NEWS

Future of Loma Linda University Projects in China: A proposal to the Chinese government by Loma Linda University says the time may have come to establish a faith-based hospital in China.

Famous Evangelist Ron Halvorsen Dies at Age 76: One of the most compelling and dramatically gifted preachers from the US evangelistic circuit in this era has left the stage for the last time.

Massive Evangelism Campaign in Zimbabwe Combined with Social Action Projects by Adventists: Urban evangelism, combining social and medical outreach with gospel preaching, is projected to lead 30,000 to baptism.

New Urban Outreach School Launched in Northeast United States: A new accredited program to educate youth and young adults in urban mission skills launches next month in Philadelphia.
**OPINION**

**In Dealing with Creationism, Is Official Adventism Going Down the Same Road as Islam?:** Muslim fundamentalists long ago opted to devalue science as a manifestation of God, impoverishing both their faith and their culture. Ervin Taylor says some Adventists seem inclined to follow a similar pathway....

**The Un-Graveyard (DEVOTIONAL):** Debbonnaire Kovacs imagines a dreamscape of horror-driven dimensions. "Read this dreamscape...if you dare," she challenges....

**We Cannot Pass This Way Again:** We seem to have fallen in love with an idealized version of what the Church used to be; problem is, that vision may not be the real one, and opting to emulate a purportedly Elysian past may further alienate our youth, writes guest columnist Edwin A. Schwisow....

**FEATURE & THE ARTS**

**PossAbilities Member to Compete in 2015 Inaugural Paracanoe World Cup games in Germany (FEATURE):** We have reported before about Loma Linda's Team PossAbilities, and the amazing spirit and abilities displayed by the Team's members. So what's the latest news as a team member travels internationally!...

**The Power of Persistence (PROSE):** Writer/poet and photographer S M Chen ponders the importance of persisting...
in the face of obstacles....

**Nothing in My Hands, by Del Starr (a pseudonym) (PROSE):** Read the introduction and first chapter of a woman's memoir, about her long sojourn in the devil's country, only to discover that God's children weren't so sure they wanted her to rejoin them when she was ready to come home....

**A Rock and a Hard Place (VISUAL):** Cheryl Morrow's breathtaking photo, "A Rock and a Hard Place," reminds us that sometimes all we have to stand on is trust....

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Future of Loma Linda University Projects in China

From News Release, May 18, 2015: The relationship between Loma Linda University (LLU) and Sir Run Run Shaw Hospital in Hangzhou, China, has led to a number of requests for similar assistance, reports Dr. Richard Hart, president of the leading Adventist health institution. “Many other enterprising businessmen and hospitals have been coming to our door, wanting to recreate the success of Sir Run Run Shaw Hospital.” Over two decades, more than 500 staff from the hospital in China have been trained at LLU and an equal number from the California university have spent time assisting in China.

The possibilities have resulted in study of two key questions, Hart said in a recent news bulletin. “What have we done that can be replicated elsewhere? … And … with whom do we want to partner in the future? We recognize it is time to branch out from Hangzhou, but we must consider who is truly committed to creating this special kind of care versus who is looking for a good marketing edge by using our name.”

Because of the strategic significance of China with 1.4 billion people, thousands of hospitals and massive cities with freeways, subways and skyscrapers, a small team of LLU leaders went to China a few weeks ago, visiting Hong Kong, Beijing, Hangzhou and Chongqing. The group “toured hospitals, listened to presentations, ate great meals with chopsticks, and discussed the best way forward. While China is opening up to Western ideas and programs, it is still a tightly controlled country, with little room for external organizations to work on their own. All of Loma Linda’s involvement to date has been in support of government hospitals and universities, including Sir Run Run Shaw Hospital. Though ‘religious freedom’ is allowed, it is carefully structured and monitored. Is there a role for a private, faith-based university now in China? Has the time come to see if this can happen? How would it best be organized? Where? What courses should be offered?”

The discussion of these questions and concerns with leaders of the Shaw Foundation, Sir Run Run Shaw Hospital, and several large health systems across the country led to the conclusion that it is time to put forward a proposal, Hart stated. “A concept paper has been developed and sent off.” Hart asked alumni and supporters of LLU to pray for this initiative which could lead to “a huge step to further involvement in this country with one-fifth of the world’s population [and] a new frontier for Loma Linda, befitting our distinguished history of innovation around the world.”

The Adventist faith in China is part of the Three Self organization, the Protestant structure in the country. There are 418,000 members of the Adventist Church in China, according to the denomination’s General Conference Office of Archives, Statistics and Research.
Famous Evangelist Ron Halvorsen Dies at Age 76

By AT News Team, May 17, 2015: Pastor Ron Halvorsen Sr., the well-known evangelist who baptized more than 11,000 converts during his career, died Friday after battling cancer. He had been diagnosed with multiple myeloma last November. On three previous occasions over his life he had been successful in fighting off cancer and he “believed that he would land on his feet again,” the Adventist Review quoted Ruthie Jacobson, a prayer ministries leader for the Adventist denomination who prayed with Halvorsen just hour before he passed away. He was planning an evangelism campaign in Norway later this year.

“Just before they closed the door to the plane in Dayton, I received news that my dad has passed away,” his son, Pastor Ron Halvorsen Jr., wrote on Facebook around 8 pm Eastern Time on Friday. The son is president of the denomination’s Ohio Conference. He asked for prayer for his mother, Carrol, and sister, Diane, a chaplain with Adventist Care Centers. A global network connected on Facebook has been praying for the senior Halvorsen’s health since late last year.

Halvorsen grew up in Brooklyn in New York City and as a teenager he was a leader in the Beachcombers Gang, “always in trouble.” He went with a friend to visit a third friend at an Adventist high school and there heard Pastor Charles Kremer preaching for a Week of Prayer. He skipped school to come back each day and at the end responded to a call to conversion. The friend from the neighborhood who was with him did not respond and later ended up in prison for murder.

The young Adventist friend who first introduced him to the gospel and invited him to the Week of Prayer was Jim Londis; Dr. James Londis, a Bible scholar and theologian who served the denomination as a professor of theology and later president of Atlantic Union College, senior pastor of Sligo Church in Takoma Park (Maryland) and a faculty member at Kettering College and senior official of Kettering Medical Center Network. Londis conducted Bible studies with Halvorsen while they were both teenagers.

Halvorsen’s story was told in a biography entitled From Gangs to God published in 1973 by Review & Herald Publishing Association. He also shared his testimony on hundreds of occasions over the years, often using it as the basis to appeal to others to give their lives to Christ.

After completing a theology degree at Atlantic Union College in Massachusetts, Halvorsen served as a pastor in the Southern New England Conference and the Carolina Conference, as well as in Tennessee, Maryland and back in New York City. He was senior pastor for the Keene, Texas, congregation on the campus of Southwestern Adventist University, director of the Ministerial Association for the Mid-America Union Conference, and an evangelist for Faith For Today television ministry. The last 17 years before his retirement in 2003, he worked for the Southern Union Conference in the United States as an evangelist and conducting training programs.

Halvorsen conducted evangelism field schools for ministerial students for more than 40 years. He also trained more than 4,000 lay pastors for the Southern Union Conference. His last evangelism campaign was in Charlotte, North Carolina, in 2013.

Because he grew up in an inner city neighborhood, Halvorsen always had an interest in the needs of low-income families. “When we go out fishing for Jesus we often want to catch beautiful, tropical exotic fish to put into our church aquariums,” he explained. “But often God sends us dirty, stinky, common fish that need a lot of cleaning up and helping.” He was one of those rough people when Jesus found him, and he has always had a heart for reaching people for Jesus who did not seem to hold much promise until Jesus changes them. For example, one of the projects he started was a drug mobile unit to help street people.
Despite the fact that he was a regular on the independent Three Angels Broadcasting Network, Halvorsen was listed by a fundamentalist splinter group among "corrupt Seventh-day Adventist leaders" because he taught "prayer walking" and trained "prayer warriors." It is unclear precisely why the group thought these things were not orthodox.

"A giant has fallen. A true giant," John Bradshaw, director of the It Is Written television ministry, was quoted by the *Adventist Review*. Halvorsen worked with the ministry for more than a decade after he retired. "Ron believed in preaching the power of the gospel," Bradshaw said. "It had changed him, and he knew it could change others. And as God worked through Ron, it did so many times."

Evangelist Mark Finley told the *Adventist Review* that Halvorsen left an enduring legacy as a Christ-centered, fearless biblical preacher who loved people and had a passion for evangelism that was undimmed through the years. "He was consumed with the overwhelming desire to see men and women, boys and girls won for Christ," said Finley, who called Halvorsen a dear friend whose life was intertwined with the Finley family for decades. "He was one of a kind but would to God we had 1,000 preachers like him whose whole life was consumed with winning the lost."

Halvorsen is survived by his wife of 57 years, Carrol LaMountain Halvorsen; son Ron (Buffy Vercio) Halvorsen Jr. of Mount Vernon, Ohio; daughter Diane Halvorsen (Peter Tsichlis) of Apopka, Florida; grandson Ron (Josie Thamas) Halvorsen III of Glendale, California; William (Donielle Anavitarte) of Keene, Texas; granddaughters Kelsey Halvorsen (Ricky) Berkihiser of Inverness, Florida and Stephanie Halvorsen (Doug) Parrish of Sequim, Washington; great-grandson Noah Grey Halvorsen; great-granddaughter Katelynne Diane Halvorsen; brothers Bill (Ann) Halversen, Warren (Judy) Halversen, Richard (Mary) Halversen, and Elliot Halversen; sister Adele (Richard) Solimine; and nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents, William and Adele Halversen, sister-in-law Grace Halversen and beloved nephew, Jimmy Halversen.

A memorial service is scheduled for 4 p.m. on Sabbath, June 13, at the Forest Lake Church in Apopka, Florida, a suburb north of Orlando. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be sent to Ohio Evangelism, c/o the Ohio Conference, P.O. Box 1230, Mount Vernon, OH 43050.

Video and audio recordings of Halvorsen's preaching is available many places on the Web. Many sermons are at *adventistpreaching.com* and a piece from his last evangelism campaign can be seen on *YouTube*. 
Massive Evangelism Campaign in Zimbabwe Combined with Social Action Projects by Adventists

By AT News Team, May 22, 2015: Sunday evening a massive evangelism campaign began in the cities of Zimbabwe with the goal of baptizing 30,000 converts to the Adventist faith, stated the Adventist Review. On Monday leaders of the Adventist denomination met with Phelekezela Mphoko, vice president of the central African country, and he thanked Adventists for building and renovating public schools and community health clinics in many places, The Herald daily newspaper in the city.

Pastor Ted Wilson, president of the denomination’s General Conference (GC), is preaching each evening at a huge outdoor venue in Chitungwiza, a suburb of 365,000 in the southern part of Harare. A free clinic began operation at the site last week and by yesterday had treated 13,000 patients and involved 180 professional volunteers, according to the Adventist Review.

The two-week “reaping campaign” is the culmination of an outreach strategy that began with more than 5,000 small Bible study groups several months ago, Pastor Duane McKey, project coordinator, told the Adventist Review. McKey is on loan to the denomination in Zimbabwe from his regular job as a vice president of the Southwestern Union Conference in the United States. Evangelists are preaching this week and next at 87 locations throughout the country, with 61 of these sites in the Harare region and the rest in 17 other cities.

The campaign is part of the denomination’s worldwide focus on reaching the cities. It uses a relatively new approach to outreach “that seeks to meet both the physical and spiritual needs of the community,” reported the Adventist Review. For example, this week as the evangelism campaign was launched, the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) opened 12 community wells around the country, including one in Chitungwiza.

“Building new wells can completely transform a village by bringing safe, clean water close to home,” Jason Brooks, an ADRA worker, was quoted by the Adventist Review. “Women and children don’t have to walk for miles to get water, so they can spend their days in meaningful work or stay in school.” He also pointed out that a clean water supply drastically reduces chronic disease in a community. When community development teams open new wells they also provide public health and sanitation training.

“The government of Zimbabwe is grateful with the programs that the church is undertaking in this country, we really appreciate that,” Mphoko was quoted by the newspaper. “I have learnt that the church is currently building schools, refurbishing hospitals and clinics … and all these facilities will be handed over to the government of Zimbabwe to benefit the communities.”

Mphoko is himself an Adventist. The delegation of Adventist leaders that met with him was led by Wilson and included Pastor Paul Ratsara, president of the denomination’s Southern Africa Indian Ocean Division and the officers of the denomination in Zimbabwe.

Wilson expressed gratitude for the freedom of religion in Zimbabwe and praised the country for being peaceful, according to the newspaper. The evangelism campaign “shows that there is freedom of worship in this country, and … I want to laud the government of Zimbabwe for that,” he was quoted as stating.

The denomination ended 2014 with more than 800,000 members on record, according to the GC Office of Archives, Statistics and Research. The membership grew at a rate of nearly five percent last year with an increase of over 37,000. It is estimated that the total of Adventist adherents in Zimbabwe, including children too young to be baptized members and non-members who attend regularly, approaches two million.
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Sharing is caring!
New Urban Outreach School Launched in Northeast United States

From News Release, May 21, 2015: A new program to train young adults in urban mission skills launches next month in Philadelphia. The REACH Columbia Union Conference Urban Evangelism School will provide a unique learning experience, a practical immersion in reaching the unreached in one of the largest cities in North America.

Like other evangelism schools it can be completed in about three months, students learn to do literature evangelism and it is in line with the urban mission goals of the denomination’s General Conference. Unlike all other Adventist evangelism schools, it is fully accredited and participants actually live and work in an urban community.

Students develop a working understanding of the cycle of transformational ministry through personal, public, and literature evangelism. They will learn valuable leadership and life skills as they connect meaningfully with their neighbors to bring about lasting change.

Dr. Tara VinCross, the program director, is excited to offer a diverse, hands-on experience to students in the areas of discipleship, community development, urban agriculture as well as various aspects of evangelism. The program is implemented in partnership with Adventist congregations in the Philadelphia metropolitan area.

Participants can earn up to 12 academic credits through the program because of its partnership with Washington Adventist University. This fact alone makes it the only accredited Adventist evangelism school. Unlike others, it encourages young people to pursue both vibrant discipleship and academic excellence.

The first cohort will start next month. More information is available at: www.reachcolumbiaunion.org
In Dealing with Creationism, Is Official Adventism Going Down the Same Road as Islam?

by Ervin Taylor, May 21, 2015: During the European Middle Ages, Muslim scholars created a "Golden Age" for Islamic intellectual pursuits that included some of the initial steps that several centuries later in the West, would lead to the rise of modern science. In a recent article published in Physics Today, Dr. Pervez Hoodbhoy, an Islamic physicist currently teaching at a university in Pakistan, described the nature of the Muslim "Golden Age," that included the development of an incipient scientific enterprise that arose among Islamic scholars, and then relates the factors responsible for destroying the foundations of that science.

Dr. Hoodbhoy cites as the principal reason for the destruction the "theological tensions between liberal and fundamentalist interpretations of Islam." As was the case with the politically and economically driven (but theologically justified) "Wars of Religion" in late Medieval Europe, these tensions in Islam became inflamed and often turned bloody. As Dr. Hoodbhoy relates it, with the military and political victory of fundamentalist elements in Islam, "the open-minded pursuits of philosophy, mathematics, and science were increasingly relegated to the margins of Islam."

Today, Young Earth Creationists (YEC) and Young Life Creationists (YLC) among fundamentalist Christians (which include Adventist fundamentalists) are fond of referring to well-known 18th and 19th century scientific pioneers in the West who were (according to YEC/YLC advocates) "faith-affirming" scientists. These modern apologists sometimes fail to look carefully at what these so-called "Bible-believing" scientists actually believed.

For example, the personally devout 19th Century Christian physicist James Clerk Maxwell (1831-1879) once wrote that he would be "very sorry if an interpretation [of the Bible] founded on a most conjectural scientific hypothesis were to get fastened to the text in Genesis. The rate of change of scientific hypotheses is naturally much more rapid than that of Biblical interpretations, so that if an interpretation [of the Bible] is founded on such a [scientific] hypothesis, it may help keep the [scientific] hypothesis above ground long after it ought to be buried and forgotten."

Maxwell was well aware that what often passes for some purported "Biblical-based" belief, is, in fact, simply an interpretation of some biblical text. Whether the interpretation of a text actually conforms to what the writer of the text originally meant to write is often ignored by YEC/YLC apologists. Maxwell's main worry here was that if some conjectural scientific hypothesis becomes bonded to a given scriptural text, this would damage the progress of science. One would think that Maxwell was talking about the "official" Adventist belief that a recent world-wide flood explains the geological record (which is currently the institutionally-sanctioned Adventist explanation of how one is able to ignore the mass of evidence that both the earth and life are billions of years old).

The ideology about Creationism being currently advanced by the parts of institutional Adventism controlled by the current party in power at the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists is causing Adventism to go down the same road that was traveled by dominant forces in Islam many centuries ago. The current efforts of the fundamentalist forces in Adventism are, in part, directed on changing the wording of Fundamental Belief No. 6 at the upcoming General Conference session. If that change is voted, official Adventism will move further and further down that broad road leading to theological ossification followed by the forces of fundamentalist Islam so many hundreds of years ago. If that occurs, the alienation of educated Adventists from institutional and official Adventism will not only continue, but be accelerated. There may still be time for moderate Adventists to seek some type of accommodation. But they must move quickly.
The Un-Graveyard

By Debonnaire Kovacs, submitted May 20, 2015

It’s a dream. It has to be a dream. And you shouldn’t have had the pizza!

There you are, in the middle of a valley, with no idea how you got there. At first, you just accept it; it’s one of those odd dream-things. Then you look around, puzzled. There are all kinds of...sticks, or something. They’re all over the place—you can’t walk without stepping on them—and they roll, and kind of crunch, under your feet. You lean down to take a closer look...

And jump back with a gasp and a surge of adrenalin. The dream begins to take on a nightmarish quality.

“A s-s-skull!” you babble to yourself. “Th-that’s a skull!”

And as you stare around you, your eyes too wide for comfort and your breathing tense, you realize...you are surrounded by human bones. Hundreds of them—thousands of them! Legs, arms, ribcages sticking up like something from an old western movie. But the skulls are the worst, grinning at you, staring sightlessly up at the sky.

It’s a dream. It has to be a dream...

You jump again as a Voice speaks. “Mortal, can these bones live?”

You don’t know how you know it, but in the way of dreams, you do know it. It’s God. The Most High God, speaking to you! You manage to find enough breath to babble something like, “How should I know? That’s your department!”

The Voice comes again, so powerful the wind stops blowing and the crickets stop chirping. “Prophesy to these bones,” the Voice intones, “and say to them:

O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord.

Thus says the Lord YHWH to these bones:

I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live.

I will lay sinews on you,

and will cause flesh to come upon you,

and cover you with skin,

and put breath in you,

and you shall live;

and you shall know that I am the Lord.”

Still not breathing all that well, you manage to obediently parrot the words you have been given. But as you speak...

“...I will lay sinews on you…”

With a mighty rattling that makes you freeze and clench your eyes shut in terror, the bones begin to come together,
held by ligaments and tendons. (You can't help peeking…)

“…and will cause flesh to come upon you…”

Like a movie with shocking special effects, muscles zip around the skeletons, covering ribs, wrapping legs and arms, coiling around the grinning skulls.

“…and cover you with skin…”

You are thankful when the skin slips over the muscles and the skeletons look like people again. You take another breath.

“…and put breath in you…”

It sounds like a mighty rushing wind. All the bodies in the valley take a deep breath, as if they’ve all been startled and are gasping. Like you.

“…and you shall live…”

They sit up. They stand up. They look at each other, and at you. Ten minutes ago it was a nightmare, a valley of death. Now…they’re just people. Just ordinary, startled people.

The Voice speaks with you as you tremblingly state the last line you were given.

“…and you shall know that I am the Lord.”

And it’s true. You do know. You wake in your own bed, in your own room, and you know—you know, gut-deep, soul-deep, that this God can bring life from death. Can resurrect you. Can pour the Holy Spirit on you and get you on your feet.

You.

Now.

Today.

*Based on Ezek. 37:1-14.*

Sharing is caring!
We Cannot Pass This Way Again

by Edwin A. Schwisow, May 21, 2015:  Dear Adventist Today Friends:  The year was 1843, and the word “Gold” echoed coast to coast in the US, continent to continent, in a muscular elegy to instant wealth.

Borrowing that theme, the American poet and polymath Edgar Allan Poe discovered a new source of material wealth in a “mystery” he wrote that same year and christened “The Gold Bug.” In it the hero claims that a yellow-colored insect is guiding him to a trove of long-buried pirate riches. It all seemed a bit insane—perhaps Edgar had imbibed a bit too heavily as he wrote. But to the bemused amazement of the reader, the bug does indeed manage to guide the protagonist directly to a cache of millions dollars’ worth of loot along the South Carolina coast.

Poe’s story epitomizes the 19th-century’s ferocious determination to cash in, in an era of gold rushes when instant wealth was a supreme theme. The religions hatched in the West during that era predictably all emphasize riches and prosperity unknown both here and in the sweet bye-and-bye.

Gold in That-thar Bible

That same year (1843), the Baptist lay preacher William Miller lifted eyes heavenward to gold untold, citing the biblical book of Daniel as his celestial Gold Bug. A golden age had arrived for all, he preached, on earth as it is in heaven—a Gilded Age, as humorist Mark Twain would later christen the latter decades of that self-focused era.

Though the coming of Christ did not happen at Miller’s predicted time, the psychology and faith of the times were such that the golden flame continued to burn, and it seemed to paradoxically glow most fervently among young, selfless idealists, who saw the Great Disappointment as a bitter, but not fatal, test of faith. God was in the advent movement, they believed, and the prediction’s immediate failure was due to human lukewarmness—not divine error.

As the Advent Movement became more and more corporatized, it developed skill in mass-producing Christianity and became a far, far cry from the days in the 1840s when it consisted largely of a group of bright, socially integrated teenagers.

A Return to the Gilded Age?

Today some heirs to the mantle of William Miller look back wistfully to the Gilded Age of the Movement—now widely referred to as its Historic period.

We are told now that these were times of ardent, simple faith, in which the golden themes running through the Bible’s apocalyptic pages were taken literally and to the death.

The denomination was united on all salient points of salvific doctrine, but alas and alack, liberalism crept in and we took our eyes off the gold and concentrated instead on bigness and numbers.

Problems with a Neo-gilded Proposition

But there’s a problem. There is no recorded Golden Era of early Advent purity. Rather, Adventists during that period were haggling to the death on such urgent matters as which horn on an apocalyptic beast represented which
European nation, and whether or not the denomination should or should not have a president. It was during this time period, in fact, that Ellen White seemed most insistent that too much kingly power was held by men who believed their way was the only way to operate the church. Do we—should we—move “forward” to this historic era? Are we prepared to reap the consequences of returning to a “Historic” era of centralized authority that had Adventist membership and theology gasping for air?

During the past 50 years, two denominations founded during our “Historic” period have learned that lesson in a dramatic way. Both the Southern Baptists and the Jehovah’s Witnesses in recent times moved toward a centralization of conservative power, and the growth of both has been seriously compromised. In fact, the downfall of denominations rarely comes from relaxing doctrines and standards; ordinarily, decay comes from adamantly imposing unalterable requirements that discourage creative expressions of faith and thoughtful Present Truth.

A Better Response

One of Adventist Today’s serious reasons for existence is to keep the lines of communication open among members of major ideological preferences, in creative ways that constantly transcend the past to present the original gospel in ways that speak eloquently to generations today. From the days of St. Paul onward this has always been the way of cutting-edge Christianity. And as in the case of Paul, it is often a quasi-independent group on the periphery of the corporate center that finds the freedom to seek out and test better ways.

In turn, we are calling on more younger writers, writing more in-depth material related to their youthful concerns, for it is among our youth that we are seeing a particularly high rate of membership loss—a group of largely progressive youth who have absolutely no interest in returning to a neo-Gilded Age. This outreach, today, is consistent with one of the founding goals of Adventist Today two decades ago—to reach out to young adults from Adventist families and keep them engaged with the faith. This is an even more important issue today, as many youth remain inactive, as their parents and grandparents illustrate more and more the “graying of Adventism.”

Adventist Today has added two additional staff members over the past year, both in their 30s, believing that you, our donors, will support us with the additional income necessary. Within this budget we are also inviting several journalism students from Adventist universities and colleges to be part of the team in San Antonio this coming summer, to provide coverage of the GC Session. The perspectives of these young adults are important not only to attract more young adult readers, but also to help the rest of us understand how young people perceive the Church.

We have also expanded the distribution of Adventist Today by adding a Facebook edition, which is updated daily by Emmy Halvorsen, our new Facebook editor and the youngest member of our staff. It is reaching a significant number of young adults around the world, especially among the burgeoning Adventist populations in Africa, Latin America and Asia.

The percentage of those who leave the faith is climbing to all-time highs, and prominent leaders seem intent on moving us back to one of the most dissonant and controversial Adventist eras in our historic existence. This ill serves young, educated Adventists who derive inspiration from both the Bible and from nature/science—books that in most arenas agree in principle.

Adventist Today needs to raise $15,000 more in the weeks before General Conference opens in early July. We’re almost there, thanks to those who have already given in April and May.

There are some who would have us return to the rusty past, where great controversy was far more than the title of a great book. This Session could be the breaking of a new and better day of creativity, or as in the case of other 19th-century denominations, it could herald an acceleration of the withering already being experienced among our youth and educated classes. There is a time for everything, wrote the Wise Man. The Gilded Age of the 19th century cannot fully address those needs in our time. We must broaden our base and strengthen our financial cords to

We Cannot Pass This Way Again - Adventist Today
http://atoday.org/we-cannot-pass-this-way-again.html
serve a world seeking widely for solid reasons to explore the pathways of Jesus in this generation.

Guest Columnist Edwin A. Schwisow is *Adventist Today* Secretary of Development.
PossAbilities member to compete in 2015 inaugural Paracanoe World Cup games in Germany

[Editor’s note: We have reported in the past about Team PossAbilities, and the amazing spirit and abilities displayed by the Team's members. So we thought you’d like to see this latest news!]

By Briana Pastorino, Media Relations Specialist, LLUH, submitted May 20, 2015

LOMA LINDA, CA – May 19, 2015 – Loma Linda University Health PossAbilities member Greg Crouse will be headed to Duisburg, Germany for the 2015 inaugural Paracanoe World Cup games May 20-24. Team USA announced via a press release that Crouse was one of four individuals who made it on the World Cup team.

“I was extremely elated and proud to make this World Cup team,” Crouse said, who was on the Paracanoe World Championship teams in 2010, 2012 and 2013. Crouse learned that he had made the team immediately following the World Cup time trials in Oklahoma City on April 25.

Although Crouse, 46, has been on Team USA Paracanoe World Championship teams in the past, he has had to requalify every year. “As I’ve gotten older I’ve had to rely on technique and experience rather than just strength,” Crouse admitted. This year, in preparation for time trials, Crouse hired a new coach, Dave Kreuger, in February and will continue to train through the end of the year in preparation for the United States National Championship and the World Paracanoe Championship.

Crouse has been on the “Road to Rio” in an effort to make it to the 2016 Paralympics in Rio de Janeiro. Everything is working toward the 2016 time trials for the Paralympics next year, Crouse stated, and things are not getting any easier. “It was a lot more flexible in the past,” he confessed, “but the closer we get to the Paralympics everything gets a little more challenging with time standards and criteria.

In order to keep the momentum toward Rio de Janeiro, he must compete in the World Cup and the World Championships this year as well as next year. “So this is a huge steppingstone for me.”

“We are very proud of Greg on making the USA World Cup team,” said Pedro R. Payne, PhD, director, community outreach & patient experience at Loma Linda University Medical Center East Campus. “He is a great ambassador of our program and is an inspiration to us all.”
PossAbilities is a free, non-profit, community outreach program, which provides individuals of all ages with permanent physical disabilities support and resources to stay active and healthy in life. Loma Linda University Health has run this program since 2001.

A United States Army veteran, Crouse lost his left leg while serving overseas in 1988. He has been a part of PossAbilities since 2008, and he attributes much of his success to the organization. “I’m honored to be a part of PossAbilities. Thank you for making my dreams a reality.”

Sharing is caring!
The Power of Persistence

By S M Chen, submitted May 20, 2015

Laura was born and raised in San Francisco. Unlike many residents and visitors, she disliked it there. The hilly terrain, which she had to walk from home to school and back again, and damp cold, which never relented, were but two things she would later consider, from the vantage point of hindsight, disadvantages. Her childhood was not a particularly happy one.

Many winters she’d catch cold, and sometimes the cold would linger for many weeks, turning from an upper respiratory infection into bronchitis. While not exactly a sickly child, she was petite and not of robust constitution. One year she was given a prolonged course of some kind of pill, which may have been an antimicrobial drug, but it wasn’t for TB.

As a young woman she moved south, where she preferred the warmer, drier climate. For a number of decades, her health seemed fairly good. She was vivacious, loved to dance, and enjoyed her job.

Then, one day, about four years ago, in mid-life, it happened. She had a sudden urge to cough, and, when she did, blood came up.

It wasn’t a huge amount, but it was enough—maybe a couple tablespoons full—to alarm her. This happened again, sporadically, over ensuing time.

She sought medical attention.

Her chest X-ray showed an abnormality in a portion of her right lung. A CT scan confirmed the abnormality and demonstrated bronchiectasis, a condition in which diseased bronchi are abnormally dilated.

A pulmonologist performed bronchoscopy. Bronchial washings demonstrated presence of a bacterial infection, for which an antibiotic was prescribed.

But Laura couldn’t tolerate the drug, and discontinued it.

She decided to try alternative medicine, and visited an herbalist, who prescribed a concoction that may or may not have helped. If it did, it was but temporary.

She continued to have sporadic hemoptysis of varying amounts. In between bouts, she felt fairly well other than being a bit winded, as if she couldn’t get enough air. This resulted in some limitation of physical activity, though her health otherwise seemed okay.

About a year ago, again without any warning or prodrome, she coughed up a considerable amount of blood—maybe a couple ounces.

She was a member of a large HMO, whose physicians she liked and trusted. At the medical facility, some MDs in training told her there was a chance she could exanguinate or asphyxiate on her own blood. This did not fall on deaf ears.

Her pulmonologist tried to reassure her, and initially refused Laura’s request for a referral to a pulmonary surgeon.

Laura was nothing if not persistent, in this as well as other matters. She insisted on being referred. “He’s not going to agree to operate on you,” her pulmonologist said. “I know that.”
“Let me see him anyway,” said Laura.

Finally, reluctantly, the pulmonologist agreed, shaking her head on the way out.

The surgeon said that surgery to remove the diseased part of her lung would be potentially curative, but also fraught with some risk and, as the pulmonologist had predicted, did not advise or urge surgery. In fact, he told Laura that most patients he operated on had worse symptoms. He essentially told Laura to wait until she got worse.

This was unacceptable to Laura. She told him she wasn’t leaving until he agreed to perform the surgery. If she died during surgery, that was meant to be. She didn’t intend to live as she had, with the constant worry that, next time, the hemoptysis might be fatal (a possibility that the surgeon acknowledged).

He glanced at the clock in the room. “I’ve got other patients waiting,” he said.

“All you have to do is schedule the surgery,” Laura said. “Then I’ll go.”

Realizing her resolve, he acquiesced.

It was not an easy surgery. Rather than one large incision, Laura had a number of small incisions. Her recovery, while prolonged and at times painful and uncomfortable, was quicker than that of many patients because of her healthy lifestyle and otherwise good health.

She considers herself finally cured.

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A long time ago another woman, with a different chronic (twelve-year) bleeding problem, in a similar persistent frame of mind, sought healing by touching the garment of Jesus (Matt. 9:20).

Her persistence and faith were rewarded. Instantly, unlike the case with Laura. But that was a different time, place, and circumstance.

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The adage: “The squeaky wheel gets the grease” continues to be apt to this day.

It is well to remember one of the things Ben Franklin said, “Energy and persistence conquer all things.”
Nothing In My Hands

By Del Starr, All Rights Reserved, Submitted May 20, 2015

INTRODUCTION

"I'm not being judgmental, your own words condemn you!"

A tear slid down Dianne's cheek as she reread the all-too-common words one more time.

Dianne had been a member of the Seventh-day Adventist internet forum for about four years, and though words similar to this were spoken often to her, she never escaped feeling the pain.

Dianne had come to trust upon Jesus wholly for her salvation in Christ. She held on to promises given her by the Bible, which had become her favorite book. The forum provided opportunities to share her love of the Lord and interact with other believers, now that her health had deteriorated to the point that she was nearly housebound.

The other person surely did not know what Dianne’s life had been. He didn’t realize how far she had come to the Lord. In his eyes, Dianne was condemned to hell because she did not believe that there was anything that she must do or believe to be saved except to believe that Jesus had died for her and to trust in Him.

A favorite passage frequently rang through Dianne’s head:

"Nothing in my hands I bring,
Strictly to Thy cross I cling."

(From “Rock of Ages,” by Augustus Toplady)

Chapter 1, Born Backwards

A light drizzle fell that early May morning, as the car sped down the Oregon mountainside to the hospital. George’s daughter-in-law, Grace, had gone into labor and he was intent upon maneuvering the vehicle as rapidly as possible through the crooked turns. Just a moment more. There it was ahead of him now. George breathed a sigh of relief as he pulled alongside the curb at the hospital.

Attendants rushed to Grace’s side and ushered her into the hospital where she spent the next 23 hours in hard labor. Anesthetic finally became necessary as it was obvious that the baby was going to need assistance to enter the world.

When Grace awakened from the anesthetic a tiny baby girl was placed in her arms and together they fell asleep once more. Ten days later Grace and her daughter, Dianne, were allowed to return home.

Home? Well, it was the closest thing they had to home. Grace was living with her now ex-husband’s parents, George and Ruth, who had sent for her and taken her into their home when Grace’s husband, Donald, had abandoned her in California.

The baby was a fretful child. Many nights Grace walked the floor with Dianne as she cried through a bout of colic. Grandpa George seemed to have rapport with the baby for sometimes be would get up in the night and take Dianne
from Grace and cuddle her close to him. With a whimper, Dianne would snuggle against him and go to sleep.

When Dianne was three months old George and Ruth moved their family, which now consisted of their youngest daughter Lorraine, age 13, and Grace and Dianne from the mountains of north central Oregon to the valley of southern Oregon. Here they purchased a few acres and began building a home, using some savings bonds that belonged to Lorraine to finance building the house. The first few months they lived in a tent on the property but the weather was good and it seemed more like a camping trip than a necessary home situation.

When the new home was nearly ready for habitation, George decided that it would be better to sell it and build another. This way he would be able to replace Lorraine’s savings bonds and have capital to finance them until he could get established. So the family continued to live in the tent for a few more months until the second home was built. There was indeed rejoicing on that day when George, Ruth, Lorraine, Grace, and Dianne walked into their new home and began to arrange their furniture and set up their own bedrooms.

World War II had its grip on the world and linoleum was impossible to obtain. Carpeting was unheard of and so it was decided that the living room floor should be painted.

George had built a large room above the main house where Ruth could have her sewing machine and her books by Ellen G. White that she loved so much. She had a bed where she could take a midafternoon nap if she desired and it was to that large room that George sent Ruth, Lorraine, Grace, and Dianne on the night that he decided to paint the living room floor.

About two o’clock in the morning he finished his project, stood back and looked at it, and determined that he was going to wake up Ruth so that she would be able to see the finished product.

Ruth came down the stairs and stood at the kitchen door. Somewhere between humor and horror, Ruth managed to blurt out, “OH, GEORGE!” For all over the floor George had placed a design of letters, numbers and figures in the gaudiest fashion. George, of course, thought that he had accomplished more than just painting the floor and had given it some character to decorate the home. It was a couple of years before linoleum could be purchased to cover the floor and ten years and a new home later, Grace and Dianne returned to the old home, pulled back the linoleum, and took pictures of George’s handiwork. It was a fond memory for all.

Times were slender but not rough for the family. Ruth grew a garden and canned, George built houses on contract labor, Lorraine attended the Seventh-day Adventist school, and Grace cared for little Dianne, who basked in the attention of them all.

Grace had met Dianne’s father, Donald, when she was a young teacher. She had gone to the town where George and Ruth lived, and lived in their home while she taught school. Donald was in the Army but Ruth saw Grace as a nice young Christian SDA girl and when Donald came home on leave, she encouraged a romance between Donald and Grace.

Donald and Grace were married and Grace accompanied Donald to New Jersey where Donald was stationed. Grace was so proud of her soldier husband and with pride she would hang out his uniforms on the line to dry so that all the neighbors would know that she was married to a soldier. The year was 1944 and Donald had answered his country’s call to service by enlisting.

When Grace was about three months pregnant with Dianne, Donald was transferred to California. In the town of Watts, he found a USO club where he told Grace to stay while he conducted some military business. Grace waited and waited. Morning turned into afternoon and afternoon into evening and Grace still waited. It was time to close the USO club for the night and still Grace waited.
The director of the USO club suggested that Grace accompany him and his wife to their home for the night and Grace thankfully accepted. The night turned out to be several weeks as Donald did not come back for Grace. He had taken their car and all of Grace’s clothing and personal belongings and disappeared.

Grace was fraught with frustration as she anticipated her future. She had no way to earn a living since it would only be a few short months until her baby was born, and her family was far from even having enough money to be comfortable. They lived in Washington State and Grace did not want to call them either to ask them for financial help which they could not afford or to let them know that she had been abandoned and was now alone in a strange town.

The USO club director, Andy, finally insisted that Grace call Donald’s parents and let them know of her circumstances. George was quite worried and upset and called Donald’s commanding officer. He learned that Donald was fine and completing his tour of duty. George requested that Donald call him.

Both George and Donald’s commanding officer insisted that Donald return the car to Grace, and George sent Grace some money so that she could drive back to the mountain home of George and Ruth. It was a long, hard trip for Grace but finally she arrived where George and Ruth embraced her and took her in as their own daughter. Grace began to call George and Ruth “Mommy” and “Daddy” just as did their other children. They loved Grace and she loved them.

Now they were all living in the valley of southern Oregon and life was getting better and easier. Little Dianne grew and was a healthy and robust child. She had a sweet temperament and the family doted on her.

However, Grace knew that it was time for her to become self-sufficient.

Grace had not completed her teaching certificate before she began to teach school and now George offered to send her to Walla Walla College to continue her courses so that she would once again be able to teach school.

Little Dianne stayed with George and Ruth while Grace attended school but when Grace received her first call to teach again at Klamath Falls, Oregon, Dianne went with her. Dianne was nearly four years old by now and enjoyed being in the school with her Mommy.

Klamath Falls was a small Indian reservation town and it was safe for Dianne to wander about by herself. Many times she would attend school with the rest of the kids, sitting at a desk and pretending to do her schoolwork but at other times she was cared for in the home of an older lady whom Dianne called Grandma VanTress.

Elder Adriel Chilson was the pastor at Klamath Falls and he and his lovely wife, Wini, a great-granddaughter of Ellen White, became fast friends with Grace and little Dianne and many times would invite them to the Chilson home to eat with their family. Dianne began calling them Uncle Adriel and Aunt Win.

Klamath Falls was cold during the winter, with lots of snow. It got deep that year, coming up to the level of the merry-go-round at the school. When it was time to go to the store for groceries, Grace would bundle Dianne up and put her on a sled, pulling her behind her to the store.

Dianne recalled that year not too long ago. She remembered her dog, Barney, the toboggan rides down the hill by the school, and the nights when she and her mother would sit on the woodpile out back of the school where they had an apartment, looking at the stars. She recalled telling her mother that someday she wanted to see a real live Indian. She did not recognize that she was playing with Indian children every day.

One incident in particular, Dianne remembers with hilarity. Grace had purchased, about a week before, some underwear for Dianne. They were the kind where the tee shirt buttons into the panties to keep them from separating. One morning Dianne called out to Grace, “Mommy, my underwear has holes in it.” Grace was horrified! They were brand new. They couldn’t have holes in them! She insisted to Dianne that they did NOT have holes in them but Dianne was insistent that they DID have holes in them. Grace asked, “What holes are there, Dianne?” Dianne
meekly said, “Buttonholes.”

Grace was concerned about trying to teach school and take care of a young child and when the year was over, she returned to the valley of southern Oregon to George and Ruth’s home, where she shared her concerns. The family decided that perhaps it would be better for Grace to consider baby-sitting at home until Dianne was old enough that Grace would not have to worry so much about her while she was teaching. George built a small home for Grace and Dianne on his property, very near his own home.

Dianne’s dog, Barney, also moved into the home. In the backyard was a huge weeping willow tree under whose branches Dianne would play Once again life was good and Dianne was secure with her family surrounding her.

In the garage of Grace and Dianne’s new home, George set up a ping pong table and very often the members of the church would get together and play games. At George’s house was an area in which to play horse shoes, they played “Rook,” and sometimes would go to Grace and Dianne’s where they would play ping pong.

Barney enjoyed having company. He would sit on the steps that led into the garage and watch the ball go back and forth between the players, but some people would tease Barney and poke sticks at him. One night he was nervous as the game was being played. One of the men walked up from behind him and Barney did not know he was there. When he reached out to touch Barney, Barney whirled around and bit him on the band. Not a word was said but the next morning when Dianne got up she no longer had a dog

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Grace and Dianne lived in the little house for about two years but Grace could not earn enough money by babysitting to support herself and Dianne and soon realized that she needed to return to teaching. Once more George provided the money for Grace’s tuition while Dianne stayed with Grace and Ruth in their home.

George and Ruth’s daughter, Lorraine, was now eighteen years old and on her way to becoming a teacher herself. Ruth had been a teacher and encouraged Lorraine. Dianne loved Lorraine and followed her everywhere Lorraine would allow. To this very day Lorraine is Dianne’s ideal.

George and Ruth decided that it was time to find a different piece of property. Where once they had been living in the country, the town had built up around them and they had built several homes on their own property. The ten acres now had two streets with homes on both sides.

They purchased five acres about six miles from town and again began building their own home. It was a large, airy home with a beautiful setting and Dianne had her own bedroom now.

Lorraine married about this time and Dianne was alone with George and Ruth. They were so good to her. They were honest and fair and instilled good values in Dianne. Christ was very important in the home, and Friday nights would find the little family in the living room playing Christian records and reading or just talking. Sabbath mornings they were always in church. Usually George and Ruth would either have company for Sabbath dinner or would be guests in other homes. The church family was very strong and every member of the family felt a part of it.

Dianne began attending the local SDA school, where she was an excellent student and was well-liked by the teachers. Her mother was teaching school on the coast of Oregon and would come home as school leaves would allow but Dianne was secure in her grandparents’ home.

When Dianne was twelve, George and Ruth decided that Grace either needed to take Dianne with her or they needed to make a permanent arrangement for Dianne’s care. They proposed to Grace that either she take responsibility for Dianne or let George and Ruth adopt her. Grace opted to take Dianne with her to her next teaching assignment. Dianne was now in the sixth grade.
Sharing is caring!
A Rock and a Hard Place

Photo by Cheryl Morrow, Paris, Ontario; submitted 5-20-2015

“He makes my feet like hinds’ feet, and sets me upon my high places” Psalm 18:33, NASB.

Sometimes, all you have to stand on is trust.