ACS Newsletter - August 2012

Disaster Response News

Over 22,000 acres have burned from the Taylor Bridge Fire in Kittitas County, Washington, forcing the evacuation of 500 residents and destroying 100 structures, including 60 homes...[Read More]

Elder Care Ministry

How Adventist are supporting Seniors and their Caregivers - [Read article on page 4]

Atlanta-Berean Opens Senior Service Center - [Read article on page 9]

Upcoming Events

Community Reach Out Symposium
September 8-9, 2012
Chesapeake Conference
Columbia, Maryland

- Community Development & Urban Ministry
- Crisis Care - Spiritual/Emotional

Nonprofit Leadership Certification Program

September 23-27, 2012
Mt. Dora, Florida
Southeastern Conference

More Details

Community Development
On July 8, 2012 Pastor Eric Shadle began a cross-country bicycle trip from Richland, Washington with plans to arrive in Silver Spring, Maryland on September 5, 2012. He is embarking on this adventure to raise awareness of the need many children have for diapers in this
country. Most of us are not even aware of such a need. He hopes to raise awareness of the need many children have for diapers in this country. His goal is to raise $250,000 to purchase 1 million diapers that will be distributed across America. The National Diaper Bank Network is offering to match the cost of each diaper the Ride4Diapers raises up to a total of 250,000 diapers ($62,500)!
For more information or to track his progress visit: www.ride4diapers.org. A program of Adventist Community Services.” Find Ride4Diapers on Facebook.
Over 22,000 acres have burned from the Taylor Bridge Fire in Kittitas County, Washington, forcing the evacuation of 500 residents and destroying 100 structures, including 60 homes. According to Sue Bush, Director of the Washington State Office of Emergency Management, the event has precipitated the largest evacuation of people and animals in the history of the state. Sadly one Seventh-day Adventist family has lost their home.

Adventist Community Services Disaster Response has been asked by the state to enter “standby alert” status for possible deployment to manage a multi-agency warehouse in the area. Patty Marsh, Adventist Community Services/Disaster Response Director, reported that the Upper Columbia Conference Disaster Response world has been intense over the last few weeks with...

- the Pendleton, OR, double apartment fire displacing 62 individuals. Seventh-day Adventists and Methodists combined their efforts to provide donations operations. Specifically, the Pendleton ACS DR collected all furniture, bedding and other household goods – and did an outstanding job in the distribution.

- Ferry County disaster with 60,000 trees down in unfortunate places. This in turn left thousands without electricity meaning they lost food in refrigerators and freezers. A half-dozen Adventists with representatives from other organizations have worked with Emergency Management in meeting those needs. A FEMA director wrote about the Ferry County response, “Your Seventh-day Adventists Church is doing a wonderful job... How could they do more?!!”

To help support continued ACS DR operations:
1) Go to www.communityservices.org
2) Call 1-800-381-7171, or
3) Mail a check or money order to:
   Adventist Community Services Disaster Response
   12501 Old Columbia Pike
   Silver Spring, MD  20904

Children's Privacy notice  Legal notice
An increasing number of Adventists are facing the challenges of aging or the responsibility of caring for the elderly relatives.

Adventists are not alone. The average age of the world’s population and the Church is changing. Each day since January 2011, at least 10,000 people have been turning 65. This trend will continue through 2037. According to the United Nations Population Division, in 2000 there were about 606 million people, ages 60 or older, in the world. By 2050, that number is expected to triple to two billion.

The fastest growing age group in the United States is the “oldest old,” those 85 years and older.
This trend is also changing the face of congregations. The average age of congregations is increasing throughout the world. The median age for Adventists in North America is approximately 51. By comparison, the median age for all Americans is 36.

What has contributed to this change? Average life expectancy has increased by 30 years, so that in the United States life expectancy has increased from 47 years in 1900 to 78 years today. Today’s seniors are happier and healthier than their predecessors are, and face the real prospect of living longer than most ever imagined. But, living longer has special challenges and rewards for seniors and their caregivers.

Longer life expectancy is rewarding individuals with the ability to remain in the workforce longer. They can also be more involved in their communities and churches.

Some of the challenges facing seniors are outliving financial resources, lack of caregiver support, and insufficient health insurance. Caregivers are also feeling the impact. Virtually all congregations include members who are caring for family members who are not able to take care of themselves. Some are taking care of two and even three relatives. The time requirement, changes in lifestyle, loss of employment, or other factors may be a caregiver’s challenge.

**WAYS TO ASSIST SENIORS**
- Offer workshops that provide education about senior issues
- Parish nurse services
- Community senior health fairs
- Homemaker services
- Home repair / maintenance services
- Nutrition sites / meals programs
- Companion services
- Telephone reassurance
- Transportation services
- Adopt-a-Grandparent program
- Hospice programs
- Elder advocacy
- Worship / prayer / study groups
- Assistance with financial management
- Assistance with legal issues
- Travel opportunities
- Recreation / social opportunities
- Meals on Wheels

**WAYS TO ASSIST CAREGIVERS**
- Counseling for stress or grief
- Caregiver support groups
- Spiritual support
- Respite care services
- Assistance with personal care and homemaker services
- Help with end-of-life issues
- Information and referral
- Listen

**Housing Facilities**
Several conferences and churches in the Southern Union provide independent living and assisted living facilities. These are sprinkled in various cities throughout the Union.

At Oakwood University Church, Carlton Byrd, D.Min., senior pastor, reports, “We have started an Alzheimer’s Caretakers Support Group. This support group and community initiative is open for all in the greater Huntsville/Madison County who serve as caretakers for persons with Alzheimers. The group meets the

**How are Adventists Supporting Seniors and Caregivers?**

**ASSIST (Academy Students Service Initiative Stipend/Tuition Program)**
Since 2007, Southern Adventist University has administered an elder care program it calls ASSIST. René Drumm, dean of Southern Adventist University’s School of Social Work, says ASSIST employs academy students to provide services to people who are homebound or need assistance. Students help older adults with day-to-day chores, provide respite for caregivers, and develop special relationships with them in the process.

One student participant in the program, Jasmine, says, “Working for Adopt-a-Grandparent has been nothing but joy and excitement .... Adopt-a-Grandparent not only has allowed me to form new friendships, but it has helped me financially .... I feel that’s a blessing from God.”

**Students who participate in Southern Adventist University’s ASSIST program have the opportunity to serve and develop relationships with older adults.**
families shrinking, there are fewer children to share the responsibility. Churches will need to know who the caregivers are in their congregation, and offer supportive and respite services to relieve the burden caregivers carry.

ACS Elder Care Ministries

Sung Kwon, North American Division Adventist Community Services (ACS) director, saw the changing demographics of the world and launched the ACS Elder Care Ministry. “ACS Elder Care Ministry promotes Christ-centered, practical, and sustainable solutions to successful wholistic aging,” says Kwon. “Elder Care Ministry informs and educates elderly members of the Church and communities about wholeness of life and attending to the physical, social, mental, and spiritual well-being of each person. In addition, it provides services for caregivers whose efforts and own personal needs are often forgotten.”

Kwon added, “We hope to cultivate elder care leadership with Certified Senior Advisors (CSA) in each conference and congregation in North America, to provide not only services for seniors, but also to create opportunities for them to be involved and serve, and to have the younger generation to be engaged in serving elders.”

How to Launch an Elder Care Ministry

Fortunately, education is available to give you the qualifications and tools you need. The North American Division Adventist Community Services Department has designed a curriculum to help unions, conferences, and local churches to make plans to address the needs of seniors and their caregivers. ACS will send an educator to a conference or union-sponsored event to present this curriculum.

It is the goal of ACS that every congregation in North America will have an elder care ministry. This ministry will not look the same in each area. It needs to be designed to meet the needs of your congregation and community.

Keep in mind that an elder care ministry is not just ministry to and for older adults; it includes ministry by and with older adults as well. Psalms is right when it says, “In old age the righteous still bear fruit.” Pastors and church leaders must see their potential and create cross-generation opportunities for youth and older adults. The church of tomorrow will be a cross-generational church.

Let your services reach beyond your congregation. Include your community in your plans. One caregiver said she wishes that a church would open its doors once a week so caregivers could bring their relatives to church for a few hours. This would give them an opportunity to run errands that are otherwise impossible to accomplish.

It is also important that each conference have available either on their website or in their office a list of all Seventh-day Adventist-owned or managed senior living facilities in their conference.

It is suggested that each conference staff at least two individuals who have their Certified Senior Advisor designation. Those interested may call the education representative for Seventh-day Adventists with the Society of Certified Seniors Advisors, Khang Chim, for more details and scholarship information, at 888-828-9251.

As you prayerfully consider how you can help, God will show you how you and your congregation can make a huge difference in the lives of seniors and their caregivers in your congregation and community.

Marilyn Renk, C.S.A., M.P.H., M.S., North American Division ACS Elder Care Ministries coordinator

R. Steven Norman III, C.S.A., Southern Union communication director

RESOURCES AND LINKS

PowerPoint Presentations
Ministry to Seniors and their Caregivers: An Introduction to Local Church Elder Care Ministry, by R. Steven Norman III, C.S.A.

ASSIST: Academy Student Service Initiative Stipend/Tuition Program. Southern Adventist University School of Social Work.

Both of these presentations may be found at: http://southernunion.adventistchurchconnect.org/article/344/news-events/news-releases/august-southern-tidings-additional-content

RESOURCES AVAILABLE FROM ADVENTSOURCE:

• Adventist Elder Care Brochure
• A Quick Start Guide – Senior Adult Ministries
• ACS Manual: Section on Elder Care Ministries

• Elder Care Ministries Curriculum Guide (coming soon)
• If you have questions or want more information, visit www.communityservices.org, click on Elder Care Ministries. ACS website: www.communityservices.org. Also, join www.facebook.com/AdventistElderCare.
Known for its community outreach and active senior services ministries, the Atlanta-Berean Church members and then senior pastor, Carlton P. Byrd, D.Min., voted in February 2008 to apply for a grant from the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) to construct a senior residential facility. Bereanite, Currine Harris, was asked to manage the application process. Harris accepted the challenge, and with prayerful support from the pastor and the members, the process was underway.

After five months of gathering information, communicating with HUD and several other entities, soliciting letters from community supporters, and so much more, the application was completed, and was submitted on July 10, 2008.

By year-end, anxiety was building waiting to hear from HUD and wondering what was taking so-o-o-o long. Finally, six months later on January 26, 2009, HUD’s award letter was received. In part, it read: “We are pleased to advise you that your application to construct housing for the elderly... has been approved. Capital Advance authority in the amount of $5,211,100 is available for this project.” To God be the Glory!

Now began the design and planning stage. During this time, the members voted to build the facility at the old vacant church school site. However, this decision met with neighborhood opposition, which resulted in a number of community and public hearings that delayed the project for several months. But again, the Lord answered prayer! All plans were ultimately approved, and on March 30, 2011, construction began.

The ribbon-cutting ceremony was held on April 1, 2012. Byrd returned to host the event, along with the Atlanta-Berean Nonprofit Board of Directors. Program participants included HUD and South Atlantic officials, the mayor’s office and Atlanta City Council representatives, community pastors, the design and construction team, and others, ushered in by Atlanta-Berean Crusaders Pathfinders Drum Corp. Hundreds attended the ceremony which culminated with a tour of the three-story building.

Berean Village is a state-of-the-art, non-smoking, one-bedroom, 48-unit apartment facility for qualified seniors 62 years old or older, of moderate-income levels. Features and amenities include new appliances, central heat and air, and laundry room, on-site management, 24-hour electronic security monitoring system, a beautiful courtyard/patio area, fitness room, media center, and more. Of significant note, Berean Village is a certified Earthcraft®, energy efficient building which guarantees to save on utility costs. This is the first HUD 202 Housing facility throughout the southeast that has earned this designation.

For more information, call Berean Village at 678-399-6510.

Currine Harris served as the project/grant manager for Berean Village and Senior Services Center.