ASI reduces convention rates, increases accessibility

The ASI Board has worked long and hard this year to make the 2011 ASI International Convention accessible to all by reducing registration fees and adding flexibility to the registration process.

"We're very eager to manage the costs of ASI so the highest number of people possible can participate and benefit from the convention," says Stan Smith, ASI's vice president for finance. "The ASI convention provides a source of inspiration and networking that our members and attendees find essential."

Two key changes have been implemented.

Read More

SCROLL DOWN to read this issue's announcements and inspiring news stories.

Convention registration form now online

The 2011 ASI International Convention registration form has been posted to the ASI website Convention Registration page for download. Copies will soon be sent to those on the mailing list. Contact the ASI office if you would like to receive a printed copy of the registration form. New information is posted concerning registration rates, meals and hotel registration. Visit the ASI website regularly for convention information updates.
Over the next two weeks, you'll see major changes and renovations made to the ASI website. Same address, new look and feel. If you have questions about navigating the new site, please call 406-210-3208 or e-mail asi@nad.adventist.org.

**ASI membership & information**

It's the season for spring meetings and for sharing. Contact the ASI office at 301-680-6450 to order copies of ASI's brochure and promotional DVD to share with friends and potential members. Each promotional DVD includes *The ASI Convention Experience* video and several episodes of *ASI Video Magazine*.

For Membership Information or to download a Membership Application, visit the ASI website. Visit the Multimedia page on the ASI website to listen to or download general sessions and seminars from the 2010 ASI Convention in various formats.

Visit the Member Events & Announcements page on the ASI website to learn about events, needs, products and services of interest to ASI members. Submit your own ministry announcements to asi@nad.adventist.org.

Share the ASI Update with friends and family and encourage them to subscribe to this bimonthly e-newsletter full of ASI news, announcements and inspirational stories. E-mail your own ministry news and stories to asi@nad.adventist.org.

---

**ASI Columbia Union holds spring meeting in Newark**

ASI Columbia Union's spring meeting was held March 12 in Newark, New Jersey. Featured speakers included NAD president Dan Jackson and three ASI officers. [Read more](#)

**Health and longevity icon Marge Jetton dies at 106**

ASI member Marge Jetton, a well-known "blue zones" health and longevity icon from Loma Linda, California, died at the age of 106. [Read more](#)

**La Sierra vows not to neglect creation teaching**

In an open letter to church leaders and members, La Sierra University acknowledged deficiency and vowed not to neglect creation teaching. [Read more](#)

**Japan’s quake elicits sympathy, spawns action**

Adventist groups and layworkers are responding with both sympathy and action to help earthquake and tsunami survivors in Japan. [Read more](#)
ASI reduces convention rates, increases accessibility

Posted on Mar 18, 2011

The ASI Board has worked long and hard this year to make the 2011 ASI International Convention accessible to all by reducing registration fees and adding flexibility to the registration process.

"We're very eager to manage the costs of ASI so the highest number of people possible can participate and benefit from the convention," says Stan Smith, ASI's vice president for finance. "The ASI convention provides a source of inspiration and networking that our members and attendees find essential."

Two key changes have been implemented. Each attendee will be required to register, which will spread the cost more evenly and allow a reduction in the amount charged per person. Just as before, evening and Sabbath meetings will be open to members of the local community with no registration requirement. This open-door policy allows a broad range of people to become better acquainted with ASI and its mission. Local evening and Sabbath attendees will receive guest badges.

Second, meal tickets may be purchased either as part of a registration package or individually onsite. Attendees are encouraged to purchase convention meals, as mealtimes provide an important opportunity for networking and fellowship. Seminars are scheduled close to mealtimes, so eating outside the convention center makes it difficult to participate in activities and meetings, particularly for families with children and youth attending. Mealtimes have traditionally been a rich time of fellowship among convention attendees, with many new friendships formed and memories made around large, inviting tables.

The registration process and rate structures have been simplified overall, according to ASI president Norman Reitz. "This benefits the registration staff, as well as making things more equitable for supporting ministries who often have very tight budgets," he says.

"We've listened to the many comments and have changed our pricing structure to reduce registration rates and allow for registration with or without meals," said Smith. "We're excited that this will make attending the convention within reach of everyone who wishes to come."

Convention registration information will be updated regularly on the ASI website. Registration rates, hotel links and car rental rates have already been posted, along with this year's registration form, which will hit the mail this week. Online registration will soon be available.

Register before July 30 to get the best registration rate. An additional $20 per person will be charged for onsite registration August 3–5. The number of individual onsite meal tickets will be limited, so it's advisable to purchase them early as well.

Visit the 2011 Convention Registration page.
ASI Columbia Union holds spring meeting in Newark

Posted on Mar 18, 2011

The ASI Columbia Union chapter held its spring meeting all day Sabbath, March 12, 2011, at the Trinity Temple Seventh-day Adventist Church in Newark, New Jersey.

The event, themed "Workmen and Women Worthy of Their Hire," featured NAD president Dan Jackson, who gave the Sabbath sermon. He urged church members to seek unity rather than uniformity, and recognized the importance of lay-driven ministry in accomplishing the mission of the Adventist Church. ASI officers Ramon Chow, Steve Dickman and Terry Anderson also participated.

Anderson gave a two-hour New Beginnings DVD training session in the afternoon as the feature presentation.

"This is the second DVD training we've done in the Columbia Union, and they are excited about it," he said. "For an area with small ASI membership, they were remarkably committed to completing the training and asked for additional training in the future."

ASI Columbia Union vice president Emanuel Pelote shared additional highlights about the event.

"The local church members worked really hard to make the event wonderful and to present a beautiful lunch for those who attended," he said. "We were not expecting that level of service, and the church really deserves a lot of credit."

Pelote joined ASI last summer while attending the GC session in Atlanta. He owns a company in Washington, D.C., that creates custom business software.

"Another high point of the event was participation by about 15 young people from Miracle Meadows School," he said. "They led the song service and gave amazing testimonies. You'd never know by talking to them what kind of backgrounds they come from."

Miracle Meadows is an Adventist school for troubled youth, many of whom might otherwise be in the juvenile detention system. Many students are referred by the court system or enrolled by parents as a last resort. The school is run by ASI Columbia Union board member Carol Bierce.

In the evening, a "Circle of Ministry" was held, giving attendees the opportunity to share testimonies about ways they are reaching their communities for Christ. For many local church members, this event was their first introduction to ASI. One woman was so inspired she agreed to be an ASI chapter representative and point of contact for the local church.

Throughout the event, ASI Columbia Union chapter president Denise Hayden emphasized that the mission of the ASI Columbia Union chapter is to make sure that every Adventist church member in the Columbia Union is involved in sharing Christ.

More than 150 people attended the meetings, including about 20 ASI members.

Visit the ASI Columbia Union website.
La Sierra University vows not to neglect creation teaching

Posted on Mar 18, 2011

In an open letter to church leaders and members, La Sierra University acknowledged its deficiency in communicating Seventh-day Adventists beliefs regarding creation to its students.

The institution surveyed biology students and majors who have attended in the past four years, as well as those attending in 2000.

"We found that only 50 percent of the students surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that our Adventist view of creation was presented, and only 40 percent agreed or strongly agreed that our Adventist view was supported. This is not acceptable and we apologize," the letter stated, outlining the following ways in which La Sierra plans to address the problem:

• Ensuring that all biology students discuss key documents relating to our Adventist belief regarding origins, including Fundamental Belief #6, the 2004 Annual Council Reaffirmation of Creation, and Genesis 1 and 2.

• Increased participation by the Church's Geoscience Research Institute in planning the General Biology Seminar.

• Ongoing refinement of the General Biology Seminar, based on student exit surveys and other input.

• Attendance of biology faculty members at the Geoscience Research Institute summer workshop.

• Continue the lecture series that presents a range of Adventist views on the integration of faith and science.

• Establish dialogue with biology professors from sister Adventist colleges and universities.

The letter was signed by university president Randal Wisbey and Board of Trustees chair Ricardo Graham.

In response to La Sierra's open letter, ASI president Norman Reitz said, "The acknowledgment on the part of the administration and Board that its teaching and support of Adventist beliefs on creation have been lacking is a positive first step. However, I hope that in LSU's implementation of the stated goal to uphold Fundamental Belief #6 (the world was created in six literal days) that fiat creation 'by the word of the Lord' would be treated as the norm and that the concept of evolution would only be taught descriptively as a worldview, not as a viable explanation of origins. We await future reports of the effective implementation by LSU of its goal to faithfully teach and strongly support the Biblical Adventist understanding on creation."

Read the full text of La Sierra's Open Letter Regarding the Teaching of Creation.

Read the full text of the Voted Report by the Board-appointed Creation-Evolution Study Group.

Read La Sierra University Won't Neglect Creation Teaching, President, Chairman Vow by Mark A. Kellner, news editor, Adventist Review.
Health and longevity icon Marge Jetton dies at 106

Posted on Mar 18, 2011

Long-time ASI member Marge Jetton, who gained national attention as a health and longevity icon, died February 15 in Loma Linda at the age of 106. Her ASI dues were paid through the current year.

Author Dan Buettner featured Jetton in his 2005 National Geographic article and book about areas he called "blue zones," where people experience greater longevity and well-being. The Adventist community in Loma Linda was one of those areas. Buettner regarded Jetton as the "poster girl" for the Adventist lifestyle, which includes a strong sense of community, volunteerism, and Sabbath keeping. She made several national television appearances, including the Oprah Winfrey Show in 2008, where she was featured doing her daily workout routine.

Jetton remained active well into retirement, continuing to work at the Loma Linda University Medical Center library and volunteering for the Voice of Prophecy.

Read more about Marge Jetton in the Adventist Review.
Japan's quake elicits sympathy, spawns action

Posted on Mar 18, 2011

With 15,000 Adventists in Japan worshiping in 115 churches, the magnitude 9.0 Sendai earthquake and tsunami struck at the heart of the world church family, eliciting both widespread sympathy and concerted action.

General Conference president Ted Wilson released a worldwide call to prayer for the people of Japan. "We are committed to helping meet human needs and sharing the greatest news of all: that God loves and cares for each of us, and that He is coming again soon" he said.

In an Adventist Review article entitled "Stirred, But Not Shaken," former It Is Written speaker/director Shawn Boonstra reflected on the quake and what it should uniquely mean to Adventists. He noted that church attendance often spikes temporarily after similar catastrophes, as it did following 9/11.

"People seem to have a nagging sense that it's no longer business as usual, but without the ability to attach meaning to these kinds of events, most of them simply forget and move on with life," Boonstra wrote. "Without the Bible's prophetic road map, large-scale disasters become nothing more than unfortunate random events.... People are shaken, but not stirred."

It should be a different story for Adventists, he urged. Not only are such catastrophes signs of Christ's imminent return, but they are "also a clear message to God's church. They are meant to stir us to action. They ought to remind us that our neighbors can't explain what is happening—and that they are utterly lost without Jesus, hurtling down a path to final destruction."

Many, in fact, have been stirred to action. ADRA assessment teams reached Sendai within 24 hours of the tsunami, which appears at this point to have possibly taken more than 12,000 lives and counting.

"The damage is so devastating, I have no words left to utter," said Atsushi Suhara, Program Officer for ADRA Japan, while assessing the damage.

ADRA is coordinating with local humanitarian and relief agencies to set up evacuation centers and provide food and necessities to displaced evacuees. Meanwhile, the aftershocks continue, subzero temperatures have overtaken the Sendai region, and the fear of nuclear fallout from damaged nuclear plants continues to rise.

Groups and individuals alike are mobilizing to help where they can. Northwest physician and lay evangelist Tim Riesenberger, a frequent speaker at ASI conventions, left this week for Tokyo to lend help wherever it is needed. Youth evangelist and photographer Alden Ho quickly gathered financial support from friends via Facebook and headed for Tokyo, arriving Friday and spending the first night at the Tokyo Central Adventist Church. "No trains or planes running," he reported, "so [I'll have] a 10-hour bus ride tomorrow to Sendai."

With many large-scale disasters, expectations concerning potential damage usually rise far above the realities. In Japan, the opposite seems to be true. Assessments of the situation have gotten worse with time, and pundits around the world are weighing the event's long-term effects on the world's economy, health, and general welfare. News of Japan's quake eclipsed that of last month's quake in Christchurch, New Zealand, where healing is still just beginning. For Adventists, these events present opportunities to share what seems to be in lowest supply—hope.

Read President Ted Wilson's Statement on the Japan earthquake.

Read Stirred, But Not Shaken, by Shawn Boonstra.

Read about ADRA's Response in Japan.