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VOTE OFTEN.
VOTE FOR OAKWOOD!

The Home Depot is donating $155,000 in grants to 14 HBCUs through the RETOOL YOUR SCHOOL Campus Improvement program.

We are eligible for a Tier 1 grant, a $25,000 Campus Pride grant, or one of 12 grants of $10,000 each.

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Oakwood University
#OakwoodRYS2013

Voting is open February 18 through April 15
Ministering Like Jesus

Christians believe that Jesus did far more than preach an hour a day and ride away from the masses on a stretch limo donkey. No, He was constantly rolling up His sleeves and getting His hands dirty. Jesus Christ actively demonstrated His love for people, no matter their race, gender, social status, or walk of life. He spent a lot of time caring for others and miraculously healing the sick, the lame, and the demon-possessed. The Gospels don’t aim to account for all of His miracles, and sometimes they aren’t specific on the exact number of people impacted, but they speak of dozens of separate miracles, including healing the sick, giving sight to the blind, feeding thousands of people, and even bringing people back to life.

Jesus didn’t perform all these miracles simply to amaze friends and influence enemies. Instead, He did miraculous works to either show compassion to an individual or to build up a person’s faith. For the most part, the Bible indicates that Jesus’ miracles were practical, matter-of-fact, and behind-the-scenes. He performed some miracles in public, but He was no publicity hound. Jesus seemed to prefer to heal people when He was one on one with them, rather than in front of a large crowd.

Jesus may not have had the domed stadiums available that preachers speak in today, but He could surely pack the crowds in anywhere He went. During those countless impromptu sermons throughout the countryside, within town squares, and inside city temples, He spent a lot of time talking about how His followers should live.

Jesus was immensely practical in His teaching. He didn’t waste time expounding on abstract beliefs or want His followers to hang out in ivory towers. Instead, He emphasized how everyday people are to live in a sinful world of loneliness, regret, disappointment, and guilt.

You probably have heard the phrase, “What Would Jesus Do?” and seen the WWJD T-shirts that caused the craze at the turn of the century. Well, the reason for all the hype was that Christians believe they’re to live their lives as Jesus did — so many Christians used (and continue to use) this acronym as a sort of reminder. The Bible showcases the reality that Jesus truly led by example. As you minister, try to remember three fundamentals that happy and fulfilled Christians focus upon:

**Jesus showed His followers how to live obedient lives.** He spoke of being perfect, but He asked no more from others than what He practiced in His own life.

**Jesus demonstrated how to live a balanced life.** He was a man in the middle. On one side, He had holier-than-thou religious leaders who were preoccupied with following rules, yet had no love for their fellow men. On the other side, He had the “sinners” — tax collectors, prostitutes, and other outcasts — who may have been very accepting, but didn’t much care about purity. Time after time, Jesus weaved His way between the legalism of the religious leaders and the permissiveness of the sinners. He was holier than the “holy people” of His day, and yet He loved and accepted sinners as brothers and sisters.

**Jesus showed how to live as a servant.** He provided the ultimate example of being a servant by dying on a cross so that others might experience salvation.

Are you feeling depressed, lonely, or guilty because of life’s battering vicissitudes? It may prove helpful to explore the healing, caring, and compassion that Jesus has always shown for the “down and out.” I invite our members of the Southern Union to join me in the quest to minister like Jesus.
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Oakwood University Wins “Retool Your School” Contest

BY KAY CAMPBELL

In a stealth campaign that energized Seventh-day Adventists around the world, Oakwood University, Huntsville, Alabama, and its 1,939 students breezed past colleges with more than twice as many students to take first place in the recent Retool Your School campaign from Home Depot.

The number one finish brings with it $50,000 that will be used to construct and equip a 30- by 50-foot outdoor pavilion near the large pond on campus, complete with fireplace, outdoor appliances and grill, and landscaping around the area.

Best of all, says Tim Allston, director of public relations for Oakwood University, the school ran the campaign based on biblical principles, teachings, and practices. The
competition was open to historically black colleges and universities in the United States, and 67 institutions entered the race. Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee, and Tuskegee University in Tuskegee, Alabama, both won $10,000 grants in the same competition.

“Our whole point was to be a witness,” Allston said about the award, which was announced Friday, May 3, 2013.

“Because we encourage our supporters to only vote six days a week, we would have a lead until Friday evening, fall to number 2 on Saturday, and then spike again on Saturday night.”

“It’s like when the Children of Israel were in the wilderness,” Allston said. “On Friday, they collected twice as much manna to carry them over the Sabbath hours.”

Oakwood, the only historically black college or university for the Seventh-day Adventist Church, structures its activities around keeping holy the Sabbath time from Friday night at sundown through Saturday night sundown.

“Yes, it’s nice to get the $50,000,” Allston said. “But it was the witnessing opportunity that made it really special. People all over the country were looking at the competition and thinking, ‘Who is this Oakwood University?’”

Senior Oakwood supporters like Ethel Dykes, retired former Oakwood University Church secretary, voted daily with their electronic devices.

Since Oakwood is part of the Seventh-day Adventist worldwide network of schools, which is second only to Catholics for number of schools and colleges around the world, the University sent the “vote now, vote often” message to Adventists around the world.

Secret recipe
During the University’s Honors Convocation on April 11, 2013, shortly before the voting period ended, Leslie Pollard, Ph.D., D.Min., Oakwood president, described the blend of networks and strategies as the “secret recipe” that resulted in votes coming in from around the globe.

It helps, too, Allston said, that Oakwood’s students hail from 42 states and 22 countries, and made sure all their friends back home were voting.

Even the pavilion itself will be a witness, said Lucy Cort, who wrote the grant application for Oakwood. Students will be involved in its construction, and the structure itself will support one of the objectives of Oakwood University and Seventh-day Adventism: to keep healthy as a sacred duty.

“Our campus really needed an outdoor recreational facility — a place for students to relax, congregate, study perhaps, and also for social gatherings,” Cort said. “This will promote healthful living in fresh air — part of how Oakwood believes in healthful living to help develop mind, body, and spirit. We think it will be a beautiful place.”

Huntsville Mayor Tommy Battle and the Huntsville City Council members recognized Oakwood’s victory during the City Council meeting Thursday, May 9, 2013, Allston said.

“Thanks again for your tireless daily voting, which allowed us to win the coveted and competitive $50,000 Home Depot grand prize. Let’s move from the Home Depot ‘Retool Your School’ contest, to now the ‘Reclaim Your Name’ initiative! If during the February 19 to April 15 Home Depot contest you voted for Oakwood University at least one time, please send us your individual name by June 30, so that we can include your name to be displayed in our ‘Reclaim Your Name’ Champions Roll Call at the new upcoming outdoor pavilion. Please do it today. Email your name to pr@oakwood.edu,” –Tim Allston

Visit www.oakwood.edu/news to view the hour-long video of the April 11, 2013, Honors Convocation at Oakwood University. It includes Leslie Pollard’s explanation of how Oakwood energized Adventists around the world to support the University in the Home Depot “Retool Your School” contest.

Kay Campbell, religion reporter for The Huntsville Times.

This artist’s sketch shows part of the concept for the new pavilion that the Home Depot grant will help create at Oakwood University, Huntsville, Alabama. The $50,000 grant should be in hand this month, officials said, with construction to begin this summer.
Imagine. You’re sitting at work, focusing on the day’s activities, when you see something out of the corner of your eye. Walking towards you is a man dressed in a long robe, looking like he just stepped out of *The Bible* mini-series on the History Channel. He walks up to your desk and introduces himself as a disciple of Jesus Christ. Before you can say, “Where’s your camel?” he begins to share with you the incredible things he saw while following the Savior. As he speaks something happens: You forget about the tasks you have to accomplish today and start to listen. You find yourself smiling, encouraged to know that God loves you.

This kind of thing doesn’t typically happen at the workplace, but at Florida Hospital, once a year, employees and patients experience just that and more. *The Week of Spiritual Renewal* is an annual celebration of the ministry of Florida Hospital as well as a reminder of our unique mission, “To extend the healing ministry of Christ.” This year’s *Week of Spiritual Renewal* was held in the days leading up to Easter.

The theme centered on the Lord’s Prayer and emphasized “Connecting with Our Creator” through prayer. Peter Bath, vice president for mission and human resources at Florida Hospital Tampa, was the featured speaker in each of the five daily videos emailed to employees each morning. It was a time for employees to step out of their busy schedules, reflect on God’s goodness and lift up one another’s burdens through the power of prayer.

Department leaders and spiritual ambassadors, employees who have volunteered to go a step farther in incorporating mission into their everyday work, made the week special with events such as potlucks, prayer times, and Easter sunrise services. In addition to dramas and daily video messages, employees were given devotion booklets and key chains featuring the Lord’s Prayer.

Through all of these endeavors, Florida Hospital creates an environment of healing — not just the mind and body, but also the spirit. Many employees share that the Week of Spiritual Renewal is their favorite time of the year, and they are deeply touched by the messages.

If you are interested in viewing the video series, *The Lord’s Prayer*, visit www.employees.FloridaHospital.org/wse/.
In 1962 Gary F. Bradley, a member of the Fletcher, North Carolina, Church, was drafted into the Army and served as a conscientious objector. After boot camp, his primary post was in medical research at Walter Reed Hospital. He worked on many ground-breaking projects, but his most notable contribution to saving the lives of soldiers in the battlefield was a full blood lab that could be dropped from the air. This was his first life-saving project. After serving two years in the military he continued to work at Walter Reed another two years. At that time, although offered a promotion, he decided to leave Walter Reed and return to his home in western North Carolina.

For the next 37 years Gary continued to invent life-saving devices for pilots to safely eject from their aircraft. He helped design ejection seats, safety harnesses, rescue vests, and helmets. The Navy, Air Force, Marines, and Army are all currently flying Gary’s emergency rescue flotation device. He also worked on a prototype system for the space shuttle which allowed astronauts to eject in an emergency, on take-off or landing. Gary has worked on 16 patents for safety and rescue devices, and has been instrumental in improving many others.

Though semi-retired, Gary continued to work as a consultant for an engineering firm. After months of research and development, he finally solved the Navy's helicopter harness safety problem with his quick release fitting. His solution won him yet another patent, but the story did not end there.

The United States Navy was so impressed with Gary’s simple and effective design that they chose to honor his patent. On November 20, 2012, at the Naval Air Warfare Center in Patuxent River, Maryland, Gary was honored, with others, at a ceremony attended by admirals and other high-ranking military officials. Gary received the Navy Combat Patent of the Year Award for the “Quick Release Fitting,” United States Patent Number 8,056,196. At the event, one of the attending admirals turned to Gary and said, “This invention will be on all of our helicopters in the next two years, and we know that it will save the lives of our service men and women.”

Gary feels blessed by the Lord to serve his country, and to be a witness among the military personnel with whom he has become acquainted. They know that he is a Seventh-day Adventist and a vegetarian, and make accommodations for him in their meals, meetings, and equipment testing times. Gary is a humble man who is always willing to help a neighbor or church member. He and his wife, Ruth, have been active in the Fletcher Church and community since moving there in 1966.

Adapted with permission from the Hendersonville Times-News.
Bob Clayton, and his son, Alex, an eighth grade student at Greeneville Adventist Academy, Greeneville, Tennessee, are going to Guatemala via a church bus — an old, moss covered, rusty, non-working, church bus.

Back in 2010 Clayton and his oldest son went on a mission trip to Guatemala with a group from Greeneville Adventist Academy, as well as a larger group from Georgia-Cumberland Academy, Calhoun, Georgia.

What an awesome experience, helping others and learning about another culture. Three churches were built, health screenings given to hundreds of people, a Vacation Bible School was conducted, and evangelistic meetings were given every night with many baptisms at the close. God changed the lives of many people; not only the Guatemalans, but those on the trip as well.

When the Claytons returned to the states, Bob told his youngest son, Alex, that when he was old enough, they would also go on a mission trip.

This year Alex is old enough. The same group is planning a trip to Guatemala. This time it will be in a different part of the country, but doing the same work and ministry.

Clayton called the local director for the mission trip and told him they had no money, but he and his son would really like to go. Clayton and his son needed $2,000 for the trip. (The Clayton family was actually in the “negative” category financially.) Some people would just throw up their hands at this point and say, “There’s no way. We can’t go.”

The director mentioned that his stepfather had some scrap metal that he would donate if the Claytons could gather it and take it to the metal recyclers.

Bob Clayton and his son called, and then went to this older gentleman’s home. He was glad to give the scrap metal, and while standing in his yard talking, he mentioned he had an old church bus parked in the woods behind his house. He said the Claytons could have the bus if they could find a way to get it to the recycling place. He said it had been sitting for about 15 years, and he used it mostly for storage. The front of the bus was covered with lichen and moss, and was quite a sight.

After a few phone calls, a local tow truck driver agreed to haul it, and he charged less than usual. After paying the tow truck driver, the Claytons had $1,100 to start on the way to Guatemala. (The original scrap metal brought $54.)

What a boost to their spirits, to continue with plans to be in Guatemala. What a mighty God we serve! God helped raise the remaining funds through generous gifts from local doctors and friends.

The whole experience reminded one of the story in the Bible of Israel crossing the Jordan River. It wasn’t until they stepped into the river that it parted and they were all able to cross. When the Claytons decided to go to Guatemala and took the first step by making the phone call, then God made a clear pathway.

Alex and Bob Clayton used creative resources to fund their way on a mission trip to Guatemala.
National Day of Prayer at Gordon Hospital

BY KAREN SHAW

More than 550 Christians circled Gordon Hospital in Calhoun, Georgia, on Thursday, May 2, 2013, in unified prayer.

In observance of the National Day of Prayer, the Gordon Hospital Christian Service Committee organized an event called “Circle the Hospital in Prayer” to bring together believers in prayer for the community as well as for the hospital’s mission of extending the healing ministry of Christ to all they serve.

“What an amazing experience of Christian unity that was displayed on our hospital campus,” Gordon Hospital Chaplain Dave Smith says. “We extended the invitations to all believers, and we had a wonderful turnout.”

More than 42 congregations were represented at the event, and more than 550 participants and employees prayed the simultaneous prayer.

“A human chain of prayers reached all around the hospital building!” Smith adds. “I wish to thank all participants for calling down Heaven’s strength for our community and our hospital.”

Upon arrival, participants were instructed to pray from their hearts or pray the prayer from the card provided by the chaplain. The prayer in its entirety said:

“Almighty Father of All Mankind, Our petitions ascend to You from the combined faith of all Gordon County. We all need You! Our churches, our commissioners and mayor, our judges, sheriff, and law enforcement officers need You. Our service men and women and their families, our firemen, emergency medical technicians, ambulances, and medical flight team, all need You. Our teachers and principals, Dads and Moms, singles and newly-marrieds, elderly, young adults, teens, children and infants need You! Pastors and counselors, physicians and health professionals, business leaders and craftsmen, bankers and mechanics, maintenance pros and construction teams, and the victims of violence from Sandy Hook to Boston! All of us need You! So, Lord God, send down Heaven’s power for Good on Gordon County, the ministry of Gordon Hospital, and the United States of America! Amen.”

More than 550 people circled Gordon Hospital in Calhoun, Georgia, on the National Day of Prayer to pray for the community and the hospital.

An aerial photograph provided by Don Keele, pastor of the Georgia Cumberland Academy Church, and pilot Steve Hannah, chief operating officer of Gordon Hospital, shows the human chain of prayer surrounding Gordon Hospital on the National Day of Prayer.
In 1995, Adventist World Aviation (AWA), a supporting ministry of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists was founded to meet the demands from isolated frontier missionaries in desperate need of air support.

Headquartered in Sullivan, Wisconsin, AWA operates 13 aircraft at eight sites in three countries to support and relieve physical suffering while proclaiming the Gospel where people have never heard about the endless love of the Creator, Jesus Christ.

Answering the call to serve with the AWA team in Guyana, South America, are Vonzell and Gwendolyn Chancy, members of the Philadelphia Church in Council, North Carolina.

Vonzell obtained a private pilot license, instrument rating, commercial pilot license, and an aircraft mechanic license from Andrews University during several years of training, and has been flying for pleasure, simply because he enjoys it. But now he has the opportunity to fulfill his longtime goal of serving the Lord as a missionary pilot. Gwendolyn has more than 20 years of practice as an OB/GYN nurse practitioner with the military/civilian sector, and is currently completing studies in nurse-midwifery.

“Gwen and I spent 10 days in Mabaruma, Guyana, in February on a site visit to observe the day-to-day operations of the AWA team there, and to participate with them in their outreach activities and flight evacuations. What a blessed experience. In fact, after the long overnight flight from John F. Kennedy International Airport in Queens, New York, to the Cheddi Jagan International Airport in Georgetown, Guyana, Laura, the AWA pilot, met us at the airport on that Monday morning with a six-seater Cessna 206. She helped load our baggage, got us airborne, and then said to me, ‘You got the plane,’ to which I replied, ‘I got the plane,’ and flew it in and out of the clouds for an hour and fifteen minutes to our destination — the village of Mabaruma,” said Vonzell.

The plane was flown almost daily during the stay. On that Monday evening a call was received to transport a patient from the village of Bemichi, 35 miles south of Mabaruma, back to Georgetown to be treated for malaria and dengue fever. However, no one can fly at night due to the heavily populated forest areas and no lighting on the short landing strips, so we could not respond until Tuesday morning when we did successfully evacuate the patient. I talked with the patient’s nurse a week later and learned that he was doing well, thank God.

The Amerindians of Guyana have been blessed by the plane, and it has proven to be an opening wedge for Bible studies and baptisms. Since 1995, AWA’s influence has resulted in more than 43,000 individuals reached, 25 churches or schools established or built, more than 2,000 emergency medical evacuations, and more than eight million missionary seat miles.

What a blessed privilege the Lord has provided the Chancys. Gwendolyn is looking forward to serving as a missionary nurse, and Vonzell considers it a joy to serve God and the people of Guyana as a missionary pilot.

Our mission is to reach the unreached, because God said so in Mark 16:15. We are Adventist World Aviation / Wings for Humanity. If you would like to learn more, we would love to share with you. Simply contact Vonzell Chancy at Chancy@flyawa.org, or 910-645-4523.
A small, white, 15 x 20-foot-frame house sits on top of a steep hill in a remote area of Haiti, Port Au Prince. Inside, a family smiles as rain falls steadily on their roof. They are dry because they are in a real house instead of their former home — a less-than-30-square-foot grass-roof shanty with dirt floors where they got wet every time it rained. This family’s new home has three rooms, a porch, concrete floors, and a tin roof. They know their good fortune has happened because a group of students and staff from Bass Memorial Academy (BMA), who decided to spend their Spring Break helping their community.

The BMA mission to Haiti began February 26, 2013, as 16 students and 14 support staff crowded onto a bus for the trip to the airport. The staff included several BMA teachers and administrators, a chaplain from Heritage Academy, parents of students, church members, and BMA alumni. Their goal was to operate a medical clinic and to build a house for a family recommended by the mayor of Laschobas. Laschobas is a small community located in the central plateau of Haiti, roughly one hour west of the border with the Dominican Republic.

The mission team’s final destination was a mission outpost located near Laschobas. The outpost is run by Ronald and Marjorie Magloire. The Magloires are native Haitians who had lived in the United States for 27 years. They gave up all their possessions and a chance at early retirement to commit the rest of their lives to this mission in Haiti.

The team arrived in Port Au Prince airport later than expected. It was dark before they left the city, but after enduring a three-hour ride over a curvy, bumpy road, they arrived at the Upward Bound Orphanage which would be home for the next week.

The next morning Kerry Neall, M.D., an emergency room physician; Kim Carr; and students helped open and organize the medical supplies that had been brought. Once the clinic had been set up, the group split with one going to build the house.

The way to get to the building site was six-tenths of a mile up and down steep hills on a single-track foot trail. The team spent most of the day hauling building supplies on their backs to the site. Phil Wilhelm, BMA principal says, “The students were troopers, and worked like pack mules. We did have two horses for part of the time. They hauled in the 94-pound-bags of Portland cement.”

Kim Carr, who worked at the medical clinic says, “One day one of our translators needed to leave early, but the medical team didn’t want to stop. People had been waiting to be seen for hours in the hot sunshine. Despite not having much medicine, God provided so we could meet every need.”

After working hard all day, the team helped with a Vacation Bible School for the children each night.

On the last day, the elderly gentleman for whom they had built the house came to thank them. Wilhelm says, “We didn’t have to understand him to know how much this meant to him and his family.”

Kerry Neall, M.D., and Kim Carr spent the last afternoon following up with visits from patients they had seen earlier. A benign tumor that had been on one woman’s breast for 17 years was removed. “The lady was so grateful!” says Carr.

As the team said their final goodbyes, all were touched by what they had seen. It was evident that all those who love the Lord and come to help, make a positive impact on the community.
I visit many churches. Churches of all sizes. Churches of all languages. Churches in major cities, and churches in the country. Churches of all styles. Here are three recommendations for creating a better experience for guests that attend your church. Pay attention to what guests experience in these areas:

1. What they hear.
Do you keep the service positive? Is the Sabbath School director happy about the ones that are there, or is there complaining about the ones that aren’t? Are you prone to speaking adventese, or can guests clearly discern and understand? When offering time comes, does it paint a picture of vision and progress, or is it a list of complaints about bills, past dues, and lack of commitment from members? People give, are attracted to, and inspired by a positive vision, not a litany of complaints.

2. What they see.
This is a problem in many churches (I would say most, but I don’t want to sound negative). As I was saying, in most churches there is no clear signage. You know where bathrooms, children’s classrooms, the sanctuary, and the fellowship hall are. Do they? No! Another thing they see is clutter. The longer you are in a church the less you see the broken window held with duct tape, the ceiling that has water spots, the year-old bulletins in the classrooms, the boxes, hymnals out of place, broken things in the parking lot, and rusty chairs. The messages that this sends are, “We don’t care about our church,” “Neither should you,” “Please don’t come here,” “We’re good.”

3. What they smell.
Many bathrooms in churches smell bad, look bad, and would never be acceptable in any of the members’ homes. Churches with musty smells, which reek of unattractive odors, send a message: “Today’s service is to be endured, not enjoyed.” Andy Stanley, in his book Deep & Wide,* says, “The physical environment does more than leave an impression; it sends a message.” In many churches the message is, “We aren’t expecting guests,” “What we are doing here is not all that important,” “We expect somebody to clean up after us,” “We don’t take pride in our church.”

What changes can you make? Who can be a set of fresh eyes you could invite to take a look at your church and point out some areas where you can improve? “If we would humble ourselves before God, and be kind and courteous and tenderhearted and pitiful, there would be one hundred conversions to the truth where now there is only one,” Testimonies, vol. 9, page 189.

Our Desire
A majority of Americans consider themselves to be religious; 75 percent believe America’s well-being is highly dependent upon its spiritual health. When surveyed, people say that their faith, more than anything else, gets them through hard times.

Fact or Fiction
But, is there substance behind our feelings about faith and trust, or is all of this just a nice illusion for soothing troubled emotions when life gets tough?

Unconditional Love
Bernie Siegel, M.D., writes, “Unconditional love is the most powerful stimulant of the immune system. The truth is: love heals.” Research confirms that feeling loved by God is associated with higher self-esteem, less depression, less physical disability, and greater self-rated health.

A Better Life
The Oxford University Press Handbook of Religion and Health, published in 2001, was a result of an extensive review of more than 1,200 published studies in physical and social health fields. The authors concluded, “Our systematic review revealed that the majority of studies indicate that religiousness is associated with less coronary artery disease, hypertension, stroke, immune system dysfunction, cancer, and functional impairment; fewer negative health behaviors; and lower overall mortality.”

Evidence
Although we have only scratched the surface, evidence suggests religious people have stronger psychological health, greater life satisfaction, and are happier and more optimistic; trust in God enhances every area of our life.

Henry Ward Beecher penned this sage insight: “Every tomorrow has two handles. We can take hold of it with the handle of anxiety or the handle of faith.”

That’s CREATION Health!
—BY LYNELL LAMOUNTAIN

Retired Nurse Shares Legacy with Students

Wanting to continue her love for nursing after retirement, Louise began her search to locate a school where she could help future nursing students. “I was looking for a school that upholds the standards and teachings of the Seventh-day Adventist Church,” said Louise.

By including a planned gift in her estate plan that will create an endowment fund for nursing scholarships at Southern Adventist University, Louise will continue her legacy of generosity and service to others.

›To learn how you can continue a legacy of generosity, contact your local Conference or University Planned Giving & Trust Services Representative.
Renovated ED Elevates Patient Experience

Patients, employees, and members of the Jellico, Tenn., community gathered to witness the ribbon-cutting ceremony on April 2, 2013, for Jellico Community Hospital’s newly renovated Emergency Department (ED). The $3.6 million project, which has been in the works for two years, added more than 2,000 square feet of clinical areas and offices.

“From a patient experience, aesthetic quality, and functional design standpoint, the space is second to none,” said Jason Dunkel, Jellico Community Hospital executive director of business development and marketing.

A new nurses’ station, outpatient waiting area, and private exam rooms are just a few of the features the new ED offers. Each was designed to reduce patient wait times and provide more privacy, elevating the overall patient experience. “We are already getting word back from patients who are reporting very positive experiences,” Dunkel said.

Employees such as Katelyn Hackler, patient access representative, are benefiting from the changes as well. “All of the new equipment helps me be more efficient at my job, which is always a plus when assisting patients,” Hackler said. In addition, a new break room and physician sleep room were added, providing a place for employees to rest between hectic schedules.

“This is an investment certainly in the hospital, but it is also an investment in the community,” Erik Wangness, Jellico Community Hospital CEO, said of the renovated ED. “We feel blessed that through these changes we can continue ‘Extending the Healing Ministry of Christ,’ and offer even better care to our community at large.”

—BY RAINIE TURLINGTON

Hospital Dedicates Newly Remodeled Chapel

Takoma Regional Hospital in Greeneville, Tenn., has always had a chapel, but it was not quite the chapel the staff dreamed of offering to visitors as a place of sanctuary. Now, thanks to the hard work of many chaplains and employees, it has a warm and welcoming feel.

“This is the chapel that we have been wanting for a few years now,” said Jan Leffers, chaplain at Takoma Regional Hospital.

Community members gathered with hospital employees to dedicate the newly remodeled space on April 18, 2013. So many were in attendance that they could not all fit inside the small room. Instead, a line stretched out the door and down both walls of the hallway.

“We’re very excited about the new look.”

Community members gathered with hospital employees to dedicate the newly remodeled space on April 18, 2013. So many were in attendance that they could not all fit inside the small room.

“Our new chapel will provide our patients and their families, as well as our staff, a place where they can talk to God and sense His presence,” Leffers said. “The chapel is anointed and dedicated to all who seek His will in their lives, and to those who want a break from life’s pressures. That has been and is the purpose for our chapel.”

The chapel, which is located to the side of the main lobby, is open daily from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

—BY TINA CHUDINA
Adventist University of Health Sciences

Student Presents Cancer Research at Florida Academy of Sciences Annual Meeting

What began as an undergraduate research practicum for one health and biomedical sciences student, turned into an opportunity to present his findings to science faculty and professionals from all over Florida.

After writing and submitting an abstract about his research, Stephen Valle, senior biomedical sciences major, was invited to present in the medical sciences section at the Florida Academy of Sciences Annual Meeting on March 8, 2013.

The annual meeting is a venue for professionals, faculty, undergraduate, and graduate students to present their research results.

For the last year and a half, Valle researched how an antioxidant extract from coconuts, when introduced into a cell culture medium, could destroy cancer cells. With more research, he hopes it could one day be a more holistic approach to treating cancer. “It’s exciting and opens up a lot of doors. The more research I do, the more interested I am.”

Sue Baker, Ph.D., and Sebastian Farrell, Ph.D., health and biomedical sciences professors, taught Valle research techniques and mentored him through the process.

“Being selected is an indication that the members of the Academy see potential in the student’s work, and deem it relevant to the section the abstract is submitted to,” Baker said.

Valle graduated in April, and has applied for a grant to continue his research.

“This type of research experience benefits the students greatly, and gives them an edge when applying to medical schools,” Baker said. “Beyond that, this work is contributing great insights to the medical community and the public in general.”

—BY SARAH CROWDER

84 Students Receive Scholarships at Awards Banquet

Adventist University of Health Sciences distributed $144,000 in scholarships to 84 students at the annual Scholarship Awards Banquet on April 4, 2013. Thanks to generous donors, this is a $47,000 increase from the total awarded in 2012.

Silfane Clenord, junior health sciences major and recipient of the Amelia Roeder Scholarship, founded by Dawn and Larry McLendon, said the gift helps relieve financial stress for her and her family.

“It’s really nice to know that people out there care about my education,” Clenord said.

At the banquet, students discovered that there were, in fact, many who cared deeply about their education: the scholarship donors.

Starting a scholarship was so important to Barbara Santos, an alumna of the nursing school at Florida Hospital of the class of 1951, that she asked her friends and family to donate to her scholarship fund rather than to give her birthday or Christmas gifts. Santos hopes that the students who receive scholarships will one day “pass it forward,” and help others when they are able.

“I remember my two daughters received scholarships, and that’s part of the reason I wanted to give,” Santos said. “It only takes a spark to get a fire going.”

—BY SARAH CROWDER
Young Serviceman Finally Finds Peace

Retired pastor and family counselor David White, member of Foster Church in Asheville, N.C., has a unique ministry. White works with veterans from the Veterans Restoration Quarters, VRQ, in Asheville.

The 210 homeless veterans who live at the facility are there for PTSD (post traumatic stress disorder), family and relationship problems, drug and alcohol issues, or a combination thereof. White has developed a Bible study group that he conducts every Sunday afternoon and evening. As many as 30 to 40 men attend the study each week.

Last fall Ron Clouzet, D.Min., from Andrews University came to the Asheville/Hendersonville area and especially his mother. When Scott graduated with honors from high school, he was determined to get away from this environment. He desired to go to college; however, his father refused to support him in any way. Scott realized that the only way he could afford college was to join the army, which allowed him to obtain his education, then afterward fulfill his army obligation. His plans changed when, shortly after classes began, 9/11 took place and Scott was immediately called into active duty.

Due to his PTSD, the doctors had given him drugs to calm his anxiety. This, he claims, was the start of his drug addiction. Scott will tell you that he experienced very dark days and months. It wasn’t until he began attending the Bible studies with David White, met Ron Clouzet, and attended the evangelism seminar, that he finally realized there was “Hope” once again.

After the Clouzet meetings, Scott asked David White to baptize him. He is now looking into finding a ministry where he can serve his Savior.

—BY RON QUICK

Motorcycles and Ministry: A Perfect Match

Since he grew up in a famous racing family and then became a pastor, mixing motor vehicles and ministry is a natural thing for John Earnhardt, pastor. At present he is working with Motor Racing Outreach at four Nascar racetracks, as well as being the pastor of Upward, N.C., Church. And, he also hosts car/motorcycle/truck shows and invites the community.

Motor enthusiasts are able to bring their prize vehicles to show, swap stories, eat, and fellowship while listening to music. He even brings his Micro Midget, built in 1956 and worked on by Ralph Earnhardt.

Sounds like a fun time, doesn’t it? It is, and it’s also a ministry! As a result of these events, several people have initiated relationships with the Adventist Church and become baptized. Yes, evangelism in the pew is vital, but evangelism at a car show? That’s reaching out and finding people, wherever they are, for Christ.

The next show is on Sunday, September 15, 2013, from 1 to 5 p.m., at Fletcher Valley Natural Foods in Fletcher, N.C. For information, call John Earnhardt at 864-985-2908.

—BY BECKY CARPENTER
Carolina News

Conference Sponsors First Church Growth, Church Planting Rally

The Carolina Conference Church Planting Department sponsored the first Church Growth and Church Planting Rally on April 6, 2013, at the University City Church in Charlotte, N.C.

Leslie Louis, Carolina Conference president, set the tone with a powerful opening message on discipleship. Pastors Art Randall, Julio Flores, Jonathan Michael, and Kevin Kim led breakout sessions in various English and Spanish languages on conducting effective small groups, how to grow your church, steps to planting a church, and how to find and conduct Bible studies. The last general session featured a case for birthing healthy church plants all over the Carolinas to reach people in unreached areas.

Special thanks to Ryan Ashlock, pastor, and the members of Charlotte University City Church for hosting the rally, and to Laura Andrews for helping to coordinate the event. Plan to attend next year!

—BY BRAD CAULEY

Charleston Church Members Hold Healthy Start Weekend

Just when many were getting weary of their New Year’s resolutions, Charleston, S.C., Church members held a healthy start weekend February 2-3, 2013. The weekend began Sabbath morning with keynote speaker Cordington Banda who brought a message on using God’s original health principles for optimal living. Banda delivered a special Vespers service entitled “You’re Sick and You Don’t Even Know It.” This presentation focused on common conditions that compromise health, and natural approaches to helping bodies heal themselves. After the Vespers service, the health fair started. Volunteers created and led interactive booths representing the eight health principles of nutrition, exercise, water, sunlight, temperance, air, rest, and trust in God. Nurses and doctors from the congregation provided wellness checks, including blood pressure, heart rate, body mass index, and pulmonary function testing.

One of the most popular events of the evening included a chiropractic consultation and demonstration of the health benefits of massage by Heidi Norman, D.C. Another demonstration was on how to grow vegetables using hydroponics. Participants enjoyed a variety of healthy snacks and drinks. Recipes were included for participants to take home and try out with their families.

The health weekend continued Sunday morning with a 5K fun run/walk. Braving cool weather and windy conditions, participants of all ages gathered for stretches and warm-up exercises before completing the scenic 5K course along the West Ashley Greenway. This was followed by a juicing demonstration where a variety of organic fruits and vegetables were combined into delectable concoctions to address specific health needs.

Those who participated in the weekend events experienced renewal and recommitment to healthy living. The Charleston community looks forward to hosting similar events in the future.

—BY TONY LAPORTE
Students Partner with ACTS World Relief

Fourteen students from Forest Lake Academy (FLA), Apopka, Fla., partnered with ACTS (Active Christians That Serve) World Relief and its training arm, Global Rapid Rescue and Relief (GR3), to simulate a disaster at Orlando International Airport. The Orlando International Mass Casualty Training Event on March 13 and 14 had more than 700 participants, including students from FLA; Miami Union Academy in North Miami, Fla.; and Heritage Academy in Monterey, Tenn. This was the largest mass casualty simulation on the east coast where young people took a professional part.

The day before the drill, students from the three academies gathered on FLA’s campus for training. They learned disaster response skills such as CPR, swift water rescue techniques, food safety, knot-tying, and moulage. FLA students were assigned to the moulage team creating fake injuries on the victims.

Thursday morning, students gathered to prep victims for the disaster drill. They spent the morning painting on injuries such as burns and head wounds. In one and a half hours, students helped prepare 320 victims who were sent to 21 different hospitals after the planned explosion at the airport. After the students prepped the victims, they were allowed to participate in a dispersion drill.

This program was an excellent opportunity for young people to support emergency response professionals in preparedness and response.

More information about ACTS World Relief and GR3 is available at ACTSWR.org, including a Mass Casualty Training in Moulage video.

— BY TIM FLOYD

Ocala Deaf Ministry Bears Fruit

Sabbaths are always special at Ocala, Fla., Church, but a recent Sabbath could best be described as a “High Sabbath.” On this day, Erick and Marlene Angulo were baptized as the first fruits of the church’s sign language ministry.

As Dave Swinyar, pastor, entered the baptismal pool with the Angulos, unseen volunteers stood in the adjacent rooms signing the service and conveying the pastor’s words. You could hear a pin drop as members sensed the sacredness of the service, and watched the facial reactions of the couple as they became aware of the pastor’s words.

Ocala Church’s deaf ministry began when Jerry Sutton* was asked to sign the services for the guest of a member. This initial signing led several deaf people to attend church, and Sutton was led to teach training classes for others to sign.

Today, more than 12 individuals, consisting of youth and adults, are capable of helping with the ministry.

“This is a beginning,” said Swinyar after the service. “I am looking for the Lord to bless us with more souls as we meet the needs of these dear blind and deaf people by introducing them to Jesus.”


— BY HERB PRITCHARD
Brandon Church Children on Fire for Jesus

Children’s Week of Prayer

“Both services? I am on fire!” replied 10-year-old Josiah Gonzalez when asked to preach at Brandon Church. His sermon was a small segment in a Children’s Week of Prayer focused on Fruits of the Spirit. Fifty children, ranging in age from three to 12, participated in the week-long program.

The children were trained to memorize and recite Scripture, lead praise and worship, perform special music, introduce speakers, call for and collect the offering, tell the children’s story, seek the Lord in prayer, and deliver a sermon. Daynette Sleem, a mom of two young children, introduced her vision for this ministry because she is passionate about giving children an opportunity to share Christ from the pulpit.

The culminating Sabbath programs contained longer versions of the nightly meetings; a special introduction by Rex Frost, pastor; and music performed by the children’s choir. The celebration continued with a potluck luncheon featuring “Fruit of the Spirit” table decorations and fruit-flavored lollipops. Following lunch, the children led their families into surrounding neighborhoods to talk with people and distribute REAL Magazine. Each magazine contained a postcard explaining the various church ministries available to children in the community.

“Our Sabbath School classes and Children’s Church are tremendous training grounds for this event,” says Mary Rogers, children’s ministries leader.

1,000 Cupcakes Become an Answer to Prayer

“Let’s have our own Cupcake Wars and take 1,000 cupcakes to migrant workers,” suggested 13-year-old Allison Rogers.

A group from Brandon Church volunteered to help at Good Samaritan Mission in Wimauma — an outreach for migrant workers. The event organizer was concerned she didn’t have dessert for the meal they were planning and had prayed about what to provide.

With Allison’s enthusiasm for the Cupcake Wars television show on Food Network, her idea of making 1,000 cupcakes soon caught on, and four mother/daughter teams met at the church for many hours to bake, fill, and frost cupcakes. The migrant workers ate all 1,000 cupcakes, and the volunteers were invited back and encouraged to make it an annual event.

During the same event, Brandon Church teens serving in children’s ministries provided a puppet ministry while children and parents waited their turns for services offered by the Mission such as dental cleaning, immunizations, eye exams, back-to-school supplies, and tickets for food.

—By Mary Rogers
Collegedale Church Earns InStep Award

Health ministry has become a frequent focus of Sam Chetty, Collegedale, Tenn., Church pastor, in the church’s outreach ministry efforts. Not only has Collegedale Church offered two-day health fairs for the community, but also cooking classes, health classes, and dinner with the doctor programs. With Chetty being an avid marathoner (as well as an ultra-marathoner), it only seems natural that he would start a walking/running club at the church, and eventually join with the North American Division’s (NAD) InStep for Life program.

At the annual NAD Health Summit in New York on March 16, 2013, Chetty accepted an award for the walkers and runners of Collegedale Church. Three churches across the NAD received awards for the most accrued miles for an individual church. Collegedale took second place. Collegedale Church had 577 participating members, and accrued 74,869 miles in 2012.

Southern Adventist University received an award for the University with most miles — 2,827, and 54 participants.

The awards were presented by Dan Jackson, NAD president, along with White House U.S. Department of Health representatives: Heidi Christensen, associate director of Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships; Jaime Torres, D.P.M., M.S., director; and Michelle Davis, Ph.D., M.S.P.H., health administrator.

—BY SHERRIE WILLIAMS

Conference Office Installs Solar Panels

The Finance Committee recently voted to move forward and purchase a 50-kilowatt solar panel system with 200 separate panels for the office. The system has been installed south of the actual office building, and is estimated to produce 7,500 kilowatt hours of electricity per year, according to Darrel Starkey, project coordinator.

“The power provider (North Georgia Electric Membership Cooperative - TVA) will pay the solar user for the energy harvested at the going rate, plus a fixed added premium per kilowatt generated for 10 years,” Starkey said.

“After that time, they pay whatever the going rate is at that time. The system is designed to be maintenance free, and has a life expectancy of more than 20 years. It’s estimated the system will pay for itself in eight to nine years. Any energy generated from that point forward is profit above cost.”

The system will connect to the Internet and report to the solar company and the customer monitor with output details, tracking the energy being produced.

“We are doing our part to be green, which is consistent with our values of being good stewards of the Earth’s resources,” said Kurt Allen, Georgia-Cumberland Conference vice president for finance.

The solar panels will be operational before this summer.

—BY TAMARA WOLCOTT FISHER
Calhoun Adventists Open Door to “God’s Closet”

The Calhoun Church opened its doors to a new ministry on April 9, 2013, with God’s Closet. The newly established outreach is meeting a Calhoun community need: clothing for families in need.

Jessi Hodges knew that the January 30 twister that hit Gordon and Bartow counties destroyed people’s closets along with their other possessions. Those closets needed replenishing. She experienced her first time helping tornado victims with much-needed clothing two years ago when storms hit Ringgold, and into Tennessee. To fill the present need, Melissa DeArk and other willing church volunteers came to the aid, spurred by Hodges. By February 13, the church was set up by these helpers for two days of distributing free clothes and offering prayer to 215 people.

The clothing recipients were so impressed and grateful, making statements like, “For free? We can have what we need?” The appreciation shown by those who were helped urged Hodges and DeArk to ask the church board if they might establish a continuing ministry through the church. God’s Closet is now a part of the church’s outreach, with Hodges and DeArk as co-directors. They are serving this free clothing distribution with the Bible text from Matthew 25:36 as their motto: “When I was naked, you clothed me.”

Hodges urges the necessity even without a tornado crisis. “People are losing jobs right and left. Keeping up with the American standard of living is hard to do. After we distributed the clothing in February, we’ve continued helping people along the way and wanted to continue.” She points out that she and DeArk also work closely together, teaching kindergarten children in Sabbath School every week. “We have the same heart for helping.” She adds, “You know that saying, ‘sisters-in-Christ?’ We really have become sisters.”

Hodges speaks with high respect of DeArk: “Melissa, a mother of three, is a cancer survivor. Cancer almost took her, but I find her to be one of the most loving and selfless people I’ve ever met.”

Now the door to God’s Closet is open, and the clothing and bedding, such as blankets, are free to anyone who comes. At this time, families in need must come by referral from the church itself or the church food bank. The Calhoun Adventist Church is accepting donations of new or gently used items from individuals or businesses. Children’s spring clothing and sneakers are especially needed.

For inquiries about need, call the church office at 706-629-5470, weekdays, 9 a.m. to noon and 1:30-5 p.m., or Fridays, 9 a.m. to noon.

God’s Closet is open twice each month on the second Tuesday and Thursday during the hours of 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. God’s Closet — free clothing ministry is also on Facebook. “And we will be assisting when disasters happen,” Hodges assures.

—By Betty Kossick

Families are invited to come and take whatever clothing they need from the new God’s Closet ministry at the Calhoun, Ga., Church. Families are referred through the church office or the church food bank.
Montgomery Hispanic Church Impacts Community

Members of the Montgomery, Ala., Hispanic Church wanted to impact their community, so they began planning. The result was not just one day of helping, but a weekend of service. The first event began Friday, April 12, 2013, as members gathered to help distribute eight tons of food to 148 families, which impacted 700 individuals.

The next day after Sabbath church service, 100 youth went door to door to invite the community to participate in the Community Services Day events.

On Sunday volunteers, including medical doctors, nurses, and church members, gathered to reach out to the community again. Visitors could choose to visit with a physician, get a haircut, enjoy a massage, receive clothing, and get their car washed, all for free — courtesy of the church members.

After these services were provided, visitors were invited to a musical concert by Junior Kelly Marchena. More than 250 attended the concert. The concert was the beginning of an evangelistic series which ended April 20. The members united to present the Gospel in a practical way, and God worked miracles. As a result of their efforts, three individuals gave their lives to Jesus through baptism, and 17 others requested Bible studies. Another added blessing was during the concert, Nilton Garcia, pastor, asked for a special offering for the building fund and $18,000 was donated.

—By Rebecca Grice and Cintia Wood

Valley Church Members Hold Community Services Day

The first Community Services Day program for Valley Church in Birmingham, Ala., was held March 30, 2013. The focus was “Reaching the Community.” The program featured Life Time Resolutions (LTR) of Montgomery. LTR is a behavioral health program for women with addictions and/or mental illnesses. The LTR Center is a holistic program that allows women to bring their children to treatment with them.

Tony Hall, LTR chaplain, spoke during the worship hour. His message was centered on the holistic principles of treating those who are challenged by addictions and mental illnesses. The four components to holistic treatment are emotional health, physical health, social health, and spiritual health. After morning worship, the LTR family joined the Valley members for lunch.

During the afternoon program, the women and some of their children silently shared their stories with cardboard testimonies. They paid tribute to women who have gone before them and are now living sober lives worth living.

They also acknowledged women who have gone before them that have gone back out into the world of alcohol and drugs. The program was moving and filled with the Holy Spirit.

Through the LTR ministry, more than 70 individuals have been baptized. There are many treatment facilities in the state of Alabama, but none can boast the miracles of LTR. Learn more about Life Time Resolutions at www.lifetime-resolutions.com.

—By Brenda Allen
Adventurers Enjoy Family Fun Weekend at Camp Alamisco

Children with their families gathered at Camp Alamisco on April 26, 2013, for an Adventurer Family Fun Weekend. The guest speaker for the weekend was Gael Murray, North American Division (NAD) youth administrative assistant.

When Murray asked if there was any club with a need, James Mangum, Gulf States Conference Adventurer director, told her about the Piedmont, Ala., Pioneers. Their leaders had been trained at the Leadership weekend in 2012, and had stepped out in faith functioning with very little funds during the year. On Saturday night, Murray surprised the club with a notification that the NAD youth department would provide the club, directors, and children with uniforms, manuals, and materials needed to function. John and Marcia Patty, club directors, were thrilled. “It was hard to keep the tears from rolling down my cheeks when I saw a miracle happening in front of me,” said Marcia Patty.

Pace’s Point Fire Department came and spoke to the children about fire safety. Other guests included Dustin Smith, a police officer from the Montgomery, Ala., Police Department, and Rita Cream, a Red Cross representative from Alexander City, Ala.

Lusia Cortez from Community Church in Meridian, Miss., was elected as the Adventurer coordinator for the Conference. Her club, the Blue Birds, was chosen as the Adventurer Club of the year. They had participated in every Conference event, turned their reports in on time, and completed all the Adventurer ceremonies.

—BY TANIA MANGUM AND REBECCA GRICE

A total of 190 Adventurers with their families convened at Camp Alamisco for an Adventurer Family Fun Weekend.

Piedmont Adventurers Conduct Sabbath Service

The Adventurers made March 30, 2013, a special day at Piedmont, Ala., Church by conducting the worship service. It was evident that the children worked hard and did their best to make the day a success.

Adventurers Christian Troxell and Ethan Patty each gave a mini sermon during the Sabbath worship hour. When asked what he wanted to be when he grew up, Patty replied, “Be a pastor.” Another Adventurer, five-year-old Tyler Cohley, has already learned about praying. “There is a Fountain” was sung by Anne Alfinda and Taylor Cohley as special music.

The Adventurers are learning about working together. They demonstrated to the congregation how their boat moves when all paddle in the same direction.

“At this precious young age, these children are learning about Jesus, and developing Christ-like characters in preparing for a life eternal,” concludes a church member.

John and Marcia Patty are the club leaders. They asked God to help them find a ministry, and they enjoy working with these young children, ages four to nine.

—BY LINDA FREEMAN

Piedmont Adventurers demonstrate how their boat moves when they paddle in the same direction.
Pastors’/Elders’ Retreat Emphasizes “Living Deeply”

The Kentucky-Tennessee Conference convened at Indian Creek Camp on April 19-21, 2013, for the pastors and elders spiritual retreat weekend entitled, “Living Deeply: Preparing for the Latter Rain.” The purpose of the weekend was to find a deeper experience with God through the spiritual disciplines of biblical journaling, prayer, quiet time in nature, and worship. Participants were given practical pointers on devotional disciplines (the ones that enhanced the lives of Bible characters and Adventist pioneers), and then were allotted blocks of quiet time to hear God’s voice through the various exercises. The weekend culminated with an agape feast and communion service where participants shared testimonies about how much the retreat had impacted their lives. The fellowship extended late into the night with recreation in the gymnasium.

On the eve of the retreat, the organizing team of pastors sighed, “We have done our very best to ‘set the table,’ now it’s up to God to feed us, fill us, and change us. Let’s pray for these mighty miracles to happen.” God answered those prayers in a remarkable way. One pastor expressed the influence of the weekend this way: “For me it was much more than merely a weekend of lec-

—By David Hartman
Ministerial Director

Worship given by Steve Haley, Conference president

Pastors and elders

Meal time

Breakout session
Madison Academy Joins Renaissance Network

The Alumni Awards Foundation (AAF) is expanding the Renaissance Network with the addition of Madison Academy (MA) in Nashville, Tenn., on July 1, 2013.

The Renaissance Network is a program developed and funded by AAF that provides management and centralized support to Adventist K-12 schools. Schools like MA, are provided with leadership training, business expertise, and academic development through a long-term partnership. Schools accepted into the program are connected with a powerful support system that encourages excellence in the spiritual, academic, social, and physical development of students.

“On behalf of the AAF Board of Directors, we are pleased to have Madison Academy and the Kentucky-Tennessee Conference join us in developing this Network of influential schools,” said Robert Summerour, M.D., AAF board chairman. “We like to think of Renaissance schools as ‘model schools,’ working together to improve the brand and sustainability of Adventist education.”

MA is known for its mission outreach, family atmosphere, and technology-integrated curriculum. In looking for ways to increase cognition, MA was the first Adventist academy to start a one-to-one laptop program for its students, which has evolved into a one-to-one iPad program. Students are tested for their individual learning styles, and teachers customize each student’s learning experience using the iPads.

“There is already a good program in place at Madison, and we are going to build upon it and make it stronger,” said Greg Gerard, Ed.D., Renaissance school manager to MA.

The first things AAF plans to concentrate on include defining a viable business plan for the linen service, developing an aggressive marketing and recruiting strategy, and establishing new sources of funding.

This partnership also brings new leadership with Kris Fuentes, an MA alumna, becoming principal on July 1, 2013. Fuentes has been serving as principal for 12 years at Escondido Adventist Academy in California.

“The Madison I remember has a huge pocket of life to the teaching ministry.”

MA is one of two schools joining the Renaissance Network as of July 1, 2013. AAF is also welcoming Hinsdale Adventist Academy in Chicago, Ill.

“With the addition of two more schools into the Renaissance Network, every step we make has tripled the impact on Adventist education,” said Melanie Litchfield, AAF director. “This kind of synergy has never been tried in Adventist education, and it’s exciting to imagine the full potential for creating innovation and efficiency.”

AAF is a nonprofit organization that has been working to improve Adventist K-12 education since 1995. It has awarded grants totaling more than $2 million to Adventist schools and educators. In 2011 AAF created the Renaissance Network to improve the level of excellence in schools by providing leadership expertise, vision, resources, and training. AAF aims to awaken the Adventist community to the full potential in Adventist education. Learn more at alumniawards.org.

—BY KAYCE FOOTE
Decatur Church Members Welcome New Pastor

Decatur, Ga., Church members welcomed their new pastor and his family on Sabbath, April 27, 2013. William Winston, South Atlantic Conference president, conducted the installation service for John S. Nixon II, and his wife, April Mendinghall Nixon, during the divine worship service. Winston invited John S. Nixon Sr., D.Min., professor in the School of Religion at Southern Adventist University, Collegedale, Tenn., and Vanard J. Mendinghall, retired former South Atlantic president, to join in the dedication prayer for the newly installed pastoral couple.

Nixon received a bachelor’s degree in theology from Oakwood University, Huntsville, Ala., in May 2000. He was hired by South Atlantic Conference in June 2000, and assigned to the Ebenezer Church in Milledgeville, Ga., and First Church in Dublin, Ga. After two years in this district, he left to pursue a master of divinity degree from Andrews University Theological Seminary, Berrien Springs, Mich., and graduated December 2004. Nixon returned to fulltime pastoral work in February 2005, and was assigned to Antioch Church in Greenville, S.C., and New Life Church in Travelers Rest, S.C. His most recent pastorate was at Immanuel Temple Church in Durham, N.C., from April 2008 to March 2013. April Nixon is currently a third grade teacher in the Durham Inner City School System.

Nixon follows W. D. Felder, who served as the interim pastor for four months. His installation sermon was entitled “Give Me Jesus.” He stressed that Jesus was rejected by the crowd just before He was sent to the cross, when Barabbas was preferred over the Son of God. “Jesus does not have a worldly agenda. He does not value the things we think are important. We care about worldly acclaim, prestige, and greatness — Jesus is concerned with what His Father cares about,” said Nixon. “We get upset with Christ when He does not fulfill our worldly desires, so we turn to Barabbas instead. Jesus requires strict obedience and Barabbas does not.”

The Nixons will celebrate 13 years of marriage in December. They have one son, eight-year-old John S. Nixon III, and one daughter, five-year-old Julia Nixon.

The day-long celebration included a fellowship luncheon at Decatur Adventist Junior Academy, Stone Mountain, Ga., and an evening concert back at the church with guest soloist Noelle Leader and saxophonist Immanuel Zechariah.

In addition to the Nixons’ parents and Decatur members, several aunts, uncles, cousins, friends, and visitors were also in attendance to support this special day.

—By Irisene Douce
Conference Holds Pathfinder Teen Leadership Training

The weekend was cold and blustery, but that did not stop the enthusiastic involvement of more than 200 Master Guides, MIT’s, and TLT’s from participating in the South Atlantic Conference annual Pathfinder Teen Leadership training.

The weekend was full of activity, and the attendees were engaged fully in all training aspects. An integral part of the weekend was the Teen Leadership and Spirit Stick. In order for a company to take control of either stick, one was to meet all the criteria, which included being in proper formation and on time for all events, but mostly displaying enthusiasm while doing each of the activities. Under the direction of the Conference Pathfinder coordinator, William Cameron, and his staff, the various clubs reported on Friday and were immediately put through the paces.

Ron Whitehead, director of Center for Youth Evangelism and director for the International Camporee, was invited to be a presenter during the weekend. He took a tour of the River Oaks Campground in Orangeburg, S.C., and was impressed with the outlay of the grounds, as well as the professionalism of the instructors who were instrumental in putting together an excellent training weekend. Whitehead also spoke to the attendees on the subject, “Where’s the Beef in Your Spiritual Life?” The sermon centered on the three Hebrew boys in Babylon. He informed the group that “the enemy wants to get into our heads” and that “Bible study helps us meet the author.”

This leadership weekend instilled the value of true leadership skills in each of the attendees. The final message to all was to make Christ the head of your life and the rest will fall into place.

—BY PATRICK CARTER

N.C. Hosts Second Annual Drill, Drum Competition

Pathfinders from South Atlantic and Carolina conferences gathered again this spring for the second annual drill and drum competition. Six churches from Charlotte, Durham, Raleigh, and Fayetteville assembled at the Raleigh, N.C., Church with seven drill teams and three drum corps to compete for the state title. More than 350 spectators assembled at the church to cheer and support their Pathfinder clubs. Pathfinder clubs that participated included Charlotte Berean, Immanuel Temple, Raleigh Spanish, Abney Chapel, Raleigh, and Gethsemane.

Two of the seven-member judging panel were local pastors Larry Johnson and Bob Cundiff. Johnson is a military veteran, and is currently serving as South Atlantic Conference treasurer and pastor of Gethsemane in Raleigh. Farewell activities began at the competition as Cundiff said goodbye to the triangle area after nine years of service to begin his new position in the New England Conference as executive secretary.

Other judges included current and former military soldiers, ROTC alumni, and music directors.

Attendance and participation numbers increased from the 2012 competition. The 2012 participants included Raleigh, Gethsemane (Drill Champion), Praise Tabernacle, and Immanuel Temple (Drum Champion). The desire for 2014 is to expand the competition to even more Pathfinder clubs in both the Carolina and South Atlantic conferences of North Carolina. Next year, they plan to host it again in March in the same location as clubs prepare for the International Camporee in Oshkosh, Wisc.


—BY TYRONE FISHER
Conference Conducts “RIDICULOUS” Youth Congress

“RIDICULOUS” was the theme for the April 4-6, 2013, South Central Conference Youth Congress. “Ridiculous” is defined as something that is not normal, out of the ordinary. Vandenberg Griffin, South Central youth director, explains that while asking the Lord about what new thing he could do for the young people, the Lord told him, “I want you to do something ridiculous.” And with that, he started planning activities that would be different from the norm — out of the ordinary. And that is exactly what Youth Congress 2013 was. As a result, the Wydham Resort in Panama City Beach, Fla., will never be the same again.

The most outstanding, impacting aspects of each meeting were the powerful video visuals that emphasized the necessity of prayer. Kymone Hinds, pastor of Overton Park Church in Memphis, Tenn., delivered a short thought on prayer with illustrations each young person could literally hold in their hands. A mustard seed and a stone represented moving mountains and slaying giants. However, the most impacting object lesson was on Sabbath when hundreds of kazoo were handed out, and Hinds talked about marching around the walls of Jericho, and how there was silence and ridiculous shouts of praise and blowing of the trumpets. Then, after instructing the youth, he asked for silence, and in the room with more than 1,500 individuals (I know this, because the event manager told me they placed 1,500 chairs in the room, and people were still standing, sitting on the floor, and trying to listen from the lobby), you could hear a pin drop. It was absolutely silent. Not even a whisper could be heard. Then at Hinds’ command, the kazoos were blown, the shouts and praises were heard, and there was a thunderous roar throughout. This ridiculous lesson, as well as each prayer lesson at each worship service, brought to reality the importance and value of prayer in the lives of all, the young and the not so young.

The keynote speaker was the ridiculous Eric Thomas (aka “The Hip Hop Preacher”), academic advisor at Michigan State University in the Office of Supportive Services in Detroit. He reminded the youth that, “All are God’s Creation; they are in His image, so therefore they should take full advantage of the life and opportunity God has given them.” He admonished them that the present is the time their futures are shaped. He let them know that life is in the Church, and death is in the world.

At the close of his message, more than 50 youth gave their lives to Jesus Christ, and some renewed their walk with Him.
Thomas used Daniel and all the trials he endured from captivity to the lion’s den as an illustration that God does move in our lives even though things may be difficult. By using the examples of Daniel’s trials, he taught that “sweat equity,” meaning exerting yourself to get something, is worth more than receiving something by just having it handed to you.

One of the most impacting points in his message was the fact that going to church is important, but going to church must be transferred from the head to the heart. Being an Adventist is great, but if it is in the head, it does nothing for you; it must become a heart’s desire for it to work. That only comes by way of prayer. That is why Daniel still prayed three times daily even though there was a decree against praying.

He then challenged the youth to leave the contract of being in Church and come into the contract of being the Church. At the close of his message he called for baptism, and 30 responded to the voice of the Holy Spirit.

She closed telling everyone that with faith God will be on their side, and therefore they have nothing to be afraid of. Hundreds responded to the call to let God use them to make a change in their church and community.

Friday was filled with the Holy Spirit’s moving. There was beach clean-up, and volunteer work at the Salvation Army. The young people stormed the area in a way that left a real impression on that city.

Michael Harpe, South Central stewardship director, talked to the youth about the value of giving. Harpe did something that still buzzes throughout. He broke out in a stewardship rap, on the value of giving our means to Jesus versus obtaining the things of the world. The place became electrified, the youth were excited, and that evening a very generous offering was collected. Harpe was so good at what he did, and it inspired Dana Edmond, South Central president, to come to the Sabbath service with his own rap.

On Sabbath, the youth were welcomed by Gayle Oberst, mayor of Panama City Beach. She praised the respectful atmosphere of the young people, and said, “I have never seen a crowd in this city with a meaningful purpose.”

The delegates formed a mass choir with more than 70 voices strong. It sounded as if the angels in Heaven had joined them in celebratory praise to God.

Jamie Kowlessar, pastor at Bethany Church in Westbury, N.Y., in the Northeastern Conference, delivered the sermon for divine worship. It was entitled “What Storm Got You Stuck?” He encouraged the youth to do something different — to use RIDICULOUS faith and step out of their comfortable surroundings, and walk on water.

On Sunday morning buses and vans were loaded, chaperones gave orders, excited farewells were shared, and all headed back home. They left Youth Congress with a ridiculous attitude, ready to be ridiculous in their homes, churches, and communities.

—BY MARVIN L. ALLISON SR.
Jacksonville First African-American Mayor Speaks to Congregations

Members of the Breath of Life Church and Emmanuel Spanish Church in Jacksonville, Fla., experienced a historic occasion on February 23, 2013, as they welcomed Mayor Alvin Brown to their worship service. Brown is not only the first Jacksonville mayor to fellowship with the congregations, but is the first African-American mayor in the history of Jacksonville.

In a joint worship service with the two churches, Mark Brown (no relation to the mayor), pastor of Breath of Life, and Jose Paredes, pastor of Emmanuel Spanish Church in Jacksonville, listen to Alvin Brown deliver God’s Word.

Mark Brown noted that the Spirit-inspired message from the mayor was truly reflective of a man of God. He also commented that in addition to it being an honor, having the mayor visit the church would lay a foundation for the Adventist churches to have a higher profile in the community for the work of evangelism. Under Mark Brown’s leadership, the churches in his district had already participated in 40 days of prayer and fasting to prepare the congregations for the work of resurrecting, restoring, rebuilding, and evangelism.

—By Barbara Smoot

Perrine Members Hold “Colorful Celebration”

Using the story of Ruby Bridges and the theme “Dream Makers,” the Perrine Church members in Miami, Fla., held a Colorful Celebration on February 2, 2013, in celebration of Black History month. This was a bridge event where several friends from the community shared in the afternoon’s presentation. The audience reflected on “Living the Dream.” The Fellowship Hall was elegantly transformed into a beautiful African museum by Angela Berry. A video presentation, “Dream the Impossible Dream,” took many back to the Civil Rights era, and highlighted the accomplishments of African-Americans from slavery to the White House. They thanked God for His guidance.

Dreams came alive through poems and songs. The first dream came from the Perrine Elementary School — “I Dreamed a Dream.” Many guest local authors were invited to share their dreams which became reality. They introduced and presented their books. These authors included Selwyn Carrington, M.D.; Beresford Nicholson; Delpha Charles, Ph.D.; Yanick Lindquist; and Jean Wilkins.

Other dreams came in the form of poems written and recited by Hamilton and Asia Kirkland.

Michael Owusu, Ph.D., Perrine pastor; Beresford Nicholson; Selwyn Carrington, M.D.; and Errol Saunders participated in the “Never Stop Dreaming” panel discussion. They focused on the story of Ruby Bridges. The panelists all agreed that Ruby Bridges’ mother, Lucille Bridges, was a strong woman, and because of her commitment to God she was able to overcome challenges. The Bridges’ family suffered for their decision, but through it all and because of their faith, they continued to trust in God. Lucille Bridges taught her daughter to pray, and Ruby was able to face the world daily with courage. What Ruby became was because of her mother’s influence.

The final dream of the night was a comedy act presented by Doreen Scully and Shelly-Ann Commock. This delightful and informative program ended with prayer by Arthur North, a visiting pastor from the community. This bridge event brought many visitors from the community. Refreshments were provided at the end of the program.

—By Milllicent Taylor
Vivian E. Gardner Long, 87, was born November 22, 1925, and died February 8, 2013. Along with her sister, Marguerite, and their parents, she developed as a beautiful, well-rounded girl in the Brownsville community of Miami, Fla. Her parents nurtured their girls and taught them to love God and serve others, and that education was paramount.

She began her early educational years at Bethany Seventh-day Adventist School, which was located behind the original church in the Overtown community of Miami. Later, she matriculated to the Miami-Dade County Public School System, and graduated from Dorsey High School. After high school she enrolled at Oakwood College (now Oakwood University), Huntsville, Ala., and completed the two-year degree program in business science.

Upon returning home from Oakwood, she began working as a school secretary at Browsville Middle School, and later at North Dade High School and the Miami-Dade County administration office. She married Herbert Carl Long on September 7, 1947. This union blossomed for more than 60 years, and they were blessed with six children who made them proud.

As a dedicated member of Bethany Church she served in many capacities, as well as a member of the King’s Daughters organization. In 1998, she and her husband relocated to Huntsville to downsize and enjoy retirement. They joined First Church, and she continued her legacy of service. In 2007 they relocated to San Miguel de Allende, Mexico. She enjoyed the views, beautiful sunsets, and warm weather.

She is survived by six children — Herbert Claude (Linda) Long, Sandra E. (Henry) Johnson, Carla Y. Robinson, Maurice D. (Cookie) Long Sr., Pastor David A. (Francine) Long Sr., and Harry M. (Kim) Long; 15 grandchildren; 20 great-grandchildren; two great-great-grandchildren; one son and one daughter in Christ — Earl and Melita Hubbard; and a host of loving relatives and friends. Her husband died in 2009.

—BY LAUNITA GAITER AND ERICKA BIDDINGS

Conference Offers Forklift Training

On a beautiful sunny day in Apopka, Fla., Mt. Olive Church members hosted a forklift training course. Fifteen people attended the training session, which included members from Mt. Olive and the community. The course was organized by Olive Gray, community services director and president of the central east federation. David L. Peay, Southeastern Conference community services director, sponsored the training.

Dorietha Robinson was one of the eager participants who received the opportunity to operate the large machinery. Robinson’s vehicle inspection went smoothly and was a success. She proved that tenacity, braveness, and strength were characteristics personified in strong women beyond the domestic sphere. Following her were two more women, Georgia Francis and Jennifer Tomlinson. “We did it!” were the immediate reactions after each woman completed her training session. In fact, all of the attendees completed the session and passed.

The success of this training led to the development of another course endorsed by Carl E. Ware, Mt. Olive Church pastor. This training was held on April 7, 2013, and included many more participants from neighboring Adventist churches.

Southeastern’s Community Services Department offers periodic disaster and forklift training to anyone who has a desire to do outreach and help their community. The course prepares participants to assist in warehouse distribution during emergencies or natural disasters. It can also help successful applicants achieve credentials to use for job improvement.

Southeastern’s Community Services Department’s ultimate goal is to create bridges between the needs of the Church and the community.

—BY JENNIFER TOMLINSON
President, Faculty Study Theology of Ordination

Gordon Bietz, D.Min., Southern Adventist University president, and several professors from the School of Religion are serving on national and international Adventist committees tasked with studying the theology of ordination and its implications for Church practices. They will be reviewing the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy while considering how the history of Adventist ordination and cultural considerations weigh into this complicated issue.

Professors Greg King, Ph.D., Stephen Bauer, Ph.D., and Michael Hasel, Ph.D., join Bietz as representatives in a General Conference group that will meet four times before sharing its findings at the 2014 Annual Council. Following that report, the committee may recommend an action to the 2015 General Conference Session in San Antonio, Tex. Until then, World Church leaders have asked unions to refrain from ordaining pastoral candidates without respect to gender.

“Ordination enables people for service to the worldwide ministry of the Adventist family,” said Greg King, dean of the School of Religion. “That’s why it should be considered globally rather than regionally.”

Bietz also serves as the chairman of a North American Division (NAD) committee analyzing the same topic — one of 12 such Division-level studies taking place worldwide — and is joined there by professor Edwin Reynolds, Ph.D. That team will report to the NAD by November 2013. But beyond the knowledge and experience of these committee members, it is their hope divine guidance will have the greatest impact on the groups’ conclusions.

Whatever the committees’ recommendations and their effect on Church practices, Bauer sees the potential for growth from the process.

“The one impact I hope the committees have for sure is to show we can dialogue about difficult topics in a gracious and Christ-like manner,” he said.

—BY INGRID HERNANDEZ

University Emphasizes Physical Activity as Integral Aspect of Wholeness

The mission of Southern includes nurturing Christ-likeness and encouraging the pursuit of truth, wholeness, and a life of service. To strengthen the wholeness component, a theme of physical activity was chosen for the University’s Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) — a measurable, multi-year commitment to a single institutional goal — and is supported in a number of ways by faculty and students.

The QEP will be in full effect during the 2013-2014 school year, requiring incoming students to take four physical education classes during their time at Southern. Freshmen will take “Fitness for Collegiate Life” (discusses principles of wellness, nutrition, stress, and physical fitness) and seniors will take “Fit for Hire” (compares freshman and senior fitness assessments, develops post-college lifestyle plan) as part of each student’s curriculum. They are allowed to choose from a variety of other activity-based classes to fulfill the four-course mandate.

Much of the physical activity at Southern takes place outside the classroom and outside of any academic requirements. More than 75 percent of the University’s students participate in one or more intramural sport, making friends beyond their traditional academic or social circles. Sports are not an end, but rather a means to an end: a healthy, balanced life. Southern’s goal is to strive to make the Creator proud by recognizing that we are “fearfully and wonderfully made,” Psalm 139:14.

—STAFF REPORT

Southern’s Fit for Eternity 5K race brought students and community members together for a fun event where participants were doused in powder paint along the route as part of a “color run.”
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Announcements
Ozark Adventist Academy Homecoming – June 8-10. All former faculty, staff, and students are invited to attend the weekend events. Details: 479-736-2221 #1109, or visit www.ozarkacademy.org.
Bellevue SDA Church Dedication – June 9, Bellevue, FL. Special invitation to all friends and former members to celebrate the opening and dedication of the new sanctuary. Details: Dot Carey, 352-236-3129.
“Ye Olde” Cedar Lake Academy Reunion – June 8-10. For alumni and warmly
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White Memorial Medical Center
Centennial Celebration Weekend
OCTOBER 25-27, 2013


To learn more about the weekend or to order the book, visit whitememorial.com/centennial.

IF YOU’VE BEEN a friend, patient, employee or graduate of White Memorial’s residency programs, plan now to join us for a faith-building weekend of events celebrating God’s work at WMMC, touring the new campus and reconnecting with old friends.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 26 | Hospital Sabbath Program
Elders Charles White, great grandson of Ellen White, and Gordon Bietz, president of Southern Adventist University
Concert by Sandi Patty, acclaimed Christian vocalist

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A fund-raising celebration for WMMC

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For more information go to: www.whitememorial.com/centennial.

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Events Calendar

North Carolina

Ordinations – June 1. Lake Junaluska-Stewart Auditorium.
Pathfinders/Adventurers Award Ceremony – June 1. Lake Junaluska-Stewart Auditorium.
ACBC Closed for inventory – June 2-4.
SIT Camp Staff Week – June 1-9. NPF.
Adventurer Camp – June 9-16. NPF.
Junior Camp – June 16-23. NPF.
Teen Camp – June 23-30. NPF.
Family Camp – June 30-July 5. NPF.
Pathfinders’ Leadership Convention – July 23-25. NPF.
Adult Sabbath School Teacher Training – July 26-28. NPF.

Florida

Complete calendar online – http://www.floridaconference.com/calendar/
Singles’ Ministries events and mailing list information. Spiritual study groups, fellowship dinners, outings, and more. http://www.floridaconference.com/lym/childrenandfamily/events/, djmiller4000@gmail.com, or 407-703-3050.
Florida Adventist Bookmobile Schedule
June 23. Jacksonville First, Orange Cove, Palatka, Palm Coast, New Smyrna Beach. (Southeastern Conference: Jacksonville Ephesus.)

Georgia-Cumberland

Olde Time Camp Meeting – June 6-8. Deer Lodge, TN.
Hispanic Camp Meeting – June 7-9. Georgia-Cumberland Academy, Calhoun, GA.
Health Rallies
June 8. 2-5 p.m. Battlefield Community Church. Ft. Oglethorpe, GA.
June 22. Ringgold, GA.
July 13. 2-5 p.m. Oglethorpe, GA.
Cohutta Springs Youth Camp: Junior II–June 9-16. Crandall, GA.
Diné Outreach Mission Trip to Navajo Indian Reservation – June 15-28. Page, AZ.
Cohutta Springs Youth Camp: Adventure – June 16-21. Crandall, GA.
Cohutta Springs Youth Camp: Tween/Pathfinder Honors – June 23-30. Crandall, GA.
Cohutta Springs Youth Camp: Teen I – June 30-July 7. Crandall, GA.
Cohutta Springs Youth Camp: Rock Solid I–June 30-July 7. Crandall, GA.
Day of Prayer and Fasting – July 5.
Online registration for events available: www.registration.gcscda.com.

Gulf States

Complete Calendar online http://www.gcsda.org
Conference Executive Committee Teleconference – June 18.

Conference Executive Committee via Teleconference – June 18.
Elders’ Certification Training – June 29. Floral Crest Church.

Kentucky-Tennessee

Hispanic Camp Meeting – June 7, 8. Highland Academy.
Conference Executive Committee – July 16.
Ministers’ Meeting – July 28-31. Indian Creek Camp.
Literature Evangelists’ Retreat – Aug. 1-4. Indian Creek Camp.
Women’s Retreats at Indian Creek Camp

Southern Adventist University

PreviewSouthern – June 13, 14. Take a tour, meet professors, sit in on financial aid workshops, and enjoy a fun activity in Chattanooga. Meals and accommodations (up to two nights) provided. Details: southern.edu/visit.
SALT Evangelism Training – July 21-28. The Summer SALT program covers the basics of personal and public evangelism, the evangelism cycle, and tools for outreach in your local church and community. Designed for busy people looking for intense evangelism training. Details: southern.edu/salt.