didn’t know Christ. These are only approximations, and conservative ones at that. Nevertheless, the numbers are staggering, and so are the implications. Clearly, we as a church face an awesome challenge in taking the gospel to the whole world, and these numbers seem to indicate that we are actually losing ground. This might be startling, but it isn’t surprising when you consider the fact that many of our churches don’t even baptize one person a year. Few of them hold annual evangelistic meetings, and even fewer have a meaningful presence in their community. While literally millions of people perish each year without a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, many of our churches seem content with the status quo. In the Columbia Union the churches that are growing are those that intentionally value and practice meaningful service to their community and the bold proclamation of the gospel. These twofold priorities are the dominant factors in the DNA of healthy, growing churches.



FOLLOWING JESUS’ MODEL

Do you remember “Show and Tell,” the popular elementary school activity? Students got to “show” a prized possession and “tell” why it was so special. No student would merely be content to show his



Making Connections: When she served as executive director of the Adventist Humanitarian Resource Center, Gail Guy (left) helped Lillian Torres and members of Pennsylvania Conference’s Boulevard and Maranatha churches connect with local police and civic leaders. Now Adventists are known in that Philadelphia community.

possession and not tell about it, and it was unthinkable to tell about something without also showing it. “Show and Tell” was really very simple, and anyone could do it. That is the way it is supposed to be with evangelism. God calls us to “show and tell” the gospel. Loving acts of service and ministering to felt needs are to be coupled with bold proclamation and personal testimony. There is transformational power in this divinely appointed combination, and Jesus effectively modeled these twofold priorities in His own earthly ministry.

Unfortunately, many Christians and churches have bought into the devil’s clever counterfeit—“Show or Tell.” They *show* care and concern by ministering to the needs of their community, but they don’t *tell* the good news about Jesus. In doing so, they become more like community centers than gospel centers. On the other hand, some churches only tell, running one evangelistic meeting after another without ministering to the needs of people or impacting the community. These hit-and-run churches attempt to reap where they have not sown and leave behind a wake of unapproachable people. “Show or Tell” is a false dichotomy. It is a perversion of the gospel and lacks the transformational

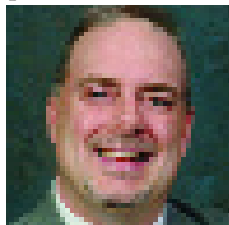
disciple-making power of God. As a result, souls aren’t won, and churches and Christians don’t grow.

“Show and Tell” is more than a child’s game; it is God’s formula for the expansion of His kingdom, and it is our mission in the Columbia Union. In this fall’s evangelism issue, we introduce you to churches that are effectively implementing its principles and bringing people to new life in Christ.

Frank Bondurant (fbondurant@columbiaunion.net) is vice president for Ministries Development at the Columbia Union Conference. Visit his photo blog at columbiaunion.org.

Treasurer Leaves Potomac Conference

After 22 years in the Potomac Conference, **Kurt Allen**, vice president for finance, recently



accepted a call to serve in the same capacity for the Georgia-Cumberland Conference.

After working for the Northern New England Conference, Allen came to Potomac in 1986 to serve as assistant treasurer, then associate treasurer and treasurer of the conference corporation. In 1997 he was elected to his present position and has since helped improve the conference's financial health and raise its working capital. He also oversaw the move and financial turnaround of the conference's Potomac Adventist Book and Health Food Store, and helped strengthen its two senior academies. "I'm particularly proud of the fact that we've helped our Hispanic members grow from three congregations in 1986 to over 60 today," he states. "In addition, their building ownership has grown from two to 20 in the last 11 years." Read more in the *Potomac People* newsletter on page 43.

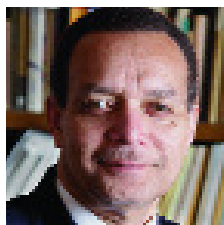
Hospital and College Announce Partnership

Adventist HealthCare recently announced plans for the use of Washington Adventist Hospital's (WAH) Takoma Park, Md., campus once the hospital relocates to Calverton, Md., in 2013. The WAH campus will be transformed into a "village of health and well-being," offering

extensive healthcare services such as emergency/urgent and primary care, a clinic for low-income/uninsured residents, imaging and diagnostic services, health education facilities, and a fitness and wellness center.

Plans for the proposed fitness and wellness center are being developed in collaboration with next-door neighbor Columbia Union College (CUC) and call for a gym, pool, outpatient rehabilitation services, and health and wellness classes for the college and community.

"The value of our proposed partnership will enhance our present and future health career programs," says CUC president **Weymouth Spence**. "We're also thrilled at the likely access to new and improved infrastructure, which will provide enviable learning opportunities and internships for students."



This new vision for WAH's 100-year-old campus was developed through ongoing collaboration and input from more than 200 community members and an initial in-depth architectural analysis. "While there are a number of regulatory processes related to the future uses of our Takoma Park campus, we



are excited about the journey and benefits to the community, and we look forward to achieving this [collaborative] vision," says WAH president **Jere Stocks**.

Review and Herald Hosts 10th Fun Run

Pastor Brenda Billingsy of Allegheny East Conference's Metropolitan church in Hyattsville, Md., was triumphant as she crossed the finish line at this year's 10th annual *Vibrant Life* 5K Fun Run and Walk. Billingsy was one of 169 church and community participants who tackled the cross-country race held on the field and tree-laden campus of the Review and Herald Publishing Association in Hagerstown, Md. Seventh-day Adventist participants came from the Allegheny East, Chesapeake, and Pennsylvania conferences, and beyond.

According to Linda Starkey, *Vibrant Life* editorial assistant, who has taken a leading role in organizing the race and its 50 volunteers over the years, not every one comes to run. "I'm just walking," said Violet Kamori, a member of Chesapeake's Baltimore First church in Ellicott City, Md. "Just trying to be healthy," agreed her friend Robin Wells. **Hazel Vetter** (below, right), age 95,



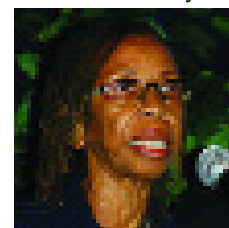
PHOTO BY MIKE GAMBLIN

who likes to attend Chesapeake's Willow Brook church in Boonsboro, Md., was the oldest person at the starting line.

Some proceeds from the race are dedicated to the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation.—*Kim Peckham*

Allegheny East Delegates Re-Elect Leaders

At the third quadrennial constituency session of the Allegheny East Conference (AEC), the 400 delegates in attendance heard reports from conference departments, openly shared their questions and comments, and confidently re-elected their



incumbent officers for the next four years.

Following a discussion and motion

led by **Phyllis P. Edmonds, JD**, director of claims and legal services for Adventist Risk Management, voters agreed that it would best suit AEC to merge the conference (as a ministry) with its association (the corporation), an action already taken by many conferences across North America. This merger not only affords them better lawsuit protection, it requires two of its officers to hold new titles: Henry Fordham's title will change from executive secretary to vice president of administration, and Lawrance Martin's title will change from treasurer to vice president of finance. The new titles do not change their job functions. Charles Cheatham's title will remain conference president.

In addition to the officers, a majority of the departmental directors were also returned. One change came when Marcellus Robinson, pastor of the Emmanuel-Brinklow church in Ashton, Md., was elected ministerial director, replacing

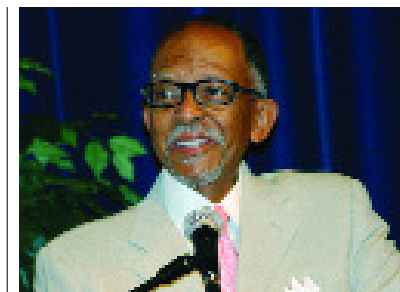
Peter Campbell. Leaders also announced the recent retirement of Thaddious Privette as director of stewardship. His successor, and the session parliamentarian, is Jackson M. Doggette, former pastor of the Germantown church in Philadelphia and an accomplished attorney. His title will be director of the Department of Philanthropy. Through a video presentation, departmental reports hit a peak when it was announced that under Privette's leadership,



conference title increased by \$4 million during the last quadrennial. This increase was supported by a growth in membership of



Delegates returned all three officers, pictured with their wives as follows: Reather and Charles Cheatham, Sharon and Henry Fordham, and Kim and Lawrance Martin.



Devotional speaker **Alvin M. Kibble**, vice president of the North American Division, reminded delegates that the faith, hope, and love for our Lord and brethren admonished in *Corinthians 13* still applies to our church today.

7.62 percent, including 15 new pastors and five new churches, now representing 10 nationalities.

Other four-year highlights came from Adventist Community Services (ACS) and the publishing department. ACS personnel served 250,000 people—including 50,000 Katrina evacuees—distributed 400,000 pieces of literature, and opened four new centers. Publishing staff distributed 148,184 pieces of literature, collected nearly \$900,000 in sales, and hosted 4,000 Bible studies.

News from the Office of Ministries Development

Mountain View Holds Evangelism Boot Camp

Thirty-four new recruits and 11 veterans recently took part in the second annual Mountain View Conference ShareHIM Boot Camp, held at the Valley Vista Adventist Center in Huttonsville, W.Va. ShareHIM evangelists taught camp attendees how to hold evangelistic meetings using materials from the ShareHIM initiative, a ministry of the Carolina Conference. Laypersons who have held meetings presented practical, field-tested counsel, and new recruits got opportunities to practice their first sermons.



Mountain View president Larry Boggess says he is excited about the prospects for 2009 evangelism, adding, "We are planning for the 50 graduates from 2007, and these 34 new graduates, to hold meetings in 2009, along with each of our pastors." This year's boot camp resulted in more than 50 lay meetings across the conference and about a dozen baptisms.

Potomac Evangelists Host Meetings in El Salvador

Recently 28 Potomac Conference members (below) of the 3-year-old Adventist Philanthropic Educational and Evangelistic Center (APEEC) joined efforts with 32 medical professionals from Loma Linda University (Calif.) to host evangelistic meetings in the 24 districts of the East El Salvador Mission. The well-attended district meetings, coordinated by Potomac pastor Raul Rodriguez, resulted in more than 2,000 baptisms.

In addition to the crusade, the missionaries distributed 1,614 boxes of food to the most needy families, a collective effort between the two visiting groups and the local conference. They also awarded 140 scholarships to low-income children, giving them an opportunity to attend the Adventist school in their area.

Throughout the week, the medical professionals assisted more than 1,600 patients in pediatrics, gynecology, and general



medicine, and donated thousands of dollars in medicine. Sofia Puerto, MD, who coordinated the medical effort, also held training sessions for nearly 70 medical professionals from the East El Salvador Mission.

"As I witnessed the wonderful volunteer work being done by lay members and pastors, I was



able to feel the presence of God and was reminded of His soon coming," commented Rubén Ramos, Multilingual Ministries director for the Columbia Union Conference, and a crusade speaker.—Beth Michaels

Pennsylvania Churches Complete SALT Training

The Pennsylvania Conference recently offered the last of three Social Action Leadership Team (SALT) training weekends for the year. Five churches and three church plants started the process in January. Two additional



A group from the Sayre (Pa.) church shares ideas during the recent SALT training weekend.

churches had also completed their assignments and were ready to learn the next step.



Weekend presenter Gaspar Colón, EdD, executive director of Columbia

Union College's Center for Metropolitan Ministry in Takoma Park, Md., applauded the teams' work and offered them ideas for their next steps. Colón also affirmed Pennsylvania for being the first conference to build training into its administrative structure, which teaches churches how to intentionally reach out to their communities by discovering and then addressing needs.

During the weekend, SALT teams also shared progress reports and worked on strategic plans, which will be completed by December 31 and sent to Bill Peterson, Pennsylvania's assistant to the president for missions. A coach was assigned to each team to help them set and

achieve goals and evaluate their process for next year.

Chesapeake Initiates Church-Planting Project

The Chesapeake Conference recently embarked upon a church-planting project in a region of Northeast Baltimore that has no Adventist church presence. Chesapeake president Rob Vandeman initiated the

launch with a church-planting invitation. More than 25 people responded and attended the first Sabbath service.

Pastor Sedley Johnson and nearly 30 people continue to gather each Sabbath afternoon at a county library for small group Bible study and fellowship. They are now searching for a permanent location.

Charter members of this ethnically diverse group (below) are excited about the possibility of reaching out to the varied people groups in their targeted territory. They plan to send a mass mailing of Bible study cards and to identify the needs of the community through door-to-door surveys and demographic research.



From the Pulpit

"We are the body of Christ, and we must present the same message He did. Jesus never began with the spoken word. Preaching on its own is isolated from ministry, witness, and service. Jesus began with service and then gave the spoken message. His service gave His preaching authority. He preached what He practiced."—Arthur Rudy Torres, senior pastor of the Garden Grove (Calif.) church, speaking at Sligo church in Takoma Park, Md.—his former flock—for their recent centennial celebration.



PHOTO BY GARY LUNSFORD

Potluck

BETH MICHAELS

What's New?

Books > Sincerely, Stacey Stacey Jean-Pierre

First-time author Stacey Jean-Pierre of Allegheny East



“God has brought you through pain far greater than mine. There is someone waiting for a blessing, so share your story.”—Stacey Jean-Pierre

Conference’s Miracle Temple in Baltimore is a young woman with experience and wisdom beyond her 22 years. Once sure she’d pursue a musical career, she recalls: “God revealed to me that I would write a book, and it would impact people of my generation.”

It took eight years, but Jean-Pierre finally understood the message she would share. *Sincerely, Stacey* is the first collection of letters she’s written to an imaginary friend about the many seasons of life that came as a result of being abandoned by her minister father. “I want this book to be an example of how we, as youth, can influence the lives of others through our testimonies,” says the second-year MBA student at Columbia Union College in Takoma Park, Md. Order a copy and read more at sincerelystacey.com.

Ellen White on Leadership Cindy Tutsch, DMin

If you think Ellen White’s ideas are outdated, author Cindy Tutsch, DMin, hopes you’ll recon-

sider. In this book, Tutsch—who attends Chesapeake Conference’s Spencerville church in Silver Spring, Md.—has gathered more of Mrs. White’s writings about leadership than has ever appeared in one publication!



“I want readers to understand that Ellen White continues to make a significant contribution to the discovery and understanding of leadership principles,” says the associate director of the Ellen G. White Estate at the Seventh-day Adventist Church World Headquarters. “Her leadership principles regarding spiritual formation and care for those who have the least in society could revolutionize our priorities and even change how we ‘think church.’”

If you hope to influence others in a positive way, pick up a copy at your local Adventist Book Center or call (800) 765-6955.

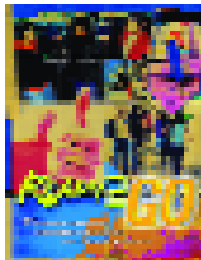
Ready 2 Go Randy Fishell

This new book by *Guide* magazine editor Randy Fishell features 15 exciting and interactive presentations for youth and young adults. “There are many ‘quick and easy’ youth program books available, but I really wanted to give leaders a collection of programs that are highly interac-



tive and fun, yet also take participants deeper into the things of God,” explains Fishell, a collegiate Sabbath School teacher at Chesapeake’s Willow Brook church in Boonsboro, Md.

Ready 2 Go covers hot topics such as self-esteem, fear, and faith. Fishell’s hope is “that the book will enable youth to increase their rootedness and conviction in Scripture and their Redeemer.” To begin experiencing God in this new and creative way, pick up a copy at your local ABC.—Ellen Poirier



WholeHealth

Exercise for Brain Fitness

A brisk walk builds muscle, strengthens the heart and lungs, combats chronic disease, and helps to manage weight. A growing body of research, however, reveals that the same aerobic exercise also improves our cognitive performance, attention, and memory.

In *Spark: The Revolutionary New Science of Exercise and the Brain*, Harvard professor and psychiatrist John Ratey explores the neuroscience behind the beneficial effects of exercise on learning, stress, anxiety, depression, addiction, hormonal changes, aging, and even attention deficit disorder. Getting your heart pumping stimulates the brain to produce a brain-derived neurotrophic factor.



Dubbed as “Miracle-Gro for the brain,” this protein fosters the growth and function of neurons and strengthens the connections between cells.

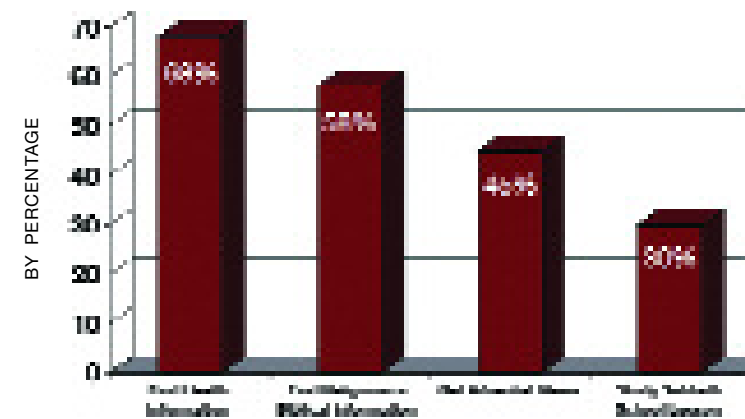
How much exercise do we need for brain fitness? A study published in the *British Journal of Sports Medicine* found that mental health benefits were observed after only 20 minutes of physical activity. Increased benefits were noted with longer exercise periods and higher intensity.

Christians now have another motive for keeping our brains functioning well—communicating with our Creator and discerning His ways.—Lilly Tryon, MSN, RN, Adventist WholeHealth Wellness Center

What You Bring to the Table

Keeping Score

Internet Use by Columbia Union Members



Source: Center for Creative Ministry/Columbia Union Conference 2007 Survey

In The Spotlight > Frank Steyn, Pastor and e-Vangelism Innovator



About two years ago, Frank Steyn started something he didn’t see any other church in the Ohio Conference doing. As pastor of the Chillicothe and Jackson churches, he recruited members to give DVDs of Seventh-day Adventist preachers to friends, neighbors, co-workers, and even people on the streets.

“We got the idea when a couple came to our church after watching a Doug Batchelor program,” Steyn recalls. “They wanted to know how they could see more of his preaching. That’s when we realized we needed a ministry that would really reach people.” He adds, “A lot of our church’s ministries produce evangelistic television and satellite programs, but often they only reach those who are already Adventist. Even our books are mainly distributed through Adventist book stores.”

So Steyn approached several nationally known speakers—including Batchelor, Walter Veith, Morris Venden, and Shawn Boonstra—and got permission to copy their preaching DVDs. Church members duplicated and placed the DVDs (along with copies of *Signs of the Times* magazine) in eight “newspaper” boxes in several nearby towns. Since starting this ministry in October 2006, five families have become Adventist.

“Adventists preach the gospel of the grace of God and freedom in Jesus as no other church can, and we need to share the message,” Steyn says. “There are many people out there who are lonely, who are at home using their computers and watching DVDs.”

In addition to the DVDs, Steyn produces short Bible studies and webmasters two sites: gospel4free.com and rootedinjesus.com. He has also written a book, *Revelation—Door of Hope*, which he also gives away.

In September Steyn retired from full-time pastoring but will still be involved in the ministry. He is now a resource chaplain at Kettering Medical Center in Dayton and also a part-time pastor at Ohio’s Piqua church.—Taashi Rowe

Creative Revival

Albert Einstein is known to have said, "The world is a dangerous place, not because of those who do evil, but because of those who look on and do nothing." This couldn't be truer for Seventh-day Adventists and our call to spread God's Word to the lost. A shepherd won't find a lost lamb if he doesn't actively search for it. How many more "lambs" could be found if there were more shepherds joining the search?

Ellen White vocalized our Christian duty early in the church's history when she said, "We are to take our Bibles, and go forth to warn the world. We are to be God's helping hands in saving souls—channels through which His love is day by day to flow to the perishing" (*Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 150).

Congregations across the Columbia Union are taking this call to heart and employing creative strategies to spread the gospel and bring revival. Here's how it's working:

Writing God's Story on North Marshall Street

Frank Bondurant



God is writing His story on North Marshall Street in Philadelphia. It all started with a telephone call to the Boulevard church office. A woman from Maryland called and asked for someone from this Pennsylvania Conference church to visit her niece and children living in Philadelphia. Lillian Torres, the Columbia Union Conference Bible worker assigned to that area, and Jolly Kalathil, a Boulevard church member, responded to the call. They soon met with Aisha Martinez, who readily gave her heart to the Lord and agreed to take Bible studies.

Upon leaving the woman's home, the Lord placed a burden on the Adventist ladies' hearts that other people on this street were searching for God. Torres was convicted that she should perform a house-to-house survey in order to identify the community's greatest needs, but she felt that some kind of incentive would be necessary to encourage the residents to complete the survey. The idea for a free spaghetti dinner in the neighborhood was born: free tickets would be given to anyone who completed the survey.

On faith, Torres prepared the tickets, despite the fact that she didn't have a date, location, or any funds to make the dinner a reality. A few days later, Torres and member Abraham Kalathil started their door-to-door campaign where they met Carrie Burton. As she completed the survey, Burton told them that one of the greatest needs in the community was a safe place for children to play. She gestured to an empty, gated lot next to her home and said that she sometimes allowed the children to play there.

Sensing the Lord's leading, Torres told her about the spaghetti dinner and asked if they could host it on the empty lot. Burton enthusiastically agreed. Soon church members from both the Boulevard and Maranatha churches (above, left) converged on the



lot to clean and prepare it for the dinner. They presented the feast on a Sunday afternoon, providing all of the food, tables, and supplies, plus games for the children and blood pressure screenings (above) for the adults. They also set up a table where another 55 residents completed the community survey. The event was a tremendous success, with the Lord providing all that was needed *and more*.

Later, as Torres and church members studied the surveys, it became clear that the three major problems in the community were drug abuse, violence, and a lack of children's activities. The members knew immediately that the children would be their focus, but how would they reach them?

Torres first contacted Gail Guy, who was executive director of the Adventist Humanitarian Resource Center, a joint community ministry of the Allegheny East and Pennsylvania conferences. Through Guy's connections—and God's intervention—she and Torres were soon meeting with police and other civic leaders to discuss community needs. As a result, many of the city's leaders became aware of the local Adventist church, and church members are becoming aware of their potential partnerships with existing community programs and providers.

During a more recent meeting with a staff member from the School District of Philadelphia, Torres, Guy, and local Philadelphia pastors Moses Andrade, Gabriel Montalvo, and Alberto Balio once again discussed community ministry opportunities. They discussed reaching troubled youth through programs like anger management, abstinence, drug awareness, and even student-led Bible study classes. Now the Adventist missionaries plan to meet with principals from local schools to

discuss how the Adventist churches can be of help.

Today, because of a phone call, a contact, and a spaghetti dinner, a bridge is being built on North Marshall Street between the Adventist church and residents. Most importantly, souls are being won to Christ. So far more than 164 people have completed the community surveys, 10 are taking Bible studies, several have visited the church, and, in addition to Aisha Martinez, at least one other person has requested baptism.

Frank Bondurant is vice president for Ministries Development at the Columbia Union Conference.



Khay Consalves (left) of the Boulevard church and Angie Torres from Maranatha serve plates of hot spaghetti to Philadelphia residents during the community event.



Columbia Union Bible worker Lillian Torres (far right) presents a new lawn mower to Philadelphia resident Carrie Burton (second from right), who helped the Adventist members secure the lot for their outreach dinner.

Building God's Kingdom, One Home Church at a Time

Jeanie Allen

God is using Pastor Fismed Omar and the members of the Spanish-speaking congregations in Roanoke, Lynchburg, and Martinsville, Va., in a mighty way to further the kingdom. Just one year ago, Omar and three others embarked on a mission to plant the first Spanish-speaking congregation in the southwest region of the Potomac Conference, and God blessed their efforts with more than 100 bap-



Pastor Fismed Omar rejoices with Fanny Herrera and Marcio Rodriguez following their baptisms.

tisms and three congregations!

José Esposito, Potomac Hispanic Ministries director, remembers how the idea emerged to plant the first congregation in this part of Virginia: "When Dave Weigley [former Potomac president and current Columbia Union Conference president] held evangelistic meetings several years ago in Roanoke, he asked why there weren't any Spanish-speaking churches there." That was enough to prompt four members from the Capital Spanish church in Washington, D.C.—including Pastor Omar and his wife, Junieth—to plant a home church in Roanoke last year.

Initially, the group of four from Capital Spanish spent a month in earnest prayer. "It's important to pray for the Holy Spirit to prepare people's hearts so they are receptive to the gospel," explains Pastor Omar. Then they canvassed the Hispanic neighborhoods every Sunday from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m., searching for and praying with people who longed to learn more about Jesus. In time they found 33 residents who wanted Bible studies.

Even before the Roanoke Spanish congregation



Pastor Fismed Omar and his wife, Junieth (front), pose with the Martinsville (Va.) Spanish congregation.

was officially organized as a church, this group spawned another church plant in Lynchburg. "Evangelism is a way of life in the Spanish-speaking churches," explains Omar. "Members are taught how to witness, and they eagerly search for people to bring to Christ." To date, the Roanoke Spanish church has 70 members while Lynchburg claims 20 and continues to grow.

Also last year, a struggling group of six Spanish-speaking Adventist members from Martinsville approached Esposito, and soon joined the

conference. Imagine the surprise when he learned that this small group had already started a church. Now Potomac claims this 48-member congregation, which regularly expands to 100 on Sabbaths because of their continuous outreach efforts. During their weekly Sabbath afternoon outreach, members offer legal help as well as translation and job search services to the Hispanic community. "When we meet people's needs," explains Martinsville member Isis Moyer, "they are more receptive to the gospel."

Martinsville members hope to plant two new home churches before year's end, giving Pastor Omar five congregations to shepherd. And this fall, Rubén Ramos, director of Multilingual Ministries for the Columbia Union, is holding a series of evangelistic meetings with the hope that many more will choose baptism.

"How we grow is no secret," explains Esposito. "Spanish-speaking members are actively involved in evangelism and commit to hosting home churches. They follow Christ's instruction of the 'Great Commission' to go and preach the gospel to all the world." As a result, God is richly blessing Potomac with phenomenal membership growth for His kingdom.

Jeanie Allen writes from Staunton, Va.

Uniting People at the Garden of Prayer

R.H. Stewart

Nestled in the Park Heights section of Baltimore, Allegheny East Conference's Garden of Prayer (GOP) church is bringing life and hope to an area that is plagued with drugs, violence, and poverty. The congregation was born in 2006 following a revival led by conference evangelist Conklin B. Gentry. A year later Pastor Ron Edmonds (right) was introduced and started creating an interactive culture that speaks to the hearts and needs of the people.

Dubbed by his congregation as "the best preacher in town," Edmonds leads this family with a charismatic style that members have adopted and a process of discipling that focuses on "rebuilding Christianity." This approach with the urban population is unique because, "it seeks to eradicate the traditional path to Christ," he explains. "It eliminates old thought processes and customs, which will help Christians think for themselves and bring new believers closer to the ministry of Jesus. It's working because its fulfilling special needs and encouraging our brothers and sisters to win against the inner-city struggle."

In addition to his leadership style and ongoing street tent efforts, Edmonds says GOP's Thanksgiving dinners, Christmas parties, and flea markets contributed to eight baptisms last year.

Each month the congregation ventures into the community with the mission to provide resources and services for residents. They helped Tom Combs who was illiterate. With instruction, Combs, 52, quickly learned how to read the Word of God, and was baptized in 2006.



Because of their community activities, members have earned the reputation of being authentic about their compassion for others. The street teams consistently let people know they can come to the GOP and "be who you are" without inhibitions. Member James Chase, a native of Baltimore, believes that love is the church's greatest strength. That same love adds to an enormous amount of courage and resiliency when ministry becomes difficult. "No matter what we go through, we never give up on God and one another. We always stretch out our arms to the community and put the people first," says Chase.

That may be what keeps Monte Sellers driving an hour from Frederick, Md., to attend each Sabbath and brings 16-year-old Nadean Davis to church every week with a host of teen friends. It's also what encourages Charlene King, a chaplain/elder, who has been called to help solidify the structure of the GOP's outreach programs. "The members here are genuine. Their approach to witnessing is 'out-of-the-box' and unique in terms of relating to an individual's situation," she states. For example, members have been sharing a tract called "Birthday Switcheroo." This cartoon-like presentation sums up the incorrect change of the "birthday" of our world (creation) from Saturday to Sunday.

With all the creative effort going into this fledgling Baltimore church, it's not hard to see why it is experiencing substantial growth and attracting all types of people.

R.H. Stewart writes from Baltimore.



Banding Together to Grow the Flock

Michelle Caviness

The harvest is ripe but the laborers are few," says Pastor Paul Turner of the Mt. Sinai church in Trenton, N.J. "Many don't think people are interested in Bible studies and the Three Angels' Messages, but they are."

He knows this because his Allegheny East Conference congregation is introducing neighbors to Christ through their method of sharing resources and good ol' street evangelism.

"The North American church is not growing because our investments have become internal," adds Turner. "Instead, we need to revitalize our members to mission. Evangelism should be a

part of our worship. The church will not grow without lay involvement."

Samuel Mendenhall, Personal Ministries leader and elder, explains that Mt. Sinai's evangelism method is like having 12 tribes of Israel plus three more "bands," or groups of five. They divide the city into sections, and assign each band a street. Because it is difficult to get church members

to commit time during the week, they are asked to dedicate 15 minutes every Sabbath immediately following the worship service: five minutes to get to their assigned street, five minutes to walk the street, and five minutes to drive back. Members not able to walk are encouraged to stay at the church and pray. This inspires everyone, regardless of age or ability, to get involved.

Each band starts their session by walking through and praying for their street's residents. The next 12 weeks are spent distributing Review and Herald tracts. They follow up by knocking on doors, introducing themselves, and asking residents if they are interested in Bible studies. Interested prospects are invited to a tent meeting, and baptismal candidates are cultivated.

The Mt. Sinai congregation feels it is very important to continue encouraging new members.

"People are drawn to Christ with heartfelt relationships," Pastor Turner explains. "Public evangelism is a tool, but then we need to have small group and personal evangelism to build those relationships."

Last summer the Mt. Sinai congregation had 800 people turn in Bible study requests. The studies yielded 78 baptisms! New members from that effort are involved in bands this year. One of their hardest workers is a backslidden Adventist who returned to the church. "He is so effective and on fire because he can relate to these people," shares Frances Pulliam, Personal Ministries secretary.

This year the church is working in East Trenton. "We are going to work like we have never worked before," shares Mendenhall. "The Lord has led us to the area. It is dangerous, but we are seeing good results and the Lord is blessing. If we baptize one, it will be worth it."

Young and old church members are out working the streets and planting seeds for God's kingdom. Pulliam recalls one story about their youngest evangelist, 6-year-old Kyle Goldware (below): "There was an older lady who would sit on her porch and watch us. After a few weeks, she said she did not want any more tracts. One Sabbath my grandson was helping my daughter and he started to go to this lady's house. My daughter told him not to go, but when the lady saw a little boy, her heart softened. She praised him for doing the Lord's work and has been taking and reading the tracts ever since."

Michelle Caviness writes from Dayton, Ohio.



Ladies gather after church to receive their street assignments.



Mt. Sinai members Sam Boswell (far right), assistant Sabbath School superintendent, and Merle Hall share literature with a community resident.



PHOTOS BY CLAUDETTE SIMONE JONES

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Ethnic Evangelism

Beth Michaels

Members Target Diverse Populations

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the United States accepts more legal immigrants as permanent residents than any other country in the world—37.5 million in 2006 alone. With their diverse backgrounds, cultures, and religions, many have yet to hear the good news of Christ's soon return. That's why churches across the Columbia Union are expanding their evangelism efforts and reaching out to the increasingly diverse American population. Here are a few of their stories:

New Jersey Introducing Jews to the Messiah

Unified members from New Jersey Conference's New Brunswick English and Lake Nelson (in Piscataway) churches started a small group two years ago with an interest in learning more about the Hebraic roots of the Adventist faith. With an escalating number of nonpracticing Jews in the area, their curiosity spawned what they call Jewish Ministries.

"As a missionary learns the new culture of a targeted group, we are learning the culture of the Jews," explains group co-founder Elayna Moffit from New Brunswick. The now 14-member coalition (right, with guests) is following a church development model created by a Jewish-born Adventist convert who has taught them more effective forms of evangelism for reaching Jews.

"As we continue to learn their customs and traditions, our goals are to reach the Jewish people with the good news of the Messiah by providing a safe worship environment, sharing our commonalities, and encouraging open dialogue," states Moffit.



Paul Lippi (right), pastor from the Greater New York Conference and member of the Jewish Ministries group from New Jersey, performs a chant of the Torah, a traditional part of a Jewish Sabbath service.

The Jewish Ministries members are also seeking more Adventist participants. "We want to build a group of family and friends so that the Jews who worship with us will feel at home," adds Moffit. Their first outreach events in 2009 will include a seder (communion) service in April and a sukkot (fall festival) at the Lake Nelson school gymnasium. For more information, contact Moffit at layna.moffitt@gmail.com.



PHOTOS BY ANTHONY MOFFITT

Potomac Drawing in the Ethiopian People

Another fledgling congregation is the year-old Oromo Fellowship, whose nearly 50 members meet weekly at the Takoma Park (Md.) church. Led by Edjigu Tolessa, an ordained pastor and full-time chaplain for Adventist HealthCare's Potomac Ridge Behavioral Health (Rockville, Md.), the group was born when area Ethiopian Adventists started holding Bible studies and Sabbath School

classes at the Potomac Conference church. Takoma Park pastor Alan DeSilva (below, left) later encouraged them to continue expanding and provided them the space to do so. Their first official service held in their native Affan Oromo language was in February this year.

Now seeking company status, the Oromo Fellowship is busy fulfilling their main objectives: to reach out, spread love, share the good news with the approximately 5,000 Oromo people residing in the Washington metropolitan area, and strengthen the faith of backslidden Oromo Adventists.

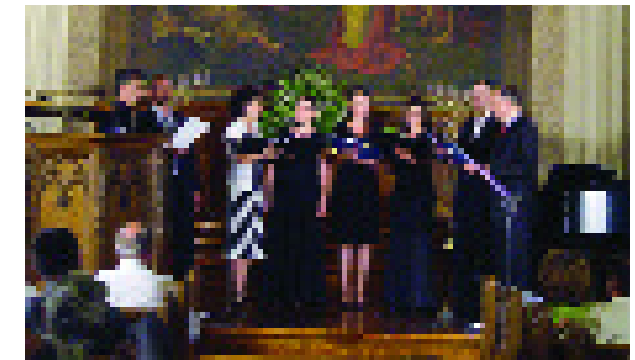


"When we look back and see how God has led and helped us grow, we thank Him for His many blessings," says Pastor Tolessa (above, right). "We are also thankful for the wonderful support offered by Takoma Park church leaders."

Pastor Tolessa reports that Oromo Fellowship members plan to help expand their membership by organizing prayer teams for door-to-door community visitations, reaching out to the sick and elderly, and ministering through their growing number of outreach departments, including Women's Ministries and the children's choir.



Members of the Oromo Fellowship share special music at Takoma Park (Md.) church in their native tongue.



Pennsylvania Initiating Romanian Church Growth

With just 20 members, the Adventist Christian church is the first Romanian church plant for the Pennsylvania Conference, as well as the Columbia Union. Recently more than 200 visitors from across the country and around the world helped them dedicate their newly purchased facility in Reading, Pa.

Member Zoltan Treitl helped lead in the search for a home facility, falling upon a beautiful, historic Lutheran church. With a dwindling congregation and an increasing number of needed repairs, the church was happy to sell to the "clean living people," as their pastor described the Adventist bunch.

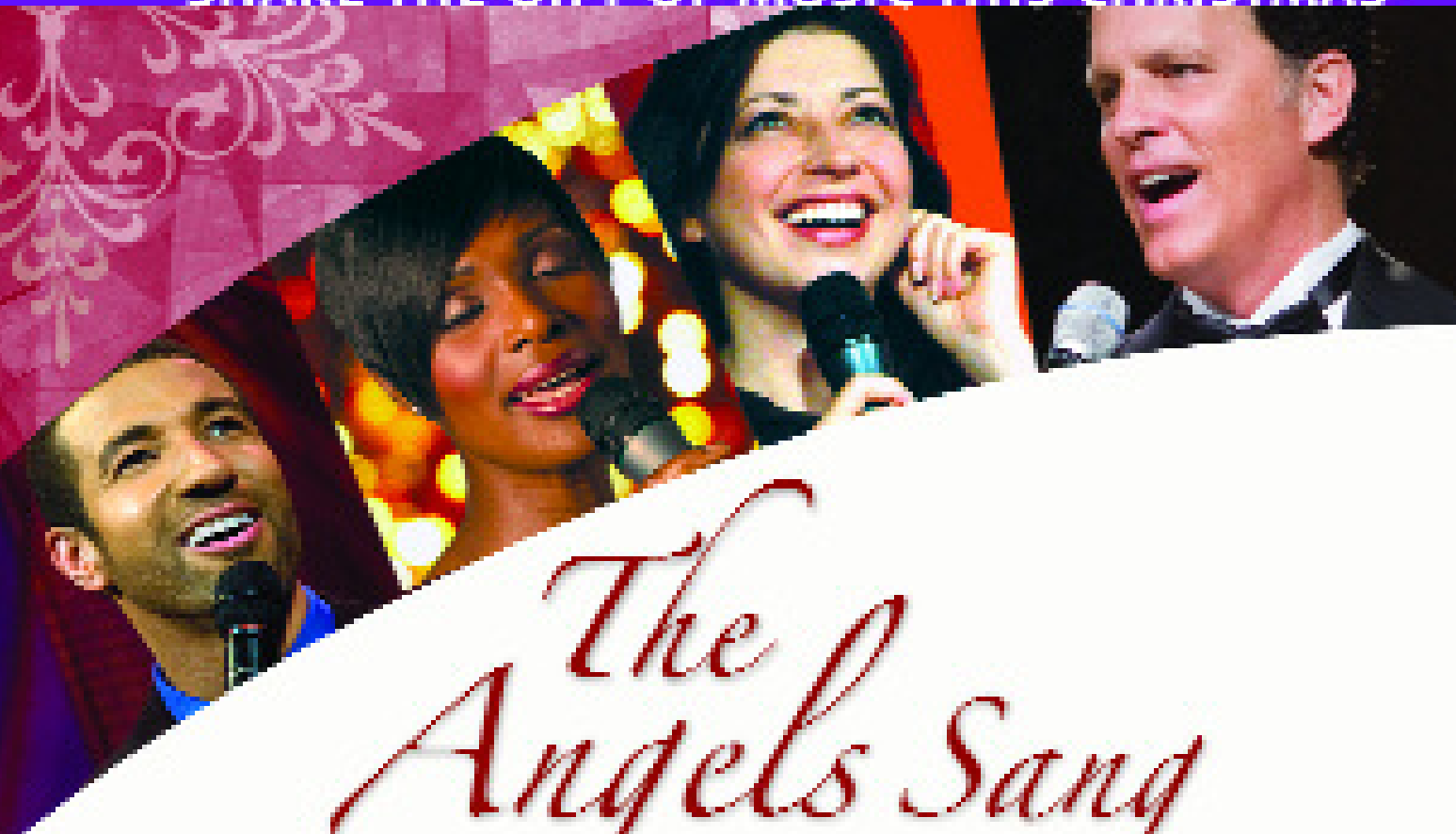
Though still in its infancy, charter members are quickly tending to the repairs and making plans for growth. Pastor Nicolae Butoiu (pictured above, right, with conference president Ray Hartwell) shares that their goal isn't just to serve Romanians in the Berks County area, but the entire community. The church currently offers two weekly services in Romanian, another in English, and plans to add Spanish to accommodate the Hispanic congregation who shares their 156-year-old building.

"[Pastor Butoiu] is a great leader," comments Pastor Alex DuBee of the Hamburg Community church, who helped parent the group during their initiation. "He's the right man for the job; when he came he really energized the group."



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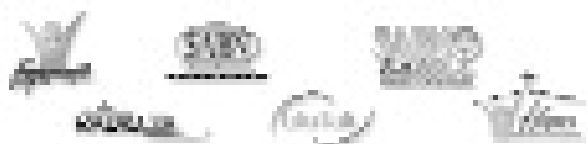


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YOUR HEALING MINISTRY

NOVEMBER 2008

Health: The Right Hand of Ministry

E. Lonnie Melashenko

Oprah Winfrey, a self-proclaimed promoter of healthy living and relationships, is now a strong proponent of "new" philosophies in the arena of Christianity. This is all well and good, except that her fans may not realize the subtle influence she holds over their viewpoint of God, the Bible, and Jesus Christ.

Winfrey's most recent infatuation is with Eckhart Tolle, author of *The New Earth* and *The Power of Now*. Tolle claims his philosophy does not conflict with Christian teachings but then proceeds to claim that Jesus is not the *only* way to be connected with God. As a matter of fact, a recent survey (as reported on a syndicated Christian news station) reveals that nearly 80 percent of proclaimed Christians believe there may be *alternative paths* to God other than Jesus Christ. On the other hand, Christians grounded in the Word know that Jesus plainly declares that *He* is the way, the truth, and the life.

As you read this, my wife, Jeannie, and I are completing an evangelistic initiative with Voice of Prophecy in China. Traveling the world for 22 years and seeing firsthand the variety of cultures and beliefs that exist deeply concerns me. What a challenge to express the gospel of Christ, conduct health clinics, and offer children's programs to teeming billions! I can understand the human desire to reconcile God with man through a human viewpoint. However, Winfrey and Tolle are taking a very significant biblical truth and applying an ancient lying twist to it. God doesn't conform *to* man! Through Jesus Christ He has *reconciled man back into righteousness and to Himself!* Any other way, and sin has a permanent place in human life.

Here's my point: Evangelism in countries where people are lacking in basic comforts is a challenge for sure, but evangelism in a wealthy country where the "poor" have at least one TV and a car is a completely different scene. Not to mention that most, if not all, cultures and religions have fallen prey to philosophies that seek to undermine *the salvific authority of Jesus Christ* as the Son of God.

A COMMON NEED

After 40 years of ministry, I've come to the conclusion that there is only one common place for all people regardless of religion or culture: the need for medical care. *All people*—from an unknown child in Paraguay with an infected arm (see story on page 22) to the wealthy and powerful Sen. Edward Kennedy—*have a strong sense of need* when they or a family member face a health challenge.

Healthcare has been the "right arm" focus of Seventh-day Adventists from the earliest days of our church.



It is a proud heritage. I am honored to now serve in ministry through my new role with Kettering Adventist HealthCare. Though Jeannie and I continue to affirm and support Voice of Prophecy, we are thrilled and compelled to turn our attention to a new dimension of ministry—one modeled by the Great Physician Himself—of *first* reaching those whose needs are *physical* as well as spiritual. We look forward to continuing to grow the spiritual services offered through our chaplains, counselors, parish nursing training programs, and quality healthcare.

E. Lonnie Melashenko is vice president of Spiritual Services and Missions for Kettering Adventist HealthCare in Kettering, Ohio.



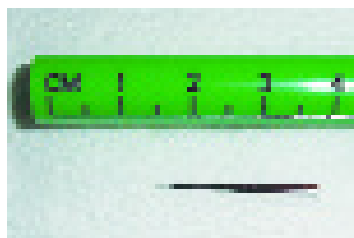
Miracles in Paraguay

Nine-year-old Adrian (below) was cutting coco palm branches to feed his family's cows when a large branch fell on his arm and deposited one of its long thorns deep into the soft skin of his inside elbow. Two weeks later Adrian's arm was so swollen, painful, and infected that he could not bend it. His family sought medical care in Rio Verde, but the doctor could not locate the stubborn thorn. Another week passed and the family received news that American doctors were giving free healthcare services at the Sanatorio Adventista.

After more than six hours of travel, Adrian was in the capable hands of Steve Schmidt, MD, a Kettering Medical Center plastic surgeon. Dr. Schmidt was to be



in an outlying village that day but transportation issues forced him to remain at the hospital with the surgical team. He spent more than two hours in surgery on Adrian's arm, searching for the offending thorn. Nearly ready to give up, the group paused to pray for guidance. Within moments they found and removed the thorn (right).



Dr. Schmidt and Cheri Mittleider, RN, were part of a team of 20 medical professionals, students, and church members (right) from the Kettering (Ohio) church and Kettering Adventist HealthCare facilities. The Ohio team joined 21 others from Arkansas, California, Colorado, Michigan, and Guatemala.



Kettering Medical Center's Steve Schmidt, MD, and Cheri Mittleider, an RN who recently relocated from Colorado, share a light moment with the sister of their patient Adrian. She proudly displays the contained thorn that once caused him excruciating pain.



Once there the missionaries established a base for operations at the Adventist hospital in Asuncion, and formed teams to conduct free health clinics in remote areas. Many of the trips required six-hour drives through rugged terrain. This project was a first-time collaboration with ADRA, who helped coordinate the clinics and transportation.

Word spread quickly throughout the area among residents (like those pictured below, left, on motorcycle) that American doctors were giving free services. In less than five days, the medical team performed 139 surgeries and saw more than 1,200 patients. They repaired cleft palates, restructured harelips, reduced burn scars, extracted hernias and tumors, and even removed extra fingers and toes. It was an intense effort to help people who would otherwise not have access to such procedures and medical exams.

In addition to medical care, the patients and their families also received spiritual nourishment. Ministry teams performed music and gospel outreach programs to share the grace of Jesus with residents, as they waited to see the medical team.

The missionary group of physicians, nurses, translators, chaplains, and helpers served at the Ana Stahl Clinic on the Amazon River in 2006, and they worked at the Adventist hospital in Honduras in 2007. This year Paraguay was selected because of its desperate need for healthcare.

"It is rewarding to serve people who otherwise have no access to procedures that can literally change their lives forever," says Dr. Schmidt, who started this group in 2003 with his sister, Lisa, an RN;



Kettering pediatrician Janet Velasco, MD, makes her examinations fun by demonstrating how to "open wide."

brother, Gary, the group's worship leader; and mother, Mafi, who coordinated travel and communication for the group. For more information about the group, contact Kettering Adventist HealthCare Spiritual Services at (937) 298-3399.



3D Lab Technicians Share Expertise

Today's medical imaging can make all the difference for critically-ill patients, showing issues with greater clarity and even locating deadly problems that would not have been noticed otherwise. This powerful tool is especially useful in the hands of a skilled technologist, like those at Kettering Medical Center's 3D Imaging Laboratory.

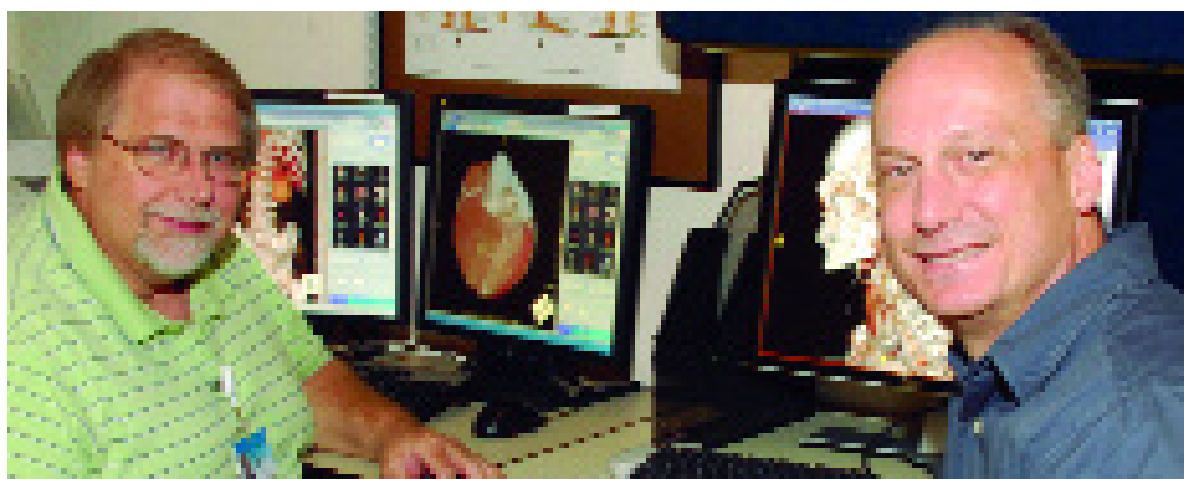
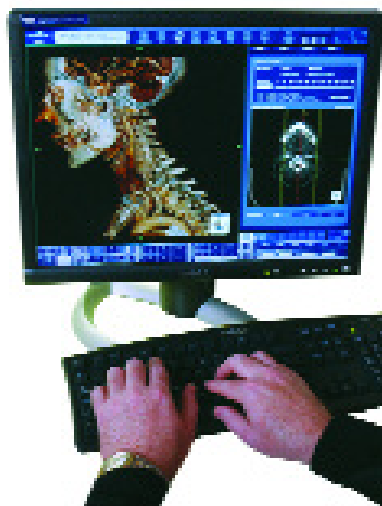
Tom Kracus, chief technologist for the 3D lab, has traveled the Midwest showing other hospital staff how to do what he does. Imaging professionals at the Cleveland Clinic, Ohio State University, and other centers are eager to learn from Kracus, knowing what an asset he is to cardiologists, cardiothoracic surgeons, neurologists, and neurosurgeons in Dayton.

Brain aneurysms, vessel blockages, and other "ticking time bombs" are Kracus' targets, and he hits them with the accuracy of a skilled marksman. The 3D studies are increasingly replacing angiography, with imaging performed in an hour as opposed to a day, and it does not require anesthesia, which allows patients to drive themselves to and from the hospital.


"This is one of the top 3D reconstruction labs around," states Ajay Reddivari, MD, interventional cardiologist. "They are really a great resource. People like Tom have gotten into this technology at the grassroots level, and he has a great wealth of experience in these reconstructions."

Kettering's 3D lab offers potentially thousands of views. Kracus, and fellow technologist Jay Coleman, sift through the high-resolution images to isolate specific areas. Two years ago they were doing only 10 cases a week. Today the lab processes 80 to 100 cases per week, as their value has dramatically increased in the local physician community.

"Jay and I have a blend of experience the doctors find really valuable, and we get so much positive feedback from the assistance we give the docs," Kracus says. "He has 30 years of angio and other special procedure experience. He's kind of like a walking anatomy book. His knowledge is a huge asset, and keeps us at the top of our game. I worked as a technologist in the cath lab for 10 years, I spent five years in CT and angiography, and I've also worked in the electrophysiology lab for one year. Working together, Jay and I know just what views the physicians want to see."



Medical centers throughout the Midwest seek the expertise of Kettering Medical Center's Jay Coleman (left) and Tom Kracus in setting up 3D labs.

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Conference Welcomes Two New Churches Behind Bars

Approximately 10 years ago, the New Life Seventh-day Adventist Prison Ministry Team in Salisbury, Md., began ministering to men housed at the local Eastern Correctional Institute (ECI), East Side. Over the years the New Life Prison Ministry team held worship services, Sabbath School, baptisms, served communion, and occasionally brought special music programs to the men. Recently all of that hard work culminated in the formation of two Adventist churches within the prison.



The New Life Prison Ministry team worked with inmates at the Eastern Correctional Institute in Salisbury, Md., for 10 years. As a result of their work, two churches were recently formed at the facility.

This was an historical event for two reasons: this was the first time the two sides of the prison residents could come together for worship or any other activity; and this was the first time two Adventist churches were established simultaneously in any such institution. The Little Flock at ECI West has 23 members, and Spirit of Faith at ECI East has 22 members. Five men were baptized that day.

Henry J. Fordham III, executive secretary of the Allegheny East Conference (AEC); Minnie McNeil, Prison Ministry advisor for the AEC; and Edith E. Tucker, president of the conference's Prison Ministry Federation, were also on hand to welcome the two churches to the conference fellowship. Fordham gave the men the charge and encouraged them to remain faithful to the Lord until the end. One of the inside members accepted that charge for all the baptized members of the two churches. Paul Bryant, DMin, will oversee the new churches in addition to pastoring the New Life church.

"This Sabbath is a day of miracles," said McNeil. One of the men indicated that even though they are still incarcerated, they are truly free in the Lord.

"God is adding to the membership of the worldwide church through the work of men and women volunteers," Tucker said. "The love extended by these talented members of the church through prison ministry is remarkable."

NEWS

Departmental Changes Announced

Thaddious Privette (right), who served as the conference's director of stewardship for 14 years, recently retired after 33 years of service to AEC. Over the past four years he helped increase conference tithe by \$4 million.



Jackson Doggette Jr., Esq., (below) was recently elected to



take Privette's place, but under the new title, director of the Department of Philanthropy. He also serves as associate Trust Services director. Doggette previously served as pastor for the Germantown church in Philadelphia.

"Stewardship is not just about money," Doggette said. "It is a lifestyle. We are emphasizing our commitment to

service in God's kingdom when we give of our time and talents." One of his major goals for the department is to get each local church stewardship leader certified by the North American Division.

Calendar Teaches the Importance of Sabbath

With the goal of teaching others about the Sabbath, Pastor Ronald Cho, special assistant to the AEC president, recently produced a Sabbath-focused calendar for 2009. Each week *The Beauty and Truth* calendar (right), includes a special Sabbath symbol, which directs readers to biblically-based Sabbath articles in the back. "It is my prayer that those who read the calendar will learn about the characteristics of Christ and be drawn to Him," said Cho.



For more information on the calendar, email remnant_144@hotmail.com.

Calvary Church Block Party “A Family Affair”

The Calvary church in Newport News, Va., recently hosted its second annual community block party. Four hundred church members and neighbors joined together for an afternoon of food, fun, and family. Themed “It’s a Family Affair,” the event included a health fair, a live concert, children’s games and recreation, athletic competitions, a book sale, an education booth, and healthy food.

A local healthcare professional checked body mass indices, cholesterol, and blood pressure. Participants in several athletic fitness challenges received prizes in the categories of double-dutch,

Hula Hoop, push-ups, and jumping jacks. Twenty-five people donated blood to the American Red Cross of Norfolk. The church also provided free educational literature covering dental health, diet, diabetes, women’s health, blood pressure, and other preventive healthcare strategies.

The music ministry staged an outdoor concert that included performances by vocalists Will Milteer, Vera Burnside, Chris Martin, Angie Roberts, TaNaasha McGriff, middle-school student Alexis Benjamin, saxophonist Randy Martin, gospel rap artist Ezra Gant, praise dancers, and two choral groups.



The church’s hospitality ministry team, led by sisters Hope Lawson and Florese Bryant, prepared a vegetarian barbeque for block party participants.

The block party also featured entertainment and food especially for the children. “The best part of every block party is the food, and this year’s party did not disappoint,” said member Eric Covington.

Helicopter Touches Down at Pine Forge’s Career Day

For the past nine years Career Day at Pine Forge Academy (PFA) has been an important part of Alumni Weekend. With about 400 alumni returning to PFA, many share information on what it takes to succeed in certain fields. This year students got a close look at what it takes to be a helicopter pilot, when several members of the Helicopter Strike Wing of the United States Atlantic Fleet, stationed in Mayport, Fla., touched down on campus.

“There was a huge roar of excitement when the helicopter landed. There was so much joy on



Cmdr. Dana Gordon (left) and Lt. Cmdr. Paul Anderson and their crew flew from Mayport, Fla., for Pine Forge Academy’s Career Day.

the kids’ faces and everyone lined up to get a chance in the pilot seat,” said Lt. Cmdr. Paul S. Anderson (’75), an Adventist chaplain stationed in Mayport who arranged for members of his fleet to come to Career Day.

“At our Career Day students often get to meet doctors and lawyers, but a helicopter pilot is not traditional. The impetus was not on recruiting, but to raise enthusiasm and show some different career options,” he noted. Students were

able to talk to the pilots and learn more about the career.

“Alumni are key to Career Day. We understand that when we graduate, our job begins; we become ambassadors for the academy, and how we conduct ourselves counts,” said Debra Anderson (’76), wife of chaplain Anderson, and president of the Pine Forge Academy National Alumni Association.

When asked why she thinks alumni are so eager to help current students, she said, “There is a special connection that students who have attended Pine Forge appreciate and celebrate. When we go there we learn academics, but our spiritual lives are nurtured, and we become part of a culture much bigger than ourselves.”

Allegheny East Exposé is published in the *Visitor* by the Allegheny East Conference ■ PO Box 266, Pine Forge, PA 19548 ■ Phone: (610) 326-4610 myalleghenyeast.com ■ President, Charles L. Cheatham ■ Communication Director, Robert Booker ■ Editor, Taashi Rowe



Student Shelbourne Richardson (’10) sits proudly in the cockpit.

Rock of Faith Youth Think “Out the Box”

The Rock of Faith church in Pittsburgh recently conducted The Real Talk Youth Conference themed “Out the Box.”

Joel “Joey” Kibble, a member of the gospel recording group Take 6, presented a stirring message during the general session. He encouraged the youth to establish a real relationship with God and to seek help from others.

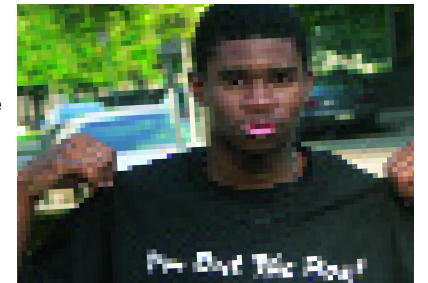


At a recent youth conference Joey Kibble of gospel group Take 6 encourages young people to get “Out the Box.”

“God has created you; He has put the muscle behind you to face your demons,” he added.

“The conference was created to show the young people how to escape the traps that Satan creates to take our eyes off Christ,” said Rock of Faith Pastor Chris Thompson.

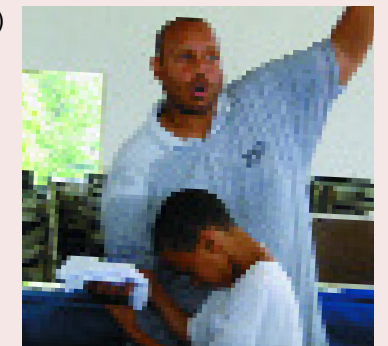
Other special guests included author Loretta Spivey, who presented a workshop that focused on the drama involved in unhealthy romantic relationships. Attendees to the conference were offered several seminars that ranged in topic from the effects of violence and drugs, to how to develop respect and a healthy mind-body connection through Christ. —Tanisha Greenidge



Pittsburgh youth and conference participant Andre Robinson shows that he’s “Out the Box.”

15 Young People Accept Jesus at Camp

This year’s summer camp program in the Allegheny West Conference (AWC) mixed outdoor fun and friends with making decisions for Christ. The program involved taking 70 campers (below) through the *Amazing Facts* Bible study lessons. Three Oakwood University (Ala.) students led the morning and evening worship sessions. Parents were notified ahead of time that there would be Bible lessons and appeals for the young people to make their decision to accept. After the campers made their decision for baptism, parents signed consent forms and were contacted and invited for the Sabbath baptism service and fellowship dinner. At the end of the camp, there were 17 decisions and 15 actual baptisms. The Oakwood students continue to follow up with the campers.



This young man is one of 17 young people who made a decision to follow Christ at this year’s summer camp.

There have also been efforts to help these recently baptized young people to connect with their home church pastor. According to Donald Burden, Youth Ministries director for the conference, this was a good example of how young adults can be trained and equipped to lead other young people to make a decision for Christ.

Community Service Volunteers Focus on Health

About 100 members of the Northern Ohio/Western Pennsylvania Community Service Federation recently met, bringing together members from 23 churches. Held at the Temple of Praise in Cleveland, the event focused on health. Federation members meet twice a year for worship and praise and to attend workshops that center on providing better community service programs.

"We hold these programs to broaden the scope of community service and teach people that there is more to community service than occasionally giving food to the homeless," said Paul Glenn, treasurer for the federation and a member of the Southeast church in Cleveland.

Special guests included Kim Lee and Earl J. Lawson, CEO/director and chief operating officer, respectively, for the African American Alzheimer's Association located in Columbus, Ohio. They spoke about how churches can help those with Alzheimer's disease, the most common form of dementia. Lawson shared that the mind is only as healthy as the body and pointed out the importance of reading and understanding labels on food and drinks.

"This has been the best and most informative, interactive community service federation I have attended. I wished more had been in attendance to receive this most timely information affecting our community," said Deborah Miller of the Southeast church.

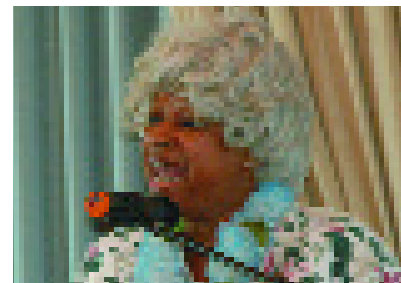
Steven Valles, pastor of the Oberlin and Twinsburg (Ohio) churches, shared the devotional, and Lucetta Cummings of Temple of Praise performed special music.



Marvin Brown (right), director of Adventist Community Services for AWC, poses with Earl Lawson (left) and Kim Lee from the African American Alzheimer's Association. Lawson and Lee spoke about the importance of maintaining a healthy mind and body.

Conference Says Goodbye to Lewis Family

AWC officers, departmental directors, office staff, and area pastors recently gathered to have one last dinner and outing with former conference president Pastor James Lewis and his wife, Sharon. Attendees wished them well and bid them farewell. Candace Nurse, an AWC accountant, performed an emotional mime to the song *Still I Rise*, by gospel recording artist Yolanda Adams. Derrick Moffett, ThD, pastor of Hilltop Community Worship Center in Columbus, played a melodic rendition of *His Eye is on the Sparrow* on his soprano saxophone. Those in attendance recalled special moments and were particularly surprised when "Sister Gethel Jones," a longtime member showed up. Gethel, a fictional character played by Ruth Ann Thompson, reminisced about the early days of Lewis' ministry. New conference president Fredrick Russell praised the Lewises for their committed, dedicated, and untiring service to AWC, then concluded with a circle of prayer over their lives and ministry (left).



Fictional character, "Sister Gethel Jones," reminisced about the good old days of James Lewis' ministry at a recent farewell event.



Catch the Vision is published in the *Visitor* by the Allegheny West Conference ■ 1339 East Broad Street, Columbus, OH 43205 ■ Phone: (614) 252-5271 ■ awcsda.com ■ President, Fredrick Russell ■ Editor, Bryant Taylor

One Size Does Not Fit All

Have you ever tried on something that is marked "one size fits all" and found that it didn't fit *you*? What if you had already paid for it, and it was very expensive—say, \$17,000? With our more than 200 students, each with a unique background, can a one-size-fits-all approach really work for everyone? At Blue Mountain Academy (BMA) we don't think so.

That is why we are striving to offer something special to each student. We do this with two dynamic pastors in our leadership program who are empowering our students to live a life that focuses on influencing others for Christ; a learning center that puts our professional and passionate learning specialist and her assistant into daily connection with the students who need additional academic support; and a program that provides students with the opportunity to graduate from BMA with as many as 15 college credits.

We are proud to celebrate the individuals on our campus, and we feel that by offering a variety of specialties (sizes), we can better prepare students to be what God has designed them to be.



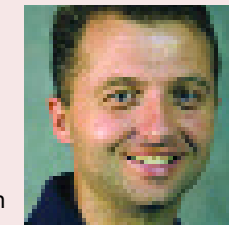
Rob Gettys
Principal

NEWS

New Staff Welcomed



Lauren (Reiner) Anderson (left) will assist the learning specialist. She served as taskforce girls' dean before finishing her degree at Kutztown University. She is married to Matt Anderson, assistant food service director.



Carlyle Ingersoll (right), health and physical education instructor and Aerial Aires coach,

comes to BMA from Highland Academy in Tennessee.



Cory Enochs (left), assistant boys' dean and recruiter, and his wife, Tracy (right), food service assistant, come to BMA from Great Plains Academy in Kansas. They have two daughters, Alicia, a freshman at Union College (Neb.), and Amber, an eighth-grader at Blue Mountain Adventist Elementary School.



School Year Begins With 229 Students

There are 229 students enrolled at BMA for the 2008-09 school year. This includes 71 seniors, 68 juniors, 54 sophomores, and 36 freshmen.

One junior, Alex Larracuente (right), wasn't sure that he would be able to return to BMA until a week before school started. He even began researching a local Christian school in Philadelphia, but God opened the way for him at BMA. He says some of the best things about BMA are the supportive environment and its deep spirituality.



Seniors Have a Blast at Annual Retreat

Jodi Baker and Trisha Strickland, members of BMA's 54th graduating class, pose for a photo before heading for the school's 9th annual Senior Retreat. The retreat activities were about coming together as a class and bringing individual strengths to the surface.



FOCUS Week Brings Student to Christ

Twice annually BMA holds a week of prayer called Focusing On Christ's Ultimate Sacrifice (FOCUS). As a result of this year's program, sophomore Caleb Roberts made a decision for Christ. "FOCUS Week really impacted me," he told the BMA church as he prepared to be baptized. He thanked his parents, family, and friends who came from Beltsville, Md., to show support.



Conference Prepares Students to Write Well



Rachel Whitaker, associate editor of *Guide* magazine, helped to guide young writers at BMA's third annual Writers Conference.

Fifth- through eighth-graders from 15 Adventist elementary schools recently attended BMA's third annual Writers Conference. This year they focused on journaling, poetry, short stories, and news writing.

"Writing, in particular, is so important, not only in school but also in their daily lives," says conference organizer and BMA English teacher Karyl Kramer. "I want to foster a continual desire for reading as well."

Rachel Whitaker, associate editor of *Guide* magazine; and English professor Richard Grant, from Columbia Union College in Takoma Park, Md., were featured guests at the conference. Several college students accompanied Grant. BMA junior English Honors and senior Advanced Placement students also assisted with writing activities. Whitaker and Grant also spent time with BMA students explaining career opportunities, and how to get articles published.

Alumni Help Raise \$1.3 Million in Capital Campaign

It's a go! With \$1.3 million raised as of September 30, BMA is well on its way to increasing its financial aid, expanding its curriculum with additional staff, and updating its facility. Alumni continue to play a crucial role in the capital campaign, contributing as much as \$215,000 of the \$350,000 needed to renovate BMA's 53-year-old bathrooms.

Those renovations started in October, and alumni Herb and Marilyn Dennison are donating toilets, sinks, piping, and skilled labor. "Anytime you have plumbing needs, just call us," they told Kathleen Sutton, director of advancement.

"It is exciting to see this project begin," says Sutton. "The students need this so badly." The project begins with gutting and restoring one wing of bathrooms at a time. Plans are available on BMA's website.

"So many alumni are getting involved. We have alumni waiting in the wings as we get permits for other projects," Sutton reports. She points to the Class of 1983, which is spearheading other dorm renovations. Members even painted the boys' dorm lobby at their expense before the school year began.

For the latest up-to-date information on completed, ongoing, and future capital campaign projects and how to get involved, go to bma.us, or contact Sutton at kathys@bma.us, or (610) 562-4214.

Want More BMA News?

We can email you the *Communique* as soon as it is printed. Send your name and email address to Kathleen Sutton at kathys@bma.us. Also check out our website for up-to-the-minute information, news, and happenings at bma.us.

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



Parents recently joined the Class of 1983 to give the boys' dorm lobby a face-lift. Pictured left to right are Ron Chong ('83), Pattie Hedges ('83), Chai Mau, parent; and Mike Dawson ('83).

THE CHALLENGE

chesapeake conference newsletter

NOVEMBER 2008

Whatever Happened to Houses of Prayer?

Have you ever noticed that Jesus launched the Christian church not while someone was preaching, but while people were praying? In the first two chapters of Acts, the disciples were doing nothing but waiting on God. And while they waited—worshiping, communing with God, letting God shape them and work on their hearts—the church was born.

What does it say about us today that God birthed the church in a prayer meeting, and prayer meetings today are almost extinct? In the early church, the apostles had this instinct: when in trouble, pray; when intimidated, pray; when challenged, pray; when discouraged, pray; when sick, pray; and when persecuted, pray. Surely this is the church as it is meant to be. It was vigorous and flexible, for those were the days before it ever became fat and short of breath through prosperity, or muscle-bound by over-organization. These people did not make "acts of faith," they believed; they did not "say their prayers," they really prayed. And through them God turned the world upside down.

Jesus, drawing upon the prophet Isaiah, declared: "My house shall be a house of prayer" (Isa. 56:7; Lk. 19:46, NASB). And I would love to see our churches match that description. I know you would too. Perhaps this is one our greatest challenges as a conference—to reawaken a passion for prayer in our churches. And to let God, once again, turn the world upside down.



Rob Vandeman
President

Youth Leaders Convene for Training and Fellowship

Driving rain could not dampen the spirits of nearly 200 teen and adult youth leaders as they converged on Mt. Aetna Camp and Retreat Center in Hagerstown, Md., for the conference-sponsored Youth Leaders Training Convention. More than once the cafeteria staff was asked to prepare additional

food as the number of attendees swelled. In addition to leaders from Chesapeake, there were about 30 representatives from Allegheny West Conference and a dozen from Pennsylvania Conference churches.

Training workshops were offered in seven tracks and included Pathfinder Basic and Master Guide certifications and honors classes, as well as Adventurer Basic certification sessions. The *Jesus Loves Jeans* series was one of two special youth evangelism tracks added this year. Dolores Agrinzonis from Texas conducted training for teenage youth leaders wanting to start and grow small discipleship groups in their churches. The second new track offered nuts-and-bolts instruction to adult leaders for planning and implementing engaging worship services geared toward youth, as well as a mission emphasis. Participants learned how to develop worship teams, incorporate technology into worship services, and organize mission trips and 30-Hour Famine programs.

"I love coming to these leadership weekends because, as a teenager, I can use what I have learned far into adulthood," remarked Erin Bush, a Williamsport, Md., teen leader. "It's more than just Pathfinders—it's about learning life skills."

Two Pathfinder area coordinators, Richard Griffin (Hagerstown) and Charlie Koerting (West Wilmington, Del.) were presented with the Pathfinder Instructor Award.



In his keynote address, Manny Cruz, associate director for the North American Division's Youth Ministries department, urged the group to "Be Joyful Always."

Hispanic Women Share Inspiration, Faith

More than 60 women representing Spanish-speaking churches in Baltimore, Annapolis, Spencerville, and Laurel, Md., and New Castle, Del., recently gathered at the conference office for a Sabbath of inspiration and training. Beny Rodriguez, Women's Ministries director for the Venezuela-Antilles Union Mission, challenged the group to use their talents and spiritual gifts for the glory of God in the home, church, and community. Afternoon seminars focused on practical ideas for women to deepen their faith and experience spiritual growth.—Cristina McConnell



Cristina McConnell (third from left), Baltimore; Beny Rodríguez (fourth from left), keynote speaker from Venezuela; Samantha Young (fifth from left), conference Women's Ministries director; Gladys Rosales (sixth from left), Baltimore; and other participants pause for a photo during the daylong Hispanic women's training event.



PHOTO BY SAMANTHA YOUNG
May-Ellen Colón, ACS director for the Adventist Church, says joining the Rotary Club and helping at the local school are just a few ways to bring the ministry of the church into the community.

Summit Equips Leaders and Volunteers for Service

Placing the Fingerprint of God in Our Local Communities" was the theme of the recent annual Adventist Community Services (ACS)/Disaster Response Summit, which attracted 75 leaders, volunteers, and pastors with a passion for service. Nikolaus Satelmajer, editor of *Ministry* magazine, shared his vision for making churches integral parts of their communities. "Do the work of God and the Lord will bless you," he asserted. "You are the evangelists."

In her workshop May-Ellen Colón, ACS director for the worldwide Seventh-day Adventist Church, zeroed in on Christ's method of reaching people as outlined by Ellen White (*Ministry of Healing*, p. 143). Colón encouraged participants to assess the needs in their neighborhood and find ways to meet those needs as a way of gaining trust in the community before sharing "the rest of the story."

Hispanic Crusades Yield Baptisms

Prayer Leads to Packed Church

When the New Castle (Del.) Spanish congregation decided to hold a series of evangelistic meetings, they made prayer an integral part of the process. Groups met at 4:30 each morning to walk and pray. Attendance the first evening was more than the building could hold, so the group moved to the larger West Wilmington church, where about 150 people gathered nightly to hear the message. "Twelve precious souls were baptized," reports Ismael Nuñez, pastor for New Castle Spanish.

Small Church Realizes Big Growth

A recent evangelistic campaign, conducted by the 42-member Parksley (Va.) Spanish church, led to seven baptisms and many others requesting Bible studies. The meetings, themed "The Victory is Yours—Take It," conducted by Pastor Andrés Peralta, drew about 27 visitors each evening.



PHOTO BY DILCIA GONZALEZ
There were smiles all around when Elodia Velasquez was baptized by Pastor Carlos Gonzalez. Her husband, Melgar, was also baptized that day.

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Columbia Union College

New Masters Degrees Keep Students Competitive

Columbia Union College's (CUC) School of Graduate and Professional Studies recently added two new masters degree programs. The master's of public administration and master's of counseling psychology are designed to meet the demands of professionals in today's workforce.



The master's of public administration will equip students with practical training in advanced public administration. Students will complete a balanced curriculum of 12 courses that will certify their expertise in public policy and public management.

"Constituents of the Columbia Union who want to garner expertise in the field of public administration will be at a competitive advantage if they hold this degree," said Gina Brown, PhD, (left), dean of the School of Graduate and Professional Studies.

Students earning the master's of counseling psychology degree may work as licensed psychologists or counselors. During the program, they will take practicums and a clinical internship. The new counselors will also receive field experience.

"This program will offer students a really solid foundation as we seek to counsel people to become whole. We will show them a wholistic perspective in combining the mind, body, and spirit," said Grant Leitma, PhD, (right), program coordinator and chair of the Department of Psychology.

Both degree programs begin in January. For more information go to cuc.edu.



College Fills Two Leadership Positions



Gary L. Wimbish (left) was recently named vice president of ministry. He will provide spiritual leadership and work with CUC's Campus Ministries department to provide meaningful and relevant resources for CUC's Christian college community. Wimbish has spent

12 years ministering to churches along the East Coast, Ohio, and California before shifting his focus to higher education administration. He has served at Oakwood University (Ala.), Emory University (Ga.), the University of Maryland School of Law, and the University of Baltimore School of Law.

Wimbish also serves as the executive Pastor for administration at the Emmanuel-Brinklow church in Ashton, Md.

Saschane M. Stephenson (below) was recently selected as the new executive director of Marketing and Communication at CUC. She is responsible for planning, developing, and implementing all aspects of the college's marketing strategies.

Stephenson is an entrepreneur with 12 years of industry experience in building stakeholder engagement and as a branding management specialist. She has worked as an assistant manager for marketing and development at the Adventist Development and Relief Agency International in Silver Spring, Md.; an adjunct professor for Andrews University (Mich.); and a graphic designer at the Review and Herald Publishing Association in Hagerstown, Md.



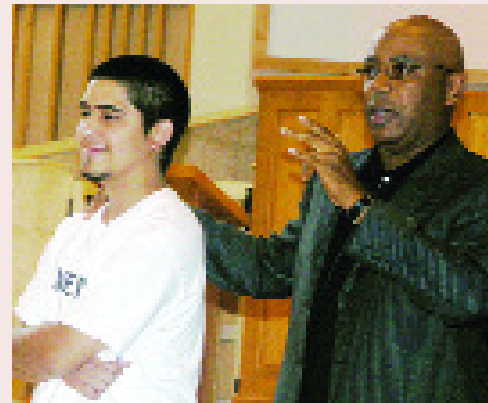
WISE Spotlights Relationships and Spirituality

Students, faculty, and staff recently packed the sanctuary of nearby Sligo church to attend CUC's Week In Spiritual Emphasis (WISE). Charles Tapp, pastor for Potomac Conference's Seabrook church in Lanham, Md., delivered several messages that resounded with everyone in attendance. The week's theme was "A Word for Life: Keys to Practical Christian Living." Tapp anchored his message on the importance of developing a relationship with God. He reminded students to have faith in the works of God and to stop blaming Him for their issues, because God knows and has the master plan.

"Life is like a jigsaw puzzle," said Tapp. "God only lets us see one piece at a time, while He sees how *all* the pieces will eventually come into play."

Highlights of WISE came in the final two days when Tapp gave a two-part sermon on Christians maintaining a healthy love life. "Never settle for less because having something you don't want is like having nothing at all," he cautioned.

At the end of the week, Tapp invited attendees to stand for special prayer. Nearly 100 students, faculty, and staff came forward and agreed to practice the life lessons Tapp taught them.—*André Hardy*



Week In Spiritual Emphasis speaker Pastor Charles Tapp (right) uses a student to illustrate his sermon.

Students Take a Day to Serve

CUC students recently spent time helping local nonprofits and community residents during the school's annual Service Day. From sorting donations at a food bank and caring for abused horses, to raising awareness for affordable housing for the homeless, volunteers enjoyed the time spent away from the classroom.

"This year, as with any other, we wanted our students to spend a day sharing an experience and doing something good for someone other than themselves," said Service Day coordinator Lorena Martinez.



Students cleaned out the stalls, fed the animals, and distributed hay bales at a farm for abused horses.

One group of students cleaned up a popular creek that runs behind the college. The students picked up trash and pulled out harmful plants affecting the local vegetation. Volunteers also planted flowers for children affected by HIV and AIDS, planted trees and shrubs, and visited with students at nearby Adventist schools.

In all nearly 230 students grabbed boxed lunches and boarded buses to put their desire to serve into action.



A group of students take a break from packing food to pose for a picture.

CALENDAR

November

3-9 Health and Wellness Week

26-30 Thanksgiving Break

December

4 Annual Christmas Tree Lighting

5 New England Youth Ensemble and Choir Christmas Concert

7 Gateway to Christmas Banquet

8-10 Final Exams

11-Jan. 1 Christmas Break

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

The Leprosy of Sin

Leprosy was the most dreaded disease of ancient days. It was extremely contagious so no one would want to touch, or even get close to a person with leprosy. In fact, should someone ever come near one infected with this disease, the leper was required to cry out, "Unclean! Unclean!" But, to make matters worse, leprosy was often considered to be a physical punishment from God for some secret sin in the life of those afflicted with the disease. In the minds of many, this made lepers unworthy of any real human or divine compassion.

Nevertheless, while Jesus was visiting one of the cities of Galilee, a man with leprosy sought Him out, to ask Him for help (Matt. 8:2-4). More shockingly, when finding Him, the leper walked right up to the Lord, and fell on his face to worship Him. Then, rising to his knees, he pleaded, "If You are willing, I know that You can cleanse me from my leprosy!" Happily for the leper, Jesus, filled with compassion, stretched out His hand and—shunning society's taboo—actually touched him! The Lord declared, "Yes! I am quite willing! Be clean!" Instantly, at the sound of the Lord's voice, the leprosy vanished from the man, leaving him completely clean. By doing so, Jesus clearly indicated that, not only was He willing to cleanse someone of leprosy, He was just as willing to remove the moral defect that supposedly caused the illness in the first place. Clearly, Jesus was not afraid to have close physical contact with a leper. More importantly, though, the Savior demonstrated that He was not afraid to have equally intimate contact with sinners of all sorts.

Isn't it good news that our Lord is willing to associate with us, when we, as sinners, reach out to Him for the spiritual healing we so desperately need? Do we treat our fellow sinners with the same level of compassion as Jesus treated the leper? It is something to think about!



Bradley Galambos
Ministerial Secretary

New Members Enjoy Special Weekend

About 60 new members and their families (below) recently attended a new-member-only retreat at the Valley Vista Adventist Center in Huttonsville, W.Va. Members who joined a Mountain View Conference (MVC) church either by baptism or profession of faith in 2007 and 2008 received an invitation.



One new member said that he was glad he attended: "[Keepers of the Flame] was really enlightening." Another attendee said she felt it was a wonderful way to meet people and get to know them better.

Wellness Camp Yields Miracles

After 17 days at this summer's conference-led wellness camp, 16 people lost more than 150 pounds, and one person lost 21 pounds, reports Daniel Morikone, Health Ministries director for the conference. Others quit smoking, and one person quit drinking coffee after being a coffee drinker for 43 years, he adds.



Many were able to walk faster and farther than they did before attending wellness camp.

While at the Valley Vista Adventist Center in Huttonsville, W.Va., the guests learned that healthy living is about turning new habits into a lifestyle and not something sporadic.

"The guests learned the miraculous blessings of properly understanding and implementing the eight

natural remedies (nutrition, exercise, water, sunshine, temperance, air, rest, and trust in Divine power). Although simple, it is easy to disregard or not implement these wonderful remedies. But, oh, the amazing, almost incredible results [which came from applying these natural methods]," says Chris Hasse, member of the Spencer (W.Va.) church and one of the health instructors.

Blood work was offered at the beginning and near the end of the wellness camp. Pastors and health educators in the conference offered their services, including Toll Gate member Jim LeVos, MD, who led several lectures and counseled guests. Morikone reported that after two weeks at camp, all diabetics were taking only half or less of their diabetic medication. One who had been a diabetic for three years was able to stop taking medication. Another guest, who had never had a cholesterol level below 200, experienced a drop from 256 to 188. Another person's triglyceride level dropped 110 points. By the time camp ended many were able to walk faster and walk farther than when they first arrived.

Throughout the day, guests were



Chris Hasse (left), member of the Spencer (W.Va.) church, and camp attendee Sandra Spitalisky, member of the Romney (W.Va.) church, demonstrate how to cook nutritious and delicious meals.

involved in discussion groups, walking, stretching exercises, swimming, and cooking classes. They also received massages, listened to lectures and testimonies, ate tasty and nutritious meals, and spent time with God in personal devotions and group worships.

One guest said, "Now I know why the 'health message' is so important and what a difference it can make in my life."

The next wellness camp will be held in July 2009. For more information, contact the MVC office at (304) 422-4581.



Daniel Morikone, MVC Health Ministries director, presents a wellness camp participant with a graduation certificate.

Mountain View EVENTS

December

- 2 Ministers Meeting, Grafton
- 7 Teachers Inservice, Summersville
- 13 Youth Rally, Clarksburg
- 14 Church Leadership Symposium

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President, Larry Boggess
Interim Editor, Valerie Morikone

NOVEMBER 2008

A Privilege and a Responsibility

At our recent "Boot Camp for Evangelism" with the ShareHIM ministry, 208 lay leaders from New Jersey Conference churches accepted the call to become evangelist leaders. They would not only serve in the territory of our conference, but anywhere in the world they may be invited to preach the gospel of the kingdom. Because of this we plan to have more than 200 evangelistic campaigns in New Jersey and any other place God may invite us. I believe it is important that our people participate in international campaigns. Preaching the gospel in foreign lands opens the eyes of the evangelist and shows what a humble person put in God's hands can do. Some of our evangelists have already had the opportunity to lead meetings in Africa, India, or Inter-America, and they have brought hundreds of people to the feet of Jesus. That is what we want to see here in the New Jersey Conference and all of North America. We want to see an explosion of small group meetings, Bible studies, and public evangelistic meetings, in every language.

This coming year has been declared the "Year of Evangelism" for our division, and although I believe that every year is the "Year of Evangelism," I encourage all to work with love, doing the work of Christ. We are inviting not only our evangelists, but all pastors to lead out in at least two large series of evangelistic campaigns in each church. And each department of the New Jersey Conference will lead out in at least one meeting. I have already signed my commitment with two of our churches to preach during our Great Festival of Evangelism in the spring, and I encourage you to get involved. Let's move forward, and let's share Jesus!



José Cortés, PsyD
President

Morristown Spanish Pays Off Mortgage

The Morristown Spanish company recently celebrated making a \$23,000 mortgage disappear in just six months. "From the moment I arrived at the church, I challenged the brethren to complete the payments on this balance, and, thanks to God, in six months it was paid off," said Pastor Ramon Crousett. "We also received correspondence from previous pastors inquiring about the miracle of completing the mortgage payments." In addition to completing the payments,

Morristown Spanish completed the construction of the church's porch and the floor on the lower level of the church.

These accomplishments made the celebration of their 10th anniversary and the dedication of the building for the service of God even more joyous. José H. Cortés, PsyD, conference president, and Jorgé Garcia, the church's previous pastor attended the celebration. After Cortés' message, three people responded to the call for baptism.



Pastor Ramon Crousett (left) and Morristown Spanish members burn their \$23,000 mortgage.



Rockaway Church Pathfinders Challenged to “Choose Wisely”

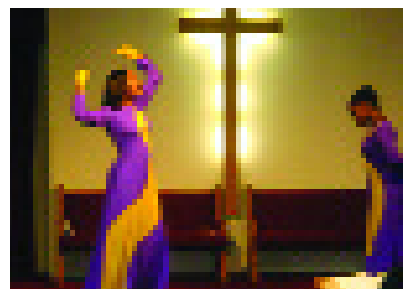
A recent Pathfinder Sabbath at the Rockaway church meant parents, friends, and church members alike got to see their Pathfinders in action throughout the entire day. The Sabbath School lesson study, “Character and Choosing Friends Wisely,” and the sermon of the day, “Origin of a Superhero,” were focused on the Pathfinders. During the Sabbath School lesson Pathfinders were challenged to consider their friends to see if they measure up to what the Bible has to say about choosing friends wisely. The sermon, preached by Raynard Josephs from the First church of Newark, challenged the listening congregation and Pathfinders to emulate those characteristics that could benefit the Christian walk. The day culminated with an induction ceremony.—Betty-Jean Cox

New Brunswick English Youth Lead Unprecedented Program

Young people at the New Brunswick English church recently took over church services from the adults and led in all aspects, from teaching Sabbath School classes to leading and preaching in the divine service.

“The purpose of youth day was to show different aspects of how we can praise and worship the Lord through the music we sing, the words that we say, and our actions,” said Louides Ferdinand, one of the organizers of the program. Miriam Ogalo and Robert Harris also organized the program.

Throughout the unprecedented



Young people at New Brunswick English church invited Hands in Praise from Victory church in Bronx, N.Y., to participate in their program.

youth day program participants expressed the different ways to worship and praise God. They praised God in song, through poetry, and through an animated children’s story created by Robert Harris. Kevin Solomons, a student at Oakwood University (Ala.), preached about true worship. After the service, youth day continued with lunch and an afternoon program.

Several adults in the congregation expressed their appreciation for the program. “I watched these young people growing up in the church. It was heartwarming to see them being transformed into such responsible and incredible leaders. To God be the glory,” said Anasthasie Sainvilus.—Philomena Ogalo

The evening program included a play written by Rhya Moffitt. The play explored the importance of making God central to romantic relationships.



A recent Pathfinder Sabbath at Rockaway church culminated with an induction service. Two young men, Rondal Arnold and Martin Kwame, were inducted into Pathfinders.

dates NEW JERSEY

November

- 1 North Area English Festival of Laity, Newark English
- 8 Central/South Area Spanish Festival of Laity, Bridgeton Spanish
- 15 North Area Spanish Festival of Laity, Tranquil Valley Retreat Center
- 27 Conference Office/Adventist Book Centers Closed

December

- 7 Pastors/Teachers Banquet

Correction: In the September issue of *New Jersey News*, it was mistakenly reported that the Hackettstown church gave away two volumes of *Uncle Arthur’s Bedtime Stories*. The church actually gave away two 10-volume sets of *The Bible Story* by Arthur Maxwell. We regret the error.

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President, José Cortés ■ Editor, Laffit Cortés

Conference President Visits India, Talks Leadership



Raj Attiken, DMin, president of the Ohio Conference, recently returned from India where he made six major presentations on leadership. The event brought together 70 Adventist leaders (left) from all levels of the church to the city of Shimla, at the foothills of the Himalayan Mountains. Pastor Attiken’s presentations focused on the leadership practices employed in the Ohio Conference, the biblical foundations for these practices, and the conference’s strategy to stimulate major transformations in the culture of Adventism in Ohio—in making it a gospel-centered, incarnational, missional movement.

“I was encouraged by the commitment of the church’s leaders in India to contextualize the gospel to the Indian perspective and by their desire to learn how to be better leaders,” Attiken said.

Adventists Minister Among Muslims

Adventists recently had an unprecedented and unique opportunity to have a ministry presence at the 45th Annual Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) convention, held at the Columbus Convention Center. An estimated 30,000 Muslims attended the event, which claims to be the largest annual gathering of Muslims in North America. Ohio ranks among the top 10 states with the largest Muslim population in the United States. A group of Adventist volunteers held a health expo with eight stations identifying basic health principles and offering free health screenings.

Expo volunteers included a group from the Atlanta, Ga., chapter of the Adventist-Muslim Fellowship Association, students from Southern Adventist University in Tennessee, and volunteers from Alabama and Ohio. Each came willing to do something historic, cross barriers and touch lives. Bryan Gallant, assistant director for Adventist Muslim Relations for The Quiet Hour, said attending the event was inspiring. “As the Muslim attendees shared their joy and surprise at our being there, coupled with a genuine interest as to how we were invited and who we were,



Several of the volunteers included Ohio Conference president, Raj Attiken, (bottom row, far left); Bryan Gallant, assistant director, Adventist Muslim Relations for The Quiet Hour (top row, fourth from right); and Pastor Paulo Bechara, North American Division Adventist Muslim Relations coordinator (bottom row, far right).



Seventh-day Adventists recently held a health expo at the 45th Annual Islamic Society of North America convention. The event, held in Columbus, drew 30,000 Muslims.

the hours disappeared much too quickly,” he said.

Another volunteer met a Muslim lady living outside Atlanta who is writing a book from her years of studying the Koran. She plans to identify many of the places where it talks about Muslims uniting with those who actually follow the Jewish and Christian Scriptures that God has given. This Muslim woman cried, hugged the volunteer, and said she wants to publish her book soon so she can share it with her people, challenging them to practice the love, kindness, and positive teachings of the Koran.

NEWS

Coshocton Hosts Health Fair

The Coshocton church recently hosted a community health fair and shared information on how to achieve optimum health and combat lifestyle-related illnesses such as diabetes, heart disease, cancer, and osteoporosis. Local healthcare providers were invited to participate, including some from the local hospital, a physical therapist, and a weight loss coach.

Toledo First Hosts "Cars 4 Kidz" Fundraiser

The Toledo First church recently held its annual car show fundraiser (left) to purchase interactive, toy pets for kids with cancer. Forty-nine classic cars were shown at this year's event, and a group of judges chose the winners in several categories. The children also got to pick their favorites.



Mansfield Attends Richland County Fair

The Mansfield church continued its annual tradition of setting up a booth at the Richland County Fair. The ministry, coordinated by John Swaisgood, offered Christian and health literature, and cold bottles of water. There were also huge smiles when they gave away coloring books, jar openers, wristbands, pens, yardsticks, and new Bibles. All items given away included church information.

Peebles Runs Booth at Adams County Fair

The Peebles Community Bible Fellowship operated a booth (below) at the Adams County Fair this year. They offered free books, Bible studies, magazines, bookmarks, and children's materials. Church members prayed with fair attendees, helped answer questions about Bible topics, and shared about the benefits of a healthful lifestyle. The group collected more than 650 surveys from fair attendees, which will help them formulate future outreach plans with God's leading.



Stillwater Youth Take Mission Trip to Montana

Fourteen youth from the Stillwater church in Dayton recently went on a homeland mission trip to Helena, Mont. They spent a week working with the children at InterMountain, a facility where neglected and abused children go for relief and comfort. "It was a real blessing. I felt that we were able to change some lives," said group leader Chris Staats. "I also think that our youth's eyes were opened, and they can now better relate to others in their own schools."

Christian Motorcyclists Visit VBS

Tom Hughes, pastor of the Zanesville and Newark churches in Ohio, recently visited a Vacation Bible School (VBS) for about 80 low-income kids at the Bellows Avenue Church of the Nazarene in Columbus. Hughes was accompanied by his grandson, Carter. Hughes, and fellow members of the interdenominational Christian Motorcyclists Association were there to present a devotional for the VBS. In addition to teaching them about Jesus, each child took home a photo of themselves posing with a motorcycle they liked the best.



Coming in January

Ohio Ministry University, a learning opportunity for local church leaders, will be held January 24-25, 2009, at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Dublin, Ohio. Featured speakers will be Peter Roennfeldt, associate ministerial secretary in Australia's Victoria Conference, and Clarence and Dianna Schilt, a pastoral couple from Portland, Ore.

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Phone: (740) 397-4665 ■ ohioadventist.org ■ President, Raj Attiken ■ Editor, Nancy Barnett

The Names Jesus Called Us

Jesus called us names. Not the mean, playground types. He said that we were "salt" and "light." The interesting thing about salt is that to have an effect, salt has to mingle with a substance such as food. In the mingling, salt does not lose its distinctive chemical properties. It still remains salt—sodium chloride—even as it becomes integrated with food. Light is not just a point of brilliance far out across the vastness of darkness, although that is sometimes how we picture it. Light, in order to overcome the darkness of a room, fills the room, spreading and reaching across all the space in a room. Just so, you and I, as members of Christ's body are to mingle with our communities. Salt and light get close to whatever they affect. Our church is to be the salt and light for the mission of Jesus. In order to do that, we must approach the people and meet them in ways that they can be receptive. Then we will be able to share the distinctive, joyful message that Jesus has placed in our hearts and lives. You and I have been called names. Let's live up to those names!



Ray Hartwell
President

Philadelphia Boulevard's Community Day Attracts Police

More than 1,200 people recently attended Philadelphia Boulevard church's community day. The event was held at the church on Roosevelt Avenue in Philadelphia.

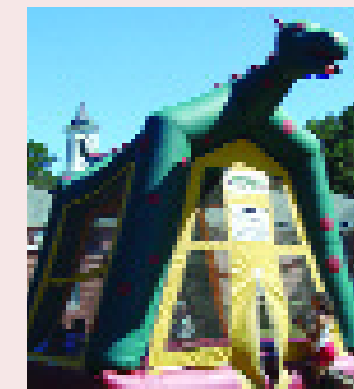
"The response to the event was phenomenal. People who attended had nothing but positive things to say. We had so many who for the first time in their lives tasted vegetarian fare. They came back for seconds, and took leftovers home. But most of all, lives were touched; people were convicted that they needed to get to know Christ better. One gentleman who came with his daughter on crutches kept telling me, 'I'll see you on Saturday,'" reported assistant community services director Deborah Roach.

Bible worker Lillian Torres operated the church's Community Ministries booth where several individuals expressed their desire to know Jesus better. At the Prayer Booth, Gretchen Valles prayed with these and others who requested prayer.



Officers from the police department fingerprinted children during Philadelphia Boulevard church's community day.

Children also enjoyed two moon bounces and face painting. Adventist WholeHealth's van was on hand offering health screenings. The Adventist Book Center's book mobile was also open for business. Representatives from the Pennsylvania Conference, the Adventist Humanitarian Resource Center (AHRC), and Allegheny East Conference were all on hand for this milestone event. Many people received quality, free clothing and other items at the Freecycle location. They also enjoyed a hot vegetarian meal that included:



While their parents picked out items from Freecycle, children enjoyed jumping in the dragon moon bounce.

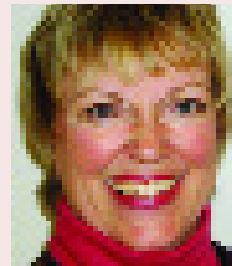
burgers in homemade gravy, rice and peas, steamed corn, green bean casserole, salad, and fresh fruit. Darryl Stovall, chairman of the board for AHRC, was instrumental in getting organizations to sponsor the event either with financial support or donations of food, including the mayor's Office of Community Services, Pennsylvania Public Utilities Commission, Philadelphia Corporation for Aging, Comcast Cable, Coca-Cola, Johanna Farms, Rita's Water Ice, Trader Joe's, BJ's Club, and Herr's Food.

Teen Retreat to Focus on Real Friendships

On Sabbath, November 22, teen girls are invited to attend a one-day retreat at the Holiday Inn Harrisburg on 148 Sheraton Drive in New Cumberland. This event will include activities and discussions on what it means to be "Really Friends." Moms and/or youth leaders are invited to bring their daughters and her friends and/or their youth group girls and their friends. Attendees will explore what it means to really be friends, how to really have a friendship with God, and answer the question: "Can boys really be just friends?" Pick up a registration sheet in your church, or download one at paconference.org on the calendar page.

Workshop to Teach Goal Setting

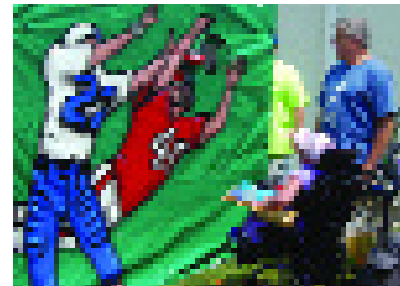
On Sunday, November 23, certified coach, professional consultant, and trainer Judy Butler (right) will lead a seminar on setting Specific, Measurable, Action-oriented, Realistic, and Time-bound (SMART) goals. This interactive and fun seminar, titled Achieving Goals, will be held at the Holiday Inn Harrisburg on 148 Sheraton Drive in New Cumberland. The cost for this one-day event is \$25 and covers the seminar, materials, and lunch. Pick up a registration sheet in your church, or download one at paconference.org on the calendar page.



Hershey Holds First Community Day

As each family attending the Hershey church's first annual Community Family Fun Day arrived, they received a warm welcome, a bottle of water; a welcome letter; which included information on upcoming church events; and a "Passport to Fun." This passport was their ticket to the various stations set up for the event. After completing a station, the passport was stamped, and a prize was given.

Stations included Jump Rope, Hula Hoop, Coffee Can Knock-down, Ducky Pull, Water Balloon Walk, Face Painting, Milking Cow, Quarterback Toss, the Giant Inflatable Fun station, and a Snow Cone and Popcorn station. Inside



Even a near miss at the Quarterback Toss was fun for participants.

the church participants found vegetarian food samples, Pathfinder/Adventurer information, literature, and chair massages.

The church mailed postcards to 1,000 homes within a one-mile radius of the church and put an ad in nearby weekly papers. More than 75 families visited the event. Many members of the church volunteered their time and efforts to make this outreach a success. In addition, local businesses supported the day with their donations, discounts, and partnerships. Church members are looking forward to next year's community day and hope to double the attendance.—Lisa Hawkins



One young man tries his hand at milking a "cow" at the Hershey church's Community Family Fun Day.

What's happening

November

- 1 Church Planting Summit
Allentown Church
- 7-9 Equipping University, *Carlisle*
- 7-9 Pathfinder/Adventurer Leadership Training
Laurel Lake Camp
- 22 Really Friends Teen Retreat for Girls
Holiday Inn, New Cumberland
- 23 Achieving Goals Conference
Holiday Inn, New Cumberland

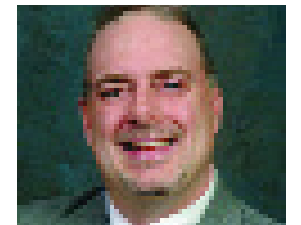
Pennsylvania Pen is published in the *Visitor* by the Pennsylvania Conference 720 Museum Road, Reading, PA 19611 Phone: (610) 374-8331, ext. 210 paconference.org ■ President, Ray Hartwell ■ Editor, Tamyra Horst

Potomac People

NOVEMBER 2008

Treasurer Accepts Call to Georgia-Cumberland

Kurt Allen, who served 11 years as vice president for finance at Potomac Conference, has accepted an invitation to serve as treasurer of the Georgia-Cumberland Conference headquartered in Calhoun, Ga. Allen has served Potomac for a total of 22 years. Allen says he and his wife, Jeanie, believe God is calling them to their new assignment. "We feel privileged to have had a front row seat to witness God's blessings in Potomac," Allen said in a farewell letter.



Kurt Allen, who served 11 years as vice president of finance for Potomac Conference, has accepted a call to serve as treasurer for the Georgia-Cumberland Conference.

During Allen's tenure the conference's membership doubled to 31,000 and new churches were built, as was the more spacious Potomac Adventist Book and Health Food Store in Silver Spring, Md.

"Kurt has served Potomac Conference with distinction. He has brought clarity in understanding the 'big picture' of mission that God has called us to, willingness to take appropriate risks to further the ministry of Potomac, and to have his voice heard at critical junctures," said conference president Bill Miller. "We wish him the best as he undertakes a new adventure in God's vineyard."

"We have been energized by the incredible growth of our Spanish-speaking brothers and sisters. We have been amazed at God's 'parting of the waters' to build and purchase new churches, when man's wisdom said it was impossible. We give God the glory for leading Potomac Conference to its strongest financial position ever," Allen said.

Jeanie also served as an assistant in the Communication Department for a number of years. The Allens are parents to teenage daughters, Amanda and Scooter.

Southwest Virginia Camp Meeting and Messiah's Mansion Draws Thousands

A camp meeting organized by lay people recently gave the Seventh-day Adventist Church in southwest Virginia the highest impact, most cost effective outreach ever done, according to Scott Cleveland, coordinator and founder of the lay-run Southwest Virginia Camp Meeting. Each fall the planning group led by Cleveland, an entrepreneur in the region, presents a three-day, weekend camp meeting inviting members and friends to the Fairgrounds in Rural Retreat, Va. The meeting reaches those who might not be able to travel to the Potomac Conference Camp Meeting 200 miles north in New Market, Va. Attendees to this year's meeting enjoyed the



Karen Bryant interprets for the deaf attending the camp meeting.

ministry of speakers such as Jorge Ramirez, Potomac Conference vice president for administration; Ron DuPreez, an Adventist educator; and Frank Fournier, president of Eden Valley Institute in Loveland, Colo.

Messiah's Mansion, however, was the main attraction. A production of Oklahoma Academy, the life-sized exhibit of the ancient Hebrew sanctuary, drew nearly 3,000 community guests from across the region. Buses from several churches of other denominations wheeled into the campgrounds to experience the inspirational and informative tours guided by students from the academy. More than 500 surveys were collected and thousands of pieces of literature were distributed. An extensive follow-up plan is being implemented.

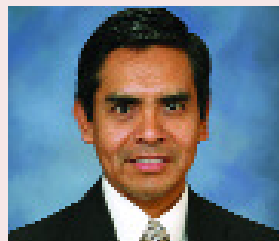


Adventist educator Ron DuPreez leads the morning message at the recent Southwest Virginia Camp Meeting.

Conference Welcomes New, Returning Staff

Hugo Chinchay Accepts Trust Services Post

Hugo Chinchay (right) recently joined the conference as its Planned Giving and Trust Services director. Chinchay previously served as chief financial officer for Loma Linda University School of Medicine Basic Sciences in California. He has also worked for La Sierra University and Loma Linda Academy (both in California) as the assistant business and network administrator. He is married to Eunice, and they have two adult sons, Hugo Jr. and Daniel.



Former Education Director Takes Interim Role

Violet Weiss, who has served eight years as vice president of the conference's Education Department, has returned to serve as interim associate for Education. She and her husband reside in North Carolina.

Sligo Church Celebrates Centennial With Music, Old Friends, and More Music

Sligo church in Takoma Park, Md., recently paused to commemorate—and rejoice in—God's leading over the last 100 years of its history. As was fitting of its 100-year history, the celebration lasted three days, starting with a Friday evening program showcasing Sligo's musical history. Every age group and genre of sacred music was represented that evening. Many of the musicians are current and former Columbia Union College (CUC) students, going back as far as the 1960s.

The Sabbath School program highlighted collaborative service projects between Sligo church, Columbia Union College, and Washington Adventist Hospital over the span of their shared history. The Sabbath morning speaker was Rudy Torres, a well-loved senior pastor who served Sligo from 1992–97. The worship service featured the music of the Columbia Collegiate Chorale, the New England Youth

Ensemble, and the Sligo Sanctuary Choir.

An international luncheon, coordinated by Rebecca Ratana, was held at Sligo Adventist School, after which there were tours of the school, church, and college. Two panel discussions were held Sabbath afternoon: one on Sligo's history of women in ministry, led by Joan Francis, PhD, chair of CUC's History and Political Studies Department; and another on Sligo's history of diversity. Sligo's New Community Fellowship ended a long day of celebrations with contemporary praise music and speaker Andy McRae, former associate pastor at Sligo.

On Sunday there was a brunch, cooked and served by Judy and Carmine Pino, Brenda and Blair Peace, and Judy Cichosz. The centennial celebrations culminated with a chamber music ensemble in the atrium that afternoon.—*Debbie Eisele*



Sligo church, which started out with 54 members recently celebrated its 100th anniversary with nearly 3,000 members on the books.

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

Spotlight on Spencerville

NOVEMBER 2008

Is Adventist Education Worth the Price?

Some recent rumination made me realize that many of the spiritual milestones in my life have occurred in an educational setting. I attended a small Adventist grade school, went to an Adventist boarding school, and completed my undergraduate work in an Adventist college. Later in my career I completed my master's degree at an Adventist university. Now I am a principal of an Adventist school catering to students from pre-kindergarten through grade 12. While writing this article it hit me that I have never left school!

You will find that most Adventist teachers are teaching because they were called to a ministry. They touch the lives of students every day in so many ways. Just as many of my significant spiritual moments occurred in an educational environment, the same can hold true for any student who walks through one of our many Adventist schools worldwide. Was my Adventist education worth the cost? With four children in school, my parents struggled to pay the tuition, however, I know they do not regret one dime of their sacrifice. For this school principal, I know every dollar that I see pass through this office is an investment in eternity.



Brian Kittleson
Principal

New Math, Bible Teachers Join the Staff

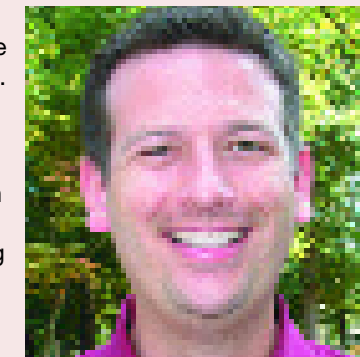


At the beginning of the 2008-09 school year, Spencerville Adventist Academy (SAA) welcomed not only new students, but three new teachers as well. Barbara Plubell (left) teaches middle school math and seventh-grade homeroom. She and

her husband come from the West Coast where her three sons and one daughter still reside. Plubell's passion for teaching comes from her passion for learning. "My greatest goal is that each student who passes through my classroom will develop a deeper, growing, personal relationship with God, and that they will realize their own immeasurable worth to God and the contribution they can make to others," she says.

DeWayne Boyer (right) joins the high school Bible department after 16 years at sister-school Takoma Academy. His wife, Bev, also teaches at SAA. "I'm passionate about preparing students to face postmodernism in college and beyond, making a strong case for a high view of marriage and sex, and challenging students to be real thinkers. However, my overriding

passion is to uplift Christ as the ultimate gift of God," he says. A newlywed of just a few months, Kameron DeVasher (right), joins the high school Bible department. He is teaching freshman and sophomore Bible. Before joining Spencerville, DeVasher spent



seven years teaching at Gem State Academy in Idaho. "I long to see young people find their identity



in the Seventh-day Adventist movement by digging deeper into the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy," he says.

Students and staff have expressed how blessed and excited they are to have these new teachers join the SAA family.

Spiritual Retreat Builds Communion With God, Friends

Nearly 150 high school students from Spencerville Adventist Academy (SAA) recently headed for Mt. Aetna Camp and Retreat Center in Hagerstown, Md., for the

school's annual spiritual retreat. These included events such as the bus push, tug-of-war, a crazy relay, water balloon toss, and capture-the-flag. The events were fun and brought out the best school spirit in everyone.



Meredith Starr ('11), Maria Galeas ('11), and Nailah Pemberton ('10) pose for a photo.

Devotional messages began with retreat speaker Joey Pollom, senior pastor for the Manassas (Va.) church. The theme was "Lift Off" and Pollom used Isaiah 40:21-31 as his primary passage of scripture. He focused most of his messages on the spiritual lessons that can be learned from studying the lives and habits of eagles.



Cassie Marroquin ('10), Nathan Thamby ('10), and Sarah Quimby ('09) relax after an activity.

This continued the Spencerville tradition of beginning the year with a high school-only spiritual retreat. According to principal Brian Kittleson, the retreat helps new students get to know their peers and makes Jesus the focus for the school year.

The retreat consisted of two main components: team-building exercises and spiritual messages. On the first morning the entire high school was divided into four teams, which then competed in various team-building games.



Ryan Jacobson ('11) participates in a water balloon toss.

The annual optional night hike came after the message. This has been a favorite component of previous spiritual retreats, and this year proved no different. More than 130 students hiked to a spot in the woods where they could turn off their flashlights and sing songs and share testimonies of how God is working in their lives.

"I'm glad that [SAA is a place] where people can feel comfortable talking about what they need to talk about," said Kaiya Kretschmar ('10).

The next day, after Pastor Pollom had finished speaking, the entire high school participated in a special communion service.

Through washing one another's feet and partaking of the bread and grape juice, symbolizing the body and blood of Christ, students recommitted their lives to



One group builds a pyramid during team activity time.

Him for the coming school year.

"I think some amazing things happened here. Spencerville wouldn't be the same without a spiritual retreat," said Spanish teacher and gymnastics coach Richie Silie.—Evan Knott ('09)



Aura Gonzalez ('12) is carried by classmates.

Spotlight is published in the Visitor by the Spencerville Adventist Academy 15930 Good Hope Rd., Silver Spring, MD 20905 Phone: (301) 421-9101 spencervilleacademy.org Principal, Brian Kittleson Editor, Heidi Wetmore

Teaching Them to Serve

Jesus clearly outlined His will for those who would follow Him in Matthew 20:26-28 "... whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave; even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (ESV).

At Shenandoah Valley Academy (SVA) we want to make following Jesus more attractive to our students and to provide a variety of opportunities for them to do so. Whether it is a once-a-year mission trip to another country, a monthly trip to our nation's capital to feed the homeless, a biweekly trip over the mountain to participate in Fun Learning About God (FLAG) Camp for local children, supporting victims of natural disaster within our own community, or learning to be our brother's keeper right here on our campus, service to our fellow man and to God is always a priority.

I have seen lives changed as people experience what it truly means to serve God and to give of their time, energy, and resources to help others. This is education at its best!



Spencer Hannah
Principal

NEWS

Students Continue 13-Year Ministry to Homeless

Each month for the past 13 years, a busload of almost 50 students travel the two-hour trip to Washington, D.C., on Sabbath afternoon to give



food, clothing, personal care items, books, and friendship to the many homeless people on the streets of the nation's capital (left).

The New Market Seventh-day Adventist Community Services Center provides the clothing, the SVA cafeteria team puts together the food, the students organize the personal care bags, and many generous people help with warm coats, sleeping bags, boots, backpacks, etc. Students purchase Christmas gifts for the homeless people as well.

"We know we are not the only ones out there, but this gives our kids a monthly exposure to ministry that gets them out of their comfort zones and gets them to see how some people live," explained SVA's head chaplain, Tim Harley.

"They were so happy for our help. I felt like I brightened at least one person's day," said Romina Esposito ('09) who recently participated in the ministry for the first time. "I'm definitely planning to go back."

Week of Prayer Speaker Testifies About God's Grace

She was born to teenage addicts abused, unloved, and unwanted and ended up on the streets of Los Angeles by the age of 13. She lived on the streets for the next 10 years, illiterate, suicidal, and addicted to drugs. This was the testimony that Cheri Peters—founder of True Step Ministries, a faith-based, nonprofit, organization committed to helping troubled children accept love into their lives and help them fight for their addiction recovery—recently spoke at SVA's Week of Prayer.

She also shared how God got her attention in the midst of her chaos. "God showed me who I was in His eyes, an innocent girl. God does not see us as we are, but sees us as we can become with His transforming power," she said.

Students, staff, and church members experienced the power of the Holy Spirit as a result of Peters' ministry, resulting in commitments to Christ.



Cheri Peters, Week of Prayer speaker, prays for a student.

Happenings is published in the Visitor by Shenandoah Valley Academy 234 West Lee Highway, New Market, VA 22844 Phone: (540) 740-3161 shenandoahvalleyacademy.org Principal, Spencer Hannah Email: spencer.hannah@sva-va.org

News you can use from Takoma Academy

Living Thankfulness

The season of thankfulness is upon us, and as followers of Christ, this is the way we should live our lives throughout the year, and especially during this time. Colossians 3:15 says, "Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful" (NIV). I am thankful to work with young people as they learn and grow and become God-fearing young men and women. I am awed that even when they make mistakes and falter—personally, spiritually, or academically—they are willing to keep pushing on. I am also particularly thankful that so many of you read our newsletter. I am even thankful for your letters—good and bad—because they encourage us and let us see where we need to improve. Please continue to support us, and pray for us, as we prepare our students to be ambassadors for Christ.



C. Dunbar Henri
Principal

NEWS

Youth Leaders Lead TA in Spiritual Dedication Service

Votive candles on the podium set a tone of prayer and dedication at Takoma Academy's (TA) Spiritual Dedication Vespers. Led by TA's chaplain Melvyn



Erica Singh ('09) holds up a candle at a recent spiritual dedication service.

Hayden III (who also pastors youth at Community Praise Center in Alexandria, Va.), and Potomac Conference's Youth Ministries director Denny Grady, the service was one of prayer, praise, and preaching.

"Students, staff, and parents were involved as we dedicated the school year to our mission—to share Christ with all whom we come in contact," said principal

Dunbar Henri. At the conclusion of the service attendees made a circle and lit each other's candles in a show of unity.

Messages to Young People Speaks of Choice

To help students grow spiritually, TA recently held a Week of Prayer themed "You've Got Mail: Messages to Young People." Using the Scriptures as his guide, naturopathic



doctor, minister, and singer Inskip Allsop (below, left) talked with students about how choices made today can determine lifelong habits.

Grammy Award Winner to Attend Native American Assembly

On November 19, Grammy award-winning singer/songwriter, actress, and lecturer Joanne Shenandoah will be the guest presenter at TA's annual Native American Assembly. Shenandoah, a former member of the Heritage Singers, will share with TA students the rich history of the Native American culture.

Calendar

November

- 1 Sadie Hawkins Party
- 3-7 Spirit Week
- 8 Youth Rally
- 9 Performing Arts Auction
- 19 Native American Assembly
- 21 Thanksgiving Break Begins, 12 p.m.
- 21-28 Thanksgiving Break

December

- 1 No School, Test Review Day
- 2 Classes Resume

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

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FLORIDA HOME FOR SALE: Roomy 3BR home for sale in Inverness, Fla. Located on three lots at the end of Patience Lane in Eden Gardens. Within walking distance of Adventist church. For more information about this home with a large oak shade tree and a tranquil view of a seasonal lake, visit CarolAHamilton.com.

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SERVICES

SINGLE AND OVER 40? The only interracial group exclusively for Adventist 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, 2747 Nonpareil, Sutherlin, OR 97479.

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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, chats, and forums. Since 1993. Adventist owners. Thousands of successful matches. Top ranked.

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TWO 2009 GREAT CONTROVERSY TOURS, March 22-April 2; or July 5-15, with Dr. Gerard Damsteegt of Andrews University. See prophecies of Daniel and Revelation come alive! Visit Rome, Italy, and Reformation sites in the Waldensian Valleys, Switzerland, and Germany. A most exciting experience! Call or fax (269) 471-5172, email gctours@mac.com.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHRISTMAS HARP CONCERT by Robin Roys and guest musicians on Friday, December 5, 7:30 p.m., at Spencerville Seventh-day Adventist Church, 16325 New Hampshire Ave., Silver Spring, MD 20905. For more information, call (301) 384-2920; or email rroys@erols.com. Free-will offering.

THE HOT SPRINGS (ARK.) CHURCH will celebrate its 100th anniversary, December 5-7. Former pastors, members, teachers, and students are encouraged to attend and renew old friendships. Your presence will make the weekend a memorable one. Contact the church at (501) 767-3336 or leave a message at hotspings100@gmail.com.

DECEMBER WORLD BUDGET OFFERING: In preparation for the Adventist Community Services (ACS) offering December 13, you can download a bulletin insert by going to communityservices.org, which includes information about the ACS Offering. Please encourage members to put their offering in a title envelope and mark it "ACS."

CALLING ALL RICHMOND (JR.) ACADEMY ALUMNI: If you attended Richmond (Jr.) Academy in Richmond, Va., please update your address, contact numbers, and family information. Contact the school at (804) 353-0036, ext. 11, or visit rasda.org to submit your information on the alumni page. The centennial celebration is planned for spring 2011.

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(407) 257-6847
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sueevangelism@yahoo.com

OBITUARIES

CERMAK, Hazel Jane, born August 10, 1928, in Elizabeth, Pa.; died April 5, 2008, in Silver Spring, Md. She was a member of the Beltsville (Md.) church. She was preceded in death by her husband, Fred Martin Cermak. Survivors: her son, Fred M. (Nancy) Cermak, Jr., of Silver Spring, Md.; her daughter, Jane Ann Cermak of Loma Linda, Calif.; grandchildren: Fred M. (Jennifer) Cermak, III, and Brian G. Cermak; brothers John (Marge) Reep and Gerald (Betty) Reep.

HALVORSEN, LESTER, born September 13, 1924, in Rapid City, Mich., to Dan and Lucille Halvorsen; died August 16, 2008, in Zephyrhills, Fla. He was a member of the East Pasco church in Zephyrhills. A veteran of the U.S. Army, he served in the South Pacific. He married Reva Jean Denslow November 30, 1946, and they have been married 62 years. He's a graduate of Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Mich. He received his MBA and worked for the Adventist church as an accountant in several places, including West Pakistan, until he retired in 1988. He also worked at Indiana Academy, Sunnysdale Academy, the Review and Herald Publishing Assn., Dakota Conference, Kettering Hospital in Ohio, and Community Services in Orlando, Fla. They moved from Orlando to Zephyrhills in 1992. He is survived by his wife, Reva; his

	Nov 14	Nov 21	Nov 28	Dec 5	Dec 12
Baltimore	4:52	4:47	4:44	4:43	4:44
Cincinnati	5:24	5:19	5:16	5:15	5:16
Cleveland	5:07	5:02	4:58	4:57	4:57
Columbus	5:16	5:11	5:08	5:07	5:07
Jersey City	4:39	4:34	4:30	4:29	4:29
Norfolk	4:56	4:52	4:49	4:48	4:49
Parkersburg	5:12	5:07	5:04	5:03	5:03
Philadelphia	4:45	4:40	4:37	4:35	4:36
Pittsburgh	5:03	4:58	4:55	4:53	4:54
Reading	4:47	4:42	4:39	4:37	4:38
Richmond	4:59	4:55	4:52	4:51	4:52
Roanoke	5:10	5:06	5:03	5:02	5:03
Toledo	5:14	5:09	5:06	5:04	5:04
Trenton	4:43	4:38	4:34	4:33	4:33
Wash., D.C.	4:55	4:50	4:47	4:46	4:46

SUNSET CALENDAR

son, Ken Halvorsen of Berrien Springs, Mich.; and his daughter Karen Gimbel of Brunswick, Me.; grandchildren: Derek, Bradley, and Scott Castleberg, Jeff Gimbel, and Lori Steenhoven; great-grandchild Ethan Steenhoven; and two sisters both of Zephyrhills, Ruby Roosenberg and Thelma Woolever. He was predeceased by a daughter, Kathy Salters.

ROSE, Joseph "Joe" Harlis Yates, born January 14, 1921, in Fremont, Va.; died July 12, 2008, in Marion, Ohio. He was a member of the Mansfield (Ohio) church. Joe was preceded in death by his wife, Margaret. Surviving are sons: Joe Kenneth Rose and Michael Rose; daughters: Sharon Kay Ashworth, Patricia Reynolds, and Mary Beth Cross; 11 grandchildren; and 18 great-grandchildren.

SZASZ, Alta Lois (Davidson), born June 2, 1924, in Athens, Ohio; died May 28, 2007, at Washington Adventist Hospital, Takoma Park, Md. She was a member of Sligo church in Takoma Park, Md., and formerly had been an active member of the Takoma Park church for over 40 years, where she served as a deaconess and children's Sabbath School teacher. She graduated from Mount Vernon Academy in 1942

and later attended Washington Missionary College (now Columbia Union College in Takoma Park). Alta worked at Manor Care Wheaton Nursing Home for over 15 years. She also worked along with her husband, John, in his custom building business as secretary and bookkeeper until his sudden death in 1973. She is survived by her daughter, Deborah Joan; her son, John Roderick; and her brothers, John, James, and William Davidson.

ZENTZ, Mae Elizabeth, 97, of Sykesville, Md., died Sunday, August 31, 2008, at Fairhaven Continuing Care Retirement Community in Sykesville. She was born May 31, 1911, in Adams County, Pa., the daughter of the late Clane Augustus Hardman and Sarah Ann Vandelia Linebaugh Hardman. She lived the majority of her life in or near Taneytown, Md. She was an avid gardener and enjoyed trips to New England. She was a member of the Westminster (Md.) church. Surviving are her husband of 67 years, Robert L. Zentz; son and daughter-in-law, Carl E. and Chong Zentz, of Glenn Dale, Md.; daughter Joyce Schaum of Westminster; and grandsons Joshua and Jeremy Zentz and Jason and Adam Schaum.

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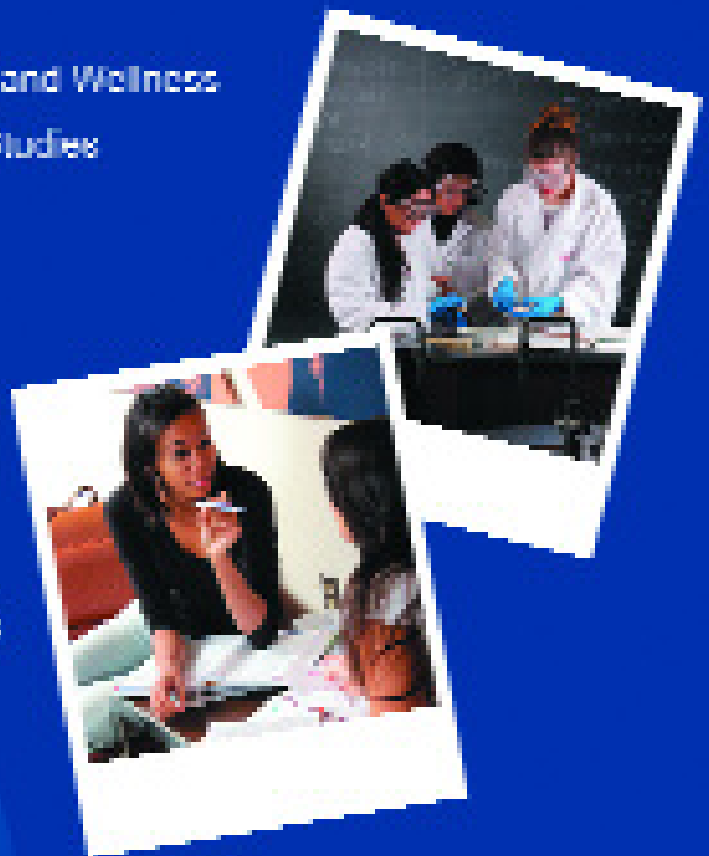
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