Maranatha, Northern California Partner on a Mission Trip to Panama
In March, NCC administrators, Pathfinders and church members traveled to Panama to build a school and hold VBS.

PHOTO BY
BORIS SAAVEDRA

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Our mission is to inform, educate and inspire our readers to action in all areas of ministry.

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God’s Truth is Our Truth

Perhaps one of the greatest discussions on truth took place between Jesus and Pilate. The Roman governor had the opportunity to free Jesus, but did not, conceding to the chant of the crowd that fateful Friday to “crucify him, crucify him.”

In the midst of his investigation of this righteous Rabbi, Pilate asked Jesus, “Are You a king then?”

Jesus answered, “You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.” Pilate said to Him, “What is truth?” And when he had said this, he went out again to the Jews, and said to them, “I find no fault in Him at all.” (John 18:33-38, NKJV).

In this encounter with Pilate, Jesus acknowledged his status as universal king, though his kingdom was not then or now an earthly kingdom. On this fact, the entire event is focused. He boldly asserted that He came into the world to testify and confirm truth.

Pilate’s response, “What is truth?” may indicate that during his lifetime, he had seriously sought truth. While Pilate didn’t wait for an answer to that last question, the question remains for us in the 21st century, “What is truth?” Jesus also described himself as “the Truth” that leads to the Father (John 14:6).

One could determine that all truth centers on Jesus and is revealed in His rabbinic teaching. Many Christians would say that no objective truth exists without Jesus, or that reality is shaped by a worldview that is Christ-centered. Jesus, through His life and teachings, informs His disciples in all ages how to live. He is the final authority of faith and life, because He is truth.

This is a challenging reality for those who believe, as by it, self is removed from the controlling position of our lives, and Christ, through His teachings and the ever-present Holy Spirit, is enthroned in us, taking command, as we yield to His influence. Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would lead believers into all truth (John 14:17). To live as Jesus lives becomes the one, all-consuming goal. He is the Master who has pre décided how His disciples will live.

Perhaps you remember the WWJD (What Would Jesus Do?) fad that moved through many evangelical Christian groups in the 1990s. It originated in Charles Sheldon’s 1896 book, In His Steps, which was subtitled “What Would Jesus Do?” WWJD? found its way to T-shirts, bumper stickers, wristbands and bracelets, and other paraphernalia. An excellent question, it was designed to bring Jesus’ principles into active consideration when making decisions and responding to actions of others. For some, it was more than a fad, but a real reminder of Jesus and what He stands for as revealed in the Gospels of the New Testament.

We seek Jesus as truth, because truth matters. It is important to know what the Creator God expects of us, not as a quest to merely acquire knowledge or achieve great things, but in a position of a learner, learning daily how to follow Jesus.

Truth as it is in Jesus trumps our individual experience and feelings. There are many voices today, both inside and outside the Adventist church, teaching alternate sources of truth. But if we accept the Bible as the primary textbook for life, the notion that we can guide ourselves by our experiences or feelings is debunked. It is “worldly wisdom,” no matter how it’s disguised and regardless who presents it.

There are many voices today, both inside and outside the Adventist church, teaching alternate sources of truth. Some say that feelings are a safe guide for life’s journey. Others insist that experience is a dependable director through life. But if we accept the Bible as the primary textbook for life, the notion that we can guide ourselves by our experiences or feelings is debunked. It is “worldly wisdom,” no matter how it’s disguised and regardless who presents it.

“For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, ‘He catches the wise in their own craftiness’; and again, ‘The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are futile.”’ (1 Corinthians 3:19, 20, NKJV).

“The Word of God is to be our guide. About the truths that this Word contains there is no guesswork. Let us not leave this unerring guide in order to seek for something new and strange. . . . There are many such doctrines that have not for their foundation, ‘It is written.’ They are but human suppositions’” (Ellen White, That I May Know Him, p. 210).

Scripture doesn’t record Jesus answering Pilates question, “What is truth?” But for those of us who read the complete gospel story and are confronted by the question in this modern era, we do have an answer. Jesus and His teachings are the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help us God!
Maranatha and the Northern California Conference Partner on a Mission Trip to Panama

A year ago, a group of Joel Wagness’s friends went on a Maranatha Volunteers International mission trip to Nicaragua. When they returned, Wagness heard their stories and felt a wave of regret. He couldn’t help but think that he should have gone, too. So when he heard about the Northern California Conference mission trip to Panama this year, he didn’t want to miss out. To be precise, he felt God didn’t want him to miss out.

“God was kind of calling me,” said Wagness, a student at Sacramento Adventist Academy. “I feel like he was nudging me along [saying], ‘I want you to experience more. You need this.’”

He hesitated at first, uncertain. Then, Wagness dove in and began fundraising as quickly as he could. He offered to do chores for church members, wrote sponsorship letters to family and friends, and even carried a jar with him from place to place, asking for mission trip donations.

Eventually Wagness had enough money for the project, and on March 20, he joined 60 other volunteers from all over Northern California in Panama. For the next 10 days, they threw mud and laid bricks to continue work that had already begun on the very first Adventist school in Santiago. Some of the volunteers conducted an outdoor Vacation Bible School for about 65 local children, complete with songs, stories, crafts and skits.

When all stages of building are complete, the new school will serve hundreds of elementary and junior high students. Church leaders in Panama expect that much of the enrollment will not come from Adventist families, but from parents seeking private, value-based education for their children. “We are pleased because we have found that in the society around us, Adventist education is perceived in a very, very good light. They consider our schools today to be doing the work that should be done in the education field: teaching values and spirituality,” said Braulio Concepcion, president of the West Panama Conference.

History has shown that Adventist schools are an effective way to share the gospel in Panama; about 10 years ago, Maranatha built six schools there, and church membership has increased most in areas surrounding those schools. But as with every mission trip, the volunteers weren’t just building a school. Mission trips
have a way of building people — transforming lives — in a way that would be difficult from the comforts of home. “I find that a mission trip reminds me of the passion that we have as a church to spread the gospel. And I see — through an experience like this — we’re preparing something that is going to be used for generations to come,” said NCC President Jim Pedersen, who went on the mission trip. “It is infrastructure that people can use to spread the message of Jesus. And even though we’re just simply laying blocks, we’re making a difference for the kingdom of God for the long term.”

This infrastructure expands to include the volunteers themselves. In this case, the project inspired a diverse group of people from Northern California to collaborate on a cause greater than their individual churches and schools and themselves. “For the same reason it’s nice to connect with another culture, it’s nice to connect with other kids from your conference that you may not know,” said Craig Heinrich, Leoni Meadows executive director. He served as construction leader on the project. “You start as a bunch of individuals, and by the end of the time, you’re a team.”

For volunteer Terry Parsons, the camaraderie between volunteers goes beyond the typical team. “They’re my family now and always will be. Because we’ve been through hardships together,” said Parsons, who is from Paradise. “And my family is growing from one mission trip to the next. I love it.” Parsons also commented on the unique experience of working with several of the conference leaders who went on the mission trip. “You see their names in a magazine, you hear their names here and there, but now you’re working side by side. You get to hear their side of their spiritual life, and it builds you up.”

Sharing spiritual walks — from triumphs to struggles — was an important part of the mission trip. Each night, the group gathered to worship together. And on Friday night, they had a special communion. However, it’s not structured worship programs that end up having the biggest influence on the volunteers. Rather, it’s the act of service itself. “It’s amazing to see how the lives of people of all ages are impacted through service,” said NCC youth director Eddie Heinrich, the trip’s project leader.

From backbreaking construction to preparing crafts for Vacation Bible School, the volunteers worked long days to impact a community. “I’ve definitely learned hard work, because this is hard work!” said Brianna Cassidy, a senior at Paradise Adventist Academy. “I’ve definitely learned how people live on the other side of the world. I’ve definitely learned that God can use you to help people. He can use you in 10 days; he can use you in five days if you’re willing to let Him. He will use you. And that’s probably the most powerful thing.”

As for Wagness, there won’t be any regrets this time. He relished every moment of his first mission trip — even those 6 a.m. wake-up calls and the blistering days in the sun. When asked why — what makes the fundraising, the hard work worthwhile — Wagness furrowed his brows. He considered the question for a few seconds, then looked up. “I think the simplest answer would be because it matters. Because there’s a purpose for what we do here.”

Julie Z. Lee
REDWOOD CAMP MEETING
THEME: "HE’S ON HIS WAY"
JULY 18-27, 2013

Pepperwood Pavilion
Jim Ayer, Vice President for Advancement, Adventist World Radio • Terry Butler, Co-investigator, Adventist Health Study 2 • Dan Jackson, President, North American Division • Tim Jones, Evangelist, Amazing Facts • John Lomaceng, Host, "A Sharper Focus" on 3ABN • Lennie Melashenko, Revivalist, Columbia Union Conference • Jim Pedersen, President, Northern California Conference

Adult II
Herb Montgomery, Director/Author/Speaker, Renewed Heart Ministries • Rudolph Peters, Pastor, Richmond Beacon Light • Jim Redfield, Pastor, Coffey/Penn Valley District • Gary Vanden, Pastor, Glendale (Arizona) Cooking School

Campamento Hispano de Redwood
Rodolfi Paredes, Lay Pastor, Marysville Spanish Group Seminar

Neva Brackett, Cookbook Author/Speaker, Live Long, Live Better Seminars

plan now to attend this year’s event.
Nestled in a campground in Northern California near Fortuna is one of the most beautiful camp meeting locations ever found. Beneath the giant Redwood trees, come to hear inspirational sermons and educational seminars. There will also be musical concerts, including special musical presentations by The Coyote Bandits and Jennifer Jill Schweizer.

For more details about the speakers/presenters and to download a registration form, visit www.ncc.adventist.org/redwoodcamp.

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I had been shown that San Francisco and Oakland were missionary fields and ever would be.

Ellen White
Testimonies Vol. 4, p. 284.3

BAY AREA FOR JESUS Bridges

June 22, 2013

The Central California and Northern California Conferences are partnering together to spread the good news of Jesus Christ in San Francisco, Oakland and the surrounding Bay Area. On June 22, two events are planned for the members of each conference.

Don't miss this opportunity to come together to pray, to be inspired and to hear about upcoming plans for this large-scale outreach to these cities.

Central California Conference
9:20 a.m. • Sabbath School & Worship Service (Lunch will be provided)
San Francisco Central Seventh-day Adventist Church
2889 California Street, San Francisco

Northern California Conference
4:00 p.m. • Hour of Prayer
5:00 p.m. • East-Bay Rally
Grand Advent Seventh-day Adventist Church
278 Grand Avenue, Oakland

Parking and other information can be found at ccc.adventist.org or www.ncc.adventist.org/bridges

“What would happen if the will of God is done in Oakland, as it is in heaven? ... How about in San Francisco? And what would it take on our part, creatively and intentionally, to answer Christ’s prayer? My dream is that this program is indeed that answer.”
Jonathan Henderson, Pastor Grand Advent Church

“A lot of people are ready and willing to study the Word of God. We need people who will really focus on the work here.”
Roldan Abello, Associate Pastor • San Francisco Central Church
Valley View Jr. Academy Celebrates 100 Years

Adventist education often excites passionate discussions. The second largest world-wide school system has a primary purpose — to educate children to be champions for Jesus in this world and to live forever with Him in the next.

Since the first Adventist congregation began in Arroyo Grande, Calif., its members have been passionate about training their children to live for Jesus. The first church building, which housed an elementary school, opened just in time for the 1911-1912 school year.

Valley View Jr. Academy in Arroyo Grande, celebrated its 100-year anniversary on April 5-7, 2013. More than 600 guests, including 300 alumni, attended the weekend event held at the Clark Center for Performing Arts. “It was more than we thought,” says Cheryl Vines, celebration coordinator. “It was a God thing!”

Friday night’s guest speaker was alumnus Atonte Myers, member of the Templeton Hills constituent church. Alumnus Dr. Scott Nelson taught Sabbath school, and Chris Blake, former English teacher, spoke for worship. An afternoon concert by Monterey Bay Academy’s Oceanaires and Wood Winds, a Saturday night mixer where alumni and friends shared memories, and a Sunday morning golf tournament completed the celebration.

Guests gave more than $70,000 to the school’s building fund. The 80-year-old schoolhouse needs to be completely renovated. According to architectural standards, the school is considered a historical building. As such, the façade of the 80-year-old structure must remain in the same style. With nearly $900,000 of the $1.3 million goal raised, phase one will begin with ground breaking on June 10, 2013. Maranatha volunteers arrive July 23 to frame the classrooms. Skilled church members are donating their time for plumbing and other specialties. The renovation will be a two-year project.

Pioneers’ Passion for Education

The Arroyo Grande township was established in 1862, with 300 square miles of territory. Building a schoolhouse and blacksmith shop granted town status in 1867. The rich soil attracted farmers and families and, by the 1870s, new businesses sprung up like new crops. The arrival of the Pacific Coast Railway and the Pismo Wharf in 1881 brought Arroyo Grande to a place of considerable importance.

Three students from Healdsburg College (now Pacific Union College) came to town in the summer of 1886 to hold their first evangelistic meetings. Though the early settlers had little interest in religion, a few people came to the rented storefront to hear what these preachers had to say.

Dr. Edwin Paulding, the town’s only doctor, became the first Seventh-day Adventist in the area. His interest in health and wellness led him to discover the benefits of a plant-based diet. He taught and wrote extensively about the importance of balanced nutrition and natural healing methods. His work laid the foundation for the development of Seventh-day Adventist health care and education systems.

Members of the Allen Street Gang, named for the address of the first Adventist church and school, celebrate with friends. Pictured left to right are: Harold Rowe, George Juler, John Robison, and Leta Jane and Ken Juler. The oldest one of the group is 91. “We had such a great time,” said John Robison. “We look forward to the next one.”
town. Clara, his new wife and a Presbyterian, refused to attend and never agreed with his new religious beliefs. Expecting an imminent end of the world, Paulding had little interest in building wealth. Instead, he and two friends bought land for a church near the corner of Short and Allen Street.

Camp meetings continued to grow the congregation. John and Elfrida Becket, successful land owners, joined the Adventist church in 1912. After the tragic death of their son in 1928, the Beckets deeded land to the Adventist church for a school. Built in 1938, in their son’s memory, it sits on a hilltop with a view of the ocean and valley hillsides.

**Passion of Today’s Pioneers**

A community couple gave a surprise gift of $150,000 to renovate the 80-year-old building. Their children attend VVJA because their parents believe the school’s education is superior. But the building was in desperate need of renovation.

The school board agreed. They hired Tony Reyes in September 2011 as the school’s director of development to organize and lead a $1.3 million fundraising campaign.

Peter Nelson, a dentist and member of the San Luis Obispo constituent church, agreed to chair the capital campaign committee. “I love this school,” Nelson says. “My kids got a great education here. I feel like I can contribute to upholding and sustaining Christian education for our church and community.”

Phillip Ermshar, school principal for six years, describes the current facility as an enormous challenge. “Fix one problem and something else happens,” he says. “Because of termites, new doors are impossible to hang.” He is looking forward to a facility to house a superior education.

Reyes thought the campaign was off to a good start until he discovered the school’s 100-year anniversary was during the 2011-2012 school year — his first year at the job. Planning a centennial event was overwhelming.

**The Centennial Celebration**

Reyes called Cheryl Vines. She grew up in the area, attended the church school and knew a lot of people. She agreed to serve as secretary of the volunteer centennial committee and spearhead the 100-year celebration.

There was no budget, but there were plenty of things to do: finding 100 years of alumni records, choosing a date, and contracting on a venue. “The Lord will provide’ was our motto,” Vines says.

Several of the seven constituent churches volunteered to provide Sabbath lunch. Researching 100 years of alumni records was challenging. Often, the early years’ information did not exist. As the database began to fill with alumni, former staff, church members, and names by word of mouth, the numbers were amazing. "You usually don’t see this kind of turnout for elementary schools,” Reyes says. The response from former and current students, staff, pastors, parents and church members is evidence of their passion for Christian education.

“I was humbled at the solemnity of the hour. It represents the tireless work of countless parents, teachers, church members and all of the resources prioritized for these precious little ones for one purpose — to prepare them for the kingdom. I was honored to be among them,” says Ramiro Cano, president of the Central California Conference.


Caron Oswald
Mayra Butcher Thompson always wanted to be a teacher — math or physics. She would tell her sister, “I’m too smart to be an accountant” — and now she is one. At that time, she had an associate’s degree in science and planned to become a math/physics teacher.

Thompson became the new treasurer of the Central California Conference on April 1. She follows Nelson Tabingo, who served as treasurer for 15 years and recently retired. Lucille Tabingo, an auditor, retired with her husband.

Thompson has a bachelor’s degree in business and a master’s in business administration, both from California State University, Fresno. A magna cum laude graduate and a member of several honor societies, she is currently working on her Certified Public Accountant (CPA).

She has served the conference as an auditor since 2002 while also lending her experience to Fresno Adventist Academy as business manager for the past two years, and Monterey Bay Academy as vice president of finance from August 2010 to February 2012.

“My personal prayer has been, ‘Lord, please surround me with the right people to accomplish Your will for this conference,’” says CCC President Ramiro Gano. “God has responded several times over, and now, once again, the Lord has chosen a very capable and well-tried servant. Central is more strongly equipped to realize heaven’s plan with Mayra at the helm of God’s financial resources.”

The Journey
Born in Panama City, Panama, Thompson grew up in a blended family. English was the language at home, Spanish the language at school. Her mom was a Catholic, Dad was a Protestant. One day, an Adventist lady knocked on the door and asked Thompson’s mom if she would like to study the Bible. Weekly Bible studies began. When the studies ended, Mom was convinced that church school was the best environment for her children. When she was 8 years old, Thompson decided to be baptized.

At 19, she married a young man she had known since primary Sabbath school. Later, a daughter and son joined the family. Thompson had to go to work. She got a job as a receptionist. One day, her boss told her she wasn’t a good secretary and gave her an accounting project. He eventually sent her to school for accounting. The rest is history.

When political unrest began in Panama, Thompson’s mother-in-law brought the family to California. Sadly, after 15 years, Thompson’s marriage ended.

Redirected
When her children graduated from FAA and left for college, she went back to school. She had been working on her CPA license. Challenged by the length of time to complete her CPA, she earned an MBA instead.

Weyerhaeuser called with a job offer. “My dream job! I have arrived,” Thompson says. She was finance and administrative manager. A few months later, the company was downsizing and offered her a job in a new location. She couldn’t move because she had not completed her degree.

At church, she learned about a job opening at the conference office for accounts payable and auditing. “I am not good enough to work for the conference,” she believed.

In spite of her lack of confidence, she began working for the conference in 2002. As an auditor, she worked with local church treasurers. “My first year I wanted to quit,” she says. “It broke my heart to see the needs.”

A church elder told her, “This is the Lord’s work. God wants you to be there.”

Back to the Beginning
“Auditing is a waste of time if the treasurers don’t know what we are auditing. Tech support and training are the most important things,” Thompson says. She has trained more than 120 treasurers. A teacher at heart, she trained a lady who had never turned on a computer. “When I call her now, she can do whatever I ask.”

She educated the treasurers in Jewel (the preferred accounting software), conference policies and IRS regulations. She told her treasurers that she would be available any time to help. One newly trained woman said, “Now I know my ministry.”

Caron Oswald
Hand ‘N Hand Training Events Held on Maui and the Big Island

Hand ‘N Hand, Hawaii Conference's annual weekend training for leaders of children and youth, has for five years taken place on the Island of Oahu. While most of the Hawaii Conference membership is located on Oahu, a large number of leaders serve on five neighboring islands.

Leaders on one of those sister islands requested that the conference hold the next Hand ‘N Hand on Maui. That request was granted and, in addition, was extended to the Big Island. These regional events took place on back-to-back weekends in February: 15-17 (Maui) and 22-24 (Big Island).

Speakers Eldon Ramirez, then Central California Conference youth director, and James Black, North American Division youth director, kicked off the weekends with enthusiasm and inspiration in general sessions at each venue.

Sabbath morning on Maui, guest speakers Candy DeVore, editor of Kid's Ministry Ideas magazine and director of Kids Ministry Network for Review and Herald Publishing, along with Ramirez and Black, visited area churches to speak for worship services. Sean Ramos, Kory Char and Edgar Ines provided music throughout the weekend.

“This was one great event,” said Pastor Juan Rivera of the Kahului church. “People attended who I never thought would. The outcome was very promising, and the enthusiasm was contagious. The folk left with a clear vision on the matter of children and youth ministries shared by well-prepared presenters.”

On the Big Island, Roland Graham, principal of Hawaiian Mission Academy, joined DeVore and Black to present worship services in area churches. HMA students J.J. Reynolds, Riley Kim, Reignette Antonio, Alex Avendano, and Sharmaine Domingo provided music, skits and general help. Break-out sessions and vespers followed the fellowship meal, and many attended a social event for the youth that evening in Hilo.

Sunday’s break-out sessions began early with workshops focused on the different age groups. Each Sunday afternoon, attendees learned about a program called “Go Fish,” which teaches children and youth how to evangelize other children and youth.

“While we have done this kind of event numerous times, wide based support from the pastors, teachers, parents and lay leaders was unprecedented,” said Pastor Jesse Seibel, Hawaii Conference youth director. “We often focus our training on people in positions. This time was different. Whole churches were growing together. That is truly what Hand ‘N Hand is about.”

At the end of each weekend, attendees received gifts donated by Review & Herald, Pacific Press, AdventSource and ADRA.

Feryl Harris

Hawaiian Mission Academy students leave their mark during “Go Fish,” an interactive child evangelism training program.

Pastor Elden Ramirez challenges leaders on Maui to a higher level of ministry.
Nestled between the White Mountains and the Sierra Nevada Mountains at an elevation of 4,000 feet is the town of Bishop, Calif. This is the picturesque home of the Bishop Adventist Christian School and its annual ice cream social fundraiser.

As cars crept along Home Street on the evening of April 25, drivers saw an unusual number of cars parked along the road near Bishop Adventist Christian School. Its parking lot was completely full. Families walked up the street toward the school. Children ran ahead, urging the adults to hurry.

Smiling students sold tickets for ice cream, face painting, a football toss, and two bounce houses. Others sold freshly shelled walnuts. Rainbow Preschool children serenaded visitors with a rousing collection of religious songs and guitar music. Inside the gym, students sold home baked goodies and performed more music. Attendees also participated in a silent auction with all types of gift baskets, ranging from toys to fitness classes to private music lessons and more. The main attraction was an all-you-can-eat buffet, including fruit salads, cookies, cupcakes, ice cream sundaes and root beer floats.

To wrap up the fundraising event, a professional auctioneer took the stage to garner bids on a new laptop, two brand new bikes, horse back riding lessons, and other big ticket items. Everyone laughed as a bidding war broke out over a small child’s chair and footstool — the seventh-grader who donated the chair was speechless.

The school raised approximately $9,000 during this year’s fundraiser. Bishop Adventist Christian School has 31 students in grades one through eight; only four of them are Adventist.

Andrea Jackson
Sunset Congregation Celebrates Church Status

It was evident for those coming to church in Sunset, Utah, on April 20, that this wasn’t going to be an ordinary Sabbath. Faces were glowing with big smiles, and everybody was wearing their best suits and dresses. The waiting was over. Finally, members from the Sunset Spanish church were ready to receive their official “church” status, belonging to the Nevada-Utah Conference.

A slide show, running through entire program, revealed how the small group of passionate church members was growing, moving from one location to another. Many “amens” resounded as special music raised words of praise and worship to God. Many guests joined the celebration. Larry Unterseher, president of the Nevada-Utah Conference, presented an uplifting message to the congregation.

During the program, the three founders of the church came to the stage to receive a plaque in recognition of their dedicated labor and faithfulness. Pastor Arturo Jeronimo also received a plaque from Unterseher commemorating the occasion.

Nevada-Utah Conference Hispanic coordinator Sergio Romero called every member of the congregation to the front. They carried candles as a symbol of their unity in Christ and a reminder to let their light shine in the community.

Then Unterseher made a call to those remaining in their seats. The appeal was clear, “If you want to join this group of dedicated church members, come to the front and receive a candle.” More than a dozen people came to the stage, making a decision to belong to the new Sunset Spanish Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Unterseher offered a prayer of dedication, the final touch to an emotional ceremony.

“This is like a dream,” said one church member. “We prayed about this moment for so long. God is so good.”

“Now we need to fill this place and plant another church somewhere else,” said another.

Sergio Romero
Researchers at Loma Linda University Health have conducted a study that documents the impact of mothers who smoke during pregnancy on adverse birth outcomes in San Bernardino County. “Estimating the Impact of Smoking Cessation During Pregnancy: The San Bernardino County Experience” has been published in the online edition of the Journal of Community Health.

The analysis of all births in the county during 2007-2008 indicated that for every 35 women who quit smoking during pregnancy, one case of low birth weight or pre-term birth was prevented. The cost of 35 women enrolling in a maternal smoking cessation program was estimated to be far less than the cost of a lengthy stay in the hospital for a low birth weight or pre-term infant.

“These data immediately translate into modeling the effectiveness of existing programs and allocating limited resources to new programs for San Bernardino mothers,” says lead author, Michael Batech, M.P.H., research analyst at Loma Linda University Center for Health Research.

“To our knowledge, this is the first county-wide study measuring maternal tobacco use from San Bernardino County,” says Jayakaran S. Job, M.D., Dr.P.H., principal investigator on the study and the chair of the department of global health at Loma Linda University School of Public Health. “We are very proud of the work that has been done on this study and only hope that it will have a positive impact on the community and beyond.”

The research team was comprised of Loma Linda University faculty and Loma Linda University Medical Center physicians who began the study in 2008 as part of the National Children’s Study work being done by LLU/LLUUMC to enroll mothers and their infants in a long term follow-up study.

The authors of the study are Michael Batech; Serena Tonstad, M.D., Ph.D., M.P.H., professor, School of Public Health; Dr. Job; Richard Chinnock, M.D., chair of pediatrics, School of Medicine and physician-in-chief, LLU Children’s Hospital; Bryan Oshiro, M.D., vice-chair of obstetrics and gynecology, School of Medicine and director of the Perinatal Institute and maternal and fetal medicine, Children’s Hospital; T. Allen Merritt, M.D., professor of pediatrics, School of Medicine; Gretchen Page, M.P.H., Southern Inland Counties Regional Perinatal Programs at LLUMC; and Pramil N. Singh, Dr.P.H., director, Center for Health Research.

The research team discovered that mothers who quit smoking during the pregnancy had reduced risks for low birth weight and preterm outcomes compared to those who continued to smoke during pregnancy. There is also a significantly lower risk of pre-term birth and low birth weight in mothers who had never smoked.

The study also incorporated variables such as age, race and years of education, which also had an impact on birth outcomes related to smoking.

“We hope that these findings will not only influence the community and contribute to better birth outcomes,” says Page, “but demonstrate the need for more education on smoking and pregnancy as well as smoking cessation programs for expectant mothers.”

The project, which was funded by the National Institute of Child and Human Development, was inspired by the fact that as the largest county in the contiguous United States, San Bernadino County has experienced one of the highest rates of infant mortality, low birth weight, and pre-term birth in California since 2009. The county also ranks among the lowest in California based on indicators of good health according to an analysis done by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

Briana Pastorino
La Sierra Celebrates 50th Year of Study Abroad Program

Fifty years ago, an overseas study program launched at La Sierra University when a group of 25 daring students crossed the country and an ocean to learn the French language in France.

First called La Sierra College Overseas, the Adventist Colleges Abroad program is now based in Washington, D.C., and has grown since its inception in 1962 to involve Adventist college and university students throughout North America. Courses are offered in 10 languages in 13 countries. All told, about 20,000 students from around the continent have participated in ACA over the years.

Members of that first adventurous student group were recently honored for their pioneering efforts. La Sierra’s alumni weekend, held April 19-21, celebrated the Adventist Colleges Abroad program and recognized La Sierra alums and LSC Overseas participants Tom Smith, class of 1963, and Ione Brunt, attended 1964. “Don’t we owe a bit of gratitude to these people who were willing to break new ground?” said La Sierra University President Randal Wisbey during a Friday evening banquet.

Smith was also recognized with an Honored Alumnus Award for his role in developing the ACA program and leading its expansion after it moved to the North American Division in 1970.

He later worked at La Sierra as registrar and director of enrollment services.

In 1962, the initial group of 22 La Sierra students, including Smith and Brunt, and three others from Pacific Union College faced an arduous journey to reach their home for the next nine months — an Adventist college, Collonges-sous-Saléve, France, in the mountainside village of Saléve overlooking Geneva, Switzerland. Before they could sail to France from New York City, they first had to traverse the United States, a harrowing adventure in its own right.

Once in France, the group, led by faculty sponsor and music professor John T. Hamilton and his wife, Arlene, enjoyed a cornucopia of cultural experiences while enduring record cold and snow. They traveled the European continent during school breaks and met Princess Grace in Monaco, visited the famed Louvre museum in Paris and attended a Christmas Eve performance of “Silent Night” in Austria’s Franz Gruber chapel named for the composer of the much-loved Christmas carol. Students also received an education in manual labor. They cleaned animal stalls in the college dairy barn, herded cows and washed dishes.

(A full account of the first ACA group and an historical background of the program is available in the Spring 2012 edition of La Sierra University Magazine.)

On April 20 during alumni weekend, La Sierra held a reunion for Adventist Colleges Abroad alums with special guest Odette Ferreira, the ACA director for the North American Division. La Sierra ACA students recited Scripture in several languages, and former ACA students described the impact of the program on their lives.

“I look back at my time with ACA as one of the best times of my life,” said Jonathan Davidson, a 2012 business graduate and former ACA participant who took Spanish language classes in Sagunto, Spain, in fall quarter 2011. “I made lifelong friendships and was inspired by great professors.”

Smith recounted with humor the struggles he and other students faced in taking that first trip to study overseas and the strength they found in each other and in God. “You’re never by yourself. You’re always part of a group,” said Smith to the alumni audience. “And the biggest part of the group is up there,” he said, pointing skyward.

Between the start of the school year last fall and this spring, a total of 46 La Sierra University students have studied abroad or are currently doing so in Spain, Japan, Italy, Argentina, France and Brazil.

Tom Hamilton, whose father, John T. Hamilton, founded the study abroad program at La Sierra, shares memories of the early experiences in Europe. Hamilton spoke at the recent golden anniversary celebration for Adventist Colleges Abroad held at La Sierra.
PUC students renovate a local school in Brazil with a fresh coat of paint.
PUC Student Mission Groups Build Relationships and Sabbath School Rooms

For the 60 PUC students who attended one of four mission trips this spring break, their evangelical and humanitarian work was preceded by hundreds of other Adventist students who came before them and worked in the same location. As the current students of PUC toiled in tropical heat and laid foundation at construction sites in foreign lands, they may not have known that their predecessors had laid a different type of foundation during the mission trips of previous years.

Fabio Maia, the Service and Mission Coordinator for PUC, explained that returning to familiar work sites is part of greater mission strategy for the college, one that develops stronger relationships between locals and PUC volunteers, as well as allowing for better quality work to be done on location, work that has an increased chance of meeting the physical and spiritual needs of the mission population.

“We decided to continue going back to the same sites and build relationships with the communities that we are serving,” Maia said. “That’s our goal. We go, become friends, and then it’s easy to introduce Jesus.”

During just one week, four separate mission trips took place. In the South American nation of Brazil, 22 students joined Maia on a humanitarian expedition to provide health education to people along the Amazon River. While in Brazil, the volunteers lived and traveled on a riverboat in cooperation with a medical missionary school. In Costa Rica, 13 students assisted in the construction of a three-room Sabbath school facility at a Seventh-day Adventist church.

Several hundred miles northwest of Costa Rica, in the Central American country of Nicaragua, 12 PUC volunteers returned to Empalme de Boaco to renovate a medical clinic they had constructed the previous year. At the same location, students also refurbished a children’s playground adjacent to the facility. Lastly, here in the United States, 19 students traveled to Page, Ariz., to the Navajo Indian Reservation as part of the Pueblo Project where they refurbished and cleaned a church constructed by a PUC group in past years.

The trips to Brazil, Navajo Nation, and Nicaragua, were all trips where PUC groups had served in previous years, and in each scenario, the previous work of students was invaluable to the continued mission work.

Maia explained that it is less glamorous and sometimes less exciting to continue to minister in the same locations, but that it’s vital for successful ministry and successful humanitarian intervention.

“It would be fun to find new places, but it’s not the most effective way. We’re making friends this way, and we’re building relationships, which are very special for our students and for their communities, too. We’re there to minister to their practical needs.”

“Yes, there are challenges in going back to the same place,” Maia continued. “We need to always be working to create new projects and create new venues for them to work in.”

However, Maia — who heads the Office of Service, Justice, and Missions at PUC — described the planning process for each site, making it clear that the groups from PUC were not in charge, per se, but were part of a cooperative, international team, and that even when continuing to return to the same spots, the work never quite finishes.

“When we go there, we’re not just going to tell them what to do,” he said. “We sit down with students and the communities to see what the next project should be and see how we can best support the community.”

While the construction work and medical efforts directly benefit the local populations, the people of Costa Rica, Brazil, Nicaragua, and the Navajo Nation are not the only communities to benefit from these trips. In perhaps a less noticeable, yet still tangible manner, PUCs academic community benefits also. Student volunteers gained a greater understanding of international topics such as exposure to the Spanish and Portuguese languages, tropical biology, developing world economies, and practical theology.

Students on the mission trips are then able to take what they learned back into the classroom with them.

Nancy Lecourt, academic vice president, pointed to the educational relevance of international trips, such as those taken to Brazil, Costa Rica, and Nicaragua, which offer “high-impact learning practices” for those in attendance.

“High impact practices are activities that research has shown to make a difference in student success in college,” she explained. “They are active learning experiences where the students are so fully engaged that they learn more deeply. They allow students to take theoretical knowledge and try it out in the real world.”

One of those students who participated in a mission trip over spring break was Jamie Wittwer, a biology major from Las Vegas, Nev. Among other things, Wittwer appreciated how the trip taught her to be grateful in her own life.

“Going to the Amazon actually made me really realize how good we have it here,” she said. “Honestly, just living on the boat, showering in disgusting water and always feeling dirty, it just made me really thankful for the things I have here.”

“It was really challenging talking to the people in Brazil,” Wittwer continued, “but it was fun being able to communicate even though there was a language barrier that we had to cross. The most positive thing for me though was just helping so many people and having a lot of fun getting to know the other students that went on the trip with me.”

Maia shared that the transformation he observed in the lives of the students was quite incredible. “It’s great to see how the students change in just one week when they have an opportunity to go and serve a community. We’re already looking forward to going back.”

Martin Surridge
The Southern California Conference Office of Education is taking new steps to ensure that every school has a quality educator at the helm. The department has initiated several new programs to ensure that its principals receive the training and recognition they deserve.

The first of these newly implemented programs focuses on showing appreciation for principals’ hard work. To accomplish this, the Board of Education has implemented a special recognition program. An outstanding principal is chosen each year based on performance and dedication to Adventist education.

The recipient, chosen by a committee from the Office of Education, receives two round-trip airfare tickets to Hawaii to enjoy a week in a beautiful Waikiki time-share. Harold Crook, Ed.D., superintendent of schools, said of the award, “We really wanted a way to show that they were appreciated and that their hard work and dedication were not unnoticed.”

This year the award went to Susan Vlach from South Bay Junior Academy. “Mrs. Vlach has served South Bay Jr. Academy as principal for 28 years,” said Rita Henriquez-Green, Ed.D. “She is a leader with a team that loves her for her leadership and vision.” The award was made possible by an anonymous donor.

Additionally, the Office of Education has implemented the new Principal Enrichment Program. Principals are in-serviced for 25 hours, learning the ins and outs of school leadership. The aim is to inspire an administrator to take his or her school to the next level. Participants are required to attend five in-service classes that focus on individual and group activities. They must also complete at least a half-day of shadowing a mentor-principal in their daily routine. Once these and other projects are completed, principals submit pre- and post-visioning statements outlining their vision for their school. At this year’s enrichment program, the 13 participants completing the entire program received an iPad Mini and a certificate of completion.

The Board of Education and Southern California Conference also voted the new Principal Retention Program, which grants an award incentive at the beginning of the school year to elementary and high school principals for their hard work and dedication of the previous year. With this program to help retain principals, elementary principals who stay with their current school receive $600, and returning high school principals get $1,000. This new Principal Retention Program will (a) provide consistency of leadership in schools, (b) reduce the high cost of relocating new principals and (c) recognize principals’ hard work to help make student and teacher life better.

“The central theme of the Office of Education is to create an environment on our campuses in which teachers and administrators mentor Jesus to every student,” explained Crook. “Christian education is evangelism, and is the primary focus of all of our Southern California schools. Nothing is more important to a school than a quality leader or principal who effectively implements this central theme.”

The Office of Education recently hired a marketing director for the 2013-2014 school year. This director will assist SCC schools with marketing materials to help recruit new students. Another focus includes the implementation of fundraising programs (jog-a-thons, silent auctions, etc.) and raising the schools’ social media presence.
Adventist Councilman Witnesses in the City

Sergio Infanzon is mayor pro tem of the community of Bell Gardens in Los Angeles County, and an elected member of the Bell Gardens City Council. He is also a member of the Spanish American Seventh-day Adventist Church.

“When he works, he is usually helping people,” said his pastor, Rogelio Paquini. “He conducts workshops for young people, 100 of whom attended one of his recent workshops at our church, to learn about getting documentation.”

“Mr. Infanzon helped me definitely to understand how I could be more focused in school and not worry about money,” said Luis Pascual, who attended one Infanzon church workshop.

“I have participated in the community for more than 20 years,” Infanzon reported. “When I was in school, I was involved in student government and other activities. When people in church noticed how involved I was, some people were concerned.

“You shouldn’t mix political action with religion,” one person had warned him.

“I have always thought helping in the community is the best way to make a difference; it also is an opportunity for witnessing,” countered Infanzon. “When you’re helping, every day can be an opportunity to do missionary work.”

“When I go to conferences, people ask why I don’t drink or smoke,” Infanzon said. “I tell them it is because of what I have learned through my church. During the last three years I have been involved with an early care and education taskforce and have emphasized the importance of care during the first five years of life. I told the group that I learned about these principles from a book written more than a century ago by Ellen White. Taskforce members wanted the book!”

Infanzon’s current political involvement is enriching his life in the sense of personal satisfaction, but, he noted, “I work full-time as a project manager for a local school district. Pay for a councilmember is somehow symbolic; I couldn’t live on it. I usually invest four to six hours daily on city issues.

“With the proper tools and resources a person can create opportunities that will open doors to help them become better individuals and benefit society,” Infanzon said. “I am committed to providing those tools and resources.”

In the past three years, Infanzon has attended meetings in California and elsewhere concerning public health needs and resources. He plans to work with the new pastor of the Bell Gardens church to launch a campaign focused on health that will incorporate city public-health policies.

Infanzon has been active in seeking funding for the health initiative. “One of the first steps will be to create a brochure that will concentrate on nutrition and exercise and include other lifestyle topics,” he explained. “My goal is to train a group of parents for leadership in public health, to help in providing information to kids in local schools.

“I know that I go beyond the line of duty on the projects that I work on for the city, particularly with the emphasis that I am placing on health,” Infanzon noted. “It is because of my beliefs.”

Councilman Sergio Infanzon participates in a ribbon-cutting event for a new soccer field in Bell Gardens, one of the many community activities and presentations in which he participates.

Betty Cooney
On April 20, members and friends of the Compton Samoan church, the first Samoan church in the North American Division, gathered to celebrate their 40th anniversary of ministry to the Samoan community within the Southern California Conference. Former pastors, church members and supporters traveled from Hawaii, Michigan and New Zealand for the event.

“I was pleasantly surprised to see the renovation work that was just completed,” said Pastor Meshach Soli, pastor of the Xcell church group in the Los Angeles area. According to the Compton Samoan church pastor, Eliu Lafo, members of the Compton Samoan and L.A. Tongan churches did the extensive renovation work, with added help from an Iowa mission group. Compton community businesses donated carpet and other merchandise to help.

Soli reminisced about his days growing up in the Compton church. “I remember being a Pathfinder and not being able to afford the proper gloves,” he said, “and my two grandfathers who had their funerals at this church. Although I like reminiscing, I believe the prize is not in the past. It’s not right here; it’s heavenward.”

The praise team along with the ministers continued to remind the congregation of the calling given to them as a church. “The Compton Samoan church was planted with a prophetic message and as a prophetic movement. This weekend is to remind you of the blessed hope,” said Pastor Siaosi Tolai, who now resides in Hawaii.

The church was filled to capacity. A narration on the history of the church was delivered, allowing everyone to reflect on the 40-year journey. Ministers who had labored at the church received awards and recognition.

“This is where I was introduced to Bible prophecy,” said former Pastor Siaosi Tolai, who at one time baptized 65 members in the parking lot of the church.

Pastor Fred Toailoa, currently ministering at the Sacramento Samoan church, reminded the congregation of the building of the Talofa Youth Hall. Toailoa spoke of the men who lined up and carried heavy beams from one end to the other in order to complete the construction of the hall. “Tears, sweat and blood went into the building of this church. It was not easy, but God provided,” he said.

As the congregation sang, laughed and cried, they were reminded of one thing: “The appearance, the face, the names of this church may have changed, but God has never changed. He is the One who preserves the legacy of this church,” said Lafo, as he closed the service for the evening.

Huge white tents were set on the parking lot behind the church to host dinner after the ceremony.

The Compton Samoan church is the mother church of four Samoan groups, which Compton members helped to plant in the Southeastern California Conference.
Pastor Cherise Gardner
Ordained to Gospel Ministry

Cherise Gardner, associate pastor for Children and Family Ministry of the Glendale City church, was ordained to the gospel ministry on Sabbath, April 27.

In her sermon at the 11 o’clock worship service, Gardner spoke of the handprints people leave in life. “As we go through this journey we call life,” she said, “we are continuously leaving behind a spiritual handprint. Our treatment of others, the examples that we set, the paths that we choose, and the decisions that we make are imprinted on the minds and hearts of those closest to us. . . . The question is, what type of impression will we leave?”

Speaking of her own pastoral journey at Glendale City church, she noted, “Personally, I will never have the gift of story that Pastor Mitch Henson did, or the intellectual acumen of Pastor Smuts Van Rooyen, who mentored me and taught me how to lead, to minister. And I know that I will never have the confidence of Pastor Todd, who can speak so eloquently, without notes. I have to have my notes on paper, as a crutch,” she added, smiling and waving her notes.

“I read somewhere, though, that, ‘Living to make our own mark is too small a thing to give our whole lives to. But to be positioned in a way that God can make His mark through us — now that’s worth giving our lives to! And,’” she added, “I want His handprint to shine through me.

“On this day, when we celebrate what it means to be called to ministry, I hope you recognize that we are all called; this is not just my calling, but yours as well. On whatever our hands touch, we leave prints. It’s my prayer that wherever we go today, we leave the handprint of God: handprints of compassion, of understanding and love, of kindness and genuine concern.”

A native of the Bahamas, Gardner was first drawn to the idea of serving the Lord in some aspect of ministry around the age of 5, when she decided to become a pastor like her grandfather. She attended Northern Caribbean University in Jamaica, earning degrees in religion and business administration. After graduating, she served as a sergeant in the U.S. Army Reserve, where she learned skills in leadership and responsibility. At La Sierra University, she earned a Master of Arts in religion with a concentration in Christian social ethics.

Since then, Gardner has served in many roles in both the church and community, but believes one of the greatest enrichments to her ministry came from her experience working under Clifford and Freddie Harris at the Drug Alternative Program. It was there, she notes, “I learned to compassionately minister to people’s emotional, physical and spiritual needs. Working with the young people and families of the church also has been one of the highlights in my life,” she added. Gardner volunteers as a youth leader for the Pathfinder club and works closely with the A+ Adventist Children’s Center associated with Glendale City church.

For the past 14 years, Gardner has been the wife and best friend of Hugh Gardner. Together, they are raising her niece, Katelyn, age 4.

Betty Cooney
Holbrook Senior Receives Gates Millennium Scholarship

Virginia Dedman’s life on the Navajo Reservation in Nazlini, Ariz., was vastly different from the life of billionaires Bill and Melinda Gates. The youngest of five brothers and sisters, home school was the focus of her daily activities for three years before enrolling at Holbrook Indian School.

Her mother, Sarah, a reading specialist, worked hard raising her children to make school a top priority. She helped Virginia with her studies late at night after returning home from work.

Eager to learn, and desiring a professional career some day, Dedman applied herself diligently to her studies — and her hard work has paid incredible dividends.

Dedman was one of 54,000 applicants for the Gates Millennium Scholarship. Of those, 1,000 high school seniors, including Dedman, were selected for a full scholarship to finance their education, including tuition, room, board, supplies, travel between home and school, and a monthly stipend for living expenses. The scholarship will continue through a doctoral program.

Winners are chosen from specific minority groups. Entrants must have outstanding grades and volunteer experience with worthwhile causes. Only 10 of the 1,000 chosen to receive the prestigious scholarship were Native Americans.

For the past three years, Dedman has attended Holbrook Indian School. In May, she completed her senior year and graduated.

Dedman plans to attend Southern Adventist University next fall to begin her studies to become a pediatric dietician. She wants to help Native children with problems like obesity, diabetes and other eating disorders, which are common to the Reservation.

Dedman is an active member of the Kinlichee Seventh-day Adventist Church in northern Arizona. Over the past few years, she has preached in several Arizona Conference churches, including Show Low, Kinlichee, Holbrook, Sedona and Flagstaff. The past two summers, she has participated in Maranatha mission trips.

During summers, she works as a counselor at Arizona Conference’s Camp Yavapines in Prescott.

Holbrook Indian School Pastor Phil Vecchiarelli, who is married to Dedman’s aunt, Sharon, is extremely thankful for all Dedman has accomplished in her young life. “Virginia began attending church as a young girl with our family,” said Vecchiarelli. “She was always praying her mother would join. So she began reading Steps to Christ to her each evening at age 12. In 2007, Virginia invited her mom to an evangelistic meeting we were conducting in Nazlini. That’s when Sarah embraced the Adventist faith and was baptized and has been very active in the church work in Kinlichee and Holbrook.”

Dedman’s hobbies include reading, studying and photography. She is often seen taking pictures on the Holbrook Indian School campus.

Vecchiarelli adds, “We are very proud to see not only what she has done, but what she wants to do with her life. She has a deep desire to help people!”

HIS graduate Virginia Dedman received the Gates Millennium Scholarship and hopes to become a pediatric dietician.
Alejandro Bullón’s Evangelistic Caravan Stops in Arizona

Anticipation was high as Pastor Alejandro Bullón’s five-day evangelistic campaign came to the Arizona Conference April 18-21. Traveling to the U.S. from his home in Brazil, Bullón embraced the meetings with the energy of his youth, not that of a seasoned, retired South American pastor.

“I have no words to describe what happened during Pastor Bullón’s Evangelistic Caravan, but I am convicted we saw the glory of God in Arizona, ” said Jose Marin, assistant to the president for Hispanic ministries. “God worked through our pastors and laity who joined forces to transform lives from condemnation to new lives in Christ.”

The meetings in Tucson, Ariz., encountered an early snafu when Bullón’s flight from Brazil was cancelled. Hispanic churches in the Arizona Conference formed a prayer chain to ask God to intercede. Fortunately, the airline found a direct flight to Tucson, and Bullón arrived just in time to begin his series, “Jesus the Great Hope.”

More than 600 guests attended opening night at the Tucson Holiday Inn. Fifty accepted Christ.

The following night, the team traveled to Yuma, Ariz., where more than 400 people attended, 42 people accepted Christ, and seven people were baptized. Visitors were given the book, Hope, by Mark Finley, plus a gift of locally grown produce.

The Phoenix Central Spanish church hosted the final three days of the caravan. Bullón, a well known and much loved speaker who had been to Arizona in years past, attracted so many visitors that many stood in line two hours waiting to get in the church. Eventually, organizers opened the gymnasium and the chapel for overflow, and closed-circuit televisions delivered the sermons to the people. More than 1,000 people attended the Phoenix meetings, during which 13 were baptized.

“Pastor Bullón did not need to ask twice in the call because people were jumping out of their seats to fill the hallways in response to the voice of the Spirit of the Lord, ” Marin said.

The meetings were broadcast live on television. The Central Spanish Church media team made the live broadcast available on MAS TV, which reaches all of Phoenix.

“Alejandro Bullón has had the greatest impact on the Hispanic work of the Adventist church of anyone I know, ” said Arizona Conference President Tony Anobile. “As a close friend, I always enjoy being with him and hearing stories of God’s blessings and the impact his ministry has made on so many lives. Bottom line — you can’t share what you don’t have. Pastor Bullón not only loves Jesus, he KNOWS Jesus. What he shares is what he has experienced in his own personal walk with God!”

Phil Draper
Students and other interested adults gathered in Sacramento April 8 to speak with legislative staff about current bills impacting religious freedom and church institutions. The Church State Council hosts the annual Lobby Day.

Fifty-three people, including 38 students from four schools, attended the event, during which they conducted some 35 scheduled lobby visits and distributed religious liberty materials to all 117 of the legislative offices. Students came from Sacramento Adventist Academy, Central Valley Christian Academy, Pacific Union College and Weimar College. Other interested individuals came from the Central California, Northern California, Nevada-Utah and Arizona conferences.

Lincoln Steed, Editor of Liberty Magazine, delivered a challenging devotion. Then, Arturo Salaices, legislative director for Assembly member Mariko Yamada, spoke to the group about the legislative process and the importance of citizens making their voices heard. Alan J. Reinach, Esq., executive director of the Church State Council then gave an overview of the three bills we were addressing — SB 327, SB 323 and AB 1085.

Assembly Bill 1085 is a measure to restore draconian cuts to the Cal Grants for students attending private and religious colleges and universities only. There were no cuts to Cal Grants for students attending state schools. The Cal Grants were cut some 40 percent for students at private schools.

Senate Bill 323 would impose an excise tax on youth groups that discriminate, which is to say, all youth groups. As applied to religious youth groups, it is considered blatantly unconstitutional and in violation of the rights of religious organizations to practice their religious beliefs. There is no constitutional obligation to grant tax exemptions to religious groups, but such tax exemption should not be taken away from religious groups who refuse to violate their own teachings, Reinach explained.

Finally, Senate Bill 327 is a measure to address the problem of human trafficking, and the difficulty of obtaining cooperation from victims.

The group met at the Citizen Hotel near the state capitol, and after a luncheon, divided into 10 teams. They reconvened at 4 p.m. on the capitol steps for pictures, recounting the experiences they had with legislative staff.

Dennis Seaton
Adventist Health Releases Third “Our Stories” Book

Much like the creation of a colorful patchwork quilt, the mission of Adventist Health is accomplished in countless ways that involve more than relieving physical pain and disease. Historically, Adventist health care has recognized that sympathy and tact often prove a greater benefit to the sick than the most skilful treatment given in a cold, indifferent way.*

What follows are personal experiences shared by Adventist Health employees in the third collection of Our Stories. They highlight the spirit of compassion of those who uphold the mission and values of Adventist Health.

“My prayer is that these experiences will inspire others to share their hearts and lives with those we are privileged to serve,” states Gloria Bancarz, vice president and chief nursing officer.

*Ellen G. White, Ministry of Healing, p. 244.

Change of Heart

I had cared for Mr. Smith off and on for several years. While I was saddened whenever his illness brought him to the hospital, I always enjoyed his eccentric personality. One day, I noticed a big difference in his behavior. He was not smiling as usual, and he seemed withdrawn and quiet. That evening before I went home, I asked if I could pray for him.

“I don’t believe in God,” he said firmly.

With no more persuasion on my part, he finally said yes. I thanked him and proceeded to pray. The next morning he greeted me with a huge smile — and confided that now he knew God was real. Unfortunately, he died later that day. I think God impressed me to pray with Mr. Smith even if he did not believe. God knew his heart.

Suzette Lewis, RN, Director, ICU/Medical Staff, St. Helena Hospital Clear Lake

Love in Our Hearts

After the devastating earthquake in Haiti in 2010, a delegation of nurses, doctors, therapists and volunteers from our hospital went to Port-au-Prince at their own expense to help with medical care and clean-up. They returned to work, showing pictures and telling stories of how they fell in love with the people there — so much so that the group decided to “adopt” an orphanage for young girls.

Hearing their stories and seeing the pictures from Haiti tugged at my heart until I finally decided to do something about it. A friend and I got busy and made 30 patchwork quilts for the girls and their teachers. We arranged for a Christmas delivery, and the teachers surprised the children by spreading the colorful quilts on their beds without their knowledge. I wish I could have been there to see their faces as they realized the love in our hearts expressed through the work of our hands.

Kathy Davidson, Registration Associate, Admitting, Ukiah Valley Medical Center

These stories are excerpts from Our Stories III: Pieces from Our Hearts and Lives. To read the book in its entirety, download the free PDF at adventisthealth.org/about-us/our-stories.
Experiencing community with fellow believers is an important aspect of the Christian life — perhaps especially so during the teenage years. With this in mind, Southeastern California Conference pastors and local youth leaders planned an event in February for youth groups from six low-desert area churches: Blythe, El Centro, Hope Community, Indio Spanish, Palm Desert and Palm Springs.

Several of the desert churches are located far away from other Adventist congregations, and the youth don't often have a chance to get together. “My favorite aspect of this event was seeing all these young people, of many different cultures and ethnicities, praying and playing together as one body in Christ,” said Roy Rantung, Palm Springs church pastor.

“There were many old friends that I was able to reconnect with, and I also was able to make new friends,” said Theo Moen, an eighth-grader from the Desert Hot Springs church.

The event began with a Sabbath afternoon worship service at the Indio Spanish church. The “G.I.G.” (God Is Good) group from the El Centro church led praise music, drama sketches and mixer activities. Eric Penick, SECC associate youth director, presented a message based on the story of Esther, encouraging the youth to stand boldly for God wherever He places them. “The way he was able to get our attention was incredible,” said high school senior Sierra Sicairos, from the El Centro church. “I liked how he gave the youth hope by telling us we are important, too, and we have to be brave and stand up for what we believe in.”

After a meal in the church’s fellowship hall, the entire group travelled to Desert Adventist Academy for a family gym night, organized by DAA principal Tim LaPiere. The youth and some adults formed teams to play basketball, volleyball and indoor soccer. About 100 people participated in the evening’s activities. “It was great seeing the pastors and their youth come together,” said Jerrold Thomson, associate district pastor of Hope Community church in Palm Springs. Thomson said he appreciates “the fact that Tim LaPiere desires to work closely with the pastors — and the pastors with him — because it shows unity and builds community.”

At the worship service earlier in the day, the teens sat with their home church friends, but as they spent more time together, they mingled and got acquainted with youth from the other churches. For the sports activities, the kids were assigned to teams that combined youth from all the churches. “By the end of the evening, they were all intermingled. You couldn’t tell who was from what group,” said El Centro church pastor Mark Tatum.

“I enjoyed spending time with friends, and I would love to do it again,” said seventh-grader Sahian Fuentes, from the Palm Springs church.

The youth groups plan to hold joint events each quarter, hosted by the different desert churches. Future activities may include community services and literature evangelism. At each event, kids will learn that they are not alone as they live for the Lord in their communities.

“We are a network of churches, working for and proclaiming God’s goodness,” said Tatum.

El Centro church 10th-grader Julissa Castro agrees. “Events like these are important, because you can see you’re not just in your own little bubble,” she said. “You’re not facing things by yourself.”

SECC associate youth director Eric Penick speaks to the young people on Sabbath afternoon at the Indio Spanish church.

Youth from six desert churches join together for worship, fellowship and fun.

Students enjoy game night at Desert Adventist Academy, rotating through sessions of basketball, volleyball and indoor soccer. “I really liked how the games were organized and that we all got to play all the games,” said ninth-grader Sharon Romero, from the El Centro church.
Palm Springs Church Hosts Winter Camp Meeting

Nearly two decades ago, the Palm Springs church began a tradition that remains to this day. Jack Blanco, best known for writing *The Clear Word* Bible paraphrase, was serving as the pastor at that time. He had the original idea to start a winter camp meeting.

The church is one of the first Seventh-day Adventist churches built in the Coachella Valley some 30 years ago. For many years, the church has had a demographic of senior citizens, but the region has expanded and the demographic changed, so the church is also focused on reaching out to younger generations.

The winter camp meeting provides a way to bridge the generational gap. While the tradition arises from the tent camp meetings of old, it also draws newer generations in search of a spiritual and authentic worship experience.

This year, the church hosted the camp meeting on Feb. 8 and 9. Church leaders and volunteers helped organize, set up and execute the programs.

Over the last couple years, interest in the camp meeting has been growing. As a result, the church rented a high school auditorium next to the church to accommodate the anticipated crowds. While the church seats approximately 450 people, the high school auditorium allows for more twice that number. The foresight paid off, as close to 850 people attended the main service on Sabbath morning.

Speaker Lonnie Melashenko headlined the camp meeting. He is best known for his previous work as speaker/director of Voice of Prophecy. Currently, he serves the Columbia Union Conference as an area-wide revivalist, making his ministry available to hundreds of churches.

In addition, Leonard Bailey, a surgeon from Loma Linda University Medical Center known for his heart transplants on children, led a presentation called “Healing Little Hearts.” The Melashenko Quartet, Desert Adventist Bell Choir and the La Sierra University Chamber Singers provided music.

While the adult attendees met in the rented auditorium, the church building did not remain empty. This year, the church ran a children’s camp meeting in tandem with the main program. They also organized a petting zoo for the children.

Attendees came from near and far. Many people who attended Palm Springs church in the past, but have since moved away, made the journey to join their former church family. In a way, the camp meeting is like a homecoming event.

People traveled from as far as Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Montana.

Some reminisced about the times when camp meetings were common. “I talked with people that are 80 to 90 years old,” said Lyle Burke, the church’s communications director. “They remember the days when actual tents would be set up in front of the church lawns for camp meetings.”

Palm Springs church is open to both classic and innovative methods for presenting the gospel. While the winter camp meeting grows year by year, the church also has airtime on a local television station.

Through this arrangement, the church service is broadcast twice a week, Saturdays at 9:30 a.m. and Sundays at 9 a.m. This helps reach a much wider audience, and younger families are starting to take notice of the church.

Lonnie Melashenko preaches at the Palm Springs church winter camp meeting.

A choir performs at the Palm Springs church during their winter camp meeting.
Chaplains Touch the Hurting with God’s Tender Care

Compassion. The word means having sympathy for the suffering of others, often including a desire to help those in need. It means asking the question, “What are you going through, and how can I help? This is how chaplains minister on a daily basis. A chaplain is a pastor who has received advanced training for the specialized area of chaplaincy ministry.

The Call of Chaplaincy

“I knew I wanted to be a chaplain from the time I was 16-years-old,” says Beth Bentzinger, staff chaplain at Loma Linda University Medical Center. “My older brother was diagnosed with cystic fibrosis when he was young. I spent a lot of time with him in his hospital room when we were growing up.”

Those years of being immersed in a clinical setting began to work on Bentzinger. “God planted seeds of compassion in my heart during this experience,” says Bentzinger. “One day, as I was praying about what I wanted to do with my life, I saw myself praying over people in a hospital.”

Those early days of exposure to chaplaincy led Bentzinger to continue her education at Southern Adventist University. After graduation and completing a Clinical Pastoral Education internship, Bentzinger began her chaplaincy ministry at LLUMC, where she works in the 96-bed NICU and mother-baby unit.

“Chaplain Beth Bentzinger felt the call of God to chaplaincy when she was just 16.”

“Chaplain Bentzinger began her chaplaincy ministry at LLUMC, where she works in the 96-bed NICU and mother-baby unit. “There is a lot of pain, both emotional and physical, that our patients are experiencing,” says Bentzinger. “Our unit is for high-risk mothers, and we have many patients transferred from area hospitals.”

Bentzinger helps patients cope with tragedy on a daily basis in the unit. “One young mother delivered her triplets at 25-weeks,” says Bentzinger. “They were just too tiny to survive. The mother’s emotional and physical state didn’t allow her to fully comprehend at first that she had lost all three babies. When that realization finally hit home, my role was to help her cope with the enormity of the situation.”

Bentzinger is also an animal lover. She regularly meets people grieving over the death of their pets. “Grief is grief when you experience loss,” says Bentzinger. “Four times a year, I conduct grief recovery groups specifically for those who have lost a pet. We deal with their grief, and guilt if they are experiencing that.”

Chaplain Themba Mzizi and fellow church members have planted a church in Rancho Cucamonga, Calif.

Neighborhood Compassion

Themba Mzizi works as a correctional chaplain with the Riverside County Sheriff Department. His full-time ministry is with inmates at the corrections center, but he also has compassion for meeting people’s needs in the community. “Several years ago I was asked to join the pastoral team of my local church,” says Mzizi. “I would oversee the evangelism and outreach of the congregation.” There was excitement among the congregation to plant a new church in an unreached area. With prayer and planning, it was decided to reach into the community of Rancho Cucamonga, although it was 50 miles away. “We organized teams to go into the community each Sabbath for a year,”
says Mzizi. “It was vital that we understood the needs of the community and that they became acquainted with us.”

Friendships were built and the group began to grow. “Our emphasis is outreach to families and helping all newcomers feel like they have come home,” says Mzizi. “When we eat, cry, laugh, and work together, it binds us to each other. When people are involved, they want to remain a part of the group.”

Why would a chaplain who works nine hours a day in a prison choose to pastor a church? “I believe my calling is to serve as a pastor both outside and inside the church,” says Mzizi. “Being the pastor of a local congregation helps me remain fully connected with my church,” says Mzizi. “It keeps before me that I am a representative of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in my work in the prison.”

**Binding the Wounds**

For Joel Mpabwanimana the wounds of war and the status of refugee are all too familiar. “While I was a student at Andrews University, war broke out in my homeland,” says Mpabwanimana, who is from the Democratic Republic of Congo. “Suddenly I was a refugee with no home to return to. Those early days were difficult and confusing.” Faced with legal hurdles and endless government documents that needed to be filled out, Mpabwanimana waded through it all and was given refugee status.

Today, he ministers as a chaplain at St. Joseph Hospital and Medical Center in Phoenix, Ariz., where he works 12-hour night shifts in order to provide another ministry outside the medical center that is near to his heart. “From Sunday through Tuesday, 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. and every other weekend I am at the medical center,” says Mpabwanimana. His workweek doesn’t end on Wednesday morning at 7 a.m. however. That is when Mpabwanimana begins his other full-time (but unpaid) job.

“In 2008, I began to meet many refugees in the Phoenix area. There were people from Rwanda, Burma, Burundi, and my homeland of Congo,” recalls Mpabwanimana. “I remembered the difficulties that I faced as a refugee, and I knew that I had to help this growing population, who were becoming my neighbors.”

Mpabwanimana accompanies refugees to their meetings with social workers and other government representatives. “As I became acquainted with these individuals, invitations were extended for me to become a member of local refugee committees,” says Mpabwanimana. “I became the voice for the refugees on the committees.”

Knowing how important it is as a refugee to have spiritual interaction, Mpabwanimana began to assist refugees to connect with their local faith communities. “Often a refugee is also faced with the loss of their self-identity,” says Mpabwanimana. “I know of refugees who have earned Ph.D. degrees and highly educated, but have been reduced to working at menial labor because they lack English skills.” This is also true for medical personnel, including doctors, nurses and pharmacists, who earned degrees in their home countries, but can’t practice in their newly adopted countries, because they haven’t received the necessary licensing.

Mpabwanimana spends Wednesday through Friday each week meeting with individual refugees, helping them fill out paperwork, find jobs, etc. On Wednesday and Friday nights, prayer meetings are held for anyone who wants to attend. Sabbaths are spent at the Glendale Adventist church.

For Mpabwanimana, binding up the wounds of others is a natural as breathing. As his wounds have healed, Mpabwanimana seeks to help others find that same healing.

Adventist chaplains around the world offer a ministry of presence and prayer. They pray in the rooms of hospitals and medical centers. They encourage students on school campuses. They minister to police and firemen, as well as the victims of violence in local communities. They bring hope within prison walls to those who have committed crimes against fellow human beings. They are on the battlefield, aboard the ships, and in the barracks with those who stand watch to keep our nation free and safe.

On Sabbath, June 8, the ministry of Adventist Chaplains will be recognized and supported by a North American Division-wide offering.

**Chaplain Joel Mpabwanimana offers support to refugees who have come to Tucson, Ariz., from all over the world.**

**Chaplain Joel Mpabwanimana prays with Karen refugees he ministers to in Tucson, Ariz.**
Pacific Union Pathfinders Among Best Bible Scholars

The College View Seventh-day Adventist Church, Union College, Lincoln, Neb., was crowded with highly trained Bible scholars April 19-20 when 38 Pathfinder Bible Experience (PBE) finalist teams from across North America arrived to participate in the final testing program for the 2013 PBE Division Finals. Pathfinders from the United States, Canada and England, ages 10 to 16, demonstrated their knowledge of the Bible books of Acts and 1st and 2nd Thessalonians by answering 90 questions of varying difficulty and point value.

“Their level of knowledge was phenomenal,” said one event judge. “They definitely know their Bible.” Many of the young people had memorized large passages of Scripture, often six to eight chapters, and they knew a lot of the content of the additional chapters.

NAD Pathfinder Bible Experience coordinator Gene Clapp reported that the 38 participating teams represented eight of the nine unions of the North American Division, plus one team from London, England. Each team was made up of six members plus an alternate.

The conferences represented were Allegheny East, Arizona, Carolina, Central California, Chesapeake, Florida, Indiana, Iowa/Missouri, Kansas/Nebraska, Michigan, Minnesota, Northern California, Ohio, Ontario, Potomac, Southern England, Southern New England, Texas and Wisconsin. Many more teams and conferences from across the division had participated in the first three levels of testing: area, conference and union. The teams at Lincoln represented only the first place teams from each union.

“With team members, staff and families, we had approximately 650 persons in attendance for the weekend,” said Clapp.

On Friday night and Sabbath morning, each team participated in the programming by sharing a musical “special,” and everyone became involved in the rest of the programs, which consisted of mixers focused on the books of the Bible that they had been studying.

On Saturday evening, following all the testing and tallying of points, parents, staff and team members screamed with delight as each team was called to the front and awarded their placement certificate. Twenty-six teams made first place, meaning the team score was at least 90 percent of the highest score. One team from the Pacific Union finished in this first place group: the Tucson (Arizona) Desert Valley Mountain Lions.

An additional 11 teams made second place, including the Camp Verde (Arizona) Cavalry, the Mesa (Arizona) Spanish Roadrunners, the Orosi (Central California) Prospectors, the Pacific Union College (Northern California) Howell Mountaineers, and the Sonora (Central California) Stars. And one team, depleted by sickness but still choosing to compete, placed third.

Clapp added that the Bible Experience program has a major impact on participants. “Several students stated that their school grades have gone up because they are applying how they study for PBE to how they study for school.” A team member from England told his director that he was supposed to take a school assessment exam while he was traveling to the United States for this event. When the proctor heard why the student was not available to take the exam, he said the young man need not sit for the exam because his grades had improved so much since he began studying for PBE.

The 2014 Pathfinder Bible Experience will cover the book of 2 Samuel.

Gene Clapp, Brenda Dickerson and Mark O’Ffill
Six Pathfinder clubs from the Pacific Union participated at the 2013 Pathfinder Bible Experience division finals in April.

Angwin Howell Mountaineers, from the Pacific Union College church in the Northern California Conference, at the 2013 Pathfinder Bible Experience division finals. From left: Willy Duncan, Andy Penners, and Caleb Jeske; Girls: Joy Paulson, Linda Duncan, and Emme Lighthouse.

Tucson Desert Valley Mountain Lions, from the Arizona Conference, took first place at the 2013 Pathfinder Bible Experience division finals.

Camp Verde Cavalry Pathfinders, from the Arizona Conference, at the 2013 Pathfinder Bible Experience division finals.

Sonora Stars Pathfinders, from the Central California Conference, at the 2013 Pathfinder Bible Experience division finals. Front row from left: Tawni Lloyd, Megan Ronneburg, Chelsea Scott, Levi Renner, Aurora Jones. Second row: Mickey Clough, director; Manny Cruz, NAD associate youth leader; Jerry Peifer, area coordinator; Louie Dale, and James Black, NAD youth leader.

Mesa Spanish Roadrunners, from the Arizona Conference, at the 2013 Pathfinder Bible Experience division finals.
Seventh-day Adventist Pastor Willie Ramos, "The Ghetto Preacher," appeals to youth at the West Coast Youth Conference to give their lives to Christ. Photo by Gerry Chudleigh.
From April 24–27, the Southeastern California Conference hosted the West Coast Youth Conference, sponsored by both Pacific and North Pacific unions. The conference occurs once every five years and brings young people together to talk about issues in their church, community and school life. Teens were invited from all the represented conferences within the two unions to share their love of God.

The theme of the conference was, “STAND: Stay True to Christ and Never Deviate.” In a culture that is inundated with temptations at every turn, teens were encouraged to look at role models that have taken a stand against cultural norms. They were reminded that amongst the social and moral challenges they face, God gives them the strength to overcome.

This year, the conference was held at the Ontario Convention Center. Approximately 750 young people attended.

Each day consisted of one or two general sessions, which included music and preaching. The high energy of the music allowed the young people to worship with enthusiasm. The speakers challenged the youth to take their relationships with God to the next level.

“My favorite part has been the music,” said Roland Williams, a teen from the Mt. Rubidoux church. “It is interesting because they play some music that I know, and some that I don’t know. Different churches or schools lead out in music, which keeps it interesting.”

“I enjoyed the speakers most,” said Sydney Joseph, a 16 year-old from Bakersfield Southside church. “They talked about what I could do with things that are coming up in the future.”

Paige Hurd, actress from the sitcom “Everybody Hates Chris,” gave her testimony during the general session on Thursday evening.

“I was also really surprised to see the actress,” said Williams. “It was very cool!”

In addition to the general sessions, attendees had a chance to select from nearly 40 workshops. Topics ranged from spiritual growth to peer pressure, music, social media, dating, self-esteem and youth leadership.
Kasey Harry, from the Riverside Kansas Avenue church, especially enjoyed the workshops. “One of the things I learned is that we shouldn’t do things for us, but rather for the glory of God," she said.

On Friday, instead of hosting an afternoon workshop, the organizers encouraged the attendees to participate in a community service event.

“What I enjoyed most was the community service," said Rahnae Scott, from the Capitol City church in Sacramento. “We packed food for needy families. It is important to remember that people are always in need, not just during the Christmas or Thanksgiving season.”

The teens were also given a chance to participate in recreation. An entire room was devoted to games such as dodge ball, basketball and bounce houses.

Micha Fisher, also from the Riverside Kansas Avenue church, said that she especially enjoyed the activities. “My favorite activity was the bungee run, but I also like the music and the preaching,” she said. “I learned how to be strong and to believe in myself — and that I can do that by drawing close to God.”

On Saturday night, during the final general session, Eric Penick, associate youth ministries director, made an appeal for young people to push away anything that was keeping them from drawing near to God. Microphones were set up around the conference hall and teens lined up to state what they would be “pushing away.” Many of the things named were fear, insecurity, anger, peer pressure, negativity, stubbornness, racism, hate and selfishness. Throughout the duration of the conference, teens were encouraged to pray for one another. A prayer wall was set up at the back of the main hall where anyone could go at any time and write a prayer request, or pray for those that were written.

Also, a special Twitter hash tag was set up, #StandWCYC, where anyone could send in prayer requests or words of encouragement. A special prayer team continuously monitored the feed, and some of the requests were projected on the main screens for others to see, as well.

As the conference wound down, many friends, new and old, reflected on their time at the conference. “I didn’t expect to meet people of so many different nationalities,” said Scott. “I met people from Seattle and Las Vegas,” said Williams. “I also met some people who came from New York and New Jersey.”

Teens were encouraged to keep in touch with one another, and to pray for one another. Attendees say they felt renewed and revitalized and ready to stand against any challenges they face.

Mario A. Munoz
Arizona

CAMP MEETING Camp Yavapines, Prescott, Ariz. “Light the World with Jesus’ Love” (June 7-15) Opening weekend; Alex Bryant, NAD exec. secretary; night meetings weekly; Ron Couzet, director NADE; closing weekend; Randy Roberts, pastor. Loma Linda University church; Adults, Herb Montgomery; Youth, Harvey Gil, Okla. Conf.; Young Adults, Jonathan Leonardo, Andrews Univ.; Morning Devotional, Dr. Dianne Burnett; Mid-week Seminars, Dr. Alfonso Valenzuela, Pastor Tony Moore, Pastor John Schachinger, Dr. Schubert and Yolanda Palmer, and Dr. Pedro Martinez. Musicians: first weekend: T. Yolanda Innocent-Palmer; second weekend: Christian Edition Men’s Chorus. RV/ Camper/Tent reservations: Angie Blake, 928-445-2162; Cabin reservations, Sandra Leski, 480-991-6777, ext. 147.

HISPANIC CAMP MEETING Camp Yavapines, Prescott, Ariz. “Jesus, La Gran Esperanza” (June 17-22) Main Speaker: Elizabeth Talbot, Jesus 101 Biblical Institute director; Devotional Speaker, Professor Victor Yaege, Universidad Peruana Union; Seminar Speakers, Dr. Miguel Angel Nunez and Dr. Karii Reinert; Hispanic Youth Speakers, Chaplain Lafitt, Pacific University, Pastor Many Arteaga. Special music guests: Verushka Laffit, Pacific University, Pastor Many Arteaga. Special music guests: Verushka Laffit, Pacific University, Pastor Many Arteaga. Special music guests: Verushka Laffit, Pacific University, Pastor Many Arteaga. Special music guests: Verushka Laffit, Pacific University, Pastor Many Arteaga.

Northern California

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL (June 16-20) 8:30 a.m.; Pleasant Hill church, 800 Grayson Road, Pleasant Hill. “Kingdom Rock” Ages 4-12. Friday, June 21: community barbeque and VBS open house. Info: 925-934-5803.

BRIDGES: BAY AREA FOR JESUS East Bay Rally (June 22) 4 p.m. Grand Advent church, 278 Grand Avenue, Oakland. Hear about upcoming plans for a large-scale outreach to the Bay Area. Info: www.ncc.adventist.org/bridges.

REDWOOD CAMP MEETING (July 18-27) 2437 Dyerville Loop Road, Redcrest. Spiritual refreshment in a beautiful setting! Speakers include Jim Ayer, Dan Jackson, John Lomacang, Lonnie Melashenko and Herb Montgomery (Adult II). Concerts and seminars. Spanish Camp Meeting: Rodolfo Paredes. Info: See advertisement in NCC section or www.ncc.adventist.org/redwoodcamp.

Southern California

SECC CAMP MEETING (June 19-22) Loma Linda University, Drayson Center. Camp meeting will provide services for adult, youth, and children. Info: Danielle Arceaneaux, 951-509-2298, or danielle.arceaneaux@seccsda.org.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL (June 24-28) La Sierra University church, 4937 Sierra Vista Ave, Riverside. Children are invited to explore the life of the Apostle Paul on his dangerous journey to share the truth. Info: Isuchurch.org/children/vbs.


BENEFIT CONCERT (August 24) 7 p.m., Loma Linda Filipino church, multi-purpose center, 11180 New Jersey Street, Redlands. Steve Green will be preforming. Funds raised will benefit an alumni center for Mountain View College in the Philippines. Info: 909-798-3822.

Southern California Conference

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL TRAINING (June 1) Athens: Paul’s Dangerous Journey to Share the Truth. 3 p.m. Norwalk church, 12191 Firestone Blvd. Info: 818-546-8446.

20TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION OF the White Memorial church Pathfinder & Adventurer clubs (June 1) 11 a.m., 5 p.m.; Investiture; 7 p.m. dinner. All former club and staff members are invited to join in the day-long festivities. White Memorial church, 401 N. State St., Los Angeles 90033. Info: 323-264-2170.

YOUTH VIGIL RE-ENCOUNTER (June 1) 7 p.m.-12 a.m. Youth re-encounter with Jesus, preparing for disciple-making. (In English) Three speakers; music, David Alberto Venegas, Cecia Garcia. Free food, games. Panamaniana Spanish church, 2912 E. Guirado St., Los Angeles 90033. Info: 323-317-4764.

11TH ANNUAL KALEIDOSCOPE of Nations International Day (June 1) 11 a.m., featuring 50-flag processional, international lunch; 4 p.m. afternoon concert and AY with international music and drama groups. Berean church. Info: Daphne Morgan, 323-298-1189.

Info: Stephanie Strode, 951-509-2266, or www.psrcamp.org.
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 Bulletin Board

DEMAND IS HIGH for managers of skilled nursing facilities and senior care centers. Southern Adventist University's degree in long term care administration is available on campus or online. Enjoy being a leader in the business of caring. Call 800-SOUTHERN or e-mail ltsca@southern.edu for information.

HAVE YOU WRITTEN a children's book, life testimony, story of God's love, or your spiritual ideas and would like them published? Contact TEACH Services at 800-367-1844, ext. 3 or e-mail publishing@teachservices.com, for a FREE manuscript review.

I AM A NATUROPATH, Master Herbalist, and a CMT (advance therapeutic massage) interested in bringing together other health practitioners to develop a holistic clinic in Northern California or join one that is established in a suitable area. Please e-mail edenrejuvcenter@comcast.net or call 530-717-7708.

SEMI-RETIRED ATTORNEY/real estate developer seeking position as estate caretaker (prior experience; references available). Military and police medical training; care provide care for homebound person(s), pets or plants. Seventh-day Adventist, cooks vegan, vegetarian, ethnic. Shop, oversee contractors, home school children, care and dispense medications for homebound, etc. Room/ board/salary (depending on responsibilities to be assigned). Contact: WTSO, Box 711747, San Diego, CA 92171 or e-mail williamtsohara@aol.com with outline of duties to be assigned.

URGENTLY NEEDS gently used, completely working, hearing aids. Donate your car, boat or RV to Canvasback Missions. Serving the medical and dental needs of the Pacific Islands. Donation is tax deductible. Autos preferred to be running. Restrictions apply. For more info: 800-793-7245 or visit www.canvasback.org.

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Employment

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ANDREWS UNIVERSITY seeks an Associate Professor of Speech-Language Pathology. Candidates should have an earned doctorate in Speech-Language Pathology. CCC-SLP is required. For more information and to apply visit: www.andrews.edu/HR/emp_jobs_faculty.cgi.

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SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY Counseling & Testing Services / Student Success Center seeks Licensed Professional Counselor. Candidates must have a Master's degree and licensure in counseling (LPC) and a minimum of three years of successful counseling related experience. Candidate must have a strongly expressed commitment to Jesus Christ, and be a Seventh-day Adventist church member in good regular standing. Submit resume and cover letter to Jim Wampler, Southern Adventist University, Student Success Center, P.O. Box 370, Collegedale, TN 37315-0370 or jwampler@southern.edu

SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY seeks a chef for their Village Market Deli. This position is a working manager, working with and directing student cooks in preparing all hot foods for meals and any special orders. Culinary Art School Preferred. Organization, communication skills, and ability to lead and motivate others a necessity. View job description at www.southern.edu/hr. Please send application and resume to Amy Steele, Human Resources, Southern Adventist University, P.O. Box 370 Collegedale, TN 37315-0370 or amy@stern.southern.edu.

SOUTHERN ADVENTIST UNIVERSITY seeks Dean for School of Business and Management. A doctoral degree required. Will oversee the undergraduate and graduate programs. Priority given to applications received by July 1, 2013. The successful candidate must have a strongly expressed commitment to Jesus Christ, and be an SDA church member in good and regular standing. Submit curriculum vitae and cover letter to Pat Coverdale, Director of Human Resources, pcoverdale@southern.edu or Human Resources, Southern Adventist University. P.O. Box 370, Collegedale, TN 37363.

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Events


WORSHIP WITH US at Yellowstone National Park every Sabbath from Memorial Day through Labor Day. Services at 10 a.m. in employee recreation hall connected to Old Faithful Lodge.

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COLLEGEDALE HOME for sale. 2,850 sq. ft., brick 2-story on partially wooded 1.9 acres. 4-bdrm., 2.5-baths. Extra-large 4th bdrm. + bonus room. Tile flooring, fireplace in family room. 2-car garage. In quiet neighborhood 2 miles from Southern Adventist University. Call 423-396-3936.

CUSTOM HOME, 3 acres on Snake River, Idaho. Ten miles from Gem State Academy. 2,600 sq. ft.; 4-bdrm., 3-bath; family room/fireplace; formal living, dining rooms; spacious master suite; eat-in kitchen w/corian countertops, lots of storage; covered patio; 28’x48’ shop w/office; dog kennel; fruit trees; landscaped. Call 208-896-4003.

FULLY SUSTAINABLE, self-contained, older French/Tudor on 10 + 10 acres in Grass Valley, Calif. Approx. 3,780 sq. ft. includes 7-bdrms, 4-baths, 3 fireplaces, library, master walk-in closet & Jacuzzi. 60 gpm well feeds two 5,000 gal. water tanks, gravity fed water to house/orchard/garden. Raise own food. Preserved over 1,000 qts. of fruit/vegetables in canning kitchen. Solar with battery back-up. RV dump, security lights, outbuildings. Partially furnished or not. 603-672-0440 ET leave msg.

RURAL LIVING. Hayfork, Calif. (pop. 1,800), near the Trinity Alps. 3.39 acres, undeveloped land, in beautiful country setting. Trees, flat areas to build your cottage, now or later. Sewer, power available. SDA church, park, senior center, library nearby. $39,500 with OWC terms. Owner: 530-628-1600. Wellness@snowcrest.net.

SECLUDED 10 ACRES with charming original homestead cabin, beautiful valley located in northern Calif., Pelton wheel electricity, gravity flow water, usable land, nice climate, good garden area, Adventist neighbors, Adventist church within driving distance. Asking $195,000. Call 541-846-6021 or 541-499-2232.

Reunions

FORT BRAGG SDA CHURCH is celebrating its centennial on October 26, 2013. Past members, friends, pastors, teachers, please contact our centennial secretary, Brenda O’Bryant, 18501 Hare Creek Terrace, Fort Bragg, CA 95437 with your name, address and phone number so we can send information.


Michael Porter, mporteratp@gmail.com or 202-746-0744.

Vacations

LIVING LANDS of the Bible presents three all-inclusive, Bible-based November tours with Dick Fenn, former Jerusalem pastor. Follow Jesus from Egypt to Galilee to Golgotha. Experience Paul’s Italy from Puteoli to Rome. Depart from/return to Lufthansa gateway cities coast-to-coast. Visit MTSTravel.com for complete itineraries. E-mail: RLF@DrWordsmythe.com. Phone: 503-659-1020.


SUNRIVER, CENTRAL OREGON. Four-bedroom executive home on the North Woodlands golf course. Two master king suites, two queens, one bunk set, hot tub, Jacuzzi bath, gas log fireplace, BBQ, W/D, bikes, all “lodge amenities”, sleeps 10, no smoking, no pets, includes housekeeping. For rates, photos and reservations: 541-279-9533, 541-475-6463 or schultz@crestviewcable.com.
ANDERSON, BRUCE MARLIN – b. Nov. 11, 1934, Glendale, Calif.; d. April 17, 2013, Napa, Calif. Survivors: wife, Darlene; sons, Rick, Kent; daughter, Kim Trood; two grandchildren.


LEMASTERS, HERSCHEL GLENN – b. March 8, 1928, Doddridge County, W. Va.; d. March 12, 2013, Hemet, Calif. Survivors: wife, Jane; sons, Roger, Jim; stepson, Jerry Noland; daughter, Cindy Korcek; 10 grandchildren; five great-grandchildren; brother, Kenneth.


MILLER, PHYLLIS M. (WEDEL) – b. March 28, 1933, Yuba City, Calif.; d. April 7, 2013, Monterey, Calif. Survivors: husband, A. H. “Peter”; sons, Steven, Gregg, Mark; five grandchildren. Served as a registered nurse at White Memorial and Glendale Adventist medical centers; as a minister’s wife the Bellflower, Simi Valley, Downey, La Crescenta and Monterey Peninsula churches.


TAYLOR, VICTOR WAYNE – b. April 28, 1934, Covington, Tenn.; d. March 17, 2013, Fort Lauderdale, Fla. Survivors: wife, Jeanette; son, Glenn; daughters, Carol Stroud, Karen Rigby, Julie Marsh; four grandchildren; brother, Charles Keith Taylor; sister, Joelenia Taylor King. Served as a director of Risk Management for Adventist Health System; served as director of Insurance Services for Adventist Risk Management and the Riverside office.


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Deadlines —

June: April 30, 2013
July: May 28, 2013
August: June 25, 2013
September: July 30, 2013
October: August 27, 2013
November: October 1, 2013
December: October 29, 2013
January 2014: November 26, 2013

CONTRIBUTIONS

The Recorder pages are assigned to the local conferences, colleges and health care institutions, and all content comes through the communication directors in those organizations. If you have a news story/idea, calendar announcement, etc., please contact your local communication director (except Hawaii, contact the editor below). See page 2 for contact information. Want tips for writing for us? See www.dailywritingtips.com/the-art-of-writing-news.

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