

VISITOR

CONNECTING COLUMBIA UNION SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

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RIPPED FROM THE HEADLINES

Where does our church stand on some of today's most talked about issues?



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Ripped From the Headlines

Wondering where our church stands on some of today's most talked about issues? We asked Columbia Union legal counsel, Walter Carson, to shed some light on some of the questions members are asking.

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EDITOR'S CORNER

"MY KIDS DRIVE ME CRAZY"

"I am just like you. My kids drive me crazy! Yet, I love them with every fiber of my being, and couldn't imagine my life without them. I sometimes keep a



clean house. Other times, it looks like a tornado has blown through. I like my family to wear clean clothes ... but the laundry! ...

I worry about the immediate future—what will we have for dinner? I worry about the distant future—will I be able to afford to send my kids to college?"

This is the opening to Kelly Holder's new blog, projectencouragemom.com. The clinical psychologist, wife, home-schooling mom of three kids under 7, and member of Allegheny East's Hillside church in Harrisburg, Pa., believes sharing her stories and those of her "mommy friends" will provide help and hope.

LISTEN UP!

Kevin Krueger, the new vice president and general manager at WGTS 91.9 FM, just told me about a website that literally brings music to my ears and that of its 2,442 other fans.



Hymnsandfavorites.com features The Heritage Singers, King's Heralds and other old-school praisers we don't often get to hear these days.

SOUP'S ON

Each year I know fall has arrived when our union territory is transformed into a yellow, orange and red display of God's handiwork. Like clockwork, *Visitor* designer Kelly Coe makes her yummy lentil soup. What soup are you making this fall? Find her recipe and post yours at facebook.com/columbiaunionvisitor. The first three Columbia Union members to share will get a nice prize.

READ THE VISITOR FROM 1901

Looking for a past issue of the *Visitor* magazine? Find and read it online at columbiaunion.org/visitor. There are a few issues missing, but thanks to our friends at the General Conference Office of Archives, Statistics and Research, you can find most of our archives dating back to 1901 when it was called *The Welcome Visitor*.



—Celeste Ryan Blyden

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MISSION STATEMENT ■ 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.

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Volume 118 ■ Issue 11

Religious Freedom: A God-Given Choice

It naturally worries church members to hear that the Seventh-day Adventist Church defends the rights of Muslims, Native Americans and even atheists. Why on Earth would we support the teachings of the Quran, the use of hallucinogens or a godless philosophy?

My answer entails a very important and urgent distinction: We do not support the doctrines of the Quran. We do not desire that people use peyote. We are not attracted to atheism. Rather, we support *the freedom of those* who wish to be Muslim to practice their faith. We support the *free choice* of Native Americans to practice their traditional religion. We support the *free choice* of atheists to believe or not to believe.

We earnestly hope that all of those people will see the truth of the Bible and accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. Still, Seventh-day Adventists are staunch advocates of religious freedom and recognize it as a fundamental God-given right. Inherent in that right is freedom of choice.

ALL OR NONE

Our advocacy is wholly consistent with the character of God Who grants us free choice in our spiritual lives. Ellen White wrote: "The government of God is not, as Satan would make it appear, founded upon a blind submission, an unreasoning control. It appeals to the intellect and



the conscience. 'Come now, and let us reason together' is the Creator's invitation to the beings He has made. God does not force the will of His creatures. He cannot accept an homage that is not willingly and intelligently given. ... He invites us to give ourselves to Him, that He may work

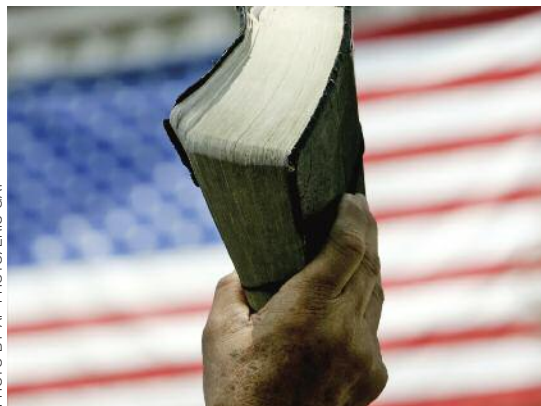


PHOTO BY AP PHOTO/ERIC GAY

His will in us. It remains for us to *choose* whether we will be set free from the bondage of sin, to share the glorious liberty of the sons of God" (*Steps to Christ*, pp. 43-44).

Paul says it this way: "Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free" (Gal. 5:1, NKJV).

Jesus Christ came not to guarantee everyone salvation—indeed, that's impossible, for some won't choose to be saved. But, Jesus Christ did come to guarantee our freedom to choose. And, it so happens that the very same freedom that allows one person to choose against God, serves to allow *us* to love and serve and worship Him. Either all are free, or none are.

As vice president and general counsel for the Columbia Union Conference, Walter Carson (wcarson@columbiunion.net) advocates for religious freedom and assists members with workplace religious accommodation.



UNION LEADERS CONFER RELIGIOUS LIBERTY AWARD

Rob Vandeman, executive secretary for the Columbia Union Conference, presents J. Brent Walker, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee, with the Adrian Westney Religious Liberty Award at the union's annual religious liberty Sabbath held recently at Potomac Conference's Sligo church in Takoma Park, Md. Walker received the award in "recognition of Baptist leadership in the advocacy of religious freedom in the United States of America," said Walter E. Carson, the union's vice president and general counsel.

HEALTHCARE SYSTEMS HELP "RESTORE SIGHT IN INDIA"

At the most recent Columbia Union Conference Executive Committee meeting, William "Bill" G. Robertson, president of Adventist HealthCare based in Gaithersburg, Md., and Fred Manchur, CEO of Kettering Adventist HealthCare based in Kettering, Ohio, donated \$25,000 to the Ruby Nelson Memorial Hospital in Punjab, India. One of the hospital's missions is to help restore vision to millions of people in rural India who end up blind because they do not have access to a simple, two-minute cataract surgery. The donation will help the hospital purchase a machine to do advanced cataract surgery. Read more at columbiaunion.org/indiavision.



Jacob Prabhakar Chindrupu, MD, medical director for the Ruby Nelson Memorial Hospital in India, presents William Robertson and Fred Manchur with a thank-you plaque.

1.3%

The amount tithes increased unionwide during the first six months of the year,

as reported by Seth Bardu, Columbia Union Conference treasurer. "It isn't a large increase, but despite the long economic downturn and ongoing unemployment challenges facing the country, we are holding steady," he said.

20 ATTEND TRAINING FOR TEACHERS OF SMALL SCHOOLS

Jennifer Ewers (below, left), who teaches at the Greenbrier Valley Academy in Lewisburg, W.Va., is in her first year teaching in a one-room schoolhouse. She has a total of 12 students in kindergarten and grades 1, 3 and 5-8. "I love it," she said. "When you have the little kids, the older kids almost have to act better because they are examples. There's just such a community feeling and character building. I also love how the little kids listen when I'm teaching something to the older kids and the older kids listen when I'm teaching younger kids." She was one of 20 who attended a recent Columbia Union Conference training for small schools. Read more at columbiaunion.org/smallschools.



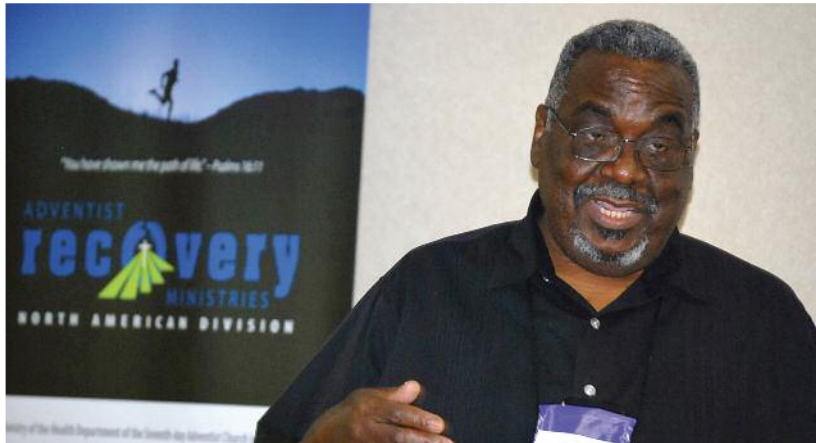
33 ATTEND ADDICTIONS RECOVERY TRAINING

Some 33 people recently attended the first Adventist Recovery Ministries (ARMin) Journey to Wholeness training offered in the Columbia Union. An official training of the North American Division (NAD), the instruction is generally only offered at their annual Health Ministries Summit, according to Katia Reinert, PhD, NAD Health Ministries director.

The three-day session, held this year at the Shady Grove Adventist Hospital Conference Center in Rockville, Md., focused on helping members recover from or minister to those suffering from various addictions using a Christ-centered, 12-step program. Participants received expert insights from Christian professionals working in the academic and clinical field of

addictions, learned how addictions and obsessive-compulsive behaviors are formed and explored the

relevance of creating a similar ministry in their churches. Read more at columbiaunion.org/armin.

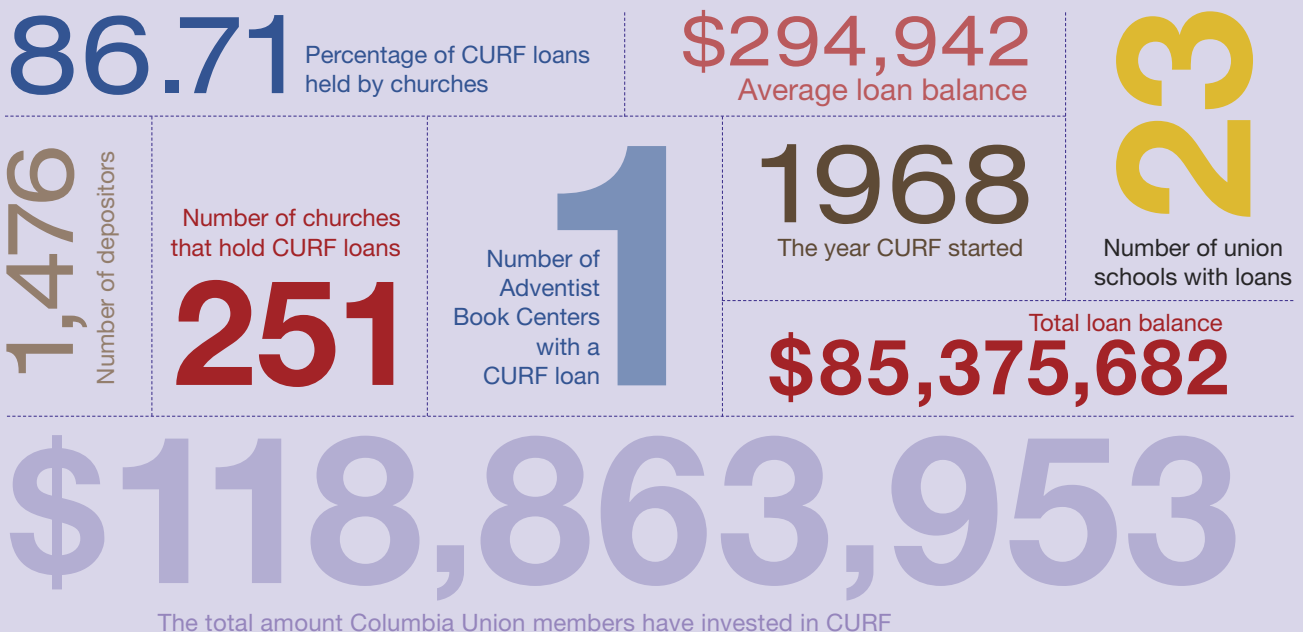


James Jackson, who has served as the ARMin director of the Allegheny East Conference's Mt. Olivet church in Camden, N.J., for more than 20 years, shares his testimony of recovery and transformation.

BY THE NUMBERS:

Columbia Union Revolving Fund

It is not always easy for church leaders to go to their local banks and secure a loan for an upcoming project. That is where the Columbia Union Revolving Fund (CURF) comes in. With the motto "Making Ministry Possible," CURF provides loans to conferences, churches, schools and Adventist Book Centers for projects ranging from major capital improvements to relatively small purchases, like a new organ or a riding lawnmower. Below are some numbers from their books as of October 15:



EN NÚMEROS: Día de camaradería de Allegheny East Conference

El consejo de iglesias hispanas de Allegheny East Conference (AEC) se reunió recientemente para celebrar el día anual de camaradería en el campamento que posee la asociación en Pine Forge, Pa. A continuación se detallan algunas estadísticas de ese día:

El número de países representados en el desfile de las naciones

37

25

El número de personas que se unieron a la iglesia ese día mediante el bautismo y la profesión de fe

El número de personas que Soraida Gouveia, la persona laica del año, llevó a Jesús

15

3,000

El número de asistentes



Los pastores hispanos de AEC reconocen como la persona laica del año a Soraida Gouveia (segunda desde la derecha), miembro de la iglesia hispana El Remanente en Wilmington, Del.

NUEVO DIRECTOR DE MINISTERIOS MULTICULTURALES DE ALLEGHENY WEST

Sergio Romero fue recientemente nombrado director de Ministerios Multiculturales y Crecimiento de Iglesia de Allegheny West Conference. Romero, que tiene un doctorado en asesoramiento, ha trabajado en el ministerio durante

23 años y proviene de Nevada-Utah Conference, donde sirvió como coordinador de Ministerios Hispanos. Ayudó a establecer seis nuevas iglesias en Las Vegas y en Salt Lake City, y organizó y dirigió once viajes misioneros en los que se construyeron seis iglesias, una escuela y un campamento permanente para niños.

Romero se dedicará a aumentar la capacitación necesaria y los programas de evangelización en todo el territorio de Allegheny West. "Cada iglesia debería duplicarse cada dos años y establecer iglesias en lugares donde no las hay", aseguró. "El eslogan 'Yo voy, yo apoyo' formará parte de nuestro plan, lo que significa que algunas personas establecerán iglesias y otras apoyarán a dichas personas".

Romero y su esposa Laura tienen un hijo, Sergio.

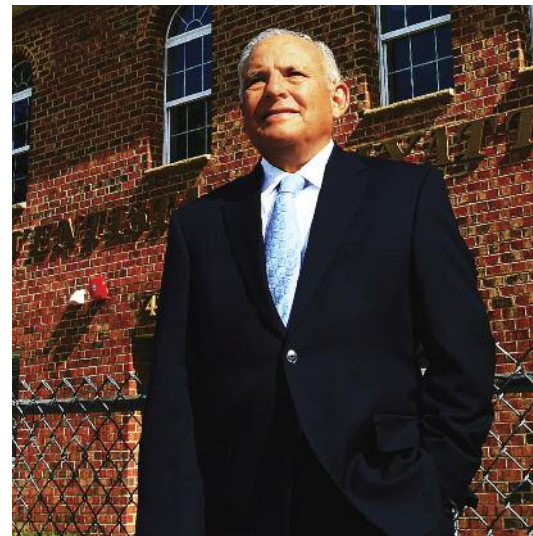


LOS MIEMBROS DE HYATTSVILLE FESTEJAN SU NUEVO HOGAR

Tras años de reunirse los sábados por la tarde a adorar en el subsuelo de la iglesia de habla inglesa de Hyattsville, Md., la iglesia hispana de Hyattsville, en Potomac Conference, se trasladó recientemente a su propio hogar. Durante el servicio de inauguración, los miembros celebraron junto a Bill Miller, presidente de la asociación; Jorge Ramírez, vicepresidente administrativo de la asociación; José Esposito, director de Ministerios Hispanos; y muchos otros vecinos y amigos.

También hubo momentos musicales con el grupo Alabanza Pura, corte de cinta, comida de camaradería y se develó un mural con los nombres de todas las personas que contribuyeron fielmente para que la iglesia sea una realidad.

Con el nuevo templo, los miembros de la iglesia hispana de Hyattsville pueden tener servicios de alabanza a la mañana y pueden extender sus servicios a la comunidad. Algunos de los servicios que ofrecen son: clases de preparación para el examen del GED, clases de preparación para el examen de ciudadanía, trabajos manuales, costura y piano. También administran un banco de alimentos.



El pastor Fausto Salazar frente a la nueva iglesia hispana de Hyattsville, situada en 4815 Edmonston Road.

FOTO CORTESÍA DE VALDENSE FILMS

PUNTOS DE VISTA: ¿POR QUÉ ES IMPORTANTE LEER LA BIBLIA?

Nos hacemos esta pregunta ya que un estudio reciente realizado por la American Bible Society y el Barna Research reveló que solo el ocho por ciento de los hispanos leen y estudian la Biblia de forma habitual.



Leer la Biblia es importante porque es un mensaje directo del trono de Dios al corazón humano. Es (tan) reconfortante como la lluvia en la tierra árida; le devuelve la vida al corazón afligido. Es la respuesta cuando estamos confundidos y nuestra guía cuando nos sentimos perdidos. Leer sus palabras nos acerca a nuestro Creador y fortalece nuestra fe, nuestra visión y nuestro propósito. Al compartir lo que la Biblia ha hecho en nuestra vidas, permitiremos que otros también lo hagan.—*Mauricio Salazar, miembro de la iglesia de Frederick (Md.) en Chesapeake Conference*



Para conocer a Dios hay que pasar tiempo con Él. A través de la Escritura, podemos escuchar Su voz que nos dice de dónde venimos y dónde quiere que estemos. Leer la Biblia nos da fe y esperanza, y nos permite ver cuánto nos ama Dios. En este mundo complejo, necesitamos estar con Dios a través de Su palabra y la oración. Allí encontrarás las respuestas a las preguntas difíciles. Ora para que el Espíritu Santo te dé el deseo de leer la Biblia a diario.—*Cristina McConnell, miembro de la iglesia hispana de Baltimore en Chesapeake Conference*



Cuando pienso en lo importante que es leer la Biblia, viene a mi mente la batalla entre Jesús y Satanás en el desierto. La respuesta a la primera tentación me pide poderosamente que esté conectado con Dios mediante la lectura de Su palabra—'No sólo de pan vivirá el hombre, sino de toda palabra que sale de la boca de Dios' (Mt. 4:4). Entender que no luchamos contra 'sangre y carne, sino contra principados' (Ef. 6:12) es una gran motivación para leer la palabra de Dios".—*Kleyton Feitosa, secretario ejecutivo y director de Ministerios Multiculturales de Chesapeake Conference*

ARTÍCULO ESPECIAL DE VISITOR: Extraído de los titulares

¿Te has preguntado alguna vez cuál es la posición de nuestra iglesia sobre algunos de los temas más discutidos en la actualidad? Walter Carson (en la foto), abogado de Columbia Union Conference, responde las preguntas de los miembros sobre algunos de los temas que aparecen en los titulares de las noticias. Decidimos pedirle que aclare algunos de estos temas que afectan nuestras libertades y nuestro futuro.



Visitor: Los últimos titulares han anunciado la creciente popularidad del papa por lo que algunos adventistas creen que la Ley Dominical Nacional será pronto una realidad. ¿Es una posibilidad real?

Carson: No existe nada inminente que sugiera la posibilidad de lo que conocemos tradicionalmente como "leyes dominicales". Pero esto no quiere decir que no suceda—de hecho, nuestra creencia profética sostiene que el sábado bíblico estará en gran peligro al final de los tiempos. Probablemente sepas que a finales del siglo XIX hubo un proyecto de ley dominical que hizo que los líderes de nuestra iglesia defendieran la causa de la libertad religiosa y la presentaran ante la opinión pública. A.T. Jones, pionero adventista, luchó y contribuyó con el fracaso de la ley propuesta.

Lea más inglés en la página 10 o en español en columbiaunion.org/religiousliberty.

Is the Church Engaged in Public Policy Discussions? And, Should We Be?

Seventh-day Adventist Church leaders have advocated for religious freedom for well over 100 years, but what about other important societal issues, like the sanctity of marriage, capital punishment or conscience protections for physicians in the recent healthcare debate? Certainly, the church is in a unique position to offer sound and ethical advice to policymakers, but should we follow the example of early church leaders who intensely engaged policymakers over prohibition and dietary health reform?

Although church founders James and Ellen White warned members about political preoccupation, they found temperance reform to be of particular importance to the church. The Whites often spoke on the dangers of consumption and worked with like-minded individuals and

groups to help establish health and temperance societies. They also viewed a campaign against national Sunday laws as a “duty ... to arouse to action” (*Counsels for the Church*, p. 336)

MAKING OFFICIAL STATEMENTS

Today the church is more engaged in political discussions than most members probably realize, says Melissa Reid (below), executive director for the North American Religious Liberty Association (NARLA). “The church has commented on a number of issues, including more controversial matters,” she explains. “Take family planning. While it may not necessarily be a priority currently, the church has issued a statement.”

These policy statements are also important tools when contemplating public advocacy.



“If there’s a pending issue before the state legislature on a topic like family life, we will refer to these press releases as we formulate our response here in the Columbia Union,” adds Gary Ross,



(above) assistant to Walter Carson, the Columbia Union Conference’s vice president for Public Affairs and Religious Liberty (PARL).

ENGAGING IN ADVOCACY

The church uses public advocacy

to educate community leaders and policymakers on important issues. For instance, the General Conference’s PARL office works with United Nations and world ambassadors, heads of state and leaders of faith communities to endorse human rights, health, education, women’s rights and religious freedom for all faiths.

Church experts monitor religious liberty discrimination in the workplace and seek accommodations. They also sign amicus briefs in support of, or in opposition to, pending litigation.

Within the Columbia Union, the PARL staff monitor pending legislation before state legislatures. If an issue like the recent marriage debate arises in the Maryland General Assembly, the office will work with community leaders and faith-based organizations, prepare committee testimony and raise awareness for church members. “We lobbied the state legislature and worked with our coalition partners,” Ross notes, referring to the marriage debate. Although the legislation ultimately passed, the effort did establish an important conscience clause. “Religious organizations and their personnel do not have to officiate or host ceremonies that violate their beliefs,” Ross explains.

FORMING PARTNERSHIPS

Through faith-based and community partnerships, the church maintains open lines of communication with policymakers and community leaders so that expertise and perspective can be shared and our religious freedoms protected. The church also participates in religious liberty round tables that allow our denomination to work closely with other faith groups to pool resources and discuss legislative approaches.

PARL’s Tips for Becoming a Better Advocate

1 Tune in to the weekly *Talking About Freedom* digital podcast, where academics, lawyers, authors, newsmakers and other headliners discuss interesting and timely church/state issues. Visit columbiaunion.org/talkingaboutfreedom.

2 Subscribe to *Liberty* magazine, which provides analysis on religious freedom issues and pending litigation to American policymakers, judges and community leaders.

3 Build relationships with your local politicians to lay the groundwork for later advocacy opportunities.

“We recognize that there are local public policy issues that may not fit in a traditional religious liberty category but are important to church-state relations,” adds Carson.

For instance, working with the Maryland Interfaith Legislative Committee and the Central Maryland Ecumenical Council provides an opportunity for the church to speak out on religious and social issues at the state level. It also promotes inter-faith dialogue and name recognition.

WHY FOCUS ON RELIGIOUS LIBERTY?

Although there are many important issues confronting our church community, church leaders remain focused on protecting and advocating for religious freedom because, as the *Statements, Guidelines and Other Documents by the Seventh-day Adventist Church* manual reads, “A society that respects religious liberty is more likely to tolerate diverse political views and show greater respect for the individual.”

It is also partly because of our understanding of end-time events, says Carson. “I believe all liberties are important, but religious freedom goes to the heart of our beliefs as Adventists,” he explains. “Bible prophecy and counsel by Ellen White clearly show that religious freedom will be infringed upon during the last days.”

Religious liberty also reflects

Christ’s nature. “He gives us the freedom of choice. The church believes it should work to preserve this freedom for others,” says Reid.

And, our Protestant heritage plays a role. “Like the reformers, the Adventist Church respects the free will of the individual, and tends not to take stands on issues unrelated to core beliefs or doctrines,” adds Reid. “Members should be free to exercise their own conscience rather than merely accepting the dictates of the corporate church.”

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Church leaders say they aren’t the only members who should join conversations about public policy. In *Testimonies for the Church*, Ellen White wrote, “We are not doing the will of God if we sit in quietude, doing nothing to preserve the liberty of conscience” (Vol. 5, p. 713).

The apostle Paul said, “Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God” (Rom. 13:1, NIV).

Education is probably the most important tool for decision-making, says Reid. “An informed citizen is better situated to respond. Look at both sides of an issue. Ask, ‘How does it relate to our Christian faith, and do our values

FACEBOOKED:

How Involved Should Our Church be in Public Policy?

We have a moral duty to be informed and involved in some critical political issues.

—Jason Miller, *Spencerville Church, Silver Spring, Md.*

[The church’s] role should be an indirect one through its spiritual and ethical education of its members.

—Karl Lawrence, *Sligo Church, Takoma Park, Md.*

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support the cause?” she says.

“We are citizens and should take our civic responsibility seriously. I believe this means everything from praying for our leaders, to paying taxes, to casting a thoughtful vote, to understanding our country’s history,” states Ross. The key, he suggests, is a proper balance between our religious obligations and civic responsibilities.

Civic responsibility extends well beyond voting and writing our representatives. Church organizations like NARLA provide an excellent opportunity for congregants to be involved in public policy discussions. They provide in-depth analysis on legislation and trends and coordinate member events, grassroots mobilization and educational awareness, including an annual Capitol Hill advocacy day in Washington, D.C.

Civic involvement also means being visible in the community. “This is consistent with Christ’s life,” observes Carson. “He reached out to people and helped them. We should not be so far removed that we are not a part of our community.”

PHOTOS BY MICHAEL MCKENNIS



Religious Liberty Advocates: John Graz, *Public Affairs and Religious Liberty (PARL) director for the General Conference*; Walter Carson, *PARL director and legal counsel for the Columbia Union Conference*; and Orlan Johnson, *North American Division PARL director*



RIPPED FROM THE HEADLINES

Where does our church stand on some of today's most talked about issues?



Although you may never see him on CNN, Walter Carson, Esq., the Columbia Union Conference’s “legal eagle,” often fields questions from members about some of the issues making headline news. We decided to put him on the witness stand to shed light on many of these topics that impact our freedoms and future.

Q Recent news headlines have heralded Pope Francis’ growing popularity, making some Seventh-day Adventists speculate that a national Sunday law could soon become a reality. Is it a realistic concern?



Carson: There is nothing on the horizon that remotely resembles what we have traditionally meant by

“Sunday laws.” But, that isn’t to say it couldn’t happen—in fact, it is our prophetic belief that the biblical Sabbath will fall into great jeopardy at the end of time. Probably you know that it was a pending Sunday law in the late 19th century that led our church to take up the cause of religious freedom and carry it into the public arena. An early Adventist, A.T. Jones, challenged and helped defeat that proposed law.

Q President Obama’s healthcare reform plan includes a federal requirement for employers to provide contraceptives and morning-after drugs through their health



insurance plans. Has our church weighed in on the discussion around birth control?

Carson: The church has issued guidelines to assist members when contemplating abortion. These guidelines do not seek to serve as an individual’s conscience. Rather, they provide moral guidance to assist members in reaching a decision consistent with “principles for a Christian view of life.”

Q Same-sex marriages are now legally recognized in 13 states. What does our church say about the growing acceptance of these unions?

Carson: It is definitely a public issue—and one that will most likely be settled by the Supreme Court. And, there are at least two religious liberty implications: we seek assurances that Adventist clergy cannot be sued for refusing to officiate at gay wedding and want assurances that churches will not

WITH PUBLIC SAFETY AND THE VALUE OF HUMAN LIFE IN MIND, THE SALE OF AUTOMATIC OR SEMI-AUTOMATIC ASSAULT WEAPONS SHOULD BE STRICTLY CONTROLLED. THIS WOULD REDUCE THE USE OF WEAPONS BY MENTALLY DISTURBED PEOPLE AND CRIMINALS, ESPECIALLY THOSE INVOLVED IN DRUG AND GANG ACTIVITIES.

Excerpted from “Ban on Sales of Assault Weapons to Civilians” voted at the General Conference Session in July 1990

PHOTO BY AP PHOTO/CHARLES DHARAPAK

WE HOLD THAT ALL PEOPLE, REGARDLESS OF THEIR SEXUAL ORIENTATION, ARE LOVED BY GOD. WE DO NOT CONDONE SINGLING OUT ANY GROUP FOR SCORN AND DERISION, LET ALONE ABUSE. STILL, GOD'S WORD THAT TRANSCENDS TIME AND CULTURE DOES NOT PERMIT A HOMOSEXUAL LIFESTYLE.

Excerpted from "Seventh-day Adventist Response to Same-Sex Marriage—A Reaffirmation of Christian Marriage" voted by the General Conference Executive Committee at Annual Council in October 2012

PHOTO BY AP PHOTO/NEWTOWN BEE, SHANNON HICKS

be penalized for refusing to offer their facilities as venues for such marriages. Some such assurances have been forthcoming. In the coming months, religious freedom advocates will most likely widen their concern on this issue, and we will listen to their arguments.

Q When it comes to hiring practices, unlike all other American employers, our church employs people based on their church membership. Isn't that discrimination?

Carson: Title VII of the Civil Rights Act permits churches to exclusively hire, and the U.S. Supreme Court recently upheld what we call the "ministerial exception." Putting it in lay terms, we believe there is such a thing as "institutional free exercise," in addition to the *individual* free exercise that we generally reference when we discuss the First Amendment. Our religious organizations may appear discriminatory when they refuse to employ individuals who are not Adventist, but we do this to protect the character and identity of the church.

Q After an armed gunman killed 20 school children and six teachers at a Newtown, Conn., school last December, the long debate over gun control gained significant fervor. Does our church have a stance on gun ownership?

Carson: Yes. As far back as 1990, the church issued a statement calling for the strict control of the sale of automatic or semi-automatic assault weapons. The statement observed that Christians should pursue peace and the preservation of life. It also expressed the opinion that such control would reduce the use of such weapons by criminals and mentally disturbed people.

Q This past summer, a valedictorian at a public school in South Carolina recited the Lord's Prayer despite his school district's recent decision to eliminate prayer from graduation ceremonies. Is it true that our church supports the ban on prayer in public schools?



WHAT CAN YOU DO ABOUT SABBATH ISSUES AT WORK?

The Columbia Union's own Walter Carson, Esq., is the only Adventist to successfully argue before the U.S. Supreme Court. In *Hobbie v. Unemployment Appeals Commission of Florida*, the Court reversed the appeals commission's refusal to provide unemployment benefits to a woman who was fired for refusing to work on Sabbath. The Court found that a state could not treat a religious convert differently than a person whose beliefs preceded her employment. ¶ Carson reminds us that the Civil Rights Act requires an employer to "reasonably accommodate" a person's religious beliefs in the workplace. If you face Sabbath issues at your job, he suggests taking the following steps:

- 1 Alert your supervisor in writing of the need for a Sabbath accommodation. Your church pastor can help you write a letter.
- 2 Cooperate with your employer to find an accommodation, seeking assistance from your local conference or union religious liberty director.
- 3 If disciplined, be prepared to file charges with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (eEOC.gov).
- 4 Take your situation to the Lord and ask for His guidance.

DID YOU KNOW?

Although the church is not actively engaged in every policy discussion, we do have statements on birth control, homosexuality, climate change and even the Iraq War. To learn more, visit adventist.org/beliefs/statements/index.html.

Carson: Yes, but only if by that you are referring to formal teacher-led classroom prayers, or other forms of state-sponsored prayer. Because public school teachers are functionaries of the state, what they do to benefit or endorse or sanction religion would strike us as a potential "establishment" of religion, which, of course, our First Amendment prohibits. But, by no means would we expunge religion from public schools altogether. Today the issue of religion in public schools has

shifted to practices that we find quite acceptable, such as noontime "flagpole prayers," and equal access rights to school property for use by religious groups and clubs and the teaching of religion in ways that does not seek to inculcate religion.

Q In September a Florida pastor (and several others since) threatened to burn the Quran. Does our church support such acts?

Carson: Absolutely not. As someone said, "God's got to look good through us." In other words, we are reluctant to take positions or actions that would put the world church in a poor light. But, this is a matter of judgment. It is often our responsibility to determine how big a price to pay for being correct as far as the Constitution is concerned. Once, the Satanists of America sought the church's support for their attempt to secure tax-exempt status, for which they were qualified under the law.

We declined the invitation because of the impression that such a partnership would have conveyed.

Q Following Superstorm Sandy, many have debated whether it is constitutional for FEMA to provide relief funds to faith-based organizations. Where does our church stand on the issue?

Carson: The church has always been wary whenever taxpayer funds are being handed out to churches and church schools. Such matters regularly go before the courts as a violation of the First Amendment "Establishment Clause." And, faith-based organizations accepting federal funding are at risk of losing their independence as they become subject to governmental regulations. Remember the adage "he who pays the piper, calls the tune." The church is carefully monitoring this situation and I am certain will seek to be consistent with its Establishment Clause beliefs.

YOUR TURN

What do you think is the biggest religious liberty issue our church faces today? Tweet @VisitorNews or weigh in at [facebook.com/columbiaunionvisitor](https://www.facebook.com/columbiaunionvisitor).

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Miracle Temple Members Work to Improve Heart Health

According to the 2011 *Maryland Vital Statistics Annual Report*, compared to Caucasians in Maryland, African-Americans have higher risks of dying from a stroke, heart disease and cancer. With this in mind, the state of Maryland is partnering with Miracle Temple's



At a recent health fair, David Turner, a Miracle Temple member, encourages kids to eat more fruit.

Faith Center for Community Wellness and Advancement, Inc., in Baltimore, to help reduce the number of cardiovascular deaths among racial and ethnic minorities in the community. Since 2009 the Maryland Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities has been working with select local health departments to eliminate racial and ethnic health disparities for adult minorities. This year the Faith Center was the only community program in the state selected to run the \$75,000 demonstration program. The program includes a six-week Healthy Heartbeat program, held this fall, which taught participants how to take better care of their heart, lose weight, stop smoking and manage stress, blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar levels.

Faith Center staff kicked off the program with a community day and health fair at a local Mennonite church. The day featured music, children's games, a moon bounce, food and free, medical screenings. For the past 10 years, the Faith Center has served the Southwest Baltimore community through annual health fairs, community clean-ups, clothing giveaways and smoking cessation and addiction recovery classes.

—Jerry R. Howard II

Calvary Member Named Teacher of the Year

Paula Barnes, PhD, an associate professor of English and chair of the Department of English and Foreign Languages at Hampton University in Hampton, Va., recently received the Edward L. Hamm Sr. Teaching Award. Students and fellow faculty members nominate each candidate for the award. The awardees are faculty members who extend their teaching beyond the classroom and inspire a zest for learning and a commitment to excellence in their students.

Upon receiving the award, Barnes, a member of the Calvary church in Newport News, Va., says she felt "honored, yet humbled. Thankful. To me, it is a confirmation of a God-given gift."

Barnes, who says teaching was something that excited her from an early age, recalls lining up her dolls on Sabbath afternoons to teach them the Sabbath School lesson. After nearly 40 years in the profession, she says she still enjoys the learning aspect of her work. "As students are exposed to my joy of learning, some of them experience that joy for themselves," she says.

Barnes holds a bachelor's from Oakwood University

(Ala.), a master's in English education from The Ohio State University and a PhD from the University of Michigan.



William R. Harvey, president of Hampton University, presents Paula Barnes with the Edward L. Hamm Sr. Teaching Award.

Ephesus Students Enjoy Hands-On Learning

Teachers at the Ephesus Adventist Junior Academy in Richmond, Va., are focused on growing 21st century scientists and engineers. At the heart of the school's science curriculum is inquiry-based learning



that encourages students to interact with knowledge during and beyond the mastery of concepts. An example of that was a recent project for students in grades 6 to 8 where they each built a Solar Rover, a car that feeds on the sun for power.

Latrell Jones, an eighth-grader, said, "It was fun building this car." Kayla Bosman, a seventh-grader, said, "I felt like an engineer helping to build the car. Being able to build and work together with my classmates made it fun and we could help each other."

Sheresa Woodson, the school's principal, said, "Activities on this level motivate students to take the knowledge learned and use it to generate a final product, which reinforces concepts taught, but also teaches the skill of working as a team to get the job done."

—Katerina Grant

Students test drive their solar cars.

3,000 Hispanics Attend Day of Fellowship

Attendees to the Spanish Council of Churches' annual Day of Fellowship in Pine Forge, Pa., numbered around 3,000, making it the highest attendance in its four-year history. The gathering, which is similar to a one-day camp meeting, was packed with activities, including a parade of nations featuring 37 countries, 20 baptisms and five professions of faith, the investiture of 12 master guides and 15 advanced master guides, and the graduation of 30 new Bible instructors from the School of Theology. One of the highlights of the day was the recognition of Soraida Gouveia, a member of



PHOTOS BY MICHAEL MENDEZ



Several Allegheny East Conference Hispanic pastors recognize Soraida Gouveia (second from the right) as their layperson of the year.

El Remanente Spanish church in Wilmington, Del., as the Outstanding Lay Person of the Year. "Besides being an elder and exemplary leader, she brought to the foot of the cross 15 souls between January and September of this year," said Pastor Ramon Escalante, leader of the Spanish Council.

Jonatan Tejel, General Conference Pathfinder leader, spoke to some 500 youth, while Mario Monzon, an evangelist from the Central Mission of Guatemala, spoke in the main pavilion. "It was a day full of blessings as we gathered together to rejoice and praise the Lord. We all made a commitment to reconsecrate our lives and hasten the coming of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ," Escalante said.

Conference Bids Farewell to Long-Time Administrator, Pastor

Robert Moore, Jr., recently announced his decision to accept a call to the Southeastern Conference in Florida, which will end his 27 years of pastoral leadership in the Allegheny West Conference (AWC). He most recently served as the executive secretary and community services director.

Moore holds a Master of Divinity and is a licensed social worker. He started his ministry on the old “infiltration” system, where he interned at a church to prove his dedication and calling. He went on to pastor every size church in the conference, including his home church, the Glenville congregation in Cleveland. Moore’s gift of evangelism opened the doors of many Allegheny West churches where he was invited to conduct evangelistic meetings for their area. Pastor Moore held meetings in every area of the conference and thus became known as the “conference evangelist.” Most years he conducted as many as four meetings while still pastoring his own church.

“As a conference, we will miss the gifts and talents Pastor Moore and his family have exhibited to help make us what we are today,” says William T. Cox, conference president. “We pray God’s richest blessings upon Pastor Moore and his wife, Dezire’, as they continue their service in the Southeastern Conference.”

Marvin Brown is now filling the role of executive secretary, as voted at the conference’s third quadrennial constituency session in April.



PHOTO BY BRYANT TAYLOR

New Director Leads Multicultural Ministries Work

Sergio Enrique Romero joins the Allegheny West Conference leadership team as the new Multicultural Ministries and Church Growth director. He fills the vacancy created when the former director, Walter Castro, accepted a call to the Florida Conference.



Romero (pictured with his wife, Laura, and son, Sergio) has served in ministry for 23 years. He is a licensed Christian counselor and holds a bachelor’s in theology and a Doctorate of Pastoral Counseling. He transferred from the Nevada-Utah Conference, where he served as the Hispanic Ministries coordinator. He says he felt blessed to plant six new churches in Las Vegas and Salt Lake City and organized and led 11 mission trips where six churches, a school and permanent children’s camp were built.

Romero, who felt the call to ministry after he was baptized into the Seventh-day Adventist Church in 1980, says it is a myth that only Hispanic churches are growing in the North American Division. He believes the Holy Spirit works the same for everyone and will be focused on expanding relevant training and evangelism programs across the Allegheny West Conference. “Each church should duplicate themselves every two years and plant churches in areas where we don’t have any,” he says. “The slogan ‘I Go, I Support’ will be part of our plan, which means some people will go to plant new churches while others will support those going.”

Southeast Church Hosts Women's Day

For conference ladies low on spiritual fuel, the Women's Ministries team of the Southeast church in Cleveland had a solution. They hosted a women's day service themed "Women on Fire for God" to offer ladies a day to be filled by the Holy Spirit.

The Southeast Women's Ministries team, led by Maria Meredith, organized the special day. They invited Doris Gothard, from the Lake Region Conference, to share the Word of God and her testimony for the divine service. Shirley Benton, the conference Women's Ministries leader, was also on hand to inspire attendees.

The day included a special commemoration of the commitment and service of several members who have



Guest speaker Doris Gothard shares her testimony and the Word of God with attendees.



Southeast members offer special prayers over ladies who have dedicated their lives to service for Christ.

dedicated their lives to the cause of Christ, including Naomi Fluellen, Gertrude Dunn, Charde Hurst, Deshon Thompson Watson, Tracy Ogelsby and Veronica Felix. Attendees gathered around these devoted ladies to pray for their service to the Lord.

During lunch Steven Fowler, the church's lead musician and a former *American Idol* contestant, blessed the ladies with a song he wrote for the occasion. The day also included musical selections by vocalist Christina Fowler, saxophonist Gerald Smith and the praise dance team Steps to Christ. The spiritual day concluded with a dinner served by the Southeast Men's Ministries team.—Victoria Davis

Ethan Temple Co-sponsors Health Day

This fall the Ethan Temple Health Ministries team collaborated with the men of the Omega Psi Phi fraternity to host a free health fair for African-Americans living in the greater Dayton, Ohio, area. Coordinated by Ethan Temple member Michael Dulan, MD, the fair epitomized the level of community outreach that both entities are striving for as they work to make a difference in the area.

"The health fair is an opportunity to educate the community at large, but specifically the African-American community about health issues, and the importance of developing healthy eating habits," explained Kelvin Bryant, social action chairman of the fraternity's Delta Alpha chapter.

Approximately 250 people attended the health fair, where they were treated to vegetarian and vegan food tastings. There were also more than 20 vendors that participated, including CareSource and the Wright State School of Medicine, that offered a variety of screenings and health information. There were also activities for the kids to learn about healthier lifestyles.

"It's not often you find this type of service in our community," noted one participant. Although that may unfortunately be true, Ethan Temple members and their new health ministry partners hope to change that by continuing to reach their communities with more health days.



Ethan Temple's medical team performs blood pressure checks on health day attendees.



Blue Mountain Academy

COMMUNIQUE

NOVEMBER 2013

Performance Groups Retreat Together, Focus on Unity

Blue Mountain Academy (BMA) has three performance groups that tour throughout the Northeast: the Bel Canto choir, Ariel Aires gymnastics troupe and LaSonnette handbell choir. Recently student participants who felt led to be a part of one of these organizations were given the opportunity to gather for a brief spiritual retreat.

“Students that were called to ring, sing or ‘fly’ participated in a spiritual retreat designed to teach them the importance of being unified, not just as a part of their group, but as a larger body, representing God, BMA and their distinct group by their actions, words, and deeds,” reports Dave Morgan, principal.

On Friday evening, Kris Eckenroth (Class of 1995), pastor of the Grace Outlet church in Reading, Pa., shared the biblical story of a unified Israel as they followed God’s leading by marching in silence around Jericho seven times. After a mighty, unified “shout,” they watched the walls come tumbling down. The point was that if each individual would surrender to God’s will, each group would prove to be a powerful force unified in the ministry of presenting the gospel of Jesus Christ through their unique talents. The evening concluded with the groups publicly praying over each other.

Senior Celica Galeano, a member of the Aerial Aires, shared in-depth about what she learned at the retreat: “At first I didn’t want to go to the retreat. As an Aerial Aires member, I thought it was unfair that we didn’t get to go to our own retreat as we have been doing for the past years. But, as we got there and Pastor Kris talked about unity and how we all were doing the same thing—and that was spreading God’s love—I realized



Senior Anna Hardinger and fellow tour group members light their candles as a sign of unity during the retreat.

that we were all [equally] important and that we all belong to the body of Christ. I learned that it’s difficult to work in unity but it’s definitely worth it, and that God uses different talents for the same purpose: to reach people’s heart.”

On Sabbath morning, a panel of performance group leaders and seasoned tour veterans answered questions about the purpose and mission of their groups, what touring is like and highlights from their most memorable moments on tour. The student leaders also gave advice to new members.

“The retreat was an important time for returning tour members to come together with the new members in unity,” said senior Andrew Caterino, a Bel Canto member.

“I believe we all got to understand each other and why the tour group leaders make the decisions that they do,” expressed senior Emily Brewer, a Bel Canto member.

Morgan continued the theme of unity by focusing on the vision in Jesus’ prayer found in John 17:22-23. Morgan set one white candle on a small altar to represent Jesus and asked each student to light and place a candle next to it to symbolize their desire to be unified with Christ.

When the students later passed by the altar on their way to lunch, the powerful message they witnessed was that while their candles had melted away—representing their actions of mingling and uniting with fellow tour members—the candle representing Jesus burned on.



Sophomore Edgar Galvez practices his guitar.

Long-Time Math Teacher Announces Retirement

Over the past 27 years at Blue Mountain Academy, teacher Cary Corbin has become well known for his love of physics, math and children's stories. Recently Corbin announced his plans to retire at the conclusion of the 2013-14 school year, giving alumni pause to reflect on his lasting impact on the school:

Alumna Christina Lloyd says her favorite memory of him was "when he let us out of pre-calc class early as long as we promised to find an item that was perpendicular to the ground. His wit, commitment to excellence and kindness make him a great teacher."

Alumna Sarah Elliott-Stowe shared, "He is a very caring teacher and gives attention to those who need it."

Alumnus Jonathan Stewart remembers one of Corbin's famous quotes: "Shortcuts are for barbers and butchers." He also recounts that when students did use a shortcut, Corbin would say, "May the fleas of a thousand camels infest your armpits." Stewart adds, "[He was a] great teacher!"

Corbin also has great memories from his years as an Adventist educator, and shares the following account of what led him to BMA:

"From my teenage years I knew that my goal was to be a math teacher. Tutoring classmates was fun and rewarding. I am a product of public school from grade 1 through college. I was going to go to BMA my



sophomore year, but decided the move from the farm to boarding school was too big a change.

Practice teaching in a public school convinced me that I could not provide the type of mentoring that would be the most beneficial for those students. The experience in one school was quite unpleasant and discouraging. The Lord opened a door for me to teach in the Adventist education system. The interaction with fellow Christians and the chance to encourage students to follow Christ put the cap on a challenging and rewarding career.

I am a Pennsylvania boy, born and raised. My goal was to teach at BMA from the first day of my professional career. When I got the chance to interview here in 1986, it took all of about 30 seconds for me to make my decision. My wife had to see the campus, but she, too, was won over. Coming here was coming home. It was the ideal place to raise our two daughters, from grade 1 through BMA and on to Adventist colleges.

My hobbies have included hiking, photography and shooting sports. I have also enjoyed working in children's Sabbath school. I've been 'held back' to kindergarten for almost 30 years! The little people are an interesting change from academy students. Working with young people has definitely kept *me* young—at least young at heart."

Principal Dave Morgan concludes, "On behalf of all of the BMA family, thank you, Mr. Corbin, for your humor, dedication and love for learning!"



Cary Corbin and his wife, Louise, have been members of the BMA family for more than 27 years.

THE CHALLENGE

chesapeake conference newsletter

NOVEMBER 2013

More Power in Prayer!

The Thanksgiving season is filled with a wide variety of celebratory activities associated with our culture. People enjoy the food, family time, shopping and other holiday traditions. However, the Scriptures call us to more than just a season of giving thanks. “Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving” (Col. 4:2, KJV). This is a call to an ongoing spirit of gratitude and thankfulness for all of the benefits God provides us. It spills over quite naturally into our prayer life and is an essential ingredient for more prayer power.

Ellen White writes, “Shall we be always thinking of our wants and never of the benefits we receive? Shall we be recipients of His mercies and never express our gratitude to God, never praise Him for what He has done for us? We do not pray any too much, but we are too sparing of giving thanks. *If the loving-kindness of God called forth more thanksgiving and praise, we would have far more power in prayer.* We would abound more and more in the love of God and have more bestowed to praise Him for” (*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 317, emphasis supplied).

So why not develop the habit of incorporating more praise in your prayers? Take a little extra time to recognize the goodness of God. In addition to strengthening your prayer life, it will refocus your attitude and remind you that God can be trusted to care for all of the challenges of life. Let Paul’s words become a reality in your life. “Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you” (1 Thess. 5:16-18, NKJV).



Rick Remmers
President

Former Rocky Knoll Principal Appointed Associate Superintendent

The Chesapeake Conference Executive Committee recently appointed Mark Walker interim associate superintendent of schools. Walker, who served as principal of the Rocky Knoll Seventh-day Adventist School in Martinsburg, W.Va., since 2002, transitioned to the conference office in mid-September.



“In addition to many years of experience in classroom instruction, he has served as a principal for 27 years and as a conference superintendent. This experience will be a great asset to our schools,” said Rick Remmers, conference president.

“Mark brings energy and expertise to the position, and I look forward to working together to support and grow our schools,” says Jacqueline Messenger, superintendent of schools.

Walker grew up in rural southwestern Pennsylvania. When he was in high school, two student colporteurs visited his home. He later met the pastor of the local Seventh-day Adventist church. At the pastor’s urging, Walker attended Washington Adventist University (WAU) in Takoma Park, Md., majoring in elementary education. These years had a positive pivotal impact leading to his baptism, he says.

Walker finished with a bachelor’s in elementary education from WAU and a master’s degree in education administration from Andrews University (Mich.). He took additional graduate classes in education psychology. Prior to coming to the Chesapeake Conference, he

taught at schools in the Mountain View Conference, where he later served as departmental director for education, youth and communication. He worked as a school principal in the New Jersey and Potomac conferences before coming to the Rocky Knoll school.

Walker is married to Janet (Gawron), also an educator. The couple has two adult children and two grandchildren—with one more due this month!

Host Families Minister to Atholton's Exchange Students

Bill Li, a 15-year-old sophomore at Atholton Adventist Academy (AAA), loves sports, especially basketball. He hopes to study biology and engineering in college. He sounds like a typical high school student, but Li, and his twin sister Danielle, came from Guang Zhou, China, to study in America and become fluent in the English language. Now in their second year at the Columbia, Md., school, the siblings, who are not Seventh-day Adventists, live with separate host families.

Li recently came to live with Candy and Greg Iverson, members of the Triadelphia church in Clarksville, Md. With excitement, the Iversons made their home ready to accommodate the teenager, transforming a spare room into a comfortable bedroom. Li participates in family life and attends church with them.

Jasmine and David Elliott, Jr., opened their home to Li's sister. "I want my children to know something about other cultures and to learn how to help others," says Jasmine, a mother of three. Members of the Atholton church, the Elliotts have housed students from China, Costa Rica, Egypt, Japan, Korea and Thailand.

"Our ESL (English as a Second Language) program is a ministry to families and our local community," says Marilyn Peeke, AAA principal. "It's an exciting opportunity to form community connections and to teach kids about Jesus."

The program started in 2006 with one student from Costa Rica. At that time, three of Atholton's teachers were already certified to teach ESL. Peeke says foreign families send their children to America to study, but some local public and private schools require a certain

level of mastery of the English language to be accepted into their programs. Atholton fills the need by helping foreign students gain the skills needed for acceptance into these schools. In addition to learning the English language, students are exposed to Bible stories and Christian values.

Two girls enrolled in the program this year because their father, a personal trainer and massage therapist, came to the United States to continue working for a newly hired Baltimore Orioles athlete. Currently the school has 23 students (representing five countries) enrolled in the ESL program with three more in process.



Bill Li, pictured with hosts Greg and Candy Iverson, is learning English at Atholton Adventist Academy.

Youth Ministries Leaders Converge for Training

PHOTO BY CHARLES KOERTING



The annual Youth Leaders Convention drew 130 Pathfinder, Adventurer and Youth Ministries leaders to the Mount Aetna Retreat Center in Hagerstown, Md., on a recent autumn weekend. They worshipped together and participated in an intensive learning experience while many worked toward certifications, such as Master Guide and Teen Leadership Training.

During general sessions, Glen Milam, North American Division Pathfinder coordinator and co-director of Willow Brook (Boonsboro, Md.) church's Pathfinder club, motivated the group to restore their passion for ministry.

"Glen's presentations were relevant and effective. He provided tools you can take home and use right away," said Ann Reynolds, conference Children's Ministries director and assistant Youth Ministries director.

Adrienne Reid, a member of the Waldorf (Md.) church, teaches a workshop in the nature center on "Understanding the Adventurer."

MOUNTAIN VIEW POINT

NOVEMBER 2013

Williamson Family's Faithfulness Yields Blessings

Dulaney Stowers and his wife, Margie, both Seventh-day Adventists, lived in an area where the nearest Adventist church was in Charleston, W.Va. Back then, due to the less-than-ideal roads, this was quite some distance away from their home in Williamson. Later there was an Adventist church in Logan, which was closer, but still the Stowers desired an Adventist presence locally. Early in their marriage, Margie would sometimes sit on the back porch of their downtown apartment and cry as she felt the loneliness of no church family nearby.

From that spot she also observed a man plowing on a hillside and, "even though I envisioned a church standing there, I never dreamed that one day the Williamson church would be built on that exact same spot." The couple helped establish a branch Sabbath School and later the Williamson Seventh-day Adventist Church, which was dedicated in 1984.



An Opportunity to Minister

In addition to being active in the church, the couple also founded the Stowers Fire & Safety Equipment, Inc., in 1957. The business involved servicing fire extinguishers at local businesses in West Virginia and Kentucky and for the coal industry in his spare time. Because he held two other jobs, many times his son, Allen, would help repair and deliver the fire extinguishers to their customers while Margie would run the office and keep the books.

They see the business as another opportunity to minister. They are sure to honor God's holy Sabbath. Stowers Fire & Safety is closed for business on Saturdays. They provide sales and service Sunday through Friday (before sundown) to all of West Virginia, and parts of Virginia, Kentucky, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Maryland. They have even provided their services to companies in North Carolina, Wisconsin and also Newfoundland, Canada. They also have close to 50 employees. The family credits their growth to faithfully returning their tithe and willingly supporting projects in the Williamson church and the Mountain View Conference.

After Dulaney's death in 2007, Margie took over as owner of the business. At almost 89, Margie still works in the office while son Allen serves as the president of the company. When Margie was asked in what ways the Lord has been faithful to them, she replied, "God has answered many a prayer; I've always believed in prayer. I give all the credit to the Lord. I've got everything I need. God has answered so many prayers for me, even little ones." Margie is quick to acknowledge God's provision that when a bill came due, in that day's mail would be a check to cover those needs. "This happened time and time again—how the Lord has blessed. I [give tithe and offerings] with love in my heart; not grudgingly. [I] am always pleased to pay the tithe and give offerings."—Roger Thaxton



The Stowers family celebrate at Christmas with employees and their families, many of whom belong to the Adventist Church.

MOUNTAIN
VIEWPOINT

At Annual Retreat, Women “Choose Life”

Some 90 women recently traveled from across the Mountain View Conference, and beyond, to the Valley Vista Adventist Center in Huttonsville, W.Va., for the annual Women’s Ministries retreat themed “Choose Life.” Below are some photos from that weekend:



1



2

1. Four sisters traveled across the country to meet up for a weekend at the women’s retreat. Mary and Bernadette are from Wisconsin, Beverly from South Carolina and Antoinette from Virginia. 2. Donna Shank talks about a women’s center in Malawi, Africa, where her daughter, Cristy, works as a doctor. “The clinic was selected as this year’s mission project and, because of generous hearts, over \$4,600 was raised.” 3. Carla Baker, Women’s Ministries director for the North American Division, speaks to the women about forgiveness, love, grace and trusting in Jesus. 4. Elaine Buchanan and Judy Olson, both from the Summersville (W.Va.) church, post requests on the prayer request board, a new addition to the annual women’s retreat. Throughout the weekend, those in attendance were encouraged to post, as well as pick several cards to take and pray over.



3



4

PHOTOS BY ANGELINA DICKSON

Is There One Thing You’re Most Thankful For?



“What I am most thankful for in this life is loving, caring, thoughtful parents who more clearly represent to me who God is.”
—Jo-Anna Clayton, 15, a member of the Spencer (W.Va.) church



“No cancer.”—Lorraine Megale, a member of the Wheeling (W.Va.) church, had a small, cancerous portion of her kidney removed two years ago. When problems surfaced again recently, an MRI showed there were no new tumors.

NEWS

NEW JERSEY

NOVEMBER 2013

The Forgotten Word

Many times we receive gifts and benefits, but we forget to even take time to give a look of gratitude to the giver. We do this with people and even the Divine Giver who is responsible for our existence and everything that surrounds us. How sad it is to realize that “gratitude” seems to have become the forgotten word!

I recently decided to make a list of all the good things that I received during these last few months. I also decided to send a note or make a call to thank each person who did something good for me. What a healthy exercise it was! Afterward I prayed, “Thank You, God, because You are good in a great way!”

At this precious time of year, I encourage you to try doing the same thing. As Thanksgiving Day approaches, I invite you to lift your eyes to heaven and thank God for life, family, work, friends, homes and a means of transportation. But, above all, thank Him for the most wonderful gift that we could ever receive—our glorious Lord, Jesus, and the work of salvation! If we give thanks each day, we can have lives full of gratitude so that the whole year can be filled with thanksgiving!



José H. Cortés
President

NEWS

Workshop Equips Teachers to Give Their Best

Earlier this fall, New Jersey teachers attended a differentiated instruction workshop at the conference office in Lawrenceville. The next morning after the workshop, Sadrail Saint-Ulysse (pictured), New Jersey Conference’s superintendent of schools, received an email from Nita Connell, the principal of Tranquility Adventist School in Tranquility. She wrote, “The workshop was very meaningful, and I thank you and the parties at the conference office that decided that this would be a good thing to bring to the

teachers. [I am] looking at my classroom completely differently this morning.”

Saint-Ulysse says offering the workshop was essential. “We praise God for the opportunity to equip our teachers to provide the best Adventist education to our precious children and young people in a Christ-centered environment,” he says. “Our goal is to continue to provide teacher development seminars that create meaningful improvement in student attainment, teacher fulfillment and school success.”



Wayne Church’s Third “Let’s Move!” Day Draws 140

The Wayne church recently hosted its third annual “Let’s Move!” Day 5K Run/Walk. They also held a 100-meter dash for kids under age 15 and games for children aged 3-8. More than 140 people participated in the three events, about 40 percent of whom were visitors. “I liked doing a 5K; now I want to get ready for a 10K,” said 13-year-old Angel Pena, a visitor. The event also drew sponsorships from several local businesses, one of which provided each runner with an individual timer.—Delma Avila



Wayne member Amalia Meliti and her son participated in the event together.

80 Couples Attend Marriage Retreat

Francisco Rivera and Lavinia Rodriguez, members of La Victoria Spanish church in Perth Amboy, recently celebrated their 50th anniversary with 80 other couples. The celebration took place during the conference's ninth couples' retreat, sponsored by the Family Ministries Department, and held in Florham Park. Edwin Mendoza, DMin, a pastor from California, along with his wife, Mary, who is also a pastor, addressed the couples over the weekend.

Ten couples who were not members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church attended the retreat and received a Bible, a copy of *Steps to Christ* and a small gift. "We thank God for this blessed event that has the goal of strengthening and supporting the marriages in the conference," said Pastor Jorge Aguero, the conference's Family Ministries director.



Pastor Jorge Aguero, the conference's Family Ministries director, and his wife, Amalia, flank Francisco Rivera and Lavinia Rodriguez.



Two Teachers Join the Conference

Due to increased enrollment for the 2013-14 school year at New Jersey Conference schools, new teachers and staff have been hired. "We are excited to see how the [Seventh-day] Adventist schools have been growing. It is really great news!" exclaimed Sadrail Saint-Ulysse, conference superintendent of schools. "We now have 351 students." Below are the two new teachers:



the conference as a teacher, he worked for the Passaic School District.

Victor Macucachi is the homeroom teacher for grades 9 and 10 at his alma mater, Waldwick Adventist School in Waldwick. He holds an associate's degree in criminal justice and a bachelor's degree in sociology at William Paterson University in Wayne. He then obtained his teaching certificate from Felician College in Lodi. Before joining



students and being a role model to those who will become leaders of tomorrow.

Kimberly Francis is the homeroom teacher for grades 5 and 6 at Meadow View Junior Academy in Chesterfield. She recently graduated from Oakwood University (Ala.) with a bachelor's degree in elementary education. Her future goals include becoming a successful teacher, inspiring all her

100 Women Retreat at Mohaven, Focus on Strengths

For nearly 15 years, ladies have requested the annual Ohio Conference Women's Retreat return to the Mohaven Retreat and Conference Center in Danville, especially after they noticed substantial improvements to the campground in recent years, led by camp managers Dave and Karen Robinson. The retreat team agreed with constituents and returned the event to Mohaven this fall.

Nearly 100 ladies of all ages enjoyed the natural, scenic, intimate setting Mohaven offered. Though some activities had to be moved indoors due to weather, new activities took their place thanks to the Robinsons' quick thinking. Once the rain cleared, nearly 60 women were able to take a wagon ride around the camp, while others enjoyed an impromptu concert by Trina Schone, a Lancaster member and musician.



Jo Ann Davidson, PhD (right), the first woman to teach in the theology department at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University (Mich.), was the speaker for most of the weekend. "I have never heard her speak before and was blown away with all the information and wisdom she has. She had me in tears at least three separate times on Friday evening [while] talking about the joys of Sabbath and being with Jesus," said Karli Kuehmichel, a Mayfair Christian School teacher and member of the Canton church.

In addition to leading the praise team, Lori Farr (above), pastor of the Wooster district, shared her

personal experiences and testimony in a Sunday morning talk titled "Who Am I?"

Moved beyond mere words, the ladies closed the Spirit-filled weekend with a circle of prayer. Women of all ethnicities prayed, some in their native languages, for each other and those at home, demonstrating the weekend's theme "Women of Strength and Beauty."

Download audio files of the retreat speakers at ohioadventist.org, then click on Women's Ministries. Plans are already underway for the next retreat, September 19-21, 2014, to be held in the Columbus metropolitan area.



The event speaker reminds attendees about the importance of spending quality time with Jesus.

Clarksfield Students Share “Bread of Life” With Neighbors

Free homemade bread for me?! Why are you giving us the bread and not selling it?” the lady asked.

Though the weather was very hot, the Clarksfield Seventh-day Adventist School students pressed on, going door to door in their Westlake community to distribute the 50 fresh loaves of bread they baked. Attached to each bag was a student-made scriptural bookmark and school label. Because students experienced so much joy and gratitude from the neighbors they met, they soon forgot about the heat.

This service project was part of Clarksfield’s Fall Week of Prayer, which they themed “Bread of Life.” Marius Marton, pastor of the Sandusky church and one of the guest speakers, shared the meaning of the Passover feast. He then helped students partake in their own Passover meal of unleavened bread and grape juice. Russ Gaskill, pastor of the Clarksfield church, and retired pastor Igor Botansky shared additional messages during the week.

Leona Bange, Clarksfield’s head teacher, concluded the week’s lessons with her usual energy and enthusiasm. She was able to pull together a small school project in such a way that kids from pre-K to grade 9 could relate and enjoy: sinking their fingers into fresh, soft bread dough! Through their project, the community was blessed and learned more about the “little schoolhouse down the road.”—Heidi Kremic



Olivia Rehm and Rhiana Powers deliver homemade bread to a neighbor.

Eastwood Junior Academy Builds Community Relationships

Darwyn Allen, the new principal and teacher at Eastwood Seventh-day Adventist Junior Academy (EJA), started the school year early and with a big goal—building connections with those in the school’s immediate community, Blendon Township. Why? To show students that their community extends beyond Eastwood.

Allen’s first connection was with the Mid-Ohio Foodbank, where he met with organization leaders and learned about their needs. Allen then reached out to his local Kroger store, which provided boxes and bags for the food bank’s Operation Feed campaign. Next, he armed upper grade students with a script about their school and their interest in helping with Operation Feed



and sent them door to door in Blendon Township. The students greeted neighbors and asked them to leave nonperishable food donations on their porch in the bags they distributed.

Several days later, joined by students from Mount Vernon Academy in Danville, the EJA students went back to neighbor homes, where they collected 425 pounds of food, which will feed 425 people.

Younger grades were not left out. On collection day, Blendon Township Fire Department staff brought out a fire engine for students to inspect and taught them about fire safety.

“Principal Allen brings with him a passionate dedication to service. EJA is blessed to have his leadership skills,” remarked Alison Jobson, superintendent of education. Future programs and service projects are in the pipeline, which Allen hopes will strengthen their relationships in their community.

PHOTOS BY BRENT RUTH



EJA students proudly pose with one of their supporters.

Pennsylvania Pen

NOVEMBER 2013

What Favor Do You Choose?

Unmerited favor, otherwise known as God's grace, sparkles through the first beam of light that touches the world (see Gen. 1:3). The dawning of the world blossoms into ever more glorious exhibits of unmerited favor until a strikingly beautiful couple reflect with language and music the marvels of light, life, sound and color that surround them. And so the world begins, not with a dot of smelly slime but rather with the intentional intensity of unmerited favor.

In that first spectacular week, unmerited favor is revealed in the Sabbath law that instructs, "Stop, don't work! The favor is all Mine!" Like a thief bent on stealing beautiful art, merited favor whispers, "If you take it, it's yours!" (see Gen. 3:5). The thief, also known as sin, threatens every light beam, life type and color scheme that was so carefully given for the pleasure of the couple.

However, from the inventory of infinity, a solution was packaged and delivered. If Jesus' unmerited favor (see 1 John 4:8) was to conquer sin, the vaccine had to be used systematically. The ultimate unmerited favor was packaged in an offering that all were to give. And so it is, the unmerited favor of the Sabbath infuses its golden flavor into the lives of men and women through tithes and offerings—inviting the Infinite One to give His unmerited favor.

Ellen White says it best: "The value of the Sabbath as a means of education is beyond estimate. Whatever of ours God claims from us, He returns again, enriched, transfigured, with His own glory. The tithe that He claimed from Israel was devoted to preserving among men, in its glorious beauty, the pattern of His temple in the heavens, the token of His presence on the earth" (*Education*, p. 250).



Ron Christman
Treasurer

Chestnut Hill Church Celebrates 65 Years



PHOTO BY AJ PASTOR

Some 300 former and current members and friends of the Chestnut Hill church in Philadelphia recently gathered to celebrate 65 years of God's faithfulness. Roy and Cheryl Schaeffer, now residing in Tennessee, conducted the song service, while Albert Reece, MD, PhD, a current resident of Maryland, piloted Sabbath School.

The Mission Spotlight focused on REACH Philadelphia, Chestnut Hill's growing church plant, under the leadership of current pastor Tara VinCross. Former pastoral partners, Franke and Kandace Zollman, who served the congregation from 1986 to 1994, delivered a challenge to remember "Jesus Christ and Him crucified."

After lunch the church family gathered for the dedication of the prayer garden, a recent landscaping project done in memory of Bill Landherr, a beloved elder who passed away in 2010. The day of celebration climaxed with a music festival and a final rendezvous over a dessert reception before reluctant farewells.—*Vishnu Nancoo*

Korean Church Offers NEWSTART

More than 50 people recently attended the Pennsylvania Korean Seventh-day Adventist Church's 19th annual NEWSTART health seminar. Yang Il-Kwon, a well-known Korean health educator and pastor, spoke on "getting back to Eden" at the weeklong

event held at the Philadelphia church. From 10 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. each day, participants learned how diet and lifestyle can cause many kinds of illness and how to make changes to improve their health. Many attendees shared that by making changes learned at the seminar, they were able to stop taking medications for high blood pressure and for diabetes.

When the NEWSTART seminar ended, Pastor Hansoo Kim invited participants to join him each Sabbath afternoon for continued health messages and Bible studies. Kim offers a stretching class and cooking class at the end of each Sabbath presentation. "My church is excited about 35 new faces coming to church," shares Kim. "I know it will be hard for them to join our church because most are committed members of other churches in the area; however, I can make a community for them in my church and share the three angels' [messages] with them."

Attendees at a NEWSTART seminar sample healthy and tasty dishes.



Urban Missionaries Brave Rain, Storms and Tornadoes

Despite the abundance of rain, storms and tornado warnings this summer, the Pennsylvania Youth Challenge (PYC) team (pictured) worked diligently to take the gospel of Jesus Christ to thousands of homes. The team worked relentlessly in territories such as Philadelphia, Souderton, Bucks County, Waynesboro, Indiana, Ben Salem, Reading and many other areas across the conference. By the end of the summer, the team reached 72,800 homes, distributed more than 9,000 books and prayed with 6,616 people.

The Lord's timeliness, power and steadfast love were revealed to the young adult participants through numerous experiences this summer. Delon Lawrence, a third-year PYC veteran, developed a ministry mindset that he describes as "the house is on fire and I am called to run in fully equipped shouting the warning cry, despite the door being closed!" He encountered a man who at first rejected the books time after time due to the fact that Lawrence was a Seventh-day Adventist. Lawrence reassured him, "Sir, the books are not harmful—at the center of all of them is the gospel of Jesus Christ." He went on to share that the important truths



about our doctrines are seen through the uplifting of Jesus and His love for mankind. At the close of the conversation, the Holy Spirit moved in the man's heart, and he decided to get *The Great Controversy, Steps to Christ* and two devotional books for his children.
—Angel Smith

Potomac People

NOVEMBER 2013

RPC Breaks Ground on Future “Lighthouse”

I don't think we've even begun to imagine what God wants to do, and I'm excited to see the possibilities,” said Bill Miller, conference president, at the groundbreaking ceremony for Restoration Praise Center's (RPC) new facility in Bowie, Md. “I have a feeling this church will be instrumental in planting more churches and win even more souls for Christ.”

RPC has humble roots as a church planted out of the Community Praise Center in Alexandria, Va. In 2006 members began to meet in each other's homes, but once they located a rental property in Lanham, Md., attendance boomed with more than 600 each week. As the congregation continued to grow, RPC members searched for a place to call their own. In September they officially began construction on a facility that will seat 1,000, and should be completed by August 2014.

Paul Graham, RPC's senior pastor, admitted that sometimes he worried this day would never come. “When I would doubt, I kept reminding myself that this is bigger than any pastor, bigger than any group of people; this is God at work,” he said. “God is providing for us time after time, day after day. There's a line in the old movie *Field of Dreams*, which goes: ‘If you build it, they will come.’”



Leaders from the conference and Restoration Praise Center ceremoniously break ground on their new church building.

I believe that if you build it, they will come. But, if we build this place for the right reasons, then the people will come because it is a lighthouse.”—Alexis A. Goring

PHOTO BY GABRIEL TROFORT

Falls Church Spanish Members Satisfy Mortgage Debt

When members of the Falls Church Spanish congregation in Falls Church, Va., placed a bid on a church property \$150,000 below asking price, they never thought it would be accepted. The property was in an ideal location but was more than they could afford. By the grace of God, the sellers did accept their bid and, in November 1998, members were able to call it home.

“Throughout the years, there were many challenges, especially after the economic crisis in 2008,

but the church stayed united and focused on its mission,” reports Pastor Elvio Soto. “The members made financial commitments to God and sacrifices to ensure that the mortgage was paid off. Every time there was a challenge, we could see God's providence and guidance. As a group, we grew stronger. After 14 years and six months, we paid off the mortgage in full—ahead of schedule!”

Because of their faith and tenacity, the congregation was recently able to burn the loan documents they obtained from the Columbia Union Revolving Fund, who helped provide the financing. “We invited Fausto Salazar, Willy Benzaquen and Ramiro Menendez, who were the three other pastors that led this congregation through this journey,” says Soto. Bill Miller, conference president, and Jorge Ramirez, vice president, also joined them for the celebration.

“This experience has taught members that God blesses His children and rewards faithfulness,” says Milton Salvador, the church's head elder and treasurer. “We want this place to serve in guiding others to know Jesus Christ.”—Tiffany Doss



Potomac People

Women Experience “Glimpses of Grace” at Retreat

There’s no record of an English women’s retreat being held in recent history,” said Sharon Cress, associate for pastoral ministries and Potomac’s coordinator for Women’s Ministries. “Women comprise such a large [percentage] of the population, and the demands of their daily lives continue to get more strenuous in today’s society. It’s important to take time to come together, recharge, nurture and energize one another, so we may pass those empowering tools on to someone else and share God’s Good News.”



That’s what more than 150 women from around the conference did this fall at Potomac Conference’s English Women’s Retreat, where they focused on grace. Several focal points of the weekend included a gala on Saturday evening, where women enjoyed rich food and musical entertainment by Moses Andradé, pastor of the Silver Spring (Md.) church, and his family. Rae Lee Cooper, RN, a staff member of the General Conference Health Ministries Department, was on hand to lead the ladies in relaxing exercises to release stress.

Potomac relaunched Women’s Ministries in June 2012. Since then Cress has spoken at nearly 10 events and hopes to see continued growth in this ministry. She hopes to host another women’s retreat in 2014.

To get more involved with Women’s Ministries, contact Cress at (540) 886-0771.—Tiffany Doss



During the gala, each attendee received a rose to symbolize how God views them—as beautiful, strong and graceful.

SEEDS Conference Inspires Future Planting

More than 180 people converged at SEEDS, a two-day conference focused on growing church plants in creative ways. “[The] SEEDS conference is an amazing event because it’s a place to inspire, motivate and encourage people to see the mission of Christ,” said main speaker Johnny Wong, who planted 15 churches in Melbourne, Australia, with his idea of care groups. “When the souls come together and get it, it just makes sense to plant another church there. It’s what the early pioneers did, and we need to make that happen more often.”

During each break in the program, the rooms would buzz with excited chatter of church plant ideas and networking. “In my interaction today, people are excited to think about possibilities and what God can do in their [lives],” said Tara VinCross, pastor of Pennsylvania Conference’s Chestnut Hill church in Philadelphia and another event speaker. “My sense is if we let our hearts be open for the Spirit to lead us that these people will multiply the people for God.”

The afternoons consisted of breakout sessions meant to empower and train planters and their teams. The event finished with a call by Peter Casillas, event coordinator and the conference’s pastoral associate for evangelism and church planting, and John Cress, vice

president for Pastoral Ministries. The men encouraged attendees to take charge of what God has given. “We are a force to be reckoned with,” said Casillas. “We should be planting within the messiness for the purpose of transformation. Praise God for what He is doing, I can’t wait to see where He is leading us.”



During SEEDS, there were periods of intentional prayer time for church plant target areas.

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Spotlight on Spencerville

NOVEMBER 2013

Students Build Relationships at Annual Retreat

Spencerville Adventist Academy (SAA) high school students and staff recently traveled to the Mount Aetna Camp and Retreat Center in Hagerstown, Md., for their annual spiritual retreat. The event provides the opportunity for students to rededicate themselves to spiritual growth and develop a broader sense of community with their schoolmates and teachers. This year students enjoyed participating in music, drama, games, small group time, personal quiet time, prayer and a lot of fun!

The Campus Ministries team, under the direction of campus chaplain Somer Knight, took the leadership role of programming this event. This year's theme was "Altar Ego," with a focus on students exploring their God-given identity and spiritual gifts. Eliud Sicard, a youth pastor from the Shalem church in Chicago, was the featured speaker.

"I enjoyed the spiritual retreat because it gave me a chance to forget about school and reconnect with what is truly important, while having a ton of fun with my friends," reported senior Matt Fennell.

Sophomore Alison Retz said, "I liked that it was very interactive and focused on building our relationship with God. This retreat also allowed me to build relationships with my classmates and people I hadn't known before. I really appreciate the fact that my school took the time



Students stand on their constructed foundation to demonstrate what can be accomplished when people work together with a common goal.

to help me build relationships I otherwise might not have made on my own."

Sophomore Lisa Correa commented, "My favorite part of the spiritual retreat would have to be the girl talk we had; we really connected and opened up. I also like the free time we had. I love being with my friends and allowing us to take time out of the day to do that was awesome."



Spotlight

AP Program Bridges High School Work to College

Approximately 40 of Spencerville Adventist Academy's high school students are taking advantage of the opportunity to earn college credit through the Advanced Placement (AP) program. As the school further develops the program, current seniors are taking one or both of the following courses: AP Literature and Composition and AP Calculus.

What does this mean for the students? When a student takes the AP course exam and earns a 3 or better on the standardized test, he or she may be eligible to earn college credit. There is another benefit, especially for those electing not to take the exam: taking an AP course shows university admission teams that a student is involved in a high level of academic rigor. Progressing through a college course at the high school level also offers the student a "bridge" opportunity—receiving the rigor of a college course with the support that a high school provides.

There is also a benefit for parents. Carrie Hess, AP Literature and Composition teacher, explains: "Students who are better prepared for the rigors of college course work will likely do better their freshman year. Doing better in school means fewer courses with poor grades and/or fewer remedial courses. This results in a monetary savings for the parents. For those students who earn college credit, they will have at least one less college course to pay for."

What does this mean for SAA's campus? "Our overall academic program improves when we offer AP courses. Students are held to a high standard and are assisted by qualified teachers to help them achieve their academic goals," says Hess. "God calls us to



Teacher Carrie Hess (left) gives her senior AP Literature and Composition students Tommy Varghese, Sandhya Abraham and Amanda Linzau a few pointers as they rehearse for their class performance of *As You Like It*.

excellence in all that we do, and we believe that our campus has been, and will continue to be, a place of excellence in learning."



Members Pray for Seniors

Pastor Jerry Lutz at the Spencerville church in Silver Spring, Md., presents the Class of 2014 to the congregation. After he and Marilyn Scott, associate pastor, offered prayers of dedication, the congregation then committed to remembering the students in prayer throughout this school year.

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SHENANDOAH VALLEY ACADEMY

HAPPENINGS



NOVEMBER 2013

www.shenandoahvalleyacademy.org

Two New Staff Lead Popular Programs

This school year Shenandoah Valley Academy (SVA) introduced two new staff members to lead the school's most popular programs. These men bring a wealth of talent and experience sure to enhance their respective departments.

Bob Kilgore, who is originally from the West Coast, is the new athletic director. He and his wife, Shelly, most recently returned from Kuwait, where he taught health and physical education for the past two years. During his 27 years at Auburn Academy (Wash.), he developed and promoted their varsity sports programs. He looks forward to continuing that work at SVA.

Kilgore enjoys interacting with students, and his goal is to challenge them to throw off their self-imposed limits and accomplish more than they ever thought they could. "In high school, you get to see [students] come in as kids, and they are young adults when they graduate," he noted. He also pointed out that along with team endeavors, some of his favorite things to do are more individualized activities, like biking and backpacking. SVA leaders believe this makes him a perfect fit for the new Outdoor Education



Joshua Goines, the new choral director, helps the choir prepare for an upcoming performance.



Bob Kilgore, SVA's new athletic director, goes over track statistics with freshman Ryan Griffin.

program, which was implemented last school year.

In keeping with SVA's new motto of "Education for Life," the school has formed an Outdoor Education club where they will promote a lifelong healthy lifestyle. The program gives students exposure to activities, such as hiking, caving, backpacking and canoeing, which typically falls outside the venue of a traditional physical education class.

Joshua Goines is SVA's new choral director. Originally from New Orleans, he recently transferred from Andrews University (Mich.), where he is finishing his degree in organ, with a choral emphasis. In addition to pursuing his degree and directing his touring choir while at Andrews, Goines was also the music director for the collegiate service of the university's Pioneer Memorial church.

Goines was only 14 and still in academy when he had his directing debut. Music is his passion, and he says he cannot imagine anything else as his life's work. Along with playing, singing, conducting and teaching, he also writes and arranges. He believes that, whether the music is secular or sacred, every note one produces should be for the glory of God. He says, "In my class, we are producing music. If we are not worshipping the whole time we're in there, something is wrong!"

HAPPENINGS

God Opens Door for New Industry Opportunity

Shenandoah Valley Academy has been seeking ways to bring new industry to the school. “We need to find business partners who can help us build a consistent work program for our students,” said Jeff Twomley, vice president of finance. God answered their desires through a series of suspiciously spiritual coincidences.

University Instructors (UI) is a company that started offering summer camp programs for at-risk K-12 students several years ago. This past summer, they saw record sales for the company due in part to a partnership with NASA to deliver science-based summer camps as part of NASA’s Summer of Innovation initiative.

UI recently asked Lisa Craig, a member of the Staunton (Va.) church, to move into the role of manager of fulfillment for the Staunton site. When UI’s CEO, Alan Carter, came to spend a few days at the Staunton facility, Craig felt impressed to share a copy of the book *The Hand That Still Intervenes*. As she handed him a copy, she said, “I can’t explain why, but I believe God wants me to give you this book.”



Freshman Josh Reinoehl benefits from SVA’s new industry partner to earn money toward his tuition.



Freshman Meshach Perez organizes material for the school’s new industry supplier, University Instructors.

That evening Carter, a trained pastor, read the book and was impressed by the many examples of godly individuals having their needs met in highly unusual ways. The following morning, a father and daughter stepped into UI’s front office, where the daughter asked about opportunities for summer employment.

Carter approached and struck up a conversation with the man. “I shared that, even though the company was currently packaging and shipping materials as fast as humanly possible, some of our camps were finishing up and requesting instructions for returning their used materials,” said Carter. “I explained that our challenge was our limited space to manage both shipping and returns and that we were looking for another

location in which to relocate the returns process.”

The father was Potomac Conference’s youth director, Denny Grady, whose daughter attends SVA. “As I listened to Alan describe the logistical challenges of their growing programs, I felt that SVA and UI could help each other,” Grady said. “Also, having an industry at SVA that involved supplying supplemental educational material to under-privileged kids would not only be a good financial opportunity, but also a purposeful experience.”

As Craig listened to the conversation, she sensed this meeting was not simply coincidence. “Once Denny and his daughter left, Alan turned to me and said, ‘Lisa, this is a perfect example of the stories I read about last night, and now you know why God wanted you to give me that book.’”

In July UI began storing extra materials in SVA’s industry facility. As a result, 15 students now consistently inventory returned items.—Dan Jensen and Alan Carter



Senior Ashley McGregor puts her organizational skills to good use.

Putting Your Service Where Your Heart Is

Submitting ourselves to the needs of others makes heroes of us all. By serving others, we recognize our Creator God, Who has supported us, fed us, taught us and tested us, even though we do not always deserve it. Understanding this simple fact often moves individuals to repay a never ending debt of gratitude. I've heard it said that service is both a means and an end, because by giving to others, you open yourself to love, abundance and inner peace. This is because you cannot serve others without uplifting yourself. A note of thanks to the postman, a parent, your professor, a spouse or the act of fulfilling the needs of someone who depends on you, can offer encouragement, lift their spirits or make their day.

You can also become a hero to a college or university student simply by supporting them as they prepare for a life of service. No matter how small the gesture, students will find it heartfelt and noble. On behalf of our students, I want to say "thank you" for your abundant acts of service, prayers and financial gifts to Washington Adventist University (WAU). Your acts of service are helping produce graduates who, as they walk through the "Gateway to Service," bring to their communities competence and moral leadership.

This is Washington Adventist University!



Weymouth Spence
President

Four Receive Awards at Inaugural Visionaries Gala

Four individuals of extraordinary accomplishments and service were recognized this fall at Washington Adventist University's (WAU) Inaugural Visionaries Gala, held at the Congressional Country Club in Bethesda, Md. The recipients of the Visionary Award were Dikembe Mutumbo, an NBA legend, for excellence in humanitarian service; Evelyn Bata, PhD, educator, business-woman, activist and philanthropist, for excellence in service to WAU; Rory Pullens, head of the Duke Ellington School for the Arts in Washington, D.C., for

excellence in community transformation; and James Bingham, DMA, chair of the WAU music department, for excellence in the musical arts and humanities.

The gala is envisioned as an annual event to support *Vision 2020*, a blueprint for campus development over the next seven years. Guided by the motto "Vision 2020: Growing With Excellence," WAU leaders aim to improve all facets of its operations to become a thriving university in the competitive higher education market. In academics, the leaders aim to exceed accreditation standards; develop a strong curriculum in science, technology, engineering and mathematics; expand service learning; conduct ongoing program review; make strategic reinvestment in the quality of programs; and promote and strengthen support services that reflect 21st century best practices.

For Weymouth Spence, president of the Takoma Park, Md., university, the gala represents "a watershed moment in the history of Washington Adventist University."

An enthusiastic Dave Weigley, president of the Columbia Union Conference and chair of the WAU Board of Trustees, echoed his sentiments. "WAU is just taking off," he said. "... This was an outstanding event to celebrate WAU's exceptional progress in recent years and to recast a renewed vision."

James Bingham, Dikembe Mutumbo, Evelyn Bata and Rory Pullens are recognized as visionaries.

PHOTO BY CHARLES VOTAW



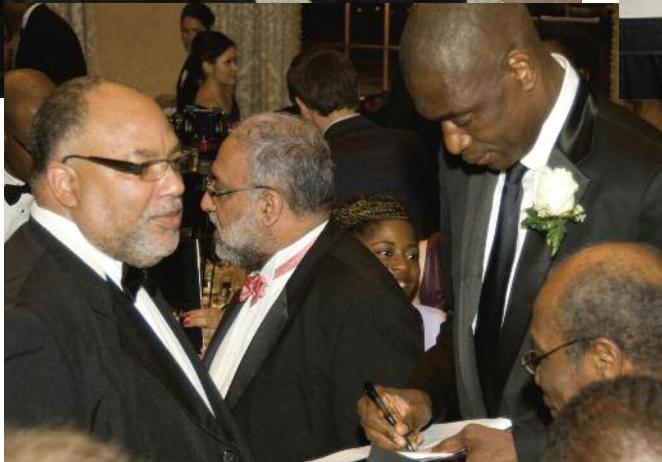
Gala Attendees Celebrate University's Vision, Excellence



University chaplains Kaneil Williams and Regina Johnson are dressed to impress.



Weymouth Spence, WAU president, presents Evelyn Bata with her visionary award.



Dikembe Mutumbo, an NBA legend, signs autographs.



President Weymouth Spence says the gala is a "watershed moment" in the university's history.

PHOTOS BY CHARLES VOTAW



your healing MINISTRY

God's Mission, God's Family

NOVEMBER 2013

In a recent employee forum, a nurse spoke out saying, "The reason I love coming to work here is that it feels like a family. In fact I drive 40 minutes and pass five other hospitals just to come and work here for that reason." Promoting and supporting a culture of "family" between physicians and nurses, housekeepers and nutrition workers, therapists and volunteers, administrators and groundskeepers is highly valued by the team members of Sycamore Medical Center and in the larger Kettering Adventist HealthCare system.

Following a post discharge call with a former patient, nurse Susan enthusiastically turned to her team and proudly beamed, "the patient said she was so thankful for the wonderful care she received by all of our staff on Unit 2. She told me that she works in health care and has never experienced the wonderful care she received from us. She said her experience was 'amazing and incredible.' She said, 'Everyone listened to me, just like family!'"

When we work together and prioritize our team members as family, we foster a culture that feeds our ability and our instinct to treat our patients as family.

Jesus affirmed this focus when He turned to His team, the disciples who were working side by side with Him dedicating their lives to His mission, and said, "Look, these are my mother, my brothers and sisters." Matthew 12:46, Mark 3:31

Working together toward the mission of quality and compassionate care makes us disciples of Jesus and draws us together with Him as a family.

Everyday occurrences within our midst, whether they be the birth of a new family member, the repair of a hip fracture, the discovery of cancer, a discussion to preserve the dignity and honor of a loved one as they die, or the renewal of wedding vows in a care unit, allow us to share in the struggle and the joy of the human family. As we witness and experience these intimate and emotional events, we work together to become a vital part of the family circle. In the very center of this circle is our heavenly Father.

God calls us into this relationship of family saying, "And I will be your Father, and you will be my sons and daughters." 2 Corinthians 6:18

Like the nurse quoted above, I count it a privilege to be part of the Kettering Adventist HealthCare family dedicated to treating those we serve like family held securely in the love of God's larger family.



W. Sackett

Wally Sackett, FACHE

Administrator Sycamore Medical Center
Vice President Kettering Medical Center

*Wally Sackett is a member of the
Kettering Seventh-day Adventist Church*

*God calls us into this
relationship of family
saying, "And I will be your
Father, and you will be my
sons and daughters."*

- 2 Corinthians 6:18



your healing MINISTRY

303 Years of Marriage and Many More Ahead

By Krystal Morris



“Stay in the church and right with the Lord. It’s the only way it can work.” That’s the secret to a happy marriage, say Gerald and Marilyn Patrick, married for 63 years.

Gerald and Marilyn, along with four other couples who reside in the Sycamore Glen Retirement Community, a Kettering Adventist HealthCare facility in Miamisburg, Ohio, recommitted their wedding vows to love each other unconditionally on Friday, June 21.

Sycamore Glen employees, Sherry Wills and Sandy Dalton, came up with the idea of a vow renewal ceremony after witnessing the inspiring love stories of their residents firsthand. They hoped that placing the festivities close to home would motivate the other



Gerald and Marilyn Patrick cut the cake after recommittting their vows.

residents to “keep going” and encourage them to recognize that there is life ahead in their retirement community.

The ceremony took place in the lobby of Sycamore Glen Plaza and included a three-piece string ensemble, Pastor Larry Kositsin from Miamisburg church to give the homily, an audience of fellow residents, and a professionally decorated wedding cake.

The couples were all smiles as they interlocked hands and listened to Pastor Kositsin share snippets of their treasured love stories. Joe Dour, married to Joann for 68 years, is a World War II veteran and was present during the raising of the American flag at Iwo Jima. This couple met while waiting to play pool; they fell in love, married, and have since then raised four children together.



Joe and Joann Dour hold hands while Pastor Larry Kositsin gives the homily.

Larry Rezash was a church pastor when he met his future, Clara who was a member of the congregation. Clara and Larry say that “unconditional love has kept them



Clara Rezash feeds cake to her husband Larry.



together and kept their marriage strong through the years," allowing them to raise three children who have given them three grandchildren.

This unconditional love that Clara and Larry experience was apparent in the lives of the couples, who each brought to the ceremony their unique story of walking and growing with Christ through their marriage.

Whether married or unmarried, young or old, many of the attendees were blessed by the enduring commitment of these five couples

to each other and to their Lord. The ceremony brought joy to the hearts of the residents and helped them recognize the vitality life can always have at every age.

These five elderly couples brought the vibrancy of newly re-committed love into the Sycamore Glen Retirement Center through renewing their vows and making plans to enjoy many more years of living for Christ in their marriage.



Guy and Natalie Anthony feed each other cake following the ceremony.



Dennis and Nancy Christian have been married for 54 years.

Somewhere in Time

By Sherry Wills, Activity Director at Sycamore Glen Retirement Community

Somehere in time, I found you. Along life's road of destiny you stood before me, and I before you. When our eyes met, our souls forever became entwined, and I knew that forever, you had to be mine.

On the day we shared our vows to forever love and be faithful, our hearts could not foresee the path that was being laid out before us.

With excitement we began a new life together, sharing each day as it came with laughter, with tears, with memories and some secrets that only we can hold near.

Now, our somewhere in time is far behind, and today we begin a new commitment for a new beautiful day that stands before us. May each and every moment of past, present and future, hold more love, more life, more fullness of joy than what we have yet ever known.

I thank God my love for our somewhere in time for that one moment will forever live on.

NEWS



NOVEMBER 2013

Providing Advanced Stroke Treatment in Ohio Area

Kettering Medical Center has been designated by the Healthcare Facilities Accreditation Program (HFAP) to be the first HFAP Comprehensive Stroke Center in the United States. A Comprehensive Stroke Center must meet very stringent requirements for advanced diagnostic, interventional processes, pre-hospital provider qualifications, and must provide community education for prevention. Because of meeting each of these requirements, Kettering Medical Center is now the only hospital in the Dayton, Ohio area that can provide advanced stroke treatment for complex stroke patients who may arrive in the emergency department. Soon after Kettering Medical Center was designated by HFAP, Sycamore Medical Center, Grandview Medical Center, and Southview Medical Center also became HFAP compliant centers. "We are proud to receive this prestigious distinction," says Mike Brendel, vice president of clinical and outpatient services for Kettering Medical Center. "By recognizing us as a Comprehensive Stroke Center, HFAP has recognized our commitment to providing outstanding stroke care to our patients and the community. This achievement demonstrates the continued commitment of Kettering Adventist HealthCare and the Wallace-Kettering Neuroscience Institute to serve the community at the highest level."



Celebrating Employee's Service

The Excellence for Life event, held at the Frazee Pavilion in Kettering, Ohio recognized employees for their extraordinary service and faithful dedication to the organization. Honorees included Employee of the Month, Living the Values, and President's Award winners, as well as those who have accomplished 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, and 45 years of service. Employees were treated with the Australian soft rock duo Air Supply and enjoyed food from City BBQ and Ritter's Frozen Custard.



Fred Manchur with Living the Values honorees Nedra Lindsay, Christina Cooper, and Linda Farley

Hospital Outreach Shown in *The Adventists 2*

Adventists in their healing ministry were again featured in Emmy winning director Martin Doblmeier's film on Adventists. This documentary, *The Adventists 2*, showcases Adventists travelling abroad spreading the health message and displays how these values of mission and health were founding principles of the Seventh-day Adventist church centuries ago.

One of the stories in this film featured Kettering Physicians Network plastic surgeon Dr. Steven Schmidt and his group, Legacy of Healing as they traveled to the Dominican Republic. The group included 53 physicians, nurses, students, and other volunteers from 7 states who performed 184 surgical procedures, treated 750 clinic patients, built a water filtration system for a community school, taught personal hygiene techniques, and shared the gospel.

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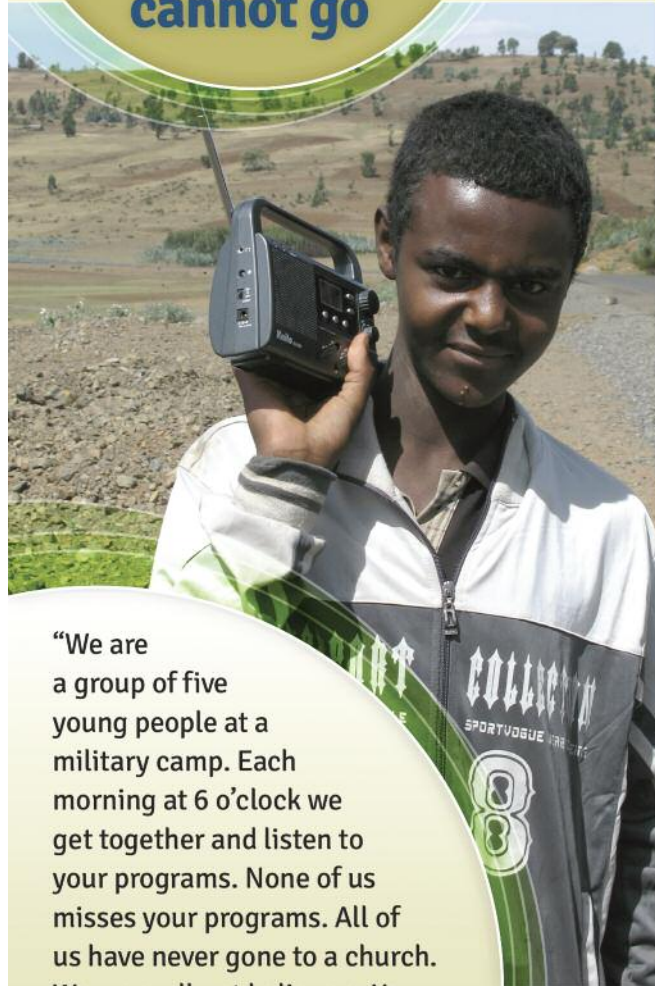
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EMPLOYMENT

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UNION COLLEGE invites applicants for a faculty position teaching accounting. Qualified applicants will have a CPA and MBA or master's in accounting and should be a committed member of the Adventist church. A doctorate is preferred. Find more information at ucollege.edu/faculty-openings or contact Barry Forbes at baforbes@ucollege.edu.

MISCELLANEOUS

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ATTENTION MOTORCYCLE ENTHUSIASTS: Interested in joining Adventist Motorcycle Ministries? If you have a passion to reach the biker community for Christ, we are looking for members to join our new chapter in Virginia. Please contact Bill at (804) 443-4731 or email billybtangler@gmail.com.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

50TH ANNIVERSARY

HOMECOMING for Hamilton Seventh-day Church, 3570 Hamilton-Middletown Rd., Hamilton, OH 45011. Former pastors, members and friends, please join us Sabbath, Dec. 7, all day, beginning

at 10 a.m. Guests include Raj Attiken, Lonnie Melashenko (speakers) and much more. RSVP or questions, email Dianne, prayerrequest09@hotmail.com.

OBITUARIES

DAVIS, Patricia Joy (Rushold), born June 20, 1931, in Minneapolis, Minn.; died September 7, 2013, at her home in Dayton, Ohio. She grew up in Minneapolis with her parents, Willie and Iona Rushold, and sister, Iva Dawn. She graduated from Maplewood (Seventh-day Adventist) Academy in Minnesota in 1949 and from Union College in Lincoln, Neb., graduating in 1954 with a bachelor's in nursing. After working at various healthcare institutions in California and Minnesota, she moved to Dayton in 1964 with her young family. She was a founding employee of Kettering Medical Center, working on the pediatric unit. After a time, she transferred to the Surgery Department and completed her career many years later in that department at Sycamore Hospital. She was a long-time and loyal supporter of the Kettering (Ohio) church, especially the music program and choir. She also enjoyed years of volunteering for the Good Neighbor House in Dayton and her involvement in the Montgomery County literacy program for adults. Pat is survived by her son, Bill Davis of Bridgman, Mich., daughter, Barbara Guenterberg of Dayton; three grand-children, three great-grandchildren, her sister, Iva Dawn Parry of Titusville, Fla., and her brother, Warren Rushold of Portland, Ore.

HENDERSON, Jesse G., born August 19, 1943, in Martinsburg, W.Va.; died August 21, 2013, in Avon Park, Fla. He was a member of the Avon Park church. Jesse was active in the publishing work during his life, in the Chesapeake, Ohio, Arizona, Arkansas, Indiana, Wisconsin, North Carolina, Georgia and Florida conferences. He is survived by his wife, Judith Henderson of Avon Park; his son, Joel Henderson of Colledgeale, Tenn.; and his daughters, Staci Froelich of Laurel, Md., and Karinda Maquera of Avon Park.

JOHNSON, Betty J. "Oma," born December 22, 1924, in Sipesville, Pa.; died May 7, 2013, in Quarryville, Pa. She was a member of the Lancaster (Pa.) church. It was her life's mission to help with any service related to the church. Her involvement included the fruit program for 12 years, the school food store for 25 years, boarded school teachers and students, the children's divisions, community services, gave Bible studies, greeter and deaconess. All five of her children graduated from the Lancaster Adventist Elementary School. She will be remembered for her

	Nov 1	Nov 8	Nov 15	Nov 22	Nov 29
Baltimore	6:06	4:58	4:52	4:48	4:44
Cincinnati	6:38	5:30	5:24	5:20	5:16
Cleveland	6:23	5:14	5:07	5:02	4:59
Columbus	6:30	5:23	5:16	5:11	5:08
Jersey City	5:53	4:45	4:39	4:34	4:30
Norfolk	6:08	5:02	4:56	4:52	4:49
Parkersburg	6:26	5:18	5:12	5:07	5:04
Philadelphia	5:59	4:51	4:45	4:40	4:37
Pittsburgh	6:18	5:10	5:03	4:58	4:55
Reading	6:02	4:54	4:47	4:42	4:39
Richmond	6:12	5:05	5:00	4:55	4:53
Roanoke	6:23	5:16	5:10	5:06	5:03
Toledo	6:30	5:22	5:15	5:09	5:06
Trenton	5:57	4:49	4:43	4:38	4:35
Wash., D.C.	6:08	5:01	4:55	4:50	4:47

generosity, hugs, "loud" kisses, big smile, happy spirit and laughter. She loved to eat, especially at Sabbath fellowship meals, sitting on the porch swing and "tweeting" to the birds. She is lovingly survived by her children: Julia A., wife of Bryan C. Yingst, Quarryville; Shirley, wife of Robert Swift, Lancaster; and Sandi, wife of Edward Bahr, Nampa, Idaho; Robert (Doris) Johnson of Manheim, Pa.; daughter-in-law, Wanda Johnson, Deland, Fla.; sister-in-law Doris Hay, Mt. Joy, Pa.; 15 grandchildren; 22 great-grandchildren; and six great-great-grandchildren. She is predeceased by her son, William Scott Johnson, a grandson and great-grandson, and, in 1992, her husband, Walter S. Johnson.

JONES, Edna, born July 8, 1933, in Suitland, Md.; died June 17, 2013, in Hagerstown, Md. She was a member of the Hagerstown church. Edna worked as an administrative secretary to Neil Wilson, who was president of the world church for many years. She is survived by her loving husband of 63 years, Pelton Jones; her son, Charles Jones; her daughter, Deborah Jones; granddaughter, Danielle Wohlgermuth; her sister, Charlotte Allen; eight grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren; a host of nieces and nephews and a loving extended family of friends. She was preceded in death by her two sons, David and Gary Jones.

REDMOND, Larry, born August 8, 1939, in Frederick, Md.; died July 16, 2013, in Hagersown, Md. He was an active member of the Hagerstown church. Larry is survived by his wife, Diane; daughters, Leah McClure and Joan Standish; and a granddaughter, Georgia Standish.

STEPHENS, Lois (Schilling), born April 27, 1945, in Colver, Pa.; died August 4, 2013, in Hot Springs, Ark. She was a member of the Shenango Valley church in West Middlesex, Pa. Lois was married to her childhood sweetheart, Raymond Stephens, for almost 49 years. Most of her career was spent working in various departments of the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference office. She loved her work. She also enjoyed young people and worked with Pathfinders in Shreveport, La., for many years. She loved her family, husband, children and grandchildren. She is survived by her husband; her son, Daren (Kari) Stephens of College Station, Texas; her daughter, Shelly (Dean) Colvin of Venus, Texas; her brothers: Franklin (Kathleen) Schilling of Belsano, Pa., Stanley (Jeanie) Schilling of Nanty-Glo, Pa., and Raymond (Jaralee) Schilling of Belsano; and five grandchildren.

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