Upper Columbia Conference Celebrates Grand Opening

Representatives from local and state government joined several hundred other people on Monday, June 20, to celebrate the Grand Opening of the newly rebuilt Upper Columbia Conference office building in Spokane, Wash. Robert Folkenberg Jr., UCC president, paid special tribute to the office staff, who, in his words, exhibited “a tremendous spirit and constant commitment to the mission of the church” in spite of the fire and temporary relocation. Bob Kyte, Adventist Risk Management president, says the insurance coverage to replace the original building, destroyed by fire in December 2008, currently represents the largest single payment in the history of the organization. The new one-story office is 4,000 square feet smaller than the facility it replaced. Read more and see a selection of photos HERE.

UCC Delegates Re-Elect Officers

Delegates to the 76th Constituency Session of the Upper Columbia Conference re-elected officers Robert Folkenberg Jr., president; Doug R. Johnson, vice president for administration; and Randall Terry, vice president for finance. More than 460 delegates attended the meeting, held Sunday, June 19, on the Upper Columbia Academy campus in Spangle, Wash. Among other business items, they voted in three new congregations to the conference fellowship of churches, and re-elected 13 departmental directors. Read more from the UCC website HERE.

Barnes & Noble to Manage WWU Bookstore

Walla Walla University has signed a 5-year contract with Barnes & Noble College Booksellers to operate the school’s bookstore, the University Shop, effective July 7. Barnes & Noble has agreed to make a significant investment in the University Shop through technology services and merchandising improvements in the 12,044-square-foot space. The store will be modeled after other Barnes & Noble campus bookstores, which are distinct from Barnes & Noble retail bookstores. In the transition, current University Shop employees will retain their jobs and become employees of Barnes & Noble. The company also plans to hire student employees. Read more HERE.

Looking Ahead

July
4: Independence Day
12–16: Ore. Gladstone Camp Meeting
14: Sept. Ad/Article Deadline
30: Arctic Mission Offering

August
11: Oct. Ad/Article Deadline

September
11: NPUC Constituency Session
11: WWU Constituency Session
15: Nov. Ad/Article Deadline

GLEANER Blogs

- Cheri Corder
- Cindy’s Garden Blog
- Let’s Talk
- Mike Jones
- Monthly Archival Photo
- Tip Sheet
Adventist Student Selected to Attend National Leadership Conference

Ariana Calderon, Kirkland (Wash.) Adventist School student, has been selected to join more than 250 outstanding middle-school peers from across the country to attend the Junior National Young Leaders Conference in Washington, D.C., June 26. The conference introduces young people to the tradition of American leaders throughout history and encourages them to develop their own leadership skills. Calderon acknowledges the ongoing encouragement of her family, teachers and church, as well as the discipline learned through Pathfinders.

Should Europe Declare Sunday an Official Day of Rest?

John Graz, International Religious Liberty Association secretary-general, writes: "Who can argue with the idea that everyone would benefit from a weekly day of rest and relaxation? The European Sunday Alliance made its pitch to the European Union's Economic and Social Committee in Brussels on June 20, arguing that if Sunday were declared a ‘work-free day’ across Europe, the result would be healthier families, a more cohesive society, and a more balanced lifestyle for everyone." Graz lists several important concerns with this proposal. What stance should the Adventist Church take on this important issue? Read more from John Graz and IRLA HERE.

Mustaches Aplenty Welcome Rojas to Montana

During the Montana Conference Camp Meeting in Bozeman, Mount Ellis Academy students were on hand to make sure featured speaker, José Rojas, felt right at home. They donned faux mustaches in an effort to match the trademark Rojas look and succeeded in planting a wider than usual grin on their special guest's face.

Griggs University Distance Learning Center Prepares for Transition

The world church distance learning institution is set to move from the General Conference headquarters in Silver Spring, Md., to Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Mich., sometime in July. The center will be housed in the Lake Union Conference building adjacent to Andrews’ entrance. Currently, 4,500 students are enrolled in Griggs, with enrollment highest in the institution's MBA program. Nearly 1,000 Griggs students are enrolled in kindergarten through grade 12, and 2,000 more are taking college courses. Read more from the Adventist News Network HERE.
Spam
Not spam
Forget previous vote
Grand Opening Celebrates New Building

by Steve VISTAUNET

The ribbon cutting wrapped up the dedication ceremony.

Elder Max Torkelsen and Elder Dan Jackson unveiled the mission statement engraving next to the front door.

Bob and Audrey Folkenberg visit with Elder Dan Jackson in the lobby.
A pathfinder honor guard, from Pullman, Wash., participated in the dedicatory ceremony.

SPOKANE, Wash., 6/20/2011 - The landscape wasn't complete, but the joy and relief wrapped up in the Grand Opening celebration for the newly rebuilt Upper Columbia Conference office in Spokane, Wash., was palpable. Robert Folkenberg Jr., UCC president, welcomed representatives from local and state government, and several hundred other folks who came Monday, June 20, to tour the facility.

Bob Kyte, Adventist Risk Management president, reflected on the miraculous providence that provided adequate insurance coverage to replace the original building destroyed by fire in December 2008. "This currently represents the largest single payment in the history of our organization," he remarked, then quipped, "it's a record we hope will stand for a long, long time."

Folkenberg paid special tribute to Bill Skidmore, UCC human resources director, who oversaw the project as conference liaison with the architects and contractors. He also noted the resiliency of the office staff who exhibited "a tremendous spirit and constant commitment to the mission of the church" in spite of the fire and temporary relocation.

The new office is 4,000 square feet smaller than the facility it replaced. Everything is contained on one level. Natural light from skylights and large windows washes through nearly every nook and cranary. Signage with the three angels motif is being placed both inside and outside the building.

Herman Schreven, Adventist Book Store manager, is nearly rhapsodic about his new area. "In our old building," he says, "we had to hand truck all our food inventories over to the store ... through the snow." Now adequate space and storage is simply in the next room.

The testimonies of God's providence throughout the project are numerous. "The initial loss was devastating," Folkenberg said, "but the end result is an added blessing to our church. And," he adds, "the insurance monies funded the replacement. No church money was required." That didn't come without careful and sometimes seemingly small decisions: Metal instead of wood door frames; and hydo-seeding outside grass instead of laying sod. "A lot of little choices," says Folkenberg, "added up to big savings and a project that came in under budget."

Doug Johnson, vice president for administration, recalls the questions that came directly following the fire. "Even while the building was burning, we found ourselves asking 'Where do we go from here?'" he says. "But every step of the way, God more than met our needs and astounded us with answers we'd never dreamed of."
Upper Columbia Delegates Re-Elect Officers

by Steve Vistaunet

Bob Folkenberg, Jr. gave the president's report, focusing on how Upper Columbia Conference has worked to meet the specific goals outlined by the 75th Constituency Session.

Spangle, Wash., 6/19/2011 - Delegates to the 76th Constituency Session of the Upper Columbia Conference, re-elected officers Robert Folkenberg Jr., president, Doug R. Johnson, vice president for administration, and Randall Terry, vice president for finance.

More than 460 delegates attended the meeting, held Sunday, June 19, on the campus of Upper Columbia Academy in Spangle, Wash. Among other business items, they voted in three new congregations to the conference fellowship of churches and approved the merger of two churches: Blue Mountain Valley and Mission Native American. They also re-elected 13 departmental directors: Larry Marsh, education; Jay Wintermeyer, communication; Gerald Haeger, ministerial; Wayne Hicks, family life/Pathfinders; Art Lenz, information and technology services; Dave Livermore, personal evangelism, discipleship and adult Sabbath School; Patty Marsh, community services, children's and women’s ministries; Richard Parker, youth; Wayne Searson, trust; Bill Skidmore, human resources; Jay Sloop, health; and Herman Schreven, Adventist Book Center.

Randy Terry, vice president of finance, noted that despite recent tithe downturns, the conference is still creatively finding ways to move forward with an energetic mission. More than $3.2 million has been raised toward the $4 million goal for the Kids Educational Endowment/Scholarship Program (KEEP), and more than $660,000 has come in toward a $1 million goal for new Camp MiVoden cabins.

Folkenberg reminded delegates of the Share the Life initiative that embeds a spirit of mission in every church and member. He called each member to be part of God's reclamation army—standing between the devil and the discouraged. He pointed to the new vision statement taken from Ellen White's Testimonies to the Church, volume 9, page 126, which begins with the words, "In visions of the night, representations passed before me of a great reformatory movement among God's people." "This should be our desire," said Folkenberg.

This constituency session came on the heels of the UCC camp meeting also held, for the first time in years, on the UCA campus.
Changes at U-Shop

Barnes & Noble to manage store

By: Rosa Jimenez

Walla Walla University is announcing a new partnership with Barnes & Noble College Booksellers. The company will begin operating the school's bookstore, the University Shop, effective July 7. The university has signed a 5-year contract with the company, which is a subsidiary of national bookseller Barnes & Noble.

Barnes & Noble has agreed to make a significant investment in the University Shop through technology services and merchandizing improvements in the 12,044-square-foot space. The store will be modeled after other Barnes and Noble's campus bookstores, which are distinct from Barnes and Noble's retail bookstores.

In the transition, current University Shop employees will retain their jobs and become employees of Barnes & Noble. The company also plans to hire student employees.

The University Shop, which will retain its name, will officially open under Barnes & Noble management July 11. The store will be closed July 7 and 8 for inventory.

The decision to contract with the bookseller came after a 3-month review by campus administrators.

"Although the University Shop has always been profitable, the textbook industry is experiencing turbulent times," says Steve Rose, WWU’s vice president for financial administration. "E-books, book rentals, and other technology changes led to our decision to partner with a strong market leader. We believe this partnership will offer more affordable, convenient options to our students and better position us for the future."

Students will have an expanded array of options, both at the store’s physical site and through its online site.

An expanded store website will offer textbooks, trade books, and school and art supplies. It will also continue to offer WWU-themed merchandise.

Among the new textbook services, students opting for textbook rentals will save up to 50 percent over the cost of a new printed book. Students will be able to pay rental fees using cash, checks, credit, or student financial aid.

Through the website’s integration with WWU’s student registration program, after students register for classes, students will be able to view required textbooks for those classes and rent or buy those books online.

Students with books that will be used in future university classes will receive a 50 percent cash payout for books they return, up to the store’s inventory limit.
Messages

June 22, 2011

Should Sunday be declared an official rest day for Europeans?

Who can argue with the idea that everyone would benefit from a weekly day of rest and relaxation? This seemingly self-evident notion is driving a new movement in Europe to reclaim Sunday as a day of rest for overworked and over-stressed Europeans. The “European Sunday Alliance” made its pitch to the European Union’s Economic and Social Committee in Brussels on June 20, arguing that if Sunday were declared a “work-free day” across Europe, the result would be healthier families, a more cohesive society, and a more balanced lifestyle for everyone.

These are worthy goals. And it’s not difficult to see why the European Sunday Alliance settled on Sunday as the day of the week most suited to their plans. Even before the 4th century, when the newly Christianized Roman Empire declared Sunday a mandatory day of rest, the first day of the week (the Day of the Sun) was already a day with strong religious—albeit pagan—associations.

There are deep traditional and historical reasons why Sunday, of all the days of the week, should be proposed as a weekly rest-day for Europeans. But dig a little deeper, and it becomes clear that declaring Sunday—or indeed any other day—as the “official” rest day of Europe generates significant complications.

Can today’s pluralistic Europe afford to marginalize its 13 million Muslim residents, who attend mosque on Friday? And what about the EU’s significant community of Jews and Seventh-day Adventists who observe Saturday as Sabbath—the oldest biblical day of rest which finds its roots in the Genesis creation story?

If, as the European Sunday Alliance declares, one of its major goals is “greater social cohesion,” then alienating significant faith groups, and making it more difficult for them to practice their faith, is surely not the best way forward.

Yes, a weekly day of rest is vitally important. Many studies have linked a regular day away from the concerns of work, with significant health and social benefits. As far as this goes, the European Sunday Alliance is on the right track. Yet designating one day—Sunday—as the official day of rest day will lead to a plethora of social, employment, and legal problems that would, ultimately, be far from “restful.”

I agree, also, that the history and traditions of Europe should play a significant role in its culture today. And there is no doubt that protecting and respecting people’s right to a weekly day of rest should be a priority.

Yet just as important is the right of all human beings to order their lives in a way that’s consistent with their religious convictions. This right is enshrined in multiple international covenants. It’s a foundational, non-negotiable aspect of basic human dignity.

With respect, I would urge members of the European Sunday Alliance to amend their proposal to acknowledge that just as everyone should be guaranteed a work-free day, so every person has the right to live, worship, and, yes, even rest, according to the dictates of conscience.

Dr. John Graz, Secretary General of the International Religious Liberty Association
Future of Adventist distance learning optimistic as Griggs expands - Adv...

Future of Adventist distance learning optimistic as Griggs expands

Move to Andrews, online courses on tap, new dean says

15 Jun 2011, Silver Spring, Maryland, United States
Elizabeth Lechleitner/ANN

Seventh-day Adventist academic administrators are optimistic about the future of Griggs University. The church's distance learning institution is set to move to church-run Andrews University next month, the final step of a two-year transfer of oversight.

The move is expected to provide increased collaboration among Adventist educational institutions and lend Griggs the opportunity to benefit from the faculty base and increased resources for curriculum development at Andrews, church leaders said.

World church Vice President Elia Simmons said the move would bring "fundamental" changes to Griggs, providing "valuable support and opportunities" for the institution.

"Both [Griggs and Andrews] will grow from this alliance; their capacity to provide education from a distance will increase in substantive ways," Simmons said.

Currently, veteran Adventist educator and academic administrator Alyane Thorpe is serving as interim president of Griggs University. Once Griggs University relocates to the Berrien Springs, Michigan campus, Thorpe will continue to helm the institution in her capacity as recently appointed dean of Distance Education for Andrews University.

"We see this merger with Andrews as a prime opportunity to expand the mission -- not only of Griggs, but of Andrews -- to make Adventist education available to students everywhere," Thorpe said, citing plans to expand the institution's online programs and collaborations.

The move from world church headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland, to what is currently the church's Lake Union Conference building adjacent to Andrews' entrance is expected by mid-July, Thorpe said. Andrews recently purchased the conference building in preparation for the relocation, a June press release from the university said. Later, Lake Union administration will move to a site more suited to their staff and the building will be renamed.

The church's top administrative body voted to transfer Griggs' oversight last October after the distance education commission established in 2009 found that the Griggs' limited resources could not handle the church's distance education needs. Shortly thereafter, Andrews' board accepted the transfer of both Griggs University and Griggs International Academy.

"Griggs needed an academic home with resources, such as a talented faculty and versatile library facilities," Thorpe said. "These were just not available to us in the General Conference headquarters building."

Currently, 4,500 students are enrolled in Griggs, with enrollment highest in the institution's MBA program. About 1,000 Griggs students are enrolled in kindergarten through grade 12, and 2,000 more are taking college programs.

Thorpe said Griggs anticipates significant enrollment growth in grades 9 through 12, thanks to a new commitment to distance learning technologies and the expansion of a partnership with Job Corps, a federal program to equip high school dropouts with education and career training.

While many students have traditionally turned to Griggs when a scheduling conflict means they need to complete a college course independently, the institution wants to increase awareness of its grade school courses, too, Thorpe said.

"In too many places, there's a huge chasm between higher education and K-12. It shouldn't be like that," Thorpe said. By offering dual enrollment -- in which students earn college credits while still in high school -- Griggs can serve as a "vital link" between higher education and grade school, she said.

An added benefit? Young people are already comfortable with the online learning technologies Griggs is seeking to embrace, Thorpe said.

With the expansion of its online distance learning offerings, Thorpe said Griggs is also recognizing an increase in nontraditional Adventist students -- some choose not to attend Adventist schools, and others postpone college education to work so they don't incur "the kind of educational debt facing some of our young people," she said.
“The more courses we offer online, the more affordable we can make them and the better we’re able to reach that market,” she said.

A credit hour at a typical Adventist university runs between $400 and $700; a comparable online course from Griggs can cost half as much due to decreased overhead, Thorpe said.

Still, online students enjoy many of the benefits of traditional classroom study, she said. New distance learning technologies equip students with access to libraries, advisors and professors.

Attending classes via video conferencing is another possibility as Griggs’ online programs expand, she said.

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1 Comment

pls. give me an update about the future of international students of Griggs MBA programme

regards,

Lijo V George

Lijo V George | June 22, 2011 6:15 AM | Reply

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