

FORUM

AAF Newsletter
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Newsletter of the Association of Adventist Forums

December 1984

Vandermolen Assumes Spectrum Advisory Council Chairmanship

A new chairperson of the *Spectrum* Advisory Council assumes his responsibilities with this issue of *Forum*. Robin Vandermolen, M.D., is an anesthesiologist at the Glendale Adventist Medical Center and has been involved for many years with the Association of Adventist Forums. He replaces Ray Damazo, D.D.S. a businessman in Seattle, Wash., who organized the Spectrum Advisory Council and has served as its only chairperson so far.

The Advisory Council is comprised of individuals who contribute a minimum of \$500 each year for three years. Since its inception in 1980, the Advisory Council has stabilized the editorial resources of the magazine, and has ensured that the journal remains a continuing part of the Adventist community. From the time Damazo started the council, it has grown to include 80 members, and subscriptions to *Spectrum* have increased to as many as 7,000.

Dr. Damazo agreed to remain chairperson longer than he had anticipated because he enjoyed meeting the expanding circle of individuals who stepped forward to support *Spectrum*. Although personal responsibilities require him to step down as chairperson, Damazo says that he "is as proud of *Spectrum* as I have ever been and will continue to give it my strong backing."

Robin Vandermolen is an anesthesiologist who attended medical school in South Africa, at the University of Witwatersrand. He moved to the United States in the 1960s after treating the victims of the "Sharpeville Massacre,"—blacks who had all been shot in the back by government security forces.

In the U.S., as a member of the Harvard University faculty, Vandermolen and his wife, Nancy (who is also an anesthesiologist), joined the group

of Adventist professionals and graduate students who later founded the AAF. He says that his wife "found the group so nurturing that she joined the Adventist Church."

In 1970, the Vandermolens moved to Memphis, Tenn., where Vandermolen started and led a chapter of the AAF. Professionals and graduate students—Memphis had a school of optometry—found the AAF chapter a place for both study and socializing. It served as a vehicle for maintaining their relationship to the church. After moving to Glendale in the late 1970s, Vandermolen became president of the Los Angeles chapter of AAF from 1981 to 1983.

Vandermolen sees *Spectrum* as not only a "vehicle for loyal members of the Adventist Church to effect change from within the church," but also as "a missionary journal for those Adventists in secular professions and academic institutions to maintain their ties to the church." He is therefore committed to the Advisory Council helping to vastly increase the circulation of *Spectrum*. "We need to introduce it to the many people who don't know about it."

Spectrum Increases Number of Issues

by Dana Lauren West

Spectrum editors plan, as of January, 1985, to officially increase the number of *Spectrums* to five a year. Association of Adventist Forums members, for the past two years, have been receiving five issues each calendar year at a subscription rate covering only four issues. Beginning in January, *continued on page 2.*

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a subscription to *Spectrum* will cost \$20 and will cover five issues of the journal—a price increase of only 25 cents per copy.

The results of last year's reader survey as well as suggestions from *Spectrum* advisory board members triggered the editors into asking for the journal to be published five times a year.

With the additional 64 pages, *Spectrum* editors hope to include more voices with different focuses without cutting back on the basic fundamental articles. Publishing five issues a year also allows for the reporting of most recent news as well as providing the reader with supplementary insights into particular issues.

Richard Lewis, director of promotion, has drawn up plans to introduce the more frequently published *Spectrum* to people who have never heard of the journal. Lewis will begin by designing a replacement for *Spectrum's* present brochure, "What Do You Expect From an Independent Adventist Journal?" Another plan includes sending *Spectrum* to those thought leaders in the church who do not already subscribe.

James Cox Challenges Sydney Chapter

by Dana Lauren West

James Cox, until recently president of Avondale College in Australia and now director of the newly-developed Metro Ministries program in Washington, D.C., presented to Australia's *Sydney Chapter* members, "You and Current Issues—Human Rights, the Economy, the Peace Movement, and the Ecology."

During the chapter meeting, held on June 9, Cox addressed an audience of approximately 70 members and described his duties in Washington and the justification for inaugurating the Metro Ministries program. As director of Metro Ministries, Cox will attempt to influence key decision makers on public policy and inform them of the Christian viewpoint.

Cox's main contention was "How can one be a follower of Christ and not be concerned with current issues?" Jesus was interested in all pertinent issues of his day. He challenged the church merchants, gave counsel on the caring for and handling of women and children, and tackled the divorce issue (see Matthew 11 and 19).

Herbert Clifford, M.D., chief administrator of Sydney Seventh-day Adventist Hospital, responded to Cox's remarks by supporting his premise. He also noted that as the church gets more involved in moral issues it must recognize geographical and cultural differences in various congregations.

According to Clifford, there is also a need for the church to allow each culture to develop at its own pace. Clifford cited several examples from his early career in South Africa. A question and answer session followed.

D.C. Chapter Hears Women in Ministry

by Dana Lauren West

Insights into women and the ministry were presented to Washington, D.C., chapter members Sept. 21. Four women involved in different aspects and levels of ministry reflected on their experiences in front of an audience of approximately 100 people.

Debbie Vance, who worked for *Insight* magazine for three years, was the first panel member to speak. Vance set the stage by reviewing the biblical background of the women's issue. She particularly focused on the New Testament, emphasizing that everyone should share their gifts and be involved in the Gospel commission.

Nancy Marter, a Potomac Conference Executive Committee member, presented the status of women within the Potomac Conference.

Marcia Frost, a Fairfax, Va., pastor, expressed her views on being a woman minister and gave a descriptive account of her life as a church pastor.

Finally, Hyveth Williams, a Columbia Union College theology student, told her story from the perspective of a woman theology student and her place within the Adventist ministry during these uncertain times.

As many as eight General Conference leaders were asked to represent the church's official views, noted Bonnie Casey, Washington chapter planning committee member; however, they all declined.

Preceding the 15-minute presentations, written queries were submitted to the panel. Robert Osborn, General Conference treasurer and local AAF member, answered questions from the General Conference perspective. Previously, Osborn had been given authorization by the conference to speak, although he was not there under the direct auspices of the General Conference.

Dana Lauren West is currently finishing her graduate studies in public relations at Maryland University College Park.

How To Start An AAF Chapter

The Association of Adventist Forums is a lay organization whose purpose is to encourage thoughtful people with Seventh-day Adventist backgrounds to examine and freely discuss ideas and issues related to the church in all its aspects and to its members as Christians in society. Since 1967, when the AAF was first conceived, chapters have formed worldwide. The only requirement for a person to be admitted to membership in the association is that he or she agrees with its basic objectives and is willing to support it financially.

In order to establish a local AAF chapter, five or more members of the national association must participate. This local group should prepare a constitution and send it to the AAF Executive Committee for approval. (A brochure on "How to Start an AAF Chapter," with a sample local chapter constitution, is available on request from the national headquarter's office: AAF, 7710 Carroll Ave., Takoma Park, Md. 20912.)

People interested in starting a chapter should meet to discuss their concerns, needs, and resources. Once officers or planning committees are elected, the information should be sent to the national AAF. Some chapters ask for minimal

dues. The funds are then used by the local chapters in several ways—a chapter newsletter, airfare for guest speakers, honorariums, or for printing costs for special chapter projects. At any stage of this process, the local group may ask for help from their regional representative (see back page), or Walter Douglas, the director of chapter development for the AAF.

Douglas, elected to this post last year, will help chapters with their special individual needs: contacting speakers, organizing seminars, assisting with chapter growth, etc. He can be reached by mail at 712 Bluffview Drive, Berrien Springs, Mich. 49103; or by phone (616) 471-7107 (h); or (616) 471-3543 (o).

Program Ideas For Forum Chapters

As the new term begins and the AAF chapter executive committees begin plans for the year, *Forum* would like to suggest some ideas that will help its members get the most out of their chapters and their meetings.

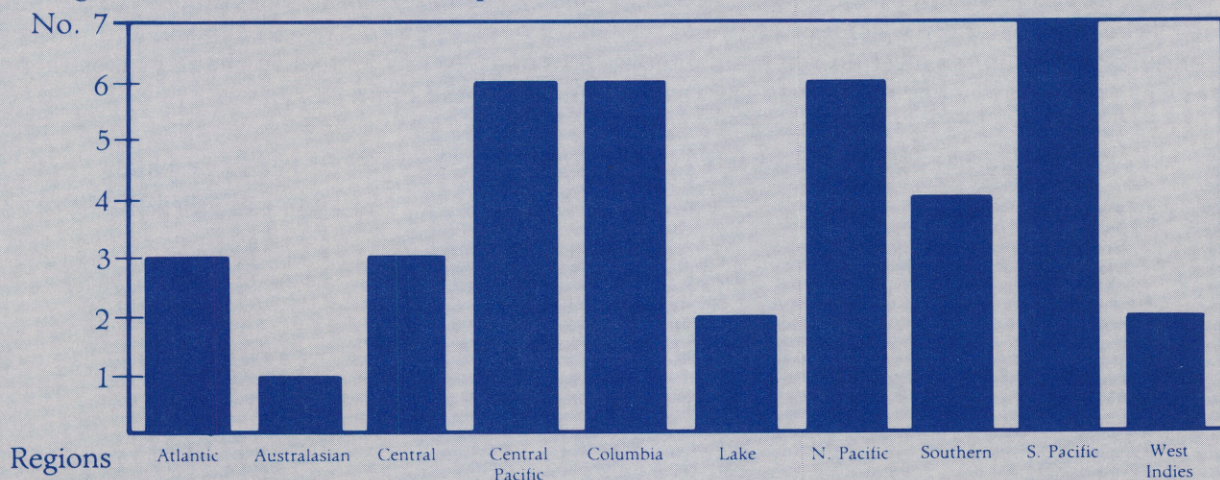
- The *San Diego Chapter* publishes a monthly newsletter. In it, editor Ella Rydzewski announces coming events and speakers. The July newsletter suggested ways to get the most out of an AAF chapter and its meetings: 1) make sure you understand what is being said before agreeing or disagreeing; 2) realize that imprecise language impedes understanding and try to discover *what*

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Chapters By Regions

The bar graph below illustrates the distribution of the AAF Chapters in their respective regions, as of 1984. As expected, regions covering the largest area claim the largest number of chapters.

AAF Regions and the Number of Chapters in each.



Southern Region

The *Orlando Chapter* welcomed *Spectrum* editor Roy Branson, who spoke on types of Adventist identity. That meeting took place Nov. 10. Branson met with Forum leaders Friday evening, and delivered a Saturday morning message entitled "The Chasm or the Way" at the Markham Woods Seventh-day Adventist Church. Future guest speakers for chapter meetings include Doug Hackleman, *Adventist Currents* editor.

Columbia Region

The *Washington, D.C.* chapter was fortunate to hear Bruce Branson speak on Baby Fae and the events leading up to the first implantation of a baboon heart in a human infant. Branson is chairperson of the department of surgery and chief of surgery of Loma Linda University Medical Center. Accompanying him was Richard Sheldon, director of respiratory care and chairperson of the Institutional Review Board of the medical center. There was standing room only in the Takoma

Academy chapel, where the Nov. 3 meeting was held.

Southern Pacific Region

Jack Provonsha visited the *San Diego Chapter* and spoke about his book *Ethics at the Edges of Life*. Provonsha focussed on abortion and heroic terminal care. Charles Sandefur's cancelled presentation on "Homosexuality and the Seventh-day Adventist Church" has been rescheduled for January 1985.

The *Orange County Chapter* heard Lorna Tobler discuss her part in the Pacific Press litigation. She presented a talk entitled "Loyalties and Conflict: A Spiritual Perspective on the Pacific Press Case."

Dr. Frank Knittel, chairperson of the English department of Loma Linda University, spoke on Nov. 10. His presentation dealt with "Academic Freedom in Seventh-day Adventist Educational Institutions: The Impact of Concerned Laity."

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is being said regardless of *how* it is being said; 3) question the speaker in order to understand, rather than to challenge; 4) disagree if you like, but be able to explain the grounds of your disagreement; 5) focus your attention on the purpose of the presentation, and distinguish the major points from the minor points of the program.

Ryzewski also includes outlines of presentations, notes from the chapter president, and an occasional editorial regarding pertinent AAF-related issues.

- Some chapters are not able to invite as many speakers as they would like. This is not necessarily a disadvantage if they use the vacant meeting slots as informal "think tank" forums. Chapter members decide on an issue about which they wish to be educated. A committee is then appointed to research the subject and the committee presents its findings at a chapter meeting where chapter members can draw conclusions. Lively and

interesting chapter sessions have resulted from this format.

- Some chapters gather to discuss articles from *Spectrum*, enlarging the scope of the pieces by using the bibliographies provided.

- Retreats and weekend theme seminars are becoming increasingly popular among the chapters. The *Orlando Chapter* is sponsoring a seminar with *Spectrum* editor Roy Branson as its principal speaker. The *Treasure Valley Chapter* conducted a successful weekend retreat last year.

- When it is not quite within the chapter's budget to invite someone to speak, some chapters invite a local church or college to co-sponsor a speaker.

Other ideas for chapter participation include outreach programs; agapé feasts; devotional readings or poetry readings; "celebrations" of the Sabbath or creation; prayer breakfasts; and musical programs. When a creative chapter takes flight, the sky is the limit.

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