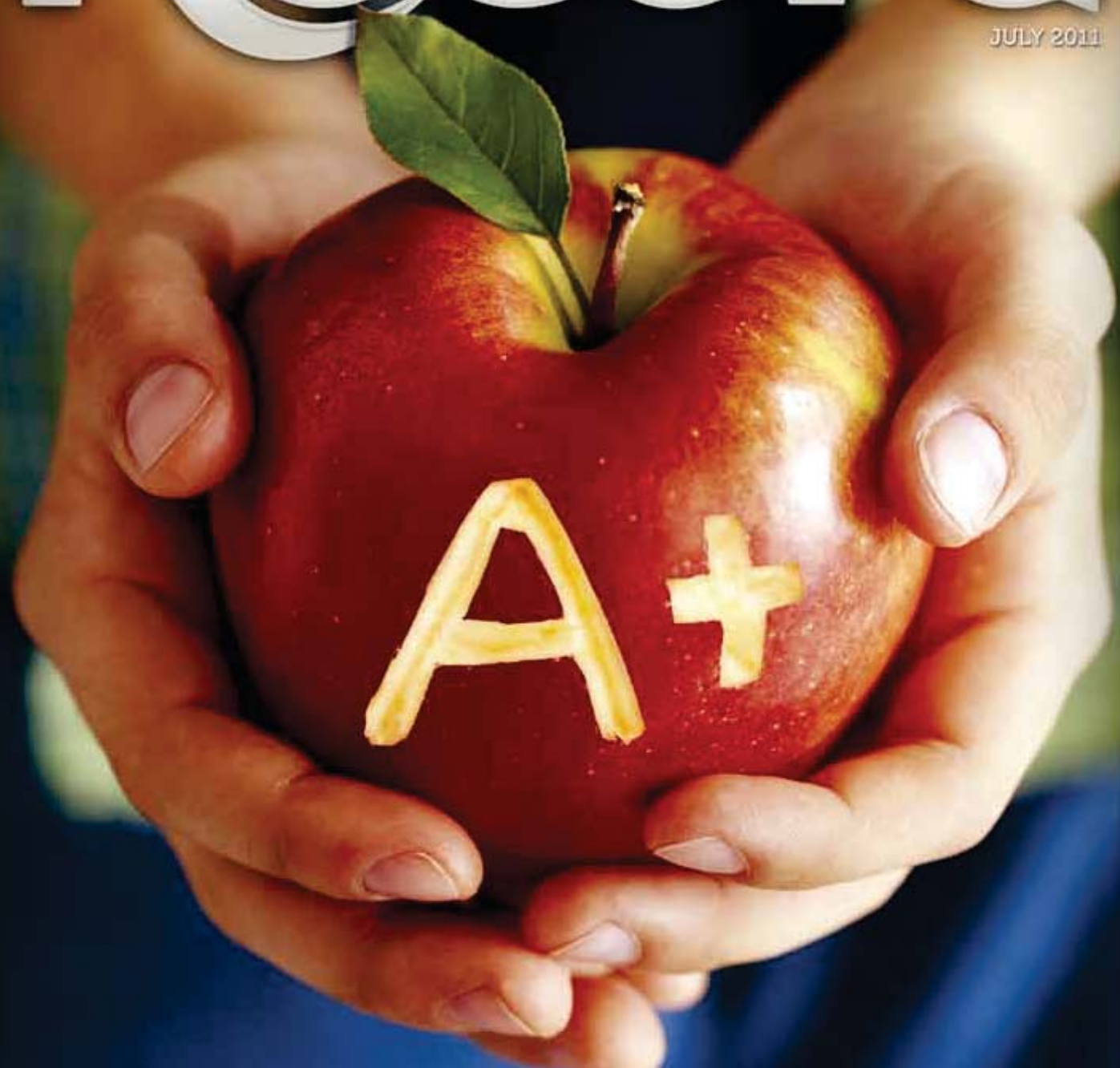


SOUTHWESTERN UNION

Record

JULY 2011



MAKING THE GRADE

RIGOROUS STUDY SHOWS BENEFITS OF ADVENTIST EDUCATION



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On the Cover

The CognitiveGenesis study shows that students in Adventist schools are well above the national average academically. Coupled with caring Christian teachers, small student-teacher ratios, a wholesome Christian atmosphere, and a solid curriculum centered on Bible principles, Adventist education definitely makes the grade!

President's Perspective»

BY LARRY MOORE » SOUTHWESTERN UNION CONFERENCE PRESIDENT



Just Try It!

Larry R. Moore

It was a hot summer day in San Antonio between my seventh- and eighth-grade years when an elder from our church stopped by for a friendly visit. My family had recently embraced the Adventist message. Along with our new beliefs came new foods, a new church family, and a new way of life.

As my parents visited with the elder, my twelve-year-old mind was probably focused on other interests, but suddenly I realized I had become the topic of their conversation.

“Have you considered sending Larry to the Adventist school?” the elder asked.

Now, I was paying attention!

I'd spent my entire childhood attending the same public school—with the same friends and the same teachers. I was comfortable there. The thought of change was unpleasant. My school was just a short walk away. The Adventist school was on the other side of town. I was happy where I was, and I didn't want to

leave the school and friends I'd grown up with, so I voiced my disapproval.

The elder made a gentle suggestion. “The Adventist school starts a week earlier than the public school,” he began. “Why don't you just visit the school for a week. Just try it. No pressure. If you don't like it, you can enroll in the public school and continue with business as usual.”

His nonchalance disarmed me, and my objections dissipated. Even if I didn't like the Adventist school, I had nothing to lose by visiting.

On the first day of school, I headed off to San Antonio Junior Academy. Instead of the old ham sandwich I used to get in my lunchbox, my mom probably packed some sort of fake meat sandwich. But the friends I found there were genuine. I was immediately surrounded by warm acceptance from students and teachers alike.

The school was smaller than I was used to, and it wasn't quite as fancy and up-to-date as my public school. But I really enjoyed learning about the Bible and having a Christian teacher who cared about my spiritual well-being.

And Jeanne, my future wife, was one of those “genuine” friends I made in the classroom.

By the end of the first week, I was hooked. I decided to stay and never looked back. I attended that school through 10th grade, and then finished the 11th and 12th grades in Keene, where I continued through four years of college.

I'm thankful for my Adventist education. I have fond memories of teachers and friends who made my experience rewarding and enjoyable. If you find yourself on the fence as to whether or not to send your kids to an Adventist school, I would quote the words of a wise elder who once told me, “Just try it.”



Adventist Education

A JOURNEY TO EXCELLENCE



CREATION Health

BY LYNELL LAMOUNTAIN

CREATION Health: Home Again

One of our deepest fears is the fear of rejection. We feel unworthy of being loved, either because we feel we are not good enough or because we believe we have not performed adequately to earn the approval of others. Many times (if not most of the time), what we feel, perceive, and believe regarding this matter does not reflect reality, and as a result, we carry needless pain and scars throughout our lives. Our story this month is about a little boy who experienced his greatest fears regarding rejection and abandonment. His name is Johnny.

He was born into a very poor family, the youngest of 12 kids. His father was never home, always working, trying to earn enough money to put food on the table. Then one day he met another woman and never came home again, leaving Johnny's mother to care for all 12 children alone.

She did her best to provide, but it was not enough. When Johnny was six, she broke the news that she was putting him up for adoption along with three of his sisters. She wept and was deeply upset. But there was nothing she could do to keep her family from starving.

The day came for Johnny to leave. He was at the train station with his mom and they were saying their last goodbyes. "When the conductor reached down to take me from my mother's arms," he said, "I felt something die inside of me."

Although his new family was kind and loving, it wasn't the same. And he feared that one day they would give him away, too.

Childhood passed and he grew into an industrious young man. Even though he was an adult now, his soul still ached from those final moments at the train station. So he absorbed himself in work to numb the hurt.

Then one day, during a moment of severe discouragement,

something beautiful happened. Searching for hope—something, anything to lift his spirits—he visited a church. The minister spoke about how God loves to adopt people, and asked if anyone wanted to join God's family. Johnny slowly rose from his seat and walked down the aisle to the altar at the front of the church. His heart, after all these years, was finally home.

In that moment, he sensed Jesus assuring him that He would never abandon him, never send him away, and never allow anything or anyone to take him from His arms. "I felt," he said, "as if God was saying to me, 'Johnny, I know about that day at the train station. I know how you felt and I've been waiting all these years to adopt you into my family.'" His pain was replaced by great peace as Christ's healing grace filled his heart with hope and joy.

We are keenly aware that we cannot always control what happens to us. But by God's grace we do not have to be controlled by what happens to us, either. Everyone, *everyone* is born with faith—even if it is just the size of a mustard seed. So we are free to exercise it and trust God with our hurts, for He is a loving Father who has adopted us into His eternal family.

"This resurrection life you received from God is not a timid, grave-tending life. It's adventurously expectant, greeting God with a childlike 'What's next, Papa?' God's Spirit touches our spirits and confirms who we really are. We know who he is, and we know who we are: Father and children. And we know we are going to get what's coming to us—an unbelievable inheritance! We go through exactly what Christ goes through. If we go through the hard times with him, then we're certainly going to go through the good times with him!" (Rom. 8:15-17, Message Paraphrase).

Enrich every facet of your life today through trust in God—your Forever Father.

That's CREATION Health!

Lynell LaMountain writes from Florida Hospital in Orlando, Fla.

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

CREATIONhealth.com



Shades of Grace

BY MIKE TUCKER » SPEAKER/DIRECTOR, FAITH FOR TODAY

Meeting Maggie

Years ago I worked as a hospice chaplain. It was company policy that the chaplain would offer to visit every patient who entered the hospice program. So, when I received word that we had a new patient named Maggie, I prepared to call her for an appointment.

Maggie had an inoperable brain tumor and didn't have very long to live. Before I called Maggie for an appointment, I reviewed her case. She was single, well educated, a professional, and an atheist.

I realized that it was possible that Maggie might refuse my visit, but I called to offer just the same.

Maggie answered the phone and when I told her I was the chaplain, she said, "You know I'm an atheist, don't you?"

"Yes," I said. "But I thought you might like to talk anyway."

"Well, if you want to, but don't expect to make a convert of me."

"I promise I won't be disappointed if you don't convert," I said. "Now when would be a good time for me to drop by?"

This wouldn't be my first visit with an atheist, so I knew I could be in for a stressful hour. Some atheists take it as a challenge to stump the pastor. They want to make him sweat and perhaps even come to doubt his own faith. Others simply say, "I'm an atheist, you're a Christian. Tell me why I should believe as you believe." And still others simply want someone to talk to about life and its meaning, if such a thing really does exist.

Maggie was a tall, slender woman in her early 40s. Her hair was gone due to the ravages of chemo, but even so, she was a handsome woman. Maggie's demeanor was such that she commanded respect.

As I entered the room Maggie looked me over as though she was sizing me up. Then with a playful smirk she quipped, "So it has come to this. The chaplain has come to visit the atheist before she dies."

Sensing her humor I replied, "That's why they pay me the big bucks, Maggie! They pay me to stand toe to toe with atheists!"

Maggie smiled but not for long. She didn't waste time on pleasantries or small talk; Maggie went right for the jugular.

"How can you believe in God when so many children are abused, or are starving? What kind of God would allow such things to happen?"

The question wasn't new to me. In fact, the question itself actually implies the existence of God. To ask why God allows children to suffer implies the existence of absolute good and absolute evil. Who says that it is wrong for children to suffer? Absolute good demands that such things are wrong.

And where does absolute good come from? If God does not exist, why would such a thing as absolute good exist? In the world of "survival of the fittest," who is to say what is good or evil?

In fact, the question itself implies the existence of God. It is not so much that Maggie didn't believe that God existed; she just didn't much like Him. Maggie was actually looking for an excuse to believe that God not only exists, but that He is likable.

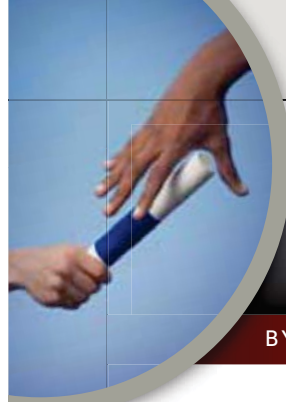
Jesus declared that when He was "lifted up," He would draw all men to Himself. In my visits with Maggie I simply attempted to paint a more accurate picture of God. If Maggie could see Him as He really is, then she would be drawn to Him.

Maggie and I visited regularly for a few weeks until she died. To make a long story short, Maggie did not die an atheist. I fully expect to see Maggie again. On resurrection morning, Maggie will finally meet a God who is likeable. She'll meet a God whom she cannot help but love, because then she will see Him, face to face.

The job of Christians is not so much to "prove" the existence of God or even to "prove" correct doctrine. We are to simply uplift Jesus so that people see who He really is. If we can do that, He will take care of the rest.

One day soon, Jesus will return to earth. It is my prayer that many people will be there to meet Him because you showed them what He is really like.

Mike Tucker



Pass it On...

A Monthly Focus on Evangelism in the Southwest

BY CAROLYN AZO

Hispanic Generation of Youth for Christ Evangelize Cleburne, Tex.

From June 9-12, with the theme "Firm and Forward!" the fourth annual Hispanic Generation of Youth for Christ (GYC) youth conference took place in the city of Keene, Tex. Young people from all parts of the United States and Mexico came to participate in a series of plenary sessions, prayer groups, and seminars that took place at the Keene Spanish church.

The first evening, Ismael Castillo, Sr., president of Montemorelos University in Mexico, invited everyone to dedicate more time to the study of God's Word, saying, "Rather than spending time with Facebook, let's put our *face* aside and spend more time with the *Book!*" He also informed the audience that young people in other countries, such as Ecuador, are also replicating the GYC model that first started in 2008.

Over the next few days, international speakers presented many seminars. Some of the topics studied were: "How to overcome temptation" by Manuel Montero; "Christian Leadership" by Raúl Gómez; "Health and Temperance" by missionary Martha Muñoz; "Spiritual Christian Disciplines" by Ismael Castillo; and "Man and Woman in the Image of God," by Isaac López and his wife, Miriam Castillo-López.

On Sabbath afternoon, 369 doors were knocked upon; 57 people were prayed for; 190 homes received literature, and local pastor Isaac López received a list of 63 names of people interested in receiving Bible studies.

Fifteen-year-old Jennifer Ramírez shared her experience: "When we were about to leave, a young man opened his door. He was amazed that young people would come and talk to him about God. When he asked what church we attended, I told him it was the Seventh-day Adventist Church. He told us that he used to be a Seventh-day Adventist as a child. I told him he should read *The Great Controversy*. He *really* wanted the book. After I returned to

church I had the burden in my heart to give him the book before he returned to his home in California. After the evening session my friend and I, along with Mark Valadez, went once again to his house and gave him a copy of the book. Then we prayed with him. I am so excited and want to do this again!"

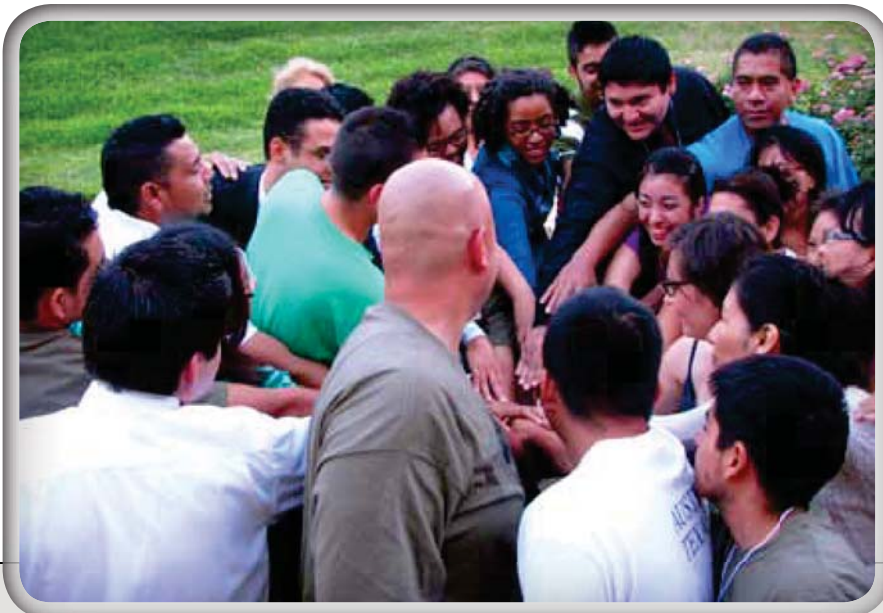
Eloé Esquivel from Kansas states: "During outreach I was able to pray with two families. I was very excited to tell them about God because I remembered the first Sabbath when someone knocked on my door."

On Sunday morning, the final day of Hispanic GYC, at 6 a.m., young people gathered together on the campus of Southwestern Adventist University to pray for one another and have a morning devotional. The hymn, "Firmes y Adelante!" resonated throughout the campus.

Carolina Bonilla, the vice president for communications for Hispanic GYC, expressed, "This weekend, many people, including myself, made a serious commitment to live actively to honor and glorify the Lord's name. We will only know the eternal consequences of what took place here when Jesus comes. I believe this event has opened doors for a worldwide youth revival."

Mark Valadez, president of Hispanic GYC, shares, "I am excited to see our Spanish-speaking young people actively involved in evangelism. During the Sabbath program, we had more than 800 attendees at the Keene Spanish church listening to Elder Craig's powerful message. I think we have accomplished many of our objectives in past conferences. However, there is still much

to be done. For this purpose, we will continue to partner with Seventh-day Adventist leadership in Texas, throughout the United States, and around the world."



◀ On Sunday morning, Hispanic youth gathered on the campus of Southwestern Adventist University to pray for each other and ask for God to empower them to share their faith when they returned to their homes.

Visión Hispana

UN BREVE NOTICIERO MENSUAL DEL SUROESTE

Generación de Jóvenes Hispanos Evangelizan Cleburne, Tex.

Del 9 al 12 de junio en la ciudad de Keene, Texas, se realizó el congreso de jóvenes hispanos, GYC en español (Generation of Youth for Christ). Al cual se dieron cita personas de todas partes de los Estados Unidos, bajo el lema: "Firmes y adelante."

Durante la primera sesión, el Pastor Ismael Castillo, rector de la Universidad Adventista de Montemorelos en México, invitó a la juventud a estudiar la Palabra de Dios. También comentó sobre la influencia mundial que tiene GYC en español. Jóvenes en otros países como Ecuador están imitando el congreso que se originó en el 2008.

En los siguientes días algunos de los tópicos presentados en manera de seminarios fueron: "Como Vencer la Tentación" por el Dr. Manuel Montero; "Liderazgo Cristiano" por el Pastor Raúl Gómez; "Salud y Temperancia" por la misionera Martha Muñoz; "Las Disciplinas Espirituales y la Cosmovisión Cristiana" por el Pr. Ismael Castillo; y "El Hombre y la Mujer a la Imagen de Dios" por el Pr. Isaac López y su esposa Miriam Castillo-López.

El sábado por la tarde se tocaron 369 puertas; se oro con 57 personas; 190 hogares recibieron literatura y el pastor de la iglesia local, Isaac López, recibió una lista con 63 nombres de personas interesadas en recibir estudios bíblicos.

La joven Jennifer Ramírez compartió su experiencia luego de haber participado en la actividad misionera: "Cuando estábamos a punto de irnos, un joven abrió la puerta de su casa. Muy sorprendido de ver a varios jóvenes tocando puertas para hablar a las personas de Dios, preguntó a que iglesia asistimos. Tras mencionarle la Iglesia Adventista, nos contó que de niño el también fue Adventista. Le recomendé el libro El Conflicto de los Siglos y se mostró muy interesado. Al volver a la iglesia sentí el deseo de regresar para entregarle el libro antes que él regresara a Cali-

fornia. Así que después de la última sesión plenaria volvimos a su casa para entregarle una copia del libro y oramos con él. ¡Estoy muy ansiosa de volver a hacer esto!"

Eloé Esquivel, recién bautizado en la Iglesia Adventista en Kansas dice: "Durante la obra misionera tuve la oportunidad de orar con dos familias. Estaba muy feliz de hablarles sobre Dios porque recordé el primer sábado cuando alguien vino a tocar mi puerta."

El último día del congreso a las 6:00 a. m., los jóvenes se citaron afuera del campus de Southwestern Adventist University para orar unos por otros y tener un devocional matutino. Todos fueron motivados a comenzar su día con Dios mientras cantaban el himno "¡Firmes y Adelante!"

Carolina Bonilla, Vice Presidenta de Comunicaciones para GYC en Español señala lo siguiente: "El resultado de lo que se llevó a cabo este fin de semana tal vez no lo veremos hasta que Cristo vuelva, pero lo único que entiendo es que varios jóvenes, incluyéndome a mí misma, hicimos un pacto aquí de honrar y glorificar el nombre de Dios. Estoy segura que este evento ha abierto las puertas para un reavivamiento mundial."

Al respecto, el presidente del GYC, en español, Mark A. Valdez, expresó: "Estoy muy emocionado de ver a nuestros jóvenes de habla hispana participando activamente en evangelismo. Durante el programa del sábado tuvimos más de 800 personas en la iglesia de Keene para escuchar el poderoso tema presentado por el Pr. Carlos Craig y creo que hemos cumplido parte de nuestros

objetivos en este y otros congresos pasados. Sin embargo, aún nos queda mucho por hacer para la juventud adventista hispana. Por esta razón continuaremos trabajando junto con nuestros líderes de la Iglesia Adventista del Séptimo Día en Texas, en los Estados Unidos y en todo el mundo."

Carolyn Azo

◀ Presidente de la Conferencia de Texas, Carlos Craig, predica un mensaje poderoso el Sabado titulado "Ni un paso hacia atras"



Assessing Adventist Education: COGNITIVE GENESIS SUMMARY REPORT

A half-page opinion-editorial appeared in the *Christian Science Monitor* on November 15, 2010, citing the results of the *CognitiveGenesis* research conducted by the Seventh-day Adventist education system. The article emphasizes the holistic approach of educating the mind, body, and spirit inherent in the Adventist educational philosophy and suggests the Adventist educational K-12 system model as one to consider for educational reform.

Test data was collected over a four-year period: Fall 2006 to Fall 2009. Survey data was collected over three years: Fall 2006 to Fall 2008. Incomplete test data and scores judged to be invalid were removed. The final data set used for all analyses included 51,706 students with data gathered for one, two, three, or four years. Substantive findings from student, parent, teacher, and school surveys indicate the following:

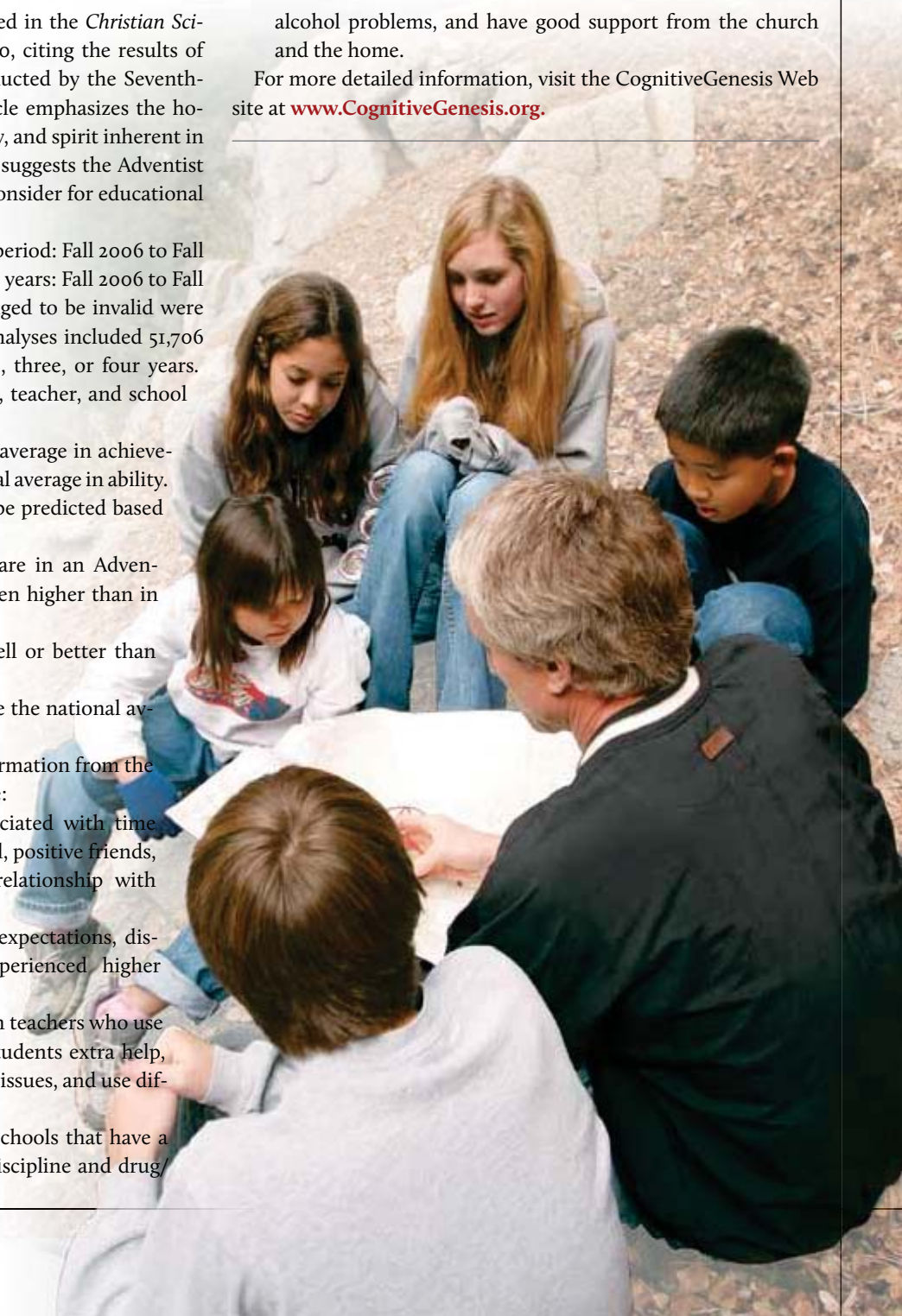
- Students are well above the national average in achievement. Students are close to the national average in ability.
- Students achieve higher than would be predicted based on their ability scores.
- Students do better the longer they are in an Adventist school; the gains in ability are even higher than in achievement.
- Students in smaller schools do as well or better than those in larger schools.
- It still holds that students score above the national average in **all** grades and **all** subjects.

The four-year report contains more information from the surveys than previous reports. For example:

- Higher student achievement is associated with time spent reading for pleasure after school, positive friends, positive spiritual attitude, healthy relationship with parents, and exercise.
- Students whose homes have higher expectations, discipline, and spiritual emphasis experienced higher achievement.
- Higher achievement is associated with teachers who use progressive teaching methods, give students extra help, interact with students about personal issues, and use differentiated instruction.
- Student achievement was higher in schools that have a good academic climate, have fewer discipline and drug

alcohol problems, and have good support from the church and the home.

For more detailed information, visit the CognitiveGenesis Web site at www.CognitiveGenesis.org.



EDUCATION OR EVANGELISM?

As Jesus prepared for His return to the heavenly kingdom, He left an edict for His people. The command is still directed to us today! According to Matthew 28:19, 20, we are to “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.”

The greatest work of the church is bringing individuals (young and old) into a saving relationship with Christ. There is no greater work! Jesus’ death was to provide the means whereby the connection that was severed in the Garden of Eden could be re-established. The love that Jesus had for mankind compelled Him to give His life that we might be saved. That love also provides mankind the privilege of cooperating with the Holy Spirit and angels in the work of evangelism. This is the work of Adventist education.

Teachers have been given the privilege of cooperating with di-

vinity in the plan to “restore in man the image of his Maker, to bring him back to the perfection in which he was created, to promote the development of body, mind, and soul, that the divine purpose of his creation might be realized—this was to be the work of redemption. This is the object of education, the great object of life” (*Education*, p. 16). Thus, there is no variance between the work of Adventist education and the work of evangelism. In the truest sense, Adventist education and evangelism are one.

It has been well established that where schools exist, the work of the church is vibrant, and where schools do not exist, the work is moving more slowly. Inasmuch as the church has a duty to educate its children and train its youth, it is out of place to close a school as long as the school is accomplishing either purpose. Before a school is closed, it should be very clear that God is leading in the closing of the school.

“The school-work in a place where a church school has been established should never be given up unless God plainly directs that this should be done. Adverse influences may seem to conspire against the school, but with God’s help the teacher can do a grand, saving work in changing the order of things. If he labors patiently, earnestly, perseveringly, in Christ’s lines, the reformatory work done in the school may extend to the homes of the children, bringing them into a purer, more heavenly atmosphere. This is indeed missionary work of the highest order” (*Counsels to Teachers*, p. 157).

If the work of evangelism is to be successful, Adventist education must continue to play a major part in touching the lives of children, youth, and parents. True education and redemption are one. Adventist education is evangelism. Let us be about our Father’s business!

Eunice Warfield, Southwestern Union education director



EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AWARD RECIPIENTS

Each year the Southwestern Union Conference recognizes excellence among its teaching staff, at both the elementary and secondary levels. The Southwestern Union Office of Education provides a pecuniary award, along with an appropriate certificate and plaque, to recipients of the Excellence in Teaching Award.

Elementary school recipients for the 2011 Excellence in Teaching Award are Joyce Fortner of Little Rock Adventist Academy in Little Rock, Ark.; Olinda Ramsarran of Excel Adventist Academy in Missouri City, Tex.; Jean Griffitt of DeSoto Adventist Christian School in DeSoto, Tex.; Jill Harbour of Killeen Adventist Junior Academy in Killeen, Tex.; and Susan Zimmermann of Lubbock Junior Academy in Lubbock, Tex. Senior academy recipients are Doug Fisher of Ozark Adventist Academy in Gentry, Ark.; and Jason Stirewalt of South Texas Christian Academy in McAllen, Tex.

These teachers represent the finest in the Southwestern Union Education System. We congratulate them for their achievement and thank them for their dedication to excellence.

“There is no nobler work that we can do, no greater benefit that we can confer upon society, than to give to our children a proper education, impressing upon them, by precept and example, the important principle that purity of life and sincerity of purpose will best qualify them to act their part in the world” (*Counsels on Education*, p. 168).

Doug Fisher



Joyce Fortner



Jean Griffitt



Olinda Ramsarran



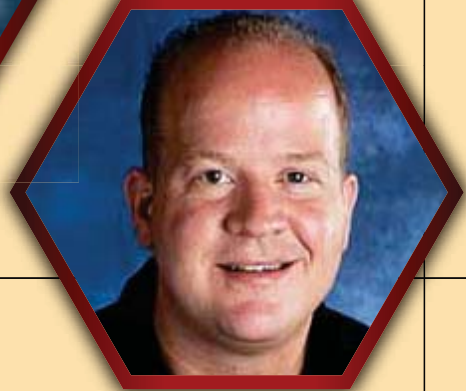
Susan Zimmermann



Jill Harbour



Jason Stirewalt



JOSHUA ADVENTIST MULTIGRADE TEACHER RECEIVES FIRST ECEC AWARD

On the evening of May 24, 2011, Eunice Warfield, education director for the Southwestern Union, presented the union's first Early Childhood Education and Care Award of Merit to Margie Gendke, the Pre-K/kindergarten teacher at Joshua Adventist Multigrade School. Margie Gendke has served 25-plus years in this union, with the last ten at JAMS.

Along with the union recognition, she was recognized by both Southwestern Adventist University and the North American Division Department

of Education, with their respective certificates of achievement in Adventist education.

Margie Gendke has faithfully served in areas where the budget didn't always stretch to include a salary, but she was there, nevertheless, to teach the little ones about Jesus. Her classroom is a busy and happy place to work and grow. We know she will continue to be a blessing to our church's most precious possession, our children.

Carolyn Early



Margie Gendke, left, who teaches Pre-K and kindergarten at Joshua Adventist Multigrade School in Texas, was awarded the first-ever Early Childhood Education and Care Award of Merit in the Southwestern Union.

BY DESIGN

The New Seventh-day Adventist Science Series for Grades 1-8

The North American Division Office of Education has partnered with Kendall Hunt Publishing Company to develop a new science curriculum for Adventist schools. The new series will be ready for use starting with the 2012-2013 school year. It is a faith-based inquiry program, based on national science standards, and will be presented in the context of the Seventh-day Adventist worldview.

It will be a tool to help our teachers explain biblically-based science to their students. It will help students understand that scientists may need to go back to the drawing board and see where they went wrong instead of criticizing the Bible, and also that the Bible should be the measuring stick for science, not having science as the measuring stick for the Bible.

Throughout the texts are "Faith Connections," and "Scripture Spotlights," with actual Bible texts and references, inquiry-based labs, and many other key features. The creation story and the biblical flood story are referenced throughout the text to help explain different scientific questions. There is no question as you thumb through the pages of these books whether or not they are totally based on Christian principles. This professionally-written series is something of which we can be proud.



ADVENTIST SCHOOLS IN THE SOUTHWEST

ARKANSAS-LOUISIANA CONFERENCE

7025 Greenwood Rd., Shreveport, LA 71119 | 318.631.6240

Baton Rouge Adventist Academy	4363 Jones Creek Rd., Baton Rouge, LA 70816
Beacon Hill Adventist School	1446 Red Ridge Rd., DeQueen, AR 71832
Bentonville Adventist School	P.O. Box 298, Bentonville, AR 72712
Colquitt Christian Academy	3233 Colquitt Rd., Shreveport, LA 71118
Ewing Adventist Junior Academy	709 Adventist Church Rd., Bonnerdale, AR 71933
Greater New Orleans Christian Academy	5220 Irving St., Metairie, LA 70006
Harrison Adventist School	4877 Hwy. 392 West, Harrison, AR 72601
Hot Springs Adventist School	401 Weston Rd., Hot Springs, AR 71913
Little Rock Adventist Academy	8708 Rodney Parham, Little Rock, AR 72205
Mountain Home Adventist School	3744 Hwy 62W, Mountain Home, AR 72653
Ozark Adventist Academy	20997 Dawn Hill East Rd., Gentry, AR 72734
Ozark Adventist Elementary School	21150 Dawn Hill East Rd., Gentry, AR 72734
Springdale Adventist School	4001 Oaklawn, Springdale, AR 72762
Texarkana Adventist School	3100 Pleasant Grove Rd., Texarkana, TX 75503

OKLAHOMA CONFERENCE

4735 NW 63rd Street, Oklahoma City, OK 73132-6802 | 405.721.6110

Ardmore Adventist Academy	154 Beavers Academy Rd., Ardmore, OK 73401
Bristow Adventist School	P.O. Box 1074, Bristow, OK 74010
Ketchum Junior Academy	35369 S. Hwy 82, Vinita, OK 74301
Parkview Adventist Academy	4201 Martin Luther King, Oklahoma City, OK 73111
Tulsa Adventist Academy	900 S. New Haven, Tulsa, OK 74112

SOUTHWEST REGION CONFERENCE

2215 Lanark Avenue, Dallas, TX 75203 | 214.943.4491

Applegate Adventist Junior Academy	P.O. Box 729, Round Rock, TX 78680
Berean Adventist School	5100 Osborne St., Baton Rouge, LA 70805
Bethel Adventist School	P.O. Box 660, Texarkana, TX 75501
Emmanuel Adventist School	702 N. Cherry St., Hammond, LA 70401
Excel Adventist Academy	P.O. Box 2240, Missouri City, TX 77459
New Orleans Adventist Academy	4500 Gawain Drive, New Orleans, LA 70127
Shiloh Adventist School	2400 S. Maple St., Little Rock, AR 72204
Smyrna Adventist School	P.O. Box 6408, Alexandria, LA 71301
Southwest Adventist Junior Academy	1600 Bonnie View Rd., Dallas, TX 75203

TEXAS CONFERENCE

1211 Highway 67 West, Alvarado, TX 76009 | 817.790.2255

Adventist Christian Academy of Texas	3601 S Loop 336 E, Conroe, TX 77301
Austin Adventist Junior Academy	P.O. Box 340370, Austin TX 78734
Brazos Valley Adventist School	1350 Earl Rudder Fwy. S, College Station, TX 77840
Burleson Adventist School	1635 Fox Lane, Burleson, TX 76028
Burton Adventist Academy	4611 Kelly-Elliott Rd., Arlington, TX 76017
Burton Adventist Elementary School	4611 Kelly-Elliott Rd., Arlington, TX 76017
Chisholm Trail Academy	P.O. Box 717, Keene, TX 76059
Cleburne Adventist Christian School	111 Meadowview Drive, Cleburne, TX 76031
Coastal Bend Adventist Junior Academy	6645 Downing St., Corpus Christi, TX 78414
Cypress Bend Adventist School	2997 FM 728, Jefferson, TX 75657
Dallas Adventist Junior Academy	4025 N. Central Expressway, Dallas, TX 75204
DeSoto Adventist Christian School	P.O. Box 4682, Cedar Hill, TX 75106
Ft. Worth Adventist Junior Academy	3040 Sycamore School Rd., Ft. Worth, TX 76133
Garland Christian Adventist School	1702 E. Centerville Rd., Garland, TX 75041
Gulfhaven Adventist School	10716 Sabo Rd., Houston, TX 77089
Harlingen Adventist Elementary School	P.O. Box 532785, Harlingen, TX 78553
Hill Country Adventist Christian School	611 Harper Rd., Kerrville, TX 78028
Joshua Adventist Multi-Grade School	P.O. Box 329, Joshua, TX 76058
Katy Adventist Christian School	1913 East Avenue, Katy, TX 77493
Keene Adventist Elementary	302 Pecan, Keene, TX 76059
Killeen Adventist Junior Academy	3412 Lake Rd., Killeen, TX 76543
Maranatha Adventist School	2526 Goliad Rd., San Antonio, TX 78223
Miller Adventist School	1471 W. Corporate Dr., Lewisville, TX 75067
New Creation Christian School	800 W. Hwy 6, Waco, TX 76712
North Dallas Adventist Academy	302 Centennial Blvd., Richardson, TX 75081
San Marcos Adventist Junior Academy	P.O. Box 801, San Marcos, TX 78667
Scenic Hills Adventist School	11223 Bandera Hwy, San Antonio, TX 78250
South Texas Christian Academy	7001 N. Ware Rd., McAllen, TX 78504
The Oaks Christian Academy	11903 C Tanner Rd., Houston, TX 77041
Triangle Adventist School	P.O. Drawer H, Groves, TX 77619
Tyler Adventist School	2931 South S.E. Loop 323, Tyler, TX 75701
Valley Grande Adventist Academy	1000 South Bridge St., Weslaco, TX 78756

TEXICO CONFERENCE

P.O. Box 1366, Corrales, NM 87048 | 800.749.7851

Crestview Christian Academy	6000 Ouray NW, Albuquerque, NM 87120
El Paso Adventist Junior Academy	3510 George Dieter Dr., El Paso, TX 79936
Lubbock Junior Academy	5302 Elgin Ave., Lubbock, TX 79413
Sandia View Academy	65 Sandia View Lane, Corrales, NM 87048
Sandia View Elementary School	24 Academy Dr., Corrales, NM 87048

The Seventh-day Adventist Church, in all of its church schools, admits students of any race to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at its schools, and makes no discrimination on the basis of race, color, ethnic background, country of origin, or gender in the administration of education policies, applications for admission, scholarship or loan programs, and extracurricular programs.

A complete list of all academies and elementary/junior academies is included on this page.

GOD IS MY REFUGE

Joseph Choi, Valley Grande Adventist Academy music director



Can you imagine the world without music? I can't. From the time I was very young, music was extremely important to me. It was a source of refuge and strength, even before I was aware of the true Source of that strength.

When I was eight years old, my father was the first Korean pastor to serve as an Adventist missionary abroad. His calling took us from Korea to Brazil, where I had to learn Portuguese at a time when I was just getting comfortable with the Korean language. It wasn't easy. I was afraid to respond to people's questions for fear of mispronouncing words and being laughed at. I still remember the humiliation of older boys coming up from behind, throwing me high into the air and making me feel helpless. I was quiet and sometimes lonely, and when I had no one to talk to, I took refuge in music.

When I was 14, my family moved to the United States and I again had to learn a new language. I became interested in sports and enrolled in the public school nearest our home where I worked hard to excel as an athlete. I had the chance to play soccer and run spring and winter track. But during the summer before my freshman year, I suffered muscle and knee injuries and ended up in a hospital bed where I was told I needed extended rest. My athletic career had stopped almost before it had begun. It was a huge disappointment.

Again, I took refuge in music. I began playing with two youth orchestras and a semi-professional orchestra, and eventually decided to pursue a music degree and become a professional musician. I especially had my eye on the movements of the conductor during all those long hours of rehearsal. I wanted to do what he was doing—be a leader, not a follower.

I also wanted to follow the Lord and use my music for Him, so after completing my degree, I became an academy music teacher. That kept me busy touring and performing almost every weekend with the schools where I taught in North Carolina, Maryland, Arizona, and Texas.

But my heart really remained with the professional orchestras I increasingly had opportunities to conduct. I had placed in several international

► Joseph and Angela Choi bring beautiful music to Valley Grande Academy. They chose to relocate to south Texas after their son, Nathaniel, was born.

▼ Below and next page: Before relocating to Valley Grande Adventist Academy, Maestro Joseph Eunkwon Choi kept a busy schedule conducting both the Evansville (Indiana) Philharmonic Orchestra (below) as well as the Owensboro (Kentucky) Orchestra (next page).





conducting competitions, and even guest conducted the Phoenix Symphony, as well as other orchestras in Indiana and Kentucky. I enjoyed those opportunities immensely. I especially appreciated the challenge to greatness they represented.

When my son was born, however, I realized I needed to be close to an Adventist school for him to attend. I wanted him to be in a place where he could grow closer to God as he studied. At the time, the closest Adventist school was more than two hours away. My wife was in the process of working on her masters in music education, and we wanted to go to a place where we could work together.

The invitation to teach at Valley Grande Adventist Academy was clearly a calling from the Lord. His leading and presence were obvious. Together, we embraced the opportunity to again teach young students to perform music that glorifies God, and to perform it well.

This isn't something we take lightly. Satan uses music to lure young people down dangerous paths and to destroy them. I see it happening every day. It's a constant battle, and many of the students aren't even aware that their eternal lives are hanging in the

balance. Because of music, many are led away from God. I want to use music to lead them *to* him.

It is my lifework to teach them to praise God with their whole hearts through music, and to find refuge in Him rather than in the music. In choir, they learn to blend their voices and minds together in a way that brings glory to God and not to them. Together, my wife and I try to teach them reverence and awe for the Creator Who made all things, including music.

I often wonder at the fact that many Adventist churches no longer have choirs. It is a missed opportunity. Church choirs praise God through good and bad times. They bring people together with a common voice and a common purpose. They remind us Who God is and who we are in relation to Him.

Singing in a choir is both a humbling and exhilarating experience, and leading a choir is a special ministry. I'm thankful that God has placed my wife and me in this ministry together. We're extremely thankful for this opportunity to work for the Lord and to have an impact on the lives of young people for eternity.

This year, the theme for the VGAA music department was "To God Be the Glory." We were blessed to have a group of students



who were not afraid to learn and perform technically challenging music. I make it clear to them that we aren't just a "choir," but a choir that brings a sacrificial offering to God every time we sing. We bring our *best* music to the Lord.

Every day is a new day in the life of a student. Each one comes from a different background or environment. Personally, I don't know their challenges or fears. Some days my calling to teach them takes me down a very lonely pathway, and I feel much like I did when I was an eight-year-old boy learning a new language and trying to feel at

Today, Joseph Choi enjoys working with the students of Valley Grande Adventist Academy, praising God through musical excellence. Pictured on this page are the VGAA Sylvan Chorale (top and middle) and the VGAA Wind Ensemble (bottom).



home in a strange and sometimes unfriendly place.

The reality is, no matter how hard I work, there will always be some students who do not appreciate what I do and who have no clue about the school's purpose and aspirations for their lives. But God does. He's the One who measures the fruits of our labors and daily gives us wisdom to teach the students and guide them toward heaven. I will always love music, but I take refuge in Him.

Prayer 101

My wife, Micki, was enjoying a nice phone conversation with Dominic, our seven-year-old grandson. I had been busy packing my suitcase for the weekend Sabbath appointments and getting ready to start off for my trip when my wife called me and said, "Dominic wants to pray for you before you leave." I was pleasantly surprised but was very happy to let my grandson offer prayer for me. I took the phone and listened as my grandson offered the sweetest prayer for his Papa who would be traveling on the highway, asking for his safe arrival. To say the least, I was touched. It was a simple prayer, but power-packed because of the faith of a seven-year-old claiming God's care over his Papa.

A month later we got to take Dominic home with us for three weeks at the start of summer vacation. One day I asked him if he was ever asked to pray at school in his first-grade class. He responded, "Every time it's my turn to be the 'line leader' I pray at the beginning of school, at lunch, and before we go home."

"So," I said, "every time you get to stand at the head of the line, you also get to offer all the prayers for the day?"

"Yes," he answered.

Dominic's Mom and Dad taught him to pray at the same time he learned to talk, so he had already been praying for at least five years. However, when I stopped to think of the impact of his church school experience with prayer, it reminded me once again of

how critically important the church school is in teaching and reinforcing spiritual values in the lives of our young people. How gratifying to know that children in the first grade are learning to pray—and learning to pray "in public." Children are being taught that they can talk to God and that He hears their prayers. It has been proven that our schools offer top-notch academics, but it is also being demonstrated that spiritual values and practical godly lifestyle are a part of the curriculum. I'm thankful for my grandson, and I'm thankful for Seventh-day Adventist Christian education . . . and "classes" like "Prayer 101."

Steve Orian, president

Farewell to a Faithful Teacher

BONNERDALE, ARK. » On May 15, the long career of Shirley Mooney as a teacher at Ewing Adventist Junior Academy was celebrated and remembered. Past and present students, family, and friends gathered together to wish her a happy and blessed retirement.

Shirley Mooney taught at E.A.J.A. for more than 20 years. During those years she has taught each grade, from kindergarten to tenth. Her love for her students and her desire to see them grow into Christian men and women has made her an excellent example of a Christian educator.

Definitely one of the "Marthas" of the community, Shirley Mooney always finds something to keep her busy. When she is not grading schoolwork, she helps lead the Bonnerdale Braves Pathfinder Club and runs a health food store. Shirley Mooney is a beloved teacher and she will be missed by her students. Her work is not done, however, and she looks forward to what God has planned for her next.

Amanda Meseraull

Shirley Mooney retired in May from Ewing Adventist Junior Academy after more than 20 years of teaching there.



God Gave Us a Burden for Souls

MAMMOTH SPRING, ARK. » We want to tell our story to let you know what God is doing in our lives and how He is using us to reach others. He led us to visit 74 homes once a month to share Him with others. It takes us three Sabbath afternoons to visit all 74 homes—three apartment complexes and five houses in Mammoth Spring, and one apartment complex in Hardy. Our story began when the Holy Spirit convicted both of us to pray that we would have a burden for souls. Before praying this prayer, we were doing what a lot of other church members do—being active in Sabbath School and church, then going home to read or sleep on Sabbath afternoon.

We began to have a burden for others, but we did not know what God wanted us to do, so we continued to pray. One day when we were adding another package of *Signs of the Times* to the stack in the church closet, it came to both of us that we were to put the magazines out. But where? The next Sabbath Rita came to Sabbath School really excited and exclaimed, “I know what God wants us to do! I am reading the book *Pursuing the Passion of Jesus*, by Dwight Nelson. Listen to what he wrote: ‘My wife, Karen’s, partnership in

ministry has turned theory into practice, as together we’ve spent Sabbath afternoons walking the streets of an inner-city block we’ve adopted as our own. She knows the names and the needs of those who live on this street. And they know her, as I do.’ That’s it, Marietta! We are to adopt an area to visit regularly so the people will know us, and we will know them. God has answered our prayer.”

We prayed about where our area should be and were impressed that we were to go to three low-income apartment complexes in Mammoth Spring. We visit three homes near one of the apartment complexes, and one of the home owners sent us across town to make regular visits to a loved one. We are also visiting an interest from the blind work. We got the idea through Brenda Walsh’s ministry that we should make bookmarks with Bible verses to distribute. We found that if people in the apartments wouldn’t take a magazine or the literature we were giving out, they would take a bookmark.

One Sabbath afternoon when we were on our way home, we decided to visit Ann, a lady who is studying to be baptized and attends church when she is physically able.

Ann’s apartment complex is in Hardy. As we drove into the complex, the idea came to both of us at the same time that we were to visit here also. In this complex we only have permission to hand out bookmarks, but we have had the opportunity to pray with several of the residents. It has been so exciting to have people recognize us when we come back and to have so many willing to pray with us. Some are waiting for another piece of literature and a new bookmark. It has not seemed like “work” for the Lord, it has been so much fun. Imagine how exciting it was for us to see one of the women we visit come to Sabbath School and church. She had visited our church a few times a year or two ago, now she was back, and even brought her husband with her. We are praying that they will continue to come.

One man showed us that he is keeping and studying the literature we have given him. He said his sister wanted it, but he didn’t want to part with it, so on this visit we gave him literature for his sister, too. The Lord has impressed both Marietta and me that we now have our missionary area to visit monthly. We still have a Sabbath afternoon free, but God may have plans for that too—possibly one day giving Bible studies to someone who we are now visiting. It is exciting to be missionaries where God has planted us.

However, when Rita was recently diagnosed with cancer, we thought our days of visitation were finished. But God had other plans. Rita had surgery, and is now on chemotherapy. The Lord has blessed by giving her energy and cheerfulness so we can continue.

We added an offer on the back of our bookmarks for Bible studies on the book of John. We had our first Bible study with a lady that we have been visiting for some time. We have two very ill ladies and a 93-year-old man who look forward to our visits every month so we can have prayer with them. They call us the church ladies.



Rita Neptune and Marietta King prayed to have a burden for souls and God led them to visit homes in the community and hand out literature and bookmarks and pray with the residents.

Rita Neptune and Marietta King

Benton Pathfinders Attend Camporee

ARKANSAS-LOUISIANA CONFERENCE

BENTON, ARK. » Benton's "Jesus Warriors Pathfinder Club" attended the Pathfinder camporee at Cypress Black Bayou State Park in Louisiana, Thursday through Sunday, April 7-10. This was the first camporee that the recently-formed Benton club attended. It was an exhilarating experience for the club as they joined with 229 Pathfinders from the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference for the spring camporee. The weather could not have been better, with beautiful balmy days and wonderful camping weather at night. A slight sprinkling of rain made it "official" camporee weather.

Friday was a full day with a tour of Barksdale Air Force Base, and then visits to the Sci-Port Museum and IMAX Theater with an exhibit of the Hubble telescope. The theme and activities were great, but the highlight of camporee was the worship service that was held each morning and night.

During the Friday-evening service the speaker asked if there was anyone who wanted to come up and give a testimony.

At first there were just a few adults and then, one by one, the Pathfinders started going up. It was awesome to see these young people take a stand for God in front of their peers. During the remaining meetings the young people kept coming to the microphone to give their testimony. They talked about the way the Lord had worked in their lives, asked for prayers, and also let their peers know that they love Jesus and believe in the power of the Holy Spirit to change lives.

After the last meeting the clubs were blessed by fellowshiping with each other, hanging out, talking, and sharing their love for Jesus. It was wonderful to see the power of God in action through these young people!

Here is what some of the Pathfinders said about camporee:

"My experience at camporee was very fun! We went to the zoo, got a lot of honors, went to the IMAX, and went to an art exhibit. On the very last night after the meeting we had the New Orleans group,

Springdale group, and some other groups over at our camp for a while! We sang songs, made a fire, ate s'mores and had a lot of fun. Even though we will miss them a whole lot, we will hopefully see them again."—Camry Clark

"When I went to the camporee I was kind of scared of what to expect. It was in a different state, but really, it was fun and I want to go next year. We also went to the IMAX and got to see what God made that is billions of light years away."—Devin Wilcox

"Wow, I had a lot of fun in Louisiana. It was a good weekend and I thank God for the beautiful weather we had. I think the campout brought us closer to each other and we got to know each other more. One thing that I felt good about was when I went up and told everyone what I felt. It was good to go up in front and talk about God. The other thing that I liked was that everyone made new friends."

Daniel Kaffenberger, pastor



Pathfinders from the Benton, Ark., church had a fun time at the conference camporee held at the Cypress Black Bayou State Park in Louisiana.

A Centenarian Celebrates Life

BATON ROUGE, LA. » With a heart-warming smile, Mattie (Dovie) Henry celebrated her rooth birthday. The centennial celebration was held at the Baton Rouge church to honor the long life and legacy the Lord has given Ms. Dovie, as she is affectionately called. Ms. Dovie, who has been a member of the Baton Rouge church for 44 years, was embraced and celebrated by friends, family, and admirers.

Mesha Cage



With her friends and family Mattie (Dovie) Henry recently celebrated 100 years of life.

Agatha Thrash, M.D., Speaks on Preventive Medicine

SLIDELL, LA. » Agatha Thrash, M.D., a board-certified pathologist and nutrition and natural remedies author, recently visited the Slidell church. She and her assistant, Vilma Myers, presented a weekend program on nutrition and health. They emphasized that many people are deceived by food, drink, and lifestyle choices, which contribute to many common health problems.

The well-attended sessions provided many informed answers for the enthusiastic congregation. Dr. Thrash often holds health seminars that focus on heart

disease, diabetes, and hypertension. She has practiced pathology for 15 years and

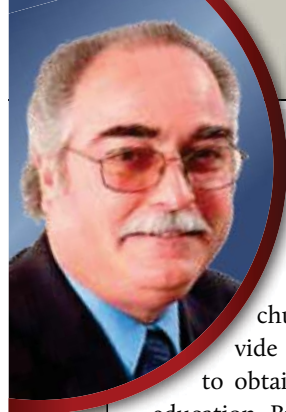
together with her husband, Calvin Thrash, M.D., who is now deceased, founded Uchee Pines Institute near Seale, Ala., 37 years ago.

Vernella Rogers



Agatha Thrash, M.D., of Uchee Pines Institute in Alabama, presented a weekend seminar on healthy living at the Slidell, La., church.

A Burden to Serve



OKLAHOMA CONFERENCE

I know that most of our churches pray for God to provide a way for their children to obtain a Seventh-day Adventist education. But then they add an escape clause, asking God to protect them whenever they attend school. Does God take delight in playing “Let’s Make a Deal” as with Lot? We are told that if a church has six students, that church should have a church school. What if a church only has five, four, three, two, or one?

Today, there are no excuses. Several resources are available, including the Oklahoma Digital Adventist Classroom, which can provide a local Seventh-day Adventist church school for only one student!

Church members, parents, conference, and union personnel should work together to ensure that no child is left behind when Jesus comes! Church members include all members, even if their local church has no eligible students.

A church without eligible students is not exempt. In fact, they are perhaps needed more, since their church budget does not include a church school that can take up to 65 percent of a church budget. Therefore, this type of church is in a position to contribute to an education fund. It takes a combined church family to educate our children.

I remember James* very well. I was on a

recruitment trip. It was a hot summer day, the kind that zaps the energy right out of you. Fortunately for me, the local pastor was driving me around as we visited families from his church.

When I was ready to stop for the day, the pastor said, “We have one more to visit. This boy needs to go to academy. One problem. He lives in the projects. No money. But he is a hard worker.”

My mind was racing. No money. In the projects, not only would he not have the social skills for academy, but our very own safety was a concern. But into the projects we drove.

Our knock on the door was answered by a loud “Come on in.” Then the door swung open to a cheery smile from a 10-year-old named Lisa.* The mom was sitting on a mattress in the middle of the room. She was facing a TV screen. She never faced us during our visit.

Lisa kept us entertained, asking us all types of questions and answering most of them, until her brother returned.

James came in with a plastic bag containing quite a few bottles and cans. That was his way of supplying finances to the family budget.

After our talk about academy life, James was ready to go, as was Lisa. The pastor said his church would help with the finances. That, along with the work pro-

gram and conference funds, would come close to making it. Fortunately, this conference had a scholarship fund made possible by church members throughout the conference who wanted to do their part for Adventist young people. So August found James in the academy classroom. And Jesus found the pathway to James’ heart open.

That was some 25-30 years ago. Today, James is a successful academy administrator. Through his leadership, many more young people have been invited to attend a Seventh-day Adventist academy, and as a result, those young people have found Christ.

All this was made possible by many adults working together to fulfill the Gospel Commission for God’s kids!

Now it’s your turn.

“Do you pray for the advancement of the truth? Then work for it, and show that your prayers rise from sincere and earnest hearts. God does not work miracles where He has provided means by which the work may be accomplished. Use your time and talents in His service, and He will not fail to work with your efforts” (*Christian Education*, p. 116).

Jack Francisco, Oklahoma education superintendent

*The names have been changed to protect the privacy of the individuals.

Campamento Hispano 2011 | Wewoka Woods, Okla. | Julio 29-31

En el campamento de jóvenes de la Asociación de Oklahoma, Wewoka Woods Youth Center, en Wewoka, Oklahoma. Para más información, llame al teléfono 405.371.5576 o 405.213.9009. Queremos invitarles a una experiencia espiritual muy especial. Nuestro predicador especial será el Pastor Steven Bohr, que traera esos temas que nos preparan para los últimos días. Nuestro tema para este año será Transformados por su Espíritu. Haga planes para estar allí.



Korean Students a Blessing at TAA

TULSA » We were blessed to have 20 spirited Korean students with us at Tulsa Adventist Academy for the duration of our third academic quarter. The Koreans brought rich cultural diversity to the school, giving our students the valuable opportunity to build international friendships. Many of the students still keep up with us via Facebook and e-mail.

The program brought another bless-

ing to our school. After the final bills were paid and the schools received their share of the funds from the Oklahoma Conference, our school was blessed with a check for \$16,000! It was more than we ever expected to receive, and it has opened some doors for us that we have been praying to open for quite some time. In cooperation with the Oklahoma Conference, we are using these funds to fully upgrade our computer lab! We have purchased 20 iMac computers! I cannot express the level of excitement that we all feel here at the school. This new addition puts our school a cut above the norm in the area of IT resources.

We greatly appreciate the Korean students and organizers for their participation, the Oklahoma Conference for their skillful leadership in this program, our school board for once again stepping out in faith, and ultimately, the Lord for providing this path that has led to one of the most significant curricular improvements this school has seen in years!

It may be a good time to begin once again the process of dreaming about the future of our school. Would it not

be great if to complement our new iMac Computer Lab, each student in the school had their personal iPad that would be fully compatible with our lab? This would allow us to convert all of our textbooks to digital books as well as open up thousands of educational applications to our students. This is still a dream. Right now we have four iPads in the school, but with the Lord, all things are possible!

Another Way God Blessed

Blessings beget blessings; this is a Christian truth that we can all count on. As we all are aware, our school facility underwent a full roof replacement last summer. The project was long overdue and the school was in desperate need. The job was expensive and the decision to act was made in an atmosphere of prayerful contemplation. Now as we look back on the year, it has become obvious that God was leading the way. After the blizzards and heavy snow accumulations, I have little doubt that our school's roof would have buckled and caved in if the work had not been done. The Lord is watching over us and protecting our precious resources.

Craig Mattson, principal



The international exchange program, which allowed 20 Korean students to spend the third academic quarter at Tulsa Adventist Academy, brought many blessings, including a disbursement check of \$16,000 from the Oklahoma Conference at the conclusion of the program. These funds were used to purchase new Apple computers for the school.

Bristow Adventist School Graduates Three

BRISTOW » Bristow Adventist School graduated three eighth-graders in a graduation ceremony on May 17, 2011. Joshua Bingham, Katherine Figueroa-Nunez, and Jae-Yung Park were heralded into the sanctuary to Pomp and Circumstance performed by Jae-Min Park on the piano. Joshua attended BAS from 6th-8th grade; Katherine attended BAS via Oklahoma Adventist Digital School for grades 7-8; and Jae-Yung attended BAS from K-8th grade. John Moyer, Oklahoma Conference president, gave Jae-Yung a certificate for his many years of attendance.

The graduates also took part in their ceremony. Katherine sang a solo for the attendees, and Jae-Yung gave the class history, highlighting outdoor school as one of the students' favorite memories. All three

students gave heartfelt spoken tributes to their parents and the parents gave tributes to their children also, followed by Bristow church pastor Harvey Gil's commencement address to the graduates. A delicious buffet followed the ceremony where families, friends, and church members alike celebrated the graduates' educational milestone. Bristow church members are very supportive of the church school and wish the best for these new graduates through their high school years. We ask God's blessing on each graduate as they fulfill their aim, "I will follow You," and their motto, "Where You move, I'll move, where You go, I'll go, where You stay, I'll stay, I'll follow You."

Caroline A. Fisher



Joshua Bingham, Katherine Figueroa-Nunez, and Jae-Yung Park recently celebrated the completion of eighth grade at Bristow Adventist School.

Native American Camp Introduces Campers to Jesus

WEWOKA » My name is Evelyn Laurie. I'm a recent graduate of Oakwood College and I'll be entering the Seventh-day Adventist Seminary at Andrews this fall. When I told my friends and family in New Jersey that I would be spending my summer working for Native Ministries in Oklahoma, the question that everyone asked me was "What's in Oklahoma?" After spending my first week in Oklahoma, it is evident to me that there is truly much going on here; especially within Native Ministries. Native Ministries held both Native American Camp and the main training phase of the Summer Evangelism Program from June 5 to 12 at Wewoka Woods Adventist Center.

Native American Camp is an outreach program that is open to all children, yet is geared specifically toward Native American children. The program is holistic in nature and free for all non-Adventist Native Americans. During Native Camp children were introduced to our Creator and His interest in their lives through powerful skits, interactive songs, and sincere preaching. Health is also a major focus of the program. Healthy and tasty vegetarian meals were served and campers were also introduced to NEW-START. Diabetes is prevalent among the Native American population and the prevention of this disease is a key component of camp.

Although the main goal of Native American Camp is to introduce campers to Jesus, Native Ministries strongly believes in the importance of preserving their ancestral heritage. In keeping with that belief, Principal Chief Harjo and Officer Tim Gentry from the Light-horse Police Department, both from the Seminole Nation, were invited to visit the camp. Both graciously accepted the invitation. Principal Chief Harjo's message to campers emphasized tribal heritage, the duty of being a good citizen, education, and the im-

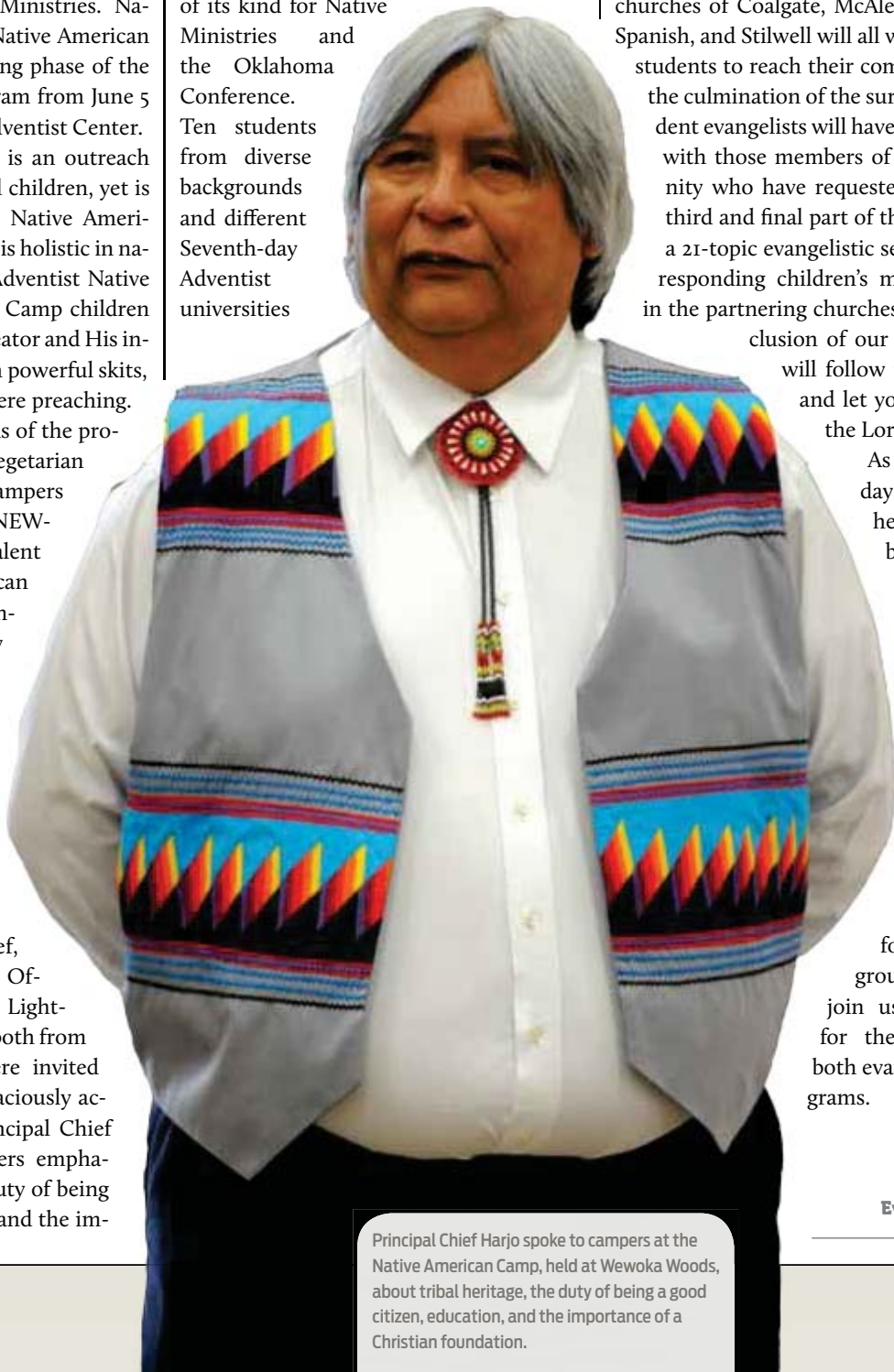
portance of a Christian foundation. Officer Gentry spoke of respect for elders and the importance of staying away from harmful substances. In appreciation for taking the time to talk with the campers, Native Ministries presented Chief Harjo with a Four-Winds Native blanket and Officer Gentry (who is a youth leader in his church) with an Andrews Study Bible.

The Native Ministries Summer Evangelism program is the first of its kind for Native Ministries and the Oklahoma Conference. Ten students from diverse backgrounds and different Seventh-day Adventist universities

have come together to participate in a nine-week evangelistic effort. Our mission began with a week of training with pastors James Bokovoy and Jim Landelius at Wewoka Woods Adventist Center. The first part of the threefold program is to conduct surveys in the cities of Coalgate, McAlester, Sallisaw, and Stilwell. In addition to attaining the opinions of the community for the purpose of future outreach, copies of *Steps to Christ* will be distributed. The churches of Coalgate, McAlester, Sallisaw Spanish, and Stilwell will all work with the students to reach their communities. At the culmination of the surveys, the student evangelists will have Bible studies with those members of the community who have requested them. The third and final part of the program is a 21-topic evangelistic series and corresponding children's meetings held in the partnering churches. At the conclusion of our program, we will follow up this story and let you know how the Lord blessed.

As it was in the days of Joshua as he stood on the brink of the Jordan River, Native Ministries is moving forward with God before us. May we, like the children of Israel, find our footing on dry ground. Please join us in praying for the success of both evangelistic programs.

Evelyn Laurie



Principal Chief Harjo spoke to campers at the Native American Camp, held at Wewoka Woods, about tribal heritage, the duty of being a good citizen, education, and the importance of a Christian foundation.

An Evening of Appreciation

SHATTUCK » Members of our church showed their appreciation for city police officers, firemen, and EMTs of our community, at a special dinner celebration held for these civil servants and their families on Sunday evening, April 17 in the Shattuck Church School gymnasium.

After a short message of appreciation by Alex Rodriguez, the church's pastor, two of the elders of the church, Wayne Williams and David Schwinn, presented each public service department a plaque on behalf of the local Seventh-day Adventist church in recognition for their sacrifice, commitment, and dedica-



The Shattuck church recently held an appreciation dinner for members of the community who serve as police officers, firemen, and EMTs. Each was presented with a special plaque in recognition of their service.

tion to the city and the surrounding areas. The fire department was also presented with a donation to assist in their services by several local businesses.

We want to express our sincere appreciation to those who attended and to everyone who made this event possible.

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.

SPONSORED BY THE OKLAHOMA CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

Children Are The Lord's Heritage



SOUTHWEST REGION CONFERENCE

Psalms 127:3 tells us that children are the Lord's heritage, and the word "heritage," in general, denotes property. If we follow this thought process, then for me, it means that children are only on loan to us and must be returned to Him when he calls for them. In other words, we are held accountable for the Lord's most precious property. Deuteronomy 4:8 tells us that a nation is considered great that has "statutes and righteous judgments" from God. Then verse 10 tells us to "teach them to our children and our grandchildren." With this kind of admonition it leaves no doubt that children are extreme-

ly important to the Lord and should be to us, likewise. These Old Testament passages simply lay the foundation for the words of Jesus, who tells us to "allow little children to come unto me and forbid them not" (Matt. 19:14) and that "unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 18:3).

This indicates to me that the most important thing is to make sure our children are trained for heaven. This brings me to the crux of the matter, and that is, How can we do anything less than educate our children in our schools? I truly believe that God's challenge to modern apostasy

is to educate our children in Seventh-day Adventist schools from kindergarten through college. Ellen White says that "We have an army of youth today who can do much if properly directed and encouraged" (*Christian Service*, p. 30). And where are they going to get this training and encouragement? In our Christian schools.

I am a product of both public and Christian education, and it is the Christian education that has shaped my life for Christian service. I wouldn't trade my Christian education for anything, for it is also core to my salvation.

Samuel Green, president

Youth Week of Prayer Results in Nine Bible Studies

HAMMOND, LA. » The youth of the Emmanuel church, along with church members and guests from the surrounding community, took part in an electrifying Youth Week of Prayer. The nightly meetings were held from Sunday, March 13 through Friday, March 18, with a grand climax dur-

represented at each prayer meeting, and took an active part in praise and worship, welcoming the guests, and giving special music presentations.

The Word was delivered in a powerful fashion by Christopher Manuel, pastor, as he built the momentum for increased

Please," "Breaking the Cycle," "Is It Safe in Here?" and "Biggie Size My Order."

As the Youth Week of Prayer drew to a close, nine people took their stand and enrolled in Bible study in preparation for baptism. "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come" (Matt. 24:14).

Linda Hodge



Young people of the Emmanuel church in Hammond, La., were actively involved in the worship activities during their Week of Prayer held in March.

ing the Sabbath worship service on March 19. The nightly prayer meetings were well attended, with an average attendance of more than 71 people each night, and on the most well attended night, 92 people were present. The youth of Emmanuel were well

attendance by offering eye-catching handouts highlighting his nightly presentations. He captivated his audience with such topics as "I.D.



Sam Green Elected as SWR President

The delegation of the Southwest Region Conference elected Elder Samuel L. Green as its new president on May 22. Green had served as the executive secretary, and human relations, public affairs, and religious liberty director of the Southwestern Union Conference since 1993. He has pastored in Texas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Arkansas. He has also served in administration as stewardship director, secretary-treasurer, and auditor. Elder Green serves on hospital boards and the Southwestern Adventist University Board.

Samuel Green graciously ac-

cepted the call and humbly thanked the delegation for their trust in him to serve the Southwest Region Conference. He is

married to Mary Alice, a teacher in Mansfield, Tex., and they have parented sons Shelton, Cameron, and nephew, Bruce, all products of Christian education. They have four grandchildren.



The executive officers of the Southwest Region Conference. From left: Terrell McCoy, vice president for administration, and spouse, Beverly; Sam Green, president, and spouse, Mary Alice; Nancy Jones, treasurer; and Larry Moore, president of the Southwestern Union Conference.

God Made Me a Woman, Now What?

PALESTINE, TEX. » “God Made Me a Woman, Now What?” was the theme of our women’s day program at the New Life church. Norman Stiggers, pastor, Debra Woods, women’s ministries coordinator, and Vernescia Fuller, youth ministries coordinator, collaborated to make this a dynamic event for young and old. Our guest speaker was Catherine Jackson, who expounded on the Word of God with such articulation, power, and grace that the ladies listened in awe, with tears of joy, worship, and praise, as they were reminded of their value and purpose. We embraced ev-

ery word that the Holy Spirit, through our sister, shared with us on that day. Catherine Jackson is a pastor’s wife, mother, sister, aunt, and a true educator, par excellence, who has committed over 37 years of her life providing Christian education to our children through numerous avenues. She serves as principal at Garland Adventist Academy in Garland, Tex., and is married to Robert Jackson. Jackson’s message reflected and testified to her lifelong journey in prayer, study, sacrifice, investment, dedication, love, and faith. She helped us realize that we, too, must continue to hold

on to God’s unchanging hand and build our hopes on things eternal, realizing that only what we do for Christ will last. We thanked the Lord for the message and His messenger.

The coordinators planned a women’s tea fellowship after divine worship service to honor the young ladies of the church. The fellowship hall was decorated nicely, with the tables covered in various pastel colors, and an array of colored tea sets tastefully arranged on each table. Only fine china, crystal, and glass were used to serve our special young ladies as their waiters stood in line to make sure they were served quickly. The selection of food was simple, tasty, attractive, and nutritious. We enjoyed answering questions about the sermon and Bible knowledge (particularly regarding women), receiving gifts, laughing together, and just “loving on, learning from, and appreciating” each other. We discovered that day, in a unique and special way, why we must be “God’s women.”

Lorraine Stiggers

The women and girls of the New Life church in Palestine, Tex., learned their true value as “God’s women” during a recent woman’s day program.



Community Health Fair Offers Screening and Education

BATON ROUGE, LA. » An African proverb says, "Giving leaves an imprint that endures forever." According to coordinators Trudy McClain, Sonja Miller, and Glenda Peeler, this was the premise behind our recent community health fair held at Berean Academy. The event marked still another opportunity for the church to fulfill its role of giving back to the community. The morning began with a continental breakfast, followed later by a scrumptious vegetarian lunch that promoted healthy eating.

The well-attended fair was designed to accommodate all age groups, and featured face painting for children and the more daring adults, including Robert Davis, Berean's pastor. As well, the children had free access to a range of children's literature. One of the district fire departments gave children lessons in fire and bicycle safety. Bookmarks and handouts, all bearing safety messages, helped reinforce the instruction.

The day's activities not only provided the usual health checks, including blood pressure, cholesterol, diabetes, hearing, and visual, but sickle cell anemia and HIV and STD screenings as well, with the latter being handled in a private setting. Southern University's nurse-managed clinic (the Jag Mobile), Wal-Mart's vision center, the Baton Rouge Speech and Hearing Foundation, the American Heart Association, and Earl K. Long Hospital were among the agencies providing the screenings. Social services that focused on strengthening family relationships came from corporate programs, such as Family Roads, Louisiana Kidmed, and Alzheimer's Services of the Capital Area. Even area physicians got in on the "giving back" act with their lectures on cardiovascular diseases, prostate dis-

orders, and diabetes. Bible workers Ralph Ford and Margaret Lawrence did their part to address attendees' spiritual needs. Their tables offered Bible lessons and an assortment of denominational reading material. As the fair came to an end, there was no denying that in satisfying the physical, nu-

tritional, and spiritual needs of those attending, the program helped to fulfill the promise of Jeremiah 30:17: "For I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the Lord."

Evelyn M. Edwards



Top: Pastor Robert Davis (rear, in striped shirt) and to his right, Glenda Peeler (in yellow shirt), co-organizer, and organizer Trudy McClain (to the right of Glenda Peeler) with community health care providers who helped to conduct health assessments at the Berean church's health fair.

Above: Southern University's Jag Mobile was one of the many health vendors that provided free screening during a recent health fair sponsored by the Berean church in Baton Rouge.

Adventurers and Eager Beavers Visit Fort Worth Zoo

Pathfinders Hold Investiture

MOSIER VALLEY, TEX. » Adventurer director Crystal Harriott, at the Mosier Valley church, took the Mosier Valley Eaglet Adventurers, along with some parents, to the

The Mosier Valley Eagles Pathfinders Club graduated six Pathfinders to the Friends class at its May 21 Investiture. The main service was conducted by the Path-

finders, with Zach Trujillo, Jared McKenzie, and Joseph Simmons delivering a heartfelt message on the Pathfinder law. The Investiture program was led by director Don Simmons and assistant area coordinator Bonnie Jackson. Each Pathfinder shared their favorite Pathfinder moments, and was challenged to live up to the Pathfinder pledge and law.



Adventurers and Eager Beavers from the Mosier Valley church visited the Fort Worth Zoo, having fun while fulfilling their honors requirements.

Fort Worth Zoo. The Eager Beavers worked on their “Animals and Animal Homes” honor, while the Adventurers worked on their “Friend of Nature” honor. The children had fun watching the monkeys play and hearing the parrots laugh. Some of the children’s favorite animals included the elephant, the zebra, and the female eagle that seemed to be shaking her head at us. The trip will be one the children’s most memorable moments of 2011.



Let's Press Forward!



TEXAS CONFERENCE

It is my humble privilege to greet you as Texas Conference president. Along with Edwin Romero, treasurer, and Gary Brady, executive vice-president, it is our honor to have been called to form part of your Texas Conference leadership team. We will prayerfully work together to direct our conference in its mission to minister to our members as well as spread the message of love, forgiveness, and redemption to those who do not yet know our Savior. As we await the return of our Lord Jesus Christ, may we be found making disciples, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything He has commanded us.

Our conference is full of wonderful outreach ministries. Many of our churches are using unconventional as well as traditional ways to reach their families, friends, and neighbors. I would like to encourage you to keep laboring for the Lord. Luke 15:7 reminds us that, "there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent." I thank you, and your church thanks you for your efforts to spread the gospel to those in need.

I am impressed by the thousands of young people involved in Adventurers, Pathfinders, and Master Guides. Join us as

we pray for our office staff and the countless lay leaders that lead this ministry forward. Our church schools and academies continue to grow. Hundreds of teachers and staff dedicate hours and hours to the schooling of our children through Christian education. Yet we are nowhere near where we need to be in the quest to have more of our children in our schools. Join us in prayer for the Office of Education of the Texas Conference and the many schools that minister to our children.

Our efforts in public and personal evangelism are stronger than ever. Scores of churches have already held evangelism meetings in our conference in 2011. We pray for our evangelists who travel from church to church sharing the message of Jesus' soon return. We also pray and encourage those churches in their Bible studies with individuals. Theirs is a very important task. When these evangelists move on to other callings, it's the church and the members who continue to nurture those new converts. We must be diligent in the work of personal ministry.

Throughout our conference, men's and women's ministries are growing, in terms of both individual churches and conference-wide retreats. These retreats attract more and more new faces each year as hundreds of individuals join for a week-end of worship, training, fellowship, and

encouragement in their relationships with Christ.

Great news from Lake Whitney Ranch! Construction has begun on the Club Ministries Headquarters Pavilion, thanks to a significant donation from a family in our conference. We have substantial challenges that face us at Lake Whitney, but we are following the Lord's leading and praying over our membership and their efforts to fund the construction of our youth camp. God has provided us with an amazing piece of property. It is our duty to build it and minister there to His honor and glory.

I am committed to the spiritual growth, nurture and development, and the preaching of the gospel in this territory. We cannot rest on the achievements of the past, we must press forward with new energies and renewed zeal, to follow God's will, and finish the work in Texas. I challenge the members of this conference to recommit to the mission of saving souls and building the kingdom of God. He who calls also equips, and as His disciples, we must earnestly seek His blessing and follow His biddings.

Be blessed in the Lord today.
Sincerely in Christ,

Carlos J. Craig, president

Texas Conference Executive Committee Elects New President



ALVARADO » On May 19, 2011, the Texas Conference Executive Committee elected **Carlos Craig** as Texas Conference president. The decision came after the committee met in a closed session chaired by Southwestern Union president Larry Moore.

"It's always good when a leader can be chosen from within the organization," said Moore. "Carlos Craig knows Texas well, and we are blessed and thankful to have him serve in this capacity."

Carlos Craig has been chosen to serve as the Texas Conference president.

Craig replaces Moore, who was chosen May 10 to serve as president for the Southwestern Union after Max Treviño announced his retirement. Craig formerly served as Texas Conference executive secretary, executive vice president for evangelism and Hispanic ministries, and youth department director. Craig and his wife, Letty, have been serving the Texas Conference since 2000. They have three children and two grandchildren.

“The Mission Has Just Begun”

Dominican Republic Mission Trip 2011

RICHARDSON » “The first time I ever flew on an airplane in my 58 years of life was yesterday. I had an extreme fear of flying—in fact I had a lot of fears. My family discouraged me from coming, but God has shown me that if He can get me on an airplane, He can do anything!” said Linda Lydick, who was one of 11 volunteers to preach a series of evangelistic meetings from March 11-20, in the city of San Pedro de Macoris in the Dominican Republic. Each member of the mission trip saw profound change—in the lives of those they reached, and in their own lives, as well.

“God used me in ways far beyond what I could have imagined,” said Amy Abernathy, a speaker at one of the seven churches around the city where the evangelistic meetings were held. Originally only planning to preach a few nights, Amy had the opportunity to “try out new things for the Lord,” like preaching all eight nights of the series, and joining local church members on home visits to pray with families in the community.

“I have become more aware of my position in this worldwide movement and the responsibilities that come with it,” Amy added. Many at Amy’s site made their decision to be baptized or to begin receiving Bible studies. As a teacher at North Dallas Adventist Academy, Amy says, “I hope that my students will become enthusiastic about missions and want to come on a mission trip sometime in the future.”

Dustin Serns, the trip’s coordinator and student pastor at the Richardson church, said, “Each night it was thrilling to see as many as 50 visitors present at

my site. I noticed that one visitor was the first to arrive every night and appeared particularly receptive to the messages.”

Dustin says he began praying for the older gentleman, whose name he learned was Sarapio. During one of the appeals after the sermon, Sarapio came forward, expressing his desire to accept Jesus as His Savior and Lord. A couple days later, Dustin went with the local pastor to visit Sarapio in his home.

“It was so inspiring to hear how he had been drinking in the Word of God, not only in the meetings, but in personal study, as well,” says Dustin. Two nights later Sarapio was baptized.

“As I hugged him after his baptism, he told me, ‘I appreciate you so much.’ I realized then just how much I appreciated him for showing me how powerfully God can work through me when I take a step out for Him.”

Dan Serns is pastor of the Richardson church, which sponsored the trip. “Just like every mission trip I’ve been on, I saw God change lives.” Heaven rejoiced as more

than 50 people were baptized and many others began preparing for baptism.

In one morning worship and mentoring meeting, Linda shared how God had been working in her life. She said, “I feel God moving in large ways. My being here has affected my family at home in a positive way. I am now more willing to step out of my comfort zone. When I go home, I want to encourage my family to give God their fears and step out in faith. I want people to know that all things are possible with God.”

Linda, who overcame a fear of flying, says it best. “God has grown our faith. The trip has concluded, but the mission has just begun.”

Dustin Serns

Caitlin Perry, Pastor Mansanillo, Dustin Serns, Pastor Rijo, Dan Serns, pastor, and Amy Abernathy are just some of the members of the missionary group, pictured here after they had shared their testimonies and promoted the evangelistic series on the most viewed channel in San Pedro de Macoris.



Touching New Lives at Dallas New Life

DALLAS, TEX. » The year 2010 was a great one at the Dallas New Life church. With one goal in mind—to touch new lives—church members brought rich blessings to our city through the various ministries of the church. Everyone, young and old, men and women, members and seekers, those with homes and the homeless, can allow the Holy Spirit to work in their lives by reaching out to others. This was the challenge from James Omwenga, our senior pastor, to all ministries: “Get busy, or pack up and go.”

Women’s Ministries

Under the direction of Mary Ayonga, assisted by Rachel Siika, Dallas New Life members showed God’s love through the adoption of The Bridge, a homeless shelter in downtown Dallas. Teaming with men’s ministries and evangelism ministries, members touched the hearts of many homeless people through their caring words and actions. They helped the staff feed the residents, and provided manicures and hair salon services, for both men and women. Now staff members of The Bridge view our church as a friend indeed, and look forward to seeing us once a month or whenever a special activity is taking place.

Children’s Ministries

Under the direction of Karen Ondimu, we held our first VBS from July 18-24, and it was quite successful. The theme was “High Seas” and everyone dressed like sailors and pirates for Christ. Approximately 50 children spent six days doing arts and crafts, memorizing Bible texts, learning how to sing new songs and to pray, and about the Sabbath. We were blessed to have Richard Black, a pastor who was visiting with his wife from Zimbabwe, to help teach the children throughout the week. Thanks to Karen Ondimu, Kem Ayonga, Stella Bogonko, Ruth Gathimba, Cathy Onyangore, Wilda Black, Christine Onkeo, James Omwenga, Ralph Black, Kepha Ayonga, Isaac Bogonko, Charles Ogoti, and Jimmy Ayonga for their dedication and for decorating the sanctuary with a replica of a ship on high seas. The children learned that a ship sails from one continent to the other and

that our church is like a ship sailing from earth to heaven with Jesus as the Captain. We, who are the sailors, should invite as many travelers as we can.

Music Ministry

New Life’s Hatari Light Orchestra blessed different crowds with favorite hymns from the *SDA Hymnal* all summer long. They entertained shoppers at Frisco Mall during the opening of a new store, played in churches of other denominations, and visited numerous nursing homes, which was always appreciated by the elderly.

Health Ministries and Evangelism

These two ministries touched many lives. Under the direction of Phoebe Omete and Isaac Bogonko, both pharmacists, the Dallas New Life team of RNs, along with Kepha Ayonga, evangelism director, we learned not only the dangers associated with heart disease, the number one killer in the U.S., but had the opportunity to conduct a free week-long clinical screening for the public. Evangelism goes hand in hand with the health message. “They (evangelism and the health message) are twins,” said Pastor Ayonga. The health ministry activities of Dallas New Life also drew the attention of other denominations, and as a result, we have been invited by a 700-member church in Carrollton to hold a similar week-long screening for its members this summer. We also arranged for a free cooking demonstration for the public that follows heart-healthy diet guidelines, including a demonstration of simple organic

bread-baking techniques. And every Sunday at Richland College we offer tips for exercising at 10 a.m., an event with an average attendance of 65, including men, women, and children of all ages. The class is open to members and non-members and is led by Lameck Siika, an exercise devotee.

Men’s Ministries

Men’s ministries stayed busy by teaming up with other ministries. Under the direction of Charles Ogoti, the men’s ministries team formed a men’s club that offers free landscape maintenance to the facility that we currently use. The owners are so impressed with the energy that we portray and, each time they ask why we do it, we simply tell them that “serving others is the highest calling.”

Pastor’s Desk

As 2010 came to an end, our climax was a Week of Prayer entitled “40 Days,” that took place the last week of December, bringing 12 souls to Christ on New Year’s Eve. New Life church senior pastor, James Omwenga, was the speaker, teaching from a devotional book on how to prepare for the Second Coming. If we follow God’s leading, we will be blessed beyond imagination as we do our part faithfully. Our goal in 2011 is to acquire our own sanctuary, where all these activities can be a regular occurrence. To God be the glory forever!

Lameck Siika

Fifty children enjoyed the High Seas VBS program in 2010 at Dallas New Life church.



Women's Ministries Showcased at Gulfhaven

HOUSTON/GULFHAVEN » A gracious and exciting women's ministries program organized by its leader, Debbie Sasser, was conducted on Sabbath, March 12, for the worship service. The sanctuary was beautifully decorated with large white bows and bunches of purple flowers at the end of each pew. Angela Bradshaw and Chris Boston created this decorative arrangement and followed the same attractive theme into the fellowship hall, where the tables were covered with white, lavender, and pink tablecloths, with vases of purple flowers. They also coordinated a delightful luncheon in honor of the women at Gulfhaven. Samantha Gilbert designed and created two banners announcing the Women's Ministries Sabbath.

The book *Surprised by Love—The Unexpected Rescue of God's Children*

by Elizabeth Talbot, was given to all the guests and friends upon their arrival.

The Cherubim Singers, a gifted musical group, shared their voices in inspirational songs and provided heavenly music on their violins. The congregation was wonderfully blessed to have them share their incredible talent for this special occasion.

The speaker for the hour was Sandra Johnson, M.Div., a graduate from Andrews University who recently moved to Hous-

ton from Michigan. Her message, "God's Greatest Creation," was based on the miraculous creation of Eve. The message included several profound statements expressing the majesty and awesomeness of our Creator-God.

A drama, "Portraits of Women," featuring Debra Pankaskie as the narrator, concluded this excellent program. She read encouraging Bible verses while six women portrayed the lives of a nurse and patient, a

business woman, a grieving widow, a mother with a baby, and a homeless person. Each person came forward to the cross, symbolizing our great need for Jesus to help us, give us peace, and guide our lives as women.

Jean Hagen



Pineywoods Adventist Christian School Opens in East Texas

NACOGDOCHES » "Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know," (Jer. 33:3). This great promise from our loving God has been evident in the formation of the Pineywoods Adventist Christian School (PACS) in beautiful East Texas!

The vision began a little over a year ago when Brad Cauley, senior pastor of the Lufkin/Nacogdoches church district, together with his congregation, fell on their knees with fasting and prayer, seeking God's guidance in starting a Seventh-day Adventist Christian School. At present, the closest Adventist school to the Lufkin/Nacogdoches area is over 90 minutes away. "Every day God is showing us in both gigantic and baby steps how to proceed. We already have two dedicated, experienced, energetic, and spiritual teachers. It's amazing to see

how God has put everything together. I can hardly contain my excitement to begin our first school year this August, 2011," said Pastor Cauley. The kids and the parents are equally excited. Dale Schroeder, member of the school board and a parent of two elementary students, adds, "I want my kids to have the type of education and upbringing that I had. I'm a product of Seventh-day Adventist education and I strongly uphold that." Cassie Schroeder, PACS treasurer, wants her Pre-K and second grader to have

a safe environment and to be with other Adventist students.

PACS will meet in Nacogdoches, in the school facility adjacent to the Nacogdoches Seventh-day Adventist Church. The grades taught will be from Pre-K to eighth grade. Nacogdoches is two and a half hours north of Houston and one and a half hours south of Tyler. "Today, we are inviting any future parents who are planning to relocate to this beautiful, serene part of East Texas, to have the blessing of enrolling your children at PACS," encouraged Pastor Cauley.

For more information about getting involved, please call 936.404.2353.

Nellie Cauley



Coming together to serve the educational needs of the children in the Lufkin/ Nacogdoches area, Sharon Clark will serve as teacher and principal, Ingrid Schroeder will be another teacher, and Brad Cauley, pastor, will continue to support and encourage families to become involved at the Pineywoods Adventist Christian School.

True Education Begins at Home



TEXICO CONFERENCE

Soon another school year will begin. I always looked forward to the start of school, especially college. Through education, a person's contribution to society is largely determined. Education happens both at school and in the home. "True education is the inculcation of those ideas which will impress the mind with the knowledge of God, the Creator, and Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God" (*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 543). This must be accomplished by the home first and the classroom second.

We live in a day of skepticism. People are skeptical of almost every branch of society: teachers, leaders in government, church leaders, ministers, and even the existence of God. God has given the home circle as a method of combating this erroneous trend. Parents, grandparents, aunts, and uncles must be constantly affirming God's plan and leadership in this world. They must be affirming God's creative power. That's why it is so important to worship and rest on the Sabbath day because we are honoring God as Creator. When we adults keep the Sabbath as God has instructed, we are establishing the foundation for true education. When we honor our spouses by staying married and treating them in a

godly way, we are participating in true education. When we affirm our church and its leaders, we are participating in true education. All of this begins at home.

There is another step in education at home. That is the implanting of the principle of sacrificing for godly education as opposed to leaving our children to the public sector. This education is essential for transmitting our faith to the next generation. The Word of God must be heard from the teacher at school as well as from the parent at home.

We read, "The sower soweth the word." Here is presented the great principle which should underlie all educational work. "The seed is the word of God." But in too many schools of our day God's word is set aside. Other subjects occupy the mind. The study of infidel authors holds a large place in the educational system. Skeptical sentiments are interwoven in the matter placed in school books. Scientific research becomes misleading, because its discoveries are misinterpreted and perverted. The word of God is compared with the supposed teachings of science, and is made to appear uncertain and untrustworthy. Thus the seeds of doubt are planted in the minds of the youth, and in time of temptation they spring up. When faith in God's word

is lost, the soul has no guide, no safeguard. The youth are drawn into paths which lead away from God and from everlasting life.

"To this cause may in great degree, be attributed the widespread iniquity in our world today. When the word of God is set aside, its power to restrain the evil passions of the natural heart is rejected. Men sow to the flesh, and of the flesh they reap corruption.

"And here, too, is the great cause of mental weakness and inefficiency. In turning from God's word to feed on the writings of uninspired men, the mind becomes dwarfed and cheapened.... All this is false education. The work of every teacher should be to fasten the mind of the youth upon the grand truths of the word of Inspiration. This is the education essential for this life and for the life to come" (*Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 41, 42).

My friends, education begins at home. We as parents, grandparents, aunts, and uncles must live and teach respect for God, fidelity to family, loyalty to His church, and dedication to hastening the coming of our Lord. This is true education. *It begins at home.*

Jim Stevens, president

Lubbock Junior Academy Holds Spring Week of Prayer

LUBBOCK ADVENTIST JUNIOR ACADEMY » One of the goals of a Seventh-day Adventist church school is to help students enjoy a multitude of good memories. Adults may think that children want new clothes, video games, or anything else that will pacify them for a while. Actually, children desire and want time with caring adults who will help them make good memories. When these memories are good and useful, they stimulate practical intelligence or develop numerous abilities through everyday learning and by putting them to effective use.

During the week of April 11-15, we conducted our Spring Week of Prayer. The week's theme was, "How to Worship God." Each day a different form of worshipping

God was presented to the students. They then designed a page in their "Worship Memory Scrapbook." These scrapbooks are reminders that can trigger positive memories about school and worshipping God.

It's no mistake that God gave us the gift of memory. Over and over again in the Bible, He challenges the nation of Israel to call to mind His benefits, and to remember His abundant kindness. God wants us to remember those things, because He can be found in our lives in so many ways. The Lubbock Junior Academy Worship Scrapbook will be another step toward building a mature and growing faith.

Susan Zimmermann, principal



During their Week of Prayer, Lubbock Adventist Junior Academy students created scrapbook pages to help them remember the importance of worship.

Sandia View Students Head for the Phillipines

CORRALES, N.MEX. » Ten Sandia View Academy students and three sponsors boarded the plane with eager anticipation of what God would be able to accomplish through them in the Philippines. After much prayer, fundraising, struggling with computers, and practice, it was time for the mission trip to begin. The group would be joining with students from Ozark Adventist Academy and ministers from the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference to preach 20 evangelistic campaigns and conduct various children's ministry programs.

Upon arrival in the Philippines, the group was trained by the Southwestern Union Conference evangelism director, Duane McKey, and ShareHim coordinator, Kathy McKey. The anticipation grew as the training was held at the Philippine Union Conference office in Manilla.

Once we reached Lipa, the city where everyone stayed, reality hit as each speaker visited their site and met their translator. The meetings began on Friday evening, March 11, and concluded on March 26, 18 sermons later. Each site had many visitors

who became acquainted, not only with the speakers, but with the wonderful message of a soon-coming Savior. When the meetings concluded, all the churches met together at a resort swimming pool where 310 new believers were baptized. More than 200 others are still studying and planning for baptism in the near future as a result of the meetings and the ministry of the Holy Spirit's leading.

The experience was not only a strong spiritual experience for the students, but a great academic and learning one, as well. Among the lessons that were learned were geography, culture, speech, communication, math (changing money), and history. This was time well spent and the students will never forget the way the Lord led as they ministered for Him. This is Adventist education at its best!

Derral Reeve, Texico education superintendent

- ◀ Anissa Monge and J.T. Schlittler with those baptized from their church.
- ▼ Some of the 310 baptisms on Sabbath.



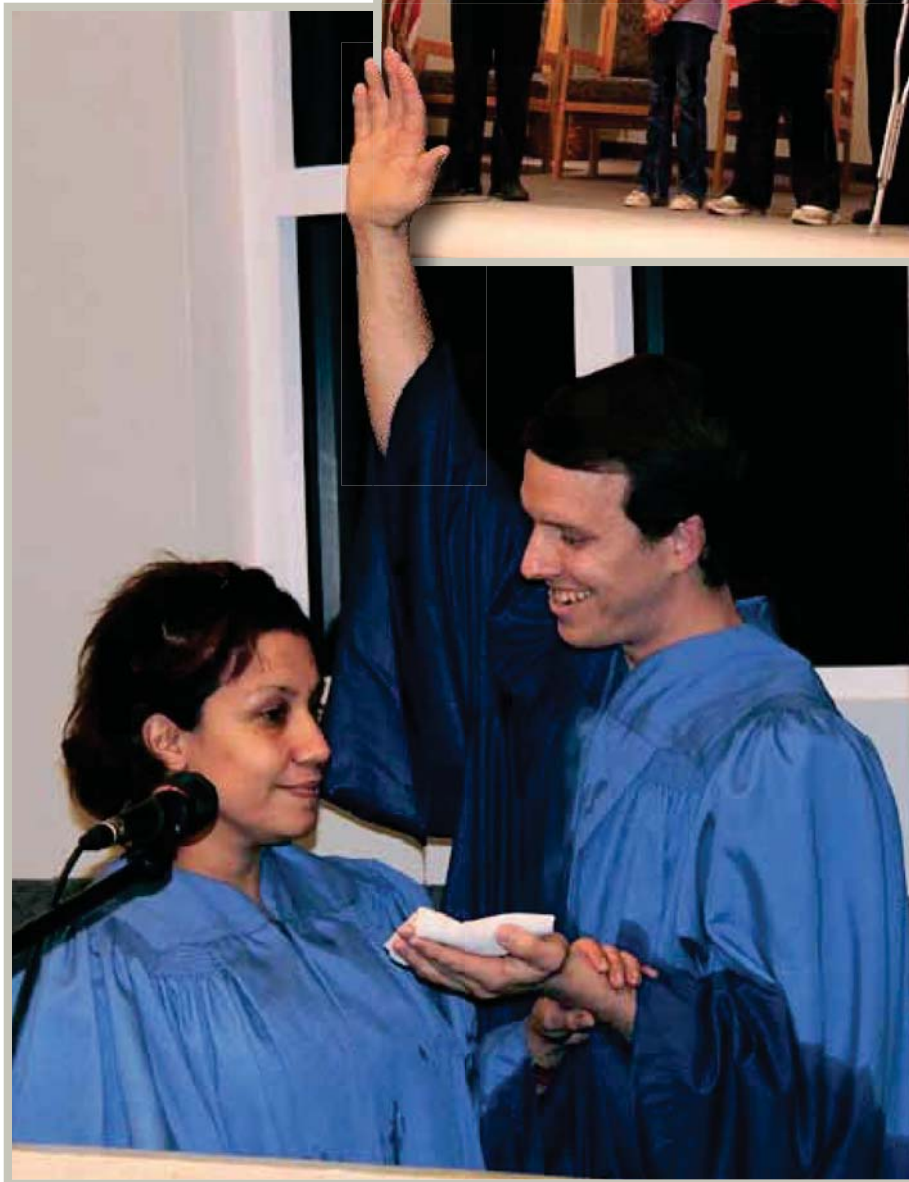
Amazing Facts Revival Brings 10 Baptisms

ALAMOGORDO, N.MEX. » The Alamogordo church members are experiencing revival as they conclude evangelistic meetings by Jason Morgan, Amazing Facts evangelist. The meetings began with 25 visitors and by God's grace, they kept nearly 20 of them to the end. It was an exciting Sabbath as 10 people were baptized and two joined the church by profession of faith. Two more individuals are planning to give their lives to Christ in baptism soon, and several more are continuing Bible studies.

Included in those recently baptized was a family of five. The head of the family had never heard anything about

Adventists until he began attending the meetings. After attending the second night, he was approached by a Jehovah's

TEXICO CONFERENCE



▲ Baptismal candidates join Andrew Spooner, pastor, on the stage of the Alamogordo church.

◀ Pastor Andrew Spooner baptizes a new believer after the Amazing Facts series.

Witness, who asked him if he would like to study together. He told him, "No, because I, am a Seventh-day Adventist." After only two meetings, he already considered himself an Adventist! In talking with a couple of the children, ages 7 and 8, Pastor Andrew Spooner asked them why they wanted to be baptized. They responded, "We love Jesus!" The family is anxious to get involved with the activities of the church, particularly with the youth.

Jason Morgan states, "God has blessed this church by their hard work and effort. We have really enjoyed working with Pastor Spooner in this series. He definitely has a love for the gospel and a passion for evangelism." Thank you for you prayers!

Andrew Spooner, pastor

At Jesus' Feet Book, Water Distributed to Faith Walkers

SANTA FE, N.MEX. » Daniel Villalva, pastor, and Eric Martinez, personal ministries coordinator, ordered books for the "Santuario de Chimayo" event, where each year some 30,000 people from all over the world make pilgrimages to the "Santuario de Chimayo" (New Mexico) for their faith. On the weekend of April 22, 300 of these special books, along with 12 cases of water, were passed out to the walkers who participated in a trek that was between 60 and 100 miles.

The book is entitled *At Jesus' Feet* by Doug Batchelor, and the reason we chose that book was because it had three special chapters that we felt would touch the walkers' hearts because of the sacrifice they were doing with this walk. One of the chapters was called "At the Cross," which was a perfect topic for the walkers.

They seem to feel that by walking and suffering for Christ it helps them to have a closer relationship to Him. As Adventists, we do understand that it is not required of us to make this sacrifice, since Jesus has already done so. Jesus has already paid the

price for sins of the world.

The second topic that we felt might touch their hearts was "At the Tomb." We pray that the walkers would come to understand the importance of the Sabbath since Jesus rested on the Sabbath day, even in death. The third topic was "The Resurrection." People all over the world believe that Easter Sunday is a holy day, but God tells us in Exodus 20 that we should "remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." God blessed the Sabbath day. And how would these walkers know unless we did our jobs as disciples and spread this very important news?

We prayed that those who received the book will find it in their hearts to read it and that these three topics will touch their hearts to know the truth. Jesus loves all His children in all denominations and that is why He is calling His sheep to come out. We are God's disciples, and it is up to us to share His truth with the world. We pray that we will have many more disciples for Christ who will want to join us in this



Please pray that the Holy Spirit will work in all who accepted the 300 books and 12 cases of water that were handed out on Friday, April 22.

event next year.

This year's disciples included Eric, Mary, Christina, Sabrina, Oliver, and Soraida Martinez; Brittany Maestas; Jim Mendoza; and Bobby Baca. Eric Martinez and Jim Mendoza expressed that they really felt the outpouring of the Holy Spirit as they did God's work.

Eric Martinez

Spanish Lay Leadership Training

EL PASO, TEX. » The Texico Conference held their semi-annual Spanish Lay Leadership training in El Paso, the last weekend of April, hosted by the Meraz Spanish church. This event was well attended and a huge success, with a crowd of 421 people on Sabbath morning. There were people seated, not only in the sanctuary and foyer, but also outside the church.

Our theme this year was "How to Reach the Catholic Mind." We were blessed with two ex-Catholic priests, Pastor Jose Luis Argumedo and Jerome Elguea, who are now Seventh-day Adventists. Each one gave his testimony on Saturday evening, ending with the recital of the Lord's Prayer in Latin.

The main speaker and training for elders was Jose Luis Argumedo. Training for

the youth directors was conducted by Aron Monge. The Pathfinder/Adventurer class was taught by Ricardo Baratta and staff. Nancy Monge and Lee-Roy Chacon led out in the clerk's class. The treasurers were trained by the Texico Conference Treasury Department.

Many of the ladies attended the women's ministries session, "Principles of Leadership," that was conducted by Roxanne Smyth, Texico Women's Ministries director, in conjunction with some of the local El Paso ladies. They were encouraged and reminded that there's a ministry for every woman. In response to this commission, they learned to make flowers, which they took to a nursing home as an outreach ministry the following day.

The meetings started Friday evening with a general session and later divided into breakout groups for the training seminars. Sabbath School was directed by the Meraz Spanish church, and there was a special



presentation by our local school, El Paso Adventist Junior Academy. An inspiring message was given by Jose Luis Argumedo, entitled "How to Be Fishers of Men."

It was a wonderful and spiritual weekend! This was a great opportunity to learn how to reach our Catholic friends, as well as, to train leaders to use their talents in helping to finish God's work. We want to thank everyone who was involved in making this weekend a wonderful blessing!

Nancy Monge, Texico membership clerk, and Roxanne Smyth, Texico women's ministries director



Graduating Senior Follows a Call to Serve

An invitation to teach a Sabbath School class at Southwestern led Dustin Serns to a lifetime of serving others.

Dustin Serns can't put his finger on the day or hour when he felt his call to ministry.

"There was never an epiphany moment when I knew it was because of that experience," he says. "I've always loved sharing my faith and being a spiritual leader and helping other people grow in their walk with God."

As he leaves Southwestern Adventist University as a theology graduate, Serns does talk about a mission trip his high school took to India, and the youth church he helped plant his senior year in his home town of Vancouver, Wash.

The son of a pastor, Serns says that people used to always tell him, "Oh, you're going to be a pastor just like your dad." In response, Serns would say, "No, I'm going to be a pastor just like me."

When Serns came to Southwestern as a freshman, he got caught up in all the social options like most new students. But when he became a sophomore, Serns began teaching a Sabbath School class for the university. That invitation to teach by Jose LaPorte, the school's student chaplain at the time, led Serns into a lifetime of service and many opportunities to get other students involved.

"A lot of people are ready and willing to go somewhere and do something," he says. "But they need to be invited. If a friend invites them to do something, then they're really open to going. So I would just invite everyone I could find in the café or class to go to Sabbath School that week."

Serns looks at Dr. Ingo Sorke, chair of Southwestern's religion department, as a mentor. When Serns was still trying to decide whether to come to Southwestern, it was a personal letter from Sorke that convinced him to come.

"I've always looked up to him as a mentor because he can relate to all ages. He gives people room to grow. And so I didn't feel any expectations to do or be a certain way."

Serns also appreciated the mentoring that went on by

older theology students when he came in as a freshman. Senior theology major Edwin Rosado befriended Serns, and Serns learned to look to him as a spiritual mentor and someone who could show him the ropes as a theology student. Rosado ministered to Serns, answering a lot of questions that he had, and helping him through the transitional time of being a freshman.

"That relationship actually still continues," says Serns. "I saw him not long ago. He's up at Seminary, and I am going up there too."

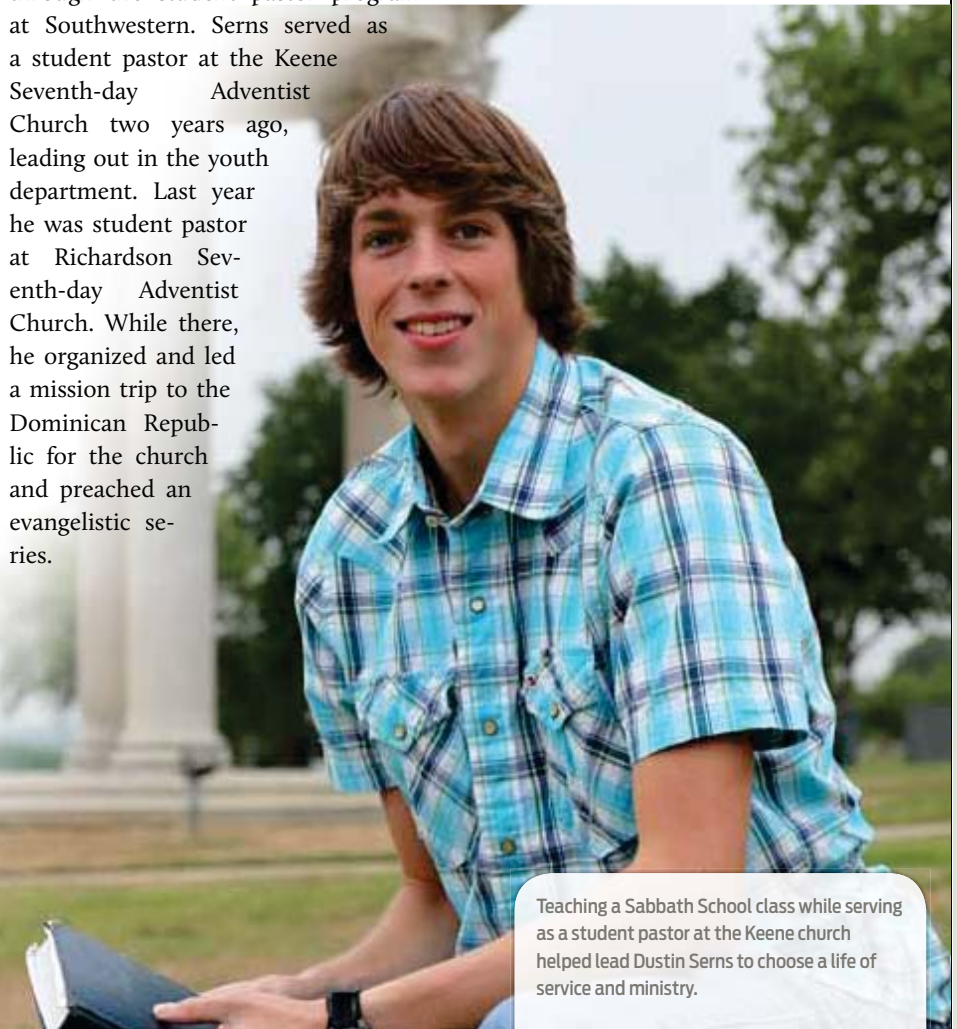
That mentoring relationship prompted Serns to do the same. Today he considers daily ministering to individuals and uplifting them to be an important part of his mission.

One way he's learned to serve others is through the student pastor program at Southwestern. Serns served as a student pastor at the Keene Seventh-day Adventist Church two years ago, leading out in the youth department. Last year he was student pastor at Richardson Seventh-day Adventist Church. While there, he organized and led a mission trip to the Dominican Republic for the church and preached an evangelistic series.

In October 2010, Serns received a call from the Washington Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. This fall, he will study at the Adventist Theological Seminary in Berrien Springs, Mich., to get his master of divinity degree, after which he will pastor somewhere in the Washington Conference.

"I strive to be used by God," says Serns. "I'm excited about being a pastor, to mobilize people in ministry, and to see more people in the kingdom of God. My ultimate is giving everyone an invitation to accept Christ and be in His kingdom."

Glen Robinson



Teaching a Sabbath School class while serving as a student pastor at the Keene church helped lead Dustin Serns to choose a life of service and ministry.



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Obituaries

CORP, Flara Dolley, born November 2, 1923 in Mineola, Tex., and died April 18, 2011 in Longview, Tex. She was a member of the Longview church. Survivors: sons, Raymond Corp, Mike Corp; daughter, Flo Carmack.

ELLINGTON, Lorena May "Duke," born April 1, 1930, in Prescott, Ariz., and died April 29, 2011. Lorena and her husband, Abraham Lewis Ellington worked for NASA at Cape Kennedy (now Cape Canaveral) in Cocoa Beach, Fla., in the 1960s. Lorena served as a nurse for more than 37 years. She was a member of the Okeene church, and also shared her musical talents on Sundays with the Okeene First United Methodist Church by playing the organ. Recently, the Okeene Chamber of Commerce honored her with the Distinguished Citizen Award. Survivors: son and daughter-in-law, Sid and Toni Ellington; daughter, Patty; five grandchildren, one great-grandchild.

FOWLER, Lester Dean, born June 29, 1930 in Heavener, Okla., and died May 17, 2011 in Boonville, Ark. Lester served as a pastor/evangelist in various states across the U.S. After his retirement he moved to Boonville, Ark. and became the lay pastor of the Boonville and Ozark churches, which both prospered under his leadership. His first love was evangelism; and his second love was gardening. Survivors: wife, Jeffie-Marie Donald Fowler of Boonville; daughters, Tanya Faye Hopper of



Little Rock, Ark., Lynn Allen of Chattanooga, Tenn.; sons, Tyrone Laird Fowler of Boonville, Paul Wesley Fowler of Chattanooga; sisters, Pauline Holder of Wellborn, Fla., Eva Staffeidt of St. Augustine, Fla.; brother, Murel Douglas Fowler of Apex, N.C.; grandchildren, great-grandchildren.

HERRING, Twylah Roark, born September 18, 1920 in Warren, Ark. and died April 19, 2011 in Longview, Tex. She was a member of the Longview church. Survivors: sons and daughters-in-law, Paul Duane and Faye Herring of Longview, Hugh Dawson and Linda Herring of Prairieville, La.; daughter and son-in-law, Gloria and Wilfred Reyna of Chula Vista, Calif.; brothers, Trevlyn Roark of Memphis, Tenn., S.T. Roark of Wilmar, Ark.; eight grandchildren, 15 great-grandchildren, three great-great-grandchildren.



HINCKLEY, Alva L., born April 22, 1936 in Baumstown, Penn., and died May 18, 2011 in Harrah, Okla. A member of the Summit Ridge church, she was laid to rest in Harrah. Alva taught in the Adventist school system, along with her husband, Neil, who preceded her in death. She moved to Summit Riege Retirement Village in 2004 and was a faithful member of the church there. Survivors: daughter, Kerri Longyhore, of Lake Ariel, Pa.; son, Keith Hinckley of Santa Ana, Calif.




KASISKA, Lenoa, born June 27, 1917 in Black Creek, Tex., and died May 1, 2011 in Fort Worth, Tex. She was a member of the

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Grand Prairie church. Survivors: daughters, Geneva, Carolyn, Nancy, and Linda; nine grandchildren, 10 great-grandchildren.

KEYS, Twylla Baker, born October 1, 1929 and died March 10, 2011 in San Antonio, Tex. She was a member of the Kerrville church. Survivors: daughters, Kay Marlene Sams of Houston, Tex., Sherry Jean Williams of Broken Arrow, Okla.; five grandchildren, ten great-grandchildren.

NOONER, George Truman, born January 3, 1933 in Mount Tabor, Ark., and died March 11, 2011 in Glenwood, Ark. George was a Navy veteran of the Korean Conflict and served six years on board a Navy LSD and Navy destroyer.

He was a very devoted member of the Bonnerdale church. Survivors: wife, Virginia Nooner of Glenwood, Ark.; daughters, Barbara Lee Britzinger of California, Karen White of San Antonio, Tex., Patty Alexander of Vilonia, Ark., Pam Thompson of Greenbrier, Ark.; sons, Billy Arnett of Vilonia, Howard Arnett, Jr., of Conway Ark.; brothers, Dennis Nooner of Glenwood, Murrell Nooner of Hot Springs, Ark.; sister, Wanda Faye Hizney of Bryant, Ark.; 17 grandchildren.

MITCHELL, Kathleen L. (Eck), born October 3, 1925 in Enid, Okla., and died January 9, 2011 in Kerrville, Tex. Survivors: daughters and sons-in-law, Sharon Taylor and

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KEYNOTE SPEAKER:
David Neff, *Christianity Today* editor-in-chief

George (Dick) Nichols of Ingram, Tex., Donna Taylor and John Garrettson of Kerrville; sons and daughter-in-law, Randy S. and Darlene Taylor of Kerrville, Steve C. Taylor of Ruidosao, N.Mex.; eight grandchildren, 10 great-grandchildren, one great-great granddaughter.

MONTGOMERY, Cherry Grace, born May 6, 1915 and died May 10, 2011 in Arlington, Tex. She was a member of the Kerrville Church. Survivors: daughter, Elaine Cherry of North Carolina; sons, Charles Cherry of Arlington, Frank Cherry of Deming, N.Mex.; six grandchildren, 11 great-grandchildren.

RAINGWATER, Johnnie Weston, born December 18, 1913 in Comanche,

Okla., and died March 31, 2011 in Raton, N.M. Survivors: daughters, Coleta Spangler of Grants Pass, Ore., Betty Cates and LoRita Wall of Raton; sisters, Evelyn Wingfield of Oklahoma City, Okla., June Rogers of Boonville, Ark.; 12 grandchildren, numerous great and great-great grandchildren.

ROARK, Robbie Lee, born November 16, 1929 in Drew County, Ark., and died December 31, 2010 in Monticello, Ark. She was a member of the Monticello church, and loved singing specials with her husband of 63 years in church. Survivors: husband, S.T. Roark of Wilmar, Ark.; son, David Roark of Wilmar; daughter, Lisa Schmidt of Wilmar; sisters, Lucille Casteel of Pine Bluff, Ark., Rosie Lee

Young of Wilmar, Bessie Dee West of Warren, Ark.; two grandchildren, one great-grandchild.

STOELTLING, Shirley J, born April 20, 1923 in Baltimore, Md., and died May 16, 2011 in Keene, Tex. Survivors: daughter and son-in-law, Carol and Herb Shauer of Grand Prairie, Tex.; son and daughter-in-law, Richard and Charity Davis of Columbia, Md.

TARKINGTON, Maxine, born January 2, 1928 in Hiawatha, Kan., and died February 23, 2011 in Sherwood, Ark. Maxine worked as a supervisor for

Tyson Foods until she was 80. She was a member of the Little Rock church and encouraged people to visit her church. Survivors: son and daughter-in-law, Rick and Liz Tarkington of Jacksonville, Ark.; daughter and son-in-law, Sharon and James Tucker of Jacksonville; sisters, Evelyn Hochstetter of Topeka, Kan., and Viola Brownsville of Kansas City, Mo.; four grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren.

Upcoming Camp Meetings:

Oklahoma Conference: July 15-23, Wewoka, Okla.

Ark-La-Tex: July 20-24, Jefferson, Tex.

NW Arkansas Spanish: July 22-23, Gentry, Ark.

Valley Rally: July 29-30, McAllen, Tex.

Oklahoma Spanish: July 29-31, Wewoka, Okla.

DFW Metro Area: Aug. 13-20, Dallas, Tex.

GODencounters Conference: Sept. 15-17, Arlington, Tex.

Bonnerdale Cowboy: Sept. 30-Oct. 1, Bonnerdale, Ark.

Springtown Fall Round-up: Oct. 13-15, Springtown, Ark.

SABBATH SUNSET CALENDAR

	Jul 8	Jul 15	Jul 22	Jul 29	Aug 5	Aug 12
Abilene, TX	8:49	8:47	8:44	8:39	8:34	8:28
Albuquerque, NM	8:24	8:21	8:17	8:13	8:07	7:59
Amarillo, TX	9:05	9:02	8:58	8:53	8:47	8:40
Brownsville, TX	8:25	8:24	8:22	8:18	8:14	8:09
Dallas, TX	8:38	8:36	8:33	8:28	8:23	8:16
El Paso, TX	8:14	8:13	8:10	8:05	8:00	7:53
Fort Worth/Keene, TX	8:40	8:38	8:35	8:30	8:25	8:19
Gallup, NM	8:34	8:31	8:27	8:22	8:16	8:08
Galveston/Houston, TX	8:25	8:23	8:20	8:17	8:12	8:06
Gentry, AR	8:38	8:35	8:32	8:26	8:20	8:13
Little Rock, AR	8:25	8:23	8:19	8:14	8:08	8:01
Muskogee, OK	8:40	8:38	8:34	8:29	8:23	8:16
New Orleans, LA	8:05	8:03	8:00	7:56	7:51	7:45
Oklahoma City, OK	8:48	8:46	8:42	8:37	8:31	8:23
Roswell, NM	8:11	8:08	8:05	8:01	7:55	7:48
San Antonio, TX	8:37	8:35	8:32	8:28	8:24	8:18
Shreveport, LA	8:26	8:23	8:20	8:16	8:10	8:04
Tulsa, OK	8:44	8:41	8:37	8:32	8:26	8:19

My Experience with Christ

A YEAR AGO, I WENT ON A MISSION TRIP TO VERACRUZ, MEXICO, with my family, students from Chisholm Trail Academy, a church group from Houston, and students from Valley Grande Adventist Academy. I was baptized when I was in sixth grade, but it wasn't until that mission trip that I got closer to my God. To be honest, I really didn't want to go. I begged and pleaded for almost two months not to go, but I'm glad I did.

We all took off toward Veracruz on a Tuesday night and didn't get there until Thursday night. Our main purpose for the trip was to preach in many different churches. My mom and dad would preach, and my brother and I would help.

The church we were assigned to seemed like a shack. Only one of the walls was cement and the rest were sheet metal. The building had windows with wood coverings, not glass. The church had only one bathroom with a toilet that didn't flush, plastic chairs instead of pews, cement floors, and poor electricity. It was in a very run-down area.

When I saw these people, though, they were happy with what they had. They had joy in their lives that I knew I didn't have. They greeted us warmly, with smiles and hugs as if we had known them forever. It made me realize what I took for granted. I had a lot more than they did, and yet I was always complaining and thought I never had enough.

From Monday to Thursday morning, the youth, who didn't preach, repainted a church, picked up trash, cleaned, and helped build a church. I wasn't happy at all—not only was I stuck here with people I didn't talk to, but didn't know them either.

There was a family that would pick us up and drive us to the church every morning. They were amazing and I came to love them very much. The mother had three children who were very loving, and their grandma always made homemade bread for us. I looked forward to that drive every day!

The first day we had to scrape rust off the fences at the church, and it gave me blisters. Then for the next three days we painted the church and the fence. The boys would be taken to the outside of town and they would build a church. They would come back drenched in sweat and with bug bites all over their legs.

During those three days, many people tried to talk to me, no matter how stubborn I was. Finally, I gave in.

When we would paint, the girls would sing about Jesus and it made me jealous to see how close they were with God. I thought He had abandoned me. When I started talking to them and heard their stories, I was amazed to learn that they had

been through the same thing I had and even worse, but they still trusted God. They showed me what love was when I didn't have any to give.

When Saturday came, we gathered to talk about our experiences. One story touched my heart especially. Karla Cisnero said she had met a little girl at her church and looked forward to seeing her everyday. After two days though, she realized that this girl always wore the same clothes. Karla decided to bring her some clothes, and on the last day, Karla told the little girl that she loved her. The little girl started crying, saying that nobody had ever told her that they loved her. We were all touched by her story.

Another lady shared her experience of visiting a lady from the church where she was assigned. Every time she would go to the lady's house, the lady would only offer her water, even when she was hungry. One day, the lady she was visiting told her, "I'm sorry that I just offer you water. It's because that's all I have." The lady had no food, so that day they went and bought groceries for her.

Hearing these stories I realized that I had come on the mission trip with the wrong idea. I had wanted to leave an impression on the people's minds and bless them, but it turned out that they blessed me. They brought me joy and made me realize things I hadn't before.

I don't take as much for granted as I used to. I was especially blessed by the girls who knew how to have fun without doing something that you might get in trouble for. They weren't ashamed to show that they loved God. They didn't care if people in the streets made fun of them, they were happy serving the Lord and that's all that mattered to them.

Seeing this made me realize how I should be, and how happy I could be with Christ by my side. The people that I'd like to thank for the blessing they gave me are Casey Lao, Leo Catillo, Perla Castillo, Claudia Fano, Arlene Moreno, Kelly Ble, and Blanca Zuazua. I want to thank them because, if it were not for them and God, I wouldn't be where I am now!



Bianca Lopez deepened her friendship with Christ during a mission trip to Vera Cruz, Mexico, with students from Chisholm Trail Academy, Valley Grande Adventist Academy, and a church group from Houston.



For the Record »

BY MARK BOND » COMMUNICATION DIRECTOR, SOUTHWESTERN UNION

Worth Bragging About

GRANDPARENTS ROUTINELY BRAG ABOUT THEIR GRANDCHILDREN. But if you'd humor me, I'd like to brag about my grandmother, "Mumsie." At 91 years young, Vivian Imogene Bohannon has been a faithful member of the Tulsa First Seventh-day Adventist Church since the 1940s.

The other day, I visited with her over the phone, and she shared a remarkable story. My grandfather, Bo, wasn't baptized until he was in his 70s. As a young father, he wasn't supportive of my grandmother's desire to send their three children to Adventist schools. It just wasn't an expense he was willing to budget for.

But my grandmother would not give up, and started praying. When it came time for my mother, Judy, to enter first grade at Tulsa Junior Academy, Mumsie began taking in ironing and watching children to earn money for her "church school fund."

Before long, she was offered a job at the local public school playing background piano music while the students



did their calisthenics. "It's kind of funny," she muses. "The Lord had me playing the piano at a *public* school so my children could attend *church* school."

That job provided just enough for her to keep her children, Judy, Joyce, and

Don in church school all the way through college. As soon as her youngest graduated from college, she received a letter from the school where she had played for almost two decades. They would no longer be providing live accompaniment for calisthenics, but would be shifting to recorded music. Her services were no longer required.

"I know it was an answer to prayer," she reminisces. "God gave me a job exactly as long as I needed it, and not a day longer." She quips, "If that's not a miracle, I don't know what is!"

Forty years later, Mumsie's miracle still lives on. Her children continue to be active in the church, and some of her grandchildren have gone on to be teachers, pastors, and church workers. Mumsie still talks about the legacy of Adventist education. I suppose she's earned the bragging rights.

Record

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