LET’S MOVE!
FIGHTING CHILDHOOD OBESITY WITH FUN AND GAMES
(find the story on page 12)
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COVER PHOTO » A grandfather enjoys playing soccer at the park with his son and grandson. | Photo by Monkey Business Images/Dreamstime.com

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DECEMBER 07 2013
starting at 5:00pm
ATLANTA, GA
Springfield Baptist Church
1877 Iris Drive SE
Conyers, GA

FESTIVAL OF PRAISE
Fellowship through music, praise, worship, and honoring ministry heroes

ATLANTA ROMANIAN CHOIR
GEORGIA-CUMBERLAND ACADEMY’S SINFONIETTA
KOREAN CHOIR
ATLANTA WEST END CHOIR
ATLANTA ADVENTIST ACADEMY’S ADORAMUS
ATLANTA HISPANIC CHOIR
GREATER ATLANTA ADVENTIST ACADEMY CONCERT CHOIR
CHILDREN OF GOD CHOIR
ATLANTA CARIBBEAN CHOIR & MORE!

GUEST SPEAKER
DAN JACKSON
North American Division President

MUSICIANS
FESTIVAL MASS CHOIR
with director Jarrett Roseborough

PRESENTED BY THE GEORGIA-CUMBERLAND & SOUTH ATLANTIC CONFERENCES
Honey bees are social insects, living together in large, well-organized family groups. In the hive, individual bees specialize in communication, nest construction, environmental control, defense, food collection and storage, and raising the young. So specialized are their roles that an individual bee cannot survive without the support of the colony.

In 1876, Ellen White had a dream in which she saw two beehives—one in Oakland and one in San Francisco—where new churches had just been established. When she visited again 24 years later, she found the San Francisco church “crowded to its utmost capacity” and thought, The Lord has fulfilled His word. How did that happen?

In 1906 she wrote, “During the past few years, the ‘beehive’ in San Francisco has been indeed a busy one. Many lines of Christian effort have been carried forward…. These included visiting the sick and destitute, finding homes for orphans, and work for the unemployed; nursing the sick, and teaching the truth from house to house; the distribution of literature, and the conducting of classes on healthful living and the care of the sick. A school for the children has been conducted in the basement of the Laguna Street meeting-house. For a time a working men’s home and medical mission was maintained. On Market Street, near the city hall, there were treatment rooms, operated as a branch of the St. Helena Sanitarium. In the same locality was a health food store. Nearer the center of the city, not far from the Call building, was conducted a vegetarian cafe, which was open six days in the week, and entirely closed on the Sabbath. Along the water front, ship mission work was carried on. At various times our ministers conducted meetings in large halls in the city. Thus the warning message was given by many” (Review and Herald, July 5).

So today, every church in Georgia-Cumberland is meant to be a beehive of mission activity. The strategies you will read about here to reach our communities are varied, practical, and relevant. More importantly, every member is needed, valued, and utilized. Thank you! Together, we are growing disciples through shared leadership.

Ed Wright is president of the Georgia-Cumberland Conference
“Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God” (I Cor. 10:31, NKJV).

Our annual conference staff Christmas event included a stop at the infamous Cheesecake Factory in Atlanta, Ga. As we pored over the menu, I was really pleased with all of the attractive and enticing vegetarian entrees. It was during this portion of our meal, while waiting for our next course, that we began to think about nutritious and wholesome options.

However, it was the dessert choices that were the most challenging. They included a variety of cheesecakes including Oreo® Dream Extreme Cheesecake, Pumpkin Pecan Cheesecake, and Dulce de Leche Caramel Cheesecake.

Life is full of temptations similar to the ones we struggled with at the Cheesecake Factory. It is simply the choices we make, big or little, that impact our lives. Should we eat the cheesecake and then go for a five-mile hike? Do we indulge at potluck and then sleep all Sabbath afternoon? God says in 1 Corinthians that whatever we do—and whatever we choose to eat—should give glory to God.

It is a healthy reminder that our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit, and we have been bought at a price (I Cor. 6:19-20).

Mitch Hazekamp is director of the Stewardship/Trust Services Department

FINANCIAL REPORT

The figures below provide an overview of conference finances as of Sept. 30, 2013. Every member who is cooperating with God in the faithful stewardship of tithes and offerings makes our ministry and outreach possible. Thank you for your faithfulness!

<table>
<thead>
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<th>2013 (39 weeks)</th>
<th>2012 (39 weeks)</th>
<th>Gain/Loss</th>
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Recently U.S. education has focused on the term Common Core. It refers to a set of national education standards embraced by 45 states, including the three states of the Georgia-Cumberland Conference: Georgia, Tennessee, and North Carolina.

Common Core standards were developed to better prepare American students for success in college and the workplace. They were also established to create a national standard. This allows students who move from one state to another to maintain a similar curriculum. These standards were written by a group of business experts and educators working together.

Currently, the nation adheres to Common Core standards in language arts (kindergarten through twelfth grade) and in math at various grade levels.

Modern Common Core standards are currently met in the Seventh-day Adventist education system, as well. Adventist education has held common national standards for decades because all curriculum is driven by the North American Division Office of Education. Any deviation requires permission from the local conference.

Adventist education requires two additional standards: physical vitality via our unique health message and the evangelizing of our children. As a result, we view our standards as robust when compared to Common Core. The mental, physical, and spiritual standards established by inspiration are our primary objectives irrespective of those developed by the U.S. Department of Education, the National Governors Association, or the Council of Chief State School Officers.

In chapter 35 of her book Education, Ellen White wrote, “Heaven is a school; its field of study, the universe; its teacher, the Infinite One” (p. 301). The educators of the Georgia-Cumberland Conference recognize the role of preparing youth for such a school and consider our labor as sacred.

As Georgia-Cumberland schools work with the framework of Common Core, know that the acronym GCC also represents God’s Common Core.

Kevin Kossick is vice president of education
Students in Adventist schools score **above** the national average* in all subjects for all grade levels.

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**FESTIVAL**

**JANUARY 23-24**

GEORGIA-CUMBERLAND ACADEMY

CALHOUN, GA

Students (including those who are home-schooled) who play in band (grades 5-8) or who play a string instrument (grades 5-10) are invited to participate in the festival. Register and order music by Dec. 2.

For more information:
visit gccsda.com/events/33502
or call 800-567-1844, ext 371.

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Students in Adventist schools score **above** the national average* in all subjects for all grade levels.

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*After controlling for ability

Research provided by Cognitive Genesis
Flames engulfed the Griffin Hilltop Church (Griffin, Ga.) early Sunday morning, Sept. 22, 2013. The building is a total loss.

According to WKEU Radio–The Rock–88.9 FM/1450 AM–Griffin, Georgia:

“When firefighters arrived, they found flames coming through the roof of the structure. Firefighters were on the scene for several hours keeping the blaze from spreading. Fire Chief Tommy Jones said that there were no injuries, and no firefighters were injured in the incident. A major concern was getting water to the structure that sits several hundred feet from the roadway on top of a hill.”

Dan Hall, pastor of the Griffin Church, said the church had been in this location for the past five years. The church is now left to decide where to go from here. In the meantime, neighbors in the community have offered assistance.

“Three local congregations have offered us the use of their facilities,” Hall said. “All three offers were very generous. We have been meeting at the First Baptist Church in Griffin. They have allowed us to use their chapel for the month of October. We will be switching churches in November and have two other churches that have offered their facility for us to use for the next two months. These are the two busiest months of the year, so they are doing a lot to offer those months for us to use until we get into our own place.”

continued on page 20 [see FIRE]
Third and fourth graders at Savannah Adventist Christian School (Savannah, Ga.) excitedly changed into work clothes and garden gloves on Sept. 20, eager to work outside in their butterfly garden. Each student was able to dig a hole and plant one specially selected nectar or host plant in the garden planted by last year’s class outside their classroom windows. With help from an adult, students added the right amount of soil amendment and water.

The garden has host plants for Gulf Fritillary, Monarch, and Swallowtail butterflies. Students have also placed in the area a small dish of water, stones, and fruit to attract Emperors, Buckeyes, and more.

The garden has provided easy opportunity for third-graders and fourth-graders to view several species of butterfly and numerous Ruby-throated hummingbirds and even to observe a Gulf Fritillary laying eggs on the passion vine that last year’s class planted. The eggs hatched into tiny orange and black caterpillars, and Esther Martinez, principal and teacher, brought several inside for students to observe. Martinez hopes this year’s students will be able to experience the miraculous process of metamorphosis.

The benefits of the garden project have extended beyond just one classroom. Students from all three of the school’s early childhood wings have visited the caterpillars in the classroom and have walked through the garden, enjoying God’s book of nature.
The Southern Union Executive Committee recently voted to discontinue Home Health Education Service (HHES) effective Dec. 31, 2013. HHES provided support, literature, and other materials to literature evangelists.

The Georgia-Cumberland Conference has a strong history and support of literature evangelism. Because of this support, the conference executive committee voted to seek ways to efficiently support the publishing work that currently exists within the current level of funding.

Tim Leffew, publishing director, said he is frequently asked why, in this world of e-books, the Internet, and electronic communication, do we continue to sell books door to door?

“First, it is still an effective means of reaching people,” Leffew said. “Most people will not come to us to find out what we believe. If they are going to be reached for the kingdom, someone is going to have to go to them. This year, the literature evangelists are averaging almost a baptism per week from contacts. Second, we believe in the promises Ellen White gave on final events. When the world tries to silence our message, it will be impossible to collect the millions of books placed in people’s homes. We are told that when the very events written about are coming to pass, people will reach for those Seventh-day Adventist books, and a great multitude will take their stand for truth.”

Three different branches make up the Publishing Department. The first is Frontline Magabook Ministries, a program where students go where the people are—knocking on doors, standing at gas pumps, or walking through parking lots. Each year, more than 100 students are involved in this ministry and have the double blessing of experiencing evangelism firsthand and helping fund their Christian education.

Second is the Light America or Spanish language program. About 25-30 college-aged students come for a year from various countries in South and Central America and even from within the United States to work as Bible workers/literature evangelists, giving group and individual Bible studies and reaching people with literature.

The third area involves full-time literature evangelists. These 20-25 individuals have dedicated themselves to the literature ministry as their life work, taking literature to the homes of people in our conference.

Leffew said, “We appreciate your prayers during this transition time as we continue this great ministry.”
Members of the Calhoun Church (Calhoun, Ga.) hosted a birthday for member Jerline Porch on Oct. 6.

Ninety-nine years is a long lifetime—and all of it has been lived in Gordon County. Jerline was born to Jesse Washington Mann and Ida Shepherd Mann on Oct. 11, 1914. As the seventh of 12 children, her life provided constant interest.

Reared on a farm, working in the fields, she learned good work ethics and a labor-intensive life. She started teaching other students before she completed seventh grade, and as an adult, “a committee of three came to me requesting that I restart a school for Black children in Sonoraville that closed down 50 years previously.” She did—with no degree. She often performed nursing duties such as helping deliver babies and caring for the sick. She still gets tears in her eyes when speaking of a baby sister and a brother who had typhoid fever.

“I also operated on cats and chickens,” she said, chuckling.

Again, no degree for her nursing smarts. Over the years, she even worked as a truck driver.

Through it all, she sang songs like “Amazing Grace” and other “back yonder” songs, she said.

“We sang in the field while chopping cotton.”

Singing runs in her family. She still sings around the house and recently sang at church for a women’s ministries program. She notes kin as outstanding singers.

“A cousin of my Papa, Roland Hayes, was well-known, the world’s highest paid tenor in the 1920s. And Papa’s brother was a good baritone.”

As a young woman of 20, she met a young man of 22, Horace Porch.

“I didn’t invite him to come visit, but he kept coming,” she said.

His insistence paid off, and a year later they married, becoming parents to four children, with two sons still surviving. Again, tears fill her eyes whenever speaking of her late husband and the loss of their two children.

“He could build anything from the ground up,” she said of Horace. She lost him “after 48 years, two months, and three days.”

Regardless of her many years, her progeny is small: one granddaughter, one grandson. No greats or great-greats.

continued on page 19 [see PORCH]
Let’s Move! is a national initiative to encourage and teach kids to be active and to create opportunities for families to move together.

Studies show that physical activity, in combination with healthful eating, is essential in helping prevent many chronic diseases including heart disease, cancer, elevated blood pressure and blood sugar, asthma, and depression. Being physically active helps control weight, build lean muscle, promote strong bones, and develop healthy joints in children.

According to the national Active Lifestyle challenge, kids and teens need 60 minutes of play with moderate to vigorous activity every day to grow up to a healthy weight. It is estimated that only one-third of high school students get the recommended levels of physical activity. On the contrary, kids ages 8 to 18 spend an average of 7.5 hours a day using entertainment media, such as TV, computers, cell phones, and video games.

To help turn the tide on the culture of inactivity, the North American Division sets aside one Sunday each September as Let’s Move Day. It’s an opportunity for Adventists to collectively promote a healthy lifestyle in their communities, and several groups from around the Georgia-Cumberland Conference coordinated various events, from 5k races to volleyball games to health fairs.

ANDREWS, NC
The Andrews Church hosted its Let’s Move Day at the Andrews Recreation Park. Thirty-eight children participated in making their way through the 12-station circuit, which included activities like baseball, basketball, volleyball, golf, Frisbee golf, a foot race, and ladder toss. For those who completed all activities, the final station was a bounce house. Parents were given information about childhood obesity along with ideas and resources for raising healthy kids.

ATLANTA, GA
Atlanta North Hispanic Church held a 5K and a children’s 1-mile run, along with soccer and volleyball. About 106 attendees enjoyed the day.
BENTON, TN

The second annual Let’s Move! Kids Fun Day was held at the Polk County Fairgrounds in Benton, Tenn. Fifty-two children, ages 4 to 14, along with their parents, flooded the field behind the show barn and enjoyed many different physical activities. Around the open field were scattered 13 activity stations, including Frisbee, hula hoop, stretching exercises, soccer, run/walk, stretch ball, 50-yard dash, grip strength testing, gardening, health education, noodle tag, and the very popular inflatable obstacle course. At the end of the course was a smoothie bike, run solely by “pedal power.” The pedal power produced fresh fruit smoothies, and other snacks such as apples, granola bars, popcorn, dried fruit, and bottled water were offered. Every child measured their steps during the afternoon with a pedometer that they took home with them, and after completing the course, each received an Olympic-style medal. The Let’s Move! event was free to the public and sponsored by local businesses in cooperation with Polk County Coordinated School Health and the Benton Seventh-day Adventist Church. The goal was to show the fun side of being active and fit by promoting healthier lifestyle choices.

BLAIRSVILLE, GA

The Blairsville Church used its small congregation to engage the Blairsville community in a successful event. More than 200 people and approximately 70 children participated in the nine sections, which included stretching, riding a stationary bike, jumping rope, a shuttle run, softball, lacrosse, and more! The park was full of energy and excitement. Lamar Paris, Union County commissioner, proclaimed Sept. 22 as the official Let’s Move Day for the entire county. Young Harris College’s athletic department provided their skill and enthusiasm as students from the cheer leading squad and the hardball, softball, cross country, soccer, basketball, and lacrosse teams helped make the day a success.

CLEVELAND, TN

Bowman Hills Church invited members to join the pastoral staff on a hike starting at the Ocoee Whitewater Center. Three hikes were formed. One group stayed on the handicap-accessible trails surrounding the center, some hiked the Bear Paw Loop Trail, and for those seeking more of a challenge, another group went up Old Copper Road. Fourteen hikers, from toddlers to seniors, joined in the fun.
CONYERS, GA
About 40 people participated in the Conyers Church 5K run/walk. The race ended at the church, where fruit and water were provided and an award ceremony was conducted. Children had fun in a bouncy house while adults appreciated the presence of LA Fitness and the on-site chiropractor. The church’s Sabbath School Department sponsored a picnic and provided activities, such as volleyball and games for the children.

DUNLAP, TN
The Dunlap Church and Hispanic Mission Group held a joint event at Community Hall. About 35 to 40 people took part in health tests (including blood pressure, glucose tolerance, cholesterol, and lung capacity) plus counsel on the eight natural remedies and on healthy food.

GRAYSVILLE, TN
In honor of Let’s Move Day, the Graysville Church held two races: a 5K run and an 80-meter dash. Prizes were awarded to first, second, and third place. Eleven people participated in the event; five of them met the 5K goal.

GREENEVILLE, TN
Members of the Greeneville Church rented the middle school track and met there to walk and fellowship. The 45 participants recorded about 158 miles, and additional miles were logged by people who walked at home that day.

KNOXVILLE, TN
On Let’s Move Day, the Knoxville First Church partnered with the North Knoxville Church to walk the Sterchi Hills Greenway. Kathy Reid, health and temperance leader at North Knoxville, guided the walk. Ten members from the church’s walking club participated, and everyone walked two miles. North Knoxville members also distributed free bottled water and copies of Steps to Christ at the Tommy Schumpert Park.

LAKEVIEW, GA
Lakeview Church’s second annual Back to Health Fun Run & Health Expo kicked off the Let’s Move Week in Powder Springs, Ga. The fun run consisted of a 5K and a 1-mile race. Nearly 20 kids participated and completed the 1-mile race and about 41 ran the 5K. A
health expo followed the race and featured local chiropractor professionals, fitness centers, the local county’s health department, and the NEWSTART program hosted by the church’s health ministry team. Healthy fruit smoothies were provided while the children jumped to their hearts’ content in the jumpy house. They also distributed 73 bags of literature including: Who Are the Adventists?, Steps to Christ, and a few health pamphlets.

LENOIR CITY, TN
More than 700 kids, parents, volunteers, and local university athletes crowded a park in Lenoir City, Tenn., to experience the fun of being active. The third annual Let’s Move Day event was made up of 25 activity stations featuring a variety of sports, physical activities, and lifestyle choices. Thousands of dollars’ worth of giveaways were also up for grabs, like a $1,500 playground set and eight bicycles and helmets. More than 50 University of Tennessee athletes were among the attendees, including the entire women's softball team, which recently competed in the NCAA championships. UT athletes helped kids try out a variety of sports—tennis, rowing, basketball, and softball—and the university’s track and field stars helped with a shuttle run by timing children and cheering them on. Other activities included camping, hiking and fishing, an inflatable climbing tower, obstacle course, flexibility exercises, Operation Bootcamp workout, disc golf, a dunking booth, and gymnastics with Southern Adventist University’s Gym Masters. The local 4-H club provided animals, including a beehive, while a farmer distributed free tomatoes and begonia plants donated by a local nursery.

Key partners for this year’s event were Fort Loudoun Medical Center, the Loudon County Health Improvement Council, the Loudon County and Lenoir City local school systems, the Lenoir City Parks and Recreation Department, and a number of businesses and organizations interested in tackling the problem of childhood obesity. A new partner, the Knoxville Area Childhood Obesity Coalition, sponsored a bike rodeo, and the Epilepsy Foundation and Lenoir City Schools’ Family Resource Center contributed free helmets for participants. The Loudon County Health Improvement Council used the event to help launch its new obesity prevention initiative, PLAY Loudon. The task force was started earlier this year as a community-driven initiative to improve the health of local residents and is being co-chaired by the health ministries leader of the Lenoir City Seventh-day Adventist Church.

OGLETHORPE, GA
The second annual Let’s Move Day for the Oglethorpe community was an event where family and friends could come be active. Held at the Oglethorpe City Park, there were 24 activity stations with jump rope, shuttle run, soccer kick, basketball shoot, and more. About 50 kids and their parents enjoyed the day’s activities and the prize drawings at the end. In addition, the stations were manned by about 50 volunteers from six churches and two community organizations.
MIRACLES IN CUBA
by BJ Boles, former pastor of the Augusta First Church | photos contributed

An evangelistic team from the Georgia-Cumberland Conference led by Neftaly Ortiz, Hispanic evangelism coordinator, set out for Cuba on July 10 to conduct meetings. Simultaneously, Tropical Storm Chantal was brewing in the Atlantic and threatening to become a hurricane. The projected course of the storm had it headed straight for the location where the group would be—Holguin, Cuba. The team of eight individuals prayed earnestly regarding the storm, that it not delay or cancel the trip. To God’s glory, the storm dissipated and did not make landfall. The evangelistic team arrived on schedule, and the evangelistic meetings occurred without disruption. This would be the first of many miracles God would work in Cuba over the next two weeks.

The country of Cuba is its own union within the structure of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. According to the current Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook, at the end of 2012, the Cuba Union Conference had 302 churches and a church membership of 32,963. Cuba itself has a little over 11 million inhabitants, meaning a ratio of one Adventist for every 340 people. The union is comprised of three conferences—Central, East, and West—and one mission, Eastern. The evangelistic team went to the East Cuba Conference, which encompasses 82 churches and 9,124 members. The plan was to conduct six simultaneous meetings in Las Tunas, Cañada de Melones, Potrerillo, Banes, Moa, and Cueto. These locations were specifically chosen in order to evangelize smaller, more rural locations outside the urban area of the regional capital of Holguin.

The beautiful people of Cuba, while poor, are content with what they have and do not

continued on page 24 [see CUBA]
Several middle school students from Collegedale Adventist Middle School (CAMS) recently helped lead the week of prayer for more than 120 third through fifth graders at A. W. Spalding Elementary School. The CAMS students were involved at a much deeper level than just giving a scripture reading or an opening prayer; they shared how to grow in Jesus from stories in the Bible and their own personal testimonies. And they boldly shared the importance of a saving relationship with Jesus in their lives.

When young people are trained to speak fearlessly for Jesus to their peers, the impact is life changing. Ellen White penned, “With such an army of workers as our youth, rightly trained, might furnish, how soon the message of a crucified, risen, and soon-coming Saviour might be carried to the whole world! How soon might the end come—the end of suffering and sorrow and sin!” (Education, p. 271).

Under the mentorship and training of LeClare Litchfield, retired pastor, these young people made themselves available to be used by the Holy Spirit in order to minister to other young people.

To end the week of prayer, the CAMS students shared a list of 12 ways to grow one’s relationship with Jesus:

1. Make a decision to grow in Jesus and talk to God about it.
2. Find a spiritual mentor to talk to about your devotions.
3. Find a friend to talk about your devotions.
4. Choose a time daily.
5. Choose a place.
6. Pray and read.
7. Listen and “be still.”
9. Mark your Bible.
10. Read Philippians and John.
11. Get some 3x5 cards and write your thoughts and prayer requests.
12. Make it a habit for life. Never give up. Always remember Jesus!

These ways to grow are just as applicable for teens and adults as they are for elementary students. Let’s seek Jesus first in all that we do!
Carole Verrill has been active in ministry since the age of 10, when her pastor’s wife saw potential in her and asked her to lead out in one of the Sabbath school divisions.

“She just saw a love for children in me, even though I was just a child myself,” Verrill said. “She encouraged me to get involved in leading and teaching in the cradle roll division in our church. And I started there because she had faith in me, and I kept on ministering, and I found out I just loved it and was passionate about it.”

Because of her love for children and teaching, she majored in elementary education at Atlantic Union College. While attending the Florida Hospital Church, Verrill’s husband, Tom, saw they had an opening for a children’s minister and encouraged her to apply.

“Carole has always had a passion for ministry in families and children. It’s where her heart is,” he said. “When the opportunity opened, her life seemed to [have been] leading up to all they were looking for. It seemed to fit who she is and what she’s about.”

God opened those doors, and she had the opportunity to serve as pastor at the Florida Hospital Church for three years before moving to the Collegedale Church, where she has served for the past five years.

On Sept. 14, friends, family, and conference officials gathered at the Collegedale Church for her commissioning.

“It’s an honor and I take this like an affirmation hug from God—just a real big hug from Him,” Verrill said. “I’m thankful He’s allowed me to serve in this way, and I hope to continue to serve in this way. It’s been just a blessing.”
On Sept. 14, the Cleveland First Hispanic Company (Cleveland, Tenn.) held an inauguration service for its Adventurer club.

The church started the club as a way to reach out to community children following this summer’s Vacation Bible School.

“I’ve always liked hats since I was a little girl,” she said.

Though several of her close relatives have lived well into their nineties, Jerline said she never thought she’d live to be 99. She notes that her heritage is Cherokee and Black on her father’s side, and Cherokee and White on her mother’s side.

When asked what she’d say to God about allowing her to have such a long life, she brightens and replies, “I’d thank Him and ask Him if I’ve done what He wanted me to do. And ask Him to forgive me for my sins.”

Jerline keeps herself busy with various hobbies. She enjoys growing flowers—roses being her favorite—and is known around Calhoun for wearing pretty chapeaus, most of which she creates herself.
Conference officials offered their condolences.

“Any time there is pain, we hurt as well,” said Ed Wright, conference president. “And we pray for God’s healing to touch those in pain at this difficult time.”

Despite the tragedy, Hall said he has seen God leading through new connections, evangelism opportunities, and even a prospective location for a new church.

“Oh the flames, God is working something new,” he said. “I would rather have a new heavens and a new earth, but since we are still here on earth, a new church can help us reach out to more people for His kingdom. That is our prayer!”
On Sept. 13, 2013, the parking lot of Jasper Adventist Christian School (Jasper, Tenn.) looked a lot like a war field from the Dark Ages. The occasion was the school’s Potato Launch. Students and parents from both the Jasper School and Cumberland Heights School (Coalmont, Tenn.) filled the parking lot, standing among launchers that looked like ancient siege weapons.

Each year, the school sets aside a day that is dedicated to allowing the students to test their creative abilities. For the Potato Launch, students built apparatus to launch a spud through the air as far as possible. They arrived at school with a variety of creations—everything from small and large slingshots to catapults, giant rubber bands, and giant trebuchets. When the launching began, some potatoes flew only a few feet, while others soared clear out of the schoolyard. One even flew backwards.

Everyone had a great time cheering for each other and watching with great anticipation to see how far the potatoes would fly. To close, each student received a small bag of Lay’s potato chips, while the winning student received a large bag. The day’s activities were enjoy by all.
I had preached evangelistic campaigns before, but my trip to the Dominican Republic this summer was the most epic campaign of my life. Not only did it give me an opportunity to share the gospel with God’s children in another country and to learn from their culture, it also allowed me to visibly see God working in my life.

Foreign evangelism presents many challenges, particularly if there is a language barrier. I am from Malawi and am not a Spanish speaker. It was amazing to see the power of the gospel changing the lives of people who did not understand my language—through the help of a translator, of course.

I learned a lot from the Dominican people. Church members there are great at organizing small groups composed of people who do not belong to the church. It’s a phenomenal practice because it builds lasting relationships between members and those joining the church. I spoke to one lady who was leading a small group in the area where I was conducting the meetings. She told me she organized a group of 10 members and gave them Bible studies. She was the only Seventh-day Adventist in the group. During the campaign, she visited the members in their homes after the evangelistic meetings for feedback. Almost all of the visitors who came to the meetings belonged to a small group of some kind.

**I went like a dog with his tail between his legs, but I came back excited like a player holding a trophy.**

By far, the most remarkable part of my trip was the opportunity to see God working in my life. While traveling there, I started to feel sorry for myself. First, I had never conducted an evangelistic campaign in another country. Second, I did not feel prepared enough
to conduct the campaign. And finally, I had never used PowerPoint in an evangelistic series. All of these concerns made me nervous, and I began to question the call to go on the trip.

Some of my fears surfaced one night when I made an appeal for people to raise their hands to accept Christ as their Savior. Not one hand went up. Everyone sat staring at me as though he or she hadn’t heard what I said. I tried other methods of invitation, but the response was the same. I closed the meetings with a prayer, all the while disgruntled and emotionally crushed. As I was meeting with people on their way out the door, an elderly lady approached me and said, “I will accept Christ tomorrow.” My translator and I tried to convince her to accept Christ that night, but she seemed unconvinced. She cooperated only enough to end our conversation, writing down her address and answering a few questions on the decision card. The following night she came and said to me, “I told you yesterday that I would accept Christ today, so I have come. I want to be baptized.” And she was. Words can’t describe the joy this lady had; her face was radiant as the “Sun of Righteousness” shined in her heart. All of my disappointments vanished.

I was also very impressed with our leader, Freddy Fuentes. I remember the day I went to him to pour out my concerns.

“Did God know before you came here that you are not fluent in speech?” he asked.

“Yes,” I answered.

“And He chose you still?” he said.

“Yes!” I said again.

“He was always there to encourage when the road got rough. When our minds were cloude...
complain. They are hungry for the Word of God. Pastors make the equivalent of only $25 a month, yet they maintain a wonderful spirit of service. The faithful church members were supportive of the meetings, giving of their time and resources. It was impressive to see the sacrifices people made to attend the meetings: walking long distances, riding for hours in the backs of crammed trucks, and getting home late at night only to be there early the next evening. In the small community of Retrete, three Adventist women invited their neighbors to the meetings in Banes, Cuba. A truck was hired to bring the group the 40 minutes each way along the bumpy roads. In the end, more than 50 were coming in the truck, and they wanted to continue studying!

The meetings were a spiritual blessing to the evangelistic team, the host churches, and all of those who came to hear the truth of Jesus. Lives were changed, people gave their hearts to the Lord, and a great revival occurred among the members. Hundreds of non-Adventist children attended Vacation Bible Schools that were held at the sites. Overall, more than 1,250 people attended the evangelistic meetings at the six locations. There were 69 baptisms during the meetings, and more than 150 precious people made decisions to be baptized.
The conference office worship room was full of smiling people for the Prison Ministries Appreciation Dinner on Aug. 25.

“More than 100 people in this conference are going into prisons virtually at their own expense,” said E.W. Dempsey, Prison Ministries Department coordinator. “That is—traveling to and from the prison, sometimes an hour or more away, and some [are going] two or three times per week. It’s a tremendous sacrifice on their part, but they love what they’re doing. They feel it’s important to reach people who are incarcerated.”

Prison ministry is not an easy calling. Many volunteers work several years just to gain access to work with the inmates and then can be turned away at any time. Many involved in the ministry use traditional methods of outreach, including Sabbath worship services, singing praise music, and Bible study, while others teach vegan cooking classes and even hold banquets.

The event was attended by about 65 volunteers and their families. Attendees enjoyed a meal and received free materials to share with prisoners, including Bibles. The volunteers were also given an opportunity to share and to ask questions, and many were given certificates of appreciation for their service.

“This conference has really encouraged me,” said Diana Halverson, from Pikeville, Tenn., who works with the Bledsoe County Correctional Facility. “It shows me that there are a lot of people trying to do the same things that I am doing. It was exciting to see how God worked today. We will never be all we were designed and meant to be unless we are doing what God wants us to do.”

Depmsey said the dinner is a small token of appreciation.

“We appreciate what these volunteers are doing to sacrifice.”
The following is the firsthand account of a woman, who has asked to remain anonymous, about God rescuing her from taking her own life. He did it through the help of a flyer advertising an upcoming meeting, The Daniel Challenge, that the Ellijay Church (Ellijay, Ga.) was hosting.

Her Story
Up until seven years ago, I lived a normal life. I had been married for 32 years to a wonderful man. We both worked hard. Life was not always on the mountaintop, and we had our share of being in the valley, but with God’s help and guidance, we overcame. We had two beautiful children and several incredible grandchildren.

Knowing how much I had disappointed my Heavenly Father was more than I could handle. I decided to end my life. ...As I sat down on the bed, my eyes focused on the piece of junk mail I had gotten out of my mailbox.

Then I was told I needed to undergo emergency surgery. After that, my life was never the same. The doctor tried several different kinds of hormone therapy, but my life never really returned back to normal.

My daughter-in-law decided she didn’t want to be a wife or a mother anymore, so my son moved back home with his 8-month-old. I raised my grandson for five years, which brought much joy into my life! Having him close helped me deal with my health problems.

Some time later, my son remarried his ex-wife, at which point she refused to let me see my grandson anymore. She said he and I were too close. I found that to be the hardest valley I had ever encountered.

I am so ashamed of the many wrong choices I made after that. I divorced my husband, and the consequences for my numerous poor decisions started catching up with me. It seemed like no matter how hard I tried, I just could not forgive myself and get my life back on track. Knowing how much I had disappointed my children, grandchildren, and, most importantly, my Heavenly Father was more than I could handle. I decided to end my life.

I made plans to go to Pigeon Forge, Tenn., and end it there. On my way out the driveway, I was impressed to get the mail. When I opened the mailbox, the only thing it contained was a brochure about a seminar. More junk mail, I thought, and threw it on the passenger’s seat.

When I arrived in Pigeon Forge, I got everything unloaded from my car and into the motel room. I threw everything on the bed and began to cry and pray, knowing this would not be easy. As I sat down on the bed, my eyes focused on the piece of junk mail I had gotten out of my mailbox earlier. The brochure looked as huge as the bed. I knew God wanted me to read it, so I picked it up and began reading.

As I read, I realized I had never heard anything like this before, and I became really interested! A church wanted to help me with my health! I went outside with the flyer in my hand and began walking up and down the river behind the motel. I prayed and asked God for His guidance.
Peace began to overtake me. I had not experienced that kind of peace in years. I knew I could not do what I had gone there to do—I had to get home and sign up for this “Daniel Challenge” program!

I am so thankful for everyone who had a hand in putting together that seminar. My life will never be the same—I am forever changed! I am most thankful to God for giving me the desire to stop at the mailbox that day to grab the “junk mail” it contained!

The Rest of the Story
One evening during The Daniel Challenge, an elder noticed a young man with fishing gear walking toward the small lake that is nestled in the valley on the church property. Understandably, the lake is not open for public use, so the elder went to let the youth know he shouldn’t be there. As the elder approached him, he found out he was actually the son of one of the people attending the meetings. The elder told him he was welcome to fish but would appreciate him releasing anything he caught.

The young man had good success with his angling, so the next night, he brought a friend. When the elder saw this, his first response was to explain that he had given permission for the one but not both. Instead, he simply went over and asked how things were going. They were both doing well and had caught a couple of large fish.

Following that night’s meeting, the participants went down to walk around the lake for a few minutes, as they did each evening. As the lady who shared her story about “a foiled trip to Pigeon Forge” was walking by the two youth fishing, she recognized the one young man’s friend. He was none other than her grandson, whom she had raised in her own home. He was the best friend of the son of one of the other attendees. She had not seen him for several years, but because of the great God we serve, she was able to visit with him three times throughout the rest of the week.

“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope” (Jer. 29:11, NKJV).
Several churches have taken hold of the God in Shoes ministry. The beauty of the outreach is that it follows Jesus’ method exactly by meeting people’s needs and connecting with them as someone seeking their good.

HEFLIN, AL :: On Aug. 4, 2013, the Vise Grove Mission Group hosted a God in Shoes event at the Pleasant Grove Elementary School. This community is the poorest in the county. Though the church served the community in many different ways during the five-hour event, the focus was on the roughly 200 students who attend the school each year. Each student was given a free name-brand pair of shoes and two bags of school supplies. Two hairdressers were on hand to give free haircuts. The NEW START for Kids health stations were located in the center of everything, and the children visited each station before receiving their certificate of completion at the final stop. Many visited these health booths while waiting for haircuts or shoes. Later, families moved to the front lawn, where they received free lunch and a bag of canned goods from our church’s food bank. There were also outside games and activities for the families to enjoy. All in all, the 40 volunteers, many of which were friends from the community, served 66 students.

PIKEVILLE, TN :: At the church’s Sept. 27 God in Shoes event, nearly 200 women received haircuts, free shoes, facials, and massages. Twenty-one women also received free mammograms. Six women stopped by to talk with a representative from Avalon Center, which helps women who have suffered from domestic violence.
“I have never been to an event like this where the ladies felt so comfortable to talk with me,” said Toni Paradis, Avalon representative.

One woman asked a volunteer what church she attended. When she said it was the Seventh-day Adventist Church, the woman replied, “Wow! A lot of people here go to the Adventist church. You all are so happy and so friendly.” This was an answer to the prayer and challenge of Donna Crandall, Georgia-Cumberland Conference God in Shoes representative, who encouraged the 38 volunteers during her devotional to be so filled with the Holy Spirit that they would “smile until their faces hurt.”

**OOLTEWAH, TN ::** The Collegedale Community Church hosted a spa day for single moms on Sept. 29. A VBS-type program was presented for children while their mothers were treated to a breakfast. Afterward, the ladies were pampered with hand care, skin and hair consults, back massages, a self defense class, a car safety check, and gifts of parenting books and business donations. The mothers left with well-rested backs and renewed spirits!
A weekend to provide mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual renewal for cancer patients and their families. All those who are currently receiving treatment and those who have completed treatment within the past year, along with their immediate family members and primary care givers, are invited to attend!

For information, email missions@cohuttasprings.com or call 706-695-9093, ext. 408
Nov 1-2    Family Ministries Leadership Training » GCC Office, Calhoun, GA
Nov 2     Prayer Ministries Day » Atlanta North Church, Atlanta, GA
Nov 2     Health Rally » Augusta Church, Augusta, GA
Nov 6-9   CHIP Summit & Leadership Training Workshop » Tucson, AZ
Nov 7-8   Choral/Bells Festival » Georgia-Cumberland Academy, Calhoun, GA
Nov 9     Health Rally » Decatur Church, Decatur, TN
Nov 9     The Blueprint: The Story of Adventist Education Movie Premier
            Conyers Church, Conyers, GA & Marietta Church, Marietta, GA
Nov 9-10  ACS Disaster Response Training » Murphy Church, Murphy, NC
Nov 14-17 Retired Workers’ Retreat » Cohutta Springs Conference Center, Crandall, GA

Dec 7    Festival of Praise » Springfield Baptist Church, Conyers, GA

Jan 4    North American Division Day of Prayer
Jan 23-24 Elementary Band/Strings Festival » Georgia-Cumberland Academy, Calhoun, GA
Jan 24-Feb 2 North American Division Health Summit » Orlando, FL
Jan 31-Feb 2 High School Retreat » Cohutta Springs Youth Camp, Crandall, GA

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