



# AVLN

ADVENTIST VIRTUAL LEARNING NETWORK

BY SHIRLEY FREED

In this column, we will be highlighting three major AVLN initiatives: the first online conference, the Montemorelos training, and online courses.

## Online Conference

AVLN delivered the first totally online conference ever held in the Adventist system, May 8-12, 2005. It used a combination of asynchronous discussion, synchronous online events, and local face-to-face sessions. The conference focused on online education, technology use, and faith integration for all levels and mediums. More than 200 Adventist educators participated in the 2005 conference from about 40 institutions on five continents: North America, Australia, Central America, Africa, and Asia. A series of clocks on the conference Website showing the time in six major cities helped the attendees deal with time differences.

The online conference started on Sunday night, May 8, for the Philippines and Australia. At 3 a.m. Pacific time, Bob Paulson, AVLN president, opened the conference with a keynote presentation highlighting lessons about collaboration from the quaking aspen. Using Voxwire, an online presentation tool, conference attendees were able to hear the presentation, view the PowerPoint slides, ask questions (aurally), and chat on a message board. The keynote presentation was repeated three more times on Monday, May 9, for Western Hemisphere participants.

There were 10 strands (see conference floor plan on page 46) where presentations, papers, resources, and discussion boards were available by clicking on the appropriate icon. The presentation icon took people to papers that had been prepared and posted prior to the opening of the conference. The discussion icon connected people to the bulletin board area and gave attendees an opportunity to become involved in an asynchronous discussion with other Adventist educators. The real-time chat icon connected individuals who were awake and able to talk at the same time. The real-time chat was used for the help desk, some of the chapel sessions, and presentation discussions. The Voxwire icon went to a live voice chat where people could hear one another and speak using the microphone on their computer. Voxwire also allowed presenters to share their presentation and take questions and comments from the audience.

A help desk manned by Adventist educators in Canada, the U.S., and Australia provided round-the-clock assistance for those experiencing technology difficulties.



David Jeffrey was in charge of chapel each evening, and participants were immersed in a discussion of examples of collaboration from the Bible. They even sang "Go, Light Your World," the conference theme song.

Southwestern Adventist University (U.S.), Walla Walla College (U.S.), Caribbean Union College (Trinidad), and AIIAS (Philippines) were able to facilitate strong face-to-face sessions for their faculty.

Funding and support for the conference was graciously provided by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, the North American Division, and Versacare.

One conference participant summed up his experience: "I enjoyed being able to see all presentations at leisure to learn what is happening with education in the denomination. I was not pressed for time, or trying to juggle which ones I needed to attend the most as was the case with past AVLN conferences. Also, I was able to click on attendees' e-mail to ask questions or make comments about presentations, etc., rather than trying to 'run down' the individual as at past conferences. Also, no plane tickets, rental cars, hauling suitcases in and out of the motel, etc., that went with past conferences."

This conference was such a success that another one is being prepared for June 19-22, 2006. Be sure to plan to attend!

## Montemorelos University Training

At the end of May, four AVLN board members, Marilyn



Eggers, Shirley Freed, Janine Lim, and Ana Salazar, presented two days of training in online education to the faculty at Montemorelos University in Mexico. Sessions covered topics such as faith integration, collaboration in the Adventist education system, Website evaluation, designing online learning, and basic technology training. Montemorelos technical staff provided some of these sessions via live streaming to universities in Central and South America. The Montemorelos faculty appreciated the training, and the administration is eager to support further AVLN activities for the benefit of Spanish-speaking countries. From this experience, plans were initiated for a totally bilingual (Spanish and English) online conference for Adventist educators, June 19-22, 2006. ✍



Shirley Freed

**Shirley Freed** is Chair of the Leadership and Educational Administration Department at Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan. She is past President of AVLN and one of the organization's originators, and teaches all of her courses online. You can reach her by e-mail at [freed@andrews.edu](mailto:freed@andrews.edu).

## AVLN Courses Available Online

### Active Online Teaching (I)

Learn how to teach online, to include meaningful interactions, and to integrate faith and learning in your online courses.

### Active Online Courses (II)

Spend six weeks working on your online course with assistance and feedback.

### Desire2Learn Mini-Courses

Desire2Learn is an online course management system that can be used in many ways, including Web-enhancing classes or teaching full online classes. Take the mini courses that address your interest.

### Developing WebQuests

A WebQuest is "an inquiry oriented activity in which most or all of the information used by learners is drawn from the Web." Design and create a WebQuest for your students.

### Internet Research and Projects

Create collaborative projects and online activities for your students, and develop ways to design efficient Internet research projects.

### Integrating Technology in the Curriculum

Participants will learn to transform learning into technology-rich curriculum.

### Technology in the Early Elementary Classroom

K-3 teachers will increase their skills in using digital cameras, KidPix, TuxPaint, and other technologies in the classroom.

Please check the AVLN Webpage—<http://www.avln.org> for information on credits and charges.

