Join the Fight Against Obesity

by Katia Reinert, director, NAD Health Ministries

Adventists continue to follow Jesus’ method of ministry by meeting the immediate needs of individuals, families, and communities — both locally and nationwide.

During the recent “The Weight of the Nation” Conference hosted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Washington D.C., we were once again reminded of perhaps the greatest health need facing our territory: the obesity epidemic. The Conference included the release of a report from the Institute of Medicine (IOM) on ways to accelerate progress in the fight against this epidemic and new forecasts about obesity rates. Currently at 36%, the obesity rates may rise to 42% by 2030.

Also featured was the premiere of HBO’s new obesity documentary, Weight of the Nation, sponsored by the IOM and CDC. The four-part documentary highlights facts about the epidemic, including the childhood obesity trends, while providing strategies needed to reverse the problem. Watch last night’s episode.

Adventists continue to have a unique opportunity to share a message of health and partner with others in this effort. The NAD Health Ministries is encouraging churches to sign up as host sites to show the newly released documentary to the community. After the showing, sites may have a discussion with both member and community attendees, inviting them to sign up for the Adventists InStep for Life initiative and encouraging families to keep track of their physical activity as well as participating in the upcoming Lets Move Day events, September 23-29. Every Adventist is invited to take part in our Division wide initiative to make each church a center for health, healing and wholeness in the community.
“Like” NAD Health Ministries on Facebook for continual updates, and share with your friends.

National Geographic International (NGI) will interview Steve Wohlberg for a segment in their upcoming documentary on the phenomenal number of large-scale bird, fish, and animal deaths around the world. The documentary will draw on Wohlberg’s expertise to tie together these deaths with the increase of natural disasters. Wohlberg will use the Bible to show the nearness of the end times. NGI will film Wohlberg this Sabbath, May 19, as he speaks at the Capitol Memorial Church in Washington D.C., and during a further interview at the church on Sabbath afternoon.

Additionally, Hope Channel confirms that Pastor Steve Wohlberg is the featured guest on the live production of Disclosure: The Future Declassified, Thursday, May 17, hosted by Shawn Boonstra. MORE

Read about the new White House report, issued April 28, offering guidance on public/private partnerships between the U.S. Government and faith-based groups. From Religion News Service as reported by Adventist Review e-newsletter, AR INTOUCH.

“The many faces of fundraising” has received a 2011 Honorable Mention by the Associated Church Press (ACP). It is an article written by Lilya Wagner, director of Philanthropic Service for Institutions (PSI), and Halvard Thomsen, assistant to the president for administration, Adventist Risk Management, published in the February, 2011 issue of Ministry magazine.

Other Adventist winners of the 2011 ACP Awards include Adventist Review, KidsView and Ministry magazine. Congratulations!

The following are positive stories that appeared this week in the news about Seventh-day Adventists in the North American Division territory.

Adventists in the News

Showing others the way
Greenville News

Man on a mission
McMinnville News-Register

Upcoming Events

NAD Adventist Single Adult Ministries Convention, May 25-26
Mid-America Hispanic Youth Leadership Convention, May 25-27
Adventist Single Adult Ministries Convention, Denver, Colorado, May 25-27
Nonprofit Leadership Certification Program, Session I, June 3-7
Prayer Call, June 7
“Revive!” by satellite, June 9-16 Andrews University- Family Celebration Weekend, July 19-22; Info: 269-471-6186
Mid-America Camporee, July 25-28
Wisconsin Conference Hispanic Marriage Retreat, July 27-29; Info: 503-951-1266, or 414-446-5964
NAD Teachers Convention, Aug. 5-8
ASI Annual International Convention, Aug. 8-11
Columbia Pathfinder Camporee, Aug. 9-11
Garland Church, Texas
Announcements

May 8

Seventh-day Adventists' health guidelines, longevity still powerful draw
Oregonlive.com
May 9

Ben Carson's creationist views spark controversy over commencement speech
Washington Post (blog)
May 8

May 8

The next Prayer Call will be June 7. Join the teleconference call anytime between 10 p.m. ET Thursday until 5 a.m. ET Friday. Call (712) 432-0031, and at the prompt dial 432650# to enter the teleconference. A downloadable Jpeg file that can be used for a bulletin insert or poster is posted on the Prayer Ministries website. Just click on "Full Story" to see the picture (and to make it larger or smaller) and the suggestions for making the call more enjoyable. Right-click on the picture to save, copy, or print. Invite your congregation to join the call.

The Great Hope audio recordings are now available online. Downloadable in mp3 format, they can be loaded to your iPod, CDs, iphone, computer, etc., for listening while you are exercising, driving, or working. Download the ZIP files, or one chapter at a time. The Spanish recordings will be available soon.

The Great Hope can still be ordered through your local Adventist Book Center (800-765-6955). The price is now 1-199/.79 ea., 200-999/.59 ea., 1,000-1999/.53ea., and 2,000 or more/.49 ea., plus S&H.

Just for fun, watch "The Missing Link," a video in which "a humble Veja-Link looks up at the stars and asks a question about where he came from." It's posted on the Guide website. Share it with your kids.

More

REACH North America

Education for discipleship - Every youth and adult learning, growing and becoming more like Christ in mind, body and spirit.
Besides a Christian education, what is more educational for discipleship than Summer Camp and Vacation Bible School? If you talk to a group of adults and ask about some of their most significant childhood memories, chances are that many of them will mention one of these two programs!

Our Division runs more than 70 youth camps because we believe in giving our youth rich experiences that will keep them connected with their Creator and the Church through nature, relationships, experiences, great stories. We want them to learn indoor and outdoor activities such as hiking, camping, horseback riding, swimming, arts and crafts, and much more, so they will have these abilities to add to their healthy enjoyment and usefulness in life.

Vacation Bible School (VBS) is another adventure that children look forward to in the summer. It provides nearly-free "babysitting and child care" for neighborhood parents, and it draws them to the church at the end of the week to see the program put on by the children, and the crafts that they have been working on all week. It's a great "opening wedge!" Churches are often built by the kind of children's programs that they provide. Parents — even non-attending and non-Adventist parents — often will bring their children to a church-sponsored program that is especially for children. In some towns, there are very few quality children's events provided that are safe, educational, and fun. Vacation Bible School fills that billing. MORE

This year there are four VBS programs available: "Kid's in the Kitchen," "Castles and Crowns," "KGCN" (Kid's and God's Communication Network), and "Go Fishin' Mission Adventure". For more ideas and resources go to http://www.KidsMinistryIdeas.com, or http://www.Kids.AdventistMission.org. MORE

Help members discover their personal spiritual gifts and where and how they can serve God best. Connections provides a series of discovery sessions with inventories and assessments. Individual consultations connect members with a ministry that fits. This complete system for connecting every member in ministry has been edited and customized for use in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It includes: two DVDs (consultant's guide and drama vignette for presentation to church); leaders manual; PowerPoint slides; consultant & implementation guide; and one participant guide ORDER
Hope Channel offers free programs for local cable access channels. By using the cable company's free studio and equipment churches can add a local message such as an invitation to church, seminar, health fairs, and other events.

To obtain Hope Channel programs for use on your cable access station, contact Hope Channel at (301) 680-6689 or email info@HopeTV.org. MORE

“Strength”

Pastor Dan Jackson, President
North American Division

Stay Socially Connected with NAD

Helpful website(s) and Resources:
- Single Adult Ministries
- ASAM Curriculum
- Adventist Singles Ministries Quick Start Guide
- Helpful tips, links and ASAM Resources
- Women's Ministries
- Women's Ministries Emphasis Day
- Share the Great Hope

Adventist World
NAD Edition

News: "Reviving Members and Communities" p. 11
Update: "After the Disaster" p. 14
Perspective: "Of, by, and for Our Youth and Young Adults" p. 17
NAD Letters: p. 18
Feature: "Single Minded" p. 32

Union Magazines and Websites

Atlantic Union GLEANER
Canadian Adventist MESSENGER
Columbia Union VISITOR
Lake Union HERALD
Mid-America OUTLOOK
North Pacific Union GLEANER
Pacific Union RECORDER
Southern Union TIDINGS
Southwestern Union RECORD
Guam-Micronesia Mission
5-16-12 2012 – Is This The End?

New book helps to demystify the topic


With the increased interest in this latest doomsday scenario, Wohlberg’s advice is clear. “The three angels’ message demystifies the topic,” he says. “If we boil it down to the simplest language, Heaven’s answer is to keep the Ten Commandments through faith in Jesus Christ.” This truth underscores Wohlberg’s passion: to show the connection between the Ten Commandments and the gospel message and to encourage God’s people to lift up the law and the cross as the center of everything.

On October 5 and 6, Wohlberg will conduct “2012 and the End of the World”—a Bible Prophecy Seminar—in the Southern New England Conference. Hope Channel will broadcast the live event, and make it available on simulcast to all churches who register for the event. Reporting from Worcester, Mass., area coordinator, Pastor Barry Kimbrough says, “We’ve been hard at work for more than a year on this program. Our vision is to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ and the special end-time Bible truths to a large audience. Churches can use it as a reaping or sowing program for it is a message that will educate old, new, and prospective members on the reasons for our faith.”

Publicity surrounding Wohlberg’s upcoming appearance in an hour-long National Geographic International documentary is expected to add further interest to the seminar. The documentary will draw on Wohlberg’s expertise to tie together the large-scale bird, fish, and animal deaths around the world with the increase of natural disasters, and will use the Bible to show the nearness of the end times.

Copies of 2012 and the End of the World will be given to everyone attending the Prophecy Seminar and participating churches are encouraged to provide it to their attendees. Available through local Adventist Book Centers (http://www.adventistbookcenter.com) (800-765-6955), 2012 and the End of the World can also be ordered online at www.AdventistBookCenter.com (http://www.AdventistBookCenter.com).


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Questions? Contact publicist@pacificpress.com
Mid-America Union
Pathfinder Camporee 2012
 Jul 25, Wed - The theme for the Mid-America Union Camporee is...

Wisconsin Conference Hispanic Marriage Retreat
 Jul 27, Fri

NAD Teachers Convention
 Aug 5, Sun - Journey to Excellence - Moving Hearts and Minds Upward More...

ASI Annual International Convention
 Aug 8, Wed - "It's Time to Be About Our Father's...

Nonprofit Leadership Certification Program, Session II
 Sep 23, Sun - The Nonprofit Leadership Certification Program (NLCP) is...

La Red (Hispanic NET Evangelism series)
 Oct 13, Sat

Society of Adventist Communicators Convention
 Oct 18, Thu - Join Seventh-day Adventist communication professionals from...

More Calendar
(churchnewsopen.php)

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NewsPoints Newsletter
(article.php?id=500)

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Your Church can have a beautiful website for free!
Click for Details (http://www.adventistchurchconnect.com)

What has helped you most in your personal Christian growth?
Take the Poll (poll.php?pollid=7)

http://www.nadadventist.org/article/1073742283/news/archived-news-sto...
White House Releases Guidelines for Faith-based Partnerships

BY ADELLE M. BANKS

A new White House report that offers guidance on public/private partnerships between the government and faith-based groups leaves critical questions unanswered and does not resolve the issue of religious groups' ability to discriminate in hiring and firing, church-state watchdogs said.

The 50-page report, issued April 28, comes 18 months after President Obama issued an executive order calling for more transparency as faith-based groups work with the government to meet social needs.

The report breaks little new ground, but reaffirms that:

-- A faith-based organization can provide federally funded social services without removing religious art, scriptures and symbols from their facilities.

-- Explicitly religious activities can't be supported by federal funds but are permitted if they are funded privately and occur at a separate time and location from programs that receive government money.

-- Beneficiaries who object to the religious character of a provider must be referred promptly to an alternative.

Joshua DuBois, director of the White House Office of Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships, called the guidance "an important step" in implementing the recommendations from a blue-ribbon advisory board.

"A diverse group of faith and nonprofit leaders proposed ways to strengthen the government's relationship with faith-based organizations in a manner that protects religious liberty and the separation of church and state, and we are glad to move these recommendations forward," he said.

The report includes detailed examples on separating federally funded programs from privately funded religious activities, including distinct web pages and careful reporting of travel and use of electronic equipment.

Rabbi David Saperstein, who directs the Washington office of the Union for Reform Judaism and served on the advisory council, said the new guidance is "a great step forward," but he and others remain unsatisfied with the administration's apparent silence on addressing the ability of federally funded organizations to discriminate on the basis of religion when hiring or firing staff.

The White House has previously said the issue would be handled on a case-by-case basis and has resisted finalizing any formal policy. "We do hope that the president will move expeditiously to ensure that no one is discriminated against when it comes to hiring with tax dollars," Saperstein said.

The Rev. Barry Lynn, executive director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State, also welcomed the report's safeguards, but said loopholes remain. "This guidance makes some significant improvements to the Bush faith-based initiative, but it falls far short of what it ought to do," said Lynn, who served on a reform task force for DuBois' office. "A fundamentalist Christian church can still run a publicly funded social service program and hang out a sign that says, 'Government job opening: No Catholics, Jews, Muslims or Atheists need apply.'"
Carl Nesmith likes to say that it took two years, two hours and two minutes to change his life.

Nesmith is pastor of Maranatha Fellowship Seventh-Day Adventist Church, but he didn’t always use the Bible as a guidebook for his life.

A native of Philadelphia, Nesmith got involved with some less-than-savory characters, making money, he says, from illegal activities such as racketeering and fraud.

But one woman took the time to witness to him, encouraging him to change his life, and to visit her church.

“I didn’t care about her church, I didn’t care about her witnessing,” Nesmith recalls, sitting amid the construction work in his church’s new sanctuary.

But the “undesirable stuff” with which he was involved began taking a toll. Personal problems mounted, and he wound up in the hospital following an accident.

The first person to visit him in the hospital was that same woman who had shared her faith with him, an act of kindness that “meant more to me than what she believed.” It inspired Nesmith to visit her church, where he felt as if the minister was preaching Nesmith’s own life story from the pulpit.

The pastor “made an appeal, and I felt like my skeletal system was melting inside of my body. I got up and started walking down to the front, crying,” he recalls.

Just a week after his decision, Nesmith was baptized, and shortly after that, he felt God calling him to the ministry.

But he credits that one woman for breaking down the barriers in his mind and heart.

“It took her two years to witness to me, two hours to get to the hospital to visit me, and she stayed two minutes,” he says. “Isn’t that something? She just came up to pray. I had friends who were benefiting from my ill-gotten gains in the community who couldn’t make it.”

That was more than 30 years ago, and Nesmith has spent the ensuing decades trying to make a positive difference in as many lives as possible. “Relational
“I wanted to use love as the main motif of my ministry,” he says. “I always put the love of God before the denomination. And then as they are receptive to me being a loving Christian, that allows me to segue to sharing what I believe. But before I share what I believe, I show that I believe, I practice what I believe.”

In the 1980s, he founded a ministry called Heaven’s Grocery Store, which began in Atlanta and eventually spread to Europe and Africa. The idea behind Heaven’s Grocery Store was to provide food to low-income people, but it expanded into much more, Nesmith says.

In addition to food distribution, the organization offered healthy cooking classes and wellness programs, as well as money management seminars.

“Feeding people is a good thing, but you can’t stop there. People will take all the free food they can get, but if you want to impact their lives, you have to go beyond the feeding part. ... The food ministry became a platform for so many other things,” he says.

Nesmith has been in Greenville for four years, responsible for two churches, Antioch and New Life, which have since merged to form Maranatha.

Maranatha Fellowship is still under construction, with its first service set for May 19. It’s been a long and bumpy road to the new facility, located on 10.5 acres on Saluda Dam Road.

The congregation, which numbers about 110 members, raised the money to begin the project, and then hired a contractor. As it happened, the company they chose was unable to receive licensing to begin, and Maranatha lost the $80,000 they had paid the company.

“It was almost devastating,” Nesmith says, but the church persevered and hired a local builder, Advent Construction, to complete the project. Nesmith credits the contractor with enabling the church to stay on course with the building.

While they’ve taken out a loan and received an allocation from the denomination, the small congregation raised much of the money on its own, thanks to “sacrificial giving,” Nesmith says.

All in all, he can only describe it as “miracle.”
Nesmith, who’s 62, envisions the church as a community resource as much as a house of worship. There are plans for a walking trail and a neighborhood garden, and he hopes to offer picnics and movie nights for folks in the community.

“We’re not going to allow a denomination to create a barrier for us working together, interacting together and being neighborly,” he says.

And Nesmith’s own story gives him confidence that the church can reach anyone, no matter how hopeless the person’s life looks on the outside.

“The God we serve can fix you up, clean you up, straighten you up,” he says. “It keeps me humble to know what God did for me. My approach to ministry is always with a thankful heart.”

PROFILE

Name: Pastor Carl Nesmith of Maranatha Fellowship Seventh-Day Adventist Church
Family: Wife, Carole; son, Khalid; daughter, Karla; three grandchildren
Education: Bachelor’s degrees in business and theology from Oakwood University, graduate degree from Andrews University, the Seventh-Day Adventist Theological Seminary
Grand opening: The church, located at 106 Saluda Dam Road, will have a ribbon-cutting ceremony, followed by worship, at 9 a.m. May 19. The event is open to the public.
Seventh-day Adventists' health guidelines, longevity still powerful draw

Published: Tuesday, May 08, 2012, 6:00 PM     Updated: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 6:09 AM

**Nancy Haught, The Oregonian**

By

Long before the culture around them embraced vegetarian diets, the search for vitamin D and the elusive goal of a good night's sleep, Seventh-day Adventists had staked their lives on health principles laid down by their founders more than 150 years ago.

Ellen White, who wrote scores of books for her fellow Adventists, summarized the "Eight Laws of Health" in the 1860s. Today, as many mainstream Christian denominations are losing members in the United States, Adventists are growing steadily, partly because of their emphasis on wellness.

But it's the longevity of Adventists that has garnered them attention in recent years. A landmark study by Dan Buettner identified Loma Linda, Calif., with its high density of Adventist residents, as one of the world's **five blue zones**, where the number of centenarians (people who live 100 years or longer) is 10 times that of the United States.

An Adventist health study of 34,000 California church members found that, on average, men lived 7.3 years longer and women 4.4 years longer than their fellow Californians. Researchers identified five behaviors embraced by Adventists for more than 100 years, that could increase life span by up to 10 years: not smoking, eating a plant-based diet, eating nuts several times a week, regular exercise and maintaining normal body weight.

The point of aspiring to wellness is not simply to live longer, but to serve God more effectively, says Scott LeMert, senior pastor of **Sunnyside Seventh-day Adventist Church** in Southeast Portland. Adventists believe that human beings are a combination of body and spirit that results in a soul.

"If you have a light bulb and you run electricity through it, you produce light," LeMert says. When physical well-being and religious faith come together "in the image of God," a person has the power to think more clearly and act in better ways. LeMert is quick to
Seventh-day Adventists' health guidelines, longevity still powerful draw

point out that not all Adventists follow the eight laws to the letter. Some church members
eat meat or dairy products and eggs, for example. Not all of them exercise every day or
avoid smoking or alcohol. And while he and other Adventists believe the eight laws are
based in Scripture, they are not pre-requisites for salvation, he adds.

Beverly and James G. Foster of Beaverton, who both grew up in Adventist homes, never
saw the health guidelines as tenets of faith as much as personal and family habits. The
couple, in their mid-50s, were raised as vegetarians who didn't drink coffee and observed
the Sabbath from sundown Friday to sundown Saturday as a matter of course. They
raised their two adult children the same way.

Both Fosters are active in the Hillsboro Seventh-day Adventist Church, which holds
regular potluck suppers (where dishes that contain meat are clearly labeled). Exercise
classes, stop smoking seminars and Bible studies are common. The Fosters emphasize
that the guidelines are not guaranteed tickets to longer lives.

"They're recommendations, promoted in Scripture, not as entrees into heaven but to
make us more healthy, productive and useful," James G. Foster says. It's not easy, he
adds, for a life-long Adventist to separate his faith from his healthy habits. "This is the
way I was raised."

Recent research has looked at the connection between good health and spiritual attitudes.
Studies suggest that people who attend religious services regularly and feel supported by
like-minded communities say they are happier. Ellen Idler, director of the Religion
and Public Health Collaborative at Emory University, says faith may be essential when religious groups
promote a healthy lifestyle.

"If you want people to follow a restrictive lifestyle over their entire life, you have to have something that holds them
together and perpetuates it," she says. "You could take religion out of the equation, and it would fall apart."

The idea of treating a whole person, inside and out, is becoming a goal of medical care, in general, but Adventists
have promoted it for a long time.

"Faith, hope and fear, these are powerful emotions," says Ed Hoover, manager of wellness services at Adventist
Medical Center in Southeast Portland. "They draw people into life and give people a reason to be involved in
health-promoting practices. Fear and anger and despair kind of cause the human being to collapse in on itself.

"Emotional states impact the immune system in powerful ways, more powerful perhaps than diet and exercise," he
says.

Margaret Ohlson, who lives in Husum, Wash., and works in Hood River, became an Adventist in 1984, attracted by
the emphasis on vegetarianism and the idea that a church community can support people as they work on changing
their behavior and making healthier choices.
"The Bible teaches in Romans and elsewhere that those who have control over their appetites and passions have a clearer perception," Ohlson says. "Change is progressive. We need to be heading in a healthier direction all the time, but not go too fast or not do it right. Then we get discouraged." That's the advice she gives shoppers who come into the natural food store where she works, interested in becoming vegetarians or vegans. Sometimes she talks about her Adventist faith, sometimes she doesn't.

"For me, this is a God-directed path," she says. "A person could enjoy full health following these principles, but the fullness for me in life is following God. Good health is just a tool to accomplish that more fully."

**Loma Linda's only blue zone in the U.S.**

Dan Buettner wrote the book on blue zones, literally. He and his research team have identified five regions in the world where the number of centenarians – people who've lived 100 or more years – is 10 times that in the United States. The phrase "blue zone" refers to the blue ink that researchers used to circle study regions on a map.

Three blue zones were featured in *The Secrets of Long Life,* Buettner's 2005 cover story in *National Geographic:* Okinawa, Japan; Sardinia, Italy; and Loma Linda, Calif., with its high concentration of Seventh-Day Adventists. Nicoya, Costa Rica, and Ikaria, Greece, are also blue zones.

Buettner has written two books on blue zones and helped create a [website](http://blog.oregonlive.com/living_impact/print.html?entry=/2012/05/sev...) where visitors can [calculate their own life expectancy](http://blog.oregonlive.com/living_impact/print.html?entry=/2012/05/sev...) and review life-lengthening principles.

Buettner's "Power 9" points are:

1. Just move – as often as you can.
2. Purpose now. Why do you wake up in the morning?
4. 80 percent rule. Stop eating when your stomach is 80 percent full.
5. Plant slant. Limit meat and eat beans, lentils and nuts.
6. Wine @ 5. One or two drinks a day, preferably wine, with friends or at meals.
7. Belong. An overwhelming majority of centenarians belong to a faith-based community.
8. Loved ones first. Keep your family close, nurture your partner if you have one and parent well if you have children.
9. Right tribe. Find a supportive social circle that shares your values.
Seventh-day Adventists' origins and numbers

Seventh-day Adventists were part of the Christian Connection, a group of believers that flourished in the 1840s as William Miller of New York state began to predict the second coming of Jesus.

Over time, some adventists argued that the Sabbath should be observed on the seventh day of the week – Saturday – as it had been established in the Old Testament, or Hebrew Bible. Seventh-day Adventists officially organized on May 21, 1863, with 125 churches and about 3,500 members.

The 2010 U.S. Religion Census, released May 1, estimates the number of Adventists in the nation at about 1.2 million, 40,000 of them in Oregon.

The growth rate for Adventists in Oregon is about 29.9 percent, compared to 14.5 percent for Catholics (the largest faith group in Oregon) and 41.8 percent for Mormons (the second largest).

-- Nancy Haught

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Man on a mission

On March 26, Rev. Lynn Bryson, who gave his final sermons Saturday after almost 13 years leading the McMinnville Seventh-day Adventist Church, walked into a newly renovated handicapped-accessible seminary at Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Mich.

He was getting his first taste of a new cross-country adventure — pursuit of a master’s and doctorate in theology at the Michigan school. He will be joined in that life-altering pursuit by his wife, Debbie, his teenage sons, Michael and Matthew, and his 3-year-old daughter, Meleah.

Bryson’s March 26 visit came 26 years to the day after he suffered such severe injuries in a plane crash that he was forced to drop out of Andrews. That, of course, was a day he’ll never forget, making his pending return all the more momentous for him.

Just 24, he had joined a mission group on a church build in Mexico. They had piled into a Piper Cherokee 6 for the return trip, and it had lost power on takeoff.

Bryson remembers thinking, “We’re going to crash. That’s not for me.”
As the plane flipped, he got word from the Holy Spirit he would be OK.

“I felt such a peace rush over me,” he said. “It was such a sense of ahhhh.”

The plane ended up on its top, leaving Bryson and his comrades hanging upside down by their seat belts. When he released his seat belt and fell to the ceiling, he realized his legs felt numb.

Bryson said the two people who responded both had specialized trauma training, which he believes was part of God’s plan.

When he saw the first responder’s face, he told the man, “I love you,” explaining, “He was my rescuer, my savior, just like Jesus is our savior.”

After being lifted up and pulled out of the plane, Bryson looked back and saw nothing but debris. Little was left of the plane.

He suffered a broken leg and a lower back injury that left him mostly paralyzed from the waist down — the worst injuries of anyone.

He desperately needed to get back to the U.S. for treatment, but lacked the proper paperwork. It took $80 to cut through the red tape.

“It’s the culture,” he said.

Bryson was evacuated to San Diego, the city of his birth and home of his grandparents. His mother, Arlene, came down from Oregon to be at his bedside.

He spent his first week in a coma. His mother worked to stimulate his mind and finally broke through on Easter Sunday.

He underwent a back fusion.

He was told he would probably never walk again, because the nerves were affected. But he was born with a defect which made his spinal canal shorter than normal, and that helped keep his spinal cord intact.

Five weeks later, Bryson spoke at a youth rally — from a wheelchair. But he was determined to leave that chair behind.

Back in Roseburg with his family, he began practicing on the parallel bars with braces on his legs. He also underwent water therapy, under the direction of a therapist.

Then he was dealt a new blow. He was diagnosed with a brain tumor.

“That was scarier than the plane crash,” Bryson said.

Doctors said only about one third of the tumor could be removed without destroying his brain stem. And they said attempting to remove it carried the risk of death of relegation to a permanent vegetative state.
He remembers being upset with God over the diagnosis. He decided he would quit fighting and leave his fate to the Lord.

He was told that it could be two days to two months before he awoke following the surgery. If he ended up resurrected, vegetative or completely paraplegic, he would deal with, he decided.

And for the second time, he felt a flood of peace rush through him. “I was so relieved it was His problem,” Bryson recalled.

He went into surgery on Mother’s Day 1987. He didn’t want to die, but was willing to let God determine what would happen.

“It was the greatest moment of growth in my life,” he said. “When we fear, we have cramps, stress. If we give it to the Lord, he’ll give us peace.”

Bryson said the operation was performed Dr. Ed Newelt, a brilliant surgeon. And to everyone’s surprise, he woke up in the recovery room.

It took six weeks of radiation, but doctors were eventually able to eradicate the rest of the tumor, he said. In December 1987, he was pronounced cancer-free.

By then, Bryson had been on a medical leave of absence from his studies, sponsored by the Oregon Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, for 3 1/2 years. Returning to the university was impossible, as the buildings weren’t wheelchair-accessible, so he was given the opportunity to serve as a pastoral intern at a church in Portland.

During Bryson’s trials he had received many letters from well-wishers. One of them — Debbie, a woman he had met just before his departure for Mexico — would eventually become his wife.

In addition to cards, she had sent him a passage from the Bible — Psalm 116, verses 1-9. It begins:

“I love the Lord for he heard my voice; he heard my cry for mercy. Because he turned his ear to me, I will call on him as long as I live. The cords of death entangled me, the anguish of the grave came over me; I was overcome by distress and sorrow. Then, I called on the name of the Lord, ‘Lord, save me!’”

The passage ends, “For you Lord, have delivered me from death, my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling, that I may walk before the Lord in the land of the living.”

Bryson said he cried when he read the words.

“She was praying for me two years before I ever responded,” he said. When he finally did respond, he asked her why she continued.

“When you pray, you learn to love,” she told him.

Debbie came to visit him in 1989. They began to develop a relationship and married the following year.

The first time he ever walked for any length in public was at his wedding. And he had to use a pair of forearm crutches to manage that.
Bryson also was told it was unlikely he would ever be able to father children. But he proved doctors wrong on that as well.

In Michigan, Bryson is looking forward to getting more time to spend with his children. He also wants to give his teenagers entree to Andrews Academy’s international campus.

“Life is not getting any slower,” he said. “My kids are growing up and I need time with them.”

He is excited to take his children to the many historical sites in the area, and giving himself time to get refreshed.

“It’s like a completion again,” he said.

When he was accepted back into the school, Bryson said, it was a beautiful day. He felt he had experienced an evangelic epiphany.

“I felt like this was home,” he said. “Where the presence of the Lord is, that’s where home is.”

But Bryson leaves with mixed feelings, too.

He likes the size of McMinnville, the fact that he can see people you know in the grocery store and the friends, including fellow pastors he’s met along the way. “There’s such a completeness in a small town like this,” he said.

But his all-encompassing commitment is to his calling, and he will go wherever that takes him. “What we’re doing in ministry, we do for eternity,” said Bryson, who first felt the calling to serve when he was just 3.
Ben Carson's creationist views spark controversy over commencement speech

By Valerie Strauss

An unusual controversy has erupted at Emory University over the choice of famed neurosurgeon Ben Carson to deliver this year’s commencement address because he does not believe in evolution.

Nearly 500 professors, student and alumni signed a letter (see full text below) expressing concern that Carson, as a 7th Day Adventist, believes in creationist theory that holds that all life on Earth was created by God about 6,000 years ago. It rejects Darwin’s theory of evolution, which is the central principle that animates modern biology, uniting all biological fields under one theoretical tent, and which virtually all modern scientists agree is true.

The letter’s authors are not seeking to have Carson disinvited. Instead, they say it was written to raise concerns about his anti-scientific views.

Carson has given dozens of commencement speeches and received some 50 honorary degrees but this is apparently the first time that his views on evolution have become an issue at a graduation.

Carson is world renowned for his work with children, becoming in 1987 the first surgeon to successfully separate siamese twins conjoined at the back of the head. In 2000 he was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian award in the United States.

He is also known for his own life story — he was raised by a single mother in Detroit and struggled for a time in school but wound up at Yale University — and for his philanthropy: The Carson Scholars Fund recognizes exceptional young people.

Carson works at Johns Hopkins University, where he is director of the Division of Pediatric Neurosurgery, co-director of the Craniofacial Center and a professor of neurosurgery, oncology, plastic surgery and pediatrics.

Carson has spoken publicly about his views on evolution and creationism, once telling a convention of the National Science Teachers: “Evolution and creationism both require faith. It’s just a matter of where you choose to place that faith.”

The letter says that Carson has made comments that suggest people who believe in evolution do not have ethics. In an article in the Adventist Review, Carson was quoted as saying, “By believing we are the product of random acts, we eliminate morality and the basis of ethical behavior.”

“For if there is no such thing as moral authority, you can do anything you want,” Carson was quoted as saying in the Review. “You make everything relative, and there’s no reason for any of our higher values.”
But Carson told Inside Higher Ed that the Review article had not published his complete quote and that he does not think evolutionists are unethical. Here’s what he told Inside Higher Ed:

“It would have been extremely courteous if they had asked me whether it was true that I said people who are evolutionist are unethical, which I never did. Those of us who believe in God and derive our sense of right and wrong and ethics from God’s word really have no difficulty whatsoever defining where our ethics come from. People who believe in survival of the fittest might have more difficulty deriving where their ethics come from. A lot of evolutionists are very ethical people.”

Here’s the text of the letter, which was published in The Emory Wheel and signed by 494 signatories, including 90 faculty from the Emory College of Arts and Sciences and Oxford College, 72 faculty from the Emory Schools of Public Health, Medicine and Nursing, 55 staff and postdoctoral researchers from across the University, 154 graduate and medical school students, 121 undergraduate students, and two Emory alumni.

To the Editor:

We are writing to call the attention of the Emory Community to this year’s commencement speaker’s denial of evolution. Dr. Ben Carson is a world-renowned neurosurgeon, who has advanced medicine and who has supported the education of countless children through his philanthropic organization. These accomplishments can provide a great inspiration to graduating Emory students. But, as those students, their families, and the Emory Community listen to his speech, we ask you to also consider the enormous positive impact of science on our lives and how that science rests squarely on the shoulders of evolution.

What is most deeply concerning about Dr. Carson’s dismissal of evolution is that he equates the acceptance of evolution with a lack of ethics and morality. In an interview published on the Adventist Review website he states, “Ultimately, if you accept the evolutionary theory, you dismiss ethics, you don’t have to abide by a set of moral codes, you determine your own conscience based on your own desires.”

Dr. Carson insists on not seeing a difference between science, which is predictive and falsifiable, and religious belief systems, which by their very nature cannot be falsified. This is especially troubling since his great achievements in medicine allow him to be viewed as someone who “understands science.”

Accepting evolution, and the scientific method in general, are not at odds with being moral or religious, as is well demonstrated by strongly religious scientists, and political and academic leaders, including Francis Collins (director of the National Institutes of Health), President Jimmy Carter, and many of the faculty and students who will be attending commencement on May 14th.

Dr. Carson argues that there is no evidence for evolution, that there are no transitional fossils that provide evidence for the evolution of humans from a common ancestor with other apes, that evolution is a wholly random process, and that life is too complex to have originated by the natural process of evolution. All of these claims are incorrect. The evidence for evolution is overwhelming: ape-human transitional fossils are discovered at an ever increasing rate, and the processes by which organisms evolve new and more complex body plans are now known to be caused by
relatively simple alterations of the expression of small numbers of developmental genes. Our understanding of the evolutionary process has advanced our ability to develop animal models for disease, our ability to combat the spread of infectious disease and, in point of fact, the work of Dr. Carson himself is based on scientific advances fostered by an understanding of evolution. Finally, much of the research at this University is based on advances fostered by an understanding of evolution.

The theory of evolution is as strongly supported as the theory of gravity and the theory that infectious diseases are caused by micro-organisms. Dismissing evolution disregards the importance of science and critical thinking to society. Stating that those who accept the underlying principle of biology and medicine are unethical not only encourages the insertion of unnecessary and destructive wedges between Americans but stands against many of the ideals of this University.

Written by:

J. de Roode (Department of Biology)
A. Eisen (Department of Biology)
N. Gerardo (Department of Biology)
I. Nemenman (Departments of Biology and Physics)

A full list of signatories can be found online.

Here are some links you may find useful

Jay Mathews, what are you talking about?
Back to the future with anti-evolution law

Follow The Answer Sheet every day by bookmarking www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/answer-sheet.

By Valerie Strauss | 11:30 PM ET, 05/08/2012

http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/answer-sheet/post/ben-carsons-creationist-views-spark-controversy-over-commencement-%20speech/2012/05/08/glQAi0vsBU_blog.html

The book is an abridged edition of White’s classic, The Great Controversy. Its digital audio release is part of a cooperative effort by the ministries of the Seventh-day Adventist Church to distribute the book worldwide. It is anticipated that 170 million copies of the book will be distributed around the globe this year.

The audio version of The Great Hope has been produced in the studios of Christian Record, a Lincoln, Nebraska-based Adventist ministry providing audio books and other reading services for the blind. The audio version of The Great Hope is narrated by Michael Paradise, the young adult pastor of the College View Church, and Lisa Forbes, an associate professor at Union College, both from Lincoln. The audio book will be available for free download from www.sharethegreathope.com.

In print The Great Hope is a 94-page volume with 11 chapters, and is Christian Record’s latest digital audio book. It will be available for a free of charge downloading by the blind and visually challenged individuals at www.christianrecord.org. The current audio library lists 1,700 titles on digital cartridges and audiocassettes. Christian Record is in the process of digitizing all of its audio books. Many Christian Record library clients are already using the state-of-the-art digital player newly developed and distributed by the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, a branch of the U.S. Library of Congress.

“This new volume was important to be included in our lending library. Above all, it reflects our interest to join the worldwide initiative of the Seventh-day Adventist Church of which our organization is a part,” said Larry Pitcher, Christian Record’s president.

“We desired to offer this recording as a contribution to the church’s effort to share The Great Hope as an engaging presentation of God’s love and His ultimate victory in the conflict between good and evil,” Pitcher added.

According to J. Alfred Johnson II, coordinator of the Share Great Hope program in the North American region of the Adventist Church, “we aim to engage in a relational distribution of The Great Hope, anticipating that our church members will become familiar with its content and share it with their family members, friends and neighbors - all who may have interest in spiritual themes.”

“Audio books are very popular today,” Johnson added. “This audio version of the inspiring Ellen G. White classic will be a valued addition to our inspirational audio book libraries with its mp3 version,” Johnson added.

- END -

Rajmund Dabrowski
Assistant to the President for Marketing
Mid-America Union Pathfinder Camporee 2012

(calendar.php?action=event_details&id=235&date=2012-07-25) - Jul 25, Wed - The theme for the Mid-America Union Camporee is...

Wisconsin Conference Hispanic Marriage Retreat

(calendar.php?action=event_details&id=236&date=2012-07-27) - Jul 27, Fri
(calendar.php?action=event_details&id=236&date=2012-07-27)

NAD Teachers Convention

(calendar.php?action=event_details&id=237&date=2012-08-05) - Aug 5, Sun - Journey to Excellence - Moving Hearts and Minds Upward More...
(calendar.php?action=event_details&id=237&date=2012-08-05)

ASI Annual International Convention

(calendar.php?action=event_details&id=238&date=2012-08-08) - Aug 8, Wed - “It's Time to Be About Our Father's..." (calendar.php?action=event_details&id=238&date=2012-08-08)

Nonprofit Leadership Certification Program, Session II

(calendar.php?action=event_details&id=239&date=2012-09-23) - Sep 23, Sun - The Nonprofit Leadership Certification Program (NLCP) is...
(calendar.php?action=event_details&id=239&date=2012-09-23)

La Red (Hispanic NET Evangelism series)

(calendar.php?action=event_details&id=240&date=2012-10-13) - Oct 13, Sat
(calendar.php?action=event_details&id=240&date=2012-10-13)

Society of Adventist Communicators Convention

(calendar.php?action=event_details&id=241&date=2012-10-18) - Oct 18, Thu - Join Seventh-day Adventist communication professionals from...
(calendar.php?action=event_details&id=241&date=2012-10-18)

More Calendar

(churchnewsopen.php)
5-16-12 How Do You Spell "Summertime?"


If you talk to a group of adults and ask about some of their most significant childhood memories, chances are that many of them will mention one of these two programs!

More than 70 youth camps (http://www.adventistcamps.org/article.php?id=3) across the North American Division's (http://www.nadadventist.org) 50 states, 10 provinces, and our new territory, Guam and Micronesia. They are run by our conference youth departments with James Black as the NAD Camps Ministries (http://www.adventistcamps.org/article/21/ministries/camp-ministries) director.

Why does our Church run so many youth camps? Because we believe in raising our youth to know God and to have rich experiences that will keep them connected with our Creator and the Church. We desire to show them God through nature, relationships, experiences, great stories. We want them to learn indoor and outdoor activities such as hiking, camping, horseback riding, swimming, arts and crafts, and much more, so they will have this ability to add to their healthy enjoyment and usefulness in life.

Beyond the obvious education and entertainment benefits, one of the greatest things youth camps do for children is to help them meet new people outside their own hometown circle, to teach them how to get along with others, and even to give them leadership skills that will help them succeed in life. It's a chance for them to see that our Church reaches far beyond the walls of their own Sabbath school and home church.

Vacation Bible School (VBS), Phyllis Washington, NAD Children’s Ministries (http://www.nadadventist.org/article.php?id=82) are distributed (http://www.adventistcamps.org/article.php?id=3) across the North American Division's (http://www.nadadventist.org) 50 states, 10 provinces, and our new territory, Guam and Micronesia. They are run by our conference youth departments with James Black as the NAD Camps Ministries (http://www.adventistcamps.org/article/21/ministries/camp-ministries) director.

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Church’s TV Network Offers Free Programs for Local Cable Access Channel

News | April 5, 2012 by newsanchor | 0 Comments

Michael Amaral has a vision for using television.

Like most of us, Amaral wants to share Biblical insights with everyone in his hometown. However, it’s all but impossible to knock on every door and offer Bible studies. He also wants local church members to be better prepared for Sabbath school before they arrive at church.

Peering over the edge of “the box” we’re all supposed to think outside of, he was struck with inspiration. What he did next, though not radical, was profound.

First, Amaral visited his local cable company in New Bedford, Massachusetts, and met personally with the manager. It turns out that the manager was interested in offering a well-produced, straightforward Bible study program to his
subscribers.

“Cable access is an underutilized resource. It's an easy and free way to spread the gospel message quickly,” says Amaral. “All cable companies are required by law to offer a channel, and studio, for community members to use.”

Amaral then did what so many can and should do. He contacted his church’s global television network, Hope Channel, and asked for free programming to place on the cable access channel. His phone call led him to Frenita Buddy, producer of Hope Channel’s Hope Sabbath School, who was happy to help. She sent a month’s worth of DVDs from one of the network’s most responded-to programs.

“We were given the 5:30 pm slot on Sundays by the cable company,” says Amaral. “We get the DVDs free from Hope Channel in batches of several weeks at a time so we always have the right lesson for the right week so church members and community people can follow along. Hope Channel even has links at their website for the online quarterly lessons.

“My biggest hope is that viewers will get interested in our message. Hope Sabbath School gives people an in-depth, not superficial, study. It is scholarly without being dry, and it’s down-to-earth. I think people here will like it,” says Amaral.

“We are delighted that Michael contacted Hope Channel about sponsoring Hope Sabbath School on the New Bedford public access channel,” says Buddy. “We support his efforts to spread the gospel. This is something others can duplicate around the country. We look forward to helping other church members who want to work with their local cable companies.”

Hope Channel offers several other programs so church members can choose a program they think will minister best to their community. By using the cable company’s free studio and equipment, local churches can add a local message, such as an invitation to church or an announcement of prophecy or healthy lifestyle seminars.

To obtain Hope Sabbath School or other Hope Channel programs for use on your cable access station, contact Hope Channel at 301.680.6689 or info@HopeTV.org. To reach Amaral for advice on working with your cable company, you may call him at 508.991.9023.
Ordination of Women in the Mid-America Union (Statements 1-4) March 9, 2012

Adventist TV: What I Want to Watch March 29, 2011

Evangelism: To be or not to be? August 4, 2011

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- Congratulations to the 2012 graduates of Union College! See pictures of the weekend and more at http://t.co/iUSAnwKf 7 days ago
- Mid-America Union Breaks the 66,000 Barrier | Outlook Magazine http://t.co/ZITpduQ9 12 days ago
- Minnesota Conference Reelects Officer Team | Outlook Magazine... http://t.co/4T79BIJd 12 days ago
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