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WHO WE ARE...

Seventh-day Adventist Kinship International, Inc. is a non-profit support organization. We minister to the spiritual, emotional, social, and physical well-being of current and former Seventh-day Adventists who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex individuals and their families and friends. Kinship facilitates and promotes the understanding and affirmation of LGBTI Adventists among themselves and within the Seventh-day Adventist community through education, advocacy, and reconciliation. Kinship is an organization which supports the advance of human rights for all people.

Founded in 1976 the organization was incorporated in 1981 and is recognized as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization in the United States. Kinship has a board made up of thirteen officers. There are also regional and population coordinators in specific areas. The current list of members and friends includes approximately 1,550 people in more than forty-three countries. SDA Kinship believes the Bible does not condemn or even mention homosexuality as a sexual orientation. Ellen G. White does not parallel any of the Bible texts that are used to condemn homosexuals. Most of the anguish imposed upon God’s children who grow up as LGBTI has its roots in the misunderstanding of what the Bible says.

SUPPORT KINSHIP

Kinship operates primarily on contributions from its members and friends. Help us reach out to more LGBTI Adventists by making a tax-deductible donation to SDA Kinship International. Please send your check or money order to the address below or donate securely online at sdakinship.org. (You can also donate using your Visa or MasterCard by contacting treasurer@sdakinship.org. You will be phoned so that you can give your credit card information in a safe manner.)

SDA Kinship, PO Box 69, Tillamook, OR 97141, USA
or visit SDA Kinship’s website at:
www.sdakinship.org.
From the Editor

Whew! Much of the northern hemisphere has had itself quite the winter. The southern hemisphere has had its share of weather and seismic issues, too. I hope this issue finds you safe, and that the change of seasons will bring you gentle breezes. One of the ways I assess whether or not I like a book, poem, or essay is my tendency to have “conversations” with it midstream. No! That’s not right!... Wow, why haven’t I ever thought of that?... Well, you could have tried that solution… Romeo and Juliet should have had some therapy and Ritalin to control their impulsivity. I have found myself talking to the articles (including the health tips) all the way through this issue. Because I am over forty (well, okay, over fifty) and have had one gloriously broken leg, I had my entire household giggling at one of the very good (though perhaps not for the chronologically gifted) suggestions for a long-term relationship mentioned in our Local Wisdom. I am in awe of how poetry can be so powerful that, even in translation, I sit humbled. Keisha’s writing leaves me wondering what her phone number is because I want to talk to her more about immigrations and freedom and choice. Ruud said so gently what many of us in Kinship’s leadership group may not have had words for. I found myself wanting to argue with Heidi (but, but, but...) but she is right—about the issue and about my church. Who knew about milk and blueberries? Isn’t that the way you are supposed to eat them? And Mike, well, take a read and let me know what you think. In this issue we are also putting in advertisements for four events that are coming up soon: Rehoboth Mini-Kampmeeting, Women and Children First, Kampmeeting, and European Kinship Meeting. Take a look at them. Make plans to attend as many of them as possible. I hope you enjoy this issue. More importantly, I hope you take good care of yourself, for you are infinitely valuable.

Catherine
Some years ago my Uncle Frank and his family came to my home for Christmas lunch. After several glasses of red wine he became quite jovial and accidentally knocked over his glass. His wine spilled on the cloth and left a big red stain. Years later and after many washes the stain is still there. Most types of stain (mud, chocolate, ice cream, gravy) can be removed with gentle or vigorous washing, but red wine always leaves a stain. A bloody bandage can be cleaned; the wine-stained tablecloth cannot.

Certain texts in the book of Leviticus cause problems for many LGBTI people. These are often countered with anti-reasoning:

*Everybody eats shellfish now. Leviticus is out-of-date nonsense.*
*Everybody plants two different crops in the same field and nobody seems the worse for that.*
*What’s wrong with mixing different fibres in the same garment? Should everyone who wears a polyester/cotton shirt or dress be stoned to death?*  
*Ridiculous!*

Well, in terms of 21st century practicalities, that may be so. But what about the principles behind the instructions?

The book of Leviticus is seen by many as setting up a code of holiness. Separateness. Purity. Given this foundation, what might we be able to see behind this instruction not to mix fibres?

In the book of Numbers, which some will have studied using the Sabbath School study guide, Q3 2009, the picture is painted of order, symmetry, and beauty in the early Israelite encampment. (The reality may have been less so!) The priests were robed in fine white linen, hugely symbolic of purity. This is in great contrast to the vision shown much later to Zechariah in which he sees Joshua clothed in filthy rags and being re-clothed—possibly in fine white linen. (Although the text does not state that, perhaps we may be allowed to extrapolate that.)

**Pure Linen**

In the gospel of Matthew, Jesus talks about the Kingdom of Heaven and gives various examples with which we are now very familiar. In one story He talks about a wedding feast. Everyone is dressed in all their appropriate finery, except for one guy who
comes in improperly clothed. I imagine this was a story his audience could relate to. Even today the bride’s white dress is supposed to be symbolic of her purity, though that is changing.

Is there, I wonder, a relationship between the call for unmixed fibres in the garments of the priests of ancient Israel and the wedding clothes referred to here by Jesus? In the story the king demands the right clothing. Why? I don’t know. But what the king wants is what the king gets. That may seem a bit crazy to me in my culture where I can wear anything at any time and no one seems to care. But then I’m not a king (or queen). And I’m certainly not The Almighty, the King in the story.

**The Symbolism of Pure White Linen**

In most Communion services, everything is usually done very beautifully. We use good quality highly polished wooden or metal trays for the sparkling glasses of wine; perhaps there is a silver plate for the bread. And there will probably be freshly laundered fine white linen cloths to cover the table and elements before and after we take part in the sacrament.

I wonder if there was a fine white linen tablecloth on the table set for the Last Supper in the Upper Room. If so, was it was made of just a single type of fibre? One might wish to hope so.

I would like to note just three things from the story of the Last Supper.

1. After washing His disciples’ feet (John 13:10–11) Jesus said “...you are clean, but not every one of you...” The stains are still there, and even the most powerful bio-powder will not remove them.
2. When Jesus lifted the cup He said, “Drink ye all of it.” Did he mean “All of you must drink” or “you must drink all of it”? Maybe both. We understand that everyone is included. All of us. Including the LGBTIs.
3. But “all of it” also means that all of the wine had to be drunk. None was allowed to be spilt on the tablecloth. Continuing with the symbolism: The cloth must not become stained; it must remain pure. If the cloth gets stained with spilt wine, it can never be washed clean.

**Looking beyond the Linen of Leviticus**

So why were the Israelites given the instruction in Leviticus about not mixing fibres? I don’t know. And in practical terms I can’t see how it might be important or relevant today. But while, in the symbolism of the Old Testament, much importance was placed on the visible, the outward appearance; when we come to the New Testament much of the emphasis is on the invisible, the internal.

During the incarnation event, Jesus, physically clothed in a seamless (homespun linen?) garment, takes the symbolically pure linen cloth from the communion table and shows us what’s underneath. He is underneath. Purity covers the pure. The seamless linen robe of the Eternal High Priest is just an earthly cover for the earthly human form. But, at the same time, it is a cover for God. God, clothed in “infinite light,” wrapped up in human flesh, covers that flesh with a pure linen robe, and submits to death in order to bring purity to the beings that were created in the image of that God.

We are privileged to be able to peek and see under that cloth. And what we see there is staggeringly more beautiful than the finest piece of cloth. Underneath we see embodied love, offered freely to each one of us.

Don’t fight Leviticus! Pick up the thread of purity that begins in Genesis (it...was created "good"), runs though the holiness code of Leviticus, and carries right through to the "white-robed throng standing before the throne" of Revelation. Take a moment to look under the pure white single-fibre communion tablecloth and see God there, offering Himself to rescue me, offering Herself to rescue you, from all the impurity and evil that is within and without; and in the words written by Zechariah hear the voice of God: “These are an omen of good things to come..... I shall now bring my servant.... In a single day I shall wipe away the guilt of this land....”

As we remember again the great Christian festival of Easter, think once more about the symbols of the broken body and spilt blood of our Lord. Look at—and under—the fine linen garment to see the purity of Jesus. Consider the righteousness that He would both cover us with and have us be, and ponder once again the means by which all of this is achieved. Be blessed as you meditate on the fine white single-fibre linen of Leviticus!

When we think about laying down a life for another we usually think in terms of a singular event. But it is possible for us to lay down our lives over the course of a lifetime, minute by minute and day by day. And it is the work of the Spirit to empower us as we seek to lose ourselves in acts of loving kindness and sacrificial living. —Elaine Puckett

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*kinship_uk@scotmagic.co.uk*  
Easter 2010
...more

Local Wisdom – Building Long-Term Relationships

By Tessa and Dana

We have found three keys for building a great long-term relationship. First, think of the journey of life as walking down a path. As you walk, different people’s paths cross with yours. Some cross only for a moment, and some parallel your path for a while then diverge. Then, one person’s path comes toward yours and converges. The person you should spend your life with is the one whose path, from that point on, runs with yours. You are heading the same direction; and now you walk the path together, hand in hand. Your paths become one. Second, you have to love that person exactly how they are right now, as if they will never change anything for the rest of their life. You can’t be with someone thinking that they’ll be perfect if they just change one thing or another. If they’re not perfect for you now, they never will be. Finally, have fun together. Set aside scheduled time each week for “date night.” Play games, hide-and-seek, chase each other around, watch movies, and just have fun together. It doesn’t matter how busy you are, you will always be able to make time for what is most important in your life. If the love of your life stays the priority in your life, you will be on your way to a great and long-lasting relationship.

By Leslie Quinn

I wasn’t aware that Jan and I could be considered a long-term relationship yet, but I guess we are. We’ve been together for about ten years now. Being together long-term is our goal!

I am just now learning that it takes real communication to maintain a relationship. I thought we were communicating before, but actually we weren’t. We were miscommunicating. We misinterpreted each other’s actions, behaviors, and needs. I see a therapist—another thing I believe is very important. The subject of our misunderstandings came up in a session. I asked Jan to join me in therapy for a while, to work on our communication patterns. Her willingness to go to therapy as a couple was a very important clue to me that she was willing to work with me on improving our relationship.

During these joint therapy sessions, I learned that all I had to do was ask for what I need. For the most part, Jan would comply. She hadn’t known what my needs were. We work hard on real communication. Jan is outgoing. I tend to be the quieter, less talkative one. I am learning I need to speak more. I am learning to share what I feel and think with Jan so she has some idea of what is going on with me. It is a real struggle because my pattern has been to shut up and let her talk. My job now is to talk more! Jan’s job is to stop and listen to me! We are both learning to work together to communicate more effectively.

During a discussion of friendship, my therapist said something that had a profound effect on me: “Wouldn’t it be nice if you were each other’s best friend?” Jan said right away, “Well, we are best friends.” Well, duh! What a concept! I did not know Jan considered me her best friend or even considered us as being best friends. What a revelation! That was an awesome thing for me to learn! At the next therapy session, the therapist asked me, “So, how does it feel having a best friend?” I just sat there with a smile. This feels very good to me!

Our foundation is the love we have for each other. I have learned that love changes but is still love. Jan and I continue to learn new things that help our relationship grow and deepen. I think it is very important to be willing to learn ways to maintain a relationship and to grow love. This builds bonds. Our relationship has not always felt strong, but we now have tools to use to make it so.

The Beach and The Book

Thursday, September 30 – Sunday, October 3, 2010

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For more information contact Catherine at region1@sdakinship.org
By Elodie Souil

I was taught one had to take time,
I was taught one had to choose wisely,
I was taught one does not play with the other one’s feeling nor with their body,
I was taught love was a serious thing,
I was taught the more one shares the same values and the same faith, the better,
I was taught when one is in love, one gets married,
I was taught once married, one was not to get divorced; for, in French, « amour » rhymes with « toujours » (once in love and never more),
I was taught a woman was to be in love with none but a man...

So, I chose to deconstruct everything, at the risk of getting lost in the process.

That very day, I fell in love with the blond woman, her outline and her hands,
Just as I fell in love with her straightforwardness and her ability to give it to you straight.
Later on, I also fell in love with her body.
It’s been seven years since, little by little, I have been rebuilding my life with my partner.
I have understood that living together is no fairy tale but still a daily written story,
I have understood the importance of living as a couple but also as oneself,
I have understood the importance of being aware of one’s wounds so as not to blame the loved one for those very hurts but rather to confide in them,
I have understood I cannot love the other one when I don’t love myself,
I have understood I cannot love the other one when I don’t listen to them,
I have understood that mean words or a peculiar behavior may hide a deep and unspeakable pain,
I have understood that though the other one’s happiness is as important as mine, my own happiness is also as significant as theirs,
I have understood I have no right to ask the loved one to become my ideal but that, as time goes on, one becomes more indulgent and comes to terms with differences,
From now on, I know that staying together as a couple requires more strength than breaking up,
From now on, I know that, once one gets closer and finds the ways and means of climbing them, what may seem unconquerable mountains are often nothing else but small hills,
I have understood that talking to the loved one is a thousandfold better than staying alone with one’s thoughts...

Today, I am still in love with that blond and beautiful young woman—and probably more so than seven years ago.

Unconditional Love?

Heidi Johnson

Growing up Adventist we were always told not to marry or date non-Adventists. That's a condition. Some things should universally be considered deal breakers. No one should ever accept abuse from a partner or a friend. No one should ever marry someone who doesn’t treat them with respect. These are conditions. Abusers sometimes kill their partners or make them wish they were dead. The Seventh-day Adventist Church values martyrdom so highly that it encourages its members to be willing to sacrifice anything for love, anything except religion, of course. In pursuit of its goal of preventing divorces, the church encourages abused spouses to forgive. The Adventist Church is so busy promoting the giving of unconditional love that it neglects the promotion of healthy limit setting, in other words, conditional love. We all have our own lists of deal breakers. To have a sexual relationship with someone we are not attracted to is probably something most of us would not accept. That's a condition. Personally, the smell of cigarettes makes me sick so I can’t live with anyone who smokes cigarettes. The better we know what our deal breakers are, the better our chances of

(to be continued on page 8)
Planting the Stranger

The painting is striking: a little boy in overalls looks through a tall iron gate, his back to us. The gate is chained; but, entranced by the view, the boy doesn’t notice that the chain lock is open.

We never learn whether he’s trying to escape or explore. We don’t know his background or how he arrived at the gate, but we sense his longing and diagnose his problem. He could see the unlocked chain, open the gate, and find the whole world open to him if he changed his focus. If he never walks through the gate because of how he views things, does it matter how he got there?

Thanks to the air travel industry, we have the ability to traverse the world much more easily than our forebears did. My parents moved from the Caribbean to a frosty England in the 1960s; they went by plane while others emigrated by boat. Some moved for work, some for family, and some for adventure and a clean start.

Other immigrants can tell similar stories. Immigrant aspirations are similar the world over, and their challenges are also common.

National immigration debates often focus on questions of identity: what it means to be American, British, or Jamaican. Yet the “huddled masses” at ports and borders aren’t the only ones asking such questions. People moving in or out of any social group also ask who they are and where they fit.

A social migrant will learn her new group’s language and customs; she will shed aspects of her old experience and wear her new label proudly. She and her peers will develop a story to explain how they found their new home; and, if all goes well, their new identity will replace their old one. They’ll assimilate, and life will go on.

This process would be much smoother if we each only ever had one identity! But that’s not how it works. All of us are part of many groups at once, and each group labels and claims us. Every possible aspect of us has a label: gender, ethnicity, nationality, marriage status, political views, religious beliefs, economic class.

Some people find that few of their labels conflict. Others find that several do. Groups like kinship serve the second class: people whose social labels conflict, people who live in the misty realm between two or more worlds, people who feel like strangers in the land.

To such people, the Tao Te Ching suggests, “The well planted cannot be uprooted. The well embraced cannot be taken.” I first read this verse while living out of suitcases in Washington, D.C., thousands of miles from all of my homes. Since then, I’ve thought about what it means to be rooted in this world. How is it possible to be well-planted if you move constantly? Which of our labels are social and shifting? Which might we carry into eternity? And what does it cost us to root in the most stable label of all: “human”?

Unconditional Love

(continued from page 7)

➢ not wasting our time or our health in bad relationships.

One reason early marriages have poor chances of lasting is that teenagers usually don’t know themselves well enough to know what their own personal lists of deal breakers are. They don’t yet know what they can’t live with or can’t live without. The Adventist Church discourages the search for knowledge of self. It’s selfish. The church encourages its members to put self aside and instead concentrate on being willing to give, to adapt, to endure, to forgive 7x7, to be selfless and not care about one’s own needs, to give unconditionally without limits. Life and love need give and take. If anyone encourages you to give, give, give and never take, they are looking to take from you.

Respect yourself, and treat others with dignity and respect. Respect your need to know your needs and set limits (conditions). Never put anyone else’s desires above your own health, safety, deal sail your own track breaks (conditions), and self-respect. Self-respect is worth more than any relationship.
For this Sweet Friend I Had Lost

By Ruud Kieboom

Where were you when... is an often used phrase for important moments in history or in our personal lives. If anyone should ask where I was when I heard that Nélio Barros had died, I will remember it. Though I knew he was terminally ill, the news of his death came as a shock to me. I realized that I would never see him again, that I would never again experience his smile, his humor, and his friendliness.

Three weeks before this news, we saw each other through Skype and talked a little. It was one day after Nélio’s 50th birthday, so Kees and I sang a Dutch birthday song for him. He looked weak and tired but was excited about the birthday party a friend organized for him at the restaurant opposite his home. I can picture the restaurant because Kees and I had been there with Fred at another party last September.

Nélio always diligently prepared for our visits because friends were important to him. While guests at their home in Tillamook, Oregon, last September, we now realize that we were privileged he was still able to visit a flower and vegetable garden with us, and practice some German conversation, and that we got to see him working on his marine biology project. At that time Nélio was still working in between chemotherapy treatments. He had even gone to Italy for a conference. While in Europe he didn’t feel well and he missed Fred, but he made it!

I am glad that Nélio and Fred were so happy to move from Sarasota, Florida, to Tillamook, Oregon. They found a nice house in a beautiful environment. Nélio loved the climate (real seasons again!) and soon made friends there. They raised chickens and grew vegetables and fruit trees. They had a spacious garden with secret corners and a real hill (well, part of it). Fred’s mother came to live next to them in her own house on the property. In 2009 Nélio and Fred officially registered their partnership, celebrated with family and close friends. They were a happy family.

Where was I when I heard that Nélio had died?

I was at my office and couldn’t work anymore. I went home and mourned for this sweet friend I had lost.
I opened the letter to find three hand-written pages of words so tiny I had to get out my magnifying glass. In part, the writer said, “After being out of work for some time, I enrolled in career-training classes. Our next assignment is to visualize a new product label and transfer it to paper. I’m afraid this retraining won’t work for me. I’m way too old to figure out this ‘new age’ gobbledygook psychobabble.”

I must confess that, by the time I had deciphered my way to the end of page three, I was laughing aloud. How unfortunate that people so often speak from misinformation rather than fact.

So I began to craft my response:

First of all, visualization is “old age.” This natural brain phenomenon has likely been around since humans took up residence on this planet. The only “new age” aspect of visualization is the fact that brain-imaging studies have now associated the ability to visualize—a form of creativity—with the right frontal lobe. All normally functioning brains are believed to possess the ability to visualize: to create internal mental pictures.

In terms of brain function, the verb to image simply means to call up a mental picture. Therefore, mental imaging (visualizing) describes the process of creating a picture in your mind’s eye of something that is not currently and concretely present in your field of vision. It may be a representation of something you have actually seen, e.g., an elephant, or something that you have never seen, e.g., an elephant with flashing psychedelic purple spots.

Many people take the ability to visualize for granted and aren’t even consciously aware that it’s happening. For example:

1. The telephone rings. One of your best friends is calling. A mental image of the person may spring to life on the movie screen of your mind.
2. You are on a school field trip. One of the teenagers says, “I want an ice cream cone.” You can be sure that he/she sees an internal mental picture of an ice cream cone. If you ask, “Would you like plain or sugar cone?” the teenager will likely visualize what each cone looks like before stating a choice.
3. While setting the table for company, you picture the face of each person and decide where each will sit.
4. You take a vacation to a destination that you have spent time thinking about. (People usually end up in places they have spent time thinking about.)

Many people have honed this mental skill to improve their personal health and wellbeing. Some are even teaching others how to use it. To some degree, the body does act out what the mind sees internally:

- Cancer patients are learning to visualize their white blood cells as fighters that attack and destroy tumors. They are picturing wellness.
- Children with severe asthma are being taught to visualize their bronchial tubes expanding and allowing air to flow freely into their lungs. In many cases, this effectively aborts their asthmatic breathing attacks.
- Musicians, athletes, and sports figures have learned to rehearse mentally when actual rehearsal is impossible. They picture what they want to have happen.
- Meditators ponder a mental picture, focusing their thoughts in contemplation. This gives brain and body a map to follow. Eventually they become the mental picture they have been beholding.

Myths about visualizing sometimes keep people from effectively using their active-mental-picturing...
ability. Here are examples:

1. **Mental imaging means coming up with something completely new, and that's dangerous.** Actually, there may be nothing new under the sun. Most ideas simply come from rearranging what you already know. Or they involve an extension of something that already exists.

2. **Mental imaging is auto-hypnosis.** Hypnosis is usually defined as a state very similar to sleep, but a sleep state that is induced by a hypnotizer whose suggestions are accepted by the subject. Mental imaging is not auto-hypnosis; it is best accomplished while the brain is awake and alert.

3. **Mental imaging is synonymous with uniqueness so can be done only by experts.** The word unique means one of a kind, very rare, or very unusual. Every normal human brain contains visualizing abilities, plus a left-brain hemisphere so that the mental images may be rationally and logically analyzed and critiqued.

4. **You can’t teach an old dog new tricks.** Wrong. It may take slightly longer for the old dog to master the trick, but it can learn it. Be careful not to confuse aging with stagnation. Professor Harvey Lehman did a study of 1000 creative achievements. He found that the median age of the creators was 74 at the time of their achievement. Alexander Graham Bell perfected the telephone when he was 58; he figured out how to stabilize the balance of the airplane when he was in his seventies. Grandma Moses began to paint in her late seventies. And so on.

Prior to the advent of television, especially in radio’s heyday, people saw pictures in their mind’s eye when they read or listened to stories. Interestingly enough, studies have shown that viewing large amounts of television may decrease skills of active mental picturing. Watching television largely involves passive mental picturing as the brain processes what other brains have created. For this reason, many creative individuals limit their television viewing.

The brain resembles a muscle in that exercise stimulates its growth. You can learn to hone the skill of visualizing and stimulate your own brain function in the process. Every thought you think creates movies in your mind. In effect, you are your own director, photographer, editor, and viewer. How are you using this natural brain phenomenon? Do you allow it to run away with itself and picture fear or failure? Do you take charge and create mental pictures of success—by design? It’s your choice.

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**Mini-Kampmeeting**

at **Rehoboth**

**April 16-18, 2010**

The Beach Retreat
47 Maryland Ave., Rehoboth, DE
www.RehobothBeachRetreat.com

Speakers are Regina Araujo, Keisha McKenzie, and Ann Roda
Cost: $80/person/weekend if staying on-site (includes room for 2 nights, $40/person/weekend if staying off-site
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July 19-21, 2010

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The cost for the two days will be $125/per person if you are sharing a room and $175/per person if you would like a hotel room to yourself. Children 19 and under stay free in parents’ room.
Fill-out the registration/payment form on www.sdakinship.org.
Oatmeal.
Your heart and arteries will be pretty thrilled if breakfast always has you craving a bowl full of oats. Regularly eating oatmeal appears to boost people’s endothelial function. That’s a fancy way of describing their arteries’ all-important ability to dilate and keep blood flowing freely to the heart and other body parts. Unfortunately, endothelial function often deteriorates in folks who are overweight or obese or who have glucose intolerance and insulin resistance. But in a six-week study of overweight adults, a daily bowl of oats helped improve the way endothelium—that thin layer of cells lining the inside of blood vessels—functioned. Researchers speculated that the phytoestrogens and beta glucan in oats had something to do with the effect. Maintaining good endothelial function helps reduce the risk of heart and coronary artery disease down the road. Overweight adults aren’t the only ones who need to be concerned about it. Normal-weight people can have impaired endothelium, too. So whether you’re big or little, oatmeal is a smart breakfast choice.

Blueberries.
Get more nutrition from your blueberries by tossing them into a steamy bowl of oatmeal instead of cold cereal and milk. A recent study revealed that combining blueberries and milk in the same meal could block your body’s absorption of the antioxidant goodness in the berries. Blueberries are packed with powerful phenolic antioxidants that help keep you young by combating oxidative stress. Problem is, these super chemicals don’t always make it from your mouth to your bloodstream; you probably absorb less than five percent of the phenolics you get from foods. And certain food combos don’t help. When researchers had volunteers eat blueberries with a chaser of water or milk, the blueberry-and-milk combo resulted in significantly fewer phenolics being absorbed compared with the berries-and-water. Researchers believe that the proteins in milk somehow interfere with antioxidant absorption. And other milk research has already shown similar results with tea and chocolate phenolics. So what to do? Skim milk in your cereal may be an option. Although skim milk still interfered with phenolic absorption in the blueberry study, it interfered less than whole milk. You could also wait a couple of hours between eating blueberries and having milk.

Metabolic syndrome.
No one wants this diabetes segue. So here’s a snack that just might help you thwart it: pumpkin seeds. Also called pepitas, pumpkin seeds are loaded with magnesium. And a recent study found that the more magnesium a person’s diet had, the lower his or her chances of developing metabolic syndrome. Metabolic syndrome is characterized by a cluster of ills, including high blood pressure, blood sugar, and triglycerides; low HDL cholesterol; and a big belly. When researchers recently tracked the eating habits of young adults, diets highest in magnesium were associated with a 31 percent lower risk of the syndrome. Experts aren’t completely sure how magnesium helps fight metabolic syndrome, but the mineral is known to improve the body’s capacity to use insulin and help regulate blood sugar. In fact, of the volunteers studied, those who consumed the most magnesium had the lowest insulin levels.
Member Services Team – Naveen Jonathan

We are focusing on several areas. First, we are developing a variety of ways to support regional coordinators and chapter leaders. As part of this, we are seeking to build community among the coordinators and chapter leaders by holding monthly conference calls, which began on February 21, 2010.

Another area of focus is to identify new coordinators and chapter leaders in areas where there is currently no coverage. We would like those living in the United States and areas around the world that currently are missing a coordinator to help us out with finding someone to fill these open positions. Finally, we would also like to begin reconnecting former members with Kinship.

Kinship Website – Linda Wright

During January we had 849,840 hits by visitors that weren’t logged in as members, who then visited 316,825 pages; and 9,007 hits by members who were logged in, who then visited 6,140 pages. In these numbers there were 4,198 different visitors (from different IP addresses).

The highest number of visitors came from (in order):

1. United States
2. Brazil
3. Canada
4. Great Britain
5. Australia
6. Russian Federation
7. Germany
8. Portugal

and The Netherlands

Other countries, with a smaller number of visitors, include:

- Hong Kong
- Czech Republic
- Indonesia
- Turkey
- Sweden
- Costa Rica
- Kenya
- China
- Italy
- South Korea
- Japan
- Philippines
- France
- Ukraine
- South Africa
- Malaysia

We are making our presence known all over the world!

Kinship Older Adults – Virginia (Ren) Reynolds

Walk! Moving is the way we will stay chronologically gifted but not “old.” There is recent research that indicates walking offsets, or can help prevent, Alzheimer’s disease. It is also important to keep up with your friends and family. Many of them are here in Kinship. Take a couple of moments to send an e-mail, post an electronic card, or send a postal note.

International Growth and Development Committee – Floyd Poenitz

The IGDC and the Member Services Team are identifying the largest concentrations of Kinship members in different areas of the world. We are developing plans to work with the coordinators in those areas to help them provide activities, support, spiritual meetings, and a variety of ways that Kinship members can be in contact with each other. We are looking for volunteers who are fluent in Spanish to correspond with the Spanish-speaking LGBTI Adventists who contact us. If you are interested, please write to me at floyd@poenitz.org. If you have access to the internet, we can use your help. If you have any suggestions on ways to create a Kinship community in your area, please send me your ideas.

Kinship Europe – Ruud Kieboom and Mike Lewis

There are some new developments happening in Europe for which we are happy and grateful.

In Manchester, England, Ornette and the new Kinship group gathers once a month. Sometimes only one person shows up. Usually there are more. The once-a-month schedule provides the continuity that will build a stable group in that area.

Mike is busy organizing the second European Advisory Council. We will be meeting again in Dunblane, Scotland, from May 14 to 16. Pastors, educators, and administrators will meet with Mike, Ruud, and Floyd to talk about ways to connect with the church.

As you may remember, Mike, Ruud, and Gerard had talks last year with Seventh-day Adventist church leaders for the United Kingdom. Because of that meeting they are beginning to be more positive in their attitudes toward LGBTI church members. We had hoped that they would be open to having Carrol Grady give a presentation to them or other members of their constituency, but they are not yet ready for that step.

In The Netherlands our new group of at least ten people has had three meetings, which were well-attended. Our next meeting is planned for July 10. As of the March Kinship Board meeting, we have become an official Kinship chapter.

In December we had our first meeting in Frankfurt, Germany! This meeting was co-organized.
with a retired pastor from the area who was one of the co-founders of the Germany Kinship group that existed before. We hope to continue these meetings on a regular basis.

New members are finding their way to Kinship Europe through the website! A new member from Czech Republic attended European Kinship Meeting 2009. He is now eager to organize a Kinship meeting chapter in his country. We have a new member in Florence, Italy, who wishes to have a meeting in that country. Because of the enthusiasm of our various members, we have EKM scheduled for: 2011, France; 2012, Germany; 2013, Czech Republic; 2016, Italy (tentative).

For European Kinship Meeting 2010 we have found a lovely place in Neer, a little town in the southeast of The Netherlands near the German and Belgian boarder. We will try to have our holiday week in the same area so we can make lovely trips to places in those countries as well. The meeting is scheduled for the weekend of September 3-6. The price is approximately €225/USD$305.

Region 1 – Catherine Taylor

One of the aspects of Kinship meetings that I am coming to appreciate more deeply is the constant appearance of surprise blessings. So, for this report, I’ll tell you what we did and then tell you about the surprise connections.

Seven Kinship members joined the Adventist Forum held at St. Mary’s Church on 126th in New York City. The presentation was by an Adventist chaplain who used to be a pastor in Washington State. His talk about what it means to be a member of a pacifist denomination and work with the military was thought-provoking.

Two of the Forum’s members who are Kinship allies joined us for lunch at the lovely little surprise of an Italian restaurant. Part of our conversation was with a Kinship member who is just now beginning to have coming-out conversations and reactions with his parents. I am very glad he has had Kinship’s support, particularly David Thaxton’s, in the last few weeks.

Because of the brisk New York weather we changed our plans for the afternoon and spent a couple of hours wandering through the Frick Gallery. Bruce and Eddie are always remarkable hosts and art educators.

Now for the connections: Because I could not get a flight in until Sabbath morning, Bruce and Eddie graciously got up at the crack of dawn to pick me up. Because they had me in tow they joined the services at the Forum. There they met a couple of friends they had not seen in a while. One of the friends from the Forum is a remarkable singer and former opera performer, Faith Eshem. Now Bruce and Eddie are suggesting her for Kampmeeting, so maybe sometime more of you will get to meet her and, even better, to hear her.

Two of our members had been trying to get in contact with each other, and both showed up for the meeting. I think they are making some plans to have lunch and be of support to each other while dealing with family issues.

Because the Forum has a prayer time, I asked for prayers for the situation in Uganda. The people there had not heard of it and were quite concerned. The Adventist chaplain was very surprised. So we had a chance to perhaps get more support for that issue.

It was a great day. Bruce and Eddie hosted me for the evening and then popped us all into the Georgia O’Keefe exhibit at the Whitney the next day.

We’re planning another Region 1 meeting in NYC for May when the flowers will be out.

Region 7, Blue Mountain Chapter – Page McDaniel

In January ten people attended our second official meeting. That more than tripled the attendance of our first meeting. Terry Rice, the new co-coordinator of our chapter, took on the task of organizing this meeting.

We met at a local Thai restaurant. The group included three students enrolled at Walla Walla University and a couple of friends of Kinship members from Gay Christian Network. After dinner, the more agile members of the group went ice skating. Finally, we met at the home of straight allies Paul and Teri Richardson to make plans for the next six months. We have some great outings and activities lined up!

Our chapter co-leader Terry Rice reported that there are several lesbian women in Tri-Cities (45 miles from Walla Walla) who want to be involved in our group. We are going to coordinate our dates and times of meetings to fit with their work schedules.

One of the students attending is a graduate student at Walla Walla. He formed a Walla Walla University Gay Students Facebook group. He made business cards announcing the Facebook opportunity and told us that 100 people have already joined and that 80 of them are current students. We don’t know what percentage are allies and what percentage are LGBTI.
On March 3 we had the Blue Mountain Chapter’s third official meeting. Twenty-two people attended! It was totally amazing! Terry is a great asset. He fills in the gaps where I have not had time to do things. He wants to have an activity every month. The group was a mixture of middle-aged and young people, men and women. I am encouraged by the discussion we had. Many of the people there had not known anything about Kinship. We explained Kinship’s goals and focus. There was a lot of discussion about relationships with the church. Some have been alienated from the church for years, but have expressed a desire to return if there is acceptance. I told them about Your Third Place, the group organized by the Richarsons, which is being patterned after Second Wind. One Adventist lesbian is a student at Walla Walla Community College (there are three colleges/universities in this area). She is involved in the Gay/straight Alliance there and wants to develop more relationships with the groups of all three colleges (including Whitman College, which has a very active LGBTIQ group).

**Region 7, Portland Chapter – Gerald Jones**

I have set up a local group on Google. We already have thirteen members and are planning an event soon to capitalize on our momentum.

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Life’s most urgent question is:
what are you doing for others?
—Martin Luther King, Jr

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**You are Invited to**

**Safe Places in the Upper Room**

**Vermont mini-Kampmeeting**

Guest speaker: Mitch Tyner

**November 12-14, 2010**

at the Juniper Hill Inn, Windsor, Vermont

To register access www.sdakinship.org

Click on ➔ Events ➔ Vermont Mini-Kampmeeting

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If it’s not happening, it’s because you’re not doing it.

—Thomas L. Friedman