

## Ongoing Conversations

*A Meeting of Minds* | BY BONNIE DWYER

*Conversation is a meeting of minds with different memories and habits. When minds meet, they don't just exchange facts; they transform them, reshape them, draw different implications from them, engage in new trains of thought. Conversation doesn't just reshuffle the cards: it creates new cards.*

—Theodore Zeldin, *Conversation*

ONE OF THE ENDEARING MARKS OF friendship is an ease in picking up a conversation over years and miles as though there has never been any separation. That is where we find ourselves in this issue of *Spectrum*—picking up conversations, stories, and poems, from friends who have played significant roles in our past. And here they are again, blessing us with new thoughts and ideas.

Malcolm Bull and Keith Lockhart burst on the publishing scene in 1989 with a book that was heralded as a masterpiece, *Seeking a Sanctuary: Seventh-day Adventism and the American Dream*. Combining history and sociology, they told the story of more than just Adventism's Millerite roots; they added perspective on the culture. A second edition of their book is being published by Indiana University Press in December. Since it is completely updated, we get to see their creative minds take on the most recent developments in the Church. It is a particular pleasure to carry a chapter from the book in this issue, because the chapter picks up the conversation begun in our last issue about authority and the Bible.

It's been thirty years since Merikay McLeod filed suit against the Pacific Press for discrimination and opened the way for equal pay of Adventist women employees in the United

States, but her case is as fresh as the daily newspaper. In October 2006, the *New York Times* carried a four-part series about faith-based profits in their business section and then followed it up with an editorial. "Where Faith Abides, Employees Have Few Rights," was the second installment of the series. Asked about the article at the Association of Adventist Women's Conference, where she was given a Woman of the Year Award, Merikay expressed frustration with the Church's learning curve when it comes to its employees. But, always the optimist, she also shared with us a poem that expresses her dream for a bright new day.

Blogging is the latest way to continue a conversation across space and time. The blog section of the *Spectrum* Web site has been a hit since its inception this past summer. For those who have not yet sampled the conversation there, we feature some of Adventism's most active bloggers in this issue. We also have the story of an evangelistic campaign told through a blog.

*Community through conversation* is the motto of Adventist Forum. We thank you for being the kind of friends who are ready to pick up the conversation, keep it going, and thereby make the community vibrant. ■

