News Coverage of Year-end Meeting (YEM), Oct. 30 – Nov 4

View Live or Recorded Programs: The Sabbath morning services (Nov. 1, at 9 a.m. – 12:30 p.m ET) of the NAD Year-end Meeting can be viewed live on the Hope Church Channel. In addition, the following will be available as video-on-demand one day after the live event:

- Evening program, Friday, October 31
- Sabbath School and Divine Service, Saturday, Nov. 1
- Morning devotions presented Friday, Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday (October 31; November 2, 3, and 4). There will be no regular issue of NewsPoints next Wednesday, Nov. 5.

Daily Newsletter Updates: Keep continual updates via the NAD NewsPoints e-newsletter, NewsPoints and news releases, PowerPoint presentations and reports will be posted online at the NAD website on the NewsPoints Archives and 2014 News Archives pages and via the RSS Feed which will go to websites that have signed up for that option.

Social Media: Join the NAD Twitter page (@NADAdventist, #NADYEM14) and NAD Facebook page for Tweets and updates that won’t necessarily be included in the newsletter and on the NAD website.

Some topics to be discussed include:

- Ordination
- NAD relocation report and discussion
- Report on the NAD Structure Meetings held in Dulles, Va.
- Media transitions and the Adventist Media Center
- "Building Blocks" reports
- Oakwood University's transfer to NAD
- Publishing merger
- President's, Treasurer's and Secretary's Reports

Who are the award-winning Adventist communicators in the NAD? Communicators help all aspects of Adventist ministry by promoting, building awareness, "preparing the ground" for other ministries, assisting in creating targeted videos and more. This year, the Society of Adventist Communicators celebrated "25 Years of Excellence." Awards were presented in more than 35 categories.

This year’s top winners include: The Lifetime Achievement Award, presented to Gerry Chudleigh, communication director of the Pacific...
Union Conference; The Young Professional Award, given to Nathan DeWild, a 2011 graduate of Southern Adventist University who now works as a videographer with Journey Films; The Tag Hunter Game from The Hope Channel, winner of the Award of Excellence; The Haystack.TV, which won the Reger Smith Cutting Edge Award.

Other awards were given in areas such as Student, Social Media, Corporate Communication, New Media, Print Media, Broadcast, Design, and Marketing and Public Relations. See how many of the winners you know. MORE

Adventists in the News

Biblical-Era Collections Suffer in a New World of Archaeology

Blankets of Comfort

With Greater Focus On Nurses After Ebola Virus Outbreak, SAU Say Their Nursing Students...

More of my conversation with Inland Adventist leader Sandra Roberts

Brighton nonprofit Warm Hearts Warm Babies gives moms handmade gifts

'ReMOTE' Ebola risk prompts training at Hinsdale hospital

Announcements

There will be no regular issue of NewsPoints next week because of Year-end Meeting news which will be sent most days during the session.

PRAY ONE MILLION

Let's find out what would happen if every NAD church member would spend just one minute a day praying for one specific person! Of course, we don't have to limit ourselves to only one minute, but you get the idea. We need to pray more for those we care about, for those who are missing, those who are leading, those struggling through challenges, in short, for those we want to see in heaven! That would include a lot of people!

If just half of us made that commitment between now and the next three or four months, and if we spent only one minute each day over the next ten weeks or so, we would storm the gates of heaven with more than a million hours of focused intercession! MORE: Watch the Pray One Million video.

Resources

How do visitors and passersby see your church? Holidays and "Welcome Home"
Sabbath” are coming very soon and that means more visitors to your church. Do you ever step back and check your church website and your church grounds to think about how they might appear to visitors? It's time to take a serious look and to start updating some "windows" into your church.

Here are some resources that might help:

- **Curb Appeal:** In English and Spanish at AdventSource
- **Web Ministry for the Local Church – QuickStart Guide,** in English and Spanish: Statistics show that the church website is now the first "window" most people see into a church if they don't know an Adventist personally or drive by the church.
- "Who are the Seventh-day Adventists?" brochure: briefly describing the Seventh-day Adventist Church in English, Spanish and French
- Parking Lot Ministry video: (Free, watch online)
- Church signage: Make sure visitors to your area can find your church with directional and highway signs. Place an attractive and inviting church yard sign in front of your church. Be sure you are using an up-to-date Seventh-day Adventist® logo, which uses the registration symbol.
- Note cards with Church Logo – Write a follow-up note on these church logo cards and let people know how happy you were for their visit and that you hope they’ll return.

**Breakfast with the Mayor explores an uncomplicated, inexpensive**, effective way to help a community come together and solicit God’s best for its citizens, its students, its leaders. There is inspiration in the book, but also a step-by-step blueprint for seeing it happen in your city. It was written by Don and Ruthie Jacobsen to go with the coming Pray One Million prayer ministries initiative in NAD. **MORE**

**Questions and Answers About Women’s Ordination,** was written to help church members get to the heart of what has become a contentious subject. Published by Pacific Press® and edited by Martin Hanna, PhD and Cindy Tutsch, DMin, it is a clear and concise presentation on the subject of women’s ordination that provides solid, biblically-based answers to 151 key questions. Available at AdventistBookCenter.com (1-800-765-6955 and at local ABCs. It is also available at Adventist-ebooks.com as an eBook for iBook, Kindle and Nook.

**Week of Prayer is scheduled for Nov. 2–8 in the NAD.** Week of Prayer Readings are available in the Sept, 24 edition of the Adventist Review. If Nov. 2–8 does not work for you and your church or small group, you can schedule it for whenever works best for you.

**A View of Adventists through a Cereal Box**
Once in a while we get to see ourselves as others see us – maybe through a wild and crazy movie, a misinformed hate site, or even through a cereal box.

Here's a frank, personal, and probably unintentional view by a "Manic Christian" who happens to be an ordained Episcopal priest, about "Breaking Fast with the Past." All the writer of this well-written and entertaining "Unorthodox and Unhinged" blog needs now is to get to know an actual warm and real Seventh-day Adventist or two personally, and learn more than the cereal box truth about us and our beliefs that doesn't come from preaching (and maybe a recipe or two using that other Kellogg's cereal, "Special K"). There are plenty more like her, who might just be open to a new interest and a new non-judgmental friend. That's where the best "ViewPoints" come from. Right?

"God in Shoes" Illustrated through NAD's Women's Ministries Convention's Ministry Projects

A lot of church-initiated conferences and conventions nowadays plan a ministry outreach into their activities. It helps give back to the community, it blesses those who participate, and also helps to build awareness of their group and the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It can also help those participating to learn the joy of volunteering and propel them into starting a similar outreach in their home church.

The NAD Women's Ministries Convention conducted "God in Shoes" ministries at not just one, but at many different locations during their last convention in Orlando, Fla. They donated, gave manicures, pedicures, facials and massages; cleaned, emptied, sorted, listened, cried and laughed, reassured, comforted, prayed and hugged – ministering to many people.

Read the personal testimonies and stories by some of the women who participated. Watch the video.
Adventist Communicators Mark 25 Years of Excellence with Awards

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (October 2014) - The Society of Adventist Communicators concluded its 25th anniversary celebration with an awards ceremony on Oct. 18 in Jacksonville, Fla.

The awards culminated with the Lifetime Achievement Award for Gerry Chudleigh, communication director for the Pacific Union Conference. This award is designed to honor veteran communication professionals who have made substantial contributions to the field for at least 25 years.

“Gerry is no stranger to the Society of Adventist Communicators, as he is a constant presence at our event,” shares George Johnson, awards host. “In fact if there is a communication event of any kind in the North American Division, it seems like Gerry is always there, with his camera taking pictures. His smiling face is something that can always be counted on at an Adventist event.”

Chudleigh’s career path began in youth ministry before transitioning to communication. As a photographer for Hope for Humanity, Chudleigh traveled to Africa, Central America and Asia to capture the needs and triumphs of the poor, sick and uneducated.

Beyond his skills in photography, Chudleigh is also a thoughtful researcher and writer. He recently focused on several hot topic issues within the Adventist church. The awards committee noted how his research and writings on the issues of church governance and women in ministry provided a clear level headed voice to a conversation dominated by yelling and distrust.

“Some people may not agree with everything that Chudleigh has written, but no one will deny the level of professionalism and passion that he displays in all of his work,” says Johnson on behalf of the awards committee. “Chudleigh is the definition of a professional communicator.”

As Chudleigh accepted the award, the audience of 150 student and professional communicators rose to their feet in a
standing ovation.

Chudleigh took to the microphone to thank his friends in communication for their prayers as he faced his recent health struggles.

"This organization has meant a lot to me in the last 12 years," says Chudleigh. "Most of what I learned about how to do this work I learned at SAC. In fact, yesterday I learned something new in a photography class. I just want to thank all of you for you what you mean to me, for your encouragement and for the skills I've learned."

**Student Award**

On the other end of the career spectrum, Southern Adventist University student, Kendall Rittenour, received the Student Award. Rittenour is noted for his technical skill in photo and video assignments in addition to passionately telling stories. Rittenour worked on the Quiet Hour film crew in Costa Rica to capture footage for a new documentary series, developed promotional films for Loma Linda University, and shot video segments for the Hope Channel in Oshkosh.

"Kendall's energy knows no bounds," says Stephen Ruf, Southern Adventist University professor. "He's willing to get up at 4 in the morning to hike a mountain to capture a breathtaking sunrise. He never complains about the conditions or the people. He just goes and shoots and brings back stunning images and sound."

"Kendall epitomizes the kind of drive and talent we seek in our students," notes the awards committee. "He is using his skill to benefit his church, mankind, at home and abroad."

**Young Professional Award**

Nathan DeWild is the winner of the Society’s Young Professional Award that recognizes young talent in the communication field. DeWild has worked on several high profile projects that have been exposed to millions of people.

As a videographer with Journey Films, DeWild’s assignments take him from the jungles of the Amazon to the war zones of the Middle East. His projects include The Adventists 2 and The Blueprint.

“A 2011 graduate of Southern Adventist University, this young man has been a wonderful example of a Adventist professionals can make a difference in the world,” says that awards committee.

**Award of Excellence**

This award is chosen from all the Best in Class winners in six categories: corporate communication, new media, print, broadcast, graphic design and marketing/public relations. The Tag Hunter Game from The Hope Channel is this year’s Award of Excellence recipient.

This game and interactive exhibit at Oshkosh Camporee included team members Fylvia Fowler Kline, Sonia Moses, Chima Nwanna and Travis Holman. The game ended up being one of the most popular exhibits at the Camporee with long lines of people waiting to take part.

**Reger Smith Cutting Edge Award**

This award is named in honor of the late Reger Cutting Smith Jr., who served the Seventh-day Adventist Church for 27 years in public relations, graphic design, photography, and other areas of communication. This award honors communicators who produce creative, innovative and cutting edge projects and includes a monetary award.

Cutting Edge Award recipient this year is The Haystack.TV, a very creative project had the judges laughing at the very unique and original way to take a totally “Adventist thing” like the haystack and turn it into a way of sharing videos produced from various Adventist entities and members. Some of them are serious and take a long look at the life of the church and others make do an excellent job of poking fun at how we tend to take ourselves too seriously. We urge all of you to visit this very creative website at www.TheHaystack.tv. Congratulations to the team of Keith Bowman II, Jeff Tatarchuk and Sam Moreno.
**Student Awards**
The Society added a new category of project awards for students this year to highlight writing, design, photography, videography, PR/marketing and social media projects.

**Best in Class for PR/Marketing/Social Media**
Stephen Foster, Union College student for his work in managing the Internal Communication Social Media team at the Oshkosh Forever Faithful International Camporee. He created a complex social media campaign to do pre-promotion, event coverage and follow up of the event for an audience of 50,000 people. He also managed a large team of social media volunteers.

**Best in Class for Design**
The student team from Andrew University for their work on the Envision magazine. This team always pushes the creative boundaries.

**Best in Class for Feature Writing**
Emily Leffler from Andrews University produced a touching story of a near death experience and titled her feature “Troubled Water.”

**Honorable Mention for Photography**
Brian Tagalog from Andrews University captured photographs that appeared in Envision magazine.

**Best in Class for Videography**
Kendall Rittenour from Southern Adventist University produced a very professional looking project for the Loma Linda University School of Public Health.

**Honorable Mention in Videography**
Vernee Norman from Union College produced a simple yet very entertaining video highlighting the normally boring subject of student advisory.

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**Project Awards by Class**

**Corporate Communication**

**Best Constituency or Annual Report Video**
BEST IN CLASS: Southeastern California Conference Constituency Report 2013, Enno Mueller, communication director

**Best Constituency Report (Print) or Best Special Event**
HONORABLE MENTION: Samaritan Center Annual Report 2013, Marcella Morales, communication director

**Best Website**
HONORABLE MENTION: North Pacific Union Conference—GleanerNow.com, Brent Hardinge, project manager
HONORABLE MENTION: Pacific Union College—This Is PUC, Haley Wesley, creative director
BEST IN CLASS: The Haystack.TV, Keith Bowman II, Jeff Tatarchuk and Sam Moreno

**New Media**

**Best App**
BEST IN CLASS: PUC Now Mobile App, Nicholas Hubbard, webmaster

**Best E-Newsletter**
HONORABLE MENTION: GleanerNOW from the North Pacific Union Conference, Steve Vistaunet, editor; Brent Hardinge; digital media coordinator; Desiree Lockwood, project manager

Best Use of Social Media
HONORABLE MENTION: Living God’s Mission social media campaign for Washington Conference, Heidi Baumgartner, communication director

Print Media
Best Newsletter (Print)
HONORABLE MENTION: Florida Focus, Summer 2013
BEST IN CLASS: Southern Adventist University, Panorama Parent newsletter, Dec. 2013

Best Magazine
HONORABLE MENTION: El Centinela
HONORABLE MENTION: For God and Country, Adventist Chaplaincy Ministry
HONORABLE MENTION: The Flame, Texas Conference
BEST IN CLASS: North Pacific Union Gleaner

Best book, Non-fiction, scholarly
HONORABLE MENTION: Crisis Boot Camp by Celeste Ryan Blyden
BEST IN CLASS: Are You More Spiritual Than a Fifth Grader by Karl & Claire Haffner

Book Non-Fiction, Narrative/Story Format
HONORABLE MENTION: Charles Mills, for Out of the Blue
BEST IN CLASS: Kay Rizzo, for Northern Lights

Best Editorial

Best Feature
HONORABLE MENTION: "Kids, Cats, and Jesus?" Kimberly Luste Maran, assistant editor, Adventist Review
BEST IN CLASS: "Record Keeper," interview with Garrett Caldwell in the North Pacific Union Gleaner

Best Devotional
HONORABLE MENTION: "Whole Heart," by Tia Lawrence, Canadian Adventist Messenger

Best News Article for Event Coverage
HONORABLE MENTION: "SECC Constituency Press Release," by Enno Mueller, Southeastern California Conference

Best Column or Department
HONORABLE MENTION: "Creation Corner for Kids," Tammie Burak, Canadian Adventist Messenger
BEST IN CLASS: "Dude, Where's My Ark?" by Seth Pierce, NPUC Gleaner perspective columnist

Best Student Newspaper
HONORABLE MENTION: Southern Accent, Southern Adventist University, Myron Madden, editor
BEST IN CLASS: The Student Movement, Andrews University, Melodie Roschman, editor

Broadcast
Best Radio Show or Podcast
BEST IN CLASS: BibleCast, Brazilian Central Union of South-America Division
Best TV/Internet Show
BEST IN CLASS: The Haystack.TV, 28 Fundamental Beliefs

Best Video Story/Project
HONORABLE MENTION: Southwestern Adventist University Acrofest 2013
BEST IN CLASS: Southwestern Frames, Darcy Force

Marketing/Public Relations

Best Promotional Video
HONORABLE MENTION: Wewoka Woods, Oklahoma Conference summer camp promo video
BEST IN CLASS: The Haystack.TV

Best Brochure or Printed Promotional Package/Kit
HONORABLE MENTION: Andrews University, Parent Financial Guide
BEST IN CLASS: Hope Channel, “Tag Hunter” Oshkosh camporee booth

Best Ad (Print)
HONORABLE MENTION: Southern Adventist University, WSMC Classical 90.5
BEST IN CLASS: Pacific Union College Triathlon ad

Design

Best Book Design
HONORABLE MENTION: A Thoughtful Hour, Gerald Lee Monks and Kristin Hansen-Mellish, Pacific Press Publishing Association
BEST IN CLASS: My Favorite Angel Stories, Gerald Lee Monks and Kristin Hansen-Mellish, Pacific Press Publishing Association

Best Magazine Cover Design
HONORABLE MENTION: Texas Conference, The Flame, Fall/Winter 2013
BEST IN CLASS: North Pacific Union Gleaner, June 2014, "Persecuted"

Best Magazine Design Overall
HONORABLE MENTION: Texas Conference, The Flame, Fall 2014
BEST IN CLASS: Pacific Union College ViewPoint, July 2014

Best Project Design
HONORABLE MENTION: Columbia Union Visitor 2014 Calendar
HONORABLE MENTION: Pacific Union College Triathlon package
BEST IN CLASS: Southern Adventist University Presidential Christmas Card

Best Photograph
HONORABLE MENTION: North Pacific Union Gleaner, "Wish"
BEST IN CLASS: Texas Conference, The Flame, Fall 2014, "Little Girl"
By GERALDINE FABRIKANT

In a few months, the Siegfried Horn Museum at Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Mich., will exhibit 48 ancient fragments of possibly religious ceramic figures depicting humans and horses. Dating from the 8th to the 6th century B.C., they were excavated over more than a decade ending in 2012 at Tall Jalul in Jordan.

While small, the exhibition, part of a one-year loan agreement with Jordan, will be something of a rarity. In recent decades, countries that house remains of the ancient world have become determined to keep archaeological finds within their borders. Partly as a result, many smaller archaeological museums at religious-affiliated schools across the United States, lacking the financial resources to buy works or borrow actively from other collections, are scrambling to increase the museums' appeal.

"Today they are often filling those museums with information, rather than with objects," said Aaron Brody, director of the Badè Museum at the Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, Calif. In the process, they have become largely "legacy museums," he said.

The loan to Andrews is a coup of sorts, bringing more recent discoveries to its museum. There are dozens of such museums, some tucked away in rooms at college libraries. Most were initially established as repositories for archaeological excavations done from the 1920s to as late as the 1970s. But today, major obstacles stand in front of the removal of excavated objects for exhibition in the United States — even major finds shedding new light on ancient history.

For example, in 2005 a dig at Tel Zayit in Israel run by the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary unearthed a stone inscribed with the earliest known specimen of the Hebrew alphabet. While the stone attracted intense interest in the world of archaeology, it remains in Israel. Ron Tappy, professor of Bible and archaeology at the seminary and director of its Kelso Museum of Near Eastern Archaeology, said a year's loan of the piece would be difficult because of costly insurance and liability issues.

The school does have 7,000 artifacts that were taken out of Israel during earlier digs, and some are on display. But the museum has not added to its collection. "We are not in a position to buy collections of artifacts," Dr. Tappy said. To convey some of the excitement of the find, he said, "there is a small corner of the museum dedicated to the discovery at Tel Zayat."

In earlier periods, some finds from archaeological digs in which American schools participated were taken to the United States under agreements with host countries that let the visiting archaeological teams keep some portion of the finds.

Some of the nation’s wealthiest universities participated in excavations years ago and created impressive museums: the Oriental Institute Museum at the University of Chicago, the Yale University Art Gallery and the Harvard Semitic Museum. Today, even though it is difficult to bring objects back, these schools continue to mount special exhibits. Their endowments also allow them to add occasionally to their collections.

Smaller schools, too, receive some gifts from collectors, but they often lack the resources to mount exhibits or acquire new objects. "For us, the challenge is to be noticed," Dr. Brody of the Pacific School of Religion conceded. The Badè Museum gets only about 800 visitors a year.
Virtually all of the museum’s holdings were acquired when a professor at the school, William F. Badè, worked at Tel en-Nasbeh in what was then the British Mandate of Palestine. Mr. Badè dug there between 1926 and 1935 in an attempt to prove that it was the site of Mizpah, where, according to the Bible, King Saul was crowned. The great find was an ancient seal with the name Jaazaniah. In the Hebrew Bible, Mizpah is linked to Jaazaniah, so the seal suggests that the site was actually Mizpah. That seal remained in Jerusalem, but 6,000 other objects have been brought to the Badè Museum over decades.

“It is not fancy-smancy stuff,” Dr. Brody said, explaining that even so, the material is valuable for studying how people lived in the period when the Bible was written.

That was not the early goal of such archaeology. Initially, research was aimed at proving the historical actuality of the Bible. Today, archaeologists at religious schools largely view discoveries of ancient objects as a means to gain insight on the historical period in which the Bible was written.

“The objects tell you how people lived in those days,” Dr. Brody said. He has his students go into the museum, choose three objects and write about them. “We take what we have in-house and use it to illustrate a point,” he said.

Two years ago, the museum had an exhibition, “Shedding Light on the Layers of a Lamp,” exploring what ancient lamps revealed about the culture at a particular site.

Even Andrews University, which is involved in two major digs, has a relatively small museum of six exhibition halls. While there are hopes to move the museum to a larger space, Constance E. Gane, its curator, acknowledged that getting the funding is difficult and that the school, which had always supported the digs, now faces financial pressures.

To keep museums relevant and make history more engaging for students, some schools’ museums, like museums around the world, are buying copies of artworks. For example, the Prewitt-Allen Archaeological Museum at Corban University in Salem, Ore., built its collection on purchases by a former instructor and amateur archaeologist, Robert S. Allen.

“Ninety percent of our things are authentic,” said its curator, Adrian Jeffers. “But we also have facsimiles of the Rosetta Stone and Hammurabi’s code.”
Florida Hospital's laundry department answered the call to help when children were evacuated from their school in the middle of a downpour.

10/28/2014 | By Don Jernigan

Those who live in Seminole County, Florida, are aware of the recent scare that took place when schools were closed in the middle of a Friday afternoon due to a bomb threat. Children and teachers were ushered in lines out of buildings and into a torrential downpour.

I recently learned about the role Florida Hospital played in this situation from Terry Aagaard, emergency department director for Florida Hospital Altamonte.

Terry wrote, "I received a phone call from Chris in the executive office saying she needed help. Chris had just gotten off the phone with a police officer who was looking for assistance with an unusual situation he was working on. "Lake Orienta Elementary School was evacuated to the Orlando Grace Church, just a couple blocks from their school on Maitland Avenue. The police officer was reaching out to a nearby hotel and Florida Hospital Altamonte to see if any blankets or towels could be spared for the kids and teachers, who were soaked and cold."

"I knew we didn't have enough blankets in the ED, so I reached out to other departments. After making a couple phone calls, I spoke with Joe in Laundry Services, who quickly embraced the challenge to find blankets for the kids. He was off work for the day, and most of his employees were gone, but Joe got busy. Five minutes later, he called me back saying he had a truck and a driver. I joked and said, 'You have two men and a truck?'

"He said, 'No, I have one man named José, who works like two men and a truck.'"

"José drove back to the laundry warehouse and loaded the truck with the mission blankets. The police officer said it was a beautiful thing to see Florida Hospital's truck pull up to the church with dry blankets for the wet, cold kids and their teachers. It was remarkable that on a Friday afternoon with heavy rains, our team responded within an hour to this call for help."

Every day we have the chance to extend the healing ministry of Christ within our facilities, but this is a beautiful illustration of how one hospital embraced the opportunity to extend His compassionate care beyond their walls. In a time of fear and insecurity, I like to think that each child and teacher felt a little safer, a little more comforted, as a warm blanket was wrapped around their shoulders.

Share a story about our mission by clicking on the link below.
EAST TENNESSEE, (WDEF)-Nurses across America have spoken out in recent weeks about the Ebola virus saying politicians are having a "knee-jerk reaction", some even ended up contracting it from their patients, others were quarantined.

At Southern Adventist University, generations of nurses have been trained to deal with the Ebola virus before heading overseas to treat patients in the developing world.

Sonia Wrate, Southern Adventist University, Community Health Nursing, "Through the CDC, through webinars, through practice, through workshops, seminars is important for us, so we can then turn around and give that knowledge to the students and allow them practice time"

Wrate says she is not surprised by the struggles of nurses during the Ebola outbreaks as she feels so many feel compelled to help.

"I think nurses go into it and realize because it's not just Ebola there are many other things and so nurses have that heart to do what needs to be done"

Kaci Hickox, a New Jersey nurse who treated Ebola patients was released from quarantine Monday.

Lee University say hundreds of their students also go overseas on a regular basis but they undergo rigorous screening, health and safety checks and also get insurance coverage.

Angeline McMullin, Lee University, Global Perspectives, "That they are safe we review each location, we purchase insurance for all the trips so if even at a certain point if we have to cancel due to health risks or due to war time so that we are prepared"

McMullin added that Lee University has just opened its nursing department and all precautions will be taken if those students go overseas in the coming years.

Southern Adventist University say their dentistry and pharmacy students also help in third world communities but along with the nurses undergo a thorough screening process.
More of my conversation with Inland Adventist leader Sandra Roberts

I wrote here on the one-year anniversary of Sandra Roberts’ election as the first woman to lead a Seventh-day Adventist conference, which is akin to a diocese. Below are more excerpts from my recent conversation with her.

Roberts is traveling this week to Silver Spring, Md., for the annual meeting of the church’s North American Division, which is from Thursday through Nov. 6.

Unlike the worldwide Adventist Church, the North American Division recognizes Roberts as a pastor and as president of the Riverside-based Southeastern California Conference. As at last year’s division meeting, she will be treated the same as any other conference president, division spokesman Julio Muñoz said.

“Sandra Roberts was elected by her constituency, and that is why the North American Division recognizes her as president of that conference,” Muñoz said. “She is entitled to represent her constituency.”

Clergy and lay representatives of churches in the Southeastern California Conference voted 567-219 on Oct. 27, 2013, to elect Roberts president.

The worldwide church does not support women’s ordination, so it does not recognize her election or her 2012 ordination as a pastor. A blank line is all that is next to “President” in the Southeastern California Conference listing in the Adventist Online Yearbook. At the worldwide church's annual council meeting earlier this month in Maryland,
Roberts was not allowed to speak during official meetings, as other conference presidents from the North American Division were allowed to do.

I spoke with Pastor Roberts last week in her office in the Riverside headquarters of the Southeastern California Conference. I started off my conversation asking about her inability to speak at the meeting and her exclusion from official world-church documents such as the yearbook. Women’s ordination was one of the main topics discussed at the meeting. If she were allowed to speak on the issue, would she have? And if so, what would she have said? (Please note that this interview is edited for space and style)

SANDRA ROBERTS: Knowing I couldn’t speak before I went, I’m not sure I gave that a lot of thought. I knew that was the condition I was going under. I had lots of positive conversations at mealtimes and in the hallways, before and after the meetings, with people from all over the world. And to me that was worth being there, worth going, and just observing and listening.

PRESS-ENTERPRISE: Those conversations – were they about various topics and was one of those topics ordination?

ROBERTS: We had a lot of conversations about the church in general and what was happening at the meetings. But more often the conversations were very personal, about where people were from and their roles (in the church), getting to knowing people from all over the world. I tend to be curious anyway about people and their lives.

PE: So conversations about ordinations were in the minority. But were people asking you about that topic, because you are still the only conference president in the world who is a woman? Were people asking you about that in terms of helping them make up their mind how to vote or how to think on the issue?

ROBERTS: Not really. Mostly people were, ‘I’ve seen your picture. I got to meet you.’ And a whole lot of selfies when I was there. Constantly. I felt very respected, very welcome by the people I met. It was really a very positive experience.

PE: Are there days that go by or weeks that go by when you don’t even think about this issue, when you don’t think, ‘Hey I’m the first...’
More of my conversation with Inland Adventist leader Sandra Roberts

pe.com/articles/roberts-752886-sandra-wrote.html

Published: Oct. 27, 2014 Updated: 8:38 p.m.

ROBERTS: I actually don’t think about it much at all, unless there happens to be some escalation of the conversation, like this last week, when we had an annual council meeting, or something major has come up. My focus has been on leading and doing the job I was asked to do by our constituents and I’m having fun doing it.

PE: (I asked Pastor Roberts what she thought about the worldwide church still not recognizing her election and about her exclusion from the church yearbook.)

ROBERTS: To me it’s really not that big of an issue, simply because I feel very supported and very able to do what I was asked to do in the territory where I’m asked to do it, here in Southern California, in the Pacific Union (the five-state Adventist body to which the Southeastern California Conference belongs) in the North American Division. I don’t interact that much with people in the General Conference, the world leadership. I don’t think having my name in a book or not affects my ability to lead. I don’t feel strongly that that impacts what I do day-to-day. I just try to focus on the job that I have to do. That’s time-consuming enough.

I hope there will be a day when this is no longer an issue. That’s what I hope for, and for the sake of our church, our church at large. I would love for our church to be able as a whole be able to experience -- I always say it’s just time for all hands on deck, for men and women and everybody to work together. I would love for that to be a worldwide experience. But as long as it’s not, we’ll just keep doing what we need to do here.

PE: (I asked Pastor Roberts about this month’s decision by the world church’s executive committee to allow a vote on women’s ordination at the 2015 General Conference Session, a major worldwide gathering of Adventists that occurs every five years. The proposed 2015 measure is somewhat of a compromise, because it would allow each of the 13 geographic divisions of the church to decide whether to permit the ordination of women. The North American Division last year voted overwhelmingly to support women’s ordination.)

ROBERTS: I think it’s the best path at this point, given the diversity of a worldwide church, and given the diversity of thought and opinions. And we are pretty polarized on this as a global church. So I think this is probably the best path forward at this point.

PE: (I asked Pastor Roberts why a policy allowing the ordination of women worldwide would not be the best option.)

ROBERTS: That would be to me an ideal situation, so that any woman who feels called of God to pastoral ministry could have that opportunity. Obviously I wouldn’t be doing this if I didn’t believe that was the ideal, that men and women are all called of God. But because we are a worldwide church and parts of the world are so opposed to that, I still believe the best way forward is for each division to be able to do what is acceptable in that division. And as we continue to model how that looks -- I think that’s the opportunity that we have. As we continue to model what that looks like, as men and women working together and how we can accomplish ministry together, hopefully that will spread.

PE: In terms of modeling, you’ve been able to lead on a day-to-day basis – is that what you’re talking about?

ROBERTS: Yes, to be able to normalize it. We’ve got a great team and I think God is doing amazing things.

That’s what’s happened as far as women pastoring churches. As we’ve seen women become senior pastors of churches or lead churches, people who experience that and see that and it becomes normal, next time around, it’s an
easier transition. I guess that’s my hope too, that here we can model what it looks like to just be the body of Christ, men and women working together. We have such diversity with ethnicity and with types of churches and styles of worship. That’s what I keep challenging our conference with, and I really challenged them yesterday at our pastors’ meeting, that with all that diversity, we can model what it looks like to work together for the sake of the mission that we have as a church.

PE: (I asked Pastor Roberts what she thinks about the argument from opponents of women’s ordination that, in their interpretation of the Bible, scripture clearly prohibits ordained female clergy.)

ROBERTS: I wouldn’t be doing what I’m doing if I believed scripture prohibited it, because I am a pastor, I am a leader who believes strongly in the word of God and that that gives guidance to our life. So I wouldn’t be doing it if I felt and believed in my own reading of scripture, in my own approach to that, that it was prohibited. Where we are right now, and this was stated last week at the annual council -- we have our best theologians in the world in our church who can’t agree on this. You have people who devote their lives to the study of theology and study of scripture who can’t agree on this issue. So while I recognize there are a lot of people opposed because of the way they interpret scripture, I feel very strongly that scripture doesn’t prohibit it, and in fact there are a lot of principles in the Bible that speak to the body of Christ having equality for all people.

PE: (I alluded to other Protestant churches that have been sharply divided over the question of women’s ordination and, in more recent years, the ordination of gays and lesbians).

Is the fear of disunity one of the reasons you think letting divisions decide might be a good idea?
More of my conversation with Inland Adventist leader Sandra Roberts

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ROBERTS: Right, right. Because we haven’t been able to solve this theologically, that there are very opposing views, that any solution probably has to come from our ecclesiology, how we just figure this out as a church, as a body, and our church I think is very strong in wanting to stay united in our mission -- one of the phrases we often use is that unity doesn’t necessarily mean uniformity. We can have some diverse practices but still be a denomination that is moving forward together and focusing on being a church.

PE: (I noted that there hasn’t been a lot written about Pastor Roberts over the past year, even in the Adventist press, and said that that the lack of coverage suggested that her first year went by smoothly. Ricardo Graham, president of the Pacific Union Conference, to which the Southeastern California Conference belongs, told me that no Southeastern employee or pastor has complained to him about Roberts’ leadership).

ROBERTS: The less we worry about the gender and all of that and the ordination, and just focusing on leadership and getting the work done, that’s the healthiest way to proceed forward, just do the work. The work is good work. The work is meaningful work. We still have a lot we want to do. Things are happening more slowly in some ways than I wish they would, even with what we’re trying to do here, but we’re trying to be very intentional and just very wise and seek God’s direction going forward. I wake up every day glad I can do this.

PE: Even though you were elected by a large margin last year, 28 percent still voted no. Have you been able to work well with that 28 percent?

ROBERTS: I think so. There are a few that I probably still have to win over. Not all the people who voted against it – I don’t take that personally.

PE: I reached Pastor Lucio Calle from Yucaipa Valley Spanish Seventh-Day Adventist Churchand he told me it was more the process he didn’t like…

ROBERTS: Didn’t want to get ahead of the General Conference. And I respect them for that. They respect the world church’s decision and don’t want to get ahead of that. They felt uncomfortable voting for something that the world church had said no to.

Again, by and large my experience has been is that people, even though they don’t agree, are very respectful. And I in turn try to be very respectful toward them. We can agree to disagree and we can still work side by side. That’s what I want to model going forward. That’s what I think our church can model going forward is we don’t all have to agree. We don’t all have to be in step together. But we can be respectful and do ministry together.

Follow me on Twitter: @DavidOlson11
BRIGHTON — Fourteen years ago, Brighton resident Sharon Horn was waiting at Rose Medical Center for her twin grandchildren to be born. The babies were arriving nearly three months early, so the waiting room was filled with tension.

They came out weighing 2 pounds, 11 ounces and 2 pounds, 13 ounces and were immediately put in an incubator for no less than three months. Shortly after their birth, a nurse came into the hospital room with a bag full of handmade blankets, clothes and a large quilt.

"It was so nice, because they used the quilt to cover the incubator," Horn, 74, said. "They covered it so that there wouldn't be so much light in, to keep their eyes growing. And then, as they got older, they wrapped them in the other blankets. It was so comforting."

Lisa Sanchez, left, and Arlene Kapron work on quilts during a monthly volunteer day for Warm Hearts Warm Babies on Oct. 15 in Brighton. (Anya Semenoff, YourHub)

Horn asked the nurse where the gifts came from, and that's when she found out about Warm Hearts Warm Babies, a nonprofit formed by a group of volunteers who knit, stitch, sew and crochet everything from booties to blankets for premature babies all over the state.

Not long after that, Horn found out that there was a local group in Brighton, and she joined.

"It meant so much to me and my family," Horn said. "I thought, 'I can make quilts, too,' and that's how I got involved."

Now with her grandchildren in high school, Horn spends the third Wednesday of every month in a big meeting room at the Brighton Seventh-Day Adventist Church at 567 E. Bromley Lane with about 25 other members of Warm Hearts Warm Babies, stuffing dolls and animals, putting the backs on quilts and cutting patterns for clothes.

The stuffed animals will go to emergency rooms all over Colorado, to police stations and inside layettes that are delivered to new mothers. The Brighton work group produces about 40 layettes every month filled with blankets, a quilt, at least three small outfits, hats, socks, pacifiers, bottles and mittens.

"It's really designed to get mothers through those first few days," said Carol Criswell, 59, the work meeting coordinator for Warm Heart Warm Babies in Brighton. "It will have blankets, a few diapers — whatever we can donate."

Warm Hearts Warm Babies started in the living room of a Brighton woman named Victoria Swain in 1998. Back then, there were about three members. Now, there are work groups in Loveland, Arvada and Colorado Springs. Criswell has been involved for about 16 years.

"It's grown so much," Criswell said. "We distribute between 3,000 and 5,000 items in each layette every month. It used to just be a few blankets and clothes."

The layettes go to hospitals, doctor's officers, day cares, foster homes, shelters, pregnancy centers and area clothing pantries everywhere from Pueblo to Loveland.
The group also makes burial clothes for newborns and takes them to hospitals. Criswell and six other volunteer drivers make their delivery rounds at the end of every month.

"It's great for first-time moms, the work is beautifully done," said Amber Robbins, a nurse at the Salud Family Health Center in Fort Lupton. "There's a real, great need for these services."

Criswell has been delivering about 16 layettes to Robbins for nearly two years. Robbins then takes each bundle and delivers them to nine Salud clinics from Brighton and Commerce City to Fort Collins and Sterling.

On workgroup days, the room inside the Seventh-Day Adventist Church buzzes with classic sewing machines and happy chatter as the (mostly) women saunter between tables and pack the layettes for deliveries.

"It's rewarding to do the deliveries myself," Criswell said. "I've had occasions where the moms have asked me to come back and see their little, tiny babies, and it means so much."

Megan Mitchell: 303-954-2650, mmitchell@denverpost.com or twitter.com/Mmitchelldp

How to help

For more information, to volunteer, or find a volunteer group near you, send an email to:
info@warmheartswarmbabies.org
'Remote' Ebola risk prompts training at Hinsdale hospital

Published: Wednesday, Oct. 22, 2014 2:22 p.m. CDT

HINSDALE – While news worldwide is buzzing with Ebola updates and facts, area hospitals are reminding residents to remain calm and keep the information in perspective.

The main message is that residents should be "cautious and conscience but not overreact" to the Ebola news, according to Dr. George Mayzell, senior chief medical officer and chief clinical integration officer with Adventist Midwest Health.

Mayzell said seeing an Ebola outbreak around the area is unlikely.

"The chances of this being a major epidemic anywhere in the U.S. are remote at best," he said.

While he doesn't anticipate many patients with Ebola, Mayzell said that has not stopped the hospitals from being prepared for such cases.

The Adventist Midwest Health hospitals – which include Adventist La Grange Memorial Hospital and Adventist Hinsdale Hospital – have been training and retraining in the emergency room while keeping in sync with the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's guidelines, Mayzell said.

Travel questions have been added to patient forms to determine if anyone has been out of the country in the past month or so.

"At this point we've done everything we need to do," said Mayzell, who added now everyone just needs to stay vigilant.

Looking forward, Mayzell said residents need to use good sources of information such as the CDC.

A statement on the DuPage County Health Department website says the epidemic does not pose a significant risk to the U.S. public.

Dan Cronin, DuPage County Board chairman, said the county's health department has been working to address the issue since August.

"[The health department] have been developing all sorts of response plans and protocols. ... We're not taking anything for granted," said Cronin, who was briefed on the situation last week.

Cronin said it was "premature" to talk about setting aside county funds for an Ebola response.

"But needless to say we're going to do whatever we've got to do."

There had been three confirmed cases of Ebola in the U.S. as of Oct. 20, one of which killed Thomas Eric Duncan on Oct. 8 after he traveled from West Africa to Dallas. Two health care workers who
came in contact with Duncan at Texas Presbyterian Hospital have since tested positive for the disease.

The 2014 Ebola epidemic is the largest in history with the worldwide death total at nearly 4,500 as Oct. 15, according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. The outbreak largely affects West African countries.

Since the two Texas Presbyterian Hospital nurses have tested positive for Ebola after coming in contact with Duncan, Illinois Nurses Association Executive Director Alice Johnson said the union has heard from many nurses in Illinois who have concerns about treating Ebola patients.

"I think that that situation is the perfect example of what happens when nurses don't feel they can come forward and voice complaints," Johnson said.

She explained nurses have contacted the union with questions about what to do if they feel they haven't been prepared to treat a patient with Ebola symptoms. Johnson and the union have been working to meet with employers to address the concerns Illinois nurses have.

"I would say there is definitely a lot of work left to be done," Johnson said.

The disease’s migration to the U.S. has led to enhanced entry screening at O'Hare International Airport in Chicago. O'Hare is one of five airports that receive more than 94 percent of West African travelers. JFK International Airport, Washington-Dulles, Newark, and Atlanta will also perform enhanced screenings, according to a CDC news release.

Staff writers Mari Grigaliunas and Nathan Lurz contributed to this report.

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**Ebola by the numbers**

The following statistics from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](http://www.cdc.gov) are as of Oct. 15.

**3:** Confirmed cases of Ebola in the U.S.

**1:** Deaths in U.S. caused by Ebola

**8,997:** Total cases worldwide

**4,493:** Total deaths worldwide

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God in Shoes Outreach

Updated: Oct 29, 2014

*God in Shoes* ministry is an innovative method of evangelism that takes the church into the community to perform acts of kindness and demonstrate God's love. For information on how to implement *God in Shoes* in your community, order a free copy of "60 Great Ideas for Women's Ministries" by emailing Erica.Jones@nad.adventist.org or calling 301-680-6427.

Report on God in Shoes Outreach event in Orlando, FL, September 26, 2014

**Testimonies from participants:**

**PACE Center for Girls**

The PACE Center for Girls was an awesome experience. At first the girls seemed quiet and reluctant to participate, but after only a few minutes these rough and tough girls relaxed and began to laugh and joke with us. One girl was so relaxed with us that she shared her journal with us, allowing us to even read her letters to and from her uncles in prison, and viewing her art. I know they enjoyed the manicures and the seminar and crafts presented by Kathy Ward, but the facials were the big hit I believe. They had never experienced a facial, and were astonished by the smooth, soft feeling their skin had when it was done. One stated, "This facial even makes my hair look good." They were very appreciative and and seemed shocked that we would take our time to come to them to do this for them, AND give them a backpack full of stuff without asking for anything in return. I think my highlight is when one girl asked me how she could get involved in helping others like we were doing. The only thing I could do was to point her to the local SDA churches and pray that she contacts one of them and they help her get involved. Traci Ball

**Mount Olive Church**

We had a wonderful group that included some of our Hispanic sisters who were a little concerned that there would not be any Hispanic women to minister to at our site. I assured them that we would love to have them join us. They did and ended up being able to minister to a number of Spanish speakers. Two in particular mentioned that while they did enjoy the spa day, their favorite part was the prayer room. Mrs. Jackson ran the prayer room which turned out to really be just a corner of the large room with a partition put up for privacy. However, Mrs. Jackson set the atmosphere with flowers and a candle that she found around the church. The ladies had such a special time of prayer with Mrs. Jackson, that they talked to some of the young people of the church about coming back the next day for Sabbath services. The young ladies were so excited; they ran off to work with the pastor to find a translator for Sabbath so that these ladies would feel completely at home in their church. This was our favorite story from our spa day at Mount Olive Church. LeShel Taylor
A.S.P.I.R.E.

The whole experience was amazing, I always see God working, not just on the ladies we are serving, but the ladies serving. This one young mom came in and then said she was going to get her baby. She trusted me to hold her baby; I was a stranger until that day. They just need people to show how much they care. All the girls thanked us over and over. Several mentioned God and wanted prayer. When we finished the day, the rest of the weekend our ladies shared how blessed they were. I even received a thank you card from one of our ladies. Dacra Herring

Women's Coalition for the Homeless

Women’s Voices rose together in praise singing many songs as we rode the bus to the downtown Orlando location of the Women's Coalition for the Homeless. Two of the many songs we sang were Make Me a Blessing and Jesus Wants Me for a Sunbeam. Ladies were placed in teams to accomplish the cleaning and organizing of four closets. Just as is the case when there is not enough time, donated items had been pushed inside with no order. The ladies worked hard together to empty, sort, and replace the donated items in an order that will hopefully make it easy for distribution to the residents. We truly believe that God heard our desire to serve and be his hands and feet that Friday and that he blessed us with both energy and perseverance to do exactly what needed to be accomplished for the homeless center. Jeannie Haldeman

Orlando Union Rescue Mission

Two buses, carrying 100 women, made the way to Orlando Union Rescue Mission for a day of volunteering. We arrived at the newest facility and was greeted warmly by director Elizabeth Lynn. She was pleasantly surprised by the significant donation of sheets, blankets, underwear, socks, and personal care gift bags. Elizabeth thanked God In Shoes and those who donated the items as they were greatly needed. Everyone received a welcome and a brief history of the 66 year old mission that helps single men, women, and homeless families by providing shelter and support to get back on their feet through education, job placement, and health improvement. The mission is faith based and does not receive government funding, so volunteers take care of many tasks. Our 100 women gave the mission a boost that day! This included hand writing thank you notes to donors, follow up phone calls, window washing, food servers in cafeteria, assist with the child care givers, and pricing, and sorting items at The Bargain Store ( thrift shop ). Because this mission is faith based, we were welcomed to have prayer circles. Prayer warrior groups went through out the facility praying for each resident and each activity that occurred in a room. For example, in the IT / computer room, they prayed for those who were learning and those instructing. They prayed that those looking for work would find it. They even prayed in the laundry room for not only the blessing of having donors that provided such nice equipment but that all might be washed with God's Spirit. The other prayer group was bused to the single men's facility, where they prayed for the residents and volunteered for tasks as needed. They concluded in one of the common areas by singing hymns and praises, providing a beautiful impromptu concert to those who were there. Most of the residents were either at work, looking for work, or at school, including the 72 children that were currently housed. Our group had very little contact with the residents, but everyone that we did see seemed very delighted that we were there.

Ray's Story

The mission has several facilities which were not located all in the same area. The mission bused our women in shifts to the single men's residence and the The Bargain Store. This is a thrift store that is just one way the mission raises the 5 million dollars that they need annually without taking government funding. ( This is a group that definitely lives by faith! ) The driver's name was Ray. He was so filled with the love of God that he shared his testimony to every group back and forth. He had a very hard life that left little to the imagination and one evening was thinking of ending it all. Then he looked up and noticed a large red cross on top of a building (the mission's men's residence).
The cross says GOD IS LOVE across and CHRIST IS SAVIOR down. He had not noticed this cross before. Suddenly he felt a presence wash over him and knew that he was not a forgotten person and God loved him. Ray wanted to accept salvation. Ray heard music and went inside to find the residents evening worship going on. The leader asked if anyone wanted to accept Jesus. Ray stepped up and instantly knew his life was going to be different. That was 2012 and he says that he never gets tired of sharing the miraculous love of God to anyone. It is very real for him. You could hear and see his joy in the Lord and earnest desire to share the love of God.

The God In Shoes Connection

It is more blessed to give than to receive. We were blessed by serving. Ray is a truck driver by trade and had been driving for the mission. He said that sometimes even though we love the Lord and serve Him, we get selfish and let things into our lives that keep us from staying in a closer relationship with Him. That was happening in his life. A few months prior to the God In Shoes volunteering at the mission, Ray told us that God did something that got his attention back. He was working to get his truck driver’s license again and as a part of this process a background check revealed that Ray had an outstanding arrest warrant for a non-violent offence that happened 17 years ago. Ray didn't even know about it. He went to the sheriff to sort it out. Ray had to serve 29 days in jail! He initially was upset and asking God why did this happen now, just as he was about to launch into the work place and why now after 17 years was this just coming to light? Wasn’t he a different person from 17 years ago? Why didn't God just answer his prayer to let him off and not have to go to jail? But Ray says he submitted to God's timing and as a result he was able to bring several people to Christ in jail. One man was released before Ray got out and was able to come to the mission and is doing well. Ray knew that God used something that happened 17 years ago that seemed very bad and uncomfortable for him, for the Lord's greater purpose. So Ray vowed to God that he would share his experience and the life lessons he learned in whatever way God presented to him. ONE WEEK after he was released from jail, this Spirit filled, yet humble man was able to share his story & testimony to women from all over North America! And they in turn learned a valuable life lesson to share where ever they call home. Karen Tillotsen

Clean the World

I was the leader of 65 women for GIS on Sept. 26 at Clean the World in Orlando. It was a wonderful day. God was definitely in charge. Clean the World is a non-profit organization where the personal items found in the bathrooms of hotels/motels. They take these items and recycle them, through sterilization. The soap is ground into particles and reshaped into a large (hand-size) block. When that is completed, it is set aside until the ‘love’ is ready. There were 10 women that counted out stacks of 100 index cards with the logo. After lunch there were 20 of us working on this project. 35,000 cards were counted. These cards are lined so messages can be hand-written and placed with the products, into a cellophane bag, along with a wash cloth and tied. On the recycle line the ladies chose the items that could be recycled. They were very efficient. So efficient, that they kept the male employees very busy reloading their tables. I was told later that most of the volunteers never were able to accomplish what these ladies did. They were able to check 50,000 bottles and 20,000 soaps, They were there to do God's bidding. Since 2009 Clean the World has distributed more than 20 million bars of soap in 96 countries. They provide hygiene kits to the homeless and families in transition through North America. There are nearly 2000 hospitality partners that supply the recycled products to children and families in countries suffering from high death rates due to the top two killers of children—acute respiratory infection (pneumonia) and diarrheal diseases (cholera).The ladies were 16-83 years of age. Frances McCarter

Covenant House

Last Friday I was privileged to participate in God in Shoes at Covenant House in Orlando, FL, a place for runaway teens. As a team, we worked so well together that you would never know that we did not even know each other. Some ladies immediately began unpacking the shoes and putting them in an orderly display. Others helped organize the hand soak and manicure area. Still others prepared to offer facials and shoulder massage to our ‘guests’. A couple of older ladies gathered the gift bags and arranged them on a large table. One woman sat down dejectedly and said, ‘I just don’t know what I can do. I can’t stand or walk well. What can I do?’ “You look like a Prayer Warrior
to me. Can you pray for everyone here?” Her face began to glow as she began her ‘task’. When the first young ‘guest’ entered, her head was bowed, her arms crossed in front of her, and she didn’t speak with anyone. She stood on the edges of the ‘action’, just watching, refusing any of the services we offered. Finally she drifted over to the gift bag table and was greeted by the ‘prayer warrior’ who immediately engaged her in conversation. For over an hour this young woman poured out her heart, telling her story in broken pieces. When she was only three years old she vaguely remembers her mother who left her for drugs and other men. By the time she was five she was taken from her father who was sexually abusing her. The foster home she was sent to was no better. The cigarette burns on her ankles spoke of the horror she lived in. More sexual abuse until an attorney who had been following her case intervened. This cycle repeated itself several times until she met a young man who helped her run away. Unfortunately, he was also using drugs and began to mistreat her. Finally she found Covenant House and is receiving counseling and a safe place to stay while preparing to go back to school. Before we left, this beautiful young woman finally agreed to allow someone to touch her. She had a manicure. Our team ‘prayer warrior’ prayed with many of these young people, reminding them that God has not and never will leave them. She listened to them as a loving grandmother would, not offering advice, just giving them unconditional acceptance. What a blessing she is! One incident that happened to me personally involved one of our male ‘guests’. He was the first man to come see what was going on, and obviously a leader in the facility. A tall, slender, attractive black man with ‘attitude’. It wasn’t long before our team had him engaged in teasing and laughing. He even got the full treatment – manicure, facial, and massage. Before long he had several other men joining in, and the laughter flowed. However, after a while he became bored with us and decided to liven things up a bit. His cell phone began playing rap music very loudly, disturbing everyone in the room. We were just finishing lunch when I approached him, asking him if he would be kind enough to lower the volume a little. He snarled at me and said, “No, I like it like this”. I smiled, then winked at him and asked teasingly, “Would you take a bribe?” Immediately interested, he said, “Whatcha got?” I opened my lunch bag, pulled out an apple and a Little Debbie cake. He snatched them both, smiled back at me, and turned the volume down, then completely off. I finally breathed. Watching the faces of these young men and women relax, laugh, and enjoy a few hours away from the stress and strain of everyday life lifted our whole team. Many, guests as well as team members commented that this was the best day ever. Each of us felt His presence, El Roi – the God Who Sees Me. Lylan Shepherd