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columbiaunion.org

Facing Hard Times? Look Up!

In the midst of this global financial crisis, we would do well to check into an “ant motel.” It may sound foolish, but as suggested in Proverbs 6:6-11, humanity could learn a thing or two from ants. Ants know that in summer, when there is an abundance of food, they must prepare for winter, which will surely come to pass. The same was also true when Joseph, as prime minister of Egypt, prepared his people for the impending famine—their winter. When it finally came, they were prepared. But what would have happened if he and his cabinet had decided on day one of the seven years of famine how to deal with the crisis?



We must always think about the future and plan for the day when, for whatever reason, difficult situations arise and we fall on hard times. Yet, lately in the news, we’ve seen company after company collapse. And governments around the world have had to pump billions of dollars into the market to prevent more financial institutions from failing.

How could a company, with billions of dollars in revenue, suddenly fall flat on its face? This did not happen overnight. Companies are in their present predicaments because of decisions they made years ago. When the economy was booming and all was going well, they probably set their operation on autopilot with no thought that tomorrow could be the beginning of “winter.” In doing so, they learned the hard way that “if you fail to plan, you plan to fail!”

In *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, Ellen White handily describes what’s happening today:

“The land boom has cursed this country, extravagant prices have been paid for lands bought on credit; then the land must be cleared, and more money is hired; a house to be built calls for more money, and then interest with open mouth swallows up all the profits. Debts accumulate, and then come the closing and failure of banks, and then the foreclosure of mortgages. Thousands have been turned out of employment; families lose their little all, they borrow and borrow, and then have to give up their property and come out penniless” (p. 317).



GOOD FOR THE GOOSE, GOOD FOR THE GANDER

In reality what goes for corporate America also holds true for nonprofit and religious organizations like ours. Our inability to think beyond today could cause us to fall just like the corporate giants we see crumbling all around us. And who will come to the aid of the church should she not have her house in order? As stewards of God, let us be very careful how we handle what has been placed in our hands.

Let’s also keep in mind that some situations we see as unfavorable could be an opportunity to share the good news of Christ’s soon return. Luke tells us that the day will come when men’s hearts fail them for fear (see Luke 21:26). Indeed, there are millions today whose hearts are failing them because their wealth and trusts are no more. Luke also says that when these things begin to come to pass, we should look up, and lift up our heads, for our redemption draweth nigh (see Luke 21:28).

In the midst of these hard times, let us not only look up, let us take the opportunity to direct others who are lost and faint of heart to Jesus. And as we share His salvific plan, may they also join us in looking up!

Seth Bardu is treasurer of the Columbia Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Pastors, Members Encouraged to “Share the Hope” in 2009

Under the theme “Share the Hope” (sharethehope-2009.com), the North American Division (NAD) is placing a special emphasis on evangelism this year. Leaders are asking every pastor—with the help of church members—to hold spring and fall meetings. Members are asked to reach out to at least three people in their communities, pray for them, and establish a friendship. The overall goal is to baptize 100,000 people for Christ in 2009.



According to Bernadine Delafield, NET evangelism coordinator for the NAD, the initiative was launched last month with three satellite programs designed to motivate and prepare pastors and members to hold local meetings. “In the past, the division has provided a satellite series of meetings to assist evangelism efforts in the local church,” she explains. “But this year, they’re asking the pastors to do the preaching.”

The Columbia Union Conference leadership is on board, encouraging each local conference and church to fully support and participate in this exciting yearlong program.

“Today like never before, the



church needs this type of initiative,” says Columbia Union president **Dave Weigley**. “We are surrounded by the indicators that Jesus is soon to return, and we must do all we can to finish the work.”

To that end, Weigley—who holds evangelistic meetings every year—has asked each Columbia Union officer to conduct an evangelistic meeting this year. Union leaders will also help provide evangelism training and resources for pastors. In addition, union office personnel are being encouraged to support meetings in their local churches. “I would hope not only in 2009, but every year, every month, every week, and every day would be an opportunity for living and sharing the hope within us—Jesus Christ!” Weigley says.

Following is a brief look at the 2009 evangelism plans or goals of conferences within the Columbia Union:

Allegheny West Conference

New president **Fredrick Russell** and his team would like to have 1,000 baptisms in 2009. To support this evangelism



goal, they plan to raise \$500,000. In addition, each pastor will conduct two public evangelistic meetings, and each administrator, departmental director, and executive committee member will conduct or get involved in a meeting.

Chesapeake Conference

With an overall goal of reaching 500 new believers, the Chesapeake Conference has committed more than \$450,000 to fund its 2009 evangelistic strategy. It includes the placement of two additional Bible workers in the Greater Baltimore area; a new pastor with extensive evangelistic experience who will serve occasionally as a trainer; several major evangelistic campaigns; a new church plant in northeast Baltimore; and numerous evangelistic programs in churches involving pastors, lay leaders, youth, and conference personnel.

“Our expectation and hope is that a strong prayer ministry will be the foundation upon which all our work is built, that every church will be intentional in its approach to evangelism and will experience the joy of finding lost people, that every church will interface with its community in some meaningful way, and that every church will create a climate where people can flourish,” says president **Rob Vandeman**.



Mountain View Conference

Building on its success with the ShareHIM initiative, which

trains church members to lead evangelism efforts, the Mountain View Conference plans to host 75 to 100 reaping meetings.

“These meetings will be conducted by graduates of our evangelism boot camps,” explains president **Larry Boggess**. He has also asked pastors to conduct two reaping meetings in their churches and invited Columbia Union officers to conduct meetings in the conference territory.

New Jersey Conference

While their evangelists are often called to preach the gospel in Africa, India, and Inter-America, conference leaders would like to hold more than 200 evangelistic campaigns in New Jersey this year and see hundreds brought to Christ. “We want to see an explosion of small group meetings, Bible studies, and public evangelistic meetings in every language,” says president **José Cortés**. He has invited all New Jersey Conference pastors to lead out in at least two large evangelistic campaigns and each department at the conference headquarters to lead at least one meeting.



Ohio Conference

“For several years, the Ohio Conference has been cultivating

the creation of a culture in which God’s people discern God’s directions and activities in them, and for their communities, and live and act as missional people,” notes president **Raj Attiken**.

This year the conference plans to take additional steps to foster, nurture, and support the engagement of churches and schools in the redemptive work of God. The goal is that congregations will see themselves as mission outposts, and be a redemptive presence with their attention placed outside their church walls. The conference also plans to launch an experimental effort to develop networks of young adults in central Ohio, who are currently not involved in any church, and involve them in a discipleship curriculum that includes truth-discovery, service, and other spiritual growth activities.



Pennsylvania Conference

“Pennsylvania is a mission field,” says president **Ray**



Hartwell. “We continually ask the overarching question: ‘How is what we are doing about reaching the lost?’”

During the last three years, the conference has invested significant operating reserve funds to engage its churches in mission through six conference-wide

training events called “Equipping University.” At these weekend retreats, church pastors and members cast visions and develop plans for soul winning and holistic evangelism initiatives.

This year conference leaders plan to build on this foundation by planting new churches, encouraging pastors to hold reaping meetings, training lay speakers, and holding several lay evangelism rallies. Hartwell plans to conduct two meetings this spring.

Potomac Conference

President **Bill Miller** and his team are placing a strong emphasis on growing healthy churches that reproduce. They would like to see every church hold a reaping series and are encouraging members to make discipleship a lifestyle. “We want to see every member bring two people to faith in Jesus,” he says.



The conference also has a burgeoning Hispanic ministry. Their goal is to plant eight to 10 new congregations, baptize 1,500 new believers, and have each church hold four reaping efforts this year.

Share the Hope 2009

Goal: Baptize 100,000 People

For more information, go to sharethehope2009.com.

What's New?

Books > Church Folk in Love Deborah Hardy

As the nation celebrates love this month, first-time author and poet Deborah Hardy's new book couldn't be timelier. The member of Allegheny East Conference's Berea Temple in Baltimore presents this "relaxing read" as a chance to be "intentional about enlivening our relationships," whether you're a newlywed or celebrating a golden anniversary.



Our wedding date is set.

First Sunday you'll be mine.

My prayers have finally been answered.

Jesus stepped in right on time.

—Deborah Hardy from the poem "Matched Wits"

"Ultimately, it is my hope and prayer that couples and individuals will be reminded of the potential and opportunity for sweetness and joy in marriage," says the mother of one. And don't think the book's rhymes and humorous lines would be complete without her husband Walter's support and amateur photography.

Order a copy and read more at benmykel.com.

I Can Read Book Series

Titles like *Joash the Boy King* and *Herbie the Hippo* will make Columbia Union kids want to start stocking their bookshelves with this new easy-to-read series. "Our vision is to provide beginning

readers, from pre-K to second grade, with materials they can read," states author and creator Rose Gamblin, PhD, a member of Chesapeake Conference's Smithsburg Valley company in Smithsburg, Md. "These books present the gospel and are also a valuable character-building and soul-winning tool."

So far eight bilingual (English and Spanish) titles have been published. Special features include the Flesch-Kincaid readability statistic, which helps parents know



if the book is at the child's correct reading level. And, according to Gamblin, who works as education specialist at the Review and Herald Publishing Association in Hagerstown, Md., each book concludes with critical thinking questions and activities.

To stock your child's library, visit adventistbookcenter.com.

CDs > God is for Us and Grand Praise! Tom Hughes

"It's been a decade since I last recorded," explains Pastor Tom Hughes of Ohio Conference's Zanesville and Newark churches about his double Christian release. "I had many songs that



people loved and were asking for." *God is for Us!*—inspired by his work in West

Virginia's Appalachian region—is "happy, uplifting" country music combined with folk. *Grand Praise!* will appeal more to those who appreciate contemporary praise, like his self-penned "You Are Righteous."



"Both CDs are youth-oriented and are an attempt to reach out to, and inspire, young people to love and praise Jesus Christ,"

Keeping Score

Christians and Pornography

420

Number of pornographic Web pages in millions

42.7%

Number of Internet users who view porn

47%

Number of Christians addicted to porn

\$97.06

Porn revenue in billions in 2006

12-17

Age of largest consumers of Internet porn

Source: <http://internet-filter-review.toptenreviews.com/internet-pornography-statistics.html>. To get help, order Freedom Begins Here, a tool kit, journal, DVD, and accountability resource, available at adventsource.org.

explains Hughes, also known as the "Bible Biker" (biblebiker.com). Check out both CDs at the Ohio and Potomac ABCs.

WholeHealth > Economic Crisis ... or Health Ministry Opportunity?

Do debt, stock market swings, and the threat of losing jobs have you wondering about the future? Over 90 percent of Americans admit they are worried about the economy. The upside, however, is that our physical health often improves during tough economic times. Research shows that people tend to eat at home more and consume healthier meals during periods of financial hardship. Smoking and obesity decrease, and for every 1 percent increase in unemployment rate, deaths from heart disease decrease by .75 percent.

What about you? Is your health your most valuable asset? What in your current lifestyle dissatisfies you? What would a change look like? A recent CIGNA HealthCare survey reported that 55 percent of Americans are now making positive lifestyle change or plan to in the immediate future. Others say they have good intentions and think they should be doing more to safeguard their health.

Today's faltering economy can spark discussions on how to prepare healthy meals, fit in exercise, manage stress, and lead to deeper issues such as healing relationships and finding meaning in life. What an opportunity to share a positive health message with people who may otherwise never visit our churches!

—Lilly Tryon, MSN, RN, Adventist WholeHealth Wellness Center

In the Spotlight > Your Story Hour Radio Ministry

For the last 60 years, Seventh-day Adventists have been producing a popular radio show called *Your Story Hour* (YSH).

One of YSH's original hosts, Betty Hausted Ahnberg, was from Medina, Ohio. For 35 years she was best known as "Aunt Sue." Her father, Ray Hausted, built one of the ministry's first recording studios in the basement of his Medina-based furniture factory.

Actors from Cleveland voiced many of YSH's most memorable characters. One was Mylas Martin, a long-time member of Ohio Conference's Cedar Avenue church, which is now Allegheny West Conference's Glenville church. Now living in Michigan, Martin wrote and later directed many of the show's scripts. He was best known for his voice as the serpent in the Garden of Eden.



"All of us who were there at the beginning were captured by creator Stanley Hills' (left, with Ahnberg) vision that drama could be done for children that would bring them into a personal knowledge of Jesus Christ," he recalls. "[Your Story Hour] is now the only surviving artifact of radio drama ... theater of the mind, I call it."

Now based in Michigan, YSH broadcasts in English, Spanish, and Russian on 3,000 stations worldwide. Its Russian programs reach an estimated 25 million people. Well known for its 30-minute radio program aimed at developing noble character traits, YSH (yourstoryhour.org) exposes kids to positive examples and demonstrates the possible detrimental outcomes of unwise choices. To complement the ministry, the producers now operate a Bible school and publish a newsletter and kids' magazine, which has received several awards from home-schooling magazines.

"This spring we are planning a recording session of 25 new stories," promises president Julie Clayburn. "We are also planning to get interactive Bible lessons online to provide quality, life-changing materials for children of all ages."—Sam Belony

Carole Pezet and Chet Damron are today's voices of *Your Story Hour*'s "Aunt Carol," and "Uncle Dan."



Weathering the Great Depression

How the Church Endured an Unprecedented Economic Downturn

Alan Hecht

Are we in a recession or is this the Great Depression all over again? is probably the question many Seventh-day Adventists are asking as the world economy hits a free fall of sorts. Whatever the terminology, we can agree that what is occurring now is something few of us have seen in our lifetimes.

DEFINING ECONOMIC DOWNTURN

A recession is an economic downturn in which real gross domestic product (GDP) declines by less than 10 percent. A depression is a sustained decline that exceeds 10 percent. To put this in perspective: In the period from 1929 to 1933, the GDP declined by 33 percent! Before the Great Depression, any economic downturn was referred to as a depression.

Historians usually date the beginning of the Great Depression to the stock market crash of October 29, 1929. The results of “Black Tuesday” were not immediately apparent. As a matter of fact, in late 1929/early 1930, the stock market rebounded. Government and business spending actually exceeded previous levels. Credit was readily avail-

able. But this could not be sustained. Consumers, many of whom had lost money in the stock market crash, reduced spending by 10 percent. Meanwhile, a drought ravaged major U.S. agricultural areas. By late 1930, it was clear that the nation and the world were in the grip of an unprecedented downturn.

ADVENTISTS PREDICT A GRIM FUTURE

In 1928 noted Adventist scholar and preacher LeRoy Edwin Froom wrote in *Seeking a Sanctuary*: “Our vaunted civilization is honeycombed with dry rot; our golden age is soon to meet with a crash that will shake it from center to circumference ...” His prediction must have seemed counterintuitive. As historian Arthur Schlesinger described in *The Crisis of the Old Order*, business and the making of money itself had become a quasi-religion during the 1920s. No one was expecting the crisis that Adventists forewarned was just around the corner.

According to religious historian Jerald C. Brauer (*Protestantism in America*), during the Depression, Adventist and other churches that emphasized the soon return of Christ appealed to people who took everything for granted—jobs, money, and possessions. One church member wrote in the *Atlantic Union Gleaner* about how much easier it was to get his neighbors to read the literature he brought them, since they no longer had jobs to go to or money to spend on amusements.

MINISTRIES DECREASE, MEMBERSHIP INCREASES

In 1931, the year in which the full effects of the 1929 crash became clear in skyrocketing unemployment rates, hunger, and poverty, church membership increased by 10,600—a full 40 percent gain on the previous year. Throughout the Depression, annual membership growth averaged 5 to 6 percent, more than twice that experienced during the previous decade. “Paradoxically,” says Douglas Morgan, history professor at Columbia Union College in Takoma Park, Md.,

“the Depression was good for church growth.”

On the other hand, none of America’s churches or religious institutions were prepared for the economic consequences of the Great Depression. Brauer writes: “The Depression had a devastating effect on the churches, as well as on the nation ... Many an institution of the church lost its endowment in the financial crash and had to close or had to drastically cut back its activities.”

The Adventist Church was no exception. Between 1930 and 1934, church income declined by more than one-third. Among the measures taken were term limits for General Conference and division personnel, the merging of several conferences, and reduction of wages for denominational workers. Monte Sahlin, director of Research and Special Projects for the Ohio Conference, adds, “The church had to greatly cut back on the number of pastors during that time. They laid off a number of younger ministers, increased the size of districts, and significantly cut down on travel budgets.”

HARD-HIT MISSIONS SEE REPRIEVE

Especially hard hit were missions. The church appealed to members to increase giving. Typical was this appeal in the *Visitor* of September 4, 1930: “There is no way to send out missionaries unless we have the money to support them. Just now there is a shortage in the treasury and the General Conference is looking to the members of our churches to be faithful in the campaign that is now in progress.”

No account of the Adventist Church during this period is complete without mention of the now legendary series of events surrounding the actions of General Conference undertreasurer W.H. Williams. The story of his reaction to the indefinite bank holiday declared by President Roosevelt in early March 1933, following the epidemic of bank failures then occurring, has been told many times since, with details changed, added, or subtracted. What we do know is this: Williams had the foresight to withdraw money in small increments over the days and weeks preceding the bank closures, and it just happened that these funds were just enough to pay the missionaries and foreign workers who otherwise would have been financially adrift.

Merle Poirier, a member of Chesapeake Conference’s Spencerville church in Silver Spring, Md., has done extensive research on this series of events. What we learn from this, she states, is that the church members



While serving as General Conference president during most of the Great Depression (1930-36), Charles H. Watson saw membership grow by one-third.

and officials “never lost their faith in God’s providence and were clearly led by men who were clearly led by God in their management of church affairs.”

As a result, by 1936, General Conference president C.H. Watson could report that the church had weathered the Depression while remaining out of debt.

Will our church today remember the valuable lessons learned by our forefathers who weathered one of the worst economic times in world history?

Alan Hecht is director of the Rebok Memorial Library at the Seventh-day Adventist World Headquarters in Silver Spring, Md.



Queuing for Food: A Red Cross volunteer distributes food to drought victims (circa 1931). Photo by MPI/Getty Images



Failed Bank: A crowd of depositors outside the American Union Bank in New York failed to withdraw their savings before the bank collapsed on June 30, 1931. Photo by FPG/Hulton Archive/Getty Images

Riding Out the Economic Storm

Can Church Entities Stay Afloat?

Taashi Rowe

With words like “subprime mortgages,” “recession,” and “rising unemployment” swirling in the air, it’s no surprise that many conferences in the Columbia Union are seeing a significant dip in church finances. Can they stay afloat and ride out the economic storm?



Victor Zill, secretary-treasurer of the Mountain View Conference, is particularly frank as he shares that tithe in the two-state territory is flat and will probably remain so for the rest of 2009. He says many of Mountain View’s 2,500 members are older and living on fixed incomes, so they are generally not affected by big fluctuations in the U.S. financial markets. However, it is clear to him that conference leaders must make adjustments that reflect this year’s smaller budget.

“We have a few districts that have no pastors, but we are quite reluctant to fill them,” says Zill. “Right now we have three-church districts, but we will probably have to move to four-church districts.”

The financial picture in Mountain View reflects that of the entire union, says Seth Bardu, Columbia Union treasurer. And as church leaders throughout the union plan for ministry this year, flat-lining tithes are causing them to think twice. To that end, they are following the lead of the General Conference and North American Division, which voted against cost of living and budget increases for 2009.

Schools, hospitals, and members are also facing budget cutbacks and shortfalls.

DOWNSIZING FOR ADVENTIST EDUCATION

Many people struggling through a weak economy find it difficult to fund private education. Dunbar Henri, principal of Potomac Conference’s Takoma Academy in Takoma Park, Md., says he has seen requests for financial aid triple (50 applications) in the past year. He has even more students looking for on-campus work to help cover tuition.

Still, there are many parents like Dwayne and Stephanie Neff who will sacrifice to give their children an Adventist education. Although the Neffs live in Chicago, their daughter, Alexandria Manson, is a junior at Ohio Conference’s Mount Vernon Academy (MVA). A combination of illness and the poor econ-

omy has caused the Neffs to sell their home and downsize. Stephanie is unable to work full-time so Dwayne cleans their son’s school—in addition to his full-time job—to help cover educational costs.

Stephanie says that even though she has had to depend on donors to keep Alexandria at MVA, she would have it no other way. “I’m educating my children for more than this world—I’m educating them for the kingdom,” she exhorts. “This was a huge commitment for us, and it comes with certain sacrifices.”

Elaine Oliver, vice president for enrollment at Columbia Union College (CUC) in Takoma Park, Md., understands the difficult choice some parents are being forced to make. She says that even with an enrollment of just over 1,000 students, “15 to 20 percent who said they were going to come to CUC last fall did not end up coming. In spite of the financial aid packages we offer—which are generous—they still weren’t able to make up the difference.”

One thing we did last year, in anticipation of this, was freeze tuition and that helped us retain students,” she reports.

HOSPITAL ADMISSIONS DECLINE

While churches and schools can make a connection between the economy, reduced giving, and increased requests for financial aid, Ohio-based Kettering Adventist HealthCare leaders can’t say for sure *why* there is a slight decrease in the number of patients using their six main facilities.

“We are seeing some decrease in our activity, but it’s hard to know exactly what’s behind that because we get increases and decreases related to everything from the flu to a change in weather,” says chief financial officer Russ Wetherell.

“We are seeing more bad debt and charity cases. Insurance is placing a heavier burden on the patient, which causes them to postpone or decide against certain procedures,” Wetherell explains. “But so far, this economy has not affected our ability to fulfill our mission of caring for the community.”

LESSONS FROM A RECESSION

Although a slowing economy is generally bad news for church members, and by extension the church institutions they support, some leaders say

there is good news to be found. David Beckworth, PhD, an Adventist and an assistant professor of economics at Texas State University, has written a paper noting a positive connection between a bad economy and church growth. Beckworth looked at data spanning 40 years, from 25 different Protestant churches, and found that Adventist conversions and memberships tend to increase during an economic downturn.

That’s why Micheal Goetz, pastor of Pennsylvania Conference’s Bucks County church in Warminster, thinks this is the perfect time to exercise trust in God. “We made a step of faith to tithe exactly 10 percent of the church’s income to direct soul winning and evangelism, even though we are not meeting our budget,” he says.

Although he estimates that it takes anywhere from \$10,000 to \$30,000 to put on an evangelism series, they still plan to hold one later this year. “We would rather sink while spending money to reach others, than to exist and not try,” Goetz remarks.

Jim Greene, secretary for the New Jersey Conference, shares Jeremiah 29:11, Joshua 1:5-9, Malachi 3:10, and Matthew 7 every chance he gets. For him those verses all add up to: “God honors those who honor Him, and that’s a promise you can take to the bank.”

We would rather sink while spending money to reach others, than to exist and not try.



Turning the Tide

How Adventists are Lending a Lifeline

Norma Sahlin

When citizens are facing hard times, history attests that they often turn to God and, consequently, the church for help. Columbia Union members are responding to the flood of requests by creatively integrating service with ministry to the “invisible disenfranchised.” Here are 14 examples of churches and ministries turning the results of a poor economy into opportunities for service evangelism:

1 Ron Wylie, Adventist Community Services (ACS) of Greater Washington director, sees those impacted by this economy walk through his doors daily. He notes that in the past few months, the number of clients coming to his Silver Spring, Md., facility have

doubled to more than 100 families each week. “The demand for food is tremendous,” Wylie comments. “Unfortunately, I think those needs are going to be there for a very long time.”

2 Similarly, Pastor Darriel Hoy of Baltimore Adventist Community Services (BACS) reports an increase of 25 percent in requests for assistance. However, the faces of those requesting help have changed. In 2007 about 95 percent of the people who contacted BACS were women. Now, middle-aged men make six out of 10 requests. BACS has also resumed their job training seminars.

3 The Atkinson Men’s Shelter (left) operated by the First church in Coatesville, Pa., says the increasing number of those seeking shelter is related to loss of jobs, coupled with inappropriate coping mechanisms—alcohol and substance abuse.

“We sheltered 181 men during 2007,” reports Minnie McNeil,

Allegheny East Conference (AEC) ACS director. “In 2008 we sheltered 284 men—the highest number of men we’ve serviced in one year.”

4 The Good Neighbor House (GNH) in Dayton, Ohio, reports that their 38 percent increase in requests for aid has now maxed out the facility’s capacity for services. Their volunteers make available emergency food and clothing, as well as free health clinic, dental, and eye care services.

“Every morning when I arrive, two hours before clients are admitted, there is a line of people waiting. Former donors and volunteers are now among the clients,” says Tiffany Collie, GNH development director. “We’re searching for a larger building, which will allow us more services and training programs.”

5 Newark church’s ACS center in Ohio has also seen the need to move to a new building (above, right) and expand its services, including more classes



The Good Neighbor House in Dayton, Ohio, helps feed a local family.

for the unemployed. They have also added a thrift store and food pantry as well as health screenings.



6 The Glen Burnie ACS center serving Anne Arundel County, Maryland, dishes up 150-plus hot meals each Tuesday, but the number of their clients has more than doubled. They also distribute clothing, sleeping bags, and other items.

7 Mountain View Conference claims seven thrift shops and food pantries that consistently serve the Appalachian region. They continue stocking their

shelves as the community’s needs increase.

8 In Portsmouth, Va., members of AEC’s Prentis Park church prepare a weekly hot lunch for 50 to 65 of the local working poor, which also continues to increase. Pastor Armando Reid says he



Pat Bibbee, ACS director of Mountain View Conference’s Parkersburg (W.Va.) church, helps stock the food pantry.

has witnessed the direct correlation between increased community service and enlarged worship attendance.

9 Jair Pinilla, pastor of New Jersey Conference’s La Esperanza, Englewood, and Hoboken Spanish churches, reports, “Every Wednesday night, we hand out groceries to visitors. Many then choose to stay for a Christ-centered message.” As a result, at least 65 people have joined La Esperanza, in Union City, and Hoboken Spanish.

10 The Walk of Faith Fellowship in Cleveland has expanded their children’s after school and tutoring program to include teenagers. They also have a food pantry.

11 Ohio’s Toledo First church took a different approach to addressing community members’ concerns. They participated in the National Pray Down the High Gas Prices Summit, a nationwide initiative spearheaded by Rocky Twyman, a member of AEC’s New Life church in Gaithersburg, Md.

“When gas prices are high, they affect all of us, but none more than those who are on a limited or fixed income,” explains senior pastor Mike Fortune.

12 The Potomac Adventist Book and Health Food Store (ABC) in Silver Spring, Md., will be offering Financial Peace seminars to their customers this spring. “The courses will help attendees develop a whole new philosophy for personal money management,” reports general manager Lisa Myaing.

The store has also expanded help through their website (potomacabc.com). Through the Eating



Walk of Faith Fellowship in Cleveland, a church plant centered on community service, has increased its services in response to a poor economy.

Well for Less homepage link, they list the health and economic benefits of preparing healthy foods at home. The Finding Peace in Chaos link focuses on how a relationship with Christ provides peace in troublesome times, and features an assortment of books.

13 Allegheny West Conference’s Southeast church in Cleveland organized an informational mortgage crisis seminar in late October to help community members prepare for more difficult times. And as a result of a recent evangelistic crusade, now twice as many families are showing up for their community meal.

14 Through the Hagerstown (Md.) church’s recent two-day Hope for Today, Confidence in Tomorrow seminar,

members were able to discuss the uncertainty of the current economy and how the promises of God provide assurance and hope. More than 30 community members attended and 11 attendees requested baptism reports Pastor Rick Remmers (below).



Church members are also continuing to participate in local, small group studies focusing on the biblical principles of money management.

Norma Sahlin is a member of the Village church in Mason, Ohio, and is communication director for the Center for Creative Ministry.

Can Adventists Learn From the Obama Win?

Two Thought Leaders Weigh In



We've Come a Long Way

Emory J. Tolbert

I never thought that I would live to see this day. Until recently, I have been reluctant to acknowledge with any enthusiasm the extent of recent progress in American race relations. The economic divide, the learning gap, the high incarceration rate for minorities—including a million black men—are real and frustrating. Yet, in a nation that continues a tradition of institutionalized racism in many ways, something extraordinary happened.

My father and mother would be astounded. Dad was a black teenager in Sanford, Fla., when he happened upon a tent meeting for whites. The Seventh-day Adventist minister who conducted the meeting allowed him to sit behind the projection screen where the audience could not see him. Dad joined anyway. Mom's mother and grandmother were already Adventists. They all understood the prevalence of the color line in and outside the church.

THE PEOPLE'S COURT

I grew up in an era when court cases and demonstrations were the main weapons against discrimination. My older brothers were at Oakwood College (now Oakwood University) when Martin Luther King Jr. came to speak in 1962. Black Adventists of that day had a lively debate over their role in the civil rights movement. Should Christians demonstrate? Should we add King's idea of racial justice as a moral issue to our teaching and preaching? Or was that the dreaded "social gospel?" Most agreed with King, including some black church leaders who became active in the civil rights movement without fanfare.

Our corporate church had not taken the lead in civil rights matters. Where segregation laws and practices prevailed, we conformed. Many Adventist schools and colleges continued to

exclude blacks until the law of the land and the pressure of public opinion mandated change. The Adventist college I attended from 1964-68 had unwritten rules against integrated dorm rooms and interracial dating. It wasn't the only one. Blacks sat together in the cafeteria, not because we had to, but because we had been made to feel unwelcome, barely tolerated. Recognizing the fact that some had been wounded by the experience, a recent president of that college sent letters of apology to the black students of that era.

The Obama election shows us that we can put much of that era behind us. The effort to maintain a color line that took so much time and caused so much pain in the past can be abandoned. We can celebrate institutions, like the regional conferences, that created opportunities for blacks and others within the church without ever excluding anyone because of race. These successful ministries deserve imitation, not elimination.

The worldwide Adventist Church has been majority nonwhite for years. Now this is becoming a reality in North America. Our strength is that we may be among the most diverse denominations in the United States. In a nation that appears to be turning away from the provincialism and xenophobia that has characterized our past, we can take the lead. Perhaps we can even capture the attitude and spirit displayed in this election and use it to build up the kingdom of God. The times call for it.

Emory J. Tolbert, PhD, is a professor of history at Howard University in Washington, D.C., and a member of the Emmanuel-Brinklow church in Ashton, Md.



Let's Embrace New Realities

Monte Sahlin

It's truly historic, something I never expected to see in my lifetime—the first African-American president. Barack Obama, 47, was elected over tremendous odds; yet, people of all races elected him with a larger mandate than any president in several decades, ages, and generations. What can our church learn from this?

CRUNCHING THE NUMBERS

Let's start with race. Recently the U.S. Census Bureau released its latest projections on race. Blacks, Hispanics, and other ethnic minorities today make up a third of the nation and in 2042 will become the majority. The Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America is ahead of the curve. What the Census Bureau estimates will happen in 2042 for the whole nation occurred within the church last year. We are a community that no longer has an ethnic majority. The new reality is that whites are simply another minority group among Adventists.

The practical evidence of this new reality can be seen in our church schools. White congregations can no longer sustain the schools they started, and the majority of the students are now from other ethnic groups. Let's chronicle the change in terms of three generations in my family: My father attended a boarding academy in the Midwest where there were no people of color. I attended a day academy in the 1960s with a small percentage of black, Hispanic, and Asian students. My daughters attended a Columbia Union academy in the 1990s and were a definite minority.

Another demographic reality—age—is also pertinent. The median age is inching up and here, too, Adventists are ahead of the curve. The newly published *Demographic Profile of the Seventh-day Adventist in North America* (published by the Center for Creative Ministry on behalf of the North American

Division Secretariat, which sponsored the study) shows that the median age for Adventists is 51 compared to 36 for the entire nation. This is one reason so many church schools are hurting. Surveys show that the percentage of Adventist parents who place children in church schools has remained the same for decades. There are simply fewer Adventist children.

In addition to race and age, the election of Obama to the presidency also represents a generational shift. Some 24 million people between ages 18 and 28 voted for him. They are part of what's called the Millennial generation. Born between 1977 and 1994, they are characteristically like their grandparents in the World War II generation. They have a can-do attitude, or, as they put it, "Yes we can!" and "Si se puede!"

In an article analyzing the election, William Johnsson, retired editor of the *Adventist Review*, pointed out that President Obama knows how to express a sense of hope, how to use the power of public speaking, together with the power of the Internet and community organizing, to mobilize people around a cause and to call people to sacrifice and to care.

Regardless of your opinion of the new president, he effectively engaged the Millennial generation, and so should Adventists. We need to harness the power of hope and mobilize these young people to make real change. We have lost the majority of the Baby Boomers and GenXers who were born into Adventist families. Let's not do that with the Millennials.

TO EVERY NATION AND TRIBE ...

As I read the three angels' messages, it seems to be a part of our unique destiny as the remnant church to proclaim the gospel to every nation and tribe and language and people group. Let's stop pretending we can be the Adventist movement in isolated envelopes and embrace our diversity as a fulfillment of Revelation 14:6. Will we respond to this moment of hope and energy with new, creative ideas for the mission of the church? Or will we sleep through the revelation and wake up to find we have no oil for our lamps when the bridegroom arrives?

Monte Sahlin (msahlin@creativeministry.org) is director of research and special projects for the Ohio Conference, headquartered in Mount Vernon, Ohio.



Money Matters

In these uncertain economic times, we are all more concerned about the well-being of our families, churches, and schools. The resources below will help you safeguard and manage your money while staying true to God's principles of good stewardship:

BOOKS/PAMPHLETS



It's Your Money! Isn't It?—Inspired by scriptural references, G. Edward Reid's handbook on everyday money management outlines principles for home buying, eliminating debt, preparing for retirement, etc. Order from adventsource.org or Adventist Book Centers (ABC). Price: \$9.99; audio seminar on CD (\$29.99), DVD (\$59.99), workbook (\$3.99)

"Stewardship ... It Really is Worship"—This powerful new brochure reminds us that faithful stewardship, even in difficult economic times, is part of God's directive to Christians. Call (301) 680-6157, or email FlomoJ@gc.adventist.org. Price: \$30/100 (plus S&H)



Dollars & Sense from Grandmommy—Author Kathy Reid, a member of Chesapeake Conference's Atholton church in Columbia, Md., teaches children basic money management and tithing through 11 lessons and activities.

Available at adventsource.org or ABCs. Price: \$13.99

Faith and Finance—Geared toward personal and small group study, this financial book, released last month by the North American Division (NAD) Stewardship Department (adventiststewardship.org), contains 12 lessons designed to guide Adventists in managing finances based on biblical principles. Available in English and Spanish at adventsource.org or ABCs. Price: \$12.99



DVD/CDS

Let God be God: Biblical Stewardship Foundations—A comprehensive training seminar for church leaders to use in educating their congregations



about stewardship. Set of three DVDs with student handbooks available. Call (301) 680-6157, or email FlomoJ@gc.adventist.org. Price: \$15

Community Concierge: Living the Mission—This practical workshop on CD—produced by Jeannette Dare, Pennsylvania Conference Adventist Community Services director—provides ideas on how to create an Adventist presence in any community through educational programs. Order at jyd2005@comcast.net. Price: \$8



PUBLICATIONS

Gifts of Heaven—Congregations can use this new packet of resources to help members understand how tithes and offerings are used locally—an especially relevant topic during a poor economy. Get copies at giftsofheaven.org.

"How to Survive the Coming Economic Crisis"—This article by G. Edward Reid, director of the NAD Stewardship Department, was published in the November 2008 issue of *Signs of the Times* (signstimes.com). It is also available *en español* in the October 2008 print edition of *El Centinela*.

Dynamic Steward—This newsletter, published quarterly by the Stewardship Department of the worldwide Seventh-day Adventist Church, offers helpful resources and tips. Learn more at adventiststewardship.com. Price: \$1/copy

ORGANIZATION

Bankers Financial Group—This is the only Adventist mortgage lending company in the Columbia Union, owned and operated by the Holland brothers of Greenbelt, Md. These Allegheny East Conference members present home ownership seminars and offer special loan programs. Visit bankersfinancialgroup.com.

Kara Watkins writes from Columbia, Md.

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For a complete registration brochure, contact your church's Family Ministries Coordinator or go to www.adventistfamilyministries.com to download one.

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DO YOU BELIEVE IN MIRACLES?

PENNSYLVANIA CONFERENCE DOES

THEIR MIRACLE WAS ACQUIRING THE POCONO GRACE CHURCH

Although no church growth happens by accident, the 40 people who recently signed as charter members of the Pocono Grace church in East Stroudsburg, Pa., see the acquisition of their new "home" as nothing short of a two-part miracle.

Part I: The Lutheran church that Pocono Grace was renting was up for sale. Although two other groups placed higher bids, Pocono Grace had already impressed the Lutheran members with their grand vision of community service—they just needed to raise their offer.

Part II: The Columbia Union Revolving Fund (CURF) stepped in with the necessary funding.

By answering the call, CURF was living up to its 40-year goal of promoting the mission of the church. As they have done with hundreds of churches, schools, conferences, and other entities across the Columbia Union over the years, CURF provides cost-effective financing, making ministry possible.



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Profiles in Caring



Inside: Prenatal Center for Low-Income Families Opens in Germantown

Happiness Is Contagious

A new study seems to indicate that it is happiness—and not misery—that loves company. In fact, in a study of nearly 5,000 people over some 20 years, it appears that happiness spreads like a virus from one person to another, and then to another, and then to another; your happiness actually impacts your friends' friends' friends.

James H. Fowler, from the University of California, San Diego, and Nicholas A. Christakis, from Harvard, set out to learn whether happiness can spread from person to person. They made use of data collected from 4,739 people over a 20-year period. They discovered that the relationship between people's happiness extends up to the friends of one's friends' friends.

They found that people who are in close touch with many other happy people are more likely to become happy as a result. And they also found that our personal happiness depends on the happiness of other people to whom we are connected, even through three degrees. Happiness, it turns out, is a collective experience, and not one that we sustain by ourselves. Our own happiness probably has an impact on many, many people we don't even know, just as we are impacted by the happiness of others.

The study also suggests that when it comes to happiness, proximity matters. The study suggests that the people who make us happiest are the ones who are physically the closest: a next-door neighbor who is cheerful has a much greater impact than someone who lives far away. Happiness is contagious. It spreads from friend to friend, from person to person, in social networks of interconnected individuals.

It all makes me mindful of a text I learned as a child: "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine" (Proverbs 17:22). It was always good advice; now it turns out it was good science, too.

William G. "Bill" Robertson
President & CEO
Adventist HealthCare





For the Babies

Shady Grove Adventist Hospital is proud to announce a new arrival: Shady Grove Prenatal Program in Germantown.

Shady Grove has been working with the Montgomery County Maternity Partnership Program since 2006, offering prenatal care to uninsured, low-income women at a Rockville location. The Center moved into its new location in Germantown in October 2008.

The new site is located in a part of Montgomery County that has grown rapidly in recent years. This new location, close to major bus routes and the busy I-270 freeway, is more convenient for many of the patients.

Good prenatal care can prevent many problems for both moms and babies. Healthier mothers and babies result in a stronger and healthier community, and are truly an excellent return on this investment. Shady Grove's Prenatal Program through the Maternity Partnership provides vitally important prenatal care to patients who may not be able to afford the care without this program.

Patients pay a \$350 flat rate for all normal prenatal care through the program including prenatal visits, labs, ultrasounds, delivery, postpartum care and the six-week checkup. The babies are delivered at nearby Shady Grove Adventist Hospital by obstetricians who have partnered with the hospital to support the program. Washington Adventist Hospital in Takoma Park also participates in the Maternity Partnership Program.

Shady Grove's Prenatal Program is unique in that it is staffed by nurse midwives. Not only do the midwives provide clinical care, they also work to educate their patients about the pregnancy, birth and parenting experiences.

Frayda Diamond, who has been a

midwife for 16 years, is a Women's Health Nurse Practitioner at the Prenatal Program. She says that her job involves a great deal of teaching and training. She has put together a booklet for her patients that describes what will happen at each visit. It lists in detail what they should know at each stage of their pregnancy. It is very specific about what the patients should be doing to take care of themselves.

Frayda states that she is a fairly strict teacher. She asks her patients to carefully read the section for the upcoming visit so they are able to ask the right questions. They discuss basics, such as proper nutrition and exercise. She explains complicated topics, such as differences between diagnostic tests, as well as simple things, such as what to bring to the hospital for the baby's birth.

The clinic also educates patients them about the birth process and post-birth issues such as breastfeeding and family planning. The nurses and midwives also find themselves trying to peer into the past to discover any pre-existing conditions, such as diabetes or high blood pressure. Many of the Prenatal Center's patients have not had any previous medical care so they are unaware of their health history and health issues that could impact their pregnancy and their baby. The booklet that Frayda uses for patients is available in English and Spanish, which is the native language of many Prenatal Center patients.

Because the two nurses at the clinic both speak Spanish, the patients feel comfortable asking questions and the chance of miscommunication is reduced. The nurses' language skills also are useful when patients call in, because this allows them to talk to a staff member immediately. And the nurses are available to translate for the two midwives—although Frayda says she has picked up enough Spanish to be able to

conduct a physical exam.

Terry Francis is the Director of Perinatal Services for Shady Grove Adventist Hospital and oversees the Prenatal Program. She believes that having nurse midwives provide care to Prenatal Program patients provides an exceptional experience for these women. "The nurse midwives are serious about teaching our patients," she points out. "They take more time with them and communicate on a more personal level."

The new program, which is open three days a week, has four exam rooms, a large lobby, and private consult space for staff to meet with patients. The building is new and all of the equipment is new. In addition, the staff members are pleased to be near Shady Grove Adventist Emergency Center, which makes it convenient to access emergency equipment or services if necessary.

During their prenatal visits, the patients also have access to county staff who can direct them to resources and services such as medical assistance and local pediatricians. "We recognize that these women need support to help them prepare for the birth of their babies and to provide care for these babies after they arrive," Terry Francis explains. "We work to provide all of this through our program."

During the Prenatal Center's opening celebration in December, Shady Grove President, Dennis Hansen, sounding not unlike a proud father, noted that "the Prenatal Program is the most recent example of Shady Grove Adventist Hospital's commitment to improving access to health care services for the upcountry."

"This is a huge commitment for the hospital," Terry Francis acknowledges. "But we do it for the babies. It's a gift we give to ensure the healthiest babies we can get."



Community leaders, Prenatal Center staff, and Adventist HealthCare executives participate in the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new Prenatal Center in Germantown, Maryland.

Nuevo centro prenatal

Shady Grove Adventist Hospital (SGAH) orgullosamente anuncia el nacimiento de Shady Grove Prenatal Center en Germantown. SGAH se asoció en 2006 con el Montgomery County Maternity Partnership Program, ofreciendo atención prenatal a mujeres sin seguro y de bajos ingresos en un local en Rockville. El local se mudó a sus nuevas instalaciones en octubre de 2008.

Las nuevas instalaciones están situadas en una parte del condado que ha estado creciendo rápidamente en los últimos años. Este nuevo local, cerca de las rutas mayores de autobuses y la carretera I-270, es más conveniente para muchas de sus pacientes.

Las pacientes de la clínica tienen muchos desafíos, incluyendo sus bajos ingresos, su falta de seguro médico y el ser indocumentadas. Si no fuese por este programa la mayoría de ellas no recibirían atención prenatal de ninguna clase porque está fuera de su presupuesto, porque tienen miedo y por muchos otros factores.

El programa cuesta solo \$350 dólares e incluye: visitas regulares, laboratorio, ultrasonido, cualquier tipo de atención de urgencia, parto, posparto y la visita después de seis semanas. Los bebés generalmente nacen en Shady Grove Adventist Hospital atendidos por los obstetras asociados con la clínica. El Washington Adventist Hospital también participa en el programa.

El Shady Grove Prenatal Center es especial porque cuenta con enfermeras parteras certificadas. No solamente proveen toda la atención clínica, sino que también educan a las pacientes para que tengan un mejor embarazo.

Frayda Diamond, quien ha sido una partera certificada durante 16 años, señala que su trabajo involucra una gran cantidad de enseñanza y entrenamiento. Ha producido un folleto que muestra qué sucede en cada visita. El folleto detalla lo que la paciente debería de saber en cada etapa de su embarazo. El folleto es muy específico en relación a lo que la embarazada debería de hacerse para cuidarse a sí misma.

Frayda pide a sus pacientes que lean cuidadosamente la sección correspondiente a la siguiente visita para que puedan hacer

las preguntas adecuadas. Les explica los puntos básicos, como la educación y el ejercicio apropiado, lo mismo que la diferencia entre los exámenes de diagnósticos y qué traer al hospital el día del parto.

La clínica prepara a las pacientes para el futuro enseñándoles acerca de contracciones, dar de pecho al bebé y planificación familiar. Las enfermeras y parteras también tratan de indagar en su pasado para descubrir condiciones pre-existentes tales como diabetes o hipertensión arterial. Frayda señala que, cuando entrevista a las mujeres para su historial, la mayoría de las mujeres responden "no" a todas las preguntas porque no han recibido ninguna atención médica previa. No conocen su historial médico.

El folleto de Frayda ha sido traducido al español porque la mayoría de las pacientes no hablan inglés. Como las dos enfermeras en la clínica hablan español las pacientes pueden hacer cualquier pregunta sin riesgo de malentendidos. Esto también es útil cuando las pacientes llaman por teléfono porque pueden hablar con ellas inmediatamente. Las enfermeras están disponibles para traducir para las dos parteras, aunque Frayda dice que ha aprendido suficiente español para llevar a cabo un examen médico sin necesidad de traductora.

Terry Francis, la directora de los servicios perinatales de SGAH, considera que es maravilloso que el Prenatal Center cuente con parteras certificadas. "Toman muy en serio la enseñanza a las pacientes", señala. "Pasan más tiempo con ellas y se comunican en un nivel más personal".

Esta nueva clínica, que está abierta tres días a la semana, tiene cuatro cuartos de examen, un vestíbulo amplio y consultorios privados. El edificio y todo el equipo es nuevo. Además tiene la ventaja de estar cerca del Shady Grove Adventist Emergency Center,



lo cual facilita el acceso a equipo de urgencia o a sus servicios cuando es necesario.

Durante las visitas a la clínica, las pacientes también tienen acceso al personal del condado que las puede dirigir a otros recursos y servicios tales como asistencia médica y pediatras locales. "Reconocemos que estas mujeres necesitan ayuda para prepararlas para el parto y proveer atención médica a sus bebés", explica Terry Francis. "Hacemos lo posible para proveer todo eso en nuestra clínica".

"Estamos contentos de anunciar la apertura del nuevo Prenatal Center en Germantown", dice Dennis Hansen, presidente de SGAH, con el orgullo de un padre. "El Prenatal Center es el ejemplo más reciente del compromiso de SGAH en mejorar el acceso a la atención médica en esta parte del condado".

"Es un gran compromiso para el hospital", reconoce Terry Francis. "Lo hacemos por los bebés. Es un gesto de nuestra parte para asegurar que los bebés nazcan lo más saludables que sea posible".



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ALLEGHENY EAST Exposé

FEBRUARY 2009

Southwest Church Hosts Wedding and Baptism

On the day of their wedding, Ricardo and Melvina Bryant not only made a commitment to each other, they also made a commitment to God. The couple was among five people recently baptized at the Southwest church in Philadelphia.

Calvert Brown, an elder at the 300-member church for the past 17 years, recalls the day he met Melvina. He had preached the Sabbath sermon titled "God Wants to Make a Deal With You," and was impressed to make an altar call. He had been praying for the Lord to bring him someone with whom he could work.



Ricardo and Melvina Bryant made a public commitment to God and to each other on the same day.

"A lady came up who I didn't recognize," said Brown. "We handed out request cards, and on the card she requested prayer and baptism. When she came into the vestry afterward, her boyfriend was with her. She told me she just felt impressed to come to church that morning, and after hearing the sermon, knew she wanted to be baptized. Her boyfriend said, 'If she wants to get baptized, I do too.'"

They started talking and her boyfriend, Ricardo, shared that he left the Seventh-day Adventist Church 25 years ago. Even so, he always reminded Melvina about the Sabbath. That same day, the couple also asked to be married. Every Sunday thereafter, Brown gave Bible studies to them both. They

were so hungry for knowledge of the Lord that the Bible studies would sometimes last three hours.

The couple decided that they wanted to be baptized on the day of their wedding. The entire church helped with food, decorations, and photography. "Southwest church is small, but it is also a very loving church," Brown says.

NEWS

Conference President's Mother Dies

Laura Cheatham (below) recently passed away at 105 years old, with funeral services held at the Pine Forge (Pa.) church. She was the mother of Charles Cheatham, president of the Allegheny East Conference (AEC). Her husband, William (to whom she was married for almost 69 years), was a pastor, and when he became president of the Allegheny Conference in 1954, she took a secretarial course and began working in the office until they retired in 1966. She is survived by eight children, 28 grandchildren, 49 great-grandchildren, and 19 great-great-grandchildren.



birthday with family and friends in Adelphi, Md.

"Old friends like C.D. Brooks and Maurice Battle came," said his son Alvin Singleton. "I know he really enjoyed having them visit."

Singleton, who established a reputation as a church planter, became the first president of the South Atlantic Conference in 1946. He later became president of the Northeastern Conference, and from 1962 to 1975 directed the Regional Department at the Seventh-day Adventist Church World Headquarters. After retirement Singleton worked part-time for the conference where he pastored small churches like Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., and Emmanuel Temple in Alexandria, Va. Singleton and his wife of 70 years, Mary, have six children, five grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.



Regional Conference Pioneer Turns 100

Pastor H.D. Singleton (right), past president of several regional conferences, recently celebrated his 100th

Women's Ministries Hosts Five Area Retreats

Hundreds of women from all over the Allegheny East Conference, from New Jersey to Washington, D.C., recently gathered for five area retreats to receive a fresh anointing from the Holy Spirit. Here are the highlights:

North New Jersey Women Learn to Rest in Jesus

Under the theme "Give Them Heaven: Come Find Rest Unto Your Souls," the women of North New Jersey came from eight area churches to learn how to cultivate an attitude of peace and how to rest in Jesus' love. Held at the Embassy Suites Hotel-Piscataway, attendees were blessed with music from singing evangelist Jean Brown, who attends the North Bronx, New York City church, and powerful speakers Beverly Francis, first elder at the Berean church in Newark, N.J.; Sheron Roberts, elder at the Brooklyn church in New York City; and a licensed social worker who taught stress reduction.



Baltimore Area Women Freed, Empowered

"Empowering Women Through Unity" was the theme of the eighth biennial Baltimore Extended Area Women's Ministries retreat held at the Wyndham Hotel in Gettysburg, Pa. The weekend was packed with music and ministry from Minnie McNeil, AEC's Women's Ministries leader; speaker Loretta Spivey, a member of the Ethnan Temple in Wilkensburg, Pa.; and keynote speaker Gina Brown, PhD, dean of the School of Graduate and Professional Studies at Columbia Union College in Takoma Park, Md. Some 10 percent of the visitors were not Adventist.



Washington Area Women "Chosen"

Dressed in red, women from Washington Area Women's Ministries gathered for their biennial retreat at the Hyatt Resort in Cambridge, Md. The weekend brought together women from 42 different faiths, a third of whom were first-time attendees. The retreat theme "Chosen: Created, Committed,



Consecrated" was vividly illustrated throughout the weekend by speakers who included Brenda Billings, pastor of the Metropolitan church in Hyattsville, Md.; Pastor Donnette Blake from Kingsboro Temple in New York City; and author Debra Anderson from the Emmanuel-Brinklow church in Ashton, Md.

Virginia Women Embrace Wonderful Change

It was on a chilly weekend that the Virginia women gathered to testify of "The Wonderful Change" that God has created in their lives. After a long hiatus without a retreat, there was joy in the air to be together again. Featured speakers Gina Brown and Loretta Spivey spoke about the changes all must make to serve God properly. There were six visitors.



Delaware Valley Women Celebrate Their "Value"

In what they have deemed the "best retreat ever," the women of the Delaware Valley celebrated the "Value of Women" in their annual three-day event held at the Inn at Reading in Reading, Pa. Keynote speaker Kelly D. Darby Holder, a clinical psychologist from Hummelstown, Pa., used the theme as the topic for her discourse. The retreat was accented by numerous workshops and special presentations throughout the weekend.



Watch for information on the upcoming Women Ministries conference-wide retreat scheduled for October 15-18 in Atlantic City, N.J.

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Glenville Church Serves 500 Meals

In a season when families gather around the table and give thanks for family, a warm home, and delicious food, members of the Glenville church in Ohio did not forget those in need. On Thanksgiving Day, church members took time away from their own families to give to those who may not have all the things associated with a happy holiday.

Some 90 volunteers, led by Orlean Whitehead, came together to cook, bake, decorate, host, pray, and share literature during a Thanksgiving feast at the church. They decorated and set up the fellowship hall to feed 200 people and contacted local shelters to supply the residents with a scrumptious meal. In addition to food, there was a prayer room where individuals could go to pray or to have someone pray with or for them. Also, as people left they were given fruit baskets, and a copy of *Steps to Christ* and *Message* magazine.



Rochelle Long (right) and daughter Nyoka Seymor display a delicious entrée for the homeless.



Glenville member Fred Boseman chats with one of the guests at the church's Thanksgiving dinner.

While individuals were being fed at the church, a delivery crew dropped off meals to homes and shelters around the city. Each of the takeout meals included a copy of *Message* magazine. With more than 500 meals served, the church has modeled what the holidays are truly about.

Cleveland Churches Support Prayer Initiative

Years ago, after reading 2 Chronicles 7:14, the Lord gave Carolyn Henry Hurst, DPM (below), a vision of church members coming together in corporate prayer. When she moved to Cleveland, she took the opportunity to make the vision a reality. She met with Women's Ministries leaders around the city, and together they hosted a series of prayer meetings themed "Intimate Moments with God" and "One Night With the King."



Sometime later a series of crises gravely affected many in the seven Adventist churches throughout Cleveland. It was from this need for intense, fervent, corporate prayer that Hurst and Glenville member Malinda Woods formed the City Wide Prayer Initiative (CWPI).

A bevy of questions hit them: how, when, and where would they be able to get the seven churches together? The Lord provided the answer in the form of a citywide revival sponsored by pastors in the Cleveland area. For an hour before each meeting, members of the area churches gathered to pray.

Exhilarated by the positive response from the weeklong revival, CWPI is planning a 24-hour prayer chain, a weekly prayer conference call, and a prayer service before each of the joint assemblies.



The City Wide Prayer Initiative encourages corporate prayer throughout Cleveland.

Cleveland Churches Gather for Praise and Thanksgiving

The Northern Ohio Pastor's Association recently organized an evening of praise and thanksgiving at the Southeast church in Cleveland, pastored by Jerome Hurst. All seven of the Cleveland churches, and a few from the surrounding areas, joined together to worship and show gratitude for blessings received during the year.

The Cleveland pastors have two major emphases: evangelism and prayer. They have even joined with City Wide Prayer Initiative, a lay ministry that coordinates prayer for the seven churches. The group held a season of prayer one hour before the service began. Members and friends gathered for this time of teaching and renewal. They prayed individually and in small groups. They praised God for His provisions, thanked Him for His blessings, and requested an outpouring of His Spirit.

Following the Spirit-filled prayer session, the praise team led the congregation in songs of praise, adoration, and thanksgiving. Area pastors joined in the testimonies, Scripture readings, and prayers.

The air was also filled with songs of Zion from featured groups Westside Youth from the Westside church and Women of Worship from Glenville.

Guest speaker Allen Baldwin, a native of Cleveland and pastor of Ethnan Temple in Wilksburg, Pa., listed reasons to be thankful and encouraged all to always have a word of gratefulness on their lips.



Pastor Allen Baldwin of Ethnan Temple in Wilksburg, Pa., encourages Cleveland members to always have a grateful heart.

Discipleship in an Instant Society

We live in a world where people assume that if something can be done at all, it can be done quickly and efficiently. Our attention spans have been conditioned by 30-second commercials. Our sense of reality has been flattened by 30-page abridgements. While it may be difficult, in such a world, to get a person interested in the gospel, it is even more difficult to sustain that interest.

Discipleship—the biblical designation for people of faith—flies in the face of this trend. As disciples, we are people who spend our lives apprenticed to our Master, Jesus Christ. We are in a growing-learning relationship—always. A disciple is a learner (literal meaning of the Greek word “mathetes”), where we learn not in the academic setting of a schoolroom, but rather at the work site of a craftsman. It is not enough for us to acquire information about God. In order to be disciples, we must learn skills in faith.

I dare say that what the church—Christ's gathered disciples—really needs is not more money, better buildings, or newer programs. The church has always been at its best when it had little or none of these. What we really need is the quality of life—abundant life—Jesus makes real in the lives of His disciples. Therefore, the greatest issue facing the world today, with all its heart-breaking needs, is whether those who call themselves Christians, or Adventists, will truly become disciples. Disciples are people who do not just profess certain views about God, but apply their growing understanding of spiritual realities to every aspect of their life on Earth.



Rob Vandeman
President

NEWS

Frederick Church Connects With Community

A group of Frederick (Md.) church members, passionate about reaching and serving people in their local area, have formed an outreach ministries team. Angela Ball, who heads the Health Ministries branch of the team, recently coordinated a vegetarian cooking class that drew 30 participants. Members Rachel Santamaria and Grace Matharu demonstrated how to prepare authentic heart-healthy Indian cuisine. “The food tasted and smelled delicious,” says attendee Yvonne Ponton-Rozman.



PHOTO BY YVONNE PONTON-ROZMAN

The outreach team taps into people's varied interests by offering a free, twice-weekly aerobics class, a book club, and a Music Ministries program. “It's exciting to see our members helping to meet the needs of the Frederick community,” says Senior Pastor Robert Quintana. “They are finding ways to be an integral part of their neighborhood.”

Cooking class participants learn to use culinary tools needed to make Indian breads and sauces.

Hagerstown Church Studies Economy Prophecy Link

More than 300 people attended a weekend evangelism series held recently at the Hagerstown (Md.) church. Presenter Dave Weigley, president of the Columbia Union Conference, led an in-depth study of the prophetic significance behind economic, political, and religious events that are taking place today. Of the attendees, 24 families were not Seventh-day Adventist. Eleven individuals requested baptism, and following the series, many others asked for additional Bible prophecy studies.—Rick Remmers

Hagerstown church pastor Rick Remmers baptizes Sokmarly Chambers, a young woman raised in a Buddhist home who is joyfully embracing Christianity. She attended the church's recent economy series.



PHOTO BY TRENT TRUMAN

Calendar

February

22 Bible Training Workshop, Northern Ohio

March

7 Education Rally Day
8 Bible Training Workshop, Pennsylvania
15 Community Service Federation Central/Southern Ohio
29 Community Service Federation Va./W.Va.

April

4 Multicultural Workshop Training Haitian Leaders, Roanoke Va.
18 Youth Federation, Roanoke Va.
19 Community Service Federation Northern Ohio
19 Constituency Organizing Committee Meeting
24-25 Conference-wide Music, Worship Conference and Championship Basketball Game
24-25 Women's Ministries 3-in-1 Conference

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



Bethel church members Marino Stepp, Justyn Stepp, and Richard Tibbs pray together.



Women of Worship was one of the groups that serenaded the prayerful attendees at Southeast church.

President Meets Pastors Face2Face

Conference president Rob Vandeman conducts annual reviews called Face2Face with Chesapeake's 60 pastors. Here, in an interview with Samantha Young, assistant to the president for communication, he offers an inside look at the experience:

Q: How did you find the time to conduct these pastoral interviews?

A: It was a challenge given the nature of my schedule. I set aside one day a week during most of November and December to dedicate to the process. Some days I had a steady stream of pastors coming to sit down in my office, other days I was on the road to meet with them on their turf.

Q: Were the interviews part of an annual evaluation?

A: Not this year. John Appel, our director of pastoral development, has more direct contact with the pastors and is in a better position to help a pastor assess his or her ministry.

Q: What have you learned from this round of interviews?

A: I've been reassured that we have some highly competent, effective, and committed pastors. Pastors are confronted many times by unrealistic, even conflicting, expectations from different groups within the church, community, their family, or even within themselves. They are expected to be all things to all people, and that is simply impossible. Some days they need to lead and challenge people with visionary preaching and careful administration. Other days they need to be tender shepherds, accepting people as they are and carefully loving them. On one hand, pastors throw themselves sacrificially into their work and strive for excellence, never shirking any task or person who needs



PHOTO BY SAMANTHA YOUNG

Pastors of the Columbia, Md.-based Atholton church, Antonio Lopez (left), Steve Jencks (center), and Bill Peeke (not pictured), share their joys and concerns with conference president Rob Vandeman.

Q: What was your goal in personally meeting with the pastors?

A: I seldom have the opportunity to sit down with a pastor when the agenda is not already established by circumstances—a crisis, a decision, or a request. Face2Face gave me the chance to just talk, probe, listen, and offer encouragement. I have a pretty good feel for what is happening in the churches. Information comes to me from a variety of sources, but I wanted to learn how they saw things—what was bringing them satisfaction and joy, what heartaches or burdens they carried, what kept them awake at night—on both a personal and professional level. I can pray for them with greater clarity after talking as colleagues in ministry, rather than as employer and employee. I hope they went away with a greater sense of my support for them.

ministerial attention. On the other hand, they are to guard their personal and family time. I encourage them to find balance. I am impressed how many genuinely seek to perform an authentic, biblical ministry and desperately desire to be faithful to their calling. There is a role that can never be mastered. Living the pastoral role is an art, something that demands both intuition and practiced skill. And it requires years to learn to do well. So I will pray more, encourage more, show my appreciation more, and hope others will join me!

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Phone: (410) 995-1910 ■ President, Rob Vandeman
Editor, Samantha Young

Columbia Union College

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College Takes Steps Toward University Status

Following a presentation of the internal University Status Taskforce, the Columbia Union College (CUC) Board of Trustees voted unanimously to pursue university status. In January, CUC first submitted its petition for university status to the Maryland Higher Education Commission, and followed with a second petition to the Middle States Commission of Higher Education for the evaluation and approval.

The proposal to become a university was first recommended under the previous administration, introduced by former college president Randal Wisbey. The objective was further developed when CUC's 19th president, Weymouth Spence, EdD, assumed leadership and adapted *The Plan for Columbia Union College* to fit the strategic imperatives of the board.

The administration pledges to diligently engage its constituents and partners as they take subsequent steps in becoming a university and determining a new name for the college. Please submit your comments or questions to comments@cuc.edu.



NEWS

Spicer Memorial College President Visits

CUC president Weymouth Spence recently hosted a reception for the president of Spicer Memorial College, Justus Devadas, PhD, who was visiting from Pune, India. During his trip to America, Devadas met with several business and education leaders in Maryland; and also sat with Spence to discuss future academic partnerships between the two higher education, Seventh-day Adventist institutions.

Alumni Weekend to Comemorate 50 Years of Student Missions

From April 3-5, CUC alumni are invited to return for a historic and fun-filled weekend in celebration of the college's rich legacy of service. Students who have served as missionaries in the United States, or overseas, are encouraged to return to CUC to share their memories and reconnect with old friends.



Tributes will be given to graduates in honor classes '49, '59, '69, '79, '84, '89, and '99. Join us for a weekend to remember that will include the popular Tastes of Takoma. For details, email pr@cuc.edu, or contact Alumni Relations at (800) 835-4212.

Anderson Becomes Newest Faculty Member

Elizabeth Anderson (right) is the newest member of CUC's faculty in the Department of Communication and Journalism. Anderson earned her teaching credentials in California where she taught for six years. As an instructor at CUC, she enjoys teaching students how to become better writers. Anderson graduated from Oakwood University in Huntsville, Ala., and received her master's in Journalism and Public Affairs from American University in Washington, D.C. She worships at the Seabrook church in Lanham, Md.



CUC to Host Intercollegiate Convention

CUC will host student leaders from 13 Adventist colleges and universities from across North America from March 31 to April 4. This will be during the annual convention for the Adventist Intercollegiate Association (AIA). Each year the AIA gathers to train new officers for student government. The young Adventist leaders convene to attend workshops, trade leadership tips, and discuss issues affecting their campuses.

John Appointed Associate Dean

Emile John is the new associate dean of Admissions and Records at Columbia Union College. He has served the college for over 10 years, and remains passionate about the Adventist education that CUC provides students.

"Adventist education is indeed the greatest education system. It's where lives are transformed and students are prepared for service to God," said John. He promotes a commitment to excellence

through his administrative talents, and also guides freshmen in honing essential study skills.

John, who attends the Spencerville church in Silver Spring, Md., ensures that every student who passes through CUC's halls accomplishes the steps needed to achieve academic excellence. "I love working with our students. They are the reason why I continue to do what I do," he said.—*Michael Martell and PR Staff*



Emile John, a teacher at CUC for 10 years, was recently appointed associate dean of Admissions and Records.

Students Broadcast Beliefs to Millions

Several students and recent alumni got the chance to discuss the relevance of their faith during a taping for the Light of Hope International Television Ministry. The program was developed by associate professor Michael M. Kulakov Jr., PhD, and was taped at CUC's Center for Law and Public Policy.

Some 13 students gathered in small groups to discuss issues ranging from Adventists in public service, to the impact of globalization and multiculturalism on evangelism in the 21st century, and the future of the Adventist mission.

"These programs featured passionate young people sharing their faith and reflecting on the most pressing issues in their spiritual, academic, professional, and personal lives," said Kulakov, who teaches political studies and philosophy at CUC.

He believes that each young person brings a unique perspective into the classroom that is based on his, or her, diverse cultural, ethnic, and social background.

The taped segments will be divided into a series of 30-minute inspirational shows that will air on a public network station in Atlanta.

The programs can also be downloaded online at lightofhopetv.com/broadcast.html.

"CUC has a very rich heritage. We appreciate the willingness of its students and faculty to join with us in this effort to create a new series of programs to give a fresh perspective on topics that are not very openly discussed," said Peter Kulakov, director and speaker for Light of Hope.

CALENDAR

February

- 9-13 Gender Week
- 11-14 Choir Festival
- 11 Agape Feast
- 21 Campus Church
- 22 College Open House
- 28 Harlem Café

March

- 2-5 Midterm Exams
- 6-15 Spring Break
- 27-29 Mother/Daughter Weekend

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 Executive Director of Marketing and Communication, Saschane Stephenson Editor, Tanisha Greenidge



CUC students and alumni recently taped a series of shows discussing their beliefs for Atlanta-based Light of Hope International Television Ministry.

Time Well Spent

Now in my fourth year of high school at Highland View Academy (HVA), I can see how I have benefited from this environment. When I first started at HVA as a freshman, I was slightly fearful, and I was thrilled that my older, senior brother would be there with me. I soon learned that HVA had a very welcoming atmosphere and that I didn't need to rely on my brother so much. This school has taught me to rely foremost on God, and then on friends and family.

It is easy to succeed with a supportive staff that has taught me about dedication, honesty, and perseverance. They teach not just from books, but from how they live their lives. I find it true that actions speak louder than words. The friends I have made here are irreplaceable and will be with me the rest of my life. We have become like a family; since the school is small I've truly gotten to know many people. There are also many activities to get involved in at HVA. I recommend that incoming students get involved in sports, band, and other activities—to make them more well-rounded. My time at HVA has made me grow, not just academically, but spiritually, and I would say that is time well spent.



Laura Boyer
Student Association President

NEWS

Canned Food Drive Helps Local Families

On a blustery and cold Sunday, perfect for sleeping in and staying warm, HVA students donned coats, hats, and gloves and set out to make a difference for local families. They walked through several Hagerstown, Md., neighborhoods asking for donations of canned and boxed food items to contribute to families in need.



By the end of the day, there were some cold hands and feet, but hearts were warmed as approximately 1,200 items were counted and boxed (above). "It was really cold, but well worth it to know that we were able to help a lot of families," said Jennifer Calhoun ('10).

Food items were later delivered to the Adventist Community Services center, also known as ACTS 9, in Hagerstown, which is operated by several area Seventh-day Adventist churches.

Students Spread Christmas Joy

Each year during the Christmas season, HVA students take part in Operation Christmas Child, a program that provides gifts to children in need. Participants pack small gifts and treats into shoeboxes that are collected from all across the United States and sent all over the world to children who would otherwise have few, if any, gifts at Christmas.

Sophomore Jill Rent (below) and her sister, Katie, a junior, provided four boxes packed with toys, T-shirts, toothpaste, and school supplies. "We packed them in glittery boxes with angels on them," said Jill. "It would be really cool to know what country our boxes end up in and who gets them."

To learn more about Operation Christmas Child, visit samaritanspurse.org.



Class of 2009 Honored

Recently members of the Class of 2009 were recognized by HVA faculty, parents, and peers during a special service. Class sponsors Ophelia Barizo and Brad Durby read a tribute for each class member, highlighting their accomplishments and personality. Of the class' 29 members, 16 are in their fourth year. Reflecting on her four years at HVA, Mary Hostetler said, "It was a great environment for me to experience growth in many areas of my life." For Michael Nyatta, also a four-year senior, friendships stand out. "Getting to know so many people and make such good friends has been awesome," he said.

The Class of 2010 hosted a reception for the seniors and their guests immediately following the service.

Highlights From Academy Day

During its annual Academy Day, sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-graders recently came to HVA's campus to learn more about the school. Guests got a chance to learn more about the school's academic program, scholarships, and extracurricular activities. The visitors also got acquainted with many of the current students and teachers.



Academy Day guests and HVA students have morning worship together.



HVA awarded \$500 scholarships to several visiting students, including Mercedes Malcolm, Caitlin Warden, and Canetra Salary.



Science teacher Ophelia Barizo demonstrates how to make foam.



Visitor Kullen Nipe participates in a geometry contest.

CALENDAR

- February**
16-21 Student-led Week of Prayer
22 International Fair
 3-6 p.m.
 HVA Gymnasium
25-Mar. 1 Home Leave
- March**
14 Senior Play
 8 p.m., HVA Gymnasium
15 Parent-Teacher Conferences
 9 a.m.-1 p.m.
15-19 Annual Phonathon Fundraiser
27-Apr. 5 Spring Break

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 Principal and Editor, Sheri Tydings

God is Able to Provide

Hearing the word "economy" causes many to think about money. For some, their thoughts focus on immediate needs such as how to pay for the groceries and how to pay the mortgage. How do we maneuver this economic road of uncertainty? My mind is drawn to the story of the New Testament church in Macedonia as recorded in 2 Corinthians 8 and 9. Members had a willingness to help others, even those who had little. "They were freely willing" (chapter 8:3), and "He who gathered much had nothing left over, and he who gathered little had no lack" (chapter 8:15). A spirit of willingness to help others was applauded and was indicative of a right relationship with Him. Thus, Paul says in chapter 9:7, "So let each give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver."

As a church family, let each of us be sensitive to the needs around us. By God's grace, let us cultivate a heart of willingness to give to others in need so that we too will give "ungrudgingly" and not out of obligation. God loves that kind of giving. Paul says in chapter 9:8, "God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have abundance for every good work." Be of good courage because God is able to provide for all our needs.



Larry Boggess
 President

West Virginia District Prays for 40 Days

For 40 days, members from the West Virginia churches of Franklin, Moorefield, and Romney gathered to pray for themselves, their church, and their community.

The idea for the 40 days of prayer originated at a district planning session. The purpose of the meeting was to determine what steps could be taken to reach their communities for Christ. The gathered members recognized that for them to know how they are to be used by the Lord, prayer would have to be the first step.

Walter Cardenas, Moorefield's associate pastor, offered to lead his congregation in 40 days of prayer and in the consecration of each member to God's service. Every morning at 5 o'clock, the Moorefield group began with prayer and songs. Next, they discussed what they had read in the day's assigned chapter from *Prayer*, a compilation of readings on prayer by Ellen

White. During the last half hour of the meeting, each individual specifically prayed for five church members and five people outside of the church.

Franklin and Romney church members also read a chapter each day from *Prayer* and prayed in their homes. Every Monday evening, Romney members met at the church to pray and to discuss their personal experiences.

As much as 60 percent of the active membership in the district participated. Church members have seen prayers answered through requests for baptism, improved health, financial miracles, enhanced relationships, and personal victories. Many have also experienced a closer connection with the Lord.

"We praise God for His faithfulness and are noting each and every prayer answered, though they may be small," said Moorefield church member Piper Ivins. "God is growing our faith through this experience."



Moorefield church members and friends found that 40 days of prayer were key in helping them grow in their faith.

Seminar Prepares Point Pleasant Members for End Times

Approximately 54 members, guests, and baptismal candidates learned how to prepare for end-time events at a recent weekend seminar at the Point Pleasant



(W.Va.) church (below). Author and speaker Jere Franklin from British Columbia, Canada, led the seminar titled "You Can Survive."

The seminar included six sessions covering such topics as "The Soon Return of Jesus," "National Sunday Law," and "God's Call to Country Living." Franklin shared how Jesus will provide for His people as they prepare for the end-time events that are swiftly approaching. He also

encouraged members to share the gospel with others.

"One of the major blessings of Franklin's seminar is that he so beautifully encourages the people to be motivated by love for Jesus, rather than being motivated by fear," said David Morgan, Point Pleasant's pastor.

Member Violet Davis said she believed "the seminars were real eye openers and heart renewing for a lot of people."

Frostburg Church Fills Backpacks With Food, Love

Children who receive free meals at schools in Western Maryland often go home to an empty kitchen on weekends. That is why each weekend the Frostburg (Md.) church sends 24 food-filled backpacks home with hungry children.

The church's participation started when Frostburg Adventist

Community Services leader Heidi Shadel made a routine visit to the Western Maryland Food Bank in Cumberland, Md., last year. The backpack program depends on sponsors to pay for kid-friendly food to fill the backpacks, then deliver the packs to the schools. When Shadel learned that there were not enough sponsors for all of the hungry children, she knew her church could help.

Frostburg member Faith Leasure and her husband, Brian, pick up the food, fill the backpacks, and deliver them to two elementary schools. The Leasures fill the backpacks with food that can be easily prepared by children. They include at least two microwavable meals each week, along with individual servings of vegetables, fruits, and puddings.

The backpack program provides an outreach opportunity by allowing the church to include anything in the backpacks. The Leasures have added holiday packages, Sabbath School papers, and invitations to church or special events. Faith, an office assistant at Mt. Savage (Md.) Elementary School, recalls, "One day this little fellow came to me and said, 'Miss Faith, when do I get another paper?'"

"They know that we are there for

them and that if there is anything they need, they can contact the church or contact myself. There is a lot of love packed inside those backpacks," she says.



Frostburg (Md.) church member Faith Leasure fills backpacks with food for children who would otherwise go hungry on the weekends.

Mountain View EVENTS

February

- 1 Church Leadership Symposium
Summersville
- 6-8 Pathfinder Winter Camp
- 21 Outreach Leadership Rally NW
Parkersburg
- 22 Walk 100 Miles Begins

March

- 2 MV Curriculum Committee
Buckhannon
- 2 Conference Teachers In-Service
Buckhannon
- 3 Ministers Meeting, *Ripley*
- 16 Executive Committee and Annual
Financial Review
- 28 Outreach Leadership Rally SW
Huntington

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Guiding Students Through the Wilderness

On a recent Friday evening, I was helping a student prepare for the following morning's Sabbath School class. The lesson for the week focused on the high priest's sacrifice and the Day of Atonement. Our discussion included all of the traditional conversation detailing the purpose of the bullock for the priest, the lamb, and the scapegoat.

Like many, I have heard the story of the Day of Atonement several times throughout my life; however, something new and fresh strikes me each time I study the topic. This time was no exception. First, I was reminded that it was highly unlikely for a person to stay alive in the wilderness on his own. The Israelites who were removed from the camp had difficulty surviving without the resources and support of their community. Second, I was struck by the preparation and enthusiasm the teacher—an 18-year-old senior here at Mount Vernon Academy (MVA)—showed for the topic. Her reflections emphasized the importance of coming to Christ to receive the grace that His sacrifice provided. She also emphasized the importance of community togetherness in order to survive our spiritual journey.

MVA is indeed preparing students to be "at one" with God. Our school allows this journey to take place among a community of Seventh-day Adventist Christians who support one another so that students don't have to try to find their way alone in the "wilderness."



David Daniels
Principal

Student Pushes Against Poverty

Last fall while visiting the war memorials on a class trip to Washington, D.C., senior Daniel Graves was inspired by those who sacrificed their lives serving our country. "I realized the true spirit of America—honor, service, sacrifice, and duty to our country," said Graves. "and I began to think about what I could do to serve this great nation." After seeking God's guidance, Graves felt impressed to discover and meet the needs in the school's surrounding community. Then he established Push Against Poverty.

Through meetings with Mount Vernon's mayor, local United Way representatives, and many social service agencies, Graves learned about the community's needs and how to implement his strategic plan.

MVA staff and students also got involved. Chaplain Tim Soper, principal David Daniels, and boys' dean Cliff Wright Jr. helped Graves implement the program. Students went into the community collecting information through door-to-door surveys.

Survey participants provided information about estimated family income, identified family size, and shared their immediate concerns. "I have discovered," he commented, "that many people need the basic necessities—groceries, children's clothing, baby supplies, and toiletries." He is currently fundraising to help acquire these items and is hoping community members and businesses will donate resources, money, and

goods. Recently the organization helped move an evicted family into a relative's home.

Graves believes Push Against Poverty will benefit not only the community, but also the MVA students and staff involved. "Students have seen how real poverty is



Daniel Graves (right) shares a moment with one of the families that Push Against Poverty has helped.

around us," he said. "They have also been blessed through blessing others."

Graves graduates in a few months and plans to appoint a responsible, caring student to take over the program. He plans to attend Cleveland State University where he will major in law and organize similar community projects in Cleveland.

SPIRIT

Week of Prayer Highlights "Purpose"

Each year Student Week of Prayer is a highly anticipated event at Mount Vernon Academy. Students lead in praise singing, special music, and speaking. This year the speakers' messages focused on "Serving a Purpose." Some students challenged their peers through examples of Bible characters who had fulfilled God's purpose. Others spoke of deliberately seeking God's purpose in one's life, and using biblical methods for discerning one's purpose.

Prior to this year's special week, the student speakers participated in a weekend together praying and preparing to share God's Word.

During the week, students focused on God's purpose in their personal lives while helping others in the community. At the end of the week, they spent time in reflection and realized that, while everyone serves a purpose, not everyone is following God's will.

The week concluded with an appeal to follow God's great plan found in Matthew 5:16: "Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven" (NIV).

Ricky Woodruff, religious vice president for the

Student Association, enjoyed "seeing the students step up and take leadership positions."

Sophomore Allison Cuva said, "It [felt] good to be blessed by people my age."

Junior Vimbai Mazani added that while it may be challenging, "we should all [be ready to] step out of our comfort zone for Jesus."—*Tim Soper*



One of the most anticipated events at MVA is the Student Week of Prayer where students are challenged by their peers.

Academy Day Planned

On March 22 and 23, Mount Vernon Academy will host Academy Days, an annual event planned to give students in seventh through 11th grade an opportunity to experience different aspects of academy life.

Visitors will participate in events designed to familiarize them with each other and MVA's campus. On Monday attendees will join current students in shortened classes to meet teachers and learn about subjects offered.

Prospective students will be able to complete financial aid applications and audition for several music and sports scholarships. These scholarships, which will be awarded to several guests in grades 8-11, may be applied toward tuition the following year.

For more information, visit mvacademy.org, or email information@mvacademy.org.



Sophomore Allegra Jenkins, Cassandra Evans, and junior Natalie Sibanda enjoy last year's Academy Days.



February

28-March 8 Mission Trip

March

4-8 Home Leave
16-17 Midterm Exams
16-19 OGT Testing
22-23 Academy Days
25 Service Day
27-April 5 Spring Break

April

5 ACT
8 Service Day
13-18 Spring Week of Prayer

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NEWS

NEW JERSEY

FEBRUARY 2009

God is Not Bankrupt

As mentioned in last month's editorial, 2009 will bring challenges. For many the stress will continue to be related to the economic crisis that exists, not only in our country, but worldwide. The news on the radio, television, and Internet continue to be hopeless. The time before us is not expected to be easy. It is possible that we will continue to hear about many companies having massive dismissals of employees. We will also continue to hear the echoing sound of the word "bankruptcy" as it accompanies the names of once large businesses and commercial chains. And if that wasn't enough, the so-called "prophets of terror" continue to make their gloomy comments, which increase fear and disturb the mental peace of believers and nonbelievers alike. To all I repeat a great truth that should serve as an anchor during the difficult times closing in: God is not bankrupt! He never has been and never will be!

The promises of God to His faithful children are clear in His Word, "...his bread will be supplied and water will not fail him" (Isa. 33:16, NIV). We do not need to be anxious, nor shall we torment ourselves. Ellen White reminds us, "We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history" (*Life Sketches*, p. 196). I have lived through situations much more difficult than these in disastrous places. I have seen the hand of the Almighty work in favor of His people. Do not fear! He has promised to be with us until the end. And next month, I will share some suggestions for dealing with these tough times.



José H. Cortés
President

Burlington Celebrates International Day

Burlington church recently celebrated its international day under the theme "United We Stand, Divided We Fall." The church family comprises more than 50 members from diverse backgrounds. One church member noted that "even though we are all from different cultures, we blend together in Christ as one family. We are not divided by language, color, nor culture, but united through One in whom there is 'no Jew, no Gentile.'"

Members, representing 15 countries—including St. Vincent, St. Lucia, Trinidad, Haiti, Montserrat, and St. Kitts—marched into the sanctuary with their respective flags while the voices of the congregation rang with the hymn "They Come from the East and West." There was also a segment where members learned how the work started in each of these countries and how it grew to where it is now.

As if expressing the sentiments of all the members, soloist Yaki Francis sang the words of the beautiful song "Each One Reach One."

Pastor David Cuke, from the Northeastern Conference, presented a very rousing, and inspiring sermon, which placed emphasis on the theme "United We Stand, Divided We Fall."

The day culminated with a special luncheon of

exotic and succulent international dishes and the thought that, someday soon, we will all partake at the long, grand table with Christ Himself at the head.



Burlington members celebrate their diverse cultures with an international Sabbath.

Dios no esta en bancarrota

Tal como mencione en el editorial de Enero, el Año 2009 trae sus grandes desafíos. Para muchos la gran pre-ocupación continua siendo la crisis económica que vive no solamente en nuestro país sino el mundo entero. Las noticias en la Radio, la Televisión y el Internet siguen siendo desalentadoras. Se espera que el período de tiempo que tenemos por delante no va a ser fácil. Es posible que sigamos oyendo hablar de despidos masivos de empleados en muchas compañías. También seguiremos escuchando resonar la triste palabra “bancarrota” acompañando el nombre de las que un día fueron grandes empresas y cadenas comerciales. Y como si todo esto fuera poco, los llamados “Profetas del Terror” siguen haciendo sus lúgubres comentarios, que aumentan los temores del pueblo y desestabilizan la paz mental de los creyentes y no creyentes. Para todos quiero decir una gran verdad que debe servir de ancla durante los tiempos difíciles que se avecinan: ¡Dios no esta en bancarrota! ¡El Nunca lo ha estado y nunca lo estará!

Las promesas de Dios para sus hijos fieles son claras en la Palabra, “...se le dará su pan y sus aguas tendrá seguras” (Isaías 33:16). No necesitamos estar angustiados, no necesitamos atormentarnos. Elena de White nos recuerda “No tenemos nada que temer del futuro, a menos que olvidemos la manera en que el Señor nos ha conducido, y lo que nos ha enseñado en nuestra historia pasada” (*Notas Biográficas*, p. 216). Yo he vivido en situaciones mucho más difíciles que esta, en lugares realmente desastrosos. Yo he visto la mano del Todopoderoso obrar a favor de su pueblo. ¡No tengan temor! El ha prometido estar con nosotros todos los Días hasta el fin.

El próximo mes compartiré algunas recomendaciones de como lidiar con estos tiempos difíciles.



José H. Cortés
Presidente

Burlington celebra un día internacional

“Unidos Nos Paramos, Divididos Nos Caemos” fue el tema de el día internacional que fue celebrado recientemente en la iglesia de Burlington. La familia de la iglesia esta compuesta de 50 miembros de fondos diversos. Un miembro de iglesia nota que, “aunque somos de diferentes culturas, nosotros mezclamos juntos como una familia en Cristo. No estamos divididos por lenguaje, color, o cultura, pero unidos por medio de Uno en quien ‘no hay Judío, ni Gentil.’”

Miembros de 15 países representados incluyendo St. Vincent, St. Lucia, Trinidad, Haití, Montserrat, y St. Kitts entraron al santuario con sus banderas respectivas mientras las voces de la congregación llamaron con el himno, *Ellos Vienen del Oriental y Occidental*. Había también un segmento histórico donde compartieron como empezó el trabajo en cada país y como creció hasta donde esta ahora.

Como una expresión apropiada de los sentimientos de los miembros, las palabras de la hermosa canción *Cada Uno Alcance Uno* fue cantado por el solista Yaki Francis.

El Pastor David Cuke de la Conferencia del Noreste presento un mensaje estimulante, motivador, y inspirador poniendo énfasis en el tema “Unidos Nos Paramos, Divididos Nos Caemos.”



Los miembros de Burlington celebran sus diversas culturas con un Sábado internacional.

El día culmino con un almuerzo especial con platos exóticos y suculentos de diferentes países con el pensamiento que algún día todos tomaremos parte de la gran mesa larga donde Cristo estará en la cabeza.

Visitors Outnumber Members at Mount Vernon Hill Health Seminar

For years the Mount Vernon Hill church family longed to experience an outreach series where friends from the community outnumbered the church members. It finally happened when the church hosted the “Boost Your Health & Vigor” seminar in the church sanctuary.

After several months of planning, working, and praying, the church billed the event as a “free seminar as a gift to our community.” Approximately 250 people came to experience and see for themselves what the church had to offer.

The keynote presenter, Wes Youngberg (left), DrPH, is director of Rancho Wellness Center and Lifestyle Medicine Clinic at the Rancho Family Medical Group in Temecula, Calif. He founded the church’s wellness center



on the Pacific island of Guam and is one of the founding directors for the American College of Lifestyle Medicine.

In three separate sessions over the course of the weekend, Youngberg focused on how to treat and reverse many lifestyle-related diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, cancer, and depression through the use of a healthful diet, daily exercise, and natural remedies.

Visitors voiced overwhelmingly positive responses to the seminar, prompting the church to invite Youngberg back for another session. In the meantime, the church is planning to offer a cooking class and stress management course.

All sessions were recorded and are available for purchase by contacting the Mount Vernon Hill church at (740) 397-3531.—Dale Glass



Historical Notes: Ohio Adventism in the 1860s

In 1858 the Great Controversy vision came to Ellen White while she and her husband, James, were with a company of believers at Lovett’s Grove near Bowling Green, Ohio. They returned to the area in 1860 to hold evangelistic meetings. James had family ties there. His brother, John, was a minister in the Methodist Conference of Ohio.



A historic marker points to the Lovett’s Grove church, founded in 1864, as Ohio’s first Seventh-day Adventist church.

Ohio was one of the seven-state conferences that formed before the General Conference was organized. As early as 1859, it was the first to have an annual meeting called the “state conference,” which included church delegates, business sessions, and the election of a chairman and secretary.

In May 1863, when the first General Conference Session was held in Battle Creek, Mich., the Ohio Conference sent two of the session’s 20 delegates, helping to form the denomination as an official organization.

One of the young men converted through James White’s efforts was Oliver Mears, who became an elder in the Lovett’s Grove congregation and later the first president of the Ohio Conference. Mears served for more than seven years, spread over three different terms (1863-66, 1869-70, and 1873-75), but never stopped making his living as a farmer.—Monte Sahlin

To be continued ...

Galion Church Member Helps Kids Have "Sweet Dreams"

Galion church member Jennie Bittner's "Sweet Dreams" clothing drive is ensuring that needy kids in the community will have warm pajamas to sleep in this winter. She collected pajama sets for children, ranging from infants to age 16, and distributed them at the church shortly before Christmas. Bittner says she got the idea from watching an episode of *The Oprah Winfrey Show* in which the host donated pajamas to foster children.

"I thought, 'Oh, that's a good idea to do something like this for the kids, because this economy is very hard [for some families];'" she said. "This has given me a way to grow with God and develop relationships with fellow church members."

Not only does Sweet Dreams provide the children with comfortable PJs to sleep in, but Bittner says this project is her calling from God to get her back in church. "God works in such mysterious ways. I feel like He is using me



Galion member Jennie Bittner collects pajamas to keep children warm in the winter.

to help others," she said. "I've hit roadblocks, but I keep plugging on. He has me doing this for a reason."

Bittner has collected several hundred pajamas. The church donated \$200 to get her started, which she then used to purchase more than 60 sets. The Meijer department store donated a \$100 gift card. Galion pastor Marcellus de Oliveira donated five sets and encouraged the small congregation to get behind Bittner's mission. "Jennie's ministry is filling the needs of chil-



Galion pastor Marcellus de Oliveira rebaptizes Jennie Bittner. Bittner says having children has brought her back to God.

dren. We try to support her as much as possible," he said. "I think she is doing what we all should do—search your heart and let God use you."

Bittner, de Oliveira, and Nancy Bittner (Jennie's mother-in-law) wore pajamas to Seventh-day Adventist churches in Bucyrus, Marion, Mount Vernon, and Mansfield to promote a pajama party at Nancy's home in Galion. "We have a lot of people who are interested. I think God is really blessing us," Nancy Bittner said. "Hopefully next year, we can expand it and give a bed-time storybook to families."

Bittner is a stay-at-home mother of two children. She said becoming a mother opened her eyes for growing closer to God. As a young girl she attended church, but "slipped away" as she got older. Becoming an active member again prompted her to study the Bible and recommit her life to God, culminating in a rebaptism. In the future, she sees Sweet Dreams going beyond Galion and even Ohio.

"I was afraid to talk about God, and now He is using me to tell others. If I can touch one person, to bring them closer to God, then I've done my job," she said. "I will be praising Him forever."—*Terricha Bradley/Bucyrus Telegraph-Forum*

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

Pennsylvania Pen

FEBRUARY 2009

What is the Lead Sentence?

In the book *Made to Stick*, authors Chip and Dan Heath give an illustration. A professor gave his writing class a paragraph to read and asked them to create a lead sentence for the school newspaper. The paragraph stated: "Kenneth L. Peters, the principal at Beverly Hills High School, announced today that the entire faculty will travel to Sacramento next Thursday for a colloquium in new teaching methods. Among the speakers will be anthropologist Margaret Mead, college president Robert Maynard Hutchings, and California governor Edmund 'Pat' Brown."

The class worked on the assignment, and after the professor collected the papers, he announced that the best lead sentence would be: "There will be no school next Thursday." This is what the students reading the school paper would find most relevant and interesting.

Apply that illustration to your local church. What is the lead sentence *you* would use to describe all that your church does and believes in? What would be most relevant for your community to hear? Your answer would give an indication of your own theology—so it should be written carefully. Most importantly, I hope that your lead sentence would focus on Jesus and His unconditional love for all humanity.



Barry Tryon
Executive Secretary and
Ministerial Director

Secretariat, Ministerial Helps Ministry Run Smoothly

Barry Tryon, DMin, leads the Secretariat and Ministerial departments of the Pennsylvania Conference. His secretariat duties include keeping minutes for official meetings, dealing with immigration and legal matters, and organizing constituency meetings. Working with him is administrative assistant Lori Landa, who takes care of credentialing and service records and general human resource concerns. Lisa Larrabee works as conference clerk and deals with membership issues, church and conference transfers, and assists local church clerks.

The ministerial side of Tryon's duties include pastoral support, training, providing resources for pastors, and conducting pastors meetings. Working with him in this department is Jeanne Hartwell, associate ministerial director. She assists Tryon in his duties and also provides support for pastors' wives.

These departments are not in the limelight. Much of what these staff members do provides the infrastructure for ministers and teachers to carry out the church's mission of reaching souls for Jesus. In any given week, the departmental staff can provide orientation to a new employee, begin the retirement process for another, and help a third work through immigration issues. They might field a question from a pastor about policy and procedure, and take a call from a member about how soon they will be getting a pastor. Their job is to keep the machinery in working condition so that those in the field can better perform the work of mission.

This dedicated team works hard to ensure that many behind-the-scene items are addressed so that ministry can run smoothly.



Pennsylvania Conference's Secretariat and Ministerial department staff includes: (left to right) Barry Tryon, Jeanne Hartwell, Lori Landa, and Lisa Larrabee.

Date _____
Name _____
Address _____
City/State/Zip _____
Phone _____
1st choice _____ 2nd choice _____ 3rd choice _____

All those who plan to stay in the Dorms and have children ages 10 and over, will be asked to stay in the respective dormitories; i.e., Girls in Girls' dorm and Boys in Boys' dorm.

Total # in your party _____. Provide information below for children.

Children	Age	Gender

Full Time Rates/Location	Amount	Total
Dorm room w/2 single beds -Extra Mattress - Each (Dorm Only)	\$227.00 10.50	\$ \$
Tent w/electricity & floor (1 double or 2 single cots included) -Extra single cot w/mattress - Each (Tent Only)	101.00 18.00	\$ \$
Small personal tent or trailer space up to 20ft. No Electricity (Field by Boys' Dorm)	43.00	\$
Cabin - Keystone (5 sets of bunk beds)	102.00	\$
Trailer space w/ limited Electricity usage Keystone (trailer size _____ ft.)	116.50	\$
Trailer space w/ limited Electricity usage Grove City (trailer size _____ ft.)	105.00	\$

Per Day Rates/Location	Amount	Total
Dorm room w/2 single beds -Extra Mattress - Each (Dorm Only)	\$28.00 6.75	\$ \$
Tent w/electricity & floor (1 double or 2 single cots included) -Extra single cot w/mattress - Each (Tent Only)	24.00 6.75	\$ \$
Small personal tent/trailer space up to 20ft. No Electricity (Field by Boys' Dorm)	12.50	\$
Trailer space w/ limited Electricity usage Keystone (trailer size _____ ft.)	21.00	\$
Trailer space w/limited Electricity usage Grove City (trailer size _____ ft.)	18.00	\$

Part time requests will be considered after full-time requests are filled.

Total Charges \$ _____

Payment Enclosed \$ _____

Due \$ _____

PROTOCOL:

1. A completed application with payment in full is required for all reservations. Partial payments will be returned to sender. Checks should be made payable to **Pennsylvania Conference of Seventh-day Adventists**. Applications will be processed on a first come first served basis only.
2. Telephone reservations for late applicants will only be accepted within the last week prior to camp meeting.
3. Reservations must be made by the party attending camp meeting. Reservations cannot be made by one party for another.
4. Children under 18 years of age **ARE NOT PERMITTED** to stay overnight at any of the camp meeting facilities unless accompanied by an adult.
5. **ABSOLUTELY NO PETS** are allowed on campgrounds or in camping areas! Please be aware that if you should choose to bring a pet, you will be required to remove it from the campus/campground. Names of local kennels are provided upon request.
6. Use of microwaves, air conditioners, and other electrical appliances are **STRICTLY PROHIBITED** due to the lack of adequate electricity. **THIS INCLUDES ALL RECREATIONAL VEHICLES PARKED IN KEYSTONE AND GROVE CITY.**
7. We regret that we are unable to provide wheel chairs and other equipment for the disabled.

Signature _____

Print Name _____

Date _____

By signing this application I agree to abide by the Protocol as stated above.

Let the Growth Begin!

If you want a poster church for growing healthy congregations, I believe the Buena Vista (Va.) church, which I have pastored for three years, is an excellent candidate! This story began in the spring of last year, when we first planned our evangelism meeting for the fall. We started with a prayer box and encouraged every member to put into the box the names of friends and relatives who needed to find God. Next, we trained 22 people to give Bible studies, divided up the church into three groups to pray for the names in the box, trained members in proper evangelism meeting protocol, and held a special prayer-filled fellowship meal on the Sabbath before the meetings were to begin.

We continued to pray until and during the two weeks of the meetings. Still, imagine our surprise when we started the meetings and the guests just kept coming and coming. We didn't start our meetings in a neutral location, but in the fellowship hall/gymnasium part of our church. We had not one or two visitors show up, as had happened in the past, but 58! Needless to say, when I saw the response, I was overwhelmed! It was like a dream unfolding before my eyes. It shows me what can happen if a church does its part and then leans on God.

Remember this is Buena Vista, Va., a small, independent city of only 6,300 people. We're *not* talking about a church in a metropolitan area, nor are we talking about growth among new, growing ethnic populations. With 150 members, Buena Vista is typical of some Potomac Conference churches that have not experienced significant growth and probably would not be expected to grow.

When we planned to have our evangelism series, there was a fair amount of negativity toward the idea, based solely on discouragement from past evangelism failures.

Now, contrast that with what happened *afterward*. We have 13 solid interests to date, plus some who have already joined through baptism and profession of faith. We have about 15 more people studying the Bible with a member and another 60 taking Bible studies through the mail.

When you add up the numbers, it means that within the space of a couple of months, we've had over 130 people either attend our meetings or are presently taking our Bible studies! Obviously, real God-stuff is happening in Potomac!



Rick Labate
Pastor, Buena Vista Church

Staunton Sabbath School Class Cares in Small Ways

Encouraged by the Sabbath School superintendent at the Staunton (Va.) church, members of the Seekers Class came up with two outreach ideas. They started sending a sympathy card with a letter from the



Members of the Seekers Class at the Staunton (Va.) church collect quarters to give away at Laundromats.

pastor and a booklet on grief to the bereaved families of each obituary from the local newspaper. The card includes a handwritten note telling the family that Staunton church members are praying for them. The class has received positive feedback from this project, including thank-you cards.

Class members are also visiting local Laundromats and giving patrons a bag with \$6 in quarters. Enclosed is a card that reads: "Just want to bring a little change into your life." The church name and address are also on the card. Recently one person wrote a note to the church recalling that when she received the bag of quarters she was faced with a decision to finish washing her clothes or buy some gas. The gift of quarters allowed her to do both.

Class members hope that through these contacts in the community, more opportunities will come to share the love of Jesus with them.—Charlene Sheffer

Roanoke Member Spreads Gospel of Health Evangelism

John Kelly (below), a lifestyle physician and member of the Rocky Mount (Va.) church, has a vision of bringing lifestyle medicine and health evangelism to the medical community in collaboration with the Seventh-day Adventist Church. He is finding the Coronary Health Improvement Project (CHIP) a great way to do it.



He and his wife, Sally, learned of the CHIP program while John was finishing his medical residency at Loma Linda University in California. When the couple returned to their home church near Roanoke, Va., in 2005, they organized and conducted a very successful "microCHIP" program at the Rocky Mount church. They were then able to form a solid CHIP team and conduct a CHIP program for the community. Many visitors attended, including two pastors from other denominations. One of the CHIP graduates pledged to donate a suitable facility for establishing a CHIP evangelism center. Before long a local bank building was remodeled for that purpose.

Soon the team was invited to help start CHIP programs at other local Adventist churches. Plans were laid to conduct a medical conference on Lifestyle Medicine in Roanoke featuring Hans Diehl, DrHSc, MPH, CHIP founder and director of the Lifestyle Medicine Institute of Loma Linda.

Taking advantage of the interest, a special CHIP evangelism visitor's day was planned to coincide with the medical conference. The North Valley church in Roanoke hosted the event. The 11 a.m. service was

filled with over 200 people. All listened intently as Diehl shared a message of health transformation and new life. Many returned for the evening program, which included participation by Kelly.

North Valley pastor Mike Hewitt said the event was "a tremendous success." It brought many new people to his church, and each one received a very positive impression of Adventists and their health principles. A December microCHIP program was organized, and a CHIP event for the community starts this month.

The medical community is very open to the CHIP program, and local doctors refer patients to the program. The Kellys intend to keep planting CHIP health evangelism programs wherever God opens a way.

Want to learn more about Dr. Kelly and his work on the CHIP program in the Roanoke area? Read the entire story at pcsda.org.



Hans Diehl (left), founder of the CHIP program, poses with attendees at a recent medical conference hosted by the North Valley (Va.) church.

Amicus Makes Outreach Continuous

Since spring of last year, the Amicus church in Ruckersville, Va., has been having one outreach program after another. They started with the "Living Well" lifestyle seminar, which ran one night per week for eight weeks. Twenty-two attendees heard lectures on various lifestyle issues, watched cooking demonstrations of a variety of delicious food, and then ate a meal consisting of the food demonstrated.

Several continuing education seminars have followed. These well-attended seminars covered bread-making, hydrotherapy, the uses of charcoal, and a vegan Indian cooking demonstration.

Immediately following the Living Well seminar, the church held two evangelistic series. One of the speakers, Ron Foutz of Faith by Prophecy Seminars, presented a series on Daniel (left). The continued interest of those who attended the seminars was evidenced by the good attendance.

The church ended the year with a series on Revelation, also led by Foutz. That series was designed to help those who attended the previous meetings to make their decisions for the Lord and His church.



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Students "Pack" Financial Aid, Work Skills Into Learning

Students at Shenandoah Valley Academy (SVA) understand that part of their education includes on- or off-campus work. Before acceptance to SVA, each student has a financial plan that includes earnings from their work. Even certain scholarships SVA awards require student labor or allow for community service hours to complete this requirement.

At SVA there are many jobs for students to do, including working in the dorms as a resident assistant, helping teachers grade papers, assisting in the music or athletic departments, working in the maintenance and grounds department, or working in the cafeteria.

One of the work opportunities on campus is at SVA Packing, also known as the Rubbermaid Return Center. Students clean and repack Rubbermaid products and then return them to the Rubbermaid plant.



In addition to an hourly wage credited to her student statement, sophomore Amy Frost generally earns a \$30 to \$40 cash bonus each month.



Senior Kevin Larios wraps broomsticks at SVA Packing.

At SVA Packing, students remove the item from the box, check the product for damages, clean the product, select a new box, and then repackage it. Next, they print a new bar code and place this on the box. The newly boxed product is then placed on a pallet. When the pallet is full of the same product, the entire pallet is stretch-wrapped and prepared for return to the Rubbermaid plant. Adult staff at SVA Packing deliver the repackaged products by semi-truck to the Rubbermaid plant in Winchester, Va.

Students are particularly happy to work at SVA Packing because they have the opportunity to earn cash bonuses for their work. Amy Frost, a sophomore from Fishersville, Va., explained that she can make a 10-cent bonus for each re-packaged product that is finished correctly. She generally receives \$30 to \$40 per month in cash as a result of her work. This is in addition to the hourly wage that is credited to her student statement each month.

Kevin Larios, a senior from Haymarket, Va., says, "I enjoy the chance to do different things each day. It gives me a way to exercise my brain."

Students also say one of the things they enjoy most about SVA Packing is that Tom Hall, the industry manager, holds daily devotionals and prays with them.

In addition to Hall, SVA Packing employs six adults and 35 to 40 students.



Sophomore Cindy Maldonado works in the office at SVA Packing.

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Phone: (540) 740-3161 ■ shenandoahvalleyacademy.org
Principal, Spencer Hannah, PhD ■ Editor, Jan Osborne

www.ta.edu TATODAY FEBRUARY 2009

News you can use from Takoma Academy

Student Reflections of Black History Month

We at Takoma Academy (TA) are blessed to minister at an international school, with students from many parts of the world. Our mission statement effectively reflects our goal to "[welcome] all races, cultures, and religions for the purpose of leading young people to a personal commitment to Jesus Christ." We celebrate our diversity and the history that each culture and race brings. February is Black History Month, and I asked senior Sheri Thorn (left) to share what the month means to her: "This month reminds us that African-Americans have come a long way, and that we have worked tremendously hard to get where we are today."



She also shared a quotation from George Santayana's book *The Life of Reason*: "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."

Unfortunately, not so long ago, segregation, discrimination, and racism ran rampant in our country, including the Seventh-day Adventist Church and here at TA. When our school was established, it was in a segregated United States, and yet, with the encouragement of Adventist Christians, the school was opened to African-Americans and all others to share the gospel of Jesus Christ.

"Today those of African descent are allowed to vote, live anywhere, eat anywhere, even attend TA, and function as any other race," said Thorn. "Sadly for some, these liberties have lost their meaning. Some have forgotten all the turmoil that many of our ancestors encountered to render the advantages we enjoy today. What would Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, W.E.B. Du Bois, and, most importantly, what would Jesus say about this?"

I think the message is clear. Taking time for reflection provides direction. We should know and respect our history. Thorn agrees and challenges each of us to use this month to advance the study of black history beyond what is taught in school. By showing others the history we all share, we can all change the world in our own small, but very significant way.

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C. Dunbar Henri
Principal

Soccer Team Places Second in State League



TA's boys' soccer team proudly hold their trophy. They came in second place in the Maryland Independent Schools Athletic League.

Calendar

February

- 8 Valentine's Banquet
- 9 2-Hour Delay—School Starts at 10 a.m.
- 9-27 Pennies for Patients Campaign
- 15-20 Senior Class Trip
- 16 No School—Presidents' Day
- 17 Parent/Teacher Conferences
- 18 Black History Assembly

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Many Strengths. One Mission.

DIVINE POWER. HUMAN INTELLECT.

EOE/AAE

Loma Linda University, Medical Center, & Health Services

Summer Business Internship & Management Residency
Loma Linda University and Medical Center are now offering several paid business internships and management residency programs that give Seventh-day Adventist business students and graduates the chance to explore how a leading health system functions from the inside out. Department rotations include Marketing, Finance, Human Resources/Diversity, Risk Management, Compliance, Information Services, Student Affairs and more. Each program provides a broad overview of the healthcare industry, mentoring and hands-on training.

Business Interns must be entering their junior or senior year in an accredited institution with a GPA of 3.0 or greater. Management Residency applicants must have graduated in the last 12 months with a Bachelor's degree in Business, Communications or a related field. Candidates must be willing to enroll full-time in an MBA program during the two-year residency. Master's-level students may be considered for both positions.

Positions are scheduled to begin work on July 1, 2009. There may be flexibility with the start date based on the conclusion of each respective school year or employment commitments. Deadline for application, transcripts and reference letters is **March 1, 2009**.

If you are an individual who understands and embraces the mission and purpose of Loma Linda University and its entities as premier Seventh-day Adventist Christian institutions, please visit careers.llu.edu or call 1-800-722-2770.

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
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ANNOUNCEMENTS

LA SIERRA ACADEMY

ALUMNI WEEKEND:
April 24 Golf Tournament, April 25 Alumni Sabbath. Honor Classes '49, '59, '69, '79, '89, '99, '04; but friends of LSA are warmly welcomed. Keynote speaker: Lewis Walton. Come celebrate friends and memories on the LSA Riverside Campus. Call Alumni Office: (951) 351-1445 ext. 244, or alumni@lsak12.com to update contact information, find missing class members, and share news and class reunion gatherings. We also have a large selection of yearbooks available if you wish to purchase one from the year you attended.

YE OLDE CEDAR LAKE

ACADEMY REUNION
will take place June 11-14 for alumni and schoolmates of 1959 and earlier, at Great Lakes Adventist Academy (formerly CLA). Honor classes: '29, '39, '49, '59. For further information, contact the GLAA Alumni Office at (989) 427-5181 or visit glaa.net.

**ENTERPRISE ACADEMY
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION 90TH ANNIVERSARY**

All School Homecoming will be held April 10-11 on the campus of Great Plains Academy, in Enterprise, Kan. All alumni are invited to attend. For more information, visit alumni2009.org, or call Darcy Force (785) 263-8211.

PLATTE VALLEY ALUMNI ASSOCIATION HOMECOMING

will be held April 25 on the Platte Valley Academy campus in Shelton, Neb. For more information, visit greatplainsacademy.org, or call Darcy Force (785) 263-8211.

**CHESAPEAKE SINGLES
VALENTINE SOCIAL**

will be held Saturday evening, February 14, at 6 p.m. Location: Chesapeake Conference office (lower level), 6600 Martin Road, Columbia, MD 21044-9988. Please bring a favorite dish to share for a potluck dinner. There will be a skit, games, and door prizes. Contact Fred Thomas: Tel. (410) 992-9731, or email mthomas1950@yahoo.com.

OBITUARIES

RENNARD, Christine M.,

born May 22, 1924, at Bocas del Toro, Panama; died October 22, 2008, at Timberville Crossing Adult Home in Timberville, Va. She was a member of the New Market (Va.) church. When she retired, she was a teacher at the Shenandoah Valley Adventist Elementary School in New Market. Surviving are her husband, Joseph Rennard; a son, Charles Rennard; two daughters:

Feb 6 Feb 13 Feb 20 Feb 27 Mar 6

Baltimore	5:33	5:41	5:49	5:57	6:04
Cincinnati	6:05	6:13	6:21	6:29	6:36
Cleveland	5:49	5:58	6:07	6:15	6:23
Columbus	5:58	6:06	6:14	6:22	6:30
Jersey City	5:20	5:29	5:37	5:46	5:53
Norfolk	5:36	5:43	5:50	5:58	6:04
Parkersburg	5:53	6:01	6:09	6:17	6:24
Philadelphia	5:26	5:34	5:43	5:51	5:58
Pittsburgh	5:45	5:53	6:01	6:09	6:17
Reading	5:29	5:37	5:45	5:53	6:01
Richmond	5:40	5:47	5:55	6:02	6:09
Roanoke	5:50	5:58	6:05	6:12	6:19
Toledo	5:57	6:05	6:14	6:23	6:31
Trenton	5:24	5:31	5:41	5:49	5:56
Wash., D.C.	5:36	5:44	5:51	5:59	6:06

SUNSET CALENDAR

Joy Buchholz and Chris Jetter; five sisters; nine grandchildren; and six great-grandchildren.

SCALZI, Thomas,
born June 5, 1920, in Cerva, Italy; died September 8, 2008, in Reading, Pa. He was a member of the Kenhorst Boulevard church in Reading, Pa. He is survived by his brothers, Dante, Michael, and Francis Scalzi; and a daughter-in-law, Cheryl Keller Scalzi.

WILLIAMS, Thelma "Sammy,"
born November 22, 1945, in Tazewell County, Va.; died November 18, 2008, at her home in Lebanon Church, Va. She was a member of the Strasburg (Va.) church. She was a devoted volunteer caregiver for many years. Thelma is survived by her husband, George; six children, Donna Griffith of Winchester, Va., Bradley Warden Williams of Winchester, Va., Patty Mullins of Florida, Vickie Wilson of Winchester, Va., Donald Brown, Jr., of Virginia, and Tracey Pettis of Richmond, Va; three brothers, Jack Jones of Florida, Albert Jones, Jr., of Winchester, and Claude Jones of Georgia; two sisters, Lois Ellen Ruffner of Winchester and Joyce Miller of Boyce; and seven grandchildren.

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Baggage: It's Time to Let it Go!

When we go on trips, my wife, Sarah, for such a petite thing, carries a lot of baggage. So, when we decided to purchase a new set of luggage, we sought after one high-quality, very large bag for her. We found the perfect one, but then the airport weight limit for baggage was reduced from 70 pounds to 50. This was a problem! You see, her new bag, alone, weighed 22.5 pounds—with nothing in it! This prompted our decision to go back and purchase a bag for Sarah based on how much it would carry.



Recently we decided to make a trip to Chile to bike through the Andes Mountains along the Chilean and Argentinean border. Because we would have to carry all of our baggage on the bikes, we decided



we better travel very light. How we utilized space was essential. What we chose to take was crucial. Planning was paramount.

We mapped out a plan based on our destination, selectively choosing only necessary items for the journey. Then, we packed our bags accordingly.

ARE YOU CARRYING EXCESS BAGGAGE?

You love Jesus, you go to church, and you pray to God regularly, but is there some excess baggage in your life? Is there something that God is asking you to let go? Are you letting God map out a plan based on your destination? Are you being selective with the items you choose to put in your bags? Have you packed your bags accordingly?

In heaven, Lucifer had some excess baggage called pride. He aspired to be like God. He connived and cajoled until he convinced a third of heaven to fall into his bag of tricks. He was sent away from heaven with all his baggage, which he brought here to Earth.

Immediately, heaven's action plan went into place. Jesus left all the benefits of heaven and came to Earth. He took on our baggage, my baggage! He, who knew no sin, became sin for us. Why? So that in Him (Jesus), we might become the righteousness of God (2 Cor. 5:21).


Jesus came to show us that we no longer have to carry all of our excess baggage. He came to show us all what *really* needs to be in our bags. Maybe it's time we do a baggage check. Maybe it's time to let go of some baggage.

Joey Pollom is pastor of Potomac Conference's Manassas (Va.) church. He and his wife, Sarah, have three sons and a daughter.

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