

One Person Can Make All the Difference | BY BONNIE DWYER

Searching for something to give to the past presidents of the Adventist Forum, I came across a plaque that read, “One person can make all the difference.” How true, I thought, each of them made unique, significant contributions: to get us organized and independent—Alvin Kwiram; to give us a place within the Adventist academic community—Larry Geraty; to help us branch out and take on ambitious projects—Glenn Coe; to provide transition from the Branson era on the East coast to the West Coast and new leadership—David Larson; to speak truth to power—Charles Scriven. These men piloted our organization in significant fashion, and we honored them at the fiftieth-anniversary conference at La Sierra University in September.

Then, at the Board meeting following the conference, Scriven announced that he would be stepping down from the Board chair position, and so a search began. In November, the Adventist Forum Board of Directors elected Carmen Lau its new chair. Scriven, who has served as chair for the past decade, will continue as a member of the Board and writing for *Spectrum*.

Lau joined the Board in 2011. She led in planning past conferences in Chattanooga and Silver Spring. A fourth-generation Seventh-day Adventist, she first learned of *Spectrum* while a student at Southern Adventist University, where she graduated with a BS in Nursing in 1983.

At Loma Linda University, she earned an MS in Nursing, in 1988. She is married to the physician Yung Lau and they have three children: Christopher, Carissa, and Sarah. Birmingham, Alabama, is their home town and where she attends the First SDA Church and serves as a Sabbath School teacher. Recently, she enrolled in the University of Alabama at Birmingham MA program in Anthropology of Peace and Human Rights and anticipates graduating in 2019.

A *Spectrum* subscriber since her college days, she says, “Reading *Spectrum* showed me that I was allowed to ask questions and have doubts. It also showed me that an Adventist can be aware of issues, honest, and on a search for truth. I see *Spectrum* as a place that reports what is and imagines what can



L to R: Alvin Kwiram, Larry Geraty, Glenn Coe, David Larson, and Charles Scriven, September 2018.

be.” We look forward to imagining the future with Carmen. We know she is one person who will make a difference.

Whoever could have imagined what a year this would be in the Seventh-day Adventist Church?

As we chronicled the actions of the General Conference (GC) Unity Committee on our website, plus the responses, both from official organizations and individuals, the stories multiplied substantially as the year went by. By the time of the October Annual Council meeting of the GC Executive Committee, we had posted over a hundred stories on the topic. Alisa Williams, our web editor, was inundated, often posting five or six stories a day on the topic. She then organized all the stories in one place so readers could better follow what was taking place. In this issue, we began with her outline of the events as we compiled a section of key materials on the topic. She made a big difference to our readers as they endeavored to understand the situation.

This year, Sharon Fujimoto-Johnson returned to the *Spectrum* design position, one she held in 1998 when she helped us by significantly redesigning the journal. Then she left to concentrate on rearing children. Her nine year-old son, Ian, has also joined the team to assist with copy editing.

To all these people, my thanks for your willingness to help us reach new goals. You make all the difference.