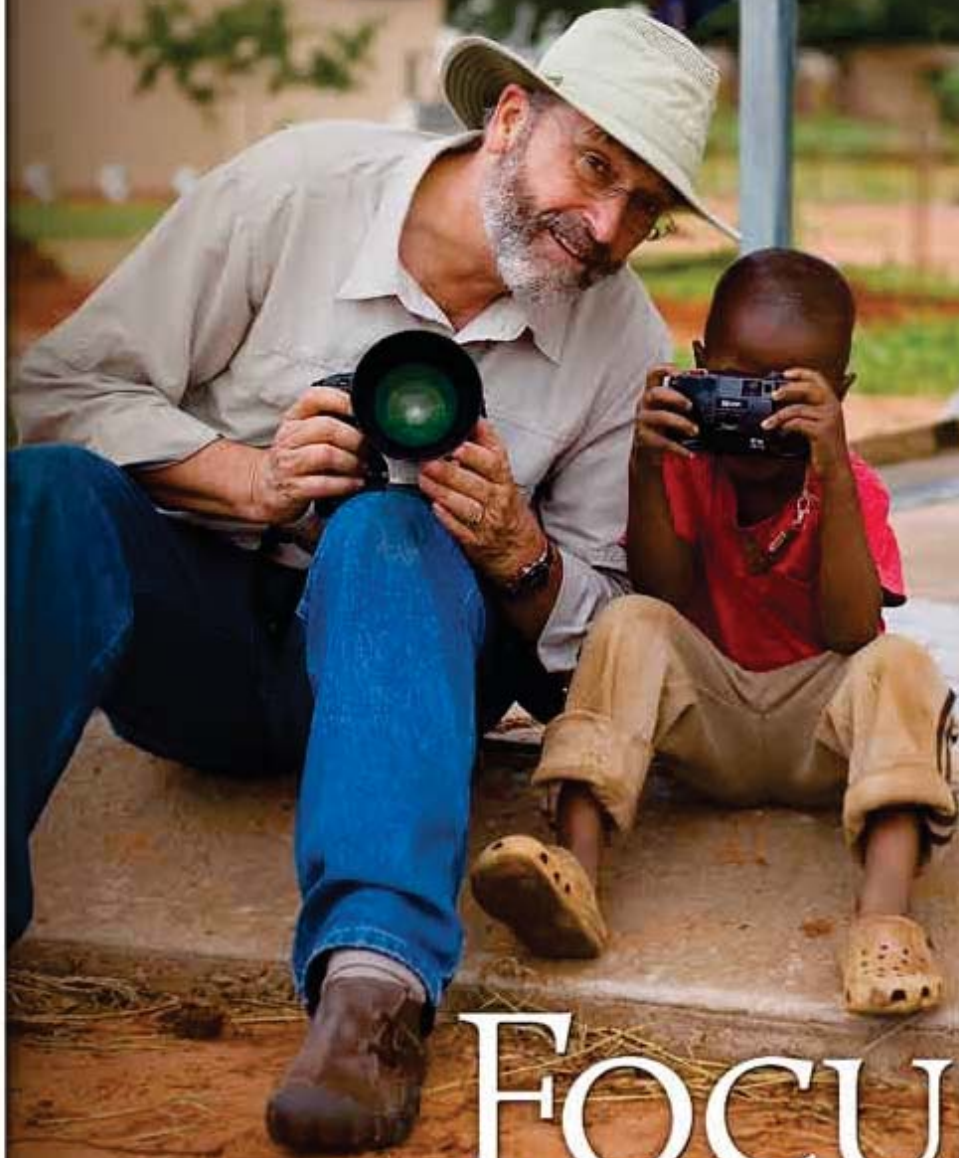


SOUTHWESTERN UNION

Record

FEBRUARY 2011



FOCUS *on* MISSION

BUILDING STRONGER CHURCHES AT HOME AND ABROAD



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On the Cover

There are countless ways to make a difference in missions; this month we focus on ways to get involved. On the cover, Dick Duerksen, assistant to the president of Maranatha Volunteers International, shares photo tips with 5-year-old Alson while at the building site of a One Day School project in Zimbabwe, Africa. Cover photo by Tom Lloyd.

President's Perspective»

BY MAX TREVIÑO » SOUTHWESTERN UNION CONFERENCE PRESIDENT



Go!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Max S. Treviño".

The Southwestern Union has a longstanding commitment to mission projects that take us to other parts of the world. In recent history, I can think of trips to Mexico, South America, the Caribbean islands, the Philippines, and Africa.

Why should we concern ourselves with evangelism in Zimbabwe or Zambia when our territory is limited to Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, New Mexico, and Texas? With so many needs right in our own backyard, why should we invest in outreach on the other side of the world?

Several answers come to mind. First, Jesus commanded us to “go and make disciples of all nations” (Matt. 28:19, NIV). We’re to be salt and light to our own communities—and to every nation. Just like Paul, we must have a passion to take the message to the ends of the earth.

Second, a fire ignites in our churches at home when they are actively involved in foreign missions. When church members go on mission trips, they come back excited about sharing with their communities. They return with a stronger personal commitment to the Lord, and that renewed commitment spills over into active involvement in outreach at home.

Perhaps that renewed personal spiritual commitment that results from mission work is the greatest reason we are so committed to global outreach. I can personally bear witness to this in my life.

I will admit that the first time I went on a foreign mission trip to preach a series of meetings, I was more than just a little nervous about stepping out of my comfort zone. But the end result of my willingness to share was that I was personally blessed—far more blessed, I’m sure, than those with whom I shared.

Why should you go on a short-term mission project? Go because God commands you to go. Go because your gifts and talents are needed. Go because it will ignite your local church with a fire for evangelism. Go because it will change your life—forever!

Max Treviño is the Southwestern Union Conference president.



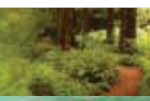









CREATION Health

BY LYNELL LAMOUNTAIN

Ten Relationship Tips for Happier Living

If any of your relationships are difficult or complicated, then listen to this. When Bill Baker was 76 years old, he married Edna Harvey, his granddaughter’s husband’s mother. That’s where the confusion began, according to Baker’s granddaughter, Lynn. “My mother-in-law is now my step-grandmother. My grandfather is now my stepfather-in-law. My mom is my sister-in-law and my brother is my nephew. But even crazier is that I’m now married to my uncle and my own children are my cousins.”

- C** Choice 
- R** Rest 
- E** Environment 
- A** Activity 
- T** Trust 
- I** Interpersonal RELATIONSHIPS 
- O** Outlook 
- N** Nutrition 

It’s no secret that relationships take a lot of work, but the effort is well worth it. According to Dr. Bernie Siegel, single men have more illnesses and die at a younger age than married men. Married men with cancer live 20 percent longer than single men with the same cancer. Women, who often have more close friendships than men, survive longer with the same cancers. He concludes that, married or not, relationships help keep us alive.

Interpersonal relationships are a predictor of the health and quality of our life. A social system is essential to wellness because relationships make the difference between sickness and health. Deep, personal relationships make our lives better.

A healthy social connection is a relationship that is filled with positive communication, service, sharing, touching, encouragement, trust, and confidence. But consider this sad news: many people in the United States are isolated and lonely. Twenty-five percent of Americans report they have no one to confide in; 29 million people live alone; and one out of every three people say they feel lonely.

I heard a presenter talk about social isolation the other day. He said that low social interaction is equivalent to smoking 15 cigarettes a day and being an alcoholic; and that it is twice as harmful as obesity and not exercising. Feelings of loneliness and isolation increase premature death by up to 500 percent because of damaging habits people use to cope with the loneliness.

Interpersonal relationships and social connection are vital to

good health and happiness. Smiling and saying “hello” can work wonders in the life of someone who feels isolated and alone. It seems that many, if not most, people are shy. But everyone enjoys being warmly acknowledged and greeted. As scary as it might feel, smile and say “hi” to the people you pass.

One of the most significant reasons why social support improves health is because people are much likelier to choose behaviors that are life-enhancing rather than self-destructive when they feel loved and cared for. Here are 10 relationship tips for healthier and happier living:

1. Practice open communication that is positive and encouraging.
2. Take time and *be present* (lose the phone and computer) with one another.
3. Give and receive healing touch—a hug, handshake, pat on the back, etc.
4. Forgive. Remind yourself often that “Jesus died for _____.”
5. Pray for the people in your life.
6. Don’t judge or criticize. It’s been said that when you look for the good in others, you find the best in yourself.
7. Be optimistic about your relationships.
8. Be flexible.
9. Give people the benefit of the doubt.
10. Don’t play fair. We often treat people the way they treat us. That’s playing fair. But if you want your relationships to improve, then don’t play fair; love and forgive people, even if you don’t think they deserve it.

Review this list of 10 tips and choose one to start practicing today, because it really is true what Karl Menninger says: “Love cures people, both the ones who give it, and the ones who receive it.”

That’s CREATION Health!

Lynell LaMountain writes from Florida Hospital in Orlando, Florida. For information about hosting a CREATION Health program at your church, visit www.CREATIONhealth.tv or call 407.303.7711.



Shades of Grace

BY MIKE TUCKER » SPEAKER/DIRECTOR, FAITH FOR TODAY

Getting It Right

Only one of the seven churches of Revelation got it right. That doesn't mean that these folk were perfect, but they clearly understood the essence of Christianity and discovered how to actually live those principles in day-to-day life.

Philadelphia was founded to be a center for spreading the Greek culture and language. The Greeks described Philadelphia as an “open door” to the world.

No criticism is given to this church.

“And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write, “These things says He who is holy, He who is true, *He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens* I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name” (Rev. 3:7, 8, NKJV).

John speaks of Jesus as being “He who is holy, He who is true,” and as possessing “the key of David.” “He who is holy” was a common expression for God the Father. When coupled with “He who is true,” it tells us that Jesus is Lord and that we can trust Him in His work of redemption.

John has also borrowed an idea from the life of Hezekiah as told in the book of Isaiah. Hezekiah placed Eliakim in charge of the City of Jerusalem.

“The key of the house of David I will lay on his shoulder; So he shall open, and no one shall shut; And he shall shut, and no one shall open” (Isa. 22:22).

Eliakim held the authority to admit or exclude from the city of Jerusalem. The fact that Jesus holds “the key of David” tells us that He possesses undisputed authority to admit or exclude from the New Jerusalem. That means that it is by Christ's grace and His permission that we are admitted to Heaven. Jesus is indeed the only way!

The church at Philadelphia had never lost sight of the gospel truth that salvation is through faith in Christ alone. They had never lost “their first love.” That first love produced works in their lives. We find a clue as to what those works might have been when we understand that Philadelphia means “brotherly love.”

What is the identifying characteristic of God's true people,

His last day people? Jesus said, “By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:35, NKJV).

Philadelphia stands as an example of how to get it right. This doctrinally pure church never forgot that the theme of Scripture is the gospel—the doctrine of righteousness by faith in Christ alone. They understood this to be the foundational doctrine upon which all other teachings of Scripture are built.

How do we get it right? Where do we begin as we attempt to prepare for the return of Jesus? We must return to the pure teaching of the righteousness of Christ and the gift of salvation. For it is “by the blood of the Lamb” that we can “overcome.”

Christ's blood is sufficient for your sins. Not only that, but Christ's blood is sufficient to change your life. His blood can make you a person who is obedient to Christ, a person who loves others.

You can “get it right,” just like the church at Philadelphia. Return to the pure gospel. Focus on the love that sent Jesus to the Cross and see how it changes your life.

“He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name,” (Rev. 3:12).

Jesus will make you to be a “pillar.” Pillars are necessary to hold up the structure. Jesus says that once you are in, you will “go out no more.” Jesus will write God's name on you. He will write the name “New Jerusalem” on you. And Jesus will even write His own new name on you! By this Jesus is telling you that your salvation is sure!

Want to get it right? Believe the gospel. The gospel will change your life. It is the thing that fits you for heaven.

Mike Tucker is the speaker/director of Faith For Today television. He writes from his home in Arlington, Tex.



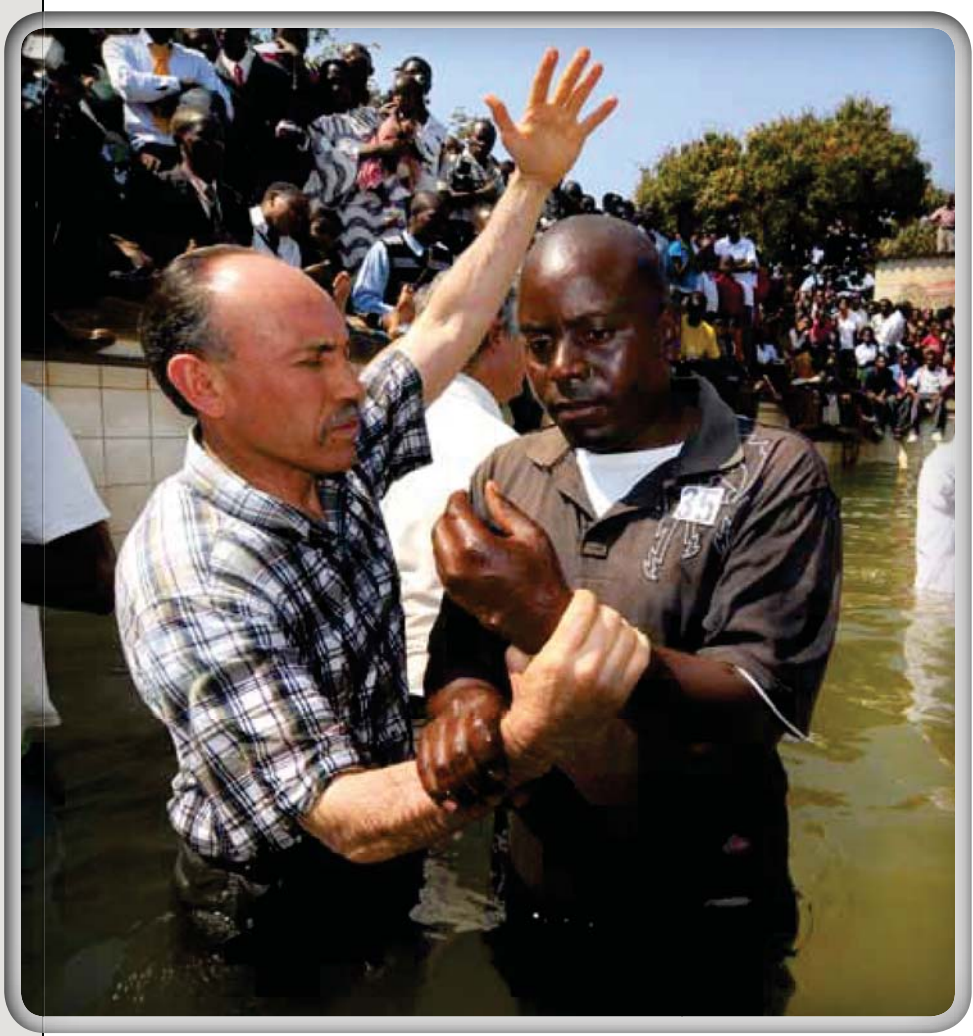
Pass it On...

A Monthly Focus on Evangelism in the Southwest

BY EDDIE CANALES » SOUTHWESTERN UNION VICE PRESIDENT FOR HISPANIC MINISTRIES

Now is the Time

Do you get sweaty palms at the thought of preaching a series of meetings? Does the idea of going on a mission trip sound exciting but scary, as well? Let me assure you that with God, all things are possible! God does not call those who are equipped, He equips those who are called. And all of us have been called.



There are so many reasons why you should consider becoming involved in short-term mission projects. Let me share just three with you.

First of all, you will be blessed by being involved. You will experience spiritual growth like never before. And you will find that your fears will fade away as you step out in faith to share the gospel message.

Second, you will experience God's miracles firsthand. You will see miracles in your own life and miracles in those who attend. Every time we plan a series of meetings, it seems that the devil tries to place roadblocks in the way, but each obstacle is an opportunity for God to work miracles that strengthen our faith.

Third, you will be a blessing to those who attend. Even if you have limited skills and experience, you can do amazing things. Think about this: Jesus chose to change the world with simple fishermen and men of trade. With the help of the Holy Spirit, they were transformed from frightened failures to empowered evangelists.

The ShareHim evangelistic materials that are available for you are so easy to use that even a child can do it. If you can read, you can preach. Believe me, I've seen students, housewives, grandparents, and others have success in sharing the Good News!

How can you get involved? You can preach either at home or abroad. The "Houston for Christ" meetings are a good example of lay people preaching in their homes and churches, many of which are being preached by laypeople who've never preached before.

So, my friend, would you consider sharing the Blessed Hope with those who have not heard? To find out about opportunities, contact your local conference evangelism coordinator, or call our office at 817.295.0476, and ask for the office of evangelism. Time is short—now is the time to Share Him!

Eddie Canales is the Southwestern Union vice president for hispanic ministries.

Visión Hispana

UN BRÈVE NOTICIERO MENSUAL DEL SUROESTE

Ahora Es El Tiempo

¿Te sudan las manos de sólo pensar en predicar una serie de reuniones? ¿La idea de ir a un viaje misionero te entusiasma y te asusta al mismo tiempo? ¡Déjame asegurarte que con Dios, todas las cosas son posibles! Dios no llama a aquellos que están equipados, Él equipa a aquellos que Él llama. Y todos nosotros hemos sido llamados.

Hay tantos motivos de por qué deberías pensar en involucrarte en proyectos misioneros a corto plazo. Déjame compartir sólo tres contigo.

En primer lugar, tú serás bendecido al participar. Tú experi-

hacer cosas asombrosas. Piensa en esto: Jesús decidió cambiar el mundo con pescadores simples y hombres de comercio. Con la ayuda del Espíritu Santo, ellos fueron transformados de fracasados asustados a evangelistas autorizados.

Los materiales de evangelismo ShareHim que están disponibles para ti son tan fáciles de usar que hasta un niño puede hacerlo. Si tú puedes leer, tú puedes predicar. ¡Créeme, he visto a estudiantes, amas de casa, abuelos y más, tener éxito en compartir las Buenas Nuevas!

¿Cómo puedes estar involucrado? Tú puedes predicar en casa o en el extranjero. Las reuniones "Houston para Cristo" son un ejemplo bueno de laicos que predicar en sus casas e iglesias. Tenemos más de 70 reuniones programadas en español, muchas de las cuales están siendo predicadas por laicos que nunca antes lo han hecho. Nuestra unión también patrocina muchos eventos en países extranjeros. Y sobre todo es ventajoso cuando programamos

reuniones en un país de habla hispana y podemos proporcionar predicadores que no requieren de traducción.

De este modo, mi amigo, ¿considerarías compartir la Esperanza Bendita con aquellos que no han oído? Para averiguar sobre oportunidades, ponte en contacto con el coordinador de evangelización de tu conferencia local, o llama a nuestra oficina al 817.295.0476, y pide la oficina de evangelismo. ¡El tiempo es corto ahora es el momento para Compartirlo!

Eduardo Canales es vicepresidente para ministerios hispanos de la Unión del Suroeste



mentarás el crecimiento espiritual como nunca antes. Y encontrarás que tus miedos se desvanecerán cuando salgas en fe para compartir el mensaje del Evangelio.

En segundo lugar, experimentarás los milagros de Dios directamente. Verás milagros en tu propia vida y milagros en aquellos que asistan. Cada vez que planeamos una serie de reuniones, parece que el diablo trata de colocar barricadas en el camino, pero cada obstáculo es una oportunidad de Dios para obrar milagros que refuerzan nuestra fe.

En tercer lugar, serás una bendición a aquellos que asistan. Incluso si tus habilidades y experiencia son limitadas, puedes

A PASSION TO SERVE

Why You Should Go on a Mission Trip

Dick Duerksen

There are dozens of reasons NOT TO GO on a short-term mission trip: “It would probably be better for us to take our airfare and other trip expenses and send it to them so they can build their own church.” “When we’re there for such a short time, we bring more disruption than help.” “There’s lots more we could be doing here. No need to go to a foreign country.” “It’s dangerous over there.”

But when you’re with a team of friends helping to build a school for kids who would otherwise never get beyond second grade, each one sounds more like an excuse than a reason.

Instead of those, let’s try out a few reasons TO GO.

Pizazz

A mission trip will bring new energy and vitality to your congregation. A well-planned mission trip re-calibrates the members’ spiritual compasses.

One pastor, who has led his congregation on 12 mission trips, says the focus on international missions has doubled his congregation’s tithing, tripled the number of Bible studies members give at home, and turned a “fairly boring” church into a vibrant ministry center.

“At first I thought that spending

money to go 4,000 miles

away was a total waste of resources. We needed to remodel the sanctuary and pave the parking lot! But we chose to go, and God multi-

plied our resources ten times over!

“Before we started going on mission trips,” another church leader says, “our church was dead, a place we used to go and sleep on Sabbath morning. Not now! Now we’re at church three or four times each week, doing crazy new outreach events with the community, and planning for our next trip. No time for sleeping anymore!”

Presence

Your presence—building, providing “bush clinic medical care,” helping kids with crafts, preaching the gospel to hundreds of upturned hearts, laughing together with new friends around evening campfires—will transform how you feel about God. “It’s like a blood transfusion for your soul!”

Earlier this week I watched as a teenage volunteer knelt beside a small boy whose tattered clothes hung like colorless threads. They were playing “rock, paper, scissors” and laughing like two old friends. Yesterday the volunteer carried a plastic bag to the job site. It was filled with new shirts, jeans, and a pair of shoes for his new friend. He was first on the bus—eager to give his gift away.

There’s a volunteer with us this week in Zimbabwe who’s on his 16th mission trip. “Six continents,” he says with a big smile. Then he begins talking about the kids he’s sponsoring at a school



Dick Duerksen shared a few photography pointers with 5-year-old Alson while his father helped paint the new One Day School.





► Officers of the West Zimbabwe Conference, Jacob Mahlangu, secretary, left, and Jeffrey B. Sibanda, president, right, don gloves to lend a hand.

in India and the Bibles he's providing for a congregation in Malawi. "Never been happier!" he declares.

Perspective

Your presence provides a whole new picture of God's family to the people you will be serving. They've heard there are other Adventists in the world, but you are the proof that God's church is large, caring, spiritually alive, and "mine!"

This month my wife and I are in Zimbabwe with a volunteer team that's building a 400-student primary school, a 400-student secondary school, two pre-schools, and 12 churches. Our team includes volunteers from a dozen countries, all working beside local members who are excited to paint, drill, weed, eat, plan, study, pray, and sing with God's big family.

Alson, the 5-year-old son of first-time painter Nelson, came to the job with his dad on Sunday. A frayed strap hanging around his neck held an ancient box camera. For more than an hour he took pictures. Volunteers, steel beams, electric drills, nothing was too



boring for a photograph.

Then he saw my cameras and came running to show me his. Six feet from me he became a shy 5-yr-old who spoke only Ndebele and was afraid of foreigners. Ten minutes later he was sitting beside me, cradling a Canon 5D MKII with a monster lens and taking pictures of his father. Both of us will remember Sunday as a "great photo day!"



Proximity

You'll get to know fellow church members as real people with real needs, real prayers, and real skills—not just as the family that sits in “pew number 9.”

Did you know that Dr. Tim is a professional house painter? Or that Joyce can make better brownies than Mrs. Fields? And the pastor wears jeans and loves to climb ladders?

Performance

When you come along with your money (rather than just sending a check) more gets done, and it all gets done faster.

Last year Maranatha volunteers built more than 1,000 church and school buildings around the world.

In Choluteca, Honduras, volunteers are building a brand-new school where Adventist teachers will offer Christian education to 900 students who would never have had that opportunity if the volunteers had not come.

Seven hundred sixty-five congregations in Mozambique have received new church buildings since 2007. In the 20 years from 1987 to 2007 the members built about 7 churches. The rest of the congregations met beneath trees.

Participation

When your short-term mission trip includes building a structure the congregation cannot build for themselves, sharing Bible studies and sermons that help the members and their friends see God and His grace in ways they had never dreamed possible, offering medical care in villages





cannot do for themselves, and learn from them how to enjoy God more.

Paradigm Shift

The experience will turn *you* inside out for God. As scores of teenagers say, "Mom, I will never shop the same again!"

Dick Duerksen is the assist to the president of Maranatha Volunteers International.

where people have never even had their blood pressure checked, and telling Bible stories to hundreds of kids who have never heard of Daniel or Esther, or Peter, or Mary (Whew! Mission trips are a boatload of work and chances are, you'll come home exhausted), you will have turned a community upside down for Christ.

If you go, don't just build. Don't just preach. Don't just do VBS. Instead, become part of the community. Help them do what they

IT'S NOT ABOUT YOU IT'S ABOUT GOD

Kathy McKey

As I write this article I am 38,000 feet in the air, flying back to Texas from the Dominican Republic by way of Miami. No, I was not on vacation, rather, I was on a mission to conduct a ShareHim pre-campaign orientation. In Santo Domingo I met with conference leaders and pastors of the churches where the Texico Conference pastors' wives, along with Carmen

Griffith, our Southwestern Union women's ministries director, and our North American Division president's wife, Donna Jackson, and others will be preaching evangelistic meetings beginning June 24.

Although I love my work, I don't care to live out of a suitcase. When we lived in the Northwest I used to envy my husband be-



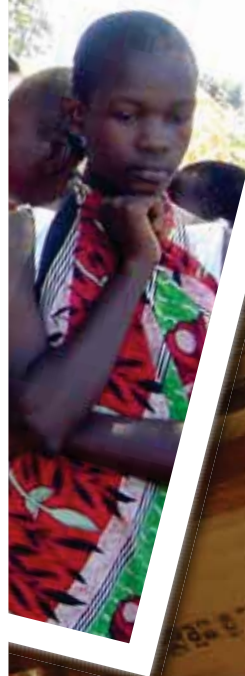


cause he got to travel and I had to stay home. But now, as the Southwestern Union Conference shepherdess coordinator and a ShareHim evangelism coordinator, I'm hardly ever home, and travel is not as glamorous as it once seemed. In reality, it's very tiring and emotionally draining. So why do I do it? Because I love seeing the faces of those who accept Jesus. It gives me such excitement and joy! And what a blessing I get when the lives of our preachers—whether in Oklahoma, Zambia, Texas, the Philippines, Arkansas, Louisiana, or New Mexico—are changed, including my own.

As you ponder the idea of being involved in an evangelistic campaign, maybe you're saying, "I can't do that! I'm too scared!" If that's your response, I can certainly relate. I had been a minister's wife for many years and was always in the background—never up front. I was more than happy to pray for my husband, Duane, as he preached, but I never saw myself in that role. One day, though, something happened to change all that. When my husband was Arizona Conference president, Elder Robert Folkenberg came to one of our camp meetings and made an appeal. He asked all those who would be willing to get involved in evangelism to come for-

ward. Well, I knew the call was about more than just being involved; he was inviting people to come forward who would actually preach. For some strange reason I didn't hesitate to go forward; but afterward I thought, *What in the world have I done?* Have you ever had an experience like that?

After making that commitment, I complained to my husband many times and asked, "What in the world have I done? *Why* did I go forward?" I had made a pledge, so I knew I had to follow through, but how could I do it? I knew I could not do it on my own, so I began to pray for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon myself, upon my translator, upon the church where I would have my meetings, and upon the community surrounding the church. At that time I had no idea where or when I would be going, I just knew that sometime in the future I would be preaching a series of evangelistic meetings. After a couple of months of praying, the Lord spoke to me in a way that He had never done before. No, it wasn't audible, but He spoke and said, "Kathy, it's not about you; it's about *Me*." That was it! All the while I had been thinking of *me*. How often do we do that? When I finally stopped whining about not being able to do it, the Lord took away my fear. Six months



later, when I went to Kenya and stood up to preach, I wasn't at all afraid. The Lord had taken away my fear! What I discovered through all the praying and preaching is that God just wants us to be willing to be used by Him and He will make up for what we lack.

I think of Hannah, an academy student who was hearing testimonies from excited students when they returned from their meetings, but was not having the same success as they were. She shared with me that she decided to pray all the next day, and as she was riding in the bus to her meeting she prayed, "Lord, just send people walking by the church into my meeting and let the church be full." When she stood up to preach, the Lord had answered her prayer and the church was full! Not only that, at the end of Hannah's meeting there was a baptism and when the appeal was made, others came forward, including some young men who were walking by the church and decided to come in. Eventually some of those young men were baptized. When Hannah returned from her meeting that night, she could hardly wait to share her testimony.

Recently a young pastor said to my husband and me, "I have never seen anything that will change a person's life so completely in such a short amount

of time as when people 'go' and 'preach.' " It's true. When people preach this message, they gain a deeper understanding. When I finished preaching 19 evangelistic sermons, I said, "God, you are so awesome to give us the privilege of sharing this message." There is nothing in this world that can match that experience.

Then there are the two university students who said excitedly when they returned to the hotel after their third night of preaching, "We have heard Mark Finley and Kenneth Cox preach these messages and now we are preaching these same messages!" It is amazing how the Holy Spirit will work in and through you, if you are willing to step out of your comfort zone.

How can *you* get involved in outreach evangelism? Talk to your pastor or call my husband, Duane McKey, at the union office and talk to his assistant, Suzanna Facundo; or you can call my office. We can help you get involved in evangelism at home or overseas. The sermons are all prepared for you. All God really wants of you and me is for us to be willing to be used by Him—anytime and anywhere. Let's not say, "I could never do that!" because with God, all things are possible.

Kathy McKey is the shepherdess coordinator for the Southwestern Union Conference and a ShareHim evangelism coordinator.



EVANGELISM RESOURCES

Southwestern Union Evangelism Department

The Southwestern Union is always planning short-term mission trips and training events that you can participate in. To find out how you can get involved in mission opportunities, contact Duane McKey at 817.295.0476.

ShareHim

The ultimate goal of ShareHim is to empower and mobilize lay men and women to be active in a lifestyle of evangelism. There are many ways to get involved, but for this purpose, ShareHim has two different programs—international campaigns and homeland initiatives. To find out how you can get involved, you can visit www.ShareHim.org, or call 1.800.8SHARE8.



Maranatha Volunteers International



Maranatha Volunteers International creates opportunities for thousands of volunteers each year. Volunteer projects center around helping people through the construction of urgently-needed buildings, and also include lots of opportunities for community service and interaction.

To volunteer with Maranatha, choose one of the many open team projects listed under *Volunteer Opportunities* on the Maranatha.org Web site, or organize a group project of your own. Many schools, churches, and even family or business groups create a team of volunteers and grow closer together while serving others. The support of Maranatha's international team makes it easier for you to serve effectively.

The television program, *Maranatha Mission Stories*, is a colorful resource to inspire volunteers and even provide tips on fundraising for your mission project, creative service opportunities, and growing your faith. Each program is available free of charge on the Maranatha.org Web site, and can also be downloaded free on iTunes.

Now available on iTunes is a brand new app for the iPhone or iPad. Search for Maranatha Volunteers International and download it free to your approved device.

Adventist Mission DVD

Although India and Russia are a long way from the Southwestern Union, churches here have an opportunity to see mission work there thanks to the video mission stories and reports on the Adventist Mission DVD.

The Adventist Mission DVD features three long videos that can be shown during the Sabbath School mission emphasis. It also includes shorter videos that can be used anytime. Many churches are using the video mission stories in the children's and youth classes. Some schoolteachers use them in their classrooms. There's also a music video and a children's story on each DVD.

Churches receive the Adventist Mission DVD for free because it is produced by the General Conference and sent to every church in the Southwestern Union by the North American Division. For more information about the DVD, visit www.AdventistMission.org.



I'm a Believer!



ARKANSAS-LOUISIANA CONFERENCE

They have been viewed simply as an opportunity for someone to take a trip. They have been criticized as being wasteful of the Lord's money. They have been perceived as vacation trips taken under the guise of ministry for others. Short-term mission trips have been observed in various ways, but I have discovered that those who can only see them in a negative way are those who have never participated in a mission endeavor themselves. On the other hand, I have yet to hear of someone who has gone on a short-term mission trip who hasn't returned home a changed person.

My first introduction to short-term missions was when my oldest son went on his

first mission trip to Mexico at the age of 14. Something happened on that trip that touched his young heart. Seeds were planted that grew into a desire to serve others, a desire to be engaged in distinctive mission service, and an openness to accepting cultural diversity. Benjamin came home a different boy than the one who left. If you were to ask him today about that trip, he would tell you of the impact it made in his life. There would be no discussion of the cost or anything mentioned of a vacation. The financial investment that he made in it personally, along with that of others, and all the hard work at their building site, he would tell you was worth everything for the experience he gained—besides the blessing that came to the people of the vil-

lage he served.

That was more than 20 years ago, and today I have an even greater appreciation for what a short-term mission trip can do, not just for the person who goes on the mission, but for the community where he or she will serve. Churches and schools are built, evangelistic meetings are conducted, Vacation Bible Schools are held, along with a host of other activities that bless a particular part of the world field, both home and abroad. It is a win/win situation for the mission participant as well as the mission project. I'm a believer in short-term mission trips!

Steve Orian, president

Pathfinders and Adventurers Inducted

HARRISON, ARK. » The Harrison Pathfinder and Adventurer clubs held their annual Induction program on November 20, 2010. All the Pathfinder and Adventurer clubs in Northwest Arkansas were invited to come and support the Harrison clubs. It was a blessing to host approximately 64 Pathfinders and Adventurers in uniform, besides having nearly 90 of their own members present. Club members from the Bentonville, Springdale, and Mountain Home Pathfinder and Adventurer clubs marched into the sanctuary with the Harrison clubs to "Onward Christian Soldiers." What a sight!

The service started with a candlelight Induction officiated by Roger Huff, the Northwest Arkansas Pathfinder area coordinator. Four Pathfinders and three staff, along with 10 Adventurers and one staff member, were newly inducted into the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference clubs. Following the Induction, the young people took over the service. Adventurer Jared Vicaro called for the offering while four other Adventurers passed the offering plates. Pathfinders Michaela Moore, Joshua Jones, Allyson Jones, and Zack Scarborough (plus a few extras) performed a short skit for the children's story about when

Jesus was young and was left behind at the temple. The message was that we should all be about our Father's business. For special music the Harrison Pathfinder and Adventurer clubs performed "Oh Glorious Day" by Casting Crowns. Jared Vicaro read the day's scripture, Psalm 138.

The sermon was inspired by the music of the popular contemporary Christian group, Casting Crowns. Michaela Moore, Destiny Wilson, Luke Gregory, Joshua Vicaro and guest, and Tommy Brixey from Bentonville, presented the audience with questions through the song lyrics of the group in the form of poetical readings. Questions presented were: "Who am I?" and "Are we too busy chasing after the world to find out?" "What if His people prayed?" "If we are the body, why do we not act like the body?" "Why do we not listen to the 'Voice of Truth?'" and "Here I go again,



Harrison Pathfinders and Adventurers present special music for Pathfinder Sabbath Induction.

why am I not telling my friends and family about Jesus?" Then the congregation was asked to be ready to preach and sing the gospel song "Until The Whole World Hears." Pastor Stephen Vicaro presented a sermonette about the need for older members to make room for our young people and to give them a chance to set the world on fire while they embrace their faith and "step up to the plate" by leading our church into eternity. The service ended with Chris Tomlin's song "Amazing Grace, My Chains are Gone."

Clarissa Moore

Jackets for Jesus

LAFAYETTE, LA. » Last autumn, an opportunity arose to assist a group of schoolchildren in need of warmer jackets for winter. Jose Luis Castro, leader of the Lafayette Adventist Community Services department, felt a special connection to the students enrolled in the English as a Second Language (ESL) program at his son's school. His son had been enrolled in that program the year before, and Jose knew that most of the students were from families who, like his own, had just recently come to the United States from their home country. Many of these families are struggling financially, and frequently come from a warm climate and are unprepared for the few months of cold here in Louisiana.

Jose approached the school principal about helping provide warmer clothing and the principal was quite excited that the church was willing to assist these children, alleviating one area of concern in

their lives. A list of sizes was distributed, and the church members went shopping and picked out jackets for each child in the program.

When the day came to present the jackets, the teachers were almost as excited as the students were. They carefully matched names with each one, and then the students were called in to receive their very own warm jacket. The whole room was buzzing with excitement as each student looked at the colors and checked to see how their jacket fit. Everyone was happy with what they received, and

the smiles reflected the pride that they felt in getting not only a warm jacket, but one that was brand new from the store! What a joy to do as Jesus has asked us and care for our brothers and sisters, especially those who are less fortunate. Once again, we can say from experience that it truly is more blessed to give than to receive.

Elizabeth Fresse

Members of the Lafayette, La., church, through the Adventist Community Services department, provided jackets for children of adult students enrolled in English as a Second Language classes.



Gentry Spanish Women's Retreat

ARKANSAS-LOUISIANA CONFERENCE

GENTRY, ARK. » On Sabbath, November 20, 2010, women from the Siloam Springs Spanish church joined the women of Gentry Spanish church for a special women's retreat. The retreat was organized by Christina Ledezma, women's ministries director of the Gentry Spanish church, and was held at Ozark Adventist Academy, where 40 beautiful women attended. The speaker was Norma Ledezma, Pedro Ledezma's wife, who is currently serving as a pastor in several Hispanic churches in Northwest Arkansas.

We could feel the Holy Spirit's presence in the meetings. Proverbs 31:10,

identifying the problem, and finding the best solutions while recognizing our value through Jesus. During the session on self-esteem we all had the opportunity to share some characteristics that make each of us special. Those moments of sharing were indeed wonderful as we expressed ourselves and our feelings, and received

Following the morning session we had a delicious lunch together in the Ozark Academy Cafeteria with an opportunity to share with our sisters. Norma Ledezma asked for all the women with "urgent" prayer requests to come to the front while the other women gathered in a circle around them. We listened as some of the women had the opportunity to share their prayer requests and pour out their hearts. We had four powerful prayers and could feel the Holy Spirit working on us. Praise God!

In the last session of the evening, our speaker illustrated the importance of communication. She gave us techniques and principles to use and her stories helped



▲ The women's ministries retreat was a great time to relax, enjoy the fellowship, and learn what God wants for us.

▲ Top: Women from the Siloam Springs Spanish church joined with women from the Gentry Spanish church for a women's retreat in November 2010.

▲ Norma Ledezma was the speaker for the Spanish women's retreat held last November at Ozark Adventist Academy in Gentry.

11 (NIV) says, "A wife of noble character—who can find? She is worth far more than rubies. Her husband has full confidence in her and lacks nothing of value." Norma Ledezma spoke about our value as women and how we tend to forget our true value in Jesus Christ. She helped us identify low self-esteem by looking at the symptoms,

feedback and support from others. It was a great experience. We each could understand more about God's life plan for us. As the prophet Jeremiah said in chapter 29, verse 11, "I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper and not to harm you, plans to give you a future and a hope."

us to comprehend the information being delivered in that session. We each need to understand how important communication is—and how our words and body expressions have a great impact on us and on those around us.

Jenny Rodriguez

Spiritual Ministry Puppet Show

SEARCY, ARK. » We are only a small congregation, but our mission is to touch as many lives as possible in the Searcy communities through our Spiritual Ministry Puppet Show, led by Richard and Angie Ataway. Recently the youth department came up with the idea of taking a spiritual puppet show to people in the nursing homes in the area. On the first Sabbath of each month, we visit the Byrd Haven Health Care Center and minister to the patients with songs and short sermons. The response we get from those attending is very heartfelt.

We have also taken the puppet show to the Searcy Health Care Facility, and we plan to take the puppet show to other places. Our goal is to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ through the puppet ministry with the youth of our church.

Herman Clements



Spiritual lessons taught through a puppet ministry warm the hearts of residents at local nursing homes and health care facilities in the Searcy area.

Revelation Now!

PINE BLUFF, ARK. » The Lord blessed the Pine Bluff church abundantly during October with the *Revelation Now!* series. Thirteen new members were brought into the church through the ministry of Evangelist Jac Colon and his wife, Dena. The meetings were held in the church sanctuary, and from opening night we knew something special was happening because we had to bring in extra chairs to seat all of our guests. Meanwhile, the church was revitalized and revived, as nearly every church member was involved in some way to minister to the guests attending the meetings. Visitation teams were organized and friendships were established long before decisions were made to join the church. We praise God for the wonderful outpouring of His Spirit on our church!

The first person baptized in the meetings was Clinton Barber. He had not missed a single night, and was praising God night after night for all the new truth he was learning through *Revelation Now!* However, the very next day he was immediately tested as to whether or not he was going to hold firm to his conviction of keeping holy



A group of new members display the welcome baskets they received following the Revelation Now! series at the Pine Bluff church.

the seventh-day Sabbath. Clinton was offered a good-paying job in his trade as a heating and air-conditioning repairman, which he needed badly. Everything was going well and they had already made his nametag when he was confronted with the fact that the job was going to require him to work on the Sabbath. Clinton stood by his convictions and even offered to work double time on Sunday, but the employer told him if he didn't work on Saturdays, he would not be hired. Clinton stood his ground and so did the employer, and so Clinton left work that morning without a job. Please keep him in prayer, because

he still has not found a job, but he is still keeping holy the seventh-day Sabbath and is already witnessing to his family.

It is our prayer that Clinton's determination to follow God, regardless of the consequences, will be an encouragement to others struggling with the same temptation to compromise. Praise God we can all hold on to the promise of Jesus, that if we "seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33).

Travis Walker, pastor

Praying is not optional



OKLAHOMA CONFERENCE

Since the last General Conference Annual Council we have been hearing a lot about revival. The leadership of our church is encouraging revival; we, the members of the church are wanting revival; and I am convinced that the Lord is longing for His church to be revived. We have often been reminded of that statement in *1 Selected Messages*, p. 121: "A revival of true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs. To seek this should be our first work." We should give serious attention to the rest of the statement. Notice! "There must be earnest effort to obtain the

blessing of the Lord, not because God is not willing to bestow His blessing upon us, but because we are unprepared to receive it." It seems that a good question at this point is, "How do we prepare to receive it?"

The answer is, "It is our work, by confession, humiliation, repentance, and earnest prayer, to fulfill the conditions upon which God has promised to grant us His blessings." Notice the next line: "A revival need be expected only in answer to prayer." Confession, humiliation, repentance are what we do in earnest prayer. Can we conclude that if revival will only come in answer to earnest prayer, and if revival doesn't seem

to be coming in our lives, that we aren't praying earnestly?

Luke 18:1 says, "Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart." Praying is not an option. Praying is not just another thing that we do as Christians. Praying is that on which everything else that we do is based. Let's invite the Holy Spirit to remind us how essential prayer is to our work, and how powerful it is to change our lives.

John Moyer, president

Pathfinders and Adventurers Reach Out

SOUTHERN HILLS ▶ The Southern Hills church has eight faithful Adventurers and one Little Lamb. Last year they participated in Family Fun Day at Southern Hills. They organized three booths: ring toss, tic-tac-toe, and a silent auction table that helped raise money for their club. In September, several Adventurers and Pathfinders helped with the daycare program during the evangelistic meetings held at Southern Hills. In October they attended and participated in the Presidential Fitness program at Wewoka Woods. We were excited to learn that our deputy director, Doris Greenfield, earned the National Level Award for the Presidential Fitness program. In November, we collected canned goods with the Southern Hills Orions Pathfinder Club. It was truly a blessing to watch these young people participate in the events and learn what it means to serve the Lord and reach out to others.

Carol Baker,
Adventurer director

▶ Justice McDonald, Damian Gomez, and Travis Paddock find their first bag of canned goods from a nearby neighborhood while can collecting.

▼ Pathfinders and Adventurers collected canned goods to share with needy people in the community.

Bottom right: Pathfinders Diamond Bias and Stephanie Green, and Adventurer chairmain, McAllister, help with a Creation booklet for the children's class during Southern Hills evangelistic meetings.



Adventist Pioneers Come to Life at Bristow Adventist School

BRISTOW » What better way to celebrate the first advent of our Lord Jesus Christ than to sing the songs, remember and tell the stories, imagine the emotions, and express some of the fears of those who believed the second advent was very near?

In December 2010, Joseph Bates, Hiram Edson, William Miller, Ellen White, and more came to life through the students and homeschool friends of Bristow Adventist School. Each child chose, researched, and wrote a mini-biography of an Advent pioneer. Each character was dressed according to the custom of the day, and spoke in first person, bringing the characters to life in the "Live Museum." Each child helped the audience to relive the great desire to go "home" and be

with their Savior. They found it interesting to learn that many people who believed in the Second Coming lost the "vision" after the Great Disappointment in 1844, while others wouldn't let go of their hopes and beliefs until they knew the truth, just like Jacob who wrestled with the angel.

In the research process, the children were extremely interested and surprised that each individual had to sacrifice in one way or another to accomplish the "call" that God gave him/her in getting the "truths" to everyone. To relive the miracles that God worked for the Advent pioneers was fascinating for the children. Discussions of sacrifice, realizing the importance of preparing for the Second Coming, and meeting the challenge of discovering the "news" that "the seventh day is the Sabbath," were everyday encounters for these young people at Bristow Adventist School.

The challenge that this program brings about is to consider the following question: Are you merely a believer in the first advent, or are you preparing yourself and others for the second advent?

Annette Park, principal



▲ From left, Danielle Hammond, Scott Lee, Joshua Bingham, Jae-Yung Park, Stephany Figueroa, and Katherine Figueroa depict our church's pioneers.

► In December 2010, Joseph Bates, Hiram Edson, William Miller, Ellen White, and more came to life through the students and homeschool friends of Bristow Adventist School.



Members Spread Christmas Joy in the Community

BRISTOW » It is tradition in many churches to go Ingathering and caroling around local neighborhoods, but this past Christmas, Bristow church members were able to sing carols in local businesses. After visiting several members who have been assuaged by surgeries and medical problems, the group of 30 or so adults and children were allowed to sing inside the local Pizza Hut. The group sang for about 10 minutes while customers politely listened and enjoyed their food.

The big surprise was venturing to the local Wal-Mart and gaining permission to sing in the eating area next to the store entrance. Customers stopped their shopping to listen and watch, and several store employees took breaks to hear the beautiful harmonies echoing through the store. After singing for about 15 minutes, the group

wound their way through the store aisles, continuing to sing as they slowly returned to the entrance. The local manager had kindly provided hot chocolate and candy canes to the singers. Afterward, the carol-

ers enjoyed the home cooking of Kenneth Fisher and other wonderful cooks from the church as they played board games until late in the evening.

Caroline Fisher



Members of the Bristow church spread cheer as they sang carols at their local Wal-Mart and Pizza Hut during the 2010 Christmas season.

Okeene Adventurers Earn Awards

OKEENE » Our church has a newly-organized Adventurer group, the Okeene Pioneers, named by the children. (Twenty-five plus years ago, Okeene had an active Pathfinder Club with the same name.) The leader of our group is Laurie Bell. We have five Adventurers, one Eager Beaver, and

one Little Lamb, along with several adult and youth helpers. Our Induction ceremony was held on October 23, 2010 during our worship hour. The Oklahoma Conference regional director for our region, Annette Park, led the Induction ceremony. Our Adventurer Club has been very busy

since we started. We have already earned the fitness award, fire safety award, bead award, and geology award. Many members of the Okeene congregation have stepped up to help the club by teaching awards and volunteering to help in other ways.

We visited the Midley Museum in Enid to assist in earning the geology award. We have had two curriculum meetings and the kids are busy learning Bible verses, the Adventurer law, and the Adventurer pledge. The kids are excited and learning a lot. Our leadership has worked hard to provide all of them with dress and field uniforms.

Our Adventurers are Emily Evans, Katie Grothe, Kassidy Winfield, Joshua Kafiar, and Terrance Kafiar, and our Eager Beaver is Kaylee Winfield. Our Little Lamb is Peter Kafiar. The adult helpers are Cindy Evans, Aaron Bell, and June Schnell (not pictured). Our youth helpers are Cassidy Kafiar and Becky Grothe. Also pictured are Laurie Bell, Okeene director, and Annette Park, Oklahoma Conference regional director.

Annette Park



An Adventurer Induction ceremony was held on October 23, 2010, led by Oklahoma Conference regional Adventurer director, Annette Park.

Three Baptisms Equal Three Answered Prayers

WAURIKA LAKE » After being dormant for too long, God blessed our little church on November 13, 2010, with three new baptisms. Pastor O.J. Jackson baptized three sisters, Taylor Gutierrez, Jordan Gutierrez, and Kaitlyn Gutierrez. The baptisms were held at the Lawton church, followed by a wonderful afternoon of food and fellowship with the Lawton and Duncan church members.

Taylor, Jordan, and Kaitlyn's great-grandmother, the late Pauline (Miller) Jones, was a long-time faithful member and prayer warrior in the Waurika Lake church. Her greatest desire was to be with her entire family in heaven. She prayed daily for her large family, and on November 13, three of her prayers were answered. Praise God!

Donna Wood



Three sisters, Taylor Gutierrez, Jordan Gutierrez, and Kaitlyn Gutierrez, were baptized at the Waurika Lake church on November 13, 2010 in answer to the prayers of their grandmother, the late Pauline (Miller) Jones.

Joada Korgan Retires

CLAREMORE » On Saturday, November 13, a bittersweet celebration took place as the Claremore church joined Joada Korgan to celebrate her retirement as church treasurer, a position she held for 18 years. She has worked with eight different pastors, multiple church boards, and various committees. As church treasurer, she was required to sit on various committees. Joada's most recent challenge was her involvement with the building of the new church sanctuary, which was dedicated in January.

Joada was honored with a presentation during church and special fellowship dinner. Through the years, Joada has counted



Joada Korgan served the Claremore church as treasurer for 18 years. The church recently recognized her at a retirement luncheon held in her honor.

thousands of pennies, nickels, dimes, quarters, and occasionally, foreign coins from the children's offerings. She has written numerous checks, added up receipts and made over 900 trips to the bank to deposit offerings. It is not unusual for people to retire from careers, but it is unusual for individuals to be able to say that they retired from 18 years in a volunteer position.

Joada was very dedicated to the Claremore church and to her service as church treasurer. Although she is retiring from the treasurer position, she still plans to stay involved with other church activities. The church thanks Joada for her service and dedication. She will be greatly missed as treasurer, but will continue to be an inspiration to all church members.

Heather Korgan

Oklahoma Campmeeting 2011

Come let us seek for spiritual revival and blessings from heaven in 2011.

Hear keynote speaker **Dan Jackson**, North American Division president, on opening night, Friday, July 15, at 7:00 p.m.; and Sabbath, July 16, at 10:45 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.

WHERE: Wewoka Woods Adventist Center, Wewoka, Okla.

WHEN: July 15-23, 2011

Call 405.721.6110 or 405.257.5404 for more information.

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Are Short-term Mission Trips Really Worth It?



SOUTHWEST REGION CONFERENCE

I feel that any mission trip, whether short- or long-term, is worth it. It gives individuals the opportunity to respond in a positive and productive way to the “go ye” of Jesus Christ (Matt. 28:19, 20) and to God’s question of “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” (Isa. 6:8).

“When Christ was about to ascend to heaven, He committed to His disciples the mission that His Father had committed to Him. And He instructed them how to fulfill this mission. He declared that as He had represented His Father to the world, so they were to represent Him. Although He would be invisible to the natural eye, yet all who believed on Him would be able to behold Him by faith. He told His followers to work as He had worked. They were to be a spectacle to worlds unfallen, to angels, and to men, revealing the Father through the Son. . . .

“Nothing will help us more than to realize how sacred is this kind of work and how perfectly it must correspond with the lifework of the Great Missionary. The object of our mission is the same as the object of Christ’s mission. **Why did God send His Son to the fallen world? To make known and to demonstrate to mankind His love for them.**

“Christ came as a Redeemer. Throughout His ministry He was to keep prominent His mission to save sinners. Clothed with humanity, Christ performed a work that revealed the invisible Father in order that His disciples might understand the meaning of the prayer, “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven” (*Manuscript Releases*, vol. 18, p. 109, emphasis supplied).

One of the most exciting ways of doing short-term missions is through the ShareHim program. ShareHim has trained and given opportunities for thousands to carry out the gospel commission mandated by Jesus. Participating in a ShareHim mission trip not only proves to be a blessing to the hearer, but also to the sharer of the good news about Jesus Christ. One youth speaker who was not a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church went on one of these mission trips and preached the ShareHim sermons and was baptized herself, along with the people she had preached to.

I, along with several members from the Southwestern Union Conference Executive Committee, can attest to the blessings, joy, and exhilaration that come when one participates in a ShareHim mission. We went to Zambia and allowed God to use us to preach His Word as a witness to the

citizens of that country, with an end result of over 1,600 baptisms in two weeks. Approximately 400 others made decisions to be baptized but were placed in baptismal classes and would be baptized at a later date. In addition to preaching the gospel, we went into the community to help construct a One-day Church for one of our congregations. What a wonderful experience it was to be ambassadors of the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords to the country of Zambia.

As you read this, I, along with the pastors and laity of the Texas and Southwest Region Conferences, will be participating in a ShareHim event called **Houston for Christ**. We will have 100 men and women preaching the everlasting gospel simultaneously throughout the city of Houston, Tex. It is with great anticipation that we expect to bring a harvest of souls into God’s church for this time in this generation.

If you have never been part of a short-term mission team, why not sign up today? I challenge you to become a member of the ShareHim family and watch God bring awesome blessings to you and others as you allow Him, through the Holy Spirit, to use you as a conduit to share the gospel of salvation with others. Love you much!

Bill Wright, president

Wellspring Diabetes Program Makes a Difference

HOUSTON, TEX. » “Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in good health” was the philosophical approach for Cornel McKenzie and her team as they kicked off the Wellspring Diabetes Program at the Fondren church in Houston on September 20, 2010. There were some who questioned why we offered 16 sessions and whether people would commit for such an extended period of time. Nevertheless, we forged ahead, and on October 18, 2010 our graduation exercises were held, with eight people completing the course.

According to Dora Morton, who attended the class, “The Wellspring Diabetes program has been a lifeline for me. I thank

God for bringing the vision to Cornel McKenzie to have the program at Fondren. It’s been three weeks of faithfully following the program and my blood glucose is consistently 20 to 25 points below what it used to be. But most important of all, the joint pains have continually eased and my night pains have all but gone away. My blood pressure and cholesterol are dropping. I will continue with this program after this is over because I want to be healed completely.”



From left, Pastor Moody, Marie Williams receiving her certificate, and Cornel McKenzie, the Wellspring Diabetes coordinator.

Murals Enhance God's Presence at Grace Temple

FORT WORTH, TEX. » On January 1, 2011 Grace Temple church was blessed with two beautiful murals hand-painted by artist Raymond Wade. The senior pastor, Helvius Thompson, envisioned the concept of two murals depicting the law of God and His grace and mercy. The first mural shows Mount Sinai with the Ten Commandments behind it, and a light from heaven shining on the fourth commandment. It also depicts the

burning bush and Mount Calvary. The second mural depicts Christ protecting Grace Temple church and the second Coming of Christ.

Pastor Thompson, with board approval, commissioned artist Raymond Wade to paint these murals to inspire and bless all that viewed them. Wade says that he felt the Holy Spirit's presence as he painted the murals. "I've painted a lot of art, but these paintings were designed to encourage and uplift men to Christ," he said. Thompson and Wade collaborated on ideas, Thompson with precise biblical principles, and Wade using his artistic experience to convey a Christ-like rendering.

Grace Temple members were pleased with the results and feel a greater sense of God's presence in their foyer.

Helvius Thompson, pastor



▲ Raymond Wade, artist, poses next to one of his commissioned murals that grace the foyer at the Grace Temple church in Fort Worth, Tex.

◀ One of the paintings in the mural at the Grace Temple church depicts the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai, with the fourth commandment illuminated by a light from heaven.

▼ Helvius Thompson, pastor of the Grace Temple church, commissioned artist Raymond Wade to paint two murals for the church foyer that are designed to encourage and uplift members and visitors.



Two Churches Raise \$1,240 For Christian Education

SOUTHWEST REGION CONFERENCE

MONROE, LA. » Members of the Macedonia and Present Truth churches exemplified the giving spirit of the holiday season by raising \$1,240 during their 2010 Christmas Day fundraiser for Christian education. The money was placed in the Ruthie G. Wheeler Scholarship Fund (RGWSF), an account established to support elementary and secondary students in Christian schools. The Christmas Day program at Macedonia featured music from students,



a tribute to Ruthie Wheeler, and a vesper thought from James Merrill, pastor, on parents' responsibilities in educating their children for this world and the world to come. Also during the program, the RGWSF's corporate sponsor, Bumper to Bumper Auto Parts, was recognized for its \$100 donation. Program coordinators included Anetra Kay Wheeler, her daughter, also a member of Macedonia, and Margaret Lee, youth leader at Present Truth church.

The fundraiser provided 35 mid-year back-to-school packets to students in need. Additionally, the fund supports the purchase of back-to-school supplies for public and private school-aged students in both churches. The RGWSF was established in memory of Ruthie Wheeler, a long-time member of Macedonia and a

strong advocate for Christian education, who died last summer due to long-term health issues. However, her physical condition never affected her selfless church and community work. Wheeler served as church treasurer and was active in youth activities as well as on the boards of several non-profit community organizations in Monroe. She was a major influence in the raising of her five grandchildren, who spent several years in Christian education, with three of them becoming accomplished musicians. Her oldest granddaughter, Felicia, is a freshman and the pianist for her school choir at Jefferson Christian Academy (JCA) in Jefferson, Tex. The RGWSF is currently providing a monthly scholarship to assist with Felicia's room and board at JCA. Anyone interested in

Top: Ruthie Wheeler's five grandchildren performed during the fundraising program. From left are Derrick Brown, Sammy Jackson, Anyssia Brown, Felicia Jackson, and Quinton Jackson.

Above left: Felicia Jackson played two solos during the Christmas Day RGWSF fundraising program at Macedonia church in Monroe, La.

Above: Donald R. Moy (right), a RGWSF administrator, present Anyssia Brown and Quinton Jackson with mid-year back-to-school packets.

contributing to this worthy cause that supports Christian education for youth, may do so at any Regions Bank in the U.S. by making a deposit to the Ruthie G. Wheeler Scholarship Fund. (The fund's exact name must be used.) For more information, e-mail donald.moy@sbcglobal.net. Donations to the non-profit RGWSF are tax deductible.

Donald R. Moy

Extending Christ's Healing Touch

NEW ORLEANS, LA. » The goal of the nursing home ministry at the Ephesus church is to reach out to adult care facility residents with love, meeting their spiritual needs by providing a ministry of hope and caring, affirming each resident's worth and dignity, and extending the healing ministry of Jesus Christ.

Our nursing home ministry began in January, 2007 at the St. Charles Health Care Center. Our leader, Edna Francois, along with our members, visits the St. Charles nursing home twice a month, on the first and third Sabbaths. We have been blessed with the participation of our members as well as our pastor, elders, deacons, and others who have served diligently with their sermons, special music, and spiritual support.

The residents eagerly await our arrival and participate in our program through songs, testimonies, and prayers. We also distribute love gifts to the residents on each holiday. During the third and fourth quarter of 2009, we began holding Communion for



the residents. Their participation during this sacred service has been a spiritual blessing to them as well as to us.

Because of their enthusiasm, we look forward to our Sabbath visits. The joy we receive from our ministry gives us the assurance that we are doing what Jesus has asked us to do in Matthew 25:36: "I was sick and ye visited me."

Leo Freeman

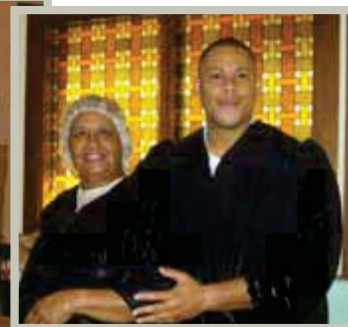


Members of the Ephesus church in New Orleans extend the healing ministry of Christ through their nursing home outreach.

Reaching in, Reaching Out

BATON ROUGE, LA. » In keeping with its reclamation thrust, the Berean church recently hosted what began as 40 consecutive nights of in-house evangelism. According to Robert Davis, pastor, the idea behind the nightly seminar was to prepare the current members before reaching out to former members and the community at large. Davis chose Dennis Smith's *40 Days of Prayer and Fasting* for the study, and provided each attendee—whether he or she owned the devotional or not—a photocopy of the night's reading. Even those missing a night were able to participate through a conference call staffed by church board members. The brainstorm of Pastor Davis, the conference calls coincided with the live meeting, with callers having access to the script for the night. Employing "The Baptism of the Holy Spirit" as its focus, each meeting introduced participants to the attributes and ministries of the Holy Spirit and the role the Laodicea church needs to fulfill to receive those attributes and carry out the ministries.

Determined to begin part two of the evangelistic thrust on schedule, on night 36, Pastor Davis announced the premature close of the scheduled 40 days. The reclamation phase followed, which began with colorful postcards boldly proclaiming the theme "It's Safe to Come Home." Members were directed to address the cards, inviting former Berean family and friends. The rostrum was transformed into a living/dining room. "The idea was to simulate an inviting home atmosphere," said Davis. A stage with a comfortable sofa and throw pillows, a wing-backed chair, floor lamps, wall pictures, and a dining room table with a place setting for two completed the look. With the living/dining room as a backdrop, Pastor Davis presented messages for six nights designed to reassure returning members that it was indeed safe



Pastor Robert Davis preaches an evangelistic series with a living room scene as a backdrop as he reassures his listeners that "it's Safe to Come Home."

to come home. And convinced they were, as throughout the week, several former and current members were re-baptized. On the final Sabbath 10 precious souls responded to the altar call, renewing their vows through re-baptism or being baptized for the first time. The members of Berean feel blessed to know that the newly-baptized members accepted the invitation, affirming the age-old adage that there truly is "No place like home." Welcome home, members!

Evelyn M. Edwards

Short-term Mission Trips



complete because of the people I met in our group and the residents of Kenya, who allowed me to confirm how blessed any of us are simply because we know Jesus.

Since my experience in Kenya I have participated in other short-term mission trips in such countries as Brazil, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, and Peru, and I continue to seek opportunities to do so. It may sound strange for some, but I embrace the simple life of being in survival mode and I look forward to meeting natives of the country who recharge my spirit. I become encouraged to see how much individuals from these countries are willing to give of themselves and I'm amazed at how the mission team becomes a family in such a short timeframe. When asked, "What makes you go?" I realize that it may be for a

selfish reason, but I engage in these experiences because I end up being more blessed than the individuals we go to serve. Not only that, but I return with a positive attitude to serve those in my local community, as well. Engaging in short-term mission trips is one of the ways I believe we honor the commandment that Jesus gave in Luke 10:27: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and love your neighbor as yourself." My neighbor may be next door, and my neighbor may also be 3,000 miles away. Let us continue to love our neighbors, wherever we may be.

Melody Argueta

TEXAS CONFERENCE

Hobbies are diverse and interests are unique. Some of us enjoy building puzzles, cooking, or cycling, others like to quilt, and others have collections of valuable items. One of my hobbies is traveling, especially travel that includes mission work. The first time I ever participated in a mission trip, I was 21 years old and had the opportunity to visit the country of Kenya. We slept in tents, showered underneath the stars, and fell asleep as soon as it was dark, because we did not have any electricity. The experience was

Northwest Houston Youth Choir Wins \$10,000 in Choir Competition

HOUSTON » The youth choir from the Northwest Houston church, Heaven Bound, won \$10,000 and the title of Houston Best Small Choir in the Verizon Choir Competition, "How Sweet the Sound" held September 9, 2010 at the Houston Toyota Center.

Choir spokesperson Dion Long said the choir was started in 2001 when the members were teenagers ministering to people in shelters and to shut-ins. The choir is comprised of members from the Houston Northwest and Houston Central churches as well as the Hebron Church in the Southwest Region Conference. Long says the choir's goal is to make Houston aware of the Adventist presence and the music that the



church produces.

Germaine Cenac, who directs the choir, continues to encourage and lead the group

▲ The members of Heaven Bound hail from three churches in the Houston area and both the Texas and Southwest Regional Conferences.

◀ A \$10,000 prize was awarded to the Houston Best Small Choir winner. Heaven Bound's interpretation of "It Is Well With My Soul" won them the title.

in its evangelistic activities and encourages other churches to participate and share their music with the world. The winning song "It Is Well With My Soul," was sung acappella and can be viewed at www.howsweetthesound.com by clicking on the "Videos" tab, and then "Houston, Tex."

Shareen A. Williams

Treat Instead of Trick at Edinburg

EDINBURG » The month of October 2010 saw the Explorer class of the Edinburg Castles Pathfinder Club doing something unique. Instead of begging for tooth-decaying handouts or scary pranks, these faithful Pathfinders knocked on doors asking for clothing or food to share with the needy. On the first Sabbath afternoon, the kids in their dress uniforms distributed empty boxes to a pre-selected neighborhood. Together with the box, the kids also handed out for the recipient to keep some books and a bookmark with a message. They also offered to pray with the recipients. On the second Sabbath afternoon they distributed more boxes and collected the boxes they had distributed before. On the third Sabbath they did the final collection of the boxes.

One could notice the different facial expressions as these kids went from house to house—the joy when someone brought out a full box, and the disappointment when no one answered the door or when someone refused to have prayer. But overall, the kids were happy to do something good for others.

Kudos to the teachers and counselors who

planned this activity, Julia and Omar Gomez, Jennifer Zambales, and Jeremy Brown. A big thanks also goes to the parents who helped out with transportation and supervision.

Indeed, during the time around Halloween, when a lot of people tend to think of what they can get for themselves, these kids did something special—they were out

to share instead of scare.

Charity Balansag



◀ The selfless Pathfinders from the Edinburg church collected boxes of donations to share with needy families.

The Oaks Adventist Christian School Gives Drugs the Boot

HOUSTON » Red Ribbon Week is a national program that designates the last week of October each year to encourage students to live healthy lifestyles and to re-

main drug-free for a lifetime. Fun themes are planned each day that encourage our students to make choices according to God's directives regarding abstinence and

temperance.

As part of The Oaks Adventist Christian School's Red Ribbon Week Campaign last year, students were encouraged to "Give Drugs the Boot" by wearing their western wear to school. Participants also brought canned food to donate to our five managing churches to use in Thanksgiving food baskets.

The students of The Oaks collected more than 460 non-perishable food items to be given to people in need. The fifth- and sixth-grade class won the competition for the most cans collected. Students at The Oaks are not only meeting Jesus, receiving a great education, and having fun—they are learning to serve their communities and share the love of Jesus.

Becky Hanson

◀ Mrs. Prokop's fifth- and sixth-grade class collected the most cans during Red Ribbon Week. As they take a stance against drugs, they take a step further, collecting nonperishables for families in need.



Fashion Show at The Path Adventist Church in Austin

AUSTIN » What comes to mind when you hear the words “modest apparel”? For the young women in the Austin area who participated in the Fall Fashion Show, modesty now has a fashionable edge. Members of The Path Adventist Church in Austin had a desire to raise money for their youth mission project fund that would help to enable youth and young adults in the area to participate in mission trips and projects. Humbly, I admit I came up with the idea of putting on a fashion show with the

theme of modesty. Women from Adventist churches came together to model fashion that demonstrates style and creativity in the context of Christian dress. The models showcased budget-friendly ideas for business or school attire, church dresses, and formal wear. Throughout the process, the young women learned how to demonstrate poise and grace, in addition to how to put together beautiful outfits that glorify God.

Many members of area Adventist churches contributed their talents and ef-

forts—without them, the show would not have been a success. The models came from the Alpha, Austin Spanish, and The Path churches. The program was presented by Ruben Garcia, a member of The Path who has experience coordinating and facilitating fashion shows. Joseph and Puteri Astran acted as lively and talented emcees and kept up the tempo of the show. Several women from The Path provided valuable help backstage with the models’ hair and outfit changes. Desiree Web of The Path

and Vanya Kovachev of the Hill Country church provided their skills as talented seamstresses and created beautiful evening gowns for several of the models. Tiffany Sykes of the Alpha church and Elda Guillet of the Austin Spanish church provided special music. The Path’s TEA Ministry catered the event. Ultimately, weeks of practice and collaboration by generous volunteers resulted in a fun and exciting Fall Fashion Show event that many are looking forward to again next year.

Addy Dean

◀ Many people were involved and many were blessed by this innovative fundraiser that brought awareness to fashionable, modest dress.



Seguin Church Goes to the Fair

SEGUIN » The Seguin church, with its 30 members, sponsored a booth at the Guadalupe County Fair in Seguin. Fair-goers were very appreciative of the free health checks that were offered, including blood pressure checks, health age analysis, and live cell analysis. A bottle of water and timely literature were given to attendees who participated. Several different types of catchy experiments were displayed to catch the attention of the public: a clock powered by fresh fruit or vegetables and an optical illusion with farm animals. Church members worked different shifts at the booth.

Jerri Boggess



Church members Clara DeLeon, Jerri Boggess, and Annie Mae Poenitz work their shift at the Seguin church booth at the local fair.

Texas City Pathfinders Contribute to Gulfhaven Adventist Christian School

TEXAS CITY » The Texas City Spanish Pathfinders, better known as “The Texas City Diamonds” and the TLT young people, surprised everyone on Monday morning, November 1, 2010, as the staff, faculty, and students arrived at school to see the beautiful change in the flower beds that contained various kinds of plants in the middle of the circled driveway at the front of the school.



▲ After some hard work weeding and digging, the Texas City Diamonds were able to transform the landscape at Gulfhaven Adventist Christian School.

► Although they may have been worn out by the end of the day, these young people made a huge difference helping out and beautifying the school campus.



The day before, as a community service project, about 10 Pathfinders and TLTs with shovels, rakes, paint buckets and brushes in hand, met together at the Gulfhaven School to begin beautifying the school grounds. They first pulled all the weeds and grass, which had become badly overgrown around all four flower beds. Next, several of these energetic and excited Pathfinders picked up a container of paint and a brush and began to paint all the decorative poles that surrounded each bed of plants. This made an enormous improvement to the school’s appearance, but they were not through yet. Felipe Morales, Team Leadership Training (TLT) director, hauled in a load of beautiful red mulch

in his pick-up, to spread over the top of each bed of bushes and plants to accent the colorful hues. This was not an easy task, but this group of extraordinary young people actually did sparkle like diamonds as the team combined their efforts to meet the challenge.

The commitment for this community service project came from the inspiration and influence of the Pathfinder director, Julieta Compas. Angel Compas said the reason for picking this project was that “We wanted to see the school and campus looking real pretty.” Compas is doing an outstanding job as director of this Texas City Pathfinder Club. Compas also serves as Home and School Leader for the Gulfhaven Adventist Christian School. The school has been incredibly blessed with her leadership through her knowledgeable, profitable, and loving ways of helping the school.

The school commends the Texas City Diamonds and their directors for their outstanding commitment and generosity and we are truly grateful to this wonderful Pathfinder Club for what they have accomplished to help beautify the school.

Jean Hagen

Southern Worship Center Helps Inmates Experience God

ARLINGTON » On October 31, 2010, more than 120 inmates at Carswell Federal Medical Center attended a special Fall celebration, “Experiencing God,” presented by Southern Worship Center’s Touch of Love prison ministries. Beautiful music from the Southern Worship Center Praise Team and Carswell’s own choir preceded a heartfelt welcome from Southern Worship Center’s prison ministries director, Herbert Davis and our pastor, Spencer Anderson.

James Brown gave the opening prayer, followed by a touching awards presentation honoring Herbert Davis and Spencer

Anderson, in appreciation for their faithful service to the ministry, which kicked off a service that was truly inspirational.

The presentations included the stories of Moses and Noah, as well as insights on the various names of God and how they point to Jesus Christ. The narrators all did an outstanding job of introducing gripping and powerful music. The inmates sang along and many were moved to tears by the message. The performers poured out their hearts on an audience that seemed thirsty for God and eager to praise Him.

The night concluded with applause and

the unanimous request for more. However, no matter how much we wanted the worship and fellowship to continue, the time came for a lovely benediction by Gary Douglas. Afterward, the inmates were given a few minutes to visit with their guests and offer, in small groups, private prayer and thanksgiving. As always, it was joyous to see friends arrive and sad to see them leave, but we each carry a spark in our heart and the knowledge that we will see one another again soon.

Sheila Sellinger

A Short-term Mission Project



TEXICO CONFERENCE

The phone rang. It was Pastor Don Gray. "Jim," he said, "we've worked out a program where you and a couple other students can be involved in a short-term mission project. You will help me with an evangelistic meeting, then you can conduct your own." Forty-five people were baptized in these two series. It was 1978.

The phone rang again, and it was a pastor friend of mine asking if I could come to his district for a short series of evangelistic meetings. I was pastoring three churches and had plenty to do. "Do you have any interests?" I asked. "We have four or five people who should be interested," he responded. "I can do it in January," I told him. This was my second short-term mission project. Two weeks and three weekends, zero degree weather and snow, but praise God, 36 people were baptized at the conclusion of the meeting. It was 1980.

The phone rang, and it was my conference president, who said, "Jim, I want you to hold an evangelistic meeting in England.

It will be a short-term mission project." For seven weeks we preached the gospel in postmodern England and 18 people accepted this truth, many of whom still communicate with us today. It was in 1982.

The phone rang. It was my North Pacific Union Conference president. "Jim we are going to help in Russia. It will be called Operation Bear Hug. We want your conference to conduct a series of short-term mission projects in Eastern Russia." (After all, you can see Russia from Alaska. I was Alaska Conference president at this time.) We rallied many dedicated pastors and lay people for assistance. Much money was given and our first meeting resulted in 400 people becoming a part of the church. This was followed by many other "short-term mission projects." It was 1993.

The phone rang two weeks ago. It was a pastor friend of mine wanting to know if I could do an evangelistic reaping meeting on another continent. It would be another opportunity to share the good news of Jesus' love. This "short-term mission project" should take place in early 2012.

Short-term mission projects are great. These can be health aid, church building projects, educational projects, and of course, evangelistic in nature. Our conference has done scores of projects. Sandia View Academy students, Ozark Academy students, and other youth are going to the Philippines this spring for short-term mission projects. Our ministers' spouses will conduct evangelistic meetings in the Dominican Republic this summer. If you are physically able, I would encourage you to share your faith in a short-term mission project. It will be one of the greatest blessings of your life.

The phone rang, not literally, but it was in my head. It was Jesus calling. "Jim, you're on a short-term mission project. It won't be long before I come back to take you home. Reach everybody you can with the gospel." My friends, heaven is our home. Time is short. Let's make 2011 the year of reaching our communities and the world with the gospel. Remember, we are all on a "short-term mission project."

Jim Stevens, president

Baby Dedication Leads to Baptism

RESERVE, N.MEX. » Recently, Anna Crowder's son, Tommy, was dedicated at the Reserve church shortly after she started working at a restaurant owned by an Adventist family. Though she was not a church member at the time, this spurred a series of Bible studies, and as a result, she was baptized into our church family.

Michael Razon, pastor

Anna Crowder's son, Tommy, was recently dedicated at the Reserve, N.Mex., church, and we praise the Lord that, subsequently, Anna was baptized and is now an official part of our church. Welcome to the family!



Santa Fe Churches Join to Feed Homeless

SANTA FE » The cold winter nights of Santa Fe's high desert climate were made considerably warmer for some people, thanks to Adventist church members who provided and served hot food at the city's Interfaith Shelter. An average of 80 homeless people, including women and children, seek shelter each night in the storefront facility in the busy commercial district of Cerrillos Road.

"You guys know how to make great food," "God bless you for your service to us," "You know how to warm our hearts," were some of the comments heard by the guests at the shelter as they heaped their plates with enchiladas, calabacitas, tortillas, and

"We're excited to have the Adventists as part of our team," said Guy Gronquist, one of the center's leaders. "Now with the Adventist churches joining us, I like to say we have the A to Z of faith communities

pletely renovate the place as a hostel and eatery for people needing temporary shelter. In the meantime evening meals and sleeping mats are provided, but come spring, these services will be terminated



temporarily so the remodeling for the permanent installation can take place.

The Marcy Park Spanish, Airport Road Spanish, Southwest English, and Rabbit Road English Seventh-day Adventist churches were eager to join forces to assist in this important ministry to alleviate the stress of people on the streets. In a sense, it is a renewal of a service they provided in years past when they teamed up to serve meals for the homeless at a city park. "Our people are anxious to put their religion into practical action," said Pastor Leonard Cummings of the Marcy Park and Airport Road churches. Altogether, Adventist members in the city number around 500.

serving at the shelter." The A refers to Adventists and the Z to the Zen Buddhists, who also occasionally provide meals!

Various denominational churches and community groups have rallied to the aid of the people of the streets at this important center. Its fate was not certain some months ago as the churches struggled to make it a go in a former pet store. But then the city of Santa Fe bought the building on condition that the various community groups provide volunteers to serve meals and supervise overnight accommodations.

Now there is a commitment to com-

Top Right: Members of the Santa Fe Rabbit Road church serve the evening meal. From left, Cis Lopez, Patsy Martinez, Tar West, and Joan Castellano.

Above: Ivan Abeyta of the Santa Fe Southwest church stirs the beans while Steve Rivera (left) and Raul Torres look on at the Interfaith Shelter.

Above right: The Santa Fe pastor, Daniel Villalva, prays with the Southwest church group as they prepare to serve a meal at the shelter.

salad. "But I think we were blessed more than they," said Patsy Martinez of the Rabbit Road church as she set custard pies on the dessert counter.

Allen Steele

A Small Church Doing Big Things for God

TEXICO CONFERENCE

TULIA, TEX. » In February of last year the Tulia Seventh-day Adventist Company started discussing a video evangelism program for the area. We purchased a projec-

tor, but then we needed to have an audience. We also came up with the idea for a food bank. At first we thought we could do this with little money, but that proved impossible. We made a few mistakes when we ordered food the first time, but we were fast learners.



on any given Sabbath. We show two videos each Tuesday night, one in Spanish and the other in English.

One night a lady asked to borrow my pen so she could take notes. When she gave my pen back, she showed me her notes written on the back of her hand, the palm of her hand, and up her arm. She had every Bible text used in the message. We now have paper available!

since most of our members are receiving Social Security benefits. So we contacted the food bank in Amarillo for help. Some Thursdays they send us a truck with up to 12-14 pallets of free food. These Thursday deliveries are mostly fresh produce that needs to be distributed right away. When a truckload is delivered, we put it out on the front lawn of the church. Sometimes there are products that can be kept longer, so these are brought into the pantry to use in our Tuesday giveaway.

A lot of people are hurting in this econ-

omy. The people we help not only need to be fed physically, but spiritually. Our food giveaway is held once a week for two reasons. First, many do not know how to manage a larger, once-a-month batch of food. Second, we want them to see 52 videos in a year instead of 12.



This is present-day evangelism. We are a small church made up of mostly senior citizens. The majority of us live 30 miles away from town and church. The town of Tulia and the surrounding county is considered a distressed area. We have had full evangelistic meetings in the past without great results. We know



The program was started last May, with our first Tuesday night giveaway to less than 30 families and about 14 people (non-Adventist) watching our videos. A retired Spanish Methodist minister helped us by finding needy families. A non-Adventist friend also wanted to help and told a few needy families. The retired minister continues to help with a monthly donation.

Top left and middle: The members of the Tulia church are reaching out to their neighbors by offering them both physical and spiritual food.

Above: Attendance at the weekly video series at the Tulia church is often three times the church's regular attendance on Sabbath mornings.

Our highest attendance so far is 74 families (not counting members). That is more than three times the adult attendance in our church

Our program has grown far beyond what we, as a small church, can afford,

that there is a small window of opportunity for our church to grow and survive, since

most of our members are above the age of 70 and some in their upper 80s. As with most small churches, our pastor has a large district, so he has more to do than there is time to do it. We needed something that could go on when he cannot be here. We decided to use the *It Is Written* videos.

At the beginning, the food bank requested that we offer some kind of health program. The first series we used was *Easy Steps for Better Health*. Next we used the Moody Bible Institute videos on science and creation on the next four Tuesdays.

This was followed by four Tuesdays of *Out of Thin Air*, with Shawn Boonstra and Timothy Standish, Ph.D. Then we did *The*

Appearing, five Tuesdays on the second coming. The people loved it! This was followed up with five Tuesdays of *The Presence*, a series on the Sanctuary. Our best attendance was during this series. It was during these meetings that the lady wrote the Bible texts all over her hand and arm.

We also showed a six-part series called *Standing Firm*, on the book of Daniel. In January we launched a series on the Great Controversy as presented in *Cosmic Conflict* from Amazing Facts. This will be followed by 24 evangelistic messages by Shawn Boonstra in his *Revelation Speaks Peace*. This will take us to the end of June. Then our pastor wants to have a two-week

meeting in July followed by a health seminar.

Our church needs several things for this missionary project, such as another refrigerator and freezer, help buying food, and more videos. Most of all, we need your prayers for God's guidance and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Anyone wanting to stop by and see what is happening here is invited to come around 6:00 p.m. on any Tuesday evening to lend a hand and see how a small church can make a difference in a community and in the lives of its neighbors.

Lentil Stew Teaches Students a Spritual Lesson

LUBBOCK » The younger students have learned that a pot of stew can either brew trouble or bring comfort. We learned how Esau sold his birthright for a bowl of lentils and vegetable soup. (See Genesis 25:31-33.) Jacob and his mother, Rebecca, the instigators of this deceit, little knew what kind of trouble they were brewing.

In order for the students to learn how our actions can hurt or harm us, we used a picture of a stew pot and discussed how the things we do can brew trouble or bring comfort. The students recommended that we should first seek God's counsel when we make small or large decisions. Together as we talked about Jacob and Esau's troubles, several students made the comment that they didn't know what lentils are, nor what lentil stew is.

During the week, we sat in a circle and ate small servings of lentil soup. Student after student commented on how much they

enjoyed this special soup. They could readily see how Esau fell for a cunning trick that tempted his hunger at the moment.

We decided that God wants us to take our time and ask Him to help us make

decisions instead of impulsively making choices based on how we feel. The Great Teacher can still help us, even in modern times, to make good, useful choices even if it takes a bowl of lentils.



Lubbock Junior Academy students display a picture of a stew pot, representing the spiritual lesson that the things we do can either brew trouble or bring comfort.

Religion Teacher John Peckham Helps Students Find Answers

“I don’t believe that there are any questions that we should avoid,” John Peckham tells his students. “I think we should ask as many questions as possible, but we should be willing to seek the answers.”

Peckham, 30, teaches for the Department of Religion at Southwestern Adventist University. Currently completing a doctoral degree in systematic theology, he originally prepared for a career in business. Even before he graduated from Atlantic Union College with a degree in accounting and administration, however, he knew that God was calling him in a different direction.

“I felt that whatever gifts or talents I had were not given to me just to enrich myself,” he says about his decision to pursue the study and teaching of theology.

He married his wife, Brenda (a registered nurse), a week after graduation from college. Within a few days

they were moving to Andrews University, where Peckham enrolled at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary. He received a master of divinity degree in 2005.

In April 2009, Peckham was pastoring a three-church district in Indiana when he was approached by Southwestern with an invitation to teach religion and theology. He joined Southwestern’s faculty that May.

Peckham grew up in a “reading” home, he says, where he was encouraged to read and think. He remembers reading from his father’s library

of Christian literature, and coming across *The Desire of Ages* at the age of 9 or 10. He has pleasant associations with Adventist literature, but he realizes his experiences may not be that of his students, and so he encourages students who have questions to investigate them and find answers.

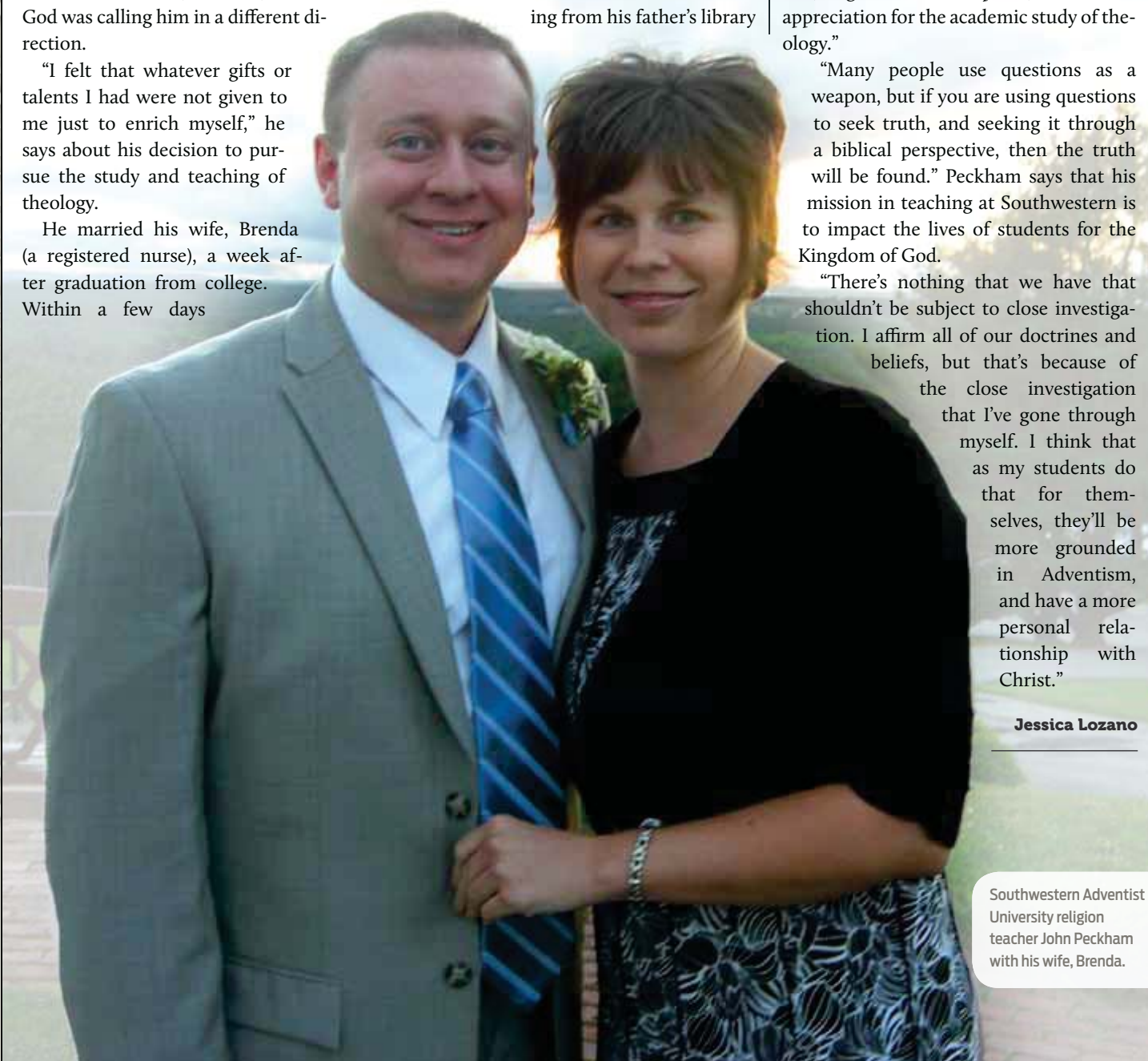
“I want my students to become thinking Christians—people who can think for themselves and who have an appreciation for the Adventist worldview. I want them to see the world through a biblical perspective, be grounded in scripture, and have an appreciation for the academic study of theology.”

“Many people use questions as a weapon, but if you are using questions to seek truth, and seeking it through a biblical perspective, then the truth will be found.” Peckham says that his mission in teaching at Southwestern is to impact the lives of students for the Kingdom of God.

“There’s nothing that we have that shouldn’t be subject to close investigation. I affirm all of our doctrines and beliefs, but that’s because of the close investigation that I’ve gone through myself. I think that as my students do that for themselves, they’ll be more grounded in Adventism, and have a more personal relationship with Christ.”

Jessica Lozano

Southwestern Adventist University religion teacher John Peckham with his wife, Brenda.



Lay Evangelism Festival Comes to Ozark

Have ever wanted to share your love for Christ and your knowledge about the Bible with others, but had no idea where to start? The Southwestern Union and ShareHim are pleased to announce the 2011 Lay Evangelism Festival, a union-wide lay evangelism training event to be held April 7-9, 2011 on the campus of Ozark Adventist Academy in Gentry, Ark.

Learn from Bob Folkenberg, Sr., of ShareHim, Jim Gilley of 3ABN, and Duane McKey from the Southwestern Union. Discover ways to build bridges through friendship and health ministry, and how to reach people who are downright anti-Christian.

"This is a fabulous opportunity to be inspired and catch a vision of how to better share your faith," says Duane McKey. "You'll find that what once seemed impossible is actually quite easy with the proper tools and the help of the Holy Spirit!"

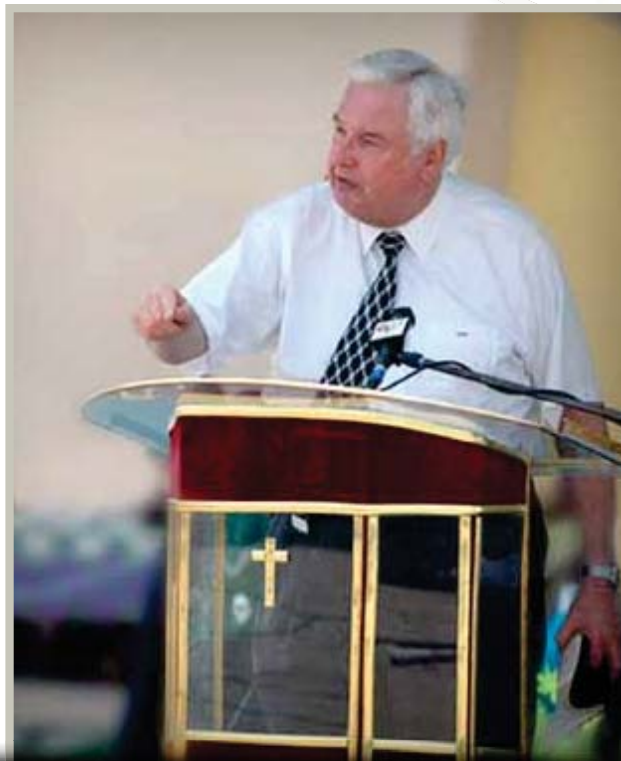
Registration is free, and meals can be

purchased in advance for \$6 each. Limited lodging is available on campus, as well as in local hotels.

To register for on-campus lodging, RV sites, or meals, call the Ozark Academy Campus Ministries department at 479.736.2221, ext. 1210.

Southwestern Union communication department

► Bob Folkenberg, Sr., of ShareHim, will be one of the presenters at the 2011 Lay Evangelism Festival, which will be held at Ozark Adventist Academy,



SOUTHWESTERN UNION

» ShareHim Southwestern Union Lay Evangelism Festival

Have you ever thought about preaching an evangelistic meeting like Kenneth Cox or Mark Finley? **YOU CAN!** You will learn how to preach and how to share your faith at our Lay Evangelism Festival, **April 7-9, 2011**, at the **Ozark Academy Campus**, in Gentry Ark. Or maybe you would simply like to learn to effectively work for and win your friends and neighbors for Christ. **PLAN NOW TO ATTEND!** To register, please call Ozark Academy at **479.736.2221, Ext. 1210**, or visit **www.ShareHim.org/lef**.



ShareHim

FEATURING



Bob Folkenberg



Jim Gilley



Duane McKey



The Event is Free!

Lodging and meals are available for a small fee.

GYC Youth Conference Sets Records

NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION

Generation of Youth For Christ (GYC) returned to Baltimore, Md., this year for its annual conference, breaking all prior

GYC is entirely planned and led by youth and young adults who contribute both the vision and the manpower to pull off this

large-scale yearly event. This year's theme was "No Turning Back." There was the usual broad array of speakers and presenters, including Eric Walsh, M.D., a physician from Southern California, who gave powerful evening devotionals.

A new element called totalChurch training was introduced this year. It supplemented the regular variety of seminars with training on how to translate personal spiritual commitment into hands-on service at home in local churches. An expanded prayer room added another new dimension throughout the conference, allowing groups of individuals to gather and pray for individual requests and corporate needs.

Attendees crowded onto approximately 70 buses on Sabbath afternoon for door-



attendance records with more than 5,100 registered attendees (up 1,500 from last year) from 43 countries, and approximately 6,700 attending on Sabbath. Each year the conference beckons youth, young adults, and various chaperones and interested supporters to leave their homes and spend part of the busy holiday season welcoming the New Year with prayer and recommitment to Christ and to His service.



to-door evangelism in and around the city of Baltimore. Many church leaders, including General Conference president Ted Wilson and well-known evangelist Mark Finley, joined the youth for that venture. During outreach testimonies on Sabbath evening, a young woman privileged to go door to door with Pastor Finley shared her amusement at introducing him as "my friend, Mark" to people who opened their doors. At least one household recognized Finley from his former television ministry as speaker/director of *It Is Written*.

Brandon Schroeder, GYC's vice president for communication, reflected on the conference with awe.

"The whole thing was a whirlwind for me. It was very intense," he said. "But the one thing that really struck me was, when I was waiting for an elevator during one of the services on Friday or Sabbath, I noticed only two young people sitting in the corridor. That was significant, considering there were nearly 7,000 people there. Even during past conferences, there have been more people hanging out in the halls and socializing. This was a very dedicated group of young people. I really believe God is doing a work in their lives, to focus them and draw them to Himself."

GYC president Justin McNeilus gave a challenging and heartfelt keynote presentation on Wednesday evening. "For many of us, 'tomorrow' is code for 'never,'" he

challenged. "Will you follow Jesus?"

McNeilus says he arrived a little late at one of the evening meetings and slipped into the back. "Typically you go to a youth

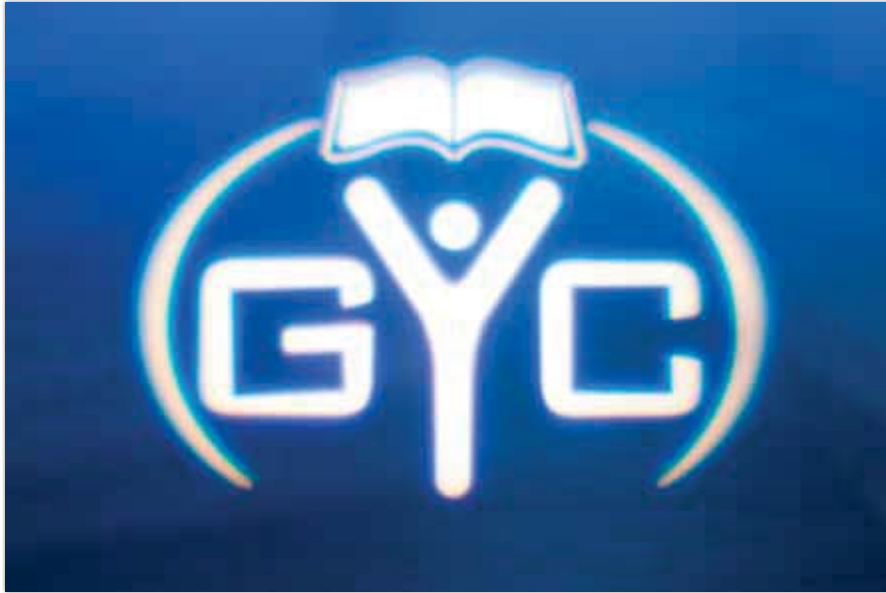
that were being made."

McNeilus says he sensed an urgent expectation among conference attendees that Jesus is coming soon, and also sensed a renewed commitment to God and to the Adventist Church in response to the messages presented.

During his Sabbath sermon, President Wilson said, "Our success is not measured by numbers, but by faithfulness to Christ and to the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.... There has never been a more important time to walk together and to work together."

Next year's GYC conference will be held in Houston over New Year's weekend. This year's general session and seminar presentations are available for download at www.gycweb.org/resources.

Conna Bond, ASI communication director



conference or various youth events and towards the back there's a lot of rustling and talking going on. But it wasn't like that this year at GYC," he recalled. "Instead, you could hear the pages of peoples' Bibles turning, and everyone was listening quietly and responding actively to the appeals

Super Bowl Outreach Magazine Available for Free

A special "Big Game" issue of *Insight* magazine is available for public outreach and for sharing at Super Bowl gatherings in homes or churches. It has an emphasis on winning in the game of life and includes an article about Cowboys star Jason Witten.

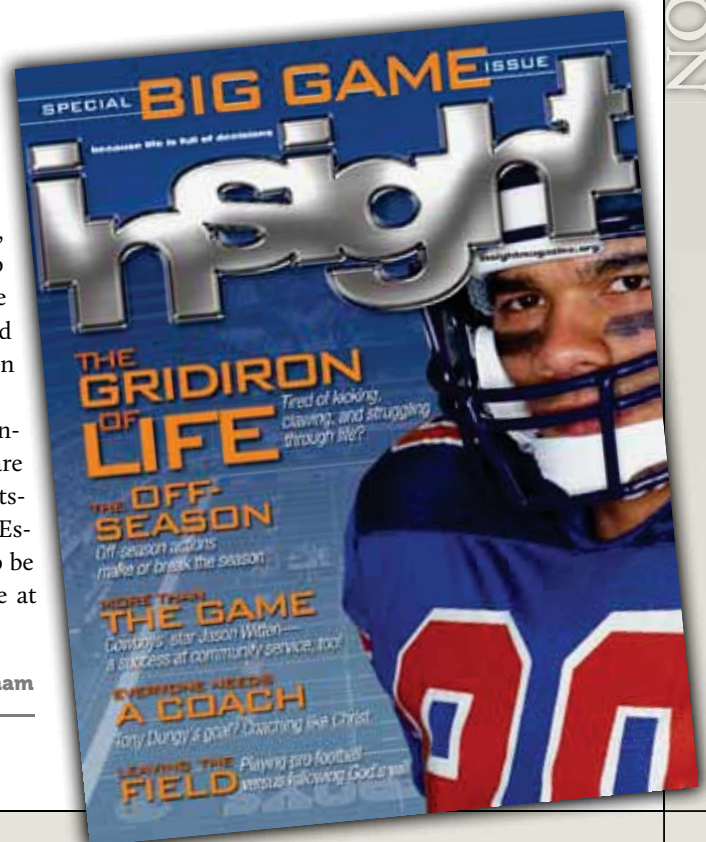
"The Super Bowl is an awesome opportunity to witness to friends, neighbors, and coworkers," reports Dwain Esmond, editor of *Insight* magazine. "We've created this special football themed issue with outreach and sharing in mind."

Each church in the Southwestern Union will be receiving extra copies of *Insight* magazine to distribute on the Sabbath before the Super Bowl. If you are planning to

host a Super Bowl party, please take extra copies to share. You can also share them with coworkers and friends at your business on Monday morning.

"This is a great, non-threatening way to share the love of Jesus in a sports-themed package," says Esmond. "We're so blessed to be able to make this available at no cost to the churches."

Kim Peckham



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Malcolm Russell, VPAA, Union College, marussel@ucollege.edu, 402.486.2501.

Southwestern Adventist University seeks a full-time nurse educator. Master's degree required; doctoral degree preferred. Must have some teaching experience and an unencumbered Texas nursing license. Contact Dr. Ron Mitchell at 817.202.6230 or rmitchell@swau.edu.

Union College seeks technical and electronic services librarian, effective July 2011. Responsibilities include acquisitions, cataloging, and assisting in the management of electronic resources. A keen interest in new technology and an MLS from an ALA-accredited program required. Contact Sabrina Riley, library director, sariley@ucollege.edu.

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After years of pastoring in Romania, he has come to the United States. You won't want to miss any of this ASI chapter meeting as Pastor Goia shares his incredible experiences. Come and enjoy the fellowship and inspiration found only at an ASI convention!

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Announcements

Broadview Academy Alumni Weekend will be held April 29 and 30, 2011. All alumni are encouraged to attend, so mark your calendars, call your classmates, and start planning for this weekend now. Honor classes: 1951, 1961, 1971, 1981, 1986, 1991, and 2001. Activities include Friday night vespers, Sabbath School, and church. All ideas and information are welcome. **We need your e-mail address so we can keep in touch. Postage is too expensive.** E-mail Ed Gutierrez at edjulie1@att.net or call 630.232.9034. More information to come. Don't miss it!

Chisholm Trail Academy Alumni Weekend will be held March 25 and 26, 2011. Honor classes: 1971, 1976, 1981, 1986, 1991, 1996, 2001, 2006. Friday vespers will be at 7:30 p.m.; Sabbath services begin at 9:00 a.m. and continue through potluck lunch. Saturday night vespers will be at 7:15 p.m., followed

by a CTA Blazers basketball game and honor class parties. Contact Shelly at scastan@aol.com or visit the Facebook page: CTA Alumni 2011.

The Fort Smith, Ark., church will celebrate its **100th Anniversary** on April 29 and 30, 2011. The weekend will include a candlelight vesper service, guest speakers, inspiring music, and other special events. All members, friends, former members, and pastors are cordially invited to attend this very special weekend. Please mail any "old" photos to Fort Smith SDA Church, c/o Communications Director, P.O. Box 180430, Fort Smith, AR 72918. All photos will be returned. For information, contact Joyce Hilton at 479.996.2974.

Los Angeles Adventist Academy will be honoring the alumni from 1941, 1951, 1961, 1971, 1981, 1991, 2010 and 2011 at its **Third Annual Alumni Homecoming Weekend** on the campus of LAAA, located at 846 E. El Segundo Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90059 on March 11-13, 2011. Call or e-mail us at 323.321.2585, ext. 229. Visit our Web site at www.alumni-laaa.com.

Memphis Junior Academy in Memphis, Tenn., will be celebrating their **100th Anniversary** April 8-10. Details: search Facebook for MJA 100th Anniversary, or call the school at 901.683.1061.

Alumni, friends, and former faculty are invited to **Union College Homecoming**, April 7-10, 2011. Honor classes: 1941, 1951, 1956, 1961, 1971, 1981, 1986, 1991, and 2001. For more information, contact the alumni office at 402.486.2503, or write to 3800 South 48th Street, Lincoln, NE 68506, or e-

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Valley Grande Adventist Academy Alumni Association invites all former faculty, staff, and students to our annual **Alumni Weekend** to be held from March 25-27, 2011. All honor class years end in 6 or 1 (2006, 2001, etc.). For more information, visit our Web site at www.vgaa.org or contact Suzanna Facundo: sfacundo@hotmail.com.

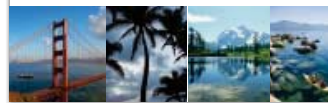
"Ye Olde" Cedar Lake Academy Reunion will take place June 9-12, 2011 for alumni and warmly-welcomed schoolmates of 1961 and earlier at Great Lakes Adventist Academy, Cedar Lake, Mich. Honor classes: 1931, 1941, 1951, 1961. Details will be forthcoming by postal service. Also, you may contact GLAA Alumni Office at 989.427.5181 or visit www.glaa.org.

GLAA.net for further information. Please do pass the good word.



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Obituaries

ARVILLE, James "Jimmy," born October 1, 1939 in Lake Charles, La., and died February 1, 2010 in Leesville, La. A member of the DeRidder Spring, Ark., church, he was laid to rest in Dry Creek, La. Jimmy joined the church on October 31, 2009. He was a retired heavy equipment operator. Survivors: wife,

Shirley Arville of DeRidder; son, Darren Arville of Ragley, La.; daughters, Tena Bourgeois of Ft. Pierce, Fla., and Mickie Thomas of Port St. Lucy, Fla.; four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

BLEHM, Vera Nadine, born September 2, 1924 in Niles, Okla., and died November 30, 2010 in Oklahoma City, Okla. She moved with her parents

to Omega, Okla., where they operated a grocery store for many years. In 1945 she married Gyle Wood and in 1978 retired as postmaster in Omega after 25 years of service. Her husband, Gyle, preceded her in death and she later married Alvin Blehm, who also preceded her in death. Survivors: son, Dennis L. Wood of Haskell, Okla.; daughter, Kathy Jeter, and

son-in-law, James, of Bethany, Okla.; five stepchildren, LaVon Smith of Bay Town, Tex., Kenneth Blehm and Bob Blehm of Houston, Tex., Wayne Blehm, and Debbie Moore, both of Dallas, Tex.; many grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

CHITWOOD, Sarah E., born July 22, 1929 in Georgia, and died December 25, 2010 in Covington, Tex. Raised in Georgia, she went to Iowa in 1959, then moved to Texas in 1972. A member of the Seventh-day Adventist church for 50 years, Sarah worked in and retired from the health care industry. She was preceded in death by her parents, three sisters, and two brothers, all of Georgia. Survivors: Steven Chitwood of Covington; Brent Chitwood of Keene; Brenda Chitwood Ramos of Covington; Beatrice Chitwood, sister-in-law, of Covington; and many loving great- and great-great nieces and nephews.

DONLEY, Timothy Eric , born June 16, 1986, and died April 20, 2010. A member of the Wichita Falls, Tex., church, he was laid to rest in Wichita Falls. Tim loved his family and was very close to his mother and father. He also loved his country and served proudly in the United States Army. In his spare time, Tim played softball and liked martial arts. He was also an avid comic book collector along with super-hero figurines. He loved children and animals. Survivors: parents, Sallye Donley and Frederick Donley of Wichita Falls; sister, Jennifer Donlan and husband, Robert, of Colorado Springs, Colo.; brothers, Stephen Boatwright and wife, Kendal, of Seattle, Wash., and Michael Boatwright and wife, Anna, of Wichita Falls; grandmother, Lucille Champion

LEGAL NOTICE

TEXAS CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

Notice is hereby given that the Quadrennial Session of the Texas Conference of Seventh-day Adventists will convene at the Keene Seventh-day Adventist Church (114 S. Fairview St.), Keene, Texas, on Sunday, April 3, 2011. The purpose of this meeting is to elect officers and directors for the ensuing quadrennial term, to consider changes in the constitution, and to transact such business as may properly come before the Conference.

The meeting is called for Sunday at 10:00 a.m. Each church is entitled to two regular delegates without regard to membership, plus one regular delegate for each 40 members.

Leighton R. Holley, President
Carlos Craig, Secretary
Errol Eder, Treasurer
Gary Brady, Vice-president

TEXAS CONFERENCE ASSOCIATION OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

Notice is hereby given that the Quadrennial Session of the Texas Conference Association of Seventh-day Adventists will be held at the Keene Seventh-day Adventist Church (114 S. Fairview St.), Keene, Texas, on Sunday, April 3, 2011. The purpose of this meeting is to elect officers and directors for the ensuing quadrennial term, to consider changes in the constitution, and to transact such other business as may properly come before the Association.

The meeting is called for Sunday at 10:00 a.m. Delegates to the Texas Conference of Seventh-day Adventists are also delegates to the Texas Conference Association.

Leighton R. Holley, President
Roger Mekelburg, Secretary

VALLEY EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

Notice is hereby given that the Quadrennial Session of the Texas Conference Valley Educational Foundation will be held at the Keene Seventh-day Adventist Church (114 S. Fairview St.), Keene, Texas, on Sunday, April 3, 2011. The purpose of this meeting is to elect officers and directors for the ensuing quadrennial term, and to transact such other business as may properly come before the Foundation.

The meeting is called for Sunday at 10:00 a.m. Delegates of the Texas Conference of Seventh-day Adventists are also delegates to the Valley Educational Foundation.

Leighton R. Holley, President

of Wichita Falls, and many aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, and nephews.

HAGERMAN, Leola E., born August 18, 1916 in Mount Ida, Ark., and died November 27, 2010 in Little Rock, Ark. A member of the Little Rock church, she was laid to rest in Alexander, Ark. Leola was a beloved schoolteacher for 27 years. When she was 94 years old this loveable Christian lady told her family she would meet them around the throne of God. Survivors: daughter, Elizabeth Burnett of Benton, Ark.; brother, Donald Anderson, and brother and sister-in-law, Clinton and Anna Anderson, all of Arkansas; two grandchildren.

MCCLAIN, LaVerne (Mac), born February 24, 1922 in Idaho and died September 13, 2010 in Berthoud, Colo. A member of the Summit Ridge church in Harrah, Okla., he was laid to rest in College Place, Wash. LaVerne spent many years in denominational work as a secondary education administrator in the Pacific Northwest, southern California, Minnesota, Nebraska, and North Dakota. Survivors: wife of 63 years, Edith, of Berthoud; sister, Mary Cook of California; sons, Richard of Castle Rock, Colo., and Donald of Lexington, Neb.; daughters, Dixie Patrick of Berthoud, and Deborah Kirby of Choctaw, Okla.; nine grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren.

NEWELL, June Yckley, born June 2, 1916 in Wichita, Kansas, and died September 29, 2010 in Olathe, Colo. She was a lifelong member of the Adventist Church, most recently in Nucla, Colo., and previously in the Fort Worth First and Waco, Tex., churches, having served in the


children's and adult Sabbath School and as church clerk. Survivors: daughters, Winona Cressler and husband, Harold, of Nucla; Lorene Yackley of Bryan, Tex.; sister, Delores Shaw and husband, J.C., of Bryan; four sisters-in-law, and many nieces and nephews.

SANDERS, Shirley H., born July 2, 1913 in Creek County, Okla., and died December 18, 2010 in Harrah, Okla. She was a member of the Summit Ridge church in Harrah. Shirley was a faithful Christian who looked forward to Christ's soon return. Survivors: Three daughters and many grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and great-great grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her husband, Wilber Sanders, with whom she shared a love for music.

TEMPLIN, Dorothy Edith Warren, born December 31, 1922 and died October 27, 2010 in Minneapolis, Minn. A member of the Mammoth Spring church, she was laid to rest in Minneapolis, Minn. She was a retired physical education, health and recreation professor at St. Cloud State University and the only Seventh-day Adventist in her family. Survivors: daughters and sons-in-law, Rosalind and Paul Ridgeway and Ramona and Marc Smith; sons and daughters-in-law, Erwin and Joan Templin II, Warren and Debby Templin, and Daniel and Diana Templin; 11 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

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SABBATH SUNSET CALENDAR

	Feb 4	Feb 11	Feb 18	Feb 25	Mar 4	Mar 11
Abilene, TX	6:13	6:19	6:26	6:31	6:39	6:44
Albuquerque, NM	5:36	5:43	5:50	5:57	6:05	6:11
Amarillo, TX	6:17	6:24	6:31	6:37	6:46	6:52
Brownsville, TX	6:14	6:19	6:24	6:28	6:34	6:37
Dallas, TX	6:01	6:07	6:13	6:19	6:27	6:32
El Paso, TX	5:41	5:47	5:53	5:59	6:07	6:11
Fort Worth/Keene, TX	6:03	6:10	6:16	6:22	6:29	6:35
Gallup, NM	5:44	5:51	5:58	6:05	6:13	6:19
Galveston/Houston, TX	6:00	6:05	6:11	6:16	6:23	6:28
Gentry, AR	5:46	5:53	6:00	6:07	6:16	6:22
Little Rock, AR	5:39	5:46	5:53	5:59	6:08	6:14
Muskogee, OK	5:50	5:57	6:04	6:11	6:20	6:26
New Orleans, LA	5:38	5:44	5:50	5:55	6:02	6:06
Oklahoma City, OK	5:59	6:06	6:13	6:20	6:28	6:34
Roswell, NM	5:31	5:37	5:44	5:50	5:58	6:03
San Antonio, TX	6:13	6:19	6:24	6:29	6:35	6:40
Shreveport, LA	5:49	5:55	6:02	6:08	6:15	6:20
Tulsa, OK	5:52	5:59	6:06	6:13	6:22	6:28

Merely a Disciple

I HAVE ALWAYS LOVED TO TRAVEL. That's why I jumped at the opportunity to go to the Dominican Republic with my youth pastor and members of my youth group last June on an evangelistic mission trip. The gravity of preaching an entire evangelistic series did not fully hit me until a few days leading up to the trip. The idea that I would be responsible for delivering sermons to my own church body in the Dominican was extremely intimidating. Some of these people were not even familiar with Christianity, let alone biblical doctrine. How was I going to convince them about the existence of God and then to accept Jesus Christ as their own personal Savior? I could only pray that God would give me the guidance and assurance that everything would work out according to His will.

After arriving in the Dominican, I met my translator, Franklin, whom I came to rely on heavily throughout the trip. I was also relieved to discover that the people from my assigned church in the town of Pescaderia were very welcoming and grateful. After delivering every sermon, I would stand at the doors of the church and shake hands with the men and kiss the women on the cheek as they filed out. I began to recognize individuals who returned each night, and prayed that the Holy Spirit would move their hearts.

There was one couple in particular who I took notice of. Their names were Juan and Jacqueline. Toward the end of my time in the Dominican, I was privileged to meet individually with the candidates to question them about whether they were ready to make a decision to be baptized. When I met with Juan and Jacqueline, I found that they both were ready to give their lives to God but couldn't, because they were unmarried and living together. When asked about why they weren't married, they said they both had too little to offer the other. I had no idea as to what to do or say in this situation, so I just prayed with them that God would lead them to the right decision.

The next morning was Sabbath, and I was picked up and taken to a building I had never been to before. I was clueless as to where we were or what was going on, because Franklin had not arrived yet. After a short wait, I saw Juan and Jacqueline exit the building and walk toward our car excitedly. When Franklin arrived, I discovered that after 20 years of living together, they had decided to get married. Later that night, they both were baptized!

Whenever I look back on this, I am continually amazed. Throughout the trip, I had been plagued with worries that no one in my church would decide to get baptized or that I was not getting through to the people. After witnessing Juan and Jacqueline get married and then being baptized together, I finally realized that I had been focusing on the wrong thing. If it had only been *me* trying to reach people, I would have been unsuccessful. It was only through the prompting of the Holy Spirit that Juan and Jacqueline decided to give their lives to Him. I was merely a disciple delivering His message.



Lindsey Mitchell is a senior in homeschool. She writes from Tulsa, Oklahoma.



For the Record »

BY MARK BOND » COMMUNICATION DIRECTOR, SOUTHWESTERN UNION

We've Gotta Go!

THIS WEEK, WHILE PREPARING CONTENT FOR THIS ISSUE ON SHORT-TERM MISSIONS,

I received a phone call from Courtney,* a student at Ozark Adventist Academy who was baptized during the recent prayer conference.

She told me that a group of young people from Ozark and Sandia View academies is preparing to go to the Philippines to preach. Courtney wants to participate and is desperately trying to raise the needed funds. Yes, *desperately*. She *really* wants to go, and for all the right reasons. So far she's raised \$1,500, but needs an additional \$500 to make the trip and fulfill her calling to preach the gospel.

Courtney is not alone. Other students around the union would benefit from assistance, as well. I suspect that many of you would be willing to help

students like Courtney who want to go on mission trips but can't afford the cost. Some of you already help in your local churches when similar needs arise.

Collectively, our willingness, actions, and funds can make a difference—even when we can't personally go on such a trip. I'd like to challenge you to contribute specifically to mission trips for students like Courtney. Their lives will be changed, and so will yours.

If you're interested in helping to create a special fund for student missions, please send a check noted for "Student

Missions" made payable to the Southwestern Union, P.O. Box 4000, Burleson, TX 76097.

Next October, I'll make my first overseas mission trip. Visiting Zimbabwe and Zambia will be exciting in itself, but I'm most excited about preaching an evangelistic series and helping to fill the hundreds of One-Day Churches that are currently being built in Southern Africa. For me—and for Courtney—it's not just a mission trip. It's a calling that just won't quit, and we've *gotta go!*

**Not her real name.*

Record

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