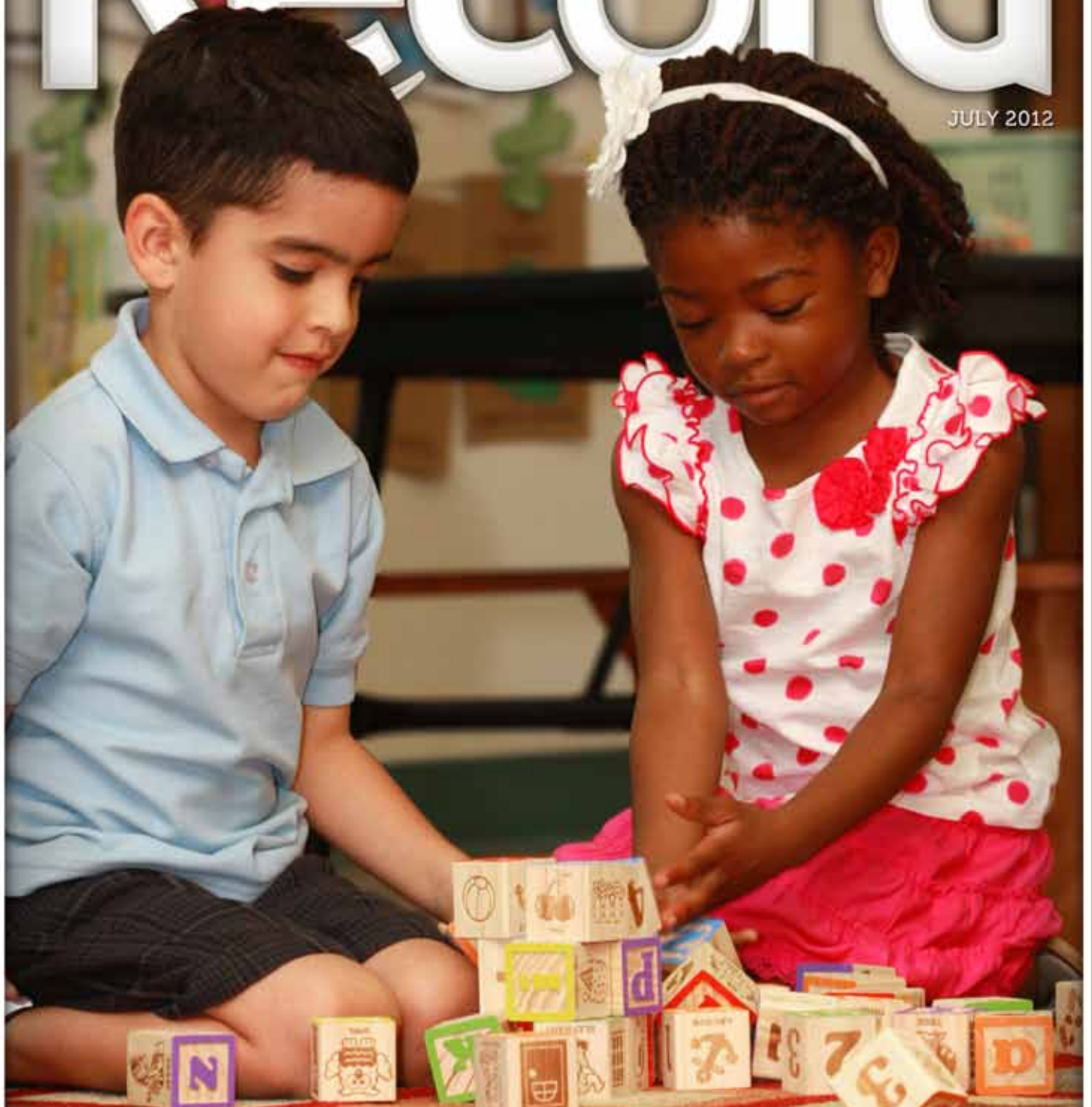


SOUTHWESTERN UNION

# Record

JULY 2012



## Adventist Education

BUILDING ON A SOLID FOUNDATION



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**ADVENTIST EDUCATION DOESN'T COST—IT PAYS!**



**PRE-K: IT'S NOT JUST CHILD'S PLAY!**



**EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AWARDS—P. 14**



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**On the Cover**

Adventist education focuses on the whole person—encompassing spiritual, mental, and physical development. Building upon the solid foundation that begins in the home and continues through the school years, the goal of Adventist education is to provide children with an environment of educational excellence that will enable them to know and live the principles taught by Scripture, to experience a vital relationship with Jesus Christ, and be well-prepared academically for a life of service. Pictured on the cover are Luis Enrique Iguaran and Keziah Tarusenga, who are just beginning their educational journey. Turn the pages of this special issue on Pre-K through 12th-grade education to discover what an Adventist education can do, not only for them, but for your children, too! [Photo by Eva Diana Iguaran]

# Point of View»

BY LARRY MOORE » SOUTHWESTERN UNION CONFERENCE PRESIDENT



## I Didn't Want to Go—But I'm Glad I Did!

**When my family and I joined the Adventist Church in 1960,** I was enrolled in public school and was happy with my circle of friends there. Then one of the elders from my new church came to visit my parents and suggested that perhaps I should go to the church school. I did not want to hear that, since the Adventist school was across town and the building was old and my public school friends were not there. I made my dislike known.

But the wise elder suggested that since the church school started a week before the public school, I could just try it out, and if I didn't like it, I could return to public school. I knew I wouldn't like it, but reluctantly agreed to go for one week. Was I ever in for a big surprise! When I got to the Adventist school, the students made me feel welcome and accepted me into their circle of friendship. I also found the teachers to be very nice. I actually began to like the place! Needless to say, I chose the church school over the public school—a decision that I am still very thankful for.

I finished San Antonio Junior Academy, went to Keene, finished college at Southwestern and from there, went on to the Seminary at Andrews University. Today I have the privilege of

servicing on the boards of these fine schools and I am extremely proud of our educational system.

I hope that you will consider Adventist schools as you enroll your students this fall. I don't know what path God has outlined for your children's futures. But I can say without a doubt that His desire is that they receive a Christian education as part of their preparation for life. Based on my own experience, I can tell you with confidence that Adventist education has been a tremendous blessing to me. Oh, by the way, did I mention that I met my wife at San Antonio Junior Academy?

*Larry Moore*





# CREATION Health

BY LYNELL LAMOUNTAIN

## The Freedom to Start Anew

### HOW FREE DO YOU *FEEL*?

Maybe you feel weighed down and held back by decisions you have made or things you have said or done. Do you ever wish that you could leave the mistakes of the past behind and start over fresh? Well—you can, *if* you have the right perspective and take the appropriate action.

It was a cold December evening in 1914. A fire started in the Film building of Thomas Edison’s plant in West Orange, N.J., followed by a violent explosion that reduced 10 buildings to heaps of

smoldering rubble by evening’s end.

As flames spread from building to building, Edison’s 24-year-old son, Charles, was terrified because he feared his father was trapped somewhere inside. When he finally found him, his father was gazing calmly into the fire, his face aglow from the orange flames, and his white hair was blowing in the wind.

“My heart ached for him,” said Charles. “He was 67—no longer a young man—and everything was going up in flames. When he saw me, he shouted, ‘Charles, where’s your mother?’ When I told him I didn’t know, he said, ‘Find

her. Bring her here. She will never see anything like this as long as she lives.”

The loss was estimated between \$5,000,000 and \$7,000,000. Insurance only covered \$2,000,000. Edison’s response? “Although I am over 67 years old, I will start all over again tomorrow.”

The employees were summoned to work the following day. And this is what Edison told them, “There is great value in disaster. All our mistakes are burned up. Thank God we can start anew.”

You and I need not go through a fire for our mistakes and regrets to be burned up so we can start anew. We need only go through a Savior—our Redeemer and Friend, Jesus Christ, whom we can trust fully.

“Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may *receive mercy and find grace* to help us in our time of need,” (Heb. 4:14-16, NIV).

The unlimited grace of Jesus Christ is your pathway to the throne of God, where you find the freedom to start over to live a life that overflows with love, light, and hope. So let us lift our voices with the Psalmist and proclaim, “But as for me, I trust in You, O Lord; I say, ‘You *are* my God,’” (Psalm 31:14, NIV).

You have been set free—so declare your independence! Leave your past behind so you can have a future—a bright future that has been secured for you by Jesus Christ.

*That’s CREATION Health!*

Lynell LaMountain writes from Florida Hospital in Orlando, Fla.

C

Choice

R

Rest

E

Environment

A

Activity

T

Trust

I

Interpersonal

RELATIONSHIPS

O

Outlook

N

Nutrition

[CREATIONhealth.com](http://CREATIONhealth.com)



## Mamá, Quiero ir a KAES

“**M**amá, me encantaría ir a KAES (Keene Adventist Elementary School),” con voz dulce suplicó mi pequeña hija, Hania, de sólo seis años de edad al comienzo de su educación cristiana. Hania hoy en día es una joven adolescente de quince años de edad cursando el décimo grado en la Academia de Chisholm Trail (CTA) en Keene, Texas. Mi nombre es Dalinda Correa y soy la orgullosa mamá de tres hijos, Hania, Jonathan de doce años y Dania de ocho años. En esta época volátil llena de crisis económicas y espirituales lo más importante para mí como madre es la educación de los hijos que Dios me confió. Yo creo en las promesas expuestas en la Biblia y la doctrina Adventista y no tengo duda que la mejor educación posible debe proveerse a nuestros hijos. Veo como Dios me ha bendecido abundantemente con vida, salud y fortaleza. Es un diario reto pero ¡“...todo lo puedo en Cristo que me fortalece,”! Dios me promete a cada momento del día que El está conmigo, que es mi Protector, Salvador y Padre.

Sí, es un sacrificio mantener a los hijos en una educación privada, cristiana y adventista, pero mi Dios eventualmente hará mis recompensas visibles en las vidas de mis hijos y las decisiones que tomen. Necesito que ellos reciban la mejor educación para que cuando sean grandes nunca olviden la doctrina de Jesús. Que si un día se alejan, recuerden que hay una puerta que está todavía

abierta para que puedan regresar a El. No tengo oro ni plata pero sí la determinación de hacer todo lo posible para educarlos, con la ayuda y bendición de Dios. Siempre he pensado que todo lo que yo haga debe ser un ministerio para mi Dios, cuanto más la educación de mis hijos que le pertenecen. Fue la educación que he recibido como feligrés sobre nuestras creencias adventistas la que me motivan a tener mis hijos en un ambiente cristiano para que ellos aprendan a una temprana edad estas verdades y les acompañe el resto de sus vidas. Nuestros principios adventistas prometen fortaleza, esperanza y felicidad para la vida cotidiana y eterna y eso es necesario que mis hijos aprendan, así como los tuyos. La seguridad en un Dios presente, amante y activo en mi vida me da una actitud de servicio. La educación cristiana adventista inspira ese sentido de servicio hacia los demás.

Por medio de otras personas Dios me bendijo y continua ayudándome, El nunca me ha fallado y nunca lo hará porque ¡El cuida de su hijos! En KAES y CTA mis tres hijos han experimentado el tener maestros que toman el tiempo necesario para enseñarles, no sólo una educación académica pero una educación centrada en la vida cristiana. Yo crecí en un hogar católico y no fue hasta que aprendí y me enamoré del mensaje y doctrinas adventistas que descubrí la necesidad de que mis hijos fuesen educados en nuestras escuelas sin importar los sacrificios. Yo quiero que mis hijos se eduquen y permanezcan en la fe, es nuestro deber fundamental como padres de jóvenes y niños. Nuestro deber como cristianos es esparcir el mensaje y nuestras creencias a nuestros familiares primero y luego a nuestros semejantes. Es por esta razón que inste a mí sobrina que viniera desde Belice para estudiar en nuestra Universidad en Keene (Southwestern Adventist University). Ella no sólo encontró una educación superior, pero también encontró al Dios que la creó. Ahora continúa sus estudios y trata de ser un buen ejemplo para su familia.

No temas de cómo Dios proveerá para la educación de tus hijos, son hijos de El antes que tuyos. Que Dios nos bendiga en el transcurso de nuestras vidas y nos prepare espiritualmente para guiar a los hijos que nos encomendó.



La familia Correa, de izquierda: Jonathan, Dania (en frente), Hania, y Dalinda.

Rocío Rodríguez



# Pass it On...

A Monthly Focus on Evangelism in the Southwest

BY CALEB PHILLIPS AND AVERY BOKOVOY

## Praying For You

Some people believe that prayer is the very least you can do for someone, but that is not true. It is the very *most* that you can do. When you pray, you are lifting up your cares to the One who created you, which gives you peace. You are accepting the fact that you are incompetent unless you have God in your life.

On April 9, my eighth-grade class left on our class trip. Our teacher had asked us what we wanted to do for our trip this year. We talked of many things, including Disney World, Epcot Center, Sea World, and other exciting places. After months of thinking and planning, we decided to go on a prayer walk across Route 66 in Oklahoma.

From the beginning of the school year, the fifth-through eighth-grade class at Ardmore Adventist Academy has been going to a section of downtown businesses in Ardmore, Okla., asking if we could pray with the people in the local businesses. We had had a great response from the people. Some of the shop owners even know us by name, and others would greet us with, “Hey, guys! Have you been praying for me?” It has had a great impact on my schoolmates, the people we pray for in the businesses, and me, too.

So there we were, Tuesday morning, standing in the town of Claremore, ready to go. We were energized and excited to pray for the people in the town—but not all of them were as excited as we were! Some of the responses we got when we asked if people would like to pray were: “No, I don’t pray!” and “It’s not politically correct.” Those responses caught me off guard. The idea of not being politically correct reminded me of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. What would have happened if they hadn’t put their faith in God and instead had chosen to be politically correct?

Not until the fourth shop that we came across did we have any success, but when we did, it was a great experience. We came into the shop and there was a lady at a desk in the front waiting to help us. She greeted us and we told her our story about our trip and she became very excited! She called her friend, who was working in the back, by yelling, “Come out



▲ Kimberly Bokovoy, Avery Bokovoy, and Yajaira Hernandez Perez enjoying the prayer walk on Route 66 in downtown Sapulpa.

▼ The entire group from Ardmore Adventist Academy stops and prays with a worker and his daughter at one of the many attractions on Oklahoma’s Route 66.

here! There are people wanting to pray with us!” After a few minutes, another woman came from the back and was ready to pray. They shared prayer requests about their friends and family, and we prayed about each of them. They were so touched, they had been silently crying during our prayers, and afterwards wanted to sign the T-shirts that we had made. Their signatures were to be a reminder to us to continue to pray for them. They had even given us a cross from their store so that we would remember them always.

Our first day was met with many prayer successes as we traveled through the business districts of Sapulpa and Tulsa. By Wednesday, we had ventured on to Bristow, where we took a detour and visited some church members, as well as the academy there. We prayed with the students of the school before heading downtown.

Finally, on Thursday, we found ourselves walking down the streets of Chandler and Stroud. It seemed everyone was ecstatic about our mission and wanted prayer. While in Chandler, the local newspaper chose to write an article about our mission. We could not have expected a better response!

Our trip allowed us the opportunity to do many educational things, as well. We had expected to be a blessing to the people of Oklahoma, but we were also greatly blessed.





# ADVENTIST EDUCATION DOESN'T COST—**IT PAYS!**

**Randy Gilliam, education director, Southwestern Union**

**The longer I live, the more I believe the old axiom, “You get what you pay for.” My wife has been happy for me to finally understand this truth. When it comes to Adventist education, I believe it is definitely worth the investment.**

One of my first responsibilities as the Southwestern Union Conference director of education was to chair the January Education Advisory Council Committee meeting. This committee is comprised of conference superintendents, Southwestern Adventist University representatives, academy principals, junior academy principals, and teachers. As an icebreaker and a way to get acquainted, I asked each person to share their name, current

position, and their most memorable teacher and why this person was so memorable! About 90 minutes later, we had completed the introductions.

I want to share a few of their experiences with you:

“I owe much of the success I enjoy today to Ken Bursey and his vision to lead his students toward better understanding of their world through travel, and understanding God better through

Christian service to the world's poor."—Craig Mattson, principal

"My most memorable teacher was my twelfth-grade Spanish teacher, who encouraged me not to waste my brain. She expressed confidence in my potential. This helped my self-esteem greatly."—Stephen Burton, superintendent

In Mrs. Samuel's classroom: "I learned that discipline in a classroom can be accomplished simply through suggestive implications, or walks to the principal's office. But most of all, learning was fun in that classroom—all year long! You know what? I wanted to be just like Mrs. Samuels!"—Dariel Jordan, principal

"As a freshman in high school, I opted out of music appreciation and took MCC instead. Under the direction of the late "Captain" C.C. Blackburn, as well as Bugger Putnam, I learned discipline and leadership skills, and developed a command voice that has served me well as a teacher and administrator."— John Hopps, associate superintendent

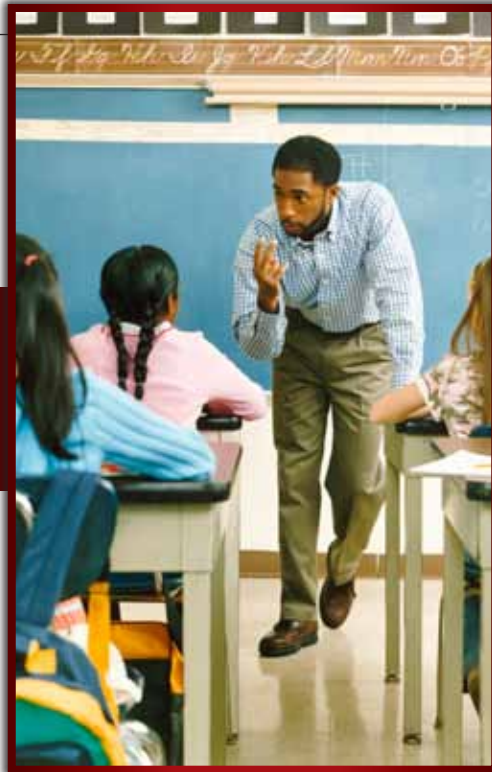
"When I was nine or ten, my mother taught my fourth grade classes for the first half of the day. Like most kids who have experience with Mom in a dual mom/teacher role, I felt at times that it was my particular duty to complain about the unfairness of 'never getting a break' and having her 'watching me all the time.' As I look back on those years from the perspective of an adult, I still find myself in awe of the



patience she had for children. She loved us into learning. I know without a doubt that the love she showed to each of us came directly from the Lord. Today, in my own classroom and school, I can only hope to be a similar conduit of God's love to the children with whom I am entrusted." – Allison Tucker, principal

"Like many other students, I got to know Walter 'Wally' Cox not just as a teacher, but as a





real person—but that was easy, since he always had time to spend with a student. When I went to Pacific Union College, he had a new title—Dr. Cox. He was my teacher, major professor, advisor, and eventually, my boss. He continued his pattern of caring for his students, while challenging them to think for themselves as they solved a variety of problems. Over the past 30 years, Dr. Cox's influence has never been far away, as it has challenged me to reflect some of his philosophies in my career as both an educator and school administrator! It is true, a teacher never knows how

far the ripples of his or her influence will extend.”—Chuck Castle, principal

After listening to the experiences of that group, I concluded that a central theme had developed throughout the testimonials. The primary reason that a teacher was remembered was because of the personal time they had invested. A personal interest was felt, extra time was invested, the teacher went the “extra mile,”—they were God-fearing, caring, and nurturing individuals.

I also gleaned that these committee members were all products of Christian education. One of the reasons that they had chosen or felt called to the teaching ministry was because they had personally felt the results of it in their own lives. To me, this is a great testimony to the value of what Christian education has to offer our young people today.

Research has clearly shown that the more years a child receives an Adventist education, the more likely that he or she will stay active in the Adventist Church. Search Institute reports that for children who have experienced an Adventist education, more than 80 percent remain active in the church, in contrast to a statistic of less than 40 percent for children who have not attended an Adventist school.

A familiar text from Jeremiah asks, “Where is the flock that was given thee, thy beautiful flock?” I am sure that each of us would want to answer this question in the affirmative. That is why I firmly believe that Adventist education does not cost, but indeed, it pays!



# PRE-K: IT'S NOT JUST CHILD'S PLAY!

Carolyn Early, assistant, early childhood education and care, Southwestern Union

Over a century ago it was written, "Too much importance cannot be placed on the early training of children. The lessons that the child learns during the first seven years of life have more to do with forming his character than all he learns in the future years" (*Child Guidance*, p. 193).

Recent research more than supports this statement! Early brain development research has demonstrated that the most rapid period of brain development occurs in the first few years of life, and that the experiences of early childhood have an enduring effect on an individual's future learning capacity.

Did you know in the first three years of life, the number of synaptic connections in a young child's brain doubles to approximately 1,000 trillion, many more than will ultimately be present in the adult brain?

As a baby begins to experience life, connections are made between cells—the more connections there are, the more the brain can do. By age three, they have more than twice as many brain connections as an adult. Wow! What a Creator we have!

We must use these critical years for the developing brain wisely. This is a time for serious education. These little ones are busy reinforcing their brain connections, as well as making new ones. These connections are critical to reinforce learning.

Felton Earls of Harvard Medical School says, "A kind of irreversibility sets in . . . by age four, you have essentially designed a brain that is not going to change very much more." While much learning will still occur after four, much of the brain's infrastructure is now in place.

So when you see children building blocks, or working on a puzzle, it may look like just play to you as we build and sort and march and run, but at this early age, movement is learning! In these early years, according to Ashley Montague, "play is synonymous with life. It is second only to being nourished, protected and loved. It is a basic ingredient of physical, intellectual, social, and emotional growth." Providing infants and young children with specific, enriching experiences can boost their cognitive and behavioral functioning.

Early educational experiences are foundational to character development and learning success. Pre-K programs help children move from the home to a classroom setting using age-appropriate activities. They will learn about Jesus, their Friend and Creator, while in the environment of exploration, observation, listening, manipulating





materials, and many more activities to help with brain development.

The Southwestern Union Office of Education is ready with a start-up package to help any church interested in developing an Early Childhood Education and Care program that can help to feed students into your school, or just be an outreach to young parents



in your community.

It has been my privilege to visit many of our Pre-K classrooms this past school year, and I have witnessed firsthand our teachers guiding precious little ones in these character building ways. The spiritual seed needs to be planted early so it is ready to grow. We can be proud of the work being done in our schools here in the Southwestern Union for early childhood.

“Children are a gift from God, they are His reward” (Ps. 127:3, TLB).

## MAYERS RECEIVES EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AWARD

**F**or the second year in a row, the Southwestern Union Office of Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) has recognized an outstanding teacher working with our little ones ages birth through four years. These are the most critical years for brain development, so a godly teacher is most important.

On May 26, 2012, at the Dallas City Temple church, Lucretia Mayers was recognized by the Union Office of Education with a plaque and flowers for her work at Southwest Junior Academy as Pre-K/Kindergarten teacher. She currently holds a teaching certificate from NAD, and has a Texas state teaching license. Earning and maintaining certification is one indicator of being a professional educator. We are truly blessed to have such quality teachers in our union. “All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children” (Isa. 54:13).



Carolyn Early, Southwestern Union early childhood education and care assistant, presents Lucretia Mayers with an award for her work at Southwest Junior Academy as Pre-K/Kindergarten teacher.

# 2012: THE YEAR OF ADVENTIST EDUCATION

**Mike Furr, associate education director, Southwestern Union**

**T**he North American Division has designated 2012 as the Year of Adventist Education. While we have always believed in the importance of Adventist education, we want to put special emphasis on it during 2012, and raise the awareness of the vital role that Adventist education plays in the work of the church. Probably the best place for the evangelism of our children is in the Adventist school.

More than 6,000 of our teachers and administrators from across North America, and some from outside North America, as well, will be attending a major event that is part of this special year—the NAD National Convention for teachers. The convention, themed “Moving Hearts and Minds Upward,” will be held in Nashville, Tenn., August 5-8, 2012.

Teachers will be able to choose from more than 450 breakout sessions to help them with their professional development. An exhibit hall will be available for participants to see what products and services are available for teachers and students.

The convention’s opening session speaker will be Carlton Byrd, senior pastor of Oakwood University and speaker/director of *Breath of Life* television. Morning devotionals will be given by Dwight Nelson, senior pastor at Andrews University, and the closing dedication service will be presented by Dan Jackson, president of the North American Division.

Another noted speaker at the convention will be Todd Whitaker, professor of educational leadership at Indiana University and author of several books. Alan November, an educator and educational consultant, will give a presentation on technology and learning, and Ken Davis, a Christian comedian, will entertain the group at a special meeting.

The NAD Education Department states that, as teachers, “we gather to share, to learn, to deepen, and broaden an understanding and appreciation of our calling. Young people have been entrusted to us by parents and by God for an education of heart and mind that extends upward, beyond the boundaries of book learning. It’s our privilege and responsibility to fulfill that trust with excellence in every area.”

Not only in this special year of Adventist education, but always keep our teachers in your prayers in order that God will give them the wisdom and patience that they need to uplift Jesus before our students. Stop by sometime after school and pray with a teacher at your school. Let them know that you have them on your prayer list. Let them know that they are a valued part of your church and community.



Doug Walker and Eunice Warfield, both former Southwestern Union education directors, give a presentation at the last North American Division National Convention for teachers in 2007.

# RECOGNIZING EXCELLENCE

## Announcing the Recipients of the 2012 Southwestern Union Excellence in Teaching Award

Each year, the Southwestern Union recognizes excellence among its teaching staff. This is accomplished at both the elementary and secondary levels. Nominations are submitted by conference superintendents of schools (elementary) and academy principals (secondary) for those worthy of this award. The Southwestern Union Conference K-12 Board of Education is responsible for the final approval of the recipients.

Ellen G. White states, in reference to teaching, that “This work is the nicest, the most difficult, ever committed to human beings. It requires the most delicate tact, the finest susceptibility, a knowledge of human nature, and a heaven-born faith and patience, willing to work and watch and wait. It is a work than which nothing can be more important” (*Education*, p. 292).

Each of the 2012 Excellence in Teaching Award recipients has exemplified excellence in spiritual credibility, academic preparedness, classroom acumen, professional development, and commitment to the values of Adventist education. Each receives a pecuniary award, a plaque, and a certificate honoring their commitment to excellence.

The 2012 Southwestern Union Excellence in Teaching Award recipients are:

**Steve Bradley**, Keene Adventist Elementary School

**Sheila Capobres**, Texarkana Seventh-day Adventist School

**Kara Castillo**, Parkview Adventist School

**Rob Gettys**, Ozark Adventist Academy

**Cindy Read**, Cleburne Adventist Christian School

**Patrick Shepherd**, Chisholm Trail Academy

**Steve Bradley**



**Sheila Capobres**



**Kara Castillo**



**Rob Gettys**



**Cindy Read**



**Patrick Shepherd**



## THE NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

# ADVENTIST SCHOOLS IN THE SOUTHWEST

## ARKANSAS-LOUISIANA CONFERENCE

7025 Greenwood Rd., Shreveport, LA 71119 | 318.631.6240

<b>Baton Rouge Adventist Academy</b>	4363 Jones Creek Rd., Baton Rouge, LA 70817
<b>Beacon Hill Adventist School</b>	1446 Red Ridge Rd., DeQueen, AR 71832
<b>Bentonville Adventist School</b>	P.O. Box 298, Bentonville, AR 72712
<b>Colquitt Christian Academy</b>	3233 Colquitt Rd., Shreveport, LA 71118
<b>Ewing Adventist Junior Academy</b>	709 Adventist Church Rd., Bonnerdale, AR 71933
<b>Greater New Orleans Christian Academy</b>	5220 Irving St., Metairie, LA 70006
<b>Harrison Adventist School</b>	4877 Hwy. 392 West, Harrison, AR 72601
<b>Hot Springs Adventist School</b>	401 Weston Rd., Hot Springs, AR 71913
<b>Little Rock Adventist Academy</b>	8708 Rodney Parham, Little Rock, AR 72205
<b>Ozark Adventist Academy</b>	20997 Dawn Hill East Rd., Gentry, AR 72734
<b>Ozark Adventist Elementary School</b>	21150 Dawn Hill East Rd., Gentry, AR 72734
<b>Springdale Adventist School</b>	4001 Oaklawn, Springdale, AR 72762
<b>Texarkana Adventist School</b>	3100 Pleasant Grove Rd., Texarkana, TX 75503

## OKLAHOMA CONFERENCE

4735 NW 63rd Street, Oklahoma City, OK 73132-6802 | 405.721.6110

<b>Ardmore Adventist Academy</b>	154 Beavers Academy Rd., Ardmore, OK 73401
<b>Bristow Adventist School</b>	P.O. Box 1074, Bristow, OK 74010
<b>Ketchum Junior Academy</b>	35369 S. Hwy 82, Vinita, OK 74301
<b>Parkview Adventist Academy</b>	4201 Martin Luther King, Oklahoma City, OK 73111
<b>Pioneer Adventist Christian School</b>	P.O. Box 1245, Guymon, OK 73942
<b>Tulsa Adventist Academy</b>	900 S. New Haven, Tulsa, OK 74112
<b>West Siloam Springs Adventist School</b>	P.O. Box 369, Siloam Springs, AR 72761

## SOUTHWEST REGION CONFERENCE

2215 Lanark Avenue, Dallas, TX 75203 | 214.943.4491

<b>Applegate Adventist Junior Academy</b>	P.O. Box 729, Round Rock, TX 78680
<b>Berean Adventist School</b>	5100 Osborne St., Baton Rouge, LA 70805
<b>Bethel Adventist School</b>	P.O. Box 660, Texarkana, TX 75501
<b>Emmanuel Adventist School</b>	702 N. Cherry St., Hammond, LA 70401
<b>Excel Adventist Academy</b>	P.O. Box 2240, Missouri City, TX 77459
<b>Martin Luther King</b>	4295 Prescott Ct., Baton Rouge, LA 70805
<b>New Life Christian Academy</b>	P.O. Box 1, Marion, AR 72364
<b>New Orleans Adventist Academy</b>	4500 Gawain Drive, New Orleans, LA 70127
<b>Shiloh Adventist School</b>	2400 S. Maple St., Little Rock, AR 72204
<b>Smyrna Adventist School</b>	P.O. Box 6408, Alexandria, LA 71301
<b>Southwest Adventist Junior Academy</b>	1600 Bonnie View Rd., Dallas, TX 75203

The Seventh-day Adventist Church, in all of its church schools, admits students of any race to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at its schools, and makes no discrimination on the basis of race, color, ethnic background, country of origin, or gender in the administration of education policies, applications for admission, scholarship or loan programs, and extracurricular programs.

A complete list of all academies and elementary/junior academies is included on this page.

## TEXAS CONFERENCE

1211 Highway 67 West, Alvarado, TX 76009 | 817.790.2255

<b>Adventist Christian Academy of Texas</b>	3601 S Loop 336 E, Conroe, TX 77301
<b>Austin Adventist Junior Academy</b>	P.O. Box 340370, Austin TX 78734
<b>Brazos Valley Adventist School</b>	1350 Earl Rudder Fwy. S, College Station, TX 77840
<b>Burleson Adventist School</b>	1635 Fox Lane, Burleson, TX 76028
<b>Burton Adventist Academy</b>	4611 Kelly-Elliott Rd., Arlington, TX 76017
<b>Burton Adventist Elementary School</b>	4611 Kelly-Elliott Rd., Arlington, TX 76017
<b>Chisholm Trail Academy</b>	P.O. Box 717, Keene, TX 76059
<b>Cleburne Adventist Christian School</b>	111 Meadowview Drive, Cleburne, TX 76031
<b>Coastal Bend Adventist Junior Academy</b>	6645 Downing St., Corpus Christi, TX 78414
<b>Cypress Bend Adventist School</b>	2997 FM 728, Jefferson, TX 75657
<b>Dallas Adventist Junior Academy</b>	4025 N. Central Expressway, Dallas, TX 75204
<b>DeSoto Adventist Christian School</b>	P.O. Box 4682, Cedar Hill, TX 75106
<b>Ft. Worth Adventist Junior Academy</b>	3040 Sycamore School Rd., Ft. Worth, TX 76133
<b>Garland Christian Adventist School</b>	1702 E. Centerville Rd., Garland, TX 75041
<b>Gulfhaven Adventist School</b>	10716 Sabo Rd., Houston, TX 77089
<b>Harlingen Adventist Elementary School</b>	P.O. Box 532785, Harlingen, TX 78553
<b>Hill Country Adventist Christian School</b>	611 Harper Rd., Kerrville, TX 78028
<b>Joshua Adventist Multi-Grade School</b>	P.O. Box 329, Joshua, TX 76058
<b>Katy Adventist Christian School</b>	1913 East Avenue, Katy, TX 77493
<b>Keene Adventist Elementary</b>	302 Pecan, Keene, TX 76059
<b>Killeen Adventist Junior Academy</b>	3412 Lake Rd., Killeen, TX 76543
<b>Maranatha Adventist School</b>	2526 Goliad Rd., San Antonio, TX 78223
<b>Knowledge Seekers Christian School</b>	1471 W. Corporate Dr., Lewisville, TX 75067
<b>New Creation Christian School</b>	800 W. Hwy 6, Waco, TX 76712
<b>North Dallas Adventist Academy</b>	302 Centennial Blvd., Richardson, TX 75081
<b>Pineywoods Adventist Christian School</b>	4629 FM 1638, Nacogdoches, TX 75964
<b>San Marcos Adventist Junior Academy</b>	P.O. Box 801, San Marcos, TX 78667
<b>Scenic Hills Adventist School</b>	11223 Bandera Hwy, San Antonio, TX 78250
<b>South Texas Christian Academy</b>	7001 N. Ware Rd., McAllen, TX 78504
<b>The Oaks Christian Academy</b>	11903 C Tanner Rd., Houston, TX 77041
<b>The Path Christian Academy</b>	4301 Kelly Ln., Pflugerville, TX 78660
<b>Triangle Adventist School</b>	P.O. Drawer H, Groves, TX 77619
<b>Tyler Adventist School</b>	2931 South S.E. Loop 323, Tyler, TX 75701
<b>Valley Grande Adventist Academy</b>	1000 South Bridge St., Weslaco, TX 78596

## TEXICO CONFERENCE

P.O. Box 1366, Corrales, NM 87048 | 800.749.7851

<b>Crestview Christian Academy</b>	6000 Ouray NW, Albuquerque, NM 87120
<b>El Paso Adventist Junior Academy</b>	3510 George Dieter Dr., El Paso, TX 79936
<b>Lubbock Junior Academy</b>	5302 Elgin Ave., Lubbock, TX 79413
<b>Sandia View Academy</b>	65 Sandia View Lane, Corrales, NM 87048
<b>Sandia View Elementary School</b>	24 Academy Dr., Corrales, NM 87048

# The Essentials of Salvation With Basic Curriculum



ARKANSAS-LOUISIANA CONFERENCE

Several weeks ago, I had the privilege of visiting Camp Yorktown Bay, where Outdoor School was in full swing. About 125 young people from grades five through 10 were involved in various learning events, including working on a canoeing honor, creating “junk” art, and learning survival skills and appropriate first responder techniques. Beaming faces, intense concentration, and occasional bursts of laughter easily told the story of just how much enjoyment was being experienced by these young people.

Classroom learning is important, but to have an opportunity to enjoy the larger classroom of nature is a missing component for far too many elementary age children. I’m thankful for and proud of the 50 or so staff under the direction of Stephen

Burton, education superintendent, who committed a week of their time to engage with our youth during Outdoor School. They helped our students focus on elements of nature and life, and experience the wonders of God’s universe that could never be discovered in a textbook. Add to this experience spiritual glue that cemented the various components of the week’s experience into a laboratory of critical life decision making. The results were truly gratifying.

At the end of the week, when the students were challenged to make a decision for Jesus, 24 students indicated a desire for baptism, and 21 students made a decision to recommit their lives to Jesus. This is the end goal of true education. We have been reminded that, “In the highest sense,

the work of education and the work of redemption are one,” (*Education*, p. 30). When our youth have the opportunity to be immersed in a process of education that combines the essentials of salvation with basic curriculum, we have provided for them the absolute best opportunity that can be given, so they can make positive decisions for the future and for eternity.

I’m thankful for Adventist education, not just because it has been recognized for its academic superiority, but because it is the only educational program in the world that, as a part of its curriculum, includes the essentials of the plan of redemption and seeks to bring students into a relationship with their Creator and Savior.

**Stephen Orian**, president

## Learning to “Forgive to Live”

**DERIDDER, LA.** » Who knew that forgiveness is a prescription for health, happiness, and a longer, more productive life? During February and March, the Deridder church held a “Forgive to Live” seminar with Sorin Munteanu, pastor, assisted by the church’s head elder, Thomas Griffin. For three Sabbath afternoons, following a church potluck, the church studied the “10 Principles of Forgiveness,” based on the work of Dick Tibbits in his book, *Forgive to Live*.

One member shared two aspects of forgiveness that he learned. “Not forgiving someone can cost you your health and even your life,” said William Miller. “Also, we give others far too much control over our lives when we refuse to forgive.”

The seminar touched on many different situations, and was geared toward the problems that we face as a church. Sometimes we are so indifferent about the lives of our church family that we take offence or distance ourselves

without even understanding why.

“Communication is the key to understanding each other,” assures Shirley Arville.

The church learned that the poison of bitterness will eat at your mind and body until something gives way, and that we must come to Jesus with our past painful encounters and learn to accept His unfailing love and to leave the past with Him. As He fills you with His healing presence and love, you become a reservoir of love, overflowing into the lives of other people.

**Nell Miller**



**Far left:** Thomas Griffin, head elder, discusses what it means to “Forgive to Live.”

**◀** Sorin Munteanu, pastor, leading part of the seminar.



# Pastors' Wives Share Him in the Philippines

**LIPA, PHILIPPINES** » Unforgettable! Amazing! That was my experience participating in the Southwestern Union's Share Him evangelism trip for pastors' wives to Lipa, Philippines this past April. There were more than 20 ladies on our team, with about seven from the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference.

The dedication of the Filipino lay people in the San Bartolome church was remarkable. On the first night, we had a card call

and health lectures from a dentist or other health professional every night. The series was timed to celebrate the opening of their new church building the last Friday night of the meetings; there were two paid Bible workers holding Bible studies in the homes of the people most days; and members visited in many homes most days. The most important thing they did was to love the people.

During the meetings, R.J., a teenager,

started attending, but ended up leaving during one of the meetings. I was sad to see him leave and thought we had lost him. I judged too quickly—on the last Sabbath, he returned. I told my translator, who was also a pastor's wife, to pray specifically for him during our meetings. What an answer to prayer it was to see R.J. baptized that last Sabbath afternoon! We discovered that he had been coming to the meetings, but had been listening from outside the building.

On our last Sabbath there, God blessed the church with 325 new souls for Christ from all the meetings around Lipa.

I challenge you to go and share Him wherever He leads you. It will be an unforgettable experience!

**Becky House**



◀ Becky House (center) with many of the children that she met while in the Philippines.

▼ Becky House (center) made lots of new friends during an evangelistic trip to the Philippines.

and 50 people indicated they wanted to accept Christ. I was so excited about that number, as I was praying specifically for 50 baptisms in my meetings. The head elder, who was so humble and dedicated, said, "Maybe God wants to double it, and have 100 baptisms." The church was one of the most on-fire churches I have experienced, even after being on the road with my husband with Amazing Facts evangelism for two years.

Here is a list of some of the wonderful things the San Bartolome church did to encourage participation: Vacation Bible School every night; an evaluation/planning meeting every night; food for guests every night; beautiful music every night;



## VBS Workshop Prepares Church Leaders

SHREVEPORT, LA. » In late March, the Southwestern Union's children's ministry leaders gathered in the Joshua church for a "working" Vacation Bible School workshop. The gym was set up with cabanas for the various stations of the VBS program. Each person in attendance was given a nametag with an Israelite tribe name on it, such as Benjamin, Joseph, or Dan. Each person stayed with their tribe as it moved from place to place to view a demonstration at each station during the program.

The leaders of each station were dressed in Bible costumes. They were well trained, and gave valuable information for each of the unique parts of the VBS program, including music, crafts, and Daniel's Adventure station, where witnesses viewed Don Fortner as Daniel in the lion's den. There was a neat lion's den of cardboard and brick-lined paper, stocked with ferocious-looking lions!

Participants were taught games to play that correlate to the "Daniel in Babylon" theme, and were told about an impressive mission project for the kids to contribute to called Operation Kid-to-Kid. The goal of the mission project is to sponsor mosquito nets for children in Mali, where bites from mosquitoes spread malaria.

There were approximately 100 people in attendance from our union. Three attended from the Shreveport First church and, because they were the first from the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference to register, they received a free VBS kit, valued at \$125.

Joyce Fortner, a teacher at the Little Rock church school and the Arkansas-Louisiana children's ministry director, and her staff were the cooks for the day, serving an authentic Babylonian meal of barley and mushroom soup, some flatbread and other breads, fig cookies, and a simple cucumber and tomato salad.

While participants ate, Fortner told them some interesting facts about the food and culture of the Babylonians during the time of Daniel, and gave them Web sites to find more information about the program and about ancient Babylon. By the time the program ended, participants felt armed and prepared to plan and execute their program.

**Kathy Farmer**



Participants of the VBS workshop, which took place in the Joshua church's gym, received free VBS kits for being first to sign up for the workshop.

### ARK/LA

#### Adventist Community Services

#### Disaster Response Training



#### CLASSES

- Introduction to Disaster Preparedness
- Donations Operations
- Leadership
- Warehouse Management

If you are interested in volunteering your help during a disaster, we invite you to join us at Camp Yorktown Bay for training.

Friday evening to Sunday  
August 10-12, 2012

Instructors: Joe Watts—North American Division Disaster Response Director; Sherry Watts—ACS Resource Depot Manager; Lavidia Whitson— ArkLA Disaster Response Coordinator

Cost: Early Bird Registration  
\$135.00  
After August 10, 2012  
\$150.00

Please note that registration includes class materials, meals and lodging.

This event is sponsored by **Adventist Community Services**. For more information, please contact:

**Lavidia Whitson** Adventist Community Services/Disaster Response Director  
(501) 317-0997  
lbwhitson@yahoo.com

or  
**Sylvia Downs** Adventist Community Service/  
Disaster Response Secretary  
(318) 631-6240  
[sdowns@arklac.org](mailto:sdowns@arklac.org)

# Outdoor School at Camp Yorktown Bay

**HOT SPRINGS, ARK. »** Outdoor School at Camp Yorktown Bay is one of those special experiences that are etched in the memory of our school kids forever. David Farmer, pastor of the Shreveport First church, challenged the kids each evening to “Say no to drugs and yes to Jesus!” Jonathan Belew, pastor of the Mountain Home church, shared several unforgettable personal experiences each morning for worship. Two dozen children said they would like to study the Bible to prepare for baptism. Another 21 said that they wanted to recommit

their lives to Jesus.

The children enjoyed a variety of activities. Morning field study classes included making sock puppets, studying insects, learning about first aid, exploring nature, identifying clouds, discovering the science of popcorn, getting acquainted with snakes, becoming water detectives, and using garbage to create masterpieces of art. Recess provided opportunities to swim, canoe, kayak, shop at the camp store, enjoy a snow cone, or hang out with friends. Honor classes included canoeing, archery, fire building and

camp cookery, geocaching, hiking, painting, water skiing, wake-boarding, reptiles, and amphibians.

Eighth-graders experienced survival camp on a remote island. They participated in a mock plane crash, and learned how to use what was available to care for the needs of the injured. Other activities included team-building activities, an excursion to Crystal Island, and special time with Jesus.

**Stephen Burton**, Arkansas-Louisiana education superintendent



◀ Trey Gettys learning a skill with instructor Monte Fisher.

Far left: From left: Julio Ruiz, Austin Bush, and teacher Rusty Litton studying nature.

# Minden Church Hosts Evangelistic Series

**MINDEN, ARK. »** In April, following several months of preparation work—health expos, cooking classes, a depression recovery program, canvassing, and Bible studies—the Minden church hosted an evangelistic series, called Discovering Bible Answers.

The participants appreciated the refreshingly clear approach of Anthony Montague, a senior religion and Bible studies major from Ouachita Hills College, as he presented Bible truths each evening. After the series, two individuals expressed a desire to be baptized.

**Kathryn Irizarry**



Anthony Montague preaching at the Minden church's evangelistic series.



The Minden church hosted an evangelistic series in April.

# Guardians of "The Gift"



OKLAHOMA CONFERENCE

They enter through the school doors as young, sacred treasures, gifts from God, of moms and dads. Twelve years later, these "gifts" walk out through the doors as educated young adults. What takes place in those 12 years has prepared a path for their future. In guarding "the gift," the doors play a vital role in the cosmic life and death struggle. The doors become portals, which lead to the end point of the conflict.

Some guardians buy into the idea that bigger and grander "portals" lead to the best in care. Advantages such as bigger

buildings, bigger classrooms, bigger labs, bigger fine arts programs and more technology all lead to greater acceptance by society.

Other guardians actually study the manual, and discover it is not the *size* of the building—it's about the *love* within the building. It's not bigger classrooms—it's the role model of the instructor guardian. It's not the bigger labs, it's about learning that the "gifts" are created in the image of their Creator. It's not the fine arts program, it's about learning ways to offer praise to their Creator.

When our Creator returns, He will ask us for our "gifts." Some will say that their "gifts" have fought their way to the top of the corporate ladder. Some will say their "gifts" have made great discoveries in science. Some will say their "gifts" have filled great auditoriums with adoring fans of their genius music abilities. But again the question will be asked, "Where are My gifts?"

**Jack Francisco**, education superintendent

## Ardmore Handbell Choir Delights Church

**ARDMORE** » The Ardmore church handbell choir, under the direction of Sharla Francisco Braun, recently delighted the church with several wonderful musical selections. The group, which consists of young adults and older, practice in the newly rebuilt Ardmore Adventist Academy, and the church members appreciate their dedication.

**Mavis Shockey**



Shockey Photography



Shockey Photography

▲ The Ardmore church's handbell choir, under the direction of Sharla Francisco Braun, perform musical selections for the Ardmore church.

◀ From left: Melissa Loewen, Caleb Phillips, Celeah Shockey, Sharla Braun, Dee Ann Roach, Kevin Brown, Brock Mayer, Tianna Shockey, and Brian Shockey.

# Oklahoma Conference Music Festival

**TULSA »** Musicians from all across the state joined together on Sunday, March 4, 2012 at Tulsa's Adventist Fellowship church to perform songs of worship and praise under the direction of clinicians Leandro Bizama, music director at Ozark Adventist Academy, and Claire Day, music director at Oklahoma Academy.

Immeasurable gratitude is extended to these two individuals for stepping in to co-direct the festival and to the participating schools and their sponsors. Participating schools included Bristow Adventist School, Pioneer Adventist Christian School, Ketchum Adventist Academy, Parkview Ad-

ventist Academy, Tulsa Adventist Academy, and West Siloam Springs Adventist School, all of which put forth a collaborative endeavor to bless the festival's attendees with beautiful music.

The festival commenced with individual school selections, and concluded with performances given by the combined academy choir, elementary choir, and mass choir. Countless hours of practice resulted in outstanding performances with song selections incorporating a string ensemble, a bell choir, and flute accompaniment along with guitar and piano accompaniment.

A production such as this could not take place without a venue capable of accommodating a large number of guests that also offers the proper

acoustics to compliment the music, so the help of the Tulsa church's senior pastor, Stephen Carlile, was recruited, along with the church's *amazing* staff. A small army of dedicated members, including James Snyder, Brit Whittington, Ed Sweezy, Deborah Rivera, and many others assisted with stage set-up, sound system, and a lovely reception that followed the program.

May we never underestimate the power of song! "The history of the songs of the Bible is full of suggestion as to the uses and benefits of music and song. Music is often perverted to serve purposes of evil, and it thus becomes one of the most alluring agencies of temptation. But, rightly employed, it is a precious gift of God, designed to uplift the thoughts to high and noble themes, to inspire and elevate the soul" (*Education*, p. 167).

Carol Thomas



◀ Music festival participants showed their talents by performing on a variety of musical instruments, such as the guitar, flute, and piano.

▼ Leandro Bizama leads the music festival choir.



# The Little School That Could

**GUYMON** » One Sabbath a few years ago, a young woman visited the Guymon church. She told the church members that she was from Myanmar (formerly Burma), and her arrival signaled a new era for the church. She was from the Zomi tribe from Chin State in Myanmar (not to be confused with the Karen, with whom the Adventist missionary Eric B. Hare worked). She told the church about how the Myanmar government has had a concentrated effort to abolish Christianity among its people, how the government interferes with the practice of the faith, and how Christians have experienced varying degrees of persecution for not complying with compulsory military service.

For people in the United States to better understand the plight of the Myanmar people, one must first grasp the situations of the Christians there.

The government has proclaimed that there shall be no home where the Christian religion is practiced. Residents from Rangoon have stated that, "If you took 100 people in Myanmar and lined them up, about 85 of them would be suffering severely." Many Christians have been displaced or murdered. There are very few from the Karen tribe who cannot tell of a loved one or relative that has been displaced, used for slave labor, mistreated, raped, or murdered by the Myanmar military. Because of this terrible persecution, some risk their lives to

escape to the United States.

Many refugees leave their families behind and travel through jungles and cross dangerous borders to reach neighboring countries. Once there, they try to make their way to the U.S. Aid organizations within the U.S. then help them send for their families legally. Typically, once a refugee enters the U.S., they are sent to find work in metropolitan areas in processing plants and factories, but as the Myanmar community continues to grow in Guymon, many are coming directly to Oklahoma instead. Many of these refugees are still waiting to be reunited with their families.

As if all this growth weren't enough excitement for a small town church, last year our church members tossed around the idea of starting an Adventist school for the many children at church, all of whom were enrolled in public schools. In reality, it was a long shot. The church doesn't have a contingency for strong financial contributors to help support such a large undertaking. However, the request for a school went out

and individual members throughout the state provided support through school supplies (including textbooks, backpacks, and desks), school uniforms, and financial contributions. Help also came from retired missionaries in Keene, Tex., who rallied support from their Sabbath School class. Another source of help came from the Adventist school in Bristow, Okla., where students sold okra as a fundraiser, and gave the proceeds to the Guymon church school. The outpouring of support from various areas has been nothing short of amazing.

With the support of donors, conference assistance, and the Lord's blessing, Pioneer Adventist Christian School opened in August of 2011. The school is blessed currently with 10 students. Their American teacher has international teaching experience and has been a godsend to the school. Although there is great potential for future enrollment at the school, the financial prospect is uncertain. While there are enough students to have a K-10 school, the lack of finances prevents the hiring of an additional teacher

or an aide to offer these additional grade levels.

The church itself, which had less than 20-25 people on an average Sabbath before the project, now has up to 90 people attending each Sabbath—a huge jump from just two years ago! As for the future of the school, there are now about 40 children under the age of 16 in the church, with more expected to arrive in the next few months.

The church and school is grateful to those who have supported the project, and

asks that members keep the school in their prayers as it endeavors not only to survive, but to thrive in the Oklahoma panhandle. If you are interested in helping in some way with this school project, please contact the Oklahoma Education Superintendent, Jack Francisco, at [pastorjackf@yahoo.com](mailto:pastorjackf@yahoo.com), or 405.721.6110, ext. 108.

**Seanna Randall**



Students at the new Pioneer Adventist Christian School in Guymon.



to the Oklahoma Conference, and the response was unbelievable.

After many Guymon church members made financial pledges, an appeal was made at the Oklahoma camp meeting on behalf of the school project. Various churches, schools,

# Oklahoma Campmeeting 2012

OKLAHOMA CONFERENCE

Please join us for a spectacular time of spiritual blessings!

**Keynote speakers:**

July 13 and 14 — Randy Roberts, senior pastor  
Loma Linda University church

July 19-21 — Abraham Jules, senior pastor  
Mt. Vernon church

For a complete schedule and list of speakers, visit  
[www.oklahomasda.org](http://www.oklahomasda.org) and click on “Camp Meeting”

**Concert:** Saturday, July 14, 4:00 p.m.

Experience a concert to remember, featuring 16-year-old,  
world-renowned violinist, Miclén Lai Pang.

**WHEN:** July 13 -21, 2012

**WHERE:** Wewoka Woods Adventist Center  
36242 Oklahoma 59, Wewoka, Okla.

**CONTACT:** 405.721.6110 or 405.257.5404  
[www.oklahomasda.org](http://www.oklahomasda.org)



*Abraham Jules*



*Randy Roberts*

SPONSORED BY THE OKLAHOMA CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

# Save The Children



SOUTHWEST REGION CONFERENCE

Times are changing so fast that it can make your head seem to spin. It doesn't matter how much technology, fads, and fashions change; however, some things remain the same or just get worse.

The scriptures speak of times just before the Lord Jesus returns to the earth. "For then there will be great tribulation ... and unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened" (Matt. 24:21-22, NKJV). Couched in any warning is an opportunity and a need to prepare for the worst-case scenario.

This begs the question, who among us are the most vulnerable for deception and

harm today? Without question, it is our children. A child is extremely impressionable during their formative years of schooling. This brings us to the value that Jesus placed on children by saying, "Whoever causes one of these little ones who believes in Me to sin would better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depths of the sea" (Matt. 18:6, NKJV).

This warning indicates that the education system in which we choose to place our children carries great weight in forming the character of our children for salvation. Our first duty as parents and guardians is to work in cooperation with God to save the children.

I know that the times in which we are living are economically challenging, but I also know that God never asks us to do anything that He will not enable us for and provide for us the ability to obey.

During these last days of earth's history, everything is going to be a faith venture. Providing a Christian education for our children should be our first priority when comes to faith in God's ability to bless. I challenge every parent, grandparent, pastor, teacher, and church member to seriously seek God in prayer on this matter, and watch what He will do.

**Samuel L. Green**, president

## God's Army of Youth Rightly Trained

**CORSICANA, TEX.** » The Bethel church held its family ministries day program last September. Rawdon Brown, church elder, preached the theme, "God's Army of Youth Rightly Trained." Brown emphasized the importance of our youth's responsibilities and duties as Christians. The church had special guests, participants, and visitors from as far as Los Angeles, as well as people from the surrounding areas.

Children, youth, and young adults were the only participants in the program for the day, with the exception of Brown, who is still young at heart. For Sabbath School, the teachers expounded on the key role that youth play in ministry. The junior youth ushers were newly baptized twins, and soon-to-be Pathfinders, Kyvon and Kynia Franklin. Quayonte Kemp, an eleventh grader who was also recently baptized, gave his personal testimony, and promoted *Message* magazine. Lorraine Stiggers, family ministries director, and Alleta LaGrange, youth director, have teamed up to schedule regular youth day programs.

**Lorraine Stiggers**



▲ From left: Married couples, Desmond and Aletta LaGrange and Kathy and Kendall Shackelford, were participants in the family ministries day programming.

▶ A group of young adults who participated in the program.





# The Shackelfords Stand Up for Christ

**CORSICANA, TEX.** » Kendall Shackelford shared his testimony of God's power, mercy, and grace with the Bethel church. Shackelford was a devoted Sunday School teacher for many years, but decided to investigate questions he had about the Sabbath. He realized something was not right about attending church on the first day of the week when Sabbath was on the seventh day of the week. He wrestled with the questions for some time, especially after the unexpected death of his wife of three years. He carried her photo in his Bible and asked the Lord for strength to make it through his time of grief. His father introduced him to the pastor of the Bethel church, Norman Stiggers, and that was the beginning of a new life.

Shackelford absorbed everything he was taught, read every book by Ellen G. White that he was given, attended services whenever the church door was opened, testified whenever he could, and he prayed. He had made up his mind and fixed his heart on keeping all of God's commandments. He decided to show his commitment to the Lord, and was baptized into the church.

He shared his newfound faith with members and friends of his former church congregation, but they rejected the Sabbath with the exception of one young lady. She, along with her children, attended church with Shackelford on several occasions, but complained about the distance, long serv-

es, and attending both his church on Sabbath and her church, where her relatives were in leadership positions, on Sunday.

Shackelford was excited about his new church, but at the same time felt lonely, discouraged, and puzzled as to why the people he had associated with for many years had refused to accept the truth of the Sabbath from the Word of God. He was encouraged to study, pray, and obey the Lord. Shackelford was reminded that God promises to work everything out for our good.

A postal service worker for more than 13 years, Shackelford encountered a new problem—his employers insisted that he deliver mail on Saturday. When he refused, explaining that he could not work on the

Sabbath, his employers scheduled him to work anyway. When he did not show up for work, he was fired and given three months' pay to give him time to look for other employment. Shackelford had made a vow to the Lord, and was determined to continue trusting in the Lord in spite of the death of his wife, separation from his family and friends, and the loss of his job.

In the midst of it all, the Lord was working it out for his good. Shackelford continued to pray, and became active in the daily prayer line. Prayer changes things, and it did for Shackelford. The Postal Service called him back to work with higher pay! He met a beautiful young lady, Kathy, who loved the Lord and was seeking a closer walk with the Christ. Shackelford introduced her to the Sabbath, which she accepted. She was baptized, and a few months later, they were married. Kathy's three children, twins Kyvon and Kynia, and Quayonte also accepted Christ, and were baptized.

The Shackelfords would like their children to attend Adventist church school, so that they will receive a Christian education. If you would like to sponsor one or all of the children, or have any questions, please contact Lorraine Stiggers, education director, at 469.567.1619 or [drstiggers@hotmail.com](mailto:drstiggers@hotmail.com).

**Lorraine Stiggers**



The Shackelford family declared their commitment to Christ through their recent baptism into the Bethel church.

# Faithfulness Rewarded

SOUTHWEST REGION CONFERENCE

**CORSICANA, TEX. »** Five young ladies who regularly attended the Corsicana Bethel church's "Big Bible Revival" meetings received something for their faithfulness they did not expect—a new hair-do and lunch at Chili's restaurant. At the conclusion of the last week of the meetings, the young ladies were asked if they would like to get their hair styled and go out to lunch, all said yes and were excited. The church's family ministries director, Lorraine Stiggers, founder of the church's "She's A Lady" program, visited the homes of each girl, requesting the parents' permission for the outing.

Permission slips in hand, Stiggers took the girls to the beautician, then to Chili's, and then returned them safely to their homes. The girls were able to choose their own hairstyle and were very pleased with the results. At Chili's, the girls tried the vegetarian black bean burger with a side of broccoli, which was something they all stated they were not used to eating, but they were willing to try. It was a fun surprise for the girls, and an enjoyable time spent in fellowship. Four of the girls are now baptized members of the church, and two of the girls' mothers, who had not even attended the meetings, have been baptized, as well.

Lorraine Stiggers



◀ Tavares has her hair styled as a reward for her faithfulness in attending evangelistic meetings at the Bethel church.

▼ The girls, Tavares, Iesha, Dezarey, Debreccera, and Kendra pose before getting their hair styled. They received this surprise as a reward for their faithfulness in attending evangelistic meetings.



## We Appreciate You

**CORSICANA, TEX. »** The Bethel church recently honored Annie L. Griffin with a check and flowers on Sabbath November 6, 2011 for her commitment and dedication in services as church clerk and assistant treasurer. Griffin has created unique bulletin designs when there were none, and makes sure they are there on Sabbath even in her absences. She prepares meals on her assigned Sabbaths, but also volunteers to prepare the meals for special programs.

Griffin sings, and encourages our youth and members to become active participants in God's program. The church felt it was necessary to take time during the divine worship hour to present flowers to Griffin to let her know that she is an asset to the congregation, which loves and appreciates her.

Lorraine Stiggers



# Women of the Year

**COUSHATTA, LA. »** The Coushatta First church's women's ministries department celebrated its annual women's day program on May 12. Every year, the church uses the Sabbath before mother's day to honor the church's "Women for the Year." Coushatta First member Ellareen Moore presented the sermon, titled "Find Purpose."

This year, the honorees were Bessie Hollaway, Mary Grant, and Sharon Lodge. They were honored for their outstanding work in the community giving Bible studies. Wavylon Smith was also honored for her work in the children's ministries department. Each honoree was presented with a certificate of appreciation from Vickie Thomas, women's ministries leader. Each woman that attended was given a gift, and all participants were presented with yellow ribbons for their lapels.

**Ellareen Moore**



From left: Bessie Hollaway, Wavylon Smith, and Mary Grant were honored for giving Bible studies in the community.

# Health Series Held at Corsicana's Bethel Church

**CORSICANA, TEX. »** Last October and November, Norman Stiggers, pastor of the Bethel church in Corsicana, held a "Big Bible Revival" health series, preaching the Word of God and the health message with power and conviction. Janelle Hart, a registered nutritionist, came from Mississippi to share healthy meal planning, food preparation, nutritional information, and veg-

an meals each Sabbath. Lorraine Stiggers emphasized the value of implementing the eight laws of health in the life for holistic development, disease prevention, and maintaining vitality in the last days. Several individuals were

baptized during this revival because of the Holy Spirit working on the hearts and minds of the people, and because of community outreach, Bible studies, and visitations by Norman Stiggers, Richard Sneed, Cyrus Stiggers, Elaine Newhouse, and Janelle Hart.



**Lorraine Stiggers**

◀ Ieisha Hamilton after baptism.

**Far left:** From left: Ieisha Hamilton, Montray Mathis, and Debreceera Raindle preparing for baptism.



## The Value of Adventist Education

TEXAS CONFERENCE

“These words which I command to you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up” (Deut. 6:6-7, NKJV).

We should not only *believe* in it, but also be *compelled* to support it with everything that we have. Henrietta C. Meyers wrote that “Learning, in Christian education, is not the mere acquisition of ideas, it is the integration of ideas into the personality and character.”

When we contemplate the effect and influence of Adventist education upon the children of our churches, we see a mighty work of character building and value instillation that is not observed in other venues of education. I am often reminded of the comical story about the parents of a certain wayward son, who was a freshman in college. He was miserably irresponsible, a social butterfly who had returned home for the summer with nothing to show for his year at school. His parents sternly informed him, “If you go back to school, you will have to pay your own way!”

So, he worked hard that summer, and consequently was not able to join the family on a vacation to Greece. While in Greece, obviously still smarting from her son’s fail-

ures, the loving mom sent the boy a postcard that read, “Dear Son, today we stood on the mountains where ancient Spartan women sacrificed their defective children. Wish you were here!” Humorous, yet indicative of the struggle parents go through trying to keep their children in line with God’s eternal principles.

Robert Simon, a professor at Hamilton College, recently stated that about 10-20 percent of his students, although they acknowledged the Holocaust, could not bring themselves to accept that the killing of millions of people was wrong. Some students were unwilling to oppose large moral horrors, including human sacrifice, ethnic cleansing and slavery, because countless young people today believe no one has the right to criticize the moral view of another group or culture. Therefore, the moral values and eternal principles that Adventist education strives to instill upon the minds of children before the age of 15 are extremely critical.

Daniel Webster once said, “If we work on marble, it will eventually perish. If we work on brass, time will efface it. But if we work on the minds of children, if we imbue them with heavenly principles, with the fear of God and a love for mankind, we thus engrave on those tablets of flesh, something which time cannot efface, which will last throughout eternity.”

Adventists are called to a higher standard of living, worship, education, and achievement. Notice the words of Ellen White, found in *Christ’s Object Lessons*, “God will only accept those who are determined to aim high. He places every human agent under the obligation to do his/her best. Moral perfection is required of all. We need to understand that imperfection of character is sin. True education is the preparation of the physical, mental and moral powers for the performance of every duty. This is education that will endure unto eternal life” (*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 330).

Preparing young people not only for heaven, but preparing them to have the desire to be in heaven is our mission. There is a story told by Joseph Stowell, president of Moody Bible Institute, about a visit he made to an orphanage for physically challenged children. While walking through the corridors, he noticed that the windows were covered with tiny little handprints. He asked the director what they were all about. The director replied, “The children here love Jesus, and they are so eager for Him to return, that every day they spend time leaning against the windows as they look anxiously into the sky, all the while asking, ‘Will He come today?’”

Carlos J. Craig, Texas Conference president

## Youth Day at Arlington-Southern Worship Center

**ARLINGTON** » The Arlington-Southern Worship Center recently put aside its regular Sabbath service in order to cater to the church’s youth in its first annual Youth Day.

During the service, the Pathfinders and Adventurers were honored with ceremonial bandanas and special messages from their parents. Parents shared with their children the hopes they have for their futures, and expressed how fortunate they felt to have their children in their lives. Parents and members shared with the youth that they are loved and that their futures are destined to be fruitful and great if they continue to follow God’s path.

The event was planned for youth to learn of God’s willingness and faithfulness and how to follow God’s path and will for

their lives. In today’s society, youth are more attracted to watching television, playing video games, and engaging with hip-hop music, but the Arlington-Southern Worship Center wants its youth to know that they have a church community that cares for their well-being, and hopes for them to prosper in God’s blessings. Instead of engaging in the things of the world, the youth were urged to find God’s presence in nature, community, and family.

Youth were ministered to by King David, as portrayed by Shion Branford, who gave insight into the effects of keeping God first and allowing Him to direct your path.

Arlington-Southern plans to engage the



Pathfinders and Adventurers took part in Arlington-Southern’s Youth Day.

youth department in more activities and services dedicated to their needs and to teach them of God’s love for them.

Kateria Baggett

# VGAA Celebrates 75th Alumni Homecoming

**WESLACO** » In March, Valley Grande Adventist Academy celebrated its 75th Alumni Homecoming. The historical event was a blessing for all who attended. Guest speakers included Kevin Wells, pastor of the Arlington First church; Steven Gifford, former president of the Texas Conference; and Steven Mosley, a published author and award-winning producer. Special guests included Larry Moore, president of the Southwestern Union; Carlos Craig, president of the Texas Conference; and Ysis España, Adventist recording artist. Another special guest, Andrew Leonie, former VGAA principal and the founder of the Valley Grande Institute School of Nursing, was inducted into the VGAA Hall of Fame.

For the weekend's Sabbath worship service, some of the alumni participated in the Sylvan Mass Choir, which performed a rendition of "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" under the direction of Joseph Choi. On Saturday afternoon, prior to a guided campus tour, many enjoyed a small concert and sing-along, which showcased the

musical talents of several of the academy's alumni.

Nestled in the heart of the Rio Grande Valley of South Texas, VGAA was founded in 1937 thanks to the vision, financial support, hard work, and relentless perseverance of visionaries such as Mr. and Mrs. C.H. Cotton, Dr. and Mrs. J.L. DeWitt, Dr. and Mrs. H. Westphal, and Dr. and Mrs. E. Reed, among many others. They recognized the need for Adventist education in South Texas, and were determined to fulfill that need.

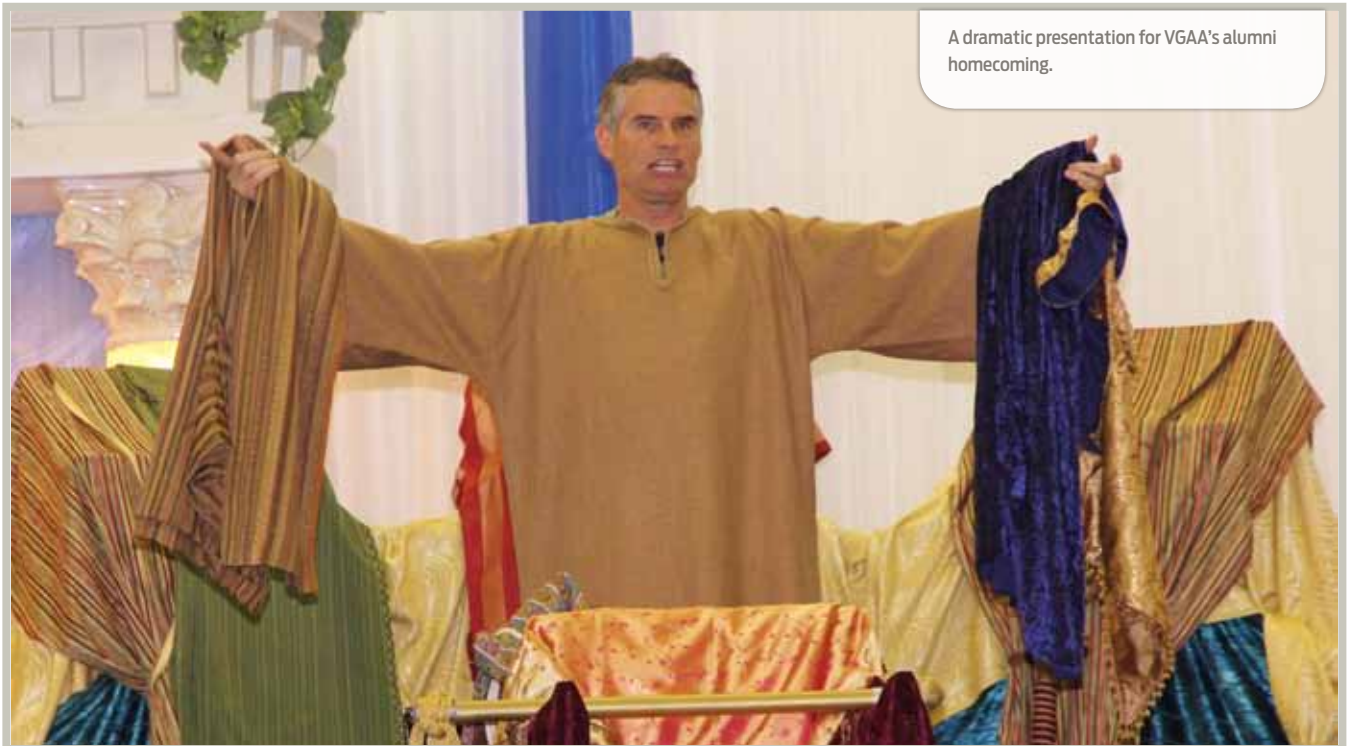
Throughout the years, VGAA has provided a solid Christian education for its students, as well as valuable work experiences for them through the various industries that have been affiliated with the academy. Its sister institution, Valley Grande Manor, has also grown with the academy, and has provided first-rate health care to the elderly population of the Rio Grande Valley for many decades.

For 75 years, the academy has produced more than 1,600 graduates. Its most fa-

mous alum was none other than the U.S. Marine Corps' Corporal Harlan Henry Block, who took part in the famous raising of the U.S. flag over Iwo Jima, Japan, during World War II. It has produced countless other professionals, as well, who have gone on to serve and positively influence their respective communities and churches. Without question, God has used the academy to further His work on earth.

Having seen its fair share of ups and downs, the academy continues to fulfill its mission and to serve the needs of those who desire to receive a quality Christian education. All who have ever been a part of this historical Adventist institution should be proud of all that it has accomplished and that which it aspires to accomplish. This school is still worth our investment, financial or otherwise. For more information about Valley Grande Adventist Academy, call 956.968.0573, or visit [www.vgaa.org](http://www.vgaa.org).

**Robert Saldaña**



A dramatic presentation for VGAA's alumni homecoming.

# Joshua Homeschoolers Take On Outdoor School

**JOSHUA** » This past April, 40 homeschoolers from the Joshua area took courage and braved the savage wilderness of the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge in Oklahoma for Outdoor School. With more than 80 people attending and classes for all ages, we were geared and ready for our exciting adventure. We battled ferociously with the mosquitoes and bugs, hiked strenuously over difficult mountains, and lived off the beans of the land!

Each day began with individual breakfasts and then a joint worship. Everyone, young and old, enjoyed the talks from our special guest speaker and friend, Glen Mitchell. The talks were story-like, interesting, and spiritual—all in one!

Afterward, we split up for classes. We chose from a wide variety of activities, including rapelling, outdoor photography, botany, entomology, outdoor cooking, “track ‘n trail,” orienteering, whittling, animal tracking, nature crafts, fishing, basket making, geocaching, first aid, survival skills, and the rangers’ hike. With the exception of a few special guests, the parents of attendees taught all of the classes. Bob and Alma Stauffer taught astronomy and rapelling, and Robert and Debby Edmiston taught outdoor cooking.

Omayra Quear and Flavia Illingworth had lunch and supper ready for us when we returned from morning and afternoon classes, exhausted and having “hiked up” an elephant-sized appetite. The feasts created by our cooks were considered “best meals ever” by attendees.

Saturday morning found most of us hiking, although we could choose our own activities. After lunch, we enjoyed a special church service together, and in the evening we rotated among exciting activity stations. The stations were loaded with family fun, and even the parents had a great time. It was an inspirational and fun Saturday for everyone.

As the weekend came to a close on Sunday, we took our last class, shed a few tears, and packed up to leave. We returned (alive,



but with empty bottles of bug spray)—full of new and useful knowledge and good memories of Joshua homeschoolers’ first Outdoor School!

**Sabrina Illingworth, age 15**

Parents and homeschooled students at Joshua participate in the first Outdoor School, held at the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge in Oklahoma, where they learned various skills and enjoyed healthy fellowship.

# Burleson's Project Impact

**BURLESON** » Project Impact was the Burleson church's spring mission project that didn't involve buying tickets or a long van ride. Five projects in Burleson received attention from about 90 church members.

On March 11, a group braved water and mud after a heavy rain and, in conjunction with the City of Burleson, picked up trash on a two-and-a-half mile walking trail around Burleson.

For the next project, a large group met at the church, had worship, ate pizza, and then received their directions to four proj-

ects. Each of four homes was to receive attention to repairs, painting, and yard work as needed. Some chores included replacing weathered siding, scraping and caulking windows, and painting. The yards were mowed, flower beds weeded and trimmed, and new landscape flowers were planted.

One home was next door to a vacant home that was in foreclosure, and the yard was very overgrown. The eager crew took to the task of mowing the lawn and cleaning the yard to help make the home and neighborhood look well-groomed.

Huguley Memorial Medical Center, Lowe's, and Mr. Jim's Pizza all aided in the sponsorship of these projects.



The local newspaper published three articles concerning Project Impact, commended Burleson church members for reaching out to the community, and noted that none of the clients were members of the Burleson Adventist Church. The

newspaper articles also challenged other churches in the area to do singular home mission projects.

**Ryan Long**

▲ Members weren't afraid of getting a little dirty in the effort to help the community.

**Above center:** A group photo of some of the members who helped with Project Impact.

**Above far left:** Members painted homes as part of Project Impact.

◀ Members helped weed, trim, and plant new flowers in flower beds.

# Where Will They Study?



TEXICO CONFERENCE

In just a few weeks, school will begin again. Right now many parents and grandparents are deciding on where to place their children for their studies. It is one of the most important and life-changing decisions that can be made. Will their children be placed at the feet of an Adventist teacher who knows and understands the will of God, or will they be placed at the feet of a teacher and organization that is prohibited by law from giving glory to God? Will their children be taught that God made the heavens and the earth, or will they be taught that it was only a matter of chance? Will they be taught love for God, or that God doesn't exist?

Paul wrote to Timothy about honoring God in his study and in his words, "Keep reminding them of these things. Warn them before God against quarreling about words; it is of no value, and only ruins

those who listen. Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth. Avoid godless chatter, because those who indulge in it will become more and more ungodly. Their teaching will spread like gangrene" (2 Tim. 2:14-17, NIV).

Every day, many secular schools are filled with "godless chatter" that fills the minds of young people with disregard, disrespect, and disdain for God, His church, His ministers, and His people. Paul says these teachings spread like gangrene, or death of tissue in the body. Paul was right, "gangrene theology" is spreading, eroding the fabric of our society. We have seen the results: "lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, trai-

tors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!" (2 Tim. 3:2-5, NKJV). We must not conform to this godless culture. We must not be participants in this modern-day, anti-God movement. We have Seventh-day Adventist schools that teach "the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." We have the medicine that will prevent this disease and prepare our children for eternal life in His coming kingdom.

Soon your child will be studying again. Make sure he or she is studying at the feet of Jesus, not at the feet of those who are banned from giving glory to God and could be filled with "godless chatter."

**James L. Stevens**, president

## Lubbock Junior Academy Visits Wilderness Tabernacle Replica

**LUBBOCK, TEX. »** The shofar sounded, and the Lubbock Junior Academy students moved toward the large, scale replica of the biblical wilderness sanctuary at Aldersgate United Methodist Church in Lubbock. (A shofar is a ram's horn that was sounded by the ancient Israelites as a warning or a summons.)

The students had spent a week studying how the tabernacle in the Old Testament was the center of ancient Israel's spiritual life, and that, when the children of Israel were traveling from Egypt to the Promised Land, the tabernacle was pitched literally at the center of their encampment.

Before entering the tabernacle courtyard, each pair of students was given a headset and an MP3 player. A brief explanation of the tabernacle, its furnishings, and its rituals were described as an intricate part of the Master Architect's spiritual plan. Visitors to the replica paused at the

altar of burnt offering, laver, lampstand, table of showbread, and the Ark of the Covenant in order to interact as the Levite priests would have done as part of their holy duties. The self-guided tour asked visitors to pray at different locations.

At the end of the tour, the recording informed listeners that they could walk boldly into the presence of God, and that "we are no longer bound by the rituals of the Old Testament tabernacle. We are set free to worship in-



Lubbock Junior Academy students enjoy their educational visit to a scale replica of the biblical wilderness tabernacle in Lubbock, Tex.

timately at any time with our High Priest, Jesus."

**Susan Zimmermann**



# Santa Fe Churches Join Together to Start New School

**SANTA FE, N.M.** » Cindy Arguello fondly remembers her days at Santa Fe Adventist School at the Marcy Park church.

“Those are days I’ll never forget. We used to have such fun at school, and the big arroyo behind the church was our

now joined together to start a new school, to be called the Adventist Academy of Santa Fe. To Arguello’s surprise, the board decided to start the school in the same location where she had been a student—at the Marcy Park church on the north side

of the city. The Marcy Park congregation has given permission to the school to rent its auditorium, but a modular unit will be required to provide adequate classrooms. Fortu-

many children might be expected to attend. They found that parents were interested in an Adventist education for their 48 children. The resulting needs assessment suggested that 40 students could be a possibility. The school, for grades one through eight, will have open enrollment to permit community families to enroll their children, as well.

Quality education comes at a cost, and the four church boards have struggled with the challenge of supporting the school financially. The members are of good courage, however, and believe that, with God’s help and the help of local church members, there will be a grand opening in

August. Church members have pledged nearly \$30,000 for the project so far, and have already given an additional \$6,000.

Arguello is excited that that her daughter, Lexi, might be the first to apply at the new school.

**Allen Steele**



▲ The gym/auditorium at Marcy Park church is being rented to the school.

► Lexi Arguello (left), and her mother, Cindy, are excited about the prospect of attending the new Adventist school in Santa Fe.

**Bottom right:** The Marcy Park church has agreed to permit the school to use its location.



playground,” says Arguello, now a mother herself. “I’ve often wished that my children could have the same experience.”

Recent research by the CognitiveGenesis study reveals that an Adventist education gives kids a clear advantage. Children who complete Adventist education consistently score above the national average on standardized tests. About 80 percent of them go on to earn a college degree. Arguello benefitted from the early childhood education she received from dedicated Adventist teachers. She went on to become the clinical laboratory manager at Christus St. Vincent Hospital in Santa Fe, where she works today. Unfortunately, the little Adventist school that she attended closed years ago.

No one is more excited than she that the four Adventist churches in Santa Fe have

nately, there’s space for a playground, and a city recreation center and park are just a short walk away.

The school board was elected last year and its first action was to conduct a survey among church members to see how



# Mission Outreach at Gathering of Nations

TEXICO CONFERENCE

**ALBUQUERQUE, N.M.** » The Gathering of Nations Pow Wow is an event that has occurred since 1982 in which Native Americans connect to other native and non-native people from around the world to encourage learning about Native American heritage, culture, and tradition. This year, over 3,000 Native American dancers and singers, representing more than 500 tribes, as well as some 800 Native American artists, crafters, and traders, came from all over the United States and Canada to Albuquerque to participate and engage with the more than 112,000 attendees.

A multi-church effort to reach this group was represented by Jep Choate from the Albuquerque Heights church; Skip and Karen Biathrow and Robert and Kimone Gardner from the Rio Rancho church. They were joined by Tomara and Lucy Peslakia from the Farmington

church. They are two new faithful believers who are Native American and often participate in outreach events for Native Americans. The group shared literature that introduced God's eternal love for all nations, as well as information about health with everyone who stopped by the group's table. Attendees asked questions, took free literature, and signed up to win a much-desired "Navajo Bible." At times,

the group ran out of literature due to a great interest in the colorful Adventist and health literature. At the end of the two-day event, the group members knew that God had blessed their efforts and were pleased to know that they'd had a hand in sharing the message of the Three Angels.

**Robert Gardner**

► Tomara and Lucy Peslakia with the winner of the Navajo Bible.

**Bottom right:** Robert Gardner speaking with visitors about lifestyle choices.

▼ Karen Biathrow and Kimone Gardner were vigilant and ready for opportunities to share Christ.



# Midland Welcomes Its New Members

**MIDLAND, TEX.** » In mid-February, the Midland English Adventist church began a month-long prophecy seminar with guest speaker Jason Morgan, senior evangelist of Amazing Facts Ministry. Before the first night of the seminar, some of the church members became worried because they had not received an invitation brochure in the mail as expected. Church members prayed for a good attendance for the opening night, and God answered their prayers. There were 76 visitors that came that first night. Church leaders, led by head elder, Sam Baron, and his wife, Susie, rallied together to make the meetings a success. Members showed their support by helping in various roles, such as usher, greeter, prayer warrior, registration attendant, parking attendant, and more.

The church was revitalized and revived as members pulled together in unity and service for the Lord. At the conclusion of the meetings on Sabbath, March 17, Abner Razon, the church's pastor, baptized 18 people, and accepted one by profession of faith. The church hosted a luncheon to welcome the new members that

day. "Truly the Lord has blessed us; this is a happy occasion," said Razon.

The church is currently doing follow-up Bible studies and prayer meetings using Daniel and Revelation prophecy seminar study guides. Attendance in these Wednesday-evening services has tremendously improved. Old and new members alike

are on fire for the Lord!

**Nefritire Razon**



▲ Roc Hernandez seals her decision for Christ in baptism with Abner Razon, pastor.



Top: New members feel what a joy it is to join the family of God.

▲ At the conclusion of the seminar, 19 new members joined the Midland church.

TEXICO CONFERENCE

## Texico Women's Retreats



**Texico Conference  
Women's *English* Regional Retreat  
August 18, 2012**

**Albuquerque Heights SDA Church  
4920 Wyoming Blvd. NE**

**Key Note Speaker  
Janet Page**

General Conference Ministerial Associate Secretary for Prayer,  
Pastoral Spouses and Families,  
*A Matter of Prayer*



**Texico Conference  
Women's *Spanish* Regional Retreat  
August 25, 2012**

**El Paso SDA Jr Academy  
3510 George Dieter Drive**

**Key Note Speaker  
Carmen Griffith**



SW Union Women's Ministries Director  
*The Power of Prayer*

\$30 Registration Fee by Credit Card - \$25 Registration Fee Check or Cash

To Register email: [texicowomen@yahoo.com](mailto:texicowomen@yahoo.com) **No later than August 10<sup>th</sup>**

**NO ONSITE REGISTRATION!**

# New Talent, Humble Service

For over a century, under various names but always with a strong Adventist spirit, Southwestern Adventist University has been in the business of educating young people. Such a grand tradition would not be possible if the mission of education was held by only one generation, which is why fresh faces, whether they are of recent high school graduates or of new professors, are the lifeblood of the university. They bring new ideas, high aspirations, and renewed leadership, which balance the well-founded history of Christian education on Southwestern's campus.

John Peckham, assistant professor of religion, is one such fresh face. Originally from Massachusetts and Indiana, Peckham came to Southwestern a little over three years ago with a masters in divinity from Andrews University. He has continued to pursue higher education as he completed a Ph.D., which he defended in June.

"When Southwestern extended the call to teach in the religion department, I was impressed that God was leading. I was excited, as I still am, to serve among the distinguished members of the department," says Peckham. "I'm humbled by the responsibility of helping college students form a vibrant relationship with God.

"Many of our graduates become pastors

and thus serve an essential role for the future of Adventism," Peckham says. "I've greatly enjoyed the opportunity to help students understand what they believe and why they believe it."

There is no questioning Peckham's determination. His dedication to the students of Southwestern is demonstrated in his efforts to keep their perspectives in mind.

"I hope I'm able to relate well with students, deal with modern issues, and understand where students are coming from, and how best to help them and reach them," he says.

Recently a student commented about Peckham, "You can ask him the hardest questions, and he will answer in a way that anyone can understand." Another student proposed that Peckham's course on biblical theology be extended to two courses "because it's that good."

Senior accounting major Phil Lemons explains, "I really enjoyed him as a teacher. He takes the time to explain the idea he is presenting until he is sure he is understood. He is also very honest about what he knows, what he doesn't know, and what is his opinion."

For Peckham, the influence and experience of working at Southwestern goes both ways. As much as the students and other

faculty feel that Peckham has brought to Southwestern, he also feels that Southwestern has provided for him.

"Coming to Southwestern has been a great experience," Peckham says, smiling. "I've been welcomed and encouraged by my peers and befriended by my students. Southwestern has a very strong family atmosphere, and a community-oriented culture. It fosters growth. I constantly recognize that I have a lot to learn, and I approach every task with this in mind."

This attitude is not lost on Peckham's peers, nor the students in his classroom. At Southwestern's May graduation, Peckham was presented with Southwestern's Educator of the Year award. The award, nominated by Southwestern's student senate and voted on by a committee of students, faculty, and former recipients, highlights the impact Peckham has at Southwestern.

Peckham says that his mission is to promote Christ by encouraging and enabling students to seek a personal relationship with God. "I want them to seek answers to some of life's big questions from a biblical perspective within the context of the Seventh-day Adventist faith."

Edward L. Cheever II



Benjamin McArthur presents John Peckham with Southwestern's Educator of the Year award during the university's May commencement.

# Pastors' Wives Become Evangelists

When I met Cindy Mercer two years ago, a seed was planted. She said, "You should organize a ShareHim campaign for pastors' wives!" I thought, "That's a great idea!" Then, last year, when we took a group of students from Sandia View Academy and Ozark Adventist Academy to the Philippines, the Union's women's ministries leader said to me, "2012 is the Year of Women's Evangelism for the Philippines. Why don't you bring a group of pastors' wives to preach and our pastors' wives can translate?" I stepped out in faith and agreed to 20 evangelistic meetings.

Every participant's experience (18 pastors' wives, one pastor and one "PK") was different, but the end result was the same. God blessed according to the need of the speaker. The speakers came from the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference, Oklahoma Conference, Texas Conference, and the Texico Conference. I want to share with you some experiences from a few of our speakers. As one pastor's wife put it, "I have resisted the idea that this will change me. And yet, it has changed me. The naked

power of the Spirit and Word of God have fanned the flame that was burning, but burning low. Now, there is a fire that cannot be quenched or denied. And I am not afraid of what that means, because after all, God is in control."

Cindy Mercer, of the Oklahoma Conference, shares her experience: "Ever since I became an Adventist eight years ago, I have wanted to go on a mission trip. I had participated in a ShareHim homeland series, but I wanted to experience an overseas campaign. I prayed that one day my opportunity would come. Time went by and I honestly forgot about the comment I had made to Kathy McKey until I ran into her at camp meeting last year. She told me she was organizing a group of pastors' wives to go to the Philippines, and she asked me if I was still interested. My first reaction was, "Yes!" And then, I started thinking, "Wait, no!" Three weeks away from my family, church, and job seemed just a little too much. To be honest, I was getting cold feet. I remembered thinking that the trip probably wouldn't happen, or there would most likely be others to sign up and I wouldn't be able to go. After re-

ceiving a phone call, I signed up for this unknown and new adventure. No doubt, this was one of the greatest "mountain-top" experiences I have had! Yes, there were trials and some discouraging moments, but those things pale in comparison to the smiles and changed lives that I witnessed night after night."

Monica Rigacci from the Texas Conference shares what she learned: "Do something.' I can still hear those words in my mind from a powerful morning worship delivered at the Southwestern Union's ministerial convention. As I listened to these bombarding phrases wrapped and delivered by the Holy Spirit, I turned to my husband and asked, 'What do you think about the Philippines?' He smiled and said, 'Go!'

"A few weeks prior to this event, we, as pastors' wives, had received an amazing invitation from the Southwestern Union and our conference to be part of an evangelistic mission trip to the Philippines. I really wanted to help, not preach. Trusting in God's promises, my thoughts were focused on the reality that it's all about His mission, and not my personal priorities.

"Preaching about prophecy was a challenging thought; we realized that we could not do it by ourselves. When you serve God, you recognize your spiritual necessities. You seek, you receive the Holy Spirit in your heart, and the idea of God's exceeding love for you is the driving force that enables you to go and do something!"

The youngest evangelist on the trip at age 12, Sara Tesch, said, "I am amazed again and again everyday of what God does for us."

God wants to amaze each one of us if we will allow Him to work in and through us and then tell what great things He has done for us.

**Kathy McKey**, Southwestern Union ministerial spouses leader



▲ Monica Rigacci, of the Texas Conference, preaching at her site in the Philippines.

◀ Pastors' wives hold up the campaign posters for the Philippines trip.

# A Boy, Two Clubs, and an Artist

TEXARKANA, TEX. » Our church family is a blessed church family. In our diversity, we enjoy the company of some of the most dedicated and skilled people in the world. What separates us from the rest of the world, though, is that when we perform our duties, we do so not for the fact that they are named *duties*, but because we want to *serve*.

Using the human anatomy described in I Corinthians 12 and 13 as a metaphor for the importance of the individual in the church, the Apostle Paul connects the everyman's role to the chief fruit of the spirit: love. In fact, service can be defined by love—purely selfless acts of kindness and aid. For Arthur Pletcher, this concept is all too clear.

A self-employed artist for seven years, Pletcher had to turn to the field of auto design to help make ends meet for his wife and son. Pletcher's son, an avid Boy Scout with Asperger's Syndrome, was invited to join the local Pathfinder Club. Pletcher agreed, and took his son to the first meeting. What happened next puzzled him. "My son told me he didn't want to be in Boy Scouts anymore. He only wanted to be in Pathfinders," says Pletcher.

For him this was as much a turning point in his *own* life as it was for his son.

Pletcher had been working on some paintings for the Boy Scouts, but once his son quit to join Pathfinders, he turned the paintings into Pathfinder paintings. "I really felt God was guiding me," he says. "My son felt more a part of Pathfinders than he did Boy Scouts, which he had been in for two years." He noticed how accepting and friendly the Pathfinders were toward his son. This is when he decided he wanted to help the club.

He set up a Web site where he offers prints of his paintings for sale. The purchaser then selects the painting, the size, and a department or club in their church they would like to help. Custom paintings are also available. The purchasers then receive their painting and the club or department receive a donation equal to 50 percent of the price of the print.

The only problem? Getting the word out has been tricky. Still, Pletcher remains optimistic.

"For me, this is about helping out," he says. "The key to real happiness is to be a servant, trying not to be selfish and lose my self-centered-ness." There is a love for



people in his ministry. To Pletcher, anyone can be a servant, and he encourages others to serve with whatever skills they may have. The verse he tries to base his life on is I Corinthians 10:31, which says, "So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God" (NIV).

Arthur Pletcher's paintings are available at his website, [www.helpsdakids.com](http://www.helpsdakids.com).

**Pablo Colindres**, Southwestern Union communication intern

## Review and Herald Votes Woman as Editor of *Message* Magazine

HAGERSTOWN, MD. » The Review and Herald Publishing Association board has voted Carmela Monk Crawford as editor of *Message*, the church's urban-flavored sharing magazine. Crawford served as associate editor of *Message* in the early 90s, but her connection to the ministry goes back to childhood. Her father, Paul Monk, took on the role of editor 32 years ago. "I remember how he came home with his pockets full of White House petit fours after a press briefing with President Reagan," she says.

Crawford left editorial work in 1995 to become an attorney, but she was drawn back to Adventist publishing. "There is only one work that is ultimately satisfying, and this is it," she explains. "I have been blessed to help people in dire situations, prevented them from serving jail sentences,

and helped protect children from abuse. I have worked to protect someone's very life. Yet, what would be the point if they did not know the freedom and clemency that Jesus offers?"

The previous editor, Washington Johnson II, served from 2007 to 2012. As a chaplain in the Navy reserve, he resigned when he received news that he was being deployed to Afghanistan.

Crawford has been invited into a position that has typically been held by male ministers. "I think my selection is a strong statement, not just within the Adventist community, but to those with whom we share the gospel," she says. "There is too much work to do, and we need more people on it. Adventist women like me must continue to serve substantively and com-



Attorney Carmela Monk Crawford has become the first female editor of *Message* magazine.

petently on every level throughout this movement. It's time for us all to get on it. I've got my gear, I'm going in."

# Transforming Adventist Education

Students today have a far different relationship with information and learning than did students 20 or even 10 years ago. This is due in large part to socio-cultural influences that include access to ever-increasing information and technology. As a result of the digital age, learners are seeking more dynamic ways to process information through connecting, communicating, and creating.

Adventist education has responded to this complexity by redefining instructional practices for 21st-century learners. Recently, a new curriculum model, *The Core of Adventist Education Curriculum*, was developed that will guide future curriculum, instruction, and assessment K-12 practices across the North American Division (NAD). Based on best practices that have been identified by both educational practitioners and theorists, this model places emphasis on engaging students in active questioning, conceptual understanding, practical application, and creative collaboration.

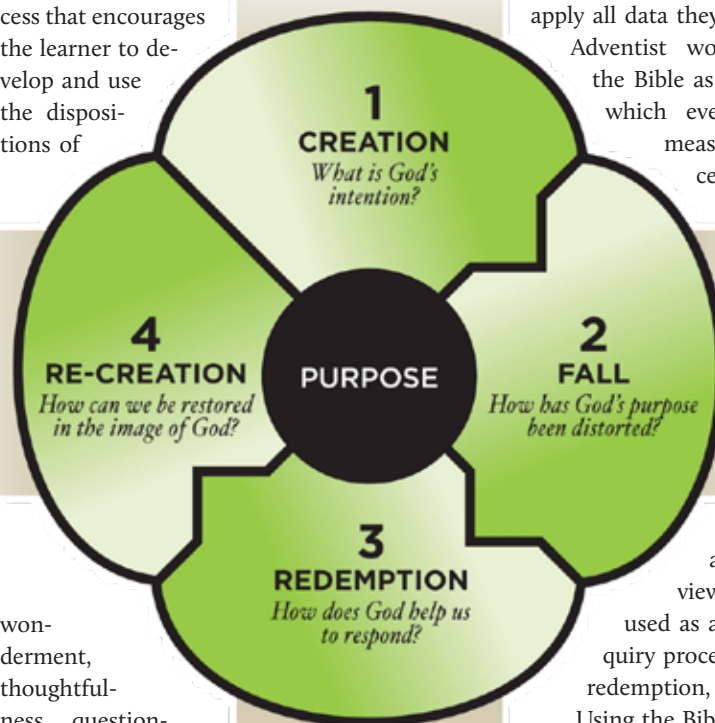
Learning theorists have begun to refer to this method of learning and teaching as the inquiry approach. We learn best when we can connect to personal experience and generate essential questions that capture the essence of our interest, providing focus, engagement, and motivation to learn more. In fact, God designed us to wonder, question, and learn about our environment. In the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve were encouraged to explore and share what they had learned with God and the angels. This type of learning was also encouraged in the schools of the prophets.

Teaching and learning through inquiry, then, is a dynamic, active process that encourages the learner to develop and use the dispositions of

wonderment, thoughtfulness, questioning, exploration of multiple resources to conduct research and investigations, and collaboration. It is learning in its most authentic and meaningful form that can lead to a depth of understanding as learners conceptually explore both school subjects and their own wonderings.

However, inquiry involves more than seeking answers to questions; the learner must also have the conceptual tools for critically perceiving and interpreting the information they assimilate at any stage of the in-

quiry process. These tools become a framework or worldview that serves as the standard by which learners consciously measure, interpret, and apply all data they encounter. The Adventist worldview accepts the Bible as the standard by which everything else is measured. Four concepts emerge from



a biblical worldview that can be used as a lens for the inquiry process: creation, fall, redemption, and re-creation. Using the Bible as the lens for inquiry has the potential to **transform** Adventist education. Learners will leave our classrooms with a conceptual toolbox, a worldview, that can empower them to critique any topic, including opposing worldviews.

Components of three inquiry-based programs that use the Adventist worldview as the lens for inquiry will be available for NAD elementary classrooms fall of 2012—*Stepping Stones Kindergarten Program*, *By Design Elementary Science Program*, and *Go Math! Big Ideas Math Programs*. These programs are aligned with the *NAD Elementary Standards* as well as the *Common Core State Standards*. Other curriculum areas will be addressed in the near future.

Please join us on this journey to excellence as Adventist K-12 education undergoes a **transformation!**

**Carol Campbell**, director of elementary education, North American Division



**Adventist Education**  
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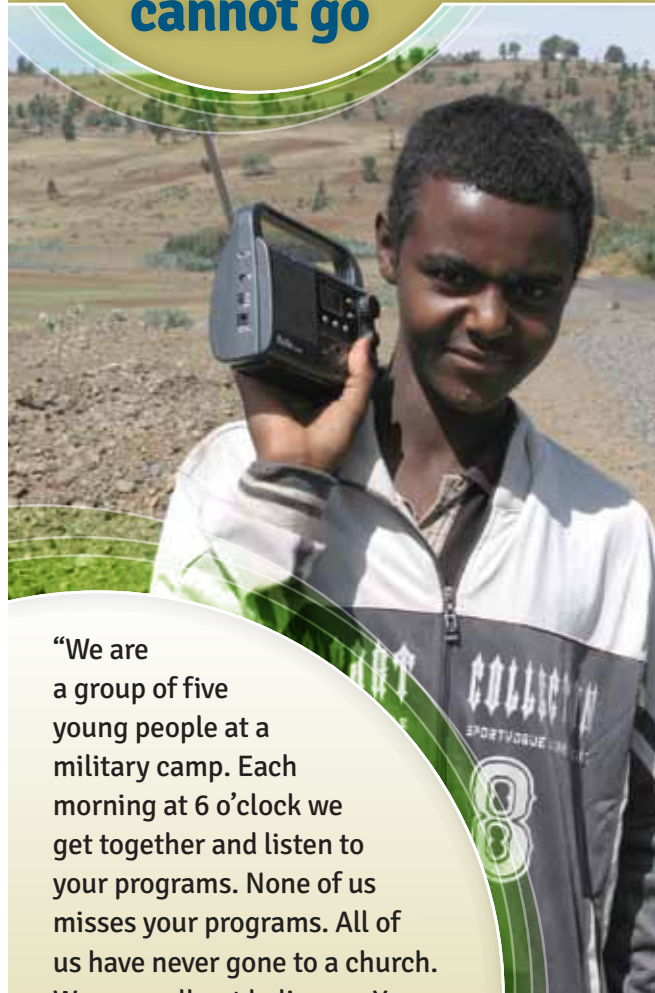
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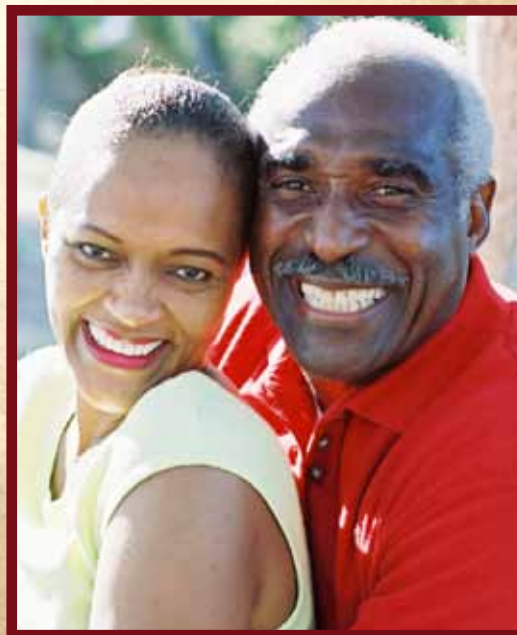
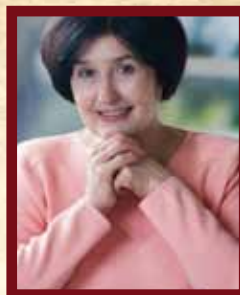
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- **Texas Conference**, Lynette Ecord 800.847.2792, [www.texasconferencelegacy.org](http://www.texasconferencelegacy.org)

- **Texico Conference**, Sean Robinson 800.759.7851
- **Southwestern Adventist University**, Harvey Byram 800.433.2240, [www.swau.edu](http://www.swau.edu)

sociate Vice President for Academic Administration, Florida Hospital College of Health Sciences, 671 Winyah Drive, Orlando, FL 32803. len.archer@fhchs.edu.

**Florida Hospital College of Health Sciences**, Orlando, FL is seeking a Physical Therapist Program Director beginning 2013. The Program Director will provide overall academic leadership developing this program and salary will be competitive. Qualifications: Minimum doctoral degree from regionally accredited school, senior faculty status, understanding of higher education and contemporary clinical, eligible for FL PT licensure, PT academic

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**Andrews University** is searching for a qualified candidate for the position of Assistant Herd Manager located at Indiana Academy in Cicero, Indiana. For additional information and to apply please visit: [http://www.andrews.edu/HR/emp\\_jobs\\_hourly.cgi](http://www.andrews.edu/HR/emp_jobs_hourly.cgi).

**Biology professor sought by Union College**, Lincoln, NE. Terminal degree strongly preferred; deep commitment to integrating Adventist faith, teaching and scholarship essential. Several specialties acceptable. Submit curriculum vitae and cover letter to Dr. Carrie Wolfe, Chair, Division of Science, [cawolfe@ucollege.edu](mailto:cawolfe@ucollege.edu). Deadline is September 30, 2012.

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## Milestones

### BIRTH

Kyle and Andeindra Timm, of the Tyler, Texas church, are happy to announce the birth of their beautiful baby girl, **Kayla Jaedyn Timm**, who was born April 12, 2012, at 12:23 p.m., weighing seven pounds and four ounces, and measuring 21 inches long.

## Announcements

**Self-supporting Missionary Couple Needed to Run Baby Home in Africa.** Cradle of Love Baby Home in Tanzania is in need of new leadership. Founded in 2004, Cradle of Love provides interim care for orphaned and abandoned infants. Attributes needed for this job are: love for small children, administrative skills, adaptability to new culture and language, and capability to be self-supporting. For more information, contact Davona Church at: [director@cradleoflove.com](mailto:director@cradleoflove.com).

**ASI Convention:** Adventist-laymen Services and Industries will hold its annual convention August 8-11, 2012 in Cincinnati, Ohio. More information about the convention can be found on the ASI Web site: [www.asiministries.org](http://www.asiministries.org).

**The Second International Bounty-Pitcairn Conference** will be held at Pacific Union College, August 20-21, 2012. Attendees will enjoy presentations and discussions about Pitcairn Island and its Adventist connections. Complete details about the conference are available at [www.2012BPC.com](http://www.2012BPC.com).

**Oak Park Academy Alumni Weekend** will be held September 28 -29, 2012, in Gates Hall, 825 15<sup>th</sup> St., Nevada, Iowa. All alumni and former faculty and staff are invited to attend. For more information, contact Mary Dassenko Schwantes at 636.527.0955, or [maryschwantes@sbc-global.net](mailto:maryschwantes@sbc-global.net). Send us your email—postage is too expensive! Send them to Warren Woledge at [warrenw2u@gmail.com](mailto:warrenw2u@gmail.com), or call 402.570.0346.

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## Obituaries

### **BARNES, Edna Marie**

**Hines Scott**, born April 7, 1920 in Tiffon, Mo., and died April 16, 2012. She was a member of the Fort Worth Handley church at the time of her death, and previously had been a member of the Tulsa First church for more than 50 years. After retiring from teaching pre-school, Edna enjoyed spending time with her daughters' families and being a grandmother. Survivors: sister, Gail; daughters, Sharon Gail and husband, of Plano, Tex, and Del Jeanne and husband, of Arlington, Tex.; six grandchildren, and eight great-grandchildren.

### **BARRANCO, Ruth Breed-**

**love**, born November 13, 1923, in Pine Bluff, Ark., and died April 29, 2012. She was a long-time resident of Tulsa and a member at the First church in Tulsa. Survivors: son, Joseph S. Barranco, of Tulsa; granddaughter and grandson-in-law, Veronica and James Marks, of Lewisville, Tex; granddaughter and grandson-in-law, Victoria and Bradley Ruley, of Tulsa; grandson and granddaughter-in-law, J. Dominic and Megan Barranco, of Tulsa; and five great grandchildren.

### **EICHELBERG, Floyd G.,**

born October 12, 1932 in Leola, S. Dak., and died March 22, 2012 in Harlingen, Tex. Floyd was a lifelong, faithful servant of God. He sang in quartet

groups in academy and throughout his life, and served as an elder, chorister, and Sabbath School teacher. He touched many lives with his Christ-like, soft-spirited personality. He was preceded in death by his son, Terry. Survivors: wife, Donna, of Harlingen; daughters and sons-in-law, Cheri and Dan, of Denver, Colo., and Susan and Jim, of Weslaco, Tex.; son and daughter-in-law, Lonnie and Modesty, of San Antonio, Tex.; eight grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

### **MOORE, Don E.,**

born February 4, 1922, and died April 19, 2012 in Fort Worth, Tex. He served in the U.S. Navy and was at Pearl Harbor during the Japanese attack on December 7, 1941. Soon after the war, he joined the Fort Worth church, where he served as an elder. He also served on the church and school board. Survivors: wife, Delores Jean Moore, of Fort Worth; daughter, Sharie Howard, of Berrien Springs, Mich.; two sisters, Oleta Evans and Betty Lawson; and two grandsons, John and Paul Howard.

**REED, Jane**, born June 22, 1914 in College Place, Wash. She and her husband served as missionaries in China, and during World War II, the couple spent three years in a prison camp with other missionaries. After they were released, she worked at the General Conference for many years. She passed

away in Florida, but was buried next to her husband in Keene, Tex.

### **STEPHENS, Lyman**

**Harvey**, born December 12, 1924 in Achille, Okla., and died April 29, 2012 in Graham, Tex. Harvey was ordained to the gospel ministry by the Texas Conference and served in four pastoral districts. Before his ordination, he served as a literature evangelist and Bible worker, and assisted in numerous evangelistic meetings. Through the years, Harvey's love for sowing seeds of truth and nurturing new believers resulted in many commitments to Christ. He was a member of the Graham church, which was his final pastoral post before his retirement in 1990. Survivors: wife, Zelia May Stephenson; brother and sister-in-law, Billie G. Stephens and Norma Jean; daughter, Karen Essig; daughter and son-in-law, Lynn and Johnny Tidwell;

four grandchildren and six great grandchildren.

### **WILTHEW, Carol Elick,**

born November 5, 1948 in Hammond, La., and died March 15, 2012 in Hammond. She was a member of the Hammond church. Survivors: husband, Bernard M. Wilthew, of Hammond; two daughters, Jennifer W. Tilyou and Amy W. Forrest, of Hammond; and one granddaughter, Gloria Tilyou.



## SABBATH SUNSET CALENDAR

	Jul 6	Jul 13	Jul 20	Jul 27	Aug 3	Aug 10
Abilene, TX	8:50	8:48	8:45	8:41	8:36	8:29
Albuquerque, NM	8:24	8:22	8:19	8:14	8:08	8:02
Amarillo, TX	9:05	9:03	9:00	8:55	8:49	8:43
Brownsville, TX	8:26	8:25	8:22	8:19	8:16	8:10
Dallas, TX	8:39	8:37	8:34	8:29	8:25	8:18
El Paso, TX	8:15	8:13	8:10	8:06	8:01	7:55
Fort Worth/Keene, TX	8:41	8:39	8:36	8:32	8:27	8:20
Gallup, NM	8:34	8:32	8:28	8:23	8:18	8:11
Galveston/Houston, TX	8:26	8:24	8:22	8:18	8:13	8:08
Gentry, AR	8:39	8:37	8:33	8:28	8:22	8:15
Little Rock, AR	8:26	8:24	8:20	8:16	8:10	8:04
Muskogee, OK	8:41	8:39	8:35	8:30	8:25	8:17
New Orleans, LA	8:05	8:04	8:01	7:57	7:53	7:47
Oklahoma City, OK	8:49	8:47	8:43	8:38	8:33	8:26
Roswell, NM	8:11	8:10	8:06	8:02	7:57	7:50
San Antonio, TX	8:37	8:36	8:34	8:29	8:25	8:20
Shreveport, LA	8:26	8:24	8:21	8:17	8:12	8:05
Tulsa, OK	8:44	8:42	8:38	8:34	8:28	8:21

BY MICHAEL GIBSON

## Waiting on the Lord

**HAVING GONE ON A MISSION TRIP TO THE PHILIPPINES THE YEAR BEFORE**, I knew God could work in powerful ways. However, I had no idea where He was going to lead me when I signed up for an evangelistic mission trip to Costa Rica this year.

I was primarily assigned as a photographer, videographer, and blogger to document the experiences and challenges of the 29 other students and sponsors on the trip. Along with that, I was a back-up speaker in case someone fell ill or needed rest. Little did I know how soon I would need to step up and deliver a sermon.

On the first Wednesday of the two-and-a-half-week trip, my friend Amanda came down with a stomach bug. Our director told me to prepare to speak at Amanda's site. Having preached that same sermon the previous year in the Philippines, preparation was fairly simple, but I still connected to my Life Support. I prayed, "God, I need your strength tonight. Give me your words to speak

off town to pick up supplies. This made me a bit uncomfortable, because I was going into a new place by myself with the potential of having to do the children's program completely unprepared. But I knew God was leading me, so as we left I prayed, "God, send Amanda's mother quickly."

I arrived to discover a locked up church with no one around. "Great," I thought, but God just kept reminding me to have patience and that it was going to be OK. And sure enough, 15 minutes later, a mother rode up on a bicycle with her little 3-year-old boy in tow. In broken Spanish, I explained to her that Amanda was sick and I would be speaking for her that night. A while later, the church elder arrived and he knew English fairly well, so I was able to explain the situation better. The elder helped me set up my equipment as they usually had it, and I continued to pray that Amanda's mother would arrive at the church soon.

Exactly 15 minutes after I prayed that last prayer, Amanda's mother arrived and my mind soared with relief. After that, I had to laugh at myself. All that time I had been anxiously waiting when God was clearly in control. The rest of the night went well. My translator and I worked very well together with the minimal preparation we had, and the people there seemed to receive the message we presented.

This experience reminds me of God's promise in Isaiah 41:10: "Do not fear, for I am with you; Do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God." I was anxiously looking about for Amanda's mother to come to and increase my comfort zone, but I serve a God who is always walking with me and leading me. I need not fear. He knows what's best for my life. I just have to step back let Him take control. His plan is above and beyond any plan I can come up with.

For more on this story and other experiences I had while in Costa Rica, check out [www.againstthevoices.wordpress.com](http://www.againstthevoices.wordpress.com).



Michael Gibson, right, preaches a ShareHim sermon in Costa Rica through his translator, Levi.

Show me what I need to say, and where I need to go."

Too soon, the vans pulled up to take us out to our sites. I grabbed all my computer and projector gear, and loaded into the van that would take me to the site. Then, I realized that Amanda's mother, who usually went with Amanda to her site and worked with the kids there, had not come back yet from her trip to a far-

Michael Gibson is a student at Sandia View Academy.



# On the Record »

BY PAT HUMPHREY » COMMUNICATION DIRECTOR, SOUTHWESTERN UNION

## A Gem of Excellence

**ONE DAY IN A SMALL TOWN** in the northeastern section of the U.S., a journalism intern on an assignment for a local newspaper was driving through a neighborhood when she happened upon a small, one-room Adventist school. As she was passing by, a group of students playing Freeze Tag and Red Rover caught her attention. The young woman backed up her car, parked across the street, and headed for the school. She introduced herself to the teacher, who cordially invited her inside to join her and the students for their Reading and Writing Workshop. The children eagerly welcomed their visitor and invited her to take a look at their projects and accomplishments. After spending about an hour in the classroom, the intern told the teacher that she'd like to come back to write a story about the school, if her editor would allow her to do so.

The intern did return, and over the next few weeks, on occasion accompanied by her senior editor, joined the students at this little Adventist school for Bible, math, language arts, and reading classes. She learned the songs they sang and thoroughly enjoyed the music of the school's chime choir. And when the students and teacher went out to do community service activities, the intern joined them, as well.

That series of interviews resulted in a lovely two-page spread that appeared a few months later in the local Sunday

newspaper. The reporters told the teacher that some of the things that had most impressed them about the school were its emphasis on community service; how engaged the students were in their schoolwork, despite such a wide span of grades in one room; and the amazing wealth of excellent teaching materials that were available, even for such a small school. They noted the emphasis on the Bible and on character building, and were especially impressed by the sense of community and cooperation that the teacher

fostered in the students. The reporters related to the teacher that they had found in that little school such a "gem of excellence" that they were compelled to ask for an extension of time in order to write the kind of story that the school deserved.

While I believe that that little Adventist school in the northeast is exemplary, it is by no means unique. Had that reporter accidentally discovered any one of our many pre-schools, elementary schools, or academies scattered across the Southwestern Union, I'm confident she would have found the same kind of excellence demonstrated in the multi-grade school described above.

Those two journalists recognized that they had stumbled upon a treasure—a "gem of excellence," if you please. If you haven't already, I hope that you, too, will discover the "gem of excellence" that only an Adventist school can offer.

*Pat Humphrey*

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*What's your someday?*

Giselle '12, Psych  
Class President

**2008: Someday, I'll be a guidance counselor.  
2012: I am the girls' dean at Holbrook Indian School in Arizona and I'm  
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