

CONNECTING | IMPACTING | CELEBRATING

VISITOR

DECEMBER 2007 • VOLUME 112 • ISSUE 12

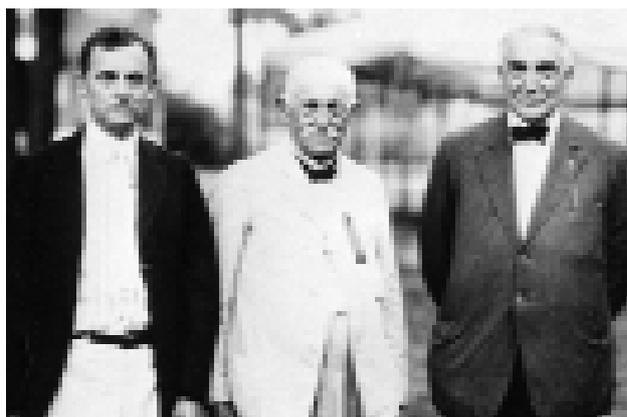


Is There Room
for us in
Hollywood?

ADVERTISER FILMMAKERS DREAM

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www.columbiaunion.org

Eyes on the Prize

Last year in a moment of excitement, or maybe naivety, I announced to my family and friends that I was going to run Washington, D.C.'s annual Marine Corp Marathon. It wasn't because I was in denial about getting older, and it wasn't on my list of things to do before I die.

The key motivators were my twentysomething son, Jon (below, left), and my oldest brother, Paul. Jon enjoys marathon running, and I wanted to do something meaningful with him. Paul, a retired pastor and former officer of the United States Marine Corp, was suffering from cancer. I wanted to encourage him by participating in an event that celebrated the commitment to fitness and preparedness so aptly demonstrated by the Marine Corp. But months before the race, Paul succumbed to cancer and is now resting in Arlington National Cemetery. As you can imagine, this strengthened my resolve to run the race in his honor.



GEMS FROM THE JOURNEY

During those 26.2 miles, I couldn't help but think about how the apostle Paul likens running a race to living the Christian life. Here are five gems from my journey:

■ **Focus** – To accomplish this demanding physical feat, I trained for months, running several miles a day. During the marathon, I had to continually remind myself of my goal—to finish the race. According to Paul, the same is true of the race of life: “Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever” (1 Cor. 9:25, NIV).



■ **Perseverance** – The early part of the race was so easy and enjoyable that I ran much faster than my training time. But my son—my coach and pacer—kept telling me to slow down. “You are going too fast, Dad; you’re going to run out of energy long before the finish,” he would say. I followed his counsel and tried to conserve my energy for the tough miles ahead. Indeed it was during the latter part of the race, when my body wanted to quit, that I discovered anew the need for perseverance, determination, and commitment. That’s when I recalled Jesus’ words to us: “But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved” (Matt. 24:13).

■ **Companionship** – Running with my son was an unforgettable experience that I will treasure for the rest of my life. Now I understand why Jesus sent the disciples in pairs to witness and work for Him.

■ **Encouragement** – The night before the race, my son did something that puzzled me. Along with our entrance numbers, he affixed our first names to our running jerseys in big letters. I wondered if it was so I could easily be identified when I collapsed on the course. But as we ran, I quickly understood. Every time we passed a crowd of spectators, they would yell “Go Dave!” and “Go Jon!” I cannot tell you how those words lifted my spirit and encouraged me to press on. Imagine how such an activity—regularly practiced by members to members, members to pastors, and pastors to members—would move the church forward!

■ **Finishing** – While the journey was meaningful, crossing the finish line was truly incredible! The title “finisher,” inscribed on my medal, says it all. I finished the race! As we close our centennial year, I invite you to renew your commitment to finish the Christian race so when Jesus returns you will hear those most incredible words: “Well done, good and faithful servant ... enter thou into the joy of thy Lord (Matt. 25:23).”

Dave Weigley (dweigley@columbiaunion.net) is president of the Columbia Union Conference. Visit his photo blog at www.columbiaunion.org.

Union Committees Dialogue About CUC, Make Recommendations

- What is the mission of Adventist education? Is our college fulfilling that mission?
- Why aren't more of our young people attending our union's college? How can we operate with shrinking enrollment, aging facilities, negative working capital, and other impacting trends?
- What are the underlying problems facing the college and how should we address them?
- Is the school a problem to be solved or a vision and a mission to be embraced at whatever cost?

These were the questions raised and energetically discussed by the 85 participants of last month's summit on Columbia Union College (CUC). This thinktank, comprised of members of the Columbia Union Conference Executive Committee, all eight local conference executive committees, and the CUC Board of Trustees (CUCBOT),

met to dialogue about the union's 103-year-old school, which is struggling in many ways and thriving in others.

Struggles that quickly came to the forefront include the mounting debt of nearly \$7 million, negative perceptions (and sometimes false information), and a growing disconnect between the school and its owners/supporters—Columbia Union Conference members.

"We have to get all the facts on the table, deal with the financial challenges, and develop a viable operating budget," declared Jim Greene, New Jersey Conference treasurer.

"We need to be shown a financial model that works and will sustain the college for the future," seconded Pennsylvania Conference member Joe Weigley.

"But the issue extends further than finances—it's a social issue," suggested Perry Jennings, an Allegheny West Conference pastor. "How do we [relate to] this cultural change we're seeing in our church?"

While many agreed that diversity and race are key issues, Hubert Cisneros, executive secretary of the Ohio Conference, also sees age as a factor. "The emerging generation is more interested in what works rather than in loyalty to church structure," he noted.

Whatever the age, Potomac Conference member Carl Sobremisana hopes vision and mission are still the driving force behind all decision-making

processes. "We need to look at our history and why the church's [headquarters] was moved to Washington, D.C.; at Ellen White's counsel, which is still relevant; and the seven stated priorities of our General Conference during this quinquennium that include outreach and urban ministry," he said.

GOOD NEWS

Following breakout groups to discuss these issues further, attendees heard good news about their college. CUC thrives on strong academics, 146 dedicated faculty and staff, and an enrollment of about 1,000 students in traditional, adult evening, and other offerings. While there's some discomfort with its cosmopolitan location, the school maintains an impressive safety record. "People are concerned about safety, but we run the second safest Adventist college in North America, and we report all incidences," announced Jean Warden, vice president for student life. She talked about the great internships and job opportunities many land while studying at CUC, and noted that 92 percent of students in the athletic program finish their degree.

Spirituality also thrives at CUC. Joan Francis, interim vice president for academic administration, shared the story of a Columbia Union freshman who was recently baptized because of the spiritual influence. Six others have also recently solidified their





commitment to Christ at CUC.

“Obviously, we believe in our school and we want it to thrive,” said Gaspar Colón, a theology professor and experienced administrator, who has served as interim president since July. He thanked the Columbia Union president, Dave Weigley, for organizing the summit and opening up a dialogue with constituents. “I’m pleading with you to tell us how we can serve you,” Colón added. “We pray that we can partner with you to vision a future that you can get excited about.”

In the late afternoon breakout session that followed, attendees voiced specific recommendations for the college and its board to consider: find a strong leader with business acumen, deal with the identified problems, streamline weaker programs while strengthening the most viable ones, pursue the three school model (liberal arts, allied health, graduate and professional studies), seek educational partnerships and philanthropic support from alumni, and redouble marketing efforts. “The leadership must, must, must do more to share the positive aspects of

CUC that we heard today,” said Dunbar Henri, principal of Takoma Academy in Takoma Park, Md., reporting for his breakout group.

Potomac Conference member Violet Pulidindi, who wants to commend the faculty and staff for their sacrifice and hard work, doesn’t think they’ll have to do it alone: “I felt a genuine sense of shared burden and willingness to address CUC’s tough issues,” she said.

Board members who took part in the summit, and will ultimately decide if and how to implement the recommendations, found value in the day-

long exchange. “I learned a lot from hearing the views of constituents outside the [Washington] beltway, because their views and what matters to them is somewhat different than [ours],” said board member Duane Dorch.

Chesapeake Conference member Walter Alonso also found the meeting beneficial. “This is not a binding committee, but knowledge is power, and that will be used in the circles where decisions are shaped and implemented,” he said.

BOARD DISCUSSES SUMMIT

The day after the summit, during their regularly scheduled meeting, CUCBOT members discussed what they’d heard at the summit and viable next steps. “The board heard our constituents and appreciated their recommendations,” said President Weigley. “They also have big objectives and are looking forward to working with our new president, and dedicated faculty, to refocus the college for the future and incorporate those ideas into their strategic plan.”



Newsline

LAVERNE HENDERSON

Adventist Mayor to Leave Office

After 28 years of public service, Philadelphia Mayor John Street (below, third from left)—who holds the distinction of being that city's and the Columbia Union Conference's first Seventh-day Adventist mayor—will step down next month due to a two-term limit.

Street, who grew up in the "City of Brotherly Love" and served as a city councilman, is a member of Allegheny East Conference's North Philadelphia church, which according to Pastor William Hall, is one of 12 churches that Street's father helped to plant.

At the fall meeting of the Columbia Union Executive Committee, held in Philadelphia, Street—elected mayor in 2000—spoke about the importance of the Adventist Church in his life: "It has been at the heart of my commitment to people and the heart of everything that I do," he said.

"John has done an admirable job in representing our church's healthy lifestyle standards by appointing a health czar for the city," said Allegheny East president Charles Cheatham. "Of course, we will never know how difficult it was for him to be God's man in one of the more notorious American cities, but I am proud of his contribution."

During Street's visit with



the Committee, Columbia Union president Dave Weigley announced plans to recognize him with an award for service to his Church and the community.

Education Leader Honored

LaVona Gillham, associate director of education for the Columbia Union, was recently honored with the Adventist Education Award of Excellence from the Education Department of the Adventist World Church. "Education is a team effort; so I thank all of you," said Gillham, after accepting the award from



Debra Fryson (above, right), associate director for elementary/curriculum at the Church's North American headquarters.

"LaVona is a gifted educator who has made enormous contributions; she is very deserving of this award," said Ham Canosa, union vice president for education. The award, presented during the recent Columbia Union School Administrators Council, is given to candidates with at least 20 years of denominational service, including 15 in Adventist education.

Live Communion Service Planned

Adventist churches across the Columbia Union are invited to participate in a special live Communion service Friday,

December 28. Broadcast live from the Adventist Media Center in Simi Valley, Calif., at 8 p.m. on the HOPE Channel (and repeated at 10 p.m.), the event will link Adventists across North America in a New Year's re-dedication service.

The ordinance of humility should be completed before the program begins,

and the emblems of Christ's sacrifice should be



distributed 15 minutes prior to the end of the 60-minute telecast that Don Schneider, president of the Adventist Church in North America, will host.

According to Fred Kinsey, assistant to the president for communication in North America and the program's producer, there will be homilies, "man-on-the-street" interviews, great music, and a sense of unity. "To have so many Adventists celebrating Communion at the same time, reminds us that we really are one church in Jesus Christ," he says. For more information, visit www.nad.adventist.org.

Women's Association Celebrates 25 Years

The Association of Adventist Women (AAW) recently celebrated 25 years of championing and spotlighting the work of Adventist women around the world. Recent ceremonies were held in the Washington, D.C., area where the organization was founded. "AAW was formally incorporated in May 1982, when Josephine Benton, then associate pastor of the Sligo

church in Takoma Park, Md., chaired the committee to establish a new organization for women,” stated original committee member **Elisabeth Wear** (below, far right). Shortly thereafter, in 1983, the first AAW National Conference was held at Columbia Union College.

Throughout the years, the untiring efforts of AAW members have led to the establishment of Women’s Ministries departments at all church levels and the appointments of women in leadership. AAW also gave birth to TEAM (Time for



Equality in Adventist Ministry), a fully incorporated group, which gives scholarships to hundreds of young women in ministry. “Since we are the majority of the church [statistics indicate 70 percent], women need to be more involved in the decision-making process,” says Beverly Habada, TEAM executive director.

The AAW also celebrates the accomplishments of Adventist women around the world with the Woman-of-the-Year Award for categories such as philanthropy, achievement, church leadership, etc. For more information, visit www.aaw.cc.

WAH Hosts Centennial Gala

Washington Adventist Hospital recently celebrated a

century of improving the health and lives of people and communities by hosting a Centennial Celebration Gala at The National Building Museum, in Washington, D.C. The event featured community dignitaries and guests, plus Grammy-winning recording artists Take 6.

“All of us take pride in the physical, mental, and spiritual healing that has taken place at our hospital and in the community over the last 100 years,” said president **Jere Stocks** of the milestone.



Columbia Union Commemorates Centennial

The Columbia Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists was officially organized November 17, 1907, when some 50 delegates met in Philadelphia to elect officers.

At its year-end meeting, the Columbia Union Conference Executive Committee celebrated the union’s centennial with the unveiling of a three-dimensional display (pictured) that features photos and mementos that chronicle the union’s history. On permanent display at the union headquarters, it highlights areas central to the Adventist Church’s mission including education, healthcare, publishing, community service, evangelism, and other ministries.

“Just as the Israelites relied on faith when Joshua led them across the Jordan, the Columbia Union Conference—for the past 100 years—has relied on faith,”



said president Dave Weigley during the commemoration service. “And I’m sure none of us want to be here for another 100 years; we want to affirm our faith that God will soon make a way for us to cross the Jordan.”

Throughout the year, union leaders have highlighted the centennial through articles in the *Visitor*, a video about the union’s development, and presentations at camp meetings. At the year-end commemoration, it was announced that the state of Maryland issued a citation in honor of the occasion.

For more news and photos, visit www.columbiaunion.org.

From the Pulpit

“When I do a craniotomy and peel back the covering of the brain, I can’t tell what nationality the person is; it’s the brain that makes us who we are, not your skin



or hair color. When red ants and black ants get together they fight. But if you do a craniotomy on them, they don’t have much of a brain. That’s their

excuse, what’s ours?—**Ben Carson, Sr., MD**, speaking for Takoma Park (Md.) church’s International Day. See more photos at www.columbiaunion.org on the *Columbia Union People* blog.

Potluck

BETH MICHAELS

What's New?

Music > “A Song in the Air” Angela Bryant-Brown

“I enjoyed recording this project,” says Potomac Conference’s

Angela Bryant-Brown of her second CD.

“With its combination of live instrumentation, spoken word, and original

arrangements of some of my favorite holiday songs, Christmas never sounded better!”

The six-song album combines Bryant-Brown’s rich tenor vocals with Latin and jazz instrumentals to give popular Christmas tunes like “What Child Is This?” and “Mary, Did You Know?” a new sound. Through it all, she hopes listeners will hear the love and passion she has for Christ—the real reason for the season.

Bryant-Brown, soon to commence her second tour with Morning Song Ministries, is a member of Community Praise Center in Alexandria, Va. To jumpstart your holiday praise, order her CD at <http://cdbaby.com/cd/angelatunes2>.

Books > Heaven’s Whisper

Do you long to hear from God? Then listen closely to the messages of the 200 women from around the world who contributed to the 2008



women’s devotional book titled *Heaven’s Whisper*. Like all the others, this 16th edition was written by and for women. “Our desire for all our sisters is that they will catch a glimpse of heaven each day,” states Heather-Dawn Small, director of Women’s Ministries at the Adventist World Headquarters in Silver Spring, Md. “As He whispers hope to our heart, we know that heaven is real, and we long to be there.”

Small and her team are already compiling the 2010 edition (2009 is completed) and need submissions from Columbia Union women. “We have been trying to work toward having 365 different authors for each book,” reports the editor and former director, Ardis Stenbakken. Submit your own encouraging story to: Women’s Ministries Department, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904. All proceeds provide scholarships for women in need, but writers are given a complimentary copy. Get the 2008 edition at your local Adventist Book Center or www.adventistbookcenter.com.

DVDs > “Cantos de Adoracion IV” Ministerio AMA

For Hispanic churches wanting to take their musical programs to the next level, this fourth worship DVD by New Jersey Conference’s ministry team, Ministerio AMA, might be the answer. The DVD has two audio tracks, allowing praise teams to use the soundtracks or congregations to sing along with the group. Nature scenes and inspirational pictures accompany the tracks, a

mix of contemporary and traditional songs.

“This DVD provides a wonderful and inspirational tool for divine worship services as well as special events, evangelistic and small groups meetings, camp meetings, home devotionals, and more,” notes member Amalia Aguero. She and her sons, Jorge Luis and Samuel—also members of the group—attend the Paterson Eastside church.

The group conducts seminars for church praise teams and is also available for singing engagements. Learn more at www.ministerioama.com or by calling (201) 290-6176.



WholeHealth

The No-Good Christmas Gift

The holiday season is here, but one gift you don’t want to give or receive is a case of the flu. Every year millions of people come down with it in this country, and more than 36,000 die. Moreover, recent warnings about the possibility of an influenza pandemic have raised concerns.

Flu is spread from person to person, so the best way to protect yourself and others is to wash your hands frequently. Use soap and warm water for at least 30



seconds, maintain a six-foot “social distance,” and change the way you cough or sneeze. Better than covering your mouth with your hand or tissue, is to “do it in your sleeve,” as suggested in a humorous online video (see www.coughsafe.com/media.html).

While you can't eliminate all exposure to germs and viruses, you can keep a strong first line of defense. Increase the things that keep your immune system functioning at its highest (proper nutrition, fresh air, exercise, and sunlight) and minimize the things that reduce its effectiveness (lack of sleep, too much sugar, high stress, etc.). After all, the gift of health is priceless! —Lilly Tryon, MSN, RN, Adventist WholeHealth Wellness Center

Keeping Score

\$25.82

2006 worldwide movie ticket sales in billions

\$1.45

2006 U.S. theater admissions in billions

10

Percent of viewers who said they changed some aspect of their religious beliefs and practices in response to Mel Gibson's movie, *The Passion of the Christ*, which depicts Christ's crucifixion.

8

Its rank among the 10 highest grossing films in U.S. history.

Sources: The Barna Group, U.S. Theatrical Market Statistics Report



On a Mission > Virginia and Frazier Mathis

Virginia and Frazier Mathis (standing in rear of photo), members of Allegheny East Conference's Emmanuel-Brinklow church in Ashton, Md., have a desire to “uplift humanity through service.” Through their 9-year-old nonprofit organization, Global Vessels, the Mathises and numerous volunteers have built three churches, a library, and a girls' dorm in Ghana. On each trip, volunteers provide medical care, conduct evangelistic meetings, and donate money and goods to local residents.

Currently the Mathises are engaged in a five-year project at the Havilah Children's Village, an orphanage community in Tanzania. They recently celebrated the grand opening of two of 10 planned homes in the community, and will return in March to continue construction. In the meantime, they're looking to get more Columbia Union members involved.

“So many of our members are just sitting in the pews and dying on the vine,” says Frazier. “All that changes when they experience a mission trip and touch lives for Christ.”

To volunteer as house parents to the orphans for six months to a year, or to volunteer as an orphanage director, contact the organization at (301) 596-0945, or visit www.globalvessels.org.



Is There Room for us in Hollywood?

ADVENTIST FILMMAKERS DREAM

Lara Beaven

How different would the world be if Christians who felt called by God to work in film or television answered the call? This is a question being addressed by a growing number of Columbia Union members who have dreams of using their God-given artistic talents in Hollywood.

Just as Jesus used stories and parables to explain God's character, today's Seventh-day Adventist filmmakers say they want to share stories with a message through a medium that has the ability to reach millions—film.

"Jesus' primary mode of teaching was storytelling," says Pierre Walters (below), a member of the Takoma Park Seventh-day Adventist Church, who recently moved to Los Angeles to pursue his filmmaking aspirations. "As a missionary, my goal is to open eyes so people can see the world around them and how God is making an impact."

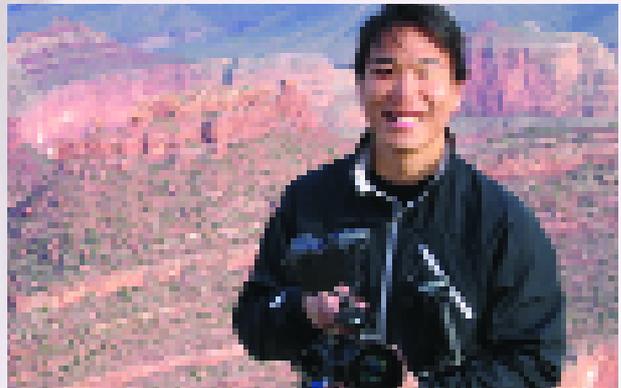
Walters, who was accepted into the American Academy of Dramatic Arts in New York City after high school, believes God has given him

the gift of acting. But after eight months of struggling to figure out how to use his talents for God, he left the prestigious program and did some acting and directing in independent

films. He then started a media company, Blue Artists LLC, and has since worked on a variety of commercial and religious projects, including producing news videos for the Columbia Union Conference. His ultimate goal is to make a fea-

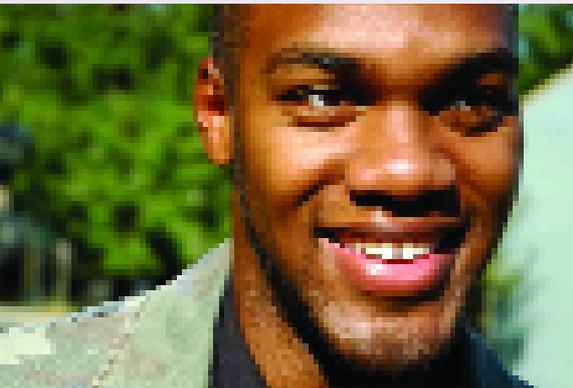
ture film about Adventist pediatric neurosurgeon Benjamin Carson.

Paul Kim (below) agrees with Walters about the importance of storytelling. "If the church wants to be able to reach today's society, it must be able to speak the right language," says the documentary filmmaker, who currently produces television programs for the North American Division and helps plan worship at the New Hope church in Fulton, Md. "Filmmaking is the predominant form of com-



municating today, but the Adventist Church has yet to fully capitalize on its power to reach millions. We preach a message, but we don't tell a story."

Kim knows all about trying to combine the great commission with the great medium. He graduated from Pacific Union College with a theology degree and worked as a youth pastor, but his interest in visual arts never left. "If you're an artist, that part of you is always there," he says, noting that his decision to leave pastoral ministry was the hardest of his life. Once he saw the potential of film—to reach people with Christ's important messages—that became his focus. Now he's pursuing a Master of Fine Arts in Media Culture and Society from American University in Washington, D.C., with a goal of producing documentaries.



Like Walters and Kim, Rik Swartzwelder's career path has been a wandering one. This Ohio native studied film at the University of Central Florida but walked away from filmmaking after becoming a Christian, unable at the time to reconcile Christian faith with movie production. He strongly considered becoming a pastor. But while studying communication and religion at Columbia Union College, Swartzwelder (left), who received lots of



encouragement from his professors, realized that one could be both a Christian *and* a filmmaker.

After graduating, he went on to earn a Master of Fine Arts in Motion Picture Production from Florida State University. His short film *The Least of These*, based on a true story by theologian and sociologist Tony Campolo, has won a total of 32 awards. Now living near Los Angeles, Swartzwelder hopes to begin producing a feature-length film next year called *Old Fashioned*, which he describes as a romantic, inspirational comedy.

"Lots of people have a heart for God out here," Swartzwelder says of his experience so far. He notes that many individuals are making a difference through friendships they form on the



set, allowing them to show Christianity in a positive way.

David Brillhart (below), an independent producer who has spent much of his career working for the Adventist

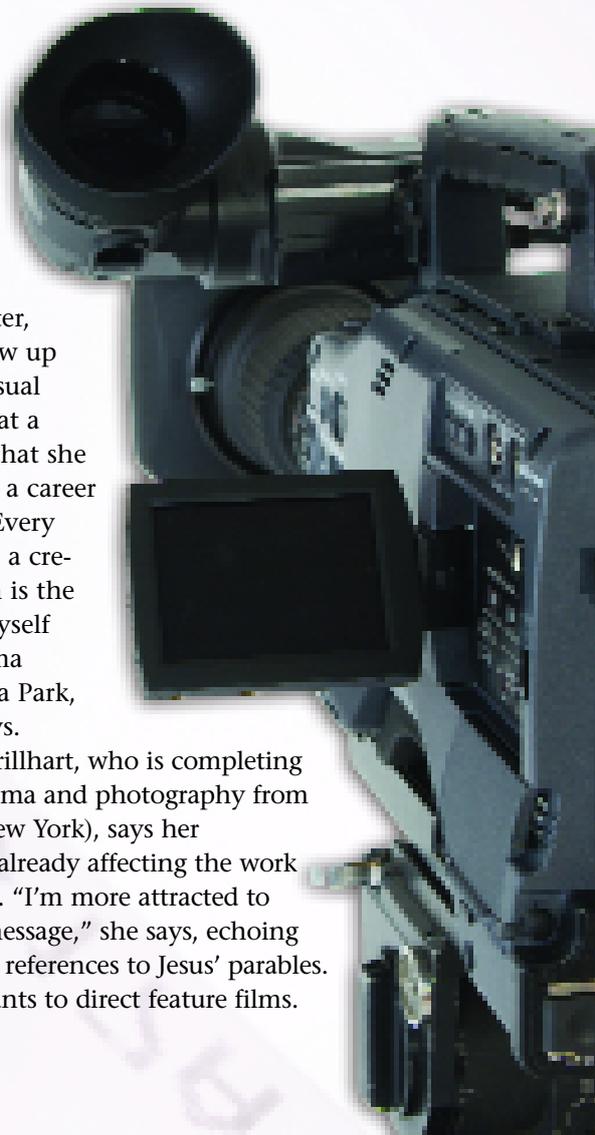
Church, agrees. Once non-Christians work with him, they really want to work with him again, he says. "It's an environment of safety. The commercial world is much less forgiving."

Brillhart, who serves as the head of the audiovisual committee at Sligo church in Takoma Park, Md., hopes to soon produce a feature film. "I'm willing to tell a story [through film] 70 percent of my church won't go see."

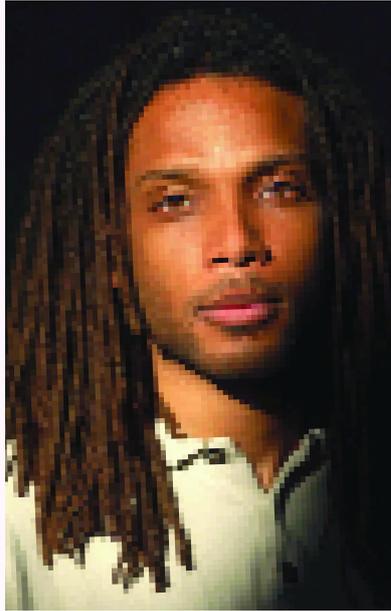
The story should be told in a way that is appealing to the very people least likely to listen to our message in another format, he says.

David's daughter, Katie (above), grew up surrounded by visual media and knew at a fairly young age that she wanted to pursue a career in filmmaking. "Every time I want to do a creative project, film is the medium I find myself using," the Takoma Academy (Takoma Park, Md.) graduate says.

The younger Brillhart, who is completing her degree in cinema and photography from Ithaca College (New York), says her Adventist faith is already affecting the work she chooses to do. "I'm more attracted to work that has a message," she says, echoing other filmmakers' references to Jesus' parables. She eventually wants to direct feature films.



Oscar Daniels (right) is another Adventist filmmaker who cites Bible stories as influencing his films. "The Old Testament depicts morally complex behavior," he says. "There are flawed heroes, and that's what I find moving when I watch cinema. I like to create those characters."



Daniels grew up in Maryland where he attended Takoma Park's Sligo Adventist and John Nevins Andrews schools and the Bladensburg church. Like some of his fellow Adventist dreamers, his move into filmmaking was incremental.

After leaving a job with the federal government, Daniels earned a master's degree in film and video from American University, moved to Los Angeles, and studied editing at the American Film Institute. He edited the documentary *DIG!*, which won the Grand Jury Prize at the 2004 Sundance Film Festival. The following year, his film *Among Thieves* was shown at Sundance, and earlier this year it won the Showtime

Black Filmmakers Showcase.

Daniels acknowledges that one of the biggest challenges for an Adventist filmmaker can be the Sabbath, as people in the film industry often work seven days a week. While Daniels always tells employers up front about his Sabbath beliefs, he says he was initially nervous about how that would play out in his current job, a directing fellowship with ABC Television Network and the Directors Guild of America. After much prayer, Daniels came to view the job as a witnessing opportunity rather than primarily a chance to break into directing. "God revealed to me that I shouldn't assume He wants me to have a fabulous career in TV directing," explains Daniels, who now feels "excited when Sabbath conversation pops up" because it may be the only opportunity the other person has to learn about it.

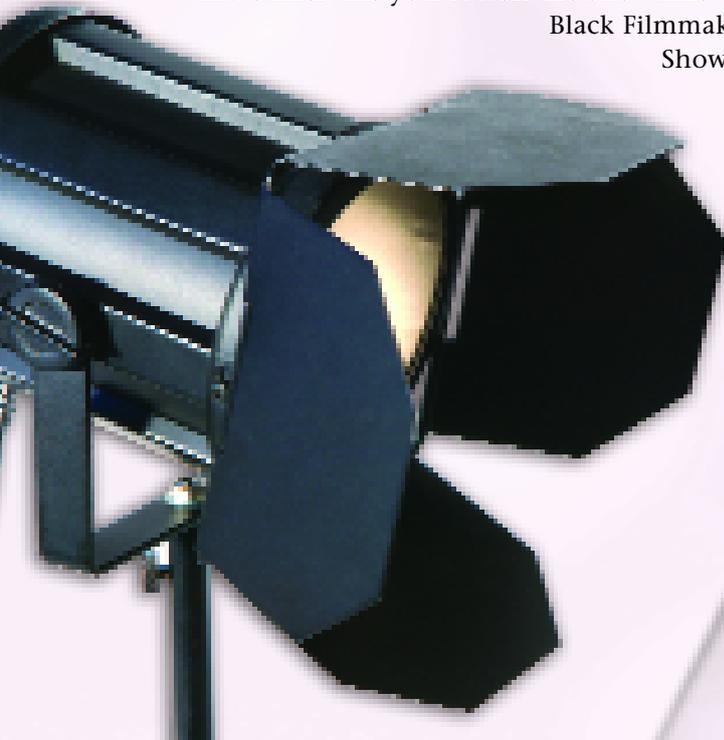
Even pastors are finding ways to penetrate Hollywood. Andre Campbell (below) is the senior pastor of the Irvington Seventh-day Adventist

Church in New Jersey. He is also the co-creator of *The Fruit Troop*, an animated series of stories teaching Christian values through fruit characters, who espouse different fruits of the Spirit.

This Pine Forge Academy (Pottstown, Pa.) graduate, first got the idea for the

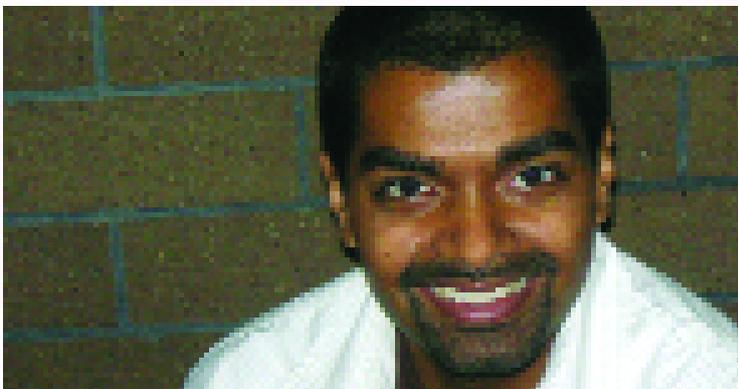
series seven years ago when he noticed that his niece enjoyed watching *Veggie Tales*. Phil Vischer, the creator of that popular cartoon, challenged Christians to make similar programming, motivating Campbell to explore ideas.

He eventually teamed with Eric Walsh, a doctor at Loma Linda University Medical Center (Calif.), and Mark Brown, a Takoma Academy graduate turned Hollywood filmmaker, to produce the first episode, "The Ball Game That Went Bust." (Brown, previously featured in the *Visitor*, has



since worked on a number of major Hollywood films including *Barbershop*, *Barbershop 2*, and *Two Can Play That Game*, etc.)

Campbell says one of the important lessons he learned while making the first episode of their show is persistence. “When the banks told us no, God said yes,” Campbell smiles. While it



took longer than expected to get financing for the film, dragging out production of the episode from six months to two years, in the end the project was completed without any debt.

The trio—now partnering with Adventist producers Lennox and Lester Parris—hopes to produce more episodes of *The Fruit Troop*, as well as a live action film called *Child of God*, that is already in pre-production.

Meanwhile, another Adventist is honing his skills on the cutting room floor. Rajeev Sigamoney (above) started writing plays for church services, first at Southern Asia church in Silver Spring, Md., and later for a contemporary worship service at Sligo.

Sigamoney was an engineer, but people kept encouraging him to consider a career in entertainment. In 2002, when the company he was working for faced significant financial troubles, he prayed about what his next steps should be and made a list of 10 things that needed to happen if God was leading him to pursue filmmaking. By the next morning, all 10 had been met, and within weeks he was driving to California.

“If you can do anything else and be happy, you should do it,” Sigamoney advises. “Out here, there are no guarantees.”

He arrived in Los Angeles with a vague notion of doing everything: acting, writing, directing. But he soon realized his strong suit was writing

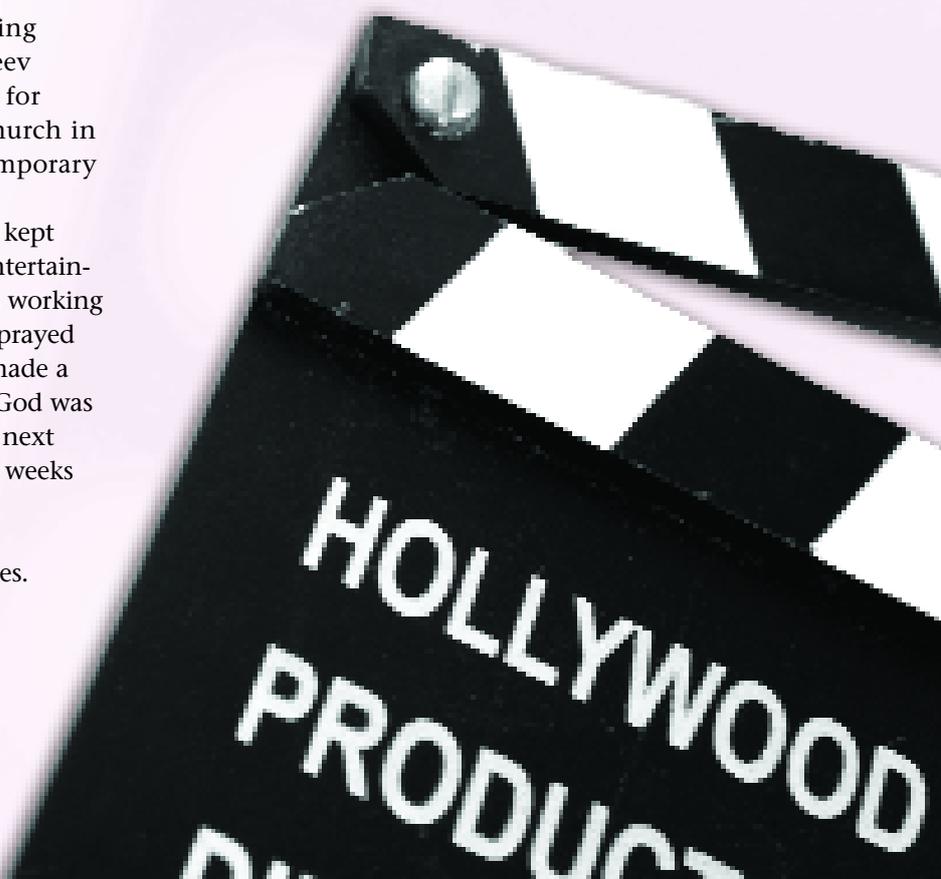
comedy that fit well in a sitcom format. He took classes at the University of California Los Angeles and through Act One, a program designed to train Christians for work in Hollywood.

To date, he and a writing partner have written and filmed several sitcom pilots, which have attracted positive interest. They soon hope to have a program on the air, and would also like to do a feature film.

Although he dreams of becoming a successful television writer, Sigamoney notes that God’s calling is not a call to be successful on the world’s terms—but a call to be servants. “My value comes from who I am in relationship to God,” he says.

It is impossible to fully know how Adventist filmmakers are impacting Hollywood—and the world—as they combine talent and faith to fulfill their higher calling. But, from these Columbia Union dreamers, we see a passion for God and a genuine desire to use the gifts He has given them to touch lives and share His message with a very captive audience. To that we say, “Action!”

Writer and editor Lara Beaven attends Sligo church in Takoma Park, Md.



Centennial Story

BETH MICHAELS

The Harding Legacy

How One Family Enhanced our History and Healing Ministry

Seventh-day Adventists might remember Warren G. Harding who served as America's 29th president. But his family's story—and Columbia Union connection—actually begins with his parents. George T. Harding, MD (below), and Phoebe Dickerson Harding, MD (one of the few female physicians of her time), served as horse-and-buggy physicians in Blooming Grove and Marion, Ohio, during the late 1800s.



Phoebe, the family's first Seventh-day Adventist convert, was a fervent influence on her children and grandchildren. George and Warren remained Baptists, but the youngest son, George T. "Tryon" Harding II, accepted the Adventist message,

along with sisters Charity, Mary, and Carolyn. After graduating from Battle Creek College (now Andrews University) in Michigan, in 1896, Tryon followed in his parents' footsteps and pursued a career in medicine. "At the request of church leaders, he attended the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor to demonstrate that Battle Creek College students were able to compete with the best students in the country," reports Tryon's grandson, George T. Harding IV, MD, recently retired chair of the Psychiatry Department at Loma Linda University (Calif.).

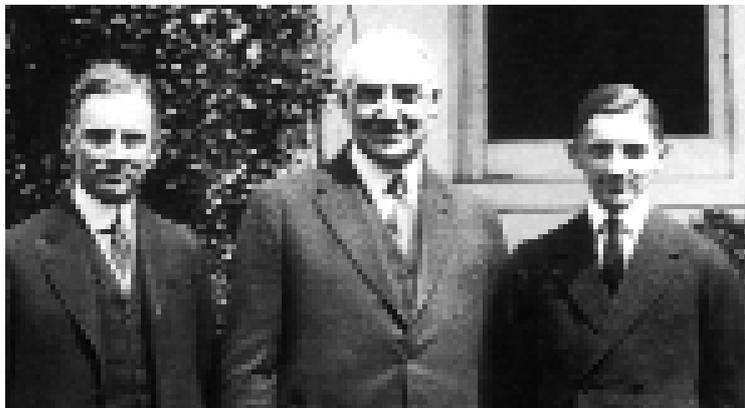
THE ROAD TO PSYCHIATRY

Once Tryon's classmates discovered his heart condition, he was advised to take an "easier" professional route. Upon graduating in 1900, he became the first Adventist psychiatrist. While on the staff of Ohio's Columbus State Hospital, he met Elsie Weaver, his future wife. "In those days, house physicians lived in the hospital and could not be married," explains Dr. Harding IV. Tryon asked Warren, an Ohio senator at the time, to introduce a bill to change this rule. "This was done to the delight of many house staff across Ohio," laughs Harding IV.

A few years later, Adventist Church leaders asked Tryon—often called "Deacon"—to be the founding medical director of the Washington Sanitarium, a new hospital opening in Washington, D.C. The facility was originally located in President Ulysses S. Grant's mansion on Iowa Circle downtown. Later it moved to Takoma Park, Md., and became Washington Adventist Hospital.

After a few years in the nation's capital, Tryon, Elsie, and their children returned to Ohio, where he opened a psychiatry office and Battle Creek treatment rooms. "The general hospitals in Columbus would not accept known psychiatric patients, so my grandfather asked my grandmother if she would keep some psychiatric patients in their home," relays Dr. Harding IV. Elsie agreed, but after their fourth child was born in 1915, "she decided that if he was going to have a hospital, he should open one," he adds. The next year, he opened The Indianola Rest Home. Later the practice was moved to the countryside and called the Columbus Rural Rest Home. In 1920 it was relocated to Worthington, a suburb of Columbus. After Tryon's death in 1934, it was renamed Harding Hospital.

"My grandfather recognized that in order to treat the whole person, their spiritual side needed to be addressed," states Harding IV. This belief was passed



Left to right: George T. Harding II, MD, poses with his brother, President Warren G. Harding, and son, George T. Harding III.

along through Tryon's successors, to other Adventist institutions and American psychiatry.

HARDING HOSPITAL PAVES THE WAY

Once Tryon passed away, his son George T. Harding III, MD, and son-in-law, Harrison S. Evans, ran the hospital. In 1941 they developed the first graduate program in psychiatric nursing. The hospital's greatest impact, however, was the development of a residency program in 1936, which trained physicians to be psychiatric specialists. Dr. Harding IV states, "Graduates went on to [establish] psychiatric units in Adventist and other hospitals across North America," including Hinsdale Hospital in Illinois and Florida Hospital in Orlando. Tryon also worked closely with Kettering (Ohio) College of Medical Arts founder, George B. Nelson, in developing their unit.

In 1973, Harding IV became the hospital's president and medical director. He helped expand its services and further develop psychiatric treatments. He remained in Worthington until 2000, when he accepted the position at Loma Linda.

That same year, Harding Hospital and the psychiatric unit of Ohio State University (OSU) merged their educational and treatment programs, becoming OSU Harding Hospital. Harding IV remains on its board of trustees and the administration continues to embrace spiritual values: "The idea that the individual's life is guided by the mental, physical, and spiritual is being carried forward," reports 90-year-old Allan Buller, president and board chair of Worthington Foods for 54 years and a current member of the Harding Evans Foundation, the primary fund-raiser and support organization for OSU Harding. In addition, Harding chaplain George Gibbs still serves the current organization.

Harding Hospital leaders made other significant contributions to the Church. They helped develop the Annual Institute on Mental Health, which taught mental health principles to hundreds of Adventist clergy from 1950 to 1993. They were also some of the founding members of ASI (Adventist-laymen's Services and Industries) in the 1940s.

WORTHINGTON FOODS ESTABLISHED

Another major contribution of Harding Hospital was the establishment of Worthington Foods in 1939. Now a division of the Kellogg's Company, it became one of the largest manufacturers of vegetarian food products in the world.

Harding IV reports that Worthington was born from the community's high demand for the same vegetarian entrees served to Harding Hospital patients. "My father was the major founder," recounts Dr. Harding IV. "He worked with the chef at the hospital, Elwin Knecht, whom he'd met when a student at Loma Linda, and William Robinson, a former salesman for the Battle Creek



George T. Harding IV (right), MD, poses with another family psychiatrist, Herndon Price Sr., of Centerburg, Ohio. Behind them are portraits of Worthington Foods leaders (left to right) George T. Harding III, MD, James Hagle, and Harrison Evans.

Food Company. The three of them, on a shoestring, started Worthington Foods."

For 20 years, Harding IV served Worthington Foods as a director, board member, and major shareholder. "This was an uncommon family—highly regarded and respected by their peers and the community," states Dale Twomley, PhD, Shenandoah Valley Academy principal and former Worthington Foods president/CEO for 17 years. "Genuine citizens and very caring at the personal level, they were very involved in the Worthington church and school."

THE LEGACY CONTINUES

Today, 16 Harding family members, including Dr. Harding IV, remain actively involved in psychiatry or other medical fields in facilities across the country. Two of them, Warren G. Harding III in Cincinnati and Herndon Price Sr. in Centerburg, Ohio, continue to be active in the Columbia Union. The Harding family legacy of healing ministry continues.

For more photos related to this article, visit www.columbiaunion.org, and click on Feature Blog.

Church Profile

HEARLY G. MAYR & ALIX ECHEVERRI

Washington Spanish Church

Birthplace for Hispanic Work in the Nation's Capital

This year marks 50 years since the Potomac Conference's Washington Spanish Seventh-day Adventist Church, the first Hispanic congregation in the nation's capital, was organized. On September 14, 1957, on the front page of its Religion section, the *Washington Post* (pictured) heralded the news: "Spanish Organize Seventh-day Adventist Church."

At that time, there were just 46 members worshipping at 5th and F Streets in NW Washington, D.C., a block away from what is today the Verizon Center, home to Washington's basketball and hockey sports teams. But recently,

as they commemorated a half-

century of sharing God's message of salvation among Hispanic communities, over 300 Washington Spanish members and guests gathered at their current location, 12604 New Hampshire Avenue in Silver Spring, Md.



The celebration actually started two weeks earlier when former pastor Freddy Sosa traveled from Puerto Rico to give a powerful message. Next, Armando Miranda, a vice president of the worldwide Adventist Church, encouraged believers to continue the work. Finally, during the actual anniversary celebration, Don C. Schneider, president of the Adventist Church in North America, urged the congregation to further extend the message of God's love to unreached communities. Following worship, where church leaders recognized the dedicated ministry of various individuals, attendees fellowshiped under a large tent on the church grounds and enjoyed music by Alfred Deynes' group and Strings of Joy!, led by Evonne Baasch.

BEYOND THE BALCONY

The seeds of this historic congregation were planted in a Spanish-speaking Sabbath School class in the balcony of the Sligo church in Takoma Park, Md. It was 1953 and F.E. Wall, president of Washington Missionary College (now Columbia Union College), never imagined that teaching this class would have such a lasting—and widespread—impact on Hispanic communities in the nation's capital.

It attracted college students, former missionaries, and Spanish-speaking immigrants from several Latin American countries. Despite their diverse origins, all felt the need to take the Adventist message from Sligo's balcony to the Hispanic communities of the region.

To that end, Ernesto Santos, a young Cuban student, together with Gabriel Castro, José Rivera, Lucas Días, Daniel Hammerly, and Enrique Niemann, started a missionary effort to attract new converts. Their dedication, and the Holy Spirit's guidance, led to the baptisms of Leopoldo Bobes and Dámaris de Adams.

On May 4, 1957, their small group started meeting in the basement of the District's Capital Memorial church. Although the arrangement wasn't optimal, they had space to worship and



Members and friends of the Washington Spanish Church enjoy festivities after an historic 50th anniversary worship service.

Church Profile



PHOTOS: HEARLY G. MAYR

grow. Original pastor Manuel Rosado labored with leaders Walter Schubert, Weslet Amudsen, and William Mulholland to take this nascent work forward. Fortunately, they managed to catch the attention of Potomac Conference administrators who embraced the fledgling flock. “The fact that immigrants began moving into the areas around Washington D.C., Virginia, and Maryland, during those years, helped the Adventist Church focus on this segment of the population,” explains current senior pastor Homero Salazar.

In 1960, under Rosado’s leadership, the congregation moved farther north to the corner of Van Buren and 4th Streets, NW, to a building that once housed the Free Methodist Church. During their dedication, Rosado spoke the following words: “This church was born in humility ... It has grown under the smile of God. ... [We pray] that it may serve as a spiritual refuge for sinners, and a small city of hope—as much for children and young people—as for adults.”

Two decades later, in 1982, Washington Spanish moved to a newly built Maryland structure. Since then, Rosado’s legacy has been kept alive through succeeding pastors Leonardo Gerometa (deceased), Delfín Gómez (deceased), Carlos Montaña, Humberto Meir, Roger Weiss, Rubén Ramos, Freddy Sosa, Josué Ramirez, Daniel Pabón, and—since March 2006—Salazar.

In addition to superb pastoral leadership, missionary-minded members contribute to the church’s allure and strength. Melchor Covarrubias, 95, is an original member of the 1957 congregation who now attends the Langley Park (Md.) Spanish, which grew out of Washington Spanish. And Josefina Corcho is the

newest member. “Belonging to this family is a privilege,” says the woman who recently joined with her husband, Fernando. “The members make me feel spiritually invigorated.”

The 300-plus members of Washington Spanish are also intentional in ministering to the community through its food bank—which assists an average of 45 families every week—two annual health fairs, seminars for youth and young mothers, and English as a Second Language courses.

“We must always be ready to take the gospel to a world that has changed so much,” explains Pastor Salazar. “That’s the only way to reach our sublime goal: To live with Jesus for eternity.”

Hearly G. Mayr and Alix Echeverri serve the Washington Spanish church, in Silver Spring, Md., as co-kindergarten Sabbath School teacher and communication leader, respectively.



Melchor Covarrubias (center), the church's oldest original member at age 95, is escorted to the service by daughters Yolanda (left) and Elizabeth (right).

Did You Know?

It started with a Sabbath School class 50 years ago. Today, more than 8,500 Spanish-speaking Adventists attend at least 57 churches in northern Virginia, the District of Columbia, and Maryland. That number is growing exponentially as over 1,100 new converts are baptized annually.

Don't Forget to Remember

Every country has memorials to its heroes. In the heart of Washington, D.C., stands a colossal stone monument to George Washington, which points 555 ft. into the air. Just inside its base are stories of this president who was “first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen.”

Not far away is a glistening white marble shrine. Under its canopy is a gigantic statue of a thoughtful figure seated in a great stone chair. It's the statue of Abraham Lincoln, a president who was also greatly loved by Americans.

Standing in the middle of all of these reminders, you get the feeling that the human mind needs a lot of prodding. Our tendency to forget drives us to jog our memories with monuments, anniversaries, and celebrations.

A POWERFUL REMINDER

Jesus knew we would need powerful reminders of what happened in Gethsemane and on Golgotha, as the decades and centuries passed. Though He never seemed to enjoy ritual or ceremony, He is the One who said, “Do this in remembrance of me” (Luke 22:19).

In the upper room, He urged His followers to love each other. By their love, He told them, they would be recognized as His disciples. They could hardly believe what He did next. I, too, am filled with amazement every time I think about it.

Picture Jesus picking up a towel, filling a basin with water, kneeling, and humbly washing the dirty

feet of each disciple. As He completed this menial task, He commanded them—and us—to do as He did in humility and love.

So each time someone kneels in front of me to wash my feet in preparation for Communion, I see Jesus in my mind. And I remember His command to love one another.

But it wasn't over. At the Passover supper, this pivotal moment in history, Jesus and His disciples ate in order to remember. They remembered God's delivery of the Israelite slaves from Egyptian bondage. They also looked forward to their future delivery from sin, the Messiah's death. Then Jesus—the actual Messiah—just hours before His death, set up a memorial for us using two items that were on the menu that evening. He was saying, *It's so easy to forget! Please remember!* And I do.

As I take that unleavened bread I remember Jesus, His sinless body bruised, beaten, and bloody. I see Him trying to drag that cross, *my* cross. I see the King of the universe hanging on that cross in my place. As I eat the bread my heart says, *Jesus, I cannot fathom the pain you must have felt for me. Thank You!*

The grape juice, too, makes me think of Jesus; His flowing blood brought from His body by the lashes, the thorns, and the nails. He died that Friday so I could live eternally with Him. And as I sip the juice, my heart cries out, *Thank You for taking my death, Jesus. I want to live for You today!*

REMEMBER, BELIEVE, RECEIVE

Yes, it's easy to forget. But I want to remember and believe. So as the water trickles across my feet, as the crusty bread brushes past my lips and I crunch it, as the sweet juice delights my taste, I remember Jesus. I think about Him, and I receive Him into my life again. *Dear Jesus, my servant King and suffering Savior, my powerful, risen Deliverer, I praise You for Your sacrifice today. I rest completely in Your mercy and grace.*

Don C. Schneider is president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America.



Profiles in Caring



Joy in Service

Each year I have the opportunity to participate in the projects described on the previous pages, under the leadership of our Adventist HealthCare staff and "Rebuilding Together." It is always a day I look forward to with eagerness and anticipation.

There are a number of reasons why I enjoy the time we spend together on these projects. First is the joy and appreciation from those we help—our reality is that we are making a difference. Second is the joy of a job well done—I feel so proud to see our hard work make such immediate results. Third is the joy of service. It really is more blessed to give than to receive. Fourth is the joy of being a part of something so meaningful alongside our coworkers. Tom hasen says, "There are better things out there than money, and the best of them is to be done around by other people." And I think is the joy of helping. I can't have these feelings and thank you to the world around us—the more that we mean, significant way I actually because I can't have.

These days are fundamental! It seems like they are taken to the library, of the Sabbath that there from God, eating from his words, did God feel this same joy when He was His creation completed? In part of what is written in the words of God's, says the spirit of it is there in the joy of work of creating and shaping and seeing the world around by our own hands?

The scriptures are full of promises of how God will bless our work, such as, 1 Cor. 3:7 which says, "For we are God's fellow workers, you are God's field, God's building."

Jesus himself accepted the responsibility of service in Luke 22:27 when He said, "I am among you as one who serves." How can we because I believe in our world? How can we be the better? I can take it "serving you as one who serves." Perhaps, Paul provides the most concise instructions in Colossians 3:23, "Whatever you do, work as if you were doing it for the Lord, not for men... It is for the Lord that you are working."

William G. "Bill" Robinson
President/CEO
Adventist HealthCare



More Blessed

The Bible says, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). This doesn't just give; it will make you happy that you're helping or helping. There isn't even equal to a lot of people. They want what they have. They add up the things they get. The way they see it, the more they get, the more they have. No, it just doesn't make sense.

That's just by it.

The employees of Adventist HealthCare have the opportunity to say that every day when they come together to provide much-needed home repairs for low-income, elderly, and disabled home owners. In partnership with Rebuilding Together, the volunteers spend a few weekends painting, repairing, cleaning, caulking, sanding, electrical, plumbing, handling waste and debris, doing paint work, building wheelchair ramps, installing handrails, fixing, and painting and so much more.

In every case around the world we have neighbors who have worked hard and put in time, and have been able to repair their own homes for most of their lives. Now, due to an ever-increasing number of chronic health issues, they can no longer make their own homes, which have become unsafe, unhealthy, and unlivable.

In Montgomery County, Maryland, where Adventist HealthCare headquarters is located, the Rebuilding Together sponsor

also mobilizes thousands of volunteers to provide home repair and modifications free of cost to needy homeowners. And for the last three years, Rebuilding Together has been matching these needs with the volunteers from Adventist HealthCare, Shady Grove Adventist Hospital, Washington Adventist Hospital, and Service Living Members.

The AHC volunteers donate their time and some materials—such as painting and cleaning supplies—and their skills, whatever they may be. Some of them have considerable experience with hardware and skills, some can handle a power tool, and others are willing and able to take on tasks. There is always an ever-growing list of volunteers and home repairs needs right through office personnel and back beyond—digging, painting, plumbing, masonry, and pulling weeds.

For example, in 2018 the AHC team worked together to help an elderly couple in the WM area. The husband is a double amputee who has diabetes. The most daunting difficulty was each time he needed to leave the house to go for dialysis. There was no wheelchair ramp. The good thing for him is that he can move up and down the driveway steps using parallel run and a walker. However, that was an incredibly difficult task, so a ramp was built with hand on ramp lift.

They really needed a wheelchair ramp. And, under the supervision of a good contractor, the AHC volunteers built one and repaired the walkway so that it would be a smooth ride all the way to the car. They also helped to secure the home to other steps, making the living room, bedroom, and bathroom safer and more accessible. They even speeded up the landscaping.

As you can imagine, this had quite an impact on the elderly couple. It literally changed their



lives. They can't say how grateful—and—when the wheelchair was done.

But what about the volunteers who gave their time and skills and whose lives are more probably a little more difficult? Why not they follow Phil's example (the Bible proverb) mentioned?

If you could ask one of the volunteers who helped out, you would not doubt get a definitive "Yes!" But chances are it would be long there, because that volunteer would go on and on about how satisfying it was and how totally involved everyone was, what a wonderful experience it was, and how much fun we have had there next year. So if you do decide to ask one of the participants about it, make sure you've got plenty of time.

The employees who volunteer to help their neighbors through this program understand that it really is more blessed to give than to receive. Because the more we give, the more we become. We become more living. We become more thankful. We become more grateful. More we come blessed.



Heroes at Home

Ryan C. Major joined the Army after graduating from high school in 2006. He achieved the rank of Specialist. His division had been in Iraq for nearly a year by November 2006, when he went out on his first patrol with his unit in Basrah. They were searching for suspected bomb makers. When an Improved Potpourri Device (IPDD) exploded next to him, Specialist Major suffered severe injuries, resulting in a long recovery of his legs, damage to both arms, and a traumatic brain injury. He was 22 years old.

Specialist Major was given the medical care he needed, but when he was able to come home, his home was no longer accessible to him.

Rebuilding Together is a national charitable foundation that uses volunteers to help homeowners who do not have the financial or physical resources to complete repairs on their necessary requirements. Rebuilding Together has just entered its 100th birthday celebration to mark the growing needs of veterans. The new program is called Heroes at Home, and our goal is to make sure that our veterans have access to help and military personnel. Specialist



Major's home was chosen to become the Heroes at Home pilot project.

Scott Handfield of Rebuilding Together called Mike Raul, Regional Director of Property Development and Facilities Management for Adventist HealthCare. Mr. Raul has led teams of Adventist HealthCare employees in volunteer home repair work for Rebuilding Together every April for the past three years. Furthermore, in his position he is in daily contact with building contractors and vendors. So Mr. Handfield felt he was the ideal person to help launch the new Heroes at Home project.

Mr. Handfield says, "I don't think I missed any weekends before Mike said, 'Sure, I'll do anything I can to help. Count me in.' Mike has one of the biggest hearts I know."

So Mr. Raul set about pulling together all the support that was needed, bringing together staff in the community. With his help and guidance, all of the labor and the majority of the materials were furnished to the project.

The renovations to the home were extensive. A dirt road, seven feet wide, had to be cut. A sidewalk had to be installed to

run better. And even more, an elevator was installed so Ryan could get upstairs.

Specialist Major is a friendly, personable young man who, in spite of everything, is doing well and wanting to go to work. He and his mother and younger brother have worked the construction site place with each other and were grateful.

Mike Raul sees this as an opportunity for the volunteers to show their gratitude to those who serve in the military. "This project was more and more my heart," says Mr. Raul, who served as an Army captain in the Vietnam War. "I hope that the work accomplished by the community coming together will help ease what Ryan has been going through."

Mr. Raul has seen the difference this project has made in the life of this brave soldier. And he has also seen the difference it has made in the lives of the AHC employees who have volunteered their time to help. "This volunteer work really follows Adventist HealthCare's mission to provide help to our community," he explains. "The way donors put a hundred items back for the work that they do and the time that they spend."





La Biblia dice: "Más bendecidos más al que da que al que recibe." (1 Tesal. 5:16, Biblia en Lenguaje sencillo). Nos da que el dar es hacer más feliz que el recibir o el aceptar. No puede haber un dador para muchos paises. Como en la que damos. Muchos más a la que se piden. Es un sistema de dar, entonces más alegría, más felicidad. Más simpática que un tener más allá.

Hay que dar la paz, es poder dar. Las empresas de Adventist

HealthCare (AHC) tiene la oportunidad de prestar su paciencia cada día al cuidar a muchos para prevenir a personas de pasar momentos, sufrimientos, incomodidades, espantos, cosas muy desagradables en sus hogares. Los voluntarios pasan sus días de manera pacífica, ayudando a personas de plantar la conciencia por sus enfermedades, accidentes, traumas, enfermedades, trabajando en el país, cuando alguien está en el camino para salir de la vida, buscando la paz interior, y que sea la conciencia, y muchas cosas más.

En cada población alrededor del mundo tenemos personas que son trabajadoras y también en cada y la compañía del área que han sido capaces de ayudar sus hogares. Ahora, dada una cantidad de cosas fuera de su control, se pueden encontrar más sus hogares apropiadamente, los cuales son más pacíficos, saludables e habitables.

En Montgomery County, Maryland, desde su nacimiento las personas de Adventist HealthCare, se comprometen

Más bendecidos

en trabajar y ayudar a proporcionarles los mejores cuidados a nivel de voluntarios para prevenir enfermedades, y enfermedades, a lugares convenientes que ayudan a sus personas. Durante los últimos años con el voluntario, tenemos la oportunidad de ayudar más convenientemente con los voluntarios de Adventist HealthCare, Montpelier, La Casa Adventista Hospital, Montpelier Adventist Hospital y Senior Living Services.

Las voluntarias de Adventist HealthCare tienen un tiempo, algunas maravillosas, tales como, plantas, y muchas de las técnicas, y sus habilidades. Algunas veces, hasta de cosas nuevas como mariposas y más cosas, hay quienes pueden estar muy bien la hora de plantas, entre las que están cosas de plantas, a semillas y frutas. Hay voluntarios que hacen para sus hijos. Los voluntarios y el personal de hospitales trabajan con el personal de niños, y los voluntarios aplicando pintura, por grandes ideas y hasta cuando niños.

Por ejemplo, en el AHC el equipo de AHC trabajó para ayudar a una pareja de ancianos en el área de Wheaton. El más de tener cosas, plantas, semillas, y dar cosas. Cada vez que necesitan salir de la casa para recibir un medicamento de niños o voluntarios a una persona discapacitada. No necesitan una cosa nueva para la silla de ruedas. En sus días, incluso se les puede ayudar a caminar y bajarlos los de arriba de los edificios cuando no pueden y no pueden. Todo eso, con nosotros, una labor muy pacífica y una cosa que ellos mismos o ellos, así que algunas veces se encuentran que ayudan.

Las cosas felices, ayudan más, una ayuda para la silla de ruedas. Bajo la dirección

de un buen voluntario, los voluntarios de AHC construyeron una casa, y se puso en la casa para que el espíritu al momento el hacer cosas y cosas. También ayuda a a renovar el hogar de cosas nuevas, haciendo más accesible, y más segura la casa, se encuentran y se hacen. Incluso hacer a un hogar a un hogar.

Contra es de imaginar, más más un impacto positivo en la sociedad. Cuando las cosas, bien de más. Para cuando el día de mañana, hay a un día de cosas muy felices, y bendecidos.

¿Qué podemos decir de los voluntarios que danos de su tiempo y sus habilidades, y que voluntarios están yaablemente un poco voluntarios el día siguiente? ¿Por qué los bendecidos? ¿Si mañana como lo pone la Biblia, más bendecidos?

Si los voluntarios a una de las voluntarios que ayudan en día de cosas más, un lugar a dar la respuesta más. ¿Por qué? Porque, lo más ayuda, la compañía con los más en la vida que que sea más una ayuda maravillosa, cosas de la voluntarios que más bien y lo más ayuda que habita más en cosas nuevas y que delimitación de acciones a ellos, el próximo año. Así que si alguien puede ser a uno de los participantes, cosas de lo que lo ayuda a ellos, ayuda de cosas con bastante tiempo.

Las voluntarios que se ofrecen como voluntarios para ayudar a sus vecinos a través de este programa voluntario que ayudan de más, también de más que más. Aunque, incluso más cosas, más cosas a ser. Llegamos a ser más voluntarios. Llegamos a ser más voluntarios. Llegamos a ser más voluntarios. Llegamos a ser más voluntarios.



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Baltimore Academy Hosts Reading Day

Baltimore Junior Academy (BJA) recently hosted Reading Day, which was a fun way to promote literacy to its students and the ability to use language to read, write, listen, and speak. The event attracted many city and church leaders, and was covered by Baltimore's ABC affiliate television station.

Participants of the special day included Stephanie Rawlings-Blake, Baltimore City Council president; Councilwoman Sharon Green Middleton from the 6th District of Baltimore; Angela Jackson, a producer/editor at WBAL Radio 11; Debra Fryson, associate education director for the North American Division (NAD); LaShawn Williams, BJA alumni president; Washington Johnson, editor for *Message Magazine*; and others.



"You want to encourage children to read books and to really get them into the enjoyment of it," said Irma Johnson (left), a member of the Mitchellville (Md.) church. She read part of her first book *I Believe ... Poems of Faith for Children* to kindergartners.

"I was happy for the opportunity to read my book."

Johnson also donated a copy of her book to the school library.

The BJA National Alumni Association sponsored Reading Day, which was used to help kick off the academy's 92nd Alumni Weekend themed "Enlightening Our Spiritual Jewels."—*George Johnson Jr.*



Pastor Gamal Alexander of the Hadley Memorial church in Washington, D.C., reads Pilgram's Progress to eighth-graders.

Grace Tabernacle Reaches Out to Community

The Grace Tabernacle church in Norristown, Pa., recently experienced one of its most dynamic youth evangelistic efforts. Through much prayer and planning, the church's outreach and inreach ministry teams collaborated to share the gospel with their vibrant and youthful community.

"At first we were planning for the typical youth week of prayer, but then we got to thinking about being more effective and creating an experience that would be longer lasting, and even ongoing," says Pastor Vernon



The Grace Tabernacle church in Norristown, Pa., entertained and educated residents through its community celebration.



Waters. "I truly believe the Holy Spirit inspired us to jump out of the boat and walk on the water."

The theme for the campaign was "Are You Fallin' or Ballin'?" The church hoped to reach all youth, especially those inclined to be involved in drugs and gangs. They wanted to give these young people a view of Someone better to befriend. Through the "up close and personal" and Christ-centered preaching of David Solomon Hall, Sr. (above), youth director for the Utah-Nevada Conference, more than 25 young people surrendered their hearts to Christ, and more than 50 people made recommitments. During the weeklong celebration, breakout groups led by community leaders and conference pastors focused on hot-button issues like peer pressure, entertainment, and even homosexuality.

Two weeks later, Grace Tabernacle reached out again through its second annual community celebration at a nearby park. Though it rained, the tent effort still brought out talented musicians, health organizations, and, of course, there was free food.

Metropolitan Health Experts Treat Dominica Residents

Sixteen health professionals from the Washington, D.C., metro area and beyond recently left the comforts of home to make a difference in Dominica. The Metropolitan Health Professionals Association (MEHPA) experts traveled to the Caribbean island to provide free health services to three of their major districts.



The health team of three doctors, four dentists, six nurses, and one medical records specialist was led by MEHPA co-founder Avis Kelly, DDS, a member of the Metropolitan church in Hyattsville, Md. They spent 11 days on the lush island screening hundreds of residents for high blood pressure and diabetes, providing numerous dental services, and handing out lots of literature and personal dental care supplies. More importantly, they shared the love of the Lord, including the eight laws of health. By the trip's end, the team had served and shown love to 1,000 islanders.

"The facilities in which we worked can easily be described as modest," reports Vanetta G. Kalu, ND, member of the Seabrook church in Lanham, Md. "Workspace was provided in the districts' dental offices, town halls, and churches.

Avis Kelly, DDS, leader and co-founder of the Washington, D.C., area volunteers, performs dental services on a resident of the Caribbean island of Dominica.



The Metropolitan Health Professionals Association (MEHPA) volunteers pause from their grueling schedule in Dominica. The organization has been providing free medical attention to those in need around the world for more than 14 years.

The dentists worked under trying conditions; however, we were well received by all in attendance."

"Best of all, our Heavenly Father served us well by allowing us to take a break from our busy schedules and daily lives," added Metropolitan member Miriam Braithwaite, RN, whose husband Joel Braithwaite, MD, is MEHPA co-founder.

New Life Ladies Retreat in Williamsburg

More than 20 women (some pictured) from the New Life church in Salisbury, Md., recently got to enjoy a spiritual respite during their Women's Ministries retreat. The event, held at the Williamsburg (Va.) Plantation Resort, also gave the four sets of mothers and daughters a chance to create some memories.

The event started at 6:30 a.m. with a one-mile walk. Following breakfast, presentations covered the five languages of love: quality time, acts of service, physical touch, expressions of gratitude, and words of affirmation. Sabbath speaker Eth-I Lee, a retired nurse



anesthetist from the Calvary church in Newport News, Va., expounded on physical touch. Another Calvary member, Karyn Lewis, MD, an Air Force staff OB/GYN, ended the day with a presentation titled "Lip Care."

The retreat planners had the total woman in mind when they

added to the schedule massage therapist Valerie Bratten from the Emmanuel-Brinklow church in Ashton, Md. Other fun activities included putt-putt golfing, door prizes, special recognition gifts, games, and lots of laughter. Much thanks goes to the church's Women's Ministries director, Gydia Charles, MD, and her planning staff for a successful event.

Allegheny East Conference

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Bethel Emphasizes Health to Community

The Bethel church in Cleveland made an impact on its neighbors through its recent Community Awareness Day. Diane Crider, the church's Health Ministries director, and her volunteers led the event.

As residents arrived, they were given gifts for attending and treated to healthy refreshments. In addition to blood pressure and cholesterol evaluations, the highlighted feature was a therapist offering guests an invigorating back massage. A representative from a local health services network presented a workshop on breast cancer awareness, and there were various booths dispensing health information. There were even periodic drawings for prizes that ranged from beautiful floral vases to character-building material for youth. While the adults were engaged in workshops, the kids were entertained with a free-throw competition and moon bounce.



A Cleveland community professional checks a resident's blood pressure during Bethel church's Community Awareness Day event.

Hillcrest Hosts Community Events

The Hillcrest church in Dayton, Ohio, reports that their recent Gospel Music Extravaganza event was a huge success. In addition to enjoying an evening of talented musicians and uplifting songs, the church raised \$7,000 in pledges for their building fund.

Hillcrest member Nivea Willis, as well as her father, noted soloist Fred Willis from the Dale Wright Memorial church in Germantown, Ohio, opened the musical program. Special guests included two members of the Shiloh church in Cincinnati: mime Michael Cleaver and Timothy McDonald, who performed selections from his CD *3 Miles Left*. Other guests from the area were invited and helped keep the audience on their feet. Member Jacelyn Johnson Grant kept things moving smoothly as the mistress of ceremonies. The brainchild of the wonderful evening was Hillcrest music director Jacqueline Moore.



Another church event was the recent Community Service Day put on by the church's Community Services Department, under the direction of Susie Robinson. The guest speaker was Rodney Valentine (above), pastor of the Southside and Springfield district in Columbus and Springfield, Ohio, respectively. He placed emphasis on community involvement and making individual commitments to help others.



The most memorable performance of Michael Cleaver, a member of the Shiloh church in Cincinnati, was his mime dramatization to a song titled "I Need You Now."



During the service there were a few unexpected surprises. Cassandra Boddie Ways was awarded for her dedicated service as director of the Good Neighbor House, a community services center in Dayton, and Jacqui Moore for her musical contributions to the church. Richard Wilson, Kevin Moore, and Daryl Wilson were recognized for going beyond the call of duty for their work as deacons and keeping the building in good shape. The most surprised person of the day was Vernon Holman (pictured), who was awarded a beautiful plaque for his dedication and service to the Communications/Media Department.

Trailer Owners Retreat at Campgrounds

Trailer owners recently converged on the Allegheny West Conference (AWC) Campgrounds for their annual retreat. It's a time when the owners come to store up blessings and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. It is also a time to close up shop on their holiday homes in the resort woodlands of the camp.



As the owners met to discuss and plan for the improvement of the trailer area, they also anxiously awaited the retreat guest speaker. Richard Long (left), a native son of the AWC and a retired pastor from the South Atlantic Conference,

blessed attendees throughout the weekend.

Participants from around the conference accented the retreat by sharing their gifts and talents. Lloyd Beswick, the campground caretaker and elder at the Hillside church in Zanesville, Ohio, led out in the

Sabbath School presentation. Denise Coleman, a member of the Ephesus church in Columbus, anointed the atmosphere of worship with her melodious voice. Donald Burden, DMin, youth and ministerial director and campground superintendent, opened the week-end by welcoming the retreaters. James Lewis, conference president, closed the week-end by thanking everyone for their continued support of the campgrounds.



Pastors in Transition

Just as the church is a movement, so are our pastors, who move from one area of responsibility to another," explains Donald Burden, DMin, conference youth and ministerial director. "Each worker has been placed where his gifts are needed and can be best used."

Pastor Collin Parkinson (right) of Cleveland's Present Truth church was recently elected to serve as the conference's Superintendent of Schools. Parkinson has extensive experience in both pastoral and educational ministry and indicated that, though the challenge is considerable, he looks forward to expanding educational ministries.



Jerome Hurst (left), former pastor of the Hilltop congregation in Columbus, Ohio, was recently installed as pastor of the Southeast church in Cleveland. William Vincent comes to Allegheny West from the Northeastern Conference. He



will now be pastoring the Hillcrest congregation in Pittsburgh.

Bryant Taylor, DMin (right), conference communication director, is now pastoring the Westside church.

He was recently serving the city's Southeast congregation. Luke Robinson, former pastor of the Westside church in Cleveland, has transferred his care to the Lorain (Ohio) church.

Christopher Thompson, a recent graduate of Oakwood College (Ala.), is leading the Rock of Faith church in Pittsburgh. Thomson succeeds William McPherson, who has transferred his care to the Beckley/Kimball district in West Virginia.

The conference also bids farewell to Pastor Perry Jennings and his wife, Betty (below). Jennings retires after 37 years of pastoring in the Allegheny West, Central States, and Washington conferences. He most recently pastored the Beckley/Kimball district. "They have served the denomination and this conference well for many years," comments Burden. "As they retire, we pray God's richest blessings on them."



Catch the Vision is published in the *Visitor* by the Allegheny West Conference
1339 East Broad Street, Columbus, OH 43205
Phone: (614) 252-5271 ■ President, James L. Lewis
Editor, Bryant Taylor, DMin ■ www.awcsda.com

THE CHALLENGE

chesapeake conference newsletter

DECEMBER 2007

Are You Giving Any Christmas Presence This Year?

A friend remarked to me recently—as I complained, yet again, about the commercialization of Christmas—that “our lives are so saturated by ‘things’ that the exchange of gifts has become a redundancy.” It makes one wish the Magi had not brought any gifts and started this business of gift giving.

Then I re-read the original story in Matthew 2, gaining new insight. It is not the gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh that are the real focus of the story. It is the fact that the wise men came to worship the infant King. The gifts were offered in royal homage. In other words, the Magi came to give themselves to Christ. The gifts were incidental, mere symbols of their self-oblation.

There is a powerful truth in that for us. This season is not about “shopping until you drop,” but about dropping to your knees in worship before Christ. The biggest and best gift we should give every year is ourselves! We are the Christmas gifts that matter. But there is another powerful truth in this for us. We should give the gift of our *presence* to others. The irony of this season is that we get so busy with the wrappings and trappings that we end up with less time for the people in our lives than at any other time of the year. I challenge you to give the gift of your *presence* this Christmas: to your children, your spouse, your parents, the shut-ins of your church family, or to the neglected residents of a nursing or retirement home. That would be the real spirit of Christmas. “For God so loved the world that He gave ...” (John 3:16). And He gave His *presence*, of course!



Rob Vandeman
President

Men of Faith Host Second Annual Conference

A lay-led ministry for men known as Maryland Men of Faith recently completed their second annual one-day conference. Participants were both challenged and encouraged to live as men of God in all of life’s arenas. The day spent at the Mt. Aetna Camp and Retreat Center in Hagerstown, Md., featured a combination of plenary sessions and practical seminars. Straight talk



about real life issues characterized the presentations. John Appel (left), Chesapeake’s director of the Office of Pastoral Development, handled both the keynote and closing remarks. Seminar presenters included pastors and departmental directors from Chesapeake and the World Church Headquarters in Silver Spring, Md.

These men of faith responded with generosity when an appeal was made to help finish a church building project near Port Elisabeth, South Africa, that has remained unfinished for some time. The offering raised \$1,000 dollars—with more contributions being pledged—to help the Kwelera Adventist church see its dream of a finished facility fulfilled. There was a sense of real joy at being able to make a positive impact on fellow believers, those with strong faith but few resources.



Conference organizer Tony Williams outlines the program for the day during the Men of Faith conference.

Maryland Men of Faith is the outgrowth of the vision of several laymen of the Atholton and Baltimore First churches in Columbia and Ellicott City, Md., respectively. The ministry has a dual focus: the development of regular spiritual gatherings for men in their home churches and an annual one-day conference. While the inaugural conference had slightly more than 30 in attendance, the second drew more than 80 men. Key leaders in this expanding ministry include Bobby Smith of the Atholton church and Tony Williams from Baltimore First. They, and others, hope to see their vision expand to all Chesapeake churches. For more information on this ministry, visit www.mmof.org.

Shore Saints Gather for Annual Convocation

Several hundred “saints on the shore” gathered recently for the annual Eastern Shore Convocation held at Eastern Shore Junior Academy (ESJA) in Sudlersville, Md. The day was characterized by inspiring teaching and preaching, fine music, and enjoyable food.

Gaspar Colón, PhD, interim president of Columbia Union College, presented a very practical approach to the adult lesson study. Stephen Chavez (left), managing editor of the *Adventist Review*, shared a unique perspective on “this marvelous thing we call grace” for the worship hour message. Students from



Grasonville (Md.) member Janet Robinson provided a lovely touch at the piano during the Eastern Shore Convocation.



Highland View Academy provided the worship music as well as programming assistance for the youth Sabbath Schools.

A special word of thanks is due to ESJA principal Lowell Litten and his staff for hosting the convocation at their fine facility. And appreciation should also be stated for Vicki Tollman and her kitchen crew who handled the fellowship luncheon. Nobody went away hungry as the fabulous cooks on the shore worked their art to perfection.



Pastor Mike Sims of the Grasonville/Cambridge (Md.) district made a real impression at the youth meetings.

Spanish Camp Meeting Overflows With Blessings

The Spanish Camp Meeting held recently at Mt. Aetna Camp and Retreat Center in Hagerstown, Md., drew more than 500 participants. The large attendance put a strain on the facilities but not on the spirit of the attendees. Chesapeake Spanish Ministries coordinator and conference treasurer, Ramon Chow, said the overflow response would necessitate a scheduling change for next year so that housing facilities at Highland View Academy could be used to accommodate the growing response to this annual event.

The Hispanic believers, representing the eight Spanish-speaking churches and companies within Chesapeake, were blessed by the preaching of retired



Attendees pack an auditorium at Mt. Aetna Camp in Hagerstown, Md., during Spanish Camp Meeting.

evangelist Victor Collins (right) and the seminar provided by Tevni Grajales Guerra, professor of Research and Statistical Methodology at Andrews University (Mich.). Pastor Ben Sosa and his wife, Magay (below), from the Pennsylvania Conference presented the youth seminars.



The work among the Spanish-speaking populations in Chesapeake is beginning to expand at a rapid rate. According to Chow, the growth rate is expected to exceed at least 20 percent per year in the foreseeable future.

The Challenge is published in the *Visitor* by the Chesapeake Conference ■ 6600 Martin Road, Columbia, MD 21044
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Columbia Union College

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Student Groups Tour United Nations and Ground Zero

Columbia Union College (CUC) students watched policies unfold during a recent class trip to the United Nations headquarters and temporary tribute to the World Trade Center Visitor Center in New York City. Throughout the semester, students in the International Relations, Philosophy, and Social and Political Philosophy classes learned about the role of human rights and diplomacy and were able to observe international organizations and witness different perspectives of life at the U.N.

"It was very instructive and fascinating to watch the students and see those with citizenship outside the United States identify where their country's representative sits and participates in the process," said



Students in the Department of History and Political Studies visit the United Nations building in New York City.

Michael Kulakov, associate professor in the Department of History and Political Studies.

Lisandy Acevedo, a senior Political Studies major, enjoyed the trip. "Sitting in the General Assembly room and seeing it for yourself is very different from watching events on TV. It was awesome," she exclaimed.

The group also received a tour of the outside exhibits from Jonathan Gallagher, DMin, U.N. liaison director for the Seventh-day Adventist Church. He accompanied the students on the four-hour trip to New York and answered questions about the inner workings of the U.N. "It was the whole world in one building," said Daniel Mackay, a senior Political Studies major.



Senior Social Work major Folu Afolabi listens as a U.N. guide describes the significance of a gun barrel turned into a guitar.

NEWS

One Week College Course Now Offered

CUC's School of Graduate and Professional Studies (SGPS) will offer accelerated three-credit courses in one week from December 30 to January 3. Students can choose from Principles of Accounting, Economic Fundamentals for Managers, Computer Concepts I, Jesus and the Gospels, and Introduction to Psychology.

The program is called "Xtreme PSP" and will give busy adults and students an opportunity to complete one general education requirement and be a step closer to completing their degree during the Christmas holiday. To register for the program, contact the SGPS at (877) 246-2225.

Tour Bus Wired With WiFi

CUC's Department of Information Technology Systems (ITS) recently installed a portable wireless Internet receiver in one of its coach buses to give



students an opportunity to stay connected during long road trips. The new WiFi connection offers a great way for students to use their laptops to research homework assignments via the Internet, check email, receive alerts by phone, or send messages to friends and family while traveling. "Many students have asked where the technology fees go. This wireless addition has been funded with those fees," said Greg Ingram, associate vice president of ITS.—Brittani Bissell

NEWS cont.

Academy Students Attend Writers Conference

Students from various Seventh-day Adventist academies recently attended CUC's annual Writers Conference. English professors gave the students tips that included how and where to publish their writings, to develop innovative creative writing ideas, and to write reviews. A local actor and play director also taught the students how to create skits and plays. The Department of English and Modern Languages sponsored the conference to expose students to different types of writing, and to give them the chance to explore the campus and the Washington, D.C., area. Highlights of the program this year included attending the play *Nothing Sacred* in Arlington, Va., and a trip to Baltimore's Inner Harbor.—PR Staff

Nursing Students Walk for Causes

More than 50 junior and senior nursing students joined 5,000 participants in the Washington, D.C., area to raise awareness and support for the American Cancer Society's Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk and the Alzheimer's Association's Memory Walk.

During the event, students volunteered in various supportive roles including setting up and acting as greeters and walk marshals. "The Department of Nursing is committed to reinforcing CUC's 'Gateway to Service' philosophy," said nursing assistant professor Carolyn Braudaway. The Edyth T. James Department of Nursing requires students enrolled in clinical nursing courses to complete four hours of

community service in each course.

According to one nursing student, these walks add to their education. "As a nurse it gives us a broader view of what's going on in the medical field and allows us to use the information that we've learned to teach others," said senior nursing major Yonique Yakam.

The Department of Nursing is CUC's largest program. It includes students from more than 20 countries.—PR Staff



Business Major Interns at Prestigious Law Firm

Jamesa Lewis (below) is a senior Business Administration major on the fast track to a career in human resources. Through a summer internship at Wiley Rein, LLP, a well-known communications law firm in downtown Washington, D.C., Lewis was able to apply her classroom theory to real life. "It felt good knowing what to do in certain situations," said Lewis, a native of Vancouver, British Columbia. "My CUC experience has prepared me for my career because of the excellent level of education that I received, especially in the Department of Business."

It was in such classes as Personnel Management and

Management I and II that Lewis became more conscious of the actions and attitudes expected in the workplace and the legal ramifications brought forward by negative behaviors. This knowledge gave her internship new meaning and stretched Lewis to expand her quiet nature to actively engage others.

Lewis noticed that her supervisor trusted her with important projects and assignments. At the end of the internship, Lewis was offered a full-time position with the firm. Since she was just on summer break, Lewis turned down the job but continues to work at the firm part-time between classes.

"Everyone at the firm was just extremely friendly and helpful," said Lewis, a member of the Emmanuel-Brinklow church in Ashton, Md. She credits CUC with teaching her how to be more independent, responsible, and open-minded. "CUC is a small school

with great community spirit," she stated. "The learning environment is quite good due to the small student-to-teacher ratio."



CALENDAR

December

- 10-12 Final Exams
- 13-Jan. 13 Christmas Break

January

- 20-21 SA Ski Excursion
- 22-25 Missions Week
- 28-Feb. 1 Student Week in Spiritual Emphasis

Gateway is published in the *Visitor* by the Columbia Union College 7600 Flower Ave., Takoma Park, MD 20912 Phone: (800) 835-4212 ■ www.cuc.edu Gaspar Colón, Interim President ■ Exec. Dir. of Marketing and Communication, Scott Steward ■ Editor, Tanisha Greenidge

The Season of Real Gifts

At the time you receive this issue of the *Visitor*, there will be, more or less, about 20 shopping days left before Christmas. Now, stop right there! Let's all make a pledge, here and now. Close your eyes for a moment, and make a commitment that the last three weeks before Christmas will not be about shopping and gifts. Instead, make it a time to reflect on the real gifts in our lives.

While we should be doing it all year long, the Christmas season is a great time to think of all the awesome gifts God has given us: life itself, family, music, sunshine, food and shelter, the beach, forgiveness, grace, peace, hope, love, and, most of all, the amazing gift of salvation.

Make this a season all about gifts, *real gifts!*



Sheri Tydings
Principal

NEWS

Leaders Hone Skills at SALT

Highland View Academy (HVA) student leaders recently got the chance to attend the Spiritual Academy Leadership Training (SALT) retreat, held this year at Camp Kern in Oregonia, Ohio. The annual retreat is hosted by the Columbia Union Conference Office of Education, under the direction of Ian Kelly, associate director.



HVA student leaders at Camp Kern

Students got the chance to learn many spiritual leadership skills from keynote speaker Laclare Litchfield, chaplain at Collegedale (Tenn.) Academy. "The leadership conference was fun and eye opening for me," shared

junior Lornah Misati, HVA Student Association treasurer. "I learned to be a better leader and I was impressed with Pastor Litchfield's advice to not let the crowd define who you are and what you can do."

The weekend was highlighted with wonderful praise music, inspiring messages, a ropes course challenge, early morning Philippians Bible studies, and the exchange of ideas among student leaders from many schools. Principal Sheri Tydings states, "It is a great opportunity for student leaders to begin a school year with such an inspiring event." She added, "The time, effort, and finances the Columbia Union educational leadership puts into this event is well worth it. The students always finish the weekend charged and ready to lead!"

Students Experience College Recruiting

Representatives from Adventist colleges and universities from across the North American Division and beyond recently visited HVA to promote their respective schools' programs and offerings. All sophomores, juniors, and seniors had the privilege of visiting their booths to glean information. Many seniors took the opportunity to complete applications and earnestly begin their college preparations. "I liked that I could talk to people that knew a lot about their college. I also liked that they waived the application fee for us!" said senior Nathan Zollman.

This event has been held at HVA for the last four years. Kim Brown, registrar and event coordinator, remarks, "It is not practical for students and families to actually travel to each campus. The fair gives them a chance to get an overview and then narrow down their choices of which colleges they want to visit, which is one reason we want to include the younger students, and not just the seniors."

"I think the college fair is a very smart idea. It gives you a chance to explore different colleges, see what they have to offer, and start planning where you want to go," commented junior Mary Hostetler.



Science Department Receives Chesapeake Bay Trust Grant

HVA's Science Department is the recent recipient of a \$4,360 grant from the Chesapeake Bay Trust to be used for Chesapeake Bay Foundation field trips, native perennial plants and flowers for a meadow project on the school grounds, and native trees. According to Ophelia Barizo, science teacher and grant writer, the trust has been providing funds for environmental education and restoration projects at the school for several years. "It has greatly enhanced our science curriculum and provided valuable outdoor hands-on learning for our students," she added.



Environmental Science students examine the various species of fish they caught with seine nets on the shores of the Chesapeake Bay.

The Environmental Science class, with funds from the grant, recently went on a field trip to Rocky Point Park in Essex, Md. Students spent time on the scientific work boat Marguerite doing chemical water testing, which helps assess the health of the Chesapeake Bay. They did map reading activities, pulled a trawl net for fish, and studied several adaptations that enable fish to survive. Students also canoed from the bay to Back River. They learned how human activities impact the bay, our nation's most important aquatic resource. "I enjoyed the field trip a lot," said freshman Olivia Gordon. "There was so much information packed into the day, and I enjoyed canoeing very much."

A week later, chemistry classes went on a field trip to the Phillip Merrill Environmental Center, the headquarters of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. Students learned how the building, which has won several awards for energy efficiency and for being environmentally friendly, is itself helping to save the bay. Their flushless toilets, "green" roofs, and other energy-saving devices intrigued the students. Students then canoed on Black Walnut Creek, learned about how marshes filter chemical pollutants, and seined for fish on the bay. Junior Kyly Bauer felt that the "field trip was a wonderful experience that helped me appreciate the Chesapeake Bay more."

On a final note, Chesapeake Bay Trust cited HVA on their website as "an exemplary example of a school that does it all" and is a "model of excellence."

Students Get "Deep" During Week of Prayer

Guest speaker for Fall Week of Prayer was Randy Preston (pictured), enrollment counselor at Columbia Union College. Under the week's theme "Living Like a Christian," Preston shared both personal life experiences and Bible stories to convey what God expects of us if we claim to be a Christian. Junior Grace Archie was blessed. "I was impressed with how thorough he was with his explanations. I was also impressed with how attentive and responsive the students were," she said. Sophomore Jordan Correces appreciated the life experiences Preston shared and how they related to the experiences of Jesus. "It helped me get a deeper



understanding of Jesus and what He went through," Correces said.

Week of Prayer services were held each morning during the school day and also in the evening at the Highland View church. The

Friday evening vespers service included an invitation to sign up for Bible studies, with several students taking advantage of the opportunity.

CALENDAR

December

- 2 SAT Testing, *Admin. Building, 8 a.m.*
- 9 ACT Testing, *Admin. Building, 8 a.m.*
Student Association
Christmas Party
- 14 Music Department
Christmas Program
Highland View Church, 7:30 p.m.
- 19-21 Semester Exams
- 21-Jan. 6 Christmas Vacation

January

- 19 Warren Miller Film
Gymnasium, 7 p.m.
- 27 Art Appreciation Day
- 30-Feb. 3 Home Leave

Highlander is published in the *Visitor* by the Highland View Academy
10100 Academy Drive, Hagerstown,
MD 21740 ■ Phone: (301) 739-8480
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MOUNTAIN VIEWPOINT

DECEMBER 2007

Holy Spirit's Power Evident in Mountain View

Impelled by the energizing power of the Holy Spirit, lay members, pastors, Bible workers, and teachers in Mountain View have used 2007 to set the tone for church growth in 2008 and beyond. Local church leaders are igniting hearts for Christ through revival meetings. Our elementary school leaders and staff are sounding the gospel trumpet.

During 2007 several Mountain View churches experienced soul winning from a new paradigm. They became the launching point of a new four-year initiative in evangelism. Supported by our seven sister conferences in the Columbia Union and the Columbia Union Conference administration, they helped to spearhead this new initiative for our church growth. Dave Weigley, Columbia Union president, launched this venture by conducting the first series of meetings in the Lewisburg (W.Va.) church. Praise God for dedicated union administrators.

In response to nearly 1,000 Bible study requests, members at one church joined their pastor and two Bible workers to produce a wave of baptisms following a series conducted by an evangelist from Potomac Conference. As reported in a recent *Mountain Viewpoint*, at a ShareHim boot camp, more than 70 of our men, women, and children committed themselves to conducting a full-scale reaping series in 2008.

May the new year be filled with an ever increasing manifestation of the Holy Spirit's presence, driving us forward with true Pentecostal power to hasten the day of our Savior's return.



Larry Boggess
President

Author Addresses Summersville on Grief Recovery

Head Elder Steven Shank saw an interview with Joy Swift on 3ABN and was impressed to invite her to Summersville, W.Va., to do a grief recovery seminar at the church's Community Health and Education Complex. Swift did come, and about 150 people from both the community and its churches attended all or part of her presentations.

Swift shared the story of how the murder of her four children by a 14-year-old neighbor and one of his friends had changed her life. She also told of losing her oldest daughter soon afterwards to ovarian cancer. On Sabbath morning, Swift conveyed the tragic story of how her grandfather got infected while burying a rabid dog and was shot when he too became rabid and might have harmed his family. She compared this to how we are all infected with the sin "germ" and pass it on from generation to generation. She remarked that all of us stand in need of the saving blood of Jesus to overcome this malady.

On Sabbath afternoon, Swift shared how her journey from being a victim of crime, hate, and despair turned into a victorious life mission to help others. By sharing Scripture truths and life experiences, she showed them how to gain hope, faith, trust, anger management and coping skills, patience, forgiveness, and unity so that they are no longer victims but victors



Summersville (W.Va.) church head elder Steven Shank was happy that author and speaker Joy Swift accepted his invitation to bless area residents with her testimony and lessons on grief recovery.

through Christ. When Swift asked for any person to raise their hand if they had never experienced grief or been victimized by crime, not one hand went up.

Swift has authored four books including *When Death Isn't Fair* and *My Heart Will Go On*. She travels all over the country to tell other victims that they also can overcome grief and despair in their lives. Many attendees purchased her books at the end of the seminar in order to share with others about grief recovery.

—Yonnie Michael

Pastoral Couple Welcomed to West Virginia District

Within their first few weeks in Mountain View, Jimmy and Elaine Buchanan (right) developed many interests and established strong community ties in the Richwood/Webster Springs district. Here's their story:

"We met in Baltimore while we both were searching—but not seriously—for the Lord. One year after we married, we attended a Revelation seminar at the Baltimore White Marsh (Md.) church and were baptized. Two years later we left our full-time jobs and attended the Mission College of Evangelism in Black Hills, S.D. From there we received a call to Bible work in Florida. After three



years of working in Florida, Pastor Louis Torres invited us to return to the Mission College, which had moved to Oregon, to train the stu-

dents in outreach. During our two years there, we were praying that the Lord would call Jim into pastoral ministry.

"After two years in Oregon, we received a call to work with Neil Nedley, MD, in Ardmore, Okla. One week before we were to move to Oklahoma, we received the call from the Mountain View Conference. We felt that the Lord had answered our prayers.

"Mountaineers are very sharing, hospitable people, who give newcomers they feel they can trust, ready access to their hearths and their hearts. This trait has given us extensive opportunity to befriend and study with district families."

In Appreciation: Nancy J. Krone

The Morgantown (W.Va.) church family recently lost one of their dear members and dedicated spiritual leader. Nancy J. Krone is resting in the Lord after losing her 20-year battle with cancer.



Members had the privilege of her spiritual leadership since 1984, when she and her husband, Charlie, transferred to Morgantown. She served in many church offices over the years, including the Conference Executive Committee, where her wise and fair-minded views were always valued. Krone delivered many sermons and inspired the church to pursue its mission. She had a talent for writing her own songs and would perform them either with piano or guitar. They always had a special message. Seldom did she miss a camp

meeting, and was always available to pray and counsel with those who were seeking guidance, comfort, or affirmation. She had a natural ability to meet new people and make them feel welcome.

Krone's zeal for healthful eating and lifestyle motivated her to conduct cooking classes at the church and in other area churches. She was instrumental in planning and organizing the Taste Extravaganza, where the community came and sampled many vegetarian dishes and nutritious desserts. In her presentations, Krone also tastefully served up the spiritual bread of life, thus generating interest on a deeper level. She also loved the outdoors. The last project she was working on at the church was landscaping the front yard. When she could no longer walk, she was still out there in her wheelchair trying to complete the job.

Because Krone was so widely known and appreciated throughout the conference, her memorial service

was conducted at the Buckhannon church, the largest of the conference's centrally located churches.

Mountain View EVENTS

December

- 8 Youth Rally, *Morgantown*
- 16 Executive Committee
10 a.m.

January

- 14-16 New Pastors
Symposium
Valley Vista Camp
- 18-21 Youth Winter Retreat
(Tentative Date)
- 25-27 Pathfinder Winter Camp
(Tentative Date)
- 27 Executive Committee
10 a.m.

Mountain Viewpoint is published in the *Visitor* by the Mountain View Conference
1400 Liberty Street, Parkersburg,
WV 26101 ■ Phone: (304) 422-4581
President, Larry Boggess
Editor, Brian Jones ■ www.mtviewconf.org

SPIRIT

MOUNT VERNON ACADEMY

DECEMBER 2007

Appreciate Our Unique Design

As I walked across campus with a student recently, we were excited to experience the season's first gentle flurry of snow. Thrilled to see the softly floating snowflakes, we started catching them and studying the intricate beauty of each tiny flake's design. It has been said that no two are alike; rather each has its own unique identity.

I know that it won't be too long before the falling snow will no longer be exciting, and I will forget to appreciate the intricate beauty of each snowflake. Soon I will be saying, "Oh no! It's snowing again!" Navigating snow covered roads, shoveling the sidewalks, and seeing brown slush on roadsides will erase the joy of experiencing the first snowfall. Still, these thoughts in no way affect the overall beauty of the snowflake as it originally fell.

I have never seen an ugly snowflake, only snowflakes altered by circumstances. This reminded me forcefully that sin is an aberration to the beauty that God has created for, and in, us. Things created in beauty can be distorted and dirtied by the effects of sin. As children of God, we are individual and wonderfully created as each snowflake. And like the snowflakes, the effects of our surroundings—a sinful world—have distorted us. Our goal as Christian educators is to seek the original, unique design of each child as created by God, and to protect and restore this intricate beauty.



Linda Taber
Vice Principal

Families, Friends Enjoy Parent Weekend

Mount Vernon Academy (MVA) recently welcomed many visitors to campus for the annual Parent Weekend. The event started with a special family Communion service and vespers led by Pastor Steve Conway from Ann Arbor, Mich. Pastor Conway and his family previously ministered to the MVA campus during Fall Week of Prayer. They were delighted to have him return.

Various student groups shared their talents through music, art, and speaking at various programs



Senior Kylie Wilson serves as a walking billboard to help raise class funds.



Senior Soogie Choi purchases food at a Fall Festival booth.

scheduled throughout the weekend. One of the weekend's many highlights—Fall Festival—took place on Saturday evening. As students and visitors entered the gymnasium, they were greeted by the aroma of various foods. Laughter from game participants and friendly conversation filled the air as MVA's family and friends mingled. The weekend provided MVA staff, students, parents, and friends another opportunity for Christian fellowship and fun.

Students Thank Alumni Through Music

The majority of students attending Mount Vernon Academy receive financial assistance from many of the school's alumni and friends. The students really appreciate the financial sacrifices made on their behalf, and are excited to be able to thank everyone who has helped make it possible for them to experience Christian education. Using the sounds of the season, MVA students are sharing some holiday cheer to their faithful and

caring friends. A short Christmas DVD featuring songs performed by the school's handbell choir, vocal choir, and band is now available on the school's website. Also included in the DVD are personal student testimonies and a rendition of "We Wish You a Merry Christmas" sung by the entire student body. To view the DVD, visit www.mvacademy.org, click on the Alumni tab at the top of the page, and then click on MVA Says "Thanks."

SPIRIT

Students Become “Salt” in Flood-Ravaged Town

All areas of the globe, including Ohio, are living through the end times, an era when the prophet Isaiah says the Earth will “wear out like a garment” (Isa. 51:6). Each year natural disasters occur around the world. Sometimes, like the disaster in central Ohio this summer, they hit close to home.

When the town of Shelby, Ohio, was recently hard-hit by torrential rains, the waters nearly flooded the entire town. Mount Vernon Academy decided to help. A bus full of more than 150 energetic teenagers and the entire staff left the campus with little more than brooms and bottles of water to beat the heat. In response to a hearty “We’ll take any help we can get” from Shelby Mayor Lee Shepherd, the students worked hard cleaning, gutting homes and businesses, and providing whatever comfort and cheer they could to the tired residents.

There were no photographs taken to commemorate the event. The local Shelby newspaper did a write-up about the group, but credited the wrong school. The students were not awarded certificates for their work.



Senior Matt Brown helps pull down destroyed drywall from an affected home in Shelby, Ohio.



Junior Bruce Cuevas removes water-soaked carpet.



And that’s exactly the point.

Our Savior taught His followers many things about service. In His mountainside sermon of Matthew 5, He summarizes the actions of true believers by saying, “...let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.”

MVA strives to teach its students two things about service. First, we must be willing to be lights. Without a true willingness to serve others, our “salt loses its saltiness.” Without continual use, our actions for Christ stagnate. Second, service for Christ is truly selfless. Christ says that while people are to “see your good deeds,” they are to “praise your Father in Heaven.” Too often our acts of service are rewarded with special recognition to the server instead of special praise being directed to the Source of our service.

Although the students returned from their day of servitude with sweaty clothes and blistered hands, they gained a clearer understanding of what true service is about.—*Tim Soper*

CALENDAR of EVENTS

December

- 15 Christmas Concert
- 15-Jan.1 Christmas Break

January 2008

- 2 Second Semester Begins
- 14-19 Student Week of Prayer
- 19 Senior Recognition
- 30-Feb. 3 Home Leave

Spirit is published in the *Visitor* by Mount Vernon Academy
525 Wooster Road, Mount Vernon, OH 43050 ■ Phone:
(740) 397-5411 ■ Principal, David Daniels ■ www.mvacademy.org
Editor, Amy Soper

NEWS NEW JERSEY

DECEMBER 2007

Passaic Churches Deliver “Big Tent” Blessings

The Passaic I and II Spanish churches recently collaborated to sponsor their fifth annual health fair to benefit their community. Together, the two congregations served more than 300 residents, who were all looking forward to seeing what was in store for them under the big yellow tent.

The free services that were offered this year during the fair were diabetes, blood pressure, and cholesterol screenings; a blood drive by the community blood bank; chiropractor



Attendees at the annual health fair by the Passaic I and II Spanish churches learn to make healthy shakes.



Residents received various free health screenings.

consultations and neck stress tests; massages; healthy living exams; personal trainer consultations and circuit exercise courses; eye exams and glaucoma testing; medical (pediatric and adult) consultations; healthy shakes (juice therapy) and a vitamin lecture; and immigration and spiritual counseling.

The fair was a great success. The tent has been a blessing to the church and community, giving the congregations enough room to sponsor such activities, which benefit the neighborhood.—Virginia Rocha

Union City Spanish Concert Yields Baptisms

Adventist youth from the Union City Spanish church recently organized a unique missionary event: a concert titled “Union City para Cristo” (Union City for Christ). The free concert was performed at a Union City park and was open to the public.

During the three-hour afternoon concert, the vocal group Oasis, from the Greater New York Conference, and several other singers lifted

glory to God in song in front of an audience that surpassed 100 attendees. Many passersby stopped and took a seat to join the event. In addition to the



Union City Spanish members, including Claudia Garcia del Puerto, MD (left), manned booths from various church organizations.

music, there were several demonstrations and colorful booths from various church departments and ministries.



Included was information about Pathfinders and Adventurers clubs, Vacation Bible School, Una Vida Sana y Activa (An Active and Healthy Life) program, and lay activities.

Union City pastor Julio Cesar Labrador

closed the concert with a moving message. As a result, seven people surrendered their lives to Christ, 32 attendees requested Bible studies, 23 asked for prayer, 16 signed up for healthy lifestyle classes, six children registered for VBS, and many more received evangelistic materials such as Bibles and flyers.

The blessed concert was a wonderful experience that involved the coordinated effort of almost the entire church membership. Union City Spanish church members and their pastor thank God for this concert and expect to repeat the experience again next year.

—Claudia Garcia del Puerto, MD

Toms River Sponsors Three-Day Health Seminar

The Community Services Department of the Toms River church recently sponsored “Your Ticket to Wellness,” a health seminar for the public. The three-day event was hosted by the city’s Community Medical Center.



More than 200 people attended the three-day health seminar sponsored by the Toms River church, with lectures by well-known chef Julio Barillas.

The guest speaker for the evangelistic effort was Julio Barillas, world-renowned executive chef and health educator from Winterpark, Fla., and repeat New Jersey Conference Camp Meeting speaker. “Chef Julio” lectured on many topics including stress management, nutrition, weight control, exercise, and diabetes management. The event concluded with a vegetarian cooking class.

In addition to the lectures, church volunteers helped pass out literature and perform blood pressure screenings. The grand total



attendance for the event was 240, which included people from the community, the hospital, and Toms River church.

As a result of the success of the program, Community Medical Center, an affiliate of the Saint Barnabas Health Care System, has expressed strong interest in bringing the Toms River church and “Chef Julio’s” health and wellness seminar back in 2008.—Carin J. Roa

Couples Renew Vows at Annual Retreat

Many couples from around the conference converged at the Tranquil Valley Retreat Center in Tranquility for the annual couple’s retreat. Under the theme “Education, Rights, and Responsibilities,” guest speakers Ramon A. Croussett and his wife, Mercedes (above), helped participants experience reconciliation and revitalization of their marriages.



Many attendees commented that the Croussetts, based in the Dominican Republic, demonstrated obvious concern for the health of families today, especially now that many couples are being affected by violence and insecurity. The “unforgettable” retreat ended with renewal of vows.

Ramon told the couples that the Seventh-day Adventist Church can be stronger if marriages are stronger. “How happy I am when I see couples that have been transformed because they found the

guidelines to solve problems in their marriages!” he commented. “May God bless each one of these couples.”



Couples from around the conference enjoy time to relax and rejuvenate during the annual couple’s retreat.

dates

NEW JERSEY

December

- 2 Pastors/Teachers Dinner
ABC Open, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.
- 4 Principals Council
K-12 BOE
Executive Committee
- 24-27 Christmas Holiday—
Office/ABC Closed
- 31 New Year’s Day—
Office/ABC Closed

New Jersey News is published in the Visitor by the New Jersey Conference 2160 Brunswick Ave., Trenton NJ 08648 Phone: (609) 392-7131 ■ President, José Cortés ■ Editor, Aura Garcia ■ www.njcsda.org

Church News

Christian-Muslim Seminar - The Toledo First church recently hosted a lecture on Christian-Muslim relations at the University of Toledo, where both Christians and Muslims attended. The lecture "Confessions of a Bridge Builder" was

given by Bryan Gallant, founder of the Georgia-based organization Enoch's Passion. Following the event, attending Seventh-day Adventists were invited to the mosque in Perrysburg to eat a Ramadhan meal with them.



Regional Gatherings - Adventists from area churches got together for worship and fellowship recently during several regional gatherings. In Northwest Ohio, at the Toledo First church, guest presenters were Mike Tucker, speaker/director of *Faith for Today*, and Gina Brown, PhD, dean of the School of Graduate and Professional Studies at Columbia Union College (CUC) in Takoma Park, Md. In Southern Ohio, at the Open Door Ministries Campus in Chillicothe, the guest presenter was Dan Mathews, former speaker/director of *Faith for Today*. In Northeast Ohio, at the Evergreen church in Boardman, the guest presenter was Zack Plantack, PhD, CUC's Department of Religion chair.

Hispanic Family Camp - This annual event was held recently at Camp Mohaven in Danville under the theme "Enjoy Life to the Fullest." Approximately 250 people stayed for the weekend, while Sabbath attendance exceeded 300. The adult guest speakers were Rubén Ramos, Columbia Union Conference Multicultural Ministries coordinator, and his wife, Nora. Youth guest speaker was Anibal Hansell, pastor of the Lafayette (N.J.) church and the Pioneer Community Company in

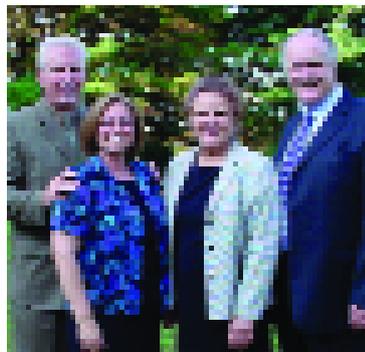


Perth Amboy, N.J. The audience was also delighted by the wonderful voice of singer Fausto Mercado from Clifton, N.J. The Lord blessed with a great weekend of excellent weather, delicious food, and fun Christian fellowship.—*William Rodriguez*

Newark Heritage Celebration - The Newark congregation recently hosted a heritage celebration to recognize the completion of a major remodeling project at their church. Conference president Raj Attiken started the daylong ceremony with the morning message to a church full of members and guests. The afternoon service included a time of praise and sharing memories, as well as a church rededication. The day concluded with a touching tree-planting ceremony in memory of founding members.



Above: Founding members John and Ardyth Loveridge help attendees look forward to the future.



Current Newark church pastor Tom and Debbie Hughes (left) share a moment with former pastoral couple Loren and Ruth Fenton.

New Clergy Newsletter - At the invitation of the North American Division, Loren Seibold, DMin, senior pastor of the Worthington church, is now producing *Best Practices*, a weekly online newsletter for clergy. For information, write to bestpractices@ameritech.net.

Guest Speaker - At the invitation of the Ohio Department of Mental Health and the Ohio Community Service Council, Shelvan Arunan, PhD, pastor of the Warren-Evergreen churches, presented a lecture on "Spiritual Care in Time of Disaster" at the Joining Forces 2007 Conference in Columbus. The event brought together community leaders and health professionals to discuss disaster response and preparedness.

New Pastors Welcomed

Lori Renee Whitted – Whitted and her husband, Terry (below), recently accepted the call to pastor the Canton and Wooster churches. Pastor Whitted completed her master's degree at the Andrews University Theological Seminary in Berrien Springs, Mich., earlier this year.

The Whitteds were both born and raised in the Pacific Northwest. They have four grown children and three grandchildren. Prior to returning to college to com-



Terry and Lori Whitted

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plete her theology degree, Whitted worked as an accountant and office manager, and was actively involved in her local community and church. Terry worked as an occupational therapist for 17 years and served his community as an alcohol and drug counselor.

Pastor Whitted states she “felt called to Christian ministry to help people know God intimately and understand His profound love for them.” She says she also “has a passionate desire to see the church actively united in meeting the needs of the community.”

Yuliyana Filipov – Pastor Filipov and his wife, Milenka, are the new pastoral couple for the Bowling Green, Northwood, and Swanton district. Filipov is also a recent graduate of Andrews University.

Filipov grew up in ex-communist Bulgaria, where, for the first 20 years of his life, he was taught to believe



The Filipov Family

that God and religion were opium for uneducated, old people. After several providential deliverances from accidents, Filipov started asking questions about the existence of God. In his quest for God, he made the greatest discovery of his life—Jesus and the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

After his baptism in 1991, Filipov's greatest dream was to become a minister. After finishing a degree in mechanical engineering, God opened the door for him to study theology at the Seventh-day Adventist Seminary Schloss Bogenhofen in Austria. After graduating, Filipov returned to Bulgaria to work as a pastor. In 2003 he moved to the United States to pursue a Master's of Divinity at Andrews University, graduating in May.

Milenka is yet another recent graduate. She recently completed nursing school at Lake Michigan College in Benton Harbor. They enjoy team ministry together with their daughter, Lora, a freshman at Perrysburg High School.

Mission Ohio is published in the *Visitor* by the Ohio Conference ■ P. O. Box 1230, Mount Vernon, Ohio 43050
Phone: (740) 397-4665 ■ President, Raj Attkin
Editor, Nancy Barnett ■ www.ohioadventist.org

Pennsylvania *Pen*

DECEMBER 2007

Pittsburgh ACS Improves Community With Playground

About 20 children from the Irishtown section of Carnegie were asked to design their own playground. They drew pictures of what they would like, including at least one slide, monkey bars, a castle, a jungle gym, and sprinklers.

Their dream came true when Adventist Community Services of Greater Pittsburgh (ACS-GP), along with Carnegie Community Action Network and the Carnegie Borough, was awarded a KaBOOM! Playground Grant for the project. KaBOOM!, a nonprofit organization, is working with The Home Depot to help build playgrounds around the country.



Nearly 400 volunteers helped Adventist Community Services—Greater Pittsburgh build a playground for the families in the Irishtown section of Carnegie.

“There will be no other playground in the world like this playground, I promise you that,” reports Ivan Baumwell, a KaBOOM! project manager.

It took nearly 400 volunteers to build the Irishtown park. They started at 8 a.m. and were finished by 4 p.m., reports Pastor Andrew Clark, ACS-GP director. It was dedicated the following Sunday. Parents are excited about the new park and have been vigilant in keeping crime, including graffiti, away from the area. Staff from ACS-GP also take time to hang out and play with the children.

The playground is one of many projects organized by ACS-GP as they help to revitalize the Carnegie community. For more information about ACS-GP, call (412) 446-0431 or visit www.adventistcommunityservices.org.



Gettysburg Dedicates New Building

Attendees were all smiles during the long awaited dedication of the new Gettysburg church. Church family and friends came from near and far to lend support with prayers and well wishes.

About five years ago, the congregation sold their Hanover Street church building, started renting the Gettysburg Baptist Church, and continued to save for the new sanctuary. The building process started just a little over a year ago, under the careful supervision of the building committee. While an outside general contractor and professional contractors were chosen to do much of the building, the church was blessed with its own skilled artisans and contractors to lend their talents, thereby saving the church thousands of dollars.

Gettysburg pastor Conrad Reichert performed the dedication service, while conference president Ray Hartwell reminded members how important it was that this new 225-seat church be a beacon of light to the community. Member Jill Althoff, a Southern Adventist

University (Tenn.) student, made a special trip home to play the piano for special music. Following a fellowship meal, an afternoon program included the baptism of Jonathan Keissling (10), Johannes Stahl (11), and Pat Noel, who rededicated her commitment to the Lord. The special event stretched into the evening. There was a vespers program by the Apple Core Band followed by an open house to the community, with a weenie roast and other fall foods and activities.—Susan Karpalla



Gettysburg church members are excited about using the new facility for mission work in their community.

Adventist WholeHealth and ABC Go to the Fair

The Adventist WholeHealth Network (AWHN) in Reading and Hamburg's Adventist Book Center (ABC) recently packed up the ABC Bookmobile and headed to the Reading Community Fair. For six days, they offered health screenings, a nightly prize drawing, information about healthful living, and a Christian book and health food store to fair attendees. Volunteers from the Hampden Heights church in Temple, the Kenhorst Boulevard church in



Volunteers from four area churches, like Barbara Blackerby (seated), invited fair attendees to stop for health screenings, information, giveaways, and free massages.

Reading, and the Blue Mountain Academy and Hamburg churches in Hamburg, all helped make it possible.

A steady stream of fair attendees stopped to learn more or take advantage of the free screenings. On some nights, nearly 100 people took the free glucose and cholesterol screenings, receiving their results within three minutes. Afterwards they were given the chance to discuss their results with Irving Jones, MD, from Reading; Leif Christianson, MD; or Tim Carlson, CRNP, both from Hamburg.

During two afternoons, AWHN featured information on depression and stress management as well as free massages. On two other days, they featured information on their upcoming Super Fit Family Challenge with volunteers giving out hundreds of balloons to children. Heart health risk assessments were offered during two other days and featured information about AWHN's CHIP program.

AWHN's health screening coordinator, Sandy Ringer, RN, was excited by the response and the opportunities



During six days at the Reading Community Fair, Adventist WholeHealth Network's Sandy Ringer (rear left) and Lynette Duman (front left) saw nearly 100 people a night for the free glucose and cholesterol screenings inside the ABC Bookmobile.

to talk not only about health but also to share Jesus. She got to pray with one couple that was concerned about their test results. "If that was the only thing we accomplished during the week," Ringer shares, "it was worth all the effort."

For more information about AWHN, call (610) 658-9900.

2008 Conference Marriage Retreat Planned

The 2008 Pennsylvania Conference Marriage Retreat will take place February 22-24 at the Lehigh Valley Best Western Hotel



Conference president Ray Hartwell (far right) and his wife, Jeanne, enjoyed the western themed 2007 marriage retreat with guest speakers Phil and Jan White (left). This year couples will enjoy a "Moonlight Over Manhattan" formal dinner and concert Saturday night.

and Conference Center in Bethlehem. Featured speakers will be Mike and Lynn Ortel, well-known speakers on the topics of marriage and family from the Northern New England Conference. The weekend will include seminars, time to relax, a Saturday night banquet, and an evening musical concert by Moses and A'Lisa Andrade. The registration fee is \$245 until January 18, or until full. The fee

covers lodging for two nights, two continental breakfasts, a boxed lunch on Sabbath, a banquet buffet and program Saturday night, seminars, and materials. To register or for more information, contact Jeanne Hartwell, Family Ministries director, at (620) 374-8331, ext. 218, or jhartwell@paconference.org. Ask about special scholarships for friends/neighbors who aren't Seventh-day Adventist.

Pennsylvania Pen is published in the *Visitor* by the Pennsylvania Conference 720 Museum Road, Reading, PA 19611 Phone: (610) 374-8331, ext. 210 President, Ray Hartwell ■ Editor, Tamyra Horst ■ www.paconference.org

Potomac People

DECEMBER 2007

Pastor/Teacher Convention Promotes “The Mission”

Pastors, teachers, and administrators from every region of the conference experienced three days of life-changing messages and purpose-changing seminars at the Pastor/Teacher Convention in Williamsburg, Va. Convention presenter Paul Borden, PhD, author of *Hit the Bullseye*, challenged attendees to shift the focus of the mission from merely maintaining churches and schools to changing their communities for Christ. Other presenters included David Vixie (left) from California, 2006 Disney Teacher of the Year; Larry Caviness, president of Southern California Conference; Karnik Doukmetzian, vice president of Adventist Risk Management and a member of the Washington Spanish church in Silver Spring, Md.; and Fred Russell, pastor of the Miracle Temple church in Baltimore.



Memorable highlights of the convention were the inspirational presentations of a 19-year-old and his father, and one man's powerful testimony of overcoming obstacles. Conference president Bill Miller concluded the convention with a call to commitment to complete God's mission.

Conference pastors and teachers engage in a lively discussion during the convention in Williamsburg.



Youth Shine at Pathfinder Camporee

More than 700 Pathfinders and their leaders representing 25 Potomac clubs converged on the grounds of Camp Blue Ridge in Montebello, Va., for the conference's Pathfinder Camporee. This is the first big event of the Pathfinder year and is intended to inspire, motivate, and build teams within the clubs. “What was unique about this year's event,” shared Youth Ministries director Denny Grady, “was that all the speakers were our own young people.”

On Sabbath morning, 13-year-old Ashley Lyn and 14-year-old Amir



Members of the Beltsville (Md.) Broncos help out with daily chores during the Pathfinder Camporee.

Allgood, from the Seabrook (Md.) Seahawks Pathfinder Club, delivered the message. Lyn said that

speaking at Seabrook for Pathfinder Sabbath helped her confidence. When asked how she prepared her sermon, Lyn recounted, “I first worked on what I wanted to say, then my mom and Pastor Jeremiah Green fine-tuned it.” She also felt it was important that her message relate to kids and refrain from trying to sound all grown up.

Allgood said that singing at Seabrook helped him feel comfortable speaking to his peers. He did admit, “Even though I felt a little nervous, I said a little prayer and thought, I'm doing this for God.”

Windsor Inaugurates New Facility

After many years of renting, the Windsor Company in Franklin, Va., recently celebrated the opening of their newly built church (pictured). The main speaker at the special event, former pastor Austin Goodwin, was instrumental in getting the building project off the ground. Conference leaders were also there to help them celebrate.

The Windsor Company, organized in 2006, was formerly named the Franklin Company. Charles Reep, a retired literature evangelist, planted the Franklin and Carrolton groups in the early 1980s while serving Potomac Conference as a Bible worker. Eventually the groups merged into the Franklin Company. The congregation purchased the property in 1995 and started construction of the new church approximately three years ago. “Now that the church is completed,” says lay pastor Sammy Moore, “we can devote our time and energy to reaching out to the community.”



Potomac People

Three New Congregations Help Conference Grow

Potomac has experienced rapid growth among Hispanic congregations. In 2006, 10 new churches were organized. In addition, many Hispanic congregations have initiated new home-based churches throughout the conference:

Centreville (Va.) Spanish Company - This newly organized congregation, which started with just 15 worshipers, had 42 individuals sign as charter members during their recent celebration. Members from the Fairfax (Va.) Spanish church initiated its formation more than a year ago. "The home church maintains its mission focus through small group ministry, which is important for outreach and growth," explained Pastor Walter Castro. The congregation currently meets in an elementary school.

Roanoke (Va.) Spanish Company - There was also reason to rejoice as this new congregation was birthed.

Nearly 60 people signed as charter members during the recent organization ceremony.

Pastor and Bible worker Fismed Omar and others spent a month in earnest prayer before they canvassed the Roanoke area in October 2006. "After we pray for the people to be receptive to the gospel, we canvass the Hispanic neighborhoods every Sunday and offer to give them Bible studies," Omar explained. Even before their official organization, this Roanoke congregation had already started a group in Lynchburg, Va., with 16 people studying the Bible. Conference Hispanic Ministries coordinator Jose Esposito added, "It is exciting to see the growth of new churches and members sharing the gospel and reaping souls for the kingdom, a trend we hope to see continue."

Gaithersburg Brazilian (Md.) Church - This growing congregation recently celebrated their elevation to church status with 65 charter members. Four years ago the group organized as a company, a result of Washington Brazilian (College Park, Md.) church's outreach. "It is my hope," said Pastor Leonardo de Oliveira, "that members will continue to focus on evangelism through small groups and we will continue to grow."



Nearly 60 people eagerly line up to sign as charter members of the newly organized Roanoke (Va.) Spanish Company.

Youth and Children's Ministries Leaders Rejuvenated

More than 150 Potomac Youth and Children's ministries leaders attended the recent leadership training weekend at Camp Blue Ridge in Montebello, Va. With more than 70 workshops to choose from, Denny Grady, Youth Ministries director and event planner, shared, "Participants were able to come away with not only a general understanding of what it means to follow God's leading, but to do that with greater skill and knowledge." Conference president Bill Miller, featured speaker, challenged the leaders to empower their young people and get them involved with meaningful ministry as soon as they begin to respond to Jesus.

"It was encouraging to realize the leaders are not only interested in telling Bible stories, but in teaching the children how to have a relationship with Jesus," shared Barbara Manspeaker, conference Children's Ministries director and event planner. Jacqueline Godinez, Pathfinder leader at the Alexandria (Va.)



Potomac participants learned about leadership skills through demonstration during the training weekend.

Spanish church, added, "The training has taught me how to be a leader and how to set goals for the future."

Potomac People is published in the *Visitor* by the Potomac Conference ■ 606 Greenville Ave., Staunton, VA 24401
Phone: (540) 886-0771 ■ www.pcsda.org ■ President, Bill Miller ■ Editor, Don Wood

Striving for Spirituality

What is spirituality? It seems like such a simple question. Parents spend thousands of dollars hoping their child will experience it, and faculty and staff work hard to achieve its atmosphere on campus. It is the most important component in the only product we sell: Christian Education.

Shenandoah Valley Academy's (SVA) leaders have recently grappled with this question, as well as how to determine if our students are achieving a higher level of spirituality, our number-one objective. Can humans measure spirituality? Can changes in a person's spirituality be observed and noted?

We do believe we help create a spiritual environment on our campus, and so we put lots of prayer, energy, and effort into creating a setting where spiritual growth can take place. We provide time and opportunities for students and staff to develop a better relationship with Jesus. We encourage students and staff to share aspects of their spiritual journey. We evaluate our plans and programs to judge if they contribute to an environment where spiritual growth can take place.



However, in all these efforts we have reminded ourselves that we are limited to looking at the outside. "Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart" (1 Sam. 16:7). We will continue to evaluate and improve our plans and programs to help create opportunities for students to grow spiritually while at SVA. However, we will be careful and intentional to not try to measure spirituality.



Dale Twomley, PhD
Principal

Campus Character Development Put in Motion

SVA is committed to providing opportunities for all students to understand, demonstrate, and practice the Christian life skills and character that will help them to become responsible citizens for successful living in this world and in the world to come.

Each month one of the nine character traits the school focuses on is spotlighted during designated assemblies, weekend religious meetings, and prayer time with campus families. The student body is encouraged to practice this trait and to observe its presence in their fellow students. At the month's conclusion, the SA Student Senate selects from among recommendations made by the staff and student body candidates who exemplify this trait. The student body then elects the student of the month who best demonstrates that character trait.



The recognition for September's trait "Brother's Keeper"—demonstrating understanding and concern for others—was recently presented to senior Tucker Coston (left). The students selected sophomore Mitch Ramsey (right) for October's trait



"Courage"—standing for what is right even if you stand alone.

At the end of the school year, the staff will select from the nine monthly winners the one student they believe best demonstrates all nine character traits. This striving for excellence in Christian character sets before each student the goal of being all that he or she can be and "attaining the whole measure of the fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4:13).

Mark Your Calendars

December

- 14 Christmas Concert, 7 p.m.
- 15 Christmas Concert (repeat), 4 p.m.
- 14-15 Open House, *Reservations Required*
- 19-Jan. 7 Christmas Vacation

Happenings is published in the *Visitor* by Shenandoah Valley Academy ■ 234 West Lee Highway, New Market, VA 22844
Phone: (540) 740-3161 ■ Principal, Dale Twomley, PhD
E-mail: twomleyd@sva-va.org ■ www.youracademy.org

A Time to Give Thanks

As I think about all I am thankful for, the gifts that I would like to give and the gifts that I would like to receive, several things come to my mind. First, I am fortunate to serve a God who is so loving and forgiving. Second, God has provided me with a beautiful wife and family. Third, I feel very fortunate to serve at Takoma Academy (TA).

It is the time when we think about giving gifts to those we love, just as Jesus gave everything, even His life. For this reason I chose to interview four students about my third love, TA. Here is what they said:



What do you like about TA?

"It is Christ centered," responded Sophomore Gabriela Bonilla (left). "You don't have to be afraid to be a Christian. There is prayer in every classroom, with teachers who really care about you." Junior Tiffani Jackson, replied, "It is a religious school and I can pray anytime. People care enough to hug me. If something is wrong, people can tell and they care."



How do you feel TA prepares you for higher education?

"Being a college prep school, we are pushed here, especially in science and English," commented sophomore Cheryl Simpson (left). "Teachers are constantly reminding us what needs to be done in college." Senior Mathew Johnson added, "Adequately. Teachers cover aspects that I will face. As long as I make a solid effort, I will be prepared."



Do you feel comfortable and safe with TA's diversity?

"Very comfortable and safe," said Jackson (left). "I like the diversity. It adds to the warmth of the school. Different people offer different things and bring positive things." Simpson agreed and added, "I feel very comfortable and safe. The diversity is great. It is not all one race and it lends to seeing different perspectives."



What is the most important aspect you feel TA has given you?

"The weeks of prayer!" chimed Bonilla. "They prepare you for being successful in life and work, with God being first in your life." Johnson (left) stated, "Spirituality. A lot has been spiritual. Boyer's religion class has revolutionized my view of God."



C. Dunbar Henri
Principal

Seniors Get National Recognition



Seniors Julian Oliver, Alex Holness, and David Byass (pictured left to right) scored in the top five percent of the more than 140,000 black Americans who requested consideration in the 2008 National Achievement Scholarship Program, when they took the 2006 PSAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test. A roster of these students' names and information is being sent to about 1,500 colleges and universities. This program was initiated in 1964 specifically to honor academically promising black American high school students.

TA Events

December

- 7 Fine Arts Christmas Program, *Sligo Church*
- 8 Senior Fundraiser, *Gym, 7-10 p.m.*
- 12 Staff Christmas Assembly Program
- 21 Noon Dismissal
- 21-Jan. 6 Christmas Break

TA Today is published in the *Visitor* by Takoma Academy ■ 8120 Carroll Ave., Takoma Park, MD 20912 ■ Phone: (301) 434-4700 ■ Principal, C. Dunbar Henri ■ www.ta.edu

From the Heart

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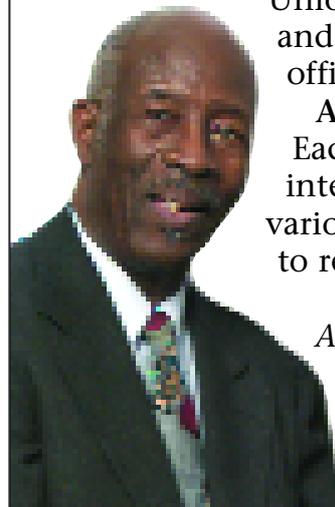
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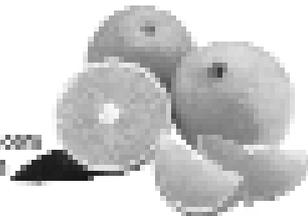
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Baltimore	4:44	4:46	4:51	4:56	5:03
Cincinnati	5:16	5:19	5:23	5:28	5:35
Cleveland	4:57	5:00	5:05	5:10	5:17
Columbus	5:07	5:10	5:14	5:20	5:26
Jersey City	4:29	4:32	4:36	4:42	4:49
Norfolk	4:49	4:52	4:56	5:01	5:08
Parkersburg	5:04	5:06	5:10	5:16	5:23
Philadelphia	4:36	4:38	4:43	4:48	4:55
Pittsburgh	4:54	4:56	5:01	5:06	5:13
Reading	4:38	4:41	4:45	4:50	4:57
Richmond	4:52	4:55	4:59	5:05	5:11
Roanoke	5:03	5:06	5:10	5:15	5:22
Toledo	5:04	5:07	5:11	5:17	5:24
Trenton	4:34	4:36	4:40	4:46	4:53
Wash., D.C.	4:47	4:49	4:54	4:59	5:06

SUNSET CALENDAR

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The *Visitor* provides news and information, resources for effective ministry, and insight on issues with a spiritual focus to help people celebrate God's transforming grace in preparation for His return.

COLUMBIA UNION CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

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Published by the Columbia Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Printed at the Review & Herald Publishing Association. Volume 112 ■ Issue 12

The Only Safe Place to Be

Do you have a story that you tell often? One of those personal, life experience kind of stories that eventually becomes so much a part of you, it seems that it's no longer merely a story you tell others, but one that is actually telling *you*, shaping *you*, guiding *you*? This is one of my stories, one that has a hold on me like that. The events are true—I was there—and I haven't been the same since.



After screening one of my films at a Christian college in the Midwest, a young student with tears in her eyes approached me. She told me she believed God was calling her to be an actress. (I'm sometimes skeptical at statements like this, but she was convincing.) I listened as she shared with great detail and passion her desire to honor God through the craft of acting. Then her voice faltered, disappearing into a whisper: "... but,"

"Stop!" I interrupted. "Let me guess ... your parents ..."

She nodded.

"They told you not to go into acting because there's no money in it," I said.

Her eyes widened as she nodded again. I continued: "They also told you that Hollywood is a dark and evil place and, if you go there, something bad might happen to you."

She nodded again and lowered her head.

I wasn't being prophetic; I'd already heard all the arguments against the entertainment industry a *hundred* times. But this moment was different. With her hopeful eyes looking to me for some kind of answer, and my own words still echoing all around me, it happened. Epiphany. Clarity. God opened my eyes to the obvious.

THE ARTIST AS MISSIONARY

What if, many years ago, the church had told potential missionaries, "Don't do it. There's no money in it. Besides, you might have to go to far away places where bad things might happen to you." What a tragic loss that would have been. Yes, many died penniless. Some even died tragically in far away places. But the world was changed because of them.

Is the cause of Christ no longer worth the risk? What is *His* story telling? How is *His* story shaping? Where is *His* story guiding?

We are all missionaries, and the only safe place to be is where Christ calls. It doesn't matter if you're a nurse, preacher, tent-maker, writer, or even an actor.

Rik Swartzwelder, a graduate of Columbia Union College, is an award-winning filmmaker who grew up in New Philadelphia, Ohio, and now lives in Burbank, Calif.

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