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Inter-America: Camporee opens with fireworks, drama and inspiring messages

Posted: 19 Apr 2011 09:00 PM PDT
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April 20, 2011, Mexico City, Mexico...Libna Stevens/IAD

"We are very happy that you have come from far away to this event," said Pastor Benjamin Carballo, youth ministries director for the church in Inter-America and top organizer of the event, as he welcomed the thousandsof pathfinders. "You are all conquerors of giants," he said as thousands screamed at the sound of the theme Conquering Giants—a theme based on the story of David overcoming Goliath.

As the Pathfinder flag was flown and the Pathfinder pledge and law echoed throughout the gathering area, young people welcomed their respective youth leaders with the energy and enthusiasm as they soaked in the first rainless night this week.

Top youth leaders of the Adventist World Church and leaders of the IAD were present on stage as well four generations of youth leaders who have led thousands of Pathfinders during the past 30 years in Inter-America. Leaders like Pastor Israel Leito, who led the first division-wide camporee as youth leader in 1983 and currently serves as president of the church in Inter-America; Pastor Alfredo Garcia-Marenko, former youth ministries director and organizer of the second pathfinder camporee held in 1998; Pastor Eliezer Melendez, who for over 50 years served as youth leader and attended 962 camporees in his lifetime, and Pastor Bernardo Rodriguez, former youth ministries director for Inter-America who envisioned and planned for the historic camporee this week.

"This church prepares and forms leaders," said Carballo. "Just know that you can conquer your giant because you have been anointed for a special mission just like these leaders," he added.

Francisco Javier Sanchez Cervantez, top leader of Iztacalco district in Mexico City, thanked church leaders and welcomed Pathfinders to his city.

"We welcome you and want you to enjoy your camporee in this the largest outdoor facility in our country," said Sanchez. He thanked the Seventh-day Adventist Church for its contribution to molding positive young people in his city.

Representing the nation's president, Felipe Calderon, was Paulo Tort, director of Religious Affairs, who on behalf of the federal government welcomed and thanked the body of church leaders dedicated to promoting a system of moral values to assure a safer society.

"The government appreciates the important role the Seventh-day Adventist church has had in forming children, young people and adults towards a better society," said Tort. "Your church has always conducted itself with enormous respect for government authorities," he said as he addressed Pastor Tomas Torres, president of the church in Central Mexico and top representative of the church in Mexico.
The Inter-American Pathfinders Camporee is more than a platform to showcase the work of youth organizations. It is also an introduction to the work and mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. This was the goal of an interesting rally called Grand Prix.

Booths were set up in a circle to represent a raceway, like the one that is actually located within the Ciudad Deportiva, the Rodriguez Brothers Raceway. Each booth is sponsored by one of the departments from the Inter-American Division (IAD). The department leaders are there to greet the children and tell them about the church's ministries.

"We expect children to visit each booth and be told about the work each department does," says Juan José García, who is responsible for organizing the Grand Prix. "We want children to understand the whole mission of the church and the way that mission can be carried out at the local church."

According to Pastor Benjamin Carballo, youth ministries director and organizer of the camporee said he was especially excited to have the Grand Prix exhibits to guide pathfinders in their daily life and stages.

"We have booths that tells when a pathfinder falls in love [family ministries]; goes to Adventist school [education]; lives a healthy life; grows up in Jesus [children's ministries]; manages his life wisely [stewardship]; is a friend of humanity [ADRA]; eats healthy foods [health food company]; and belongs to a to a pastoral families [ministerial]," commented Carballo.

Pathfinders at all booths were given small gifts that portrayed the work of each department. Other souvenirs were given away when children participated in games or after completing some crafts. This was especially true at the children ministries booth, where the director, Dinorah Rivera, eagerly engaged with the kids and directed the games.

"In our booth, children will listen to a puppet show in three scenes," said Pastor Javier Mejía, stewardship director for the church in Inter-America. "A group of puppet Pathfinders will talk about how children can save money, spend wisely, and share with joy what they have."

Pathfinders will visit the Grand Prix all day Wednesday and Thursday during the camporee.

For other stories on Inter-America's Pathfinder Camporee, visit us at www.interamerica.org

Tune in to watch the live webcast every evening program at 7:00 p.m. Central Time or Mexico City Time at http://camporee.interamerica.org/

To view a photo gallery of the Camporee visit us at www.flickr.com/photos/interamerica

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IAD Camporee Facebook in Spanish click here
Some 800 pathfinder club leaders and leaders gathered for a special message and recognition on Apr. 19, 2011.

With an act of dedication and commitment of the leaders of the Pathfinders, the Inter-American Division's 3rd Pathfinder Camporee began this morning in Ciudad Deportiva of Mexico City.

Pastor Abner De los Santos, an IAD vice-president and camporee's adviser presented the challenging message to the leaders.

"It is always possible to overcome giants when we surrender our hearts to Jesus Christ. There's no giant that can't be resisted," De Los Santos.
Carlos Roblero is a professor in the Montebello's Lagos District of Chiapas. He assists the Pacayal Adventist Church in the Altos Chiapas Mission. As a church member and layperson, he has been involved in preaching the gospel and is currently teaching a group of Pentecostal believers that have begun keeping the Sabbath. But, Carlos also helps the young people of his local church.

He was not able to camp out with his Pathfinder club but he applied to be a volunteer at the camporee. "I am here to praise God," says Carlos gladly. "I have struggled to be here. I worked hard to pay for the registration, and here I am, thanks to God."

Together with Roblero, another 848 volunteers from Mexico and other countries from throughout the Inter-American Division responded to the call to help during the large gathering. "Volunteer applicants had to be invested master guides, fill out a form, and obtain their pastor's signature or local elder's and the signature of the local director of the youth ministries of their conference," explains Ursula Sors, assistant youth director for the Youth Ministries Department of the South Mexican Union.

There are various reasons for collaborating in the volunteers group. Some come to the camporee because they already have a record of participation in local events in their conference or union.

That was the case for Eliseo Sanchez, Benjamin Salgado and Kepler Vela from the Santana Adventist Church from Mexico's Central Union. All three were involved in youth clubs from an early age.

"That developed a spirit of service which we carry, and we are happy to come and help," said Eliseo.

Similarly, some church members are already recognized as enthusiastic participants in youth events and their leaders helped them to come. That was the case with Julian Rios from Macuspana, Tabasco, in the South Mexican Union. The treasurer of his conference told him about the meeting and encouraged him to participate.

The same happened to Dr. Daniel Castillo from Tuxpan, Veracruz, in the Inter-Oceanic Union. Because of his long track record of participating in Adventist youth organizations, he was invited by Pastor Benjamin Carballo, youth ministries director of the church in Inter-America.

"In the end, all the credit goes to our own pastors because they shaped us, they developed our taste for service and for being in the youth activities. My pastors were vital in my spiritual shaping and for that reason I am here," says Castillo.

Of course, coming here also represents a unique camping experience as well as social attraction. That's the way it is seen by Esmeralda Pacheco from Ixtapaluca in the State of Mexico.

"I have been able to meet many people from other places, and that's beautiful. I am very...
More than 10,000 pathfinders invaded Six Flags--the most famous amusement park in Mexico City where they enjoy their stay.

April 19, 2011 – Mexico City, Mexico…Fabiola Quinto/IAD

More than 10,000 pathfinders invaded Six Flags--the most famous amusement park in Mexico City where they enjoy their stay.

They did not neglect the opportunity to enjoy each amusement activity and they didn't mind the long wait in lines.

The *Superman and Batman the Ride* were the games most visited by pathfinders.

For members of the Pioneers Pathfinder Club from Hidalgo, Veracruz, Inter-Oceanic Unión, it was a special and fun experience; also for kids of the Gideon Club from *la Omelca*, from the same union. When they came down from the Kilahuea Tower, their adrenaline was kicking in full force.

Other clubs joined the amusement like the Kobayowe Club from Colpac University and the pioneers from the Narvarte Church of Monterrey, Nuevo Leon, in North Mexico.

After getting soaked in the Splash Game, the members of Club Jarvel from Villahermosa, Tabasco, South Mexico, enjoyed themselves ingesting a delicious pizza.

The members of Club Bellatrix from Izucar of Matamoros, Puebla, Inter-Oceanic Union also enjoyed a soak.

It was a time to share in together and make friends from the different countries.

“We want our directors to let us meet people from other countries because that is what we came here for, to make friends,” commented young girls, members of the Jarvel Club from Villahermosa, Tabasco.

Many kids introduced themselves to each other, asking for telephone and address to continue in contact.

Pathfinders enjoyed as never before the Batman Show and some of the leaders of the various clubs present, also participated.

Pastor Carballo enjoyed some time with some pathfinders from Baja California and from Puerto Rico.

The Guatemala delegation came back happy from Six Flags because this was the first time in Mexico. Also, all in Six Flags they shouted and said that their