

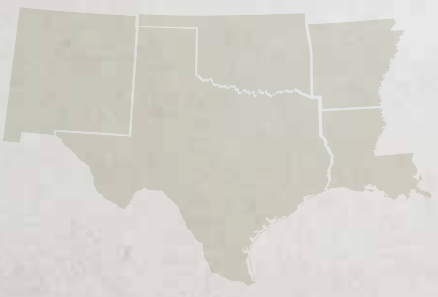
SOUTHWESTERN UNION

# Record

MARCH 2010

# BUILDING Bridges

FINDING PRACTICAL WAYS TO WITNESS



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# Building Bridges



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## Showing Love in a Practical Way



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## Destined to Win!



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### On the Cover

This issue is dedicated to building bridges. All around us there are people in need of the Savior. Too often we are guilty of passing up personal witnessing opportunities because it seems too inconvenient or simply because we don't know what to do. But as the features in this issue show, you can build bridges. It is our hope that this issue of the *Record* will inspire you to reach out to those around you in kind, fun, and practical ways!

# President's Perspective»

BY MAX TREVIÑO » SOUTHWESTERN UNION CONFERENCE PRESIDENT



## On Feeding Sheep and Seagulls *Max S. Treviño*

**Witnessing is at the core of what we are called to do as a church.** It's in our DNA. But witnessing is not something we can sit back and let the pastor or evangelist do.

In a stirring passage from the last chapter of John, Jesus asked Peter a question. Three times Jesus questioned, "Do you love me?" Three times Peter answered, "You know that I do." Jesus' reply to Peter was a command—"Feed my sheep."

Jesus stated earlier in John 10:16, saying, "I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd."

Betty's sister lives in Seattle and when we go to visit her, we often take a ferry across the bay to the San Juan Islands. One of the highlights of the ferry ride is

feeding chips to the seagulls.

There's an interesting process that always happens.

You start by throwing a crumb to one lonely seagull. But he gets so excited that he joyously cries out with his high-pitched shriek.

Moments later, another swoops in to see what the fuss is all about... then another, and another. Within seconds, an entire squadron of hungry birds has gathered.

We're all just hungry sheep, looking for an especially lush patch of greenery to feast upon. When we discover God's green pastures, it's natural to share the goodness with our friends and neighbors.

Have you ever discovered a new restaurant with particularly good food? It's always fun to tell friends

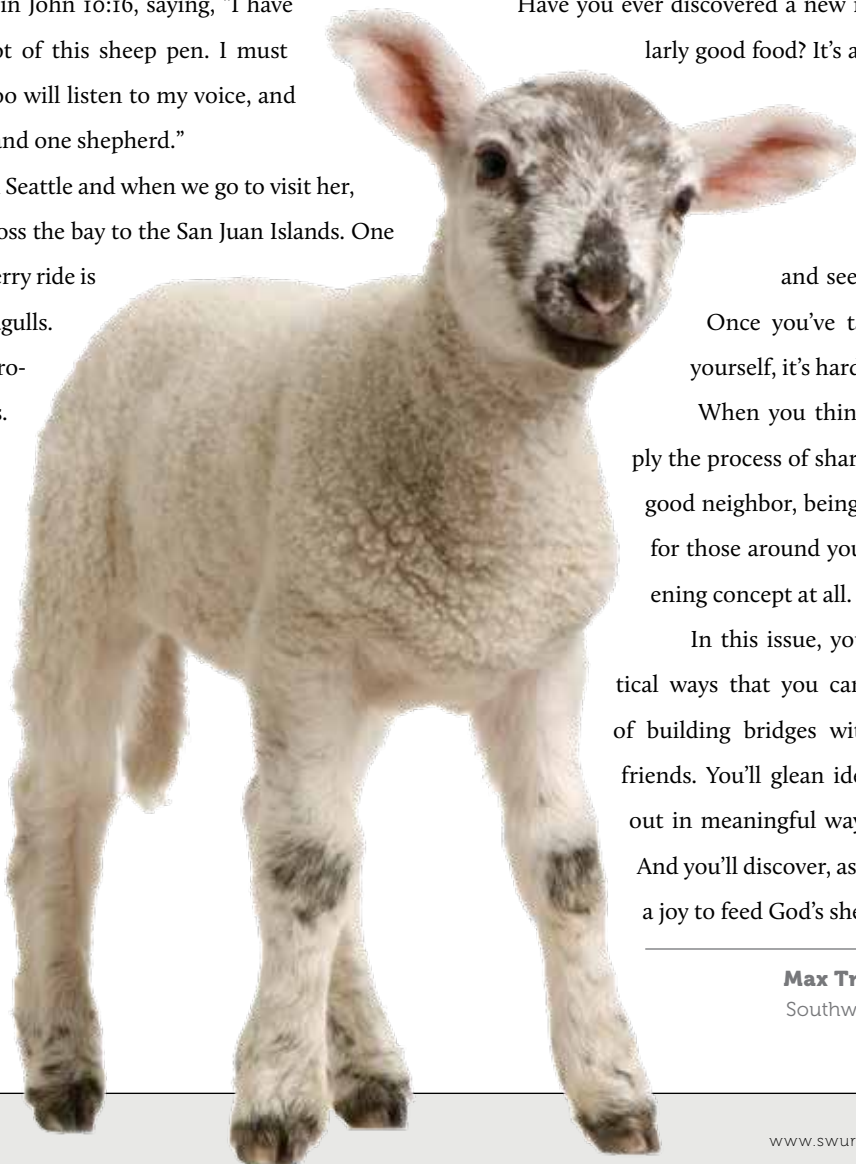
about your find. It's even better to take them there yourself!

David said to "Taste and see that the Lord is good."

Once you've tasted His goodness for yourself, it's hard to keep it to yourself!

When you think of witnessing as simply the process of sharing good news—being a good neighbor, being kind and loving, caring for those around you—then it's not a frightening concept at all.

In this issue, you'll discover some practical ways that you can go about the process of building bridges with your neighbors and friends. You'll glean ideas about how to reach out in meaningful ways to those around you. And you'll discover, as I'm discovering, that it's a joy to feed God's sheep!



**Max Treviño** is president of the Southwestern Union Conference.



# CREATION Health

BY LYNELL LAMOUNTAIN

## Live Life to the Fullest with REST

**During World War II, Great Britain instituted a 74-hour workweek but soon discovered people couldn't maintain the pace.**

After experimenting with the schedule, it found that a 48-hour workweek with regular breaks and a weekly day of rest resulted in maximum efficiency. During the French Revolution, France experimented with a ten-day week; chaos resulted from the ensuing mental and physical stress.

God got it right the first time around. In six days He created our world and rested on the seventh day. Science has observed this seven-day rhythm in nature. Medical research has demonstrated seven-day rhythms in connection with a variety of physiological functions. These include heart rate, natural hormones in human breast milk and urine, swelling after surgery, rejection of transplanted organs, human and animal cancers and their response to treatment, inflammatory responses, and the drugs we use to treat them. For instance, a patient will tend to have an increase in swelling on the seventh and the fourteenth day after surgery. Similarly, a patient who has had a kidney transplant is more likely to reject the organ seven days and fourteen days after surgery.

German scientists call the thing that sets a biorhythm "zeitgeber" or "time-give." The zeitgeber that initiates and maintains the seven-day rhythm is not yet understood, but some chronobiologists think that a regular day of rest might pace it. It is possible that we have a physiologic need to rest a specific day each week.

Resting one whole day in seven brings renewal to the physical and spiritual life. Unlike days, months, or years, this biorhythm has no astronomical marker. There is no plausible explanation for its presence except that it was designed and built into our physiology by our Creator. The day can be used for many restorative things: to connect with others; for re-creation, reflection, and meditation; and it can be a special time to focus on nurturing one's spiritual values. How interesting (though not surprising) that science is discovering the health benefits related to keeping God's fourth commandment of spiritual rest.

Although we experience physical and mental rest when we observe the weekly Sabbath, our body requires nightly rest, too. Seven to eight hours of sleep is optimal. According to research, people who sleep less than six hours a night

or more than nine hours might actually decrease their lifespan by nine years. The highest quality hours for our best sleep occur during early evening because this is when certain hormones and their interactions are at their peak. Studies show that missing three hours of sleep on any given night can compromise the immune system by up to 50 percent. (The CREATION Health Seminar covers in great detail how to have better rest, create the optimum sleep environment, and tips for helping you fall asleep and get your best rest.)

In addition to weekly spiritual rest and nightly physical rest, we need annual rest. Stress is fracturing families and sending countless thousands to emergency rooms because we live in an over-stimulated, under-rested society. During a 20-year follow up of women participants, the Framingham Heart Study found an association between infrequent vacationing and increased incidence of death from coronary causes. Another study found that men who developed psychosomatic illnesses were less likely to have taken vacations than were men who never developed such illnesses. Doctors Gump and Matthews found in their nine-year study of more than 12,000 men that annual vacations were associated with a reduced risk of all-cause mortality. The specific cause of death most strongly associated with inadequate vacationing was coronary heart disease.








God created us to be restored through daily, weekly, and annual rest. Rest is incredibly powerful. It refreshes, rejuvenates, regenerates, and rebuilds our mind, body, and soul. It empowers us to function at our best. But perhaps the best reason of all for us to rest is the one that God modeled at the end of Creation week. He wasn't physically tired, mentally stressed, or emotionally exhausted when He rested. He rested simply to enjoy.

This is an experience that Jesus desires each of us to have, for He said, "Come to me all, all you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest."

Rest brings joy, happiness, and peace into our lives; we rest to enjoy. We rest to enjoy God and those whom we love and serve. We rest to live life to the fullest.

That's CREATION Health!

Lynell LaMountain writes from Florida Hospital in Orlando, Fla. For information about hosting a CREATION Health program at your church, visit [www.CREATIONhealth.tv](http://www.CREATIONhealth.tv) or call 407.303.7711.

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

# Shades of Grace

BY MIKE TUCKER » SPEAKER/DIRECTOR, FAITH FOR TODAY



## Don't Miss the Grace!—Part 3

**This is our third and final study of Hebrews 12:15 (NIV): “See to it that no one misses the grace of God.”** We've learned that in order to be faithful to the Apostle's command, we must first receive the gospel for ourselves as we bask in the glory of God's forgiveness for our sins and in the miracle of assured salvation.

Last month we discovered that the second step to insuring that no one misses God's grace is to be taken at home. We are to see our family as children of God who need our love and acceptance.

The next step is more of a leap than a step, since it is to cover the entire world. We have not been faithful to the Apostle's command until we learn to extend God's grace to everyone in our world.

This can be the most difficult step since there are a lot of people in the world who we just don't like. Who fits into that category for you? Who do you find to be the most difficult for you to extend the gift of grace?

However you answer this question, it is important to remember that we have not obeyed the Apostle's command until everyone has experienced God's grace through us.

A little over a year ago Gayle and I interviewed a man on *Lifestyle Magazine* who received the most horrific news any parent could ever receive when a highway patrol officer knocked on his door to tell him that his son had been killed by a drunk driver. Ted and his wife were absolutely devastated by the death of their 18-year-old son. Robert had been an honor student, a terrific athlete, and a devoted follower of Jesus Christ. His plans were to complete college, spend a year or two in the mission field, and then study for the ministry. And now he was gone.

So painful is this type of loss that the divorce rate for couples that lose a child to death is 95 percent over a five-year period!

When I asked Ted how he dealt with the death of his son, he pointed to his faith as a strong resource for the healing he and his wife experienced. However, there was one more thing that truly helped. Early on they decided to forgive the man whose seemingly inexcusable act had destroyed Robert's life.

To be sure, it was not an easy thing to do, but as Christians, this godly couple decided that forgiveness was not only their only option, but that it would be an essential ingredient to their personal, emotional, and spiritual healing.

They wrote a letter to the jail where Chris, the man who was responsible for Robert's death, was being held. They told him about their son and their love for him. They spoke of the incredible emptiness and pain they now felt as a result of his death. And then they told Chris that because of the love and grace that Christ had given them, they were now choosing to extend that same forgiveness to him. They said that it was their sincere prayer that God would enter his life and change him so that he could experience the healing that only comes through God's amazing grace.

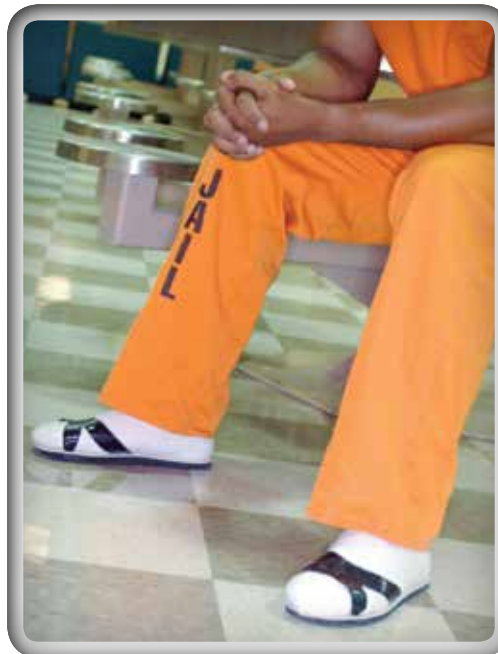
When Chris' trial took place, Ted was in the courtroom every day. And when Chris was found guilty, before sentencing, Ted was allowed to make a statement directly to Chris.

Ted said, “We have forgiven you, just as Christ is willing to forgive you. It is our prayer that you will receive that forgiveness and that we will be able to spend eternity with you.”

But that's not where the story ends. Through a miracle, Ted was allowed to visit Chris in prison. Through Ted's persistent, patient love, Chris has accepted Christ as his Savior. Upon Chris' release from prison, it is his desire to study for Christian ministry.

Ted says, “We have a son. No one can replace the son we lost, but Chris is our son and we love him.”

Ted is fulfilling the Apostle's command. How about you? Will you “see to it that NO ONE misses the grace of God”?



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



# Pass it On...

A Monthly Focus on Evangelism in the Southwest

BY STEVE DAYEN

## Conroe: A Local Church with a Global Vision

**T**he Adventist Church has always liked the question, What if? What if we printed a small paper that went around the world? What if we sent J.N. Andrews to Switzerland? What if we opened hospitals?

We, in Conroe, Tex., also had a dream—a dream to build a church. So, a couple of years ago, we set up our building committee and looked at what it cost to build it. As soon as we talked about the projected cost and realized it would be in the millions, something went through my mind. For about the past year I had been listening to *Maranatha Mission Stories* and was impressed with what they were doing with the One-day Church building program. We simply asked the question: Why not, while raising funds to build our own church, raise funds to build many churches around the world? We had already been talking about the idea of giving a percentage. So I planted a seed with the building committee and shared with them the idea that if we could give a percentage of the money we were going to spend on our own church, it would make a big dent toward helping to build other churches around the world. When I talked with my building committee chairman, he said, “Why don’t we do 10 percent?” And as soon as he said that, in my heart, I said “Yes!” The next step was to go to a board meeting and everyone agreed. Then we had a big banquet, and 70 people were there. Everyone there was also in agreement.

On February 7, 2009, the members of the Conroe church voted unanimously to give 10 percent of any new local building fund contributions to help the work of foreign missions throughout the world. The lion’s share, or nine percent, will go to build One-day Churches all over the world. Another one percent will be given to help at least one orphanage in India and possibly others in the future.

### WHAT IS THE MEANING OF 10 X 10?

The Conroe church is committed to building at least 10 churches during the two-year period of 2009 and 2010. Simply put, “10 x 10” = 10 churches by 2010. We are not alone in this dream. We have formed a “partnership in faith” with Maranatha Volunteers International and ASI to make this dream a reality. For more details, you can view our Web site at: [www.10Churches.org](http://www.10Churches.org).

My personal goal is that the Conroe congregation can fund the matching portion (50 percent) for at least 100 new One-day Churches over the next

few years. I believe that this goal is very achievable, by God’s grace. This vision has arisen from the simple principle that we are blessed in the process of blessing others. Jesus said it best in Matthew 10:8: “Freely you have received, freely give.”

### HOW CAN MY CHURCH DO SOMETHING LIKE THIS?

If you are planning a local church building project for your own congregation, we would encourage you to prayerfully consider the “10 X 10” concept as a foundation for your stewardship plans.

Pastor Steve, Bruce Oliver (our building committee chairman), and the members of the Conroe church are happy to share ideas and resources to help make 10 X 10 a success in your church. We are happy to let you use our marketing materials as a pattern for producing your own. We want to work together to finish the work of spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ to the entire world!

**Steve Dayen** is pastor of the Conroe church in Conroe, Tex., and the visionary behind the congregation’s innovative church building program.



▲ Through a unique giving plan, members of the Conroe, Tex., church are using 10 percent of the offerings raised for the construction of their own church building to build One-day Churches around the world.



## Dios Todavía Obra Milagros

Cuando Jeison del Águila tenía 16 años, comenzó a tener convulsiones. Determinando que una anomalía en su cerebro causaba las convulsiones, los doctores declararon que la condición era inoperable, y le dijeron que tendría que vivir con ella por el resto de su vida. Jeison sabía que en cualquier momento podría tener su ataque final y morir.

Entonces, un domingo por la tarde a mediados de agosto del 2009, el temido momento llegó. Jeison había estado trabajando en su computadora y tuvo que salir a comprar algunos materiales para completar el trabajo. Cuando volvió a casa, había tenido una convulsión, pero ésta era diferente. La mamá de Jeison, notando que él no respondía cuando le habló, inmediatamente lo llevó al hospital. En la sala de emergencias, el personal le informó que el cerebro de Jeison sangraba con severidad y que la situación era grave.

A la mañana siguiente el doctor declaró, “no podemos hacer nada por él. Si vive, será un vegetal.” El personal del hospital entonces decidió pedir permiso por escrito para donar los órganos de Jeison. El miércoles Jeison ya había dejado de respirar y fue puesto en un respirador, pero ya para el mediodía del siguiente día, la decisión de desconectarlo del respirador había sido tomada.

Sin embargo, durante todo este tiempo, oraciones subían en nombre de Jeison. Al principio cuando Jeison había sido admitido al hospital, un amigo de la familia, el Pastor Sergio Rodríguez, había venido para ungir a Jeison. “Jesús,” oro, “queremos que sea Tu decisión, no la nuestra. Queremos que Jeison viva, pero Tu sabes lo que Tu plan es para su vida. Sea hecha Tu voluntad.” Aunque ojos humanos no podían verlo, Dios estaba trabajando desde el principio.

“Oramos fervientemente,” recuerda la mamá de Jeison. “Los tres primeros días el personal del hospital estaba impresionado por la cantidad de personas que habían venido a visitar.” ¡Muchas personas vinieron—un total de 700—la sala de espera estuvo llena a capacidad y los visitantes de Jeison tuvieron que ser movidos a la capilla!

El jueves, cuando llegó el momento de desconectarlo del respirador, el personal del hospital explicó el procedimiento y le dijo a la familia lo que ellos podrían espe-

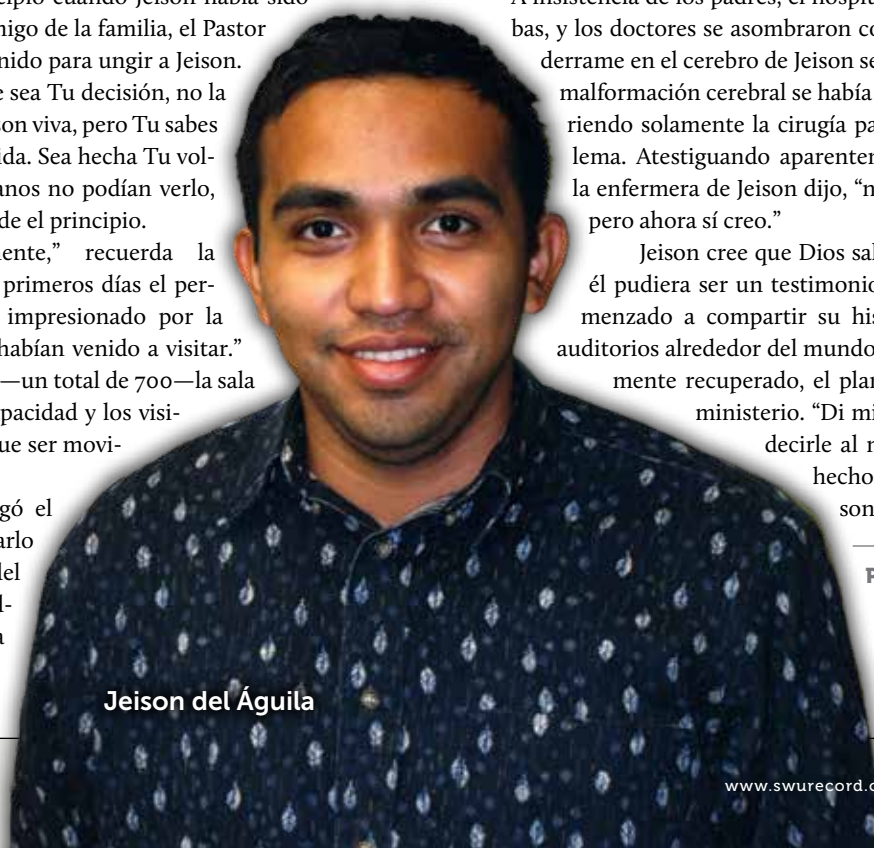
rar. Una inyección sería dada para aliviar el dolor de modo que no sufriera, y poco después, moriría. Quince miembros de la familia inmediata de Jeison estuvieron alrededor de él para ser testigos del procedimiento y dar su último adiós.

Sin embargo, después que el respirador fue desconectado, la mamá de Jeison notó que él parecía estar respirando. “Cuando lo miramos, vimos que él comenzaba a normalizarse,” dice ella. Desde ese momento, tanto ella como su esposo realizaron que Dios había contestado sus oraciones y que Jeison viviría. Pero el personal del hospital no fue tan fácilmente convencido. Durante tres semanas, Jeison se aferró a la vida con sólo medicamentos para el dolor y la fiebre—sin alimento o agua. Los doctores esperaban que muriera.

Al día siguiente, mientras su madre suavemente lo frotaba con una toalla fría, Jeison reaccionó, y dijo, “¡Está frío!” asustada, la mamá corrió para decirle a la enfermera, pero la enfermera le dijo que ella estaba alucinando. “Usted es su madre, y usted no quiere que él muera,” dijo ella. Pero, momentos más tarde, cuando Jeison agarró la mano de la enfermera, la enfermera decidió que era el momento de llamar al doctor. “¡Él apretó mi mano!” dijo ella con entusiasmo.

A insistencia de los padres, el hospital realizó más pruebas, y los doctores se asombraron con los resultados. El derrame en el cerebro de Jeison se había detenido y la malformación cerebral se había desprendido, requiriendo solamente la cirugía para corregir el problema. Atestiguando aparentemente lo imposible, la enfermera de Jeison dijo, “no creía en milagros, pero ahora sí creo.”

Jeison cree que Dios salvó su vida para que él pudiera ser un testimonio vivo. El ya ha comenzado a compartir su historia milagrosa en auditorios alrededor del mundo. Cuando esté totalmente recuperado, el planea estudiar para el ministerio. “Di mi vida a Dios y voy a decirle al mundo lo que Él ha hecho por mí,” dice Jeison.



Jeison del Águila

**Patricia Humphrey**  
es la redactora  
asociada del  
*Record.*

# Showing Love in a Practical Way

By Ruthie Jacobsen

A few years ago, Steve Sjogren wrote a remarkable book entitled *Conspiracy of Kindness*. How often have you seen those two words together—conspiracy and kindness! But Steve is a pastor whose church in Cincinnati, Ohio, grew explosively because they decided they would put a very significant principle into practice. They decided to—in practical, loving ways—develop intentional strategies to demonstrate God’s great love to those around them.

You might say that they happened on the secret by accident. You see, Steve and his wife, Janie, had tried everything they knew of to try to stimulate growth in their church of about 235 members. But after two years of hard work they still had the same number—235—so they decided to go down to the city park and experiment. They knew they’d find a lot of joggers, family picnickers, and strollers, and perhaps they could interest some of them in an “outdoor” church service.

They got to the park and started setting up chairs, a little stage, and some sound equipment. But the first people to show up were a couple of police who asked if they had a permit for a public meeting. They didn’t, so they were asked to leave. But one of the ladies in their group had an idea.

“Don’t go anywhere,” she said. “Wait for me. I’ll be right back.” Sure enough, in a few minutes she returned with her trunk full of boxes of popsicles. She had gone to Costco or somewhere and purchased all of these frozen treats and they began handing them out to the folks in the park. With each popsicle they’d

simply say, “We’re just showing God’s love in a practical way.”

So the fun began. Before long, the boxes were empty, but there were groups of people standing around asking questions, getting acquainted, and learning why anyone would give away popsicles. Nearly everyone who heard their story was impressed, and many even asked directions to the church.

Maybe even more important was what happened to the group from the church. They began to understand how simple and inexpensive it is to demonstrate kindness to others—even to strangers.

After the popsicle party in the park they decided they would explore other methods of reaching out to those around them. Sometimes they

would work as a group, sometimes as individuals.

They experimented at work, at a restaurant, in a grocery store, wherever the Holy Spirit seemed to impress them of a need. Sometimes they went as groups to places of business—maybe to clean restrooms, or some other humble but necessary task. The simple projects began to be noticed and appreciated. And their church began to grow.

Jesus didn’t ask us to do difficult things. He didn’t say, “I was sick, so you built me a hospital.” No, He said the little things are all important if they are done for His glory. He even said that a cup of cold water could have great kingdom results.

Maybe before we try to get someone to read a book, or take Bible studies, we should build bridges of trust—through such activities as making friends who trust us and enjoy being with us. Jesus knew that this is how we earn the right to invite someone to church, or to come to our home for





a simple meal and a prayer for them and their needs.

One of the fun and non-threatening things they liked to do was to go downtown and “feed the parking meters.” The group would meet at the church, pray together, then, armed with quarters, they would get some exercise walking and checking to see whose cars needed quarters.

One afternoon, a frazzled shopper rushed back to her car, knowing that she was “overtime,” and would likely have a parking ticket. What a happy surprise to find that the meter still had lots of time on it. Under her windshield wiper she found a little note that said: “Your parking meter looked hungry, so we fed it. Just showing God’s love in a practical way.” At the bottom of the card was the name of the church.

She re-read the little note, and there were tears in her eyes as she said aloud: “Lord, today is my birthday, and my husband forgot. My children forgot, but You remembered.”

It was something very small, yet the Holy Spirit used this simple act to reach a heart with His great love.

Laurel Mayers, in central California, found the little book *Bridges 101*, and it seemed to have a message for her personally. Laurel had lost her husband of many years, and after his death, she seemed to slip into a kind of survival mode. She was lonely and missed the love of her life.

She read the book, then read it again, and her prayer became, “Lord, what can I do?” He seemed to remind her that He had gifted her with a love and ability to cook and bake. So she started to put some things together that she could share with her neighbors.

The next day, in just one short visit, she discovered a neighbor struggling through chemotherapy for leukemia. She wasn’t eating well, and didn’t have the energy to prepare good food for herself. So this became Laurel’s first project. She loved fixing the food and delivering it to someone who needed it so desperately. Before long, the neighbor was looking forward to the food and the visits, and it became a happy, daily routine. Then other neighbors became part of Laurel’s daily route. It changed her life, and the lives of others. It’s

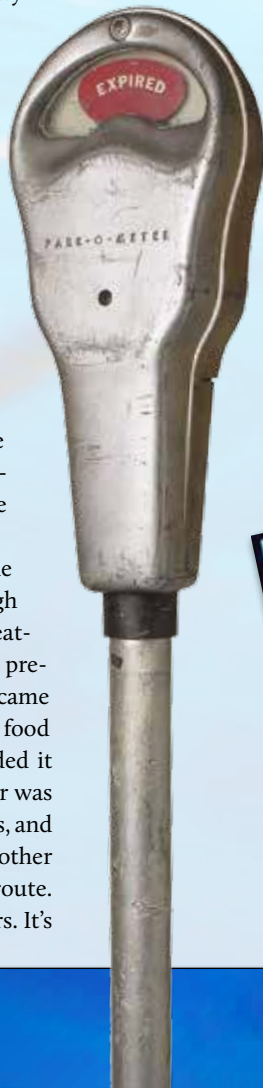


not a task God asks us to do alone; He promises to be at our side.

Laurel called her son who is on the faculty of a Seventh-day Adventist college and asked if he had read the little book, *Bridges 101*. He told her no, but when he read it, he was so impressed that he assigned it to the students in one of his classes. Part of their assignment was to find some creative and simple ways to practice reaching out to others on campus as well as off. It was a new venture for some of the students, but many of them got really resourceful in finding ways to bless others. The consensus in the class was that this unique but simple assignment had brought a new joy into their lives.

How about you? You may wish to ask God to show you when and where He wants *you* to show His love in a practical way.

Ruthie Jacobsen is the North American Division prayer coordinator.



## Send your stories!



Send us your stories of how the Lord has used you to show love in practical ways. If we use your story in a future issue of the *Record*, we’ll send you a copy of Ruthie Jacobsen’s book, *Bridges 101*. Send your stories and photos to [record@swuc.org](mailto:record@swuc.org) with the word “bridges” in the subject line. Or you can mail your stories and photos to P.O. Box 4000, Burleson, TX 76097.

# Destined to Win!

By Eddie Canales

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** We've been enjoying the 2010 Winter Olympics from Vancouver. This feature from Eddie Canales was fresh on my mind as I was watching the men's snowboarding halfpipe competition. In case you didn't see the competition, let me share briefly what happened.

Snowboarders perform a routine of jumps, acrobatic flips, twists, and tricks as they hurl down a half-cylinder snow tube. There are two heats in the competition. Riders are judged based on the height and style of their tricks. Each Olympian performs twice, keeping their highest score.

Shaun White, riding for the American team, dazzled the crowd on his first run. His score, 46.8, was 6 points higher than any of the other athletes. At the end of the second heat, the highest score was 45.0—still shy of Shaun's first run.

When the final rider's score was posted, it was a priceless moment. Shaun was standing there at the top of the hill with the assurance of a gold medal—before he even made his final run! He couldn't lose. With nothing to fear, he threw down an amazing performance, topping his own score by 1.6 points for a final score of 48.4.

Like Shaun, we already have a gold medal. Christ has already won the competition! We are more than conquerors, and Christ has empowered us. These were the thoughts that crossed my mind as I was comparing the competition with Eddie's article.



Can you think of something the Lord cannot do? Could God force you to act according to His will if He chose to? Of course He could. However, He allows you to choose whether or not to serve Him.

In Matthew 28:18, Christ says, "All power has been given to me in heaven and on earth." In the next verse He commands, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations."

Notice the bridge word "therefore." In other words He's saying, "Because I have all power, I am empowering you to go."

Some say, "But I don't have the gift of witnessing." I have news for you. Witnessing is not a gift; it's a command. And notice that the Lord did not say, "Go and make church members." He said to make disciples.

According to Webster's Dictionary, a disciple is "one who accepts and assists in spreading the doctrines of another." Simply being a church member doesn't mean you are a disciple of Jesus. A disciple of Jesus is actively engaged in witnessing.

Our churches have plenty of members! What we need more of are disciples of Jesus—individuals committed to the Lord and His mission. Jesus says, "The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest" (Luke 10:2).

The Great Commission calls us to "make disciples of all nations." That generally brings to mind places like Africa, Bolivia, or Haiti. It's true, those places are genuine mission fields—but maybe not in the sense we might think.

Consider the country of Zambia in Africa, which has a population of 12,000,000 people with about 700,000 Seventh-day Adventist church members. That means there is one church member for every 17 people in Zambia. In contrast, the United States has a population of about 300,000,000 people with approximately 1,000,000 members. That breaks down to one church member for every 300 American citizens.

So where is the greatest mission field—in Africa or in our own country? Some of the countries we consider mission fields have great material needs. But God's greatest resource is people—like you and me.

Your mission field may be your place of work, your neighborhood, or maybe even your own home—where you reach out to a spouse, a child, a parent, or other loved one.

In the last part of Matthew 28:19, Jesus continues the Great Commission, calling us to baptize them "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

It is not enough merely to share the gospel. We must also of-

fer people the opportunity to commit to the Lord Jesus Christ through baptism. Beyond that, we need to help them become disciples of Jesus, not just passive church members. We must train them and equip them to share their faith with others. It's essential to their spiritual health.

The Great Commission continues in verse 20: "teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Newly-baptized members need to be nurtured. They are new babes in Christ and need to grow spiritually. The ingredients needed for spiritual growth are the same for everyone—new and old members alike.

## Pray

The first necessary ingredient is prayer. Prayer is the spiritual breath, and is just as essential as physical breath.

Some time ago, *American Way* magazine, the official magazine of American Airlines, included an article about the importance of learning to breathe properly. The article explained how the body eliminates toxins. I was surprised to learn that the body eliminates 70 percent of its toxins through breathing, while eliminating only 16 percent through sweating, and 14 percent by other means. Clearly it's important to breathe deeply.

If it is true physically, it is even more so spiritually. A vital, continuous prayer life is essential to our spiritual wellbeing. When life's problems test our faith, we must go to God in prayer instead of falling into desperation. Prayer is the means by which we eliminate the toxins of sin and spiritual confusion from our lives.

## Study Your Bible

The second essential ingredient to spiritual growth is Bible study. If prayer is the breath of the soul, Bible study is the food of the soul. We need to study our Bibles as often and as urgently as we consume our daily meals. Otherwise we become spiritually anemic. It is possible to have spiritual food right at our fingertips and still experience starvation.

What things occupy your family members on a day-to-day basis? In the average family, children spend about 40 to 60 hours per week watching TV, playing video games, or surfing the Internet. No wonder so many families are spiritually anemic! Change is needed!

## Attend Church

A third important ingredient to spiritual growth is regular church attendance—and that means more than just showing up for the 11 o'clock service every Sabbath. Many of us are "7-11 Christians" because we only attend church on the seventh day and rarely even show up for Sabbath School!

## Share Your Faith

The final essential ingredient is witnessing. Sharing your faith with others is one of the fastest and most effective ways to grow spiritually. It doesn't matter who you share with—one-to-one, at work, with friends and neighbors, or with relatives. It's a great idea to participate in a small group ministry where you dedicate one evening per week to prayer and Bible study with a group of friends and relatives in your home.

Matthew 28:20 ends with the beautiful, comforting promise, "and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." As Jesus' disciples we're assured that, no matter what circumstances we face, He will be with us until the end. He has already won the battle. It is ours to go forth as conquerors—in His strength and power.

Disciple or church member? Only you can decide. Just remember that with Christ on your side, you're destined to win!!

**Eddie Canales** is vice president for Hispanic ministries and personal ministries director for the Southwestern Union.

# Tools for Witnessing

Listed below are a variety of tools and resources to help you share your faith with others. Check your local Adventist Book Center or go to [www.adventistbookcenter.com](http://www.adventistbookcenter.com) for these and other sharing resources.

## Online Bible Study Resources

<http://www.amazingfacts.org/store/entity/tabid/267/c-11-witnessing-tools.aspx>  
[www.bibleinfo.com](http://www.bibleinfo.com)  
[www.kidsbibleinfo.com](http://www.kidsbibleinfo.com)  
<http://bibleschools.com/>

## Sharing Books

*Your Friends, the Seventh-day Adventists* by Ken McFarland  
*Your Bible and You E-book* by Arthur S. Maxwell

## Sharing Magazines

*Vibrant Life* (A Christian approach to whole-person health)  
*Message* (Encourages virtuous living for today and eternity)  
*Signs of the Times* (News, tips, and articles to help readers live the Christian life)  
*Real* (Christian outreach magazine for unchurched children in North America)

## Television and Radio Ministries

<http://www.hopetv.org/home/>  
<http://www.3abn.org/>  
<http://www.vop.com/>  
<http://www.thequiethour.org/Page.aspx?pid=183>

## Witnessing Help

*Christ's Way of Making Disciples* by Philip G. Samaan  
*Christ's Way of Reaching People* by Philip G. Samaan  
*Light Your World For God: A Dynamic Soul-winning Manual to Lead Your Church* by Ernestine and Mark Finley  
*New Ways to Tell the Old, Old Story* by H.M.S. Richards, Jr.  
*Power Witnessing* by David A. Farmer  
*Winsome Witnessing, Dynamic Ways to Share Your Faith*, two-DVD set by Gary Gibbs



## Witnessing: A Way Of Life!

The parting words of Jesus (Acts 1:8) as He stood on the Mount of Olives with His disciples just before He ascended to heaven were words of promise and instruction. The words of promise were that His followers would receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. It was a restatement and reminder of a promise that had already been shared with them. It was a promise of empowerment by the Spirit that would give them authority, influence, and power in their witnessing.

The instruction was that His followers were to be witnesses at home and abroad. This is the heart of the gospel commission. As followers of Jesus, we are to represent Him wherever we are. We are called to be witnesses, not just on special occasions, but at all times and under all circumstances.

Witnessing training is very helpful and essential to assist all of us in becoming more effective in pointing others heavenward. Yet witnessing should be seen, not as a scheduled event, but rather, as a way of life. How I conduct myself, how I speak, how I relate to others, are all witnessing moments that will either bring blessing to someone's life or repel them from the gospel. For the Christian, witnessing is not an option. It is not something for which I make time. It is something that I do all the time.

It is important for us to keep in mind that we are never "off duty" as Christians. By definition, a Christian is a follower of Jesus Christ, which means that a Christian lives like He lived. As a Christian, I pattern my life after His. Just as Jesus was consistent in His daily communion with the Heavenly Father and ever did His will, just so I must be consistent in my communion with Jesus and ever seek to serve and please Him. I cannot be "on" and "off" in my walk with Him. In the same way, my witness cannot be turned "on" and "off." Witnessing is a way of life!

**Steve Orian**, president

## New Industry at OAA Will Provide Jobs for Students

**GENTRY, ARK. »** Ozark Adventist Academy (OAA) is proud to introduce a new addition to the Ozark family and campus. The newly-formed Industrial Committee



▲ Top: New equipment for embroidery at Ozark Adventist Academy. Above: OAA's new equipment for screen printing and design.

is designed to help OAA manage and run its new business. This group of successful Adventist businessmen in the area has agreed to form a new corporation designed to help Ozark Adventist Academy develop an industry that will help both the students and the school by providing work for students, as well as teach new job skills in graphic arts and design.

The opening of the new business is now a reality, thanks to the Industrial Committee's guidance and financial support and the many donations for the new equipment, which is housed in the remodeled

Industrial Arts building. The committee has not only remodeled the facility, but has provided the funds to hire a full-time business manager and production manager and to supply other critical needs for getting the business started.

The Industrial Committee plans to accept new members as business continues to grow. Proceeds from the business will eventually help provide financial assistance to the academy for much-needed educational materials, plant growth, and development. The new industry at the academy will provide such services as silk-screen printing, embroidery design, vinyl signs and banners, and laser engraving. Let us know how we can help you.

**Mike Dale**, principal

## Children Lead Out at Jonesboro Church

**JONESBORO, ARK. »** The children of the Jonesboro church were very busy during 2009. Thanks to Deborah Fairchild, with others assisting, the children have been learning to take over tasks during the Sabbath worship and have also performed several times for church services. Our young junior deacons now take the offering almost every week.

▼ Children from the Jonesboro church sing special music.





Donna Morara is baptized by Pastor Elroy Tesch at the Jonesboro, Ark., church.

happiness and pleasure.

The church ended the year on a high note and celebration with two events just a week apart: the baptism of several young members and then a baby dedication the following week. Many proud parents and friends in the congregation wept with happiness and thanked the Lord for such a blessed year. The babies dedicated this year included Alexis Morara, Chasity Freeman, Gabrielle Leslie, Bailee Payne, and Camille and Kamalya Williams. The church is especially grateful to the children for all their hard work, and for Deborah Fairchild. Thanks to her dedication, love for the Lord, and patience, the Jonesboro church saw many blessings this year.

Carol Lawson

## Health and Temperance Day Focuses on Healthy Living

**SLIDELL, LA. »** Our church hosted Health and Temperance Day on October 31, 2009, with Dr. Isaac Olatunji, Jr., Professor of Religion and Theology at Oakwood University, Huntsville, Ala. During the morning worship service and evening **MORE »**



► Dr. Isaac Olatunji, Jr., presented principles of achieving better health during the Health and Temperance Sabbath at Slidell church.

Each quarter the children take over the Sabbath School program and worship service, leading out for one Sabbath. They do the call to worship, and call for the offering. They lead the song service and usually have the special music, and then one of the young people may even give the sermon.

Getting children involved in these activities has prepared our young people for membership and leadership roles in the church. The newest members are Stephen Williams, Donell Williams, Jr., Dylan Morgan, Donna Morara, and Sara Tesch. Sara was baptized earlier during a seminar in Pocahontas, Ark.

On November 28, 2009, a young man, Christopher Shawn Bettis, joined the Jonesboro church through baptism. Both the present and a former pastor had the pleasure of welcoming Shawn into the church family. Pastor Elroy Tesch officiated and Pastor Bill Painter performed the baptism. Shawn's parents have been members of the Jonesboro, church for many years. Shawn was welcomed with obvious

Guest Speaker



Keith Gray



Featured Musicians

# Youth Fest 2010

**March 26-27 • Bonnerdale Seventh-day Adventist Church**

Activities start on Friday, March 26<sup>th</sup>, 7 pm  
 Registration Fee: \$25/person (includes meals, T-shirt & free concert)  
 A sponsor, 21 years of age or older, must accompany each group during the event

For more information, contact:  
 Ryan Long – 870.356.7978 or Paul Cox – 870.356.8492; or visit [www.arklayouthministries.org](http://www.arklayouthministries.org)



vespers Dr. Olatunji gave presentations on achieving better health through diet and lifestyle. Several members and visitors attended both services to receive this vital information on healthy living.

Dr. Olatunji has pastored in the South-west Region Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and has preached the everlasting gospel in revivals and evangelistic crusades in Europe, Africa, and Australia. Dr. Olatunji is a decision strategist and success coach, as well as a medical evangelist, teaching on prevention of sickness and restoration of health.

Vernella Rogers

## Church Members Prepare Holiday Gift Baskets

**LAKE CHARLES, LA. »** Our community services department, along with church members and friends, collected perishables and non-perishable food items for Thanksgiving and Christmas baskets during the 2009 holiday season. Nineteen families enjoyed food for Thanksgiving dinners and 17 families received Christmas baskets. The Calcasieu Parish Women's Shelter received a big box of toys for the children housed there, and the community services department continues to service the 264+ regu-

▼ Lake Charles members provided Thanksgiving baskets for the needy.



lar monthly clients with food supplied by Second Harvest. Several of the volunteer helpers for the community services food pantry are not members, but they are open to prayer and invitations to join the Lake Charles members in fellowship and sometimes even attend Sabbath services. Please keep the Lake Charles Adventist Community Services in your prayers as we work for our Lord during this coming year.

Margaret M. Jackson, community service director, and Jerry Fletcher, pastor

## Twenty New Members Join the Church

**MOUNTAIN HOME, ARK. »** When Pastor Jonathan Belew's two churches canvassed the area with mass mailers, he had no idea how receptive the people would be. But part of the church preparation included holding



▲ The Mountain Home church prays with the new members.

a district-wide Spiritual Bootcamp, hosting the summer student literature evangelists, and maintaining the bulk *Signs* magazine stands. After finishing a successful Prophecy Unlimited seminar series in Yellville, Ark., Pastor Belew began a prophecy seminar in the Mountain Home church. The attendance on opening night was 95, with 58 non-members. Praise God for the outpouring

of His Holy Spirit in this area of the Ozarks.

On Saturday night of the last meeting, November 14, 2009, Pastor Jonathan called up all the candidates who were ready for baptism and/or profession of faith. Twelve people were baptized and five people were accepted by Profession of Faith. What a great day of celebration! And all the folks who were previously baptized at the Yellville meetings were there to experience the celebration all over again. The Lord has certainly given us His blessings in more ways than we can count.

During the following weeks, three more people were baptized, bringing the total to 20 new members in Mountain Home. Yes, the fields around Mountain Home in Baxter County were certainly ripe for the harvest!

Dolly Tabura

## Young People Collect Food for the Needy

**BENTON, ARK. »** On November 19, 2009, a group of Adventurers and Pathfinders hit the streets of Benton for their annual food drive. They went door to door handing out paper bags and asking that people fill them to help the needy in our area. Fifty bags were collected with more than 328 different food items. These were used to make up Thanksgiving baskets that were given to 75 families through the church's food pantry. It was an awesome time for the kids as they shared Jesus with our community.

Trish Light, Adventurer director

▼ Benton Adventurers and Pathfinders with bags of food for the needy.





## A Passion For Harvest

Are you scared by the word *preach*? You shouldn't be. Preaching isn't only about reaching an audience from behind the pulpit. It's about living the Christian life.

Let's use the letters from the word P.R.E.A.C.H. as a way to illustrate Christian witnessing. Remember, effective witnessing is simply building meaningful relationships with those to whom we want to introduce Jesus.

### P—PREPARE

The first step is to prepare. It is vital that we experience a heart preparation through prayer and studying the Scriptures before we try to witness. We cannot give what we do not have, and sometimes, what we *do* have needs to be appropriately packaged by the Holy Spirit.

Effective Christian witnessing must be approached with an attitude of friendliness, minus a critical and judgmental attitude. Jesus said that we are the salt of the earth and the light of the world. "Salt must be mingled with the substance to which it is added; it must penetrate and infuse in order to preserve. So it is through personal contact and association that men are reached by the saving power of the gospel" (*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessings*, p. 36).

### R—RESEARCH

After mingling, listening, and learning, you are then able to identify with people's interests. Here is an opportunity to conduct some mini-interviews in a non-threatening manner as you try to understand the person's level of spiritual awareness. Just a thoughtful question or a simple request could open the door to a meaningful dialogue, just as it happened with Jesus and the woman at the well (John 4:1-42).

### E—EVALUATE

By now you have gathered some valuable information about the person's inter-

ests and their needs. You are now able to evaluate their level of spiritual interest so that you can adequately plan to minister to their needs.

### A—ACT

By showing a genuine interest in the wellbeing of the person you are reaching out to, your relationship will soar to another level.

"When love fills the heart, it will flow out to others, ... love is the principle of action ... It is this, and only this, that can make us the salt of the earth" (*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 38).

### C—COMMUNICATE

Here is where you must ask the all-important question, "Have you won their confidence?" It was after Jesus won the confidence of His hearers that He invited them to follow Him. (*The Ministry of Healing*, p.143). Building relationships takes time, effort, patience, and love, but the dividends are highly rewarding.

### H—HARVEST

Jesus expressed high expectations for followers when He said in John 15:8, "By this My Father is glorified, that you bare much fruit; so you will be my disciples." So, as we develop a passion for the harvest, let us "go and teach," "sow in righteousness," and "reap in joy" (Matt. 28:19; Hosea 10:12; Ps. 126:5, 6). Beware of two dangers: "In bearing the message, make no personal thrusts at other churches" (*Evangelism*, p. 576). Second, avoid an atmosphere of controversy, rather, begin where you agree. Accentuate the positive: "Tell them how you found Jesus, and how blessed you have been since you gained an experience in His service.... This is genuine missionary work, and as it is done, many will awake as from a dream" (*Evangelism*, p. 486).

**Trevor Thompson**, secretary and stewardship director

► Linda Hollifield hosts CHIP seminars twice a year at the Broken Arrow church in addition to hosting CHIP alumni meetings and sending a newsletter to CHIP graduates.

## CHIP Is Making a Healthy Difference

**BROKEN ARROW** » When Linda Hollifield tells you that the CHIP program is not about dieting, its about lifestyle and commitment, she isn't just talking—she's putting her words into action. Linda has directed the CHIP program in Broken Arrow for the past several years and as those who have attended will attest, making a lifestyle change is a continuing process. Linda hosts follow-up meetings with CHIP graduates and also sends them a newsletter in which she keeps them abreast of upcoming activities and shares recipes and healthy living tips.

To get the CHIP program into the public arena, Linda set up a booth at the Remodel and Landscape show at the Tulsa Convention Center in February. Also, the Broken Arrow church is fortunate to have Dr. Jeff Davis as a member, and was blessed to have him as the guest speaker at the recent CHIP alumni meeting in February. As soon as she concludes a CHIP seminar, Linda begins making plans for another. The next seminar is planned for sometime in August. The now healthier Broken Arrow members and others who have benefited from Linda's time, enthusiasm, and dedication give her a hearty and healthy "Thank you!"

Judy Marquette



## Oklahoma Teachers Gather for Annual Convention

**OKLAHOMA CONFERENCE** » Cherokee Spur Ranch in Afton, Okla., was the site for this year's Oklahoma Conference Teacher's Convention held February 7-10. What a beautiful place in the country for the teachers to get away and fellowship with one another! During the day, the teachers spent time at Ketchum Adventist Academy, where they were exposed to hands-on technology in the classroom. Live webinars were presented while the teachers fol-



◀ During the Oklahoma Conference Teacher's Convention, teachers spent time in prayer for their schools and for their students. Pictured are Vickie Toews and Michelle Huebner in prayer.

▼ Candis Hitchye (left) and Traci Crussell near a booth at the community health fair sponsored by the Wagoner church last summer.

lowed along on computers to test new programs for the classroom. Morning and evening worships allowed the teachers the opportunity to break away from their schools and pray with other teachers regarding the specific needs of students.

Technology is becoming so advanced that one teacher was able to attend via Skype because she wasn't able to attend in person! The convention brought abundant blessings for all and everyone left refreshed with new insights for their classroom mis-

sion fields! Our team is awesome and we are blessed to have such a wonderful group of teachers who teach God's kids in Oklahoma!

Carol Thomas

## Community Outreach Programs Touch Lives

**WAGONER** » In a small town sets a small church that has reached out to the community through a number of programs and events. The congregation held its first health fair at the end of last summer to educate parents with schoolchildren on such topics as childhood diabetes and pre-

ventative health. The Wagoner Public School personnel were delighted to see the launch of the Food For Kids program, which is sponsored by our church and provides food on weekends for needy kids.

Also, our church pantry distributes food twice a month to those who are in need, and the Adventist Community Services department provides clothes on a weekly basis as well as food baskets to needy people in the Wagoner community at Thanksgiving and Christmas. In 2009 the Wagoner church distributed food, clothes, and other goods valued at more than \$9,000. With a membership of only 25, it's easy to see how God has blessed us. Through constant prayer, the funds received have continued to multiply. The Tree of Life program, which not only helps people locally, but internationally, as well, was able to provide coats for 16 children—a blessing during our cold winter months. Please continue to keep us in your prayers, so that we can continue God's work.

Jack Harris

## Revolutionary New Diet Book Hits Bestseller Lists

**SULPHUR** » Released on January 4 of this year, *The Full Plate Diet* has achieved best-seller status with the *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *USA Today*, and *Publisher's*





*Weekly*. Written by Dr. Stuart Seale, Dr. Teresa Sherard, and Dr. Diana Fleming from the Lifestyle Center of America (LCA), *The Full Plate Diet* presents a full-color easy-to-follow guide for people who want to slim down, look great, and be healthy. Sid Lloyd, president and CEO of LCA said, "We are so excited to see the acceptance in the market of a book that presents the health message in a way that is attractive, compelling, and effective for so many people." According to Lloyd, the book's premise is simple; include more high-fiber whole foods in your diet, drink more water, and stop eating when you are no longer hungry. The book's Web site ([www.fullplatediet.org](http://www.fullplatediet.org)) features success stories of people who lost up to 15 pounds in a

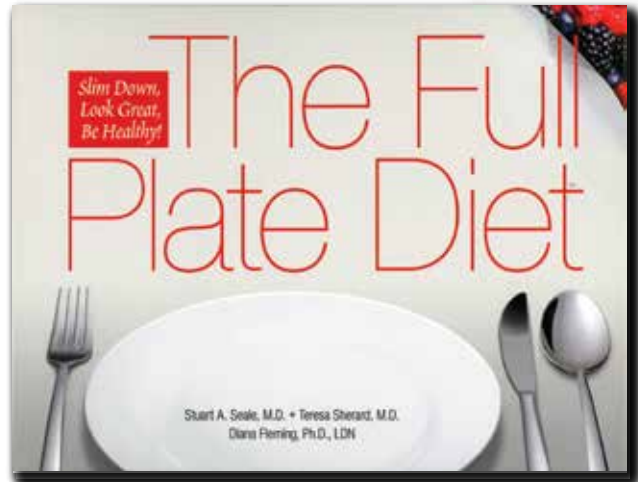
month by applying these simple principles, along with a free abridged audio copy of the book that can be downloaded or read online for free. "As an organization empassioned to help people lead healthy and vital lives, we are committed to making this book as widely available as possible," says Lloyd.

While simple in concept, the 160-page full-color glossy book is based on the latest scientific information on how people change behavior and how newly chosen behaviors are sustained. The authors worked with Dr. James Prochaska, a renowned researcher in behavior change, to craft a gradual approach to lifestyle change that can be permanent.

The authors are currently traveling the U.S. giving pre-

sentations about *The Full Plate Diet*. Also, LCA is about to begin piloting small group weight loss programs with church and health organizations using the Full Plate Diet book and workbooks.

*The Full Plate Diet* is available wherever books are sold or can be ordered online from the major online book retailers. Volume orders can be placed directly with LCA.



Released on January 4 of this year, *The Full Plate Diet* has achieved bestseller status with the *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *USA Today*, and *Publisher's Weekly*. It was written by Dr. Stuart Seale, Dr. Teresa Sherard, and Dr. Diana Fleming from the Lifestyle Center of America (LCA) in Oklahoma.

# Oklahoma Campmeeting 2010

Please join us for a spectacular, long weekend of spiritual blessings! Friday and Saturday night speaker:

**Dr. Dwight K. Nelson**, senior pastor at Pioneer Memorial church in Berrien Springs, Mich.

**WHERE:** Wewoka Woods Adventist Center, Wewoka, Okla.

**WHEN:** July 15-18, 2010

Call 405.721.6110 or 405.257.5404 for more information.

**SPONSORED BY THE OKLAHOMA CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS**

## Bridge Building in the Local Community

Yes, it is 2010 and the local hospitals are still admitting on a monthly basis many who are suffering life-threatening strokes, massive heart attacks, diabetic comas, hypertensive disorders, colon cancer, lung cancer, throat cancer, cirrhosis of the liver, and many other medical disorders and challenges. Could these people have been spared the trip to the hospital? Perhaps—if the local churches had been engaged in continuous witnessing to their community through health programs such as, “How to Reverse Hypertension and Diabetes,” “How to Lower Your Risk of Cancer,” “The Benefits of a Vegetarian or Vegan Diet,” “Go Raw, Be Healthy, and Watch the Pounds Melt Away,” “How Exercise Can Keep Your Arteries Unclogged,” “How to Lower Cholesterol,” “How to Overcome Alcohol and Tobacco Addiction,” “How to Cope with Stress,” “How to Recover from Grief,” and “How to Recover from Divorce.”

This is bridge-building evangelism at its best! These community programs can help people to transition into a healthier lifestyle and avoid the many diseases, cancers, addictions, illnesses, and premature deaths that are so prevalent today. In order to be effective in helping people to live a better life now and for eternity, there must be a culture of intentional, creative evangelism between the gospel preacher, physician, nurse, nutritionist, and other specialists.

My favorite author shares with us that there is no better way to reveal Christ to our neighbors and friends “than to take hold of the medical missionary work in connection with the ministry” (*Medical Ministry*, p. 319). “The gospel and the medical missionary work are to advance together. The gospel is to be bound up with the principles of true health reform. Christianity is to be brought into the practical life. Earnest, thorough reformatory work is to be done. ... We are to present the

principles of health reform before the people, doing all in our power to lead men and women to see the necessity of these principles and to practice them” (*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 379, emphasis supplied). “There is to be no separation in His work. In God’s work, teaching and healing are never to be separated” (*Testimonies*, vol. 8, p. 165, emphasis supplied). “The Lord has ordained that Christian physicians and nurses shall labor in connection with those who preach the Word” (*Review and Herald*, Sept. 10, 1908).

Friend of mine, I challenge you, whether you are a pastor, physician, nurse, nutritionist, other specialist, or simply a member of God’s church, to collaborate and establish on a weekly basis these bridge-building programs in your church, so that the census of hospitals, nursing homes, and funeral homes will be drastically reduced because of the healthy lifestyle that you have taught and shared with others in the community where you are. *Remember, community service is the key to effective evangelism.* When people have been helped, they will gladly hear from you the story of Jesus and His love for them. Love you!

Bill Wright, president

## Love’s Chapel Reaches Out Through Spanish Radio

**FORT SMITH, ARK. »** The evening of January 2, 2010 was very special at Love’s Chapel—not because it was the first Sabbath of the new year, but because Arturo and Gabriella Martinez followed Christ into the watery grave of baptism. But what made the evening extra special was the dedication ceremony of Arturo and Gabriella’s two precious little girls, Jamilet and Valeria, conducted by Pastor Tyrone Douglas.

This was all made possible through God’s blessing and the dedication and tireless efforts of Nelson Vasquez, who solicited funds to sponsor a radio program to reach our Spanish-speaking neighbors with the three angels’ messages. Also, Rogrigo Cortez and Lorenza Renderos were honored for being the firstfruits of the evangelistic efforts made over the airwaves. The radio program continues and is made possible because of donations that keep the pro-

▼ The members of Love’s Chapel in Fort Smith, Ark., are reaching out to their Spanish-speaking neighbors through a radio program. They are rejoicing that this ministry is bringing new members to the Adventist Church.



gram on the air. For this, we give God the glory and praise. We are also thankful to Azariel Ramos, Hermelindo Gaspar, and Benito Robles for their ministry to this vibrant and growing congregation.

Harry Winans

## SWRC National Bible Bowl Champions!

### SOUTHWEST REGION CONFERENCE »

“We enjoy Bible Bowl because it provides motivation and encouragement for consistent Bible study,” explained Yolanda Pugh from the Alpha church in Austin, Tex. She and her teammate, Fabian Morgan, have represented Southwest Region Conference (SWRC) at the National Bible Bowl Tour-



namment every year for the past five years. This year, 185 players, from 39 teams and nine conferences all over the U.S. and Canada, converged in Atlanta, Ga., on October 23 and 24, 2009, for the BAYD National Bible Bowl Tournament.

Southwest Region Conference was represented with strong teams on all levels. Bible Bowl veterans, the Alpha church represented SWRC in the Senior Youth, Young Adult, and Adult categories, with the Young Adult team making it to the final championship round. Bible Bowl newcomers, Berean church from Houston, sent teams to represent SWRC in the Junior Beginner and Junior Youth categories. Both Berean teams also made it to the championship circle.

For Alpha’s teams, there was almost an exact repeat of the previous year. The Young Adult Team won the first several games and went into the Championship round with one loss against Northeastern Conference.

Just as in the previous year, the Southwest Region Young Adults won the first game by just 10 points and forced Northeastern to play a second game for the Championship. The second game resulted in Northeastern taking the national championship and Southwest Region Young Adults took first runner up. To God be the glory!

The Southwest Region Jr. Beginners (ages 6-9) and Jr. Youth (ages 10-15) from Berean church in Houston, didn’t know what to ex-

pect when they arrived at their first National Bible Bowl Tournament. This was also the first time BAYD included Junior Beginner teams in the national tournament. The audience was amazed at the knowledge and speed demonstrated by very young players from all over the US. Berean even scored 400 points in one of their games! Berean’s Junior Beginners finished as second runner up in the final championship round.

In the first Junior Youth game, Berean’s biggest fear was realized. They faced a well-studied team from Canada who demonstrated their knowledge by winning 300 to 100. Instead of giving up, the team dug in and surprised themselves (and some of the spectators) by winning the next several games in a row. The final championship game against a team from New York ended in a 260-260 point tie. In the one-minute tie-breaker lightening round, the New York team edged them out by a few points. Berean proudly accepted the first runner up trophy.

Even though national tournaments can be stressful, the teams all encourage others to join them in Bible study. “It teaches you different values than sports competitions,” said Harry “Langston” Swinton from Berean. “The teams have Christian sportsmanship,” he added. “It’s also exciting to visit different cities every year,” said Yolanda Pugh. “You start seeing the same people at the tournaments and you develop lasting friendships from all over the U.S. and Canada.” Dajah Swinton, from Berean, added, “Studying the Bible gives you the power to learn the truth for yourself. You don’t have to believe everything you are told, if you study to show yourself approved to God.”

For more information on SWRC Bible Bowl, contact: [biblebowlsouthwest@yahoo.com](mailto:biblebowlsouthwest@yahoo.com).

**Ardis Griggs**, Capital Cities Youth Federation Bible Bowl Coordinator



Top left: The Young Adult Team from the Austin Alpha church placed as First Runner Up National Champions at the National Bible Bowl Tournament in Atlanta, Ga. Shown are Yolanda Pugh and Fabian Morgan with tournament officials.

Bottom left: The Junior Youth Team from the Berean church in Houston earned the title of First Runner Up National Champions at the National Bible Bowl Tournament in Atlanta, Ga. The team is pictured here with coaches and tournament officials.

## Salvation in the Sanctuary Seminar Held at Westbank

**NEW ORLEANS, LA. »** Westbank United church members were privileged to participate in a seminar on “Salvation in the Sanctuary,” conducted by Dr. Dwight E. Haynes, who holds a Ph.D. in Systematic Theology. The seminar was held January 16-23. With the aid of the Holy Spirit, Dr. Haynes inspired, innovated, and invigorated the members each night with messages on the Sanctuary, and helped them to get a glimpse of what our Intercessor, Jesus Christ, is doing for us in the Most Holy Place. The members attended the meetings faithfully each night. They learned so much in ten days that one member commented that each participant should receive three college credit hours!

The weeklong seminar concluded with a message entitled “The Cross and the Sanctuary.” Using the passage found in Matthew 27:38-44, Dr. Haynes emphasized verse 44, which says: “The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth.” After the presentation, 90 percent of Westbank’s members made a commitment to enroll five persons in a Bible class, and seven visitors decided to follow Christ through baptism.

God has truly blessed our church.

“The goal for this new year,” said Pastor Elliott, “is to fill up the church by doing seminars, revivals, Bible studies, and whatever we can do to hasten the second coming of Jesus Christ.”

**Mathieu Cherenfant**

Dr. Dwight Haynes addresses the congregation on Sabbath afternoon during a weeklong seminar on the Sanctuary at the Westbank United church in New Orleans.



## The Whitfields: A Model Couple

**JEFFERSON, TEX. »** “Let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband” (1 Cor. 7:2).

With the seed of divorce being sown among us as Seventh-day Adventists, there are newlyweds and an abundance of promising young adults who are looking for married role models with God-guided relationships. It is a blessing to those who are just starting the journey to find couples who strive to live out God’s plan for marriage. With that in mind, I would like to recognize a man and his wife who are putting God at the head of their union and stepping up to the challenge of beating the odds of divorce.

Ellsworth and Berlin Whitfield celebrated their 60<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary on December 20, 2009. The two have known each other since junior high school. Elder Whitfield served in the U.S. Navy for three years, in the U.S. National Guard for about 12 years, and then spent time in the U.S. Army Reserve for 15 years. While on a break from serving his country, he married his grade school sweetheart and began a family. The Whitfields have three children of their own, and were blessed with the opportunity to foster other children for 10 years. They enjoyed a life of traveling and camping with their children during the 50s, 60s,

and early 70s. Ellsworth was in and out of the military, continuing his service to his country, which included serving a year in Germany. The Whitfields prayed continu-



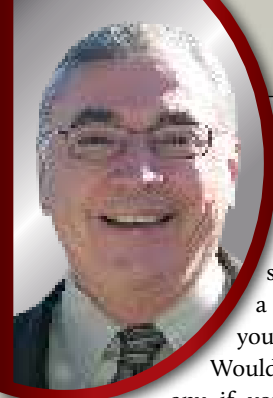
Ellsworth and Berlin Whitfield celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary in December 2009. They serve as role models for happiness and longevity in marriage for church members and young couples to whom they offer counsel and encouragement.

ally during their times of separation, for safety and for preservation of their marriage. God did answer their prayers! At the end of his service, Ellsworth worked for the City of San Diego, Calif., and retired after 20 dedicated years.

The past 30 years of living in Texas have brought more joyful occasions into their lives. Both continue to be active members in the church. They are so thankful for the spiritual enlightenment that God is bestowing upon them at the Jefferson church. And even though their children are grown, the fun has not left the marriage! They still enjoy outdoor activities, traveling, grandchildren, and providing encouragement to younger couples. The Whitfields truly are an example that God will maintain your marriage, if you follow His instructions and put Him first. To God be the glory!

**Sharon Caines**

# A Story Only You Can Tell



Do you have a personal testimony to use as a witness if someone asks you why you are a Christian? Would what you'd say change any if you were asked why you chose to be a Seventh-day Adventist Christian? Why are the answers to these two questions important, anyway?

Whether we call it witnessing, sharing our testimony, or evangelism, just the idea of having to talk to someone about our faith can set off a sense of fear and nervousness. Many people don't feel capable. They are afraid someone will ask them something to which they don't have a ready answer. It seems to be an overwhelming task which we don't feel equipped to tackle.

It is my belief that we've created a mindset about witnessing that has made it more difficult than it needs to be.

I was fortunate to be raised in an Adventist home. Witnessing to others was most often emphasized as something to "do" on Sabbath afternoon. This was especially true just before an evangelist was scheduled to come to hold a tent meeting or a meeting in a community center.

My home church had an evangelist for a pastor. He had two sons who each had a church in the area. This made it convenient for father and sons to hold two or three evangelistic campaigns per year. Before each of these series of meetings, members of each of the participating churches were organized to go door-to-door with religious material or a campaign handbill. Members were instructed to ask anyone who came to the door if they would like to study the Bible. If they showed little interest in that idea, we were to give them an invitation to attend our upcoming meetings. Witnessing was, more often than not, relegated to knocking on doors and sharing a piece of literature. My parents dragged me along, but at that age it was not something I was fond of doing.

While there is nothing wrong with that approach, it is more risky today to knock on strangers' doors. That is why a greater emphasis is put on making a friend first—"friending." If we make them a friend,

there will be times in casual conversation when we have opportunity to witness for what Christ is doing in our life. One way to ease the nerves is to think of your witness as sharing your personal story. No one knows that better than you!

If you don't have a personal testimony on the tip of your tongue, may I suggest three key words? Before, how, and since! Before I knew Jesus personally as Lord and Savior; how the circumstance or event was a turning point in my life; and what it has been like since. Remember to keep the story concise and to the point. Avoid churchy words or jargon. Write it out. Practice it out loud. Pray for the appropriate opportunity to witness using it.

No one wants to be over-witnessed to. The authentic life of a friend can be the best witness of all. We sow the seed; the Holy Spirit does the rest.

**Doug Kilcher**, executive secretary

## United African Church Revived

**HOUSTON** » Under the leadership, support, and direction of our pastor, Gilbert Jacob, personal ministries director Aaron Youngblood and his team of elders planned a two-week revival that was held November 7-21, 2009. We believe that in order for the church to win souls from the community in which they live, the entire church has to be united and on one accord. It is only then that the Holy Spirit will empower the church members to reach out and win souls for Christ. With that in mind, the revival idea was born, and Pastor Matthew Makau was invited to speak for a two-week revival.

Through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, Pastor Makau energized the congregation with his powerful sermons. The very first day of the revival he told the congregation

that a "revival has to come from within." He shared that the person must "want revival by allowing the Holy Spirit in." He preached on the need to be united in heart and purpose, love for one another, and the need to win souls for Christ.

The congregation was ready to be revived and opened their hearts and souls for the Holy Spirit to come in. It soon reflected in their faces, and through personal and collective actions, participation in the nightly events, personal testimonies, and personal relationships with one another. Many baptized members re-dedicated their lives to Christ and other members added their names to the list of a newly-established baptismal class. It was a wonderful two weeks to behold; two weeks ordained by God Himself.

The United African church is not just united in name anymore but by personal relationships with one another. The congregation is of one accord, filled with the Holy Spirit, and ready to go into the community to win souls for Christ.

Please remember the United African church and its personal ministries department in your daily prayers, as they kick off their soul-winning program and reach out to the community around their church.

**Charles N. Imo**

▼ Pastor Matthew Makau inspires United African church members with his powerful sermons during a two-week revival series.



TEXAS CONFERENCE

## On the Move for God

**LAS COLINAS** » “Without vision the people will perish.”

The Las Colinas personal ministries outreach program has been inspired by God to be on the move for Him in these last days. God has truly blessed and many souls have been touched through our nursing home ministries, blood drive, and tutoring program.

The first student tutored at the Las Colinas church was a little girl who failed first grade. As we tutored the little girl, we gave her all the love, all the care, and all the patience she needed. Would you believe that she now wants to be a teacher? Not only that, the little girl has been worshipping with us since August 2008. We don't know where God will lead this little girl, but we pray that she will become a powerful teacher for God. I am reminded in John 12:32, where Jesus said, “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.”

One of the mothers from the tutoring program called to ask if we had a church van. She asked because her desire was to get herself and her family back into church. We went to pick her up that following Sabbath for church. The mother is still worshipping with us today and she plans to stay. Matthew 5:16 says, “Let our light so shine before men, that they may see your good works

and glorify your Father which is in Heaven.”

We have so many more stories to tell of the goodness of God, but space will not permit. We are committed as a church to be on the move for God and to be a shining light for Him with the power of God. We are in our second year of tutoring. Please pray that we'll continue to be on the move for God until He comes!

Ethel Marks

## Powerful Prophecies Make Their Point in San Antonio

**SAN ANTONIO** » This past autumn the lights of San Antonio's skyline provided a backdrop as people of all backgrounds filled the Laurel Heights church nightly and listened to Lynwood Spangler's “Power Points of Prophecy” series. Teens-to-retired, singles and families, men and women enthusiastically participated each evening.

“Ancient words, ever true, changing me and changing you” the audience sang along with Spangler, then followed in their Bibles and overhead PowerPoint presentations as the evangelist presented ancient prophecies and truths as never before understood by most in attendance.

“The excitement of the people was impressive,” Phyllis McFarlane said. “The Holy Spirit was very evident in the meetings.” Several long-time church members commented that “Elder Spangler gave new important insights.”

Nineteen were baptized and others are attending twice-a-week Revelation studies by pastors Mitchell Jonakin and John McFarlane. Still others are attending church each Sabbath.

The Spangler team was impressive in its organization, dedication, hard work, and master of technology. Three TV cameras were operated all through each meeting, with Peggy Spangler doing simultaneous editing. DVDs of each night's presentation were ready for purchase the following night.

Lynelle King

## Hispanic Work Changes Lives

**GAINESVILLE** » In June 2009, a Hispanic work began in the community of Gainesville. There was a great need for the Spanish-speaking people of this area to hear the great truth of God's Word in their native tongue. As a result, a Hispanic group was started with Pastor Elias Lopez, under the leadership of the Anglo Seventh-day Adventist church in Gainesville.

From the very beginning God has truly



▲ The tutoring offered by the Las Colinas personal ministries outreach program gets students excited about learning and coming to church.



▲ Following baptism, new members of the Laurel Heights church in San Antonio are welcomed by Pastor Mitchell Jonakin and evangelist Lynwood Spangler.

blessed this program. Each Sabbath, new faces have joined the group. The Gonzales, Castillo, and Gaona families eagerly helped in any way they could to establish and grow this new group. It has been such a blessing to see people seeking God and finding Him.



A Spanish-speaking work in the Gainesville community is changing lives.

On September 12, 2009, the Hispanic group had their first baptism. One of the candidates, Raquel Mata Olivera, had a wonderful testimony to share.

Raquel had become very discouraged when she lost her husband eight years ago. In fact, she stopped attending church altogether. When Pastor Lopez and his wife visited with Raquel, they gave her a copy of *Steps to Christ*. When she opened the book and began reading, the first chapter that caught her attention was the scripture John 3:16. Raquel began to cry and said, "Jesus loves me! He is giving me a call to come back to His church."

The next Sabbath, she brought her new husband with her. They have not missed a single service. They were both thrilled to give their lives to Jesus and be baptized on September 12, along with four other souls.

We now have more than 30 people re-joining in this new family. We have a good attendance for Bible studies each Sabbath, and many gather together on Wednesdays as well. Pastor Lopez and his wife, Amelia, are now assisting with the Hispanic work in the Sherman-Denison area. A dedicated group of believers is working to keep the Adventist light shining stronger each day. We appreciate all the prayers of our dear brothers and sisters in Christ for the Lopez family and this great work that has just begun. May the truth of God's Word be spread throughout every nation and tongue!

Laurie Bishop

## West Houston Celebrates Changed Lives

**HOUSTON** » Sharing Jesus in word and action is at the heart of the ministry of the West Houston church. A Wednesday community service ministry serves families in need and the homeless with food, clothing, hot showers, and other necessities every week. It is not uncommon to have more than 120 people receive not only physical help, but also the opportunity to study the Bible with the new senior pastor, Ashwin Somasundram.

One of Pastor Ashwin's first decisions

regularly more than 600!

On October 31, 2009, the church celebrated God's forgiving grace in the lives of 10 new souls. One of them is Ross Garcia, a homeless man who began occasionally attending three years ago. Gradually, through the loving help and spiritual encouragement of the members, Ross has seen the love of Jesus. Ross continues to minister to the homeless and invite them to the church.

The church's motto for 2010 is "Each One, Reach One." The church is praying for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit as they continue to make disciples in the wonderful city of Houston.

Billy Gager



Thanks to an emphasis on ministry groups and community service, the West Houston Seventh-day Adventist Church is making new disciples for Christ.



## Sowing, Watering, Harvesting

Over the past couple of years I've seen some amazing miracles in the lives of some of our family members. My wife's cousin and his family attended a Kenneth Cox seminar and became part of the church. My wife's aunt and uncle became part of the church by reading *Bible Readings For the Home* and attending the local Adventist church. My brother-in-law's lifetime best friend and his wife just made their decision to become a part of the church, several weeks after attending evangelistic meetings. My nephew moved his wife and two children to SWAU to study to be a minister. He is 38 years old and has not been in school for 20 years. God is working in amazing ways.

All of these individuals were exposed to the message of truth many years ago for the first time.

They have seen the influence of the truth on the lives of our family members. The seed was planted by my mother-in-law and many others. It was watered by the consistent Christian lives of those of us who have a love of the truth. The Holy Spirit has been and is working in their lives and in ours. But for each of these individuals, it is the preaching of the Word that brought them to a decision.

It takes sowing, watering,

and harvesting to bring in a natural crop. The same applies in the spiritual arena. For all of these individuals, the message was planted long ago. God watered it and in His time brought the right set of circumstances for the harvest. For those of us who love this truth, we see God at work.

But occasionally in Adventist churches one finds a few people who are disgruntled. They criticize other members of the church, the ministers, and the conference leaders. But my friends, God is at work and this gospel is moving ahead. Before long we are going to heaven. Let's do our part in sowing, watering, and harvesting. And let's rejoice, not criticize, when God reveals the increase.

**Jim Stevens**, president

## Bible Study Leads Young People to Baptism

**MIDLAND, TEX.** » Dec 12, 2009 was a high Sabbath for the Midland church. As a result of a small group Bible study held in our home, two young people, Noah Joshua Munoz and his younger sister, Marcela Munoz, decided to give their lives to the Lord through baptism. Pastor Abner Razon had dedicated Marcela when she was a baby and it was a joy to see her ten years later accept the Lord at her young age and make the decision to be baptized. Their mom, Mayra Munoz, was also accepted at the Midland church by membership transfer. What a joy to see families come together. Praise the Lord!

**Nefritire Razon**



Noah and Marcela Munoz were baptized recently as a result of Bible studies held in the home of Abner and Nefritire Razon, pastoral couple of the Midland church. Mayra Munoz, pictured with her children, Noah and Marcela, transferred her membership to the Midland church.



# SVA Students Score High in Brain Games

**CORRALES, N.MEX. »** The academic program at Sandia View Academy (SVA) has shown real progress over the previous years in many areas. In the past, we have sent teams each year to the Southwestern

release for the pandemic.

Saturday night the schools were involved in a math contest with teams “buzzing in” for the first chance to answer the questions. The Sandia View Academy team placed very well in this contest. With only 43 students in the school, our team felt somewhat intimidated when competing against large schools, such as Collegedale Academy and Shenandoah Valley Academy, which have over 300 students. The SVA team was excited when they found

themselves in the semi-finals with only teams from Midland Adventist Academy, Collegedale Academy, and Shenandoah Academy left. The students felt very satisfied to have reached fourth place in this competition.

As the evening concluded, the awards were given out for the science pandemic adventure. The SVA team was awarded second place, only one point behind the winner, Midland Adventist Academy from the Mid-America Union. Congratulations on your achievement, Sandia View Academy!

**Derral Reeve**, Texico education superintendent/principal

# Baby Dedications Bring Community Members to Church

**ODESSA, TEX. »** Baby dedications aren’t just special occasions, they are an outreach ministry at the Odessa English church. Almost every quarter, the church’s pastor, Abner Razon, schedules a baby and child dedication ceremony. It is so beautiful to see parents, both members and non-members, bringing their babies and children to be dedicated to the Lord. The occasion also gives parents **MORE »**



▲ Sandia View Academy students scored well on the science portion during a recent Brain Games competition at Southwestern Adventist University.

Adventist University (SWAU) Brain Games, where academies from across North America compete, but have never placed in the top levels. This year our team had high hopes as they entered the competition.

The science portion consisted of a simulated pandemic episode where the students had to determine what the disease was and how to contain it. In the process, the students had to take tissue samples from their mouths and culture them as part of the test procedures. SWAU student actors provided some interesting drama by “throwing up” on the wall and “falling unconscious.” The teams from the academies had to take samples for testing, as well as try to revive the victims. Skills from English class were used in the reports by developing a press



Members of the Odessa English church reach out to their community with baby dedications that bring nonmembers to church for the special ceremonies that are held regularly.

an opportunity to invite their friends and families to attend our church services. On November 28, three families, who are not church members, came to present their children to the Lord. Pastor Razon had the privilege of dedicating Eric and Gabriela Munoz' newborn baby; Jeanette and Victor Martinez' newborn baby; and Daniel and Savannah Morales' two children. Pastor Razon challenged the parents regarding their responsibilities and along with the ordained elders in the church, prayed, and laid hands on the babies. A Certificate of Baby Dedication was presented to each set of parents.

**Nefritire Razon**

## Small Church, Big Offerings

**PORTALES, N.MEX.** » The Portales church has always been involved in missions. The members there believe that when the needs of the Adventist mission work are regularly emphasized, that people are led to pray and open their wallets when it's time for the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering. Leaders at the Portales church believe that if all Adventist churches were to encourage giving to missions, giving would increase and more projects could be funded.

The consistent practice of having a weekly mission story and/or seeing the *Spotlight on Missions* DVD has begun to pay off in this little church with a membership of only 22 people. Several times, the members gave approximately \$1,000 on Thirteenth Sabbath. Then, beginning in June 2009, members were challenged to increase their giving. Since then, the Thirteenth Sabbath offering has ranged from \$1,727 to \$2,241.

In addition to giving liberally on Thirteenth Sabbath, members of the Portales church have also chosen to support orphan children through International Children's Care. Long ago, the seed was planted in the heart of church member Merlene

Olmsted when she was a student at Columbia Academy where Wendell Fleck was the pastor. Years later, while she was in Guatemala working on her dissertation, she went to see one of the orphanages started by the Flecks in Guatemala City. When the needs of the International Children's Care were presented to church members, they decided to support three children at \$25 per child. That number has now increased to six children in the following countries: Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Mexico, and the Congo.

In 2009, when head elder Dennis Harper read about the One-day Church project in Africa, he presented the need to the members. With the aid of matching funds, the cost for building a church was only \$1,500, and again, when given the opportunity, the members rose to the challenge and funded the construction of six churches.

**Darlene Lauterbach**



### Texico Conference Association of Seventh-day Adventists

Notice is hereby given that the Texico Conference Association of Seventh-day Adventists will hold a members meeting at the Albuquerque Marriott Pyramid North, located at 5151 San Francisco Road NE in Albuquerque, New Mexico on April 25, 2010. This meeting is called to begin at 9:00 A.M.

The purpose of this meeting is to consider and vote on the following motion: whether the Association should sell the 22-acre parcel of real property, commonly known as the "Sandia View Property," generally in accordance with the August 26, 2009 purchase agreement with Corrales Senior Living, LLC. Delegates who attended the last Texico Conference Constituency Session held on June 7, 2009, are members of the Association and are entitled to attend this Association members meeting.

*James L. Stevens, President*

*Lee-Roy Chacon, Secretary*

## Why I Teach

By **Glen Robinson**

Like most Seventh-day Adventists, I've always been very familiar with Jesus' final mandate for us to "Go into all the world and preach the Good News to all creation." (Mark 16:15). In fact, the concept comes along with believing in the Second Coming, from where we get our name, *Adventist*.

But it's one thing to know it in your head, and another to feel it in your heart. When I surrendered my life to Jesus Christ in 1972 in a cow pasture in Austria, and asked him to give my life new meaning, the mandate became a burning mission for me.

It seems easy to do what God asks, but in this age of overwhelming information thrust into the faces of every man, woman, and child in the Western world, one realizes that we need to be "as wise as serpents and as harmless as doves." In order to be heard over the competition of the world, we need to know how to speak, write, and show our message in a professional manner that will get the attention of our audience. That's not saying that we have to do things the way the world does them; we have to do them better. The job is to

present the gospel in beauty, simplicity, and clarity that our audience—whether it is our next-door neighbor, readers of our magazine, or viewers of our television program—can't overlook.

That's what drew me into the field of communication. I believe God has called me—as He has called my students and many of you—to communicate His message and share it with as many people and in as many varied ways as possible. And I tend to put the emphasis on the word "varied." God gifted us with the talent of imagination, and I believe that it is a mistake for communicators within the Seventh-day Adventist Church and within Christianity to continue to limit their communication to the same methods that have been used for decades and possibly centuries. Technology has changed the way that people communicate, and their expectations for the messages they receive. What's successful for one group is likely to be unsuccessful for another group. Mass evangelism works for one segment, but person-to-person evangelism works for others. And those who can't be reached with a sermon might be reached through Christian music, drama, or creative storytelling. One size does not fit all.

Jesus' mandate for us to "preach" the Good News isn't a literal command to use only sermons. He wants people to hear and make up their own minds. And in order to do that, we have to be creative in our approaches, each of us training and honing our varied talents, then using them to do what Jesus has asked.

That's why I am a communication teacher. That's what drives me. I am thrilled with the Good News of salvation through Jesus Christ, and want to share it with as many as will listen. And my hope is that through professional, imaginative communication of the

gospel, we can complete our task and see Jesus Christ return within our lifetimes.

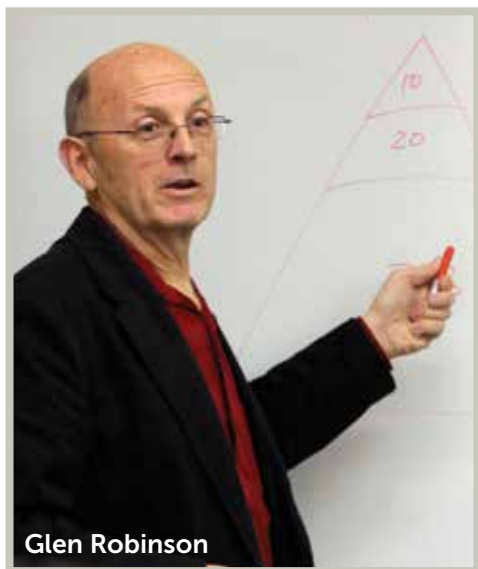
## Preaching and Teaching: The Best of Both Worlds

Southwestern's **Jorge Rico**, associate professor of religion, has recently become a featured speaker for American Media Ministries through his *Foundations of Biblical Doctrines* seminar. The series presents the foundations for the early Christian church's doctrines, and then proceeds through the doctrines' distortion, historical deviation, and restoration. It is available through ACM's website, [www.americanchristianministries.org](http://www.americanchristianministries.org).

Rico's work at Southwestern permits him to enjoy what he calls "the best of two worlds" by allowing him to teach during the week and preach on weekends, traveling to present seminars to church members, lay leaders, and pastors in and outside of the United States.

He says he has seen the Lord at work in people's lives, both in the classroom and while conducting seminars, including student baptisms on campus as well as lives rendered to God in the mission field.

Rico also has a strong Spanish ministry, and has submitted Spanish sermons to ACM. He hopes to be able to minister widely to Spanish-speakers in this way, but also says he will continue to teach and preach as the Lord wills.



**Glen Robinson**

## Homecoming

Southwestern Adventist University's 2010 Homecoming will be held April 7–11 with the theme "Home Again, 2010." For more information, contact alumni director Bev Mendenhall at 817.202.6232 or [bevm@swau.edu](mailto:bevm@swau.edu).



**Jorge Rico**

## Lyle Hansen Honored

Dr. Lyle Hansen received one of the Seventh-day Adventist Church's highest educational awards, the Award of Excellence, at a ceremony held at the Southwestern Union Conference office on January 20, 2010. In presenting the award, union president Max Trevino mentioned the superb leadership that Dr. Hansen has given to schools and conferences across the Southwest over the past half century. Dr. Hansen is particularly notable for his pioneering work with mathematics instruction in K-12 schools across the union and for his early leadership in the introduction of technology into Adventist schools.

Dr. Hansen and his wife, Arlene, served in the Mid-America Union before coming to the Southwest where he taught at Chisholm Trail Academy and Southwestern Adventist University before accepting the role of principal at Burton Adventist Academy (BAA). Many current educational leaders across the union served under Dr. Hansen at BAA, and they added their words of personal appreciation at the awards ceremony. After leading BAA for several years of rapid growth and develop-

ment, Dr. Hansen was elected superintendent of schools for the Texas Conference, where he served until his first retirement. Following retirement, Dr. Hansen accepted a call to become the principal of Ozark Adventist Academy (OAA) for three years before retiring again, although he continued to recruit for OAA for some time. When Arkansas-Louisiana superintendent of schools Don Hevener retired for health reasons in the fall of 2008, Dr. Hansen once again answered the call to serve as superintendent of schools to provide strong educational leadership across that conference until his third retirement in June of 2009. His record of leadership has gone far beyond the call of duty, and the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists has chosen to honor his exceptional record of service to God's children and youth. Dr. Hansen says that he and his wife, Arlene, who has become known as "Grandma" to scores of students across the Southwest, plan to stay retired this time and enjoy their growing family of grandchildren and great-grandchildren. May God continue to bless the Hansen family in their retirement years.

**Doug Walker**, retired education superintendent of the Southwestern Union Conference



Dr. Lyle Hansen received one of the Seventh-day Adventist Church's highest educational awards, the Award of Excellence, at a ceremony held at the Southwestern Union Conference office on January 20, 2010. From left: former Southwestern Union education director Doug Walker, Arlene Hansen, Lyle Hansen, Southwestern Union president Mex Trevino.

## The ADVENTISTS

*The ADVENTISTS* is the new one-hour documentary film on the Seventh-day Adventists that explores the history and contemporary story of the faith-group whose members are some of the healthiest and longest-living people on the planet. The film will air on public television stations the week of April 5, which is both Easter Week and National Public Health Week. It became available on DVD in February. Special screenings are being scheduled nationally in February and March.

Formed on American soil in the mid-nineteenth century, Seventh-day Adventists are by their own description a conservative religion that holds as a central tenet that Jesus Christ is returning again, soon. At the same time Adventists are pioneers in medical technology and health care exploration. For them, waiting for the Second Coming is not a time for fear, but for preparation and hope.

Filmed on location at hospitals and health care facilities in Florida, Ohio, and California, the film also contains a re-enactment of the 1844 event called *The Great Disappointment*, which gave birth to Adventism, and a profile of the charismatic figure, John Harvey Kellogg whose Battle Creek (MI) Sanitarium set the standard for progressive health care in the early twentieth century.

"Adventists are a fascinating mix of conservative religion and state of the art health care and healthy living," says filmmaker

Martin Doblmeier (*BONHOEFFER, The POWER of FORGIVENESS*). Where so much of our current health care debate is framed around economics, Adventists start from the belief that the body is "the temple of God" and needs to be cared for. For them hospital and health care work is "sacred work" and this can help bring a fresh—even revolutionary—approach to our public health care discussions today.

*The ADVENTISTS* is a produced in high definition by Journey Films of Alexandria, Va. It is written and directed by Martin Doblmeier, produced by Dan Juday, and edited by Gayle Añonuevo. It is a presentation of South Carolina Educational TV and will be distributed nationally to public television by American Public Television.



## Did You Know?

» There are five different charitable remainder unitrust models that are available. The assets placed into a unitrust avoid probate and represent a irrevocable gift. The gift makes the Federal capital gains tax (20%) levied on appreciated property (like real estate) disappear. In the year the unitrust is funded, you receive an income and gift tax charitable deduction. You and your spouse will receive a quarterly payment for life based on a fixed percentage of the trusts net fair market value. A unitrust can be funded with cash, public securities, certain types of real estate, and closely held C corporation stock.



**Dr. John Mathews, CSPG**  
Planned Giving & Trust Services  
Southwestern Union  
817.295.0433  
jmathews@swuc.org  
[www.swuc.org/trust](http://www.swuc.org/trust)



Elder Steve Orian, President of the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference, Elder Ken Simpson, Director of Planned Giving & Trust Services and Edwin Romero, conference treasurer, hold the distribution check of over \$40,000 from the Weavers' charitable remainder unitrust.

## » Sticking With It

During World War II the plane of J. L. Weaver, a United States bomber pilot, was damaged by antiaircraft fire over Naples, Italy. He ditched the plane in the Mediterranean only to be picked up by the Italians. On a train full of prisoners being transported to a POW camp in Germany, J. L. made an agreement with the Lord that if he got back to America alive he would become a Christian. On the way to Germany, J. L. and Roger Miller, a P-38 pilot, smashed open a train ventilator and jumped into the dark night. They survived on food supplied by Italian peasants, and 33 days later made it to the allied lines. For the rest of the war J. L. taught flying and lived a life of pleasure.

When J. L. and Doris were married they started attending different churches, but always went away with their questions unanswered. At work J. L. would talk about religion with a co-worker who would answer his questions by reading texts out of the Bible. It wasn't long until they had read the *Conflict of the Ages* series, as part of Bible studies given by Elder Lingenfelter.

One night J. L. dreamed he was straddling a wooden fence. Satan pulled one way and God pulled the other way. He remembered the agreement made as a POW to follow God and knew he had to make up his mind. Would he follow Satan or God? J. L. and Doris were soon baptized into the Adventist church. Elder Lingenfelter said, "Of all the people I've baptized, I think you two are the most likely to stick with it."

Sticking with it is what J. L. and Doris did; by making a full commitment to the Lord and His church for the rest of their lives. He was an Adventist hospital administrator and led highly successful Ingathering campaigns in Siloam Springs, Arkansas. They were interested in Adventist education and loved working with young people.



**J. L. and Doris Weaver**

How did J. L. and Doris learn about a unitrust? With accounting, business, and real estate backgrounds, they both realized that the wealth the Lord had placed under their stewardship needed to be carefully managed. Upon hearing about the options offered by the trust department of the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference, they realized that their dream of supporting the Lord's work with a substantial gift was possible, and at the same time the gift would provide income to them for as long as they lived.

J. L. often said, "I would rather live as a Christian and find out I was wrong, than not, and find out Christianity was right."

In 1978, through prayer and love for the Lord's work, J. L. and Doris established a charitable remainder unitrust funded with 160 acres of appreciated real estate. Today, their legacy lives on—supporting Camp Yorktown Bay, through the remainder of their trust fund.

I call a gift like this "Giving»Forward."

—John Mathews

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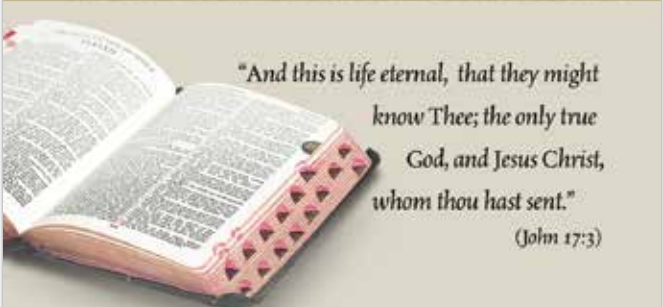
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## Announcements

**Chisholm Trail Academy's 42<sup>nd</sup> Alumni Weekend** will be held March 26-27, 2010. The weekend will begin Friday night at 7:30 p.m. with slideshow memories and continue on Sabbath morning at 9:00 a.m. with worship, potluck, photos, vespers, and a CTA Blazers basketball game on Saturday night. For more information, contact Shelly (Hansen) Cantania: [scastan@aol.com](mailto:scastan@aol.com) or 817.658.9461.

**Jefferson Academy Alumni Weekend**, April 16-18, 2010 in Jefferson, Tex. Speaker will be Pastor Kenny Micheff and musical guests, Forever His. You

can contact the academy at 903.665.3973 or alumni president Brenda Hiser Wilson at [brendawilson61@sbcbglobal.net](mailto:brendawilson61@sbcbglobal.net).

**CHIP (Coronary Health Improvement Project)** class begins March 25, 2010 at Huguley Hospital in Fort Worth, Tex. Learn to prevent or reverse heart disease. For details and cost information, call 817.558.1755.

**The annual Resurrection Pageant** sponsored by the Keene Seventh-day Adventist Church will be held on Sabbath, April 3, 2010. For ticket and performance information, contact the church office at 817.641.9804 or visit their Web site at [www.keenechurch.com/pageant](http://www.keenechurch.com/pageant).

**Tulsa Adventist Academy Alumni Weekend** will be April 17 and 18. Sabbath School 9:30 a.m., church 10:45 a.m., alumni picture, fellowship lunch, MEMORIES afternoon (everyone bring old yearbooks and pictures), vespers, Alumni vs. Eagles Basketball Game. TAA Golf Tournament, Sunday, April 18. For more information, contact Sherry Nikles or Andrew Short, 918.834.1107.

**All Valley Grande Adventist Academy (VGA) Alumni are invited to Alumni Weekend** March 26-28, 2010. Come visit with friends from the past and see what the school is doing for the students of today. We are promised more of the yummy cinnamon rolls we all remember so fondly. For information, contact Suzanna Facundo at [sfacundo@hotmail.com](mailto:sfacundo@hotmail.com) or call her at 817.295.0476. Send us your current contact information for future newsletter mailing.

**Washington Adventist University Alumni Weekend** (Columbia Union College, Washington Missionary College) April 9-11. Music Center Groundbreaking, President's

Banquet, worship services, class reunions, evening concert, Alumni Brunch, WAU Family Fun Festival. Honor Classes: '30, '40, '50, '60, '70, '80, '85, '90 & '00. More information: [wau.edu/alumni](http://wau.edu/alumni), [alumni@wau.edu](mailto:alumni@wau.edu), or 301.891.4133.

**"Ye Olde" Cedar Lake Academy Reunion** will take place June 3-6, 2010, for alumni and warmly-welcomed schoolmates of 1960 and earlier, at Great Lakes Adventist Academy (formerly CLA). Honor classes: 1930, 1940, 1950, 1960. Details will be forthcoming by mail. Also, you may contact the GLAA Alumni Office at 989.427.5181 or visit [www.GLAA.net](http://www.GLAA.net) for further information. Please do pass the good word.

## Obituaries

**BEARD, Wanda Marie**, born August 26, 1933 in Leon, Iowa, and died October 6, 2009 in Dallas, Tex. She and her husband owned and operated Roy's Natural Market in Dallas. Wanda was also an active member of the Dallas First church, where she served in past years as a Sabbath School teacher and superintendent, and in many other offices, and lately, as a greeter. Survivors: husband, Roy; daughter, Alice and husband, Brad; sisters, Margaret Nick and Retha McCarty; several nieces, a nephew, and two grandchildren.

**BROWN, Shirley Irene**, born June 24, 1946 in Hot Springs, Ark., and died January 8, 2010 in Hot Springs. A member of the Hot Springs church, she was a loving mother and provider for her children. Survivors: son, Chris Brown, daughter and son-in-law, Amber and Gary Gilchrist, and daughter, Heather Brown, all of Hot Springs; brother and sister-in-law, Frank and Linda Estell;

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**Buford Griffith, Jr.**, Southwestern Union vice president for ministries

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sister and brother-in-law, Marla and Gary Perkins of Dallas, Tex.; four grandchildren.

**FUGATE Jr.,** Guy William, born Sept. 3 1937 in Ada, Okla., and died December 28, 2009 in Keller, Tex. He was a member of the Richardson church. Among many talents, he was an accomplished auctioneer, lending his services to many local charities. He enjoyed hunting and fishing and spent a successful career of more than 45 years in the water well industry. Survivors: wife of 52 years, Shug Fugate; sons, Guy William Fugate III and wife, Jodi, Clay Fugate and wife, Karen; daughters, Sabra Fugate, and Cheryne Ellis and husband, Joshua; four grandchildren.

**HALL, Carrol Elvin,** born April 22, 1921 in Antioch (Malvern), Ark., and died January 8, 2010 in Hot Springs, Ark. A member of the ARKLA Conference church, he was laid to rest in the Antioch Cemetery. Carrol was a loving husband to his wife of 63 years, Imogene, who preceded him in death. He was also a World War II veteran. Survivors: son and daughter-in-law, Pastor Richard and Pat Hall of Conway, Ark.; daughter and son-in-law, Joyce and Da-

vid Coston, and daughter and son-in-law, Carolyn and Rick Muns, all of Hot Springs; five grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

**HOLZKAMPER, Ruth Kerr Woodruff,** born November 7, 1909 in Springdale, Ark., and died January 10, 2010 in Hendersonville, Tenn. A member of the Gentry, Ark., church, she was laid to rest in Gentry. Ruth served as director of the Ozark Adventist Academy Food Service for nine years and also cooked for summer camps and other schools. Survivors: daughters, Mary Gill of Gentry, Ellen Mustoe of Seattle, Wash., Sara Earnhardt of Tulsa, Okla., and Margaret Carver of Hendersonville; son, Tim Holzkamper of Savannah, Ga.; 21 grandchildren, 29 great-grandchildren, and 25 great-great grandchildren. A son, John Woodruff, preceded her in death.

**KOSTENKO, Peter Arnold,** born May 6, 1920 in Grassy Butte, N.Dak., and died May 6, 2009 in Shreveport, La. A member of the Shreveport church, he was laid to rest in the Centuries Memorial Cemetery in Shreveport. He served the denomination for over 40 years in conference departmental work, most recently serving in Arkansas-Louisiana from 1971-1998, and previously in the Carolina, Iowa-Missouri, and Rocky Mountain conferences. He held a variety of positions, including director of Youth Ministries, Personal Ministries, Adventist Community Services, Trust Services, and Communication. Survivors: Joyce Kostenko of Shreveport; daughter and son-in-law, Dawn and Richard Kerbs of Burleson, Tex.; daughter and son-in-law, Janell and Van Hurst of Lincoln, Neb.; brothers, Michael Kostenko of Greenville, Tenn., Harold Kostenko of Lenore, Ida., and

Bill Kaye of Portland, Ore.; three grandchildren.

**SHROCK, William,** born May 6, 1945 in Anchorage, Alaska, and died January 11, 2010 in Colcord, Okla. He was a member of the Gentry, Ark., church and was laid to rest in Gentry. Survivors: son, Denver Shrock of Sacramento, Calif.; father, Cecil Shrock of Colcord; brothers, Jack Capman of Nome, N.Dak., Wayne Shrock of Mid-West, Wyo., and Danny Capman; sisters, Denali Fox of Colcord; Aleutia Beeskow of Gardner, Ill.; Mary Martin of Siloam Springs, Ark., and Linda Woods of Las Vegas, Nev.

**SLAUGHTER, Mary Lou,** born January 6, 1920 in Leaksville, Miss., and died October 11, 2009 in Jonesboro, Ark. A member of the Jonesboro church, she was laid to rest in Jonesboro. Survivors: daughters and sons-in-law, Carolyn and Gene Ruud of Inverness, Fla., Ann and Danny Nuckles of Jonesboro, and Becky Biggers and Randy Osipuk of Paragould, Ark.; son, James Wimpy, Jr., of Fort Worth, Tex., brother, Clinton White of Huntsville,

Ala.; five grandchildren, 10 great-grandchildren, and two great-great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her husband, John Slaughter, in 1972, and by the father of her children, James Wimpy, Sr., in 1986; a son, Rick Lane Wimpy, two brothers, and a sister.

**STONE, Charity Wisdom,** born Jan. 27, 1919 in Keene, Tex., and died Feb. 1, 2010 in Baytown, Tex. She was a member of the Baytown church. She and her husband, Virgil, endowed the Wisdom Nursing Scholarship at Southwestern Adventist University. Charity truly lived up to her name and leaves a legacy of service and love to her family, friends, and community. Survivors: daughter, Jeanene White of Houston, Tex.; daughter and son-in-law, Debbie and Mark Himsel of Baytown; seven grandchildren, nine great-grandchildren, and numerous nieces and nephews.

**SABBATH SUNSET CALENDAR**

	Mar 5	Mar 12	Mar 19	Mar 26	Apr 2	Apr 9
Abilene, TX	6:40	6:45	7:50	7:55	7:59	8:04
Albuquerque, NM	6:06	6:12	7:18	7:23	7:29	7:34
Amarillo, TX	6:47	6:53	7:59	8:04	8:10	8:15
Brownsville, TX	6:34	6:38	7:41	7:44	7:47	7:50
Dallas, TX	6:28	6:33	7:38	7:43	7:48	7:53
El Paso, TX	6:07	6:12	7:17	7:22	7:26	7:31
Fort Worth/Keene, TX	6:30	6:35	7:40	7:46	7:50	7:55
Gallup, NM	6:14	6:20	7:26	7:32	7:37	7:43
Galveston/Houston, TX	6:23	6:28	7:32	7:37	7:40	7:44
Gentry, AR	6:17	6:23	7:29	7:35	7:41	7:47
Little Rock, AR	6:08	6:14	7:20	7:26	7:31	7:37
Muskogee, OK	6:20	6:26	7:32	7:38	7:44	7:50
New Orleans, LA	6:02	6:07	7:11	7:16	7:19	7:23
Oklahoma City, OK	6:29	6:35	7:41	7:47	7:52	7:58
Roswell, NM	5:58	6:04	7:09	7:14	7:19	7:24
San Antonio, TX	6:36	6:41	7:45	7:49	7:53	7:57
Shreveport, LA	6:16	6:21	7:26	7:31	7:35	7:40
Tulsa, OK	6:23	6:29	7:35	7:41	7:47	7:52

**Note:** Daylight Savings Time begins at 2:00 a.m. on Mar. 14.

## Don't Worry!

**I CAME TO THE AMERICA WHEN I WAS 15 YEARS OLD TO FINISH HIGH SCHOOL AND LEARN ENGLISH.** Honestly, I did not come because I wanted to come, but because my parents insisted that I come. Since I only knew how to say simple words and phrases, such as *chair, table, "How are you?"* and *"My name is Rolando,"* I thought that coming to America to study was very unreasonable. How was I going to pass my classes without being able to speak English?

But my parents were very sure that sending me to America was going to be good for me. It wasn't long before they discovered a good Adventist boarding Academy in America. I found myself on an airplane headed to Nebraska, fearing that I was not going to be able to make new friends, that I was not going to like the school, and that the professors were not going to be patient with me. Unable to cope with the feelings of fear and anxiety, I prayed and asked God to be my guide, my shield, and my fortress. I told Him, "If you prosper me and protect me, if you teach me English and take care of me, I am going to follow and obey you all the days of my life."

Sure enough, God answered my prayer by guiding my steps, helping me learn English, and helping me pass all my classes. He also gave me good friends and great professors! I guess I shouldn't have worried in the first place, for God was going to take care of me.

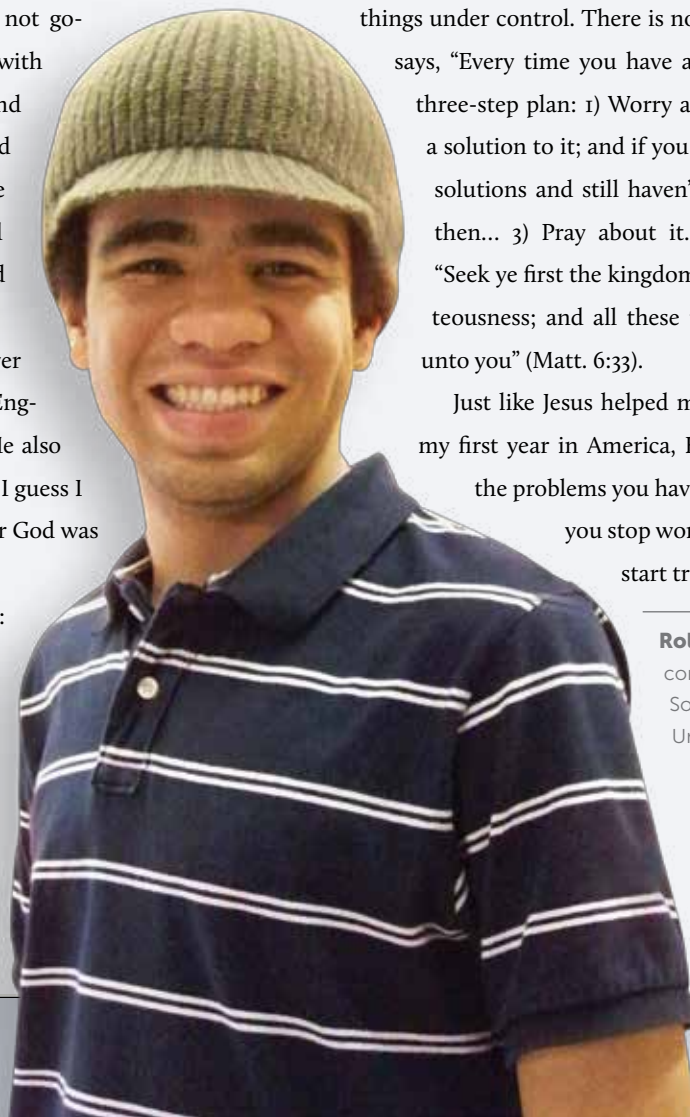
The Bible says in Matthew 6:27-30: "Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of

the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?"

Many times we worry about our grades in school, what people think of us, relationships, and money or the lack thereof, and ignore the fact that there is a God in heaven who has all things under control. There is not one Bible verse that says, "Every time you have a problem, follow this three-step plan: 1) Worry about it; 2) Try to find a solution to it; and if you have tried all possible solutions and still haven't solved the problem, then... 3) Pray about it." Instead, Jesus said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33).

Just like Jesus helped me to make it through my first year in America, He can help you with the problems you have today. So, why won't you stop worrying about them and start trusting God?

**Roland Brutus** is a senior communication major at Southwestern Adventist University.





# For the Record »

BY MARK BOND » COMMUNICATION DIRECTOR, SOUTHWESTERN UNION

## It's Not Just Something You Do

**WHEN I HEAR THE WORD "WITNESSING," I'M REMINDED OF MY YOUTH** when, as a young Adventist, my friends and I were often recruited to venture out on Sabbath afternoons with bags full of *Steps to Christ* or some other booklet to share with hapless strangers. I remember feeling weak in the knees and short of breath as I reached out to knock on the first door.

Does that picture come to your mind when you hear the word "witnessing"? Do you break out in a sweat at the thought of sharing your faith?

Today's young people still have many opportunities to share the Good News door-to-door. But as I've matured, my understanding of what it means to witness has matured, as well.

You've heard it a million times—actions speak louder than words. This is especially true with Christians. Unfortunately, the world too often sees a less than flattering view of Christianity. Members of the news media are quick to follow scandal and expose a person whose actions belie his words.

When someone acts nobly, however—just because it's the right thing to do—people notice. Such action may not make the 5 o'clock news, but the world is impressed when we live up to our genuine Christian legacy.

"I was hungry and you fed me. I was thirsty and you gave me a cold drink of water." Those are simple, tangible ways to witness. Some call it servant evangelism. I call it building bridges.

I like stories about churches handing out ice-cold bottles of water during a hot Fourth of July parade. Or about kids showing up at an elderly woman's home with rakes and trash bags, ready to clear her yard of its fall colors.

It's love with no strings attached. Fishing with no hook at the end of the line. Which is simply to say that we plant seeds, but aren't always the ones to stick around and gather the harvest. When we reach out to someone with a kind word... When we let someone who's in a hurry take our place in line... When we invite a neighbor over for ice cream... When we bow our heads in prayer at a restaurant... we're witnessing!

When you have personally encountered your Savior, witnessing happens naturally all day long—without sweaty palms or knocking knees. More than that, a witness is something you become, not something you do. It's who you are—all day, every day, and in every circumstance.

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# Relive the Memories



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