September 21, 2011

Columbia Union Churches
Get Ready to Move!

As a part of the Adventists InStep for Life initiative, the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America has set aside this coming Sunday, September 25 as Let’s Move! Day. Churches in Maryland, Ohio, Washington, D.C., and Pennsylvania have activities planned. You can participate too! Click here to see the churches closest to you! For more information on Let’s Move Day, visit adventistsinstepforlife.org.

Allegheny East, Pennsylvania Churches Help Flood Victims

Seventh-day Adventist volunteers from
churches throughout the Allegheny East and Pennsylvania conferences worked at five sites throughout Pennsylvania on Sunday to offer aid to their neighbors still recovering from the effects of Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee. Just two weeks ago, the Adventist church in Paterson, N.J., partnered with Lowe’s Home Improvement stores to distribute items to a community reeling from flood damage.

Working from a successful model established in Paterson, three organizations focused on replicating the efforts in Pennsylvania. Feed the Children, a nonprofit organization, donated five truckloads of items to Adventist Community Services Disaster Relief (ACS DR), Lowe’s paid for transporting the goods and offered their stores as distribution sites and then ACS worked with the various Adventist churches in and around Lancaster, Sayre, Bloomburg, York and Harrisburg to distribute the goods. Upwards of 140 Adventist volunteers, including Lisa and Matthew Musser (pictured in Lancaster), worked alongside Lowe’s volunteers to distribute buckets of cleaning and laundry supplies, food, storage containers and other needed items.—Taashi Rowe

READ MORE

Takoma Academy Students Help With Flood Clean Up

It was the end of a long week of heavy rains brought on by the remnants of Tropical Storm Lee, and Takoma Academy students in Takoma Park, Md., were looking forward to their fall picnic. Instead, Chaplain Tim Soper asked students to skip the picnic and help the residents of Ellicott City, Md., clean up from severe flash flooding.

On Friday morning, with brooms, shovels, buckets, gloves and squeegees in hand, 18 students set out with Soper and TA’s language teacher Nora Ramos. They made their way into the valley and located a number of businesses that had been inundated with water. The students jumped right in (no pun intended) and cleaned up the mud and debris from a small park behind the local visitor center. They then walked to a thrift store and an architectural firm where they helped haul, sort, clean and organize merchandise and shovel mud.—Tim Soper
150 Leaders Learn How to “ReCharge” Youth Ministries

This past Sabbath, 150 leaders from six out of the union’s eight conferences gathered at the Columbia Union Conference headquarters in Columbia, Md., to participate in “ReCharge,” a training event for youth and young adult ministry leaders. The union partnered with the North American Division Youth Ministries department as well as Potomac, Chesapeake and Mountain View conferences. The youth leaders chose from three seminar tracks for youth leaders (in English and Spanish) and young adult leaders.

“I enjoyed seeing how the youth leaders were eager to learn,” shared Walter Cardenas (pictured), Youth Ministries director for the Mountain View Conference. He also led the Spanish-language track for youth leaders. “I could tell that all of them truly have a genuine burden for the youth to whom they minister.”

READ MORE AND VIEW SLIDESHOW

Kettering College Breaks Enrollment Records

With a total of 938 students enrolled for the fall semester, Kettering College has posted its highest opening enrollment in its 44-year history. The number eclipses the previous high of 917 that was set at the start of the 2010-11 school year. This is the fourth consecutive year that the Kettering, Ohio-based college has topped its previous best opening enrollment numbers.

“Our enrollment goes up because our graduates are happy with their education—and the word gets out,” said Charles Scriven, PhD, college president. “Obviously, we can’t discount the current economy as a factor, but the bottom line is the quality education that our students receive here.”—Mindy Claggett
Tournament Proceeds to Fund Tuition to Pine Forge

The young men and women running up and down the basketball court at Takoma Academy in Takoma Park, Md., on Sunday are having a blast. At ages 11-13 none are quite ready for the NBA, but as they dribble, shoot and score baskets, these participants in the first David Kelly Scholarship Tournament, are making a difference that will go far beyond this tournament. The $2,500 raised from this event will help send other young people to Allegheny East Conference’s (AEC) Pine Forge Academy (PFA) in Pine Forge, Pa.

“We want to send kids to Pine Forge who aren’t Adventists and introduce them to the church,” Andrew McNeil Jr. says earnestly. A member of the Coatesville (Pa.) church who helped found the tournament, he says he felt fortunate to have had access to a Seventh-day Adventist education. Now he and his friends want to give that same gift to children whose parents cannot afford to do the same.—Taashi Rowe

README MORE AND VIEW SLIDESHOW

Highland View Recruiting Team Helps Grow Enrollment

During the hot summer days of Chesapeake Conference Camp Meeting, HVA’s 2011 recruiting team (pictured) was very busy in the Earlteen class. They spent the week interacting with the kids and telling them all about Highland View Academy in Hagerstown, Md. The young recruiters also spent time with kids attending Vacation Bible School at the Westminster (Md.) church and helped with church services in Martinsburg, W.Va., and Dover, Del.

Again this year, parents and alumni blessed the team with meals and lodging during their recruiting trips, and all of their efforts paid off. The totals came in and 17 percent of HVA’s current enrollment of 122 reported that the recruiting team directly contacted them.
“The Lord has blessed HVA with amazing student leadership,” exclaims Renee Williams, recruiting director. “The students shared their love for the Lord and their school. It was a great opportunity, and the memories will be cherished for a lifetime.”

Ohio Conference Church Offers Gardening Space

Seeking an effective yet manageable community service project for their small congregation, Ashtabula (Ohio) church members decided to utilize unused land behind their church and establish a free community garden. The garden contains 20 tilled plots, each about 10 feet by 20 feet.

Now in its third summer, the church’s plots are once again completely taken. While the plot is free, individuals agree to purchase their own plants and provide their own tools, and to come and go freely anytime between sunup and sundown, except during Sabbath hours.

At the end of the current season, the church organized an informal gathering for members and gardeners to get acquainted. “They are all very appreciative of what this church is doing,” says Cyndy Sleigh, the church clerk. “To our knowledge, there are no other churches in Ashtabula County—of any denomination—that provide a free community garden such as this.”—Heidi Shoemaker

Pennsylvania Youth Challenge Changes Lives

“This summer has just changed my life,” said Twana Ambrose. She was an assistant team leader with the Pennsylvania Youth Challenge (PYC) who spent her summer knocking on doors across Pennsylvania, sharing Christian literature, praying with people and seeing God work in her own life.

Thirty high school- and college-aged young
people knocked on 58,000 doors, shared Christian materials, listened, prayed and witnessed for Christ. Several gave mini Bible studies right at the door. Not only did they change lives in Philadelphia, Reading, Allentown, Doylestown, Souderton, Lansdale and Bucks County, but their own lives were impacted as they saw Him working through them. “It wasn’t until I was in this program that I saw how real God truly is,” said Jevoni McAllister. To join the PYC team next year, contact Pastor Tara VinCross at tjvincross@paconference.org or visit payouthchallenge.org.—Tamyra Horst

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**Wheaton Church Hosts Gospel Concert on the Lawn**

For the third consecutive summer, Potomac Conference’s Wheaton church in Silver Spring, Md., hosted a gospel concert on their front lawn. The concert was held on Sabbath afternoon followed by a community day on Sunday. Musicians included Orin Richards from the Metropolitan church in Hyattsville, Md., and Donnell Josiah from Miracle Temple in Baltimore. According to the church’s pastor, Steve Murphy, members had a rollicking good time, sharing food and fellowship with passersby.

“We thought that a lot of folks would get their supplies or their food and then leave, but quite a few people I’ve never seen before hung around chatting and laughing,” Murphy said. “It’s a great opportunity to share Jesus.”

Murphy reported that the church made 80 new contacts and two people even asked for baptism. The next day, the church gave away 70 packs of school supplies.—Taashi Rowe

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**Spring Valley Seniors Survive Extreme Camping**

Spring Valley Academy’s Class of 2012 recently embarked on their Senior Survival experience at Camp Mohaven, which is located near Danville in northeast Ohio.
The seniors from the Centerville, Ohio-school were challenged in ways they never have before. When they arrived at the campsite, they received basic materials (such as plastic, duct tape, etc.) to build shelters to withstand the wind and/or rain for the next five days. This experience is part of their senior Bible class grade and includes journal writing, group activities, participation, attitude and attendance, as measured through the evaluations of both staff and group members. The team-building activities are designed to challenge seniors individually and strengthen them as a class.

Michael Briley summed up the experience: “Trust, teamwork and being proactive are key to being successful in life. You need people and you need to take into account their ideas and suggestions.”—Vicki Swetnam

Los Jóvenes Hispanos de Youngstown le dan un cambio especial a la Sociedad de Jóvenes

La Iglesia Hispana de Youngstown de la Conferencia de Ohio comenzó en julio un programa titulado “Youth Night Summer Movies Festival”, con el propósito de reavivar y reactivar la Sociedad de Jóvenes. Durante este verano, cada viernes de tarde a las 7 p.m. la Iglesia presenta una película contemporánea con un tema cristiano. Luego de la película tomamos tiempo para discutir lo que sucedió en la película, tenemos un refrigerio, y recibimos el sábado.

La reacción a este programa ha sido muy positiva, tanto de jóvenes cómo de los adultos. El plan para el otoño e invierno es mover el programa a los sábados y combinar la programación “tradicional” de una Sociedad de Jóvenes antes de la puesta del sol, y complementarla con una película tiempo social después de la puesta del sol.

LEA MAS Y VEA FOTOS
Youngstown Spanish Puts a New Spin on Adventist Youth Society

Ohio Conference’s Youngstown Spanish church is putting a new spin on the traditional Adventist Youth Society (AYS) program. Over the summer, they started a “Youth Night Summer Movies Festival” hoping that it would spur reactivation of AYS. Held each Friday at 7 p.m., the movies share contemporary Christian themes. After the movie, attendees discuss what they saw, enjoy refreshments and welcome the Sabbath together. Some of the movies screened include *Gifted Hands: The story of Dr. Ben Carson*, *Letters to God, The End of the Spear, To Save a Life, Faith Like Potatoes* and *Soul Surfer*.

William Rodriguez (pictured), the church’s pastor reports both youth and adults have responded positively to the program. This fall and winter, they plan to move the program to the Sabbath following a traditional AYS program. Find the church’s Facebook page under “Youngstown Spanish SDA Church.”

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Pine Forge Students Take Classes Online

For the past three years, students at Pine Forge Academy have been able to participate in distance learning for their courses in the Math Department. Students who may have been ill or off visiting colleges, have Skyped into class from near and far.

This summer the Math Department offered Algebra 1 and geometry online. These courses, six-weeks in length, were taught section by section to students from coast to coast. Feel free to check out [mathtrailer.weebly.com](http://mathtrailer.weebly.com) to see what the students experienced!

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**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**October 1: Maryland Men of Faith** will hold their annual conference at the Mount Aetna Camp and Retreat Center in Hagerstown, Md. Pastor Fredrick Russell,
Allegheny West Conference president, will be the keynote speaker. Register online at mmof.org.

October 1: “Men of Honor” Awards The Washington Metro Area Women’s Ministries presents the 2011 “Men of Honor” awards ceremony at 5 p.m. at the Breath of Life church in Fort Washington, Md. They will be recognizing men who have exhibited an extraordinary dedication to their churches and communities.

October 1-2: Columbia Union Attorney Weekend The Adventist Lawyers Association of Greater Washington will host the “Annual Columbia Union Attorney Weekend” for all Adventist attorneys, pre-law and law students, and other legal professionals in the Columbia Union. The weekend will begin with worship at Sligo church in Takoma Park and culminate with the annual attorney dinner. For more information and registration, visit alagw.org or email info@alagw.org.

October 7-9: The Chesapeake Conference’s Adventist Singles Retreat will be held at the Mount Aetna Retreat and Conference Center in Hagerstown, Md. Kim Logan-Nowlin and Arthur Nowlin will be the main speakers. Learn more at ccosda.org or call (410) 992-9731.

October 14-16: ANEW Fall Conference ANEW, a ministry for Adventists attending secular colleges throughout the mid-Atlantic region, is inviting fellow Adventists and young professionals to attend their upcoming retreat at the Camp Hebron Retreat Center at 957 Camp Hebron Rd., in Halifax, Pa. “This will be a great opportunity for you to grow in your understanding of God's specific calling for your role in ministry,” says Jacqueline E. Rivera, ANEW’s communication director. Those interested in attending must print out the registration form and mail it along with payment by September 23. Late registration lasts until September 30 and will include an additional $5 fee.

October 16: Highland View Academy’s First 5K Run/Walk will benefit the school’s athletic program. Runners and walkers of all ages are encouraged to get out and move and enjoy a day of fun. Area churches will also provide a vegetarian buffet for attendees, complete with recipes. Register at hva-edu.com by September 15 to receive a T-shirt; however, applications will be accepted up to the event date. For more information, contact John Henline at jhenline@highlandviewacademy.com or by calling (301) 331-1016.
October 22: ACTS 2011 Adventists in Ohio will come together this year to honor our past, celebrate the present and learn how to shape the future for the glory of God. This daylong convocation, held at the Roberts Center at the Holiday Inn, Wilmington, will bring together Adventists from across Ohio and neighboring states for a day of worship, study and fellowship. Speakers include Rebekah Liu, a pastor from Southwest China; Ted Wilson (pictured), president of the General Conference; and Ganoune Diop, the Adventist Church’s newly-appointed liaison to the United Nations. A free lunch is available for those who pre-register online at ohioadventist.org. Deadline to register for your lunch is Friday, October 14. Groups need to register with Heidi Shoemaker at the Ohio Conference, (740)-397-4665, ext. 165, or email information@ohioadventist.org.

For more news and up-to-date information from the Columbia Union Conference, visit columbiaunion.org

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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/emailnews. Thank you!

Stay Connected:

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Allegheny East, Pennsylvania Churches Unite to Help Flood Victims

Story by Taashi Rowe
Published 9/20/2011

Seventh-day Adventist volunteers from churches throughout the Allegheny East and Pennsylvania conferences worked at five sites throughout Pennsylvania on Sunday to offer aid to their neighbors still recovering from the effects of Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee.

Just two weeks ago, the Adventist church in Paterson, N.J., partnered with Lowe's Home Improvement stores to distribute items to a community reeling from flood damage. As the home improvement store looked to aid flood victims in eastern Pennsylvania, they again worked with Adventist church members who, with little notice, were quick to volunteer their time, hugs and prayers.

Working from a successful model in Paterson, three organizations focused on replicating their efforts in Pennsylvania. Feed the Children, a nonprofit organization, donated five truckloads of items to Adventist Community Services Disaster Relief (ACS DR), Lowe's paid for transporting the goods and offered their stores as distribution sites and then ACS worked with the various Adventist churches in and around Lancaster, Sayre, Bloomburg, York and Harrisburg to get the goods out.

Upwards of 140 Adventist volunteers worked alongside Lowe's volunteers to distribute buckets of cleaning items, food, laundry supplies, storage containers and other needed items. Although coordinators are still compiling the total numbers of people helped, they are estimating that at least 3,000 families received aid on Sunday. Volunteers at the Lancaster site helped 1,800 individuals while the Harrisburg site served more than 800.

“We are living in a rural area and those areas got hit bad,” shared Daniel Chrispell, first elder at Pennsylvania Conference’s Sayre church. They served some 300 families at their location. “We are a small community and thought it was a good amount.” He added that the church members went beyond distributing supplies and set up tents where nurses offered massages, took blood pressures and prayed with those who asked.
“The Lord blessed us,” Chrispell said. “We made a lot of contacts. One our neighbors came down and was totally surprised to see what we were doing.”

Minnie McNeil, ACS coordinator for the Allegheny East Conference (AEC), noted that it was an impressive outcome considering that this was the first time that any of these churches got involved in this type of disaster response effort.

Sung Kwon, ACS director for the North American Division, drove with his family to three of the sites and was impressed with the collaborative spirit he saw. “It was tremendous to see churches from both conferences work together side by side. That is what I call heaven on Earth,” he enthused.

When reflecting on the day, John Peters, pastor for Pennsylvania Conference churches in Berwick, Danville and Shamokin, also noted the spirit of cooperation and thanked the volunteers for their “representation of Christ.” He was also thankful that the churches took the opportunity to serve humanity and was especially happy that Adventist Spanish-speakers from several churches served as translators.

Pastor Michael Dyson, coordinator of the Harrisburg site, said the event made it evident that: “The church wants to work. They want to do tangible work in the community and really demonstrated that at [these] sites.” Dyson pastors the AEC churches of Hillside in Harrisburg and Truth Tabernacle in York.
Walter Cardenas, Youth Ministries director for the Mountain View Conference, helps to present “Ministerio Juvenil en el Siglo 21” (21st Century Youth Ministry).

150 Leaders Learn How to “ReCharge” Youth Ministries
Story by Visitor Staff
Published 9/21/2011

“These ministry leaders are working tirelessly in their local churches to reach out and engage their youth and young adults,” said Frank Bondurant, Columbia Union vice president for Ministries Development. “To retain and enlist these youth and young adults in our local church ministries is one of the greatest challenges we as a church are facing, and I am grateful that [we] could support and assist these leaders in this important ministry.”

Bondurant was referring to the 150 leaders from six out of the union’s eight conferences gathered on Sabbath at the Columbia Union Conference headquarters in Columbia, Md., to participate in “ReCharge,” a training event for youth and young adult ministry leaders. The union partnered with the North American Division Youth Ministries, Potomac, Chesapeake and Mountain View conferences. The youth leaders chose from three seminar tracks for youth leaders (in English and Spanish) and young adult leaders.

“I enjoyed seeing how the youth leaders were eager to learn,” shared Walter Cardenas (pictured), Youth Ministries director for the Mountain View Conference, helps to present “Ministerio Juvenil en el Siglo 21” (21st Century Youth Ministry).

The praise team from the Washington Spanish church in Silver Spring, Md., led the song service and James Black, the North American Division Youth Ministries director closed with a challenge.
Basketball Tournament Proceeds to Send Students to Pine Forge

Story by Taashi Rowe
Published 9/20/2011

The basketball team from the First church of Coatesville, Pa., was declared the winner in the inaugural David Kelly Scholarship Tournament.

Photo by Gerald Evans Photography

The young men and women running up and down the basketball court at Takoma Academy in Takoma Park, Md., are having a blast. At ages 11-13 none are quite ready for the NBA, but as they dribble, shoot and score baskets, these participants in the first David Kelly Scholarship Tournament, are making a difference that will go far beyond this tournament. The $2,500 raised from this event, will help send young people to Allegheny East Conference’s (AEC) Pine Forge Academy (PFA) in Pine Forge, Pa.

Teams from AEC’s First church of Coatesville, Pa.; Dupont Park church in Washington, D.C.; Capitol Hill church (also in D.C.); Bladensburg (Md.) church; and Potomac Conference’s Community Praise Center in Alexandria, Va.; and Seabrook church in Lanham, Md.; are playing to win. The six teams battle it out, and after 10 games, the Coatesville church’s basketball team emerges victorious over the Seabrook church.

“We are just trying to send kids to Pine Forge,” Andrew McNeil Jr., says earnestly. A member of the Coatesville church, who helped found the tournament, he says he felt fortunate to have had access to a Seventh-day Adventist education. Now he and his friends want to give that same gift to children whose parents cannot afford to do the same. “It’s also an outreach effort,” he adds. “We want to send kids to Pine Forge who aren’t Adventists and introduce them to the church.”
McNeil, who is a father, says while he realizes a private school education can be expensive, he is not encouraged by the state of public schools. “I attended PFA and we had more than faith in common … we formed lifelong friendships,” he said. “We are giving back with the hope that it will impress others to give back to Adventist education in their own ways.”

The tournament is named for the late David Kelly, McNeil’s classmate who was a member of the Class of 1986 and an avid basketball player. Reggie Moore, who served as a tournament referee along with four other Pine Forge alumni, says he played basketball with the tournament’s namesake at PFA. “He played two years in public school. [When he came to] Pine forge, he mentored a lot of us. He was a good friend of mine,” he says.

While Moore said Kelly did a lot for Pine Forge’s basketball program, he wants the young participants to realize that Kelly’s prowess extended beyond the basketball court to academics as he graduated with a 3.9 GPA.

Clarence Mosely, Dupont Park’s church’s athletic director said he was happy to support the cause of Adventist education. However, the bonus for him was that the game “allows our kids to come together, form friendships and bonds and learn about the sport.”

Sandy Hayden, who was visiting from St. Petersburg, Fla., was happy to see her grandkids participate. “It’s events like this that keep our young people focused on trying to excel spiritually, mentally and physically,” she says.

“I was excited and nervous but we played [well],” shares Dominique Allen, who played on the Community Praise Center team.

According to McNeil, plans are already in the works for the next David Kelly Scholarship Tournament. For more information about the tournament, call McNeil at (610) 301-4031. To make a donation to The David Kelly Memorial Fund, make checks out to “Life Long Health,” a nonprofit 501c(3) community-based organization backing the tournament. Checks can be sent to:

Lifelong Health
P.O. Box 33757
Washington, D.C. 20033
Los Jóvenes Hispanos de Youngstown le dan un cambio especial a la Sociedad de Jóvenes

Historia por Visitor Staff
Publicado 9/21/2011

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La reacción a este programa ha sido muy positiva, tanto de los jóvenes como de los adultos. El plan para el otoño e invierno es mover el programa a los sábados y combinar la programación “tradicional” de una Sociedad de Jóvenes antes de la puesta del sol, y complementarla con una película y tiempo social después de la puesta del sol.

“Pedimos que oren por nuestra iglesia, y en especial por nuestros jóvenes,” dice William Rodríguez, el pastor de la iglesia.

Rodríguez, el pastor de la iglesia.

Las películas que hemos presentado hasta ahora son, Gifted Hands: The story of Dr. Ben Carson, Letters to God, The End of the Spear, To Save a Life, Faith Like Potatoes, y Soul Surfer.

Puede encontrar la pagina de la iglesia en Facebook bajo el nombre “Youngstown Spanish SDA Church”
Pastor William Rodríguez, pastor de la Iglesia Hispana de Youngstown, dice que la iglesia enseña películas con temas que inspiran y son cristianos.