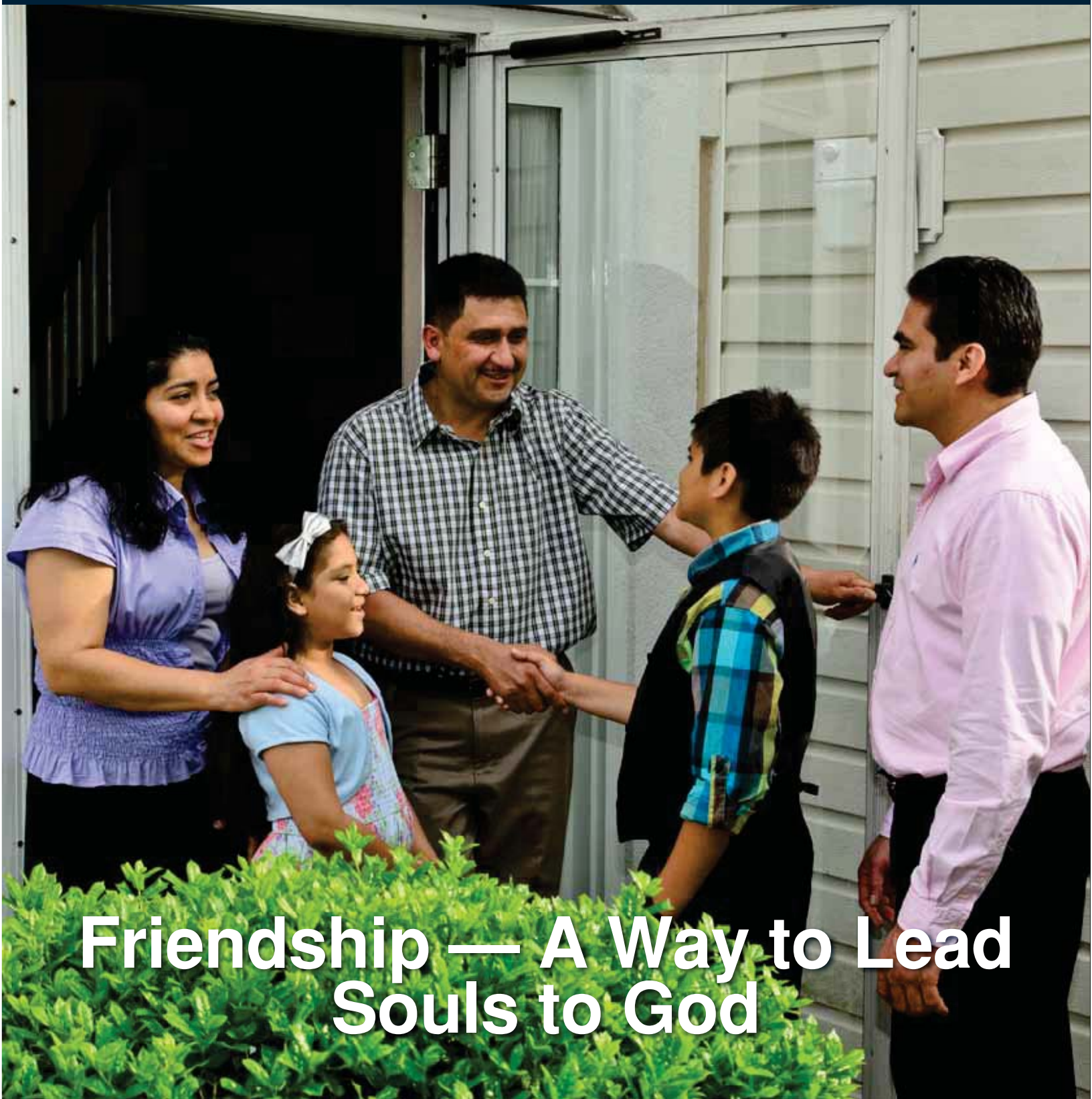


June 2011

# T SOUTHERN TIDINGS



**Friendship — A Way to Lead  
Souls to God**

# Our Day Together

After we were married four years, my husband was given the opportunity to attend the seminary at Andrews University. He had two jobs and was going to school full time. When we arrived at Andrews, Carisa, our daughter, was nine months old, and I was three months pregnant with Tim, our son. I tried to do some sales work in the evening when Gordon was home studying to help supplement our income, but mainly my job was taking care of babies, picking fresh fruit and vegetables, and canning the wonderful produce we were able to get around Berrien Springs, Michigan. We were young, happy, poor, and very busy; so busy that finding time together was difficult.

But, because I loved my husband so much, I wanted to have a special time with him — a few hours when we could think about each other and enjoy being together — a time when we could talk and share our thoughts with no distractions. A time when we could relax, laugh, and forget about the stress of finances, work, and school. So we agreed on a special afternoon together every week. We called it “our date day.” We found a good babysitter to watch the children, and planned an activity each week that we could enjoy together. This special day, this time designated for each other, blessed us mentally and physically, made wonderful memories, and blessed our marriage with a strong love and friendship.

Jesus knew that we would get busy in the act of living. With His visual presence in Heaven, He needed something special to grow the love and friendship with His created beings. He wanted a time in which He and His family could do things they loved and enjoyed together, when they could focus on each other and not be distracted. So He created a special time — a day, 24 hours every week, Friday evening at sunset until Saturday evening at sunset — and He called it Sabbath, a day of rest.

In Exodus 20:8-11, Jesus tells us about this day He made, and He gave us instructions to not work but to keep that day, the Sabbath, the seventh day, a day of rest. We are to keep it holy, or set it aside as special, and we are to remember to do it each week, never forgetting to come apart from our regular work and activities and spend time with God. And in Mark 2:27, He tells us He made it for us. So the Sabbath is not to be a burden on us, but a delight and a blessing. In fact, the Bible also says that God blessed this day: Not only is it a day for developing friendship and love for God, but it is a day that carries a special gift, a blessing, to each person that partakes of its observance. God knew that worries and work would consume us. He knew our bodies both physically and mentally needed rest and rejuvenation. He was jealous for our time and thoughts, so He created a date day for God and me. What wonderful memories I have of Sabbath with Jesus! I can start the week with energy and peace after resting in His presence. What a store of spiritual and physical gifts have blessed my life with its observance. And as I partake of these wonderful blessings, I can experience the rest and assurance of the gift of redemption which Sabbath is a symbol of each week — a reminder of that “perfect rest” in Jesus.



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*As Christ modeled when He ministered on Earth, friendship is a proven way to lead souls to God.*





*“By being social and coming close to the people, you may turn the current of their thoughts more readily than the most able discourse.”*

*Gospel Workers, page 193*

# Friendship

## A Way to Lead Souls to God

BY MARIEL LOMBARDI

It was Yanina's first day of work. She had just graduated and moved to the big city to start her career. It was exciting. She had wanted to get away from old problems, and this seemed like a great opportunity to do so. Nevertheless, she soon found out that the environment at the new company was very competitive and not as friendly as she wished. She had no friends or acquaintances, and old problems began to haunt her again. It was not too long after that she started feeling depressed.

By this time, she had to move her office to a different floor. That is where she met Pablo, a man that had been working at the company for years. He was very helpful; finally, she had someone to talk to. Pablo noticed Yanina's state of mind, and told his wife, Raquel, about it. She immediately suggested he invited her for dinner. "We have to help her," she said. Pablo and Raquel were Adventists. They were active in church, but did not feel comfortable with the idea of giving Bible studies or anything that involved public speaking. Before inviting her, they prayed for the Holy Spirit to work in them, to be able to share God's love. Yanina accepted the invitation, and they had a lovely evening getting acquainted.

Their friendship continued to grow, and Pablo and Raquel had the opportunity to help Yanina many times, in different situations. Yanina knew they be-

lieved in God. Often, when talking about simple things, they saw them as blessings, and showed a thankful heart. Yanina believed in God, too, but her concept of Him was blurry. Little by little, Yanina started seeing Pablo and Raquel as family and started asking them about their religious beliefs. She felt free to do so because they had never pressured her. Her questions became deeper as she learned new things, and God's love became more real to her. Finally, she felt comfortable to invite herself to church. Yanina was very happy. She had found peace of mind placing her old and new issues in God's hands. She had learned that God stands near us at all times — in her case, using her new friends to help her. She asked for Bible studies, and decided to get baptized. It was a natural process, and a blessing to the ones involved.

One of Jesus' ways of accomplishing His saving mission was to bring humankind back to God by restoring the true idea of God to them. To people in those days, God was an unapproachable Being. He was hidden behind layers and layers

of misconceptions, rules, and ideas that the devil had placed in their minds. That is also true in this era. For the same and different reasons, humanity finds it difficult to turn to God. Satan has used every subtle trick to have God's children where he wants them to be: far from their loving Father. That is why it was Jesus' plan to become one of us. In the simplest ways possible, He tried to show us how close He and His Father are to every single soul.

When reading the Scriptures, we often see Him sitting at people's homes. Using social situations, Jesus witnessed about the love of His father by showing the people His love for them. He did not come through peoples' doors to immediately preach a sermon. Instead, He made sure He gained the trust of those around Him and a place in their hearts, to be able to speak to those hearts at the right time. We see Him eating at Lazarus', Zacheus', Peter's, and even at a Pharisee's house. We also see Him in Cana of Galilee attending a wedding, and there are no records of any preaching in that occasion. We only see Him using His power to help.

In His call to men he says, "Behold I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come into Him, and dine with him, and he with Me," Revelation 3:20. Jesus loves our company, and being with us in everything we do. When we experience that, we confide our lives to Him.

"Christ's method alone





will give true success in reaching the people. The Savior mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then, He bade them ‘follow me,’” The Ministry of Healing, page 143.

This has always been the key to people’s hearts. The same method can be used today.

For the past decade, the Southern Union Conference Hispanic Ministries Department has been promoting the evangelistic work through small groups. There are approximately 920 families that have opened their homes for small groups of Bible study. People find it easier to attend a meeting at the house of someone they know, and enjoy a Bible study in a familiar environment where they do not feel like strangers, than going to a church or a meeting hall. This presents more opportunities of having a closer relationship with the ones we want to bring to Jesus. There is a better chance of knowing their needs to be able to help them,



not only spiritually. Churches have been extremely enthusiastic about this method of evangelism, and the Hispanic Ministries Department has organized seminars and prepared materials and ideas to make this work easier. Usually, after a certain period of time, once small groups have finished a series of studies and become familiar with some of the church members, they are invited to an evangelistic campaign. Many individuals have been baptized after these efforts.

“In our churches, let small companies be formed for service... The formation of small companies as basis of Christian effort has been

presented to me by One who cannot err,” Testimony Treasures III, page 84.

“Your success will not depend so much upon your knowledge and accomplishments, as upon your ability to find your way to the heart... The presentation of Christ

in the family, by the fireside, and in small gatherings in private houses, is often more successful in winning souls to Jesus than are sermons delivered ...in halls or churches,” Gospel Workers, page 193.

Now, the concept of winning souls through friendship, has taken a different approach. A more personal and natural method of evangelism was introduced through the movie “La Ventana” (The Window, script by evangelist Alejandro Bullón) which has been distributed in the churches of our territory, as well as other unions. The movie shows the process that a family



went through as they realized their neighbors needed help. How they became friends, spent leisure time together, and comforted them as they mourned the lost of their son. Little by little their new friends became interested in their beliefs, and accepting Christ was the consequence.

Following the trend of thought illustrated by the movie last March, evangelist Alejandro Bullón and Sao Paulo Brazil Adventist University Theology professor Rainieri Sales, presented the plan “Hogares de

ern conferences. Every family has a friend, relative, neighbor, or co-worker with spiritual, emotional, or material needs. An invitation was extended to the 10,000 Hispanic families in the Union territory, to open their home to that person in need. The idea is to pray for him/her during a certain period of time, before inviting her/him to enjoy moments of fellowship during a special and simple meal at their home on May 14. After the invitation, families continued to pray for the Holy Spirit to provide them love and wisdom to

warm gathering, simple conversation on matters of mutual interests, and looking for the opportunity to mingle stories of blessings received. At the end of the visit, the family will pray for the friend, give him/her a small present, and lend a book, video, or CD that will leave the door open to a future encounter. The invitation is to continue that friendship in a social way, and tactfully take every opportunity to show Jesus’ kindness and love. Little by little, the friend will become interested in the beliefs that make that family different. This method requires a lot of prayer and study.

A variety of seminars on personal witnessing work were presented at the festival. The invitation was clear throughout the weekend, and was repeated in a variety of ways: “We need to use Jesus’ evangelism method carried out through sincere friendship.” The 700 attendees returned to their homes inspired to share the concepts learned with their families and churches.

The call goes even farther: evangelism is not a single event. It is a lifestyle that attracts more people than the most eloquent sermon.



Esperanza” (Homes of Hope) at the last Festival of the Laity sponsored and organized by the Southern Union, and Florida and Southeast-

witness, and to the guests, the capability of seeing the love of the Lord towards men. The idea is not of a preaching session; just a nice and





# FLEISCHMANN TRUSTS GOD TO MAKE DECISIONS

BY BRITNI BRANNON

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On April 27, 2011, Michael Fleischmann was headed toward his second customer on his food-service distributor route in Trenton, Ga., when debris traveling in the same direction as his vehicle started passing him on the road. Turning his head to look behind him, he discovered a tornado barreling down the road, riding on his heels.



"I put my foot on the gas pedal and really took off," Fleischmann said.

Just ahead was a convenience store, where he whipped his car in, jumped out and headed for the doors.

"It was only about 20 feet away," he said, "but I felt like I was running in a dream, like you're never going to get there. Debris was blowing by me; I was getting hit on the back by debris... Things were flying through the air, things [were] skittering across the ground past [my] feet. [The tornado was] picking up things like empty boxes and odd things like road signs and slinging them, and it's like, 'Oh man! I gotta get out of here because those things are missiles.' I really thought that this could be the end for me here on this earth."

But he made it to the door and, inside, Fleischmann found a handful of people frozen in place and not sure exactly what to do under the circumstances. He, on the other hand, knew exactly where he was going: the walk-in cooler. He told them that's where they needed to be, too, and the group followed as windows exploded, merchandise started flying, and ceiling tiles popped out of place and fell to the floor. Fleischmann said he was certain the roof was going to come off next.

The small group waited while screaming winds and torrential rain passed over — it all happened in a mere 15-20 seconds. Once a relative calm returned, they emerged to find the store in state of disarray, with groceries and glass scattered everywhere and ceiling tiles decorating the floor instead. Amazingly, the roof had remained intact, and Fleischmann returned to his vehicle to find it as he'd left it, though the bank next door was roof-bare, large trees

lay uprooted, and live electric wires sprawled across the landscape.

"It was just a surreal scene," he said.

He and another member of the group lent their cell phones to others so family members could be called.

"I thanked God for protecting me," he said. Fleischmann then called his son to assure him he was alright.

"It all happened so fast. There was no time to think. When everything settled, I realized how close I'd come to death."

The brush with death has been particularly somber and reflexive for Fleischmann, who lost a son nearly seven years ago.

"It's a very interesting feeling for me," he said. "I don't question that [his son's death], but God in His wisdom, for some reason, He allowed

my son to die. When we prayed over him with the pastor, we prayed for God's will. We knew what we wanted, but we prayed God's will. One day God is going to put that little boy back in my arms."

Fleischmann reflected on the comparison of him being a father and knowing what's best for his own children, and God being our Heavenly Father.

"I have to trust that God makes the decisions."

And Fleischmann knows from experience that trusting God is the best way. He's been through two other tornadoes, though he said he always witnessed the storms from a distance; they were never the experience he went through about 36 hours ago. But the most recent one, about 15 years ago, set the precedent for what saved his life and the lives of the other convenience store

group. He was living in Indiana at the time, and a tornado ripped through town not far from where he lived, demolishing a local Domino's Pizza joint.

"The Domino's Pizza was right in the path of the tornado, and it was on a cement slab. [It] was gone, but right in the middle was the walk-in cooler—it was still there. As soon as I saw that tornado — and I give the Lord credit for this — that's the first thing that came to my mind.

Fleischmann is a member of the Collegedale Church in Tennessee.

To see a video and interviews with other members, visit [www.southernunion.com](http://www.southernunion.com).

*Britni Brannon is Georgia-Cumberland Conference communication assistant.*



*Michael Fleischmann stands by the car he was driving when he saw a tornado heading his way. He made a quick dash into a local convenience store in Trenton, Georgia. This not only saved his life but the lives on those inside the store as well.*





*Not much was left of Piedmont Church after a tornado slammed into it on April 27, 2011.*

# TORNADOES, DEVASTATION, HOPE

BY REBECCA GRICE

Sabbath, April 30, 2011, was to be a high day for the Piedmont, Alabama, Church. Five years ago the congregation had united to build a beautiful church building, and now the last payment had been made. It was time to burn the mortgage. Gulf States Conference officers and special friends were invited to come and share in this special service. That was before April 27, when severe weather swept across the southeast, and as many as 28 tornadoes slashed across the central and northern parts of Alabama. The tornadoes left in their wake thousands of destroyed homes and businesses, injured people, and more than 230 tornado-related deaths.

The Piedmont Church was not spared. On Wednesday evening,

Rick Blyth, pastor, and his wife, Ginger, received a call from Bryon Folsom, a friend and someone with whom they had been studying the Bible, informing them that their church had been destroyed. Only 60 miles north, John and Elease Whit-ed, members of the Ownbey Chapel Church, left their home and went across the street to be with their daughter during the storm. All three of them lost their lives when their daughter's house was completely destroyed by a tornado. By Thursday it was evident many Adventist Church members' homes and businesses had suffered storm damage, and a number had been completely destroyed.

Though the situation was bleak, there was hope and a sense that

all would work out as long as God was there, no matter the circumstances. Many members have shared stories of God's protection. Before the Blythes had time to think about where they would have church in the following weeks, Bryon Folsom called again and offered the use of the chapel in his new funeral home, free of charge. Ginger Blythe says, "We have lost a church building; we still have our church family." She pauses and then adds, "We know God is providing. We won't let Satan stop us. This next time, we'll build an even bigger, better church."

In spite of a hope and faith in a caring God, there are physical needs for all who were affected. On Wednesday evening, while most people were watching the weather



news and staying close to their “safe places,” Bob, Robert, and Alex Hill had already gathered the equipment needed for clearing roadways so emergency vehicles could get through, and were heading toward Pleasant Grove, a town northwest of Birmingham that had been hit hard. They worked through most of the night.

By Thursday evening, three mobile kitchens were preparing meals for volunteers and those affected by the storms. Two of these mobile kitchens are in Pleasant Grove, Alabama, and one is in Concord, Alabama. Rick and Deborah Hutchinson, from the Gulf States Conference, along with Buster Lowery and other volunteers, helped at the Concord site. ACTS (Active Christians That Serve) volunteers are maintaining the mobile kitchens in Pleasant Grove. A group of trained students from Union College came to help with search and rescue. Heritage Academy students and Bass Memorial Academy students helped serve meals, and went from house site to house site (very few buildings

were standing) accessing what had happened to each family. By Sunday, numerous volunteers, many from the Birmingham First and Roebuck Adventist churches were “on the ground” helping with debris removal and meeting other requests as needed.

Ray Elsberry, Gulf States disaster response director, reported at the request of the Cullman County EMA, a warehouse in Cullman, Alabama, has been opened to handle incoming donations. Donny Robertson, a leader at the Cullman Church, is the warehouse manager. A group of church members from the Cullman Church are helping. Later, a distribution warehouse was opened in Alabama. A group of church mem-



*Piedmont Church, before it was destroyed by a tornado on April 27, 2011*

bers from the Guntersville Church are helping. For many residents it will take a long time for things to get back to normal. There will be a continuing need for volunteers to give of their time and talents to help all who have suffered from these storms. Please continue to remember this area in your prayers.

To see a video and interviews with other members, visit [www.southernunion.com](http://www.southernunion.com).



*A group of ACTS volunteers, some from Heritage Academy in Tennessee, and others from Birmingham First Church, help victims select household items they need.*

# Adventists InStep for Life

BY KATIA REINERT

What do a hospital-sponsored 5K run/walk, a school-sponsored community vegetable garden, and a church-sponsored summer feeding program have in common? They are all ways in which Seventh-day Adventist institutions and members are working together to promote a healthy lifestyle and fight childhood obesity.

Today, doctors are seeing diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, kidney disease, and heart disease — which once affected only older adults — striking children as young as six. The cause? Childhood obesity, which in 2008 reached an all-time high of 17 percent among children ages 2 through 19, according to the Federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. In fact, the concern is that this may be the first generation in history that grows up less healthy than their parents. The potential impact on our nation's economic health and security is significant.

But the good news is that there is a lot that we can do to prevent these diseases. "This is our time! As a Church we have long talked about the importance of not just healthy minds and hearts, but also healthy bodies. Our culture is coming to grips with its health crises, and we have a message for the times," reports Dan Jackson, president of the North American Division (NAD).

The Seventh-day Adventist Church joined some 50 other faith and community organizations in support of a national initiative of United States first lady Michelle Obama to fight the epidemic of childhood obesity. Adventists InStep for Life is a North American Division initiative

Church members will be encouraged to:

1. Increase physical activity via:
  - Collectively accumulating one million miles through walking and other activities

- 60 percent of Adventist students achieving the NAD and President Active Lifestyle Awards

2. Focus on nutrition and increasing fruit and vegetable servings by:

- Launching 100 summer feeding programs (VBS, camps, community service activities, etc.) so children will have access to healthy meals when school is out

- Starting 100 community vegetable gardens at schools and churches to invite people who don't have their own space to grow food

3. Engage youth, parents, schools, and the community in working together to fight obesity

More than ever, the time has come for God's message of healing and restoration to be heard. Adventists InStep for Life is a wonderful opportunity to make a positive impact for Christ.

Health ministries leaders across the Division have worked together to develop ideas, resources, and a tool kit for implementing the initiative, which launched April 1, 2011. The North American Division has also set aside Sunday, September 25, as "Let's Move Day." Churches, schools, and healthcare institutions are encouraged to host 5K run/walks or other active events on that day to provide opportunities for physical activity, and promote a healthier lifestyle.

"As soon as InStep for Life was first started, the Southern Union Conference voted that same year at its administrative and departmental meetings to enthusiastically support the program in all of our churches,

and urged them to keep a record of their InStep for Life reports," shares Allan R. Williamson, Southern Union health ministries director. "We like the new name with the addition of Adventists InStep for Life. The Southern Union Conference definitely says, 'YES!' to healthy kids and families."

E. W. Dempsey, Georgia-Cumberland Conference health ministries director, reports that through their ongoing InStep for Life program, members are reaping the benefits of renewed health and vitality through exercise. "Reports have come in from people who have been able to reduce and in some cases eliminate medications as the result of a consistent exercise program. Physical activity is powerful medicine! It can change your life."

"This initiative is consistent with our Church's approach to ministering to people physically, mentally, socially, and spiritually," states Ted N. C. Wilson, president of the Adventist World Church. "The Seventh-day Adventist Church will do its part to fulfill God's wish found in III John 2, which indicates that God wants us to be in physical and spiritual health."

Do you want a healthy future for yourself, your children, and make a difference in your community? Adventists InStep for Life is an opportunity to promote a message of healthful living and make a positive impact for Christ. For details and an initiative tool kit, visit [www.nad-healthministries.org](http://www.nad-healthministries.org).

*Katia Reinert, MSN, CRNP, FNP-BC, PHCNS-BC, FCN, is health ministries director at the North American Division.*





Debra Fryson (sitting, right, in burgundy jacket), Southern Union director of education, leads out in a question and answer session with students at Ridgetop Adventist School, Ridgetop, Tennessee.

W. EUGENE BREWER

## What Makes Them Schools of Excellence?

BY DON TUCKER

Since the Adventist EDGE (Educators Delivering a Great Education) initiative began more than nine years ago, numerous schools across the Southern Union — from pre-K through grade 12 — have been improving education for hundreds of students. Just how are these schools doing it? What do they all have in common?

The answer is dedication. An excellent school doesn't happen overnight; it takes hard work and intention to build a culture of excellence, but when a whole community — the church, school, and home — comes together to create an excellent school, the results are astounding.

### Excellent Effort

Education is an important topic in today's culture, as pundits and experts debate the best ways to teach children. In the Southern Union, the answer to that debate was the EDGE initiative, which follows a scriptural mandate to strive for excellence. The EDGE formula for excellent schools is to deliver **GREAT** education that is **God-centered**, **Results-oriented**, in an **Environment** that is safe and nurturing, **Aligned** with Adventist and national standards, and a **Team effort**.

Those who received the Adventist EDGE School of Excellence award said the results of the certification process were better than they had anticipated.

"We in the Adventist system need to go beyond the minimum requirements for accreditation and focus on the core elements that will identify our schools as the highest quality of education," says Richard Stitzer, principal of John L. Coble Elementary School, Calhoun, Georgia. "We looked at all the components of what GREAT meant," says Yvonne Brown, principal of Decatur Adventist Junior Academy, Stone Mountain, Georgia.

EDGE certification starts with a six-step process that helps schools define their long-term goals and identify areas for improvement. In order to become certified, schools examine every aspect of their operation, from the grounds and facilities to curriculum and customer service. The spiritual aspect of education is emphasized and the schools work hard to focus on building positive relationships and compelling experiences by being courteous, kind, friendly, warm, caring, accepting, and Christlike all the time. Ineffective teaching methods and outdated tools are discarded or replaced. A teaching system called 4MAT helps faculty make the most of good teaching practices, and teachers work to meet students' needs on an individual level.

Like any worthy endeavor, meeting the requirements for EDGE certification takes time. Parents, board members, faculty, and even students

work together as a team to help the schools make necessary improvements.

### Excellent Results

By the time the school is certified as a School of Excellence, its mission and vision have been refined; parents and students begin to take more pride in their school, and the faculty act with a new sense of purpose.

"Our enrollment has increased, confidence has improved, and the board has more clarity in its vision and direction," says Keith Nelson, principal of Greeneville Adventist Academy, Greeneville, Tennessee.

"There were a lot of things we had been doing before, but we just weren't very intentional," says Aaron Raines, principal of Ridgetop Adventist Elementary School, Ridgetop, Tennessee.

That vision is the core of the EDGE initiative. Any school can produce good test results and stellar scholars, but EDGE Schools provide so much more than that — they are dedicated not only to excellence in education, but also to transparency in education, but also to transparency with parents and students, relationships with the community, a vision of an ever-brighter future, and Christlike spiritual instruction.

*Don Tucker is marketing consultant for the Southern Union Office of Education.*



# From a Distance: Fostering Spirituality in Online Learning

BY DAN LIM, PH.D.

Adventist colleges were founded on the principles not only of educating the mind, but of doing so in a spiritually rich environment, allowing students to explore and grow in their relationship with God. These days, we find ourselves juxtaposed between classroom and distance learning environments and have had to become innovative in our ways of fostering spiritual development. In distance learning, students are more likely taught as individuals whether in small or large distance courses. “Online you get to know your students’ mind, not just their faces,” says Linda Harasim, an online learning expert. Distance instructors quickly realize that it may take more time to interact with distance students due to the instant communication channels, on-demand access, and constructivist environment in online learning. The highly interactive environment in online learning between instructor and students, and between students and students, could be a great way to foster a spiritual environment if done intentionally. Florida Hospital College of Health Sciences (FHCHS) has taken advantage of the highly interactive online learning environment to extend one of the four institution mission words, Spirituality, to its 1,500 degree-seeking dis-

tance students in three distance bachelor’s completion programs – nursing, radiologic sciences, and sonography. The right mix of synchronous and asynchronous learning has been a critical model for fostering a positive spiritual climate as well as a strong retention tool at FHCHS.

Learning online could be a lonely experience and distance students needing nurture often find it in a positive spiritual climate. One of the hallmarks of the FHCHS distance modality is the strong nurturing instructor presence. Instructors have prayer with distance students during the weekly real-time class meetings, and students often have prayer requests for academic and life issues. Instructors using the Wimba “Live Classroom” conduct multimedia devotionals with students. In fact, some students enter the virtual room prior to the class meeting

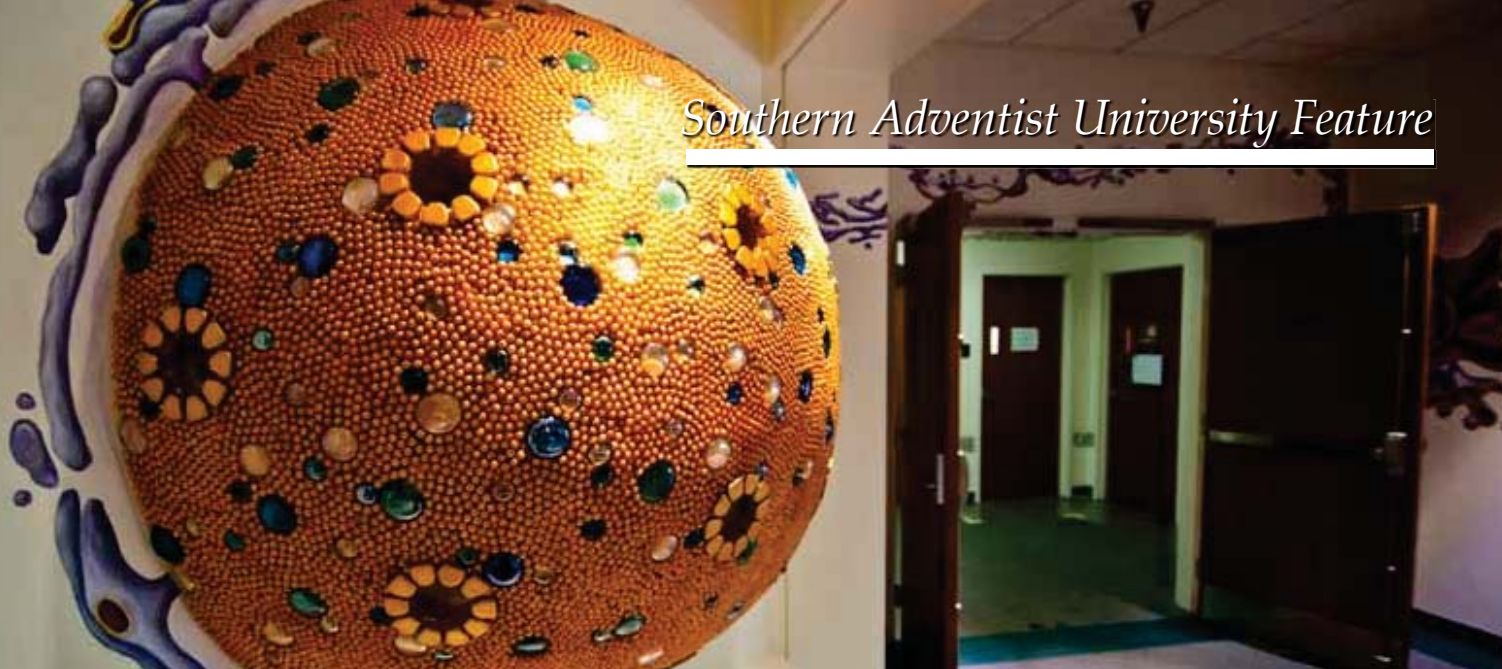
and enjoy the soothing multimedia devotionals. Distance students in the two required religion courses have indicated they experienced significant spiritual growth due to instructors’ modeling, the positive spiritual climate during online class meetings, and deep learning contents. One instructor is now working on a Wimba Bible class as her students wished that the religion class would not end.

FHCHS is working on other distance technologies. A new program has been launched in Denver via Polycom technology. The distance students at the Denver site experience that same positive spiritual climate in real-time as the students on the host campus in Orlando. While the IP-based Polycom equipment is running, students in Denver may Skype with students in Orlando to conduct a group learning activity. FHCHS is also experimenting with Second Life, a virtual world platform. The very first FHCHS Second Life simulation is an OB clinic, which has been integrated into a nursing class. The next project is to figure out how to effectively foster spirituality among distance students more visually via Second Life.

FHCHS endeavors to find highly engaging media and technologies to ultimately instill “Healthcare as Ministry” among its distance students.







*As students walk through the Origins Exhibit in the Biology Department, they will encounter what the outside of a typical cell nucleus looks like.*

## Southern Publishes Creation Statement

Southern Adventist University wrote and published its first Creation statement on February 20, 2011, affirming seven critical principles that pertain to Creation, such as a belief in the Genesis Creation story as literal, and the Word of God as true.

The statement was created after the General Conference Executive Committee for Seventh-day Adventists appealed to educational institutions to uphold the Adventist belief on Creation. It also was formed as part of the University's desire to show Southern's personal stance on the issue.

"Creation is foundational," says Greg King, dean of the School of Religion. "It tells us we are not a product of a purposeless nothing, but of a loving, benevolent God who wants to have a relationship with us."

In January, a University senate sub-committee was created to develop and write the statement. It consisted of seven members from several areas of the University, including biology, chemistry, physics, English, religion, business, and marketing and university relations. Within one month of meeting, the statement was passed and approved.

"The members already had a vision of what kind of statement Southern should have, and I think that is why it went so quickly," says Mitch

Menzmer, a professor in the chemistry department. "What it gets down to is whether or not a person will take the Bible as authoritative, or science as authoritative. You can't have both on issues of origins."

Southern's Creation statement directly affirms seven principles:

1. We affirm the primacy, authority, and trustworthiness of the Bible in all areas of inquiry it addresses, including the origin of the natural world and the various kinds of life created therein.
2. We affirm that Genesis 1-11 is an accurate and historical account of the events it presents. The description found therein is reaffirmed throughout the Old Testament, and every New Testament writer and Jesus Himself explicitly or implicitly affirms the historicity of Genesis 1-11.
3. We affirm the supernatural Creation of a beautiful and perfect world in one literal week of six consecutive, contiguous, 24-hour days of creative activity, followed by the Sabbath of rest.
4. We affirm that the Creation week and the origin of life on Earth took place recently, a few thousand years ago, and that there was no life on Earth prior to that time.
5. We affirm that death came about as the result of human sin,

that there was no death in the world as originally created, and that there will be no death in the new Earth as restored by God.

6. We affirm the value of Ellen G. White's endorsement of the biblical teaching on the early history of Earth, specifically a literal six-day creation, God's rest on the literal seventh day, a short chronology for life on Earth of a few thousand years, and a global Flood.

7. We affirm that the doctrine of Creation is foundational for and interconnected with other important biblical doctrines, including the inspiration of Scripture, the Sabbath, the character of God, the plan of salvation, marriage, resurrection, and the new earth.

Whether it is a professor in the science or English department, both affirm Southern's stance on Creation, representing the University's unified belief on the issue.

"At Southern we do not have to start with an ambiguous understanding of our origins," says Robert Montague, a professor in the School of Business and Management. "Instead, we can start with a sturdy faith in the Word of God, and rather than doubt God, we can appreciate and delight in His Word."



Former pastors and Conference officials were present to participate and support Ephesus Church's centennial celebration.

## Ephesus Celebrates 100 Years

In Columbia, South Carolina, on March 11, 1911, 69 faithful believers accepted the Adventist message as a result of an evangelistic meeting conducted by elders Sydney Scott and J. L. Critchlow. These faithful few then became members of the Columbia Seventh-day Adventist Church No. 2.

The first local elder, John A. Hoover, allowed the group to meet upstairs in a room over his grocery store on Blossom Street. Later a church building on 1216 Henderson Street was rented, which later became the church's first purchased property.

Membership growth in the early years of the church occurred as a result of spreading the Adventist message through Sabbath School, Ingathering programs, community outreach services, and evangelistic meetings. Calvin B. Rock, D.Min., interned from 1952 to 1954, and baptized 50 individuals during a tent meeting.

God has richly blessed the Columbia Church during the past century since the early days on Blossom Street. The congregation has moved multiple times, and its name has changed to Ephesus Seventh-day Adventist Church. The new edifice on Wilson Boulevard, north of downtown Columbia's Main Street, boasts a vibrant congregation of third and fourth generation Adventists, including children of members who attended the church in the 1940's and 1950's.

Leading up to the final week of celebration, the week was full of events and programs for the members. The church also paid homage to its past with a ceremony commemorating deceased members during the last 100 years.

Many former pastors, Conference officials, and community leaders were in attendance. Former pastor Marcelus Howard led the church through a week of spiritual and prayerful revival. During the week, the members were supported and honored by visits from William Winston, South Atlantic Conference secretary; Steve Benjamin, Columbia City mayor; and many community church choirs.

On Sabbath, the congregation celebrated with a feeling of homecoming and an august body of ministers led by the current church pastor and Conference treasurer, Larry E. Johnson. Also in attendance were Vanard J. Mendinghall, Conference president; pastors Carl Nesmith, Alex Todd, Kenneth Moore, Melvin Warfield, Horace Malone, Benjamin Cummings, Ivan Williams, Melvin Preston, and Calvin Preston, who also was the Sabbath speaker; and retiree Calvin

BY SHELLY-ANN BOWEN  
Robinson.

The Ephesus Church family, friends, and community gathered on Sunday, March 6, 2011, to culminate seven months of community outreach that involved Bible study, evangelism, and youth gatherings. "Celebrating the Planting of 100 Footsteps ... Lord Plant our Feet on Higher Ground."

The church's initiatives to reach the community, reclaim former members, empower youth, recognize veterans, and increase the church's presence in the city of Columbia were all reported to the congregation as successful efforts by Vanessa Des-Saussure Bartley, celebration committee chair.

Leslie O'Neal, the leader for "Friday Friends," an activity targeting nonAdventist youth, ages 16-25, plans to continue the program after the celebration ended.

The Ephesus congregation is excited about its future and vision of impacting the immediate community using Christ's model of meeting the needs of the people before bidding them to follow Him.



Steve Benjamin, Columbia City mayor, congratulates the congregation for the milestone of reaching the 100-year mark.



## Division President Dan Jackson Encourages Students at Advent Home



*Blondel Senior, Ph.D. (left), welcomes Dan Jackson, North American Division president, to Advent Home.*

Dan Jackson, North American Division (NAD) president, visited Advent Home Learning Center in Calhoun, Tenn., in February. Accompanied by Tom Evans, NAD treasurer, and Gail Reitz, he toured the campus with Blondel Senior, Ph.D., Advent Home director. Jackson then spoke to the students, staff, and guests in the school auditorium.

In a warm, down-to-earth manner, Jackson shared some of his own teenage rebellion. He would break into houses, steal and “chug-a-lug” alcohol with his buddies, until one summer his mother told him to

pack his things — she was taking him to a Christian academy. Although his dad objected, a determined mom enrolled him in (then) Canadian Union College Academy (CUCA). Two of his friends had committed suicide, and Jackson sensed that he needed to leave his old environment.

He recalled the sacrifice his mother made for him to attend CUCA, where even-

tually he found Jesus.

“Actually, Jesus found me,” he said. God was telling

me, ‘I’m not finished with you yet.’ Jesus loved me too much to leave me like that.” The eight years there were good ones. God gave him victory over smoking, he married his wife, Donna, and they had their first child. Today, he is a passionate believer in Adventist education.

During a brief question/answer session, one student asked how he got his current position. “Not by politics,” Jackson replied. “It was a total surprise, but I believe in my heart, God did it.” Before leaving campus, he encouraged the boys, “Life is a path, a journey. You’re on the path and God is leading you. God doesn’t stop, even when we do.”

—BY BARBARA GRAHAM



*Division President Dan Jackson visited Advent Home Learning Center where he shared his testimony with the students and staff, and then answered questions.*

## Florida Hospital Flagler's PET-CT Imaging Technology is Unique to Florida

Florida Hospital Flagler, Palm Coast, Fla., is now equipped with a Positron Emission Tomography CT (PET-CT), more advanced than any other facility in the state. The advanced capabilities benefit patients through optimized system design. It enables detection of disease at an earlier stage, motion match; improves the quality of scans in areas prone to motion and a patient-friendly design; and features a comfortable bed for patients.

"This type of PET-CT benefits the patients because it combines the ability of not only the PET-CT, but also the ability to plan

the patients' radiation therapy in the same machine," said Alvaro Alvarez, M.D., radiation oncologist. "It allows patients the luxury of only needing one scan, as opposed to having three separate scans, and then needing to fuse the scans together."

With a PET-CT scan, doctors can better determine whether a mass is malignant (cancerous) or benign (not cancerous). Prior to an exam, a mildly radioactive substance called a radiotracer is injected into the patient. The PET-CT



image helps distinguish cancer from healthy tissue when there is an accumu-

lation of the radiotracer in the cancerous tissue. Most radiotracers are glucose (sugar) based, and because cancerous cells and tumors absorb, accumulate, and metabolize sugar faster than healthy tissue, they appear as bright spots on the scan.

The capability of the PET-CT sends a strong message to the community. "Florida Hospital Flagler is committed to Flagler County by providing first class care to the patients, especially the cancer patients," said Alvarez.

—BY LINDSAY REW

## Innovative Robotic Arm Guides Knee Surgery at Florida Hospital Zephyrhills

Florida Hospital Zephyrhills, Zephyrhills, Fla., is the first hospital in Pasco and Polk counties to perform MAKOpasty®, a new, minimally invasive partial knee resurfacing procedure used to treat early to mid-stage osteoarthritis of the knee. This new procedure, powered by the RIO® Robotic Arm Interactive Orthopedic system, offers a more precise and consistent outcome for partial knee resurfacing, which results in faster

recovery times.

"This technology allows us to treat patients with osteoarthritis of the knee at earlier stages and with greater precision," says Randolph Knight, M.D., orthopedic surgeon, Florida Hospital Zeph-



yrhills Orthopaedic & Spine Institute. "Because it's less invasive and more of the patient's natural knee remains, the goal is for patients to have more natural knee motion post-operatively."

This system provides the surgeon a pre-surgical plan that details the techniques for bone preparation and customized implant positioning using a CT scan of the patient's knee. During the procedure, the system creates a

3-D live action, virtual view of the patient's bone surface, and correlates the image to the pre-programmed surgical plan. As the surgeon uses the robotic arm, its tactile, acoustic, and visual feedback limits bone preparation to the diseased areas and provides for more optimal implant positioning and placement for each individual patient.

"Precision is the key in planning and performing partial knee surgeries," says Knight. "For a good outcome, you need to align and position the implant just right."

—BY LYN ACER



## Relief Organizations Set Up Headquarters at Southern

Hope and healing are extending from the Hulsey Wellness Center on the campus of Southern Adventist University, Collegedale, Tenn., where four organizations have set up headquarters to serve tornado-affected members of the community.

“Out of all the places I’ve been, this is the best set-up we’ve ever had,” says Wade Geary, U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) team leader at the Disaster Recovery Center. SBA

assists homeowners, renters, and businesses with loans to rebuild and repair damage.

FEMA, the Tennessee Department of Human Services, and the Samaritan Center have also gathered to help tornado victims through food stamps, temporary housing, clothing and furniture, gas money, and future building solutions. Counseling is also available upon request.



*FEMA is one of four organizations providing relief to tornado victims from their temporary headquarters at the Hulsey Wellness Center on the campus of Southern Adventist University, Collegedale, Tenn.*

To date, 415 people have utilized the Center’s services.

“We’ll be here as long

as we need to,” says José Monge, FEMA manager for the Collegedale site. “It could be a month, it could be more, but we’ll be here until everyone’s been helped.”

The Hulsey Wellness Center, a symbol of mental and physical restoration on Southern’s campus, is now a Center for community restoration as well.

—BY RAINEY PARK

## First International Class Gift Reflects Mission

For the first time in Southern Adventist University’s history, the senior class decided to give an international gift instead of something that would directly benefit the University’s campus.

After voting on possible gift ideas, the senior class decided to partner with

ADRA to provide \$2,011 worth of scholarships for 17 students to attend school in Nepal. The amount, chosen in celebration of their graduation year will cover the cost of schoolbooks, supplies, uniforms, and a year’s tuition for each child. In addition, it will help provide bicycles for female

students to help them safely reach school each day.

“We are very excited to give the gift of education,” says Reneze Trim, president of the 2011 class and senior psychology major. “We realize many gifts have been contributed for us to attend Southern, so we’re ecstatic to share this blessing with

children who have not had the same resources or opportunities.”

“The students have wholeheartedly internalized the mission of the school,” says Geovanny Ragsdale, director of development and advancement. “Southern has done its job well.”

—BY JOHN SHOEMAKER

## Biology Trail Expands

Outdoor enthusiasts can soon enjoy almost 11 miles of new paths on Southern’s Biology Trail. Located behind Southern’s campus, the Biology Trail is a system of trails with varying difficulty levels that lead from the bottom of the valley to an overlook of the University. Recently, erosion has lowered the quality of the trails, inspiring community members to partner with the Biology Department to

fix the problem.

A volunteer organization called The Friends of White Oak Mountain was formed to raise money to help improve the Biology Trail system. More than \$25,000 was raised to build new paths and in-



*The Biology Trail is a popular place for bikers and mountain bikers.*

stall new signage. Special machinery was used to

help the trails shed water and prevent further erosion. Jim Johnson, founder of Friends of White Oak Mountain, is pleased with the project’s results.

“This trail system is now probably better than any other in Chattanooga,” Johnson says. “Their layout is better and they handle water better.”

—BY CAITLIN FOSTER

## Remembering a Carolina Pastor

Pastor Ben Wheeler passed away recently at the age of 88, his life was one of service to the Lord.

He was born February 20, 1923, in Palatka, Fla., to the late Anson and Josephine Oliva (Hansen) Wheeler. During WWII, he served in the Army with the 39th field Hospital as an X-ray technician in England and Belgium. He arrived in Normandy four days after the invasion, and cared for many wounded soldiers.

Following the war, Wheeler felt called to serve the Lord as a minister, so he earned a B.A. in religion from Southern Adventist University (formerly

Southern College) in Collegedale, Tenn.

He and Carolina "Ann" Morgan were united in marriage on July 2, 1950, in Fletcher, N.C. The Wheelers then moved to Washington, D.C., where he earned an M.A. from the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary.

Ben began his ministry in Brunswick, Ga. In 1953,



*Pastor Ben Wheeler*

he accepted a call to Kenya to serve as mission director of the Karurah Mission in Nairobi, arriving in the middle of the Mau Mau rebellion. He served in various positions, teaching and ministering

during the next 30 years. During furloughs from Africa, Wheeler was able to further his education and earn an M. Div. from Andrews University in Ber-

rien Springs, Mich., and an M.S. in public health from Loma Linda University in Loma Linda, Calif.

The Wheelers served faithfully in Kenya, Uganda, and Rhodesia until 1983 when he returned to pastor in South Carolina until his retirement in 1993. Although retired, he remained active in the ministry, serving his community in many ways.

Ben and Ann Wheeler had two sons, David and Carroll; and three grandchildren, Jonathan, Christopher, and Jennifer.

## Legal Notices

### Carolina Conference Session

Notice is hereby given that the 41st regular session of the Carolina Conference of Seventh-day Adventists will be held in the auditorium at Nosoca Pines Ranch in Liberty Hill, South Carolina. The first meeting is called for 6:30 p.m., Thursday, August 18, 2011. The session will continue through Sunday, August 21, 2011. The session is called for the purpose of electing officers and formulating plans for the next quinquennium, and for the transaction of such other business as may properly come before the session. Each church may appoint two of its members as delegates to the session, provided their membership exceeds fifty (50). Those churches having fewer than fifty-one (51) members may appoint one of its members as a delegate as outlined in the Carolina Conference By-Laws.

*James R. Davidson*  
*President*  
*Gary D. Moyer*  
*Secretary*

### Carolina Conference Association

Notice is hereby given that there will be a legal meeting of the Carolina Conference Association of Seventh-day Adventists, Incorporated, under the laws of the state of North Carolina, in connection with the regular session of the Carolina Conference, which will be held in the auditorium at Nosoca Pines Ranch, Liberty Hill, South Carolina. The first meeting is called for 6:30 p.m., Thursday, August 18, 2011. The session will continue through Sunday, August 21, 2011. The purpose of the meeting is to elect officers and trustees and to transact any other business that may come before the association at that time. The delegates of the 41st session of the Carolina Conference of Seventh-day Adventists are the delegates of the association meeting.

*James R. Davidson*  
*President*  
*Chad Grundy*  
*Secretary*





## New Season of “Old Man New Man” Produced

Minner Labrador, Charlotte, N.C., Sharon Church lead pastor (right), recently interviewed Derek J. Morris, D.Min., one of 13 guests invited to participate in the second series of the “Old Man New Man” television program produced at the Charlotte Sharon Church studio.



Morris is the editor of *Ministry Magazine*, as well as assistant ministerial director of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. He is also the author of several books, including *The Radical Prayer* and *Radical Protection*.

The first series of Old Man New Man was aired last year on Charlotte’s local Channel 10, WXOC, and on the Adventist HOPE Channel. The programs proved so successful that a second series was created for the HOPE Channel. Both the first and second series are recorded and edited by Kris Allen, in the studio designed by Allen and built by Gary Bartsch, facilities manager of Sharon Church. Evelyn Labrador, wife of pastor, introduces the series.

Other speakers, authors, psychologists, attorneys, and workers for God were interviewed for this

Minner Labrador, Sharon Church lead pastor (right), recently interviewed Derek J. Morris, D.Min., one of 13 guests invited to participate in the second series of the “Old Man New Man” television program.

outstanding series. They include Jim Hohnberger, author of *Men of Power* and *Escape to God*; John Earnhardt, pastor, evangelist, and author of *Victory Lane*; James Black, North American Division director of youth and young adults, and author of *God Has a Plan* and *You’re In It*; Claudio Consuegra, North American Division speaker and director of family ministries; Roma Palcan, psychologist; Christian Yaste, dentist and entrepreneur; Marc Swearingen, pastor and evangelist; and Bernie Anderson, pastor and author of *Breaking the Silence*.

Four more programs will be recorded for this series during the month of April. Each program includes a

study guide for churches and groups to use in their spiritual growth.

Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, both seasons of Old Man New Man were conceived and created by Labrador, Carolina Conference director of men’s ministries and former North American Division coordinator of men’s ministries. Labrador has a passion for reaching out to men who want to bring His Gospel to a lost world, but feel out of place in a “touchy-feely-dress-up-and-sit-quietly-in-a-pew” church environment (which research shows appeals more to women than men). Men need action, and church leaders who recognize this will plan their programs to effectively reach this

segment of their membership.

Labrador, author of the article, *Missing in Action*, published in the February 2008 issue of *Ministry Magazine*, encourages an active men’s ministry at Sharon Church. During this past year, Chuck Connors, Sharon Church men’s ministries director, and his team, have hosted an antique car show, a Sunday morning family bowling event, Sunday morning breakfast at a local restaurant, and a golf tournament.

There is now a Sharon Church men’s baseball team called The Sons of Thunder. Two of its members formerly played college and minor league baseball. (So far, they have won all their games!) These activities are geared toward creating an environment to celebrate serving the Lord, while still being a manly man.

Please pray for the Carolina Conference and for these programs created especially to reach men. Visit, [www.oldmannewman.com](http://www.oldmannewman.com) to learn more about this production and how to obtain the complete series.

—CONTRIBUTED BY THE  
SHARON CHURCH  
MINISTRY TEAM

## Couple Introduced Through Adventist Contact



Ron and Claire Bryant on their wedding day in 1975

Adventist Contact was designed to introduce compatible and single Seventh-day Adventists. The need for this service arose from the number of men and women who were marrying outside of the Church, and leaving their Adventist heritage.

In 1974, Adventist Contact was a new, innovative instrument to introduce couples who would not have ordinarily met. Since its inception, hundreds of individuals have married and found happiness as husbands and



Ron and Claire Bryant, daughter Amanda Martin, son-in-law Paul, and granddaughter Nora

wives — some of whom in their 80's and 90's. Such is the story of Ron Bryant and Claire Breaux, the third couple to meet and marry through Adventist Contact.

Ron lived in Michigan and Claire lived in Louisiana. Ron didn't know what a Cajun was, and Claire didn't like cold weather, so only God could have

brought them together. They were introduced through Adventist Contact, and its comprehensive profile helped them get better acquainted before meeting in early 1975. They married in August the same year.

Today, as Ron and Claire give back to God by attending and volunteering at Forest Lake Church,

Apopka, Fla., they look back with no regrets for their prayerful decisions to join Adventist Contact. They are strong advocates for this matching ministry which serves only unmarried Seventh-day Adventists age 18 and older.

Adventist Contact information can be found at [www.adventistcontact.com](http://www.adventistcontact.com)

—BY AMANDA MARTIN

## Blair and Verona Seifert Celebrate 70 Years of Marriage



Blair and Verona Seifert celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary in Avon Park, Fla. They met

in 1936 while working at Hinsdale Hospital, Hinsdale, Ill. and were married there on March 13, 1941.

After a term in the service of his country, Blair began a nursing course at Glendale Adventist Medical Center, Glendale, Calif., and finished it at Paradise Valley Hospital, National City, Calif., in 1950. He

then completed nurse anesthetist training in 1952, at Madison Hospital, Madison, Tenn.

Blair worked as a nurse anesthetist in Aurora, Ill. until 1972, and then at Walker Memorial Hospital, Avon Park, Fla., as a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist until his retirement in 1982. Verona spent her time raising their two children

while working part time.

Blair and Verona have enjoyed many trips and cruises, as well as time with their family: daughter Julie is retired and lives in Lakeland; son Thomas, a dentist, lives in Avon Park; four grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

—BY CAROLE SEIFERT



## God Uses Child to Lead Dad to Baptism

Maran Walters Jr. is a student at William A. Kirlaw Junior Academy in Miami Gardens, Fla. His parents, members of the Baptist faith, made sacrifices to send him to Adventist church schools since pre-kindergarten. They were pleased with the quality of Christian education offered.

After each Week of Prayer service at the school, Maran Jr. would ask to be baptized, but his parents would answer, "No, you are too young."

One Sabbath, Maran Sr. visited Maranatha Church. When an altar call was made, Maran Jr. asked his dad to go to the altar with him, but he refused.

During another visit to the church, an appeal was made. Again, Maran Jr. wanted to go to the altar



*Maran Walters Sr. was baptized, thanks to the efforts of his son, Maran Jr.*

and asked his dad to join him. This time, Maran Sr. felt the Holy Spirit tugging on his heart and he accompanied his son. A few weeks later, Maran Sr. was baptized.

While teachers strive to model Christ to students at William A. Kirlaw Junior Academy, it is their prayer that more students will lead their parents to Jesus.

—BY VALREY FRANCIS



*Teacher Valrey Francis (left) spends one-on-one time with student Maran Walters Jr. at William A. Kirlaw Junior Academy.*

PHOTOS: RACQUEL WILLIAMS

## A Virtuous Woman Turns 107



JOSSETTE SOOKIE

Olive Este, at 107, is the oldest member of the Northwest Dade, Fla., congregation. She was born March 28, 1904.

When paying Este a visit, the first thing she will say to you is, "I'm

deaf and dumb." It is true she can no longer hear very well, and her eyesight is also failing, but she continues to have a kind and indomitable spirit. At her age, she still makes her famous and delicious fruitcake for church potlucks.

"I've known her for most of my life," says Jossette Sookie, friend and fellow church member. "Every encounter has been a positive experience. She has always lifted my spirits with just the power of her smile.

We have had many conversations over the years, and these are the lessons I have learned from Sister Estes: **1. Love deeply.** Loving God, family, and those around you is everything. Nothing matters as much. **2. Have faith in God.** When her son was dying, she poured out her heart to God the night before his surgery, then went to bed and slept soundly, knowing she had left her son's life in God's capable hands. **3. No matter what, smile.** Be a positive force in

this world; it's what Jesus would do. **4. Be a friend.** Everyone needs someone, sometime. Befriend someone, think about others. The best way to avoid depression is by helping someone else.

"My goal in life is not to live to 107, but rather to have a good spirit and a kind and loving heart as Sister Este has modeled throughout my life. She has also been a wonderful example to her church family of what it means to live a Christ-like life."

—BY JOSSETTE SOOKIE

## Church Community Outreach Yields 12 Baptisms

Twelve people entered the waters of baptism at Kress Memorial Church in Winter Park, Fla., at the conclusion of a six-week evangelistic series held by Lester Pratt, Florida Conference evangelist. Each candidate was clearly brought to the congregation by a series of unique miracles.

Helen Wright lived across the street and began attending “Dinner at Kress” on Wednesday evenings. Shortly afterward, she was joined by her children and grandchildren, and it wasn’t long before they decided to attend church. Today, the family takes up two pews each Sabbath, and three of Helen’s grandchildren are attending school at Orlando Junior Academy.

Carmen Castro was originally a member of a church renting from Kress Memorial on Sunday mornings. She slipped into her customary pew on a Saturday instead of Sunday one week, determined to find out what the seventh-day Sabbath was all about. After a few weeks, she joined a Sabbath School class and requested Bible studies. Her friend, José Candelario, joined her



*Ten of those baptized by Eric Doran, pastor (left), as a result of evangelistic meetings held at Kress Memorial Church, Winter Park, Fla., were Aric Patrick (back row, left), Matthew Riordan, Hayden Candelario, Pearse Candelario, José Candelario; Amanda Barnett (middle row), Helen Wright, Carmen Castro; Spencer Candelario (front row), and Judith Gopie. The two additional baptismal candidates are pictured below.*

at church two weeks later, and they began earnestly studying the Bible. Within a month, José was reunited with his three teenage sons who enthusiastically embraced the opportunity to join their father at church. When the evangelistic campaign began, Carmen, José, and his three boys attended every evening, and all five were baptized.

A few months before the meetings, Mauri Barnett and his girlfriend, Kyla Riordan, became convicted of the Sabbath. They both

began observing Sabbath along with Kyla’s son and two daughters and Mauri’s son and daughter. After finding Kress Memorial’s online church service, they tuned in one Saturday to Pastor Eric Doran’s sermon on Sabbath observance.

“It’s like he was speaking directly to us,” said Mauri. “We changed our way of worshiping that very day. We started getting out into nature, spending time with the children, and pointing out God’s hand in creation.”

After receiving a flyer in the mail, the two families attended the evangelistic series. The two eldest children were baptized, and they will be joined soon by Mauri and Kyla who plan to marry.

Elizee Daniel and Judith Gopie also decided to marry as a result of their commitment to Christ. Elizee reconnected with his Adventist background and Judith was baptized.

Aric Patrick discovered the meetings when he received a flyer in the mail.

Raoul Campoverde, the brother of a church member, had been taking Bible studies from Bible worker Mike Shellong.

Liz Clifton heard about the scheduled baptism at the meetings from Shellong. Due to terminal cancer plaguing her life with uncertainty, she earnestly requested permission to immediately join the baptismal group. Doran consented and Clifton was baptized on Sabbath evening. “This is the best decision I have ever made,” she said. “The water feels wonderful. I know I am in God’s hands. I can feel His peace all around me.”

The congregation was moved to tears and then broke into applause. She came out of the water with a glow of radiance, all thoughts of cancer held in abeyance for the moment, delighted to be sealed with God’s people.

Two months later, Doran performed Clifton’s funeral service, followed by a dinner provided by

the Kress Memorial Church family. Her witness lives on through the spiritual interest of her daughters. Meanwhile, Kress Memorial continues reaching out in the community with more baptisms planned.

—BY SANDRA DORAN



*Liz Clifton*



*Raoul Campoverde*





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## Two Survive, Teachers' Home Destroyed



*This was the home of Randy and Teresa Dorn, teachers at Learning Tree Elementary in Dalton, Ga. They live in McDonald, Tenn. Their son, Brandon, and an exchange student from Korea, Jason Shim, survived when a tornado struck their home, April 27, 2011.*

Wednesday, April 27, 2011, is a day that I will remember for the rest of my life. It was nighttime, and I was upstairs playing a video game in our game room. I began to notice the lightning striking outside, but this lightning was different somehow, as it was

striking non-stop. Thinking this was weird, I went down to the first floor to check the weather on the television, and saw that a warning had been posted until 9:15 p.m., in Bradley County. The lady who lives in our basement apartment was out of town, but had

given us permission to use her apartment, if necessary. It was nearing 9 p.m., so I went upstairs to get Jason Shim, a Korean student that lives with us, to go to the lower apartment. About five minutes after reaching the lower apartment, the power went off. We noticed the wind picking up, so I told Jason we better

go into the small laundry room in the center of the apartment. We crouched down, then in a matter of seconds the tornado struck directly into our house. The first and second stories collapsed, and the roof was hurled into the air. It was

a frightening sound, but somehow we were okay, and saw what seemed to be a glimmer of light. We followed this, and were able to crawl out from the wreckage. Our house was leveled, but we were alive! We ran up to my grandparents, Gale and Eula-May Gabbert, who live in front of us, and found that their home had been struck, but they had also survived by climbing into their bathroom. I know that God was with all of us, and that His Spirit guided us in following a path to safety. I know that God kept us both alive for a reason, and we are anxious to find out what plan God has for our lives.

To see a video and interviews with other members, visit [www.southernunion.com](http://www.southernunion.com).

— BY BRANDON DORN,  
SENIOR, COLLEGEDALE  
ACADEMY

## GCA Students Help Tornado Victims

Georgia-Cumberland Academy (GCA) sent groups to help with tornado clean-up. Sunday, four days after a record outbreak of tornados devastated the south, a small group helped members of the Hamilton Community Church clear fallen trees off a house in East Ridge, Tenn.

The next day, a larger group, led by Greg Hudson, GCA chaplain, and Rick and Judy Cusick, GCA Church members, headed to Bartow County, Ga.,

just north of Cartersville, where a tornado struck a community.

A church with a completely damaged sanctuary had opened its fellowship hall for a distribution center. GCA students helped clean up the damaged area, sorted donated items, and delivered food.

Other students cleared downed trees from the homes of individu-

als. "It was touching to see people so grateful for a simple meal," said Lauren

Brackbill, GCA freshman. "Though their homes were destroyed, they were thankful to God to be alive."

"I was most impressed by working with Gilbert," said Alex Brady, GCA sophomore. "He started working with a group of strangers, worked really hard, and helped us find people in need."

—BY GREG HUDSON



*GCA students Matthew Hauge, Daisy Munoz, Karla Aponte, and Caresse Hobdy work to clear debris from the recent tornadoes that came through Bartow County, Ga.*



## Greenville, Tenn.



JEREMY ARNALL

## Apison, Tenn.



GRANT TUTTLE



DAVID COOK



DAVID COOK

## Ringgold, Ga.



BRIAN HENNING



BRIAN HENNING



BRIAN HENNING



BRIAN HENNING

## Conference Appoints Health Ministries Director

The Conference recently invited Christopher Barr, pastor of the Huntsville, Ala., Central Church, to serve as director for the Health Ministries Department. Barr and his wife, Valarie, have been in the pastoral ministry for 24 years in a number of interesting and different places, including six years in Ireland, eight years in Iowa/Missouri, four years in Montana, and the last six years in the Gulf States Conference.

The Barrs' pastoral ministry has always had a strong health emphasis. By conducting whole-food cooking schools, natural remedy workshops, and health seminars, they have tried to encourage church members as well as individuals in the community to practice healthful lifestyle choices. The opportunity to dramatically expand this side of their

ministry came just three years ago when the church was awarded grant funding from Florida Hospital to develop a church-based health ministry, reaching out to the community.

Last year, two fulltime health workers from the Huntsville Church conducted 18 community health seminars. As their grant-based program was drawing to a close, they appraised which programs had been the most successful during the past three years. While in this process, Florida Hospital informed the church that they were looking at other ways they could help more churches become involved in community health initia-



Christopher Barr

tives. They had recently developed a community health program called CREATION Health.

“CREATION Health is about wellness, and wellness is more than health or the absence of disease. Well-

ness is being mentally fit, physically healthy, spiritually vital, and socially connected,” explains Barr.

He goes on to explain that in the Bible's Creation story, you find eight simple strategies for enjoying and sustaining optimum whole person health.

Due in part to Barr's previously established working relationship, he was able to negotiate an opportunity for the Gulf States Conference

to be involved in a pilot program for CREATION Health. Fifteen pastors in the Conference have been approved for grant funding in this pilot project. This funding will assist with purchasing the CREATION Health package, supplies, and advertising. Churches without grant funding can still participate in this excellent program.

Training sessions are being held around the Conference for those who desire to conduct a CREATION Health seminar. Members and friends can participate in a complete CREATION Health program at this year's camp meeting. During this time, there will be an opportunity to be trained as a program director/facilitator.

—BY REBECCA GRICE

## Columbia Women “Plant the Seed”

The Columbia, Miss., Church women's ministries hosted a spring women's program entitled, “Plant the Seed,” on Sunday,

March 20, 2011.

The women began with prayer and a game, followed by salads, snacks, and drinks.



Each woman received a potted plant and a seed packet.

The program was on the Great Commission and Planting the Seed. Attendees were given a booklet

that began with a summary of The Divine Example.

That was followed by, “What Can I Do?” and “Here Am I, Send Me,” which consisted of 39 ways to meet the needs of others around you and show you care. “The Mission: Focus on Outreach,” was Isaiah 61:1-3. There were 49 ideas for churches and small groups, followed by seven things to test if an idea that comes into your mind is from God. The back page was Mat-

thew 13:37-43, explaining the good seed, the tares, and the harvest.

After the program, door prizes were given, and each woman also received a potted plant and a seed packet of cucumbers or tomatoes. Flyers for the church's upcoming prophecy seminar were available to each person.

The women who attended were from three different denominations, and one unchurched family.

—BY LYNNE POWELL



## Bass Students Receive Disaster Response Training

“The greatest amount of people in the shortest amount of time.” That was the motto for the CERT disaster training program, sponsored by ACTS World Relief, that Bass Memorial Academy (BMA) and other Southern Union schools were invited to attend. “For two days the students learned what to do in a disaster by interacting with other schools, putting on fake wounds, and being a part of an actual reenactment,” explains Stephanie Rivas, a student at BMA.

On the first day, students went through a series of classes. They discovered how to help themselves and others deal with the stress of a disaster, and how to save lives. Students enjoyed choosing from a variety of classes. “My favorite class was the fire unit where they taught us how to have the proper fire extinguisher for each fire, and how to use each of them,” said Heather

Caler, BMA sophomore.

Students decided what class to go to next, when suddenly they heard screaming. A leader yelled, “There’s been a terrible accident in the back of the building. I need your help.”

That’s when a swarm of students ran to a very chaotic scene. Wounded people were everywhere. Bodies lay on the floor, and other people screamed for help. Through this exercise, the students demonstrated what they had learned from their classes. “We were supposed to know what to do,” says Rivas, “but I, with about 30 other kids, would have been killed by a live electrical wire that we walked over.” In the end, more individuals would have been killed than saved. Next, the students went over their mistakes with the instruc-



Students reenact during disaster training.

tors, while learning what to do the next time. “We were determined to be ready for our next exercise,” Rivas explains. “And they were. The students were a lot more organized and, had it been a real event, they would have saved a lot of lives.” At the end of the course, the attendees were given a written test. All of the students from BMA passed and received certification.

Another learning experience occurred on Thursday when students, including four from BMA, had moulage’s (the art of applying mock injuries) placed on them. With real

looking gashes, broken bones, or small cuts, the trainees were loaded onto a bus and rushed to Arnold Palmer Hospital for Children. The students were nervous, not knowing what was going to happen. A nurse came to see who needed immediate attention first.

“Then it all happened. Some people were put in ambulances; others were taken to the Emergency Room, the operating room, or just regular hospital rooms. It took about three hours until it was officially done, and we all came back with crazy stories of our fun experience,” Rivas says. She concludes, “The CERT training was a really great experience that will help us tremendously in the future. Bass is very thankful that it got invited to be a part of this experience.”

—BY STEPHANIE RIVAS

## Mission Trip to India Yields 13 Baptisms

Elbert James, Crestview, Fla., Church member, has completed his eleventh mission journey to southern India (Madras). Rosalee Lithicome, also a Crestview Church member, and Wilburn Caver, from the Washington Conference, joined James on the trip. Three others from Washington state were scheduled to join the mission team, but had to cancel when bad weather caused them to miss their

connecting flight from Memphis, Tenn., to Pensacola, Fla. In spite of appeals to the airline, the three lost \$2,500 on the cost of their tickets.

Once in Southern India, the remaining team held meetings outside



Wilburn Caver (left), Rosa Lithicome, and Elbert James just recently returned from a mission trip to India.

under a tent for 10 nights. Each night individuals came, eager to hear the Word of God. Carver preached for the meetings, James provided special music and preached at

other locations, and Lithicome took charge of the

children’s program along with help from the school teachers. From 75 to 100 children attended each night.

At the completion of the meetings, the pastor gave an altar call, and 13 individuals came forward to be baptized. Another 50 converts are still studying with the Bible workers.

—BY REBECCA GRICE

## Madison Academy Leaves Joy in the Amazon

After 24 hours of airports and plane rides, Madison Academy's Global Mission group arrived in Manaus, Brazil, only to have another four-hour taxi ride and 20-hour boat ride down the Amazon River to look forward to. The Amazon became bathwater, dishwasher, and an extremely wide, yet open, sewage line for the 18 volunteers who included 12 students, three staff, and three alumni. Hammocks were strung across the top level of the boat and personal privacy was something to be longed for the entire trip. For the next 10 days the group lived on and in the Amazon River.

Each morning as we climbed out of our hammocks, we were met with the river dolphins jumping and dancing around the boat. The river and jungle surrounded us as far as the eye could see. It would be a four-hour boat



*Pam Gatling (center) walks the plank.*

ride to stores or hospitals, and communication with the outside world was unheard of from our boat. We were there to share the love of Jesus with this village, Coata. We didn't need stores or the outside world, just the joy that comes from knowing our Savior.

Our goal was to lay the foundation, put up the main support beams, and lay the brick wall around three sides of the new Adventist church we were to build. The roof and the front of the building would need to be finished when more supplies and skilled laborers were available.

This sounded like a task that we could complete in the six days we were at Coata. What we did not take into account were the tools we were to work with. They were all handmade,

and most were broken or on the verge of breaking. There was a total of two trowels, five hoes, half a shovel, and two post-hole diggers. We laid most of the bricks using only our hands, and mixed the cement with a couple of hoes. To say that the tools and equipment on the job site were inadequate is an understatement.

We not only finished our part of the church building, but we also had a successful week of Vacation Bible School, seeing more than 30 of the children from the village each day. In spite of the language barrier, we made

so many relationships with the children and their parents during this time. We quickly realized that the only toys these children had were the toys and crafts they made and received during Vacation Bible School. These people were starved for attention and our students were quick to give it to them.

What a blessing this trip was to our students and to the people of Coata. One of the church members in the village was visibly sad to see our group leave on the last day and said, "We want to thank your group for all they have done. Your group is so joyful and you are leaving that joy in our village!" We realized that although we are thousands of miles apart, on the opposite sides of the spectrum when it comes to economic and technological ways of life, we can all have the same joy that comes from Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

—BY ANDREW JAMIESON



*David Denton and Coleen Moralde mix the cement by hand.*



*Students make crafts with the local children at Vacation Bible School.*



*Andrew Jamieson (center) and crew build the church.*



## CHIP Fights Diabetes at Vanderbilt University

Winter of 2011 brought with it another Coronary Health Improvement Project (CHIP) to Nashville, Tenn. This CHIP program was unique in that it is a pilot study sponsored by the Vanderbilt Employee Health Plan as part of its Health and



*Tom Kush says, "I never dreamt I could eat as much as I want and still have the pounds fall off. I have more energy and feel alert, and ready to do anything. My wife and adult children are proud of me."*

Wellbeing Initiative. Additionally, several Vanderbilt professionals also provided input in their areas of expertise "Should we find success with our outcomes (improved costs and health), we hope to make CHIP a part of our standard benefits package," explains Dexter Shurney, M.D., M.B.A., M.P.H., medical director for the Vanderbilt Employee Health Plan, and member of Nashville First Church.

Among the experiential opportunities, participants had to learn about healthy living. Each evening session started with a mouthwatering healthy meal. Every recipe served was from The Optimal Diet, The Official CHIP Cookbook, by Darlene Blaney, M.Sc., N.C.P., and Hans Diehl, DrH.Sc., M.P.H.

Each participant was given several books, including a cookbook, workbook, syllabus, and a pedometer. Topics includ-

ed diet, exercise, obesity, stress management, and sleep (a new risk factor in diabetes). Biometrics and lab work were taken when the program began, participants monitored their insulin levels in partnership with their physicians throughout, and biometrics and lab work were repeated when the program concluded.

The "Standard Ameri-



*Juliet Santos is the founder and president of International Council for Corporate Health and a member of the Nashville First Church, Nashville, Tenn.*

can Diet" (SAD) has been detrimental to health, and for those whom the idea of a plant-based diet was new, the information and research findings were stunning. Participants learned that many Western diseases, including coronary artery disease, diabetes, high

blood pressure, and elevated cholesterol can probably be prevented and possibly reversed by following the healthy lifestyle outlined by CHIP.

Each participant was encouraged to keep track of the time they spent in daily exercise, and an award was given on the final evening to the person having spent the most time exercising. Other awards were given throughout the program. In the beginning, the first few who were willing to speak out about their successes and challenges were given awards, usually a new type of healthy food or a health related book.

Since this was a scientific study, the follow-up for the participants will vary. One-half were randomly selected to meet with a health coach weekly for the next year. All will continue to have lab work, providing ongo-

ing data for the outcomes of the study. Additionally, all participants have been invited to join the Nashville CHIP alumni group, sponsored by the International Council for Corporate Health ([www.icch.us](http://www.icch.us)), which meets monthly and provides a variety of speakers, videos, dining experiences, and



*Amy Williams says, "The CHIP program has helped me get my diabetes under excellent control, and I have also lost about 10 pounds, and look forward to continued weight loss and getting off my diabetes meds."*

lots of personal experience regarding successes and challenges. "CHIP is a well established lifestyle program, backed by research and supported by a network of CHIP alumni graduates," says Juliet Santos, M.S.N., C.C.R.N., F.N.P.-B.C., president of the International Council for Corporate Health. "Anyone can have positive health effects even if they implement just a few of the CHIP principles in baby steps," Santos adds.

—BY SUE PHILLIPS

## Hairstons Celebrate 61 Years of Marriage

Former South Atlantic president, Ralph Hairston, and his wife, Katherine, celebrated their 61st wedding anniversary in February in Atlanta, Ga.

The Hairstons met at a Baptist picnic in Atlanta, and it was love at first sight. He became a Seventh-day Adventist in 1946 in Los Angeles, Calif., after spending three years in the military serving in World War II. Katherine became a member in 1948 in Atlanta, Ga.

After two years at Oakwood University (formerly Oakwood College), Huntsville, Ala., they married on February 14, 1949, at

Atlanta-Berean Church in Atlanta. Later they returned to Oakwood where he graduated in 1951.

Their ministry has carried them to the states of Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Florida, where he pastored 18 churches. Hairston was elected executive secretary of the South Atlantic Conference in 1972, and served as director of stewardship, trust services, and inner city. He served as president of South Atlantic from 1978 until 1988.

Hairston retired in 1991. They celebrated their anniversary with their five children, Ralph Jr., Antho-

ny, Angelia, Teresa, and Derrick; 10 grandchildren; and 11 great-grandchildren.

Hairston pastors part time at Mount Sinai Church in Thomaston, Ga., and resides with his wife in Atlanta.

—BY TERESA HAIRSTON



*Ralph and Katherine Hairston. Hairston is retired but still serves as a pastor on a part-time basis.*

## Rebecca Davis Joins Atlanta-Berean Pastoral Staff

Rebecca Davis was installed as an assistant pastor at Atlanta-Berean Church in Atlanta, Ga., on April 16, 2011. Davis is a native of Lexington, Ky. She and her siblings moved to Louisville, Ky., when she was a freshman in high school, and it was at this time that she became a Seventh-day Adventist Christian.

After completing high school she attended Oakwood University, Huntsville, Ala., where she fulfilled the requirements for a bachelor of



*Rebecca Davis is installed as a new member of the Atlanta-Berean pastoral staff, as her husband, Justin Davis Sr., participates in the reading of the litany.*

arts degree in ministerial theology in 2004. She went on to Andrews University Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary in Berrien Springs, Mich., where she completed a master of divinity degree in August 2007.

Since that time, she has become a wife and mother. Davis married Justin Davis in July of 2008. In July of 2009 she gave birth to their son, Justin Z. Davis II. Since then, Davis has served as an In-reach chaplain, teacher,

and most recently, director for campus ministries at Oaklands Park Church in Murfreesboro, Tenn.

Davis joins the Atlanta-Berean pastoral staff with Carlton P. Byrd, D.Min., senior pastor; John T. Boston II, associate pastor; and James K. Lamb Jr., assistant pastor. Linwood C. Stone, who formerly was an associate pastor at Atlanta-Berean will serve as the senior pastor at New Hope Church in Ellenwood, Ga.

—BY JAMES K. LAMB



## Carolina Adventist Academy Hosts Education Rally Day

Carolina Adventist Academy (CAA), Whiteville, N.C., was the host school for the South Atlantic Carolina Education Rally Day on March 12, 2011. Five schools participated.

David Smith of Savannah, Ga., led out in an inspirational group lesson geared for youth. Afterwards, special music was given by several of the students, including Jessica Daniels and Ezekiel Strayhorn of CAA. A skit entitled, "Who is Jesus?" was presented by CAA youth, and CAA's own 'Men of Honor' presented praise singing and made Sabbath School come alive.

The personal

ministries period was facilitated by Sheridan Albert, principal of Ramah Junior Academy, Savannah, Ga. Each school gave a synopsis of how they were reaching out into their communities. The activities were numerous and included working at a crisis center, food drives to give out free food to



*Nearly 400 individuals were present to witness the students involved in every aspect of the program.*

local communities, giving out care bags to the less fortunate, helping local church community services and Pathfinder clubs, singing at nursing homes, singing and sharing at local Sunday churches, and student-led Weeks of Prayer.

For divine worship, the spoken word came from the students themselves, speaking on the theme, "I'd Rather Have Jesus." Each school provided special music and a student speaker. The student speakers included Joshua Quaterman, Ramah Jr. Academy, Savannah; Aayda Ervin, Berean Jr. Academy, Charlotte, N.C.; James W. Kenner Jr., V. J.

Mendinghall Jr. Academy, Orangeburg, S.C.; Kemarion Abraham, Jack J. Hanna Jr. Academy, Florence, S.C.; and Michael Taylor, Carolina Adventist Academy, Whiteville. A summary was given by Torrence Simmons, who teaches at CAA, and is a retired naval Lt. Commander of the U.S. Navy.

AYS and recreational activities concluded the day. Surely all were blessed to see what investing in Adventist Christian education can do for many children and the community.

—BY CHARLOTTE VERRETT, M.D.

## Wrens Members Honor Community Guest

The Wrens, Ga., Church congregation held a community guest day program on Sabbath, March 26, 2011.

The day started with a rousing Sabbath School program in honor of 13th Sabbath, which featured the lower division. The guest speaker for worship was David L. Moore, M.D., who serves as the health ministries director for the South Atlantic Conference.

Music for divine worship was presented by Randy Bogan, a member of First Augusta Church in Augusta, Ga. The honoree for the day was Phil Brown, a native resident of Wrens, Ga. Brown was

selected as an honoree because of his untiring involvement in community programs, and his devotion to the youth of Wrens. He has also served as a former president of the local NAACP chapter, an advocate of the Boys Club, and mentor of young African-American males in his community.

The church was filled to capacity as members of the community gathered to witness the award presentation, and stayed to enjoy a fellowship lunch. The afternoon brought an informative health emphasis seminar given by Moore. Eighteen months earlier, Moore and the health team

of Wrens Church conducted an eight-week health evangelistic series that included free nightly health

screenings, and culminated with a church baptism.

—BY BETTY E. JAMES



*Pictured are local elders Henry Lewis (left) and Randy Bogan; honoree Phil Brown; Pamela and David Moore, M.D.; and Equilla and Ronald J. Wright Sr., pastor.*

## Tornado Destroys Members' Homes, Property

The tornado came through between 3 and 4 a.m. on April 27, 2011, and lasted minutes. Tornado survivor Nancy Lawson is a member of the Harvest, Ala., Church. About 90 percent of her neighborhood was destroyed. She heard the storm come to her house and go. She said it sounded like a huge wash-

ing machine breaking up everything. The only walls on her house left standing are the walls surrounding her bathroom where she was covered by a mattress and pillows — God is good! “I laid down in the bathtub and covered myself with a mattress and pillows.... I did pray and take peeks to see what was go-

ing on. Then, I saw the sky outside. The Lord saved my life and I am truly grateful,” said Lawson.

Around the corner from Lawson is her grandson Ronald Lemons' home. His home was hit with the total impact of the tornado. Nothing was left but debris. Lemons' two-year-old son was being held

by his brother-in-law. The tornado snatched the two-year-old out of the uncle's arms — the child survived with a scratch. God spared Lawson, her family, and neighbors.

Lawson amazingly had put photos of her home and property in her car before the tornado hit.



Nancy Lawson

O. C. MADDOX



Lawson's home before the tornado destroyed it

MICHAEL HARPE



Bathroom before

MICHAEL HARPE



Bathroom after

MICHAEL HARPE



Nancy Lawson stands next to her car damaged by the tornado.

MICHAEL HARPE



Ronald Lemons' (Lawson's grandson) home was totally destroyed by the tornado.

MICHAEL HARPE





MICHAEL HARPE

*Kitchen before*



MICHAEL HARPE

*Kitchen after*



MICHAEL HARPE

*Bathroom after*



MICHAEL HARPE

*Hall before*



MICHAEL HARPE

*Hall after*



## Tornado Disaster Areas in Tuscaloosa, Ala.





## FEMA Warehouse in Huntsville, Ala.



*Robert Spencer, ACS Warehouse facilitator*



## Maranatha's Annual Health, Fitness Fair a Big HIT

More than 1,500 people gathered at the north Florida Fairgrounds on Sunday, April 10, 2011, for the second annual Southside Community Health Fair, sponsored by Tallahassee Maranatha Church.

This year, professional football player Ernie Sims and his Big HITS Foundation (Helping to Instill Tools for Success), joined Maranatha as a co-sponsor.

A major contributor to the fair was the Florida A&M University (FAMU) chapter of Health and Educational Relief for Guyana (HERG), a volunteer organization that provides local and international service opportunities for students of all majors.

The fair was composed of more than 70 vendors who provided a pleth-



*A Florida A & M University nursing student administers a health screening to one of more than 1,500 individuals who attended the Maranatha Annual Health Fair.*

ora of free services and goodies from noon to 5 p.m., for the medically and financially disenfranchised. However, this year's focus was especially on seniors, youth, and children.

"This community health fair is a direct result of the outreach and in-reach pillar ministries of our church," said Willie L. Taylor, pastor of Maranatha.

The collaboration required to successfully plan and implement such a huge fair was born from the Joint

Leadership Initiative, which was developed and promoted by Taylor. "Joint Leadership is a means to empower the church ministries to support each other, and to serve the community in a big way," Taylor added.

A variety of critical health screenings were offered throughout the day at the fair, including HIV, diabetes, cholesterol levels, high blood pressure, and vision and dental screenings. The Leon County Mobile Health Unit, managed by Kathy Lewis, was also on site.

"I expected to have a full and fruitful day with everything we offered, and the Lord did not disappoint," said James L. James, head fair coordinator and Out-reach Pillar Ministries leader. "We must have

touched more than 1,500 souls today."

Other activities included free food and clothing distributions, as well as a complete vegetarian meal served during the event.

Children and youth enjoyed the rock climbing wall provided by the U.S. Army. But, most of their time was spent in the Moon Walk and the Bounce House.

"Southside youth are more at risk, so we are trying to give them an alternative," said James. "We want them to know we are here for them."

"People were impressed that we had quality music and that it was indeed a real health fair," said Natalia Word, project manager and assistant coordinator of the fair.

—BY WILLIEMAE PETERKIN  
MUSGRAY

## Perrine Member Conducts ShareHim Crusade

"We are at the cross ... Jesus wants your heart. He already knows it, so He gets intimate with you."

So began the ShareHim evangelistic meetings at Perrine Church in Miami, Fla., January 7-30, 2011.

This 15-day experience was a spiritual, energizing, and uplifting moment for all who listened to the inspiring words night after night, as spoken by Tshai Bailey, M.D., personal ministries director at Perrine.

To prepare for the crusade, each member pre-

pared a list of individuals they wanted to see saved in God's kingdom. These names were prayed over and visits were made to encourage them to attend the meetings.

Perrine conducted several activities that fostered friendships with these individuals, and included a 40-day fasting and praying campaign, and flyer and pamphlet distribution in neighboring areas of Perrine.

Bailey expounded carefully, night after night,



*Antwon Mells, pastor of Perrine Church, baptizes a son and mother at the conclusion of the ShareHim crusade.*

on the love of Jesus. She explained that He is personally involved in our lives, and His heart propels

toward us daily.

"How marvelous is God's love," said one visitor.

At the end of the campaign, five individuals were baptized, each with the firm determination to love Jesus and follow Him all the way.

Another evangelistic campaign is planned for April 7 to May 14, 2011. It will be conducted by Antwoyn Mells, pastor of Perrine. For details about ShareHim, visit <http://www.sharehim.org>.

—BY MILLICENT TAYLOR



## Southeastern Conducts Annual Science Competition

More than 45 kindergarten to eighth grade students competed in the Southeastern Conference Annual Conference-wide Science Fair, on April 17, 2011, at the Orlando Science Center in Orlando, Fla.

There were five categories based on grade levels: kindergarten, 1st and 2nd, 3rd and 4th, 5th and 6th, and 7th and 8th. Each



*A science fair contestant explains his project to one of the judges during the Southeastern Conference Science Fair in April.*

Southeastern school held a science fair locally and sent their first place winners to compete on the Conference level.

When asked why he sponsors all his students to attend the competition, Edson Jarvis, principal of Mt. Calvary Jr. Academy in Tampa, Fla., says, "I want to give our students an opportunity to exhibit their talents, see science on a larger scale, experience what other children are doing academically, and generate more interest in the field of science."

When students are allowed to ask a question, design an experiment, and interpret results, they understand the role science plays in investiga-

tion and invention.

Brain research shows that students learn better when they solve real-life problems as opposed to being drilled on bits of information.

"By allowing our students to learn and celebrate science together, we break barriers and allow students to become champions in science," said one educator.

After the judging, students explored one of America's top hands-on science centers.

Before the winners were announced, suspense was created with a perfor-



*First place winners of the Annual Southeastern Conference Science Fair: Kindergarten - Dario Scully, Perrine SDA School, "Soak it Up"; 1st and 2nd Grade - Farrab Murray, Mt. Olivet SDA School, "Which Fabric Will Stay the Cleanest?"; 3rd and 4th Grade - Szymon Taylor, Perrine SDA School, "Don't Cry Over Spilled Oil"; 5th and 6th Grade - Jarod McCullough, Perrine SDA School, "Hyped Up On Sports Drinks"; 7th and 8th Grade - Trevor Dollar, Miami Union Academy, "CO2 on the Move!"*

mance from the "Kaboom! Science Show."

First place winners received a trophy and white lab coat with a nameplate that read, "Future Scientist."

—BY T. TRINA BOWDEN

## Mt. Zion Celebrates 30th Anniversary

Approximately 300 individuals gathered for the 30th anniversary celebration of Mt. Zion Church in Kissimmee, Fla., on March 19, 2011. In attendance were former pastors Roy Parham and Tony Taylor; J. Mair, wife of the late Cleveland Mair, first official pastor of Mt. Zion; and founding members Ruby Alexander and the Caseys.

As Parham reminisced of the early days, he shared that all the members of Mt. Zion were able to fit into the car of one of

the church's elders. Today, Mt. Zion has a much larger membership.

Awards and gifts of appreciation were given out to long-standing members and officers of Mt. Zion. Among the recipients was Michael Clarke, the longest serving elder and first elder for 18 years.

Worship during the event began on Friday evening with a stirring message from Taylor. This was followed with an urgent plea from Parham to "Stay in the Fire." Saturday afternoon presented

a panel discussion and inspiring concert as all "Looked Back While Moving Forward." The program, moderated by Sandra Chiddick, included Tony Taylor and Maxwell Berkel, current pastor of Mt. Zion, who refocused the members sights on their mission:

"The Gospel to all the world, beginning with our community."

The weekend activities concluded with a banquet on Sunday. A quick peek



*Mt. Zion honors former pastor Roy Parham, and his wife, Betty, for their dedicated service to Mt. Zion. Parham was the second pastor of Mt. Zion Church.*

into the church's history shows that Mt. Zion "gave birth" to the Poinciana Church, and more recently, the South Lake Church.

—BY EDNA FRANCOIS

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To read more about the Swayer's, go to [www.susdagift.org](http://www.susdagift.org) and click on on their story.

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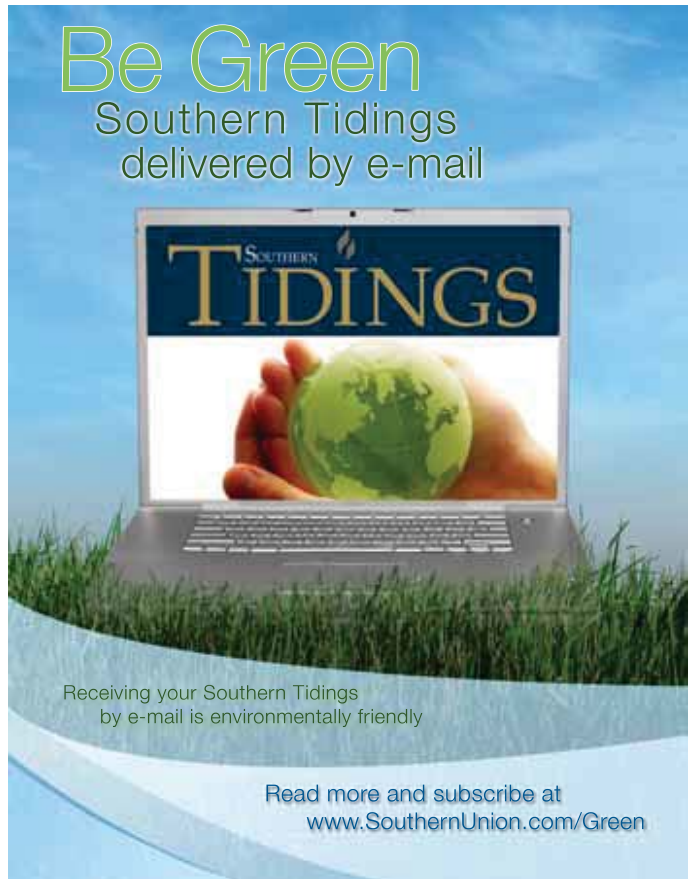
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## **The South Atlantic Conference Session**

Notice is hereby given that the 24th regular Session of the South Atlantic Conference of Seventh-day Adventists will be held at the River Oaks Praise & Worship Center, in Orangeburg, South Carolina, Sunday, September 11, 2011. This Session is called for the purpose of electing officers for the ensuing quinquennium and for transacting all other business which may properly come before the Session. The first meeting of the Conference Session is called for 9:00 a.m. The Organizing Committee will meet Saturday night, September 10, 2011, at 8:00 p.m. Delegates will be seated per Conference Bylaws.

*Vanard Mendinghall, President*  
*William L. Winston, Executive Secretary*  
*Larry E. Johnson, Treasurer*

## **The South Atlantic Conference Association of Seventh-day Adventists, Inc.**

Notice is hereby given that the 24th regular Session of the South Atlantic Conference Association of Seventh-day Adventists, a corporation, is called to meet at the River Oaks Praise & Worship Center, in Orangeburg, South Carolina, Sunday, September 11, 2011, 9:00 am. The Organizing Committee will meet Saturday night, September 10, 2011, at 8:00 p.m. Duly elected delegates to the South Atlantic Conference Session serve as the constituency of the corporation.

*Vanard Mendinghall, President*  
*William L. Winston, Executive Secretary*  
*Larry E. Johnson, Treasurer*

## **The South Central Conference Session**

Notice is hereby given that the rescheduled 24th regular session of the South Central Conference of Seventh-day Adventists will be held in Huntsville, Alabama, Sunday, June 26, 2011, at 9:30 a.m. The Organizing Committee will meet on Saturday night, June 25, 2011, at 8:00 p.m. This constituency session is called for the purpose of electing officers for the ensuing term and for transacting any other business that may properly come before the session. Each church in the conference is entitled to one (1) delegate for the church and one additional delegate for each 25 members or major fraction thereof. For the Organizing Committee, each church is entitled to one representative for the church and one additional representative for each full 500 members. The total number of representatives on the Organizing Committee is 156 and the quorum is 104.

*Dana C. Edmond, President*  
*Auldwin T. Humphrey, Secretary*  
*Philip G. Palmer, Treasurer*

## **The South Central Conference Association of Seventh-day Adventists, Inc.**

Notice is hereby given that the rescheduled 24th regular session of the South Central Conference Association of Seventh-day Adventists, a corporation, is called to meet in Huntsville, Alabama, Sunday, June 26, 2011. The delegates to the South Central Conference of Seventh-day Adventists are the constituency of the corporation.

*Dana C. Edmond, President*  
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**THE SANCTIFIED LIFE** is the theme for the 2011 Secrets Unsealed Summit at Cohutta Springs October 6-9. Speakers: Stephen Bohr, Richard O'Ffill, CA Murray & Milton Teske, MD. Register online at [www.secretsunsealed.org](http://www.secretsunsealed.org)

or call 888-738-1412. Children 8-12 program available. On-site IMT ultrasound testing. [6-8]

**BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY:** No Sabbath issues, be your own boss. "Carisma Car Cosmetics" master technician will train you to own your own business in appearance reconditioning for autos, boats, planes, etc. Mobil service, low overhead, substantial returns. Online at [www.carcarisma.com](http://www.carcarisma.com) or call 210-602-5777. [6]

## Announcements

**"Ye Olde" Cedar Lake Academy Reunion – June 9-12.** For alumni and schoolmates of 1961 and earlier at Great Lakes Adventist Academy, Cedar Lake, MI. Honor classes: '31, '41, '51, and '61. Details will be forthcoming by postal service. Also, you may contact GLAA Alumni Office at 989-427-5181 or visit [www.GLAA.net](http://www.GLAA.net) for details.

**Sharon Church Homecoming – June 18, 19.** Charlotte, NC. A special invitation to all former ACA students, teachers, principals, pastors, associate pastors, interns, and former members to join us. Register by calling the church office at 704-364-8973.

**Association of Seventh-day Adventist Librarians 2011 Conference – June 19-23.** For librarians and information professionals. Pacific Union College, Angwin, CA. Details: <http://spinery.southern.edu/asdalthere/> for conference information or contact Lauren Matacio, [matacio@andrews.edu](mailto:matacio@andrews.edu), 269-471-6062.

**Madison College Alumni Association Homecoming – June 24-26.** Honor classes: '41, '46, '51, '56, '61, and those who attended Madison College or Madison College Academy. Activities and meals on Friday evening, Sabbath, and Sunday morning at Madison Academy Campus. Jim Culpepper, secretary/treasurer, 615-415-1925.

**Elgin, Texas, Church 100th Anniversary – July 8-10.** The weekend includes guest speakers, "Walk Down Memory Lane," slides, and other special events. All former pastors, teachers, members, and friends are cordially invited. Bring old photos. Details: Betty Hold, 512-281-3268 or e-mail [earlhold@msn.com](mailto:earlhold@msn.com).

**Benedict / Turtle Lake Church 100th Anniversary – July 23.** Turtle Lake, ND. We invite all past and present constituents and their families to join us. Details: Roger Boyko, 701-448-2884 or e-mail [rkboyko@westriv.com](mailto:rkboyko@westriv.com).

**Grand Ledge Academy First Years Reunion – Aug. 5-7.** Elysian Fields Hunting Preserve near Bellevue, MI. For all charter students, alumni, and faculty from 1959-1964. Details/registration: [claudiabahnmler@gmail.com](mailto:claudiabahnmler@gmail.com), call Claudia at 360-793-1883, or Facebook group "Grand Ledge Academy - First Years."



# Events Calendar

## Carolina

**SIT Camp** – June 12-16. NPR.  
**Adventure/Horsemanship I/ Water Sports/Basketball Camps** – June 19-26. NPR.

**Jr. Camp I/Horsemanship II/ Wheels/Sports Camps** – June 26-July 3. NPR.

**Cambodian/Hmong 9th Annual Camp Meeting** – July 1-3.

**Tween/Horsemanship III/Golf** – July 3-10. NPR.

**Horseback Camping Trip** – July 17-24. NPR.

**Mountain Bike Camping Trip** – July 17-24. NPR.

**Sabbath School Workshop** – July 29-31.

## Florida

**Complete calendar online** – <http://www.floridaconference.com/calendar/>

**Pathfinder events** – <http://www.floridaconference.com/youth/> or call 407-644-5000 x127.

**Singles' Ministries events and mailing list information** – Spiritual study groups, fellowship dinners, outings, and more. <http://www.floridaconference.com/childrenandfamily/>, [djmiller4000@gmail.com](mailto:djmiller4000@gmail.com), or 407-703-3050.

**Florida Hospital DeLand Support Groups** – Florida Hospital DeLand offers a variety of support groups such as attention deficit disorder, bereavement, brain injury, celiac disease, diabetes, sleep disorders, and more. Details are available under the "Support Groups" link in the "Patients and Visitors" box at <http://www.fhdeland.org/>

**North Florida Oakwood University Alumni Chapter** – membership information and event listings for Oakwood alumni in Florida. Details: <http://www.oakwoodalumninfl.org/>, [oakwoodalumninfl@gmail.com](mailto:oakwoodalumninfl@gmail.com), 888-719-7776, or 904-616-1896.

**Adventist Book Center** – Winter Park: 877-55-FLABC (877-553-5222). Miami: 305-805-9900. High Springs: 386-454-7956. Shop online: <http://www.floridaconference.com/abc/> or order by e-mail: [FloridaABC@floridaconference.com](mailto:FloridaABC@floridaconference.com)  
**Adventist Bookmobile**

## Schedule

June 25. Perry.

June 26. Cross City, Ocala, Silver Springs Shores, Belleview, Inverness.

July 9. West Palm Beach.

July 10. Midport Road in Port St. Lucie, Fort Pierce, Cocoa, Titusville. (Southeastern Conference: Port St. Lucie, Palm Bay.)

July 16. Jacksonville Southpoint.

July 17. Jacksonville First, Orange Cove, St. Augustine, Palatka, Palm Coast. (Southeastern Conference: Jacksonville Ephesus.)

July 23. St. Petersburg.

July 24. Clearwater, New Port Richey, Spring Hill, Brooksville, East Pasco in Zephyrhills.

July 30. Maranatha in Miami Gardens.

July 31. Fort Lauderdale, Lauderhill, Pompano Beach, Jupiter-Tequesta.

## Evangelism Series

July 2-9. Sorrento Spanish. Rolando and Rebeca de los Ríos.

July 9-Aug. 20. Deltona. Bill and Sunshine Waters.

Aug. 20-27. Brandon Spanish district. Rolando and Rebeca de los Ríos.

Sept. 10-Oct. 29. La Caravana de la Victoria (Caravan of Victory): 8 locations in Fort Lauderdale and Hollywood area. Rolando and Rebeca de los Ríos.

Oct. 1-Nov. 12. Altamonte Springs. Bill and Sunshine Waters.

Nov. 5-19. Northwest Miami Spanish. Rolando and Rebeca de los Ríos.

## Georgia-Cumberland

**Cohutta Springs Youth Camp, Junior 1 (ages 10-12)** – June 5-12. Crandall, GA.

**Hispanic Camp Meeting** – June 10-12. Georgia-Cumberland Academy, Calhoun, GA.

**Women's Ministries Emphasis Day** – June 11.

**Cohutta Springs Youth Camp, Junior 2 (ages 10-12)** – June 12-19. Crandall, GA.

**Olde Time Camp Meeting** – June 16-18. Deer Lodge, TN.

**Cohutta Springs Youth Camp, Adventure Camp (ages 7-9)** –

June 19-24. Crandall, GA.

**Hispanic Women's Evangelism** – June 24-26. Atlanta, GA.

**Cohutta Springs Youth Camp, Tween/Pathfinder Honors** – June 26-July 3. Crandall, GA.

**Cohutta Springs Youth Camp, Teen Camp (ages 13-17)** – July 3-10. Crandall, GA.

**Cohutta Springs Youth Camp, Rock Solid Camp (ages 16-18)** – July 3-10. Crandall, GA.

**Pathfinder Mission Challenge** – July 3-19. Nova Scotia, Canada.

## Gulf States

**Complete Calendar online**

<http://www.gscsda.org>

**Camp Alamisco Staff Week** – May 29-June 4.

**31st Constituency Session** – June 5. Community Adventist School, Meridian, MS.

**Pathfinder Council** – June 12. Camp Alamisco.

**Executive Committee** – June 14. Conference Office.

**Teen Mission Trip** – July 9-26. Monument Valley, UT.

**Pastors' Retreat** – July 25-28. Camp Alamisco.

## Kentucky-Tennessee

**Conference Association Board**

July 19. Sept. 20. Dec. 6.

**Conference Executive Committee**

July 19. Sept. 20. Dec. 6.

**Camp Meeting (Spanish)** –

June 10, 11. Highland Academy.

**Summer Camp Dates**

**Cub Camp/Blind Camp** – June 12-19.

**Junior Camp** – June 19-26.

**Family Camp** – June 28-July 3.

**Tween Camp** – July 3-10.

**Teen Camp** – July 10-17.

**Family Camp II** – July 17-24.

**Extreme Outpost Camp** – July 24-29.

**Hispanic Child/Youth Camp** – July 25-31.

**50 Plus Camp** – Aug. 9-14.

## Southeastern

**Community Services**

**Convention** – May 13-15. Hilton Orlando, Altamonte Springs, FL.

**Ministry 2.0, an Interactive Conference** – May 13-15. Hilton Orlando, Altamonte Springs, FL.

**Camp Meetings**

**English.** June 16-25. Camp Hawthorne.

**Haitian.** June 29-July 2. Camp Hawthorne.

## Southern Adventist University

**PreviewSouthern** – June 9, 10.

	June 3	June 10	June 17	June 24	July 1	July 8
Atlanta, GA	8:48	8:49	8:51	8:52	8:52	8:51
Charleston, SC	8:25	8:28	8:31	8:32	8:32	8:30
Charlotte, NC	8:35	8:38	8:41	8:42	8:42	8:40
Collegedale, TN	8:52	8:55	8:57	8:59	8:59	8:57
Huntsville, AL	7:57	8:00	8:02	8:03	8:03	8:02
Jackson, MS	8:05	8:08	8:10	8:12	8:11	8:10
Louisville, KY	9:03	9:07	9:09	9:10	9:10	9:08
Memphis, TN	8:11	8:15	8:17	8:18	8:18	8:16
Miami, FL	8:10	8:13	8:15	8:16	8:16	8:16
Montgomery, AL	7:50	7:53	7:55	7:56	7:56	7:55
Nashville, TN	8:01	8:05	8:07	8:08	8:08	8:06
Orlando, FL	8:21	8:24	8:26	8:27	8:27	8:26
Wilmington, NC	8:21	8:24	8:26	8:27	8:27	8:26

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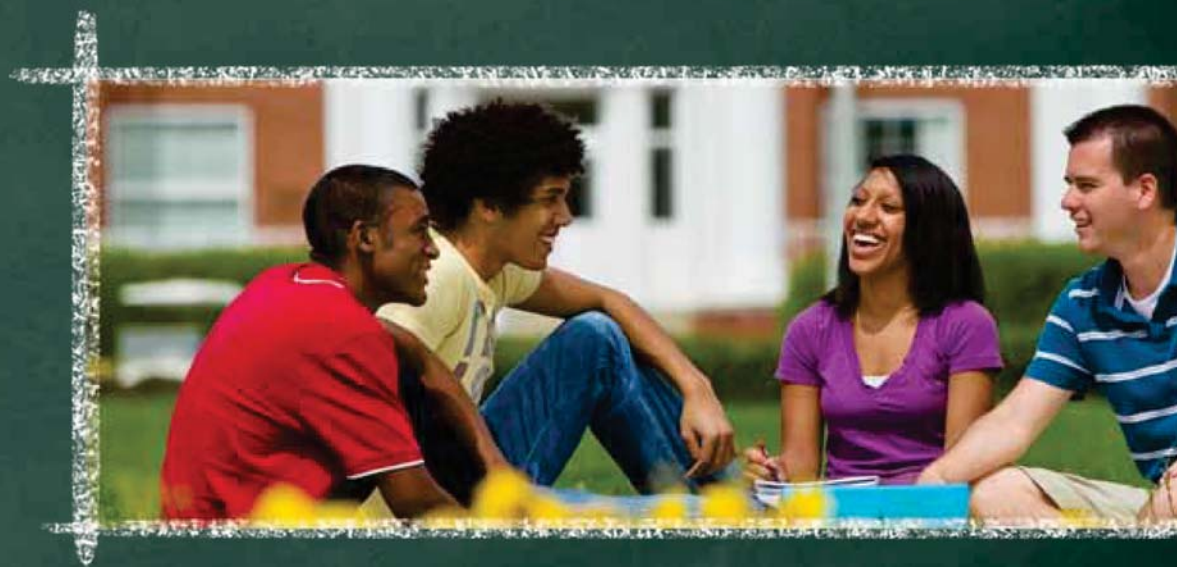
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