

VISITOR

CONNECTING COLUMBIA UNION SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

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Poetic Praise

Visitor Poetry
Contest Winners



Contents



p.10

4 | Newline

6 | Noticias

8 | Underscore

10 | Feature

Poetic Praise

Out of more than 50 entries from around the Columbia Union territory, 11 entrants wooed the hearts of our judging panel with their spiritual reflections and earned a winning spot in the *Visitor's* first poetry contest. This month's cover story features them and their winning poems in four categories.

15 | Newsletters

44 | Bulletin Board



Editor's Corner

iABIDE DVDS AVAILABLE

If you heard that the keynote speakers for the Columbia Union Conference's recent pastor's convention were great, you heard right. Pastors Randy Roberts, DeForest Soaries, Elizabeth Talbot, Henry Wright (pictured),



Roger Hernandez and our own union president, Dave Weigley, were among the presenters. Order DVDs at adventsource.org and search "iAbide."

THINK ABOUT IT

The U.S. Supreme Court will soon determine whether the town of Greece, N.Y., can continue starting its meetings with prayer. Opening government meetings with prayer, even in Congress, is a long-held tradition in our country, but opponents argue that it could be an endorsement of religion. *Visitor* Facebook editor Michelle Bernard wants to know what you think, and how should Seventh-day Adventists respond? Weigh in at facebook.com/columbiaunionvisitor.

WAY TO GO!

Earlier this year, we challenged you to name all the creatures in the 2013 *Visitor Calendar*, themed "Fearfully and Wonderfully Made." The McDowell sisters (pictured): Alicya (8), Asiya (6) and Alivia (2), of Potomac's Hampton



Roads (Va.) church, responded first. We also heard from Elizabeth You, a member of Potomac's Chesapeake (Va.) church.

STAY CONNECTED

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Volume 118 ■ Issue 7

Psalms—As Messy as Life Itself

For many years, reading the Psalms confused me. Psalms of bleak despair were followed by psalms of soaring joy. Psalms of quiet confidence were tucked between psalms of doubt and frustration. In my reading, I had missed the point. The Psalms are mostly personal prayers in the form of poetry, written by a variety of people in wildly fluctuating moods. They give us examples of ordinary people struggling to align what they believe about God with what they actually experience.



The Psalms do not theologize because they are poetry, and poetry's function is not to explain but to offer images that resonate with our lives. Now, as I read them, I ask myself questions: Could I have prayed these prayers? Have I ever felt this particular anguish or outburst of joy? Do I have this same hunger for God?

The Psalms give us a comprehensive record of life with God through individually fashioned accounts of how the spiritual life works. I no longer come to Psalms as a student wanting to acquire knowledge but as a fellow pilgrim wanting to acquire relationship. The first and greatest commandment is to love God with all our heart, soul and mind (see Deut. 6:5 and Matt. 22:37-38). More than any other Bible book, the Psalms reveal what a heartfelt, soul-starved, single-minded relationship with God looks like.

STEPPING STONES

Poetry works its magic subtly. We seldom turn to poetry to learn something. We turn to it because the poets' shaping of words and images gives us pleasure and moves our deepest emotions. And if poetry is successful, we may gain something greater than knowledge—the Psalms have transformed my spiritual vision and understanding of how I relate to God.

Taken together, the 150 psalms are as difficult, disordered and messy as life itself. And oddly, that fact gives me great comfort. The strewing of emotions I once saw as hopeless disarray, I now see as a sign of great spiritual health. From Psalms I have learned that—like the Hebrew poets—I can rightfully bring to God every emotion experienced in my daily activity. This process of "letting God in" is one I need to learn from. Somehow, these poets managed to make God the gravitational center of their lives so that everything related to Him. And now, I use these prayers/poems as stepping stones in the process of recognizing God's true place at the center of my life.

Rob Vandeman (rvandeman@columbiaunion.net) serves as executive secretary of the Columbia Union Conference and loves to read, preach and teach about the Psalms.



Newsline

TAASHI ROWE

UNION PUBLISHES 2012 ANNUAL REPORT

"I will remember 2012 as an historic and transforming year for the Columbia Union," says Dave Weigley, union president. "We opened a brand new hospital in Ohio—the eighth in our Kettering Adventist HealthCare network; completed the first new building in 40 years on the campus of Washington Adventist University; and voted to ordain women called to the gospel ministry."

These are just three of the accomplishments Weigley features in his annual report to the leaders, boards and committees that govern the Columbia Union. The 12-page report, recently published and distributed to the union's executive committee, shares 2012 highlights from the union's officers, departmental

leaders, healthcare networks and university, as well as a financial statement. Read it online at columbiaunion.org/2012annualreport or request a copy by emailing bweigley@columbiaunion.net.
—Celeste Ryan Blyden



DISCIPLESHIP SCHOOLS AID GROWTH

Rubén Ramos, assistant to the Columbia Union Conference president for Multilingual Ministries, reports that the Hispanic School of Discipleship saw recent graduates in five of the union's eight conferences: Allegheny East (38), Allegheny West and Ohio (34), Chesapeake (90) and Pennsylvania (95). Ramos explains that in these programs, lay members complete eight classes to become certified as small group leaders, Bible instructors, Family Ministries leaders, lay evangelists or assistants to the pastor.

He cites this as one reason Hispanic churches saw 1,900 baptisms in 2012 and membership grew to 23,566 unionwide. "This also resulted in tithe increases," he noted. "Allegheny West saw a 25 percent tithe increase among Hispanic churches; Pennsylvania 5.3 percent; and Ohio 5 percent."
—Celeste Ryan Blyden



At last month's Chesapeake Conference Spanish Camp Meeting, 85 graduated from the School of Discipleship.

2,300

The number of Bible study requests the Mountain View Conference received from their mailing to households across their territory. They are now working with the Voice of Prophecy's Discover Bible School ministry to follow up and prepare for a conference-wide evangelism thrust. Read more on p. 23 and make this a matter of prayer.

WAU NAMES NEW PROVOST



At press time, the Washington Adventist University (WAU) Board of Trustees announced their selection of Cheryl Kisunzu, PhD, RN, to fill the role of provost. Kisunzu begins work at the Takoma Park, Md., campus next month. She holds a doctorate in educational leadership from Andrews University (Mich.) and previously served as the executive dean and director of nursing at the Mountain View College in Texas. "Dr. Kisunzu ... will provide the stability, vision and energy that will help WAU meet the current and future needs of our students," says Weymouth Spence, EdD, president. Read more about her in the August issue of *The Gateway*.

“Our sin
so deep
it has
no end
but in front
of Him
there’s
no need
to pretend.”

—Dadrie Thorp is a junior at Blue Mountain Academy in Hamburg, Pa. Read this poem in its entirety on p. 14.

SHOULD PRAYER BE AN OFFICIAL PART OF PUBLIC MEETINGS?



Historically, the separation of government and religion in the public place has been part of the American way of life based upon the Constitution. We have prayers offered at public events, like on Memorial Day, prayers offered at U.S. congressional meetings each day, during national tragedies, etc. But to allow public prayer in town hall meetings, with politicians and public officials either at the municipal, county, state or federal levels, goes a bit too far. The diversity of so many religions in the United States with different philosophies of religion would create unnecessary animosity and add to the already negative attitude to organized religion.—*Carl Sobremisana, Retired Government Worker; Potomac Conference's Takoma Park (Md.) Church*



Prayer in some form is normative to all people of faith; therefore, it's appropriate for a prayer to be offered when people gather to celebrate community events and even official government proceedings. The precedent for prayer at government functions was set in 1789, when Congress first authorized that its deliberations begin with prayer. It is a tradition in both the House and Senate that has been maintained ever since. It is important to remember that when a public prayer is pronounced, it should be culturally sensitive and spiritually inclusive.—*Debra Anderson, Communication Director, Capitol Hill; Allegheny East's Emmanuel-Brinklow Church, Ashton, Md.*



Prayer should be an official part of public (government) meetings if those leading the meetings desire it. The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution says, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof ..." The U.S. Supreme Court's interpretation of this amendment conclude that the act of prayer as part of government meetings does not violate the principles of the First Amendment. So long as citizens are not forced to pray, the act of prayer should not be prohibited.—*Jackson Doggette, Director, Allegheny East Conference Philanthropy and Trust Services*

UNION SELECTS NAD MINISTRY REPS

Columbia Union Conference administrators recently selected five local conference departmental directors to represent the union at North American Division (NAD) departmental advisories. Also called union coordinators, they are:

- Youth/Young Adult Ministries—**Joel Johnson** (pictured)—Allegheny West Conf.
- Health Ministries—**Leah Scott**—Allegheny East Conf.
- ACS/Disaster Response—**Minnie McNeil**—Allegheny East Conf.
- Children's Ministries—**Samantha Young** (pictured)—Chesapeake Conf.
- Women's Ministries—**Shirley Benton**—Allegheny West Conf.

"Whereas the Columbia Union does not have the traditional departmental ministries, our union coordinators interface with NAD personnel and their counterparts from other unions in planning divisionwide initiatives," says Frank Bondurant, the union's vice president for Ministries Development. "Our union coordinators serve a vital role as conduits of communication between the local conferences and the NAD."



Noticias

TAASHI ROWE

EL COORDINADOR DE MINISTERIOS HISPANOS DE ALLEGHENY WEST DICE ADIÓS

Walter Castro, quien pasó los últimos cuatro años construyendo los ministerios hispanos en Allegheny West Conference (AWC), aceptó un llamado en Florida Conference.

Castro nació en Argentina y emigró a los Estados Unidos en 1995. Con el apoyo de su esposa Katty—y luego sus dos hijos Kevin y Keyla—comenzó su ministerio en Potomac Conference, donde sirvió por 12 años como pastor distrital.



Últimamente sirvió en AWC como director de Ministerios multilingües y Plantación de iglesias. Bajo su liderazgo, los miembros plantaron más de 10 iglesias. Además ayudó a duplicar los miembros involucrados en el ministerio hispano y participó en la capacitación de varios nuevos conversos que llegaron a ser líderes del ministerio en las iglesias recién establecidas.

NEW JERSEY PLANEA 130 REUNIONES NY13

La iglesia Bridgeton Spanish de New Jersey Conference recientemente organizó una serie de evangelismo que atrajo a más de 350 personas cada noche. José H. Cortés, su presidente, por dos semanas condujo las reuniones tituladas: “Revelation of Hope,” [Revelación de esperanza] y al



Pastor Eleazar de Gracia bautiza a Laidy Roblero.

final, 45 personas se bautizaron. Las reuniones en Bridgeton son solo una de 130 reuniones evangelísticas que la asociación planeó este año como parte de la iniciativa de la Asociación General NY13 (ver ny13.org) para alcanzar a los que viven en la ciudad de Nueva York y sus alrededores. Para ver una lista de los locales de reuniones, visite revelationofhopeny.org/events.

SE ORDENA A UN PASTOR EN PENNSYLVANIA CONFERENCE

El mes pasado en el campamento ordenaron a John Rengifo, pastor de las iglesias Chambersburg English y Hispanic, y Waynesboro, de Pennsylvania Conference. Él sintió el llamado al ministerio después



de un viaje misionero a Tanzania, donde atestiguó a más de 200 personas que entregaron sus vidas a Cristo a través del bautismo. Dejó su trabajo en el estado de California para ser obrero bíblico. Después de casi tres años como obrero bíblico, asistió a Southern Adventist University (Tenn.). En el 2009 él y su esposa, Denny, concluyeron su

maestría en divinidad. Rengifo desea ver al pueblo de Dios maduro en Cristo emocional y espiritualmente y convertirse en testigos activos para Él.

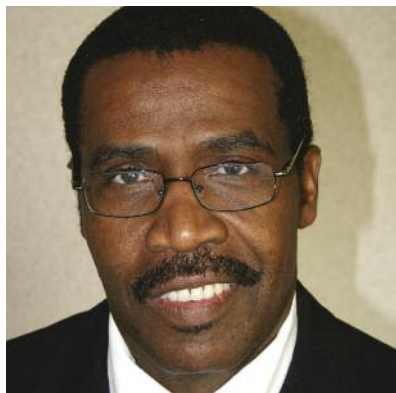
LAS ESCUELAS DE DISCIPULADO AYUDAN AL CRECIMIENTO

Rubén Ramos, asistente del presidente de los ministerios multilingües de Columbia Union Conference, informa que la Hispanic School of Discipleship [Escuela hispana de discipulado] tuvo recién graduados en cinco de las ocho conferencias: Allegheny East (38), Allegheny West y Ohio (34), Chesapeake (90) y Pennsylvania (95). Ramos explica que en estos programas, los laicos completan ocho clases para certificarse como líderes de grupos pequeños, instructores bíblicos, líderes de ministerios de familia, evangelistas laicos, o asistentes de pastor. Él dice que esta es una de las razones por las cuales las iglesias hispanas tuvieron 1,900 bautismos en el 2012 y la feligresía creció a 23,566 a nivel de unión. “Esto ocasionó aumento en los diezmos,” adició. “Allegheny West tuvo un 25 por ciento de aumento en diezmos entre las iglesias hispanas; Pennsylvania 5.3 por ciento; y Ohio 5 por ciento.”—*Celeste Ryan Blyden*



Alberto Sánchez se gradúa de la School of Discipleship [Escuela de discipulado] de Pennsylvania Conference con un certificado en Ministerio de familia.

¿DEBIERA SER LA ORACIÓN UN COMPONENTE OFICIAL DE LAS REUNIONES PÚBLICAS?



Recientemente me pidieron tener una oración de apertura en la reunión del ayuntamiento para un municipio local del condado. Me pareció muy apropiado. Considero que la gente se confunde con el significado de separación de iglesia y estado. Nuestros antepasados solo querían evitar que las iglesias tuvieran poderes gubernamentales, pero no significaba que debíamos eliminar a Dios de toda la vida pública.
—Anibal L. Hansell, pastor de la iglesia Cornerstone de Chesapeake Conference, en Exmore, Va., y de las iglesias Parksley Spanish en Parksley, Va., y Pocomoke (Md.)



Sirvo a un Ser mayor, y no me gusta tener doble personalidad. Si profeso creer en Dios, ¿por qué debo orarle solamente en la iglesia? Si usted lee los evangelios, verá que incluso Jesús no temía hablar de su Padre en los cielos, sin importar con quién hablaba. Creo que una de las preocupaciones es que cuando se está en público, se puede ofender a alguien de una fe diferente, pero creo que se puede respetar la fe de otros y aun servir a Dios.—Edwin Danny Mendoza, pastor de las iglesias Wilkesbarre Hispanic y Freely Hispanic de Pennsylvania Conference



Entiendo que las personas con diferentes religiones, o incluso aquellos que son agnósticos pueden ofenderse si se orase en reuniones gubernamentales, pero creo que si oramos en la iglesia, entonces debemos orar en público. No somos sabios por nuestros propios méritos y necesitamos que Él ilumine nuestras mentes. Como cristianos, Dios siempre debe dirigir nuestras decisiones y Él nos dirige a hacer lo correcto y lo correcto es orar.
—José Briones, miembro de la iglesia Takoma Spanish I, en Takoma Park, Md, de Potomac Conference



ARTICULO ESPECIAL DE VISITOR: Alabanza poética

Este mes la revista Visitor destaca 11 de 50 poemas enviados por nuestros lectores. He aquí uno de ellos en español:

MENCIÓN HONORÍFICA Madre

Madre solo hay una, bella como ninguna.
Es un regalo heredado, por nuestro Padre amado
al entregar en tus bellas manos,
tan dedicadas a mis cuidados.
Tu amor es incondicional,
solo Dios te lo pudo dar.

Entre lirios y jazmines
eres la rosa más bella.
De mi jardín ese aroma
inconfundible ya reluciente,

—Mercedes Gómez, miembro del grupo Grasonville Spanish (Md.) en Allegheny East Conference

tu rocío me conforta cada día.
Tu amor y ternura me da
fuerzas cada día.

Dios te bendiga y te guarde
entre tristezas, dolores y llantos.
Dios te abrigue con su manto.
Siempre estas orando y a tus hijos esperando.
Para Dios y para mí eres
el pétalo más delicado de las flores.
Eres la mujer más importante, más valiosa,
como una joya preciosa.
Por eso te describo así:

Maravillosa Amorosa Dedicada Respetuosa Especial

How Safe are We? Officials Evaluate Security at Adventist Organizations

In the wake of the December 14, 2012, “Newtown Massacre” that left 26 students and teachers dead at Connecticut’s Sandy Hook Elementary School, government officials fielded what has become an all-too-common question these days: Are our schools safe?

They weren’t the only ones. Seventh-day Adventist Church members began asking questions about our schools, churches, conference offices, hospitals and other ministries:

ARE WE SAFE?

Ten years ago, Erwin Mack, a member of Potomac Conference’s Sligo church in Takoma Park, Md., started convening monthly meetings that he called the Adventist Community Action Council (ACAC). With support from the Columbia Union Conference, he invited officials from the community, county and state to breakfast meetings with the leaders of a dozen or so Adventist entities in and around Takoma Park. Over fruit and muffins in the boardroom at Washington Adventist Hospital (WAH), they got acquainted, discussed community issues, coordinated opportunities for service and talked about the church’s past, present and potential impact. After a meeting last fall, where safety and security questions arose, Mack scheduled city and county police to meet with the group on December 14, 2012.

Get More: To find tips, videos and resources, visit adventistrisk.org and click on Prevention.



Erwin Mack, chair of the Adventist Community Action Council, meets with Walter Hawkins, director of security, and James Stoddard, director of safety and emergency preparedness, at Washington Adventist Hospital.

“At 8:30 a.m., I started the meeting with the chief of police of Takoma Park; district commanders in Prince George’s County, Maryland; and district commanders in Silver Spring, Md. Walter Hawkins, director of security for WAH, joined us that day as well. The plan was just an ordinary thing, to say we’ve had several personnel changes in our Adventist institutions as well as in the police department of the three districts that surround us, and [I thought] it would be a good thing to get together to discuss if a problem arises, who do you contact and how do you handle it?” he recalls. “We had no clue that at that very moment, Newtown was happening.”

Mack took the Newtown tragedy as a call to action and set out to make sure the Adventist organizations in his hometown and

all the people inside were secure and prepared in the case of a life-threatening event. He also asked Hawkins to develop a strategy and assess ACAC-member organizations for safety.

“He and a group of local security directors adapted a checklist from Adventist Risk Management that we’ve asked each principal to comply with, and then they go out to the schools (and soon churches) and, literally and physically, inspect them for areas where there could be a weak spot in door safety, window safety, guest passes,” said Mack. “I can’t say enough about the work they’ve done to secure maximum safety.”

When asked how effective these measures have been in preventing breaches of security so far, Mack said, “We really hope never to have

to answer that question. Our responsibility is to be as safe as we're able because, first of all, we're truly concerned about safety, and second of all, we have a legal responsibility."

Security leaders at the Columbia Union's 13 hospitals are equally concerned about the safety of patients, physicians, employees and visitors. Hawkins and his team are responsible for security at WAH, a 252-bed acute care facility, which sits on 13 acres and shares a campus with Washington Adventist University and Sligo church. "We have protocols in place to effectively manage security situations that could arise," he shared. "Washington Adventist Hospital and other facilities within the Adventist HealthCare system also participate in countywide and regionwide disaster drills each year, as well as additional smaller-scale drills to practice and refine our plans. In any emergency situation, we work very closely with police to quickly take the appropriate measures."

COULD IT HAPPEN TO US?

The 2,971 members of Sligo church, where Mack is head elder, meet in a massive, stoned wall building that some liken to a stadium. Securing such a large organization and audience is not simple. For that reason, Don McFarlane, administrative pastor, says church leaders opted to have "a number of police officers" on duty during worship hours. "It not only provides security, but it provides a *sense* of security for our members. When they look back and notice a policeman is there, I think they're feeling more at peace with themselves and the church," he proffered. "... I think we should pull out all the stops so people feel comfortable and secure."

At some churches, Sligo included, the deacons guard the doors during offering and prayer time. McFarlane, however, is not sure this provision is enough. "Deacons keep an eye on the flow of people around the building, escort people to where they want to go, provide information and offer help," he said. "Security relates more to safety."

About 20 minutes north in Silver Spring, Md., lies the Adventist world headquarters, a 300,000 square-foot facility that houses 800 employees and a sizable security force. They have a lot of ground to cover and a lot of people to protect, but James Vines, director of security, believes they can meet any challenge. "In light of all the events that have occurred worldwide, we take every effort to ensure that our employees and visitors are as safe as possible," he said. To that end, Vines says his security officers complete "intense training" with local police and some are certified by the state and carry weapons.

Not everyone takes the presence of armed officers seriously, and many do not think a security breach could happen because we are under God's protection. "The idea that nothing can happen in Adventist organizations is concerning," Vines added. "History has shown that things can happen any place, anytime. ... Yes, we are in the church, but I firmly believe that the Lord wants us to responsibly protect ourselves because of the nature of today's world."

WHAT SHOULD WE DO TO PREVENT TRAGEDY?

This is one of the questions Dale Hodges considers in his role as president of the Professional Adventists for Safety and Security (PASS), a fledgling association of Adventist security leaders who share a desire to prevent tragedy and take the measures necessary to keep our organizations safe. After retiring from law enforcement, Hodges went to work as director of Campus Safety for Andrews University (Mich.) and sought to connect with his peers at other church institutions through annual meetings, an email listserv and creating an association. The 2-year-old PASS (adventistsecurity.gcnetadventist.org) now includes security personnel at a number of schools and organizations, as well as the Review and Herald Publishing Association in Hagerstown, Md.; the Adventist

7 Steps to Safety

- 1 Self-inspect your property to identify vulnerable points of access.
- 2 Make sure your property has good perimeter security lighting at night.
- 3 Install fencing at school yards, playgrounds and parking lot areas to clearly define your perimeters and keep children from venturing off your property.
- 4 Have visitors enter through a secure door and check in at the office.
- 5 Have deacons patrol the church to identify strangers or suspicious objects.
- 6 Develop an emergency response plan.
- 7 Practice safety emergency drills, including one Sabbath each year.

—Arthur Blinci, VP/Chief Risk Management Officer, Adventist Risk Management

world headquarters; and WAU.

Their goal, he says, is to raise their level of professionalism, standardize security services among Adventist organizations, mitigate the safety issues that exist and help increase the safety of our populations.



Poetic Praise

Out of more than 50 entries from around the Columbia union territory, 11 entrants wooed the hearts of our judging panel with their spiritual reflections and earned a winning spot in our first poetry contest. This month's cover story features them and their winning poems in four categories (including one in Spanish on p. 17).

Category: Age 18+

First-place:

I Want to be a Window

I don't want my beliefs to sit in a church pew,
I want them to live and breathe in everything I do,
I don't want to take for granted what I'm given,
I want to be grateful and forgiven,
I don't want to get caught up in everything,
just going through the motions feeling nothing,
I don't want to be right or righteous,
I want to be a window where others can see Jesus,
I don't want to be a perfect pretender,
I want to be broken into complete surrender,
I don't want to be safe,
I want to be saved.

—Donice Palmer, who attends Ohio Conference's Centerville church, started writing poems in grade school, but turned to spiritual themes 11 years ago when she "opened her heart and life to God."





Honorable Mention:
The Cross and the Cradle

The Cross and the Cradle
So different are they
In purpose and shape
Not the same in any way

The Cross—to torment and pain
The Cradle—to comfort and sustain
The Cross—to expose and shame
The Cradle—to shelter and frame

Made from a carpenter's wood
He carried, and shaped and nailed
One to destroy the strong
And one to protect the frail

We see the Cross and the Cradle
The God-Man born to die
Rocked in Mary's Cradle
Crucified our life to buy

The Cross and the Cradle
Two wonders to behold
The everlasting gospel
The Good News to be told

In that Cradle rocks
The Savior of mankind
The Cross and the Cradle
There, God's Son you'll find

The Cross and the Cradle
So different in every way
But the world was filled with joy
On that Cross-centered Christmas Day!

—When Tom Hughes isn't busy pastoring Ohio Conference's Newark church, or speaking at Christian motorcycle rallies, he enjoys penning poems and music, the latter since age 16. "I try to write something every month about my life, family, faith, motorcycling, etc.," he says.



Honorable Mention:
Welcome Home

As I sit and reminisce
Pondering things I may have missed
Early in life not knowing that He
Had given His life to set me free
The Word made flesh my only hope
I give you life, these words He spoke
A tugging deep within my heart
Confirmed that I was set apart

To listen to His still small voice
As He guides me through a narrow course
Designed to bring me back within
That space I lost because of sin
All charges against me no longer stand
My record is clean, just look at His hands
No more failures or chance of defeat
The great work that He started is now complete
In peace I will meet Him face to face
Directed by mercy and covered with grace
My mind, body, soul can rest
Assured that I have passed my test
Well done, well done! Welcome home!
Join God's people around His throne
"You see, my child, this I knew
One day this spot would be filled by you"

—Cheryl L. Brookshire, from Allegheny West Conference's Hillcrest church in Dayton, Ohio, says this title "was motivated by Jesus and His great work of redemption." Eight years ago, a friend encouraged her to pursue poetry.



Honorable Mention:

Garbage

We rode along in a beat up truck.
He a dad.
I a son.
Just taking the garbage to the road.
His thoughts,
the past,
what might have been.
Mine,
the road,
unpaved, rutted, we bounced.
His voice,
'I wish
I could have done better.'
My voice,
'You did
the best you could.'
We dumped our garbage.

Daniel Kittle, principal at Mount Vernon Academy in Mount Vernon, Ohio, has been creative with verse since boyhood and drew great inspiration from the late poet E.E. Cummings. He hopes this title might serve as 'a reflective moment to look at relationships and [think] about our fallibility.'

Category: Age 11-17

First-place:

The Truth

You speak of religion
as if it were an object
to set up
and look at

You speak of religion
as if it were a thing
to measure between
the good and the bad

You speak of religion
as if it were a duty
and not as if it were
a desire

You speak of religion
as something
you must practice
or you will die

I speak of religion
as love
and need
and hope
and truth
and might
and glory
and God

Yet you miss the point

Jessica Coleman will be a freshman at Highland View Academy in Hagerstown, Md. A poet since age 4, she says this title is about religious people who lack a personal relationship with God. 'It made me think how they never seem to look at it in a deeper way,' she says.





GET MORE

To enjoy more creative verse by Columbia Union members, visit columbiaunion.org/poetrycontest.

Honorable Mention:

Christ Jesus

Christ died for us to live another life
He loved us so much that He gave His life
Resurrected He was after the third day
Invested His time and love to help us
Sacrificing His form and immortality for us
Trembling over the fact that we sin and reject Him

Jesus came here for us and us alone
Eternity we are now allowed to spend with Him
Safe in His arms forever
Unable to forget about us
So committed to helping us because of His love

—Jason Hess, from Chesapeake Conference's Spencerville church in Silver Spring, Md., says a childhood of learning about Jesus helped him write this alliteration. "[God] inspired me because I used words that I don't normally use," he says. "I thank Him for that."

Honorable Mention:

An Artful Sunrise

The sky has broken
Colors are everywhere
Splashes of pink, purple and blue
So delicate, so artful
The Master Painter is at work again
Swiftly
It's a wonderful light show that I see
Through it all
I will know that
My loving, caring Lord
Watches over even me
And knows how I feel and my deepest thoughts
When it begins to get dark
And the show is fading
I can remember His promise
That soon He is returning
And I will go home to be with Him

—Cameron Mayer, who's entering the eighth-grade at Spencerville Adventist Academy (SAA) in Spencerville, Md., used to find poetry boring and difficult to write. "This year I was shown by my teacher, Mrs. [Sharon] Williams, how to express myself through words on paper. Now I love poetry!" she says.



Notes



Honorable Mention:

God's Grace

A small light that we can never see
 that keeps us bound and says to darkness flee.
 This act of getting us back
 when we are so clearly bent off track.
 A glint of hope we never see.
 The urge to just be.
 We think we cannot resist
 but we truly do need His assist.
 Our sin so deep it has no end
 but in front of Him there's no need to pretend.
 He has us covered, encased and loved,
 He's always watching from below and above.
 It's the only thing that keeps us from falling apart.
 He wants us to know that He cares,
 that underneath all these fears
 we have a chance to rewrite the years
 the horrors of the falls
 the ignorance of the unmistakable calls.
 The love that pours from a nonexistent cup.
 Sealed with blood was the offering He sent up
 the right to ever forgive and seal,
 the One whose love no darkness may steal.
 This gift He gives is never wrapped,
 but once uncapped
 evil is trapped,
 through its twisting vines
 His love unwinds.
 Then through that perhaps
 we'll see
 His grace is always here
 for you,
 and for me.

Category: Poetweet

First-place:

Squandered

Out of the first dark stepped You
 beaming like brushed gold
 I spent my share of You
 to buy a piece of dark
 to wrap me in & spare my eyes
 the pain of perfect Light

—Joy Coleman, who attends Chesapeake Conference's Bell Branch church in Gambrills, Md., comes from a family of language lovers. "I started to experiment seriously with writing styles when I was 13 and, by the time I was 14, I knew that my real love was poetry," she says.



—Dadrie Thorp, a junior at Blue Mountain Academy in Hamburg, Pa., who already enjoyed writing, says an English assignment last year sparked her interest in poetry. She wrote this poem to remind others that "God will always be there for you with His grace."



MAGIC Etch A Sketch

Category: Age 6-10

First-place:

God Sends the Spring

Plants will grow, nature will show its beauty to the Earth.
 Blossoms bloom, making room for a new season to start.
 It is warm, butterflies in a swarm.
 Birds sing in spring, and fly as royal as a king.
 Flowers, fruit, it is great, spring is something not to hate.
 In the care of spring so warm, you are not subject to harm.
 Animals and baby birds, you cannot describe in words.
 New life and holidays, springtime is a super-fun maze.

—Bethany Krause, who's entering second grade at SAA, says being in nature inspired her to start writing poems last year. For this title, she says, "I started to think about cherry blossoms, all the holidays that happen in spring and how nice it is—everything growing."



Seashore Members and Richmond Students Team Up

Lois Matthews, 74, a member of Allegheny East Conference's Boardwalk group in Atlantic City, N.J., seems right at home in the middle of some 40 students and staff from Richmond Academy (RA) in Richmond, Va. It's seven months after Superstorm Sandy hit the area, and they are organizing boxes in the building next door to the Seashore church in Pleasantville. "We've been working behind the scenes for six months to get our students here," shares Malcom "Mick" Hutchinson, RA principal. "We just came to help."

And that help is welcome. "People don't realize that we still need help," says Robert Smith, pastor of the Seashore, Boardwalk and Newtonville churches.



Ethelene Sylvester, community services leader for the Seashore church, and Lois Matthews reluctantly pause for a photo after a morning of moving boxes.

RA students are the third wave of Seventh-day Adventist students to come to New Jersey to help with post-Sandy cleanup efforts. Over four days, RA students worked side by side with local church members to organize and distribute books, clean up storm refuse and travel to homes in the community to clean, make repairs and paint.

Smith, who has been coordinating the conference's cleanup and outreach in the Atlantic City area, explains that what is needed now is long-term recovery help—he wants to be ready to respond when the next storm hits. In the parking lot of the church is a trailer filled with emergency food and supplies. The next step is to finish renovation on the building next door to create a disaster response warehouse.



Robert Smith, who pastors three churches, is focused on long-term recovery.

Around lunchtime, Aya Pagunasan, 12, an RA seventh-grader, says, "It's tiring but I love working with people. I hope I'll get to go on another mission trip."

Pagunasan's response to working in New Jersey is one that Smith has heard before. "Young people want to do volunteer work. It's good for them to have this [mission] experience," he says.

And, this hometown mission experience is one that Matthews feels compelled to participate in, even in her golden years. "Even if I can't do as much as the kids, I'll do my best. This is where I want to be."



In addition to doing cleanup, Richmond Academy students led worship services at the Seashore church.

Metropolitan Members Sow Love at Local School

Brenda Billings and Marquis Johns, pastors at the Metropolitan church in Hyattsville, Md., are kneeling in front of a garden box with second-graders at a local public elementary school. All are listening closely as Baldwin Williams, a Metropolitan member, shows them



how to plant peppers, collard greens and strawberries. The garden is an answer to prayer for Denise Dunn, principal. “Some 90 percent of our students get free or reduced lunch,” she says. “I wanted to have a school garden so we can ... give them access to food over the summer months when school is not in session.”

Over the past few months, Metropolitan members have circled the school and prayed; held a clothing drive; invited Ridgecrest parents to make use of the church’s food pantry and started English-language classes. Dunn remembers how excited the parents were when they received the clothes. “We were not used to receiving new clothes, and they were so beautifully packed up with loving kindness,” she said.

Billings, Metropolitan’s senior pastor, is thrilled that the Ridgecrest community can feel Christ’s love through them. “This feels better than traditional evangelism, as we are really touching the community, and that is what Jesus would have us do,” she says.

Baldwin Williams Sr. and pastors Brenda Billings and Marquis Johns help students break ground on one of eight new garden boxes.

Angaza-Sharon Members Share Health Message

After noticing an increase in lifestyle diseases, such as diabetes and hypertension, in their fellow East Africans, members of the Angaza-Sharon church Health Ministries team in Newark, Del., vowed they would help improve the health of the community. They offered members and community members health screenings and led seminars on how to make healthier choices. The team also went one step further and had children and teenagers present some of the information to the congregation (right).

“We have had members change their eating habits after being screened and finding out their blood sugar and blood pressures and weights were very high. Upon taking up the change, they now possess healthy numbers,” says Felishia Opiyo, PhD, the church’s Health Ministries director. “Other members of the congregation have reported a reform on food choices they make.”

Many of the Angaza-Sharon Health ministry team members, which include doctors, nurses, a physiotherapist and nutritionists, are multilingual, making it easier for them to engage with their community. They ensure that the health spotlights, demonstrations, screenings and even health-related questionnaires are all done in English

and their native language, removing the barrier of communication. The other advantage is that the health team members have suggested healthy foods similar in taste and nutrition to the ones they are used to at home.

Although the Angaza-Sharon Health Ministries team has grown and is making an impact both at the family and community levels, they know they still have a great task ahead.—*Susan Kamau*



Ephesus Church Initiates Disabilities Ministries Emphasis

Ephesus church leaders Donald L. Burden, senior pastor, and Sharon L. Bowen, director of Disabilities Ministries, decided to blaze a trail in the Allegheny West Conference as advocates for persons with disabilities. In fact, the Columbus, Ohio, congregation is striving to become a state-of-the-art house of worship that will accommodate and include persons with disabilities.

Ephesus recently got their mission underway by hosting the church's first Disabilities Awareness

Sabbath, inviting Anil Lewis (pictured above), director of strategic communications for the National Federation of the Blind, as their featured speaker.

Burden presented him an Outstanding Leadership Award from the Allegheny West Conference. Pastor Burden commented that this special Sabbath was a first for Ephesus, adding, "It truly was a wakeup call that we all should be doing more and better in the area of disability and inclusion. We here at Ephesus will certainly do our best to make sure that any member or guest at Ephesus will be accommodated and made to feel a part of our church family."



Sabbath, inviting Anil Lewis (pictured above), director of strategic communications for the National Federation of the Blind, as their featured speaker.

Bowen reports that Lewis captivated the congregation with his words of inspiration and enlightenment and admonished people not to feel sorry for persons with disabilities. He instructed listeners to include the disabled, to give parity versus pity and not to discriminate against them because of a disability. "Recognize the ability, not the disability," he said.

Church members were prepared with programs in Braille, persons to sign the service, reserved seating, as well as audio-visual special effects. "April is Disability Awareness Month, so what a perfect time to launch our program," explained Pastor Burden. "This is just the beginning."

Bowen added, "The Ephesus church highlighted Disabilities Ministries Day to raise awareness and emphasis on family matters and the importance of inclusion." During the service, she presented Lewis with a proclamation from the Ohio Civil Rights Commission for his outstanding leadership in the area of civil rights and advocacy for persons with disabilities. And, Pastor



Sharon Bowen, Ephesus' Disabilities Ministries leader, and Pastor Donald Burden were pleased to have Anil Lewis (center), from the National Federation of the Blind, to help members better understand how to treat people with disabilities.



Catherine Burks, from the Cincinnati Shiloh church, signs the day's message for those with hearing challenges.

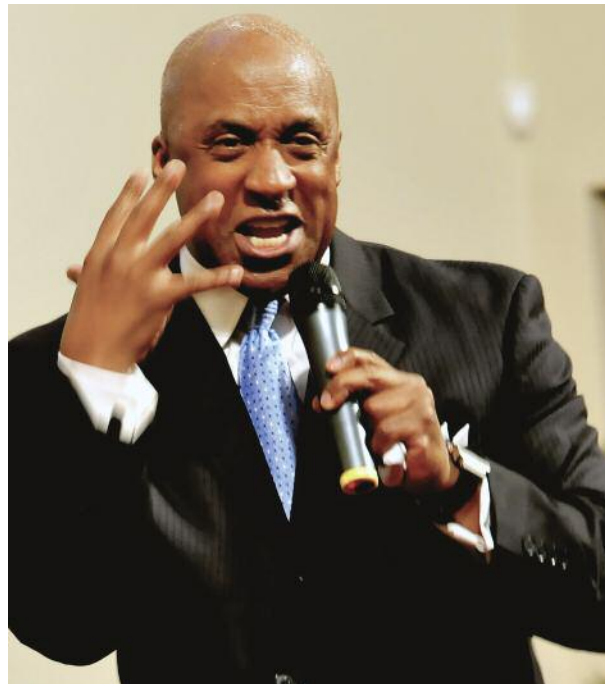
PHOTOS BY STEPHANIE HUNT

Conference Bids Farewell to Two Leaders

Adventist work is often referred to as a movement. There are times when that is even truer—when faithful workers leave our vineyard. The Allegheny West Conference (AWC) is experiencing such a movement as leaders and members say “fare thee well” to two faithful laborers: Walter Castro and Rupert Bushner, DMin.

Castro (below), born in Argentina, immigrated to the United States in 1995. With support from his wife, Katty—and more recently his two children, Kevin and Keyla—he started his ministry with the Potomac Conference, where he served for 12 years as a district pastor.

Castro spent the past four years in the AWC as the Multilingual Ministries and church planting director. Under his leadership, members planted more than 10 churches. He also helped double the number of members involved in the Hispanic ministry, and helped train several new members who became ministry leaders at the newly established churches. Castro is currently a Doctor of Ministry candidate at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University (Mich.). He recently received a call from the Florida Conference to serve as the multicultural director for their Lay Ministry department.



Bushner (above) is a “son” of Allegheny West who grew up in the Bethel church located in Akron, Ohio. He later earned a Doctor of Ministry from the United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio.

Bushner faithfully served in the AWC for many years as a pastor in West Virginia and Ohio, then as the conference Youth Ministries director before accepting a call to Oakwood University (Ala.) to serve as chaplain. He returned to the AWC to serve for three years as the church growth specialist, during which time he conducted many evangelistic meetings and baptized many new believers. Earlier this year, Bushner accepted a call to the South Central Conference, where he now pastors the Mt. Calvary church in Huntsville, Ala.

“Walter has been a faithful member of the Allegheny West Conference ministry and will be greatly missed,” says William T. Cox, conference president. “We will also miss Dr. Bushner as he and JoAnn minister in another part of God’s vineyard.”

Conference administrators are currently searching for a single individual who will direct their efforts in both Multicultural Ministries and church growth.

School Body Portrays Noah's Flood for Community

It took more than 100 Blue Mountain Academy (BMA) staff, students and school friends the entire school year to write and prepare for its recent two-night performance of "Noah's Flood," a fully staged production of the biblical story. Their hard work paid off when about 900 people from area Seventh-day Adventist churches and the community gathered in the M.W. Schultz Auditorium to enjoy the performances.

The free, three-act show involved performers from BMA's many musical groups and gymnastics team, and incorporated musical arrangements of various Romantic composers (e.g. Beethoven, Dvorak, Holst) along with personal compositions and lyrics by Maestro Lawrence Galera, BMA's music chair. Others credited with helping create the production are Karyl Kramer, English teacher, who wrote the stage dialogue; Coach Alex Balanos, who choreographed the gymnastics scenes; Christy Link, a local Adventist who made the costumes; and Eric



Ariel Aires members team up to be "giants in the land."



During "Noah's Flood," sophomore Shayla Wilson and junior Heidi Ramirez portray animals about to enter the ark.

Engen, BMA's music director who composed additional music. The 12 main roles of the cast included Noah, played by senior Ivan Ramirez; naysayers played by juniors Audrey Jackson and Michael Wong; Jesus, played by senior Michael Marr; and the voice of God, provided by senior Stephen Acosta.

Galera and Chaplain Shawnessy Cargile, the visionaries behind "Noah's Flood," say they imagined the initial stages of the production last summer. They then spent long hours collaborating with BMA colleagues through musical and dramatic development, then started rehearsals with the choir, symphony orchestra and main cast in early January.

"I really appreciated all the time and hard work everyone put in to making 'Noah' happen," commented Acosta. Senior Amy Beisiegel, who played the role of Jerusha, Noah's wife, added, "Being a part of something so much bigger than all of us was an amazing experience."

Galera credits experiences he gained during college and at previous jobs, where he helped put on similar performances, for inspiring him to help write and direct this show. "I believe the Lord enriches us with experiences to do His will," he says. "Coming back into the work setting, I have always wanted to write and produce a dramatic musical work; and what better way to use your dreams and goals but for the ministry of the Lord. Noah was not a story of devastation, but of salvation; a reminder that God will save humanity from the destruction of sin and of Jesus' soon return."



Sylvan singers form a choir of angels.

Graduating Seniors Leave Lasting Impression

Blue Mountain Academy proudly announced the graduation of nearly 40 seniors from its Class of 2013 during recent commencement services, a class that school leaders say exemplified the school's mission to "lead students into lives of service for God." Staff members say they often found these graduating seniors participating in selfless acts of service—conducting benefit concerts for children in need—or raising awareness for local causes.

"By offering their time to feed the homeless on Sabbath mornings, teach [physical education] twice a week at the local elementary school, run basketball clinics for Special Olympics participants and mentor freshmen at BMA, a core group of the class of 2013 have left an indelible mark on the mission of our school and those students they leave behind," says Chaplain Shawnessey Cargile.

The Class of 2013 also left an indelible mark on BMA through their academics. Of the 38 seniors graduating, 12 received the advanced studies diploma, which is only bestowed upon those that have met stringent criteria. "In order for a student to receive the advanced placement diploma, they must complete a minimum of 250 credit hours and maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.67," explains Diana Engen, registrar. "In addition to the students that received the advanced studies diploma, many students from the Class of 2013 received scholarships



Hannah Ashburn and Anna Bugbee prepare for their final procession through BMA's gymnasium.

from 11 different colleges and universities." In all, the seniors received more than \$20,000 in merit scholarships from BMA based on their 2012 ITED tests.

BMA also left a positive mark on the Class of 2013. "I will always remember the good times and friends I had there. Graduation was awesome! I feel privileged to be a part of BMA's Class of 2013," shared Solomon Lesko.

Jiayu Chen, a one-year senior from China, commented, "I had a lot of fun and made many friends here. I learned a lot about Seventh-day Adventists and different people. I'm really happy to say that I don't regret coming here."

Passing on congratulations to the successful students from the staff, parents and alumni, David Morgan, principal, told them, "It will be with interest, prayers and encouragement that we watch as you search for your calling in life and pursue that calling with reckless abandon." He added, "May you keep these words in your heart: 'But now, this is what the Lord says—He who created you, O Jacob, He who formed you, O Israel: 'Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze'" (Isa. 43:1-2, NIV).



Abigail Opuku, Micala Howson and Ivy Martinez celebrate the completion of their high school careers.

Register Now

Want your child to have the opportunity to be part of something big? Do you want them to have the opportunity to discover God's calling in their lives? Register now for the upcoming 2013-14 school year by calling (484) 662-7000. Ask for the recruiter's office.

THE CHALLENGE

chesapeake conference newsletter

JULY 2013

Rest—A Blessing From God

Rest is one of the essential ingredients for life and health. Summer provides a good opportunity to consider the four S's of rest:

Sleep—Sleep deprivation can cause many problems with our mental and physical health. One of the keys to sleeping well is to have plenty of activity through work and exercise during the day so that our bodies are ready for the benefits of sleep.

Social—In order to have peace and rest in our social relationships, we need to practice the habit of affirming and encouraging others. Those around us will surely appreciate our positive focus, and it serves to benefit our mental health as well. We can also rest better when we let go of the events and people over which we have no control.

Salvation—“You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You” (Is. 26:3, NKJV). We can enjoy spiritual rest when we stay focused on all of the wonderful provisions God makes for our lives. We have confidence that God is able to care for us now and a certain hope for the future. Rest in Christ!

Sabbath—Each week the seventh-day Sabbath ties together all of the other S's. We enjoy physical rest as we cease our labors. We have more time to cultivate the social networks of family and friends. We are reminded of and celebrate the salvation that God provides. Added to this is the joy of joining together with other believers for worship of a holy God. The Sabbath is a counterbalance to all the stresses and strains of life.

Do you need a good rest? Enjoy each aspect of this blessing from God.



Rick Remmers
President

Education Superintendent Retires

Carole Smith, EdD, the Chesapeake Conference superintendent of schools since 1998, retired last month after 41 years of teaching and administrative work. Smith has taught at the elementary, secondary

and tertiary levels. A Maryland native, she was pleased to return to her home conference in 1993 to serve as associate superintendent and Children's Ministries director.

“We appreciate the 20 years that Carole has given to Chesapeake,” says Rick Remmers, conference president. “Many good things have happened during her tenure, and we value her contributions to our education program.”

A curriculum specialist, Smith has kept educators on the forefront of new materials and methods and participated in the selection of curriculum used throughout the Columbia Union.

“Carole will be missed,” says Jacqueline Messenger, Smith's former associate who now succeeds her as superintendent. “She is a strong, dedicated leader—always willing to mentor, guide and pray with our teachers and principals.”

Smith says, “As I reflect on God's blessings to me, I am amazed and humbled. It has been a privilege and pleasure to serve as an administrator in Chesapeake, and I am so grateful to Him.”

Smith will work on some special projects for the conference, and looks forward to pursuing hobbies and spending time with her family.



Ham Canosa, Columbia Union vice president for Education, presents Carole Smith with an award for outstanding service.

Glen Burnie ACS Center Gets a Facelift

Recently about 100 volunteers, including realtors, builders and contractors, spent the day sprucing up the Adventist Community Services center operated by the Glen Burnie (Md.) church. The volunteers came as

part of the annual nationwide Keller Williams Realty RED (Renew, Energize and Donate) Day initiative dedicated to improving the community.

Star Hood, a center volunteer and realtor for the Keller Williams Crofton/Ft. Meade agency, nominated the center as a project site. “Keller Williams is like a family,” says Hood. “We come together and we give back to the community.”

Volunteers organized donations of \$15,000 to \$20,000 in building materials and supplies, including 2,000 square feet of flooring donated by the local Home Depot. Volunteers painted the center and outbuildings; installed the flooring, kitchen countertops and doors; and cleared then landscaped an adjacent lot.

Carolyn Goss, church community services director, estimates that about 400 people come through the center each month. The center’s 45 regular volunteers serve a hot meal to 150 local residents each Tuesday and distribute groceries and clothing.

“The RED Day was an answer to our prayers,” said Diego Boquer, church pastor. “To God be the glory.”



PHOTO BY SAMANTHA YOUNG

Diego Boquer (center), Glen Burnie pastor, takes a break with volunteers. Star Hood (far right) and Wendy Hess (second from right) organized the project.

Pathfinders Explore “God’s Incredible Nature” at Fair

Recently Chesapeake Conference Pathfinder clubs set up camp at the Mount Aetna Camp and Retreat Center in Hagerstown, Md., for a weekend of training and outdoor fun.

Under the theme “God’s Incredible Nature,” educator Steve Gatz used a tortoise and other live animals to illustrate spiritual lessons.

“When the reptile instructor placed the serpent on the cross and expressed the Living Word of God, it left a deep impression upon the hearts of Patuxent



The Atholton Faithblazers club of Columbia, Md., march in a parade during the Pathfinder fair weekend.

PHOTOS BY CHARLES KOERTING



Outdoor educator Joel Springer explores the retreat center’s snake collection with campers.

Lamplighters,” said Frankie Jiménez, director of the Patuxent church’s club in Leonardtown, Md. “Pathfinder activities are an awesome in-reach program that prepares us to become the best outreach earthen vessels for Christ.”

Each Pathfinder club helped teach then earned 22 honors during the weekend. Some campers learned to pitch a tent for the first time, said Norris Ricketts, director of the Northeast Bluejays club in Baltimore.—Ann Reynolds

MOUNTAIN VIEW POINT

JULY 2013

250 Members Prepare for Historic Outreach

Nearly 250 of the 1,000 active members of the Columbia Union's smallest conference—Mountain View—recently attended Bible school training in Huttonsville, W.Va., led by Voice of Prophecy staff. The May training was to prepare attendees to participate in "Reach Appalachia," an historic, outreach program that involves sending Discover Bible School invitations to those living in and around the Mountain View Conference.

"I am humbled by the dedication and work of the fine team helping us with this huge endeavor," Larry Boggess, conference president, said during his opening remarks. He shared that for many years, he and several others dreamed of spreading the gospel to the 2 million people in the Mountain View territory. Over the next year and a half, Voice of Prophecy leaders will invest \$1 million, including manpower, into this outreach effort to make that dream come true.



During the training weekend, Kurt Johnson (above), director of the Discover Bible School for the Voice of Prophecy, brought in his team of trained professionals to prepare attendees for this project.

Johnson explained that during the Reach Appalachia project, they would send out three bulk mailings of 300,000 cards to West Virginia and parts of Maryland. The first mailing, he said, went out weeks before they came to Huttonsville, and there had already been a response. He said within the first week, there were nearly 1,300 responses (with more than 1,000 others since)! "I have been doing this as long as 16 years and the number of cards we've gotten back is the biggest response ever," said Johnson. "God is already moving."

The next two mailings are set to go out in October and January. The effort will conclude with a graduation ceremony near the close of 2014. Mountain View members will play a critical part in reaching their neighbors. Over the weekend, they learned the ins and outs of online Bible school, setting up a correspondence Bible school and personal studies.

At the close of the training, members from each church received their enrollment cards, and each congregation prayed over the cards before heading back to their home churches to put what they learned into practice.

—Angelina Dickson



Jordana Ashburn (right), Discover Bible School one-on-one field trainer, engages two Mountain View members during a class.



Larry Boggess (center), president of the Mountain View Conference, rejoices when he learns about the number of Bible study requests received so far.

Toll Gate Member, Longtime Conference Leader Passes

Wilton E. Williams, Jr., a member of the Toll Gate church in Pennsboro, W.Va., passed away in May at 87 years old. Williams leaves behind Janice, his wife of 68 years; children Diana Lee, Philip Kent and Timothy Andrew; and many other family and friends.



Williams was an engineer by trade, who worked locally and abroad. While he was very involved in his local community, Williams and his wife were passionate about the Seventh-day Adventist Church. They envisioned a church, donated the land and along with a core team, spent many hours developing a school and a church that became known as Toll Gate. Williams went on to serve as head elder for many years. He also served on the Columbia Union Conference Executive Committee, as a long-time member of the Mountain View Conference Executive Committee and as camp manager for the Valley Vista Adventist Center in Huttonsville, where he presided over several building projects, two of which are named in his honor.

Larry Boggess, conference president, says, “[Wilton Williams’] footprints are indelibly marked upon the progress of the various facets of the Lord’s work in Mountain View. He will be missed, but remembered.”

Couple Finds Truth at East Pea Ridge Church

Until recently Kathleen Plybon, who was a member of two local churches, had never heard of the Adventist Church. She became interested when a friend received a flyer in the mail for a Revelation seminar. “We didn’t even know what kind of church we were going to at first, but we had always been interested in learning that ‘difficult’ book,” she said. As they attended seminars at the East Pea Ridge church in Huntington, W.Va., God helped her understand through Pastor Justin Howard’s preaching. After just two nights, Kathleen’s husband, Danny, went shopping for a Bible—something Kathleen never thought she’d see—and they couldn’t wait for the next seminar.

They were baptized in December, and Kathleen says, “I thank God for leading us there.”—*Angelina Dickson*



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Carla Baker
Women's Ministries Director
North American Division

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John 8:12

NEWS

NEW JERSEY

JULY 2013

What is Your Mission?

Our theme this year is “Our Mission is Jesus’ Mission.” We continue to believe in this theme and work to fulfill it. This theme expresses with simplicity and clarity the only reason that we, Seventh-day Adventists, exist.

Working to accomplish this mission—the same one that Jesus started and commanded His disciples to follow before going back to heaven—should be at the heart of our calling as Christians. Doing the opposite or doing nothing would be an affront to our Master. The New Jersey Conference is answering this call to finish the work that Jesus gave to us in Matthew 28:19-20, which can be summed simply as, “Go and make disciples!” We are following His command and preparing others and ourselves for that glorious day when we are going to be lifted up to our heavenly home! How are you making Jesus’ mission *your* mission?



José H. Cortés
President

NEWS

Bridgeton Spanish Evangelism Meetings Yields 45 Baptisms

New Jersey Conference’s Bridgeton Spanish church recently hosted an evangelism series that drew more than 350 people each night. José H. Cortés, conference president, conducted the two-week long meetings, themed “Revelation of Hope,” at the end of which, 45 people were baptized. The Bridgeton meetings are just one of the 130 evangelism meetings the conference has planned this year as part of the General Conference’s NY13 initiative (called NJ/NY13 in the conference) to reach people living in and around New York City. To see a list of meeting locations and reserve a seat, visit revelationofhopeny.org/events.



Pastor José H. Cortés, conference president, preaches in the newly renovated Bridgeton church to a full house.



Eighteen people (some pictured) were baptized into the New Brunswick church.

New Brunswick Members Celebrate 18 Baptisms

After a series of Bible studies at the New Brunswick English church, 18 people recently gave their lives to Jesus. “We saw how the Holy Spirit moved upon the hearts of people who made their commitment to walk with the Lord, Jesus,” said Vilas Urtekar, elder. “There was much rejoicing. Praise the Lord!”

Hoping to reach the community, members Edward and Svetlana Bildey opened the doors of their home in Old Bridge for Bible study. They were delighted when five of their students took a stand for baptism. “God is good,” Svetlana said. “We started with one family and we gathered for one year. Then, God brought other people, and now we have 22 in our Bible study group. We still meet every Friday and are hoping to have a Russian-language church with English translation.”

See videos of the altar call at facebook.com/columbiaunionvisitor. It was posted on May 24.

Mission Caleb Group Pledges to Reach Hindus

With lots of colors and enthusiasm, the 18th Mission Caleb group was born May 18. More than 70 people sang praises in their native tongue and celebrated the beginning of the first Mission Caleb group geared toward reaching South Asians in Edison. José H. Cortés, conference president, preached the group's inaugural service and officially established this new Mission Caleb group.

About 30 people made a commitment to establish this group with the objective of becoming a company and soon becoming the first Adventist church for the Hindu population in New Jersey. Jason Jeyaprakash and Villas Urtekar will lead the group.

"We believe that this Mission Caleb group will be a true blessing in reaching the Hindu community of Edison," said Jorge Aguero, the conference's Personal Ministries director.



Lake Nelson Church Celebrates 30th Anniversary

More than 400 people recently filled New Jersey Conference's Lake Nelson church in Piscataway for its 30th anniversary. To prepare for this special homecoming event, members mailed hundreds of invitations to former church members, as well as individuals in the surrounding communities who recently requested Bible studies or literature from Adventist media.

Piscataway Mayor Brian Wahler thanked the congregation for being a beacon of light in the community for 30 years, and Pastor Jim Greene, the conference's executive secretary, offered words of recognition.

Lonnie Melashenko, former director/speaker for the Voice of Prophecy radio program and Columbia Union revivalist, served as the guest speaker. He encouraged

them in their upcoming evangelism efforts.

Melashenko shared that God loves misfits and can transform them by His grace.

"It was wonderful to see familiar faces as well as meet new people at the 30th anniversary weekend," says Andrea Sestak, a longtime member. "I am energized about what we can accomplish in the next 30 years with God's help."—*Bianca Morales*

PHOTO BY JIM GREENE



Church elders sing with Lonnie Melashenko (fourth from left).

700 Gather for Pathfinder Fun Day



"Alone we are one, but together we are an army!" Paulo Macena, conference Youth Ministries director, told 700 attendees right before the kickoff of Pathfinder Fun Day at the Tranquil Valley Retreat Center in Tranquility. During this day of fellowship and fun, Pathfinders participated in archery, canoeing, waterslides, ultimate Frisbee, soccer, obstacle courses, tug-of-war, giant volleyball and many other activities.

We Celebrate Unity in Cincinnati

It seems people are often conditioned from an early age to notice differences, which often can separate us from each other. However, members and numerous guests gathered on a sunny, lily-speckled, spring Sabbath morning to celebrate our unity rather than our differences during the Clifton church's fourth annual International Day.

"This day provides ongoing evidence to our congregation that, under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, people from various cultures and backgrounds can come together to live and serve," said Pastor Jeba Moses. The celebration "has [grown in participation], with more guests from other congregations attending each year."

It's a glimpse of life in heaven with a temporal affirmation that we are a church of many parts in one body. Clifton's annual celebration is not about wearing our



John and Eva Kelso enjoy the annual celebration of their church's diverse membership.



Clifton kids, dressed in their parents' native dress, present a song for the special day.



Clifton members Marida Gingras and Aye Thida Lwin flank visitors Stephanie Dee and Myat Pan Nu, who represented Myanmar during the Clifton church's annual International Day.

native clothing, nor is it about sharing our homeland's food afterward in our school. International Day, here in the middle of urban Cincinnati, is a statement of faith. It's a statement of praise about the one God who brought his people together in His name from every end of the Earth.

Most of us know that God promised Abraham that his seed would bless all nations of the Earth, like the number of stars in the sky. Count the flags to start. Then, count the stars. It's become a reality. Sabbath here is living proof. More than 300 people attended the special day, representing 32 countries. For the day, we witnessed the physical manifestation of something deeper and spiritual—coming together as one, just as He dwells among all of His people.

At the close of Sabbath School, we began the Lord's Prayer—each in his or her native language to confess our faith in unity. For about two minutes, we spoke the language of the Lord in the one common prayer that reflects our common faith. We were women, men and small children, all dressed differently but sharing one body and one language for that moment in time.

We invite you to join us, not just on International Day next year, but every day to see the miracle that has brought such a diverse congregation together in one body every week.—Joshua Kinman

Donations Move Camp Mohaven Toward Goal

Thank you for your work with Camp Mohaven. The Northeast Ohio Pathfinders thoroughly enjoyed camping here,” wrote Frank D. Peden, Pathfinder area coordinator, in a letter to Dave and Karen Robinson (pictured), camp managers. “I would like to present the camp with the budget surplus from our campout. This \$350.23 is to be used for the bathhouse fund.”

The Robinsons say they are greatly humbled by these types of donations, but are excited that such generosity is getting them closer to meeting their \$200,000



goal. The funds will help them construct two new bathhouses on the Danville, Ohio, campsite. To date, big-hearted donations like the one above have helped them reach \$125,000. The new structures—located near the horse barn (pictured left, in progress) and the pool pavilion—will also act as shelter for camp visitors during inclement weather. To learn more about the project or to help the camp reach its fundraising goal, visit Camp Mohaven’s Facebook page or mohaven.org.



Innovators to Unite for Annual Conference

Google defines innovation as “a new method or idea.” When it comes to the conference’s annual National Conference on Innovation, it is a time for creative minds and missional entrepreneurs from across the globe to assemble and share in-depth perspective, great insight and incredible faith. It is an opportunity for visionaries to experience timely and dynamic conversations on how to infuse a creative edge and innovative vitality into life, faith and service; to develop the ability to move quickly and purposefully to seize the complex and fast-changing opportunities to engage cultures in transformative ways; to meet and learn from some of the nation’s leading voices and authors; and to network with those who are on the frontiers, reinventing their way to growth, value and excellence.

For more information, and to read about the presenters, visit sdapartnersininnovation.org. To register for group discounts, call (740) 397-4665, ext. 114.

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Pennsylvania *Pen*

JULY 2013

Pastors Ordained at Camp Meeting

The following three pastors were ordained on Sabbath, June 22, at the Pennsylvania Conference Camp Meeting:



John Rengifo's mother, Elizabeth, believed her son was called to preach from the time he was a little boy. He attended the inaugural Amazing Facts College of Evangelism course and, during a mission trip to Tanzania, felt called to ministry when he witnessed more than 200 people giving their lives to Christ through baptism. He quit his job for the state of California to do Bible work. Three years later, he attended Southern Adventist University (Tenn.). In 2009 he and his wife, Denny (pictured below with their daughters, Jasmine and Sophia), completed their Masters of Divinity. Rengifo desires to see God's people mature in Christ and become active witnesses for Him. He pastors the English and Hispanic Chambersburg churches, along with the Waynesboro church.

Darnel Marius became the first Seventh-day Adventist in his family, and earned a bachelor's in theology from the Adventist University of Haiti. He went on to baptize hundreds in his home country for Christ. In time he came to the United States, where he served as an assistant pastor for the Ebenezer Haitian church in Delaware. In 2009 he received a call to Pennsylvania and currently pastors the Shekinah Haitian church, as well as two groups in Lebanon and the Poconos area. Marius, who is pictured above with his wife, Marie, and their sons, Thaddee Dan and Omar Thad, finds strength in Psalm 115:12. He is working on a master's in pastoral ministry.



John Kent (left) was raised in Western Pennsylvania. He graduated from Blue Mountain Academy in Hamburg, where he excelled in fun and adventure but not so much in academics. Upon graduation and hitchhiking across the country, he gave his heart to Christ and was immediately filled with a passion to serve God. That passion led him to a ministry in New York City where he met and married his wife, Belinda. In 1988 they received a call to go to Papua New Guinea with Adventist Frontier Missions where they planted several churches. He returned to the United States in 1997, then served for 16 years as the director of training for Adventist Frontier Missions. He then accepted a call to serve in the Pittsburgh area. He holds a master's in Pastoral Ministry from Andrews University (Mich.).—*Jeanne Hartwell*

Everett, Altoona Pastor Retires From Army Chaplaincy

After 38 years of service in the U.S. Army, Robert “Bob” Snyder, pastor of the Altoona, Everett, Lewistown and Mifflintown churches, recently retired with three awards. The Sabbath before his official retirement, Gary Councell, director of the General Conference’s Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries, spoke at the Everett and Altoona churches.

The next day, Councell and his wife, Joyce, accompanied Snyder and his wife, Barb, to the Army Reserve Center in Butler, Pa., for a retirement ceremony. While there, Snyder received awards from Councell; the Army Chief of Chaplain’s office; and his unit, the 301st Reserve Support Group.

“The best part about the Army chaplaincy has been to be with soldiers,” says Snyder. “It has been a great joy to work with them and worship and laugh and learn about God. It is a challenge to bring Christ to young people in the military who often have had no experience with God.”

Snyder began his service as an Adventist Army chaplain in March 1992. He began his military service as an enlisted soldier in 1975, serving three years as a hospital records specialist at the West Point Military Academy in West Point, N.Y. He then left the Army and studied ministry at La Sierra University in California. It was while Snyder was at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University (Mich.), that he was asked to serve as an Adventist Army chaplain.

After three years as a Bible worker in upstate New York, Snyder pastored the Athens, Marietta and Pomeroy churches in the Ohio Conference. He then

served in active duty at Fort Stewart, Ga., before flying to Germany, where he served for seven years. While there he was part of a five-month task force in Saudi Arabia. Upon returning to the United States, Snyder pastored the Havertown and West Chester churches in the Pennsylvania Conference. He joined the Army Reserves and was mobilized in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and stationed at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, with the 247th Corps Support Battalion, traveling to Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan on missions. There he helped begin a Seventh-day Adventist worship service at Camp Arifjan. During his time there, 10 Adventist soldiers attended and two were baptized. He also regularly preached and taught for the Sunday Protestant chapel group on the base.

“There is a bond between chaplains of all faiths, and we often worked and served alongside one another despite doctrinal differences,” he says. “It was a joy to be included in ecumenical and interfaith worship services on special occasions, and to stand before diverse Protestant and Catholic congregations and preach.”

One of his favorite memories of his service is “accompanying my boss, a Catholic priest, [from] Ansbach, Germany, to Rome. We visited the Catholic basilicas and holy sites. The priest held morning Mass, and I represented the Protestant faith with a devotional message. One of those particular days, we held Mass, and I preached in one of the conclaves inside St. Peter’s Cathedral at the Vatican.”

The Snyders continue to serve four Pennsylvania churches.



Col. Gary Councell (second from left), director of Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries, and his wife, Joyce, are pictured with Pastor Robert Snyder and his wife, Barb, at Snyder’s retirement ceremony.

Potomac People

JULY 2013

Vienna Member Addresses Addiction

Nearly everyone in the room missed the irony—the addiction seminar they were attending, put on by Mike Onoffrey, a member of the Vienna (Va.) church, was held on the same day many Americas set aside to celebrate cannabis. One attendee, however, noted the overlap. When she inquired, Onoffrey shook his head and said, “Believe it or not, no. It’s quite the coincidence.”

The inquirer confessed, “The reason I’m here is because I’m addicted to marijuana. When I saw you were holding this seminar on April 20, I ... had to find out what this is all about. I grew up an Adventist. I know this is not the way I’m supposed to live.” She also explained that she had never told anyone of her addic-



Onoffrey shares his testimony at one of his seminars and encourages others to make the church a safer environment to discuss addictions.



The Onoffrey Family: Elizabeth, Nathan, Samuel and Mike

tion and hadn’t planned on sharing that afternoon. He assured her she isn’t alone.

“Addictive behavior takes on many forms, from alcohol and drug abuse to pornography,” Onoffrey explained to the group, challenges he’s addressing through his ministry Utter Wonders (utterwonders.com). “These are addictions that not only exist outside of the church—a truth we need to start accepting and confronting in order to stay relevant to the next generation.”

Onoffrey challenges believers to honestly face this question: Am I simply going to belong to a “come to church” religion, or am I willing to experience a “come to Christ” relationship? Read the full story at pcsd.org/stories/420.html.

SEEDS Conference to Teach Church Planting Skills

After announcing that Potomac Conference will host its first SEEDS Conference, September 6-7, Peter Casillas, associate for church planting and evangelism, offered: “It’s important to empower and unleash church planters. We must collect resources from those who are doing it already and celebrate the stories of those in the trenches.”

SEEDS is a training program designed by the North American Division for those interested in growing the kingdom of God by planting churches. The event focuses on helping church volunteers and pastors learn how to best plan and implement their ventures.



“We are learning to look at church in a fluid way,” adds Casillas. “Church, meaning the people in it, is God’s instrument to reach those who haven’t heard the name of Jesus. In order to reach the variety of people we have in our country, we need different approaches that can convey the three angels’ messages.”

Johnny Wong (pictured) will be the main speaker. Wong developed a concept called care groups, through which he planted 15 churches in Australia. Topics covered will be second-generation church plants, discipleship, how to plant churches and how to do outreach through demographics. To attend the event, hosted by the Community of Hope church in Silver Spring, Md., register by August 15 at <http://seedsconf.eventbrite.com>. Attendance is limited to 200.—*Tiffany Doss*

Potomac People

SASDAC Celebrates 25 Years in Ministry

The Southern Asian (SASDAC) church in Silver Spring, Md., recently celebrated 25 years in ministry. According to Pastor Franklin David, the church, which opened in 1988 with less than 50 members, is the first Southern Asian Seventh-day Adventist congregation in North America. It is also now the largest one in the world with nearly 1,000 Christians primarily from India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Nepal and neighboring countries.

The weekend celebration started on Friday evening with a vespers message from Raj Attiken, president of the Ohio Conference. On Sabbath, Bill Miller, Potomac president, led the divine hour with an inspirational sermon, punctuated by the colorful regalia of an ethnic parade. The parade, organized by lay leader Veena J. Alfred, highlighted the congregation's diversity.

Vijay Benedict, a former Bollywood singer and devout Christian, provided a high point for the afternoon program. He traveled from India to perform. Then, an evening program showcased talent from a variety of local performers.

"This weekend was another high point for our congregation," said Pastor David. "The successful program is evidence of God's love and kindness. This congregation has relied on God by giving faithfully, both financially and with time." David has been the pastor of this congregation since it opened its doors, and until the past several years, was the only pastor for more than 600 members, in addition to ministering to the Indian community in the metropolitan area.

When SASDAC first formed, they rented two nearby churches for 15 years. In 2006, after prayerfully facing the insurmountable challenge of raising enough capital,



Pastor Franklin David introduces Ralph Martin, a retired president of the Columbia Union Conference and Potomac Conference, who originally signed the charter documents establishing SASDAC as an official Adventist church.



The children's choir delights the congregation with their rendition of "It's a Miracle," a song written by Bill and Gloria Gaither.



A parade of nations during the divine hour demonstrated SASDAC's unity and diversity, with members representing more than 17 Indian states and 20 countries.

they finished their vigorous building project and moved into their current home at 2001 East Randolph Road. To expand their ministry even more, SASDAC recently planted a sister church in Herndon, Va.

"This is a congregation largely made up of first-generation, Indo-American immigrants. God has created something special here, especially for the young people. They have been presented with unique leadership opportunities previously unavailable," reports John Varghese, head elder. He adds, "This weekend celebration marked the beginning of a legacy of Adventist ethnic Indian church growth in North America. When average people reach out to God and put their trust and faith in Him, they accomplish things that are extraordinary."—Richard Christian

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Spotlight on Spencerville

JANUARY 2013

Students Go Barefoot for a Good Cause

It's 8 on a Tuesday morning. The first Spencerville Adventist Academy (SAA) students have trickled in to the high school commons area, and something is discernibly different about the way they look today—they aren't wearing shoes. Junior Kacey Banks, co-community service director for Campus Ministries, stands sentinel at the front door, collecting \$5 participation donations and distributing participation stickers to each barefooted pupil. As students continue to stream in, it becomes clear that being without shoes is the norm for the day.

Why did they shun their shoes? To participate in One Day Without Shoes, a global awareness campaign started by the TOMS shoe company that raises awareness for children's health and education issues. The idea is that shoes provide comfort, health, self-esteem and allow participation at school and in other public activities. Last year there were more than 3,000 One Day Without Shoes events in over 50 countries. Inspired by the message and the community experience of these events, Banks decided to organize one at SAA to encourage students to practice an active form of the compassion and care they often discuss.

Going through the experience of being barefoot for a whole day is one thing, but Spencerville students wanted to be a blessing to those without shoes in a more tangible way. They decided to give the funds they raised from the event to Restore A Child, a Seventh-day Adventist nonprofit dedicated to helping impoverished children. The organization helps students in Haiti obtain shoes so they can participate in school (as they are not allowed to attend classes without them). In total, more than 100 high school students participated in the day, raising \$555 toward their objective.

"[We are] excited to embrace opportunities to provide students an understanding of why even sometimes the smallest things make a huge difference, and to know what it is like to be blessed with enough resources to share," states Somer Knight, campus chaplain.



Kacey Banks, co-community service director for Campus Ministries, put compassion into action by organizing the No Shoes fundraiser.



The No Shoes fundraiser was another avenue for SAA students to demonstrate their commitment to service.

Spotlight

Broadcast Class Produces Film With Valuable Message

Spencerville Adventist Academy's broadcast journalism class recently created a 14-minute short film titled "*It's Girls*," which addresses the issues of peer pressure and being true to oneself. The students took charge of the project, from writing the script, directing, acting, editing, composing the original music and much more, then released the film during high school chapel.

Junior Paola Charnichart, who wrote the film, says she was inspired by her personal experience of starting high school. She says, "I have always pictured myself in the movie *Mean Girls* but wanted to put my own twist on the story. High school isn't about being popular; it's about meeting the people who are going to be there for you for life."

Charnichart says the story is about a shy girl named Sophia who goes to high school and struggles to fit in. She gets mixed up with a group of mean girls who influence her to change for the worse, and she begins to turn on those who truly care about her. After all her friends reject her, Sophia begins to reevaluate her actions. She realizes that she shouldn't change herself in order to make other people accept her. She also learns the valuable lesson that those who except her for who she is are the type of people she wants in her life.

The broadcast students say they thoroughly enjoyed producing the film, while the editors say they enjoyed expanding their knowledge of editing software. Senior Sara Hernandez, who played the role of Sophia, says, "It has been a good experience seeing how much work goes into making a film."

Robert Martinez, broadcast teacher and the film's producer and director, says he appreciated this

opportunity to put their leadership skills into practice. "Film is a form of communication that this generation of young people is interested in," Martinez comments. "Giving them a structure in which to work has opened their eyes to the witnessing opportunities that their own work can reach. I am trying to show them how to communicate their ideas in an effective, professional and spiritual way."

View the movie at <http://youtu.be/f0dFthvklbw> or at spencervilleacademy.org.



Jason Boyd, CJ Gibbons and Danny Elliott edit their class film utilizing specialized computer software.



Alex Melendez films a scene while class member Elizabeth Bautista watches.

SHENANDOAH VALLEY ACADEMY

HAPPENINGS



JULY 2013

www.shenandoahvalleyacademy.org

Alumni are Opening Doors

Shenandoah Valley Academy (SVA) provides a Spirit-filled, transformational Seventh-day Adventist education, and SVA alumni and supporting this God-ordained and -sustained school to transform the hearts and minds of the next generation. Together, we are opening doors:

A Door to Reconnection: Alumni weekend 2013 was a beautiful time for reconnection, traditions and spiritual emphasis. Highlights this year included honor class events; the annual golf tournament; a vespers where we shared music, memories and testimonies of God's faithfulness; our traditional Sabbath church service complete with the "Hallelujah Chorus"; a gospel jam session; and the basketball game. The alumni also elected a slate of new officers and used the new SVA Alumni Association Facebook page to provide school and event information.

A Door to Action: Principal Travis Johnson is opening the door for alumni to contribute in new, action-oriented roles for SVA. He has convened and empowered volunteer committees to provide structure to the alumni association and to pool talents and resources to drive enrollment. In fervent support of SVA's educational ministry, alumni are joining forces to nurture peer connections, and harness and broaden the financial support base. It's exciting to see the renewed energy among alumni who are activating support for SVA.

A Door to Changing Young Lives: Greater than 50 percent of SVA's current students rely on financial aid. Alumni know firsthand how transformational an Adventist boarding school experience can be, and also understand the financial sacrifice required. They long to see more young people benefit from SVA's excellent academic program and lifelong friendships, yet most importantly, they wish to nurture each student's relationship with Jesus as their personal Savior.

Just as someone may have opened the door for *them* to receive a quality and safe Christian education, alumni are prayerfully pledging to do the same for another young person. Alumni initiated the "Open a Door—Sponsor a Scholar" effort to raise vital student financial aid. Gifts to this fund directly enable young people to enroll!

A Door to Greater Impact: For more than 100 years, the SVA family of more than 7,000 alumni and staff has witnessed how Christian education deeply impacts



New Alumni Association Officers: Kathy Bendall Young ('78), secretary/treasurer; Tony Williams ('82), vice president; and Janel Haas Ware ('86), president



The Class of 1988 celebrated their 25th anniversary during alumni weekend.

lives. SVA alumni lead in churches, hospitals, schools and businesses across the globe, extending faith, friendship and service to a hurting world. The Spirit of this God-ordained and -sustained school remains ready and waiting to fill the hearts and minds of each new generation.



Janel Haas Ware
Alumni Association President

HAPPENINGS

Students Lead Efforts to Initiate Outdoor Education

At first it was just a suggestion: some students wanted to get outside to fulfill their desire to grow in knowledge of the outdoors. They approached Jim Little, Plant Services director, who is known for his interest in caving and hiking. With his support, they shared their vision with Todd Coulter, guidance counselor. He wasn't hard to convince since he is currently completing his graduate work in outdoor education. The new collaborators soon worked on the logistics—how to create an outdoor education class for credit.

The determined team created a list of activities to be included in the class, being sure to provide enough hours for it to be offered for physical education (PE) credit. When they finished, they sent their outline to the curriculum committee to seek their vote. The group prospered and Outdoor Education PE now has five



Seniors Kelvin Guandalini and Hans Werner enjoy canoeing on the Shenandoah River to gain school credit.

teachers, each of whom offers a different strength and knowledge to the course, and 20 participating students. Outdoor Education PE now provides exposure to a variety of outdoor interests. This past semester, participating students experienced backpacking, caving and canoeing. The activities not only provided new experiences but, according to staff, also helped teach leadership, responsibility, ecology and care of the Earth.

When asked why he joined the class, Kelvin Guandalini, an international student from Brazil, said, "We just don't have these same opportunities in Brazil, and I want to try everything at least once."

During a recent field experience, the students got to test their paddling skills on the Shenandoah River. "I liked it when our canoe flipped while going down the rapids, and then we had to find all our stuff floating



The outdoor education class enjoys a campfire during their first camping experience together.

down the river," laughed junior Eric Sloan.

"The students often express how they feel closer to God when outside. This really is one of the greatest benefits of the class," says Travis Johnson, principal. "Students and teachers alike are out exploring the world's largest classroom, the Earth itself. And, it is only natural that they would meet the Creator on their journey through His creation."

Staff members now realize what wonderful opportunities the Shenandoah Valley provides for connecting to God, and wonder why this class wasn't started sooner. Everyone looks forward to the addition of cross-country skiing and snowshoeing to next year's curriculum.



Juniors Eric Sloan and Imani Laues learn how to safely explore underground cavities during a class caving expedition.

Growing With Excellence

The Accrediting Association of Seventh-day Adventist Schools, Colleges and Universities (AAA) recently granted Washington Adventist University (WAU) continued accreditation for the period ending December 2017. This is the maximum term of accreditation possible under AAA guidelines. AAA is the denominational authority for all tertiary and graduate educational programs and institutions owned by Seventh-day Adventist Church entities. We are certainly pleased with this report.

At WAU, we aim to improve all facets of our operation to become a thriving university in the competitive higher education market. In academics, we aim to exceed institutional and accreditation standards, expand service learning, conduct ongoing program reviews, make strategic reinvestment in the quality of programs, and promote and strengthen support services that reflect 21st century best practices.

Congratulations to our hardworking faculty and staff for demonstrating compliance with AAA standards to the maximum level of accreditation possible. This is Washington Adventist University.



Weymouth Spence
President

Commencement Reflects Growth Trend

Consistent with the growth trend at Washington Adventist University, this year's commencement in Washington, D.C., was bigger than ever, as large numbers of graduates, their friends and families, attended the culminating event of the academic year.

E. Albert Reece, MD, PhD, MBA, a distinguished scientist, scholar and the vice president for medical affairs at the University of Maryland, delivered the commencement address. "Live your life in the relentless pursuit of excellence if you are to make a positive impact," Reece said. "You cannot accomplish anything without being committed and focused on your goals and on Jesus."

Daniel R. Jackson, president of the North American Division, spoke at the baccalaureate service. He urged



graduates to live purposefully, lest they become among "the vague, the thoughtless and the foolish." He also said, "Do not lose your lives because you lack creativity—because you lack a plan. Live with purpose! Live with passion! Live proactively!"

And, at the consecration service on Friday, Gary Wimbish, pastor of Allegheny East Conference's Columbia Community Center in Columbia, Md., noted a changing world in which wrong and right are increasingly indistinguishable. He urged the graduates to heed the biblical admonition and enter into the "narrow gate."

This year marks the first time that the university celebrated this rite of passage as a single event. Historically, the school has held two ceremonies—one in spring and a second in summer.



Weymouth Spence, EdD, WAU president, presents a student with her diploma.

WAU Charters Prestigious Leadership Society

At a charter ceremony held at Sligo church this spring, 28 aspiring leaders from the university community officially became members of Omicron Delta Kappa (ODK), one of the nation's most prestigious honor societies.

Inductees included President Weymouth Spence; five alumni, including Charles McMillan, PhD ('77), 2013 alumnus of the year; and three faculty members, including Ralph Johnson, PhD, charter sponsor and dean for student success and faculty development. "WAU is the only Seventh-day Adventist institution to have this circle. The level of exposure that it gives our campus is enormous!" said Johnson, a 1982 ODK initiate.

There are circles of ODK at over 300 institutions of higher learning. ODK, a diverse national leadership honor society, is the first of its kind to give recognition for leadership. To be eligible for membership, students must be in the top 35 percent of their class and demonstrate exemplary character and outstanding leadership in at least one of the five areas of campus life.

Each year the ODK Foundation awards 20 scholarships of at least \$1,000 to members planning to attend graduate or professional school. The General Russell E. Dougherty National Leader of the Year Award consists of a \$4,000 scholarship and circle grant to an outstanding member of ODK. For more information about the society, visit odk.org.



A Beloved Campus Personality Says Goodbye

Come fall this year, WAU will be without Deria Gale Anderson Gadsden, assistant registrar. After 30 years in Adventist education, she will retire this summer. With her larger-than-life personality, "Mrs. G.," as she is affectionately called, is beloved within the community and respected for a no-nonsense approach to her work.



"It has been an honor to work in this vineyard for the Lord. I have learned a deep trust in His plan and purpose for my life," Gadsden said. "WAU has fond memories for me."

An alumna of Atlantic Union College (Mass.) and the University of Nebraska, she began her career as a teacher's assistant at Vestal Hills Seventh-day Adventist School in New York. She later became school board chair, sat on the board of Union Springs Academy (N.Y.), and served on the K-12 Board of Education for the New York Conference. She later worked at the Poughkeepsie School (N.Y.) as a teacher's assistant. Her next stop was the Garden State Academy in New Jersey, where she worked as assistant registrar and class and yearbook sponsor.

Her service to the university was recognized during alumni weekend, when she was named an honorary WAU alumna. "[Mrs. G.] has demonstrated commitment to and love of Washington Adventist University and its students. It was our pleasure to recognize Mrs. G's many years of service and to officially accept her as an honorary alumna," said Ellie Barker, director of alumni relations.



your healing MINISTRY

An Expanded Place of Healing

JULY 2013

Mary's husband, consumed with worry and concern, refuses to leave her intensive care bedside. As the hours pass, both Mary and her caregivers become increasingly concerned that George is not getting enough to eat, or sufficient sleep. A chaplain discovers this devoted couple has very little in the way of income or finances and George does not have the money to get something to eat. In an instinctively loving act of kindness, a nurse quickly reacts by providing George with meal passes to the newly completed Grand Central Café at Grandview Medical Center.

Twenty-nine year old Alisa, anxious, weak, and dehydrated from the procedure prep, arrives 30 minutes early for her procedure. Alisa later recalls: "Every nurse along the way was smiling, warm, welcoming and eager to please – unusual from my hospital experiences at other places. Even though they might have been behind a few minutes with a new electronic medical records system and recently opened procedure rooms, everyone stayed calm and empathetic. I left this wonderful institution feeling loved and well cared for. That makes all of the difference in the world!"

The following pages highlight the West Wing, a new \$40 million five-story patient tower and entrance at Grandview. The first significant new construction in 29 years, this long-awaited 74,500 square feet addition clearly enhances a physical environment where the "sacred work" of health care is already taking place 24/7/365.

Nationally ranked for clinical outcomes and known for patient experiences such as noted by Mary, George, and Alisa (pseudonyms), it is not the facility, but the people who make the real difference at Grandview. It is with a humble realization our 2,500 physicians, staff, and volunteers serve as the hands of the Master Physician in caring for those who entrust their health care to us. What a privilege to serve with committed colleagues in a high-touch, faith-based environment supporting the physical, mental, and spiritual needs of those coming through our doors for healing.

Dave Seidel is a member of the Miamisburg Seventh-day Adventist Church.



David R. Seidel

David R. Seidel, FACHE

VP, Clinical and Support Services
Grandview Medical Center
Kettering Health Network

"Physicians, staff, and volunteers serve as the hands of the Master Physician in caring for those who entrust their health care to us."



your healing MINISTRY

Let the Celebration Begin

By Christina Keresoma

With the construction and remodeling complete, Grandview Medical Center in downtown Dayton, Ohio, is celebrating the first major construction project in 29 years.

The purpose of the renovations was to improve the patient experience and the hospital personnel believe they exceeded their goals. Inpatient Surgery is now closer to the Pre and Post Care units, which makes the transportation of patients easier and brings less stress to them as the distance to the surgery is shortened.



Local officials touring the pre and post care units

The dining areas are now located off the lobby making easier access for visitors who may want to grab a bite to eat while waiting for their loved ones. Expanding the area has also allowed an increase in the type of food that is served.

Employees have been spotted with an extra bounce in their step as they head to the cafeteria due to the excitement of additional services and food options.



The wall length window looking out to a garden patio area also helps bring cheer to the diners while they enjoy their meals.



(From left to right) Kevin Reid, DO, Roy Chew, Robert Hunter, DO, Fred Manchur, and Richard Haas

The morning of the ribbon cutting the lobby was buzzing with medical staff, employees, elected officials, and visitors as they were all admiring the changes that have taken place these last two years. The new atmosphere, created with the design, colors, and flow has brought a sense of pride to all who work at Grandview Medical Center.

"We are thrilled to have an easily accessible main entrance and beautiful lobby to welcome our incoming patients," says Dave Seidel, vice president of Clinical and Support Services. The new signage and location of the information desk also helps patients and visitors find their way in a timely manner.



Rob Vandeman, CUC Executive Secretary and artist James DeVries pose with Fred Manchur, Kettering Adventist HealthCare CEO and Richard Haas, Grandview President in front of the Creation Wall

“Patients have been informing us of their positive first impressions to all the changes that have been made.”

A new sculptured feature in the lobby is the “Creation Wall” which is now displayed in three of our seven hospital facilities. It showcases God’s handy work that surrounds us in our daily lives but has become a shadow of the original creation due to the fall of man. Kettering Adventist HealthCare believes it is important we share our faith and beliefs with everyone who walks through our doors. The sculpture captures this and it is a moving reminder of our sacred work for visitors and employee as they walk by.

The newly renovated chapel was designed to bring calmness and peace to each individual sitting and reflecting on the day’s outcomes. Every hospital experience is different and brings varying needs. You may be celebrating a successful surgery or hearing the dreaded words; it’s cancer. It is important for patients and family members to have a place to go and spend time contemplating or coping with difficult events and circumstances.



NEWS



JULY 2013

Kettering College Names New President

Alex Bryan, D.Min., has been named the sixth president of Kettering College. He replaces Charles Scriven, Ph.D., who retired this spring after a 12-year tenure at the college.



Alex Bryan Wife Nicole, Audrey and William (Children)

"We are delighted to have the Bryan family join our community," says Roy Chew, chair of the Kettering College board of directors and president of Kettering Medical Center, which owns and operates the school. "Alex has a passion for education, learning and leadership. He will work with the Kettering College faculty and staff to continue to grow and improve the already excellent educational opportunities, making for an exciting future."

"It is an honor to join such a wonderful team of educators and health care professionals," says Bryan. "I am passionate about learning institutions like Kettering College, which trains its students in both professional excellence and meaningful Christian service. I look forward to contributing to a rich spirit of innovation as Kettering College pursues its unique and important mission in the days ahead. Adventist higher education has a long history of preparing men and women to make a rich, Christ-centered difference in the world. I am thrilled to be a part of this work."

Good Neighbor House Opens New Doors

A hundred people came out to celebrate the ribbon cutting at the Good Neighbor House's new location in downtown Dayton, Ohio. The larger facility provides space for a nutritional outreach program for the community as well as bigger dental, medical, and eye care rooms. The expanded site also allows more storage for donated items from the local community.

"The Good Neighbor House facility will enable increased services and programs to people in need. Kettering Adventist HealthCare is very proud of the work that the quality volunteers provide and are pleased to partner with them to improve the lives of the communities we serve," says Fred Manchur, Kettering Adventist HealthCare CEO.

Women's Walk for Wellness

Spirits were high during the walk in spite of the cool and rainy weather with over 1,000 participants. Sponsors and donors contributed more than \$92,000 to this May event which benefits the Women's Wellness Fund. This fund provides diagnostic mammography, ultrasounds, and prostheses to uninsured and underserved individuals within the greater Dayton region. Those in attendance enjoyed the Wellness & Boutique Vendor Mall as well as the lunch provided by our "Real Men Wear Pink" Celebrity Grillers. Kettering Adventist HealthCare's own *Anything But Serious* Clowns were onsite to distribute smiles and carnations to everyone. Roses were also given to breast cancer survivors.



Volunteers helped show their support by distributing shirts at the event.

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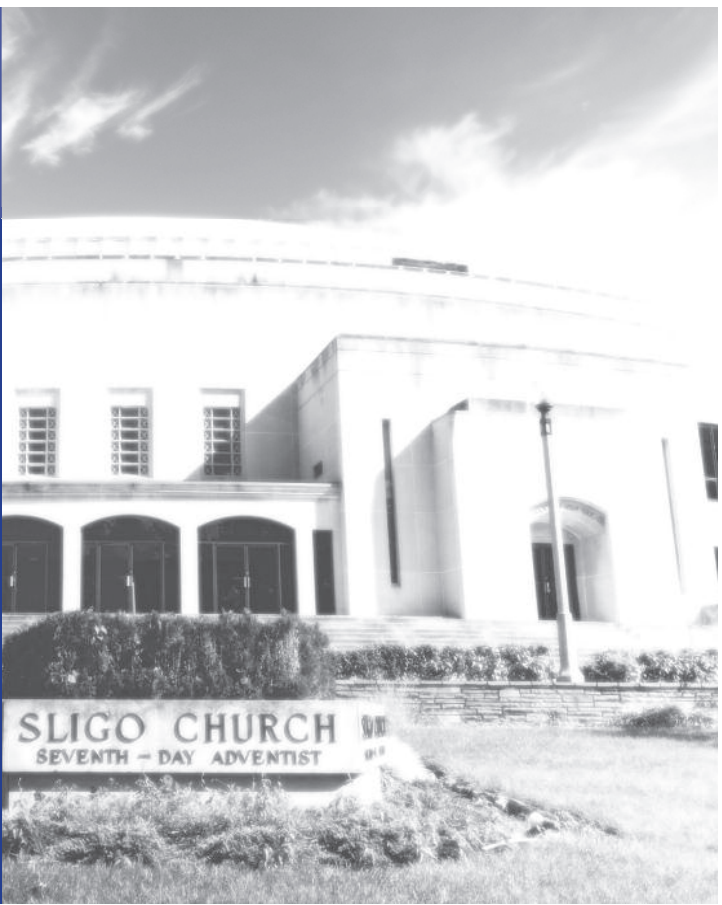


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EMPLOYMENT

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MISCELLANEOUS

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REVIEW AND HERALD HOMECOMING

July 20

Hagerstown, MD 21740

Join current and former employees for a Sabbath-day event celebrating 30 years since the move to Hagerstown.

Services begin on our campus at 10 a.m., followed by an afternoon program of praise for God's leading.

Guest speakers:

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GC president

Delbert Baker,
GC vice president

Jim Nix,
director, White Estate

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Cincinnati	9:08	9:05	9:01	8:56	8:49
Cleveland	9:04	9:01	8:57	8:51	8:44
Columbus	9:04	9:02	8:58	8:52	8:45
Jersey City	8:31	8:28	8:24	8:19	8:12
Norfolk	8:28	8:26	8:22	8:18	8:12
Parkersburg	8:56	8:54	8:50	8:45	8:38
Philadelphia	8:33	8:30	8:26	8:21	8:14
Pittsburgh	8:53	8:51	8:47	8:41	8:34
Reading	8:37	8:35	8:30	8:25	8:18
Richmond	8:35	8:33	8:29	8:24	8:18
Roanoke	8:44	8:42	8:38	8:33	8:27
Toledo	9:12	9:09	9:05	8:59	8:52
Trenton	8:32	8:30	8:25	8:20	8:13
Wash., D.C.	8:37	8:35	8:31	8:26	8:19

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

OAK PARK ACADEMY will hold its alumni homecoming weekend September 27-28 in Nevada, Iowa. The honor classes of 1963 (50 years) and 1973 (40 years) will lead the Friday evening vespers and Sabbath morning worship services. Michael Porter ('71) will speak for Friday evening, Ron Karr ('63) will speak for the 11 a.m. worship service, and Teresa Hoover ('73) will speak for Sabbath evening vespers. Jaime Jorge, an internationally known violin virtuoso, will present a concert Sabbath afternoon. For information, contact Michael Porter, mporteratp@gmail.com, or (202) 746-0744.

OBITUARIES

BARNETT, Margaret S., born December 20, 1926, in Blacksburg, Va.; died January 6, 2013, in

Bulletin Board

Radford, Va. She was a member of the Christiansburg (Va.) church, where Margaret had been church treasurer, and also at the Radford Adventist church for many years. She also was a leader in community services and loved giving Bible studies, books and help to the community. She is survived by her husband, Calvin C. Barnett, of Blacksburg, Va.; her daughter Geraldine B. Mohler of Christiansburg; and her granddaughters, Amelia C. Beecher of North Carolina, and Tiffany A. Mohler of Christiansburg.

BULLER, Allan R., born December 2, 1917, in Morse, Saskatchewan, Canada, to the late Jacob and Stella Buller; died March 23, 2013, at his home surrounded by family. He was a long-time member of the Worthington (Ohio) church and instrumental in the planning and building of both churches and the associated school. Allan's family immigrated to South Dakota, and then to Michigan when he was a child. He attended grade school in Michigan, graduated from Andrews University (Mich.), and later received an MBA at Ohio State University (OSU). He served in the U.S. Army during WWII as a staff sergeant. At 24, and supervising a staff of eight, he accomplished in one month the

complete stocking of a 1,400-bed military field hospital. He married college sweetheart Mickey Walberg in 1942. After the war, they moved to Worthington for Allan's new job at Worthington Foods, where he joined an innovative team of pioneers in the vegetarian food industry. He was CEO when he retired in 1985, and continued with the company on their board of trustees. Allan was a great accomplisher. He worked hard and played hard. He was a fan of any OSU Buckeye team, and was a lifelong golfer. He was a founding member of the Worthington Prayer Breakfast and a member of the Worthington Chamber of Commerce, Lions Club, Rotary Club, Harding Evans Foundation and many other organizations. He was involved in a wide range of charitable projects, too many to list; all close to his heart. He was a great traveler; with his wife he traveled to 50 states and 48 countries on six continents. He was very active in hiking, camping and planning the famous "annual family vacation." He enjoyed carpentry, a skill he learned from his father. He kept an immaculate yard and was proud to win Yard of the Month.

CARNEY, Marian "Bubbles" Ramona, died March 30, 2013. She was a faithful member of the

Forest Grove church in Dover, Del. She played the piano every week and taught Sabbath School.


HENDRIX, Henrietta "Elizabeth," born December 7, 1919, in Baltimore; died December 14, 2012, in Glen Burnie, Md. She was a faithful member of Baltimore First church in Ellicott City, Md., for many years. She is survived by her nephews: Robert W. Immler of Westminster, Md., and Thomas B. Immler of Finksburg, Md.

SETH, Courtney M. (Hendryx), born November 13, 1930, in Baker, Ore.; died March 1, 2013, in Collegedale, Tenn. She was a member of the Collegedale (Tenn.) church. From 1953-56, Courtney was employed as the secretary for the education secretary at the Columbia Union Conference office in Takoma Park, Md. (now in Columbia, Md.) From 1974-79 she was the church secretary at the Takoma Park church. Then in 1980, she began working as a secretary at the Medical Center Hospital in Punta Gorda, Fla., and then from 1995 to 2000, was the church secretary at the Port Charlotte (Fla.) church. She is survived by her husband, William Seth, of Collegedale; her daughters: Marie Petrelis of Frederick, Md., Karen Seth of Germantown, Md., and Barbara Edens of Ooltewah, Tenn.; her son,

Doug Seth, of Meridian, Miss., and Ken Seth, of Mt. Airy, Md.; nine grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

SHEER, Walter B., M.D., born on a ranch in southern Idaho; died peacefully in his sleep at home January 4, 2013. He was born to immigrant parents and was the last of seven children. The majority of his education was within the Seventh-day Adventist school system, which he strongly appreciated and supported. Following graduation from Gem State Academy, he was drafted into the U.S. Military Army Airborne. Returning from military duty, he worked on a ranch before enrolling at Walla Walla College (now Walla Walla University) in Washington, graduating in 1954. In 1958 he graduated from Loma Linda University Medical School (Calif.). After completing his medical training he relocated to Maryland and purchased a busy family medicine practice, which he continued for 42 years. He is survived by his wife of 51 years, Doris A. Novak Sheer; his four daughters: Keli Mace (Perry) of Grottoes, Va., Kimberly Sheer of Laguna Beach, Calif., Susan Perkin (Dr. Ronald M.) of Greenville, N.C., Leslie Sheer of Charlottesville, Va.; his grandchildren: Benjamin and Savannah Perkin, Seth, Zach and Alexis Mace; two sisters; and numerous nephews and nieces.

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Worship Service: 11 a.m.

Speaker Schedule:

June 29	Robb Long
July 6	Stephen Chavez
July 13	Larry Evans
July 20	Terry Johnsson
July 27	Kermit Netteburg
August 3	Derek Morris
August 10	William Johnsson
August 17	Fred Kinsey
August 24	Charles Tapp
August 31	Robert Quintana
September 7	Vladimir Corea
September 14	Mark Sigue
September 21	Nikolaus Satelmajer
September 28	Gary Gibbs

Services held at St. Peter's Lutheran Church
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Casual dress is appropriate.

Columbia Union Revolving Fund

WELL INTO THE 21ST CENTURY, the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Columbia Union is busy building the body of Christ through its many entities. As union membership increases, so does the need for churches, schools, conference offices and other structures.

The Columbia Union Revolving Fund (CURF) is the organization hundreds of Adventist entities have depended on for 44 years to get low-interest funding to fix, purchase, expand or build. Allegheny East Conference's Emmanuel-Brinklow church in Ashton, Md., bought a new property with a CURF loan. Ohio Conference's Worthington congregation built a new church and school with a loan from CURF. Since it started, CURF has provided some 1,800 loans to institutions in the Columbia Union.

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