Adventist Heritage Center

From: Adventist News Network <adventistnews@gc.adventist.org>
Sent: Tuesday, July 8, 2014 2:17 PM
To: Adventist Heritage Center
Subject: ANN Bulletin: July 8, 2014

Headlines

Pan-American Health Organization urges Adventists to share health expertise
The appeal made at opening Global Conference on Health and Lifestyle attended by 1,150 in Geneva

Adventist Church’s General Conference Session starts one year from today
Global spiritual gathering, business meeting set for July 2, 2015, in San Antonio; #GC2015

‘Hope Brazil’ initiative empowered Adventists to serve, share mission during World Cup
Volunteers assisted with blood donation drives, distributed literature

Pan-American Health Organization urges Adventists to share health expertise
A senior public health official appealed to the Seventh-day Adventist Church on Tuesday to share its expertise on healthy lifestyles with the rest of the world, saying at a conference that the health of the world’s population was going from bad to worse.

World church President Ted N.C. Wilson said the church would press ahead with plans to expand its comprehensive health ministry to every Adventist church, and he insisted on starting with the well-being of the 1,150 people in the audience, asking them to stand up and stretch.

Anselm Hennis, director of the department of non-communicable diseases and mental health at the Pan-American Health Organization, made his appeal at the opening of the second Global Conference on Health and Lifestyle in Geneva, Switzerland.

Hennis cited two internationally recognized Adventist studies that concluded that vegetarians have a lower risk of dying of non-communicative diseases.

"If you eat more vegetables, you will have a lower risk of dying prematurely," he said.

Hennis, who works for the Americas branch of the World Health Organization, painted a grim picture of deteriorating global health, particularly among low- and medium-income groups, which he said are most prone to non-communicative diseases like heart disease, cancer, respiratory disease, and diabetes.

"We are sitting on an evolving epidemic on all levels," he said.

The theme of the conference is non-communicable diseases, which cannot be passed from person to person and are caused by poor diet, tobacco, alcohol, and a lack of exercise.

**Government regulations not enough**

Hennis said Mexico passed the U.S. as the “fattest country in the world” last year. He added that it was no coincidence that Mexicans are the world’s biggest consumers of sugary beverages, drinking an average of 163 liters per person annually compared to U.S. citizens in second place at 118 liters.

But Mexico is taking the global lead in adopting laws meant to regulate better health, introducing an 8 percent tax on junk food and a 1 peso per liter tax on soft drinks in January 2014, he said. The 1 peso tax alone is expected to reduce soft drink consumption by 5 percent.

Hennis said, however, that government regulations were not enough. He applauded an agreement signed between his organization and the Seventh-day Adventist Church three years ago to
combat non-communicative diseases and urged Adventists on Tuesday to share their knowledge in their communities.

"I am very impressed with the outreach, with the advocacy, with the mission, of your church," he said. "I think we need to come to you to learn how we can do a better job at trying to change lives, making the healthy choice, the better choice."

**Wilson encourages by example**

Wilson, the church president, said in a plenary speech that Adventists needed to not only share information about healthy living but also incorporate healthy choices in their own lives. As if to illustrate the point, he invited participants to stand and stretch their arms with him when he took the stage two hours into the conference.

"We are not a Pentecostal meeting, but we really need good health," Wilson said to audience laughter.

Later in his remarks, Wilson offered a personal example of how he sought to find ways to exercise, saying that he and his wife, Nancy, had walked the 17 minutes from their hotel to the conference venue that morning.

"It was a great walk," he said.

In a sign of the importance that Wilson has placed on the conference, he is staying in Geneva until its conclusion on Sabbath, July 12, when he will deliver a sermon.

Wilson urged attendees to step up efforts to implement “comprehensive health ministry,” a wholistic approach that blends information about health and Jesus to meet people’s physical and spiritual needs.

"Comprehensive health ministry is as important a part of the Seventh-day Adventist Church as the right arm is to the body," Wilson said.

A key goal of the conference is to lay the groundwork for the creation of community health centers in every Adventist church worldwide. Conference organizers are providing attendees, a mixture of church leaders and influential laypeople, with information meant to allow them to implement wellness programs back home.

**Participants impressed, surprised**

Audience members appeared to be relishing the opportunity to learn from leading health and church officials.

"This is a very good conference," said Mikalai Patsukevich, a senior Adventist leader from Belarus."It was good to hear Elder Wilson explain how we can share the gospel through a healthy lifestyle.”

Rodolfo Celestial, a private farmer from Malaybalay, Philippines, said he was impressed with speakers’ comments on the benefits of vegetarianism and looked forward to learning how to share them with children at his home church.
At least one participant was left stunned. “I was so surprised to see that Mexico and the United States are the fattest countries in the world,” said Noldy Sakul, president of the East Indonesia Union Conference.

In his speech, Wilson underscored that Adventists had an obligation to not only share information about health but also about Jesus.

“Don’t get wrapped up in thinking that you are going to go to heaven because you are a vegan,” he said.

**Other conference highlights:**

David Williams, an Adventist professor of public health and sociology at Harvard University, urged conference attendees not to worry about the seemingly overambitious goal of creating a community health center in every church, saying Adventists have a 120-year-old model that they can follow.

“What does a comprehensive health ministry look like?” he said in a plenary speech.

Williams pointed to a program set up by pioneering Adventist doctor John Harvey Kellogg in Chicago in 1893 that saw the city’s impoverished residents treated by doctors-in-training from an Adventist school in Berrien Springs, Michigan. The initiative also included a homeless shelter, a soup kitchen with low-cost meals, employment for those who could not afford the meals, and a halfway house for prostitutes.

Kellogg’s efforts won high praise from one of the leading public health officials of his day, Williams said.

Niels-Erik Andreasen, president of Andrews University, announced that the school was launching a healthy lifestyle initiate that includes a new health and wellness center and a full-time staffer to improve the health of students.

Andreasen said a search was under way to hire a “wellness champion.”

He said the health and wellness center would open in a few years at a prominent location at the front of the campus in Berrien Springs, Michigan, and offer fitness equipment and lecture halls.

The new program will be funded largely by the university’s endowment.

Conference organizer Peter Landless, head of the church’s Health Ministries, was clearly impressed with the presentation.

“This will be a model for all schools of all denominations,” he said.

**Adventist Church’s General Conference Session starts one year from today**
Global spiritual gathering, business meeting set for July 2, 2015, in San Antonio; #GC2015

July 02, 2014 | Silver Spring, Maryland, United States | ANN staff

The Seventh-day Adventist Church’s General Conference Session is set to begin one year from today, July 2, 2015, and run through July 11, 2015. The 10-day meeting will be held at the 65,000-seat Alamodome and the adjacent Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center in San Antonio, Texas, United States.

Session, which has been held every five years since 1970, is a spiritual gathering and business meeting of the international Protestant denomination. Session is the highest governing body of the Church, which now has more than 18 million members worldwide.

“We are looking forward to welcoming delegates, members and the public to experience the sights, sounds and colors of GC Session,” said Session Manager George Egwakhe, who is an associate treasurer at the Adventist Church’s world headquarters.

The meeting is a revival event, reunion for members and families and a tradeshow of ministries. Nearly 2,600 delegates are expected to vote on policy items, authorize changes to the General Conference Constitution and appoint Church officers. Worship services are held throughout the day and feature musical performances representative of the worldwide denomination. In the evenings, leaders present reports about the Church’s mission in their region.

“It’s like a giant campmeeting,” said Sheri Clemmer, associate Session manager and the Church’s meeting planner.

Session also features service projects in the city, cultural and musical events for the public, as well as outreach programs offering educational services on health.

The site for the 2015 Session was chosen in 2006 by the denomination’s Executive Committee, which is comprised of more than 330 delegates from around the world.

The theme for the 2015 Session will be, “Arise! Shine! Jesus Is Coming!” The hashtag will be #GC2015.

For more information about the 2015 Session, visit 2015.gcsession.org.

ANN will report more stories about the upcoming 2015 Session in the coming weeks and months.

‘Hope Brazil’ initiative empowered Adventists to serve, share mission during World Cup
Volunteers assisted with blood donation drives, distributed literature

July 08, 2014 | Brasilia, Brazil | ASN staff

During the FIFA World Cup, thousands of Seventh-day Adventists in Brazil are participating in the Church’s local “Hope Brazil” initiative to offer ministry outreach and service to international football fans and tourists visiting during the tournament.

At many of the Cup’s 12 stadium sites, Adventist volunteers donated blood and coordinated assistance ongoing blood drives, distributed a missionary book, and advocated against sex tourism with the distribution of a special issue magazine about the issue.

“We wanted to motivate youth to donate blood, distribute, and participate [in the project] with outreach actions,” said Areli Barbosa, Youth Ministries leader for the denomination’s South American Division and coordinator of the “Hope Brazil” project.

In São Paulo, volunteers used an Adventist church a few miles away from the Arena Corinthians stadium to prepare 500 meals, which they distributed along with water and missionary books. Adventist distributed approximately 100,000 missionary books at Governador André Franco Montoro International Airport in Guarulhos and in metro stations.

In Porto Alegre in the southern state of Rio Grande do Sul, Adventists distributed 60,000 trilingual pamphlets with Christian messages and information on connecting with the Adventist Church online. Volunteers distributed pamphlets near the Beira-Rio stadium and at other tourist attractions, including the Gasometer, Redenção Park and the Brazilian Navy Park.

Adventist youth took to the streets on June 14 to offer football fans hugs, words of encouragement and kits containing missionary materials.

One of the biggest impacts was made at the state blood center as several groups of 60 people packed the venue to donate blood.

Local New Time Radio reported on the activities of the “Hope Brazil” initiative and invited listeners to join the 2,000 volunteers working on the project.

In Salvador in the northeastern state of Bahia, 30 Adventist volunteers from the Pituba Adventist Church distributed some 2,200 missionary books on June 14 at the Deputado Luis Eduardo Magalhas International Airport.

Near Arena Amazonia in Manaus, 1,000 Adventists distributed 50,000 missionary books on June 18, 22 and 25.
In Brasilia, about 130 Adventist young people distributed books on June 21.

Even though the city of Juiz de Fora in the southeastern state of Minas Gerais didn't host a match, Adventist youth donated blood and distributed leaflets.

In Rio de Janeiro, young people donated 200 units of blood on June 14. In a symbolic gesture of the cause, 4,000 people formed a large “drop” of blood on the field of Olaria Atlético Clube stadium.

On the same day, 300 Adventist young people distributed missionary books, hugs, glasses of water, and information leaflets in front of the Maracana stadium. The next day, June 15, 40,000 books were delivered on the beaches of Copacabana and Leblon. Spanish-speaking tourists received the missionary book in Spanish.