Vandeman Elected Union Executive Secretary

The Columbia Union Conference Executive Committee today elected Robert T. Vandeman (right) executive secretary of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the eight-state, mid-Atlantic region.

“Rob brings to the table a depth of experience that will bring real value to our union,” says Columbia Union president Dave Weigley (left). “He is a seasoned administrator and has a balanced approach regarding the mission of the church.”

Vandeman began his ministry 40 years ago, pastoring churches in Colorado, Minnesota and Maryland, where he spent 12 years as senior pastor of Chesapeake Conference’s Spencerville church in Silver Spring, Md. In 1995 he joined the conference leadership team, serving as executive secretary for 10 years and president for the past five.

“Not only am I honored and humbled by the confidence shown in me for this position, but I am excited about the opportunity to be actively engaged in a wider sphere of ministry,” Vandeman said after accepting the call. “I want to be a supportive presence to the conferences and institutions throughout the Columbia Union.”
As part of his duties, Vandeman will serve on a number of boards and committees and assist Weigley in providing administrative leadership and support to the union’s eight conferences, two healthcare networks, medical college and university. His office will record and archive minutes, policies and resolutions of the union and see that each entity abides by their respective constitutions and bylaws.

He plans to take up his new role later this summer and serve the 2011-2016 term left vacant last month when Neville Harcombe died. During his transition, Edward Motschiedler, former union executive secretary, is serving as interim secretary.—Celeste Ryan Blyden

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**Bikers “Rev It Up” for Christ at First Motorcycle Camp Meeting**

The plangent roar of dozens of motorcycles coming to life in unison breaks the quiet of a Mount Vernon, Ohio, Sabbath afternoon as dozens of bikers prepare to ride into the countryside. This is just one of the activities that bike enthusiasts recently enjoyed at Ohio Conference’s first “Rev It Up Biker Revival.” Held at Mount Vernon Academy, this camp meeting drew some 80 Christian bikers from as far West as California and as far south as Florida.

While the purpose of this camp meeting is the same as most Seventh-day Adventist camp meetings, at this camp meeting, attendees wear with pride their Harley Davidson paraphernalia, such as their jeans, T-shirts and pins, etc. One friendly, petite, red-headed, freckled woman biker sports a patch on her leather vest that gleefully announces, “These are my church clothes.” —Taashi Rowe

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**Ohio Conference Youth Serve Their Neighbors**

Edward Marton, pastor of the Mansfield church, and Victor Brown, dean for Enrollment Management at Kettering College of Medical Arts, worked with youth to help clean up a neighbor’s home and yard. It was one of several daily service projects the youth undertook during Ohio’s Intergenerational Camp Meeting.—Heidi Shoemaker
Mountain View Makes Camp Meeting Accessible

Because of funds donated at last year’s camp meeting, the Mountain View Conference’s campgrounds in Huttonsville, W.Va., now has a wheelchair-accessible cabin. Mike Ellis, a member of the Toll Gate (W.Va.) church, and Delmar and Karen Davis, members of the Charleston (W.Va.) church, relax outside the cabin.—Monica Zill

Pennsylvania Earliteens Collect Food Donations

Young people from Pennsylvania Conference’s Earliteen tent took to the streets of Hamburg to collect canned food items, which they donated to the Hamburg Community Seventh-day Adventist Community Center. This was one of many service opportunities they participated in during Pennsylvania Camp Meeting.—Tamyra Horst

New Jersey Members Called to Pray, Share Christ

During the New Jersey Conference English Camp Meeting, more than 150 people responded to speaker Robert Folkenberg Sr.’s call to become Kingdom Friends. Members of Kingdom Friends agree to pray for their friends and neighbors and to
share Christ with them.—Jim Greene

Seabrook Members Bring Neighbor to Potomac Camp Meeting

Tamika Reid was living in the Lanham, Md., neighborhood that surrounds the Seabrook, Md., church when a member of that church knocked on her door. Soon they were studying the Bible together and praying over the phone. Although she is not yet a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, Reid is excited to attend her first camp meeting with several Seabrook members. Pictured (left to right) are George and Liz Rampersad, Tamika Reid and Mark Wilbur. See videos of other Potomac camp meeting events at pcsda.org.—Taashi Rowe

Chesapeake Kindergarteners Learn About Faith

Kindergarteners march around Jericho seven times (until the wall fell down). Franke Zollman (in yellow shirt), division leader and pastor of the Williamsport (Md.) church created a large “wall” from cardboard boxes on the hill. The kids had fun and learned a spiritual lesson, too. To see more photos from the conference’s camp meeting, visit facebook.com/chesapeakeconference.—Samantha Young

Allegheny West Conference Members Pray
Allegeny West Conference members lift their hands in prayer during last week’s Sabbath services at the conference’s campgrounds in Thornville, Ohio.—Bryant Taylor

Camp Meetings Continue This Week and Beyond

- **Potomac Conference’s Hispanic Camp Meeting** starts today and continues through June 26 at Shenandoah Valley Academy in New Market, Va. The theme is “*Reposo Divino para el Remanente*” (“Divine Rest for the Remnant”). Major programs will be streamed live at pcsda.org.

- **The New Jersey Conference Spanish Camp Meeting** will be held June 24-26 at the Tranquil Valley Retreat Center in Tranquility, N.J. The theme is “Proclama Su Gracia” (“Proclaim His Grace”).

- **Allegheny West Conference Camp Meeting** continues through June 25. This Sabbath’s speaker will be Calvin Preston, pastor of the West End church in Atlanta. Kurtley Knight, pastor of the Hillcrest church in Pittsburgh, will preach in the youth pavilion. Starting at 11 a.m. all events in the adult pavilion will be streamed live at awconf.org.

- **Allegheny East Conference Camp Meeting** runs from June 30-July 10 and is themed “Experiencing God Through Revival, Reformation and Renewal.” The meetings will be held on their campus in Pine Forge, Pa., and will feature speakers Delbert Baker, PhD, a General Conference vice president, and Alvin Kibble, a North American Division vice president. Senior youth speakers include Carlos Ming, pastor of the Caffin Avenue church in New Orleans, and Ken Manders, executive secretary in the Bermuda Conference. Gregory Nelson, pastor of the University Heights church in New Brunswick, N.J., and the Metropolitan church in Plainfield, and Dylis Brooks, associate campus chaplain at Loma Linda University (Calif.), will preach in the young adult tent. Services will be streamed live at myalleghenyeast.com.

Forward to a Friend

To share the Visitor News Bulletin with friends and church members across the Columbia Union, click the “Forward to a Friend” link below so all the photos and copy will appear correctly. Also, encourage them to sign up for the email at www.columbiaunion.org/email. Thank you!

Stay Connected:
Bikers “Rev It Up” for Christ at First Motorcycle Camp Meeting

Story by Taashi Rowe

The plangent roar of dozens of motorcycles coming to life in unison breaks the quiet of a Mount Vernon, Ohio, Sabbath afternoon as dozens of bikers prepare to ride into the countryside. This is just one of the activities that bike enthusiasts recently enjoyed at Ohio Conference’s first “Rev It Up Biker Revival.” Held at Mount Vernon Academy, this camp meeting drew some 80 Christian bikers from as far West as California and as far south as Florida.

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Earlier that day, people file into the school’s cafeteria with bandanas, tattoos, piercings and, for the most part, these attendees look the part of the stereotypical biker. However, in spite of their outer trappings, these are not stereotypical bikers. Many are wearing patches on their leather jackets or even T-shirts that proclaim their loyalty to Jesus Christ. One towering man with a black goatee and nary a smile on his face, wears a red bandana and a T-shirt with a verse from Isaiah 40:31 that states, “They shall mount up with wings like eagles. They shall run and not be weary and they shall walk and not faint.” Some others wear leather jackets with a large patch that reads: “Sabbath-Kee pers, Seventh-day Adventists, Revelations 14” accompanied by the verse “Jesus is also Lord of the Sabbath, (Mark 2:28).”

Standing 6’4” tall, Tom Hughes, pastor of the Newark (Ohio) church and coordinator of this camp meeting strums his guitar as he leads out in the song service. He can identify with some of those who have lived the outlaw biker lifestyle. Before he became an Adventist, he always thought he was “too bad to be saved. I had a lot of shame, hatred, self-anger … I thought, ‘If God knows anything about me, He wouldn’t want anything to do with me.”’ Now through his Bible Biker Ministries, Hughes has witnessed to bikers in all 50 states.

Monte Sahlin, Ohio Conference’s director of Research and Special Projects, is always on the lookout for unique ways to minister to underserved groups. With 400,000 bikers in the state of Ohio, he needed an entering wedge to reach those bikers, but realized that “many bikers are not interested in conventional church.” That’s where Hughes’ long history ministering to bikers
became helpful. With support from the Columbia Union and the Ohio Conference, Hughes designed this camp meeting as a way to reach out to unchurched bikers and provide training to those who want to minister to this group.

This kind of ministry is what Dave Weigley, president of the Columbia Union Conference, calls "recreational evangelism." Weigley, who drove more than 300 miles on his Harley from his home in Maryland to the camp meeting, says bikers have an instant rapport that create opportunities for Adventists to reach some unexpected candidates for Christ. Following his sermon at the worship service, Weigley shared that he was hoping that "people will leave here with a sense of community, where they will sense that they belong to a large fellowship of Christian bikers who are in love with Christ and have the joy of experiencing His new life."

For Marc Kopocy, a member of the Carrollton (Ohio) church, this biker gathering gave him a much-needed sense of community. "It's nice to meet people who I have more in common with, people who have similar backgrounds, are turned on by Christ and can still enjoy life," he says. "I'm really glad I came."

Read more about this unique camp meeting in the August issue of the Visitor magazine.