

# VISITOR

CONNECTING COLUMBIA UNION SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

JANUARY 2013 • VOLUME 118 • ISSUE 1

## *New Year's Resolutions* for our **Church**



If the church  
made resolutions,  
what would we  
seek to improve?

**Read** the article  
on p. 10

**Watch** the conversation  
continue online

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on Facebook

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### New Year's Resolutions for Our Church

*Celeste Ryan Blyden*

This is the time of year that many of us conduct self-assessments and resolve to make positive changes that will improve our quality of life and move us forward. What would happen if our church made resolutions? Nine young pastors weigh in.

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The 2013 *Visitor Calendar* features elephants, giraffes, foxes and meerkats. Even a hummingbird graces our cover as we celebrate God's creatures—great and small. Free extra copies are available now. Email requests to [bweigley@columbiaunion.net](mailto:bweigley@columbiaunion.net).



### ◀ WATCH NOW

In this issue, we're asking pastors to share New Year's resolutions for the church. Of course, they had so much more to say than we could fit in five pages. Get more of their discussion by watching this month's *Columbia Union Story* facilitated by Pastor David Franklin at [columbiaunion.org/videos](http://columbiaunion.org/videos), then Facebook us *your* thoughts.

### #COLUMBIAUNIONRESOLUTIONS

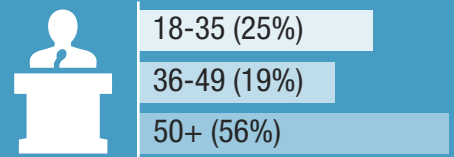
# If the church made New Year's resolutions, what would you seek to improve? Tweet us.

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### SURVEY SAYS

What age is your pastor?



Source: [facebook.com/columbiaunionvisitor](https://www.facebook.com/columbiaunionvisitor)

### WDYT?

Which are you more likely to try this year? A low-carb diet, a raw food diet, or a "see-food" diet? Take our poll this month on [facebook.com/columbiaunionvisitor](https://www.facebook.com/columbiaunionvisitor).





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# Should a Church Make New Year's Resolutions?

**W**hy not? We all want our church to be effective, make a difference and have measurable impact, right? What would it take to achieve that? And, of course, the 64 million dollar question is *how* do we achieve that? That's the purpose of a resolution.



Thankfully, in many areas of ministry, we *are* making a difference as reported in the pages of the *Visitor* each month and in this month's cover story. In the Columbia Union last year, our church grew in number and finances, and took groundbreaking steps to move the mission forward in our territory. We also fed, visited, healed, cared for and helped thousands in our territory come to know Christ as their Savior and soon-coming King.

## MY RESOLUTIONS FOR 2013

**Be real.** We are all guilty of "playing church." We gather on Sabbath for worship and fellowship—which is essential and nurtures our church family—but there is so much more. Most of the Bible speaks of Jesus' ministry *outside* the church. He daily got His hands and feet dirty ministering on the dusty roads of old Palestine; healing the physically, mentally and spiritually sick; hanging out with the people as well as with the outcasts and morally impure of society; and challenging the status quo of His day. And in everything, He demonstrated the power of grace to touch and change lives. We, too, need to find genuine, grace-filled approaches to ministry *outside* our walls.

**Be relevant.** The demise of Eastman Kodak, Woolworth's, Borders Books & Music, Blockbuster and The Crystal Cathedral, to name a few, is indicative of resistance to change. Their past methods of success were so immortalized, change was seen as the enemy. Indeed our past is also illustrious. In the "good ole days," we employed some great, cutting-edge techniques. But now, in 2013, without diluting our message, we need to open ourselves to "newness in Christ." In *Evangelism*, Ellen White, stressed over and over that while the message is the same, our methods need to keep up with the times.

**Be robust.** This is a term I often hear about organizations and institutions that characterize viability, effectiveness and sustainability. To achieve this, we must daily maintain a spiritually connected life. Without it, we will struggle—individually and collectively—to be robust representatives of Christ (see John 15). Prayer, personal Bible study, active engagement in a church family and ministering in the community will help us achieve this and the growth we seek in 2013 and beyond.

*Dave Weigley (dweigley@columbiaunion.net) is president of the Columbia Union Conference.*

# Newsline

TAASHI ROWE

## COLUMBIA UNION HONORS FIVE NOTABLE PERSONS

Columbia Union Conference leaders recently presented a new award, called Notable Persons of Honor, to five members at a luncheon held in their honor. Dave Weigley, union president, told the honorees, “Thank you for your contribution to the cause of Christ. You’ve made a difference.” Below are the honorees:

■ **Joyce Newmyer**, president of the Washington Adventist Hospital in Takoma Park, Md., was recognized for helping to substantially advance “excellent patient care and exceptional patient experience, [and building] a highly engaged employee team and medical staff,” said Rob Vandeman, Columbia Union executive secretary.



*Dave Weigley, Columbia Union Conference president, presents Joyce Newmyer, Washington Adventist Hospital president, with the Notable Person of Honor award.*

■ Vandeman shared that **Larry Boggess**, president of the Mountain View Conference, “is always searching for new methods to reach people. Elder Boggess has an open-door policy, and his vision and planning has been to encourage and train lay members to become successful, active witnesses so the church may grow.”

■ **José H. Cortés**, has been president of the New Jersey Conference

since September 2007. “Since José became president, there have been 4,200 baptisms,” Vandeman reported. “It is said if José cuts himself shaving, he bleeds evangelism.”

■ **Josephine Benton**, 87, the union’s first ordained female elder, who later became a pastor, seemed absolutely delighted to receive the honor. Read more about her on p. 8.

■ “Before **Dr. [Weymouth] Spence** (pictured, right) came to [lead] the university, Washington Adventist University was on a downward spiral,” said Vandeman. “But thanks to Dr. Spence, we have seen an overall financial turnaround, capital improvement and the second highest enrollment in the school’s



history this fall with 1,402 students. He is loved by the students, respected by the board and challenged by the faculty.”

# 136,294

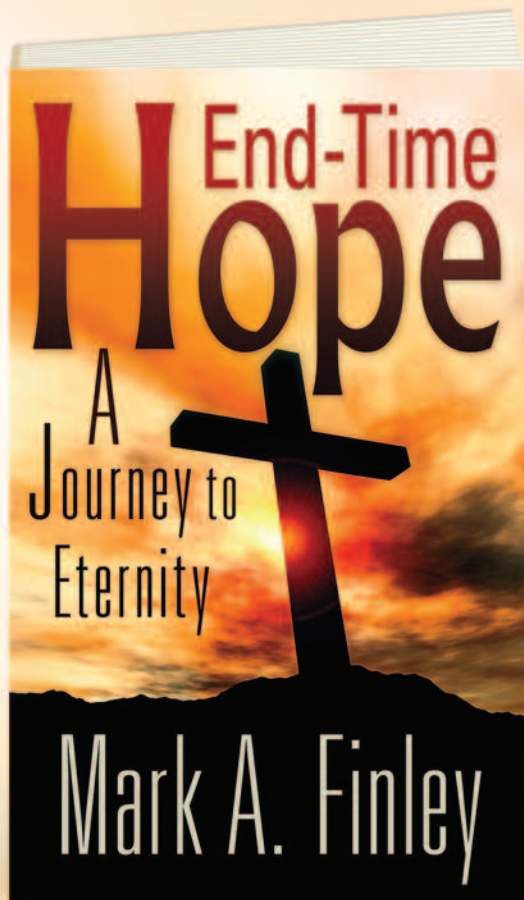
The number of baptized Seventh-day Adventists in the Columbia Union



**12-YEAR-OLD BRINGS 42 TO CHRIST IN SOUTH AFRICA**  
Mpilo Norris, a 12-year-old evangelist from Allegheny East Conference’s Liberty church in Baltimore, recently helped win 42 people for Christ in South Africa. Read more on p. 16.



# Sharing Books *for* 2013



**End-Time Hope: A Journey to Eternity**  
*Mark A. Finley*

Get answers to the confusing dilemmas of the world! In the pages of this book, you'll look beyond what is to what will be, and your heart will soar. Joy will be yours as you discover hope for today, tomorrow, and forever.

0-8163-3791-8

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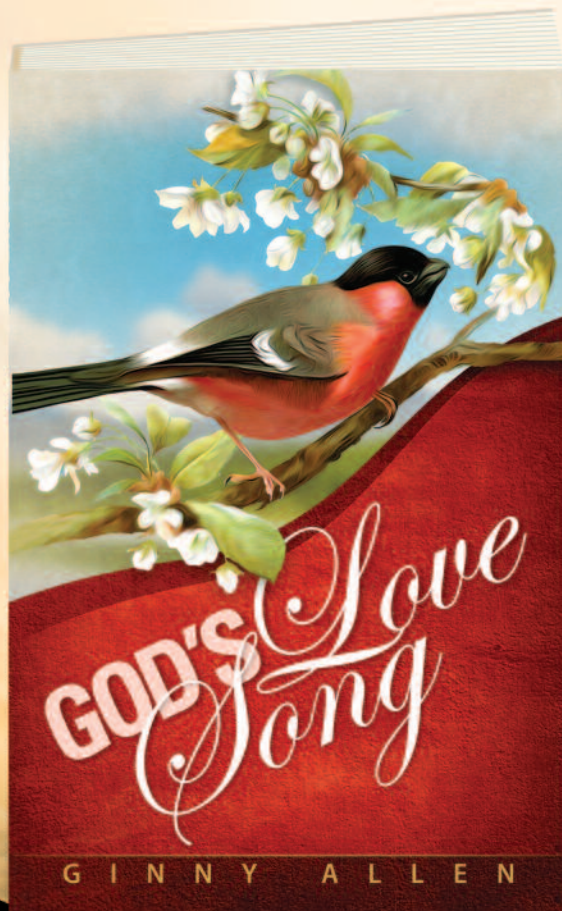
**God's Love Song**

*Ginny Allen*

I think God has a unique love song for each of us. As He sings, I imagine the angels saying, "God is singing again!" Can you hear Him singing your song deep in your heart?

0-8163-3902-3

**US\$2.99.** Quantity prices available.



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## MIL DAMAS HISPANAS ASISTEN A LA CONVENCION EN POTOMAC

Unas mil damas hispanas se reunieron recientemente en la iglesia Southern Asian en Silver Spring, Md., para una tarde de inspiración. La reunión recibió a mujeres de todo Potomac Conference, y los líderes transmitieron el evento en vivo a través del Internet.

Gillen Molina de Puerto Rico presentó el mensaje titulado “Ungida con aceite divino”. Los cantantes locales dirigieron la reunión con un servicio de canto y mini-concierto. Cuatro personas se bautizaron incluyendo una joven de la iglesia Germantown Spanish (Md.) cuya familia no es adventista del séptimo día. El plan de la joven era bautizarse aún si sus padres no estaban presente para apoyar su decisión. Sin embargo, los miembros de la iglesia y el pastor visitaron a la familia de la joven en Boston, y lograron convencer a la familia a estar presente en el bautismo (en la foto).

“Alabamos a Dios por la oportunidad de alentar y animarnos unas a otras”, dijo Carmen Esposito, directora del ministerio de la mujer hispano de la Asociación.

—*Jacqueline Sánchez-Ventouris; foto por Félix Ortiz*

## DOSCIENTOS CINCUENTA ASISTEN AL PRIMER CONGRESO “CRECER PARA SERVIR” DE PHILADELPHIA

El grupo del ministerio de la mujer en la iglesia First Hispanic de Pennsylvania Conference en Philadelphia, organizó recientemente su primer congreso misionero bajo el tema “Crecer para servir”. El congreso atrajo a más de doscientas cincuenta damas de todas las iglesias hispanas de la Asociación.

Susana Schulz, directora editorial de *Dialogue*, una revista que

produce la Asociación General para los estudiantes universitarios, fue la oradora invitada. Habló de la importancia del crecimiento espiritual por medio de una relación íntima con Jesús. Las participantes también aprendieron la importancia de un buen ministerio de bienvenida y cómo dar la mejor impresión de un Jesús amoroso a los miembros de la iglesia y las visitas.

“Quiero agradecer a todas las mujeres de nuestras iglesias que participaron y apoyaron incondicionalmente este evento; también a todos los pastores y sus esposas que con sus oraciones y coordinación hicieron este sueño una realidad”, dijo Saúd E. Elías, pastor de la iglesia First Hispanic en Philadelphia, quien con su esposa Yolanda, organizó el evento.





## CHESAPEAKE CONFERENCE INICIA LA ESCUELA PARA EL DISCIPULADO EN EASTERN SHORE

Recientemente, Chesapeake Conference inició una nueva escuela para el discipulado para los miembros que viven en Eastern Shore. Hasta ahora, diecisiete estudiantes aprenden cómo ser instructores bíblicos.

La Asociación comenzó la escuela para el discipulado en el 2009 en Columbia, Md., con el objetivo de enseñar a los miembros los diferentes aspectos del ministerio laico como el dar estudios bíblicos, dirigir grupos pequeños, y asistir al pastor. Hasta ahora, hay doscientos cuatro graduados (algunos están en la foto).



El pastor Orlando Rosales, asistente del director del ministerio hispano de la Asociación, menciona que el ofrecer estas clases en la iglesia Seaford (Del.) es una manera de lograr que más personas se involucren en la obra misionera.

Para los graduados como Yolanda Flores el programa ha sido una bendición. “Estoy muy agradecida de haber participado en estas clases”, dice ella. “He aprendido más acerca del evangelismo práctico y cómo compartir la verdad con otros”.

## MIEMBROS DE ALLEGHENY WEST SE REANIMAN CON EL PROYECTO ALCANZA A CINCINNATI

Temprano este año, los miembros del distrito hispano de Cincinnati fijaron varios blancos que deseaban alcanzar en Cincinnati. Uno era dar a conocer mejor la Iglesia Adventista del Séptimo-día a los ciudadanos de esa ciudad. Por lo tanto, iniciaron un programa de radio en la única estación radial hispana de esa ciudad, La Mega 97.7 FM. El programa “Para vivir mejor” se transmite cada domingo a las 10 a.m. con un enfoque sobre la familia, la salud, y la Biblia.



“Esto nos ha permitido hacer muchos contactos, y varios ya han comenzado a asistir a nuestras iglesias”, dijo Rafael Soto, pastor de las iglesias Cincinnati Central Hispanic y El Buen Pastor.

Luego, un grupo de treinta y seis jóvenes de la iglesia Cincinnati Central Hispanic formaron el grupo “Jesús, la esperanza de vida” dedicando dos meses a alcanzar a las familias hispanas del área con estudios bíblicos, la entrega de alimento, y oraciones especiales. Al final del proyecto, catorce almas (algunas en la foto) entregaron sus vidas a Cristo después de participar en una serie de reuniones de evangelismo. Estas además de las cuarenta y dos personas que tomaron su decisión por Cristo a principio del año.

“Estos resultados maravillosos se deben a nuestros miembros que dedicaron su tiempo y se comprometieron al evangelismo”, dijo Soto.

## Artículo especial de *Visitor*: Resolución de Año Nuevo para nuestra iglesia

Si la Iglesia Adventista del Séptimo Día hiciera resoluciones ¿qué desearíamos mejorar? Esa fue la pregunta que le hicimos a Jorge Coxaj, un pastor de veinticinco años de edad nativo de El Salvador que pastorea en las iglesias Hackettstown, Phillipsburg y Rockaway (N.J.)

Él nos comenta: “Veo el esfuerzo que se hace por nuestros jóvenes, pero por alguna razón no está logrando una conexión. Necesitamos invitar a nuestros jóvenes a ‘probar y ver’ algo que nosotros mismos hemos comido”. Y por esta razón él está fortaleciendo los programas del ministerio infantil de sus iglesia “para que podamos alcanzarlos [a nuestros jóvenes] cuando empiecen a caminar y hablar”, y pasa tiempo con los jóvenes a su nivel—literalmente. “Averiguo lo que les interesa—la lucha [deporte], fútbol, fútbol americano—y trato de encontrar un terreno común para lograr abrir esa ventana”, nos explica. Entre touchdowns y la resolución de problemas, él espera que vean su dedicación y que ellos también se contagien, y que no solo permanezcan en la iglesia sino en Cristo y traigan otros a Él.—*Celeste Ryan Blyden*



# How Josephine Benton Blazed the Trail for Women in Ministry

Looking back, Josephine Benton, now 87, knows exactly where her desire to minister came from. Her father was a Seventh-day Adventist evangelist who frequently moved their family around the country. “I would sit and listen to my dad’s sermons, and I always knew that if I had been born a boy, I would have been a preacher,” she said. “But, that path didn’t seem open to me.”

So, she did the next best thing and majored in speech so she could teach pastors how to preach. When other denominations started becoming more open to women pastors, she took several pastoral courses at the Wesley Theological Seminary, which was then based in Takoma Park, Md. Little did Benton know this step would help her blaze a trail for women to fully minister in the Adventist Church.

She then applied to pastor in the Potomac Conference and went to speak with Dale Hannah, senior pastor of the Sligo church in Takoma Park. “I said to him, ‘If you ever want a woman on staff, let me know.’ I thought he would laugh and I would laugh, but he thought about it,” she recalled.

### THE MOHAVEN PAPERS

The conference, however, turned her down. Benton, married with two sons, didn’t give up. She went to each member of the conference executive committee and shared her vision for ministry.

That was in 1973, the year she served on the famous General Conference ad hoc committee to study the role of women in ministry at Camp Mohaven in Danville, Ohio. The group of 13 men and 14 women



published 29 “Mohaven Papers” and recommended that women be ordained as local church elders and that those with theological training be employed as associates in pastoral care. The group also proposed that a pilot program be developed to lead to ordination by 1975.

That same year, Benton was ordained as an elder, and she became an associate pastor at Sligo church. While she did get some support from members, she recalled one man approaching her as she walked through the church’s hallways. “He said, ‘Josephine, you know I don’t believe in what you’re doing.’ I told him, ‘I know,’” she said. She also knew that he was thinking about Paul’s letter to the Corinthians where he wrote that women should be silent in church (see 1 Cor. 14:34).

Despite that verse, Benton said, “I felt called to ministry, and even before I was hired, the Lord opened doors for me in ministry. I served as a chaplain at a camp and served at Loma Linda

University [in California].”

When pressed more about the Corinthian verse, Benton pointed to Acts 10:23-48, where Peter meets Cornelius the gentile and the Holy Spirit fell upon all who heard the Word. “That text shows me that whomever God chooses to send His Spirit to has no choice but to accept it.”

As she served at Sligo, she said, “There was enough work for me to do that didn’t require me to be ordained.” She joyfully ministered to children and singles and helped lead a church plant in nearby Washington, D.C. She then went on to the Rockville (Md.) church, where she served as senior pastor from 1979 to 1982. Afterward, she served as an administrator in the Adult Evening Program at what is now known as Washington Adventist University in Takoma Park.

### BACK TO MINISTRY

When Benton retired, she moved to the Hagerstown, Md.-area and



secured a chaplaincy post at the Williamsport Retirement Village. She ministered there for 19 years. During that time, she worked with Rob Vandeman, then president of the Chesapeake Conference, to get her chaplaincy license. She was thrilled. "I could now do weddings, which was a big thing because up until then, I was only allowed to do funerals, and anybody can do those," she joked. As an elder at Chesapeake's Williamsport (Md.) church, she still gives Bible studies and ministers to those in need.

Benton said that although it's taking awhile for women pastors to gain their ordination credentials, she has seen it coming for a long time and believes it will come to the entire world church. She even watched the live stream of the Columbia Union Conference Special Constituency Meeting in July, where the union became the first in the North American Division to ordain women without regard to gender.

Earlier this fall, when the Columbia Union approved 16 female pastors for ordination, it was a young, female pastor at Sligo church who called to invite Benton to the first of such services in the union. A very happy Benton sat in the front row and watched the ordination of Debbie Eisele, a Sligo associate pastor. This was something that had not been possible when she served there 40 years ago.

## "I'M THANKFUL GOD OPENED THE DOOR"

On that same day, Dave Weigley, Columbia Union president, told her that union leaders also approved her name to receive emeritus ordination credentials. Benton, who is now a grandmother of five and great-grandmother of five, joked, "I'm glad they didn't wait until 2015 to do this because by then I would be a very old woman."

Columbia Union leaders also recently presented Benton with their Notable Person of Honor award (pictured) at their year-end meetings. "We've been talking about equality in ministry in the Columbia Union for 40 years," Vandeman said before presenting Benton with the award. "Shame on us that when Josephine Benton was an associate pastor at Sligo church, then senior pastor at the Rockville church, that we as a church family didn't have the courage to ordain her. We don't know how to apologize as a church for the time it has taken us to recognize the contribution that you and other women have made to the ministry."

On that same day, Joyce Newmyer, president of Washington Adventist Hospital, shook Benton's hand and thanked her for blazing a trail for other women to serve as leaders in the church. After the awards ceremony, William T. Cox, president of the Allegheny West



Conference, searched for Benton. "I just wanted to come and shake your hand and tell you, 'Thank you for your service and commitment,'" he said.

With a smile on her face, Benton softly said, "I'm really thankful God opened the door for women to become pastors, even senior pastors at some of our churches. I'm just glad to see more people use their gifts for God's church."



*Rob Vandeman, Columbia Union executive secretary, speaks of Josephine Benton's accomplishments during the Notable Person of Honor award ceremony, while Dave Weigley, Columbia Union president, nods in appreciation.*

# New Year's Resolutions for our Church

Celeste Ryan Blyden

If the church made resolutions, what would we seek to improve? When I posed this question to nine up and coming Columbia Union pastors, what emerged were challenges for our church and ideas to help us move the mission forward.

## Follow Christ's Method Alone

I graduated from academy with 70 people but there's only a handful who are still active in the [Seventh-day Adventist] Church that I know about," Geoff Starr told me via phone. "I see far too many youth leaving the church." The 30-year-old,



Michigan native, who directs Youth and Young Adult Ministries for the Mountain View Conference and pastors its Ripley (W.Va.) congregation, says he once thought the problem could be solved with more funding and programming, but now believes otherwise.

"I often ask our young people if they're proud of their church and too many aren't, so they don't invite people," he said. He offered a suggestion:

"We've got to care about people like Christ did. 'Only Christ's method will truly change people. He

spent time with them, He wanted their good, He genuinely showed sympathy, He ministered to their needs, He won their respect and trust, and asked them to follow Him,'" he answered, paraphrasing *Ministry of Healing*, page 143.

"How often do we mingle with people who aren't Adventist? Outside of the people we work with or go to school with, many of us don't even have friends who aren't of our faith," he said. "When we hear about a need, we're quick to give money, but we have to be *in* the community to hear them. How are we going to meet needs if we don't even know your name or know you?"

So, one of the first things he did after returning from seminary a year ago was ask the mayor of Ripley about needs. She told him there's not a lot for the youth, and there's a lot of divorce and separate parenting in the community. In an effort to help, the church hosted a family financial seminar, and is planning others on marriage and parenting. Starr and eight members recently went door to door to meet and pray for neighbors. "We're also planning to do some youth events, and next summer, we're hoping to send five kids from the community to our camp," he shared.



## *Give Up Traditions*

**E**liasib Fajardo, 34, had an encounter with Christ 15 years ago that changed his life and his plans to study computer engineering. Today the native of Mexico pastors Potomac Conference Spanish congregations in Arlington, Falls Church and Sterling, Va., and coordinates its Hispanic Youth Ministries.

It almost didn't happen because when he arrived at his country's Montemorelos University to answer the call, he was told that he was too young to become a pastor and that he didn't look like a pastor. Undaunted he returned sometime later, graduated in 2001 and became an associate pastor for nine churches. In Virginia he's thankful that "the youth, young adults and women are allowed to minister and have strong leadership roles because they are the ones developing creative ideas and making a difference in the lives of others."

And while he's pleased with this growing sign of unity in diversity, he would like to see us give up traditions that are "not even in the church manual but somehow manage to become unwritten law," he emailed just before the birth of his third child. "We sometimes see this in communion, worship service style and order, and even in our ordination practices. Jesus called us to be guided by His Holy Spirit, not by our traditions. We can follow all the commandments but still be lost."

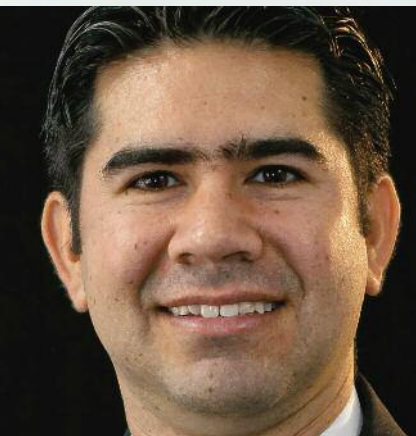
## *Taste and See*

**I**n the northeast quadrant of the New Jersey Conference, Jorge Coxaj was driving when I reached him. "When I grew up, there was a

reality presented in the church—a future life where everything would be perfect, and a reality that we lived everyday—poverty, violence, drugs, gang activity. The two didn't coincide," recalled the 25-year-old from El Salvador who arrived in California at age 3, grew up in the church in New York City and now pastors the Hackettstown, Phillipsburg and Rockaway (N.J.) churches. "We have created a lot of veggie-eating, no earring-wearing, no movie theater-going, Pathfinder uniform-wearing members who are culturally Adventist but aren't truly focused on our mission or walk with God. I think it's because too many times our leaders and teachers don't believe [that reality] themselves. They share stories like David and Goliath, but do they apply them? It's like they work at a restaurant but never try the food. As Paul says, 'Don't just sell it or be a trafficker of the Word, use it,'" he paraphrases. "We need to invite our youth to 'taste and see' something we've actually eaten. When we transmit the gospel message of salvation, it's transmitted from the heart of a person who's truly been there and experienced it."

To change this, Coxaj is strengthening the Children's Ministries departments in his churches "so we can reach them when they start walking and talking," and he hangs out with the youth on their turf. "I find out what they're interested in—wrestling, soccer, American football—and try to find common ground so as to open that window," he explained.

Between touchdowns and problem-solving, he's hoping they'll see the passion he couldn't shake that drew him to pastoral ministry, and that they'll not just stay in the church but stay in Christ and bring others to Him. "Then we won't have to worry about retention or lack of funds," he opined. "We'll have a new problem—overpopulation."





{ *The issue is never the message, but the approach to the people who are hurting from the inside out,*

## *No More Spectators*

**I**n his quest to fill Allegheny West Conference's 950-seat Parkwood Temple in Toledo, Ohio, Mackenzie Kambizi and his members are building relationships inside and outside the church. They run a mentoring program that enables youth to avoid the juvenile system and a record and recently partnered with city police to host a job fair for ex-offenders. The Toledo mayor, who handpicked Kambizi to serve on several high-profile boards and committees, has visited the church, as have members of congress. All of this is raising awareness of

the church and helping it grow, making it part of the discussion in the community and changing its internal culture.

"Typically, our focus is so much on the inside becoming perfect, we're not understanding that our perfection comes from the execution of the mission," posited

the 38-year-old pastor who reads five books a week and takes his daughters on individual dates. "Every organization and club exists for its members. The church is the only organization that exists for non-members. It doesn't mean we are not *for* members, but members need to know that it's about God reaching to *nonmembers* through them." He touts John 1 where, just after meeting Jesus, the disciples couldn't explain Him or know everything about Him, yet they invited others to "come and see" the Messiah.

He also believes we'll see more growth in North America when members stop being spectators. "We need to unleash and cultivate their spiritual gifts,"

he says. "In Zimbabwe, I had 14 churches in my first district, so I couldn't get to all of them each Sabbath. The members took responsibility and we experienced explosive growth."

He longs to see this happen in Toledo too. So, for example, he plans to have the children preach the sermons for all five Sabbaths in March.

## *Diffuse Christ's Fragrance*

**I**n many ways, our focus has become how we can sustain, protect and resurrect the church institution, [when the reality is] the church is not brick and mortar, it's flesh and bones," observed David Franklin. "Along with theological accuracy, we must also have missional living, which means we can no longer simply go to church, we have to *be* the church."

The 31-year-old California native serves as associate pastor of Allegheny East Conference's Berea Temple by day, co-host of Hope Channel's live *Let's Pray* program by night and helps lead ministries like The Jesus Gathering and The One Project in between.

"Christ wants to diffuse the fragrance of His knowledge to everyone through us," he emailed, referring to 2 Corinthians 2:14. "Every day we are called to help His 'kingdom come' on our jobs, in our friendships and marriages, at the grocery store and bank, and in our neighborhoods. Every day we are called to be people of forgiveness and agents of deliverance. Everywhere we go, in everything we do, we are to be Christ's ambassadors fulfilling His will on Earth 'as it is in heaven.'"





*Until we deliver a message of hope and mercy  
we will never be as effective as Jesus. —Diego Boquer*

## *Try Something New*

**I**n Kettering, Ohio, Steve Carlson, 32, yearns to see us try new methods and ministries. “The church is structurally oriented,” said the life-long Adventist from North Dakota who now directs

Ohio Conference Youth Ministries. “This has been a huge benefit in [becoming] a world-wide movement. However, change comes about incredibly slow. ... Methods are not sacred. I want to encourage people to think outside the box when it comes to reaching others for Jesus.”



This pastor and musician who is fostering a holistic ministry of worship, fellowship, discipleship and evangelism and recently preached from Romans 8 about the transformational change Christ wants to bring to our lives, wants us to experience what he calls authentic Christianity. “We can dress right, talk right, worship right and attend church on the correct day, but are we better people because of it?” he asked. “We preach a love for the lost, but would people guess that by looking at our churches, finances or attitude? As much as I fully embrace and love our Adventist teachings, what people want to know is, how has it changed my life?”

## *Refresh Others and Be Refreshed*

**P**ranitha Fielder is concerned about “stale spirituality” in our church family. The 28-year-old serves as associate pastor

for youth and young adults at Sligo church in Takoma Park, Md., the fifth largest Adventist congregation in North America, while her husband, Kelan Fielder, is the assistant pastor at Allegheny East’s Emmanuel-Brinklow church in Ashton, Md.

She suspects that some of us are experiencing God on a mostly informational level, and suggests that we need to revitalize our faith and experience Him personally by sharing Him with others. “This will make us more certain about the things we ourselves believe,” she wrote. She recently preached on Proverbs 11:25, which reads, “... Those who refresh others will themselves be refreshed” (CEV). Her sermon also expounded on Ezekiel 33:7-9, which intensifies this idea. “Here God makes Ezekiel not only responsible for sharing His message with those around him, He ties up Ezekiel’s salvation in his acceptance or refusal of God’s directive to share that message,” she noted.

Fielder firmly believes that God created us as social beings and made us responsible for each other’s salvation. “If we ignore this commission, we may find that our faith becomes routine, stagnant, even cumbersome,” she added.

To equip her youth, she is ingraining and modeling service. Rather than asking, “How was your week?” she asks, “How have you helped someone else this week?” To encourage more “outward-focused” relationships, she is working to make Sligo a site for an international Christian mentoring program.



## Speak the Language

In a suburb of Baltimore, Brazilian-born Diego Boquer pastors Chesapeake Conference's Glen Burnie and Brooklyn (Md.) churches. "The issue is never the message, but the approach," he wrote



via email. "We need to evaluate our approach and make sure we are still being relevant and preaching the 'present truth.' It is dynamic, not static, and if we want to reach the people, we need to speak their language."

Though 2012 was his first year as a full-time pastor,

the 28-year-old theology graduate of Washington Adventist University in Takoma Park, Md., baptized more than a dozen people last year and was pleased to see members so involved in feeding programs, Prayer Ministries, Vacation Bible School, health fairs and family days. But, he had some questions for the church:

"In many of our evangelistic meetings, we still see a super emphasis on Daniel and Revelation, the beast and 666, the antichrist and the dragon, but what good is it to preach about all that to people who have completely lost hope in this life and are hurting—the mother who just lost twins, the girl who was abused, the teen boy who thinks he is a girl inside a boy's body, the person with tattoos and piercings, or the kids who sit in the balcony making too much noise?"

Before Jesus ever spoke about the 'end,' He spoke about a 'new beginning,' a second chance, hope," he wrote, referring me to Matthew 5-7. "Until we deliver a message of hope and mercy to

the people who are hurting from the inside out, we will never be as effective as Jesus."

## Ditch the Comfort Food

Jason Foster, 35, lives and works to connect the disconnected every day. From his base at the Pennsylvania Conference, he serves as assistant boys dean at Blue Mountain Academy in Hamburg, director of Laurel Lake Summer Camp in Lassiter and associate pastor at the Grace Outlet church in Reading.

His concerns may explain why so many of Geoff Starr's classmates, as well as mine and maybe yours, are disconnecting from our church family: "People become apathetic because they have no real investment in the church, making the case to leave it pretty strong. Getting people involved in an intimate community and genuine service is a recipe that fights apathy," theorized the Georgia native and newlywed. "In other

cases, members are doing something that, though once was most likely meaningful, is now like comfort food. It has no real value, but you can't stop eating it."

He's glad to be involved in Grace Outlet, which rents a ballet studio in an old goggle factory in downtown Reading, that's now a center for arts and events. That's where he, senior pastor Kris Eckenroth and a group of over 100 are intentionally seeking out and building relationships with people who aren't connected to a community of believers. From hosting pajama parties and bonfires to coordinating worship and acts of service, they're dispelling apathy one connection at a time.



*Got a New Year's resolution for our church?*

How will you help move the mission forward locally and globally this year? Post your resolutions on our *Visitor* Facebook page this month at [facebook.com/columbiaunionvisitor](https://facebook.com/columbiaunionvisitor).



## Fourth Street Leadership Summit Addresses “Relevant Kingdom Building”

For over a period of three days, the church at the corner of Fourth and Q streets in Washington, D.C., served as more than a house of worship, it was the home of the 2012 Strategic Leadership Summit. In addition to those who packed the church’s tiny sanctuary, attendees and participants also joined in via live stream from England, Barbados, India, Qatar, Dubai and other countries. Multiple speakers addressed the theme “In the Spirit of Tomorrow: Engaging Race, Ethnicity, Sexuality and Its Impact on Relevant Kingdom Building” and focused on building a more inclusive church.

learn to appreciate differences. There is something about the new that is challenging and frightening to some people.”

Nathan Krause, pastor of Potomac Conference’s Olney (Md.) church, said, “We really need to deal with issues that divide us, or they will continue to divide us. That is where the Holy Spirit comes in. If you foster the love of Christ, then a judgmental spirit would not be there.”

Another panel discussed the generational and cultural shift. “Our greatest resource is young people,” said Henry Fordham, newly elected Allegheny East Conference president. “They are not the church of tomorrow, they are the neglected church of today.” He promised to form a task force of young people who will share where they want to see their church go. “I hope we will have the courage to listen,” he said.

Though the discussions were not always eloquently handled, and no one claimed to have all the answers, Sylvia Danley-Smith, a member of the Capitol Hill church in D.C., said, “I was blessed. We are all part of the human race, and we really need to examine how we treat each other. We are one church, and there is no need for distinctions.”

At the end of the program, Harewood encouraged all attendees to take the ideas learned over the three days and put them into action. Read more at [columbiaunion.org/4thstreetsummit](http://columbiaunion.org/4thstreetsummit).



*Debra Anderson, Pastor Andrew Harewood and JoAnne Powell Lightford moderate a panel discussion.*

“The painful reality is that as a Christian community, we are engaged with more God talk than God walk,” said Andrew Harewood, pastor of the Fourth Street Friendship church, explaining the reason behind the theme. “In fact, I would dare say if we’re not careful, our [Seventh-day] Adventism will cause us to lose our place in heaven. We are not dealing with relevant issues.”

Those may sound like fighting words, but several church and community leaders agreed with Harewood. Panelists tackled the rarely addressed issues of churches divided by race and people who feel unwelcomed in church because of their sexuality.

On Sabbath afternoon, people could Skype, tweet, Facebook or text their questions to the multiple panelists. One of those panels discussed the topic “How Tolerant Are We of Differences?” Alvin Kibble, a North American Division vice president, responded, “We must



*Panelists Inka Vesela, Henry Fordham and Norma Nashed discuss ways to build a more inclusive kingdom.*

## 12-Year-Old Liberty Member Brings 42 to Christ in South Africa

**M**pilo Norris, a 12-year-old evangelist from the Liberty church in Baltimore, recently joined Pastor Gregory Nelson—along with two of his members—from the University Heights church in New Brunswick, N.J.,



*Hazel Harris and Mpilo Norris interact with Pathfinders and other children attending the camp meeting Sabbath service.*

in the East Rand District in South Africa where they preached to hundreds. At the end of the meetings, some 100 people gave their lives to Christ.

Mission Exchange USA-Africa, a nonprofit organization started by Grace Zuzo, a University Heights member, made their trip possible. For this trip, two of Nelson's church members, Hazel Harris and Beverly Francis, accompanied him. The ladies offered prayer, gave special music and led workshops for local widows. Norris joined them on Sabbath to help with the mission report, children's chapel and vespers.

According to the South African district pastor, Ziphozonke Mbatha, Norris "is a mature man of God who was able to proclaim the Good News of salvation with power." He also holds Norris responsible for helping 42 people make decisions for baptism.

Norris said, "I thank God for allowing me to preach to the kids in South Africa. The point of my mission was to get kids to realize that the work of the gospel is not just for old folks, but that young people have a part to play too."—*Beth Michaels*

## West Philadelphia Church Welcomes Women in Jeans

**T**he West Philadelphia church recently hosted an outreach program sponsored by a Sunday church called, The Church Down The Way, for the women of Mill Creek. "The goal of the program, themed '200 Women in Jeans 2012,' is an extension of 'come as you are,'" explains Donna Riley, the West church's inner city coordinator. "It dispels the assumption that church attendance demands a particular dress code." It also served as a fundraiser for "The Daughters Beautiful," a local program designed to promote self-esteem in girls aged 9 to 17.

The two denominations sought to lift Christ up in the lives of the downtrodden. The women in jeans ranged in age from under 30 to over 50, and came from four Adventist churches in the Delaware Valley as well as local Sunday churches. The women learned, prayed, cried and laid their burdens at the foot of the cross, where there was no difference between the GED and the PhD. The three-part sermon was designed to empower change in single women, seasoned women and women in general.

State Rep. Venessa Lowry Brown, who "only had a few minutes," stayed until the end, as did several

women who remarked, "I only intended to just stop by and go home." Riley said, "They left in a cluster of sisterhood armed with copies of *Steps to Christ* and renewed by the Holy Spirit."



*West Philadelphia church members man the reception table for the "200 Women in Jeans" program.*



## We Teach Excellence

Allegheny West Conference (AWC) leaders are thrilled about what is happening in our schools and classrooms. Students are being introduced to Christ. They are involved in community service activities while continuing to grow academically and socially in supportive and nurturing environments.

We started the year with a booming enrollment and hired new staff members to accommodate the growth. Seventh-day Adventist education begins at birth, and our goal is to offer quality education, starting with our pre-school and childcare centers. We are proud to announce the upcoming debut of Little Footprints Learning Center in Cincinnati, Ohio. The classrooms, media center and science lab are developmentally friendly, bursting with vibrant colors and appeal to the exploratory minds of preschoolers.

Allegheny West teachers are enthusiastically leading and guiding their students through an authentic daily inquiry-based curriculum. As they facilitate learning, students are given the opportunity to hypothesize, experiment, discover and grasp the knowledge that will carry them successfully on their “journey to excellence” (the North American Division educational theme) and up the academic ladder.

We have embraced the initiative to build strong, healthy bodies by exercising and encouraging students to eat healthy. This is further emphasized through gardening, organized sports programs and involving the YMCA in the implementation of a vigorous, well-developed and child-friendly physical education program. Allegheny West schools participated in the national “Let’s Move!” Day, and Sean Maycock, math and science teacher at Columbus Adventist Academy in Columbus, Ohio, helped train and prepare five students to run in the Buckeye Classic 10K.

The following stories reflect a snippet of a Spirit-led educational program that is well rounded in preparing students to be successful servant-leaders in this world.



**Yvette Cooper**  
*Superintendent of Education*

## Ramah Makes Classroom, Structural Improvements

We are doing our best to take Ramah to the next level,” Kevin Cameron, principal at Ramah Junior Academy in Cleveland, recently wrote to parents. “We are raising student achievement scores, growing relationships with God, increasing technology in the classrooms, having timely and effective communication with parents and renovating our building, to name a few.”

He also reported that God helped them birth a “phenomenal theme” for the 2012-13 school year: GIFTED, which stands for Growing In Faith Together Every Day.

The increase in technology can be tied to Ramah’s



*Juanita Burris makes sure her kindergarten students get fresh air and exercise every day.*



*Ramah kindergartner Hailey Nickens gets supplemental education through the school’s new classroom computers.*

first walkathon, held last school year. With God’s help, the students’ hard work, along with donations from parents and supporters, they were able to raise more than \$20,000! Ramah put the funds toward 16 new laptops. Now every classroom has at least five computers as supplementary resources for the students.

Cameron says he is very happy about the progress but reminds others “the work is not over. We will be raising funds throughout the school year to ensure our children have everything they need.”

## Columbus Academy Engages Students in Varied Learning

Educators at Columbus Adventist Academy in Columbus, Ohio, have been busy strategically planning activities to engage students and appeal to their varied learning styles. Here is a snapshot from each class:

Kindergarteners learned about the generous Shunammite woman in II Kings who built a room for the prophet Elisha, which prompted the kids to build their own “homes” out of magnets and blocks.

After learning that adjectives describe nouns, first-graders literally felt their way through a pumpkin and described how the inside feels. During the presidential election, they also learned key vocabulary words, like candidates, election and voting.



Columbus Adventist Academy first-graders, with teacher Alyssa Minisee, get an introduction to the election process.



Second-graders learned how to explain events in a step-by-step format. For example, after getting a piece of bubble gum, teachers challenged them to explain the process of making and blowing a bubble.

Third- and fourth-graders, inspired by *The Courage of Sarah Noble*, took a trip to the Ohio Historical Society, where they experienced life in the 18th century, like churning butter and scrubbing clothes on a washboard.

To introduce fifth- and sixth-graders to the theme book *Shepherd Warrior*, teachers asked them to fill empty containers with unexpected knickknacks. Then students shook and sniffed the containers to determine their contents. The lesson? Never judge someone by their outer covering, for no one knows what lies beneath the surface.

Seventh- and eighth-graders heard President Barack Obama speak at Capital University in Columbus, where the local ABC news affiliate interviewed eighth-grader Aaron Wimberly (above) about the experience.

## Conference Daycare Centers are Growing

The conference’s three preschools strive to offer quality instruction for children of local church members and the community. Here is what they are up to now:

After a recent growth spurt, Precious Jewels in Columbus, Ohio, was forced to relocate from their single-room space at Columbus Adventist Academy to the Ephesus church, reports Darlene Bell, director. The move gave the preschool more space to increase enrollment.

Parents and local educators report that director Linda Reed’s curriculum for the Emmanuel Learning Center, an outreach ministry of the Emmanuel church in South Boston, Va., exceeds the expectations of the public school system. As a result, the center is currently at maximum capacity. They have purchased property next door and hope to erect a top-quality facility soon.

The Ramah Early Learning Center in Cleveland received its first star for Step Up to Quality, a quality rating system administered by the Ohio Department of

Job and Family Services. The center, co-directed by Mary Conwell and Villere Parkinson, has become a respected feeder program for Ramah Junior Academy.



The Ramah Early Learning Center includes music in their curriculum to help prepare tykes for elementary school.





# Blue Mountain Academy COMMUNIQUE

JANUARY 2013

## Thankfully, Business Isn't "As Usual"

Earlier this school year, when principal Dave Morgan asked me to join BMA's team, my family gave the invitation prayerful consideration while putting out our "fleece." In the end, we felt compelled to make the move.

It wasn't a stretch for me to join BMA's team. I graduated from this great school and learned a tremendous amount from my time in the work-study program. As a matter of fact, I still use many of those skills today.

BMA has many opportunities to offer with more than 700 acres of prime real estate, an industry facility that has in excess of 16,000 square feet of work space, a staff and student body that are energetically engaged and a philosophy for work education that changes lives. Could you ask for a better business model?

There's more to tout. The industry program here has so many benefits on a local and national level. Dare I mention one of the lowest overhead rates in the country? Should I state that we have an amazing student body that takes pride in its workmanship and strives for excellence? What about the fact that this is a God-based, work-study program that encourages such positive work ethics as teamwork, integrity and hard work?

The following is one of the best stories I've heard that proves the benefits of the work-study program: A student came to BMA with no work experience; in fact, the school would later learn that any time there was work to be done at home, this young man would pull a disappearing act.

Blue Mountain Academy takes life-training seriously, and it wasn't long before the school took steps to get this young man's attention. Looking at his folder today,



*Leslie Barrera, industry supervisor, shows senior Johann Gerardo how to do his part in the work-study program.*

I see several suspensions, times of "free" labor and, eventually, a pink slip from his job.

You might be thinking, "Is that the kind of kid that attends BMA?" and "Do I want my child rubbing shoulders with that kind of kid?" but you would be asking the wrong questions. I propose you should ask, "Seriously? BMA will patiently work to instill the value of hard work, honesty and responsibility in my child?" The answer to that question is a resounding, "Yes!"

This young man was required to have a job, and eventually took on the responsibility of finding a new place to learn the skills essential to succeed in the world. I am happy to report that he successfully graduated from BMA and continues to make a difference for God. And, I don't think there's any question that part of his success is due in great part to the patient approach BMA takes in instilling such crucial character traits, such as a hard work ethic, honesty and responsibility. Today that student is taking on a new venture for God, serving as BMA's new principal. Yes, that young man was Dave Morgan.

If you have a business that is looking to grow, let's talk. We want your business to belong here at BMA. For more information, contact me at [sreese@bma.us](mailto:sreese@bma.us).



**Stephen Reese**  
*Vice President of  
Finance, Marketing and  
Business Development*



*Volunteers and BMA students work together in the Industrial Arts building.*

## Superstorm Sandy Provides Educational, Outreach Opportunities

At Blue Mountain Academy, staff has identified a part of their curriculum that they believe most schools see as a bother: discipline. Principal Dave Morgan explains, “At BMA, we look for those moments when we can say, ‘Aha! Another opportunity to build character!’ We believe that it is at these moments that we have a huge opportunity to make a difference in a student’s life.”



Staff most recently saw such opportunities during Superstorm Sandy. When teachers noticed a student who needed an “Aha!” moment, they took the student to one of the many trees the storm brought down, a tree (pictured) that appeared to be strong enough to withstand such a storm. They asked, “What do you notice was the main cause for this tree coming down?” The student pointed out the obvious truth. The

storm revealed a flaw that couldn’t be seen before; the inside was completely rotted.

Morgan reports that the student obviously saw the object lesson: “When we make poor decisions based on ‘what we behold,’ we begin a slow process of rotting from the inside out. We may look great on the outside, like we have it all together, but when the storms hit, and they will hit, you lack the ability to withstand the winds of strife and down you go.” He adds, “At BMA, character-building is an intentional part of who we are!”

### Helping Others

Superstorm Sandy gave another character-building opportunity well known to BMA students: outreach. BMA leaders responded by hand selecting 20 students to make the two-hour drive to Trenton, N.J., to help.

Upon arriving, students found piles of clothes, cleaning supplies and boxes that needed to be sorted, packed and prepared for delivery to those areas hit hardest by the storm. In one room, students packaged flood buckets filled with rubber gloves, sponges and a variety of supplies needed to clean mud and dirt from flood-ravaged homes. In another room, students sorted through mountains of bedding, men and women’s clothing, and personal hygiene items. The work required long hours of standing in small spaces, often five to eight students working in a single room, but they never grumbled or complained.

Jim Greene, New Jersey Conference executive secretary, shared, “Thank you to each one of you that helped today. Your efforts have helped make a difference to those affected by this storm. We are grateful for your dedication to the residents of the New Jersey Conference.”

*Junior Diana Montalvo carries flood buckets filled with cleaning supplies that were later distributed to the hardest hit areas of New Jersey.*



Blue Mountain Academy’s group of Superstorm Sandy volunteers gather outside the distribution site in New Jersey.



# THE CHALLENGE

chesapeake conference newsletter

JANUARY 2013

## Walk With God! Share His Grace!

Our natural desire is to keep good things for ourselves. So, when a young child doesn't want to share their favorite toy with a playmate, a lesson about sharing is sure to follow.

The dictionary definition of sharing is to "use something along with others." The beauty of sharing is that you don't lose or give up the thing you share. It just benefits more people and multiplies the joy of the one sharing.

There are options to sharing. We can hoard things for ourselves. But, like a pond that grows stagnant and stale without an outlet, our spirit turns foul from inactivity. We can throw things away, but then no one benefits from their value. Giving has its benefits, but can leave the giver with a sense of loss.

One of the great sharing stories of the Bible takes place when the disciple Andrew meets a boy with a small lunch (John 6:5-14). The disciples can't imagine any way for them to feed the crowd of 5,000-plus as Jesus instructed. But, the boy is willing to share his lunch of five barley loaves and two small fish. And in the hands of Jesus, what is little became much. The great crowd has their hunger satisfied and food is left over. The unnamed boy who shared not only ate his fill, but also had an amazing story to tell all who would listen.

When we share the grace of God by our actions and words, it blesses us and that blessing is abundantly reproduced in the lives of others.



**Rick Remmers**  
President

## Women Convene for Spiritual Renewal and Fellowship

When the western Maryland venue for the Chesapeake Conference's 2012 Women's Retreat cancelled the contract so they could renovate the space as a casino, it looked like the retreat might not happen. But, a waterfront hotel in Ocean City offered to accommodate the group. Then, Superstorm Sandy hit the Maryland coast just five days before the retreat. Once again, it seemed the retreat might not take place. However, the hotel experienced only minor damage, and about 260 women gathered for the event.

Yet another challenge surfaced when a large bus carrying 58 passengers broke down 40 miles from Ocean City. As the group began to pray and sing, the bus gained speed and arrived just as the opening sessions

*Kayla Perez plays the saxophone. She traveled from Puerto Rico to provide music during the retreat.*



*Dee Scalzo, a former conference Women's Ministries director, addresses the group.*

PHOTOS BY CHARLOTTE MCCLURE

(offered in English and Spanish) began.

Ruth Wright of the Berkeley Springs (W.Va.) church invited her neighbor, Barbara, a Methodist, to accompany her to the retreat. "She wants to come with me again next year," says Wright. "Although she did suggest getting a different bus!" Visit [ccosda.org](http://ccosda.org) for links to photos, seminar handouts, recipes and more.

## NEWS

### Wilna Members Feed Harford County Homeless

The Wilna church's outreach committee recently partnered with their Trailblazer Pathfinder Club to provide meals for residents of a local homeless shelter. The Joppa, Md.-based congregation is dedicated to supporting the needs of their community and creating an awareness of Seventh-day Adventists there. "We want the community to see the Wilna church as a caring and giving church," says Jean Hastick, outreach coordinator. "We are not only focused on the spiritual aspect of someone's life, but also care about their emotional and physical well-being."

The team visits the shelter once a quarter and provides breakfast,



Members of Wilna's outreach committee prepare dinner for local homeless persons.



PHOTO BY TODD OTIS



PHOTO BY SAMANTHA YOUNG

Volunteers Joyce Parris (left) and Dianne Grant prepare registration packets for prayer conference attendees.

a sack lunch and a hot supper for residents.—Valerie Nozema

### Prayer Conference Attendees Focus on Faith

More than 240 people gathered to hear Pavel Goia, a Kentucky-based pastor, share his personal faith-building stories of answered prayer at a recent conference-sponsored prayer weekend held at the Atholton church in Columbia, Md.

"The information shared at the prayer conference was practical and has already been very useful to me," said attendee Daniel Herzal.

### Frederick Students Hone Survival Skills at Outdoor School

Students in grades 5 and 6 at Frederick Adventist School in Frederick, Md., recently participated in an outdoor education experience at the Mount Aetna Retreat Center in nearby Hagerstown.

This year the students focused on emergency shelters, ecosystems and habitats, and the most-talked about activity—high ropes and rappelling under the guidance of instructors. "The high ropes made me nervous in kind of a fun way,"

John Schroyer, a sixth-grader at the Frederick Adventist School, participates in a stream exploration class.

remarked Clay Otis, a sixth-grader.

"Outdoor school is a growing, maturing experience for the students," says their teacher Linda Stewart. "All the students who accomplished these activities were amazed that they actually did it." —Elisabeth Catalano-Appleton

### Atholton Honors Seniors

A few weeks ago, the Atholton church in Columbia, Md., held its first Senior Day. In an expression of thanks, Rick Remmers, conference president, said, "Seniors provide a foundation that we continue to build on today. We are indebted to our senior members for their counsel, encouragement and support."



PHOTO BY DAVID FOURNIER

Violinist Brian Liu, an Atholton church member, plays the music of favorite classical composers during the Senior Day concert.



# MOUNTAIN VIEW POINT

JANUARY 2013

## Can We Reach Appalachia?

Is it possible to blanket the entire Mountain View Conference with the Good News? I know we can, because what seems impossible is always possible with God. We at the Mountain View Conference are now partnering with the Voice of Prophecy (VOP) for a new program we're calling Reach Appalachia, where we will mail Bible study response cards to every home and nonbusiness mailbox in the conference!

Last fall VOP team members spent two Sundays meeting with church members, pastors and conference administration sharing how this dream of reaching Appalachia would be accomplished. All churches will establish a Discover Bible School and members in each church will be visiting Bible students, grading completed lessons, mailing out new lessons and, most importantly, praying for the Holy Spirit's power to impact those who respond to the mailing. We will have a conference-wide graduation in 2014 at the Charleston Convention Center.

Toward the close of the meeting, I asked attendees to stand as a sign of commitment. I was thrilled to see that the response from those in attendance was unanimous. People then gathered in small groups and asked God to bless this program and to pour out His Spirit on each one as they go forward to reach others for Christ.

Toni Miller, a new Charleston member, was thrilled as she heard about Reach Appalachia. She had already been asking the Lord what more could she do to help herself and other people and said, "God has answered my prayer. God is awesome, and I want to share the Good News." What about you? Will you join us?



Larry Boggess  
President

## Volunteers Train, Share Gospel in Charleston

Over the past year, Mountain View Conference members have participated in a special initiative to reach Charleston, W.Va., with the gospel. Most recently church members (right) from around the conference converged in Charleston again, this time for a nine-day evangelism training intensive. One participant came all the way from Wisconsin.

The program began on a Friday night with a vespers service, where Thando Amankwah, the Generation of Youth for Christ vice president for missions, led a study on the book of Philemon. He also reminded attendees that their motivation for service should be the love of Christ. Over the next eight days, attendees received training on how to study the Bible, how to give Bible studies and learned about the evangelism cycle, Christ-centered preaching, the Holy Spirit's role in evangelism and distinctive Adventist doctrines. They also participated in an outreach practicum each day, where they either went door to door to find Bible study interests, or distributed some 700 flyers for an upcoming evangelistic series.

Participants came back with stories of Divine appointments each day. Opening night at Charleston's "Midnight Cry" series brought more than 50 visitors

from the community! Many have remarked that their participation in the outreach efforts in Charleston has been life changing. They now have tools they can use at home and newfound confidence to share what they know with others.—Daniella Pusic



## Personal Testimony: My Journey to the Weirton Church

As a young child, we were not permitted to have a Bible in our house. But, my mother had one hidden under the kitchen sink where she knew my dad would never find it, and when he would leave (he was a truck driver), she would take it out and read it. Aunt Carol, my mom's sister, was a Seventh-day Adventist, and I remember her talking to us about God and teaching us Bible stories and Christian songs.

When I was 14, I began experimenting with smoking, drinking and drugs. In that year, I was fortunate enough to be invited to evangelistic meetings at an Adventist church, and decided to get baptized for my 15th birthday at another Adventist church in Ohio. However, I saw hypocrisy in the church and left before I was 18.



I turned away from God and fell right into Satan's lap. I started experimenting more with drugs and alcohol and spent many years learning the arts of witchcraft. For approximately five years, I believed that God and Satan did not exist. It is so easy to do wrong things when you don't believe there is a high price to pay.

I found myself eventually working at a newspaper, where I was instructed to cover an event at the local Catholic church. I was very uncomfortable with the idea of being in a church, and I was deeply offended when people even prayed. During that time, I got involved in a play that a good friend of mine was directing at the local Catholic church. They prayed before every practice, but I didn't pray with them. Then it got to the point that when they prayed to God, I prayed to my own gods. Eventually, I thought to myself, "When in Rome ..." and soon I began to pray *with* them.

While performing in the play, I slowly felt God's transforming power come into my life. At first I attended the classes at the Catholic church because I was already a

pagan and felt at home with their practices. I thought I could have my cake and eat it too. I soon fell away from that as well, and for months I debated and argued with Linda Jones, a member of the Weirton (W.Va.) church. I studied the Bible with my uncle, and through Jones' encouragement and the will of the Holy Spirit, I started attending the Weirton church.

It was not an easy road for me to walk. I was in and out of church—testing God and myself. I tried for a year on my own to do all the things I thought I should be doing and struggled. In December 2011, I went back to the Weirton church, and last January began Bible studies with Pastor Doc Michael and his wife, Yonnie. They were loving and understanding when I had questions and struggles. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, they were able to get through to me, and I was baptized at the Weirton church last June.

The past year has not been easy but it has been rewarding. The choices I have made for Christ have put me in situations where I had to say goodbye to a job I loved, a significant other, friends and even family, but praise the Lord, He gave me a new family, new friends and a new job. I pray God will allow me, and all His children, to be witnesses for Him and help finish the Great Commission.—*Angelina Dickson*



*Doc Michaels, pastor of the Weirton (W.Va.) church, gets ready to baptize an overjoyed Angelina Dickson.*



# NEWS NEW JERSEY

JANUARY 2013

## Strategic Planning for the New Quinquennium: “Our Mission: Jesus’ Mission”

In order to fulfill our mission, we need a sound vision for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in New Jersey. Conference leaders consulted with office staff, pastoral staff, leaders and members of local churches and the president’s cabinet to develop our initiatives for the new quinquennium. After discussion and prayerful consideration of the many suggestions and approval by the conference executive committee, we are ready to present to you our initiatives for the 2012-2017 quinquennium.

The initiatives are based on the concept of the seven stars, which Jesus holds in His hand as described in Revelation 2:1. The symbol of the seven stars will represent the seven initiatives, which will be the focus of our ministries. Our theme will be “Our Mission: Jesus’ Mission,” which we will accomplish through:

1. Our outreach (evangelism, Mission Caleb, small groups)
2. Our schools (Seventh-day Adventist Education)
3. Our compassion (community service, disaster response, Health Ministries)
4. Our youth and family (children, singles, women and men)
5. Our relationship with Jesus (prayer, Bible study, devotional life)
6. Our leaders (well trained and healthy)
7. Our stewardship (body, talents, time, treasures)

The seven stars symbolize a philosophy of teamwork with all our ministries working together for the finishing of the work in New Jersey. It is my prayer that this be the last quinquennium before Jesus comes. Jesus is coming soon! Amen!



**José H. Cortés**  
*President*

## Two New Pastors Join Conference Team

**Pastor Joey Pollom** is the new pastor of the Robbinsville/Princeton district. “Pastor Joey,” as he prefers to be called, comes from the Texas Conference.

He has also pastored in the Potomac Conference. Pastor Joey and his wife, Sarah, have four adult children.



**Pastor Marco Estrada** comes to New Jersey from Mexico, where he pastored a 19-church district in the South Veracruz Conference. Estrada and his wife, Arisai, have two children, Marco Junior and Xaris. He is pastoring the Guttenberg Spanish, Jersey City Spanish and Union City Spanish district.



## Expanding Disaster Relief to Help Our Neighbors

After assessing damages to the New Jersey coast caused by Superstorm Sandy, it has become clear to New Jersey Conference leaders that long-term assistance is needed, so we've responded in many ways. Through the help of donations from the Columbia Union and Potomac Conference, we were able to obtain a truck to help in our disaster relief efforts. We've also decided to use our old conference office building as a new Adventist Community Services (ACS) center. The conference has had the building listed for sale for three years; however, in light of Sandy, we decided to utilize the facility as a disaster response warehouse. Once storm relief efforts wind down, we'll also see it up as a full-time ACS center. The conference is also working with the North American Division and state officials to manage a 160,000 square-foot warehouse for receiving donated relief supplies and redistributing the supplies to affected areas.

We have also had a number of volunteers help as we respond to the needs of the communities affected by the storm. Heritage Academy from Tennessee; Blue Mountain Academy from Hamburg, Pa.; and Shenandoah Valley Academy from New Market, Va.; sent teams of students to help us respond to the disaster. We thank the leaders of these schools and also the Potomac Conference and Columbia Union for their generous support.—*Jim Greene*



1. Joe Luste, New Jersey Conference ACS Disaster Response (DR) regional coordinator; Joe Watts, North American Division ACSDR director; Jim Greene, conference executive secretary; Jeff Burns, New Jersey state official; and Kitty Juneau, Chesapeake ACSDR coordinator; discuss arrangements for setting up the warehouse operations of the New Jersey Donations Management Multi-Agency Staging Area. 2. Blue Mountain Academy students from Hamburg, Pa., pose for a photo after a long day of service. 3. Dave Weigley, Columbia Union president (right in sunglasses), and José H. Cortés, New Jersey Conference president, distribute supplies in Atlantic City. 4. Mike Gill, New Jersey Conference ACS director; Ilene Gill, and Claudia Ramirez, ACSDR coordinator; show off the new truck purchased with funds donated by the Columbia Union and Potomac Conference.





# Mission Ohio

OHIO CONFERENCE NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2013

## 600 Ohio Youth Connect With Christ at Rally

Steve Carlson, Ohio Conference Youth Ministries director, recognized that Adventist youth don't get many opportunities to connect and worship together. His solution? Put on a youth rally for young people across Ohio, making sure to include Allegheny West Conference (AWC) young people.

After more than a year of coordination and planning, Carlson and Joel Johnson, AWC Youth Ministries director, hosted "ConneXtion With Christ ... Finding Your Identity!" at the Worthington (Ohio) church. Nearly 600 high school students "from schools, churches and conferences connected with each other and with Jesus," reports Carlson.

Highlights from the daylong event included an energizing talk by Mackenzie Kambizi, AWC pastor of the Parkwood church in Toledo; humor and sleight-of-hand antics from pastor and Christian comedian Lyndy Phillips of Dallas, Texas; as well as a youth praise band that provided uplifting and contemporary music. Students from Mount Vernon Academy, based in Mount Vernon, Ohio, attended en masse and showcased their drama team. Many from Spring Valley Academy in Centerville also attended, including their school choir. "We also had youth groups from every corner of the state," adds Carlson. The event concluded with an evening of games and sports, where the remaining 250 youth broke into groups.

Reviews from the rally have been overwhelmingly positive. "ConneXtion was awesome. Glad I got to go," said Justin Gallion from Ohio Conference's Wooster church. "It was a wonderful day to worship together with lots of youth. Thanks Ohio and Allegheny West conferences! You did an awesome job!"

Plans are already underway for the next ConneXtion youth rally, scheduled for November 2 in central Ohio.



PHOTOS BY JOEL JOHNSON

Students from Mount Vernon Academy pause from activities at the ConneXtion youth rally to say, "Cheese."



Lindsey Conkle, a student from Spring Valley Academy, gets pulled from the audience to assist pastor and comedian Lyndy Phillips during one of his tricks.



## Annual Women's Retreat Proves "Most Spiritual"



PHOTOS BY MARIYA MARTON

Hyveth is a woman who knows and loves the Lord!" said Chandra Attiken, wife of Ohio Conference president Raj Attiken, as she introduced this year's women's retreat speaker, Hyveth Williams, DMin (left). Later, when referring to the weekend theme and call to be His "sweet fragrance ... the perfume of God," Williams told attendees to "live the words, don't just say the words."

The weekend was filled with a variety of newer features, including praise music courtesy of the Mansfield church's praise team and a seminar featuring Rwandan genocide survivor and advocate Norah Bagirinka. She shared her testimony and the powerful Emmy award-winning documentary that she narrated, *God Sleeps in Rwanda*, about five women whose lives are irrevocably altered by the Rwandan genocide. Celeste Holbrook, PhD, gave a seminar about reclaiming healthy intimacy after abuse, and there was a seminar on the power of one in prayer.

"This retreat was one of the most spiritual ones I have attended," said Susan Bell, Women's Ministries

leader for the First Community church in Chesterland and a member of the conference retreat team. "Hyveth was wonderful at breaking God's Word open for us," said another attendee. Countless women echoed similar comments.

Did you miss the retreat, or want to listen to the presentations again? Visit [ohioadventist.org](http://ohioadventist.org) and click on "Women's Ministries." Plans are underway for 2013, with guest speaker Jo Ann Davidson, PhD.

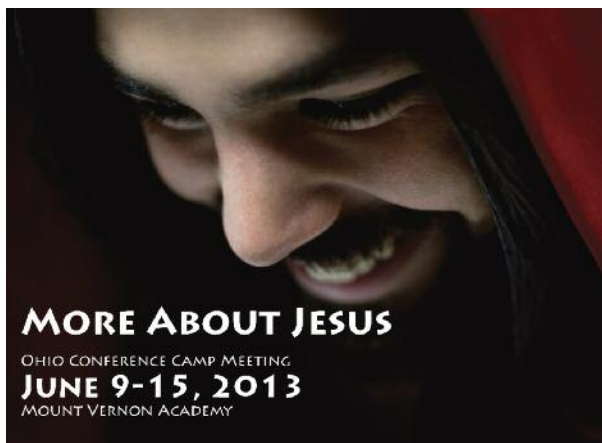


*Lunch Buddies: Perky Davis, Marilyn Farr, Shirley Kirchberg and Pastor Lori Farr from the Wooster church*

## Pastors Plan 2013 Camp Meeting

For the third consecutive year, a team of pastors are planning and organizing the Ohio Conference Camp Meeting. While taking into consideration the spiritual and social needs of all age groups, this team balances a week of teaching, music, discussion and activities that surely will challenge, inspire and bless all who attend.

Make plans to attend "More About Jesus," June 9-15,



at Mount Vernon Academy in Mount Vernon. The confirmed speakers and topics not to be missed are Pastor Jeba Moses, DMin, in "Truth in Love: Communication With Family, Kids, Pastor, Church, Work, etc."; Sandy Hrabowy's "Budget-Friendly, Healthy Cooking for Families"; Pastor Russ Gaskill in "The Widow's Mite"; Pastor Lori Farr with "Jesus Loves Me Anyway: An Intro to Following Jesus"; Pastor Tom Hughes' "What the Bible Says About Worship"; and Pastor Winston Baldwin in "Spiritual Maturity: A Decrease That Leads to an Increase."

There will also be very special focus on the 150th anniversary since the organization of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. There will be a review of the origins and development of our denomination along with special guest Merlin Burt, PhD, director for the Center for Adventist Research at the Ellen G. White Estate Branch Office at Andrews University (Mich.).

Begin making reservations for lodging (dorm and RV sites) at MVA via email at [campmeeting@mvacademy.org](mailto:campmeeting@mvacademy.org). The price list and phone number will be available soon. For additional information, visit [ohioadventist.org](http://ohioadventist.org) and click on "Annual Events," or call (740) 397-4665, ext 165.



# Pennsylvania Pen

JANUARY 2013

## Grace in the Church: As if It Never Even Happened

In the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy last October, I saw a swarm of green trucks moving across southeast Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Maryland, helping restore homes and businesses in the clean-up process. On each green truck was the restoration company logo and the words, “As if it never even happened.” It made me think of a powerful concept that Ellen White presents in the book *Our High Calling*. She says, “... Through the righteousness of Christ we shall stand before God pardoned, and as though we had never sinned” (p. 48).

What a comprehensive picture of grace! That is what the remnant church is called to have and to share in these last days—grace. The full message of Christ and His redemption motivates and inspires the recipients of God’s grace to live 100 percent committed to God. A church filled with grace is truly the remnant church that fully reflects Christ to a dying and fallen world. For you see, it is only when grace leads that truth can shine! It is only when grace leads that people want and accept truth and keep it in their hearts. That is why Ellen White writes, “The strongest argument in favor of the gospel is a loving and lovable Christian” (*Ministry of Healing*, p. 470). May your heart, may your church and may our conference be filled with grace, so that we can fully reflect Christ here in Pennsylvania.



Ray Hartwell  
President

## Easton’s Cool Camp and Pathfinders Share a Link

Ever wonder what Cool Camp has to do with Pathfinders? The answer is everything! For the past three years, the Easton church has sponsored Cool Camp. Many of the young adults from the Easton Hummingbird Pathfinder Club staff have also worked as Cool Camp staff. Several of the teen Pathfinders have volunteered at Cool Camp. Pathfinders have even attended Cool Camp.



But, there is more. When the invitation went out this fall to the Cool Camp families inviting them to enroll their children in Pathfinders, they responded! Three families from the local community enrolled their children in the Pathfinder club. The Pathfinder staff counts it a privilege to be part of God’s ministry by getting to know these kids and their families. Easton’s Pathfinder club has almost doubled in size, and the dynamic has changed from a primarily teen club to a younger club, with Pathfinders full of enthusiasm and eager to learn everything.

God’s blessings are evident everywhere, from the staff who have grown in their spiritual walk and improved their leadership skills, to the Pathfinders who have been given the opportunity to learn leadership skills and find out what ministry is about, to the seed planting that takes place when kids come to Cool Camp and hear stories about God that they can then share with their family and friends.

“I’m thankful that God is using the Cool Camp and the Easton Hummingbird Pathfinder Club to make a difference in our community,” shares Donna Achenbach, Easton’s Pathfinder director. “Only God knows what is going to happen next, and I can’t wait!”

## Williamsport Member Celebrates 100th Birthday

**K**athryn Ertel Kreger, a former teacher at the Mountain View Christian School in Williamsport, celebrated her 100th birthday in September with the help of her friends from the Williamsport church and school. The school's current students presented her with cards and balloons.

Kreger taught at the Williamsport school for 27 years. Her husband, Herman, celebrated his 100th birthday in February. The Kregers were very active in the Williamsport church for many years and still live in their own home.

The couple (right) was featured in a local newspaper and on a local television station. When asked about their lives, she told them that they thank God every day for taking care of them and giving them long lives.

—*Elaine Scott*



## Mission: Africa

### Youth and Young Adult Evangelistic Mission Trip

**When: July 1-24, 2013**

**Who: Ages 16-34**

**What: Preach 19 evangelistic sermons**

**Cost: \$3300.00**

#### Includes:

- Training
- Materials
- Lodging
- Meals
- Visa
- Airfare

For more info please contact the PA Conference Youth Department, at 610.374.8331 ext 212 or email us at [pa-youth@paconference.org](mailto:pa-youth@paconference.org).



# Potomac People

JANUARY 2013

## Evangelism From the Heart

I have to admit I was skeptical at first. In my experience, evangelism series are always driven by pastors or conference officials bringing in a big name. I wasn't sure how successful a series, organized entirely by lay people, could be; however, the "Prophecy of Hope" meetings—brainstormed, planned and financed by members of the Staunton and Waynesboro (Va.) churches—broke that mold.

I was asked to help run the audio/visual equipment for the meetings. As a result, I regularly met with a dedicated team who meticulously planned everything down to the last detail. They pulled in their fellow church members to fill in support positions, perform



special music or simply to monitor the parking area. The response was incredible.

During the first night of the seven-day meetings, held in Staunton, Va., at the C.F. Richards Junior Academy, more than 200 people packed the school gymnasium. Roughly 50 attendees were visitors from the community.

Guest speaker Mark Martin (above), a former Jehovah's Witness and current Waynesboro (Va.) church member, shared his incredible story. He explained how he spent the better part of 10 years studying the Bible, specifically on the topic of the Sabbath. The results of his research prompted him to leave his congregation. While this act cut him off from all of his friends and most of his family, and strained his marriage, Martin didn't let that slow him down. With new friends and a Seventh-day Adventist church family, he is as dedicated as ever to bringing new people to Christ, using only the Bible.

I'm impressed with these lay members and how they continue to be accountable and to disciple new interests through their journey. Each Friday they dive into the Bible with those who want to learn more about the presented topics. This process showed me that a well-known speaker has nothing to do with successful evangelistic meetings; passion, faith and teamwork are enough.



**Aaron Cheney**  
*Communication Intern*



# Potomac People

## Habitat for Humanity Donates \$2K to Buena Vista Church

We're not put on Earth just to accumulate material possessions. We're meant to help others," observed Jim Garber. That was the sentiment behind a 2009 meeting he and other Buena Vista (Va.) church elders held to brainstorm community service project ideas. "One suggestion was to team up with Habitat for Humanity," he recalls. "Upon further consideration, we decided we would volunteer to install foundations for them. This work had previously been subcontracted out, with Habitat for Humanity paying for labor costs as well as materials. Two of us at the Buena Vista church are masons, me and David Hall. As a team, we figured that laying foundations for Habitat, with no labor cost, would be the greatest contribution we could make as a team."



To date Garber and Hall and their faithful crew have completed 11 foundations and started the 12th one in October. In all, they have saved Habitat approximately \$15,000 in labor costs.

"This gives our church the opportunity to make a difference in the community while helping to provide decent, affordable housing to individuals unable to secure a conventional loan," Garber explains. "We believe Christianity is all about service, the very things Jesus taught when He was on this Earth."

After years of working with the Buena Vista church, Habitat for Humanity workers learned about church members' upcoming participation in Potomac's annual mission trip. On October 17, Lynn Leech, executive director for the Rockbridge Area Habitat for Humanity, presented members with \$2,000 to support the effort. "We are grateful for the foundation work volunteer



members of the church have so generously provided to Habitat and our homeowners," said Leech. "Just as they have supported Habitat's good work in the community, we are pleased to be able to assist the church's good work in the world." Kelly Wallace, Habitat's assistant construction site supervisor, expressed a personal interest in the mission trip and will join church members in Brazil next year.

The Buena Vista church's outreach ministry doesn't stop with foundation work. Members have also given gift bags to elementary school teachers in appreciation for their work, provided free oil changes to single mothers and served an appreciation meal for the local volunteer rescue squad and police department.

"We really believe in Matthew 25:40," says Garber, which states, "As ye have done unto the least ye have done it unto Me."—*Tiffany Doss*





# Spotlight on Spencerville

JANUARY 2013

## New Campus Ministries Plan Nets Greater Student Interest

It's Monday lunchtime. Fifteen students crowd into the chaplain's office carrying their lunch trays and bags. They arrange themselves around the room and commiserate about the busyness of the new week. One offers prayer, and then they're off sharing ideas and discussing upcoming events and final plans for the week. Their goal is to brainstorm ways to provide interactive worship opportunities and achieve a cohesive, relevant message. Twenty minutes later, group members are on the same page, each planning to play a part in making ministry valuable on their campus.

This is what Spencerville Adventist Academy (SAA)'s new, dedicated Campus Ministries program looks like. They established a greater focus on implementing a



Sophomore Chelsea Kent sorts student donations that helped the school make food baskets later distributed by Spencerville church members. Campus Ministries participants organized the drive for a recent Week of Prayer.



Members of the drama team set the stage for a chapel program.

spiritual master plan that starts in the Bible classroom and ripples out to student opportunities that engage them in real-time ministry. The program is designed to ensure that ministry is accessible and connected to students' gifts, talents and interests. Ministries have been restructured so that students are involved in every stage of programming design, preparation and implementation.

With a beautiful, new auditorium to worship in and a Campus Ministries headquarters in the chaplain's office, the program also offers more structure and focus. And, SAA teachers are training students as spiritual leaders, equipping them with a clear philosophy, an ear for quality and intention in every action.

Getting the program off the ground took a few busy months, but a collaborative effort is being made by all

leaders who stepped up to head the various ministry teams. This year more than 90 students signed up to be involved in one or more of the program's 10 diverse ministry options, including the academy's weekly chapel program, fine arts, prayer ministries, service on and off campus and in-reach (or "secret service" as the students refer to it).

The growth on campus has additionally impacted the students' connection with their local congregation, the Spencerville church. In September the students and church leaders collaborated to select a sermon topic and students prepared and presented Scripture reading. Both entities are enthusiastic about pairing their efforts more regularly.



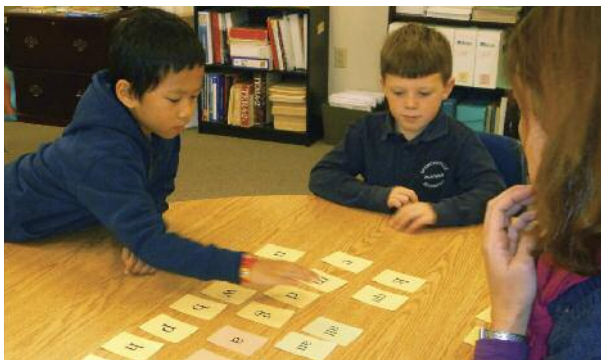
Students gather after a Campus Ministries vespers program.

# Spotlight

## Resource Staff Strive to Meet Student Learning Needs

In an effort to steadily expand its services to diverse student learning styles, Spencerville Adventist Academy recently overhauled its resource department. Resource staff works with students who have academic and/or cognitive difficulties as well as those who require accelerated learning and/or gifted and talented instruction. The department currently has one full-time teacher, Christina Ramirez, and one part-time assistant, Jenet Searce, who serve the entire pre-K to grade 12 population.

Some of the exciting things the resource staff implemented this fall is the use of ALEKS, an artificial intelligence-based computer assessment and math learning system for eligible middle schoolers, and the Wilson reading program for primary students. High schoolers



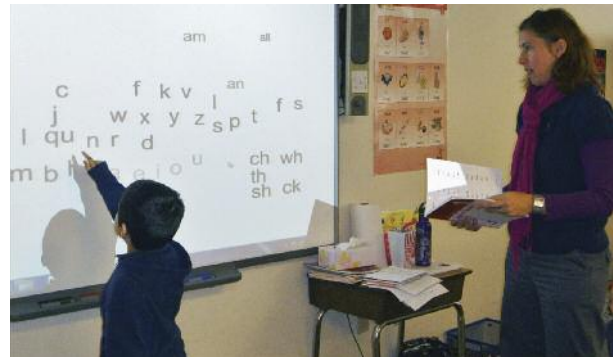
First-grade students use the Wilson reading program.

also continue to interact with resource staff to develop graduation plans and facilitate accommodations for students who need them. On the horizon is the greatly anticipated use of tablets so that Web-based learning can take place on and off campus.

“Much research points to technology as a great facilitator of differentiated learning that has enormous ‘buy-in’ value with students,” states Ramirez. “Engaged students make for students willing to work, in every classroom, no matter what their learning needs.”

The two instructors are also working hard to more effectively do the following:

- Conduct systematic informal assessments on students in grades K–2 that help predict their future reading success,
- Provide interventional phonics instruction to qualifying students to help them bring up and maintain grade level achievement,
- Work with SAA’s executive committee to expand writing instruction,



Christina Ramirez, resource department director, helps elementary students use a SmartBoard to move letters into words as they learn to recognize the sounds they make.

- Use technology with direct instruction as well as remediation in the subject areas,
- Create regular monthly meetings between staff and parents of students who arrived at SAA with IEP or 504 plans, have a MAP plan through SAA or are suspected of needing further academic evaluation. At the meetings, they evaluate the appropriateness of the plan, determine what SAA can provide to best meet the student’s learning needs and allow teachers and parents to communicate in a collaborative environment.
- Determine what qualifies a student for special education support. The goal of special education is to help give the student access to the general educational curriculum.

“We are delighted to be able to provide more academic support to students in a Christian environment at SAA,” stated Barbara Plubell, elementary vice principal.



Jenet Searce, resource department assistant, helps a middle school student with math problems using the ALEKS computer system.



# SHENANDOAH VALLEY ACADEMY

# HAPPENINGS



JANUARY 2013

www.shenandoahvalleyacademy.org

## “Men of Stiel” Groomed, Selected to Lead Boys Dorm

Sometimes inspiration comes from hours of fasting and praying, but for Gerry Davis, Shenandoah Valley Academy’s (SVA) boys dean, it came during an airline flight last summer. Davis was flying to Oakwood University (Ala.) with his assistant dean Andrew Smalls. The two started discussing ways they could grow more lasting relationships with the incoming 2012-13 male boarding students.

“We wanted to change the culture of the dorm to a more Christ-centered focus, and to help these young men morally stand on their own, despite what the world tells them that a man should be,” explains Smalls.

Davis was casually reading the airline’s pamphlet when he stumbled across a statement by the airline’s CEO that explained the integrity the company was built upon. The statement inspired him to create the concept of building “Men of Stiel.” The name Stiel is directly linked to Phanstiel Hall, so named after S. Louise Hart Phanstiel (’76) and her husband, Howard, whose generous funding allowed for the reconstruction of the former Price Hall in 2008.

After much thought and prayer, Davis and Smalls settled on 10 character traits to focus on during the school year. They decided at registration they would ask each student and their parents to sign a contract agreeing to uphold these qualities. Now these traits are talked about in dorm worship, posted on all bulletin boards and exemplified in the life of each dean, resident assistant (RA) and Men of Stiel leader.



Local artist and SVA parent Adriana Fernandez paints the boys’ dorm mission statement and the 10 Men of Stiel character traits on the lobby wall.



Seniors Steven VandeVere and Aren Bruce, the first Men of Stiel, show off their new dorm mission statement and character traits.

“You have to aspire to the high standards we set in the dorm to be considered for a Men of Stiel position,” notes Davis. This year’s title bearers are Steven VandeVere and Aren Bruce. Both are four-year seniors chosen for their solid academic records and outstanding Christian character traits demonstrated in all aspects of their lives.

A key component to the program’s success lies in the commitment of the deans to develop a positive relationship with each student. “The generation that our kids are growing up in is very narcissistic, and we knew it would be a struggle to change that mindset,” Davis explains. “This is where fostering these relationships comes into play.”

The program has dramatically improved the atmosphere of the dorm by giving students a sense of ownership rather than just a list of rules to follow. Davis and Smalls have also seen a deepening spiritual commitment in the students. There are several who take time to study the Bible for themselves, as well as with others. Some of the students also regularly lend counsel or tutor a struggling student.

“I have core guys from each class that I can turn to when students need prayer,” reports Davis. He adds, “We will definitely continue to use this program, but it will also be assessed continually for improvement.”

# HAPPENINGS

## Why I Enjoyed the Girl's Dorm Retreat

Each October the girls of Hadley Hall look forward to their weekend getaway at Highland Retreat in Bergton, Va. This year we all gathered in the dorm chapel on Friday evening to start off the Sabbath by singing songs. Pastor Buz Menhardt of the New Market (Va.) church led out with a get-to-know-you-better activity. It was a lot of fun! Our speaker, Hillary Whonder-Genus, MD, mom to freshman Stephen Genus, spoke to us about guarding our speech. She inspired us with her talk; it gave us another glimpse of God's love for us. The deans and dorm moms then went to each room to pray with the students.

On Sabbath, after sleeping in a bit, we had a delicious breakfast organized by some of the dorm moms. Around 10:30 a.m., we headed out for Highland Retreat. We held our church service under a shelter that was



In the late afternoon, we had fun decorating our dorm retreat T-shirts, which had 1 Timothy 4:12 printed on them: "Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity."

To close the Sabbath, we had a special communion where we got the opportunity to wash a partner's feet in the creek and then pray with them. We then returned to the shelter where a table in the shape of a cross was filled with lit candles and bread and grape juice for each person.

As our weekend theme reflected, I learned that even though we are young, we can still be examples for God. In doing this, we can bring others to know what a wonderful Savior we serve.—*Chelsea Campbell ('13)*



open to the beautiful, fall outdoors. SVA's history and government teacher, Gabrielle Griffin, gave us spiritual gifts assessments that allowed each girl to learn more about what God created them to do. It was very interesting to learn that everyone has a special place and job in God's eyes. No matter how young or what talents you have, you are always an instrument of God.

After a little while, we split into groups and participated in some trust-related activities, such as the "trust fall." In this activity you allow yourself to fall backwards off a platform into the arms of your friends. Hopefully, they catch you!

After a delicious lunch of Dean Rita Miller's famous Italian pasta dish, we were able to have some down time. Some went on a hike, some joined a small Bible study about purity and others took naps on the grass.





## Students Lend Helping Hands to Storm Victims

In a clear manifestation of the spirit of service, Washington Adventist University's (WAU) Department of Ministry led a team of students to provide assistance and comfort to residents of storm-ravaged New Jersey. Led by Chaplain Kaneil Williams, 16 students embarked on the three-and-a-half hour journey to Pleasantville, N.J.

"It was a pleasure to put aside my 26-page paper to go out and do what I love to do—serve others," said Trece Jefford, nursing major. "I thank God for using me on this day, for choosing me to go out in the community and be a light to others."

Forty students and three parents from nearby Takoma Academy, led by music teacher Lulu Mwangi



WAU and Takoma Academy students sing during for New Jersey residents impacted by Superstorm Sandy.



Breanna Taliaferro, a junior counseling psychology major, distributes relief supplies to victims of Superstorm Sandy in New Jersey.

Mupfumbu, also shared the trip. They provided songs of inspiration throughout the journey.

"Just as this was an unforgettable experience for students, it was more so for residents, who, for a variety of reasons, did not leave their homes and neighborhoods seeking help. Today help came to their door, and they will never forget that," said Minnie McNeil, Allegheny East Conference's (AEC) director of Adventist Community Services. McNeil coordinated the outreach event.

Norman Miles, senior pastor of AEC's Trinity Temple in Trenton, presented a devotion with the story of the Good Samaritan as a framework. He left volunteers with a three-step formula for service in disaster relief: be compassionate, meet short-term needs first and be wise

enough to move on after stabilizing the situation.

"Service is more than a day or event; it is a lifestyle. That is why it is important for students to get involved in such projects," Williams said as he reflected on the day. "Micah 6:8 gives us God's service curriculum. What he desires is that we 'do justice, love mercy and walk humbly.' For many of our students, our initial trip was a major sacrifice as end of term papers were due. Many of them even did assignments on the bus as we made our way there and back. All this because service is not just what we talk about at Washington Adventist University, it's what we do."



WAU students (in green) and Takoma Academy students (in red) get ready to hand out relief supplies.



## Nursing Professor Celebrates Double Honors

Chioma Nwachukwu, DNP, PHCHS-BC, RN, an adjunct professor in the nursing department, is celebrating double honors with the recent completion of her doctorate and being sworn in as member of the District of Columbia Board of Nursing. Her dissertation is titled “Decreasing Pain and Length of Stay in the Post Anesthesia Care Unit.”

Nwachukwu, who started at WAU in August, is an accomplished professional with 14 years of experience as a registered nurse. She is the interim nursing director of outpatient peri-operative services at Washington Hospital Center in Washington, D.C.

Nwachukwu said becoming a nurse was a response to the call to serve. “Being able to help others and be fully present for them in their time of need is very rewarding for me,” she said.

She also enjoys mentoring younger nurses. Her advice for new WAU nurses is never to assume anything. “If you have questions about anything, you should always ask,” she said.



## WAU Hosts Acrofest, Welcomes 750 Gymnasts

More than 750 university, high school and home-schooled gymnasts from across the country recently visited Washington Adventist University for Acrofest 2012. The campus was a blaze of color and teeming with activity, as Acrofest is the largest Seventh-day Adventist athletic and interscholastic acrobatic event in the country.

Participants at the annual event represented some of the nation’s best gymnastics teams from the United States, Canada and Puerto Rico. The weekend is planned and produced by SDA Gymnastics, a worldwide organization of teams from Adventist schools.

The event’s grand finale took place November 10 with performances from the host team, WAU’s Acro-Airs, as well as other participating teams. More than 1,000 people attended.

*Acro-Airs team members and other attending gymnasts give coach Ben Johnson a special thank-you for putting the event together.*

*Right: Washington Adventist University Acro-Airs*



*Blue Mountain Academy students were among several high school teams to perform.*





# your healing MINISTRY

## Staying Focused

JANUARY 2013

The healthcare industry faces challenging times as we look to the future. At the same time, our patients entrust us with the care of their lives and rightfully expect us to provide compassionate, high quality and safe care. As healthcare leaders, we are responsible for being true to our mission in the face of declining reimbursements and greater demand. Every day, our leaders, employees, physicians and volunteers give their very best to improve the quality of life of the people we serve.

The most important thing that we can do during challenging times is to stay focused on what is truly important. This year's Kettering Adventist HealthCare Mission Conference enabled us to pause and reflect on the reason for our existence. We exist to compassionately care for every patient, everyday across all of our facilities. At the end of the day, no matter how great the challenge, Adventist healthcare organizations are responsible for being God's instruments.

In his keynote devotional, Dick Duerksen, Storyteller at Maranatha Volunteers, reminded us that we are "gloves on the hands of God." It is through us that God's compassion and healing is brought to people who look to us for care. God touches our patients through us.

Marcus Engel, a nationally recognized speaker with a truly compelling story, presented "The Other End of the Stethoscope." Marcus shared his personal experience of a tragic, life-changing accident in his senior year in high school that left him blind. Engel talked to us about the need to more keenly understand what it is like to be a patient.

Karl Haffner, senior pastor of the Kettering Adventist Church, presented a practical approach to "cultivating a culture of compassion." Karl used real life illustrations that challenged us to be more aware of being fully present to people who are vulnerable.

Our Mission Conference continued on Sabbath morning with a tribute to caregivers who are following Jesus' example every day. Dick Duerksen completed the weekend with a sermon highlighting the "miraculous healing that takes place in a secular world." Dick's easy-to-relate to real-life stories challenged us to action.

The times may be challenging. But those challenges are all the more reason for Adventist HealthCare institutions to recommit to why we exist and reconnect with our calling. We are Christ's hands reaching out to people at the most vulnerable moments in their lives.



*Fred Manchur*

**Fred Manchur**  
CEO, Kettering Health Network

Fred Manchur is a member of the Kettering Seventh-day Adventist Church

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*Every day, our leaders, employees, physicians and volunteers give their very best to improve the quality of life of the people we serve.*

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# your healing MINISTRY

## Cultivating a Culture of Compassion Written by Joseph Nicosia



The 2012 Kettering Adventist HealthCare Mission Conference celebrated the privilege of sharing in the sacred work of health care. This year's theme focused on the importance of intentionally cultivating a culture of compassion. "Our annual mission conference is a great opportunity for us to showcase our talent and celebrate how Christ's healing ministry happens through our employees and physicians hands every day," said Fred Manchur, Kettering Adventist HealthCare Chief Executive Officer.

Kettering Adventist HealthCare's annual mission conference is a two day event that brings together leaders, physicians, board members and employees in a colorful celebration of Kettering Adventist HealthCare's mission.

Karl Haffner presented "Cultivating a Culture of Compassion" and challenged attendees to live up to Christ's ministry of compassionate care for the vulnerable.

"Our annual mission conference is a personal highlight for me. We are delighted to have our leaders and employees experience and participate in our Sabbath morning worship service. The music, message and fellowship make for a wonderful celebration of the mission we share every day," said Fred Manchur.

To hear Dick Duerksen's sermon please visit [ketsda.org/index.php?/preachit/studylist.html](http://ketsda.org/index.php?/preachit/studylist.html)





Many employees take part in the Sabbath worship service which is a grand celebration of the sacred work of health care.



Dick Duerksen, Assistant to the President for Maranatha Volunteers International presented "Gloves on the Hands of God." Duerksen offered practical advice for tending to the spiritual needs of patients.



Best-selling author and speaker Marcus Engel shared his extraordinary story of overcoming adversity and how to have a better understanding of the health care experience from a patient's perspective.



Dick Duerksen delivered the Sabbath Worship Service sermon, "Miraculous Healings in a Secular World."



The Mission Conference brings together leaders, board members, physicians and employees in a celebration of the sacred work of health care.

# NEWS



JANUARY 2013

## Fall Harvest at Soin



Kettering Adventist HealthCare's newest hospital, Soin Medical Center, was designed top to bottom to promote wellness and healing in our community. Shortly after the hospital opened in early 2012, a group of employees and volunteers came together to plant an organic vegetable garden. Caring for the garden has been a team effort across several hospital departments.

Nutrition Services Manager Tina Banning, enlisted the help of her brother, an expert gardener to plan out exactly where to plant each crop in garden. Volunteer Services Coordinator Marilee Pretzinger, joined Tina and other volunteers for a day of planting that started early in the morning. Employees from the facilities department assisted with the watering every day. Volunteers and employees picked vegetables all summer long.

## Easier Access to Grandview

Grandview Medical Center, located in the downtown area of Dayton, is celebrating the completion of the Great Miami Blvd. roadway project. The project provides easier access to the surrounding neighborhoods and it also serves as an

alternate route for I-75 during construction of the portion of highway that runs near downtown Dayton.

At a ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate the completion of the Great Miami Blvd. roadway project, Kelly Fackel, vice president of development for the Grandview Foundation, expressed appreciation to the City of Dayton for the new roadway. "The new infrastructure not only improves access to Grandview and the neighborhood, it continues to energize the revitalization of our entire area," she said.

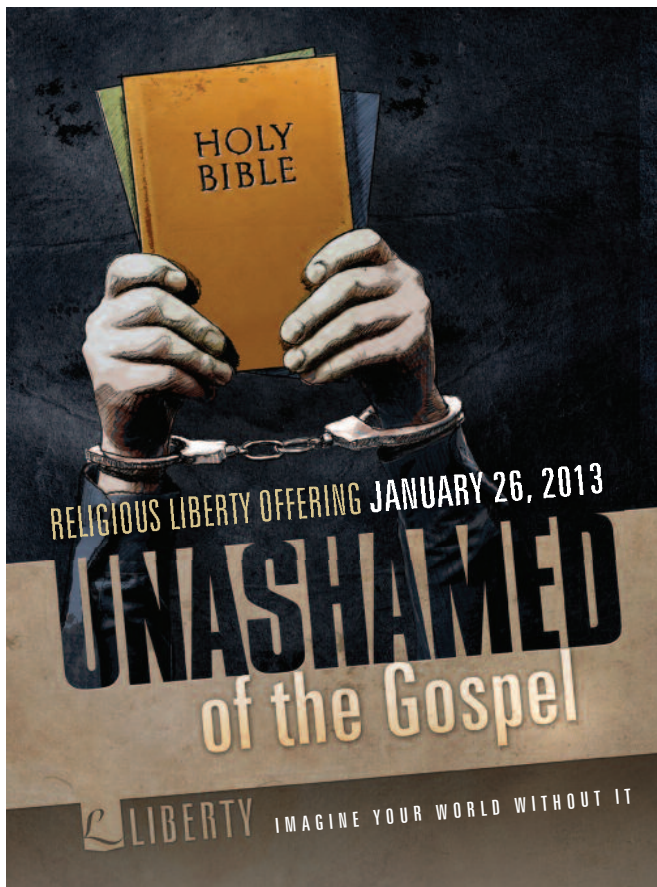
## Ribbon of Hope Spreads Awareness



Women gathered to spread awareness and raise funds for a good cause at the 12th Annual Ribbon of Hope Luncheon. The event raises funds for the Women's Wellness Fund. The Fund provides free screenings and prostheses to uninsured and medically underserved individuals in our community. The Fund also provides education on breast cancer and other women's health issues.

This year's keynote speaker was Cate Edwards.





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Sarah Winder is a dog lover, a dedicated walker and a wife. She's also a valued member of the nursing staff at Loma Linda. She brings her sense of humor, her humility and commitment to every patient interaction. Sarah is one of the people that help to make Loma Linda a center of clinical excellence and supportive faith-based care.



Sarah Winder, RN

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# Bulletin Board

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### SOUTHERN ADVENTIST

**UNIVERSITY** seeks professor of film to teach directing, screenwriting and film theory. MFA in film production preferred. Broad knowledge of field, advanced technical skill, professional production experience and strong storytelling abilities are requisite. Must be a Seventh-day Adventist Church member in good and regular standing. Send cover letter, curriculum vitae, statement of teaching philosophy, portfolio samples and at least three references to Randy Craven, Dean, School of Visual Art/Design, Southern Adventist University, POB 370, Collegedale, TN 37315-0370.

### SOUTHERN ADVENTIST

**UNIVERSITY** seeks dean for School of Business and Management. A doctoral degree required. Will oversee the undergraduate and graduate programs. Priority given to applications received by January 31. The successful candidate must have a strongly expressed commitment to Jesus Christ and be an Adventist church member in good and regular standing. Submit curriculum vitae and cover letter to Pat Coverdale, Director of Human Resources, [plcoverdale@southern.edu](mailto:plcoverdale@southern.edu), or Human Resources, Southern Adventist University, POB 370, Collegedale, TN 37363.

### WALLA WALLA UNIVERSITY

seeks applicants for a full-time faculty position focusing on medical-surgical nursing on the Portland, Ore., campus to begin September. For more information and to apply, please visit: [jobs.wallawalla.edu](http://jobs.wallawalla.edu).

### SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST

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## MISCELLANEOUS

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## TRAVEL/VACATION

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### "A LIFETIME OF LOVE"

**MARRIAGE RETREAT:** Don't miss the fifth annual community marriage retreat weekend, February 8-10, at Dunes Manor Hotel in Ocean City, Md. Joan and Rich Liversidge will be the presenters of the sessions. For more information, email: [MarriageEnrichment@comcast.net](mailto:MarriageEnrichment@comcast.net); or contact: Mark/Peggy Lee, (301) 801-2344; or Jeff/Sandy Hartz, (443) 864-6328.

## OBITUARIES

**ANDERSON, Loretta**, born April 3, 1929, in Hagerstown, Md.; died August 31, 2012, in Hagerstown. She was a member of the Hagerstown church. She is survived by her daughter, Cindy Nutzman; and a sister, Beverly Ronchi.

**ANDERSON, Stirling**, born April 7, 1924, in Thurmont, Md.; died September 19, 2012. He was a member of the Hagerstown church. He retired from Washington Adventist Hospital and moved to Fort Myers Beach, Fla., for 25 years, then moved back to Hagerstown in 2004. He is survived by his daughter, Cindy Nutzman.

**LINCOLN, Darlene**, born in Georgia; died August 26, 2012, in Greensboro, N.C. She was a member of the Hagerstown (Md.) church. She is survived by her son, David Lincoln, and her daughter, Angie Flynn. She was preceded in death by her husband, Eugene Lincoln, and her sons, Mike and John Lincoln.

**REIFSNYDER, Harold A.**, born September 8, 1922, in Reading, Pa.; died June 29, 2012, in Beavercreek, Ohio. He was a member of the Kettering (Ohio) church. He is survived by his wife, Josephine Ann Reifsnnyder; his son, Harold Reifsnnyder; his daughter, Dawn Reifsnnyder Hubbell; his sisters, Dorothy Fellow and Ruth Rothenberger; his sister-in-law, Dorothy Reifsnnyder; his brothers: Ralph, Richard and Edward Reifsnnyder; and his two granddaughters, Nicole and Andrea Hubbell.

**ROYS, June Gleason**, born June 12, 1935, in Warren, Pa.; died September 19, 2012, in Washington, D.C. She was a member of the Sligo church in Takoma Park, Md. She was an elementary school teacher at John Nevins Andrews School in Takoma Park, Md.; Beltsville Adventist School in Beltsville, Md.; and Alexandria church school in Alexandria, Va. Survivors: her husband, Gil Roys of Silver Spring, Md.; her daughter, Robin Roys McWilliams of Silver Spring; her son, Craig Roys of Frederick, Md.; her sisters, Gay Mack of Adelphi, Md., and Dell Bond of Hector, N.Y.; her brother, Gary Gleason of Silver Spring; her granddaughter, Carly McWilliams of Silver Spring; her grandsons: Andy McWilliams of Silver Spring, Ronnie and Ramsy Roys of Frederick, Md.; her nieces: Sylvia Mack of Takoma Park, Md., and Ellen Trimarchi of White Plains, Md.; and her nephew, Bobby Trimarchi of Pomfret, Md. She was preceded in death by her parents, Robert and Inez Gleason, and her aunt, Ethel Young.

# Sunset Calendar

	Jan 4	Jan 11	Jan 18	Jan 25	Feb 1
<b>Baltimore</b>	4:56	5:03	5:10	5:18	5:26
<b>Cincinnati</b>	5:28	5:35	5:42	5:50	5:58
<b>Cleveland</b>	5:10	5:17	5:25	5:33	5:42
<b>Columbus</b>	5:20	5:26	5:34	5:42	5:50
<b>Jersey City</b>	4:42	4:49	4:56	5:05	5:13
<b>Norfolk</b>	5:01	5:08	5:15	5:22	5:30
<b>Parkersburg</b>	5:16	5:23	5:30	5:38	5:46
<b>Philadelphia</b>	4:48	4:55	5:03	5:11	5:19
<b>Pittsburgh</b>	5:06	5:13	5:21	5:29	5:37
<b>Reading</b>	4:50	4:57	5:05	5:13	5:21
<b>Richmond</b>	5:04	5:11	5:18	5:26	5:33
<b>Roanoke</b>	5:15	5:21	5:28	5:36	5:44
<b>Toledo</b>	5:17	5:24	5:32	5:40	5:49
<b>Trenton</b>	4:46	4:53	5:00	5:09	5:17
<b>Wash., D.C.</b>	4:59	5:06	5:13	5:21	5:29

**SAUDER, Earl R.**, born November 4, 1915, in Akron, Ohio, the son of Dr. O.R. and Martha Steiner, and was adopted by Frank and Edith Sauder; died August 12, 2012, in Mt. Vernon, Ohio. Earl was educated in the Seventh-day Adventist school system and was a longtime member of the Mansfield (Ohio) church. He was employed by White-Westinghouse and Ford Motor Company in Mansfield and then by Cooper Energy Services in Mt. Vernon until his retirement in 1978, where he was vice president of sales and engineering. He held three patents and enjoyed farming, building houses and music. He is survived by three daughters: Marcia Arnold of Rockville, Md., Janet Ratz of Mt. Vernon and Kathleen Phillips of Ft. Myers, Fla.; eight grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren; and one great-great grandchild. He was preceded in death by his first wife, Vilna (Farber) Sauder; his second wife, Esther (Kuckenmeister) Sauder; a daughter, Elaine Kazaka; and a son, Frank Sauder.

**SHELLEY, Eleanor J.**, born October 29, 1927, in Barton, Ohio, a daughter of Lewis and Lydia Bowman Henry; died October 31, 2012, at her home in Boardman, Ohio. She was a member of the Evergreen church in Boardman.

She graduated from South High School in Youngstown, Ohio, in 1947. She worked as a stocker for Kmart stores, retiring in 1987. She leaves her husband, John Shelley, whom she married in 1948; a son, John (Nancy) Shelley of Lehigh, Fla.; two daughters, Paula (Fred) Latessa of Boardman and Bonnie (Terry) Johnson of Sandy, Utah; eight grandchildren; and eight great-grandchildren. Besides her parents, Eleanor was preceded in death by her brothers, Joseph and Paul Henry; and her sister, Nancy Chickerella.

**STEWART, Doris H.**, born June 18, 1918, in St. Helena, Calif.; died June 15, 2012, in Dayton, Ohio. She was a member of the Sligo church in Takoma Park, Md., for 40 years and the Spencerville church in Silver Spring, Md., for 12 years. She served as partner to her husband in ministry in California, and as a deaconess, a pianist and Sabbath School teacher in later years. She loved Bible study and "Wordwise" and was greatly blessed by the outstanding worship music and Evensong programs at the Spencerville church. She is survived by her son, John (Carolyn) Stewart of Portland, Ore.; her daughter, Beth (Bill) Van Meter of Spencerville; four granddaughters; and four great-grandchildren.

## Bulletin Board

She was preceded in death by her husband, Elder Arlyn Stewart.

**THOMAS, Carol Ann**, born January 14, 1938, in Syracuse, N.Y.; died October 16, 2012, at her home in Hagerstown, Md. Carol grew up in Syracuse and attended Atlantic Union College (Mass.) and Andrews University (Mich.), where she majored in music and education. She was a member of the Middletown (Md.) church. She and her husband, Kenneth "Dick" Thomas, spear-headed building the new addition on the church in Middletown. Carol always gathered the information and prepared the Sabbath bulletin. She also served the Lord faithfully at her husband's side in the Publishing Ministry of the church in the Atlantic, Columbia and North Pacific unions for 45 years. Carol is known by her family and friends as a wonderful cook and hostess! Her children and grandchildren were the center of her life. She is survived by her husband of 54 years; her sons, Mark Bradley (Dawn) Thomas of Hagerstown, and Kent Russell (Joan) Thomas of Hagerstown; her daughter Cheryl Thomas (Dr. James) Peters of Middletown, Calif.; her grandchildren: Bradley Thomas, Callie and Benjamin Williams, Kenneth Thomas, Kenzie Thomas, Kenneth Caviness, Cara Peters, Chelsea Courtney and

Brandon Peters; her great-grandchildren: Bryton and Dylan Caviness and Andrea and Angelina Courtney; her sisters, Barbara Schmidt of Tustin, Calif., and Nancy Clark of Sandy Creek, N.Y. She was preceded in death by her granddaughter, Cherie Cara-Mae Caviness.

**WILLSON, Sallie**, born July 10, 1947, in Piketon, Ohio, to Helen Emler; died October 18, 2012, at her home in Jasper, Ohio. She was a member of the Peebles (Ohio) Community Bible Fellowship. Sallie was a graduate of Mount Vernon Academy in Mount Vernon, Ohio. On August 18, 1968, Sallie was united in marriage to Keith Edwin Willson. She retired from the Scioto Valley School District in Pike County, Ohio, after 32 years of service. Survivors: her husband; her two daughters, Beth (Ed) Alexander and Cristi Thompson, both of Piketon; grandchildren: Tyler Lambert, Jonathan Thompson, Cameryn Alexander, Jenna Lou Thompson and Harrison Alexander; three brothers: Dan (Debbie) Emler of Florida, Brian (Sheila) Emler of Mt. Vernon, and Tim (Kathy) Emler of Jasper; her mother-in-law, Donna Willson, of Jasper; brother-in-law and sister-in-law, Earl and Cyndie Willson of Milford, Ohio; and her aunt Carol Crissman of Jasper. Sallie was preceded in death by her father-in-law, Robert C. Willson.

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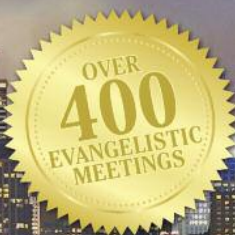
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