 PALMERSTON NORTH, NEW ZEALAND

The “Circle of courage” New Zealand cycle tour has challenged 23 towns in New Zealand to learn the names of five children in order to address issues of “at-risk” behaviour among young people in the country.

“There is a simple premise to the ‘Circle of courage’ philosophy,” says Pastor Paul Rankin, tour coordinator and director of Adventist health for the New Zealand Pacific Union Conference. “It’s about building relationships with young people and taking a sincere interest in their lives.”

The “Circle of courage” New Zealand cycle tour came at an opportune time as a United Nations report, released during the first week of the tour, revealed that New Zealand rated worst in the developed world for death rates among teenagers and other issues of teen welfare, such as suicide and pregnancy rates.

According to Jonathan Duffy, director of Adventist health for the South Pacific Division (SPD) and initiator of the “Circle of courage” cycle tours both in Australia and New Zealand, “Studies have shown that if adults take the time to learn the names of the young people in their community and get to know them, it will build resilience and self-esteem.” (Continued on page 3)
There is nothing particularly special in Scripture about the 12th gate that sets it apart from the other eleven. It's what it symbolises. In the context of the theme for the 6000 Pathfinder camporee at Stuarts Point (NSW), it was akin to “the narrow gate” or “the door of salvation,” denoting entrance into the kingdom of God.

The nightly drama was a gripping depiction of the love and concern Jesus has for His earthly children, the battle that rages over each person and the length to which Heaven will go to win them for eternity. It centred around “the Plan,” represented by a huge box that occupied centrestage. It involved five young people trying to work out how to open it to discover its contents. When they finally succeeded with the help of an angel, they found pieces of old metal that, given the way they were positioned, looked “a bit like a cross.”

This nightly feature became the backdrop for the devotional meetings presented by Pastor Jose Rojas, which were powerful, relevant and challenging. On Sabbath, when a call was made for a commitment to Jesus, 1517 indicated a desire to be baptised, 1293 pledged to learn more about Him through Bible study and 995 signified their intention to continue serving Him as their personal Saviour.

An event of this nature is not cheap to run. It cost hundreds of thousands of dollars, to say nothing of the countless hours involved in preparing, organising and running it, donated by hundreds of willing volunteers. For those who may be tempted to ask “Why this waste?” let me share with you my response:

- It was one of those significant memory events that will remain with the attendees for the rest of their lives, providing them with a positive image of the church. For many it will indeed prove to be the Twelfth Gate.
- It created a wonderful environment for the many different cultures and ethnic groups that make up our diverse division to mingle together in a positive and dynamic way. In a world torn by racial hatred we need to model and nurture a community of unity and tolerance.
- It provided a great opportunity to challenge this age group in our church to commit their lives to Jesus.

In a recent email, a grateful parent testified, “My daughter gave her life to God at camporee! . . . A very personal thank you for your sacrifice. It meant the world to my daughter, and me.” How do you quantify in monetary terms such experiences?

Paul, in 1 Corinthians 12, uses the body as a symbol of the church, drawing the analogy that “as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ” (verse 12, NASB).

The church, according to Paul, is the sum of all of its parts, whether we are referring to the total number of individual churches or the number of members that make up a particular congregation.

A good deal has been written and spoken of the need to give—in more than a token way—young people a voice in the church and for them to be recognised as a vital part of the corporate church. While this is a message that must be heeded, it is also equally true that the older generation, middle-aged professionals and children are just as vital a part of the church. All groups need to be catered for and their unique value and contribution acknowledged.

As such, the recent Pathfinder camporee was an excellent and worthwhile investment in a segment of the church from which the leadership of tomorrow will be drawn. Only eternity will reveal the results.

But the corporate church must also recognise the role of the local church in the lives of these children. It is here that they get an exposure to the real church and how they are valued on an ongoing basis. This is their first and most important encounter with the Adventist Church.

Unless they are welcomed, appreciated and loved for who they are, and made to feel important and part of the body of Christ in a local church—unless they are welcomed through the first gate—it is highly unlikely they will find their way through the Twelfth Gate.
“Circle of courage” challenges NZ towns

(Continued from page 1)

“This will help prevent young people from getting into at-risk behaviour.”

The cyclists shared the challenge of the “Circle of courage” during Rotary Club meetings and town meetings in the evenings. The message was also shared through newspaper and radio coverage the cyclists received during their four-week tour from Bluff to Cape Reinga.

“It’s a really good and simple concept,” says Maylene Jennings from Dunedin. “It’s sad though that knowing the children in the community and even in our own church is not a natural thing for us to do. The fact that someone has to tell us about it shows us how impersonal we’ve all become.”

Although the numbers at the public meetings varied from 30 to three at different towns, key people such as educators and youth workers were usually present. For example, the mayor of Blenheim, who attended the town meeting, has promised to take on the “Circle of courage” as his strategy to help the young people of his town.

Reading materials, information packs, radio spots and newspaper articles, some of the resources produced, were also made available to towns visited by the “Circle of courage” cyclists.

Steve Kennelly left the tour when it departed from the South Island. However, the remaining cyclists made their way to their March 8 destination of Cape Reinga at the extreme north of New Zealand.

“I really connect with the Circle of Courage philosophy personally,” says rider Doug McLeod, pastor of the Glen Innes Adventist church in Auckland, as well as road captain and bike mechanic of the tour. “It’s exactly what I have been doing. I know all the children in my street by name and I have developed healthy relationships with them. So it’s something I identify with and have tried to implement personally.”

During the tour, Jake Ormsby, cyclist and pastor of the Manurewa Adventist church and chaplain of the South Auckland Adventist School, together with team mascot Kahu, became unofficial ambassadors of the “Circle of courage” philosophy. “I’ve been focusing on building relationships on this ride,” he says.

“I have intentionally decided to try to connect with young people in the communities we visit on the ride. This is what it’s all about. We need to put it into practice.” —Melody Tan

More @ www.circleofcourage.org.nz

◆ Church and community leaders of Moge Nambga, Western Highlands, Papua New Guinea (PNG), have come together with a New Year’s resolution to fight crime, drunkenness and unrest in the community. At the same time a new Seventh-day Adventist church was dedicated and the community provided two cows and 500 chickens to celebrate. Pastor Johnathan Wera, associate secretary of New Britain New Ireland Mission, ran a two-week prophecy seminar attended by more than 600 people each night. Raphael Goiye, on behalf of his Gumis community, welcomed the Seventh-day Adventist Church to the area and challenged them to continue making contributions to the area: “I want to see more marijuana plants being up-rooted in my community; kill the deadly habits and point everyone to the soon-coming Saviour, Jesus Christ, our Lord and King. All churches must cooperate to make this happen.” —Wako Napasu

◆ Adventist pastors from around Papua New Guinea (PNG) recently gathered in Lae, Morobe Province, for two weeks of ministerial upgrading workshops to improve their ministry skills. The program, attended by 78 ministers from around the country, was hosted by the church’s Ministerial Association for graduates of Sonoma Adventist College. The workshop was facilitated by Pastors Paul Petersen and Ray Roennfeldt, and is the last time participants from all over the country will join together. The next programs will be run for a week regionally. —Martina Darius

◆ Prominent businessman Robert Puri, from Yamka Yantnamb, Western Highlands Province, PNG, was baptised with 18 other candidates in front of 10,000 people from across the region. At his own expense, Mr Puri built a permanent church building, which was dedicated two days before his baptism. —Wako Napasu
MVAC growth sees creation of middle school

DOONSDIDE, NEW SOUTH WALES

Mountain View Adventist College (MVAC) has started a middle-school program for students in Years 5 to 8, with the hope of it benefiting the students as they move into higher grades and make the transition from primary to high school easier.

Brooke Auvaa-Bazley is in Year 6 and comments, “Middle school is cool—it feels like high school but it’s not. We have different teachers for some of our subjects, our own uniform and our own chapel.”

With the growth in student numbers experienced at MVAC, the need for new classrooms has also seen construction undertaken to build the eight-room specialist middle-school block, a new basketball court, large undercover area and new canteen, with completion scheduled around June of this year.

Eden Valley Academy celebrates baptisms

MAE SOT, THAILAND

The Eden Valley Academy in the Mae Lae refugee camp, based in Thailand, celebrated the baptism of 46 students on December 22, 2006.

The students came from varied backgrounds, including Baptist, Anglican, Catholic, Buddhist, Animist and Seventh-day Adventist.

“The students told the pastor they learned to know and trust Jesus slowly through Bible classes as well as attendance at church and Sabbath school,” says Helen Hall, principal of the school. “They also learned of our Adventist beliefs fully in Year 10 Bible doctrines class, a compulsory school subject for our division exams.”

This was the first time in the 25 years the school has been operating that there have been no problems gaining parental consent for the baptisms. “Many parents actually encouraged their young folk to join our church,” reports Ms. Hall.

“There have been a lot of problems in the camp during the past few years from drugs and alcohol abuse. People have noticed that our school has never been involved in fighting caused by use of drugs, and that we teach them at school not to take such things. They say the Adventist Church is the only one that takes a firm stand against use of such things. Praise the Lord for this.” —RECORD staff/ Helen Hall

Satellite downlink site set up on Tench

TENCH, PAPUA NEW GUINEA

The people on the remote island of Tench, New Ireland Province in Papua New Guinea, now have access to fresh news from around the world because a satellite downlink facility was installed on their island in January.

The islanders, who are all members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, agreed in 2003 to set up a downlink site on the island so they can watch religious programs. Each family was asked to give money toward the project, but unfortunately, the money raised by the families was nowhere near the targeted amount. They then divided all the residents of the island into three groups. These groups raised money by catching fish near the island and selling them at Kavieng.

Ward councilor Norman Jonah said during the launching of the downlink site that the New Ireland provincial government gave them a grant, which helped to reach the amount needed for the equipment.

Alpheaus Daniel, a public servant who has just returned from the island, said that on the first weekend after the downlink site was launched, the congregation was able to participate in international worship that was brought to them by satellite.

“The programs from the satellite really suited the young people and they all turned up,” said Mr. Daniel. “The downlink enabled us to participate in worships, musical programs, Bible discussions and other international programs.” —Matupit Darius

Excited residents of Tench watch their first program following the satellite installation.
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WEDDINGS

Gibbons—Durrant. Andrew David Gibbons, son of David Gibbons (Sydney, NSW) and Karen Roll (Cooranbong), and Kristy Lee Durrant, daughter of Calvin (Perth, WA) and Sharon Durrant (Newcastle, NSW), were married on 3.12.06 in the Wallsend Adventist church. Troy Roberts, Benaz Craig

Hedges—Page. Allan Hedges, son of Ida (Brisbane, Qld) and the late George Hedges, and Roslyn Page, daughter of Albert and Gwen Page (Cessnock, NSW), were married on 18.2.07 in the Toronto Adventist church. Ray Dickson

LAGAASIA—VAIFALE. Junior Faateu Lagaasia, eldest son of Faateu and Sipili Lagaasia (American Samoa), and Maureen Vaifale, eldest daughter of Vito and Etvise Vaifale (Cooranbong, NSW), were married on 17.12.06 at Avondale College church, Cooranbong. Eddie Evoka

Seton—Gosling. Michael James Seton, son of Frances Seton (Umina Beach, NSW), and Natasha Mandi Gosling, daughter of David Gosling (Galphot) and Amanda Atken (Berowra), were married on 7.1.07 at the Haven Beach, Terrigal. A Grant

Vidler—Bond. Daren Ross Vidler, son of Ross and Karen Vidler (Cleveland, Qld), and Tracey Lee Bond, daughter of Thomas and Judith Bond (Christchurch, NZ), were married on 4.2.07 at the Latrobe Chapel, Paddington, Qld. Jorge Munoz

OBITUARIES

Hancock, Gloria Patricia (nee Parker), born 6.4.1941 in Barossa Valley, SA; died 28.10.06 in Modbury Hospital, Adelaide. In 1968 she married her second husband, Merv. She is survived by her husband (Birdwood); her daughter and son-in-law, Karen and Erwin (SA); her son, Rick Stivan (WA); and her three grandchildren. Gloria was a much-loved wife, mother, grandmother and friend; a positive, active Christian within her church and the wider community; one who surmounted considerable tragedy, but now peacefully awaits her Lord's welcome home. Wolfgang Stefan, David Hamilton

Hitchen, John, born 18.4.1919; died 20.11.06 at Cronulla, NSW. He is survived by his wife, Ruth; and his children, John, Kevin and Maria. John died peacefully in his sleep and now rests awaiting the soon return of His Saviour. Chris Marzhey

Risky, Adrian John, born 8.8.1948 in Sydney, NSW; died 12.11.06 in Perth, WA, after a long illness. He was the third son of Berly Mauger and the late Ces Risky. He was preceded by his brothers, Colin and David. He is survived by his siblings, Lance and Sheree. During his earlier years Adrian's capable hands were seldom idle; a perfectionist, but above all, a Christian gentleman. Many relatives and friends gathered to celebrate his life; Sheree and Uncle Colin came from Victoria. Sheree and Lance wish to thank all who made Adrian's last days pleasant and rewarding. Adrian and Colin pointed everyone to the Saviour whose substitutionary death and resurrection assures believers of a glorious reunion. Colin Lockyer

Simpson, Kerrilyn Earlene, born 14.9.1946 at Burwood, NSW; died 21.12.06 in Southern Highlands Private Hospital, Bowral. She is survived by her husband, Mark; her daughters, Michelle, Amber and Tiffany. She was a member of the Bowral church, and is greatly missed by her family. Tony Mulla

Winterburn, Joy Southey (nee Adams), born 10.2.1916 at Giranbe, NZ; died 20.12.06 in Hollywood Nursing Home, Nedlands, WA. On 3.1.67 she married Eric. She is survived by her husband (Hollywood Aged Care Village, Perth); her stepchildren; her grandchildren; her sister, Rachel Wade (Naper, NZ) and family; and her brother, Pastor Cyrus Adams (Perth). Joy was a devoted San-trained nurse. Her service included three years at a leper colony in PNG, matron, Longburn College, NZ, for several years, Freeman Nursing Home, Rossmoyne, WA, for seven years. A sincere Christian awaiting the Life-giver. Cyrus Adams

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Mount Gravatt (Qld) church is holding a Good Friday service on April 6, 2007, at 9.00 am sharp! You, your family, friends and neighbours are all welcome. Brisbane Adventist College Student Centre, 305A Broadwater Road, Mansfield. Inquiries: Pastor Mark Pearce 0417 625 888.

FOUR очерк ofr your electrical needs contact Bruce Grieve 0410 752 724.

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Apology—we regret to advise that the James Morrison and Emma Park program previously advertised for March 24, 2007 has been cancelled. We apologise to those who were planning to attend for any inconvenience.

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