Sick kids win with Dick Smith

Wahroonga, NSW

Sick children were the winners when well-known businessman and aviator Dick Smith touched down at the Sydney Adventist Hospital on September 24 to hand over a $A200,000 donation from Dick Smith Foods.

The donation, received by the hospital’s CEO, Dr Leon Clark, will help fund a new Paediatrics Ward, including increasing the size of the Children’s Sleep Disorders Unit—the only private paediatric unit of its kind in Australia.

According to Mr Smith, founder of Dick Smith Foods, the donation is indicative of the philosophy behind the company, which has now donated more than $A2.5 million to Australian charities and worthy causes.

“Our support for Sydney Adventist Hospital is a great example of how an Australian company can give something back to the community, while providing ongoing support for Australian farmers and manufacturers by keeping the profits in Australia to create jobs and safeguard the future for our children,” says Mr Smith.

“I believe that this attitude is shared by the majority of Australians who have purchased well over $200 million worth of our products since we started in February 2000, allowing us to give donations such as this one.”

“We’re ecstatic with this very generous donation from Dick Smith Foods,” says Dr Clark. “The San is a not-for-profit hospital and there are a growing number of families with children coming into the area. This donation will enable us to accommodate more children, in a more comfortable environment to help speed their recovery.”—Kristen Mackie
Fulton teachers score high marks

Teacher trainees at Fulton College have just completed a five-week practicum teaching session in 127 schools in the islands of Fiji. It took almost four weeks for the five lecturers to visit the schools to examine the trainees in action.

“One highlight was visiting a BEd student, Ryan (BEd students do their practicum at a ‘special school’), teaching blind children to cook,” reports June Hamilton. “The children just loved it.

“Another highlight was visiting the outer islands of Gau (pronounced now) and Namamanuca, an island out from Nadi, and watching our teacher trainees lead out in these Fijian schools and showing other teachers how creative they are.”

Because of the influence of the trainees, Fulton has been asked to run a reading seminar for the teachers at a village school out of Nadi.

“Our teacher trainees have a big impact on the schools of this country. While out on practicum the trainees really miss Fulton and it’s a thrill to visit them, and especially hear the Hindi trainees say, ‘We miss your Sabbath.’

“I’ve even heard them say to the regular teachers in the many schools that they are ‘Seventh-day Adventist Hindus.’”

Asian Aid, the supportive Adventist ministry, has developed a new mission statement that “reflects our commitment to working through the Adventist Church to reduce poverty.” It reads, “Asian Aid is called to empower believers in Jesus to address the causes of physical and spiritual poverty amongst disadvantaged communities.”

Almost 1200 youth gathered in Palmerston North, NZ, recently. Preaching by Pastor Anton Van Wyck, Scott Wareham and the STORM Co team challenged youth to reach out to lost people. Music, drama and video gave the same message.

When Turkan Akvoy (pictured) was one of the house-mates from the 2002 Big Brother TV series, she chose to take a Bible into “the house” as the book she wished to read. She recently visited a Kellyville church, NSW, youth social event and gave a talk to the youth about how important God has been in her life and encouraged them to make God an important part in their lives too.—Robyn Crabtree

A security guard for the Adventist Development and Relief Agency, Oyaw Abdwahd Ukash, was shot and killed on September 14 while travelling with coworkers from Kenya to Somalia.
Injecting room increases drug sales

Sydney, NSW

The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA)–Australia recently prepared an analysis and report for Drug Free Australia, critical of claims made by supporters of the injecting room in Kings Cross.

The analysis of the Kings Cross Injecting Room Report shows that the injecting room is most likely increasing heroin sales in the Kings Cross area.

Data within the report, which drew no comment from the injecting room evaluation team, shows that injecting-room clients had 36 times more overdoses than heroin users on the streets of Kings Cross.

“People do not overdose by injecting the usual amount of heroin,” says Gary Christian, Chief Operations Officer for ADRA–Australia. “Overdoses are more likely the result of experimenting with higher doses of the illicit drug, and higher heroin consumption inevitably means increased sales and profits for the local criminal suppliers.”

Other findings of the analysis were that the injecting room had not saved even one life during its first 18 months of operation, countering the claims of injecting-room evaluators that it saved at least six lives.

“Injecting-room report data showed that there was one heroin fatality for every 190,000 injections on the streets of Kings Cross,” says Mr Christian. “Because the injecting room supervised less than 35,000 heroin injections during its 18 months of operation, or less than a mere one-fifth the number of injections associated with a single heroin fatality, it cannot even claim to have saved one life.”

On ADRA–Australia estimates, the injecting room would take eight years of operation, or $A19.55 million, before it could claim to have saved one life. It is asking the NSW Government to close the injecting room in favour of drug rehabilitation.

Drug Free Australia, which used ADRA’s analysis, is a relatively new peak community group set up to oppose drug legalisation measures in Australia. Major Brian Watters, the Prime Minister’s key adviser on drug issues, is patron of the organisation.—Bruce Manners

Freedom on the European agenda

Brussels, Belgium

As moderator for the first morning session of an Inter-Parliamentary Conference on Human Rights and Freedom of Religion at the European Parliament in Brussels on September 17, Dr Jonathan Gallagher reminded participants that the treatment of minorities were a clear indicator of the state of freedom in any nation.

Dr Gallagher is the associate director of Public Affairs and Religious Liberty at the General Conference, in Washington, DC.

The conference brought together parliamentarians from a number of national legislatures, including Egypt, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Italy, Croatia, Ukraine, Estonia, Russia, Romania and Sweden, together with representatives of international bodies, religious groups and non-government organisations.—Viola Hughes

KidSpeak——Adventist children speak about their world

Children from Armadale and Livingston churches, WA, were asked, “What do you like best about your Sabbath school and lesson?”

**Name:** Kimberly Burnie  
**Age:** 9 years old  
We can learn about Jesus and the Holy Spirit and how He died for us to save us from our sins. We meet, sing and do lots of activites.

**Name:** Emily Schirmer  
**Age:** 11 years old  
I like singing lots of songs, learning the Bible lessons, seeing my friends and learning lots of new things about Jesus.

**Name:** Jared Harvey  
**Age:** 11 years old  
The games we play when answering Bible questions. Getting to talk with my friends, stories and stuff like nature walks.

**Name:** Connor Townsend  
**Age:** 6 years old  
I like learning about Africa, singing songs and being friendly. Uncle Les makes our lesson fun, like making a marshmellow temple.
Lighting up Victoria, together

Nunawading, Victoria

The members of the church in Victoria are working together to share their faith with those in their community.

This is part of a project called Light Up Victoria, which, in turn, is part of the Australian Union Conference’s (AUC) Light Up Australia. The goal of Light Up Australia is to run 1000 prophecy seminars across the country in 2004.

The majority of Victoria’s 83 Adventist churches and companies have agreed to begin 120 prophecy seminars during the same week, March 14-20, next year. Working together in this way helps with promotion. The church plans to advertise the seminars on television and in metropolitan daily newspapers and to operate a centralised call centre for inquiries.

“Local churches are not out there on their own,” says Pastor Glenn Townend, the evangelism coordinator for Victoria and the minister of Living Waters, a company based at the church’s Gilson College in Melbourne’s north-west.

“Everyone’s having a go.”

Pastor Townend and his team are, too. Living Waters has been running adult-education courses focusing on topics such as parenting and vegetarian cooking. Attendance has ranged from 12 to 70 people. “The principal of the school and one of the chaplains are running our prophecy seminars.”

Light Up Victoria will begin with evangelistic programs from February 20 to March 14. Pastor Geoff Youlden, presenter of The Search video series—Adventist Media estimates more than 10,000 Australians watched the series in 2002—will present three of the programs in the east, north-west and south-east of Melbourne.

Light Up Australia is the AUC’s response to the worldwide church’s Year of Evangelism.

“There’s something exciting about big events, and the Year of Evangelism, when Adventists over the world will focus on sharing their faith, is a big event,” says Pastor Chester Stanley, the president of the AUC.

“We were thinking of challenging only our ministers to run prophecy seminars, but anyone, anywhere can run prophecy seminars. You don’t have to be a minister to get involved with the Year of Evangelism.”

Pastor Stanley, who will be running his own seminar, says the time is right for the Year of Evangelism. “We don’t live in a laid-back Australia anymore. People are uncertain about the future. It’s an opportunity to share some of the answers we have for the future. Adventists can’t keep quiet at a time like this.”—Brenton Stacey

First female treasurer for Fiji Mission

Suva, Fiji

The Fiji Mission has appointed a new treasurer. Suruj Deo is the first woman to serve as treasurer in the Fiji Mission. She is also one of only 300 Adventist Indians—they make up 1.3 per cent of church membership—in Fiji.

“I am a woman, I am Indian, I lack some qualifications, but I have experience,” she says.

Mrs Deo worked as a secretary and as an accountant at the church’s Tailevu, Fiji-based tertiary institution, Fulton College, after graduating in 1980. She began working for the church in Fiji in 1985, first as an accounts clerk, then senior accountant and chief accountant before becoming associate treasurer at the beginning of this year.

“My biggest challenge as treasurer will be to help the mission become a conference,” says Mrs Deo.

“Suruj has been in our accounts team the longest,” says the president of the Fiji Mission, Pastor Tom Osborne. “She understands the system.”

James Kent, the treasurer of the Trans-Pacific Union, says Mrs Deo’s appointment sends a message to the community. “We should employ people based on their ability to do the job and their commitment to the job, not on their gender or their ethnicity.”

Deo encourages more women to work for the church, and not just in fields such as business. “Women can work in any field,” she says.—Brenton Stacey

Conference put on canvas

Sydney, NSW

Artwork representing the Greater Sydney Conference was recently hung in the foyer of the conference office. The triptych (three sections) is 6.7 metres long and includes scenes of the city, suburbs and parks that make up the conference.

The painting was done by Pastor Ken Mead, a retired minister who grew up in the Sydney suburb of Manly and worked in ministry for 20 years in the city. He now lives in Victoria and recently turned 80.

Pastor Ken Mead.
Bush Foods Breakfast cereal from Dick Smith Foods is 97% fat free, high in essential dietary fibre and is free from lactose, eggs, yeast and artificial colours and flavours.

Made from a delicious blend of crispy honey dipped golden flakes and puffs of wheat, Bush Foods Breakfast combines a sprinkle of macadamia nuts with fruits, seasoned with natural bush flavours such as wild rosella, forest-berry herb, lemon myrtle and aromatic wattle seeds.

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**A matter of taste**

*Norman H Young, NSW*

The Sanitarium Health Food Company is to be congratulated on its sponsorship of Kids TRYathlon events. This is an outstanding corporate contribution to Australian and New Zealand societies, as is its contribution to our respective diets.

I’ve now tried one of the company’s tasty Vege Burgers (Newsfront, August 9), and would like to defend its association with McDonald’s.

If the writer’s view in “Selling our McSouls to Maccas” (Letters, September 13) prevailed, Sanitarium could not trade. Australia’s two biggest retailers are leaders in the sale of liquor and cigarettes (major factors in the incidence of ill health and social dysfunction) to say nothing of fatty foods, nutritionally poor snack foods and sugary sweets. These two giants have transformed the landscape of Australian small business—a concern of the writer.

As for pollution, the millions of plastic shopping bags distributed by these two retailers is a greater concern than the recyclable cardboard container in which I received my Salads Plus Vege Burger.

Sanitarium’s products share supermarket shelves with cereals of up to 50 per cent sugar and waterplus® jostles with internationally advertised, sugar-laden soft drinks. But the writer might respond that there are also many healthful food choices available in the supermarkets.

Indeed, and that’s why we can be grateful that Sanitarium is helping McDonald’s provide a healthy option for its customers.

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**Anne Pedersen, NSW**

I finally tried McDonald’s/Sanitarium new Vege Burger and what a sad joke! I would doubt that anyone would be attracted to “healthy vegetarian eating” on the basis of my experience. We could have spent the $A3.25 more profitably. Definitely not a positive advertisement for Sanitarium; sorry.

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**Break the cycle**

*Peter Schaper*

What a pity that Joy Butler (“Response to domestic violence,” August 16) gives no more than token acknowledgement that women initiate violence. The article serves to promote the myth that domestic violence is always the fault of the man, regardless of its footnote.

Domestic violence and abuse is not a gender problem; rather, it is a person problem. Only when we take the gender bias out of our attitude toward it will we begin to make progress in dealing with it.

Maintain the current gender bias and marriages and families will continue to be destroyed by domestic violence, many of them unnecessarily. If abused men were believed instead of ridiculed or regarded as abusers, appropriate counselling might save many marriages and families, but when the victim is held responsible, no amount of counselling will help resolve it. The end result is tragedy—a broken marriage or possibly a man going “over the edge” with even worse consequences.

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**David Hancock, NSW**

It is a sad fact that most abuse is perpetrated by men. However, it is a sobering fact that most abusers are themselves victims of abuse, usually as children, although this is no excuse. Surely the most effective response to abuse is to prevent it—short-circuiting the recurring cycle of being abused then abusing.

Christianity teaches the application of grace as the only ultimately effective remedy for sin. So why, then, does the current climate of response to abuse in the church rely so heavily on notions of shame, vindictiveness, anger and stereotyping, as demonstrated in Jodie Flint’s “Not acceptable!” (September 20)? It’s these emotions that are responsible for the abuse in the first place.

To forgive is not to excuse, but to heal is the Christian way; any other is not Christian.

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**More help, please**

*Shirley Passmore, NSW*

I’ve just spent three months touring Queensland and can’t believe the lack of signage advertising the location of Adventist churches. Please, get information in places such as local papers and in welcoming brochures.

A comprehensive address list of churches is available at the web site [www.adventist.org.au](http://www.adventist.org.au)—choose Find a Church from the Information menu. Local churches are responsible for advertising locally.

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**Note:** Views in Letters do not necessarily represent those of the editors or the denomination. Letters should be less than 250 words, and writers must include their name, address and phone number. All letters are edited to meet space and literary requirements, but the author’s original meaning will not be changed. Not all letters received are published. See masthead (page 2) for contact details.
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### Obituaries

**Holland**, Norene (Rene), born 10.3.1908 in Brooklyn, Wellington, NNZ, died 31.5.03 at New Plymouth. Rene attended Longbourn College where she graduated as a shorthand typist. She stayed at the college for many years and became “mum-away-from-home” for many students. She also worked in Sanitarium cafes and the conference office in Auckland. In her retirement she spent time at the Bethesda Home and Hospital, until she went to a home in New Plymouth. She will be missed by many as she had a sweet, loving spirit.

- **Keller**, Graham Keith, born 5.5.1936 at Milford, Vic, died 5.5.03 at Milford. On 19.58 he married Kaye. He was predeceased by his son, David, in 1990. He is survived by his wife (Milford); his children and their spouses, Rosemary and Tim Adams (Brisbane, Qld), Robyn and...
Freedom is deliverance from the chains of sin which has bound each one of us. So join with us. Sing along, and experience His “Spirit of Freedom”!

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105th anniversary. The Stanmore SDA church will be celebrating its 105th anniversary on November 8, 2003, with a very special full-day program of services and activities starting at 9.15 am. All former worshippers and friends are cordially invited to attend. For further information please contact Danly on (02) 9789 2268, or email <danlyrn@bigpond.com>.

Wanted—someone (or couple) to help in the maintenance of home and garden in exchange for full board, long- or short-term. In Ballarat area on 10 acres. Please phone (03) 5349 2821 (H) after 6 pm, or (03) 5333 2272 (B1).

Cooranbong Florist can supply flowers for all occasions, Australia and world-wide. EFTPOS and major credit cards accepted. Phone (02) 4977 2547.

Blacktown SDA church 70th anniversary—November 15, 2003. Past members, pastors and friends invited for special Sabbath celebration, luncheon and sacred concert in the afternoon. Any memorabilia will be appreciated and returned. For lunch bookings/memorabilia contact Vione Beyers <vione@questo.com.au> (02) 9634 4147; Jim/Ruth Hutchinson, 35 Catalina Street, St Marys NSW 2760 (02) 9623 2023; Jennifer D’Costa <jennydcosta2@hotmail.com> (02) 9670 1682.

Young, happy family looking for a live-in/mothers help to assist with active 4-year-old twin boys (at kindly during the day), a newborn baby and light house duties. Separate self-contained flat in eastern suburbs of Sydney. Good salary, flexibility with days/hours. References essential, driver’s licence an advantage. Phone Michelle 0417 491 408.

International Date Line issues have made some Sabbath-keepers think they are keeping the wrong day! This question plus many others answered in Sabbath Challenge, Sabbath Delight! by Dr David Bird, 340 pages. Read selections at <http://www.burnoutsolutions.com.au>. $A27.50 plus p&p; (02) 6689 9289.

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